

Medieval English Theatre Conference

University of Wolverhampton • Saturday, 4 April 2020

CALL FOR PAPERS

Consumption, Performance, and Early Theatre

Consumption involves the using up of a resource, whether through acts of imbibing or intake and acts of expenditure or through decaying or wasting away. Early performance relies on consumption, whether this takes the form of Eucharistic consumption accompanying liturgy; Eve's sinful act of consumption that provided pretext and plot for urban biblical pageants; the use of performance to sell goods and medicines; the material goods required to create dramatic spectacle; the consumption of drink, ideas and time by spectators and performers; or the Tudor feasts that produced space for dramatic interludes. The *Records of Early English Drama*, with their lists of goods, payments and services, provide an archive of evidence for consumption practice.

Yet acts of consumption in early drama are often fraught. Consumption is as often used to articulate doubt or mark characters and performance makers as morally dubious as it is to ensnare the senses of audiences. In a climate both preoccupied with material consumption at a global level and in which we, as researchers, theatre practitioners and teachers are frequently reminded that our labour is also consumer material, this conference seeks to examine how consumption is manifested, managed and questioned in early performance. Topics might include but are not limited to:

- The consumption of raw materials and/ or material culture in the production and performance of early drama
- Food or fasting in early performance; the morality, ethics and/or theology of consumption
- Economies of consumption in early performance
- Ritual performance and faith; inclusion and community
- Subversive consumption, over-consumption and/or consumption as a source of 'othering'
- Consumption, spectacle and the senses
- The consumption of play manuscripts and texts
- Critical reflections on the role of consumption within modern performances and broadcasts of early drama
- Critical reflections on the role of consumption in early drama pedagogy and/or research

We invite 300-word proposals from scholars at any stage of study or career, for 20 minute papers or roundtable sessions; please submit your proposals by **1 December 2019** to Daisy Black d.black3@wlv.ac.uk.

On the day before the conference (Friday, 3 April 2020) there will be a Postgraduate and Early Career Symposium organised with the [Early English Drama & Performance Network](#); more information about this will be posted soon.

For over forty years the Medieval English Theatre conferences have offered an opportunity for intellectual collaboration and the journal has presented some of the best scholarship that has resulted from the vibrant intellectual network that is METH.

Further details and registration information will be posted soon at [Medieval English Theatre](#).