

The *Second Shepherds' Play* and Early Drama Studies Bibliography

This December 2007 Weekend Workshop was organized by **Greg Walker** (University of Leicester) and **Kathleen Lynch** (Folger Institute). Session Moderators included Sarah Beckwith (Duke University), Sarah Carpenter (University of Edinburgh), Theresa Coletti (University of Maryland), Janette Dillon (University of Nottingham), Alexandra Johnston (REED, University of Toronto), John McGavin (University of Southampton), and Claire Sponsler (University of Iowa).

from the Folger Institute brochure: “With its brilliantly profane inversion of the nativity story, the “Wakefield Master’s” *Second Shepherds’ Play* articulates a deeply typological world view while also juxtaposing the sublime and the carnivalesque in ways often associated with the dramaturgy of the later Shakespeare and his contemporaries. While the *Second Shepherds’ Play* is one of the most widely read of medieval dramas, this one-day workshop asks what can be achieved with a modern production. Participants will view the Folger Consort’s new holiday production Thursday evening, and invited speakers will serve as catalysts to discussion the following day, when performers will join scholars to consider such topics as: the conventions of contemporary production and what they reveal about the evidentiary base of past practices and the desirability, or indeed possibility, of authenticity in production; the cross-fertilizations across the secular/religious divide that this play may illustrate; and the new directions in early drama studies that these discussions might articulate. Some fruitful questions for discussion include: What kind of drama is the *Second Shepherds’ Play*? What does it suggest about the nature of medieval religious drama, including its role in medieval society, its relationship to other spectacles, pageants, and civic ceremonies, and their various uses of social space? What has been the influence of early drama studies’ critical turn toward the body and to issues of performativity? What difference does it make if early drama is the domain of theatre studies or medieval literature, social history or even anthropology? What continuities and parallels exist from early to early-modern drama? Applicants should describe the ways their current research engages these issues and prepares them to participate actively throughout the sessions. The workshop will accommodate up to three dozen participants.”

Establishing the Nature of the Manuscript

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