

**Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* and Webster's *Duchess of Malfi***

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**Start date** 6 April 2018**End date** 8 April 2018**Venue** Madingley Hall  
Madingley  
Cambridge**Tutor** Clare Smout**Course code** 1718NRX033**Director of Programmes**

Emma Jennings

**For further information on this  
course, please contact**Public Programme Coordinator, Clare Kerr  
[clare.kerr@ice.cam.ac.uk](mailto:clare.kerr@ice.cam.ac.uk) or 01223 746237**To book** See: [www.ice.cam.ac.uk](http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk) or telephone 01223 746262

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**Tutor biography**

Clare Smout has contributed courses to the Institute's weekend programme since 2007, teaching Shakespeare, Early Modern Drama and Irish Drama. She is a part-time Teaching Fellow at the University of Birmingham, a Visiting Lecturer at Newman University and a major contributor to Crandall University's Study Programme at Oxford. Other regular teaching includes projects for i-Learner (Hong Kong) and the Chinese University of Hong Kong. She is currently co-editing *The Palgrave Handbook of the History of Women on Stage*.

Clare previously spent two decades in professional theatre, specialising in directing and in developing new writing, and this has shaped her research and teaching interests. She still directs whenever possible: her most recent project was an adaptation of *King Lear* for primary school students in Hong Kong. She regularly contributes theatre reviews to academic journals and her academic research explores the interaction between play texts and the circumstances of their production and performance.

Clare's approach to teaching is essentially interactive. Most sessions are a combination of informal lecturing, full group discussion and small group work. They generally include DVD clips of the plays being studied and occasionally involve students in reading short extracts. Clare believes the strength of courses such as those run by ICE comes from the opportunity for students to exchange ideas and debate interpretations, as well as to gain insights from the tutor's specialist knowledge and enthusiasms. The weekends at Madingley are the highlight of her teaching year. It is a great joy to work with students who are so informed, motivated and engaged, and it is a privilege to have time to explore these plays together in such detail.

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## Course programme

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### Friday

Please plan to arrive between 16:30 and 18:30. You can meet other course members in the bar which opens at 18:15. Tea and coffee making facilities are available in the study bedrooms.

19:00	Dinner
20:30 – 22:00	<b>Introduction: Historical and Theatrical Context, Themes</b>
22:00	Terrace bar open for informal discussion

### Saturday

07:30	Breakfast
09:00 – 10:30	<b><i>Twelfth Night: Twins and Identity</i></b>
10:30	Coffee
11:00 – 12:30	<b><i>Twelfth Night: Marrying the Mistress</i></b>
13:00	Lunch
14:00 – 16:00	Free
16:00	Tea
16:30 – 18:00	<b><i>Twelfth Night: Madness and Folly</i></b>
18:00 – 18:30	Free
18:30	Dinner
20:00 – 21:30	<b><i>The Duchess of Malfi: Marrying the Steward</i></b>
21:30	Terrace bar open for informal discussion

### Sunday

07:30	Breakfast
09:00 – 10:30	<b><i>The Duchess of Malfi: Twins and Intensity</i></b>
10:30	Coffee
11:00 – 12:30	<b><i>The Duchess of Malfi: Madness &amp; Methods of Treatment</i></b>
12:45	Lunch

**The course will disperse after lunch**

### Aims:

- To enable students to gain deeper insights into the plays studied and the themes explored within them, including Early Modern approaches to identity, madness, twinship and cross-class marriage
- To enable students to develop increased appreciation of the theatrical craftsmanship used in these plays and the interplay between character, structure, language, imagery, genre and the dramatic conventions of the time to create meaning and impact the audience
- To enable students to develop transferable skills applicable to analysing Early Modern drama and theatrical craftsmanship, as well as increased confidence in discussion and argument in this field

### Content:

Two contrasting tales both featuring twins, madness and the love of a steward for his noble mistress. Shakespeare and his contemporary John Webster use the same ingredients to very different effect, with what is comic in one play turning to tragedy in the other. Our course takes these ingredients as starting points for our exploration of their two dramatic masterpieces.

We open with a contextual introduction on the historical and theatrical background to the plays and their shared elements. We then explore Shakespeare's comic usage in *Twelfth Night*: how the interchangeable twins not only generate laughter but also focus the theme of uncertain identity; how the steward Malvolio's frustrated ambition to marry his mistress drives the farcical sub-plot; and how the themes of madness and folly escalate through the play culminating in the confrontation of Malvolio and Feste.

In the second half, we examine how the Duchess of Malfi's successful wooing of her steward triggers the play's tragedy; how Webster's use of dissimilar twins not only adds emotional intensity and one-sided incestuous desire to the tragedy but also helps us interpret the play's apparently unusual structure; and how the treatment of the consort of madmen whom Ferdinand hopes will drive his sister mad differs from the treatment he receives when remorse drives him to madness himself.

### Presentation of the course:

The sessions will be a combination of formal and informal lecturing, full group discussion and small group work. They generally include DVD clips of the plays being studied and occasionally involve students in reading short extracts. The work is essentially interactive. Clare believes the strength of courses such as these comes from combining the tutor's specialist knowledge and enthusiasms with the opportunity for students to exchange ideas and debate interpretations.

### As a result of the course, within the constraints of the time available, students should be able to:

- Discuss these plays, their themes, language and structure with greater confidence, more textual and contextual knowledge and deeper insight
- Demonstrate awareness of how similar ingredients can be used to very different effect by different playwrights in different plays
- Apply the knowledge and transferable analytical skills developed during the course to other plays from this period or on similar themes

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## Reading and Resources List – Advance Reading

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**Please read both the plays before the course starts and ideally also the introductions to one of the editions of each below. Please bring a text of each of the plays to the classes.**

If you cannot get the Arden edition of *The Duchess of Malfi*, other good annotated editions are available in the New Mermaids series (ed. Gibbons) or Oxford Worlds Classics Anthology of Webster (ed. Weis) or Penguin Anthology of Webster and Ford (ed. Kingsley Smith).

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Author	Title	Publisher and date
William Shakespeare	<i>Twelfth Night</i> , ed. by Keir Elam OR ed. by Warren & Wells	Arden Shakespeare: Third Series, 2008 Oxford University Press, 1994
(2008)		
John Webster	<i>The Duchess of Malfi</i> , ed. by Leah Marcus	Arden Early Modern Drama, 2009

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## Reading and Resources List – Future / Optional Reading

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Listed below are a number of texts that might be of interest for further reading, but do not need to be bought (or consulted) for the course. Multiple volumes of critical work have been published on both these plays. I'm very happy to recommend reading tailored to students' individual interests either during or in advance of the class.

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Author	Title	Publisher and date
Findlay, Alison and Oakley-Brown, Liz (eds)	<i>Twelfth Night: A Critical Reader</i>	Bloomsbury Arden, 2013
Luckyj, Christina (ed.)	<i>The Duchess of Malfi: A Critical Guide</i>	Continuum, 2011
Murray, Daisy	<i>Twins in Early Modern English Drama and Shakespeare</i>	Routledge, 2017
Neely, Carol Thomas	<i>Distracted Subjects: Madness and Gender in Shakespeare and Early Modern Culture</i>	Cornell UP, 2004
Barker, Roberta	'Individual and Relational Selves in <i>The Duchess of Malfi</i>	(copy attached)
Findley, Alison	<i>Feminist Perspectives</i> (Extract on <i>Duchess</i> and <i>TN</i> )	(copy attached)
Haber, Judith	' <i>The Duchess of Malfi</i> : Tragedy and Gender'	(copy attached)

## The Plays in Performance

There is no need to watch either of the plays before attending the study weekend but many people like to do so and find it helps them with unfamiliar works. Others prefer to watch these after the course instead. Here is a selection of what is available.

### Current and Forthcoming Live Productions

#### ***Twelfth Night***

Shakespeare's Globe, dir. Emma Rice, 15 May – 5 August 2017

RSC, Stratford-upon-Avon, dir. Christopher Luscombe, 4 November 2017 – 24 February 2018

National Theatre, London, dir. Simon Godwin, with Tamsin Greig as Malvolia (ongoing)

For regular updates on productions across the British Isles see

<http://www.touchstone.bham.ac.uk/performance/shakespeare%20productions.html>

#### ***The Duchess of Malfi***

No productions are currently scheduled but productions announced in future will be listed on

<http://www.touchstone.bham.ac.uk/performance/renaissance%20productions.html>

### DVDs and Downloads

#### ***Twelfth Night***

Dir. Tim Carroll (Shakespeare's Globe, with Mark Rylance and Stephen Fry), 2013

Dir. Trevor Nunn (with Ben Kingsley, Nigel Hawthorne, Imogen Stubbs, Helena Bonham-Carter, Toby Stephens), 1996

Dir. Neil Armfield (South Australian State Theatre Company, with Geoffrey Rush), 1986  
(also available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9VuuPhAp-ig&t=1433s>)

Dir. Kenneth Branagh (with Frances Barber, Anton Lesser, Richard Briers), 1988  
(also available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6i3J17Jp0ag>)

Dir. John Gorrie (BBC Shakespeare, with Felicity Kendal, Alec McCowen), 1980

Dir. John Dexter (with Joan Plowright, Alec Guinness, Tommy Steele, Ralph Richardson), 1969  
(also available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DuwgQ9Qof88>)

Shakespeare Animated Tales ([http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x27398y\\_shakespeare-the-animated-tales-01x06-twelfth-night-eng-subs\\_shortfilms](http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x27398y_shakespeare-the-animated-tales-01x06-twelfth-night-eng-subs_shortfilms)), 1992

#### ***The Duchess of Malfi***

Dir. Dominic Dromgoole (Sam Wanamaker Theatre, Shakespeare's Globe, with Gemma Arterton), 2014 - available to download as rental or purchase via Globe-Player on

<https://globeplayer.tv/videos/the-duchess-of-malfi>

Four very brief clips of the Dromgoole production are available free online at the following links:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NnV54axNsw8>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=skbPx36GS2E>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NoIP7Ftz5BI>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F1IHWqISSm8>

Dir. Elizabeth Freestone (with Aisling McGuckin, Tim Steed), 2010

Four very brief clips of the Freestone production are available free online at the following links:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qgsiZnPhVRE>

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KiKxLcxcg\\_g](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KiKxLcxcg_g)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=galX1Y6tIRc>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pLAeqZ6toko>

## Other Useful Websites

Reviews of several productions of *Malfi*: <http://blogs.nottingham.ac.uk/bardathon/?s=malfi>

**Note** Students of the Institute of Continuing Education are entitled to 20% discount on books published by Cambridge University Press (CUP) which are purchased at the Press bookshop, 1 Trinity Street, Cambridge (Mon-Sat 9am – 5:30pm, Sun 11am – 5pm). A letter or email confirming acceptance on to a current Institute course should be taken as evidence of enrolment.

*Information correct as of:* 26 September 2017