

Seminar

Shakespeare and Music

*Supported by the Royal Musical Association, RMA Shakespeare and Music Study Group seminar
Supported by the Society for Renaissance Studies*

Michelle Assay^{1,2}, David Fanning³

¹Sorbonne University, France; ²University of Huddersfield, United Kingdom; ³University of Manchester, United Kingdom; michelleassay@gmail.com; david.fanning@manchester.ac.uk

'If music be the food of love, play on' (Twelfth Night, I/1/1)

Despite the fact that at least some Shakespeare-inspired music constitutes an important part of the concert repertoire, scholarship specifically dealing with Shakespeare and music is surprisingly under-developed. Studies in this area are far less numbered than, for example, those dealing with Shakespeare and film.

This seminar aims to approach the subject matter of Shakespeare and Music, from both aspects of music in Shakespeare's time or on various aspects of music in Shakespeare's works (including his musical imaging and imagination), and music inspired by Shakespeare's works or composed either to Shakespearean themes or directly for Shakespeare plays: in short – Music in Shakespeare and Shakespeare in Music.

As John Stevens observed Shakespeare 'inherited and enhanced a tradition of theatre music used not only for embellishment but in the delineation of character and with accepted symbolic associations.' On the other hand, Shakespeare's musical afterlives – works that found their inspiration in Shakespeare – not only contribute to a richer understanding and appreciation of the Bard's works, but are often they works that can stand alone and act as gateways to the musical traditions and aesthetics of their time.

Possible threads for papers or lecture/recitals include but are not limited to:

- Music imagery and imagination of Shakespeare
- Original melodies for Shakespeare songs and their afterlives
- Shakespeare and opera
- Incidental music for Shakespeare productions: past and present
- Analysis and contextualising of individual Shakespeare-inspired works
- Setting Shakespeare's words to music
- Shakespeare in instrumental music
- Shakespeare and film music
- Role of Shakespeare in musical imagination and creative output of composers
- Shakespeare and music nationalism
- Shakespeare in non-classical music (jazz, musicals, pop)
- Performing Shakespeare's music
- Afterlife of Shakespeare-inspired music

Keywords: Music, opera, afterlife, transmedial, nationalism, translation