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# EXCLAMATION:

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## EDITORIAL

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Corridors are interesting places. They are liminal spaces, leading from one place to another, their sole purpose being to convey you to your destination. It was in one such innocuous corridor that *Exclamation: An Interdisciplinary Journal* was born. A chance conversation ended with the seemingly innocent “let’s start a new journal”; some six months later, we are proud to present the first edition.

The members of the editorial team and the contributors to this journal, whilst at varying stages of postgraduate work, are nevertheless all at the beginning of their careers, as Professor Andrew McRae – Head of English at the University of Exeter – identifies in his guest editorial for this edition. As such, we are acutely aware that early-career academic publication is both challenging and essential. Our mission has therefore been quite simple: to create an online, open-access and innovative space in which postgraduate research and taught students can engage in current debates and interdisciplinary discussions. We bring together divergent and creative new ideas, and fundamentally showcase their work via this new publishing platform.

The pieces in this journal consequently represent a diverse array of postgraduate work from the disciplines of English, Creative Writing, and Film. From short stories and poems, to articles on contemporary films, early modern plays and varying aspects of modernism, they demonstrate the breadth and depth of Exeter's vibrant postgraduate research community. We are delighted to also include contributions from established academics among these new voices, allowing conversations between the pieces without boundaries of rank or reputation.

The journey to the edition that you are currently reading has inevitably been one of exploration and discovery as we have navigated and negotiated the processes of publishing and editing. Many lessons have been learnt along the way; we have absolutely no doubt, too, that there will be more to learn as we now look ahead to subsequent editions and plan to expand the journal’s appeal, seeking to attract contributors, reviewers and

readers from a wider audience. Learning, however, is ultimately what we are here to do.

As this is a new venture, we are indebted to a number of people. Professor Laura Salisbury, our Director of Postgraduate Research, and Andrew McRae were our first ports of call, and their enthusiasm, experience and advice were invaluable. The Humanities Graduate School Office have provided both practical and emotional support, for which we are most thankful. We are indebted to the doctoral student peer-reviewers for providing such detailed and supportive feedback, and to the academics who undertook the same task at a very busy time of year. And, of course, we must thank the assistant editors whose invaluable expertise, experience, passion and commitment to the project helped make the new journal a reality. We are grateful, too, for the financial awards we received from both the Researcher Development team and the College of Humanities; these have enabled us to have a special print run for our first edition.

Volume 1, Number 1 of *Exclamation* set no thematic constraints on contributions; we are delighted by the mixture of periods, disciplines and styles on show, with many different ways of thinking and imagining. In many ways, then, this inaugural edition represents, in itself, a kind of corridor that leads postgraduate students of English, Film and Creative Writing to unanticipated, exciting and innovative places. We invite you to join them while on your own academic journey; perhaps they will take you somewhere unexpected.

**Sarah-Jayne Ainsworth and Teresa Sanders**

## English Studies: Past, Present and Future

*Andrew McRae*

The contributors to this inaugural volume of *Exclamation* are at the beginning of their careers. For me, it's now 25 years since I was given the key to an office at the University of Sydney, and a list of nine classes (of the same module) to teach each week of the year. I think I was given a computer, though that wasn't standard; I can date myself by having worked in newspapers when computers consigned linotype to history, and in universities when email made handwritten memos an oddity.

So this seems like a reasonable time and place to ask two questions. Firstly, what's changed in the discipline of English, for those of us teaching it? And secondly, what comes next?

English really mattered in the 1980s and 1990s. Politics and post-structuralism were blowing open the canon. It was never entirely clear whether someone at Cornell really was 'teaching the phone-book', but I swear that made the newspapers. And there was a genuine political force behind the motivation to put women and non-white authors onto courses, and question the politics of literary representations. Lit crit changed lives; or we thought it did.

These movements also changed departments. Australia had always been more susceptible to new ideas about the discipline; many of my colleagues at Sydney were veterans of one of arguably the most bitter departmental splits anywhere in the world on Leavisite grounds. And in Australia since the 1980s traditional canon-based English curricula have been eroded. Gender studies, film studies, postcolonial studies, theory, creative writing, indigenous studies, and so forth, have transformed the shape of the discipline in that country. Personally I don't see this as right or wrong, and I appreciate the powerful cultural reasons for it in a country I love. But it's an interesting case-study in the nature of our discipline, and of how quickly things can change.

In the United Kingdom, change has been more incremental. I see that as partly a result of the more central cultural position

of the basic idea of ‘English studies’, partly a result of the power of the enduring disciplinary brand within an A-Level system that is wary of change, and partly a result of a coordinated national curation of disciplines via the QAA’s benchmark statements. The English Benchmark Statement, in its recently-revised form, is a sensitive yet essentially conservative document, informing the way English is perceived and taught from schools through to universities.

But a high degree of stability in the classroom has been coupled with radical transformations in the shapes of academic careers. The RAE has been an extraordinary agent of dynamism: manufacturing lifetimes of anxiety on the one hand, but with the promise of swifter career progression on the other hand. A culture of external grants has changed the way we do research, increasing its pace, levels of collaboration and interdisciplinarity. In teaching, we’re perhaps performing the same functions but in different ways. In particular, forms of assessment have diversified, while technology is transforming how students access information, and maybe even how we all think.

So where to in the next 25 years? Based on nothing particularly scientific by way of evidence, here are some predictions. With a bit of luck I’ll be around to see how successful I am.

- Let’s start with the negative. I fear that some of the core values of our discipline are under pressure. What has always typified English for me is a commitment to close, independent critical engagement with texts. What worries me is that students seem increasingly less prepared, in general, to commit themselves to this activity. Maybe this is caused by the way they are so ferociously prepped for A-Levels, maybe it’s a product of the discipline’s stretching; or maybe this is simply the perception of someone growing old and grumpy without noticing. But if we lose these core values and practices, what’s left to give us coherence?
- I expect we will all need to become more pragmatic and employability-focused about what an English degree might

involve. Internship-based modules are becoming common, and rightly so. At Exeter we're not alone in having introduced modules that directly face the creative industries and digital humanities. Of course changes along these lines may, through unintended consequences, place still more pressure on those core values (above), but I think this is where we're heading.

- Student numbers in English are currently in slight decline. I think it will remain a robust discipline, but that's not to say that the decline will quickly be arrested or reversed. I even wonder whether the small-nation political connotations of 'English' as a brand, however much we vociferously contest them, might rankle a little with the Brexit generation (and even more so with international students). In practical terms, I expect departments to close at some (maybe many) universities that do wonderful work but simply lose out in the fierce competition among universities for a limited pool of students.
- I think we will increasingly find ways of collaborating with other scholars in our discipline across the world. The growth areas for English are not in the UK; they're in Asia. Many of today's PhD students may find careers in places they hadn't expected.
- Interdisciplinarity will continue to transform the way we do research, especially anything externally funded. The rise of the medical humanities is instructive in this regard. It remains to be seen whether the Global Challenges Research Fund will be as powerful an agent of change, but it's indicative of changes that today's early-career researchers would do well to notice.
- How will we be publishing our research 25 years from now? The monograph has proved astonishingly resilient; certainly a lot more are published now than when I wrote my first one. But the open-access movement, and the availability of

digital technologies, really must at some point shake our lives more than they have to date.

- Finally, I wonder whether academic careers might become more varied and multi-dimensional. In a world where most people change jobs frequently and careers occasionally, academia is an outlier, and our discipline more so than others. This gives us security and continuity, but can also leave us desperately exposed when funding is tight. Given greater levels of openness, especially in relation to the impact agenda and the creative industries, maybe this will change.

## Language Barriers? Songs, Nostalgia, and Adolescence in Lisa Azuelos's *LOL* (2009)

Gemma Edney

How do songs 'mean'? This question is difficult to answer directly, as there are so many possible channels of meaning-making within a song structure. That meaning is communicated through songs is perhaps obvious, but the question that is most interesting for this article, is *how* this meaning is communicated, and the different ways in which it is possible for a song to 'mean' in film. In his article, 'Analysing Popular Music: Theory, Method and Practice,' Philip Tagg provides the following methodological 'checklist' for the analysis of popular music, featuring a large range of musical elements:

1. *Aspects of time*: [...] pulse, tempo metre, periodicity; rhythmic texture and motifs.
2. *Melodic aspects*: register; pitch range; rhythmic motifs; tonal vocabulary; contour; timbre.
3. *Orchestration aspects*: type and number of voices, instruments, parts; technical aspects of performance; timbre; phrasing; accentuation.
4. *Aspects of tonality and texture*: [...] harmonic idiom; harmonic rhythm [...] relationships between voices, parts, instruments [...]
5. *Dynamic aspects*: levels of sound strength; accentuation; audibility of parts.
6. *Acoustical aspects*: [...] degree of reverberation; [...] 'extraneous' sound.

7. *Electromusical and mechanical aspects*: panning, filtering, compressing, phasing, distortion, delay, mixing, etc.; muting, pizzicato, tongue flutter, etc.<sup>1</sup>

Despite this extensive list of musical features available (and, arguably, necessary) for musicological analysis of popular song, these aspects are often ignored in favour of song lyrics: although analysis of classical and instrumental music will include most, if not all, of the above features, in song analysis they are startlingly absent. Indeed, it is easy, especially within the context of film sound and its dialogue-sound effects-music hierarchy, to turn to lyrics as the predominant carrier of meaning in a song. It could be argued that the conspicuousness of lyrics as signifiers of meaning has contributed in part to the lack of attention afforded to songs in film music studies. As Cécile Carayol argues, songs ‘ostensibly reveal their own message’: if all meaning is revealed within the lyrics of a song, then further analysis is rendered unnecessary.<sup>2</sup> Claudia Gorbman has also noted the distracting nature of song lyrics, arguing that ‘[s]ongs require narrative to cede to spectacle, for it seems that lyrics and action compete for attention’.<sup>3</sup> Not only, therefore, does this potential distraction from lyrics inhibit potential meaning-making for filmmakers, but critical case studies of individual songs often focus predominantly on the lyrics of a song, rather than addressing other, musicological elements of the track. While it is undeniable that lyrics are important in the exhibition of meaning in a song, there are many other channels of meaning within a song structure. This article takes as its starting point the fact that, despite scholarship’s focus on lyrics as the predominant carrier of meaning in a song, very little has been done to explore issues of language in a film

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<sup>1</sup> Philip Tagg, ‘Analysing Popular Music: Theory, Method and Practice’, *Popular Music*, 2 (1982), 37-62 (p. 48).

<sup>2</sup> Cécile Carayol, *Une musique pour l’image: Vers un symphonisme intimiste dans le cinéma français* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2012), p.189.

<sup>3</sup> Claudia Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music* (London: BFI, 1987), p. 20.

context. I aim to address this issue, drawing attention to the importance of considering language as a factor in film song analysis, as well as how this may coincide with other means of communication within a film song.

Issues of language have been largely ignored by film music scholars, especially in English-language works. Reasons for this perhaps include the tendency, at least in Anglo-American cinema, for foreign music to predominantly signal place or setting, or the popularity of British and American music around the world, which therefore reduces the seeming significance of its inclusion in popular film. However, in the study of songs, where lyrics are so often considered to be the predominant carriers of meaning, I argue that the language of the words becomes increasingly important. If a song's lyrics are in a language different from that spoken by the majority of a film's intended audience, how does this impact the 'ostensibility' of those lyrics? If the lyrics, nonetheless, relate directly to the image on screen, what effect do non-native language lyrics have on the spectators' recognition or inference of meaning? These are questions that have yet to be fully explored by scholars in both Anglophone and Francophone film criticism.

It is not unusual for Francophone films to use English language songs: as in Hollywood cinema, songs accompany all manner of scenarios. However, very little has been written on either the reasons for this, whether industrial, aesthetic, or both, and specifically what the impact of this language shift might be. One of the few researchers to have specifically considered song language in contemporary French cinema is Phil Powrie. In his 2015 article, 'Soundscapes of Loss', Powrie identifies, using a sample of fifty films released in the decade between 2000 and 2010, a number of emerging conventions and trends that have developed in the use of song in contemporary French filmmaking. Where French songs are included on the soundtrack, he argues, they come 'from two specific periods: the 1930s and 1960-1980'; English-language songs (most often

from America), on the other hand, are 'more contemporary'.<sup>4</sup> As a result, French songs become past-facing, serving 'a nostalgic function [...] as markers of family and community, and as anxious appeal for reparation from loss',<sup>5</sup> and English songs are 'future-facing', indicating the 'fracture of community of family without the appeal to the past and its ideals'.<sup>6</sup> Thus, a relationship emerges in the films Powrie discusses, between song language, time, and evoked 'pastness' or 'presentness': French songs indicate nostalgic loss, longing, or a return to traditional values, whereas English songs indicate acceptance of loss, and a more 'future-facing', optimistic attitude.<sup>7</sup> What is interesting for the purposes of this article, however, are the films in which this is not the case: what is the effect when the English-language songs in a film are in fact rooted in the past? Does this temporality get re-written? This article aims to answer these questions through the specific lens of French teen film, using Lisa Azuelos's 2009 film *LOL (Laughing Out Loud)* as a case study. The adolescent film particularly suits this inquiry, due to its foregrounding of the question of temporality through an emphasis on generational differences; because music, especially English-language music is nevertheless tied to French youth culture; and because popular music is key to the genre's audience appeal. *LOL* presents a particularly useful case study for these concerns, not least because of its popularity (the film was the ninth most popular film in France in 2009, and the third most popular French-produced film); it is also particularly relevant for its foregrounding of the parent/teenager relationship and the difficulties in overcoming generational differences. In this article, I draw on the popularity of English-language pop music among youth listeners in France in order to culturally examine the prevalence of English-language songs in these films. Beginning with an exploration of the relationship between

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<sup>4</sup> Phil Powrie, 'Soundscapes of Loss: Songs in Contemporary French Cinema', in *A Companion to Contemporary French Cinema*, ed. by Alistair Fox et. al. (Chichester: Wiley, 2015), pp. 527-546 (p. 527, 536).

<sup>5</sup> Powrie, p. 527.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 541-42.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 533-39.

English-language popular music and French youth listening practices, I argue that this music subsequently comes to represent the adolescent experience, thus providing a means of articulating the sensations and experiences of the characters on screen.

### **The global music market in France**

During the 1980s and early 1990s, France witnessed a substantial increase in radio stations aimed specifically at the youth market, playing predominantly popular tracks to appeal to adolescents and young adults who, up until that point, had received little representation on the airwaves.<sup>8</sup> Geoff Hare notes how, due to this sudden increase in the market, stations competed for listeners by playing the most popular music, thus devoting more and more airtime to 'already successful' British and American music, and reducing the time devoted to 'relatively unknown' French artists.<sup>9</sup> Following influential news coverage on the 'loss of French popular music' and the effect it would have on French culture, concerns over the diminishing airtime afforded to French artists, combined with the existing anxiety over the threat of globalisation (and particularly *Américanisation*) to French national identity, led to the passing of the Broadcasting Reform Act in 1994.<sup>10</sup> Part of this act, the 'Pelchat Amendment', imposed on radio stations a 40 per cent quota for French-language songs during their programming, plus further quotas for the inclusion of newly released recordings or emerging talent.<sup>11</sup> Anglo-American music, it seemed, was discouraged on French radio, despite its popularity with the youth market. However, despite the concerns of the French cultural establishment over the need to preserve French

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<sup>8</sup> Geoff Hare, 'Popular music on French radio and television', in *Popular Music in France from Chanson to Techno: Culture, Identity and Society*, ed. by Hugh Dauncey and Steve Cannon (Farnham: Ashgate, 2003), pp. 57-75 (p. 62).

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Hare, p. 51.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 62.

national identity and the French language, Anglo-American music has continued to pervade French culture, on radio and in the charts. Indeed, of the twenty most popular tracks for the first half of 2015, eleven are not from Francophone artists, and a further four are by Francophone artists but sung in English.<sup>12</sup> The worldwide dissemination of British and American acts, combined with ease of access provided by the internet and pressure from record companies for artists to sing in English in order to reach a wider audience, has meant that Anglophone music is a near-permanent feature of French listening habits, particularly among young listeners.<sup>13</sup> This, then, goes some way to explaining the prevalence of English-language tracks in French popular film, particularly those aimed at or starring adolescents, in which the music often reflects contemporary listening practices in order to promote alignment with the youth characters. Perhaps, also, this prevalence and normalisation of English-language songs in France explains the tendency among scholars to ignore issues of language in film song analysis, despite the frequent focus on lyrics as predominant carrier of meaning. However, I argue that it is vital to take song language into account when considering the communication of meaning through song.

### **Music as youth**

While music listening itself is a predominantly individual activity, sociologists have noted how it provides opportunities for shared group experiences and the creation of communities, thus giving the sense of belonging to a larger peer network.<sup>14</sup> As

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<sup>12</sup> Julien Goncalves, 'Les 20 meilleures ventes de single du 1er semestre 2015,' *Pure Charts* (2015)

<<http://www.chartsinfrance.net/actualite/news-98158.html>> [accessed 20 May 2017].

<sup>13</sup> Cece Cutler, "'Chanter en yaourt': Pop Music and Language Choice in France,' *Popular Music and Society*, 24.3 (2000), 117-133 (p. 118).

<sup>14</sup> Jeffrey Jensen Arnett, 'Adolescents' Uses of Media for Self-Socialization', *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 24.5 (1995), 519-533 (p. 524).

such, music provides a way for adolescents to explore youth-specific concerns, and also outwardly display their own personal values through associations with certain songs, genres, or artists.<sup>15</sup> Youth-oriented media, then, including the teen film, serves a dual function, providing not only a representation of youth characters and their identification practices on screen, but also a means of identity formation and expression for their youth spectators. As Timothy Shary argues, teen film and television are 'imbued with a unique cultural significance: they question our evolving identities from youth to adulthood while simultaneously shaping and maintaining those identities': music provides these films with a means of internal identity construction (the representation of their characters'<sup>16</sup> identities on screen), and external identity communication (the outward expression of identity and value that can be appropriated by spectators). Scott Henderson writes how, in youth film, music is 'foregrounded as a primary marker of character', noting how 'rather than functioning as a supplement to or comment upon the narrative', music in youth film is often a 'main concern of the central characters':<sup>17</sup> when representing adolescent characters in film, music is able to recreate identification practices already present in everyday life, thus enabling spectator alignment with those characters. As well as using popular music in order to express specific concerns or identity traits, and thus aid alignment between the characters and the *youth* spectators, though, the songs can also go some way to aiding identification for any non-adolescent audience members, or indeed the filmmakers (and sometimes actors) themselves. I argue that, just as popular music in general becomes

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<sup>15</sup> Patricia Shehan Campbell, Claire Connell and Amy Beegle, 'Adolescents' Expressed Meanings of Music in and out of School', *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 55.3 (2007), 220-236 (p. 221).

<sup>16</sup> Timothy Shary, *Teen Movies: American Youth on Screen* (London and New York: Wallflower, 2005), p. 11.

<sup>17</sup> Scott Henderson, 'Youth, Excess, and the Musical Moment,' in *Film's Musical Moments*, ed. by Ian Conrich and Estella Tincknell (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), pp. 146-157 (p. 146-49).

'synonymous with youth', the popularity of American and British songs in France amongst youth listeners means that these tracks come to affectively signify adolescence itself.<sup>18</sup> These songs help to circulate the 'affect' of adolescence, articulating the feeling and experience of adolescence that the characters are experiencing on screen. In films where the English-language music is not contemporary, then, we are presented with an interesting duality which both acknowledges and plays with generational difference: on the one hand, the language of the music reflects contemporary youth listening culture; on the other hand, the release dates of the songs appeal more to older listeners. I aim to explore this duality, to argue that these older English-language songs, rather than representing the 'fracturing' of family community, in fact serve to reinforce familial links and provide some of the traditionalism usually offered by French-language songs. These songs can therefore act as a generational link between adolescent characters and their parents on screen, as well as providing a method for aligning these characters with adult audience members.

### **Case study: *LOL***

Lisa Azuelos's 2009 film, *LOL (Laughing Out Loud)*, presents a particularly interesting example of the links between English-language songs and the articulation of adolescence. The film, can perhaps be described as a very typical teen film – indeed, an American high-school remake of the same name starring Miley Cyrus was released in 2012. It tells the story of high school student Lola (Christa Theret), known as Lol to her friends, as she navigates life, love, and, importantly, family. The compilation soundtrack, comprising predominantly English-language popular songs, is similarly typical, and is heard almost continuously throughout the film. Further, a soundtrack album,

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<sup>18</sup> Kay Dickinson, "'My Generation": Popular Music, Age and Influence in Teen Drama of the 1990s,' in *Teen TV: Genre, Consumption and Identity*, ed. by Glyn Davis and Kay Dickinson (London: BFI, 2004), pp. 99-111 (p. 99).

featuring both pre-existing tracks and original songs by the film's composer Jean-Philippe Verdin, appeared shortly after the film's release, much like in American or British teen films. However, what is more unusual about the soundtrack in Azuelos's film is its inclusion of, not only conventional, contemporary songs, but also older, more retrospective English-language songs. These songs, I argue, provide a particular way of navigating the sensations of adolescence felt by Lola and her friends, both for the spectator and the other characters in the film.

### **Links between generations**

Near the beginning of the film, Lola and her mother Anne (Sophie Marceau) bicker as they rush, late, to the car before school. 'C'est la même comédie', her mother complains, translated in the English subtitles as 'same old song'. Once they begin their journey, Lola's mother attempts conversation, complaining idly to herself (and the spectator) about her expectations for the journey and her daughter's lack of interest as Lola dances along to her personal stereo, unaware of her mother's discontent. However, perhaps unexpectedly, it is not a contemporary song that distracts Lola's attention, but an 'old song': The Rolling Stones' classic, 'You Can't Always Get What You Want'. At first, the music is inaudible to the spectator, save for the low drumbeat heard over Lola's headphones. Then, as the camera moves behind the front seats of the car, the music becomes suddenly audible, allowing the spectator into Lola's private listening space and drowning out her mother's words. While the camera offers a visual representation of our change of perspective, here, it is the music that provides the sense of Lola's space: it creates an audible barrier between Lola (and the spectator), and her mother.

When the camera swings back to the front of the car, facing the two characters, the music is once again lost, and Anne's voice is allowed to dominate the soundtrack. During the moments when we hear Lola's mother's voice, we are excluded from the private listening space created by the song, and thus are located outside of Lola's experience, confined (like her mother) to the outside. In this way, Lola's music creates two

separate film spaces: a youthful, adolescent space from where the music is audible, and an older, adult space where the music cannot be heard. The spectator is permitted to hear either Lola's music, or her mother's voice, never both: in this film, it seems, there is no room for both musical and vocal expression for the female characters; one must always overshadow the other. Here, it is the music that eventually comes out on top, when Lola offers her mother one of her headphones and the pair sing along together, the music now audible from every camera angle. It is in this moment that the music's significance becomes clear. Not only do the lyrics reflect how Lola (and also her mother) 'can't always get what she wants', the track also serves as an important generational link between the two characters. If the song had been too contemporary, it would have the potential to alienate Lola's mother; indeed, contemporary music is used to this effect with many of the other parent/child relationships in the film, where the teenagers' music listening habits inhibit communication with their parents. The most drastic example of this occurs when the father of Lola's boyfriend, Maël, destroys his son's guitar after discovering that his school grades have slipped and he has been smoking marijuana. This destruction of the guitar places music as the primary barrier between Maël, who sees the guitar as an extension of his own communicative ability, and his father, who seems not to understand popular music's importance in his son's life.

The song is in English, which means it plays into cultural youth listening practices, and does not seem out of place for an adolescent character. English lyrics are naturally associated with young listeners, and therefore the song helps to signify Lola's youthfulness and help us navigate her adolescent experience. However, the use of an older song (the track was first released in 1969) encourages a certain sense of nostalgia, allowing both Lola and, importantly, her mother, to participate in the listening activity. Lola's mother may well have listened to the song in her own youth – it is possible that this is how Lola first heard the song herself – and so it provides a means of accessing Lola's space in the scene. The song helps to build familial links and allows Anne a means of navigating Lola's adolescent

experience. The elicitation of nostalgia and appeal to memory that comes from using an older, less contemporary song provides a means of articulating, for the spectator as much as the on-screen adults, the sensations of adolescence: this song 'feels' youthful in the way that music from our own adolescence or childhood retains its associations with youth.

### Cover songs

Interestingly, *LOL* not only includes older songs throughout its narrative, but also covers of older songs by the film's composer Jean-Philippe Verdin. This use of cover songs opens up new layers of meaning within the film text. Ben Aslinger writes how cover songs help to create 'listening histories' and invite the listener to take part in them: songs that are originally heard and enjoyed by parents or older siblings can be re-created and re-experienced by children or younger siblings.<sup>19</sup> George Plasketes notes how the cover song allows the listener to connect to this history. Cover songs create a music 'genealogy:' the original is always present in the listening experience, and so the cover version invites comparison and 'provides access to the past'.<sup>20</sup> Therefore, cover songs provide the perfect vehicles for the generational linkage I have already discussed: an older song appeals to older listeners, but creating a new version with a new sound appeals equally to younger generations. In film, then, cover songs act much like 'You Can't Always Get What You Want' does in *LOL*, but with an added layer of meaning. Indeed, it has been argued that the use of cover songs in teen film even represents adolescence itself: a cover song, by nature, occupies a liminal space between new and old, just as adolescence is situated between childhood and adulthood.<sup>21</sup> Therefore, by taking an older song and making it new, a liminal, 'adolescent' art form is created, helping to articulate the struggles of

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<sup>19</sup> Ben Aslinger, 'Clueless about Listening Formations?', *Cinema Journal*, 53 (2014), 126-131 (p. 127-29).

<sup>20</sup> George Plasketes, 'Like a Version: Cover Songs and the Tribute Trend in Popular Music', *Studies in Popular Culture*, 15.1 (1992), 1-18 (p. 13).

<sup>21</sup> Aslinger, pp. 127-28.

adolescence for the spectator. In *LOL*, the cover songs help, just like 'You Can't Always Get What You Want,' to bridge the generational divides between parents and children. In one notable scene, during the school trip to London, Lola sneaks into boyfriend Maël's (Jeremy Kapone) host family house in order to spend the night. Once upstairs, she admits that 'it's my first time', accompanied by Verdin's cover of The Korgis' 1980 track, 'Everybody's Gotta Learn Sometime'. The scene changes, to show Lola's mother at the end of an evening with policeman Lucas (Jocelyn Quivrin). The song continues as she makes her own confession that 'it's my first time [...] making love with another man since my divorce'. Thus, the two generations are linked through both a visual mirroring of the scene, and also the aural continuation of the music that connects the two scenes together: the music provides a literal link between the two scenes for the spectator, and metaphorically links the two characters and their experiences together. This ability to link the two scenes together is enhanced by the fact that the song is a cover. It is older, and so not out of place in Anne's scene (indeed, it is possible that Anne would have been of a similar age as Lola when the song was first released). It provides, just like 'You Can't Always Get What You Want', a level of nostalgia to the scene, allowing Anne and the film's adult spectators to re-live her own 'first time' all over again. However, the song is also a cover, a new version, which means that it is equally well-placed in Lola's scene. The song therefore provides a literal reflection of how Lola and her mother can both experience the same thing, despite their generational differences, and offers the spectator a means of navigating their experiences at the same time.

A similar effect is also achieved by the end-credit song, The Kinks' 'Lola,' originally released in 1970 and again covered by Jean-Philippe Verdin for the film. While the song here is not accompanying a particular scene in the film, it still provides a means of connecting generations, both in relation to the film's characters, and for the spectators. Powrie notes how often, French film will use an older French song as the end-credits song, in order to 're-establish traditional values after a narrative

that is anchored in contemporary attitudes'.<sup>22</sup> Here, however, it is not a French song that we hear during the end credits. Nevertheless, the age of the original song prevents it from simply continuing the 'contemporary attitudes' present in the film. Powrie also notes how the end-credits song often provides a 'comment on the film as a whole'.<sup>23</sup> In *LOL*, the use of Verdin's cover version of 'Lola' almost provides a summary of the film that precedes it: not only is it named for the protagonist of the film, it is also a cover song, appealing to both older and younger spectators. If the film has an overall message, it is that the parents and children are not so different from one another, and are capable of having the same experiences. The use of Verdin's version of 'Lola' reinforces this notion: it is a new way of experiencing the same thing. It is also worth noting, here, that while the cover songs themselves are in English, the cover artist is French. Just as the cover songs reflect the temporal combining of 'traditional values' and 'contemporary attitudes', they also represent the linguistic linking of older and younger generations.

### **Songs as vehicles of nostalgia**

In the previous section of this article, I demonstrated how older songs, including when they are covered by more modern artists, can appeal to older spectators and characters in order to link the lives of teen characters with those of adults. The way these songs function, then, is distinctly nostalgic: as I explored in my discussion of 'You Can't Always Get What You Want', the song invites Lola's mother, and us as spectators, to nostalgically remember our own adolescence in order to align us with Lola as a character. Indeed, nostalgia plays a big role in the teen film genre in general: the genre itself relies on the reliving and remembering of adolescent experience by adult filmmakers, actors, and spectators. In her article, 'Tuesday's Gone: The Nostalgic Teen Film', Lesley Speed writes how teen films

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<sup>22</sup> Powrie, p. 539.

<sup>23</sup> Powrie, p. 532.

ultimately offer an 'adult perspective' on the youth experience.<sup>24</sup> Given that, especially in American teen films, the actors who play the protagonists are usually much older than their characters, and the filmmakers are almost always adults themselves, teen movies usually portray adolescence from an adult perspective. These films present a nostalgic remembering of past adolescence, either through the actual setting of the film's narrative in the past, or through judgement of the present in comparison to what 'used to be'. Speed notes how the coming-of-age or rite-of-passage movie offers a particularly nostalgic mode: where the protagonists undergo some kind of transformation or journey to maturity, this journey is often also a moral one.<sup>25</sup> In a society where concerns over adolescent activity continue to grow, these films express a 'desire for moral and ideological security':<sup>26</sup> while the teen characters may rebel against authority, in the end there is usually a moralistic compromise or understanding reached between the two divided parties. Thus, adolescent attitudes are reigned in to better resemble the attitudes of days gone by, and the adults' narrow conservatism is widened to embrace a more 'modern' approach. Teen films, therefore, allow a fond remembrance of the freedom of adolescence, whilst maintaining an overall conservative and moralistic code.

Music, especially film music, is also heavily linked to memory and the feeling of nostalgia. Indeed, as Philip Drake writes, music is 'often a means of activating memory': the music, especially popular songs, that we hear when we watch a film has the ability to trigger personal and collective memories and therefore draw associations with past events.<sup>27</sup> Associations, emotions, or feelings associated with certain genres, musical

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<sup>24</sup> Lesley Speed, 'Tuesday's Gone: The Nostalgic Teen Film,' *The Journal of Popular Film and Television*, 26.1 (1998), 24-32 (p. 24).

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> Philip Drake, 'Magic Moments: the textuality of musical memory in contemporary Hollywood cinema', in *The 12<sup>th</sup> Biennial IASPM-International Conference Montreal 2003 Proceedings: Practising Popular Music*, ed. by Alex Gyde and Geoff Stahl, pp. 172-178 (p. 172).

styles, or particular songs are therefore projected onto the film and into the particular scene that the spectator is watching. Drake refers to this as 'musical memory', writing that film music 'embodies memorial knowledge'.<sup>28</sup> When pre-existing songs are used in film, therefore, the spectator is invited to remember, in order to align more closely with the film's characters, and feel more closely connected to the film's events. In teen film, then, spectators are invited to remember their own adolescence, thus aligning them with the film's teen characters, and enabling an affective connection between adult spectators and the film's adolescent mode of communication. Using older songs on the soundtrack to a teen film can therefore provide, much like 'You Can't Always Get What You Want' in *LOL*, a nostalgic reminder of the experience of adolescence, enabling the articulation of the adolescent experience in the film, and allowing older spectators and characters to navigate the teen lives portrayed on screen.

As I have already discussed, the songs used in *LOL* use these nostalgic powers of song to great effect, in order to demonstrate generational links. Using older songs such as 'You Can't Always Get What You Want' and 'Everybody's Gotta Learn Sometimes' enables the adult characters in the film, as well as older spectators, to affectively navigate, and empathize with, the experience of the younger characters. Indeed, this articulation and navigation of youthfulness using nostalgic songs is evident throughout the narrative, even when there are few adults present on screen. A particular example occurs during the school trip, for example, when Lola and her friends visit London. The trip does not, at first, live up to the teens' expectations: they are placed with a spectacularly eclectic array of old-fashioned and very stereotypical host families, who are obsessed with Princess Diana, do not have access to MSN Messenger, and serve dubious food that includes pasta sandwiches with cranberry jam, and orange jelly for dessert. However, despite the fact that the trip as a whole is somewhat ideologically 'adult,' and seems to aim to suppress the teens'

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<sup>28</sup> Drake, pp. 171-78.

incessant youthful attitudes, there is in fact a surprising lack of adult characters from within the frame. Nevertheless, the song that accompanies the majority of the action in this section of the film is not a contemporary song, but yet another older song. During the main montage sequence of the film, the teens visit a selection of London tourist destinations including Big Ben, Westminster, and the London Eye. They shop for guitars at classic music stores, and dress in 'retro' outfits at clothing stores, all accompanied by Supergrass's 1995 hit, 'Alright'. While the song is not as old as the others that I have discussed so far in this article, it was released nearly fifteen years prior to the film, and therefore provides a similar elicitation of nostalgia to 'You Can't Always Get What You Want'. Not only is the song older, but the style of song, with its guitar accompaniment and tinny harmonies in the vocal line, is characteristic of the mid-1990s Britpop movement, which itself has a very specific cultural and nostalgic resonance both in eliciting 'Britishness' outside of the UK, and in the UK itself. Seen as a reaction to the American grunge genre and other popular music genres from the 1980s, Britpop itself is characterized by a certain British nostalgia: as Andy Bennett and Jon Stratton write, Britpop was regarded as a 'return to form – a brand of characteristically British [...] music that rekindled the spirit of the mid-1960s'.<sup>29</sup> Therefore, where the English-language lyrics and youthful vocals ('We are young, we are free') reflect the youthfulness of the protagonists, the nostalgia elicited by the use of an older song and an older musical style provides a means of articulating, for the older spectator as much as the on-screen adults, the sensations of adolescence. In her seminal work on film music, *Unheard Melodies*, Claudia Gorbman writes how film music has the ability to 'bathe' the spectator in affect, to surround the viewer with emotion in order to elicit certain sensations during the film.<sup>30</sup> In this scene, then, the spectator is 'bathed' in the affect of adolescence: this song, and the scene as a whole, 'feels'

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<sup>29</sup> Andy Bennett and Jon Stratton, 'Introduction,' in *Britpop and the English Music Tradition*, ed. by Andy Bennett and Jon Stratton (London and New York: Routledge, 2010), pp. 1-10 (p. 1).

<sup>30</sup> Gorbman, p. 6.

adolescent in a way. The music serves to induct the spectator into the adolescent world depicted on screen: just as the music in the car journey scene provides a means of allowing the spectator into Lola's private, adolescent listening space (and therefore experience), here we are permitted into the teens' world, the music providing the link between the (potentially adult) spectators and the characters on screen, and providing a means of articulating the sensations of adolescence experienced by the protagonists.

To conclude, the English-language songs in *LOL* provide a reference point for the adolescent experience: the cultural association between English-language music and adolescent culture means that the very inclusion of English-language songs comes to represent youth listening practices and, by extension, a more youthful mode of viewing, thus going some way to articulating (both for the on-screen characters and the spectators) the experience of adolescence. These songs often appear in scenes in which both parent and child are present, providing a reference point for the spectator, and allowing both characters and spectators to navigate the adolescent space on screen, so that rather than suggestive of generational conflict, these songs emphasize community, togetherness, and youthfulness, regardless of age. However, even when adults are not present on screen, the songs continue to evoke nostalgia for spectators. These songs therefore transform the idea of 'youth' into an affective concept that is evoked through music, offering an alternative means of articulating the sensations of adolescence that cannot be expressed through words or action, providing a distinctly youthful film-space that includes all characters and spectators.

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## 'If you please to hear': The Soundscape of Act III, Scene 5 of Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair*

*Sarah-Jayne Ainsworth*

The charter for a fair to be held within the grounds of the priory of St. Bartholomew was granted in 1133 and '[t]he fair or market held on the even, the day, and the morrow of the feast of St Bartholomew (August 24<sup>th</sup>)',<sup>1</sup> was an important source of income for the monastery of St. Bartholomew. Originally a cloth fair, over time, it expanded to include cattle and other merchandise, with merchants travelling considerable distances to sell their wares.<sup>2</sup> In 1614, the same year as Jonson wrote his play *Bartholomew Fair*,<sup>3</sup> the area was paved and 'Bartholomew Faire there kept, without breaking any of the paved ground, but the Boothes discreetly ordered, to stand fast upon the pavement'.<sup>4</sup>

*Bartholomew Fair* might share a name with this annual gathering, but, Theodore Miles suggests, 'the bearing of the actual Bartholomew Fair upon Jonson's play is largely a matter

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<sup>1</sup> E. A. Webb, 'Bartholomew Fair', in *The Records of St. Bartholomew's Priory and St. Bartholomew the Great, West Smithfield: Volume 1* (1921), n.p.

<<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/st-barts-records/vol1/pp298-317>> [accessed 11 May 2017].

<sup>2</sup> Jane Traies, *Fairbooths and Fit-ups* (Cambridge: Chadwyck Healey, 1980), p. 16.

<sup>3</sup> Ben Jonson, 'Bartholomew Fair' [1614], in *Ben Jonson The Alchemist and Other Plays*, ed. by Gordon Campbell (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 329-433. All the act, scene and line numbers in this article refer to *Bartholomew Fair*; all further references are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>4</sup> John Stow, *The survey of London*[...] (London: n.pub., 1633), p. 424 <<http://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/eebo/A13053.0001.001/1:57.2?rgn=div2;view=fulltext>> [accessed 11 May 2017].

of speculation'.<sup>5</sup> Whilst contemporary descriptions of the fair suggest that the range of characters included in the play matches the experience of fair-goers, the Induction - consisting of a conversation between a stage-keeper, book-keeper and scrivener - makes it clear that Jonson has not attempted to reproduce the fair in visual terms: 'you were e'en as good got to Virginia, for anything there is of Smithfield' (Induction, L. 9-10). What he does, over the course of this Induction, is demonstrate his concern not with the visual, but with the auditory framing of the action. The Stage-keeper's opening lines are addressed to the audience and he is keen to keep his voice down, 'lest the poet hear me' whilst he tells them 'the truth on't' (Induction, L. 6-7). The stage-keeper thinks the play is 'scurvy' (Induction, L. 8) because the playwright has not captured the right sounds. He 'has not conversed with the Bartholomew-birds', neither speaking, nor listening to, the 'birds' and choosing instead 'plain English' (Induction, L. 11-12; 8-9). There is no 'jig-a-jog' with its attendant music and 'earthquake' of sound and movement and the poet will not 'hear' of the Stage-keepers proposed emendations (Induction, L. 22-23; 32). The frequent references to sound and hearing - the prologue which the Book-keeper hopes 'you please to hear'; the promise of a play 'as full of noise as sport'; 'a consort of roarsers for music'; '[a] sweet singer of new ballads' - serve to shift the people from 'spectators or hearers' (L. 58-59) to 'hearers and spectators' (Induction, L. 73; 109-110; 111-112; 58-59; 121). Having thus established the primacy of sound in *Bartholomew Fair*, Jonson proceeds to create and manipulate the range of textures and timbres within a soundscape calculated to create, if not the spectacular, then an auditory representation of the space.

This paper will focus on act III, scene 5 of *Bartholomew Fair* and how the voices and sounds of the fair evoked by Jonson contribute to the establishment of this soundscape, a term

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<sup>5</sup> Theodore Miles, 'Place-Realism In A Group Of Caroline Plays', *The Review of English Studies*, 72 (1942), 428-440 (p. 428).

defined as ‘sounds which form an auditory environment’.<sup>6</sup> Whilst the designation is anachronistic, the term is used for the way that it covers the way that sounds combine to create an aural backdrop to the action of the play. Although Richard Finkelstein asserts that Jonson had a ‘[d]islike of excessive theatrical display’,<sup>7</sup> James Mardock argues that Jonson’s stated anti-theatricality is strategic.<sup>8</sup> It is ‘as probably an example of playing a role as anything, an exercise in consciously theatrical masquerade’,<sup>9</sup> an acknowledgment that, as a playwright consummately skilled at using the space of the theatre, Jonson could not ‘disclaim the power of the theatre’.<sup>10</sup> I will argue that the awareness of the power of the theatre is also present in his evocation of the soundscape of *Bartholomew Fair*, something which contributes to the ‘exceptional realism and topicality’ the ‘images of contemporary London’ that John Creaser attributes to the work.<sup>11</sup>

*Bartholomew Fair* was originally performed in the Hope theatre, a space which had been erected as a:

game place of playhouse fit and convenient in all things,  
both for players to play in, and for the game of bears and  
bulls to be baited in the same, and also a fit and convenient

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<sup>6</sup> ‘soundscape’, *OED Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), <<http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/185124?redirectedFrom=soundscape-eid21824372>> [accessed 28 Dec. 2014].

<sup>7</sup> Richard Finkelstein, ‘Ben Jonson on Spectacle’, *Comparative Drama*, 21.2 (1987), 103-14. (p. 107).

<sup>8</sup> James Mardock, *Our Scene is London: Ben Jonson’s City and the Space of the Author* (London: Routledge, 2008).

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 107.

<sup>10</sup> Eugene Giddens, ‘Recent Research on Ben Jonson’, *Shakespeare* 12.4 (2016), 473-485 (p. 476).

<sup>11</sup> John Creaser, ‘Bartholomew Fair’, in *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson Online*, ed. by David Bevington, Martin Butler and Ian Donaldson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), n.p.

<<http://universitypublishingonline.org/cambridge/benjonson/k/works/bartholomew/facing/>> [accessed 10 May 2017].

tire-house and a stage to be carried or taken away, and to stand upon trestles good, substantial, and sufficient for the carrying and bearing of such a stage.<sup>12</sup>

The accounts of the Master of Revels include '[c]anvas for the booths and other necessities for a play called *Bartholomew Fair*, forty-one shillings sixpence'.<sup>13</sup> The associations of the Hope with a range of activities, and the use of props, contribute to the flavour of the fair, as created by Jonson, but, I would argue, it is the sounds that he evokes throughout the play that more fully realise the potentialities of the drama. If the theatre itself, with the 'tire-house' and moveable stage, constitute the 'place' within which the drama exists, then the sound is part of the 'space' which is created within it.<sup>14</sup> It is sound which constructs Bartholomew fair; the economic activities of the carnival, its booths, its hawkers, the mixture of people and its music, giving voice to 'more humble and familiar transactions of petition, shoptalk, banter and baiting'.<sup>15</sup> The different strands of the plot are categorised according to the sounds associated with them: 'a brass-tongued justice of the peace, the rant of a hypocritical puritan, the roar of a noisy horse trader, and such assorted idioms as those of a Middlesex moron, a Northern clothier and an Irish bawd'.<sup>16</sup> The presence or echoing of these

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<sup>12</sup> Walter W. Greg, *Henslow Papers being Supplementary to Henslow's Diary* (London: A.H. Bullen, 1907), p. 20.

<sup>13</sup> William Streitberger, *Malone Society Collections, Volume XIII: Jacobean and Caroline Revels 1603-1642* (Oxford: Malone Society, 1986), n.p.

<sup>14</sup> Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. by Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), p. 117. Certeau asserts that place is the stable relationship of one thing to another, which 'space is a practiced place', 'composed of intersections of mobile elements' (p. 117).

<sup>15</sup> Eric Wilson, 'Plagues, Fairs, and Street Cries: Sounding out Society and Space in Early Modern London', *Modern Language Studies*, 25.3 (1995), 1-42 (p. 4-5).

<sup>16</sup> James E. Robinson, 'Bartholomew Fair: Comedy of Vapors', *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900*, 1. 2 (1961), 65-80 (p. 65).

constituent elements in act III, scene 5 renders it a productive one upon which to base a consideration of Jonson's evocation of the sound of the fair.

At the most immediate level, the soundscape consists of speech acts. The numerous characters in *Bartholomew Fair* belong to a series of speech communities, groups of people sharing a language or variety of language. These speech communities are defined depending not only to space or place, but also to time, according to where and when and how often they speak to one another. They are marked by variety of dialect, accent and register in 'a whole range of aural possibilities for maintaining communal self-identity'.<sup>17</sup> Describing *Bartholomew Fair*, as a 'volatile speech-pot', Wilson observes

the ravings of madmen – both 'real' (Trouble-All) and in drag (Overdo) – as well as the rantings of grotesque Zeal, balladeers, puppeteers, hawkers of pig, purses and pictures...all complete for sonic authority on the stage and for the attention of Bartholomew Cokes.<sup>18</sup>

Act III, scene 5 opens with Justice Overdo's a sides and his speech community, that of the educated and powerful man, is marked by his '[a]ctum est' in line 7. This use of Latin has also occurred in act II, scene 2 in which he quotes the closing words of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*: 'Iamque opus exegi, quod nec Jovis ira, nec ignis &c.' (ll. 2. 63) which belonged to what Bruce Smith describes as part of the 'ever more rarefied literacies of Roman-letter print'.<sup>19</sup> By using Latin, Jonson creates the aural equivalent of such writing and establishes Overdo's position as Justice of Peace and his separateness from the people he is observing through the sounds of the words that he uses. Winwife and Quarlous's use of language similarly indicates their

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<sup>17</sup> Bruce R. Smith, *The Acoustic World of Early Modern England: Attending to the O-Factor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), p. 43.

<sup>18</sup> Wilson, p. 27.

<sup>19</sup> Smith, p. 42.

participation in an elevated speech community. In act II, scene 5, Quarlous establishes his credentials through his classical allusions to 'Orpheus' and 'Ceres' (II. 5. 6,9), and at the end of act III, scene 5, when he and Winwife speak to Grace, the latter hopes that 'our manners ha' been such hitherto, and our language, as will give you no cause to doubt yourself in our company' (III. 5. 277-9). Their functioning within a particular speech community is used to signal their participation in a desirable social milieu and serves as an aural distinction between the different classes of people. Despite her attendance at the fair, Grace asserts that 'there's none goes thither of any quality or fashion' (I. 5. 116), and Jonson uses different speech communities to distinguish those of 'quality or fashion' (I. 5. 116).

That Jonson differentiates between the speech acts of the different strata of fair-goers and fair-people bears witness to him as an 'intelligent observer of society and nascent capitalism in particular'.<sup>20</sup> For Wilson, the interactions of the market place create aural webs of 'financial transactions linking producer, consumer, and vendor' which engender 'a site of spatial and fiscal competition that depends on sound economic practice'.<sup>21</sup> The language used by the fair-people is calculated to ensure that they achieve the economic exchange necessary to prosper within the fair. Amongst themselves, exchanges are frank and free, as is the language which is often obscene and abusive billingsgate.<sup>22</sup> The relationship between Leatherhead and Trash, for example, is fractious: Leatherhead threatens to 'mar your market, old Joan' (II. 2. 11) and to 'take you down too, afore Justice Overdo' (II. 2. 19-20), and is annoyed when Trash manages to 'interrupt my market, in the midst and call away my customers' (III. 4. 88-89), activities which threaten his economic endeavours. Such exchanges, in voices raised in anger, lift their speech acts above others; Trash does not take away

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<sup>20</sup>Jonathan Haynes, *The Social Relations of Jonson's Theatre* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 11.

<sup>21</sup>Wilson, p. 8.

<sup>22</sup>Susan Wells, 'Jacobean City Comedy and the Ideology of the City', *ELH*, 48.1 (1981), 37-60 (p. 50).

Leatherhead's customers, he calls them away. It is the volume of his speech acts that influences their actions, and the accusations are also expressed at high volume.

Jonson's vocalising of these 'more humble and familiar transactions of petition, shoptalk, banter and baiting'<sup>23</sup> adds to the verisimilitude of scenes in which orality is a component of economic necessity. These voices belong to the city, to the local merchants and traders of London. However, the voices of the northern clothier and of the Irishman Whit underscore the wider appeal of the city and of the fair. Northern does not speak until act IV, scene 4, the inclusion of his words reflecting the shift in function of the fair from commercial cloth selling to social gathering. The voices of Whit and Northern are distinguished from the others, and from each other by the dialect which Jonson writes for them, Whit's lines being further removed from Standard English than Northern's. Whit's Irish accent is conveyed on the page by the frequent use of 'sh' sounds: 'shuffishient noishes and gallantsh too' (III. 1. 3-4) and by the use of 't' instead of 'th': 'Phat o'clock toest tou tink it ish, man?' (III. 1. 15). In attempting to represent the sound of the accent on the page, Jonson is controlling the soundscape of his play via the speech communities he envisages for his characters.

These speech communities are not static. Nightingale, in act III, scene 5, accommodates his language to Cokes as he draws Cokes into his song and prepares to pick his pocket. Not only does he address him politely, as 'sir' (III. 5. 58), reflecting the commercial function of his language as he seeks a customer, but also his vocabulary is more sophisticated – he describes his song as an 'admonition' – and the syntax of his sentence is more complex: 'It is a gentel admonition, you must know, sir, both to the purse-cutter and the purse-bearer' (III. 5. 58-9). In his dealings with fellow fairers, Nightingale's utterances have been short, choppy bursts: 'How now Ursula? In a heat, in a heat?' (II. 2. 46); 'When he comes, bid him stay; I'll be back presently' (II. 2. 59-60); 'We shall have a quarrel presently' (II. 5. 83). Now, as he tries to beguile Cokes, he matches the latter's enthusiastic

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<sup>23</sup> Wilson, p. 12.

babbling: 'Sir, this is a spell against 'em, spick and span new; and 'tis made as 'twere in mine own person, and I sing it in mine own defence' (III. 5. 37-39). His utterances spill forth, barely separated by commas, with an increased emphasis on his own agency: things are 'mine'.

The business of the fair-people is instituted in act II, scene 2, as Jonson establishes the fair as a dramatic site by introducing the trades and wares on sale. Eugene Waith suggests that the physical representation of the fair is established over the course of the act, so that there is an admixture of 'a frank display of theatrical process with a kind of local color [*sic*]<sup>24</sup> and the inclusion of calls and cries at this point helps to establish the auditory setting of the fair. 'What do you lack, gentlemen' (III. 4. 15) is the cry from Leatherhead as he hawks his range of wares. Smith claims that 'the ritualized cadences of their calls seems positively to demand description as music' and notes the efforts of early modern composers to transcribe street cries and turn them into music, to somehow '*domesticate* the cries'.<sup>25</sup> As well as being written out and sold, they were also used as the basis of polyphonic compositions, by composers such as Orlando Gibbons, Thomas Weelkes and Richard Dering, who transformed them from 'public advertisements to private entertainments',<sup>26</sup> suggesting the musical qualities of the chants. Whilst there is no indication that the lines of the vendors Leatherhead, Corncutter, Tinderbox Man or Trash are sung, it is possible that these were delivered with a melodic quality, a cadential patterning which gave them a feeling of music. Wilson suggests that these street cries are dialogic and represent the '[b]attle for economic turf on visible and audible grounds',<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Eugene Waith, 'The Staging of *Bartholomew Fair*' *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 2.2 (1962), 181-195 (p. 188).

<sup>25</sup> Smith, p. 64.

<sup>26</sup> Deborah L. Krohn, 'Quodlibets and fricassées: food in musical settings of street cries in early modern London', in *Food Hawkers: Selling in the Streets from Antiquity to the Present*, ed. by Melissa Calaresu and Danielle van den Heuvel (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016), p. 44.

<sup>27</sup> Wilson, p. 29.

and, as such, melodic and cadential patterning would help to differentiate and distinguish them from one another and from the speech acts which surround them. Whereas, in the early engravings of London cries, Sean Shesgreen claims that hawkers are pictured as sober, orderly, law abiding, Jonson's hawkers are nothing of the sort, as the exchange between Leatherhead and Trash (II. 2. 1-25) demonstrates.<sup>28</sup> Thus, the sounds of the cries are bound up in the struggle for aural primacy and economic survival.

An additional sound reference is evoked through the sound associations of the wares that the vendors hawk. Leatherhead's wares include: rattles, drums, fiddles, instruments, pipes, Jew's tumps and toy animals: lion, bull, bear, dog, cat, a bird (II. 5. 4-5). It is conceivable that there were birds on stage in cages, which would add their song to the events, but even where these things are not actually present, the distinctive sounds associated with them, and imagined by the audience, feed into the soundscape of the fair. The use of alliteration also underscores the musicality of the vendors' cries. Leatherhead offers 'Fine purses, pouches, pin-cases, pipes' (III. 5. 15-16), 'babies o' the best? Fiddles o' the finest' (II. 2. 29-30). These lists of wares are punctuated by 'What do you lack?' which acts as a refrain, every bit as much as the last two lines of the ballad. Equally, these calls contain repetitions which help to create a rhythmic quality. The Costermonger calls, 'Buy any pears, pears, fine, very fine pears!' (II. 2. 31) and later presents a variation on the cry when he distracts Cokes: 'Buy any pears, very fine pears, pears fine!' (IV. 2. 27).

Willa Evans describes Nightingale as the 'most outstanding musician in any of Jonson's plays'<sup>29</sup> and observes that he is depicted as the only professional musician. The resonances of the name Nightingale as the ballad singer creates an image which underscores the role in the play. The nightingale can learn as many as 190 variations of song, which, frequently heard

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<sup>28</sup> Sean Shesgreen, 'The First London Cries', *Print Quarterly*, 10. 4 (1993), 364-373 (p. 373).

<sup>29</sup> Willa McClung Evans, *Ben Jonson and Elizabethan Music* (New York: Da Capo, 1965), p. 68.

at night, and used to attract a mate.<sup>30</sup> Nightingale's name suggests that he has a wide repertoire of ballads with which to entertain people, that he can adapt his song according to his audience, and that he has a voice good enough to attract people to buy them. However, the association of the nightingale with the night and the dark also implies something sinister about him, which is borne out by his nefarious thieving activity. The darkness which might cover his song and the ease with which he might change his song gives a sense of the ease with which he can fade into the night, or dissemble in order to escape.

As a ballad singer, Nightingale is introduced in act II, scene 3, where his description of the action contributes to the establishment of the fair, and to his place within it as social commentator (II. 2. 33-39). His song adds a different dimension to the aural landscape, but its lyrics also refers to sounds. As the 'Fair's a-filling', he sees the need for a 'tune to startle/The birds o' the booths are billing' (II. 2. 33-35). He wants to use his song to tempt people away from the booths, to put a stop to the singing of the 'birds' or customers who are 'billing', a word which links the birds to the economic activity of the fair. As a commentary on the action, this snippet of song has an improvisatory feel and allows Nightingale the opportunity to demonstrate his ability to extemporize musically. His closing 'Buy any ballads; new ballads?' (II. 2. 40) adds another aural dimension, for it is a cry rather than speech or song, situating him with the other fairers who perform cries, as he advertises himself in the same fashion. In act II, scene 4, Nightingale demonstrates his wares by hawking ballads. Whilst there is no stage direction requiring him to sing, as a ballad singer he would have relied on his ability to perform the songs to demonstrate his goods and it seems therefore reasonable that he might have sung the titles, perhaps to snatches of the tunes to which they were set, particularly if it happened to be part of a tune that the

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<sup>30</sup> Dave Armstrong, 'A Nightingale Sings', *Earth Times*, 9 (2011), n.p. <<http://www.earthtimes.org/nature/nightingale-sings/1613/>> [accessed 12 May 2017].

audience would have known.<sup>31</sup> The ballads listed are a mixture of love songs, cautionary tales, insalubrious stories of bodily functions and tales of heroism - popular topics, presumably sung to popular tunes. However, it is not merely a case of demonstrating his wares: Nightingale is also concerned with commanding the aural space by positioning himself physically within it in order to control it. To make best use of the distraction that his song offers, Edgworth and Ursula direct him:

EDGWORTH: Look you choose good places for your standing  
i' the Fair when you sing, Nightingale.

URSULA: Ay, near the fullest passages; and shift 'em often.  
(II. 4. 37-39)

His position within the fair, and on the stage, is calculated so that his song is most efficacious. The sound needs to be heard; it is a vital part of the scheme and needs, therefore, to be given primacy within the scene. This is confirmed by Edgworth's description of the actions that he needs to employ as part of it:

And i' your singing, you must use your hawk's eye nimbly,  
and fly the purse to a mark, still – where 'tis worn, and o'  
which side – that you may gi' me the sign with your beak,  
or hang your head that way i' the tune.

(II. 4. 40-43)

In act III, scene 5 Cokes becomes the unwitting subject of their pick-pocketing, and Nightingale serves as a distraction for the action. He entices Cokes first of all with the first line of a ballad: 'My masters and friends, and good people, draw near, &c.' (III. 5. 11). These are his first words in this act and the use of melody at this point cuts through the pomposity of Overdo's preceding speech in which the justice denigrates the 'terrible taint, poetry!' which he describes as an 'idle disease' (III. 5. 5-

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<sup>31</sup> McGee observes that several of the titles allude to poems that Jonson's audience would have known. C.E. McGee, "'The Ferret and the Coney': An Oddity of Editorial Annotation", *The Ben Jonson Journal*, 12. 1 (2016), 165-169.

6). The juxtaposition of a ballad warning of the cutpurse seems to affirm the link between poetry and “debauched company’ (III. 5.3). Jonson’s inclusion of ‘&tc.’ at the end of line 11 suggests that Nightingale continues to sing under the speeches of Cokes, Wasp, Quarlous, Winwife and Grace, thus blurring the boundaries between spoken and sung words.<sup>32</sup> The counterpoint of the two creates a texture which has not been heard before in the play and which initiates, aurally, the struggle between the two sides which is enacted in the pocket picking – Coke’s first line is an invitation to the audience to direct their attention to Nightingale: ‘Hark, hark!’ (III. 5. 12). The repeated word serves as a verbal invitation to participate in an aural activity and helps to establish the primacy of what is heard over what is seen which enables the criminal act to take place undetected. The song creates a soundscape within which the visual is sublimated and becomes secondary, and demonstrates that, at this point, Nightingale has won the battle for Cokes’ attention.

More than half of act III, scene 5 is devoted to the ballad and the attendant activity. David Fuller suggests that it is unusual for Jonson to use ballad tunes in his plays, as he prefers composed tunes in other instances, but that its use here adds to the ‘air of authenticity of his scenes of London low-life, just as the pig woman and the puppet-show and an almost infinite number of smaller details likewise do’.<sup>33</sup> As a consequence, ‘music adds merriment and verisimilitude to the fair’.<sup>34</sup> Ballads belonged to the street and represented a form accessible to the characters: ‘a ballad tune is a simple rhythmical melody by an anonymous musician of the lower class’.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Creaser observes that six of the eight occurrences of etc. appear in this scene. At this point, the words have not already been cited, so the abbreviation is not for printing economy.

<sup>33</sup> David Fuller, ‘Ben Jonson’s Plays and Their Contemporary Music’, *Music and Letters*, 58.1 (1977), 60-75 (p. 71).

<sup>34</sup> Linda Phyllis Austern, ‘Musical Parody In The Jacobean City Comedy’, *Music and Letters*, 66.4 (1985), 355-366 (p. 357).

<sup>35</sup> Edwin Lindsay, ‘The Music in Ben Jonson’s Plays’, *Modern Languages Notes*, 44.2, (1929), 86-92 (p. 87).

Smith points out that ‘the art of music was more typically transmitted person to person, singer to singer...Hence the sufficiency of the tag that accompanies most printed ballads, ‘[t]o be sung to the tune of...’.<sup>36</sup> When invited by Cokes to begin, Nightingale announces that his song will be ‘To the tune of ‘Paggington’s Pound’ (III. 5. 55). According to Claude Simpson, this was the ‘most popular single tune associated with ballads before 1700’, appearing under several different names: ‘Packington’s Pound’; ‘Bockington’s Pound’; ‘Pagginton’s rounde’; ‘Packington’s Pounce’.<sup>37</sup> William Chappell also names it as ‘A Fancy of Sir John Pagginton’ suggesting that the tune was named for John Packington, a great favourite of Elizabeth I, although Gratton Flood suggests that it could be ‘Paggington’, written by Thomas Paggington, a musician retained in the service of Protector Somerset in about 1560.<sup>38</sup> Whatever its genesis, it was a well know melody which was used numerous times, with at least one ballad and one version of the tune being preserved from the sixteenth century.<sup>39</sup> Having been used in *Bartholomew Fair*, the tune became associated with the action it accompanied, becoming described variously as ‘The Cutpurse’; ‘Youth youth in Bartholomew Fair’; ‘Youth, youth &c.’; ‘Youth, youth, thow hadst &c.’; ‘You Cut Purses all, &c.’ despite the fact that Nightingale’s words were not printed until almost a century later in *Wit and Mirth: Or Pills to Purge Melancholy*.<sup>40</sup> The tune also appears in *The Fitzwilliam Virginal Book*, an anonymous collection of keyboard music from the Elizabethan and Jacobean period in which *Packington’s Pound* is given an elaborate, contrapuntal arrangement. Thus, for audiences, there is an aural inter-textuality in which the words

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<sup>36</sup> Smith, p. 112.

<sup>37</sup> Claude Simpson, *The British Broadside Ballad and Its Music* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 1966), pp. 562, 265-8.

<sup>38</sup> William Chappell, *Popular music of the olden time [...]* (London: Cramer, Beale and Chappell, n.d.), n.p; Gratton Flood, ‘Packington’s Pound’, *The Musical Times*, 66.986 (London: The Musical Times Publications Ltd., 1925), 347.

<sup>39</sup> Simpson, p. 565.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 568; Fuller, p. 71.

from other ballads and, potentially, these sophisticated compositions are evoked by Nightingale's song.

That Cokes knows the tune is demonstrated by his 'Fa, la la la, la la la, fa la, la, la, la' (III. 5. 60-61), which fits with the metrical scheme of the tune (if one assumes an anacrusis or upbeat for the first syllable). However, Evans suggests that he never manages to imitate more than a line or two of the refrain and that, to a musically literate audience, this would be a source of amusement.<sup>41</sup> Although the use of the word replacement 'fa, la, la' does appear in folk tunes, it also resonates with madrigals, polyphonic compositions for several voices, as exemplified in Morley's *The Triumphs of Oriana*. As a gentleman, the audience would have presumed Cokes's familiarity with madrigals. His use of a refrain common to madrigals serves as an aural reminder of the different class of the two people: Nightingale knows and can sing the melody; Cokes cannot grasp the ballad but has some fleeting memory of a musical form. However, what Jonson does at this point is to demonstrate his facility with musical composition, even in using a pre-existing ballad tune, by creating a polyphonic texture within the exchange. Cokes' comments form a counterpoint to Nightingale's ballad. They occur after each musical phrase, which would have provided musical cues for the actor playing Cokes who would be able to hear when to speak from the musical phrasing and cadential patterning of the melody. Jonson mixes the spoken with the sung, almost like recitative and aria, but this time, by alternating the two, he establishes a dialogue between them, which again serves to illustrate Cokes' ignorance as he is duped by the comen. By the time that Cokes is able to join in the refrain, the con is on.

The voices of Cokes and Nightingale dominate the soundscape of act III, scene 5, but are not the only ones heard. Neither are all the voices of this scene heard in their natural tone. One of the structural features of the play is Jonson's use of the aside as a dramatic device. In this scene, as elsewhere in the play, it serves a dual function. At the beginning, Justice

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<sup>41</sup> Evans, p. 69.

Overdo's remarks are made 'aside' almost as a soliloquy, as he shares his clandestine progress with the audience. His entry at the very start brings him into a dynamic situation, where the fair-people have been plying their trade with Cokes, and where there has been bickering, haggling, talk of masques and references to all sorts of sounds. His asides, whilst obviously still of necessity audible to the audience, represents a *sotto voce* utterance which is in contrast to the noise of the previous scene. His is a 'hushed surveillance'.<sup>42</sup> So, too, the asides of Quarlous and Winwife indicate a different sound quality – a stage whisper, perhaps – which takes the words out of the main soundscape and situates them in an alternative, private one. The asides during the ballad comment on the action and message of the song and serve almost as a Greek chorus. In this way, they not only punctuate the melody with hushed utterances, but they also almost give voice to the thoughts of the audience, so that the 'hearers and spectators' (Induction, L. 120) become vicarious participants in the soundscape.

The presence of the song in act III, scene 5 raises the question of what else is taking place on the stage whilst it was being sung. Certainly, whilst Cokes is the intended recipient of both the song and the pickpocketing that the song is designed to hide, the text suggests that the rest of the characters are engaged by Nightingale's performance. Dramatically, this needs to be the case in order for the theft to proceed unobserved. The invitation, 'My masters and friends and good people draw near' (III. 5. 62) encompasses both Coke's party and Nightingale's fellow faire-people. The line at the end of the ballad is thus attributed to 'All': 'An excellent ballad! An excellent ballad!' (III. 5. 159), a *tutti* exclamation suggesting total involvement. In addition, the fact that the ballad is so well known would seem to suggest that the people on stage could have participated in some way, as could the audience. Whilst the text stipulates that Cokes 'sing[s] the burden with him' (III. 5. 88), it is not inconceivable that other characters, and indeed the audience, might have done so as well. Finkelstein suggests

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<sup>42</sup> Wilson, p. 30.

that the lack of dancing in *Bartholomew Fair* amounts to a lack of spectacle.<sup>43</sup> There are no stage directions to indicate dancing but, given that the whole cast has been exhorted to 'hark' and is engaged in listening to a tune with which we might assume they are familiar, there is reason to believe that there might be some physical response to the music, perhaps through hand clapping or foot tapping. These activities would add an extra aural dimension to the scene, marking the pulse and punctuating the lyric. Within a theatre, timber and lath and plaster walls would provide a moderately reflective surface for the sound, whilst the congregation of many bodies would have a dampening effect, but, nonetheless, the percussive timbre would cut through the singing and vary the texture of the soundscape. In addition, if the auditors on stage are clapping to the pulse of the music, this would establish a rhythmic framework within which Cokes' spoken lines were delivered, to maintain the beat.

The soundscape is influenced not only by the speech communities of the speakers, but also by the timbres of the voices, with those of the boys playing the female roles contrasting with the sound quality of the men's voices. Mistress Overo speaks just once before the song, and Grace does not speak until after the song is finished and the most players have left the scene, but stage directions suggest that, although silent, Trash is present for the whole of act III, scene 5. If this is the case, she is presumably part of the 'All' at the end of the ballad, and this would add a treble voice to the collective. As part of the fair community, she is probably aware of and involved in the activities of Edgworth and Nightingale and thus is part of the aural deception. If the rest of the cast were involved in singing at least that part, her voice would once again provide some contrast to the masculine voices of Nightingale, Cokes and so forth. It is less clear of the role that might have been played by Grace and Mistress Overdo in this situation. Mistress Overdo does not appear to share her brother's passion for ballads as music, asking only 'Has't a fine picture, brother?' (III. 5. 43) and

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<sup>43</sup> Finkelstein, p. 110.

Grace's preoccupation with the seriousness of her guardian suggests that she would be unwilling to participate in something that he might disapprove of. The treble, rather than soprano, timbre of the female characters would give their utterances a particular tone, and would contrast to the male voices. However, some theatre historians have suggested that the records from certain playhouses of the time suggest that the part of Ursula was played by an adult male. This would have implications for the soundscape of the scenes in which she appeared, marking a pronounced polarity between the bass of Ursula and the treble/counter-tenor of the other female characters, with a range of male vocal timbres heard on the stage.

Smith notes that '[e]arly modern singers and listeners were themselves aware that it was the first-personhood of ballads that made them so interesting'.<sup>44</sup> Nightingale describes the ballad as 'a spell against' cutpurses (III. 5. 37) which has been 'made as 'twere in mine own person, and I sing it in mine own defence' (III. 5. 38-39), the alliteration of 'spell', 'spick' and 'span' in line 37 suggesting an incantation. Thus, Nightingale's duplicitous position is illustrated as he both warns against the pickpocket and at the same time seeks redemption from the victim if they take no notice: 'Then if you take heed not, free me from the curse/Who both give you the warning for and the cutpurse' (III. 5. 72-73). No one is immune to the cutpurse and Nightingale's ballad warns the thief and his unwitting victims and elevates him to a sort of folk hero in the daring of his escapades. According to Smith, 'the absent, figurative 'I' of the story takes shape as the aggressively self-presenting seller, the absent, figurative 'you' as the listeners'.<sup>45</sup> The designation of the 'you' in the ballad is open to interpretation. As a ballad for widespread consumption, the 'you' is all people, at the fair and beyond and serves as a warning to them. However, in the context of act III, scene 5, Cokes represents the individual 'you' who Nightingale is warning: 'You oft have been told/Both the

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<sup>44</sup> Smith, p. 196.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 168.

young and the old/and bidden beware of the cutpurse so bold' (III. 5. 68-70). It is a warning which recalls the cautions given to children, something that resonates with Coke's comments about the 'nursery-chimney' (III. 5. 44) a matter of lines before. This is advice that they should have heeded since childhood, but have not. However, this ballad is far from a simple warning: Nightingale both admonishes the assembled crowd to 'look to your purses', and appeals to the 'vile nation of cutpurses' to '[r]elent and repent' (III. 5. 36; 143-4). His observation '[a]s if they regarded or places or time' (III. 5. 81), introduces another group of people into the narrative, an unspecified 'they', who are depicted as passing judgement but who are accused of being blind to the facts and who are presumably in opposition to the 'I' and 'you' of the ballad.

The song's initial invitation, 'My masters and friends and good people draw near/And look to your purses, for that I do say' (III. 5. 62-63), establishes a wide audience: masters, friends and good people. Within the context of Bartholomew Fair, however, this is not a particularly reassuring group of people: his friends are hardly good people and the 'good people' are likely to be duped by his friends. The invitation to 'draw near' provides a cue for action on the stage as people are drawn into the song and establishes the aural distraction which will facilitate the cutpurse's action. Having got their attention, Nightingale's song then delivers his direct warning to 'beware of the cutpurse so bold' (III. 5. 70), before admonishing the cutpurse himself: 'thou hadst better been starved by thy nurse/Than live to be hanged for cutting a purse' (III. 5. 74-75). Ironically, this, rather than the warning to look at his purse, is the soundbite Cokes manages to acquire; he sees not how to avoid the act, only the consequence of it for the perpetrator. The ballad continues with Nightingale admitting that 'men of my trade' (III. 5. 68-70) have been held responsible for the crime, but he counters this with examples of the crime happening in more exalted places such as 'Westminster Hall' and 'Worcester' and to more venerable people: '[a] knight of good worship', '[a] judge' (III. 5. 84, 93, 94, 100). However, it is the admonitory function which ends the ballad and leaves Cokes and the other auditors, both on the stage and off, with an invocation to

'[r]epent' and 'kiss not the gallows for cutting a purse' (III. 5. 155-156), immediately before Edgworth lifts Cokes' purse. The ballad combines a salacious story, a complicated message, a fluctuating persona, and a shifting construct of the audience within a popular melodic casing which helps to establish an aural camouflage for the physical action with which the scene is involved.

The primacy of the sound of *Bartholomew Fair* is emphasised by the fact that the noises of the fair are appropriated by the puritan, Busy, in his condemnation of it. Initially, his objections to it are visual and aural: 'Look not toward them; hearken not!' (III. 2. 35). He admonishes his party, 'you must not look, nor turn toward them' (III. 2. 40-41). By act III, scene 6, when Leatherhead tries to sell him his '[r]attles, drums, babies', Busy demands '[p]eace' (III. 6. 1-2), he decries his wares as 'profane pipes, the tinkling timbrels' (III. 6. 86) with such vehemence that Leatherhead has to fetch a constable as they 'cannot sell a whistle, for him, in tune' for his 'sanctified noise' (III. 6. 93-95). The symbols of fairing, the joyous sounds of festivity have won out over the sanctimonious noise of a puritan dissenter.

In act III, scene 5, the sound of which Busy disapproves so vehemently is constructed on several plains. Voices are used in both speech and song, monophonically, homophonically and polyphonically, *sotto voce* and *tutti*, in order to construct the fair. The presence and absence of voices and the use of poetic devices such as alliteration and wordplay evoke and recall sounds from elsewhere in the play to produce a complex web of sound allusions. Jonson demonstrates the ability to conceive of drama in acoustic terms, manipulating the human voice into a variety of timbres and qualities, from the whispered asides of Overdo, to the *tutti* refrain of 'An excellent ballad!' (III. 5. 159). Within the scene, Jonson creates and refers to contrapuntal techniques which allude to more 'sophisticated' forms of music, thus establishing and commenting on the intersection of fair goers and fair-people, in the unique soundscape of *Bartholomew Fair*.

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## Pandora's Farmhouse

*Lorna Wilkinson*

Samuel was already sitting on the red-brick doorstep outside the house, his hair shading the book on his knees. Sunscreen stained the collar of his T-shirt, which had the word "Maestro" stitched across it in large letters. He rose when they opened the gate, frowning like a schoolmaster, and ignored Misty jumping at his legs.

"I've been reading," he said.

"Hi Samuel," said Geoff. "Got here alright then?" Samuel was nine.

"Mum says I've got to watch what you do with the jewellery."

Iona shut the gate. The house radiated an impression of dust, from the chalky path and smell of clay to the veiled windows and the rust eating the drainpipe. She tried to remember when she'd last been here, but could only think of those long-ago Christmases when there had been real candles on the tree and the presents beneath would always be spotted with wax. She called to Misty.

"Righto, let's see if we can get in, first." Geoff rattled the wrong key in the lock, realised, and switched it. "What a berk."

Iona pointed out that the house would be full of spiders. She half expected Auntie Pandora to appear, looming over the doormat to greet them with tosses of her head and a breathy "Oh...". Instead, the hallway waited alone, the mirror over the telephone desk greeting them with their own pink faces. It was cool and still in here, more spacious than Iona had recalled, and the outside noise of traffic seemed to glide over the stone floor without sticking to anything. Geoff stared about him like a cat that had been set down suddenly, and Iona wondered where they could possibly begin.

"Where will the jewellery be?" asked Samuel. Something creaked in the wooden staircase.

"Tell you what, you two go up and look for it. I'll start clearing out downstairs." Geoff stood watching the room, his face dragging downwards. Flecks of tissue stuck to his cardigan: he hadn't checked the pockets before putting it in the wash. "No doubt today will go by like the clappers."

"I was going to make tea," said Iona.

"I'll have coffee thanks," said Samuel, and then hesitated. "Ta," he amended.

Iona announced that they hadn't brought any coffee.

"I've got mature tastes," Samuel said. "I even like olives. Not the green ones though." He climbed the staircase two steps at a time, bouncing on every stride.

"Go with him, love. We'll make tea a bit later."

"What about Misty?"

"She can go too."

The upstairs rooms smelled of talcum powder and were in semi-darkness: net curtains modestly covered the windows. Iona drew them back, letting sunlight slant into Pandora's bedroom and run over the yellow quilt and white walls. She looked about her. It had always been her great-aunt's house, even when Uncle David was alive. Traces of Pandora decorated the room: the hearing-aid on the bedside-table, the Alice band curled on the dresser, the watercolours, the breathy lisp of the clock.

Samuel made a display of unpacking his backpack to fit his book back inside. He carefully placed a white card on the bed, glanced at Iona, pulled a plastic bottle, jumper and mobile phone from the backpack, slotted in the book, replaced the bottle, jumper and phone, and raised his eyebrows at the white card.

"What's that?" he said. "Oh, my report card. Forgot about that. Look at my teacher's funny writing." He thrust the card at Iona. It showed a list of A-star grades, all printed neatly in red pen.

Misty jumped onto the bed, circled, and lay down in the sunlight. Her coat gleamed and saliva ran down her tongue.

"Oh Misty-baby," said Iona. She liked to draw attention to the dog, so silky and lovely, of whom nobody else took enough notice.

"For science I got the highest exam mark in my year."

They spent the morning going through drawers and trinket boxes. Auntie Pandora had kept all the replies to her letters of complaint in three shoeboxes beneath the typewriter; letters from old school-friends were folded in a single envelope in the dresser, inexplicably labelled "poppy seeds". A stiff coil of human hair, tied with blue ribbon, was discovered in a bottom drawer. Iona tightened her ponytail. She shuffled through photographs of Pandora and David in Italian cities, Pandora's narrow eyes watching the camera from beneath straw hats, David curved in deck chairs like a meek reptile.

Every four or five minutes, Samuel sniffed with a moist noise that seemed to stick in his throat.

Pandora's school exam papers were filed under the bed, those with the highest marks on top. Praise from teachers of seventy years ago was set in faded ink – Pandora had always been closer to Samuel's side of the family. Iona looked over to her cousin, who had made a collection of plastic brooches and was now using them to decorate a dried fir-cone.

"This is boring," he said. "I want to find something expensive."

Iona had also hoped to discover something valuable. "Don't be silly," she said. Her stomach felt tense, possessed by the ghost of Pandora's own famously delicate stomach, and she wanted to read her novel. "Why don't you go and look in Uncle

David's study? He had lots of books on science and stuff. And Jung, if you know who Jung was." Auntie Pandora had insisted that nothing of David's should be moved after his death, but somehow all his belongings had amassed themselves in his study.

Samuel wound out of the room. Iona lay on the bed bedside Misty and opened her book, listening out for Geoff's footsteps. Her dad had discovered her stash of teen romance once before: the memory of his scowl and the words "trashy books" still brought indignant shame. The book's pages were crinkled from the times she'd read it in the bath. Misty snored, the quilt felt rough beneath Iona's legs, and something moved in the ivy outside the window.

The doorbell rang at around midday, and, when nobody answered the door, rang again. Iona slipped the paperback under Pandora's pillow and followed the dog downstairs, thinking it uncanny that her feet didn't produce any sort of echo on the wooden steps. An elderly woman stood at the door and twitched her mouth and nose like a rabbit.

"I saw you arrive earlier. I'm Joan Bird. I live across the street."

"Hello."

"I knew the lady who lived here. Is everything alright?"

"Oh. Yes."

Geoff came up behind Iona, holding a couple of candlesticks.

"Hello," said the woman. "I was just saying, I was a friend of Mrs Christen. Joan Bird."

Geoff shook her hand, the fingers of his left hand straining to contain both candlesticks, and explained who they were and what they were doing. Joan Bird's lips sank at the corners, and she frowned past Geoff into the hallway. One of her clip-on

earrings had slipped to the tip of her earlobe – Iona waited for it to drop off.

“Right, well. I was just checking. You understand.”

“Thanks. That’s decent of you.”

The woman headed back through the gate and paused to study their car’s licence plate.

“Silly old jig,” said Geoff.

Iona followed her dad back into the kitchen, where boxes and papers covered the table. She remembered sitting at that table as a little girl, being served skinny triangles of burnt pizza, which Pandora would pronounce “pitsa”, and lemon barley water in a plastic cup. Pandora had apparently once slapped her hand when she’d reached for a cake before everyone was seated, although Iona didn’t remember this herself. Nor did she remember the time when, as a toddler, she had proudly shown Pandora the contents of her potty, which had prompted the old lady to write a now-infamous letter to Samuel’s mother, declaring Geoffrey’s child to be “rude at both ends”. She hoped Samuel would never hear that story.

There was a pile of cuttings from Uncle David’s magazines on the table, and Iona read a few sentences from the one on top. *The female praying mantis, like the black widow spider, is known for her sexual cannibalism. This seems most predominant in females that are hungry or have a poor diet: the mantis bites off her partner’s head during the mating process, before slowly devouring the rest of him.*

Samuel’s trainers squeaked on the tiles as he came into the kitchen. He carried a leather notebook, clutched open against his chest. “I’ve found Uncle David’s diaries,” he said, his voice high. “He’s written down loads of his dreams, and some of them are really weird, like, okay, this one: ‘Was on train, eating strawberries and cream. Was told I had to give lecture on the gypsy moth, but hadn’t prepared so couldn’t. Had to make self

sick as punishment. Saw weeping anima again, standing on station platform.”

Iona watched her dad. The tense feeling returned to her stomach at the thought of placid Uncle David making himself vomit.

“What’s an anima?” asked Samuel.

“Oh, just mumbo-jumbo. They both believed in things like that. Pandora was always getting conned into thinking she’d won millions of pounds.”

“It’s not mumbo-jumbo,” said Iona. “It’s a Jung thing, I think.” Uncle David had had articles published about Jung; no-one in the family had read them, but Iona had once watched part of a documentary about the psychoanalyst, and knew that he’d done stuff with dreams and the unconscious mind and had had a tiff with Freud. She opened her mouth to explain this, but was interrupted by Geoff.

“Poor old Pandora. It’s a blessing she outlived David though, really. He’d have had to go into a home otherwise.” Geoff’s shoulders sloped; he’d spent much of his childhood in this house. There was a photograph of him and his sister Bea, Samuel’s mother, propped on the windowsill behind a seashell, but it had faded so much that their features ran into a creamy grey. “Perhaps best not to read any more of those old diaries,” he told Samuel.

“They go back to nineteen fifty-two.”

“Yeah. Look at Auntie Pandora’s paintings instead. We’ll have that cup of tea now, love, I think.”

“I’d been going to take Misty out,” said Iona.

“Righto.” Geoff sucked his cheeks inward and stared at the out-of-date calendar. One of his eyes drifted slightly sideways.

The house had a large garden. It had once been a remote dwelling, but the nearby town of Tenswick had gradually

expanded and absorbed the smallholding into its suburbs. Now the only clues that The Farmhouse had ever been a farmhouse were its cob walls, the outbuilding that the Christens had turned into a potter's workshop, and the orchard where stray cats often crouched in long grass. Iona stood in the sun, hoping it would lighten her hair. The sky was blue, cracked like an egg by the branches of a dead tree, and somewhere a dove let a song swing back and forth in the air. Traffic was barely audible here; the garden seemed locked in its past. Pandora and David had met in their fifties, while recovering from their respective nervous breakdowns at a retreat, and had bought the farmhouse with the intention of transforming it into an art-therapy centre. They had never done so.

"Here, Misty-lady." Iona wandered into the potter's workshop, followed by the dog. She could remember Uncle David teaching her to make clay pots here, supervised by Pandora, and baking them in the round oven. What were those round ovens called, again? She couldn't think. The workshop was dark and cluttered: tools and pots covered the table and floor, along with several old toothbrushes, a brown clay angel with an unfinished wing, a bent bicycle wheel, and the damp remains of a cereal box. A butterfly net rested over the window, sieving dusty light into a diamond pattern. Everything smelled of earth.

"Guess what," said Samuel. "You won't believe this." He stood in the doorway, holding another open diary before him.

"What?" said Iona. "By the way, has my dad said what we're doing for lunch?"

Samuel's face was flushed. "Look." He laid the diary on the table. "This was on the night before his and Auntie Pandora's wedding. The *night before*."

Iona moved forwards and read where he pointed. A pounding began inside her, and the tense feeling in her stomach spread to her arms and legs. Uncle David's handwriting was straight and square in black biro, his lowercase aitches so high

as to spear the words on the line above. Iona reread the sentence, and wished she hadn't.

"What do you folks want for lunch?" Geoff came through the workshop door; Iona stepped in front of the diary.

"Oh. We were just saying, I don't know, maybe sandwiches?" The words that she and Samuel had read prowled around the three of them, filling the shadows of the workshop.

"What about you Samuel, what do you fancy?"

"We'll go to the shop in a minute," said Iona. "They'll do sandwiches."

"Samuel?"

Samuel's lips were pressed together in a tight grin, his eyes rolling from Geoff to Iona to the diary. His face was red and his shoulders shook slightly with suppressed giggles. Panic solidified in Iona's limbs: she wanted to hit her cousin. Outside, the pendulum-like birdsong stopped.

"What's the joke?" Geoff gave a puzzled imitation of Samuel's grin, and his eyes dropped onto the book – he stepped forwards to read what was written on the open page. There was movement beneath his cheeks; he inhaled through his nose, and turned to leave. "Buy something healthy. None of those rubbishy processed cheese things you're so keen on, Iona."

Iona took the diary back to David's study after lunch. It was the one room that Pandora hadn't permeated. Paperweights and clay ornaments surrounded a black-and-white photograph of David's family in Switzerland, and on the chair there lay a Rubik's Cube that Iona suspected had been intact before Samuel's arrival today. Science books slumped wearily against books on religion. David's own unfinished manuscript was on the desk: its edges were frayed with anti-climax, having been a work-in-progress for thirty years, and Iona couldn't understand the paragraph she read. Beams, criss-crossing the ceiling, formed a hovering net above her.

Downstairs, Geoff and Samuel were sorting out Pandora's paintings. Samuel frowned at Iona when she entered: his face was blotchy and his eyes still had a pink tinge. Sweat-patches now bracketed the "Maestro" on his T-shirt, and he looked younger than nine. Iona sat down in David's chair beside the window; her dad's and cousin's reflections brushed the glass like ghosts.

"Any good paintings?" she asked. There was one of an orange grove hanging above the fireplace – greens swirling below a dark sun.

"Her earlier ones are fairly good. She did have talent, in her younger days." Geoff picked a bit of tissue off his cardigan. They were sorting the paintings into two piles: "good" and "bonfire". Iona closed her eyes and remembered Pandora giving her a watercolour set for one of her birthdays. Iona had mixed colours on the lid, painted a ginger cat watching fish in a pond, which her dad had later spilled HP Sauce over. She had asked for oil paints the following year, but Pandora had flown into a huff: apparently oils were totally inappropriate for children. Had a slap been administered then, or just another of Pandora's letters to Bea?

"I want to go home soon," Samuel said. "I wouldn't have come if I'd known it would be this rubbish. I thought she had expensive stuff: I hate paintings. Oh – and Mum says you can keep Auntie Pandora's ones but you need to talk to her about the others. The ones by good people."

A policeman with a dimpled chin arrived at the front door around four o'clock, just as Geoff was about to take Samuel to the bus station, and reported that one of the neighbours had asked him to check up on them. "Seems to think there's something dodgy going on," he said, scratching eczema on the back of his hand. "Said something about stealing candlesticks."

Joan Bird was visible at her window across the street.

"Oh for crying out loud," said Geoff. "I'm Mrs Christen's nephew. I told her."

“She also says she thinks she dropped one of her ‘doo-dahs’ here. Any clue what that might be?”

Iona saw the earring on the doorstep, and said nothing.

That night, Iona made herself a bed on the sofa, surrounded by paintings and Pandora’s heavily-pencilled astrology charts. She had realised that there were no spiders in this house after all: no cobwebs, even. The Farmhouse was airtight, its windows never unsticking to admit a fly, and any spiders would have starved long ago. She pictured them curled in corners, turning to dust. The ceiling creaked as Geoff got into Pandora’s bed upstairs.

“Iona? What’s this trashy book you’ve been reading?”

Iona twisted up her legs in the sleeping bag and drew the rug close to her chin. She’d check her dad’s laundry for tissues herself next time, she decided: it was always embarrassing seeing his clothes in that state.

Misty snored in the corner of the room now. The trees in the orange grove painting looked like clusters of dark warts; outside, the real trees in the orchard would be hidden and still. Uncle David’s chair had a dented cushion from where Iona had sat earlier, and the girl felt her great-uncle’s eyes upon her as she lay watching it in the darkness. He had been Pandora’s most docile pet, but she had realised today that he had also been self-aware, even mutinous – for, surely, when he had written “She will be a millstone around my neck” in English in his diary on the night before his wedding, it had been an act of rebellion, because there would always be the chance that Pandora might one day find and read it. The thought made sweat prickle in Iona’s armpits. She recalled the last time she had seen Pandora, a month ago now, the old woman bent at an odd angle against hospital pillows, dignity leached from her face by the fluorescent light, flapping crossly at her sister’s children and grandchildren. Her hair and skin had seemed to run downwards from her head into the bed, spreading out across the mattress in the form of a frothy nightgown. Pandora was buried next to David.

Once, soon after Uncle David's funeral, Iona's mum had had too much sherry while cooking the Sunday roast, and, tossing shreds of thyme over the potatoes, had announced that Pandora would go to her grave a virgin. Iona didn't know how her mum knew this fact, or even if it were true, but she felt a wave of respect for her great-uncle tonight, thinking about it all.

*The mantis bites off her partner's head...*

Iona turned off the lamp and shut her eyes. She remembered that a potter's round oven was called a kiln.

## Zone of Catastrophe: The Rurality of Djuna Barnes's *Nightwood*

Julian Isaacs

Inter-war literary Modernism has been commonly located within the great metropolitan cultural centres of Paris, London and New York, housing as they did many prominent modernist publishing houses, salons and coteries. Much of Djuna Barnes's *Nightwood*,<sup>1</sup> set primarily in urban Paris, and published by Faber & Faber of London in 1936, was written 'during the summers of 1932 and 1933',<sup>2</sup> at Hayford Hall in Devon, near Buckfastleigh on the fringes of Dartmoor. Rented by Peggy Guggenheim, who is rightly termed by Mary Dearborn in her biography a 'Mistress of Modernism',<sup>3</sup> Hayford Hall soon acquired the nickname of Hangover Hall for Guggenheim and her companions: Barnes, John Ferrar Holms, Emily Coleman and Antonia White. Aside from bucolic over-indulgence and the crossfire of literary conversation, Hayford Hall was where, mainly at night, Barnes wrote her modernist masterpiece *Nightwood*. Although *Nightwood* is often read as an urban or metropolitan text, this essay will interrogate how the rurality of the novel's primary site of composition, with its 'quite beautiful, half wild' garden, where 'beyond was Dartmoor vast, rolling, mostly barren',<sup>4</sup> augurs a non-urban interpretation of the transgressions it articulates.

Hayford Hall was more than a site of construction and revision for the text of *Nightwood*: it played an important role in the genesis of its publication. Without Hayford, Emily

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<sup>1</sup> Barnes, Djuna, *Nightwood* (London: Faber and Faber, 1996).

<sup>2</sup> Phillip Herring, *Djuna: The Life and Work of Djuna Barnes* (London: Viking Penguin, 1995), p. 192.

<sup>3</sup> Mary. V. Dearborn, *Mistress of Modernism: The Life of Peggy Guggenheim* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2004), p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Dearborn, p. 87.

Coleman would not have had the large hand in its revision that she did. Furthermore, Edwin Muir, who was a great friend of John Ferrar Holms and through him first read the manuscript of *Nightwood*, might never have exerted the influence he did upon Faber & Faber to publish the book. The parts played by both Coleman and Muir in *Nightwood's* publication were, it turns out, of greater significance than that of T.S. Eliot, who wrote his preface in 1937, the year following the book's initial publication. Hayford Hall is the place where *Nightwood* was written, in Dartmoor's space, by an American whose grandmother had held a salon in London. It thus fits Davis' and Jenkins' definition of modernism as 'a strategy of permanent exile', and the space of modernity as a 'condition of unhousedness or extraterritoriality'.<sup>5</sup>

For Barnes, New York, London, Paris, and for a brief spell in 1921, Berlin,<sup>6</sup> were more than sites of Modernist gestation and fruition, they were her places of residence for the bulk of her adult life. Barnes was raised at her family estate in Cornwall-on-Hudson in upstate New York but her soul was urban, not rural. Regardless of the level of any social or amorous engagement with her literary and artistic peers, Barnes felt at home not just as a city dweller, but as an inner-city dweller. When the apartment block in Patchen Place, Greenwich Village, which was her home from September 1940 to her death in 1982,<sup>7</sup> was under threat of demolition by the developer who had purchased the building, Barnes attended a 'tenants' protest meeting', where she 'said that she would die if she was forced to move uptown'.<sup>8</sup>

No fan of country life, Barnes ironically authored *Nightwood*, her most critically acknowledged work, whilst enclosed within the sanctuary of her bedroom in an English country house. The reclusive solitude in which she elected to

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<sup>5</sup> Alex Davis and Lee M. Jenkins, eds, 'Locating Modernisms: An Overview', in *Locations of Literary Modernism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 3-29 (p. 13).

<sup>6</sup> Herring, pp. 138-9.

<sup>7</sup> Andrew Field, *Djuna: The Life and Times of Djuna Barnes* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1983), p. 218.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 236.

spend her days at Hayford Hall, whilst the rest of the party were engaging in more traditional rural outdoor sporting and recreational activities, prefigured that of the final decades of her life behind the door of her Patchen Place apartment. Significantly, the character of Nora Flood in *Nightwood* echoes Barnes' unease in exterior surroundings: for Nora the city streets incurred 'some derangement in her equilibrium'.<sup>9</sup> The French have a word for such derangement of the equilibrium – *détraqués* – and Barnes employs this in the ensuing paragraphs, stating that 'those who love a city become [...] the *détraqués*'.<sup>10</sup> It is the genesis and disintegration of Nora's lesbian affair with Robin Vote that formulates what sequentiality there is in the plot of *Nightwood*. Nora's imperiled selfhood is at its greatest risk when she is outside and wandering, first the Parisian city streets then, at the novel's finale, the grounds of her home in rural New York State.

The Devon countryside, even on a sunny summer's day, held more menace for Barnes than it did allure: this threat of the rural, or indeed any exterior setting, is echoed in *Nightwood*. The novel builds from the opening, set in late nineteenth-century Vienna, to its perplexing, alarming and climactic dénouement in the terrain of upstate New York. It is more than coincidence that Barnes's sense of intimidation by the rural is echoed, not only in the character of Nora Flood, but in the overall framework of the novel, and further reflects the physical locus where the book was written. A halcyon retreat for Guggenheim and the rest of the party, Hayford Hall was a heterotopia for Barnes. Enclosure for Barnes equated to safety; whilst her interiority, as is Nora Flood's, was troubled, the walls of the physical interior of her dwelling places built a carapace from the threat of the exterior. She preferred to be enclosed within, rather than engage with her metropolitan surroundings, quite possibly because she was fleeing the perturbing, haunted memories of her incestuous upbringing on the Barnes family farm in upstate New York.

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<sup>9</sup> Barnes, *Nightwood*, p. 46.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 47.

Heritage and bloodlines are familiar Barnesian tropes: both *Nightwood* and her novel *Ryder* open by delineating the genealogy of their major players; in the former it is that of Felix Volkbein's father Guido, whose 'house in the Inner City' of Vienna was 'large, dark and imposing' with 'long rococo halls, giddy with plush and whorled designs in gold'.<sup>11</sup> On arrival at Hayford Hall in August 1932, Guggenheim and the other members of the party 'all agreed that Djuna should take a bedroom done up in rococo style, as they felt it suited her',<sup>12</sup> and which they 'deemed to fit her personality'.<sup>13</sup> Barnes was allotted this bedroom not only because it was 'the most ornate' but also 'because it was the general opinion that it suited her Gothic personality'.<sup>14</sup> Whether or not Barnes herself viewed her personality as Gothic, that her friends and associates did so is underscored by the fact that when she moved to Chelsea in London in 1936, she 'took an extremely large room over an antique shop on Old Church Street, which her friends dubbed Nightmare Abbey'.<sup>15</sup> Certainly, to Barnes, Hayford Hall was not an idyllic rural site but more an unsafe haven from which she was reluctant to emerge, 'preferring to restrict her exercise to a comforting surround of rolling hills, but as intrusive and short walk in the rose garden'.<sup>16</sup> She saw Dartmoor as threatening, with the Devon landscape imposing on the stone country house, rather than the imposing building, as it still does today, forging a mark on the encircling landscape.

The English summer weather in both 1932 and 1933, when the Guggenheim party were resident at Hayford Hall, was unseasonably warm and clement, over and beyond the mean average. August 1932 was 'exceptionally warm in England', with 'the outstanding feature of the weather of the month' being 'the excessive heat over a large part of England', and August

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<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>12</sup> Dearborn, p. 87.

<sup>13</sup> Herring, p. 192.

<sup>14</sup> Field, p. 18.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.

<sup>16</sup> Herring, p. 193.

1933 was 'an unusually warm and sunny month' where 'in many parts of England there was no single day with a complete absence of bright sunshine'.<sup>17</sup> She reminisced gloomily to Emily Coleman in a 1940 letter:

Have you forgotten how the moors of Hayford Hall terrified me, because of the dead bones, horse skulls, and [...] finally I would not go out at all on the moor, because I simply could not endure it.<sup>18</sup>

Barnes's vulnerability was exacerbated as much by the leafy but unlit, looming lanes of the South Devon countryside, as it was by the games of Truth the party habitually played after dinner. These sinister sylvan surrounds were, literally to Barnes, night woods. The overarching melancholic mood of *Nightwood*, to which we will return, is reinforced as much by the environs in which it was written as by those in which it is set.

Hayford Hall lies roughly equidistant from the granite cell blocks of Dartmoor Prison and Jay's grave, the latter anecdotally the haunted, eldritch burial site of an eighteenth century 'loose woman' whose apocryphal biography states that she hung herself in a nearby barn and 'was buried at the intersection of a road and a moorland track'.<sup>19</sup> It is much nearer, geographically and temperamentally, to both these sites of alterity than it is, for example, to the present day idyllic creative writing community of the Arvon Foundation at Totleigh Barton in the same county.

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<sup>17</sup> *Monthly Weather Report*, Meteorological Office, 49.8 (1932) [1], and 50.8 (1933) [1] <[www.metoffice.gov.uk/binaries](http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/binaries)> [accessed 21 December 2016].

<sup>18</sup> Herring, p. 192.

<sup>19</sup> Tim Sandles, 'Kitty Jay', *Legendary Dartmoor*, 25 Mar. 2016. <[www.legendarydartmoor.co.uk](http://www.legendarydartmoor.co.uk)> [accessed 21 Dec. 2016].



Figure 1. The gates of Hayford Hall, November 2016

Barnes's reactive vulnerability to Hayford Hall's neighbouring contours is reflected in the physically shrunken representations of the characters of Jenny Petherbridge and Dr. O'Connor, when they venture into noctambulant situations. Although it is at Jenny's behest that her party leave her house to circumnavigate the Bois de Boulogne, before they even embark the carriages, we learn that 'though it was an early autumn night, it had become very chilly by twelve o'clock'.<sup>20</sup>

Already delineated as an unattractive, bird-like marionette with 'a beaked head' and a 'body, small, feeble and ferocious',<sup>21</sup> she becomes still more shrunken on entering the carriage: 'Jenny, with nothing to protect her against the night but her long Spanish shawl, which looked ridiculous over her flimsy hoop and bodice, a rug over her knees, had sunk back with collapsed shoulders'.<sup>22</sup> The insidious threat of the park, or 'wood' by night has caused her to relinquish her tenuous locus of control, and physically diminished her further. The tenebrous menace is such that the doctor feels 'a twinge of occult misery'.<sup>23</sup> At best unintegrated, and at worst misfits, Jenny searching for love aided by her purse, and Matthew O'Connor searching for drink financed by others, their already damaged identities and ontological insecurities are further diminished in exterior situations. The physical figure of the doctor himself, once removed from the safety of bed or bar, is similarly seen as reduced. When Felix later seeks the doctor out, after first spying his 'small black-clad figure', he is:

shocked to observe, in the few seconds before the doctor saw him, that he seemed old, older than his fifty odd years would account for. He moved slowly as if he were dragging water; his knees, which one seldom noticed because he was usually seated, sagged. His

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<sup>20</sup> Barnes, *Nightwood*, p. 65.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 59.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 66.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 66.

dark, shaved chin was lowered as if in a melancholy that had no beginning or end.<sup>24</sup>

The doctor, when viewed at home, is both in drag and in bed, and bed for both the doctor and Barnes was a setting in which to philosophise. Although the uncanny dichotomy of the doctor's transvestitism and the filthy or *sale* surroundings of his 'consulting' room, or *salle*, with its 'swill-pail [...] brimming with abominations',<sup>25</sup> is truly *unheimlich* in the Freudian sense, bed was Barnes's chosen setting for writing.

As a young cub journalist in New York, Djuna Barnes wrote many pithy, aphoristic headlines, including the pertinent: 'NOTHING EVER DONE WELL THAT WASN'T PLANNED IN BED'.<sup>26</sup> Herring cites Antonia White's observation that "'Djuna arranges herself very carefully, makes up meticulously and prefers to write in bed'",<sup>27</sup> and White's daughter Susan Chitty, describing after-dinner pastimes at Hayford Hall, notes: "'Djuna, fresh from a day in bed, spun her devastating aphorisms'".<sup>28</sup> Coincidentally, whilst there is no specific evidence that any of White's novel *Frost In May* was written at Hayford Hall, it is contemporaneous with *Nightwood* and was published in 1934, the year following the two summers spent at Hayford by White and Barnes. The protagonist of *Frost In May*, convent girl Nanda Gray, is expelled following the discovery of her novel, deemed irreverent and seditious by the magisterial nuns, that she has been secretly writing in bed in her dormitory by night. Furthermore Nanda, like Nora, perceives the grounds of the convent to hold more menace than reassurance of retreat and, also like Nora, voices the spiritual angst of her creator.

Bed, historically associated with sex to the extent that it has become a euphemistic synecdoche for it, was for Barnes at Hayford Hall, a creative site, and further a place for Holms' witty cross-referential processing of metaphysics and

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<sup>24</sup> Barnes, *Nightwood*, pp. 98-9.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71.

<sup>26</sup> Field, p. 49.

<sup>27</sup> Herring, p. 192.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 193.

epistemology - somewhere to analyse as well as make love. Be it flawed, thwarted, unrequited, melancholic love, *Nightwood* is nevertheless a love story. The investigation of the scarring, not healing, power of love that is thematic and integral to the narrative occurs when Nora consults the doctor, in the chapters 'Watchman, What of the Night?' and 'Go Down, Matthew'.

The character of Dr. Matthew O'Connor is based on the Irish American drinker and raconteur Dan Mahoney, whom we and Nora see ensconced in bed in 'a woman's flannel nightgown' and 'heavily rouged [with] his lashes painted'.<sup>29</sup> Predictably unsettled by this sight, Nora, unsure, 'wondered why she was so dismayed'.<sup>30</sup> The perplexity engendered in Nora by seeing one to whom she is turning for advice in a transvestite performative situation is additionally prefigured by her early dreamed childhood memory of seeing her grandmother 'dressed as a man, wearing a billycock and a corked moustache, ridiculous and plump in tight trousers and a red waistcoat'.<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, Herring confirms that Nora's recollection of her grandmother echoes Barnes' remembrance of her own grandmother: 'Djuna told Chester Page that she had fallen in love with Thelma Wood (the novel's Robin) because she resembled her grandmother'.<sup>32</sup>

However, in that August of 1933, it is more likely that Mahoney was more prominent in Barnes's thoughts than her grandmother, as she had stopped off in Paris en route to England from Tangier for him to perform an abortion on her. *Nightwood* is dedicated though, not to Mahoney, but to Peggy Guggenheim and John Ferrar Holms. It is Nora who is sitting on the doctor's bed listening to him spinning epigrammatic axioms, and trying, albeit resistantly, to elicit from them any logocentric resolution, but at Hayford Hall the roles were not only swapped but reversed. As Barnes delineated the characters of Nora and the doctor, it was her sitting up in bed with Holms on the end of it

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<sup>29</sup> Barnes, *Nightwood*, p. 71.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 57.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 59.

juggling gnomic, philosophical pronouncements culled from his capacious memory and vast field of reference. Holms, of course, was far from effeminate; he was a lone heterosexual male resident at Hayford amongst four sexually charged women, with at least two of whom he had libidinous relationships.

Dr O'Connor conducts all his consultations 'in his cups', but as with Mahoney and Holms, his 'cups' are cornucopias that overflow with epistemological sagacity. Albeit for the two struck-off doctors, real and fictional, it is a faux or *ur*-sagacity, it nevertheless retains a poignancy and pertinence for their audiences of Nora Flood and Djuna Barnes. Herring asserts that 'Dr. O'Connor becomes a clearinghouse of consolation for those who desire Robin: Felix, Nora and Jenny'.<sup>33</sup> Robin, of course, is the catalyst that causes disintegration in the others, the one who never consults the doctor: her attraction is centripetal but her rejection centrifugal and, once she has flung away from herself, or othered her lovers, it is they and not her that are 'marooned'. Conversely, Stange, referencing Julia Kristeva, maintains that the doctor is unable to 'survive' his melancholia because he founders in "'the darkness of disconsolation"'.<sup>34</sup> This is not as paradoxical as might first appear: the doctor consoles others because he is disconsolate himself. To put it at its simplest, other people's problems help him take his mind off his own; his consultations serve the dual purpose of temporarily alleviating the alterity of his 'patients' whilst, coupled with alcohol, they assist him in the avoidance, if not resolution, of his troubled sexuality.

Whilst Barnes's experience of the writing process was, aside from her journalism, tortured, tortuous and extended, temporally if not textually, she nevertheless produced and published finished works. Like Mahoney, Holms'

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<sup>33</sup> Herring, p. 206.

<sup>34</sup> Martina Stange, "'Melancholia, melancholia": Changing Black Bile into Black Ink in Djuna Barnes's *Nightwood*', in *Hayford Hall: Hangovers, Erotics and Modernist Aesthetics*, ed. by Sandra M. Chait and Elizabeth M. Podnieks (Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 2005), pp. 133-149 (p. 142).

circumlocutionary and referential, if irreverent, philosophical and literary ramblings produced no body of published work. Stange cites Lance Sieveking: 'Holms had a way of producing some obscure fifteenth-century poet',<sup>35</sup> and tells us herself that his 'frustrated aspirations made him wretched'.<sup>36</sup> Nora's engagement with the doctor's prolix digressions, and Barnes's with both Mahoney and Holms' ontological analyses can be read as a metaphysical *dérive* through both *Nightwood* and its literary gestation. As the bulk of the latter occurred at Hayford Hall, such a *dérive* is also akin to the walks the rest of the party took across Dartmoor while Barnes wrote: specifically to Holms' horse rides, one of which indirectly killed him, just as the doctor's rambling delineates and elucidates Nora's love for Robin but fails ultimately to rationalise it. In *Nightwood* it is Robin whose restlessness engenders her wanderings as a nocturnal flâneuse. Nora's is a secondary fretfulness: she meanders her exterior surrounds in the hope of locating the lost Robin. Nora's love for Robin is doomed and imprisoned by its own dysfunction, and thus can only be transgressive and not transcendental.

The narrative of *Nightwood* tracks and traces representations of the uncanny journeying towards this transgression, from Felix's parents' Vienna home being 'as sinister in its reduction as a doll's house',<sup>37</sup> via Robin 'wandering the countryside, alone and engrossed'<sup>38</sup> whilst pregnant, and 'wandering without design',<sup>39</sup> to Nora finding Robin in the chapel of her country home 'in her boy's trousers'.<sup>40</sup> Field correctly cites the inspiration for Nora's chapel as being the one on her family estate: 'It is in this real chapel that the imaginary end of *Nightwood* is staged', quoting Barnes's great-great-grandfather's description of it as "'the old Methodist church [...] which stood

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p. 136.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 138.

<sup>37</sup> Barnes, *Nightwood*, p. 4.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p. 41.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p. 150.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 152.

on the slightly and breezy hill”'.<sup>41</sup> However, on Nora's route from her house to the chapel, 'the briars made her stumble,'<sup>42</sup> and whilst there is no chapel in the grounds of Hayford Hall, briars line the lane leading to its gates and furthermore mark the driveway beyond them.

An additional model for the chapel in *Nightwood* is quite possibly the Temple à l'Amitié in Natalie Barney's Paris garden at 20 Rue Jacob. The 'Night Watch' chapter, in which we are first appraised of Nora's background and appearance, opens: 'The strangest 'salon' in America was Nora's'.<sup>43</sup> Barnes was a frequent visitor to Barney's house and chapel, and Meryle Secrest, in her biography of Barney's partner Romaine Brooks states: 'What made No. 20 a kind of miracle on the Left Bank was its garden, a small oasis in a jungle of tightly packed streets, [which] contained a tiny Doric "Temple d'Amitié"'.<sup>44</sup> The garden of Hayford Hall is a tree-fringed oasis, not in an urban jungle, but contained within the uncanny bleakness of Dartmoor. The oneiric journeys undertaken in *Nightwood* might be routed through the urban landscapes of Paris, New York and Vienna but the novel's construction took place in Devon at Hayford Hall, and the imposition of this rurality is mirrored in Nora's existential and amorous insecurities.

Hayford's other literary renown, aside from housing Peggy Guggenheim and her guests in the summers of 1932 and 1933, is as a posited site of inspiration for Arthur Conan Doyle's Baskerville Hall in the Sherlock Holmes tale *The Hound of The Baskervilles*. This is evidenced by two large stone hounds squatting on the twin gateposts that guard the entrance to the driveway to Hayford Hall (see Figure 2). The most recent critic to associate Baskerville Hall with Hayford Hall, Philip Weller, who has devoted an entire book to identifying the topography of *The Hound*, whilst admitting that his research is speculative,

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<sup>41</sup> Field, p. 178.

<sup>42</sup> Barnes, *Nightwood*, p. 152.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 45.

<sup>44</sup> Meryle Secrest, *Between Me and Life: A Biography of Romaine Brooks* (New York: Doubleday, 1974), p. 315.



Figure 2. The hound on the gatepost of Hayford Hall, November 2016

nonetheless specifies some pertinent similarities between the two structures and their grounds.<sup>45</sup> We see the two most notable, namely the twin towers of the house itself and the gates and gateposts, in Conan Doyle's first description of Baskerville Hall, and its 'lodge-gates, a maze of fantastic tracery in wrought iron, with weather-bitten pillars on either side, blotched with lichens and surmounted by the boars heads of the Baskervilles'.<sup>46</sup> Aside from the posts being surmounted by the stone bodies of the Hound(s) of the Baskervilles, and not the family emblem of boars' heads, this portrayal is a fairly accurate description of Hayford Hall's gateway.

Barnes's representations of horses and equestrianism have been addressed by critics – Singer *et al.*<sup>47</sup> – mainly alluding to her 1918 short story 'A Night Among The Horses'.<sup>48</sup> In *Nightwood* however, it is Nora's dog, not her horse, who performs an integral role in the plot, one that is as looming and gothic as that of the Baskerville hound. The novel culminates with Nora relegated to the role of voyeur, an uninvited guest in her own family chapel witnessing the performativity of Robin and her dog as it stands 'mouth open [...] whining and waiting'.<sup>49</sup> The dénouement is foreshadowed at the opening of the 'Night Watch' chapter, where we learn that Nora would sit in her salon 'listening, her hand on her hound, the firelight throwing her shadow and his high against the wall'.<sup>50</sup> Before Robin, we therefore see Nora already otherved, observing from the edge of the crowd; and her dog, coupled with the tenebrous setting, occasions this alterity. Barnes's choice of the word

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<sup>45</sup> Weller, Philip, *The Hound of the Baskervilles: Hunting the Dartmoor Legend* (Devon: Devon Books, 2001).

<sup>46</sup> Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (Ware: Wordsworth Classics, 1999), pp. 57-58.

<sup>47</sup> Alan Singer, 'The Horse Who Knew Too Much: Metaphor and the Narrative of Discontinuity in 'Nightwood'', *Contemporary Literature*, 25.1 (1984), 66-87

<sup>48</sup> Djuna Barnes, 'A Night Among The Horses', *The Little Review*, 5.8 (1918), 3-10.

<sup>49</sup> Barnes, *Nightwood*, p. 152.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 45.

'hound', not 'dog', is significant. There is a catachresis at play: Nora is both hounding and hounded by Robin, and the animal, initially portrayed as a pet or guard dog, ultimately poses a threat. The hounds on the gateposts of Hayford Hall, whilst clearly representative of the threatening, fictional hounds of Baskerville, nevertheless guard the entrance to the property from their surveillance points atop the gateposts.

Podniecks and Chait quote Peggy Guggenheim's recollection that Hayford's 'front entrance was approached by a driveway of monkey-puzzle trees',<sup>51</sup> which is not dissimilar to Conan Doyle's portrayal of 'the avenue where the old trees shot their branches in a sombre tunnel'.<sup>52</sup> Furthermore, this matches the driveway as it stands today. Any tree-lined avenue is more attractive or alluring in summer months with sunlight dappling the leaves, as it would have been in that heady August of 1932 for Guggenheim and Barnes, than it would be in October when Dr. Watson first glimpses the fictional Baskerville Hall. Further, Herring renders Guggenheim's sense of the large central hall at Hayford: 'At the end of this room was a big cathedral-like window. All one could see through it were vast trees that kept out the sun'.<sup>53</sup>

Barnes's room was not the only dark, Gothic one in the house. It would seem that this hall, at the architectural and intellectual vortex of the traditional grey stone structure, where the company ate before playing their nightly after-dinner games was, even on a sunny August day, at the heart of its own 'night wood'. Conan Doyle similarly renders Dr. Watson's initial impression of the central chamber of Baskerville Hall as 'large, lofty and heavily raftered with [a] high, thin window of old stained glass'.<sup>54</sup> This is quite probably coincidental as, at breakfast the next morning 'the sunlight flooded in through the

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<sup>51</sup> Elizabeth Podniecks and Sandra Chait, eds, 'Introduction: "What a heavenly place this is"', in *Hayford Hall: Hangovers, Erotics and Modernist Aesthetics* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 2005), pp. 1-22 (p. 2).

<sup>52</sup> Conan Doyle, p. 60.

<sup>53</sup> Herring, p. 192.

<sup>54</sup> Conan Doyle, p. 60.

high mullioned windows'.<sup>55</sup> Further minor discrepancies are not difficult to locate. However, the remoteness of Baskerville and Hayford Hall, and melancholic timbre of the surrounding moorland, both provide the setting for Conan Doyle's novel and set the fugal tone for *Nightwood*. Conan Doyle lived, and practiced as a doctor – though legitimately, unlike Mahoney and O'Connor – for a period in Plymouth, Devon and so knew this Dartmoor territory; whereas Barnes was a visitor who wrote most of her novel there, but set it elsewhere. Whether intuitively or osmotically, the psycho-geography of Dartmoor's bleak beauty encompassing Hayford Hall pervades the ontology of *Nightwood*, and consequently Nora's experience of Robin.

Nora Flood's house in Connecticut, containing an 'oak table before the huge fire', while the structure itself 'was couched in the centre of a mass of tangled grass and weeds', projects a rural alterity. Although this description occurs at the start of 'Night Watch', the third chapter, it is effectively the setting for the beginning of Nora's story, as it is for the dénouement. What linearity there is in the plot of *Nightwood* inscribes a circle that takes Nora, topographically, back to where she started, namely a heterotopia of stone melancholia encircled by arboreal threat. The 'Night Watch' section terminates when Nora awakes in the night and, looking out into the garden, detects 'a double shadow falling from the statue, as if it were multiplying'.<sup>56</sup> As Nora's eyes delve deeper, making a closer inspection of what she terms 'the zone of their catastrophe',<sup>57</sup> she realises she is witnessing the triple shadow of the statue, with the shadows of Robin and another woman drape over both each other and the statue. Nora articulates the estrangement engendered by this 'double doubling' by 'thinking "now they will not hold together"'.<sup>58</sup> Barnes's biographers Field and Herring both allude to her appreciation of Yeats' poetry, and Nora's words evoke those of Yeats in 'The Second Coming':

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid., p.62.

<sup>56</sup> Barnes, *Nightwood*, p. 57.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid, p. 57.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid, p. 58.

Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;  
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world.

(Yeats, L. 3-4)<sup>59</sup>

Nora here appears also to echo the experiential sentiment of Yeats' succeeding lines: The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere:

The ceremony of innocence is drowned;  
The best lack all conviction, while the worst  
Are full of passionate intensity.

(Yeats, L. 6-9)

The chapter's penultimate sentence: 'Unable to turn her eyes away, incapable of speech, experiencing a sensation of evil, [she] turned away from what Robin was doing, [...] and at that moment she knew an awful happiness',<sup>60</sup> with its closing gothic oxymoron, underscores this discomfiture. Yeats' words 'The best lack all conviction' epitomise the character of John Ferrar Holms, a man whose persona was memorably voiced by Barnes as "'God come down for the weekend";<sup>61</sup> his encyclopedic knowledge of literature and philosophy, and his prodigious memory nonetheless led to him authoring next to nothing himself. It is therefore likely that, as for Nora with Dr. O'Connor, any catharsis that Barnes hoped for in her nocturnal interrogations of Holms was either defective or failed to materialise altogether. In contrast with Holms, the women residents at Hayford Hall – Barnes, Guggenheim, Emily Coleman and Antonia White – were indubitably full of both 'passionate intensity' and conviction, although the repercussions of barriers to, and lapses in, religious faith and amorous fidelity, led them all to doubt themselves in subsequent fiction, memoirs and correspondence. All five were certainly contenders for 'the worst' at love and marriage, their failures

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<sup>59</sup> W.B. Yeats, 'The Second Coming', in *Collected Poems* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2008), p. 200.

<sup>60</sup> Barnes, *Nightwood*, p. 58.

<sup>61</sup> Herring, p. 188.

leading them to seek refuge, variously, in alcohol, promiscuity, and the Catholic Church.

Clearly, it is Yeats' public and political world that is disintegrating in the wake of, for example, the Easter uprising of 1916 in Ireland, whereas Barnes is alluding to the social and sexual turmoil that Nora is experiencing in her private life. However, Barnes is nonetheless echoing the tropes of failed conviction, drowned innocence and the subsequent turbulent fragmentation. There is also a forensic literary connection between 'The Second Coming' and Barnes: Yeats' poem first appeared in the November 1920 number of the Chicago-based little magazine *The Dial*, which in March of that year had published a crayon drawing by Barnes entitled 'Head of a Polish Girl'.<sup>62</sup>

The character of Dr. O'Connor is first introduced as 'an Irishman from the Barbary Coast'<sup>63</sup> who, in his opening tirade, declares to his audience: 'Legend is unexpurgated, but history, because of its actors, is deflowered'.<sup>64</sup> Like Mahoney, the doctor is an exiled Irishman, and his allusion to history as being deflowered, or ruptured, demonstrates this. In this preliminary harangue, he recalls hiding from the bombs of the Great War in a cellar, where there 'was an old Breton woman and a cow she had dragged in with her, and behind that someone from Dublin, saying, "Glory be to God!" in a whisper at the far end of the animal'.<sup>65</sup> Both this reminiscence and the doctor's later words to Nora: "'Remorse [...] sitting heavy, like the arse of a bull'",<sup>66</sup> resonate with a similar sentiment and bestial allusion to the closing couplet of Yeats' poem: 'And what rough beast, its hour come round at last, / Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?'<sup>67</sup> Likewise, his drunken assertion a couple of hours later in his

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<sup>62</sup> Nick Tabor, 'No Slouch: The widening gyre of heavy-handed allusions to Yeats's 'The Second Coming'', in *The Paris Review* (2015), n.p. <theparisreview.org> [accessed 14 May 2017].

<sup>63</sup> Barnes, *Nightwood*, p. 13.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 126.

<sup>67</sup> Yeats, L. 21-22.

local bar that: 'The mocking bird howls through the pillars of Paradise',<sup>68</sup> suggests a recollection of Yeats' 'indignant desert birds'.<sup>69</sup> The doctor has declared earlier to Nora that: 'I tuck myself in well at night, well content because I am my own charlatan. Yes, I, the Lily of Killarney, am composing me a new song, with tears and with jealousy'.<sup>70</sup> His cluttered diatribes may be inebriated ramblings, but they are the inebriated ramblings of a displaced Irishman musing on history and his heritage.

Furthermore, at Hayford, and in *Nightwood*, 'the ceremony of innocence' was indeed 'drowned', as suggested by David Copeland: 'Children at Hayford Hall, and in *Nightwood*, are individuals whose age, understanding or incapacity limits their engagement with experience. Children are not so much spiritually poor as incapable and uncomprehending: in a word, unknowing'.<sup>71</sup> Whilst Copeland is overtly referring to Felix Volkbein's son Guido, who appears to suffer from something akin to Asperger's syndrome, and Jenny Petherbridge's 'niece', Nora's innocence too is choked by the discovery, or knowledge, of Robin's amorous duplicity. In a sense, this is a Blakean analysis of innocence and experience, presaging Nora's later observation, on seeing the doctor rouged and bewigged in bed: "'God, children know something they can't tell'".<sup>72</sup> Her innocence drowned, Nora's intellect, though fogged by alcohol, nevertheless tells of things she has been shown but wishes she didn't know.

Copeland further argues that 'what is elegiac, then, in Barnes's portrait of innocence is this perpetually deferred promise, which inspires so many of the novel's narratives of thwarted desire'.<sup>73</sup> *Nightwood* is indeed elegiac, but elegy as

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<sup>68</sup> Barnes, *Nightwood*, p. 146.

<sup>69</sup> Yeats, L. 17.

<sup>70</sup> Barnes, *Nightwood*, p. 86.

<sup>71</sup> David Copeland, 'The Innocent Children of Nightwood and Hayford Hall', in *Hayford Hall: Hangovers, Erotics and Modernist Aesthetics*, ed. by Sandra M. Chait and Elizabeth M. Podnieks (Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 2005), pp. 116-132 (p. 118).

<sup>72</sup> Barnes, *Nightwood*, p. 71.

<sup>73</sup> Copeland, p. 128.

well as desire is thwarted: all the major characters are imprisoned in and bound to present circumstance by memory, which appropriates their loci of control, barring the path to resolution by continual diversion to the past. T.S. Eliot, in *The Waste Land*, another thwarted Modernist elegy, also addresses 'Memory and desire',<sup>74</sup> and alludes to the past and genealogy in the opening stanza: 'And when we were children, staying at the arch-duke's, / My cousin's'.<sup>75</sup> Memory and desire in *Nightwood* facilitate eulogising, primarily by the doctor, but eulogising of history itself not of individual actors upon its stage.

No human intellect, clouded or otherwise, can foretell the future, and the problems and anomalies in separating past, present and future are summed up by Dr. O'Connor, whose serpentine Tiresian predictions display the 'quality of horror and doom',<sup>76</sup> identified by Eliot in his introduction. Before launching into what reads today like the publicity for a drag performance, defining his aspirations to have been 'a high soprano [with] deep corn curls to my bum', he tells Nora: 'The wise men say that the remembrance of things past is all that we have for a future'.<sup>77</sup>

The doctor is alluding to Proust, and Sandra Chait argues: 'Like Proust, who suggested in *Remembrance of Things Past* that those who suffer feel closer to their souls, White, Barnes and Coleman became intimate with theirs',<sup>78</sup> proceeding to cite an interview Barnes gave thirty years after Hayford,<sup>79</sup> when 'she did claim to believe that one must pay with suffering in life in order

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<sup>74</sup> T.S. Eliot, 'The Waste Land', in *Collected Poems 1909-1962* (London: Faber & Faber, 1974), p. 63 (L. 3).

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, L. 13-14.

<sup>76</sup> Barnes, *Nightwood*, p. xiv.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 81.

<sup>78</sup> Sandra Chait, ed, 'Site Also of Angst and Spiritual Search', in *Hayford Hall: Hangovers, Erotics and Modernist Aesthetics*, ed. by Sandra Chait and Elizabeth M. Podnieks (Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 2005), pp. 150-169 (p. 162).

<sup>79</sup> Barnes gave this interview, coincidentally, exactly two weeks after Sylvia Plath had committed suicide, thus ending her own 'suffering in life'.

to reap the reward, presumably in the afterlife'.<sup>80</sup> The comparison between *Nightwood* and Proust is underscored by Peggy Guggenheim herself, writing in a letter to Emily Coleman on 1 September, 1939 (the day the Second World War broke out), reporting: 'I reread all of Proust & enjoyed it just as much again. I find parts of it very like Djuna'.<sup>81</sup> It is thus not unreasonable to surmise that Proust would have been both an after-dinner discussion topic at Hayford Hall and one of the many sources which Holms would have quoted to Barnes whilst sitting on the end of her bed, as well as Barnes herself having read it.

In *Nightwood*, the suffering of the past is relived and experienced again through recollection, becoming the suffering of the present. The future is thereby forestalled: the past becomes present but the present fails to transform into future, rather the abjection, denial and pain contained in the present reflect and mutate back to the past. In the later 'Go Down, Matthew' chapter, where Nora again consults the doctor, she couches this succinctly if resentfully, in more personal terms: "'Robin can go anywhere, do anything," Nora continued, "because she forgets, and I nowhere, because I remember"'.<sup>82</sup>

Martina Stange, in her essay "'Melancholia, melancholia": Changing Black Bile into Black Ink in Djuna Barnes's *Nightwood*', proposes that the doctor's 'rhetoric comprises a number of phrases promising elucidation [...] but all his talks amount to nothing'.<sup>83</sup> Herring, however, disagrees, maintaining that the doctor 'seems to represent Barnes's own worldview [and] can sufficiently transcend suffering to construct a metaphysics of pessimism, which, for all its rambling, does make a coherent statement about life'.<sup>84</sup> Both Nora, listening to the doctor, and Barnes listening to Mahoney and Holms, at least

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<sup>80</sup> Chait, p. 162.

<sup>81</sup> Peggy Guggenheim, (1939, September 1) [Letter to Emily Coleman], Peggy Guggenheim Foundation Papers, 1898-1979, (Venice: The Peggy Guggenheim Collection).

<sup>82</sup> Barnes, *Nightwood*, p. 137.

<sup>83</sup> Stange, p. 144.

<sup>84</sup> Herring, p. 207.

desire to take the latter view. Stange is apparently inverting the immanence of Hélène Cixous' 'white ink' in the use of her words 'black ink', but Cixous, too, elucidates the indefinable threat of darkness: 'Dark is dangerous. You can't see anything in the dark, you're afraid. Don't move, you might fall. Most of all, don't go into the forest'.<sup>85</sup> Robin ventures alone into the night courting descent and fall, whereas Nora hides from it behind her own and the doctor's curtains. Similarly, Barnes's own imperilment led her to avoid not the forest but the moors, retreating to her rococo sanctum at Hayford Hall, and thence down into the interiority of her psyche, where she writes her own 'metaphysics of pessimism' into *Nightwood*. Dr. O'Connor speaks of 'the mind [...] ambling down the almost obliterated bridle path of Well and Ill';<sup>86</sup> the lane leading to Hayford Hall is itself bordered by such a bridle path, marking the liminal territory between the exterior perils of the wild moor and the contained, if unconventional, country house interior of the Hall. During the day, while Barnes wrote, Holms would have been riding down this bridle path; by night his mind fluctuated between 'Well and Ill', doubtlessly instilling in Barnes, as Podniecks tells us he did in Emily Coleman, 'the notion that the artistic genius was a tortured soul'.<sup>87</sup>

Dr. O'Connor, whose pronouncements, as we have seen, go far deeper than inebriated meanderings through history and philosophy, declares to Nora: "'sea level, and atmospheric pressure and topography make all the difference in the world!'"<sup>88</sup> The topography of Hayford Hall and the moors that envelop it, where Barnes and the other Hayford residents were

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<sup>85</sup> Hélène Cixous, 'The Laugh of The Medusa', in *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, ed. by Vincent B Leitch, 2nd edn (New York: Norton, 2010), pp. 1942-1959 (p. 1944).

<sup>86</sup> Barnes, *Nightwood*, p. 135.

<sup>87</sup> Elizabeth M. Podniecks, ed, "'They sat and roared'": Hayford Hall's Performance in the Diary of Emily Coleman', in *Hayford Hall: Hangovers, Erotics and Modernist Aesthetics*, ed. By Sandra M. Chait and Elizabeth M. Podniecks (Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 2005), pp. 89-115 (p. 112).

<sup>88</sup> Barnes, *Nightwood*, p.135.

impermanently, but strategically exiled, are not only integral to the gestation and construction of *Nightwood*: they penetrate its ontology. Julia Kristeva poses the question: 'Where does this black sun [of depression] come from? Out of what eerie galaxy do its invisible rays reach me, pinning me down to the ground, to my bed, compelling me to silence, to renunciation?'<sup>89</sup> For Barnes, pinned to her bed in her rococo room in Hayford Hall, the sunlight streaming through the windows in the summers of 1932 and 1933 was darkened by the eerie surroundings of Dartmoor. Like Nora Flood, Barnes was compelled to renunciation, but Hayford Hall enabled her to reject silence and articulate some of the 'infinite number of misfortunes [that] weigh us down every day'.<sup>90</sup>

*Nightwood* builds to a shadowy conclusion in a similar darkened, damaged pastoral setting to the one in which it was written. It is this arcane melancholia, rather than the halcyon luminosity of those Devon summers, that is diffused throughout *Nightwood*. Of the proliferation of hangovers incurred at Hayford Hall, framed by Dartmoor's 'zone of catastrophe', *Nightwood* is the one that refuses to lift, lingering and perpetuating still.

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Figures 1 and 2 © Julian Isaacs 2016

## The Creative Quotient

*Sally Flint*

Children picking up our bones  
Will never know that these were once  
As quick as foxes on the hill;

'A Postcard from the Volcano' Wallace Stevens

In his essays on reality and imagination the American poet Wallace Stevens believes: 'The imagination is the only genius'. Our imaginations combined with intelligence make us unique in the animal kingdom; it is why we have the internet, penicillin, Shakespeare's plays, The Sistine Chapel, the wheel.

As a poet and lecturer in creative writing, I value, encourage, endorse and champion the cross fertilisation of the arts and other subjects in schools, colleges, universities and beyond; it concerns me that creative subjects are being reduced and sometimes undermined on curriculums. That's because I come from a family and a 1960/70s state education where imagination and creativity were highly regarded. As a child I was able to practise and dabble in a wide variety of arts subjects alongside the three Rs. However, there was a particular incident and time at school that proved to me the importance of providing creative space in education. I was the girl who stared out of the classroom window while the 'clever' children at the front shouted out mental arithmetic answers to the teacher's pointed finger. (Sometimes the board rubber was thrown in my direction because I had not listened to a question.) One teacher, frustrated by my ambivalence to mathematics, marched me to the Headmaster's office and said: 'The girl's nothing but a dreamer'. Fortunately the 'Head' had the insight, time and patience to talk to me and investigate this with his colleagues. As a result the school corridors were covered in thick, white paper and I was told: 'Now it's your job to fill them'.

It never crossed my mind to be daunted by this blank space. At the age of ten I could see the possibility of creating something exciting that would enrich the experience of walking along clinical walkways. I imagined the space 'alive' with stories and pictures. I started to draw and paint and to write little poems/stories alongside – and other pupils became curious. They joined in, added to the mix; like me they saw a maze of possibilities lying ahead of them. We coloured those walls and celebrated on them, experimented with language, wrote jokes, played hangman, set birds free, composed music and lyrics, sketched ghosts. (We included fears and worries too.) It seemed our teachers learnt a lot about our state of minds and how they could best take us forward on our educational journey.

Some might think this flush of creative freedom led us off the rails. That we took cans of spray paint beyond the school walls – but we didn't need to – we had a space to fill and it was ours. And some of those who were outstanding at mental arithmetic also visualised things in new lights. I found that by using my creative brain to 'picture' a mathematical sum as if it was written down on paper enabled me to calculate an answer much more quickly. As children we found new exhilarating ways of looking, communicating and producing.

Decades on, I can't remember all the things that adorned those walls; a part of me wished it had been archived – but that is not the point – the experience underpins and continues to open up and fuel my imagination. This idea of sharing, inventing and learning the power of words and images aids my understanding of how we all not only have 'Intelligence Quotients' but 'Creative Quotients' too. The space between imagination and creativity may be more heightened in some than others. However, whatever a child's CQ may be, they benefit from the opportunity to explore this to enhance their understanding of the learning process. I knew that there was art and poetry in maths and science but, until I was given those blank walls to decorate, parts of my education just weren't playing my tune.

Now I teach 'creative approaches to reading and writing' to groups at all levels, from small children, to people with substance misuse problems, to postgraduates from a broad mix

of disciplines; I am fortunate to teach others not to be afraid of the blank page or computer screen and to realise, explore, build and value their 'creative quotient'. Having witnessed the advantages of using creative writing in multi-disciplinary ways I now want to formally research how best to tailor and offer creative space to academics in a variety of fields, schools and community and disadvantaged groups and document the results.

Neurologists continue to further understand how human brains connect and function. By raising awareness and giving space and time to research how intelligence and creativity work together, more interesting, worthy and thought provoking things have the potential to erupt, unravel, and make exciting things happen. From a young age, and as an ongoing force across our lives, we need more opportunities, not less, to explore how our 'creative quotients' work in tandem with intellects. Wallace Stevens also writes: 'It would be tragic not to realize the extent of man's dependence on the arts' in terms of the space between reality and imagination. However, the reality may be that in the next few years the establishment's legacy could show how underfunding the arts has the power to stifle the next generation's creations and voices, rather than give them chance to grow and understand their lives.

What I know is that those school walls did not divide us. They gave us room to recognise good and bad things in our lives. We linked words, had fun, resolved arguments and made peace. We respected one another's ideas and learnt from each other's experiences and ways of seeing. As children we seized an opportunity to fire up our creative brains and, as a result unexpected connections erupted and, in doing so, learnt valuable skills and lessons that broadened and still benefit our lives.

## Walking Away

### SW Coast Path – Poole to Par

We walk the wrong way  
against received wisdom  
reading the guide backwards  
with the wind in our faces  
and the sea on our left.

We pace ourselves  
with short bursts over years.  
The dog laces our steps  
as we press into contours –  
sandstone, granite, slate.

We repeat ourselves  
doing maths with the miles  
looping back and forth  
with our cars, the worsening news,  
the early deaths of friends.

We tread in step  
together on the flat  
falling apart on higher ground  
never quite expecting to be  
where we find we are.

Soon we will turn the corner.  
With the sun behind us  
we will face the other way  
and begin to walk away  
from ourselves.

*Helen Scadding*

## Angelina Jolie's Extraordinary Star Body in *Maleficent* (2014)

*Katie Newstead*

*Maleficent* continues Disney's long-standing series of films that reproduce or rework traditional fairy tales.<sup>1</sup> Taking Disney's 1959 animated adaptation of Charles Perrault's story of 'The Sleeping Beauty' as its starting point, *Maleficent* gives a 'back story' offering an explanation for the behaviour of the eponymous "wicked fairy", here played by Angelina Jolie, with young and teen versions of the character depicted by Isobelle Molloy and Ella Purnell. Scholars, such as Josephine Dolan and Jack Zipes, discussing both children's literature and film respectively, identify the wicked fairy or stepmother as an archetypal figure, which whilst bearing characteristics that are recognisably similar across generations, they are nonetheless available for the inscription of culturally and historically specific significations.<sup>2</sup> This article aims to explore what meanings are mobilised by Jolie's version of the 'wicked fairy'.

A useful starting point for this examination of the relationship between stars and archetypes would be Northrop Frye's polemic, which determines that archetypes are a mass of complicated and sometimes opposing connotations,<sup>3</sup> much like the structured polysemic nature of a star, as defined by Richard

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<sup>1</sup> *Maleficent*, dir. by Robert Stromberg (Walt Disney, 2014).

<sup>2</sup> Josephine Dolan, 'Crumbling Rejuvenation: Archetype, Embodiment and the 'Ageing Beauty Myth'', in *The Happiness Illusion: How the Media Sold us a Fairytale*, ed. by Luke Hockley & Nadi Fadina (Basinstoke: Routledge, 2015), pp. 75-88; Jack Zipes, *The Enchanted Screen: The Unknown History of Fairy-Tale Films* (New York: Routledge, 2011); Jack Zipes, *The Irresistible Fairy Tale: The Cultural and Social History of a Genre* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013).

<sup>3</sup> Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* (London Princeton University Press, 1957).

Dyer (1998), which individuals have acquired an innate and, often, unconscious knowledge of over time.<sup>4</sup>

While Dyer does not specifically use the term 'archetype' in his analysis of film stars, he does discuss the idea of *types*, and how a star is able to shift between being a distinguishable individual, as well as represent an identifiable type. In 2009, Dyer states that:

In our society, it is the novelistic character that is privileged over the type, for the obvious reason that our society privileges [...] the individual over the collective or the mass. For this reason, the majority of fictions that address themselves to general social issues tend nevertheless to end up telling the story of a particular individual, hence returning social issues to purely personal and psychological ones.<sup>5</sup>

Dyer suggests here that the individual, represented by the star, is valorised above a type, and films that focus on one character enable any larger social issues to be affixed to this figure; allowing for a deeper and more recognisable reading of these concerns.

This coincides with Dolan's idea that stars bring embodied verisimilitude to the fantasy of the fairy tale, and that female stars reify such social anxieties as the decaying body, fertility and maintaining a successful career.<sup>6</sup> Stars thus, according to Dyer and Dolan, are not only physically recognisable as individuals, but as the embodiment of societal and cultural values, denoting and promoting the modern ideals of individualism and capitalism, which have themselves been accelerated by neo-liberalism.

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<sup>4</sup> Richard Dyer, *Heavenly Bodies: Film Stars and Society* (London: Routledge, 2013).

<sup>5</sup> Richard Dyer, 'The Role of Stereotypes', in *Media Studies: A Reader*, ed. by Sue Thornham, Caroline Bassett and Paul Marris (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), pp. 206-212 (p. 209).

<sup>6</sup> Dolan, 'Crumbling', pp. 75-88.

The individualised female star simultaneously reflects the post-feminist discourse of shifting the focus from the feminist, collective action against gender oppression to the individualised, goal-oriented post-feminist polemic of women 'doing it for themselves'. However, stars also need to be recognisable as types, so as to retain a far-reaching appeal. Stars are imbued with a cultural realism and intelligibility that allows audiences to identify with the female roles they perform, such as mothers, grandmothers, wives and daughters. With Dyer's writings in mind, it can be understood that if a star does not fit into a type at some point during their career, remaining completely individualised, they will begin to lose credibility, and lack any semblance of meaning or identification.

In a post-feminist society fixated on youth and looks, ageing is constituted as something to be feared or avoided. Ageing, and the fears and anxieties surrounding it, is made visible in the fairy tale, personified by the vibrant and globally recognisable archetypes of the wicked stepmother, fairy godmother and crone or witch. Dolan contends that the fairy tale film allows the ageing female body to become visible, with stars imbuing the archetypes they portray with such relevant and contemporary issues as consumerism, beauty, youth and (re)production, positioning these women as ideal examples of 'successful ageing'.<sup>7</sup>

The ageing female star reifies what it is to be a successful older woman, as she signifies the whole package of female worthiness, privilege, productivity and visibility: she has a career, wealth, family, and beauty. The most obvious and observable example of successful ageing is certainly that of the star body as, through their ability to bring together such contradictory ideas as the individual and collective selves, stars can make the concept of growing old gracefully seem the most natural and expected option.

Paradoxically, making these archetypes of ageing femininity *more* visible, via the fact that they are played by such highly

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<sup>7</sup> Josephine Dolan, 'Smoothing the Wrinkles', in *The Routledge Companion to Media and Gender*, ed. by Cynthia Carter, Linda Steiner & Lisa McLaughlin (London Routledge, 2015), pp. 342-351 (p.345).

recognisable and sexually desirable Hollywood actors as Angelina Jolie, Charlize Theron and Cate Blanchett, serves to *disguise* their bodies' markers of ageing. The fairy tale film's casting of these beautiful women as characters traditionally perceived as grotesque, who have failed to age successfully, coincides with the post-feminist contradiction of valorising youth, yet judging a woman's worthiness largely on her ability to achieve prescribed life stages, i.e. motherhood, which she can only do by growing *old*. The specific appearance of the ageing female star in the rebooted fairy tale film is significant, as this fantastical, temporally and spatially dislocated space allows for real social concerns surrounding ageing, and its effects on the body, to be dramatically and graphically visualised, particularly as the narratives of these films are so fixated on ideas of rejuvenation, youth, and transformation.

As Dyer posits, stars demonstrate the capitalist ideal of financial independence, whilst having the power and influence to speak about difficult or emotive cultural issues.<sup>8</sup> The fact that the title role of *Maleficent* is played by one of the most well-recognised and revered Hollywood stars, Angelina Jolie, is a hugely significant and distinctive feature of this version of the *Sleeping Beauty* tale. Jolie's star image brings glamour, beauty and sex appeal to this role, while her highly publicised support and dedication to humanitarian aid locates her body as a site of devotion, kindness and charity. Maleficent is archetypal villain, protagonist and saviour of this film and, undoubtedly, Jolie's negotiation between the contradictory modes of nurturing adoptive mother and sex goddess serves to facilitate and overcome the contradictions within this character.

Indeed, there is a somewhat disturbing scene in *Maleficent*, which should be read as rape, and is certainly intended to stand as the motivation for this archetype's cruel cursing of a newborn baby. During the night, Maleficent's childhood human friend Stefan (Sharlto Copley), now under orders from the King (Kenneth Cranham) to murder her, appears out of the mist calling for her. Maleficent enters the frame from above,

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<sup>8</sup> Richard Dyer, *Heavenly Bodies: Film Stars and Society* (London & New York Routledge, 2013).

emphasising her ability to fly, and rendering the event that is about to take place even more tragic and disturbing. Stefan and Maleficent are then framed in medium shot, sitting side-by-side, allowing the audience to clearly see that they hold hands; their closeness connoting intimacy and romantic privacy. Stefan gives Maleficent a bottle to drink from (0: 16: 34), which can be read as a phallic symbol and, indeed, after Maleficent has taken a drink she strokes her lips, and gives a small, knowing smile. This moment hints of a sexual relationship between Maleficent and Stefan, while connoting the pleasure and satisfaction that the fairy particularly gains from it.

In the next shot, as the contents from the bottle take effect, Maleficent falls asleep and trustingly rests her head on Stefan's shoulder (0: 16: 58), a gesture that signifies a physical closeness between the two. Stefan tenderly strokes Maleficent's face as she sleeps, perhaps to check that she is definitely asleep, or this may be a genuine moment of affection.

The camera then cuts to a close-up of the still sleeping Maleficent with her body across the frame, and her head to the left of the screen (0: 17: 13). This shot is spatially matched by the next, when the glass vial that had contained the intoxicating amber liquid also lies horizontally across the screen, with its open end directed towards the bottom right-hand corner of the frame, dripping the last of its contents onto the ground (0: 17: 01).

This match-cut, or mirroring of shots, forces the point that Maleficent is drugged and in danger from the man sent to kill her. Moreover, the juxtaposition of the dripping vial and the drugged fairy points to the potential for blood and semen to be spilled.

The fact that these events occur while Maleficent is asleep, at her most vulnerable, situates the fairy as the victim of a brutal and painful attack by Stefan; a man ultimately putting his desire for power and control over his alleged love for this woman. This works to subvert the traditional *Sleeping Beauty* fairy tale, as it is the future wicked fairy who is first seen to fall victim to the curse of sleep. Yet, as this paper will go on to demonstrate, Aurora's (Elle Fanning) subsequent sleep is perhaps not

necessarily the punishment of Perrault's version, but can be seen as Maleficent's way of preventing a similar violation.

Rape is confirmed by Jolie's performance of Maleficent's awakening after the attack. Maleficent experiences great pain and trauma, and the combination of her facial features, presented in close-up to the audience, the blood and torn dress where her wings used to be, and her screams of agony and anguish make this sequence extremely harrowing to watch. Maleficent's reaction is silent at first (0: 18: 16), as if she is too stunned, or in too much pain, to make a sound. Instead, Maleficent sits on the forest floor, bathed in a cold blue light, with her mouth open in a silent scream (0: 18: 27), before descending into soundless racking sobs (0: 18: 33).

The camera then moves away from Maleficent, framing her in a much wider, longer shot (0: 18: 39) that situates her in the centre of the frame, yet the *mise-en-scène* here means that the dull brown colour of her dress renders her barely distinguishable from the forest surroundings. This distance from the camera, as well as the fact she is sitting in a hunched, kneeling stance, makes Maleficent appear physically small and vulnerable; visually enhancing her fragile and emotional state.

After once again focusing on Maleficent's face in close-up, the camera takes a high-angled shot from above her, as she lies back down on the forest floor, with her head resting on her arm (0: 18: 58). This is an almost childlike pose, and the camera's position above her as it zooms out and away from her further reduces her body, suggesting that the violent removal of her wings has not only caused her physical damage, but has had an emotional and psychological impact too; causing her to literally shrink in stature.

The last shot of this sequence, wherein the camera zooms out from its focus on Maleficent, leaving her as a tiny speck on the forest floor, and then tilts upwards to concentrate on the King's castle in the distance, serves as a final reminder to the viewer as to what the fairy has lost, and for what purpose. The phallic, sharp spires and turrets signify the cruel patriarchal power that has caused Maleficent's suffering, while the fact that the camera ends this sequence by focusing on the shadowy, oppressive castle in the distance denotes that its presence will

continue to be felt throughout the narrative; Maleficent is not yet free of patriarchy's brutal rule.

In her capacity of UN Special Envoy in a *BBC Radio 4* interview from the Global Summit on Sexual Violence and Conflict, Jolie stated the following:

In essence the question was asked; what could make a woman become so dark and lose all sense of her maternity and her womanhood and her [...] softness, and something would have to be so violent, so aggressive and so of course [...] we were very conscious, the writer and I, that it was a metaphor for rape. And that this would be the thing that would make her lose sight of that and then at a certain point the question of the story is what could possibly bring her back [...]. And it is an extreme Disney fun version [of *Sleeping Beauty*], but at the core it is abuse and how the abused then have a choice of abusing others, or overcoming and remaining loving, open people.<sup>9</sup>

Jolie is bringing her privileged role as spokeswoman for the very real, traumatic subject of sexual violence to the fictional character of Maleficent, not as a means of dismissing or belittling such an attack, but of examining the motivations behind this woman's subsequent actions. As Jolie maintains, the rape not only physically damages Maleficent, but harms her desire to protect and nurture those weaker than her, whereas once she was seen as the matriarchal protector of the fairy folk. As well as the rape providing motivation for Maleficent's actions, Jolie's statement suggests that it was intended as a means of allowing this character the space to become either wholly evil and attack everyone around her, or to gradually rebuild herself, and reclaim the maternal, loving and respected woman that she once was. Arguably, Maleficent's relationship with Aurora is what 'brings her back', yet it also seems to be the case that this rape of Maleficent is cited as the ideal motivation

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<sup>9</sup> Angelina Jolie, 'Angelina Jolie, William Hague, and Sexual Violence in Conflict', *Women's Hour*, BBC Radio 4, 11 June 2014.

for her to re-establish herself as a woman of authority and power.

This echoes the polemic of 'resilience' discussed by Robin James, where the burdens placed upon women by patriarchal values and expectations lead to damage.<sup>10</sup> Women able to work through this damage, successfully moulding their bodies into normalised and acceptable sites of femininity, are upheld as worthy and "good" models of womanhood. In this formulation, a good woman is one committed to consistently maintain her body, despite the pressures inflicted upon her. James adds that the damage patriarchy causes needs to be embraced, before utilising it in the creation of a stronger, more productive and valuable self. As she summarises:

[...] this encumbrance is now the very *medium for* transcendence – it does not prevent you from doing, but provides you the very materials with which you can *do* something. You have to be damaged and/or have damage in order to have something to overcome.<sup>11</sup>

Maleficent begins as a healthy, able-bodied, powerful and attractive woman, until she is damaged by Stefan (as a symbol of patriarchy); her wings, representative of her independent power, are ripped away, and she is the victim of rape, leaving her emotionally and physically fragile. If one is to apply the discourse of resilience, it can be argued that overcoming the physical and emotional aftermath of Stefan's attack in the way in which Maleficent does, by adopting Aurora, recoups her as a "good" example of womanhood. Maleficent does not allow herself to fall under the weight of patriarchy's damage, by becoming wholly evil, and takes on the highly venerated and expected role of 'mother' to Aurora, thus ensuring that she once again becomes a "good", i.e. productive, attractive, resilient woman. Maleficent has not overcome *despite* her damage, but

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<sup>10</sup> Robin James, *Resilience and Melancholy: Pop Music, Feminism, Neoliberalism* (Zero Books, 2015), Kindle Ebook.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 84.

*because* of it; it is this damage that has made her the person that she is.

This reverberates, to some extent, with Jolie's star image as, following a double-mastectomy that, naturally changed her body to one that did not immediately accord with social expectations of attractiveness and sexiness, the actor continues to be regarded as one of the most beautiful women in the world. While undoubtedly traumatic and painful this bodily transformation, echoed by the removal of Maleficent's wings in the aforementioned scene, and having similar connotations of power, maternity, and protection, presented Jolie with the opportunity to demonstrate her own resilience and strength. Jolie, of course, is already in an extremely privileged position of being an attractive, desirable and successful star, and she uses this foundation of power and influence to speak openly and informatively about her experience, thus coding her as a successful example of neo-liberal femininity and resilience. The star has triumphantly overcome the threat of cancer, its physical effects on her highly sexualised body, and patriarchal pressures by tackling these issues in a frank and authentic way, and this only serves to instil Maleficent with these courageous and robust traits.

The fact that stars contain numerous and contradictory meanings situates them as ideal locations for holding together such social inconsistencies as needing to remain young, yet achieving each designated life stage. These archetypes of femininity embody realistic concerns about successful ageing, the female life cycle, physical and emotional changes, having it all, and being financially and emotionally independent whilst caring for a family, which they do because they are played by the paradoxical and everlasting figure of the star. To echo Dyer's polemic of stars as simultaneously ordinary and extraordinary<sup>12</sup>, stars function as realistic sites of the societal concerns of growing old, body image and maintaining a productive work/life balance, yet they also become models of aspiration, with their sparkling onscreen personas fulfilling viewer fantasies

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<sup>12</sup> Richard Dyer, *Stars* (London BFI, 1998).

and wishes. The privileged body of the star is able to demonstrate resilience via the economic and emotional maintenance of their idealised selves, which is further facilitated by the numerous resources available exclusively to them, such as beauty treatments, fitness regimes, glamorous clothing and cosmetic surgery.

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## Three of Them

*Michael D. Rose*

There were three of them. Two of them were married.

I was doing my usual Thursday morning, sitting in Birmingham airport with an unpleasantly large coffee, watching the planes mooch about. I had my gold-edged notepad and I was making little bullet points, notations, picking scraps from passing conversations. I'll pick up some phrase or expression, and puzzle out where the people are from. I am a collector. You never know what will turn into a story – politics, arguments about the washing, or a child's sulking gabble.

Often, if the tables around me empty, I'll string together a paragraph or two, continuing an imaginary chat with the departed person.

"What's your name?" I say.

"My name is Raymond Knight. I am a collector, too."

"That's interesting. I thought I heard you mention photographs earlier – to that other lady."

"Ah – that was Valerie. She lives next door to me, and has a car, so sometimes she gives me a lift. I collect photographs of things I find. Not your usual landscapes and family, you know. I find objects in the street. Lost objects – like gloves and scarves – that are really absolutely worthless, but valuable to the person that lost them. Pieces of paper with cryptic writing on are good; homework and love letters. Even shopping lists; you could write a whole novel out of some of them. Once I found a fire-extinguisher, in the middle of a field."

He has a nasal Brummie voice, and he tells me about the book he wants to make of all these photos, and we nod and smile. Sometimes I'll turn it into a story, but often they just wander off after a while, and the next person sits at the next table, and I start a new page. I liked Raymond; I invent a small dog for him, and a minor creeping disease. But I wouldn't want to spend too

much time with him. He kept looking at my earrings instead of my face. Odd smell, too. I leave him standing staring out of the big windows at the tarmac, scanning for some abandoned suitcase or umbrella carcass, posed and naked before his telescopic lens.

It was about seven in the morning. They sat directly behind me, which is perfect. I put my feet up on the edge of the low green table in front of me and out of habit bit the lid off my pen. I couldn't see them without turning around, but they sounded fairly young, with a nice mix of voices. A West Coast American, clearly; a pretty non-descript Englishman with hay fever, and another accent I couldn't place – maybe a form of Scottish that had lived too long in the soft South.

Ok, setting the scene; butterfly net poised. They were going to Ireland. I think the American was trying to find her *roots*. Not that she'd ever visited or knew anyone there or had researched anything; she wanted to belong somewhere, though. Red hair was probably enough to stake a claim. I began to imagine how we might chat. I could sit her down with a muffin and have one of those nice rambling conversations about how well our mothers would get on if they met – my grandmother was Irish, too. *No way!* We're practically related. I decide her name is Samantha, though later on I find out she's called Rowena. I like Samantha better. She'll just have to lump it.

"I've never been to Ireland, either," I say, "Do you know what to expect?"

"Well, it'll be really green and stuff, and like, countryside. I'm soooo excited! And Megan says Dublin is beautiful!" She claps her hands briefly, and bounces in her chair as if she doesn't need a plane to get her there at all. (I need to work on making her speak – I don't normally write about a lot of Americans. I can practise by watching films.) "I want to try A Guinness."

"Samantha," I say, putting my hand confidentially on her arm, "do yourself a favour and don't buy a big hat with I ♥ Ireland on it."

We might have talked for longer, but Megan reappeared from WHSmith's, and dragged her away. She's edgily energetic, bored and loud. I give her straight dark-blonde hair and skinny jeans. "Come on, Bad Idea Bear. Entertain me!" As they round the corner the word "bitch" floats back to me but I don't know for whom. Perhaps Megan's jealous.

Their disappearance just leaves the English guy. I risk a glance back, pretending to check the arrival times. He's slouched half-asleep on the bench; it's too early in the morning to talk to his type anyway. Glasses, heavy, scruffy clothes. He has big, chunky hands that rest on a yellowing paperback. He's probably a student of something pointless he won't shut up about. The Philosophy of Obscure Work in Translation from a Poor Oppressed Social Conscience. *God*. I get up and try to decide whether or not to have another coffee.

I settle on tea, and also that the American and the other girl could be married. Why not? Nothing so loatharially lethargic as an Englishman in an airport, and if any story with these three is going to come alive, it needs a bit of romance. And some vices. Not drugs – too obvious – but something whimsical. A consuming addiction to films by and starring Madonna? A dead and loathed father who nevertheless influences all major life decisions? A secret desire to make love on steam trains? (And no, don't worry, I'm not writing myself into this story now. Loath trains of all kinds.)

What I do is to pick up litter. Words left behind as people drift off to wherever it is they'd rather be. A Womble for life-stories and accents. It's hardly stealing. If you didn't want to share your lisp or your recent diagnosis of halitosis you should have kept your mouth shut (for several reasons) and sat staring stupidly at your iPhone like everyone else. Not that everyone sees it that way; how I filter and improve and correct on your unguarded utterances and unpleasant habits. Some people might call it eavesdropping, or spying, if dramatically inclined. What to say if someone actually notices what I'm up to?

I practice lines in my head, and half-perform the reassuring, slightly embarrassed smile I'll stick on: "Don't worry – I'm just stealing bits of your life for my books. Come and have a coffee." I've been caught twice before. Once by an elderly couple; the husband blustered at me and said he was fetching a policeman, until his wife pulled him away and told him to stop fussing. The other time it was a Norwegian backpacker. He ended up inviting me to a party at the weekend, where I was the only person without culturally appropriative piercings to show off. I left early.

Except, I just made those two incidents up. I've not been caught, ever. People have stared and moved away occasionally, but they can't confront you. Imagine the risk of getting it wrong! Easier to believe it's not happening. Especially if you leave some room for doubt: never stare directly at your quarry; always look at something else when you're listening; squint over the top of your mug if you're watching them. Spying. Collecting.

Would you be angry? Violent, even? Hard to say what people will do in an airport. At least you can get off a bus.

I should give you a date. Verisimilitude. This story is set on 26th May 2005, the day after Liverpool Football Club heroically won the Champion's League. There were a few lads in red shirts wandering about, pale from the night's amazement in Istanbul. I jotted down a few snaps of banter as one group passed. "Boss mate, boss." "Do you see Stevie G, see that?" "What you buy a bluidy hookah for? Dev's mum's sister Amina sells them things in her corner shop anyway." Inspiring stuff from a historical night. I'm sure you could set a grand narrative against the drama of One Night in Istanbul, but the morning after, in Birmingham Airport, probably not. I started to sketch the back of the head of one of them – wonderful sticky-out ears.

The next thing to strike me was the woman a few tables away. As the happy Reds jumbled past, she came into view, and I was transfixed. She was extraordinarily tall and thin – even sitting down as she was, you felt she had been folded into her seat like

origami. She had to lean forwards and down to put her elbows on the table, both of them resting on the plastic surface, and her head was cocked to one side, looking with one eye at the muffin sitting between them, daring it to move. I quickly jotted down her smart business suit, her greying, loosely-tied up hair, and her handbag. Her bag was very similar to mine, so I could use that for extra details. It had short, sky-blue straps, and colourful stripes on it, almost like a deckchair. Mine has a lot of everyday rubbish in it. A quick list – good for building up a world around the reader. It's nothing Umberto Eco would put his name to, but here are the contents of my handbag: two packets of tissues, my purse, three spare pens – one red and two black, a flattened Mars Bar, some loose coins, plasters, lipstick, mirror, make-up kit, perfume, a comb, my page-to-view diary, a stray silver earring, anti-histamine tablets, two scraps of paper with phone-numbers on that some overly-friendly old ladies foisted on me after our chat last week, a bank statement, some unidentified crumbs, another comb, some old receipts with hand-scrawled notes on the back, some hairclips and half a pack of chewing gum. Now we know each other. I hope we can be friends.

I don't know why I told you that. Perhaps the ladder-like woman has the same contents. She's probably got a much smarter bag for the big meetings she attends, but this one is her life. There's also a picture of her pet cat in the front pocket of her purse. She has just clinched a deal for X-million dollars to bring a revolutionary new type of carpet shampoo into the UK market. Its American name will have to be changed, of course, so she's spent the morning hissing at the marketing team to find the perfect logo for new, amazing "Carpet-rite". Silver, shiny, bright, simple. Now she is on her way to her second-home fishing cottage in Penrustic, in Cornwall, where she will spend the weekend staring peacefully at the sea, walking a red setter up to the cliffs and back, and fretting over the fact that she can't get mobile reception unless she's at the top of the hill, holding it over her head like Robinson Crusoe flagging down a passing ship.

I watched as she started to pick at her muffin, taking tiny clumps between her long fingers, and lifting them slowly up to her mouth. She chewed every tiny bite exactly twenty times. At this rate it would probably take her an hour to eat it. She was playing with her food, drawing out the treat, deliberating. And then I realised: I was watching a professional. A time waster. A dawdler – someone who spends great ripe chunks of their life stuck in airports, trains, taxis and airplanes. Eking out a little cake between Birmingham and Newquay, a Twix between Edinburgh and Brussels, root vegetable crisps on the train into Kings Cross. I felt a strange, blank kinship with her; her life of time passing, passing time. Lulls between the real events, how she could be becalmed and alone in this busy place. (I'm racking up the transport metaphors, no? Next time let's meet in a library. All those whispered conversations prime you for something exciting, too.)

She's probably read all the readable books in the bookshop, and quite possibly has no idea which country she's in. Could you tell where you were from an airport? I've sat in hundreds of these places and there's not much difference between Munich, Washington or Paris. Different snacks, same prices. Even the chairs smell the same. Airports aren't just landing spots, they're airlocks; pressure controlled so we don't have to acclimatise before we jump off again, anonymous above the clouds. Don't bother learning to breathe the air. Everyone will be somewhere else in a couple of hours, speaking a different language. Walk invisibly through the builders' yard of Babel and you can see what HSBC, McDonalds and British Airways are selling today. She bites one of her nails, and I find I'm doing the same. Filthy habit. Stop staring.

If someone did get violent, caught me jotting down quirks and secret, I think I'd faint. They wouldn't even have to do anything, I'd just imagine them slapping at my cheek with craggy fingernails and I'd keel over, still trying my innocent half-smile. If they drew blood I'd be out for the count – can't stand the sight of it, makes me shudder. Add me to the pile of little incidents in the waiting area, the woman bleeding on to her own notebook

while the businesswoman tries to search her pockets for recording devices from competitor firms. Maybe Raymond will take my picture.

But no, I choose my spots for their invisibility. I am the ambush predator, the devil scorpionfish, in tights. Find me in the depths. This bench is a good hunting spot – shielded on one side by a thin wooden wall, the window over the planes in front of me. Behind me is another bench, and to my right are all the tables and chairs that attract my characters. In this lounge there is a curious mish-mash of furniture, as if the designer couldn't make up his mind what state the customers would be in – a couple of all embracing armchairs here, skinny metal chairs under the tables, three bar stools against one wall, and these benches, rigidly padded in an unexcitable green material. I make short notes, dashed off without much of a scheme – noting a particular type of luggage, or the body language of a conversation. Sometimes I start having ideas for a story then and there. Often I draw stickmen, or doodle flowers as if I were on one end of a dull telephone conversation. I get this nervous fidget from my mother. Tall thin woman doesn't fidget, apart from the nails; she stores energy for PowerPoint presentations.

Some Chinese students took over the immediate area at this point, grouped around with their miniature computers and cutely loud mobile phones. They squabbled amiably, barely touched by the rest of the airport's noise and apathy. I thought I might as well take this as a time for a break, and went to the loo. I found a cubicle that had graffiti on the walls – someone venting their frustration with the world. "My husband is driving me mad!!" it said. No one had scribbled a reply, not even a rude joke.

As I exited, I nearly tripped over a clan of small German children, who were alternately grizzling and staring raptly at the watches in the gadget shop. The whole family was walking cheerfully around in shorts and t-shirts. The father had a welcoming brown beard and was absurdly tall. He seemed to be looking around his temporary kingdom, benignly noting the

scratched paint here, the inefficient seating layout there. He was inspecting the adverts and safety signs, mumming the English as he read. I picture him in a fairy tale – a bear cursed to take human form and live amongst these hurrying fools. Gentle and powerful, gate-keeper to the secrets of the kingdom; our hero's dangerous mission is to get him out of bed and dressed on a cold December morning.

My corner of the coffee bar had emptied again. The students had spotted an arcade game in the corner, and were shouting instructions to each other. I reclaimed my territory, scrunched back into the seat, and waited. I liked the idea of the English guy, the American and the other girl – now that I thought about it, was she Scandinavian? What do I know about Scandinavians? It's dark a lot, they have pornography, trees and good nursery care, and beat themselves with sticks. No, lazy stereotype; I tap myself on the forehead in reproach. Stop thinking and keep listening. I could ask my friend Pete about the porn though – I'm sure he's got a library of the stuff. I'm going to stop thinking about that now. Instead, Samantha and the Scottish/Scandinavian are married; Megan (let's call her Megan) is a chef with a filthy temper that only Samantha knows is just front. Samantha delights in disappointing her parents but worries that she's just been drifting the past few years, never settling on a career. Both are so afraid of being alone they cling together. Time will tell if they are keeping each other afloat, or drowning, their limbs knotted together.

At that moment the two girls ambled back in to the café. Samantha carrying an enormous coffee and telling a dirty joke about her Snickers bar; Megan has a dirty laugh to match. I like her, too. They took the same seats as before, slumping into them with exaggerated sighs. Englishman mumbled something and sat up, rubbing his stubbled cheeks with both hands. They were a noisy group, which makes taking notes that much easier. And they swore a lot, which I can leave out to speed things up. I decided that the English guy was called Adam. God, he's boring. What's the point of him? Megan and Samantha have just returned from their spur-of-the-moment honeymoon in

Amsterdam, and are hopping over to Ireland to find Samantha's family.

"Like Inigo Montoya!"

"You're not going to kill anyone. You're Pinocchio, hoping to turn into a real human being."

Adam is in the first year of his PhD and is coming along to taste some of the authenticity of Irish green hills, and all their oppressed poetry.

Their conversation drifted past me. These were bitchy, crabby people, adapting to their airport environment; it's a kind of camouflage. I swooped to catch the rarer snippets, though, catching them on the point of my pen:

"...talking to her was like sucking treacle through a straw..."

"...that dog will get her in anywhere..."

"...crotchless Lederhosen..."

"...you look like David Hasslehoff's carpet..."

"...Ancient Greeks had no word for the colour blue..."

"...do you think it's suiting?"

(It's junk, mostly, but that last one is great – the not-quite native English that makes perfect sense. The kind of malapropism you always want to give your characters but can't make up. I underline it in my notebook.)

After a while I decided I'd picked up enough bits and pieces from them. Something like a story seemed to be coming together. Megan and Samantha endure family disgrace and fish-out-of-water times in Ireland. Not sure Adam will make the final version; hope he doesn't feel unfairly silenced by my imperialist pen. My attention drifted, and I noticed a younger couple take up the nearest table. Mid-twenties, friends probably – they were exchanging relative stories – my mad uncle John this, my cute baby cousin Claire that. This is good stuff. Other people's relatives are the backbone of a great many novels, scenes around the dining table, or convenient plot changes. The guy started telling a longer story, and I missed much of it because he was leaning in towards the girl, faces close together. She was happily standing her ground, smiling on cue, brushing her hair back behind one ear every so often. Flirting story, I thought, until

I heard the words “Grandma”, “Fireworks” and “Funeral” drift over. I shifted my position a little, so I could look directly at them without turning my head. Interesting. The mood had shifted too – the eyes a bit bigger on the smiles, hands drawn together sympathetically. The guy had one elbow on the table, the other arm was tripping across the table top in rhythm with his yarn. I still couldn’t see his lips. Could I move to a nearer table without drawing attention? A story charming the girl like that must be worth having. I edged to the furthest extreme of the bench, one leg suspended in mid-air as I leaned towards the sounds. I felt on the brink of hearing, as though an extra inch towards them would let me in. I gripped my pen tighter, so I could write without looking, and moved imperceptibly onto my tip-toes, buttocks almost floating beyond the seat. I eyed the next table enviously, and tensed, putting all my weight on the right leg. I could almost –

A big drop of coffee splatted on my page.

“Hey! You *are*! You’re writing about us. Lemme see!”

Above me loomed Samantha. No friendly chat, no muffin, no imagined camaraderie. I tried to judge her voice – angry, triumphant? Feeling sick, I slowly look up, one hand holding on the bench, carefully rearranging my face into a smile.

# 'The Best Hoax': The Emergence of Performative Modernism in Loos and Faulkner

*Samuel Cribb*

In the United States during the 1920s, modernism was becoming a cultural commodity. In 1928, for example, *Vanity Fair* advertised 'modernist writers and artists' to attract a public 'interested in highbrow culture'.<sup>1</sup> Such blatant commercialisation of high culture illuminates 'the frequency with which modernists published in commercial contexts',<sup>2</sup> evincing the increasing marketability and recognisability of modernism at the time. The recent reconceptualisation of modernism as 'subject to market pressures'<sup>3</sup> negates the critical ideal of high modernism as the myth of 'the individual [artist] threatened by homogenized ... mass culture',<sup>4</sup> signifying a more nuanced and permeable relationship between high and low culture than previously considered.

Andreas Huyssen provides a useful basis for extending related discussions: the Great Divide, which is seen in any 'discourse that insists on the categorical distinction between high art and mass culture'.<sup>5</sup> This divide is not 'a static binary of

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<sup>1</sup> Natalie Kalich, "'How Fatally Outmoded Is Your Point of View?": *Vanity Fair's* Articulation of Modernist Culture to the Modern Reader', *Reception: Texts, Readers, Audiences, History*, 6.1 (2014), pp. 19-37 (p. 20).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.

<sup>3</sup> Andreas Huyssen, 'High/Low in an Expanded Field', *Modernism/modernity*, 9.3 (2002), 363-374 (p. 370).

<sup>4</sup> John T. Matthews, ed, 'What Was High About Modernism? The American Novel and Modernity', in *A Companion to the Modern American Novel 1900-1950*, ed. by John T. Matthews (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), pp. 282-305 (p. 285).

<sup>5</sup> Andreas Huyssen, *After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), p. viii.

high Modernism vs the market', but rather 'a powerful imaginary insisting on the divide'<sup>6</sup> - it is a critical and authorial preconception. Miriam Hansen, in exploring the divide, proffers the term 'vernacular Modernism' for 'the study of modernist aesthetics to encompass cultural practices [mediating] the experience of modernity';<sup>7</sup> rather than resisting it, she proposes a culturally perceptive form of modernist studies. Building on these discussions, I propose the term 'performative modernism': if modernist authors really were 'acutely aware of the Great Divide',<sup>8</sup> I contend that they attempted to benefit from it by satirising and deconstructing the commodified ideal of modernism to appeal to wider audiences. Furthermore, to succeed in a media-saturated culture, American modernists employed a form of self-fashioning in which the image of the author was as much a product of artifice as the works they produced. In this article, I will analyse the emergence of performative modernism in William Faulkner's 'Golden Land' (1933),<sup>9</sup> 'Artist at Home' (1935),<sup>10</sup> and 'Carcassonne' (1931),<sup>11</sup> alongside Anita Loos' *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (1925),<sup>12</sup> and argue that both authors engaged in performative modernism to market themselves and their works to audiences on both sides of the perceived divide. I will begin by interrogating the relationship between the performances of gender and modernism in contemporary American culture, and proceed by

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<sup>6</sup> Huysen, 'High/Low', p. 366.

<sup>7</sup> Miriam Bratu Hansen, 'The Mass Production of the Senses: Classical Cinema as Vernacular Modernism', *Modernism/modernity*, 6.2 (1999), 59-77 (p. 60).

<sup>8</sup> Robert Scholes, 'Exploring the Great Divide: High and Low, Left and Right', *Narrative*, 11.3 (2003), 245-269 (p. 255).

<sup>9</sup> William Faulkner, 'Golden Land', in *Collected Stories of William Faulkner* (New York: Random House, 1950), pp. 701-726.

<sup>10</sup> William Faulkner, 'Artist at Home', in *Collected Stories of William Faulkner* (New York: Random House, 1950), pp. 627-646.

<sup>11</sup> William Faulkner, 'Carcassonne', in *Collected Stories of William Faulkner* (New York: Random House, 1950), pp. 895-900.

<sup>12</sup> Anita Loos, *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (London: Penguin Books, 1998).

investigating how Faulkner and Loos use their fiction to comment on the marketing process of literary texts. Subsequently, I will examine Hollywood's relationship with modernism, considering how the permeable barriers between high and low culture meant that popular texts could reflect modernist concerns, and vice versa. Finally, as performative modernism requires authors to adopt multiple stances on their work, I will analyse the fracturing effects of performative modernism on the performers themselves.

### **Blonde bombshell: performing gender and modernism in Loos**

Critics have often discussed how, for American modernists, Hollywood ostensibly represented the mindlessness of mass culture. Mark Eaton contends that Hollywood's 'debased form of culture' pressurised literature to become more accessible.<sup>13</sup> He concludes that the influence of the film industry should encourage critics to investigate the mutual influences between high and mass culture.<sup>14</sup> John Matthews concurs that Hollywood's negative reputation in literary circles gave rise to the 'myth of the artist corrupted' by commercial and mass media.<sup>15</sup> However, both critics offer surveys more than sustained analyses of contemporary texts. In response, I will investigate Loos' *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* as a text that challenges the permeability of the boundaries between high and popular culture, as well as between film and literature.

Loos achieves a balance between these different types of culture through the novel's protagonist Lorelei Lee, a gold-digger whose ambitions are to be either 'an authoress' or 'a

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<sup>13</sup> Mark Eaton, 'What Price Hollywood? Modern American Writers and the Movies', in *A Companion to the Modern American Novel 1900-1950*, ed. by John T. Matthews (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), pp. 466-495 (pp. 471-2).

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 486.

<sup>15</sup> John T. Matthews, 'Faulkner and the Culture Industry', in *The Cambridge Companion to William Faulkner*, ed. by Philip M. Weinstein (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 51-74 (p. 51).

cinema star';<sup>16</sup> to her, the two are interchangeable. Critics of the novel often note that it is not classifiable as either high or low culture.<sup>17</sup> Nevertheless, binary debates about classification, stemming from H L Mencken's rejection of the initial *Blondes* short story from *The American Mercury* for being too 'frivolous' for a 'serious publication',<sup>18</sup> risk maintaining the illusion that the novel must exist solely on one side of the great divide, and should therefore be treated with caution. Jean Marie Lutes astutely observes that Loos 'figured her own authorship' to take advantage of the beauty culture of *Harper's Bazar* in which the novel was first serialised:<sup>19</sup> Loos, she concludes, 'creates a writer-persona that unites the expert' and 'the beauty', necessitating 'the ability to perform, to manipulate appearances'.<sup>20</sup> This performative aspect extends beyond the covers of *Harper's* and into Loos' association with modernism, allowing her to perform certain stylistic aspects of modernism and attract readers from both high and low culture.

The novel does indeed flaunt common features of literary modernism. Its adoption of modernist ideals is apparent from the first page: Lorelei's assertion that 'I mean I seem to be thinking practically all of the time'<sup>21</sup> emphasises the importance of verisimilitude. In fact, throughout the novel, it matters more what things 'seem to be'<sup>22</sup> than what they are. Her statement also introduces the idiolect of her narration, used to 'conceal her story in an artificial language of propriety' and bury the

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<sup>16</sup> Loos, *Gentlemen*, p. 6.

<sup>17</sup> Laura Frost, 'Blondes Have More Fun: Anita Loos and the Language of Silent Cinema', *Modernism/modernity*, 17.2 (2010), 291-311 (p. 292); Faye Hammill, "'One of the Few Books That Doesn't Stink": The Intellectuals, the Masses and *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*', *Critical Survey*, 17.3 (2005), 27-48 (pp. 28, 41).

<sup>18</sup> Anita Loos, *A Girl Like I* (New York: The Viking Press, 1966), p. 267.

<sup>19</sup> Jean Marie Lutes, 'Authoring *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*: Mass-Market Beauty Culture and the Makeup of Writers', *Prospects*, 23 (1998), 431-460 (p. 432).

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 451.

<sup>21</sup> Loos, *Gentlemen*, p.3

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

'narrative essentials' in the manner of 'high modernist poets and novelists'.<sup>23</sup> In another instance of modernist technique, the reader is sometimes excluded from the narrative, as in the revelations that Lorelei tells her suitors 'things that I really would not even put in my diary',<sup>24</sup> and later that 'I am taking special pains with my diary ... as I am really writing it for Gerry'.<sup>25</sup> These barbs invoke the isolation and 'hostile reading experience' present in a modernist aesthetic,<sup>26</sup> distancing the reader from the text and transforming them into solitary voyeurs. Nonetheless, Lorelei believes that writing is a special art 'because you do not have to learn or practise',<sup>27</sup> and that 'good books are always welcome',<sup>28</sup> despite assigning her maid to synopsis Conrad's novels<sup>29</sup> - she welcomes what their appearance represents, rather than what they contain. Indeed, Lorelei finds appearance more appealing than depth or content. Consequently, she believes that the 'Eyefull Tower is ... much more educational than the London Tower, because you cannot even see the London Tower if you happen to be two blocks away'.<sup>30</sup> Moreover, Mencken's *The American Mercury* is an inferior magazine because 'it has not even got any pictures in it'.<sup>31</sup> Lorelei comically concludes that Dorothy 'really does not care about her mind'<sup>32</sup> because associating with the drab Mencken will make her dull; she judges intellectual worth by aesthetic quality. Loos' preference for visual jokes like 'Eyefull Tower',<sup>33</sup> and Lorelei's past as a Hollywood starlet 'doing quite

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<sup>23</sup> Brooks E Hefner, "'Any Chance to Be Unrefined': Film Narrative Modes in Anita Loos's Fiction", *PMLA*, 125.1 (2010), 107-120 (p. 114).

<sup>24</sup> Loos, *Gentlemen*, p. 11.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>26</sup> Laura Frost, *The Problem with Pleasure: Modernism and Its Discontents* (Columbia University Press, 2013), p. 3.

<sup>27</sup> Loos, *Gentlemen*, p. 4.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 55.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 55.

well in the cinema',<sup>34</sup> repeatedly emphasise the novel's cinematic background. As will be demonstrated later, Loos' awareness of Hollywood stereotypes played a large part in her ability to successfully navigate popular markets. Meanwhile, Lorelei's prioritisation of visual culture over text, even while engaging with literary figures like Mencken, may be said to represent the threat of the masses invading high culture.

By using Lorelei to navigate between high and low culture, Loos also challenges traditionally gendered definitions of the masses, particularly a masculine culture of high modernism. According to Huyssen, the masses are 'the hidden subject of the mass culture debate',<sup>35</sup> and, in the early twentieth century, mostly consisted of women – owing perhaps to the 'misogynist current within the trajectory of modernism'.<sup>36</sup> Huyssen elaborates that the 'ascription of femininity to mass culture always depended on the very real exclusion of women from high culture',<sup>37</sup> an exclusion which Faye Hammill describes as having 'some statistical basis' as, in the 1920s, 'the bestseller was largely the preserve of women readers and writers'.<sup>38</sup> As such, Lorelei aspires not to be an author, but rather an 'authoress',<sup>39</sup> and Loos attacks 'the bestselling fiction industry' by having Lorelei publish 'a commercially successful book'.<sup>40</sup> This gendering of both the masses and Lorelei's authorship, Catherine Keyser remarks, empowers Loos to 'associate the manipulation of femininity with women's entrance into ... the public sphere'.<sup>41</sup> Loos thus labels 'masculine professionalism' a

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<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

<sup>35</sup> Huyssen, *After*, p. 47.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 49.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 62.

<sup>38</sup> Hammill, p. 32.

<sup>39</sup> Loos, *Gentlemen*, p. 6.

<sup>40</sup> Hammill, p. 43.

<sup>41</sup> Catherine Keyser, "'This Unfortunate Exterior": Dorothy Parker, the Female Body, and Strategic Doubling', in *Playing Smart: New York Women Writers and Modern Magazine Culture* (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2010), pp. 51-78 (p. 65).

'receding fantasy'<sup>42</sup> as women become more visible in the public sphere after the First World War. As *Blondes* specifically mentions Joseph Conrad<sup>43</sup> and H L Mencken<sup>44</sup> as proponents of high literary culture, an opposition forms between feminine modernity and masculine modernism. However, because Lorelei performs both gender and modernism, Loos uses her to problematise this dichotomy.

Loos herself reveals the toll of entering the male-dominated sphere of literary modernism: 'my beau didn't want to believe I was an authoress; it turned me into some sort of monster; I no longer seemed to be a girl'.<sup>45</sup> Huyssen remarks that the early twentieth century maintained the older notion that 'mass culture is somehow associated with women while real, authentic culture remains the prerogative of men'.<sup>46</sup> This ingrained patriarchal stereotype so affected Loos that she reports having 'no pride in authorship because I never thought that anything produced by females was, or even should be, important'.<sup>47</sup> Therefore, when Faulkner remarks in his only letter to Loos that 'I am still rather Victorian in my prejudices regarding the intelligence of women',<sup>48</sup> he reveals his sexist view of mass culture as the preserve of women. Elsewhere in the letter, Faulkner gives his 'envious congratulations on Dorothy', calling the novel 'charming' and 'the best hoax' - and delighting in the fact that some readers 'will only find [*Blondes*] slight',<sup>49</sup> indicating a knowledge of the novel's hidden depths. That Faulkner, 'America's most distinguished author' of the 1900s,<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., p. 78.

<sup>43</sup> Loos, *Gentlemen*, p. 13.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 40.

<sup>45</sup> Loos, *Girl*, p. 70.

<sup>46</sup> Huyssen, *After*, p. 47.

<sup>47</sup> Loos, *Girl*, p. 181.

<sup>48</sup> William Faulkner, *Selected Letters* (The Scholar Press: London, 1977), p. 32.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., p. 32.

<sup>50</sup> Peter L Hays, 'Modernism and the American Novel', in *A Companion to the American Novel*, ed. by Alfred Bendixen, (Chichester: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2012), pp. 60-74 (p. 70).

should write to Loos expressing admiration for something as trivial as a bestseller has long puzzled critics. It is either 'a glowing response',<sup>51</sup> or a grudging acknowledgement that Loos has accidentally created a 'difficult and worthy modernist text'.<sup>52</sup> His statement that 'you have builded better than you knew'<sup>53</sup> appropriates Lorelei's style to employ it against Loos - Faulkner consciously performs Loos' subverted modernist aesthetic to attack (or perhaps tease) her. This exchange would not be the only time Faulkner was influenced by Loos, however.

### **'All the brainy gentlemen': performative modernism as commercial endeavour**

Faulkner's short story 'Artist at Home' was heavily affected by Lorelei's unique idiolect and outlook. Yet it has attracted little critical attention, and the commentary it has received is reserved. M E Bradford remarks that 'Artist at Home' is not one of Faulkner's more powerful stories';<sup>54</sup> however, as we will see, the story has hidden depths in its commentary on the commercial necessities of publishing in relation to modernist ideology. Faulkner's short stories are reputedly commercial: Hans Skei states that Faulkner actively 'tried to make his short stories marketable',<sup>55</sup> giving editors 'carte blanche to edit and cut as they found suitable'.<sup>56</sup> Nevertheless, 'Artist at Home' was not particularly marketable. An 'ironic, metafictionist text on

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<sup>51</sup> Lutes, p. 437.

<sup>52</sup> Daniel Tracy, 'From Vernacular Humour to Middlebrow Modernism: *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* and the Creation of Literary Value', *Arizona Quarterly: A Journal of American Literature, Culture, and Theory*, 66.1 (2010), 115-143 (p. 138).

<sup>53</sup> Faulkner, *Selected*, p. 32.

<sup>54</sup> M. E. Bradford, 'An Aesthetic Parable: Faulkner's "Artist at Home"', *The Georgia Review*, 27.2 (1973), pp. 175-181 (p. 181).

<sup>55</sup> Hans H. Skei, *William Faulkner: The Short Story Career: An Outline of Faulkner's Short Story Writing from 1919 to 1962* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), p. 31.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 109.

writing and the masks of the writer',<sup>57</sup> in which Faulkner details the life of Roger Howes, a commercial novelist who uses his wife Anne's affair with a poet, John Blair, to inspire his latest novel, it garnered only \$25 in a 1931 edition of *Story*.<sup>58</sup> Critiquing the 'role-playing through which fiction writers and poets alike' sell themselves,<sup>59</sup> Faulkner explores the performativity of authorship in a commercial and modern context - engaging with modernism as a cultural object and a form of self-fashioning.

It is no coincidence that this story is written in the vernacular of Lorelei Lee, as both Loos and Faulkner shared a performative approach to engaging with the markets and culture of literary modernism. When Howes sells Blair's final poem, the narrator remarks that 'the magazines that don't have any pictures took the poem, stealing it from one another',<sup>60</sup> almost directly quoting Lorelei's description of *The American Mercury*, a 'green magazine which has not even got any pictures in it'.<sup>61</sup> Moreover, the story's unsophisticated narrator is gendered as female: Anne, lampooning Blair's idea of her, says 'it seems that, being a woman, I don't want freedom and don't know what equality means',<sup>62</sup> so that when the narrator later states 'It seems that this was the shot',<sup>63</sup> their shared phraseology formally links the two (with the repeated refrain 'it seems' employing another of the blonde's idioms). Like Lorelei, the narrator possesses an increasingly visual awareness of form: 'A poet is human, it seems, just like a man. But that's not it. That can be seen in any movie'.<sup>64</sup> The paragraph break here expertly undercuts the supposed moral lesson of the story, and complicates the portrayal of authorship by hinting that its reality is more

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<sup>57</sup> Lothar Hönnighausen, *Faulkner: Masks and Metaphors* (Mississippi: University Press of Mississippi, 1997), p. 92.

<sup>58</sup> Skei, p. 69.

<sup>59</sup> Hönnighausen, p. 89.

<sup>60</sup> Faulkner, 'Artist', p. 643.

<sup>61</sup> Loos, *Gentleman*, p. 19.

<sup>62</sup> Faulkner, 'Artist', p. 634.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 643.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 636.

complex than what can be 'seen' on the surface. As well as being 'a man', when Blair dies after his affair with Anne ends, Roger thinks of him as a self-styled "Shelley", whose 'whole life was a not very successful imitation of itself'.<sup>65</sup> Indeed, his romantic affectations served only to disguise his primary concern: 'Will this sell?'<sup>66</sup> As a novelist 'besieged by modernity',<sup>67</sup> Howes understands that the world of mass visual culture reveals the performativity of authorship more than ever before - but that an authorial persona must be performed in a nuanced fashion to avoid the self-parody of Blair. Performative modernism understands the role of 'modernist' to be an artificial stance: for Faulkner, negotiating modernity meant constructing authorial personas to market himself more effectively.

In the introduction to *Lion in the Garden*, a collection of interviews published shortly after Faulkner's death, the editors locate a divide between Faulkner as a man of 'easygoing if reserved informality' and an imperious modernist 'with an imperviousness to contact'.<sup>68</sup> Faulkner cultivated this image 'to achieve a predetermined effect' and, crucially, 'attract media attention'<sup>69</sup> by being famously reclusive about his works. For example, in an interview with Vida Markovic, Faulkner icily commented that 'I don't remember the books. Once I have written them they no longer belong to me'.<sup>70</sup> This persona

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid., p. 644.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., p. 633.

<sup>67</sup> Julian Murphet, 'New Media Ecology', in *The New Cambridge Companion to William Faulkner*, ed. by John T. Matthews, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 14-28 (p. 17).

<sup>68</sup> James B. Meriwether, and Michael Millgate, 'Introduction', in *Lion in the Garden: Interviews with William Faulkner, 1926-62*, ed. by James B Meriwether and Michael Millgate (New York: Random House, 1968), pp. ix-xvi (p. ix).

<sup>69</sup> M. Thomas Inge, 'Faulknerian Folklore: Public Fictions, Private Jokes, and Outright Lies', in *Faulkner and Popular Culture*, ed. by Doreen Fowler and Ann J Abadie (London: University Press of Mississippi, 1990), pp. 22-33 (p. 26).

<sup>70</sup> William Faulkner, 'Interview with Vida Markovic', in *Lion in the Garden: Interviews with William Faulkner, 1926-62*, ed. by James B

conflicts with his other poses: he often presented himself as a 'red-neck farmer'<sup>71</sup> or 'an unlettered, simple country man who happened ... to write works of genius',<sup>72</sup> hoping to fascinate readers and 'pander to [their] taste for the paradoxical and the bizarre',<sup>73</sup> encouraging them to buy his work. In response to an English professor who critiqued his work, Faulkner humbly replied 'You found implications which I had missed', because 'I am an old 8<sup>th</sup> grade man',<sup>74</sup> and Loos takes a similar stance in her autobiography *A Girl Like I*: 'a girl like I who never got past high school can take modest pride in making out quite well with the highbrows'.<sup>75</sup> The fact that both authors adopted similar poses suggests they shared a market awareness.

Loos was especially adept at manipulating perceptions of herself, and even the title of *A Girl Like I* links Loos to Lorelei: the phrase 'a girl like I' appears several times throughout *Blondes*,<sup>76</sup> and the author reports being 'given my first diamond at the age of seven'<sup>77</sup> in Lorelei's typically materialistic manner. However, Loos' authorial self-fashioning soon grows more complex: she was 'certainly never born to be an actress'<sup>78</sup> yet draws comparisons between herself and Clara Bow: 'the It girl and I were supposed to look alike'.<sup>79</sup> She describes herself as 'a teenage femme fatale' but later complains that her wish to have 'been a femme fatale' was unfulfilled.<sup>80</sup> Similarly, Loos owes a

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Meriwether and Michael Millgate (New York: Random House, 1968), pp. 282-286 (p. 284).

<sup>71</sup> Inge, p. 32.

<sup>72</sup> Doreen Fowler, ed, 'Introduction', in *Faulkner and Popular Culture*, ed. by Doreen Fowler and Ann J Abadie (London: University Press of Mississippi, 1990), pp. ix-xiv (p. x).

<sup>73</sup> Inge, p. 32.

<sup>74</sup> Theresa M. Towner, *The Cambridge Introduction to William Faulkner* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 95.

<sup>75</sup> Loos, *Girl*, p. 63.

<sup>76</sup> Loos, *Gentleman*, p. 79, 93.

<sup>77</sup> Loos, *Girl*, p. 15.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 121.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 181.

lot to Lorelei, she states, but 'was Dorothy's most accurate prototype'.<sup>81</sup> Still manipulating her audience forty years after *Blondes* was published, Loos often presents thesis alongside antithesis in describing herself, allowing the reader to create their own synthesis. Like Faulkner, Loos 'relished the contradiction she presented',<sup>82</sup> variously 'distancing herself from her blonde-bombshell narrator'<sup>83</sup> or employing a 'celebrity persona that brings Loos commercially close to Lorelei Lee'.<sup>84</sup> This latter pose as a harmless member of the supposedly female masses proved more commercially lucrative than the modernist who 'played a rotten trick on [her] admiring public'<sup>85</sup> and envisaged Lorelei as 'a symbol of our nation's lowest possible mentality'.<sup>86</sup> Louis Budd similarly observes the nuances of Faulkner's performativity, as a man who 'didn't have such a reputation for hatred of publicity',<sup>87</sup> with a personality 'complicated beyond the typical'.<sup>88</sup> An author who 'hungered for public recognition',<sup>89</sup> he pretended to be shy when trying to conform to the archetype of the reclusive high modernist. Lorelei may measure literary value in terms of mass-market exposure - she refers to 'literary gentlemen like reporters'<sup>90</sup> and describes her society debut as 'a very great success because all of the newspapers have quite a lot of write-ups' about it<sup>91</sup> - but her idea of culture apprehends the performativity of the modern

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid., p. 275.

<sup>82</sup> Noël Falco Dolan, 'Loos Lips: How A Girl Like I Talks to Gentlemen', *Women's Studies*, 37.2 (2008) 73-88 (p. 75).

<sup>83</sup> Lutes, p. 431.

<sup>84</sup> Keyser, p. 67.

<sup>85</sup> Faulkner, *Selected*, p. 32.

<sup>86</sup> Loos, *Girl*, p. 267.

<sup>87</sup> Louis J. Budd, 'Playing Hide and Seek with William Faulkner: The Publicly Private Artist', in *Faulkner and Popular Culture*, ed. by Doreen Fowler and Ann J Abadie (London: University Press of Mississippi, 1990), pp. 34-58 (p. 41).

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., p. 34.

<sup>89</sup> Fowler, p. x.

<sup>90</sup> Loos, *Gentlemen*, p. 100.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., p. 106.

literary milieu: 'I invited all the brainy gentlemen I could think of', a 'famous editor' and 'a famous playwright ... Heaven knows how long it will take to get the chandelier fixed'.<sup>92</sup> By alluding to the raucous nature of her cultured guests, Lorelei reveals the affected basis of literary culture.

### **'Success is too easy': Hollywood's precarious relationship with modernism**

Faulkner had an ambivalent association with Hollywood, sometimes finding it financially necessary to write for the movies. This is an inconvenient truth for those wishing to characterise Hollywood 'as both producer of and magnet for trash', a scholarly bias that has caused 'the opposition between modernism and mass culture' to remain 'amazingly resilient'.<sup>93</sup> The belief that Faulkner was 'willing to serve time in Hollywood'<sup>94</sup> to subsidise his novels should be avoided in reconsidering Faulkner's relationship to modernism. In fact, when Faulkner first arrived in Hollywood, he was so concerned that he would not 'measure up to the high expectations of the studio' that he absented himself for an entire week to drink.<sup>95</sup> Although he opined that 'success is too easy'<sup>96</sup> in Hollywood, to believe this typically modernist pose would ignore that Faulkner was willing to compromise his scripts to make money.<sup>97</sup> Balancing modernist self-fashioning with fiscal obligation was occasionally contradictory: Faulkner stated that 'If I didn't take ... motion picture work seriously ... I would not have tried',<sup>98</sup> but also that 'I don't take writing for the movies

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>93</sup> Huyssen, *After*, p. vii.

<sup>94</sup> Gene D. Phillips, *Fiction, Film, and Faulkner: The Art of Adaptation* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1986), p. 1.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>96</sup> Budd, p. 53.

<sup>97</sup> Phillips, p. 29.

<sup>98</sup> William Faulkner, 'The Writer and Motion Pictures', in *Authors on Film*, ed. by Harry M Geduld (Ontario: Indiana University Press, 1972), pp. 198-9 (p. 199).

seriously'.<sup>99</sup> Hollywood, it seems, had an association with modernists that was as turbulent as it was lucrative.

Faulkner's statement that 'I could film a good short story'<sup>100</sup> appropriately links his two most commercial enterprises; his story 'Golden Land', written in early 1935<sup>101</sup> and coinciding roughly with his contract at Fox studios from 1935-37,<sup>102</sup> chronicles the attempts of realtor Ira Ewing to deal with his family's struggle to live in Hollywood. Ewing's hatred of the area, with its 'arid earth' and 'rootless', vacuous nature,<sup>103</sup> has often been interpreted as Faulkner's own view:<sup>104</sup> a denouncement of 'Hollywood, screenwriting, popular culture, magazine writing, materialism, and modernity'.<sup>105</sup> Read as Faulkner critiquing Hollywood via Ewing, it is no surprise that the story was first published in *The American Mercury*, the same magazine that rejected *Blondes* for being too frivolous. Appropriately, the editors exploited the cultural cachet of Faulkner's name: 'Golden Land' was a featured story in the issue, with the name 'William Faulkner' prominently displayed in the centre of the cover.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> William Faulkner, 'Interview with Cynthia Grenier', in *Lion in the Garden: Interviews with William Faulkner, 1926-62*, ed. by James B. Meriwether and Michael Millgate (New York: Random House, 1968a), pp. 215-227 (p. 223).

<sup>100</sup> William Faulkner, 'Classroom Statements at U Miss', in *Lion in the Garden: Interviews with William Faulkner, 1926-62*, ed. by James B. Meriwether and Michael Millgate, (New York: Random House, 1968b), pp. 52-58 (p. 57).

<sup>101</sup> Skei, p. 87.

<sup>102</sup> Phillips, p. 25.

<sup>103</sup> Faulkner, 'Golden', p. 719.

<sup>104</sup> Skei, p. 34; Phillips, p. 7; M. E. Bradford, 'Escaping Westward: Faulkner's "Golden Land"', *The Georgia Review*, 19.1 (1965) 72-76 (p. 76).

<sup>105</sup> Matthew D. Ramsey, "'All That Glitters": Reappraising "Golden Land"', *The Faulkner Journal*, 21.1 (2005), 51-65 (p. 51).

<sup>106</sup> William Faulkner, 'Golden Land', *The American Mercury*, 137 (1935), pp. 1-14.

Nonetheless, a reading of the story that understands this viewpoint as a modernist construction reveals deeper anxieties regarding the role of mass culture in modernity. Ewing's daughter, Samantha, renames herself April Lalear and is only present through tabloid headlines like 'LALEAR WOMAN CREATES SCENE IN COURTROOM'.<sup>107</sup> Ewing refuses to read the papers, because 'for two days his daughter's face had sprung out at him ... from every paper he opened'.<sup>108</sup> Even 'the highest class [paper] of the city' still has 'a black headline across half of it',<sup>109</sup> evincing Ewing's disdain for the entirety of Hollywood media culture. During the story, Samantha/April only appears as a mediated, excessively sexualised, feminised presence of 'long pale shins' and prurient headlines like 'APRIL LALEAR BARES ORGY SECRETS'.<sup>110</sup> The use of heavily gendered headlines like 'LALEAR WOMAN DAUGHTER OF PROMINENT LOCAL FAMILY'<sup>111</sup> again links women to mass culture and film. Meanwhile, Ewing's hatred of tabloids - he would rather 'look at nothing'<sup>112</sup> - denigrates the apparent female nature of mass culture. If, in modern culture, the emergence of women in the public sphere represented 'a loss of power' for men and a 'fear of losing one's ... ego boundaries',<sup>113</sup> the assertion of the male gaze in the media was 'a construct of patriarchal power' employed to subjugate the female threat.<sup>114</sup> Accordingly, Ewing asks his mother 'Can't you understand that you don't get into the pictures just by changing your name? and that you don't even stay there when you get in? that you can't even stay there

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<sup>107</sup> Faulkner, 'Golden', p. 721.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 705.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 707.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 705.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 711.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 702.

<sup>113</sup> Huyssen, *After*, p. 53.

<sup>114</sup> Laurie J. C. Cella, 'Narrative "Confidence Games": Framing the Blonde Spectacle in *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (1925) and *Nights at the Circus* (1984)', *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies*, 25.3 (2004), 47-62 (p. 60).

by being female?’<sup>115</sup> His focus on the fickleness of modern fame, as ‘you don’t even stay there’, is augmented through the story’s re-association of women and performative femininity with the movies - staying famous in Hollywood is not achievable by ‘even’ women - connoting an enduring, masculine, sophisticated culture as a counterpart of ephemeral, feminine, mass culture. Understandably, ‘most critics read the story biographically’,<sup>116</sup> seeing it as an endorsement of the male gaze and asserting masculine modernism’s dominance over feminine modernity. However, Ewing acknowledges the constructed nature of the media by attempting to manipulate it, acquiring newspaper space and advertising himself as ‘APRIL LALEAR’S FATHER’ in a crude attempt to exploit and commercialise his daughter. He even complains to his secretary that the advertisement is too small: ‘Is thirty percent [of a page] all you could get?’<sup>117</sup> This tacit admission of modernity as a series of malleable poses demonstrates Ewing’s willingness to engage in base market manipulation and shameless self-promotion undercuts his impassioned speech and exposes the artifice at the heart of both modernism and modernity.

### **‘You need not be a genius’: balancing performative modernism with media culture**

Modernism and modernity, then, are not so diametrically opposed after all. Developing Hansen’s comment that ‘Hollywood cinema [was] a cultural practice on a par with the experience of modernity, as an industrially-produced, mass-based, vernacular modernism’<sup>118</sup> performative modernism recognises that just as modernist texts found the boundaries between high and mass culture increasingly malleable, so too could popular texts reflect modernist concerns without performing the stylistic aspects of high modernism. For

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<sup>115</sup> Faulker, ‘Golden’, p. 713.

<sup>116</sup> Ramsey, p. 51.

<sup>117</sup> Faulkner, ‘Golden’, p. 715.

<sup>118</sup> Hansen, p. 65.

example, Loos and her husband, John Emerson, wrote a guidebook entitled *How to Write Photoplays* (1920)<sup>119</sup> that engaged with several modernist ideas while attempting to be thoroughly accessible. The chapters, rarely more than five pages, have instructive and inclusive titles like 'Let's Write a Movie'.<sup>120</sup> While the authors promise to make the reader 'a Milton of the scenario game',<sup>121</sup> 'you need not be a genius' to write successful screenplays.<sup>122</sup> Despite this, the authors emphasise 'originality' as a key criterion for the photoplay writer, in keeping with the modernist edict to 'make it new'. The authors also share the typically modernist complaint that 'the real masterpiece lies unnoticed for years, while the potboilers sell like hot cakes'.<sup>123</sup> Moreover, they emphasise depth of literary knowledge and allusion as desirable for scenario writing, because 'reading the great plays and great poems awakens new faculties and suggests new themes and plots'.<sup>124</sup> Yet, as a popular text, the guide also recommends 'standard writers' such as 'Shakespeare, Voltaire, Oscar Wilde' and others as 'high-brow reading for the movies',<sup>125</sup> creating a pre-packaged notion of culture to be mined 'as a source of inspiration'.<sup>126</sup> Loos later 'satirises the emergence of middlebrow taste'<sup>127</sup> in Gilberston Montrose, the 'scenario writer' who impresses Lorelei with his farcically middlebrow opinions that 'Shakespear is a very great playwright' and that 'nearly everybody had ought to read Dickens'<sup>128</sup> - opinions echoing Emerson and Loos' prescriptions above. While touching on some modernist ideals, the writers ultimately create a

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<sup>119</sup> John Emerson and Anita Loos, *How to Write Photoplays* (Philadelphia: George W Jacobs and Company, 1923).

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 24.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 72.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>127</sup> Hammill, p. 37.

<sup>128</sup> Loos, *Gentlemen*, p. 113.

commercially viable book by adopting an instructive middlebrow position. The pressure of marketability decidedly tempers Emerson and Loos' performance of modernist concerns: 'What the public wants is, after all, the final criterion for any photoplay'<sup>129</sup> - and, indeed, any author. Here, 'Miss Loos wrote many stories before her first was accepted',<sup>130</sup> yet Loos later reports that she 'succeeded with a first effort' in film and literature.<sup>131</sup> The conscious effort to appeal to readers through middlebrow encouragement thus exposes the performativity of Loos' authorial personas.

Instead of appearing to embrace media culture as Emerson and Loos did, Faulkner remained protective of his modernist ideals. Twenty years after 'Golden Land' was published, Faulkner was still maintaining his public persona of a reclusive author above the commercial banalities of advertising. In the July 1955 edition of *Harper's*, Faulkner published an essay entitled 'On Privacy – The American Dream: What Happened to It', in which he argues that though a writer's works are 'in the public domain ... his private life [should be] his own';<sup>132</sup> media voyeurism threatens this careful balance. Nevertheless, the author's protest that mass media has made truth into 'an angle, a point of view having nothing to do with truth nor even with fact'<sup>133</sup> serves to reveal his deep understanding of how publicity and self-fashioning operated in an era dominated by media scrutiny. His authorial personas were all angles, including that of the essay's author, the indignant master 'artist', a role and keyword he invokes throughout<sup>134</sup> - far from the positions of commercial novelist and penniless poet he satirised in 'Artist at Home'. As the piece was unsolicited by *Harper's*, and Faulkner habitually wrote to periodical editors concerning subjects on

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<sup>129</sup> Emerson and Loos, p. 74.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>131</sup> Loos, *Girl*, p. 46.

<sup>132</sup> William Faulkner, 'On Privacy – The American Dream: What Happened to It', *Harper's*, July 1955, pp. 33-38 (p. 34).

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 35-38.

which his views were unrequested,<sup>135</sup> this essay can be understood as Faulkner garnering free publicity for his performative high modernist persona as well as expressing some personal reservations about the invasiveness of media culture. His concern that media invasiveness could transform America into an 'identity-less anonymous unprivacied mass' is surprisingly relevant to his private self.<sup>136</sup> Faulkner's ability to play so many modern personas, from the humble old eighth-grade man to the imperious artist, resulted in something of a personal identity crisis induced by entering the public sphere.

### **'Not like you': the multiple masks of performative modernism**

'Carcassonne' is one of Faulkner's earliest short stories, and definitely one of his most contemplative. Written in a 'period of transition' from poet to novelist around 1927,<sup>137</sup> it develops a deeply introspective instance of performative modernism, examining what it means to self-fashion on an existential level. 'Carcassonne' speaks to the fracturing of selves and decentering induced by performing modernism. While it deals with 'the artist's problems of creation' like 'Artist at Home',<sup>138</sup> it is less an instance of performing modernist poses in the context of commercial culture and more in the context of personal self-image. In the story, an unnamed poet enters into a dialogue with his skeleton about attempting to create art. Hard to summarise and analyse, 'Carcassonne' is Faulkner's 'most perplexing and enigmatic story'.<sup>139</sup> Yet Faulkner first published it as the final story in his anthology *These 13* in 1931, and again in 1950's *Collected Stories*. Bradford maintains that the story, ending the final 'Beyond' category, is 'somehow a summary of what Faulkner has had on his mind in the forty-one other' preceding

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<sup>135</sup> James G. Watson, *William Faulkner, Letters and Fictions* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1970), p. 167.

<sup>136</sup> Faulkner, 'Privacy', p. 36.

<sup>137</sup> Skei, p. 39.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 70.

<sup>139</sup> Noel Polk, 'William Faulkner's "Carcassonne"', *Studies in American Fiction*, 12.1 (1984) pp. 29-43.

stories.<sup>140</sup> Building on Bradford's view, I contend that 'Carcassonne' therefore represents an almost Borgesian concern with the artificiality of authorship and self-fashioning, one that permeated Faulkner's work from his first short story until his death. To represent the complexity of navigating the multiple positions that Faulkner adopts, the story uses multiple narrators and modes of narration, purposely resisting the reader's attempts to create a single linear interpretation. Even the story's structure is unclear, as a second voice interrupts the narrator within the first few sentences: the poet's 'skeleton lay still ... after a time it groaned. But it said nothing. *which is certainly not like you* he thought *you are not like yourself*'.<sup>141</sup> The level of diegetic awareness here is complex: the initial ambiguity of the relationship between narrator and interlocutor – and confusion around the narrational hierarchy of the story – instantly registers a form of acute self-reflexivity more explicitly than Faulkner's other stories. As the speaker interrupts the third-person narrator (who narrates the story in the past tense) while directing its speech toward the skeleton in the present tense, the temporal and narrational structures of the story are thrown into disarray, already creating a piece 'beyond' the reach of the collection's other stories. If the narrator is a third facet of the poet, an interpretation that allows the italicised speaker to interact with the narrator, the exchange and discord between the poet's selves occurs on multiple levels. Not merely representing the binary opposition between the 'romantic imagination' of the poet and 'the physical world' represented by the skeleton, as argued by Robert Milum,<sup>142</sup> the story in fact sets up a conversation between the poet's multiple (and sometimes contradictory) selves, analogous to Faulkner attempting to navigate the multiple (and sometimes contradictory) personas he created.

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<sup>140</sup> M. E. Bradford, 'The Knight and the Artist: Tasso and Faulkner's "Carcassonne"', *The South Central Bulletin*, 41.4 (1981), 88-90 (p. 88).

<sup>141</sup> Faulkner, 'Carcassonne', p. 895.

<sup>142</sup> Richard A. Milum, 'Faulkner's "Carcassonne": The Dream and the Reality', *Studies in Short Fiction*, 15.2 (1978), 133-138 (p. 134).

Faulkner uses the figure of the poet to navigate these selves in relation to the material and cultural requirements of the modern artist's life. The poet lives in material poverty in a garret in Rincon, and uses 'an unrolled strip of tarred roofing made of paper'<sup>143</sup> as his bedding. Noel Polk observes that the setting 'comes directly from Section III of *The Waste Land*' and is itself 'a waste land dominated by the monolithic Standard Oil Company, symbol of the mechanised and sterile modern world'<sup>144</sup> - yet the company 'owned the garret and the roofing paper',<sup>145</sup> giving them to the poet as a form of patronage. By adopting his setting from a blazon of high modernism, Faulkner paints modernity as both patron and problem. In doing so, he establishes a complex relationship between modern mass culture, the idea of high art, and the financial realities of authorship. All three of these areas require different and often contradictory performances from the artist. Pulled in opposing directions, the poet is far from a cohesive individual; instead, he is a fractured set of masks trying to navigate the multiplicity required by the modern world. The poet's attempts to navigate this complex dynamic explain some of the stranger moments, such as when the skeleton interrupts the narrator in an artistic reverie: the narrator imagines a horse's head 'mailed so that it could not see forward at all, and from the centre of the plates projected a - projected a - "Chamfron", his skeleton said. "'Chamfron". He mused'.<sup>146</sup> The confusing structure of the story, with its multiple interruptions, modes of communication and hesitations as evidenced in this quotation, can be read as the poet trying out several modes of self-expression in order to best express his artistic impulses, all while combating the material, cultural and financial requirements of his social context. The narrator finally retreats into a fantasy of 'the horse ... galloping ... up the long blue hill of heaven'<sup>147</sup> and the poet remains stuck

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<sup>143</sup> Faulkner, 'Carcassonne', p. 895.

<sup>144</sup> Polk, p. 32.

<sup>145</sup> Faulkner, 'Carcassonne', p. 897.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 898-99.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 899.

between his artistic imagination, his material skeleton, and the commercial demands of the Standard Oil Company.

In his refusal to resolve the poet's multiple selves into a single, coherent entity, Faulkner's extreme introspection goes beyond typically modernist epistemological doubt. Therefore, it is understandable that Robert Hamblin sees the Faulkner of 'Carcassonne' as 'belonging more in the company of ... John Barth or Robert Coover' than his predecessors.<sup>148</sup> Performative modernism certainly recognises acute self-awareness and authorial self-fashioning, as forms of market manipulation in response to cultural and commercial contexts. In doing so, it encourages a reconsideration not just of the great divide between high and mass culture, but between modernism and postmodernism. As Matthews notes, 'modernist and postmodernist works of art cannot be distinguished formally',<sup>149</sup> aesthetically, or even by subject, and Frost concludes that Loos' 'playful word images would become the stock in trade of the next literary generation'.<sup>150</sup> Acknowledgement of the multiplicity of self, awareness of the self as a construct, and the ability to manipulate and be playful with self-presentation are all features that performative modernism shares with postmodernism. The many authorial stances presented by Loos and Faulkner hide an acute self-awareness, revealed through the introspection of 'Carcassonne', and an understanding that repeated acts of self-fashioning create an unstable, fractured identity that changes in response to shifting cultural contexts. Faulkner's realisation that truth 'has now become an angle, a point of view',<sup>151</sup> that the self is simply a performative collection of influences and situations, is an idea that continues to resonate throughout postmodernism and into the twenty-first century. Whether in the satire of *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, then, the

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<sup>148</sup> Robert W. Hamblin, 'Carcassonne in Mississippi: Faulkner's Geography of the Imagination', in *Faulkner and the Craft of Fiction* ed. by Doreen Fowler and Ann J. Abadie (University Press of Mississippi, 1989), pp. 148-171 (p. 169).

<sup>149</sup> Matthews, 'What', p. 288.

<sup>150</sup> Frost, 'Blondes', p. 309.

<sup>151</sup> Faulkner, 'Privacy', p. 37.

authorial self-fashioning of *A Girl Like I*, or the commercial, cultural, and personal contexts of Faulkner's short stories, performative modernism continues to grant the poet's final wish: 'I want to perform something bold and tragical and austere, he repeated' - something modern.<sup>152</sup>

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## Seville

I am turning into somebody else —  
somebody who makes marmalade.

Somebody who rolls a cool thick Seville  
against her cheek  
breathing in the smell of Spain  
in the dusk of Devon.

Somebody who cuts thin peel  
skimming golden froth  
from amber soup  
in a January kitchen.

When did this happen?  
Watching the teaspoon for the set,  
boiling the jars,  
writing tidy labels.

I should be wearing  
a white dress  
gazing up through blossom  
at a Spanish blue sky  
  
biting into olive flesh,  
and running my fingers  
along red walls  
warm with secrets  
  
instead of lining up  
nine jars of sun.

*Helen Scadding*

## CONTRIBUTORS

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**Gemma Edney** is a PhD candidate in Film Studies at the University of Exeter. Her current research centres on the interaction between music, identity, and emotion in contemporary French girlhood cinema, bringing together a combination of musicological, film, and cognitive theory to ask how music helps spectators to identify with girl characters on screen. Her wider interests include a range of other, sometimes overlapping, areas within film and cultural studies, including film affect theory, post-feminist filmmaking, teen film, and digital visual cultures, specifically the creation of communities around the dissemination of online, open-access visual content.

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**Lorna Wilkinson** has recently passed her viva for a PhD in English at the University of Exeter. Her interests lie in literature of the mid-twentieth century, and her thesis looked at the figure of the "trickster" in the works of Elizabeth Bowen, Elizabeth Taylor, Iris Murdoch and Muriel Spark. Lorna has a Master's degree in Creative Writing, also from Exeter, and enjoys writing short stories whenever she has the

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**Helen Scadding** was born in Bristol, and then moved to the Midlands and London. She returned to the South West with her family in 2004 and now lives in Dartington in Devon. She works for a national charity and has also been a teacher, worked for the Greater London Authority and spent two years with Voluntary Service Overseas in Ghana. Helen started writing poetry six years ago but would call herself a "beginner". She is a member of Moor Poets and is currently studying an MA in Creative Writing at Exeter University part-time.

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**Mitchell Manners** is an MA student in English Literary Studies at the University of Exeter. His dissertation analyses methods of reader engagement within children's literature in the nineteenth century and how these methods have been incorporated into the works of contemporary writers. Mitchell's other academic interests include postmodern North American literature and film, as well as emerging digital and interactive technologies and their impact on empathy and communication.

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