



**Chloe Porter**

**MAKING AND  
UNMAKING**  
IN EARLY MODERN  
ENGLISH DRAMA

Spectators, aesthetics  
and incompleteness

Making and unmaking in early modern  
English drama



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early modern English drama  
Spectators, aesthetics and incompleteness

CHLOE PORTER

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# Abbreviations

- EEBO*      *Early English Books Online*. [http:// eebo.chadwyck.com](http://eebo.chadwyck.com)
- OED*      *Oxford English Dictionary*. [www.oed.com](http://www.oed.com)
- Oxford DNB*      *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. [www.oxforddnb.com](http://www.oxforddnb.com)

## Introduction: speaking pictures?

In the third Act of John Lyly's comedy *Campaspe*, Alexander the Great attempts to learn to draw under the instruction of the ancient Greek painter Apelles. Midway through this unusual art lesson, the emperor finds that since he draws 'like a king' he is 'nothing more unlike a painter', and quickly abandons his attempt at image-making.<sup>1</sup> Alexander's failure to draw is illustrative of the depiction of visual representations in many early modern English plays; the unsuccessful process of image-making is on display at least as much as is the image itself, which remains notably incomplete. In early modern England, 'display' could mean to 'unfold' or 'expose to view', but from the late sixteenth century this term also indicated verbal revelation, since as a noun it referred to 'the act of setting forth descriptively'.<sup>2</sup> When dramatists put image-making on display, therefore, they often do so using words as well as spectacle; in Robert Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, we are told of the making of a magical brazen head by a demon named Belcephon, and see the destruction of this item onstage by means of a magical hammer.<sup>3</sup> In Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*, meanwhile, we hear of the carving of a sculpture of the supposedly dead queen Hermione by 'that rare Italian master, Giulio Romano', before we are shown the statue seeming to come to life.<sup>4</sup> In these examples visual representation is associated with processes of construction rather than with the display of a finished, formal object. This book is about why playwrights are so interested in visual things that are 'under construction', and what that display of construction processes might have meant for those playwrights and their early audiences.

In order to address this question I explore drama as a part of a changing post-Reformation culture in which reception is a key aspect of cultural production. In this approach my study builds on research that demonstrates the interactivity of reading and spectatorship in this period, from the violence of early modern writing and reading practices, to the iconoclasm so often associated with England in this period.<sup>5</sup> Drama participates in this culture of interactive reception; prologues, epilogues and chorus speeches are littered with calls for audience members to contribute to the production of onstage illusion. *The Winter's Tale* provides a famous and pertinent example, as the figure of Time,

serving as Chorus, tells the audience to ‘imagine me, / Gentle spectators, that I now may be / In fair Bohemia’ (4.1.19–21). Depictions of spectatorship in plays frequently figure viewers as participants in processes of making; again, in *The Winter’s Tale*, the awed inset spectators who behold Hermione’s statue are invited to ‘awake ... faith’ in the possibility that the Sicilian courtier Paulina can ‘make the statue move’, and are also advised not to ‘kiss’ or touch the statue, which is ‘newly fixed’ (5.3.46–95). In *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, meanwhile, Miles, a young scholar, is pointlessly armed with ‘pistols’ and acts ineffectually at the moment at which the brazen head awakes and speaks (xi.74). Accepting that spectatorship is understood as an important aspect of image-making in early modern England, this study considers depictions of passive and interactive viewers as a vital component of playwrights’ portrayal of processes of making and unmaking. The metatheatricality of allusions to spectators in plays means that playwrights’ depictions of image-making, when centred on reception, become highly metatheatrical. Consequently, it is possible to investigate dramatists’ engagements with processes of visual construction as metatheatrical moments of reflection on the significance of representational activity.

This study, then, takes theatre’s engagement with an active visual culture in process of ‘re-formation’ as a starting point from which to understand concepts of cultural production and reception as these register in early modern English drama.<sup>6</sup> In this respect my argument is highly unusual, since most studies in this area start from the point of the supposed absence of visual culture in an iconoclastic post-Reformation England blighted by lack of knowledge about the Italian visual arts.<sup>7</sup> Frederick Kiefer opens his study of the emblematic portrayal of abstract figures such as Time in *The Winter’s Tale* with an anecdote about Elizabeth I’s ‘preference for words over pictures’ which, he concludes, ‘suggests a major direction of sixteenth-century culture in England’.<sup>8</sup> James A. Knapp, meanwhile, notes that ‘Reformation hostility towards religious images and a paucity of native English visual artists created an atmosphere in which the word was not only privileged over the image, but the visual sense was denigrated in its favor’.<sup>9</sup> Knapp suggests that Protestant hostility cultivated a ‘preoccupation with visual experience in early modern English culture’, ‘even in the absence of a significant tradition in the visual arts’.<sup>10</sup> In focusing on post-Reformation English cultural activity in the ‘absence’ of the visual arts, Knapp follows a critical tradition traceable at least as far as an influential article by Leonard Barkan on the relationship between Elizabethan literature and the visual arts. In this article, Barkan declares that ‘we may learn more about the place of the visual arts in Elizabethan literature by focusing on absence than by focusing on presence’.<sup>11</sup> For Barkan, this focus on ‘absence’ is justified because ‘theatre is England’s lively pictorial culture’.<sup>12</sup> Regardless of whether or not the aesthetic premise of this argument is convincing, the suggestion that Elizabethan theatre accounts for English pictorial culture is an exaggeration, since the Shakespearean theatre

that Barkan discusses was largely centred on the commercial theatres of early modern London.<sup>13</sup>

Significant numbers of scholars have subsequently agreed with the basic premise of Barkan's thesis. In studies in this area early modern literature and drama are frequently described as an inventive presence stimulated by the absence of images. Lucy Gent claims that 'conditions in England where the visual arts were concerned meant that a poet could all the more easily launch into a realm of painting which actually existed only in his head'.<sup>14</sup> Emphasising that the theory of linear perspective was not properly understood by English viewers during the early seventeenth century, Alison Thorne argues that English lack of understanding of perspectival techniques allows figures such as Shakespeare to 'experiment' with these techniques from a unique standpoint.<sup>15</sup> The narrative of the absence of early modern English visual culture is particularly strong in criticism that centres on dramatists', and particularly Shakespeare's, handling of ekphrasis, a literary mode that entails 'the verbal representation of visual representation' and therefore implies the absence of an image described in words.<sup>16</sup> For example, Richard Meek observes that 'pictorial culture' in early modern England was 'relatively underdeveloped compared to the rest of Europe', and pursues Shakespeare's development of a mode of ekphrastic writing that is dependent on language 'and the audience's imagination' to fill in the visual 'absences'.<sup>17</sup> In Thorne and Meek's analyses, drama and literary production more broadly are fluid, adaptable modes contrasted with a stolid visual culture constituted by images which are implicitly exchangeable but not adaptable. Visual works are available or unavailable, present or absent where drama may alter, change and progress.

At the summit of this critical outlook is the assumption that a play constitutes a 'speaking picture', in the phrase used by Sir Philip Sidney in his *An Apology for Poetry*.<sup>18</sup> Sidney alludes to speaking pictures in order to suggest that poetry is a verbal mode of representation, a way of 'representing, counterfeiting, or figuring forth' (p. 86, lines 18–19). The phrase derives from Plutarch's oft-used analogy between painting and poetry, which he, in turn, derived from Simonides:

Now, Simonides calls painting silent poetry, and poetry voiced painting, because whereas painting presents us with events as if they were actually happening, words describe and relate the same events in the past.<sup>19</sup>

Plutarch's allusions to 'silent poetry' and 'voiced painting' contribute to the discourse of *ut pictura poesis* ('as is painting, so is poetry'), which was highly influential amongst early modern writers, and which is based on a recognition of painting as the supreme model of mimetic representation.<sup>20</sup> In early modern Europe, circulating alongside the notion of *ut pictura poesis* were the *paragone* ('comparison') debates, which revolved around the struggle for superiority amongst modes of representation.<sup>21</sup> The *paragone* were known to English

playwrights in this period and shape a number of dramatic treatments of the relationship between word and image. For example, Shakespeare and Thomas Middleton's *Timon of Athens* (written 1607?) opens with a competitive dialogue between a poet and a painter that is often taken as an example of an onstage *paragone*.<sup>22</sup> Shakespeare presents some links between the two characters: both seek the patronage of 'Lord Timon', and as they discuss the poet's ideas, the painter refers to 'our condition', indicating a sense of shared experience (1.1.57–78).<sup>23</sup> At the same time, however, the conversation between the poet and the painter is competitive. The poet is keen to promote what he calls his 'rough work', and describes it at length (1.1.44). The painter, meanwhile, responds with an assertion of the superiority of painting to poetry:

A thousand moral paintings I can show  
That shall demonstrate these quick blows of Fortune's  
More pregnantly than words. Yet you do well  
To show Lord Timon that mean eyes have seen  
The foot above the head. (1.1.92–6)

The relatively polite tone of this debate between a writer and a visual artist is not reflected in an example of a *paragone* debate in an entertainment presented before Elizabeth I at Mitcham in 1598. Here, a poet and painter each strive to prove the inferiority of the other's profession.<sup>24</sup> The poet, for example, attacks the 'fantasticall paynter', suggesting that if he did not 'suck all from Poetry' there would be no 'difference betweene paynting and dawbing' (p. 22). The painter's response is to 'curse the teates that poysoned my invention' (p. 22). It is at this point that the struggle between the two draws towards a close, suggesting a bias in favour of poetry which is presented as a nurturing source upon which visual representation depends. Reflecting the combination of unity and opposition associated with the *ut pictura poesis* and *paragone* discourses, however, this entertainment concludes with the poet and painter united, with a 'musitian', in a tribute to the queen (pp. 26–8).

More than most early modern English writers, Sidney can be connected to the advanced continental visual arts considered 'absent' from England by so many scholars. For example, visiting Venice in 1574, Sidney sat for a portrait by Veronese; he had also contemplated having his portrait painted by Tintoretto.<sup>25</sup> We might expect Sidney, the cultivated connoisseur of the continental visual arts, to be relatively sympathetic to visual images in his deployment of the rhetoric of *ut pictura poesis*. And yet there is more than a tinge of the divisive tones of the *paragone* in Sidney's allusion to poetry as a 'speaking picture'. Plutarch associates painting with urgent immediacy, 'events as if they were actually happening'; verbal expression, meanwhile, may unfold a narrative of past events. In *An Apology for Poetry*, in contrast, all sense of motion is concentrated in the 'figuring forth' accomplished by poetry, which combines the immediacy of painting

with the unfolding reach of narrative (p. 86, lines 18–19). Visual representation is useful in Sidney's analogy only so long as it is 'lacking' in comparison with the liveliness of verbal modes of expression.

Reflecting Sidney's preference for verbal expression in his allusion to the 'speaking picture' trope, critical usage of this phrase often emphasises the literary bridging of a perceived gap between early modern word and image in which the former gives 'voice' to the latter. This configuration is especially visible in writing on early modern emblem books, in which meaning is communicated via a combination of image and text.<sup>26</sup> John Manning, for example, suggests that emblematic meaning is mobilised by verbal expression when he finds that the recycling of 'woodblock designs' across emblem books indicates that 'the woodblock image was not emblematic in itself, but only when attached to emblematic verses'.<sup>27</sup> The emblematic model of pictorial representation as a passive, semantically limited body awaiting enlivening contact with inherently meaningful verbal signification extensively informs critical appropriations of the 'speaking picture' motif in discussions of early modern drama. In these critical readings, theatre goes beyond the verbal reach of the emblem, further mobilising static spectacle in a living, breathing version of the emblematic mode. For example, Barkan advances a reading of the 'statue scene' in *The Winter's Tale* to support the claim that Shakespeare 'celebrates the drama as speaking picture'.<sup>28</sup> As noted at the outset of this introduction, *The Winter's Tale* presents a statue of the supposedly dead Sicilian queen Hermione that appears to come to life. This event is depicted in the concluding scene of the play; in the penultimate scene, the statue is said to have been 'newly performed by that rare Italian master, Giulio Romano', an inaccurate allusion to the Italian painter of the same name that constitutes the only reference to a living sixteenth-century visual artist in Shakespeare's works (5.2.94–5). Barkan takes Hermione's sculpture as a 'real person', and 'the Hermione who has taken these years to be *performed* in the sense of *perfected*':

But she cannot be perfected so long as one can only speak to her but not receive an answer in response, so long, in other words, as she is only a statue. In that sense, the event becomes theater only when, simultaneously, the statue moves and speaks, or when word and picture are joined. It is at that moment that the central dream of all ekphrasis can finally be realized, that is, that the work of art is so real it could *almost* come to life. Theater removes the *almost*.<sup>29</sup>

This argument is complicated by subsequent debate on the extent to which Hermione is a 'real person' in the statue scene, a subject discussed in the second chapter of this book, and which I will therefore leave to one side for the moment. For now, I want to call attention to Barkan's investment in the 'perfecting' and 'completion' of Hermione. Pictorial representation is in this view unsatisfactorily static, lifeless and defunct until united with the movement and language



of performance. The aim of theatre here is to present a finished product that moves, speaks and so resists, or even 'transcends', the supposed limitations of pictorial representation.<sup>30</sup> Barkan understands theatre as transcending what W. J. T. Mitchell would later call the 'impossibility' of ekphrasis, reflecting on the fact that 'words can "cite," but never "sight" their objects'.<sup>31</sup> Ekphrastic readings of Shakespeare's plays frequently suggest that in its function as a 'speaking picture', early modern theatre overcomes this impossibility, uniting spectacle and speech while simultaneously allowing dramatists to build playfully on the absence of the paintings and sculptures described, 'opening up a space for the imagined, the missing or unsaid or inconsistent'.<sup>32</sup> Building on Mitchell's study of ekphrasis, for example, Richard Meek identifies language as a mobilising force in Shakespearean theatre's exemplification of the 'speaking picture' motif, as Shakespeare's descriptions of paintings are held to demonstrate that words can 'make us see'.<sup>33</sup> Once again, theatre is a mobile, animated, lively and inventive arena that flourishes in relation to stolid visual objects that elsewhere clash unproductively with verbal modes of expression.

The corpus of 'speaking picture' criticism presents troubling assumptions. At its heart is the notion that early modern plays aim to reach towards some kind of 'perfect' unification of the verbal and the visual. In this way, appropriations of the 'speaking picture' trope in discussions of early modern drama reflect what Mitchell identifies as a cultural history of attempts to 'overcome' the perceived 'gap' between poetry as 'an art of time, motion, and action' and painting as 'an art of space, stasis, and arrested action'.<sup>34</sup> Writing on visual representation from a literary perspective in 1986, Mitchell suggested that in discussing the relation between word and image, we should adopt a historicising approach, and aim 'not to heal the split between words and images, but to see what interests and powers it serves'.<sup>35</sup> This recommendation has not been pursued amidst continuing scholarly reliance on the speaking picture motif as a means through which to understand early modern drama in connection with word and image debates. To counter the critique implied by this observation, it might be argued that critical preoccupation with the speaking picture trope is historicising in focus, since playwrights were engaged with the discourse of *ut pictura poesis* and the *paragone* debates, and were therefore interested in the opposition between and possible union of verbal and visual modes of expression. As Alison Thorne has shown, moreover, rhetoric shaped the role of visual experience in Shakespearean theatre.<sup>36</sup> Yet exploration of attitudes to word and image in early modern English drama from rhetorical perspectives paints only one side of the picture, presenting dramatists as literary figures whose works may be explained in predominantly rhetorical terms. A view of Shakespeare and his contemporaries as 'literary' dramatists who wrote for readers as much as for performance is available; in this study, however, I am concerned with plays as performed, material works that were enjoyed by audiences.<sup>37</sup> The collaborative nature of

performance positions rhetorical influences against a host of material, visual and textual contexts informing the construction of the drama as it is played. It would be possible at this point to reassert the notion that drama in performance bridges the 'split' between word and image. In light of Mitchell's suggestion that we should be alert to the cultural function of this perceived 'split', however, it can also be suggested that in discussions of drama in performance, such a split becomes discursively dysfunctional as multiple contexts combine in our view of the making of the play. When considering drama in performance as a part of visual culture, the 'split' between word and image is especially exposed as a rhetorical construct that informs the play but does not fully cohere with the aesthetic world of early modern performance.

There is a serious disjunction between the aesthetic implications of evidence relating to performance contexts and the aesthetic aims associated with the rhetoric of *ut pictura poesis*. As noted above, *ut pictura poesis* is often linked to the transcendence of verbal/visual boundaries in the pursuit of aesthetic perfection. Characterised thus, the aims of *ut pictura poesis* seem invested in notions of 'unity' that are most usually associated with post-eighteenth-century aesthetics.<sup>38</sup> What may actually be at stake in this discourse is the investment of 'iconology', the rhetoric of images, in 'similitude', understood as the coincidence of the sign and signified, as opposed to the referential relationship between sign and signified described by Derrida's notion of *différance*.<sup>39</sup> As is discussed in chapter 2, the referential split implicit in mimetic representation is of great concern in the context of Reformation image controversies. In addition to this theoretically informed historical contextualisation for the concerns of *ut pictura poesis*, however, there remains a troubling and intriguing gap between the intellectual realm of this rhetoric and the aesthetics of plays in performance. This latter aesthetics seems invested in disunity, failure and imperfection. Jeremy Lopez, for example, argues convincingly that 'failure' and 'potential for failure' are central components of early modern performance and the popularity of plays in reception.<sup>40</sup> Tiffany Stern, meanwhile, suggests the extent to which playwrighting was associated with material imperfection when she emphasises that in early modern London the 'common perception' was 'that a play was pieced together out of a collection of odds and ends: it was not a single whole entity'.<sup>41</sup> What, in such a context of material 'patchiness', would a 'perfect' representation resemble? Could aesthetic ideals of unity survive in such a materially patchy world? The 'speaking picture' trope edges us towards Enlightenment, Romantic aesthetics, while evidence about the material and textual world of plays pulls in an entirely different aesthetic direction. The language of *ut pictura poesis* that dominates critical discussions of drama and visual culture in this period seems to come from an intellectual world distinct from that which is discussed in materialist studies of Shakespearean theatre. Part of the problem here is that Shakespeare and his contemporaries worked in a period before the formal discussion of

'aesthetics', a time that Larry Shiner, writing on the visual arts, refers to as 'proto-aesthetic'.<sup>42</sup> I am reluctant to apply the phrase 'proto-aesthetic' in this study, partly because it seems to speak to a rigidly linear version of the history of aesthetics. At the same time, however, this book considers aesthetics before the time of the aesthetic as part of a broader concern with early modern attitudes to what might now be characterised as aesthetic experience.

I am especially concerned to historicise and understand that gap between the aesthetic implications of writing about visuality, and the aesthetic implications of early modern materiality. Depictions of and allusions to processes of visual construction on the early modern stage are perfect exempla for such an investigation. These instances reflect the discourse of *ut pictura poesis* in using the world of image-making as a vehicle for the discussion of verbal arts, but also draw attention to the materiality of early modern visual culture by showing images that are 'under construction'. A focus on the importance of processes of visual construction in plays frees the speaking picture trope from a limiting investment in the notion of the 'picture' as an inanimate, motionless, 'fixed' object. In this view I build on Jonathan Gil Harris's useful discussion of physical objects as distinct forms that assume 'a synchronic temporal framework in the shape of a historical moment'.<sup>43</sup> Harris points out that, in contrast, matter has been understood by both Aristotle and Marx 'as a sensuous, workable potentiality that implies pasts, presents and futures'.<sup>44</sup> In *De Anima*, Aristotle distinguishes between 'form' as 'actuality', and 'matter' as 'potentiality'.<sup>45</sup> Marx, meanwhile, writes that 'the chief defect of all hitherto existing materialism ... is that the thing, reality, sensuousness, is conceived only in the form of the *object or of contemplation*, but not as a *sensuous, human activity, practice*, not subjectively'.<sup>46</sup> Aristotelian and Marxist distinctions between matter and object highlight the conceptual tussle at the heart of critical appropriations of the 'speaking picture' trope. To set up drama as an animated, lively, 'real' form in contrast to the implicit stasis of visual representation is to make fixed, impotent objects of both, rather than to recognise the reworkable 'potential' of either.

Attention to the material culture of early modern England can expand our understanding of the rhetorical discourses that inform attitudes to visual experience in this period. It is therefore a shame that there has been a lack of dialogue between visual and materialist perspectives in early modern literary studies. Visual representations are rarely discussed in volumes concerning drama and early modern material culture. Catherine Richardson discusses portraits in her *Shakespeare and Material Culture*; Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass refer to 'the matter of paintings' in their study on early modern clothing and memory, but use portraiture mainly as a lens through which to understand the role of clothing in constructing early modern identity.<sup>47</sup> Although art historians have engaged with material culture and especially the 'everyday' life of the early

modern English household, few literary scholars concerned with plays and the visual arts take into account the critical advances presented by these studies.<sup>48</sup> Critical opportunities are often missed as a result, because early modern English playwrights are themselves preoccupied with image-making as a material practice in a way that destabilises notions of a 'finished' object or form. For example, Keir Elam observes that where many dramatists exploit painter characters in plays as an 'opportunity to ... talk about the act of painting and about paintings themselves', Shakespeare 'indulges more parsimoniously in technical painterly discourse'.<sup>49</sup> This observation is made almost in passing in Elam's survey of the ways in which 'onstage art objects ... speak' in early modern drama.<sup>50</sup> In this, Elam reflects the approach of many scholars who discuss playwrights' accounts and depictions of image-making, only to locate meaning in the presentation and display of a supposedly finished visual product.

An alternative approach to the depiction of visual representation in early modern plays focuses on material processes rather than finished forms. In order to demonstrate the possibilities suggested by this approach, it is worth returning briefly to the final 'statue scene' of *The Winter's Tale*. The detailed preoccupation with image-making and its reception suggested by Shakespeare's allusion to Giulio Romano continues here, as the Sicilian king, Leontes, asks 'what fine chisel / Could ever yet cut breath?' (5.3.77–8), and thus uses phraseology that extensively recalls the terms of Italian humanist praise for artworks.<sup>51</sup> A huge amount of critical time has been devoted to analysing the significance and source of Shakespeare's allusion to Romano; the correspondence between the statue and statuary that may have been known to Shakespeare, and the significance of the apparent transformation of the image from stone to flesh.<sup>52</sup> But how might we approach the subject of that transformation if we consider that meaning may be linked to details about the making of the supposed statue? What if Shakespeare is as interested in the completing of an object as its completion? What if Hermione is never meant to reach 'perfection'? How far is the displayable 'inanimate object' ever considered finished if the dynamics of its making mean so much for early modern viewers?<sup>53</sup>

These are the sorts of questions that I pose throughout this book, as I interrogate what 'finished', 'incomplete' or 'under construction' meant for early modern playwrights and the contemporaries who watched their plays. By drawing attention to the extent to which playwrights are interested in image-making as a process that engages with visual 'matter', I hope to complicate our understanding of early modern attitudes to representational activity more broadly. I am encouraged in this approach by the metatheatrical function of allusions to image-making in plays. In Thomas Dekker's *The Welsh Ambassador*, for example, Carintha, wife of Penda, son of the Duke of Cornwall, displays a 'statue' which depicts the moment of Penda's death, showing '*Penda with a leading staff. Voltimar at his back: his sword in him*'.<sup>54</sup> Carintha does not realise that

Penda is merely pretending to be dead, and has framed Voltimar, a captain, for his murder. She explains the process of the making of the image:

I now remember, when I had desire  
 To figure out that divell which slew my *Penda*,  
 By chaunce a fellow fashiond just like this  
 Past by, my workman eyed him, and cutt this,  
 A more illfavord slave I nere beheld,  
 And such a one methought was that rogue sure,  
 That killd my lord, and so this stands for him. (II.iii.45–50)

The sculptor's rather arbitrary working methods thus produce unknowingly an image which imitates, or 'stands for', the lie that forms the narrative of Dekker's play. In describing the statue-making process, Carintha calls attention unwittingly to the constructedness of her husband's 'death', and the potential for visual representation, like theatre, to 'rework' the truth, since the use of a picture to 'figure out' an accurate version of events has produced the opposite effect. It might be pointed out at this point that Carintha describes an object, rather than matter; it is an unstable object in that it is inaccurate, but is also apparently a completed, finished 'thing' nonetheless. Yet in post-Reformation terms the inaccuracy of the statue is precisely what makes it not a thing, or rather no-thing at all. In early Christianity an idol is 'a false representation of what does not exist', in contrast to an image, which is 'the truthful representation of an existing thing'.<sup>55</sup> Similarly, in a popular text on idolatry published in 1601, William Perkins writes:

The generall propertie of all Idols is that they are *NOTHING* in the world, as Paul saith, I. Cor. 8. 4. And they are so tearmed, because they have nothing in them of the divinitie or Godhead, whether we regard the nature or the efficacie thereof.<sup>56</sup>

The dominant Calvinist view was that God's image was visible in his earthly works, especially in people, and in his word.<sup>57</sup> Against this background, an idol could be any representation in which there is no correspondence between sign and signified; in other words, a 'false' representation that in Perkins's and early Christian terms alludes to nothing that exists. Carintha's sculpture on this count is an idolatrous 'nothing', since the 'workman' has depicted an event which never happens in the course of the play. Building on the metatheatricity of Dekker's allusion to sculpture, the image of Penda's murder is doubly 'nothing', since Penda's survival and telling of the tale of his death is itself part of the fiction of the play.

And yet, in this play, there is still an object, a 'thing' onstage; is this 'thing' understood as matter, as object, finished, nothing? How does incompleteness relate to nothingness, or erasure? Throughout this study I interrogate the inconsistencies, anomalies and ambiguities that mark early modern English attitudes to image-making processes and the representations that result from these proc-

esses. Given the metatheatrical meaning attendant on depictions and accounts of image-making in plays, my analysis reflects on the ways in which playwrights viewed their own practice and the 'perfection' of the works that they produced. Sidney alludes to painting in order to suggest the value and potential of literary work as *mimesis*. In contrast, I will suggest, playwrights such as Shakespeare focus intently on images of visual incompleteness and faultiness as a means through which to acknowledge and sometimes transgress limitations perceived to be associated with mimetic representation. A central strand of my argument is that the notion of 'finish' carries significant cultural weight in this period, and that the discursive evasion of finish in early modern English drama performs an important, socially conservative function. In this way, I consider the deconstructive potential of early modern plays within the workings of a supposedly divinely ordained social hierarchy that is both disturbed by and dependent on notions of aesthetic 'wholeness'. In discussing aesthetics, I am not concerned with the revival of a discourse on the determination of aesthetic value, although this critical concern informs some studies of Shakespearean drama and visual culture.<sup>58</sup> Instead, this book concerns the ideas about 'making and unmaking' that Shakespeare and his contemporaries may have known and formulated, and how these ideas relate to our own critical assumptions about early modern aesthetic experience.

As I explain in my first chapter, the study of drama as a part of visual culture offers the perfect context for an exploration of pre-modern aesthetic discourse. This opening chapter expounds my approach to plays as participants in a lively post-Reformation visual culture in process of 're-formation'. Many of the plays discussed in this book depict patrons of the visual arts, and chapter 1 concludes by linking this focus on patronage to broader concerns about the social implications of representational activity in early modern England. My second chapter extends the focus on the social meanings of patronage of the visual arts in a discussion of Paulina as patron of Hermione's image in *The Winter's Tale*. Noting that the supposed sculpture of Hermione is never taken to be completed, I argue that Paulina is presented as a matriarchal gatekeeper to an unreachable, non-mimetic 'wholeness', figured in the much-vaunted ambiguity of Hermione's image. Accepting that interactive spectatorship is understood as a source of image-making in the early modern period, I suggest that Paulina enables Leontes to enter into a 'fantasy of wholeness' by forcing him to adopt a passive mode of spectatorship that rejects mimetic complicity.<sup>59</sup>

My discussion of *The Winter's Tale* pivots around the play's troubling investment in patriarchal notions of 'perfection'. As a result, I avoid the conventional use of this play as a vantage point from which to draw conclusions about early modern aesthetics, and instead take the famous 'statue scene' as a point from which to look further into the meanings attendant on making and unmaking in early modern English drama. The structure of this book is therefore not

chronological. Instead, my argument progresses thematically from the jumping-off point of Shakespeare's aesthetic concerns, delving from there into the meanings of 'completion', 'incompletion' and 'destruction' in *Campaspe* (1584) and *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* (1589), before drawing out again to a discussion of concepts of erasure in an early-to-mid-seventeenth-century play, *The Two Merry Milkmaids*. This non-chronological 'order' that folds in on itself before unfolding back out again seems appropriate for a discussion of dramatists' preoccupation with deferred endings and continual processes of making and unmaking. The four plays that form my main focus are selected on a thematic basis, rather than because each is a comedy and that together these plays might tell us something about genre and visual culture. There is certainly much more that can be said about the place of the visual artist in early modern English carnivalesque humour, but questions of genre are not tackled extensively in this study.

Following my discussion of *The Winter's Tale*, chapter 3 focuses on the ends and aims of 'making' in the Elizabethan imagination. When John Lyly's Euphues states that his account of Elizabeth I is 'but begun for others to end', what endpoint does he envisage?<sup>60</sup> With reference to the 'drawing-lesson' scene in Lyly's *Campaspe* I argue that early modern awareness of God as ultimate creator situates earthly making as implicitly transgressive, and the attainment of 'finish' as potentially idolatrous. In response to this situation, Lyly deploys the motif of the 'frame without a face' as a politically sensitive mode of representation assertive of both imperfection and the potential for viewers to 'begin' to 'end' what they see. Taking into account the idolatrous status of 'finish', chapter 4 asks what early modern dramatists and playgoers understood by 'destruction' with reference to Robert Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*. This play presents an onstage depiction of iconoclasm in the breaking of a brazen head that is under construction for much of the play. The supernatural iconoclasm directed against the brazen head is seen as an instructive example in spectatorial *praxis*, as I argue that Greene engages with contemporary technological discourses in order to call attention to the brokenness of visual experience. Like the supposed statue of Hermione, the brazen head is never presented as a completed object, and so Greene's play emphasises the on-going fracture of the earthly visual world. In highlighting the urgent function of image-breaking, Greene also suggests that total erasure of images is out of mortal hands.

My fifth chapter takes up the theme of erasure, noting that several early modern playwrights are preoccupied with the possibility of magical disappearance from the visible world. How does this type of erasure relate to the supposed divine status of total destruction? And why did playwrights and theatre companies present invisible characters as a highly visible presence on stage? This chapter, on the anonymous comedy *The Two Merry Milkmaids*, is slightly different in focus to the other chapters, each of which discusses a play in which a visual object is made. Here, the partially erased, semi-complete visual object is the play itself in

performance. This chapter thus presents a reading of drama as a part of a visual culture in which incompleteness is a highly provocative concept. Invisible characters in early modern plays are 'unseen' rather than inherently, divinely invisible. Multiple instances of characters passing in and out of visibility in *The Two Merry Milkmaids* draw attention to the material incompleteness of the unseen character, but at the same time rehearse and imitate the experience of divine limitlessness and omniscience. Moreover, the dynamics of the 'making' of the unseen character encourages spectators to realise the fractured dynamics of vision while entering into a fantasy of omniscience. As such, the figure of the unseen in this play walks the borderline between deference and transgression, acknowledging material limitations while pushing at the limits of earthly visibility.

My conclusion attempts to piece together the different parts of my argument, and considers the critical implications of early modern English dramatists' investments in processes of making and unmaking. This study offers an opening onto the subject of early modern attitudes to visual construction and aesthetic experience, but does not present firm conclusions. There is much more work to be done in this area, particularly through the forging of stronger connections between material, visual and literary studies. Early modern dramatists, I suggest, are implicated in the formation of commodifying aesthetic discourses that continue to shape critical interpretations of the material and literary cultures of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The mid-seventeenth century may present the beginnings of a turning point in the development of this discourse, but I am reluctant to apply a linear narrative to evidence that resists formal notions of 'ending'. I therefore conclude this book with a brief consideration of the implications of my study for approaches to early modern temporality. Harris's discussion of 'untimely matter' in this period offers a fruitful, 'polychronic' lens through which to understand the material workings of early modern culture, but does not account for Shakespeare and his contemporaries' arguably forward-facing preoccupation with deferred endings.<sup>61</sup> In returning so insistently to representations as permanently 'under construction', I suggest, playwrights repeatedly invest in a stasis stimulated by a desire to reach an 'end'.

### Notes

- 1 John Lyly, *Campaspe*, ed. G. K. Hunter, in *Campaspe: Sappho and Phao*, ed. G. K. Hunter and David Bevington, *The Revels Plays* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991), III.iv.127–8. All subsequent references are to this edition.
- 2 *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED). [www.oed.com](http://www.oed.com). Accessed 2 November 2012. All references are to the online edition.
- 3 Robert Greene, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, ed. Daniel Seltzer, *Regents Renaissance Drama Series* (London: Edward Arnold, 1963), ii.55–6, xi.74SD. All subsequent references are to this edition unless stated otherwise.



- 4 William Shakespeare, *The Winter's Tale*, ed. John Pitcher, The Arden Shakespeare, third series (London: Methuen, 2010), 5.2.94–5. All subsequent references are to this edition.
- 5 See Jonathan Goldberg, *Writing Matter: From the Hands of the English Renaissance* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991), especially pp. 70–80; Jonathan Gil Harris, *Untimely Matter in the Time of Shakespeare* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), pp. 13–19. On iconoclasm, see John Phillips, *The Reformation of Images: Destruction of Art in England, 1535–1660* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1973), and Margaret Aston, *England's Iconoclasts: Laws Against Images* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988).
- 6 The phrase 're-formation' is taken from Tara Hamling and Richard L. Williams, 'Introduction', in Tara Hamling and Richard L. Williams (eds), *Art Re-Formed: Re-assessing the Impact of the Reformation on the Visual Arts* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007), pp. 1–13, p. 1.
- 7 See Lucy Gent, *Picture and Poetry 1560–1620: Relations between Literature and the Visual Arts in the English Renaissance* (Leamington Spa: James Hall, 1981), p. 6; Edward Chaney, *The Evolution of the Grand Tour: Anglo-Italian Cultural Relations since the Renaissance* (London: Frank Cass, 1998), p. xiii, and John Peacock, *The Stage Designs of Inigo Jones: The European Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 36.
- 8 Frederick Kiefer, *Shakespeare's Visual Theatre: Staging the Personified Characters* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 1.
- 9 James A. Knapp, *Image Ethics in Shakespeare and Spenser* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p. 1.
- 10 Knapp, *Image Ethics*, pp. 1–2.
- 11 Leonard Barkan, 'Making Pictures Speak: Renaissance Art, Elizabethan Literature, Modern Scholarship', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 48:2 (1995), 326–51, 335.
- 12 Barkan, 'Making Pictures Speak', 338.
- 13 For a study of early modern theatre outside the London context, see Siobhan Keenan, *Travelling Players in Shakespeare's England* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002).
- 14 Gent, *Picture and Poetry*, pp. 39–40.
- 15 Alison Thorne, *Vision and Rhetoric in Shakespeare: Looking through Language* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000), pp. 32, 43–4, 55–6.
- 16 W. J. T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), p. 152.
- 17 Richard Meek, *Narrating the Visual in Shakespeare* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), pp. 11–15, 82.
- 18 Sir Philip Sidney, *An Apology for Poetry (or The Defence of Poesy)*, ed. R. W. Maslen, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (1965; Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), p. 86, line 19. All subsequent references are to this edition.
- 19 Plutarch, *Essays*, trans. Robin Waterfield (London: Penguin, 1992), 346F, p. 157.
- 20 See Christopher Braider, 'The Paradoxical Sisterhood: "ut pictura poesis"', in Glyn P. Norton (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism*, 9 vols, 3: *The Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 168–75, pp. 169–70.
- 21 Claire Farago explains that the word 'paragone' has been associated with these

- debates since it provided the title for an 1817 edition of Leonardo's writing on this subject; Farago, see 'Paragone', in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner, 34 vols, 24 (London: Macmillan, 1996), pp. 90–1.
- 22 See William Shakespeare and Thomas Middleton, *Timon of Athens*, ed. Anthony B. Dawson and Gretchen E. Minton, The Arden Shakespeare, third series (London: Cengage Learning, 2008), I.i.1–226. The relevance of the *paragone* for *Timon of Athens* was first noted by Anthony Blunt in 'An Echo of the "Paragone" in Shakespeare', *Journal of the Warburg Institute*, 2:3 (1939), 260–2; see John Dixon Hunt, 'Shakespeare and the *Paragone*: A Reading of *Timon of Athens*', in Werner Habricht, David John Palmer and Roger Pringle (eds), *Images of Shakespeare: Proceedings of the Third Congress of the International Shakespeare Association 1986* (Cranbury, London and Mississauga: Associated University Presses, 1988), pp. 47–63, p. 47.
  - 23 Although Shakespeare and Middleton collaborated on *Timon of Athens*, the opening scene is generally accepted to have been written by Shakespeare; see *Timon of Athens*, ed. Dawson and Minton, Appendix 2, p. 402.
  - 24 See Anon, *Queen Elizabeth's Entertainment at Mitcham: Poet, Painter, and Musician*, ed. Leslie Hotson (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953). All subsequent references are to this edition.
  - 25 The portrait by Veronese is now lost; see H. R. Woudhuysen, 'Sidney, Sir Philip (1554–1586)'. *Oxford DNB*. [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/25522](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/25522). Accessed 23 September 2012. See also Clark Hulse, *The Rule of Art: Literature and Painting in the Renaissance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), p. 117.
  - 26 On emblems, see Michael Bath, *Speaking Pictures: English Emblem Books and Renaissance Culture*, Longman Medieval and Renaissance Library (London: Longman, 1994), and John Manning, *The Emblem* (London: Reaktion, 2002).
  - 27 Manning, *The Emblem*, p. 85.
  - 28 Barkan, 'Making Pictures Speak', 342.
  - 29 Barkan, 'Making Pictures Speak', 343. The emphasis is in the text.
  - 30 On theatre as a transcendent 'speaking picture', see Marguerite A. Tassi, *The Scandal of Images: Iconoclasm, Eroticism and Painting in Early Modern English Drama* (Selinsgrove, Pa.: Susquehanna University Press and Associated University Presses, 2005), p. 208; Tassi argues that plays transcend the limitations of word and image, and in this view follows Hunt, 'Shakespeare and the *Paragone*: A Reading of *Timon of Athens*', p. 53, and his 'Pictura, Scriptura, and Theatrum: Shakespeare and the Emblem', *Poetics Today*, 10:1, Art and Literature I (1989), 155–71, 159.
  - 31 Mitchell, *Picture Theory*, p. 152.
  - 32 Martha Ronk, 'Locating the Visual in *As You like It*', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 52:2 (2001), 255–76, 257.
  - 33 Meek, *Narrating the Visual*, p. 3, and n. 4. In the phrase 'make us see', Meek quotes Mitchell, *Picture Theory*, p. 152; Meek explains that Mitchell borrows the phrase from Joseph Conrad, *The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'*, ed. Cedric Watts (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1988), p. xlix.
  - 34 'The history of culture is in part the story of a protracted struggle for dominance between pictorial and linguistic signs', W. J. T. Mitchell, *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), pp. 43, 48.

- 35 Mitchell, *Iconology*, p. 44.
- 36 See Thorne, *Vision and Rhetoric*, *passim*.
- 37 See Lukas Erne, *Shakespeare as Literary Dramatist* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Meek uses Erne's work as a starting point from which to explore Shakespeare's destabilisation of 'literary' and 'theatrical' modes, *Narrating the Visual*, pp. 22–3.
- 38 See Hugh Grady, *Shakespeare and Impure Aesthetics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 2.
- 39 Mitchell, *Picture Theory*, p. 114; this definition of 'iconology' is taken from Mitchell, *Iconology*, p. 1. For 'différance', see Jacques Derrida, *Speech and Phenomena and Other Essays on Husserl's Theory of Signs*, trans. David B. Allison (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973), pp. 129–59, and his *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), pp. 1–28.
- 40 Jeremy Lopez, *Theatrical Convention and Audience Response in Early Modern Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 2–3.
- 41 Tiffany Stern, *Documents of Performance in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 1.
- 42 Larry Shiner, *The Invention of Art: A Cultural History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), p. 53.
- 43 Harris, *Untimely Matter*, p. 8.
- 44 Harris, *Untimely Matter*, p. 7. See also Jonathan Gil Harris and Natasha Korda, 'Introduction: Towards a Materialist Account of Stage Properties', in Jonathan Gil Harris and Natasha Korda (eds), *Staged Properties in Early Modern English Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 1–31, p. 17.
- 45 Aristotle, *De Anima*, in *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, trans. Richard McKeon (New York: Random House, 1941), pp. 535–606, p. 555, also quoted in Harris, *Untimely Matter*, p. 7.
- 46 Karl Marx, 'Theses on Feuerbach', trans. Tom Nairn, in *Karl Marx: Early Writings* (London: Penguin, 1975), pp. 421–3, p. 421.
- 47 See Catherine Richardson, *Shakespeare and Material Culture*, Oxford Shakespeare Topics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 118–22, 124–5; Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 34–58; see also pp. 89–94.
- 48 See Tara Hamling, *Decorating the 'Godly' Household: Religious Art in Post-Reformation Britain* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2010), and Tarnya Cooper, 'The Enchantment of the Familiar Face: Portraits as Domestic Objects in Elizabethan and Jacobean England', in Catherine Richardson and Tara Hamling (eds), *Everyday Objects: Medieval and Early Modern Material Culture and its Meanings* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), pp. 157–78; in this collection see also Robert Tittler, 'Faces and Spaces: Displaying the Civic Portrait in Early Modern England', pp. 179–87.
- 49 Keir Elam, "'Most truly limned and living in your face": Looking at Pictures in Shakespeare', in Virginia Mason Vaughan, Fernando Cioni and Jacquelyn Bessell (eds), *Speaking Pictures: The Visual/Verbal Nexus of Dramatic Performance* (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2010), pp. 63–89, pp. 75–6.

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- 50 Elam, 'Most truly limned and living in your face', p. 63.
- 51 See Michael Baxandall, *Giotto and the Orators: Humanist Observers of Painting in Italy and the Discovery of Pictorial Composition, 1350–1450* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 52.
- 52 Much of the literature on these subjects (particularly the 'transformation' of the supposed statue) is discussed in my second chapter. On Shakespeare's sources for Romano, see Georgianna Ziegler, 'Parents, Daughters and "That rare Italian master": A New Source for *The Winter's Tale*', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 36:2 (1985), 204–12, and B. J. Sokol, *Art and Illusion in 'The Winter's Tale'* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), especially pp. 85–115. Catherine Belsey discusses Hermione's statue in relation to 'early modern tomb sculpture' in *Shakespeare and the Loss of Eden: The Construction of Family Values in Early Modern Culture* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), pp. 90–120.
- 53 Marion O'Connor, "'Imagine Me, Gentle Spectators": Iconomachy and *The Winter's Tale*', in Richard Dutton and Jean E. Howard (eds), *A Companion to Shakespeare's Works, IV: The Poems, Problem Comedies, Late Plays* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), pp. 365–88, p. 383.
- 54 Thomas Dekker, *The Welsh Ambassador*, in F. Bowers (ed.), *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker*, vol. IV (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), II.iii.35SD–38. All subsequent references are to this edition.
- 55 Alain Besançon, *The Forbidden Image: An Intellectual History of Iconoclasm*, trans. Jane Marie Todd (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2000), p. 66.
- 56 William Perkins, *A Warning against the Idolatrie of the last times* (Cambridge: J. Legat, 1601), p. 4.
- 57 See Stuart Clark, *Vanities of the Eye: Vision in Early Modern European Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 165.
- 58 See Meek, *Narrating the Visual*, pp. 7–8.
- 59 Barbara Johnson, *Mother Tongues: Sexuality, Trials, Motherhood, Translation* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2003), p. 62.
- 60 John Lyly, *Euphues and His England*, in *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit and Euphues and His England*, ed. Leah Scragg, The Revels Plays Companion Library (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), p. 333. All subsequent references are to this edition.
- 61 Harris, *Untimely Matter*, p. 4.

## Early modern English drama and visual culture

This book discusses early modern English drama as a part of visual culture. But what is visual culture, and why use this phrase in place of the ‘fine arts’ or the ‘visual arts’? In part, this choice is motivated by my concern with exploring the plays in their historical contexts. Shakespeare and his contemporaries would not have recognised the phrase ‘fine arts’. Nor would they have recognised the categories that we might now refer to as the ‘decorative arts’ and ‘crafts’, these terms being products of the eighteenth century.<sup>1</sup> It is partly because the phrase ‘fine arts’ is anachronistic for the early modern period that I avoid its use throughout this book, although I frequently discuss visual representations which are identified with this aesthetic category, such as paintings and sculpture. Instead, in this study I approach drama as a part of visual culture, and, within this broad approach, I refer to visual representations and occasionally to the visual arts. These phrases are all as anachronistic as is ‘fine arts’ for a discussion of early modern culture, and so my terminology requires further qualification. To this end, this chapter explores what is meant by early modern English visual culture, and expounds my approach to drama as a part of that visual culture.

The phrase ‘visual culture’ emerged in art-historical criticism in the late twentieth century, and is usually used with reference to modern and postmodern visuality, although it is notable that the first allusion to ‘visual culture’ is in Michael Baxandall’s pioneering 1972 study, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy*.<sup>2</sup> ‘Visual culture’ is a pertinent phrase for use in this study because it implies a breadth of visual reference that includes the diverse range of types of work with which an early modern artisan might be involved. Painters in this period regularly carried out decorative work, and, as Lucy Gent points out, paintings in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries were to some extent ‘thought of as forms of surface and wall-cladding’.<sup>3</sup> For example, active in the early seventeenth century, Rowland Buckett was a painter whose ‘forte lay in decorative painting’ but was also expert in ‘gilding, joinery, and carving’.<sup>4</sup> Examples of his work survive, such as his decorations of a chamber organ made by John Haan and dated to 1611–12, at Hatfield House (figure 1).<sup>5</sup>

In this swirling composition depicting intertwined bodies of animals, mythical



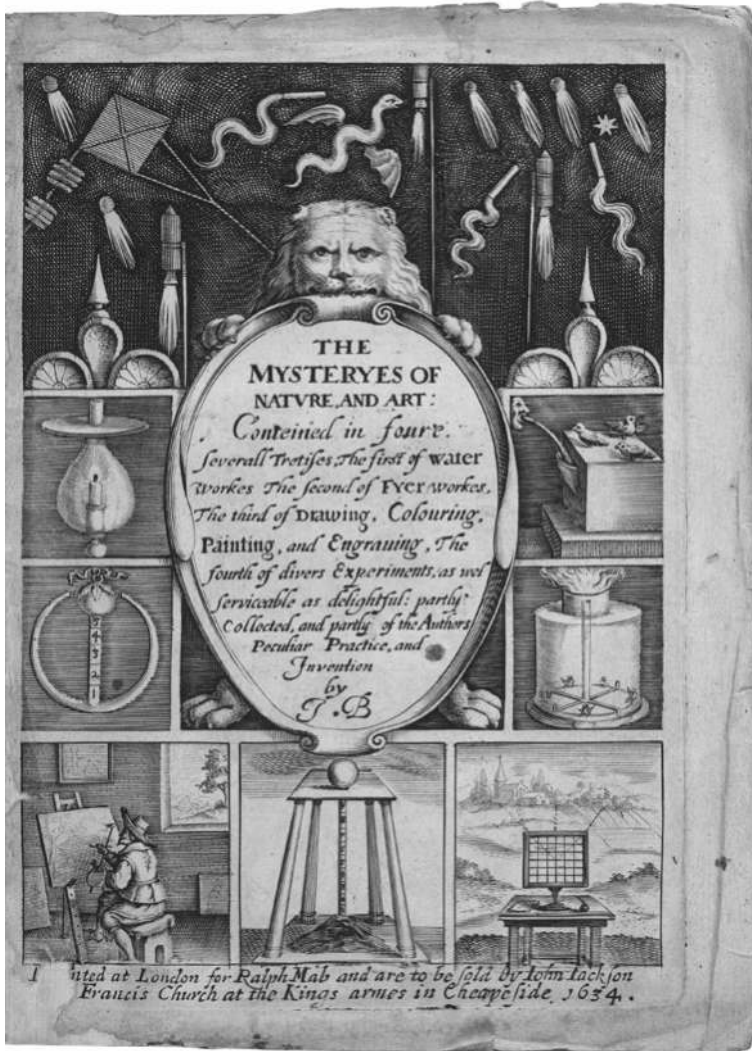
1 Rowland Buckett, detail of painted decoration of John Haan's chamber organ at Hatfield House (1611–12)

beasts and semi-human figures, Buckett, the son of a German refugee, 'adapted a plate from *Newes Gradesca Büchlein*, a suit of grotesques designed by the engraver Lucas Kilian (1579–1637) and published in Augsburg in 1607'.<sup>6</sup> This type of grotesque design is also known in the period as 'antic work', as in John Florio's 1598 Italian–English dictionary, where '*grottesca*' is defined as 'a kinde of rugged unpolished painters worke, anticke worke'.<sup>7</sup>

By 1611 Buckett was relatively experienced in organ decoration, as in 1599–1600 he travelled with the organ-maker Thomas Dallam to Constantinople in order to deliver to Sultan Mehmed III the diplomatic gift of an elaborate organ that also functioned as a clock.<sup>8</sup> A versatile figure, Buckett was closely connected to the world of early modern drama, working for Edward Alleyn from 1612, and even selling Alleyn 'painter's pigments and gold and silver leaf'.<sup>9</sup> The painter also collaborated with Thomas Middleton on the production of the Lord Mayor's Show, *The triumphs of honor and industry* (1617), and worked on the set for James Shirley's masque *The Triumphs of Peace*, performed at the Middle Temple in 1633.<sup>10</sup>

Buckett's versatility was not unusual in this period. Life as what might be termed a 'visual artist' in early modern London seems to have often involved a variety of types of work in collaborative contexts. The painter John De Critz produced portraits of James I and Anne of Denmark in 1605–6, but as Sergeant Painter to the king he also carried out decorative work, such as 'Cullouring in Gould cullor the Braunches of ... Candlesticks in the Cockpitt', and also scene-painting for masques, such as 'payntinge ... a greate arche with two spandrels, two figures and two pillasters' in the Banqueting House for the performance of Thomas Campion's *Masque of Squires* on 26 December 1613.<sup>11</sup> Inigo Jones, the most well-known stage designer to work on the Stuart court masques, was, famously, an architect, appointed Surveyor-General of the King's Works in 1615.<sup>12</sup> In 1630, this role included passing 'Designes and Draughtes' for 'woorkes about the Cockpitt and Playhouse there' to De Critz, who then directed 'Carvers and Carpenters' in implementing the designs.<sup>13</sup> That painting was connected to a range of other practices is also suggested by the treatises on drawing and painting which emerge increasingly in the early seventeenth century. For example, Henry Peacham's *The Gentlemans Exercise* (1612), which was also published with a different title page as *Graphice*, discusses 'drawing' and 'the making of all kinds of colours' for the benefit of 'all yong gentleman' as well as 'Serving for the necessarie use and generall benefite of divers Trades-men and Artificers, as namely Painters, Joyners, Free-masons, Cutters and Carvers'.<sup>14</sup> One of Peacham's later works, *The Compleat Gentleman* (1622), discusses 'Drawing and Painting in Oyle' as one of the many practices appropriate for gentlemen, in addition to 'Cosmography' and 'Musicke'.<sup>15</sup> John Bate's *The Mysteryes of Nature, and Art* (1634), meanwhile, is divided into four sections; the third covers 'Drawing, Limning, Colouring, Painting, and Graving', while the other sections are devoted to waterworks, fireworks and 'divers experi-

ments' termed 'Extravagants'.<sup>16</sup> The title page to Bate's work shows a man painting in the bottom left corner, alongside images of fireworks and contraptions for the production of waterworks (figure 2). In the bottom right corner is a 'frame' that functions along loosely perspectival lines and is recommended by Bate for the depiction of 'a Towne, or Castle'.<sup>17</sup>



2 John Bate, *The Mysteries of Nature, and Art: Contained in foure severall Treatises, The first of Water workes the second of Fyer workes, The third of Drawing, Colouring, Painting, and Engraving, The fourth of divers Experiments, as wel Serviceable as delightful: partly Collected, and partly of the Authors Peculiar Practice, and Invention, by J. B.* (1634), title page



It is against this backdrop of professional versatility that I have chosen to refer to 'visual culture' as opposed to 'the visual arts' or 'the fine arts'.

At its broadest, visual culture can mean anything that is seen.<sup>18</sup> Visual culture thus also implies the 'visual field', but the term 'culture' usefully invokes the production of representations as a part of that field. Moreover, 'culture' collapses the disciplinary divisions between visual and literary modes of representation in ways that are useful for an interdisciplinary study that looks between modes of expression sometimes understood as distinct. As a constituent of the visual field, it is possible for a play in performance to participate in visual culture in a direct way that does not seem as plausible with reference to the visual arts, although that Shakespeare is 'himself a visual artist' is sometimes claimed.<sup>19</sup> In addition, the use of the word 'culture' directs us away from the idea of image-making and playwriting as the setting up of a representational object, focusing attention instead on representational activity as 'process'. Raymond Williams states that 'culture in all its early uses was a noun of process; the tending of something, basically crops or animals'.<sup>20</sup> Culture thus implies an action in process, on-going, fermenting, subject to change; a state of affairs that I will argue characterises dramatists' metatheatrical engagements with the idea of representation. As I explain in the next section, this association between visual experience and matter subject-to-change is also highly pertinent for post-Reformation English visual contexts.

### **Re-formation visual culture**

By the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, English visual culture had experienced tumultuous changes resulting from the religious reforms that began to take effect in the late 1530s. In pre-Reformation devotional practices, the relationship between worshipper and God was extensively mediated through visual representations depicting Christ and the saints. Medieval English churches were 'filled' with images of the saints, the embellishment and upkeep of which was paid for by worshippers.<sup>21</sup> Decorated shrines held relics of the saints in containers 'overlaid with decorative plates of gold and silver and the jewels given by generations of pilgrims'.<sup>22</sup> Individuals purchased devotional images carved in alabaster depicting scenes from the Passion, or 'iconographical types such as the Lamentation, Christ as the Man of Sorrows and St. Anne with the Virgin and Child'.<sup>23</sup> The centrality of visual representations in Christian devotion in England was overturned by the Protestant Reformation, which insisted that man's relationship with God be mediated through Scripture and therefore denied the place of images in spiritual communion.<sup>24</sup> Christians had long debated the function of images in spiritual life, but the reformist emphasis on the primacy of the word was now directly invested in the identification of religious images as idols; as distracting 'false' representations.<sup>25</sup> As a result,

during the reforms of the early sixteenth century, images were destroyed and removed from churches; wall paintings depicting the saints were whitewashed, the heads and hands of sculptures knocked away or defaced.<sup>26</sup> Subsequently, and with the exception of the five-year reign of the Roman Catholic Mary I, bursts of state-authorised and popular iconoclasm targeted images in religious, public and domestic spheres.<sup>27</sup>

Interlinked with this attack on visual culture was a destabilisation of theories of vision. In the early modern period 'seeing' was understood as a material, tactile experience, a view based on medieval and classical models which held that '*species*' which 'radiated out' from objects 'carried the likeness or "similitudes" of visible forms from object to eye'; the likeness was then 'stamped' on the memory by the 'internal senses'.<sup>28</sup> Influenced by Neoplatonism and advances in psychology, early modern theorists of vision positioned the imagination as a creative faculty that mediates between the sensory perception of external objects and the intellect, 'constructing, combining, and manipulating' the images with which the latter is supplied.<sup>29</sup> In this view, perception implies a mental process of image-making mediated by an imagination that is able to 'recreate, recompose, and relocate images'.<sup>30</sup> Because early modern models of vision conceptualised spectatorship as a mode of image-making, 'superstition' was held to exist 'in the mind of the worshipper'.<sup>31</sup> It was therefore feared that any spectator could fall into idolatrous imaginings in any visual situation.<sup>32</sup> As is often noted, the playhouses were frequently attacked as idolatrous; the antitheatricalist Stephen Gosson, for example, argued that 'such men as are erectors of Stage Playes among Christians ... communicate with the sacrifices and idolatry of the Gentiles'.<sup>33</sup>

Studies of early modern English drama and visual culture frequently aim to trace the theatre companies' responses to the challenges posed by professional performance in post-Reformation contexts.<sup>34</sup> Most importantly, Huston Diehl has explored the ways in which the spectacle of the stage might have been adapted to suit a 'Protestant aesthetics'.<sup>35</sup> Diehl was pioneering in her recognition that theatrical spectacle might form a part of visual culture, yet she ultimately considered a 'Protestant aesthetics' to have been impossibly flawed and self-destructive, playwrights 'killing what they love' as they demystified 'the older, miraculous forms of theatricality'.<sup>36</sup> Diehl therefore considered early modern English drama to be in process of change as a part of an unstable post-Reformation visual culture headed towards an iconoclastically fatal conclusion. In this, and in her focus on Protestantism as a faith that 'nurtured a deep distrust of the visible', Diehl echoed the widespread assumption that the Reformation fostered deep-seated anti-visual sentiments in England.<sup>37</sup> As noted in the introduction, it is widely held that early modern English visual culture was in some way deficient, lacking, bereft in the wake of the Reformation. Such a view echoes Patrick Collinson's claim that, during the sixteenth century,

England moved 'from iconoclasm to iconophobia'.<sup>38</sup> This narrative of an early modern English visual culture set on a destructive path remains influential. For example, in his two works on literature and visual culture in this period, Knapp builds on Collinson's account of 'Elizabethan iconophobia', although with the acknowledgement that 'a vibrant visual culture continued to thrive on single-sheet prints (mostly ballads and broadsides)'.<sup>39</sup> This reference to a thriving, popular visual culture acknowledges the work of Tessa Watt, who makes an important challenge to Collinson's thesis in her *Cheap Print and Popular Piety, 1550–1640*. This seminal study traces the vast array of affordable printed images in circulation in England in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, demonstrating the significance of printed visual material in religious life after the Reformation.<sup>40</sup>

The present book exploits the groundswell of studies that approached the topic of English Protestant visual culture with seriousness in the wake of Watt's pioneering work. I am especially indebted to an important collection of essays on this subject edited by Tara Hamling and Richard L. Williams. Introducing this collection, Hamling and Williams argue that rather than considering the Reformation as signalling 'the end of art' in Britain, we should understand the visual arts in this period as 're-forming', or undergoing a process of 'cultural transformation' that included 'continuities and discontinuities, innovation and destruction'.<sup>41</sup> This approach to the period is most effectively demonstrated in Hamling's work on the function of religious images in Protestant life in England and Scotland in her *Decorating the 'Godly' Household: Religious Art in Post-Reformation Britain*. Hamling overturns Collinson's 'flawed notion of iconophobia', and demonstrates that Protestant households were decorated with biblical scenes that played an important role in everyday piety.<sup>42</sup> Hamling explores the dynamics and nuances of 'Protestant image theory', such as that depictions of Christ and the Virgin Mary 'were widely condemned in a church setting', but 'were not unusual in post-Reformation domestic decoration'.<sup>43</sup> For example, Hamling shows that New Testament imagery is found in the first-floor chamber of merchants' houses, a room 'almost certainly ... used for household prayers'.<sup>44</sup> Old Testament scenes, meanwhile, were associated with meditation and so frequently appear on fireplace overmantles, the 'site of prolonged viewing, contemplation and possibly discussion'.<sup>45</sup> Of course, this biblical iconography has no place on the early modern stage, as the depiction of religious subjects in plays was prohibited under the terms of the 1559 religious settlement.<sup>46</sup> As Catherine Belsey has shown in a study which informs Hamling's work, however, it can be highly profitable to read Shakespearean drama alongside religious visual imagery from the period.<sup>47</sup> Greater awareness of the types of visual representation that playwrights may have encountered in domestic spaces should surely inform our interpretation of the depiction of visual culture on the early modern stage.

Recognising that early modern visual culture was not the 'end of art', then, this book is most heavily indebted to Hamling and Williams's conceptualisation of a Protestant visual culture undergoing change. This vision of early modern English visual culture complements my concern with depictions of visual processes and practices in plays, and with reworkable matter as distinct from completed, fully formed objects. In addition, the notion of a visual culture in process of transformation also complements new art-historical work on iconoclasm that I exploit in this study. As noted above, iconoclasm is frequently understood as a symptom of post-Reformation English hostility to images, and the catalyst for the 'iconophobic' rejection of images described by Collinson. Significantly, Collinson recognised that iconoclasm is not in itself 'anti-image', since iconoclastic attacks modify images and so produce new spectacle.<sup>48</sup> Concentrating on iconophobia, Collinson did not explore extensively what he had implied was a creative side-effect of image-breaking.

Since Collinson's work, a number of studies have revisited the contested meaning of iconoclasm in ways that are useful for my interest in drama as a part of a visual culture in 'process of cultural transformation'.<sup>49</sup> In an important collection of essays on iconoclasm, many of the contributors explore the proposition that, as Richard Clay explains, image-breaking has a 'creative dimension', given that 'even when an object is utterly erased the empty space that it once filled can connote new meanings for as long as the absent signifier is remembered'.<sup>50</sup> Such an interpretation locates the iconoclast as a spectator who views an image in order to destroy or deface it, and simultaneously becomes a 'maker' in iconoclastically producing 'a new signifier that points to new meanings'.<sup>51</sup> Michael Wayne Cole and Rebecca Zorach, similarly, write that 'accusations of idolatry' in the early modern period are significant because 'such accusations did not just concretize the idol in an act of destruction: it likewise resulted in the *making* of new things'.<sup>52</sup> What is most important for my study is what iconoclasm may tell us about early modern spectatorship. Fabio Rambelli and Eric Reinders, writing on iconoclasm in East Asia, view the destruction of images as a process with transformative implications for the iconoclast as much as for the destroyed object:

The destruction of objects produces new meanings and practices, and damaged things may become more precious. The destruction of religious objects is a cultural practice that changes the materiality or the meaning of the object involved, or both. Destruction and damage of religious objects cause transformations of the semiotic status of those objects ... destruction may also transform the status of the agents involved.<sup>53</sup>

Here, iconoclasm is a transformative process, rather than an event which ends in total destruction for the image and continuation of the iconoclast's status prior to this process. The iconoclast, in this view, is simultaneously a spectator and



3 Headless statues in the Lady Chapel, Ely Cathedral  
 © Photograph by Evelyn Simak. Creative Commons Licence

maker of an image; they view the image in order to destroy or damage it, but in the process of destruction, they make a new visual item.

This understanding of iconoclasm is applicable to instances of early modern English image-breaking. Iconoclasts in this period would often obliterate the head and hands of an image, leaving it on display in a ‘mutilated’ state.<sup>54</sup> This has happened in the case of the headless statues which still stand in the Lady Chapel of Ely Cathedral (figure 3), and also in the defacement of the heads, hands and feet of the saints depicted on a rood screen in St Nicholas’ church, Salthouse, Norfolk (figure 4). Leaving behind mutilated figures in both cases, the iconoclasts responsible created new spectacle.<sup>55</sup>

Iconoclasts operated in different ways and with different degrees of violence across the period. For example, archeological examination of fragments of a figure from the shrine of Little St Hugh, Lincoln Cathedral, has revealed that where iconoclasts in 1540 had chipped away at and defaced the head of the figure, image-breaking that probably occurred in a major attack on the Cathedral in 1644 required that the already defaced head be ‘knocked off the structure’.<sup>56</sup> Thus seventeenth-century iconoclasts reworked century-old defacement in a more violent act of signification. A different kind of remaking is evidenced by wall paintings in the parish church of St Lawrence, Eyam, in Derbyshire. Here, in around 1600, in response to the prohibition on depictions



4 Rood screen panels showing defaced figures, St Nicholas' church, Salthouse, Norfolk.  
© Photograph by John Salmon. Creative Commons Licence

of Christ and the saints, a series of wall paintings showing the ensigns of the twelve tribes of Israel were painted either side of the chancel arch, either side of the belfry arch, and on the north and south walls of the church.<sup>57</sup> These paintings replaced earlier images, now lost, and in about 1620 were also 'replaced by a third design ... a fragment of the Creed'.<sup>58</sup> All of the images were covered up in the 1640s, and not uncovered until the nineteenth century; a medieval depiction of a skeleton was also uncovered, this image presumably having been whitewashed during the initial sixteenth-century reforms.<sup>59</sup> The interior of Eyam parish church therefore attests to a long early modern history of iconoclasm and remaking, in which the production of images is interlinked with the destruction of others.

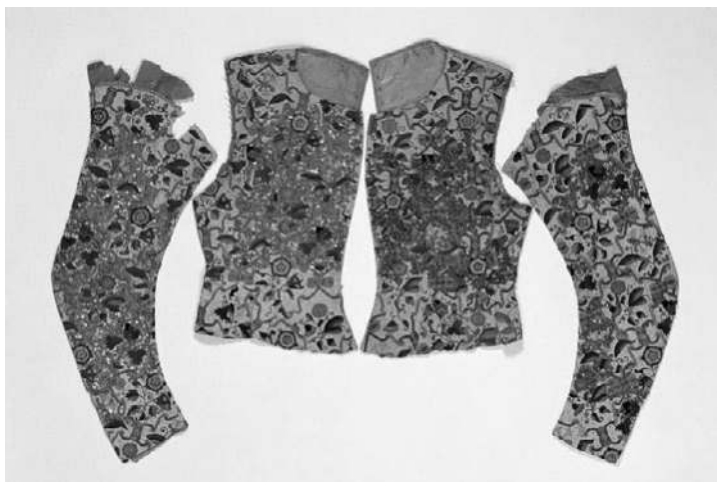
Can we understand post-Reformation iconoclasm as a form of interactive spectatorship, in which viewers participate in a process of continual remaking within visual culture? And given that iconoclastic attitudes are taken to have extended to visual culture more broadly, can we then apply this model of spectatorship to the experience of watching a play in post-Reformation England? The applicability of this model is suggested by the many instances in which plays are depicted as 'under construction' at the hands of audience members. In the next section, I explain in more detail my approach to the interactive function of the spectator in drama and visual culture.

### Ways of seeing: spectators as ‘makers’

The prologues and epilogues performed on the commercial stages of early modern London frequently draw attention to the significance of spectators as participants in the construction of meaning. For example, *The Travels of the Three English Brothers*, by John Day, William Rowley and George Wilkins, first performed and published in 1607, opens with a Prologue in which the audience are told that the ‘scene’ of Sir Anthony Sherley’s journey to Persia ‘lies speechless, active but yet dumb, / Till your expressing thoughts give it a tongue’.<sup>60</sup> The Epilogue to John Ford’s *The Broken Heart* suggests that if the ‘best’ of the audience are pleased with the production then ‘the *Broken Heart* may be piec’d up again’.<sup>61</sup> To take a further, very well-known example: in the prologue to Shakespeare’s *Henry V* (probably first performed in 1599), spectators are invited to use their ‘imaginary forces’ to conduct piecemeal processes of assemblage while watching and imagining the events of the play.<sup>62</sup> Alert to the inability of the ‘unworthy scaffold’ of the stage to convey ‘the vasty fields of France’, this prologue suggests collaboration between production and audience:

O pardon: since a crooked figure may  
 Attest in little place a million,  
 And let us, ciphers to this great account,  
 On your imaginary forces work.  
 Suppose within the girdle of these walls  
 Are now confined two mighty monarchies,  
 Whose high upreared and abutting fronts  
 The perilous narrow ocean parts asunder.  
 Piece out our imperfections with your thoughts.  
 Into a thousand parts divide one man  
 And make imaginary puissance.  
 Think, when we talk of horses, that you see them  
 Printing their proud hoofs i’ th’ receiving earth.  
 For ’tis your thoughts that now must deck our kings,  
 Carry them here and there, jumping o’er times  
 Turning th’accomplishment of many years  
 Into an hour-glass.<sup>63</sup>

Here, audience members are invited to view the scenes that are to be presented to them as visual and material items subject to alteration. Audience members are enlisted in the dressing of the bodies of kings in the play, since, as the *OED* suggests, all late sixteenth-century interpretations of the verb to ‘deck’ relate to this act. Similarly, the invitation for spectators to mentally ‘piece out’ the production in order to compensate for the play’s failings refers to the construction of visual appearance. According to the *OED*, the earliest meaning of ‘piece’ as a verb, still current in the sixteenth century, was ‘to mend, make whole or ...



5 Jacket, possibly remade for masquing (1600–20), © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

patch’, with the first known use of this word being in reference to the piecing of a ‘clout hem of sacchis or opere pecis’.<sup>64</sup> The practice of patching and piecing together items of material and dress would have been familiar to spectators from all levels of society. As Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass explain, ‘the value of clothes was ... directly connected to the expense of the materials from which they were made’, and so such materials would long outlive their initial usage in a culture in which ‘fabrics were reused by rich and poor alike’.<sup>65</sup> An embroidered silk jacket dated to 1600–20 is thought to have been remade decades into its lifetime for use in masquing, with extra spangles added to catch the light in performance (figure 5).

Below the level of the elite, most people would have had experience of mending their own clothes; a rare survival of a full sailor’s outfit in the Museum of London, for example, shows heavy patchwork where the thick woollen cloth has been repaired (figure 6).

Early modern clothing ‘was a composition of detachable parts’, with the dress of wealthy and aristocratic men and women in particular requiring the assemblage of a significant number of different items.<sup>66</sup> As a result, ‘dressing and undressing were social processes that required ... other pairs of hands’.<sup>67</sup> The construction of the spectator as a participant in visual and material culture in *Henry V* therefore draws on processes which would have been familiar to playgoers from the experience of piecing together their own visual appearance, or helping to compose the dress of relatives, friends, masters, mistresses or clients.

As noted above, playwriting was commonly understood as the piecing together of ‘odds and ends’; it was on this basis that playwrights were known as ‘play-patchers’.<sup>68</sup> Material and literary modes of piecing together intersect here,





6 Shirt ensemble (1600–1700), © Museum of London

as, the *OED* explains, to ‘piece out’ was a newly developed phrasal verb in the late sixteenth century, meaning ‘to enlarge or complete by the addition of a piece’. For example, George Puttenham deploys the phrase in the context of poetic composition when he notes ‘how much better some *bissillable* becommeth to peece out an other longer foote then another word doth’.<sup>69</sup> The prologue to *Henry V* thus appeals to spectators through terminology invoking literary, material and visual compositional practices. I draw attention to this combination of literary, material and visual contexts in order to emphasise that while I am concerned with drama as a part of visual culture, other types of sensory experience and modes of expression are important for my analysis. Work on the early modern senses paints a picture of Reformation sensory experience in which different types of perception converge and overlap. For example, in an important reorientation of conventional critical thought on Reformation sensory experience, Matthew Milner points out that the word which replaced the image in sixteenth-

century reforms also took on roles previously supplied by images; the word was thus 'visual and aural, ... touched, eaten and smelled'.<sup>70</sup> Such a sensory overlap is arguably encouraged by the dynamics of performance and reception in early modern theatre. Playwrights' allusions to and depictions of visual experience are verbal in the sense that they are produced by writing and speech, and 'visual' in that their performance always entails some degree of spectacle. The player speaking the Prologue at the opening of *Henry V* draws attention to the lack of visual content presented on stage, yet his standing on that stage at all constitutes spectacle. That theatre companies considered even the barest of onstage moments as part of a visual composition is indicated by the fact that players who delivered stage orations such as prologues frequently wore a 'Prologue uniform', often a laurel wreath, that denoted the speaker's function.<sup>71</sup>

In speaking of spectators' visual and sensory experiences of plays in performance, I do not mean to allude simplistically to audience members as individual agents. Gurr has pointed out that spectators are individual viewers, whereas "'audience" is a collective term for a group of listeners'.<sup>72</sup> The tension between the experience of the individual watching a play and the collective experience of a group that constitutes an audience has been the scene of extensive debate, most prominently in Anthony B. Dawson and Paul Yachnin's collaborative discussion of early modern English playgoing culture.<sup>73</sup> It seems reasonable to adopt a view of early modern playgoing that recognises distinctions and the importance of 'negotiations' between 'individual' and 'collective' experiences, but which suggests that collective experience was constituted by playgoers' individual perspectives.<sup>74</sup> In this approach I build on Charles Whitney's work on playgoers' responses to early performances of the plays of this period. Whitney emphasises diversity in dramatic reception, and therefore calls attention to the ways in which individual reactions to plays in performance might emerge from collective audience experiences.<sup>75</sup> I also avoid the identification of different 'types' of playgoer, a subject which has received significant attention, particularly in regards to the contrast between 'seeing' and 'hearing'.<sup>76</sup> Such a focus is encouraged by certain examples from the plays, and particularly works by Ben Jonson. For example, the Induction to *Bartholomew Fair* (first produced 1614) distinguishes between 'spectators and hearers'.<sup>77</sup> In a later play by Jonson, *The Staple of News* (first performed 1626), the Prologue for the Stage declares that Jonson would 'have' playgoers be 'wise, / Much rather by your ears, than by your eyes'.<sup>78</sup> There is scope for taking these allusions to opposing modes of playgoing as reflective of a Jonsonian *paragone* debate.<sup>79</sup> Jonson's disparaging reference to those who are satisfied by that which pleases the 'eyes' in *The Staple of News* can convincingly be linked to the playwright's infamous quarrel with Inigo Jones, with whom Jonson had collaborated on the Stuart court masques since 1605, and whom he seems to mock in parts of this play.<sup>80</sup> Yet how can the divisions between 'spectators' and 'hearers' encouraged by Jonson be related

to the fluid sensory experience evoked in the prologue to *Henry V*? One way to approach this apparent inconsistency is to acknowledge that in line with early modern English visual culture more broadly, concepts of spectatorship were in transition during this period.

According to the *OED*, during the late sixteenth century ‘spectator’ emerged as a new term meaning ‘one who sees, or looks on at, some scene or occurrence; a beholder, onlooker, observer’. The earliest usage of this term noted in the *OED* is from Sir Philip Sidney’s *The Countesse of Pembrokes Arcadia*, where Plexirtus trusts ‘no eyes of sufficient credite in such a matter, but his owne’ in the murder of his brother, ‘and therefore came him selfe to be actor, and spectator’.<sup>81</sup> The first edition of this work was published posthumously in 1590, and ‘spectator’ appears in this revised version, which Sidney wrote in 1584.<sup>82</sup> In his still invaluable study of early modern playgoing, Andrew Gurr states that ‘the first writer to use the term “spectator” appears to have been ... Philip Sidney’.<sup>83</sup> The earliest usage of ‘spectator’ in English that I have been able to find is from a much earlier text, *The new pollecye of warre* (1542), by the reformist theologian Thomas Becon (also known as Theodore Basil), who declares in his Prologue that he has been a ‘vayne gazer and idle spectator’.<sup>84</sup> Becon’s allusion to being an ‘ydle spectator’ perhaps illustrates the *OED*’s second meaning for this term, dated to 1590: ‘one who is present at, and has a view or sight of, anything in the nature of a show or spectacle’. This definition has clear relevance for the spectatorship of the ‘show’ presented in the early modern playhouses, but suggests that spectators behold a scene over which they have no control and which functions independently of their gaze. The spectator who passively watches a ‘show’ does not resemble the interactive figure of the spectator that is invoked both in the plays and by early modern theories concerning the tactility of vision. It might be suggested that our understanding of spectatorship in the early modern theatre remains incomplete, and that in early modern London the relatively ‘new’ context of commercial theatre offered a useful but unstable testing ground for ways of seeing.

It is not new to suggest that theatre participates in post-Reformation anxieties about visual experience. In a book that extensively influences the present study, Katharine Eisaman Maus suggests that early modern spectacle, including theatrical spectacle, depends on semi-hidden, ‘ambiguous’ truths, and so reflects the period’s ‘chronic doubts about the adequacy of what can be seen’.<sup>85</sup> Decades since Maus’s study, and building on Stuart Clark’s work on the history of vision, Knapp has explored the ways in which Shakespeare’s works address the ethical choices presented by a visual world in which access to a stable ‘truth’ is uncertain.<sup>86</sup> In this book, I build on Maus and Knapp’s sense that playwrights are concerned with the location of ‘truth’ in an uncertain visual world, but connect this to the interactive, material practice of spectatorship in a changing visual culture. In this view, spectatorship involves engagements with the materiality of the viewed which act as a source of knowledge, both about the viewed and about

the viewer themselves. In this approach I connect the act of spectating with the ontological implications of 'the maker's knowledge tradition' as discussed by Elizabeth Spiller.<sup>87</sup> This tradition rejects an Aristotelian divide between 'praxis or poesis' and scientific knowledge, enforcing the integral relationship between mechanical practice and cognition.<sup>88</sup> As a result, 'being able to make something was an act of knowledge; knowing something involved knowing how to make it'.<sup>89</sup> Against this backdrop, acts of viewing which engage with material *praxis* develop a connection between looking and knowing.

When plays depict or allude to the practicalities that construct spectacle, viewers are invited to reflect on their own status and function in relation to that which they view. For a useful example, I return here to *Bartholomew Fair*, which concludes with a puppet play put on by the hobby-horse seller Lantern Leatherhead. In the course of this puppet play, Zeal-of-the-Land Busy, a Puritan, enters the audience in the play-world and calls for a halt to the production on the grounds that it is idolatrous. Persuaded by other characters to defend his 'quality', Leatherhead declines to enter into 'disputation' with Busy, but instead presents 'the Puppet Dionysius' to 'venture the cause on't' (5.5.33–7). Idolatrously entering into an argument with a puppet, Busy tells Dionysius that his 'main argument against you is that you are an abomination; for the male among you putteth on the apparel of the female, and the female of the male' (5.5.96–8). Busy here refers to one of the central objections to the theatre as an arena which staged transvestism.<sup>90</sup> The puppet's response to this accusation leaves Busy 'confuted' and 'converted' to 'a beholder' (5.5.111–15). Dionysius tells his opponent:

*It is your old stale argument against the players, but it will not hold against the puppets; for we have neither male nor female amongst us. And that thou mayst see, if thou wilt, like a malicious purblind zeal as thou art!*

*(The puppet takes up his garment).*

(5.5.101–15)<sup>91</sup>

The Puppet Dionysius's self-exposure points to the extent to which this study is interested in early modern drama as 'an art of incompleteness: a form of display that flaunts the limits of display', to borrow Maus's terms.<sup>92</sup> Writing from a new-historicist perspective, Maus views playgoers as either 'structured' by the experience of watching a play or resistant to 'the imposition of that structure'.<sup>93</sup> The example of Busy's interactions with the puppet, in contrast, demonstrates the complicity of the spectator in the production of the incompleteness that is 'flaunted' in drama of this period.<sup>94</sup> Here, it is the revelation of the material, sexless base (or puppeteer's hand) beneath the external appearance of the puppet that allows Busy to reconfigure his attitude to playgoing and theatrical spectacle. Recognising the nuts and bolts that 'make' that which he views, Busy understands the nature of his role as viewer. Moreover, it is through the process

of defacement in the alteration of the appearance of the puppet that Busy is converted to a confident and secure 'beholder'. Aura Satz has shown that it is not too much to associate this alteration in the surface of the Puppet Dionysius with the broader iconoclastic context in which defacement and desecration are reasonable responses to visual representations.<sup>95</sup> Jonson thus uses the dynamics of iconoclasm to convert an iconoclastic antitheatricalist to a willing participant in the construction of onstage meaning. This instance therefore exemplifies the relevance of image-breaking as image-making for the playhouse, and so draws attention to defacement as a productive mode through which spectators may engage with the viewed. It is worth noting here that Busy does not touch the puppet; as is discussed in the next chapter, touch in this period is not a secure route to ontological certainty.<sup>96</sup> Understanding of the material construction of the puppet offers the Puritan clear parameters through which to configure and understand his relationship to and distinction from the puppet. Busy's conversion, however, also acknowledges that he cannot fully 'know' the nature of spectacle, that there is always something in representation that is beyond material knowledge.

Throughout this study, I focus on the display of incompleteness, half-finished works and things that are 'under construction' as moments at which playwrights reflect broadly on representational activity and their own place within this. It is not a coincidence that I allude to playwrights' 'place' within an implicit representational hierarchy. Cultural production in early modern England is extensively shaped by the period's theologically informed concepts of social hierarchy. The concept of representation is founded on the hierarchical relationship between man and God, since creativity is divine, but representation is an imitation of the divine; as Barbara Johnson points out, 'human language in no way resembles the creative word'.<sup>97</sup> The act of representation is, then, always a flaunting of limitations by comparison to the boundless creative reach of divinity. In later chapters I explore the extent to which deference to divine creation shapes dramatists' preoccupation with unfinished images and the depiction of processes of making in which the reaching of a conclusion is endlessly deferred. Harris understands early modern matter as 'a species of 'arche-writing' in Derrida's sense, inasmuch as it is characterized by an ontological and temporal self-differentiation and hence deferral'.<sup>98</sup> In this study I consider depictions of making and unmaking in plays as a mode of this early modern 'arche-writing' that posits a response to aesthetic limitations associated with divine hierarchy.

Before encountering this Derridean reading of early modern attitudes to creativity and representation, however, it will be useful to understand in more detail the hierarchical nature of early modern visual culture at a more local level. With the exception of a brief consideration of the diverse roles occupied by 'visual artists', this chapter has thus far considered image-making and its reception as activities undertaken by relatively anonymous figures more or less divorced

from social contexts. In order to fully understand the extent to which image-making in post-Reformation England is inextricable from social hierarchy, it is necessary now to consider in more detail the hierarchical relationship that is at the centre of visual transactions in this period: patronage. As I shall explain, this is a context which is of great interest to dramatists, and which has much to tell us about attitudes to making and unmaking in this period more broadly.

### Patronage, image-making and authorial agency

In each chapter of this book I discuss a play that depicts instances of the patronage of a visual representation. In other words, the processes of visual construction discussed here are connected to commissions made by patrons who also function as onstage spectators. In *The Winter's Tale*, Paulina is patron of the supposed statue of Hermione; in Lyly's *Campaspe*, Alexander the Great commissions a portrait of Campaspe, while in *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, Friar Bacon oversees a demonic image-making process. Since *The Two Merry Milkmaids* concerns spectatorship within the visual field rather than of a specific artwork, there is less emphasis on patronage in this play. Even here, however, an invisible character commissions a portrait from a low-quality painter who cannot even see his subject. The faultiness of the commission in this latter play is indicative of the instability of patronage of the visual arts in the dramas discussed here overall. In each instance, commissioning processes produce items that never reach a state of 'finish' and therefore remain as reworkable matter.

Despite this apparent emphasis on 'failed' processes of image-making, it should not be surprising that the patronage of the visual arts was an appealing subject for the collaborative world of early modern theatre, because the commissioning of visual representations was a highly collaborative process. In subsequent chapters I will be interested in what these depictions of unfinished works tell us about early modern attitudes to the process and results of cultural production. For now, however, it is worth noting that certain commentators associate English patronage of the visual arts with the production of highly unsatisfactory results. Richard Haydocke, for example, considers interaction between the patron and visual artist to be at the root of what he perceives to be the lamentable state of the visual arts in Elizabethan England. Explaining his purpose in preparing his 1598 English translation of Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo's *Trattato Dell' Arte Della Pittura, Scoltura, Ed Architettura* (1584), Haydocke touches on the subject of patron-painter relations:

*My final reason is plaine: the increase of the knowledge of the Arte; which though it never attained to any greate perfection amongst us (save in some very feawe of late), yet it is much decayed amongst the ordinarie sorte, from the ancient mediocritie, for these 2. causes: First the Buyer refuseth to bestowe anie greate price on a peece of worke, because hee thinkes it is not well done: And the Workemans answeere is, that he therefore neither useth*

*all his skill, nor taketh all the paines that he could, because hee knoweth before hand the slenderness of his reward. That bothe these obiections might be taken away, I have taken the paines, to teach the one to judge, the other to worke.*<sup>99</sup>

Rather than discussing the 'buyer' and the 'workeman' as co-makers of a visual object, Haydocke portrays patron and artisan as complicit in the production of a paralysis in the making process. Although this prefatory material introduces a work which instructs on pictorial technique, Haydocke implies that painters are sufficiently skilled but do not 'worke' in a way that utilises their full abilities, given that the 'buyer' does not give any economic incentive or the encouragement of praise, respect and high expectations. The patron, in Haydocke's view, is the source of this inert dysfunction in making; because the buyer cannot 'judge', the painter does not 'worke' to a sufficient standard. The making of a commissioned object is here dependent on the well-informed spectatorship of the client. For Haydocke, this failure on the part of the client is linked to a lack of knowledge about the visual arts in comparison with that which is available on the continent, hence his project of making Lomazzo's text available to an English-speaking readership.

Haydocke's critique of the 'buyer' and the 'workeman' is frequently quoted as evidence of the underwhelming condition of the post-Reformation English visual arts.<sup>100</sup> The dominant view that early modern English visual culture is unworthy of serious study has meant that scholars of early modern drama have looked tentatively to the continental visual arts in order to discuss models of patronage. Asking 'what is a text?' in 1991, Stephen Orgel used negotiations between Filippo Lippi and Inigo Jones and their respective patrons as an analogy for the network of exchange from which the early modern text is produced.<sup>101</sup> Discussing the collaborative nature of Shakespeare's 'late' work, meanwhile, Gordon McMullan notes that 'the late work of Renaissance painters ... is to a surprising and perhaps uncomfortable degree collaborative'.<sup>102</sup> McMullan is cautious about the usefulness of analogies between Shakespeare and 'Renaissance painters', finding that 'it would obviously be inappropriate to draw too close a comparison between the Renaissance studio system and Elizabethan/Jacobean theatrical collaboration'.<sup>103</sup> It would be inappropriate to overemphasise analogies between early modern English writers and painterly practice in Renaissance Italy, but McMullan overlooks the fact that collaborative practices were commonplace in late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century English visual culture. Although in provincial English workshops master painters employed very few journeymen or apprentices, in the metropolitan workshops that may have been known to London playwrights and playgoers, several painters often worked collaboratively on portrait production.<sup>104</sup> Moreover, the production of a visual image frequently involved extensive collaboration between the visual artist(s) and the patron(s) who commissioned the work. When Inigo Jones

submitted annotated costume sketches to Anne of Denmark from which she then 'made whatever alterations in the design that she wished', the architect and designer of the court masques was not introducing a new continental practice, but working in the collaborative fashion that was widespread practice in England as well as continental Europe at the time.<sup>105</sup> As Tittler explains, in early modern England, portraits served 'as a tableau in which the patron and the painter collaborate in determining and arranging the content so that it conveys the desired narrative'.<sup>106</sup> The planning stages prior to the building of late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century English houses, meanwhile, 'involved a series of dialogues between the patron, surveyor (master mason), and various craftsmen'.<sup>107</sup> Similarly, patrons of funeral monuments 'exerted ... strict control over the socially and ideologically sensitive aspects of tomb design', making 'moral and legal demands' that tomb-makers found 'hard to ignore'.<sup>108</sup>

The example of tomb design calls attention to the range of people that could be involved in the production of a commissioned work. Patrons involved in tomb design were usually family members, but this process could also involve 'business agents' who negotiated 'contractual agreements', as well as 'specialists in tomb construction' to consult on the design.<sup>109</sup> The person commemorated often contributed to the cost and sometimes the design of their monument.<sup>110</sup> John Donne, for example, wrote the epitaph for his famous monument by Nicholas Stone in St Paul's Cathedral, which shows the poet and former Dean of St Paul's rising from an urn in a winding sheet.<sup>111</sup> Izaak Walton's claims that Donne designed the monument, posing for its composition by standing on an urn while wearing a winding sheet, have been questioned.<sup>112</sup> Stepping aside from the accuracy of Walton's account, the story of Donne's involvement in the design of this sculpture demonstrates early modern appetite for the idea of the interactive patron as a figure who collapses the boundaries between image-makers, collaborative agents, consumers and even the subject depicted.

The story of Donne's efforts as a tomb-designer is instructive in this regard, since literary accounts of image-makers working to commission frequently merge into a single figure the multiple roles associated with commissioning projects. In *The Winter's Tale*, we hear of Giulio Romano carving the supposed statue of Hermione, but there is no mention of any assistants or auxiliary agents employed on this commission. In the painter additions to the 1602 quarto of Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*, the bereaved Hieronimo, Knight Marshal of Spain, orders the painter Bazardo to produce an image that will reflect a passage of time covering the periods before, including and after the murder of Hieronimo's son, Horatio. As Hieronimo demands that Bazardo show 'a man hanging, and tottering and tottering, as you know the wind will weave a man' and 'make me curse, make me rave, make me cry', the painter appears as a solitary figure.<sup>113</sup> Bazardo suggests that his 'name' is reputable and proudly refers to the fame of 'my painting', assuring Hieronimo that he can 'draw a murderer',



because he has 'the pattern of the most notorious villains that ever lived in all Spain'.<sup>114</sup> This scene extensively mocks the perceived limitations of artificial representation, a mockery that has been understood as complicit in a broader attack on the pre-Reformation 'devotional gaze'.<sup>115</sup> Bazarido's humiliation is so acute partly because he is such a solitary figure. The completion of the painting demanded by Hieronimo would be impossible for a sizeable, functional team of workmen, but Bazarido's willing agreement that 'yea' the picture can be 'done' seems especially implausible given the solitariness of the painter who is eventually beaten off the stage by Hieronimo.<sup>116</sup>

Depictions of patronage of the visual arts in plays usually focus on the relationship between a lone patron and a lone visual artist. This not only means ignoring the groups of workers who might make a visual representation, but also casting a veil over the institutional commissioning of images that was a part of civic life in provincial English towns and cities as well as in London during the period.<sup>117</sup> It is unlikely that playwrights did not know about collaborative modes of patronage, since, as in the 1617 collaboration between Thomas Middleton and Rowland Buckett, many dramatists worked with artisans on the production of spectacle for civic pageants and royal entertainments commissioned by the London Livery Companies.<sup>118</sup> In the playhouses, moreover, dramatists were engaged in the collaborative production of spectacle that was consumed by sizeable crowds of people. In this light, the choice to depict image-makers and spectators as singular figures seems like a missed metatheatrical opportunity. On a basic level, it might be argued that this choice is motivated by practical limitations such as the size of the cast. To some extent playwrights' focus on individual visual artists can also be explained by the combined influence of the discourse of *ut pictura poesis* and the *paragone* debates, both of which invite comparisons between a 'poet' and 'painter' in ways that obscure collaborative practices in the contexts of verbal and visual representation. The possible influence of this rhetorical discourse should alert us to the literary nature of playwrights' interests in depicting commissioning processes in their plays. It is well known that notions of authorship were in flux during the early modern period, with Jonson's 1616 publication of a folio of his 'complete works', *The workes of Benjamin Jonson*, often taken as a foundational milestone in the formation of authorial identity.<sup>119</sup> Decades earlier, in *An Apology for Poetry*, Sidney had wrestled with the subversive implications of literary ambition in his suggestion that a poet must defer to and 'give right honour to the heavenly Maker of that maker' (p. 86, ll. 1–2). If God is divine creator of all, claims to authorial ownership may be taken as idolatrous blasphemy, since in Calvinist terms idolatry was not only offensive on grounds of deceitful misrepresentation, but also because it involved 'the worship of the creature in place of the creator'.<sup>120</sup>

At no point in the plays discussed in this book is a desire to transcend representational limitations expressed, although, as we shall see, *The Winter's Tale*

comes quite close. At the same time, there is plenty of evidence that the fit between the dynamics of image-making and the divine, natural hierarchy within which it operated was by no means smooth. It has been established that external symbols such as clothing are invested with great social meaning in this period; it was for this reason that the role of the stage in the transgression of sumptuary legislation and the marketing of new fashions provided a point of focus for antitheatricalists.<sup>121</sup> Beyond discussions of the status of playwrights as contributors to a lowly, 'impure art', or of the social dimensions of literary patronage, however, early modern attitudes to social propriety and the act of making a literary or visual representation remain underexplored.<sup>122</sup> This is significant, because who might appropriately produce an image is a source of on-going tension throughout the period.

For example, there is much tension around the propriety of painting as a practice to be undertaken by gentlemen. Tittler explains that in the late sixteenth century 'the most fashionable London-based painters had begun to think of themselves as professionals and gentlemen', but most provincial painters in this period would not have claimed this status.<sup>123</sup> Although it may be that some early modern English portraits were produced 'by people formally trained in some other craft occupation', most 'painters' of this period trained and worked 'within a guild system or at least a well-established freemanry'.<sup>124</sup> Alongside these professional painters was a 'small handful of gentleman painters', who painted 'as a hobby and not an occupation'.<sup>125</sup> A number of writers on courtly and gentle conduct recommended painting as a pursuit suitable for a courtier and unsuitable for those of lower social status. For example, Thomas Hoby's English translation of Castiglione's *Il Libro Del Cortegiano*, explains:

I remember I have read that the men of olde time, and especially in all Greece would have Gentlemens children in the schooles to apply painting, as a matter both honest and necessary. And this was received in the first degree of liberal artes, afterwarde openly enacted not to be taught to servantes and bondmen.<sup>126</sup>

Henry Peacham repeats this history of noble painting in *The Compleat Gentleman*, and also highlights the utility of drawing for those of gentle status, explaining that 'without the helpe' of visual representation, those 'employed' in their 'Countries service in following the warre ... can describe no plot, manner of fortification, forme of *Battallia*'.<sup>127</sup> Referring to Peacham's advice on the utility of drawing for those of gentle status, Christy Anderson suggests that an early seventeenth-century manuscript treatise on linear perspective in English and Latin in the British Library was intended for an audience of amateur artists as well as the young men addressed by Peacham in *The Compleat Gentleman*.<sup>128</sup> Anderson notes that learning about perspective was a part of 'a general humanist education', equipping a gentleman with the visual skills necessary for battle and land management.<sup>129</sup> In *The Art of Drawing* (1606), Peacham links the

educational benefits of his work to social status, stating that for a 'scholer' in the practices he describes, he would 'make choise of ... a yong Gentleman'.<sup>130</sup> It is worth pointing out that *The Art of Drawing* is an earlier version of *The Gentlemans Exercise*, which, as discussed above, is presented as useful for "Trades-men" as well as gentlemen. Notably, the title page to *The Art of Drawing* does not refer to this artisanal audience; moreover, in *The Gentlemans Exercise* Peacham repeats his preference for a 'Scholler' who is a 'young Gentlman'.<sup>131</sup> Overall, Peacham approaches visual representation as a useful, gentle mode of expression with artisanal associations.

Notably, John Bate's accounts of visual practices in his *Mysteryes of Nature, and Art* do not draw attention to the gentle utility of these practices or any preference for a gentle readership. This may be because Bate's work is a popular 'book of secrets' that discusses painting and drawing alongside other technical, 'scientific' activities that fell under the umbrella of the burgeoning study of natural philosophy in this period.<sup>132</sup> The practical, 'scientific' application of Bate's instructions on drawing is suggested by the fact that these parts of *The Mysteryes of Nature, and Art* were copied out by 'the young Isaac Newton'.<sup>133</sup> I do not wish to claim broadly that social difference held an importance in early modern visual culture that was not found in the world of natural philosophy. That said, it might be tentatively observed that the significance of the social status of the visual practitioner is intriguingly prominent in early modern English writings. For example, concerns about social status inform the miniaturist painter and goldsmith Nicholas Hilliard's *The Arte of Limning*, which was not published during the author's lifetime, or in full until the twentieth century, and which was one of the earliest works on visual representation written by an English professional visual artist.<sup>134</sup> It seems that Hilliard was persuaded to write his treatise by Richard Haydocke, who, in the prefatory material to his translation of Lomazzo, promises his readership that the miniaturist will produce 'a treatise of his owne Practise ... with all convenient speede'.<sup>135</sup> Hilliard's treatise was therefore possibly intended for the same educated audience as Haydocke's translation of Lomazzo, which was published whilst Haydocke was still a student at Oxford.<sup>136</sup> That Hilliard's words are intended for a restricted audience is certainly emphasised in his opening statement of intent to 'shewe who are fittest to be practisers' (p. 62). Yet Hilliard speaks not of the gentle painter, but of the professional visual artist who must adopt gentility as part of his professional practice. Accounting for the attributes of limners, Hilliard remarks:

it is convenient that they be gentlemen of good parts and ingenuity, either of ability, or made by prince's fee able so to carry themselves as to give such seemly attendance on princes as shall not offend their royal presence. Seest thou not that these men, then, must often in their business stand before princes, though they be born but common people? But God, the author of wisdom and the giver of all

good gifts and goodness, He giveth gentility to divers persons, and raiseth man to reputation by divers means. (p. 65)

Hilliard's interpretation of the relationship between professional limning and gentility becomes tangled as he insists that limning is an inherently gentle practice. Since gentlemen are not practitioners of professional making, Hilliard must invoke a divinely ordained social mobility in order to reconcile the presence of those 'born but common people' in the practice of a mode of representation that 'tendeth not common men's use' (pp. 63–5). Hilliard does not find it contradictory to imagine that a 'prince's fee' might be a manifestation of this divine mobilisation of social identity.

Concerns about the social implications of the intimate access to the sitter that a painter might enjoy are explored in the plays of this period. In *Campaspe*, Apelles is ordered to paint the portrait of Alexander the Great's Theban captive, Campaspe, and falls in love with her as she sits for the picture in his 'shop' (III.v.68). To an extent, this depiction of painterly transgression reflects the common trope of the tailor as a sexually transgressive figure who exploits unusually intimate access to the bodies of male and female clients.<sup>137</sup> That Apelles regularly enjoys painting attractive women in intimate privacy is suggested by his boy, Psyllus, who explains that 'it is always my master's fashion, when any fair gentlewoman is to be drawn within, to make me stay without' (III.ii.1–3). It is important to point out here that a painter's 'client' is not always equivalent to the sitter for the painting; Alexander is the patron here, rather than Campaspe. Apelles's transgression in falling in love with his monarch's object of desire is therefore equivalent to an act of social disobedience, the painter consequently fearing that he may 'perish' as a result of his love (V.ii.5). As this example suggests, the hierarchical dynamics of patronage provide a fitting context for carnivalesque comedy that draws on the social anxieties attendant on the act of image-making. In *The Wisdom of Doctor Dodypoll*, a comedy first printed in 1600 and probably first performed around that date, Earl Lassingbergh poses as a painter in the home of a jeweller, Flores, in order to be close to his daughter, Lucilia, whose 'glorious parts' he paints with delight.<sup>138</sup> In this instance, then, the gentleman painter poses as a professional workman in the employ of a non-gentle character. The play opens with Lassingbergh 'painting' as Lucilia 'sits working on a piece of cushion work' (I.i.3–4SD). This is not an instance of Lucilia sitting for her portrait; instead, the aristocrat-as-painter uses Lucilia's body as the model for the disparate body parts that contribute to 'Antickes' (I.i.21). Lassingbergh is therefore painting the kind of decorative work seen in Rowland Buckett's designs for the organ at Hatfield House. Lassingbergh includes Lucilia's body parts amidst an antic design comprising flowers, jewels and figures from classical mythology:

Form these base Anticks where my hand hath spearst  
 Thy severall parts: if I uniting all,  
 Had figur'd there, the true Lucilia,  
 Then might'st thou justly wonder at mine Art,  
 And devout people would from farre repaire,  
 Like Pilgrims, with their dutuous sacrifice,  
 Adorning thee as Regent of their loues;  
 Here, in the Center of this Mary-gold,  
 Like a bright Diamond I enchast thine eye.  
 Here, underneath this little Rosie bush  
 Thy crimson cheekes peers forth more faire then it.  
 Here, *Cupid* (hanging downe his wings) doth sit,  
 Comparing Cherries to thy Ruby lippes:  
 Here is thy browe, thy haire, thy neck, thy hand,  
 Of purpose all in severall shrowds disper'st:  
 Least ravisht, I should dote on mine owne worke,  
 Or Envy-burning eyes should malice it. (I.i.50–66)

The dispersal of Lucilia's body parts in the antic design here facilitate highly sexualised exchanges between Lucilia and Lassingbergh. The painter suggests that he has hidden her 'parts' in 'severall shrowds' because the unification of these elements would cause him to 'ravish' the painting. The fragmentation of Lucilia's body is therefore presented as a preventative tactic that withholds an anticipated moment of Pygmalion-like idolatry. Aesthetic unity is here both desirable and fearful, a 'just' reflection of the Earl's 'art' but provocative of sexual, social and spiritual transgression. Lassingbergh's deployment of antic work is a crucial aspect of his disguise, and, as L. E. Selmer notes, 'preserves the secrecy of his passion'.<sup>139</sup> The Earl's allusion to what might be achieved aesthetically and risked morally in the 'uniting' of Lucilia's 'parts' suggests that he more usually paints in a naturalistic, figurative style. That this style may be socially appropriate in other contexts where the sitter is not a social inferior is suggested by the apparent fame of Lassingbergh's work. In Act 2 the painter's identity is discovered when Prince Alberdure, whose name is thought to allude to Albrecht Dürer, admires 'The cunning strangenes' of the 'antick worke' in Flores's home, stating that 'though the generall tract of it be rough / Yet is it sprinckled with rare flowers of Art' (II.i.354–5).<sup>140</sup> Alberdure invites the opinion of Motto, 'a practitioner', who concludes:

My Lord, I thinke more Art is shaddowed heere,  
 Then any man in Germanie can shew,  
 Except Earle Lassingbergh; and (in my conceipt)  
 This worke was never wrought without his hand. (II.i.371–4)

That Lassingbergh is 'discovered' to be an aristocrat as the result of the viewing of his work by elite figures connects nobility with skill in visual

representation. This connection is advanced by the Earl's opening speech, which situates his work as a part of a divine, natural order. Lucilia laments that Lassingbergh must appear as 'a mercenary painter', to which the Earl responds:

A Painter faire Lucia? Why the world  
 With all her beautie was by painting made.  
 Looke on the heavens colour'd with golden starres,  
 The firmamentall ground of it, all blew.  
 Looke on the ayre, where with a hundred changes  
 The watry Rainbow doth imbrace the earth.  
 Looke on the sommer fields adorn'd with flowers,  
 How much is natures painting honour'd there?  
 Looke in the Mynes, and on the Easterne shore,  
 Where all our Mettalls and deare Jems are drawne:  
 Thogh faire themselves, made better by their foiles.  
 Looke on that litle world, the twofold man,  
 Whose fairer parcell is the weaker still:  
 And see what azure vaines in stream-like forme  
 Divide the Rosie beautie of the skin.  
 I speake not of the sundry shapes of beasts,  
 The severall colours of the Elements:  
 Whose mixture shapes the world's varietie,  
 In making all things by their colours knowne.  
 And to conclude, Nature her selfe divine,  
 In all things she hath made, is a meere Painter. (I.i.24–44)

Lassingbergh's activities as a painter are here envisaged as an extension of the natural work of earthly creation. Since the social structure was also considered to be natural, Lassingbergh's painterliness is therefore produced by the same divine structure which generates his nobility. In this view, the Earl's skill as a 'maker' is a consequence of earthly creation and a facet of elitism.

The social status of image-makers remained a preoccupation for dramatists decades later, as is demonstrated by Richard Brome's *The Court Beggar*, probably first performed between 1640 and 1641.<sup>141</sup> Here, Mr Dainty, a pickpocket, poses as a painter, and proposes a monopoly on sign-painting to the foolish knight, Sir Andrew Mendicant:

DAINTY Sir, I am a picture-drawer, limner, or painter (if you please) and would gladly purchase authority, by myself and deputies, for the painting of all the king's- and queen's-head signs for taverns, inns, ale-houses, and all houses and shops of trade throughout the kingdom upon this ground: that they draw and hang up their royal images for signs in so hideous manner that men bless themselves to see't.  
 MENDICANT Aye, marry, this hangs upon some ground. But are you an exquisite workman in that art, sir?  
 DAINTY I am an artist in that mystery, sir, and have drawn some of His Majesty's

pictures, by copy only but so to the life that gentlemen have kneeled to 'em for suits and knighthoods.<sup>142</sup>

Dainty's assertion that he is a limner makes a mockery of the refined craft of the miniaturist, since he claims to be nothing more than a sign-painter who draws the king second-hand. Dainty's boast that his representations deceive the eye matches the deceit that he practises on the gullible Mendicant, and Brome's depiction of a pickpocket who claims to be a painter chimes with post-Reformation concerns about the reliability of visual experience. In *The Wisdom of Doctor Dodypoll*, the social elite maintain a modicum of authority within the social unruliness of the play-world. Lassingbergh's disguise, for example, is discerned by the aesthetically well-informed Alberdure and his courtly train, but is at first inscrutable to the non-gentle Flores, who is convinced that Lassingbergh is 'but a simple man kept in my house', whose skill as a painter is 'obscur'd by needie povertie' (II.i.361–2). In *The Court Beggar*, in contrast, Mendicant is easily deceived by Dainty's disguise. As Marion O'Connor explains, this 'tricksy' play 'refuses a stable position' from which it may condemn or celebrate Caroline politics.<sup>143</sup> From this elusive standpoint, the play explicitly addresses the 'proliferation of monopolies' around the time of the Short Parliament of 1640, as Mendicant is a 'monopolist' as well as a knight who, at the conclusion of the drama, according to a stage direction, appears '*attired all in patents*' as a part of a chaotic anti-masque (5.2. Speeches 1104–5).<sup>144</sup> Dainty's suggested monopoly on sign-painting therefore partakes of Brome's commentary on a volatile moment of social disintegration, as Mendicant the 'old Knight' transforms into a 'Projector'.<sup>145</sup> Significantly, this commentary on monopolies sees Brome policing the boundaries of his own profession. During the 1630s, tensions rose amongst professional dramatists angered by the activities of self-funded, aristocratic playwrights such as Sir John Suckling, who paid for the performance of his play *Aglaura* at the Blackfriars theatre in 1638, and also subsidised the publication of the drama in an expensive folio, satirised by Brome in the poem 'Upon *Aglaura* in Folio'.<sup>146</sup> Suckling is ridiculed throughout *The Court Beggar* in the figure of Sir Ferdinand, an 'Exquisite cavalier, courtier and soldier, / Scholar (and what not!)', while the exclusion of non-professional playwrights from the theatre is entertained in Mr Court-Wit's proposal that only plays by those 'who profess or endeavour to live by the quality' be 'admitted to the stage' (1.1. Speech 15; Epilogue, 2. Speech 368).<sup>147</sup>

How does the contested social status of the professional visual artist or writer relate to the makings of non-professional, elite figures? To consider this question it is worth looking at the example of the aristocratic hive of creativity that was the family of Mildmay Fane, second Earl of Westmoreland, during the late sixteenth century and well into the seventeenth century. Mildmay

Fane's grandmother, Grace, Lady Mildmay, produced a medical guide and *Lady Mildmay's Meditations*, a manuscript containing maternal advice prepared between 1603 and 1617–20.<sup>148</sup> The latter manuscript was supplemented by other relatives to become *A Book of Advice to the Children*, presented to Mildmay Fane and his younger brother, Francis.<sup>149</sup> Grace, Lady Mildmay's granddaughter, Rachel Fane, was a similarly prolific writer; 'one of the few women at the time to learn secretary hand with any fluency', she was probably responsible for the transcription of her grandparents' advice in *A Book of Advice to the Children*.<sup>150</sup> Rachel Fane's surviving notebooks contain recipes, sermon notes, translations and a fragment of a masque that was probably written when she was thirteen or fourteen.<sup>151</sup> O'Connor suggests that it is a 'virtual certainty' that the masque was 'performed sometime between December 1626 and July 1627' at the family home, Apethorpe Hall, Northamptonshire.<sup>152</sup> The children of the family starred in this lively production, which had been carefully designed by Rachel Fane, her stage directions for example suggesting that the production conclude with the masquers dancing 'a dance of my making'.<sup>153</sup> Rachel Fane also seems to have made her own games; a playing card showing the Queen of Diamonds, and inscribed 'Rachel', survives in the Kent Archives, Maidstone.<sup>154</sup>

The family were also engaged in architectural and sculptural acts of making. In his will, Sir Anthony Mildmay (d. 1617) requested that a monument be built in St Leonard's church, Apethorpe, this being paid for through the sale of Lincolnshire land.<sup>155</sup> The monument, attributed to Maximilian Colt, stands in a south chapel that was specially made to house it in 1621 (figures 7 and 8). Also installed in the chapel in 1621 was a stained-glass window, attributed to Baptista Sutton, showing Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, the Crucifixion and Judgement Day (figure 9).<sup>156</sup>

In 1622–24, Rachel Fane's father, Francis Fane, first Earl of Westmorland, undertook a major programme of building at Apethorpe in order to accommodate visits by James I, Anne of Denmark and Prince Charles.<sup>157</sup> As Jennifer S. Alexander and Kathryn A. Morrison have established, the remodelling of the hall was probably carried out by the workshop of local mason Thomas Thorpe, who had also been involved with building work at Blickling Hall, Norfolk, in 1618–23.<sup>158</sup> The Fanes' cultural production is spread between individualistic writings and large-scale commissions for built structures which required interaction with numerous professional artificers. Out of this context of diffuse literary productivity and architectural remaking emerges the most well known of the Fane family, Mildmay Fane, a prolific poet who also wrote masques to be performed at Apethorpe by family members and servants. Amongst these masques, which survive in manuscript form in the British Library, *Raguillo D'Oceano* includes a detailed stage design that demonstrates knowledge of cutting-edge stage practice, showing 'oblique side wings' of the sort used by Inigo Jones in the last of the Caroline court masques, *Salmacida Spolia* (1640).<sup>159</sup> The stage designs





7 The Mildmay monument, attr. Maximilian Colt (1621), Church of St Leonard, Apethorpe, England



8 Detail of sculpture of Grace, Lady Mildmay, the Mildmay monument, attr. Maximilian Colt (1621), Church of St Leonard, Apethorpe, England



9 Painted glass window, attr. Baptista Sutton (1621), Church of St Leonard, Apethorpe, England

for Fane's masques also deploy the language of the published scripts of court masques; a visually less-detailed design for the masque *Candy Restored*, describes a scene rendered 'in perspective' showing 'a goodly fabrick or Cittie the Emblem of Concord Unitie and peace'.<sup>160</sup> Fane was the first English peer to publish his poetry, in the collection *Otia Sacra* (1648), but, unlike Sir John Suckling, did not publish any masques or plays.<sup>161</sup>

Writing after the closure of the London theatres that produced such professional–amateur tensions, Mildmay Fane depicts professional 'makers' in a mode that appropriates the comic figure of the artisan in an expression of anxiety at the social and political turmoil of the 1640s. Fane was imprisoned in the Tower of London between August 1642 and April 1643, and, while there, wrote the short masque *The Change*, which was probably never performed. In Scene 5 of *The Change*, the 'old felonious world' of the early seventeenth

century is tried by a jury comprising two merchants, two women enthusiastic for drastic change, and ten artisans including 'Sim Seinemaker', also known as 'Mr Discoverye', 'Sam Shark, Saylor', 'Tim Fit Round-Buttonmaker' and 'Batt Basketmaker'.<sup>162</sup> That the Fanes were fond of these reductive tropes of artisanship is suggested by the fact that one 'Captain Sharke one of the fleete' is also a character in a later Fane masque, *Pugna Anima* (1650).<sup>163</sup> In *The Change*, the court is presided over by a half-French, half-Italian madman, Cappritcio, and the possibility of artisans influencing the social and cosmological order is ridiculed.<sup>164</sup> The trial is held in the vernacular for the benefit of the jury, and each of the artisans is introduced with a comic reflection on their profession and status. 'Batt Basketmaker', for example, declares that the 'world is soo growne' with 'pride' to be seen in the company of a basketmaker, but also claims that 'fools and women' are 'of my Congregation'.<sup>165</sup> The connection between the artisans and the Parliamentary cause is signalled as each artisan is associated with 'round' items, such as the 'Charles Capper', the Haberdasher's 'Capp of haire' that 'shall not be square, it shall be Rounde'.<sup>166</sup> Although imprisoned because of his support for the king, Mildmay Fane was not the most committed Royalist, pledging allegiance to the Commonwealth in 1643 and spending much of his time after 1645 on his estates.<sup>167</sup> Writing in the Tower, however, Fane expresses dismay at political events through the carnivalesque figure of the artisan, so distinct from his and his family's identities as makers of literature, monuments, buildings, games and performances.

Taken with Brome's *The Court Beggar*, *The Change* suggests the intricate relationship between social hierarchy and the status and agency of those who are implicated in cultural production. The mid seventeenth century was of course a time of great change for drama, and in the past the 1640s have figured as a kind of endpoint for studies of drama and visual culture. Diehl, for example, suggested that dramatists' attempts to 'reform the stage' made them complicit in the suppression of playing that led to the closure of the playhouses in 1642.<sup>168</sup> The mid seventeenth century also often looms as a moment of change for studies in this area because this period is associated with the development of Cartesian ways of seeing the world and the self.<sup>169</sup> Knapp, for example, explores aesthetic experience and ethical choice in Shakespearean drama with an eye on the 'transition' to Cartesian models of vision in the later part of the seventeenth century.<sup>170</sup> In this study I do not aim to challenge the meanings that are attached to the mid seventeenth century as a time of political, social and scientific change, and nor do I intend to provide a history of the development of attitudes to making and unmaking from the late sixteenth century and up until that moment of supposed 'change'. The latest play to be studied in this book, *The Two Merry Milkmaids*, was first performed in 1619, and I am concerned with fermenting ideas about aesthetic experience as these relate to the pressures of early modern English social hierarchy. Since that social hierarchy came under

revolutionary pressure in the 1640s, my analysis implicitly gestures towards this historical moment as a point of possible aesthetic change. Perhaps appropriately for a book concerned with unfinished things, I gesture towards this implication but do not arrive at it in full. This is in part because I am attracted to Harris's understanding of early modern matter as shaped by 'polychronic' time, and consider, as explained in the Introduction, that it would be inappropriate to impose a chronological, linear structure on this discussion.<sup>171</sup>

At the same time, however, that seventeenth-century 'change' hovers in the far distance throughout this book, even as I explore the ways in which concepts of cultural production in drama constantly turn in on themselves as they refuse notions of stable 'finish'. This is partly because this study is concerned with a divinely ordained social hierarchy that destabilises aesthetic ends. This socially shaped aesthetic instability is suggested in *The Wisdom of Doctor Dodypoll* in Lassingbergh's resistance to an aesthetic 'unity' that is rendered inaccessible because his practice as a painter is connected to the inversion of social order. Lassingbergh considers his painting an extension of divine, natural creativity, but the Earl's need to adopt a disguise that includes painting in an 'antic' style betrays the socially inflected limitations attendant on image-making. What means of legitimisation were necessary for image-makers who were not of the status of an earl? The examples of visual artists and 'creative' figures discussed to this point have been largely elite, or, like Hilliard, employed by the elite. Did professional artisans 'make' literary or visual works for their own enjoyment? Was there what Shiner might refer to as a 'proto-aesthetic' amongst this community?<sup>172</sup> It is extremely difficult to ascertain an answer to this question because very little evidence of artisans' textual or pictorial output survives, as it does for an aristocratic family such as the Fanes.<sup>173</sup> A pertinent example is the two compendious miscellanies made by the craftsman Thomas Trevilian (or Trevelyon), which are known as the *Miscellany* (1608) and the *Great Book* (1616).<sup>174</sup> These huge works combine written extracts from a wide variety of sources with colourful illustrations, many of which Trevilian is thought to have copied 'while they hung in shops in Blackfriars, the Strand and elsewhere'.<sup>175</sup> For example, in a section entitled 'The miser of mans life: Dye to Live', and 'The misery of mans life: Live to Dye', versions of which appear in both the *Miscellany* and *Great Book*, Trevilian combines religious verse with conventional *memento mori* iconography, including an image of a shrouded corpse copied from Richard Day's *A Booke of Christian Prayers* (1578) (figures 10 and 11).<sup>176</sup>

The humble sense of mortality asserted in these images reflects the humility with which Trevilian introduces his *Great Book*, in an epistle to the reader. Trevilian explains:

I tooke this labour in hande to accomplish my minde, to pleasure my friendes  
... For what I have done hath bin of my selfe without mans teaching, God onely



10 Thomas Trevilian, 'The miser of mans life: Dye to live', *The Great Book* (1616), fol. 371r

11 Thomas Trevilian, "The misery of mans life: Live to dye", *The Great Book* (1616), fol. 375r

infusing his celestial blessings: And though I in my rashnesse presume to write this booke, yet I trust in gathering the fragments and broken sentences, as a beginning unto others that are better stored, it will be of some considered, though of others defamed and mocked.<sup>177</sup>

Trevilian here adopts the apologetic tones that are a familiar aspect of early modern prefatory writings such as the prologue to Shakespeare's *Henry V*. Echoing that prologue, Trevilian draws attention to the imperfection of his work, a collection of 'fragments and broken sentences', and gestures towards the future improvement of this fragmentary assemblage by his readers, to whom the *Great Book* is offered 'as a beginning'. The self-taught, independent act of bringing together and then reproducing such a compendious collection of words and images requires qualification, as Trevilian deferentially admits the 'rashnesse' of his presumption in producing the text and presenting it to be read. This letter to the reader encourages us to see the *Great Book* as made within the conventions of literary patronage. Indeed, it has been suggested that Trevilian may have been commissioned to produce a pattern book by William Herbert, third Earl of Pembroke, or may have made a pattern book that he intended to dedicate to Pembroke.<sup>178</sup> The latter parts of both the *Miscellany* and the *Great Book* are devoted to beautiful motifs, lettering and alphabet designs and patterns which would have been used 'for embroidery, marquetry and other applied arts'.<sup>179</sup> But what is the relationship between these patterns and the earlier parts of the miscellanies, which seem intended as didactic sources of 'edification and entertainment'?<sup>180</sup> Heather Wolfe observes that what is unusual about Trevilian's *Miscellany* is its 'color, size and range of multimedia material'; otherwise, the text draws on the widespread early modern practice of miscellanising or commonplacing.<sup>181</sup> Significantly, Wolfe also suggests that the 'fragments and broken sentences' assembled by Trevilian reflect his efforts to 'create order, beauty, and continuity out of the fracture and stress caused by his country's growing pains'.<sup>182</sup> If this is the case, then in the *Great Book*, Trevilian presents the attainment of this order as beyond his grasp as a craftsman who has worked 'without man's teaching' and only with 'celestial blessings'.

Gesturing towards an 'end' that is beyond his reach, Trevilian presents his work as unfinished as an act of deference. Perhaps this deference is to an aristocratic figure such as Pembroke. Even if this is the case, however, Trevilian's attitude to his work as aesthetically fragmented is generated by the craftsman's position within a social hierarchy understood as divinely ordered. In this way, Trevilian's introduction to the incompleteness of his *Great Book* marks the perfect point at which to end this chapter, demonstrating that aesthetic 'finish' is a socially inflected property. At the same time, Trevilian's *Great Book* suggests that the 'end' was attainable in a material sense, as the author states that he 'made an end' of the text in 1616. Of course, this 'end' signalled the completion of a work that is an

altered version of the 1608 *Miscellany*. Amidst the social anxieties attendant on the idea of ‘finish’, the declaration of a material ‘end’, and the intricacies of Trevilian’s textual practice, this craftsman’s miscellanies reflect the complex relationship between material activity, social status and aesthetic concepts in this period. Moreover, the uncertainty regarding Trevilian’s audience and his relationship to a possible patron create the sense that his miscellanies are unique, and arguably overemphasise our sense of his status as an individual, originary ‘author’. In the next chapter, I show that the hierarchical nature of the patronage of the visual arts provides a context through which Shakespeare explores the contested status of material ‘finish’, and the agency of image-makers and their audiences alike.

### Notes

- 1 Shiner, *The Invention of Art*, p. 12.
- 2 See James Elkins, *Visual Studies: A Skeptical Introduction* (New York and London: Routledge, 2003), pp. 2, 36. See also Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy: A Primer in the Social History of Pictorial Style* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972).
- 3 Lucy Gent, “‘The Rash Gazer’: Economies of Vision in Britain, 1550–1660”, in Lucy Gent (ed.), *Albion’s Classicism: The Visual Arts in Britain, 1550–1660*, Studies in British Art, 2 (New Haven: Yale University Press for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art and the Yale Center for British Art, 1995), pp. 382–3, pp. 377–94. See also Juliet Fleming, *Graffiti and the Writing Arts of Early Modern England* (London: Reaktion, 2001), pp. 32–3.
- 4 Robert Tittler, ‘Buckett, Rowland (bap. 1571, d. 1639)’. *Oxford DNB*. [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/101262](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/101262). Accessed 8 April 2012. See also Anthony Wells-Cole, *Art and Decoration in Elizabethan and Jacobean England: The Influence of Continental Prints, 1558–1625* (New Haven: Yale University Press, for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 1997), pp. 32, 207.
- 5 Wells-Cole, *Art and Decoration*, p. 32.
- 6 Wells-Cole, *Art and Decoration*, p. 32.
- 7 John Florio, *A Worlde of Wordes*, Anglistica & Americana Reprints (Hildesheim: George Olms Verlag, Zürich, 2004), p. 157.
- 8 Tittler, ‘Buckett, Rowland’.
- 9 Tittler, ‘Buckett, Rowland’.
- 10 See Tracey Hill, *Pageantry and Power: A Cultural History of the Early Modern Lord Mayor’s Show, 1585–1639* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), pp. 76–7; see also Tittler, ‘Buckett, Rowland’.
- 11 F. P. Wilson and R. F. Hill (eds), *Collections X: ‘Dramatic Records in the Declared Accounts of the Office of the Works, 1560–1640’* (Oxford: Malone Society Reprints, 1975), pp. 43, 24–5. The ‘Cockpitt’ is the Cockpit-in-Court at Whitehall, redesigned by Inigo Jones in 1629; on this court theatre, see Glynne Wickham, *Early English Stages 1300 to 1660*, vol. 2: *1576 to 1660, Part II*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (1959; London: Routledge, 2002), pp. 119–22.



- 12 See Peacock, *The Stage Designs of Inigo Jones*, p. 6.
- 13 Wilson and Hill (eds), *Collections X*, p. 41.
- 14 Henry Peacham, *The Gentlemans Exercise* (London: John Browne, 1612), title page, and *Graphice or The Most Ancient and Excellent Art of Drawing and Limning disposed into three Bookes* (London: printed by W. S. for John Browne, 1612), title page. EEBO. <http://eebo.chadwyck.com>. Accessed 29 December 2012.
- 15 Henry Peacham, *The Compleat Gentleman Fashioning him absolute in the most necessary & Commendable Qualities concerning Minde or Bodie that may be required in a Noble gentleman* (London: Francis Constable, 1622), sig. A2r. EEBO. <http://eebo.chadwyck.com>. Accessed 29 December 2012.
- 16 John Bate, *The Mysteryes of Nature, and Art: Contained in foure severall Tretises, The first of Water workes the second of Fyer workes, The third of Drawing, Colouring, Painting, and Engraving, The fourth of divers Experiments, as wel Serviceable as delightful: partly Collected, and partly of the Authors Peculiar Practice, and Invention, by J. B* (London: printed by Ralph Mab to be sold by John Jackson and Francis Church, 1634), pp. 101, 149.
- 17 Bate, *Mysteryes*, p. 109.
- 18 Elkins, *Visual Studies*, p. 4.
- 19 Michael O'Connell, *The Idolatrous Eye: Iconoclasm and Theater in Early-Modern England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 144.
- 20 Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (1976; London: Fontana, 1988), p. 87.
- 21 Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England 1400–1580*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (1992; New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005), pp. 155–6.
- 22 See Phillips, *The Reformation of Images*, p. 25.
- 23 Francis Cheetham, *English Medieval Alabasters: With a Catalogue of the Collection in The Victoria & Albert Museum*, new edition (1984; Woodbridge: Boydell, 2005), p. 28; see also Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, p. 233.
- 24 Phillips, *The Reformation of Images*, p. 41.
- 25 Phillips, *The Reformation of Images*, p. 41, and see also pp. 10–21, 30–40 for a useful account of pre-Reformation image debates in England. For a history of image controversies that draws on Greek, Judaic, Islamic and Christian contexts, see Besançon, *The Forbidden Image*.
- 26 See Phillips, *The Reformation of Images*, pp. 62–79, 89–90, 95–6, 106–7, 115–17.
- 27 See Aston, *England's Iconoclasts*, pp. 220–342, and her *Faith and Fire: Popular and Unpopular Religion, 1350–1600* (London: Hambledon Press, 1993), pp. 262–89.
- 28 Clark, *Vanities of the Eye*, p. 15; Michael Camille, 'Before the Gaze: The Internal Senses and Late Medieval Practices of Seeing', in Robert S. Nelson (ed.), *Visibility Before and Beyond the Renaissance: Seeing as Others Saw* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 197–223, pp. 208–9. On gender in medieval theories of vision, see Katharine Park, 'Impressed Images: Reproducing Wonders', in Caroline A. Jones and Peter Galison (eds), *Picturing Science, Producing Art* (New York and London: Routledge, 1998), pp. 254–71.
- 29 Clark, *Vanities of the Eye*, pp. 43–4.
- 30 Clark, *Vanities of the Eye*, p. 44.

- 31 Phillips, *The Reformation of Images*, p. 55.
- 32 See Phillips, *The Reformation of Images*, pp. 55, 92; see also Clark, *Vanities of the Eye*, p. 163.
- 33 Stephen Gosson, *Playes Confuted in Five Actions, Proving that they are not to be suffered in a Christian common weale, by the way both the Cavils of Thomas Lodge, and the Play of Playes, written in their defence, and other objections of Players frendes, are truely set downe and directlye aunsweread* (London: Thomas Gosson, 1582), sig. C1r. EEBO. <http://eebo.chadwyck.com>. Accessed 29 March 2012.
- 34 See for example Tassi, *The Scandal of Images*, p. 31.
- 35 Huston Diehl, *Staging Reform, Reforming the Stage: Protestantism and Popular Theater in Early Modern England* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1997), p. 8.
- 36 Diehl, *Staging Reform*, p. 217.
- 37 Diehl, *Staging Reform*, p. 2.
- 38 Patrick Collinson, 'From Iconoclasm to Iconophobia: The Cultural Impact of the Second English Reformation', The Stenton Lecture, 1985 (Reading: University of Reading, 1986), p. 8.
- 39 James A. Knapp, *Illustrating the Past in Early Modern England: The Representation of History in Printed Books* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), pp. 16–19, 75–6, and his *Image Ethics*, p. 34.
- 40 See Tessa Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety, 1550–1640*, Cambridge Studies in Early Modern British History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), passim.
- 41 Hamling and Williams, 'Introduction', pp. 1, 4. I refer to 'Britain' here following Hamling and Williams's use of this term. I discuss the significance of Hamling and Williams's work for literary studies in 'Idolatry, Iconoclasm and Agency: Visual Experience in Works by Lyly and Shakespeare', *Literature & History*, 18 (2009), 1–15.
- 42 Hamling, *Decorating the 'Godly' Household*, p. 7.
- 43 Hamling, *Decorating the 'Godly' Household*, pp. 158–9.
- 44 Hamling, *Decorating the 'Godly' Household*, p. 159.
- 45 Hamling, *Decorating the 'Godly' Household*, p. 221.
- 46 Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespearean Stage, 1574–1642*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (1992; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 75.
- 47 Belsey, *Shakespeare and the Loss of Eden*, p. 13.
- 48 Collinson, 'Iconoclasm to Iconophobia', p. 8.
- 49 Hamling and Williams, 'Introduction', p. 4.
- 50 Stacy Boldrick and Richard Clay, 'Introduction', in Stacy Boldrick and Richard Clay (eds), *Iconoclasm: Contested Objects, Contested Terms* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 1–14, p. 9. See also essays in this collection by Charles Ford, Richard Clay, Alexandrina Buchanan, Adrian A. Bantjes, Hans Georg Hiller von Gærtringen, Polly Jones and Ramon Sarró.
- 51 Boldrick and Clay, 'Introduction', p. 9.
- 52 Michael Wayne Cole and Rebecca Zorach, 'Introduction', in Michael Wayne Cole and Rebecca Zorach (eds), *The Idol in the Age of Art: Objects, Devotions and the Early Modern World* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009), pp. 1–10, p. 2. The emphasis is in the text.
- 53 Fabio Rambelli and Eric Reinders, 'What does Iconoclasm Create? What Does

- Preservation Destroy? Reflections on Iconoclasm in East Asia', in Stacy Boldrick and Richard Clay (eds), *Iconoclasm: Contested Objects, Contested Terms* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 15–33, pp. 17–18.
- 54 C. Pamela Graves, 'From an Archaeology of Iconoclasm to an Anthropology of the Body: Images, Punishment and Personhood in England, 1500–1660', *Current Anthropology*, 46:1 (2008), 35–57, 35.
- 55 On the defacement at Salthouse, see Robert Whiting, *The Reformation of the English Parish Church* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 17–18.
- 56 Graves, 'From an Archaeology of Iconoclasm', 37–8; see also Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, p. 431, and Julie Spraggon, *Puritan Iconoclasm during the English Civil War*, *Studies in Modern British Religious History* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2003) pp. 207–8.
- 57 See John Clifford, *The Ensigns of the Twelve Tribes of Israel*, St Lawrence Parish Church booklet, pp. 1–3. See also Watt, *Cheap Print*, p. 161, n. 116.
- 58 Clifford, *The Ensigns*, p. 1.
- 59 Clifford, *The Ensigns*, pp. 1–2.
- 60 John Day, William Rowley and George Wilkins, *The Travels of the Three English Brothers*, in *Three Renaissance Travel Plays*, ed. Anthony Parr, *The Revels Plays Companion Library* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), Prologue, 30–1.
- 61 John Ford, *The Broken Heart*, in *John Ford: Three Plays*, ed. Keith Sturgess (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970), Epilogue, 5–14.
- 62 The dating of the Chorus speeches in *Henry V* has been subject to debate; see Richard Dutton, "'Methinks the truth should live from age to age": The Dating and Contexts of *Henry V*', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 68:1–2 (2005), 173–204.
- 63 William Shakespeare, *Henry V*, ed. T. W. Craik, *The Arden Shakespeare*, third series (London: Routledge, 1995), Prologue, 10–31. All subsequent references are to this edition.
- 64 John Wycliffe, *The Rule of St. Francis* (?1430), in Frederic D. Matthew, *The English works of Wyclif hitherto unprinted* (London: Trübner & co. for the English Text Society, 1880), quoted in the *OED*.
- 65 Jones and Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing*, p. 26.
- 66 Jones and Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing*, p. 24.
- 67 Jones and Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing*, p. 23.
- 68 Stern, *Documents of Performance*, p. 1.
- 69 George Puttenham, *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589; Menston: Scolar Press, 1968), p. 104. This is the earliest usage of to 'piece out' quoted in the *OED*.
- 70 Matthew Milner, *The Senses and the English Reformation*, *St Andrews Studies in Reformation History* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), pp. 7–8.
- 71 Stern, *Documents of Performance*, pp. 113–14.
- 72 Andrew Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (1987; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 1; see also Charles Whitney, *Early Responses to Renaissance Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 5.
- 73 See Anthony B. Dawson and Paul Yachnin, *The Culture of Playgoing in Shakespeare's England: A Collaborative Debate* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

- See also Paul Menzer, 'Crowd Control', in Jennifer A. Low and Nova Myhill (eds), *Imagining the Audience in Early Modern Drama, 1558–1642* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. 19–36, pp. 23–4.
- 74 Dawson and Yachnin, *The Culture of Playgoing*, p. 5.
- 75 Whitney, *Early Responses*, p. 5. See also Lopez, *Theatrical Convention*, pp. 18–19.
- 76 See Gurr, *Playgoing*, pp. 107–16; see also Brian W. Schneider, *The Framing Text in Early Modern English Drama: 'Whining' Prologues and 'Armed' Epilogues* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), pp. 71–91. Lopez warns against over-attention to 'the surface impression of more rigidly segregated audiences ... than the evidence actually yields up', *Theatrical Convention*, p. 16.
- 77 Ben Jonson, *Bartholomew Fair*, ed. Susan Gossett, Revels Student Editions (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), Induction, 66. All subsequent references are to this edition.
- 78 Ben Jonson, *The Staple of News*, ed. Anthony Parr, The Revels Plays (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), Prologue for the Stage, 1–6.
- 79 See Judith Dundas, 'Ben Jonson and the *Paragone*', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 9 (1978), 56–65.
- 80 For a discussion of this dispute, see D. J. Gordon, 'Poet and Architect: The Intellectual Setting of the Quarrel between Ben Jonson and Inigo Jones', in *The Renaissance Imagination: Essays and Lectures by D. J. Gordon*, ed. Stephen Orgel (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), pp. 77–101.
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- 83 Gurr, *Playgoing*, p. 109.
- 84 Thomas Becon, *The new pollecye of warre wherein is declared not only how ye mooste cruell tyrant the great Turke may be over come, but also all other enemies of the Christian publique weale, lately devised by Theodore Basille* (London: John Maylerre for John Gough, 1542), sig. B4r. See also Seymour Baker House, 'Becon, Thomas (1512/13–1567)'. *Oxford DNB*. [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/1918](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/1918). Accessed 18 September 2012.
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- 86 Knapp, *Image Ethics*, p. 2.
- 87 Elizabeth Spiller, 'Shakespeare and the Making of Early Modern Science: Resituating Prospero's Art', *South Central Review*, 26:1–2 (2009), 24–41, 27. Spiller takes the phrase 'maker's knowledge tradition' from Antonio Pérez-Ramos, *Francis Bacon's Idea of Science and the Maker's Knowledge Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988).
- 88 Spiller, 'Shakespeare and the Making of Early Modern Science', 27.
- 89 Spiller, 'Shakespeare and the Making of Early Modern Science', 27.
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- Impersonations: The Performance of Gender in Shakespeare's England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 26–30.
- 91 The italics are Gossett's, reflecting italicisation in the play as published in the 1640 second folio of Jonson's works, which used a version of the play prepared for publication in 1631. On the play's textual history see Jonson, *Bartholomew Fair*, ed. Gossett, pp. 20–1.
- 92 Maus, *Inwardness and Theater*, p. 210.
- 93 Maus, *Inwardness and Theater*, p. 34; on new-historicist approaches to spectatorship, see Nova Myhill and Jennifer A. Low, 'Introduction: Audience and Audiences', in Jennifer A. Low and Nova Myhill (eds), *Imagining the Audience in Early Modern Drama, 1558–1642* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. 1–17, pp. 2–3.
- 94 See Maus, *Inwardness and Theater*, p. 210.
- 95 Aura Satz, 'Attacks on Automata and Eviscerated Sculptures', in Stacy Boldrick and Richard Clay (eds), *Iconoclasm: Contested Objects, Contested Terms* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 35–49, pp. 45–7.
- 96 Lynn Enterline, 'Afterword: Touching Rhetoric', in Elizabeth D. Harvey (ed.), *Sensible Flesh: On Touch in Early Modern Culture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), pp. 243–54, p. 248.
- 97 Johnson, *Mother Tongues*, p. 53.
- 98 Harris, *Untimely Matter*, p. 8. Jacques Derrida writes that 'it is because arche-writing, movement of difference, irreducible arche-synthesis, opening in one and the same possibility, temporalization as well as relationship with the other and language, cannot, as the condition of all linguistic systems, form a part of the linguistic system itself and be situated as an object in its field', *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, corrected edition (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), p. 60.
- 99 Richard Haydocke, *A tracte containing the artes of curious paintinge carving and building written first in Italian by Io: Paul Lomatius painter of Milan and Englished by R. H student in physic* (Oxford: Joseph Barnes for R. H., 1598), ¶5r–v.
- 100 See for example Gent, *Picture and Poetry*, p. 2; Thorne, *Vision and Rhetoric*, p. 44; Kiefer, *Shakespeare's Visual Theatre*, p. 1; Tassi, *The Scandal of Images*, p. 60; Knapp, *Illustrating the Past*, p. 81.
- 101 Stephen Orgel, 'What is a Text?', in David Scott Kastan and Peter Stallybrass (eds), *Staging the Renaissance: Reinterpretations of Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama* (New York and London: Routledge, 1991), pp. 83–7, pp. 85–6.
- 102 Gordon McMullan, *Shakespeare and the Idea of Late Writing: Authorship in the Proximity of Death* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 233.
- 103 McMullan, *Shakespeare and the Idea of Late Writing*, p. 233.
- 104 Robert Tittler, *Portraits, Painters, and Publics in Provincial England, 1540–1640* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 68. Tittler draws here on the 'Making Art in Tudor Britain' project at the National Portrait Gallery, London, which is led by Tarnya Cooper; see *National Portrait Gallery*. [www.npg.org.uk/research/programmes/making-art-in-tudor-britain.php](http://www.npg.org.uk/research/programmes/making-art-in-tudor-britain.php). Accessed 30 October 2012.
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- Centuries* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990), pp. 139–47. There is a great deal of literature on patronage of the visual arts in early modern Italy. See, for example, Mary Hollingsworth, *Patronage in Renaissance Italy: From 1400 to the Early Sixteenth Century* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), and her *Patronage in Sixteenth-Century Italy* (London: John Murray, 1996); Creighton E. Gilbert, 'What Did the Renaissance Patron Buy?', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 51:2 (1998), 392–450, and Michelle O'Malley, *The Business of Art: Contracts and the Commissioning Process in Renaissance Italy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005).
- 106 Tittler, *Portraits, Painters, and Publics*, p. 125.
- 107 Hamling, *Decorating the 'Godly' Household*, p. 20; see also Malcolm Airs, *The Making of the English Country House, 1500–1640* (London: Architectural Press, 1975), and his *The Tudor and Jacobean Country House: A Building History* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 1995).
- 108 Nigel Llewellyn, *Funeral Monuments in Post-Reformation England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 277.
- 109 These figures were usually involved in commissions by 'female patrons and grander patrons', Llewellyn, *Funeral Monuments*, pp. 164–5, 276–9.
- 110 Llewellyn, *Funeral Monuments*, pp. 165–7, 279–82.
- 111 Donne's monument forms a part of Jones and Stallybrass's discussion of the materiality of memory in *Renaissance Clothing*, pp. 252–5.
- 112 See Izaak Walton, *The Life of John Donne, Dr. in Divinity, and Late Dean of Saint Pauls Church London* (London: printed by J. G. for R. Marriot, 1658), pp. 111–13; see also Helen Gardner, 'Dean Donne's Monument in St Paul's', in René Wellek and Alvaro Ribeiro (eds), *Evidence in Literary Scholarship* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), pp. 29–44. Llewellyn does not question Walton's account, *Funeral Monuments*, p. 235.
- 113 Anon, 4<sup>th</sup> Addition, in Thomas Kyd, *The Spanish Tragedy*, ed. David Bevington, Revels Student Editions (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), 153–60.
- 114 Anon, *The Spanish Tragedy*, 4<sup>th</sup> Addition, 115–36.
- 115 See Diehl, *Staging Reform*, pp. 112–14. For a response to Diehl's argument on the place of 'incarnational ways of thinking' in Elizabethan theatre, see Dawson and Yachnin, *The Culture of Playgoing*, pp. 21–9.
- 116 Anon, *The Spanish Tragedy*, 4<sup>th</sup> Addition, 144–5, 170SD.
- 117 See Robert Tittler, *The Face of the City: Civic Portraiture and Civic Identity in Early Modern England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2008), especially pp. 37–68.
- 118 See Hill, *Pageantry and Power*, pp. 53–117, and David M. Bergeron, *English Civic Pageantry 1558–1642* (London: Edward Arnold, 1971), pp. 243–308.
- 119 See Joseph Loewenstein, *Ben Jonson and Possessive Authorship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); see also Douglas A. Brooks, *From Playhouse to Printing House: Drama and Authorship in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 104–39. Stephen B. Dobranski builds on Brook's work in his *Readers and Authorship in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 101.
- 120 Clark, *Vanities of the Eye*, p. 163.

- 121 See Jones and Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing*, p. 188.
- 122 Gurr, *Shakespearean Stage*, p. 7. See Cedric C. Brown (ed.), *Patronage, Politics and Literary Traditions in England 1558–1658* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1993); C. Warley, *Sonnet Sequences and Social Distinction in Renaissance England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).
- 123 Tittler, *Portraits, Painters, and Publics*, p. 60.
- 124 Tittler, *Portraits, Painters, and Publics*, pp. 61–2.
- 125 Tittler, *Portraits, Painters, and Publics*, p. 60.
- 126 Thomas Hoby, *The courtyer of Count Baldessar Castilio divided into foure bookes* (London: Wyllyam Seres, 1561), sig. J3v.
- 127 Peacham, *The Compleat Gentleman*, sig. P3r.
- 128 Christy Anderson discusses BL, Sloane MSS 536, in ‘The Secrets of Vision in Renaissance England’, in Lyle Massey (ed.), *The Treatise on Perspective: Published and Unpublished*, Studies in the History of Art 59, Centre for the Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, Symposium Papers XXXVI (New Haven and London: Yale University Press for the National Gallery of Art, Washington, 2003), pp. 323–47, pp. 333–9.
- 129 Anderson, ‘The Secrets of Vision’, p. 339.
- 130 Peacham, *The Art of Drawing with the Pen and Limning in Water Colours, more exactlie than heretofore taught, and enlarged with the true manner of Painting upon glasse, the order of making your furnace, Annealing &c* (London: Richard Braddock for William Jones, 1606), p. 3. EEBO. <http://eebo.chadwyck.com>. Accessed 22 December 2012. Gent discusses the popularity of drawing amongst men of gentle and aristocratic status because, unlike painting, ‘it did not involve messy colours’ and ‘was the tool of arts and sciences’, *Picture and Poetry*, p. 11.
- 131 See Peacham, *The Art of Drawing*, title page, and *The Gentlemans Exercise*, p. 4.
- 132 See William Eamon, *Science and the Secrets of Nature: Books of Secrets in Medieval and Early Modern Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), p. 307.
- 133 Steven A. Walton, ‘Bate, John (fl. 1626–1635)’, *Oxford DNB*. [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/53656](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/53656). Accessed 4 November 2012.
- 134 See R. K. R. Thornton and T. G. S. Cain, ‘Introduction’, in Nicholas Hilliard, *A Treatise Concerning The Arte of Limning, by Nicholas Hilliard, together with A More Compendious Discourse Concerning ye Art of Limning by Edward Norgate* (Ashington and Manchester: Mid Northumberland Arts Group in association with Carcanet Press, 1981), p. 17. All subsequent references are to this edition. ‘Limning’ refers to miniature painting; see Roy Strong, *The English Renaissance Miniature* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1983), and Graham Reynolds, *English Portrait Miniatures* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).
- 135 Haydocke, *Tracte containing the artes of curious paintinge*, sig. ¶6r. See also Thornton and Cain, ‘Introduction’, in Hilliard, *Arte of Limning*, pp. 17–18.
- 136 See Sarah Bakewell, ‘Haydock, Richard (1569/70–c. 1642), Physician’, *Oxford DNB*, [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/12746](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/12746). Accessed 9 June 2007.
- 137 See Simon Shepherd, ‘“What’s So Funny about Ladies’ Tailors?”: A Survey of Some Male (Homo)Sexual Types in the Renaissance’, *Textual Practice*, 6:1 (1992), 17–31.
- 138 Anon, *The Wisdome of Doctor Dodypoll*, ed. M. N. Matson (New York and London: Garland, 1980), I i.10. All subsequent references are to this edition.

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- 140 See Tassi, *The Scandal of Images*, p. 121.
- 141 On the date of the composition and first performance of this play, see Marion O'Connor, 'The Court Beggar: A Critical Introduction', *The Court Beggar*, paragraph 28, *Richard Brome Online*. [www.hrionline.ac.uk/brome](http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/brome). Accessed 14 April 2012.
- 142 Richard Brome, *The Court Beggar* (1640–42), ed. Marion O'Connor, (2. Speeches 379–81). *Richard Brome Online*. [www.hrionline.ac.uk/brome](http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/brome). Accessed 14 April 2012. All subsequent references are to this edition.
- 143 O'Connor (ed.), 'The Court Beggar', paragraph 40.
- 144 See Martin Butler, *Theatre and Crisis: 1632–1642* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), pp. 16, 135–6.
- 145 O'Connor (ed.), 'The Court Beggar', paragraph 40.
- 146 Tom Clayton, 'Suckling, Sir John (bap. 1609, d. 1641?)'. *Oxford DNB* [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/26757](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/26757). Accessed 18 March 2012. Brome's poem was included before the Prologue of *The Weeding of Covent Garden*, in Richard Brome, *Five new playes, viz. The English moor, or the mock-marriage. The love-sick court, or the ambitious politique: Covent Garden weeded. The new academy, or the new exchange. The queen and concubine* (London: A. Cook, 1659), unpaginated. See O'Connor (ed.), 'The Court Beggar', paragraph 20 and note 11599.
- 147 O'Connor (ed.) 'The Court Beggar', paragraphs 8, 20–5.
- 148 Edith Snook, 'Maternal Advice', in Caroline Bicks and Jennifer Summit (eds), *The History of British Women's Manuscript Writing, 1500–1610*, vol. 2 (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp. 108–29, p. 113. Linda A. Pollock, 'Mildmay, Grace, Lady Mildmay (c. 1552–1620)'. *Oxford DNB*. [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/45817](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/45817). Accessed 18 September 2010.
- 149 Snook, 'Maternal Advice', p. 115.
- 150 Caroline Bowden, 'The Notebooks of Rachel Fane: Education for Authorship?', in Victoria E. Burke and Jonathan Gibson (eds), *Early Modern Women's Manuscript Writing: Selected Papers from the Trinity/Trent Colloquium* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), pp. 157–80, p. 162.
- 151 Bowden, 'The Notebooks of Rachel Fane', pp. 164–5.
- 152 Marion O'Connor, 'Rachel Fane's May Masque at Apethorpe, 1627', *English Literary Renaissance*, 36:1 (2006), 90–113, 96.
- 153 Rachel Fane, 'Rachel Fane's May Masque at Apethorpe, 1627', ed. Marion O'Connor, *English Literary Renaissance*, 36:1 (2006), 105–13, 112.
- 154 See O'Connor, 'Rachel Fane's May Masque', 93.
- 155 'Probate Will of Sir Anthony Mildmay dated 14 Feb. 1614 Proved 11 Oct. 1617' MS Westmorland (A) 1.ix.1, Northamptonshire Record Office.
- 156 See Graham Parry, *Glory, Laud and Honour: The Arts of the Anglican Counter-Reformation* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2006), pp. 102–3. See also Hamling, *Decorating the 'Godly' Household*, pp. 58–9.
- 157 See Jennifer S. Alexander and Kathryn A. Morrison, 'Apethorpe Hall and the Workshop of Thomas Thorpe, Mason of King's Cliffe: A Study in Mason's Marks', *Architectural History*, 50 (2007), 59–94, 59.



- 158 Alexander and Morrison, 'Apethorpe Hall', 71, 74.
- 159 See Barbara Ravelhofer, *The Early Stuart Masque: Dance, Costume and Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p.94. See also Mildmay Fane, *Raguillo D'Oceano*, in 'Six Comedies Performed at the Earl of Westmoreland's Seat at Apethorpe, co. Northampton, by the children and servants of the family', MS ADD 34221, British Library. Following Clifford Leech, I use the British Museum pagination; see Clifford Leech, *Mildmay Fane's Raguillo D'Oceano, 1640, and Candy Restored, 1641, edited from the London and Huntington Manuscripts* (Louvain: Librarie Univerditaire, 1983), p. 5.
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- 161 See Tom Cain (ed.), *The Poetry of Mildmay Fane, Second Earl of Westmoreland* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), p. 1.
- 162 Mildmay Fane, *The Change*, in 'Six Comedies Performed at the Earl of Westmoreland's Seat at Apethorpe, co. Northampton, by the children and servants of the family', MS ADD 34221, British Library. See Leech, *Mildmay Fane's Raguillo D'Oceano*, pp. 45–7.
- 163 Mildmay Fane, *Pugna Anima*, in 'Six Comedies Performed at the Earl of Westmoreland's Seat at Apethorpe, co. Northampton, by the children and servants of the family', MS ADD 34221, British Library, fol. 125r.
- 164 Fane, *The Change*, fol. 58v; see also Leech, *Mildmay Fane's Raguillo D'Oceano*, p. 46.
- 165 Fane, *The Change*, fol. 62r–v.
- 166 Fane, *The Change*, fol. 64r.
- 167 Stephen Wright, 'Fane, Mildmay, Second Earl of Westmorland (1602–1666)'. *Oxford DNB*. [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/9139](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/9139). Accessed 11 May 2012. As Leech notes, Fane's political sympathies in *The Change* are highly ambiguous, Veering 'from one side to the other with a rather bewildering rapidity', *Mildmay Fane's Raguillo D'Oceano*, p. 47.
- 168 Diehl, *Staging Reform*, p. 215.
- 169 On Descartes, optics and cognition in light of the history of early modern vision, see Clark, *Vanities of the Eye*, pp. 333–56.
- 170 Knapp, *Image Ethics*, p. 12.
- 171 Harris, *Untimely Matter*, p. 10.
- 172 Shiner, *The Invention of Art*, p. 53.
- 173 For an anthology of surviving artisan writings, see James S. Amelang, *The Flight of Icarus: Artisan Autobiography in Early Modern Europe* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998).
- 174 In using these titles I follow Heather Wolfe (ed.), *The Trevelyon Miscellany of 1608: A Facsimile of Folger Shakespeare Library MS V.b.232* (Washington, DC: Folger Shakespeare Library, 2007). In my use of the spelling 'Trevilian' I follow Nicholas Barker (ed.), *The Great Book of Thomas Trevilian: A facsimile of the Manuscript in the Wormsley Library*, 2 vols (London: Roxburghe Club, 2000). All subsequent references to *The Great Book* are to vol. 2 of this edition unless otherwise indicated.
- 175 Wells-Cole, *Art and Decoration*, p. 235.
- 176 Trevilian, *Miscellany*, fols 180r–1r, and *The Great Book*, pp. 371, 375. See also Richard

- Day, *A Booke of Christian Prayers, collected out of the ancient writers, and best learned in our tyme, worthy to be read wyth an earnest mynde of all Christians, in these daungerous and troubleseome dayes, that God for Christes sake will yet still be mercyfull unto us* (London: John Daye, 1578), sig. Y3r.
- 177 Trevilian, *The Great Book*, p. 2, quoted in Wolfe (ed.), *Miscellany*, p. 8. This prefatory material is not included in the *Miscellany*, but, as Wolfe notes, 'the first four pages (fols 1–2)' of the *Miscellany*, 'which are no longer extant, may have originally contained such matter', *Miscellany*, p. 8, fig. 1. The page which includes this passage is not included in Nicholas Barker's facsimile of *The Great Book*. My thanks to Nick Peate of the Wormsley Library for his assistance with this reference.
- 178 Wolfe (ed.), *Miscellany*, pp. 11–12.
- 179 Wells-Cole, *Art and Decoration*, p. 235; Trevilian, *Miscellany*, fols 215r to 307v. John L. Nevinson refers to Trevilian as a 'scrivener', in 'A Show of the Nine Worthies', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 14:2 (1963), 103–7, 103.
- 180 Wolfe (ed.), *Miscellany*, p. 8.
- 181 Wolfe (ed.), *Miscellany*, p. 8.
- 182 Wolfe (ed.), *Miscellany*, p. 7.

## ‘In the keeping of Paulina’: the unknowable image in *The Winter’s Tale*

Shakespeare’s *The Winter’s Tale* presents one of the most famous depictions of a patron of the visual arts in early modern English drama. In the penultimate scene of the play, we are told that the Sicilian courtier, Paulina, is in possession of a ‘statue’ of the dead Sicilian queen, Hermione (5.2.93). ‘Hearing of her mother’s statue’, Perdita, Hermione’s long-lost daughter, and the Sicilian king, Leontes, repair to the ‘removed house’ where it is kept (5.2.92–105). Sixteen years previously, Leontes caused his wife’s death, accusing her of adultery with the Bohemian king, Polixenes, and rejecting his own paternity of Perdita, who as a baby is abandoned in Bohemia. In the final scene of the play, Paulina pulls back a curtain to reveal what seems to be a disarmingly lifelike statue depicting Hermione. Now penitent and reunited with his daughter, Leontes is encouraged by Paulina to ‘awake ...faith’ in the possibility that the image may be made to ‘move’; the king watches in wonder as the statue is apparently transformed to the living Hermione, ‘stone no more’ (5.3.88–9).

As is often noted, playgoers share Leontes, Perdita and Polixenes’ ‘ignorance’ of what happens during this supposed transformation.<sup>1</sup> In many of Shakespeare’s comedies, spectators are aware that a character has assumed a disguise in order to achieve the resolution of the plot; in *The Winter’s Tale*, however, the theatre audience are not given an explicit warning that Hermione is to appear in the guise of a statue.<sup>2</sup> There are hints that a woman ‘as like as Hermione as is her picture’ may appear in the play, but these contribute to intrigue rather than to certain knowledge about how Hermione has ‘stolen from the dead’ (5.1.74, 5.3.114). This uncertainty continues after the supposed transformation, as Hermione explains that she has ‘preserved’ herself to ‘see’ Perdita, her ‘issue’ (5.3.127–8). This explanation indicates that Hermione has been alive for the past sixteen years, but at the same time directly contradicts the report of the queen’s death offered by Paulina at the end of Act 3 scene 2.<sup>3</sup> Paulina tells Hermione that there’s ‘time enough’ for a full explanation of the queen’s mysterious ‘preservation’, and Leontes gestures ‘hence’ towards a future time, ‘where we may leisurely / Each one demand and answer his part’ (5.3.128–53).<sup>4</sup> Indefinitely deferring answers to the questions generated by the bewildering spectacle

of Hermione's image, Shakespeare recognises that 'the idea of satisfaction is more seductive and, paradoxically, more satisfactory, than the thing itself'.<sup>5</sup> The aesthetic force of this scene is therefore invested in a resistance to closure that centres on spectators' incomplete understanding of the supposed statue of which Paulina is patron. Certainly, the open-endedness of the 'statue scene' has proved irresistible for critics of *The Winter's Tale*, and is often positioned as the summit of Shakespeare's thought on aesthetic and sensory experience.<sup>6</sup> Given the prominence of this highly ambiguous depiction of patronage of the visual arts in Shakespeare studies, it is worth considering the tenor and implications of criticism on this play in more detail.

Studies of *The Winter's Tale* cover a diversity of aesthetic, formal, social, theological and ethical concerns, but most critics share an attraction to the 'statue scene' as the site of the endorsement of the 'unknown' and 'unknowability'. The metatheatrical consolidation of audience viewpoint with the perspectives of Leontes, Perdita and Polixenes is important for these critical readings, which usually position playgoers as encouraged to embrace the unknown along with the play-world spectators. Michael O'Connell, for example, suggests that Shakespeare 'presses an audience into idolatry as it assents with Leontes to whatever reality the apparent statue may mysteriously possess'.<sup>7</sup> It is often noted that the 'statue scene' is steeped in Catholic iconography, as Perdita and the penitent Leontes worship the statue of a maternal figure in a secluded chapel, and the statue transforms to flesh in a musical, ritualised ceremony.<sup>8</sup> The revelation that Hermione may have 'preserved' herself throughout the drama, however, is also sometimes taken as an undercutting of this Catholic iconography, or a moment of breakage in Shakespeare's engagement with Reformation debates about religious spectacle.<sup>9</sup> Marion O'Connor suggests that the play detaches from 'iconomachic' debates at the moment at which 'the figure of Hermione is no longer perceived as an image but recognised as a human being'.<sup>10</sup> Prior to this moment, the 'figure' of Hermione 'signified something other, and more enduring, than the stone of a statue or the flesh of a human being'.<sup>11</sup> Significantly, O'Connor considers this transition from unknowable otherness to familiar 'living' warmth as a part of the play's exploration of the unreliability of words and images, and Shakespeare's refusal to validate 'Reformed logocentrism'.<sup>12</sup> Recalling the optimism of critics invested in the notion of the 'speaking picture', O'Connor concludes that this rejection of Reformation iconomachy reflects a broader Shakespearean openness to 'collaboration' rather than 'contest' between words and images.<sup>13</sup> Although she does not consider the question of Hermione's statue to be particularly open-ended, then, O'Connor connects the play's investment in the indecipherability of 'signs' with a flexible, open-minded approach to Reformation image controversy. In this conviction in Shakespeare's flexible approach to religious debate, O'Connor's analysis reflects the view adopted by a number of critics concerned with religious contexts and more convinced of

the open-endedness of the 'statue scene'. For Richard Wilson, the 'systematic ambiguity' of the final scene reflects a cultural openness to incertitude that makes 'Shakespeare's audience ready ... for the future Church of England'.<sup>14</sup> Phebe Jensen, meanwhile, argues that this undercutting of pre-Reformation iconography is not an iconoclastic rejection of Catholicism, but 'allows for different responses from a devotionally diverse audience that held varied opinions about whether praying to painted statues was idolatrous'.<sup>15</sup> In these readings of the play, the bewildering ambiguities attendant on the image of Hermione are reflective and evocative of the climate of uncertainty that characterised early modern English religious culture.

Elsewhere, the 'unknowability' of Hermione's image is a source of 'wonder' that has radical implications for spectators' ontological experience. T. G. Bishop, for example, equates watching Hermione's supposed transformation with a 'sudden waving of the barriers of self-knowledge' that constitutes an 'experience of "wonder"', spectators wishing Hermione into being and in the process realising 'something about themselves, about their own desires'.<sup>16</sup> That the 'statue scene' is in some way aesthetically transcendental also shapes Anthony Dawson and Paul Yachnin's discussion of the play. Dawson and Yachnin disagree regarding the cultural contexts for the 'sublimity' of Hermione's supposed transformation, but both state that in this scene 'visual pleasure ... looks beyond itself'.<sup>17</sup> What is most interesting about Dawson and Yachnin's allusion to visual experience that goes 'beyond itself' is that these critics write from historicising and 'neo-Marxist' perspectives that might not be readily associated with investment in aesthetic transcendentalism.<sup>18</sup> Part of the appeal of the 'statue scene', however, is that its gesturing towards an unknown 'beyond' its own formal limits functions meaningfully across critical and methodological boundaries. The idea that the 'statue scene' gestures towards something 'beyond itself' is, for example, very useful in deconstructive readings of *The Winter's Tale*. In an important discussion of the play from this perspective, Howard Felperin argues that in the final scene we are encouraged, with Leontes, to 'relax and enjoy' the 'inescapable mediacy of language'.<sup>19</sup> Building on Felperin's analysis, John J. Joughin is even able to dislocate the 'unknowability' of Hermione's image from a transcendentalism implicated in notions of formal unity. Joughin suggests that the image of Hermione 'undoes attempts to unify meaning', and so 'is certainly *not* the unifyingly fulfilling or unreflectively transcendental category of the aesthetic caricatured and maligned by so much early "radical" cultural criticism'.<sup>20</sup> Repeatedly, the association between Hermione and incomprehension generates meaning for critics working across a range of contrasting concerns.

Even discussions of *The Winter's Tale* sceptical about the value of the play's 'open-endedness' are heavily invested in the unknowable otherness of the 'Hermione' that appears to turn from stone to flesh. Taking Felperin's reading of the play as a starting point, James A. Knapp aims to show that the

encounter with Hermione's incomprehensible image places an ethical demand for a 'response' on spectators.<sup>21</sup> In this view, the open-endedness of the final scene demands action on the part of spectators rather than encouraging the relaxed celebration of the 'inescapable mediacy of language'.<sup>22</sup> Knapp argues that Leontes's awakening of faith in the image of Hermione recognises the 'unknown' and 'unknowable' as 'other' and thus constitutes an ethical choice in the sense recommended by Emmanuel Levinas.<sup>23</sup> Levinas defines ethics as a recognition of the 'other' that enables the rejection of 'sovereign reason' that 'knows only itself'; as Knapp points out, the 'other' in this sense refers to 'the other person, designated "other"' as well as 'the utterly other, designated "Other" – the other as other, conceptually equivalent to God'.<sup>24</sup> This view posits Hermione as a bewildering, almost incomprehensible figure of divine, thus immaterial, and yet gendered, material otherness. Building on Knapp's work, Renuka Gusain finds Hermione's image redolent of a Levinasian 'Other' that "'grounds" Being' through its unknowability, and is equivalent in its alterity to early modern theological concepts of grace and Neoplatonic notions of beauty.<sup>25</sup> Taking Leontes's tyrannical rejection of Hermione in the early stages of the play as a violent reaction against beauty, Gusain suggests that Paulina, acting as a 'playwright-artist-courtier figure' presents the transformation of the statue as 'a solution to the problem of responding to the Otherness of beauty without doing violence to it'.<sup>26</sup> Such violence would 'disrupt' the divine 'Otherness of the beautiful object', and preclude the 'awareness of something Other' that is central to Levinasian subject-formation.<sup>27</sup> As in T. G. Bishop's exploration of the 'wonder' of the 'statue scene', Gusain presents self-knowledge as dependent on the transcendental 'strangeness' of Hermione's image, which mediates between materiality and immateriality, and is perceived as a violable object that is also 'inexpressible and unknown'.<sup>28</sup>

Together, these diverse discussions of *The Winter's Tale* demonstrate the extent of critical investment in formal ambiguities of the 'statue scene' that pivot around the unknown status of Hermione's image. There is arguably something troubling about this critical preoccupation with tantalising aesthetic effects and meaning as generated by a disarming image of protean, unknowable femininity. Every time we pursue Shakespeare's 'meaning' (or the evasion of meaning) in the unknowability of Hermione's statue, we are at risk of validating a highly patriarchal narrative in which aesthetic value and form are mediated via the image of the woman-as-other. Moreover, the more we emphasise the extent to which Hermione's image enables deconstructive resistance to formal 'finish' in Shakespeare's play, the more we invoke the ideal of an aesthetic 'whole'. In these observations, I build on Barbara Johnson's incisive discussion of the persistence of concepts of 'wholeness' in literary and philosophical discourse even as the aesthetics of modernity emphasises fracture and fragmentation.<sup>29</sup> Engaging with hostility towards mothers articulated in literature and in Freudian and Lacanian

psychoanalysis, Johnson argues that maternal figures are frequently set up as barriers to 'wholeness', given the connection between mimetic fracture and sexual difference.<sup>30</sup> The relevance of cultural meanings of motherhood for *The Winter's Tale* has already been recognised in a number of studies focusing on Hermione's maternal body.<sup>31</sup> Significantly, these readings of the play are at times invested in the unknowable, deferred 'wholeness' invoked by Hermione's statue. For example, acknowledging the 'decidedly patriarchal' nature of the 'framework' within which Shakespeare's play operates, Janet Adelman nonetheless suggests that *The Winter's Tale* presents 'an astonishing psychic achievement', in which 'Shakespeare figures the loss and recovery of the world in the mother's body, returning to us what we didn't know that we had lost'.<sup>32</sup> Jensen's evocation of the play's ambiguous religious stance, meanwhile, is based in part on a discussion of idolatry and iconoclasm that centres on Leontes's horrified realisation that he is complicit in a post-lapsarian 'representational economy' founded on sexual difference.<sup>33</sup> This realisation flares up through a combination of the sight of Hermione's heavily pregnant body, and the mention of the moment at which he and Hermione first 'crossed eyes' (1.2.79). The latter provocation occurs in a conversation between Polixenes and Hermione in which the former idealises his boyhood friendship with Leontes as a pastoral scene, describing himself and the Sicilian king as 'twinned lambs that did frisk i' th' sun' who 'knew not / The doctrine of ill-doing' (1.2.67–70). When Hermione notes that Polixenes refers to an innocence lost, the Bohemian king redefines the innocence he describes as a time prior to his and his friend's encounters with their future wives (1.2.75–80). Where Leontes and Polixenes, 'twinned' as boys, were the mirror image of one another, the introduction of sexual difference disrupts visual unity and collapses Polixenes' 'iconic reflection' (1.2.88).<sup>34</sup> In this way, the sight of Hermione provides a point of mediation through which Leontes negotiates and reconfigures his attitude to representation, eventually rejecting his iconophobic, iconoclastic rage at the referential fracture in order to 'awake faith' in images in the 'statue scene'.

It seems impossible to get past the signifying function of Hermione's body and its transcendental immersion in patriarchal concepts of 'unity', as the play invests critical discourse and audience 'faith' in the notion of women as the procreative point of 'splitting' from an originary, pre-lapsarian wholeness. As Tara Hamling has shown, early modern audiences would have been familiar with the iconography of this originary wholeness, as decorative schemes and textiles frequently depicted scenes from the creation as told in Genesis.<sup>35</sup> Trevilian's *Miscellany* and *Great Book*, for example, include a series of illustrations of creation scenes, accompanied with extracts from Genesis. One page in the *Miscellany* shows the emergence of Eve from Adam's rib, presenting a view of this scene as shown in *The Holie Bible* of 1568, but which was also copied in various forms in England in decorative schemes and textiles (figures 12–13).<sup>36</sup>



12 Thomas Trevilian, 'Creation of the world: sixth day', *Trevelyon miscellany* [manuscript],  
1608 (1608) fol. 39v





13 Woodcut showing 'the creation of Eve', *The Holy Bible* (1568) sig. A3r

Significantly, this scene shows Adam and Eve before the development of sexual difference, Eve emerging in fluid fashion from Adam's side, with both figures at this point existing as united, semi-formed matter.<sup>37</sup> One-ness in this depiction is notably formless, and it might be argued that we cannot do more as critics than accept Shakespeare's engagement with historically prevalent, gendered images of unity as aesthetically 'beyond form'. On the other hand, there is more that can be done critically here. It is arguably intense focus on Hermione as viewed-object that limits critical scope to the repeated assertion of the 'unknowability' of her image. By recognising Shakespeare's interest in the making of that unknowable image, it may be possible to adjust our focus to an extent. Rather than focusing on Hermione's body as the barrier to unreachable 'unity', there is much to be gained from a consideration of Paulina as the patron and therefore co-maker of Hermione's image. In this view, Paulina becomes the key to Shakespeare's treatment of mimetic practice in *The Winter's Tale*. In the next section, therefore, I discuss Paulina as a patron whose role straddles the functions of spectator, consumer of images and participant in the construction of spectacle. The immaterial/material unknowability of Hermione is shown to be traceable to Paulina's active work in these roles.

### Paulina as patron

The image of Hermione that is presented in the 'statue scene' is described repeatedly as the property of Paulina. The sculpture is a piece 'in the keeping of Paulina' in her 'removed house'; behind a 'curtain', in a 'chapel', 'apart' from a 'gallery' of other images owned by the Sicilian courtier (5.2.92–105, 5.3.10–86). Paulina is said to have overseen the production of the statue with care, having 'privately twice or thrice a day, ever since the death of Hermione' visited the 'removed house' (5.2.103–5). When displaying the supposed sculpture in the final scene, Paulina refers to it as 'my poor image', and affirms that 'the stone is mine' (5.3.57–8). Despite this evidence of Paulina's status as a patron of the visual arts, critics have not focused on this significant aspect of her function in the play, although Paulina's matriarchal agency is frequently acknowledged. Barkan, for example, wonders whether Paulina is Hermione's 'protectress – or jailer?'<sup>38</sup> Stanley Cavell, meanwhile, takes Paulina as the 'muse' of the 'ceremony' of the play's final scene, or its 'stage director'.<sup>39</sup> O'Connor notes that Paulina has a 'private collection of "many singularities"', as well as 'a chapel' containing 'a shrine', but does not dwell on the subject of patronage, instead figuring Paulina 'as priestess-like promoter of Hermione's cult'.<sup>40</sup> Others contextualise Paulina in relation to black magic, encouraged by the ritual element of the final scene as well as Leontes's earlier assertion that Paulina is a 'mankind witch' (2.3.66).<sup>41</sup> As mentioned above, Gusain sees Paulina as a hybrid 'playwright-artist-courtier figure', where 'artist figure' is equivalent

to a conjurer of spectacle, 'like Prospero in *The Tempest*'.<sup>42</sup> Lowell Gallagher, meanwhile, notes that Paulina is presented as the 'owner' of the statue, and concludes that this means that the image has 'multiple owners', since he takes Giulio Romano to also have 'possession' of Hermione.<sup>43</sup> Gallagher therefore considers Paulina to be a 'covert, collaborative author' of the statue along with Romano.<sup>44</sup> This is an odd conclusion given that Romano is much more 'covert' than Paulina in the play in performance, never even appearing onstage. Gallagher's analysis overlooks the hierarchical details of patron–visual artist relations in the context of early modern patronage, and, in prioritising Romano as an 'author' figure, reflects broader critical assumptions about the 'making' of Hermione's image.

Paulina's status as a consumer of images is arguably often overlooked because of critical interest in the attribution of the statue to Giulio Romano. This attribution is made in a conversation between Paulina's steward and two Sicilian gentlemen that takes place in the penultimate scene of the drama. Here, the steward explains that Perdita has heard of 'her mother's statue':

which is in the keeping of Paulina, a piece many years in doing and now newly performed by that rare Italian master, Giulio Romano, who, had he himself eternity and could put breath into his work, would beguile Nature of her custom, so perfectly he is her ape. He so near to Hermione hath done Hermione that they say one would speak to her and stand in hope of an answer. (5.2.92–9)

As I noted in the introduction, this is an inaccurate allusion to the sixteenth-century Italian visual arts, since Giulio Romano (1499?–1546) was known as a painter and architect rather than as a sculptor.<sup>45</sup> A number of critics have discussed the identity of Shakespeare's Romano, often with a focus on the possibility that the playwright was familiar with Giorgio Vasari's life of Romano in *Le Vite De' Piu Eccellenti Pittori Scultori e Architettori* (first published in Italian in 1550, revised and enlarged 1568).<sup>46</sup> This attention to Romano often seems to be at the expense of recognition of Paulina as patron. Julia Reinhard Lupton, for example, suggests the pertinence of Giulio Romano as a point of reference in *The Winter's Tale*, since 'like Paulina', Vasari's Romano is 'a collector of antiquaries'.<sup>47</sup> Similarly, in a later essay on hospitality in *The Winter's Tale*, noting that it is Paulina who pronounces Hermione dead in Act 3, Lupton considers Paulina as a 'coroner turned curator' who hosts Hermione for sixteen years and oversees the spectacular reunion of the final scene.<sup>48</sup> When considering the aesthetic meaning of the statue scene, however, Lupton transfers the agency of the 'curator' from Paulina to Shakespeare's Romano, who is compared to Antony Gormley, the sculptor, who in 2009 invited members of the public to stand on the empty fourth plinth in Trafalgar Square, London.<sup>49</sup> This is an ingenious comparison for what it suggests about Shakespeare and Gormley's evocation of the aesthetic 'allure of real life'.<sup>50</sup> By aligning Gormley with Romano, however, Lupton

effaces the significance of Paulina as a patron who is materially engaged with the construction and presentation of the statue.

Critical neglect of Paulina's engagement with visual practice may be attributed partly to the widespread view that early seventeenth-century English visual culture was underdeveloped and therefore offers no 'real' sources for the depiction of Paulina as patron. Catherine Belsey, for example, refers to Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel's pioneering collection of antiquities, assembled between 1612 and 1615, and notes that '*The Winter's Tale* ... precedes by a whisker the fashion Arundel helped to inaugurate'.<sup>51</sup> Following Bruce R. Smith, Belsey suggests that 'the likely model for Hermione's statue was tomb sculpture'.<sup>52</sup> This is indeed likely, and enables a reading of Paulina as a patron in the vein of early modern female patrons of the visual arts who were widows or were 'released from marital responsibilities', and were of a high social status.<sup>53</sup> Paulina fits this profile; although she is not certain of the death of her husband, the courtier Antigonus, until Act 5, she has lived as a widow throughout much of the timescale of the drama, and swears that he 'did perish' in Bohemia before this has been confirmed (5.1.44). Paulina particularly corresponds with elite female patrons who commissioned commemorative images, such as Lady Anne Clifford.<sup>54</sup> Clifford, who died in 1676 and was active as a patron during the mid to late seventeenth century, postdates Shakespeare's play and is not presented here as a 'source' for Paulina-as-patron. Instead, Clifford presents an instructive point of reference in a discussion of female patronage in *The Winter's Tale* because, like Paulina, she operated as a matriarchal figure within the patriarchal structures of monumental image-making.<sup>55</sup>

Clifford's patronage of the visual arts forms a part of a range of self-presentational activities undertaken in relation to a long-standing legal battle over the inheritance of her father's estates, which had passed to her uncle at her father's death in 1605.<sup>56</sup> Clifford finally took possession of the estates in 1643, and although she was not able to visit her lands until 1649, she set about 'an elaborate plan to prove she had been wronged forty years earlier'.<sup>57</sup> For example, Clifford pursued old-fashioned, gothic schemes in her architectural projects in order to create the impression that her buildings were an established part of the landscape.<sup>58</sup> A similar architectural inscribing of the past onto Clifford's lands was achieved in the monument to her mother that Clifford built in 1656, known as 'The Countess Pillar'. This memorial pillar was built on the spot at which Clifford last saw her mother in 1616 (figure 14).

Clifford's use of a phallic structure to mark the loss of her mother indicates the extent to which her activities as a patron exploit patriarchal iconography for matriarchal ends. Similarly, a portrait known as *The Great Picture Triptych* and commissioned during the 1640s when Clifford was still resident in London, is embellished with inscriptions that detail Clifford's family history so as to legitimise her inheritance claims (figure 15).<sup>59</sup> Two versions of this



14 *The Countess Pillar* (1656), Penrith, England

portrait were commissioned, one for each of Clifford's daughters, although only one version of the painting survives.<sup>60</sup> The inscriptions are thought to have been added by the same scribe who wrote parts of 'the great books of record', a collection of writings and heraldic illustrations concerning the Clifford family history.<sup>61</sup>



15 Attributed to Jan Van Belcamp, *The Great Picture Triptych* (1646), oil on canvas. Centre panel: 254 x 254 cm. Side panels: 254 x 119.38 cm

Attributed to the Dutch painter Jan Van Belcamp, the painting shows Clifford's life across three huge panels; on the left panel Clifford is depicted at fifteen, the age at which she was disinherited; on the panel on the right-hand side, she is shown aged fifty-six.<sup>62</sup> Depicting the passage of time, *The Great Picture Triptych* is therefore an example of the sort of portrait that Hieronimo mocks in the painter additions to *The Spanish Tragedy*. The central panel shows Clifford's brothers and her parents, George Clifford and Lady Margaret Russell. An inscription on the painting notes that this central portrait is based on a previous image painted after the date of Anne's conception in 1589.<sup>63</sup> Clifford is therefore depicted 'in utero' in the central panel, which gestures towards the future depicted in the left and right panels.<sup>64</sup>

Where Paulina presents the spectacle of the image of Hermione in the 'statue scene' in order to initiate the reunion between the Sicilian queen, her daughter and her husband, Clifford similarly deployed commemorative portraiture to assert matriarchal bonds within a conservative, familial framework. As noted above, spectator collusion in the 'awakening' of Paulina's 'stone' is frequently understood as functioning in relation to viewers' indefinitely incomplete understanding of Hermione as an unknowable image. Significantly, Clifford's commissions also function around deferral and the transgression of formal boundaries. For example, the central panel of *The Great Picture Triptych* gestures towards the left-hand panel, and the latter gestures towards the image of the middle-aged Clifford present on the right-hand side of the portrait. Although the formal family unit shown in the central panel appears relatively static, Clifford's siblings poised calmly at the feet of their parents, the gestation alluded to in this picture is the catalyst for a sense of lively movement that increasingly spills out into and beyond the left and right panels. The left panel depicts the rich potential of the teenage Clifford, shown flicking through a book of music on the table covered with an ostentatious red and gold cloth. In the background, shelves hold heavy books, including Sidney's *Arcadia* and Montaigne's *Essays*, neatly lined up and piled in groups of three and four. In the panel depicting Clifford as a woman in her late fifties, meanwhile, the scene is more animated and disordered. Clifford leans against a table similar to that depicted in the left-hand panel, but a greyhound leaps up at her skirts; a long paper overlaps the edge of the table, peeping out from under the pile of books on which she rests her hand. In the background, the shelves overflow with books carelessly replaced as if the reading process were hurriedly or half-finished. Significantly, parts of this panel are indeed incomplete. A biography of Clifford's adult life is written on the piece of paper that peeps from under the books, unfolding over the side of the table. The biography on this paper is unfinished, or rather was unfolding at the time of composition, since Clifford was then still alive, and the information has not been added in retrospect. Indeed, the final sentence of this biography is unfinished, ending on a comma:

The 5<sup>th</sup> of July 1647 was this Countess of Pembroke's youngest daughter by her first Husband, the Lady Isabella Sackville, married in Clarkenwell Church London, to James – Compton Earle of Northampton,<sup>65</sup>

The unfinished biography on the unfurling paper in *The Great Picture Triptych* highlights the extent to which this portrait is invested in image-making as an on-going process. The tiny inscriptions on the portrait were added by a scribe, and so Van Belcamp must have initially produced an image littered with blank spaces. The making of *The Great Picture Triptych* was therefore structured around the deferral of material completion. The unfinished biography on the right-hand panel may not have been a deliberate aesthetic choice, and we can only speculate that the other version of the painting may have at some point presented more complete biographical information.

The investment in incompleteness in *The Great Picture Triptych* emerges elsewhere in Clifford's commissions, most notably in her funeral monument. Clifford is buried in a vault in St Lawrence's, Appleby, where there stands a black marble monument which presents the Countess's ancestry in a heraldic family tree. Alice T. Friedman writes that in this monument, completed in 1666, Clifford 'abstracted and distilled her own image to the point of virtual invisibility'; Friedman reads this distillation as a rejection of the 'chance' for Clifford 'to place an image of her female body on her own monument'.<sup>66</sup> Friedman suggests that the design chosen by Clifford enabled her to emphasise her parity as a landowner with her 'ancestors' by becoming a 'pervasive and omnipresent power through her restorations and commemorative plaques'.<sup>67</sup> Clifford thus utilised dispersal and fracture in the negotiation of the patriarchal hierarchy within which she was determined to be dominantly situated.

Where Clifford deployed a fractured aesthetic on her monument to assert her standing as the female head of her estates, Paulina patronises an image that disrupts the solidity of the monumentalised form in order to mark the reunion of the Sicilian royal family. The supposed image of Hermione is 'unfixed' and unstable partly because, like *The Great Picture Triptych*, the work attempts to reflect the passage of time. For example, Leontes observes that the statue is presented with an 'aged' appearance (5.3.29). Displaying her technical knowledge of the production of this alleged sculpture, Paulina explains that Hermione's 'wrinkled' look is a reflection of the skill of 'Giulio Romano':

So much the more our carver's excellence,  
Which lets go by some sixteen years and makes her  
As she lived now. (5.3.30–2)

In this version of the making of Hermione's image, the 'carver' recalls the appearance and 'natural posture' of the Hermione who lived sixteen years previously, while projecting a vision of the 'future' appearance that the supposedly dead Sicilian queen would have acquired had she lived. Of course, this depiction



of an 'aged' Hermione hints at the revelation that the statue may not be made of stone after all, or that it may be subject to change. In this hint, Shakespeare suggests that we understand the statue as not just 'aged', but 'ageing'. The statue is not complete, never a fixed, static 'stone', even before Paulina calls for 'music' and orders Hermione to 'be stone no more' (5.3.98–9).

It is significant that the incompleteness of the image of Hermione is articulated at the moments at which Paulina demonstrates her engagement with the commissioning process at a technical, practical level. Paulina's material ownership of the 'stone' can therefore be seen as the source of the play's bewildering deferral of meaning. Richard Wilson comes close to recognising this when he suggests that Paulina's 'gallery' resembles a secluded matriarchal space such as a convent, or what Wilson calls 'one of the isolated female spaces, unseen by patriarchal power', that functions as a Foucauldian *'heterotopia'*, a place of suspended reality, in which events are placed 'under the sign of indefinite erasure'.<sup>68</sup> Focusing on the gendered nature of the space in which Paulina presents Hermione, Wilson does not consider the extent to which 'indefinite erasure' is evoked through a preoccupation with material erasure and 'finish' that is centred on and controlled by Paulina.

Paulina's actions as 'owner' of the statue enable this ambiguous image to be viewed as a constantly transforming spectacle that seems to merge from stone to flesh as part of a continuum of on-going making and unmaking. Hermione's sculpture is, after all, a long-term project, 'many years in doing', that now only teeters on the brink of completion (5.2.93–4). While the statue appears 'masterly done', Paulina warns that it is 'but newly fixed; the colour's / Not dry' (5.3.47–65). In suggesting that the final coat of paint has been applied to the statue, but that this paint has not yet settled, Paulina presents the artwork as still in the process of reaching finish, and therefore susceptible to defacement. When Leontes and his daughter attempt to 'kiss' the sculpture both are prevented from doing so by Paulina, who states that such veneration would ruin the image. Leontes, for example, is asked to 'forbear', since:

The ruddiness upon her lip is wet.  
 You'll mar it if you kiss it, stain your own  
 With oily painting. (5.3.80–3)

Accepting, with Wilson, that we cannot be certain at this point that 'Hermione was alive all along', it is possible to view Hermione-as-statue and the Hermione who 'appears' to live as fragments of the same partially assembled representation, a barely finished sculpture that becomes an ambiguously preserved living being (5.3.117).<sup>69</sup> The indefinite 'unknowability' of Hermione's image that has so appealed to critics is therefore articulated in the language of Paulina's material ownership of the statue. Significantly, the ambiguity surrounding the status of the image is also generated by the fact that it is not reworked by Leontes, Perdita

and Polixenes, who obey Paulina's instructions not to touch the statue. What would they (and the playhouse audience) have discovered if Leontes had not agreed to 'forbear'? I have been arguing that interactive spectatorship is valued in early modern drama and is a facet of the commissioning process, so why is Paulina so keen to prohibit interactions between Hermione and her audience?

### 'Great creating Nature': parts and the whole

In order to understand Paulina's actions in the 'statue scene', it is necessary to return to the earlier stages of the play, in which Shakespeare is preoccupied with the limitations of visual experience. In this approach, I follow the many critics who consider the final events of the play to be a restorative response to Leontes's earlier tyranny, understood as an iconoclastic outburst against representational activity and visual experience.<sup>70</sup> As noted above, Leontes's tyrannical rage at his wife and newborn daughter in the early stages of the drama can be understood as an attempt to iconoclastically break his complicity in representational *différance* triggered by the 'fault' of interaction with women (1.2.85).<sup>71</sup> Paulina, meanwhile, acts as the matriarchal mediator of referential images which are at first rejected by Leontes but which he learns to accept by the final 'statue scene'.<sup>72</sup> For example, in an attempt to persuade Leontes that he is Perdita's father and that Hermione is innocent, Paulina shows him his newborn daughter:

It is yours,  
 And might we lay th'old proverb to your charge,  
 So like you, 'tis the worse. Behold, my lords,  
 Although the print be little, the whole matter  
 And copy of the father – eye, nose, lip,  
 The trick of's frown, his forehead, nay, the valley,  
 The pretty dimples of his chin and cheek, his smiles,  
 The very mould and frame of hand, nail, finger.  
 And thou, good goddess Nature, which hast made it  
 So like to him that got it, if thou hast  
 The ordering of the mind too, 'mongst all colours,  
 No yellow in't, lest she suspect, as he does,  
 Her children not her husband's. (2.3.94–106)

Perdita is here a direct copy, or imprint of her father, who is therefore also figured as an image, while Paulina is the knowing spectator of both. Reflecting her intimate knowledge of image-making, Paulina describes the formation of Perdita's temperament through an allusion to the intermingling of colours, suggesting that the future Perdita would only be as 'yellow' (jealous) as Leontes if she doubted the paternity of her own children.<sup>73</sup> Here again, Paulina draws attention to the fracture implicit in image-making, suggesting that Leontes's jealousy is an extremity unlikely to be replicated in his daughter.

It is not a coincidence that Paulina refers to 'Nature' as a female deity in this speech. English writers had personified 'nature' as a woman, *Natura*, since at least the twelfth century, when the Platonist poet Bernard Silvestris introduces this goddess figure as an 'artisan' who is said to assist with the formation of bodies from chaotic matter, although 'we do not actually see her doing this' in Silvestris's text.<sup>74</sup> Nature appears onstage as a goddess and artificer in John Lyly's *The Woman in the Moon*, which was entered into the Stationer's Register in September 1595, and may have been performed in the early 1590s.<sup>75</sup> Significantly, Lyly's play opens with an appropriation of the Pygmalion myth, as a group of shepherds 'bewail their want of female sex', and are answered by Nature, who reveals her 'shop', where stands a 'clothed image' of a woman, which is then given 'sense and mind', and made to 'stand ... move, or walk alone' (1.1.50–77). Like the 'goddess Nature' described by Paulina, Lyly's 'Nature' has made the woman, who is named Pandora, in a 'mould' that produces an 'impression' (1.1.63–5). When Paulina invokes 'Nature' as a female artisan, then, she forcefully reminds Leontes that the source of image-making is in sexual difference.<sup>76</sup> Advocate of Perdita as a 'copy' of her father, therefore, Paulina acts as the proud patron of 'Nature' and so plays directly into Leontes's misogynistic fear of representation.<sup>77</sup>

It is worth pausing at this point to consider the implications of Leontes's rage against *mimesis*. Although this desire to stand outside of mimetic representation is presented as Leontes's erroneous 'rebellion with himself', it is a desire that is not entirely without foundation in early modern literary thought (1.2.352). In his *Apology for Poetry*, Sidney suggests that poets may surpass 'Nature' by making 'forms such as never were in Nature', and that 'Nature never set forth the earth in so rich tapestry as divers poets have done' (p. 85, lines 20–5). Having therefore made steep claims for poetry in comparison with God-created 'Nature', Sidney legitimises his position with reference to the poet's post-lapsarian imperfection. Here I quote in detail Sidney's thoughts on the frustrated 'reach' of the mortal poet:

Neither let it be deemed too saucy a comparison to balance the highest point of man's wit with the efficacy of Nature; but rather give right honour to the heavenly Maker of that maker, who having made man to His own likeness, set him beyond and over all the works of that second nature: which in nothing he showeth so much as in Poetry, when with the force of a divine breath he bringeth things forth far surpassing her doings, with no small argument to the incredulous of that first accursed fall of Adam: since our erected wit maketh us know what perfection is, and yet our infected will keepeth us from reaching unto it. (p. 85, line 44, p. 86, lines 1–8)

By legitimising poetic practice while drawing attention to its subversive potential, Sidney suggests that through *mimesis* poetry paradoxically goes 'beyond Nature' by reproducing non-mimetic, creative representation.<sup>78</sup> Sidney expresses

deference to God in his allusion to 'that first accursed fall of Adam', but D. H. Craig advises that we should not take Sidney's deference 'too seriously', after all, the poet's declaration of the imperfection of mortal wit forms a stage of an argument designed to convince readers that poetry is the source of immortality (p. 116, lines 20–42, p. 117, lines 1–12).<sup>79</sup> Sidney, like Leontes, is frustrated by the imperfections of post-lapsarian language; literary production is an attempt at 'reaching' beyond these limitations while simultaneously remaining within 'accursed', fallen boundaries.

Is Shakespeare interested in testing these representational boundaries? Where Sidney legitimises 'reaching unto perfection' as a facet of poetic activity, in *Leontes*, Shakespeare associates such ambition with erroneous destruction. Accepting Felperin's deconstructive reading of the play, it is arguable that Shakespeare encourages audiences to celebrate the limitations of *mimesis*, embracing 'the fallen and irredeemable nature of language as a medium for defining human reality'.<sup>80</sup> Even Knapp's interpretation of the deconstructive force of the 'statue scene' as an impetus for ethical action depends upon Shakespeare's acceptance of the 'incomprehensible ... the condition of living in a world that we can never fully understand'.<sup>81</sup> Moreover, that Shakespeare encourages deference regarding *mimesis* as the language of fallen humanity is suggested by a well-known conversation between Polixenes and Perdita during the Bohemian 'sheep-shearing' scenes. Here, Perdita is living as the daughter of the shepherd who finds the princess at the end of Act 3, reluctantly abandoned as an infant by Antigonus at the stormy Bohemian coast, along with letters and a box of riches confirming her noble birth (3.3.46–121). Perdita is unaware of her true parentage but is famed in Bohemia for appearing 'more than can be thought to begin' from a shepherd's 'cottage' (4.2.43–4). Polixenes' son, Florizel, has fallen in love with Perdita and attends a sheep-shearing festival at which she is 'mistress of the feast' (4.3.40). Also in attendance at the feast in order to spy on Florizel are Polixenes and Camillo, a Sicilian courtier who defects to Bohemia in the wake of Leontes's tyranny. While there, Polixenes engages in conversation with Perdita who, like her father sixteen years previously, is suspicious of image-making.<sup>82</sup> She tells Polixenes that she will not 'get slips' of 'gillyvors', which she refers to as 'Nature's bastards', because she believes that their colourful 'piedness' is an artificial corruption of 'great creating Nature' (4.4.82–8). Polixenes responds with an explanation of the relationship between artifice and nature that locates the latter as a divine, originary source for artifice:

Yet Nature is made better by no mean  
 But Nature makes that mean. So over that art,  
 Which you say adds to Nature, is an art  
 That Nature makes. You see, sweet maid, we marry  
 A gentler scion to the wildest stock,  
 And make conceive a bark of baser kind

By bud of nobler race. This is an art  
 Which does mend Nature – change it rather – but  
 The art itself is Nature. (4.4.89–97)

Here, Polixenes asserts that artificial composition is at root natural. Metatheatrically, this world-view defends performance as natural, and also legitimises Polixenes' assumption of a disguise in order to spy on Florizel, managing his son's sexual activity and therefore the continuation of the Bohemian royal line. Artifice is here a function of the natural social order, occasionally producing unnatural-seeming images that appear to defy explanation; Polixenes, for example, observes that Perdita is 'too noble' for the shepherd's dwelling, that everything she 'does or seems / ... smacks of something greater than herself' (4.4.157–8). Of course, Polixenes is a hypocrite at this point, because he disapproves of the union between Florizel and Perdita, whom he believes to be 'a bark of baser kind'. Within the logic that the Bohemian king expounds here, however, that hypocrisy is itself a natural product, and is soon resolved by the subsequent natural-artificial events of the play by which Perdita is revealed to be the Sicilian princess and Florizel's social equal. Florizel's mingling with a figure who appeared to be his social inferior thus 'naturally' produces the continuation of a regal lineage. Jensen takes the exchange between Polixenes and Perdita as a transitional moment for the Sicilian princess, as Perdita subsequently chooses 'new flowers' and begins to speak in rich metaphorical language of 'symbolic grafting'.<sup>83</sup> Perdita begins to be satisfied with modes of image-making that involve working with the fracture of referentiality, and so paves the way for Leontes's similar acceptance of referential image-making, in his 'acknowledgement of hermeneutic discrepancy – the fabulous image (*statuam*) of a feigned absence'.<sup>84</sup> In this view, Perdita and Leontes learn to accept that referential fracture is so because of the divinity of creation; that if what they see does not fully comprehend as a whole, then that too is generated by divinity. This is the logic that informs critical understanding of the 'statue scene' as a moment of reconciliation with the 'incomprehensible image' figured in Hermione.<sup>85</sup>

And yet there is reason to suggest that Shakespeare is not satisfied with referential limitations and is preoccupied with the possibility of accessing a divine 'wholeness', both as a visible 'object of view' and as point of view. Since, in Calvinist thought, God's creative work could be seen in the earthly landscape and in people, mortal vision marks a distinction between earthly subject and God as creator.<sup>86</sup> Awareness of the limitations of mortal as contrasted with divine visual experience therefore also evokes earthly distance from originary, creative modes of signification. Notably, throughout the early scenes of *The Winter's Tale*, Leontes's limited and distorted viewpoint is contrasted with a divine, unpolluted and all-encompassing perspective. Exasperated at his monarch's irrational jealousy, a Sicilian Lord assures Leontes that Hermione 'is spot-

less / I'th' eyes of heaven and to you' (2.1.131–2). Hermione, similarly, suggests that 'innocence' will shame 'false accusation', 'if powers divine / Behold our human actions – as they do' (3.2.27–8). These allusions to divine omniscience draw attention to the fracture of Leontes's visual experience in contrast to the access to the 'whole' enjoyed by God. Such contrasts recall St Augustine's account of sensory experience in the 'flesh' as always piecemeal, since:

you are ignorant of the whole to which the parts belong. Yet they delight you. But if your physical perception were capable of comprehending the whole and had not, for your punishment, been justly restrained to a part of the universe, you would wish everything at present in being to pass away, so that the totality of things could provide you with greater pleasure ... There would be more delight in all the elements than in individual pieces if only one had the capacity to perceive all of them. But far superior to these things is he who made all things, and he is our God.<sup>87</sup>

Elsewhere, Augustine claims that transcendent contemplation of the certain knowledge of God's constancy enables him to glimpse God's "invisible nature understood through the things which are made" (Rom. 1:20). But I did not possess the strength to keep my vision fixed.<sup>88</sup> Augustine, whose works were used by English Protestant readers, thus considers God to be only fractionally perceptible through the sight of earthly creation.<sup>89</sup> Augustine's emphasis on the fragmented state of human insight into the world and thus God's invisibility locates incompleteness as a facet of visual experience and therefore the experience of image-making. The relevance of this model of spectating for an early modern English context is suggested by Brian Cummings's analysis of God's grace as the 'outrepassé' subject over which sixteenth-century writing 'ineluctably exhausts itself, searching for what is 'at once invisible trace and dangerous supplement, simultaneously grammatological and illegible'.<sup>90</sup>

Importantly, Shakespeare repeatedly emphasises that playgoers watching *The Winter's Tale* only have access to 'individual pieces' of the play-world, and not the whole picture which is implicitly present but unavailable. In the opening lines of the drama the Bohemian courtier Archidamus promises Camillo that were he to 'visit Bohemia' he would 'see, as I have said, great difference betwixt our Bohemia and your Sicilia' (1.1.1–4). Having invited Camillo's judgement, Archidamus suggests that this must be modified, joking that 'we will give you sleepy drinks, that your senses, unintelligent of our insufficiency, may, though they cannot praise us, as little accuse us' (1.1.13–16). It might be argued that unlike the drugged Camillo of 'Archidamus's barbiturate fantasy', the playhouse audience at least has access to an unpolluted view of the contrast between courtly Sicilia and pastoral Bohemia.<sup>91</sup> Yet Shakespeare draws attention to spectators' complicity in the mediated construction of these locations when he deploys the figure of Time as a Chorus to orchestrate the shift between Sicilia and Bohemia sixteen years later, asking audience members to 'imagine

me, / Gentle spectators, that I now may be / In fair Bohemia' (4.1.19–21). Shakespeare's audience are complicit in the construction of the artificial 'parts'; they cannot access the pre-mediated view of the 'whole' of the contrast between Sicilia and Bohemia that Archidamus would seek to control with 'sleepy drinks'.<sup>92</sup>

That an omniscient view is present yet unavailable in the play-world is also suggested by Leontes's recourse to the Apollonian oracle which, immediately prior to the announcement of the deaths of Mamillius and Hermione, and just after the banishment of Perdita, declares that Leontes's wife is '*chaste, Polixenes blameless*' and that '*the king shall live without an heir if that which is lost be not found*' (3.2.130–3).<sup>93</sup> Realising the full extent of his catastrophic error, Leontes revives the image of himself and Polixenes as one, but this time the figure is split and corroded, the Sicilian king observing that the innocence of Polixenes '*glisters / through my rust*' (3.2.167–8). Images of wholeness and fissure are also deployed following Leontes's penitence of sixteen years, as Hermione becomes a figure of a perfection surpassing the fracture offered by lived experience. Prior to the 'statue scene', Paulina advises Leontes of the impossibility of his remarriage, telling him:

If one by one you wedded all the world,  
Or from the all that are took something good  
To make a perfect woman, she you killed  
Would be unparalleled. (5.1.13–16)

Paulina's advice neatly reflects the possibility that Hermione may have been 'preserved' for the past sixteen years while anticipating her reunion with Leontes and Perdita at the end of the play. At the same time, Paulina's declaration of the impossibility of 'making' a perfect woman comparable to Hermione alludes to Shakespeare's Ovidian source in the myth of Pygmalion, in which a sculptor falls in love with the ivory image that he has sculpted, and, following successful prayers to Venus, discovers that his beloved statue turns from stone to flesh. Significantly, Pygmalion makes his ivory sculpture because he is 'revolted by the many faults which nature has implanted in the female sex, and long lived a bachelor existence, without any wife to share his home'.<sup>94</sup> Stimulated by 'a strange combination of frustration and desire, misogyny and idealization', Pygmalion, with the help of a divine agent, brings something into being which stands outside the faults of 'Nature'.<sup>95</sup> In *The Winter's Tale*, Paulina implies that a similar divinely sanctioned action would be necessary to produce Hermione, who is implicitly beyond 'perfect', the 'parts' available in the world being insufficient for her composition. When spectators in the play-world and the playhouse encounter Hermione's statue in the final scene, both groups have therefore already been encouraged to recognise the Sicilian queen as resembling a divine Other as described by Knapp and Gusain, as well as a gendered other.<sup>96</sup>

How can this vision of Hermione as beyond perfection, evocative of divine Otherness, be reconciled with the depiction of the image as a commissioned, material artefact?

### 'Touching overhard': Pygmalion, Paulina and prohibition

Valerie Traub understands the monumentalisation of Hermione as the physical encasement in stone of the sexual threat posed by the female body.<sup>97</sup> I have argued, however, that the supposed statue of *The Winter's Tale* is materially unfixed, an unknown quantity that seems to breath beneath a smudgeable, moist layer of what might be paint. Pre- and post-transformation, the image of Hermione presents a continuation in the performative life of the same piece of 'matter'. Materially, therefore, Hermione can be described as matter that has no fixed form and so contains no limit or inward fracture, and is therefore unknowably 'unified' in contrast to the imagined woman assembled from 'parts' that Paulina has encouraged Leontes, and the playhouse audience expectant of a reunion, to reject. As Lynn Enterline suggests, 'the statue is *not* mimetic; its beauty supersedes that of any living woman', and so, in the image of Hermione, 'Shakespeare aspires to a mode of representation that can move beyond the impasse'.<sup>98</sup> When Paulina facilitates the unknowability of Hermione by preventing Leontes's and Perdita's contact with the statue, then, she acts as a matriarchal guardian for inaccessible, divine wholeness.

How exactly does Paulina facilitate that unknowability? It is important to note that this process is not merely the result of the inset spectators not touching the alleged sculpture prior to its 'transformation'. Touch is not a stable source of knowing in *The Winter's Tale* or in the Pygmalion myth.<sup>99</sup> In the former, Leontes, under the instructions of Paulina, offers his 'hand' to the apparently newly transformed Hermione, exclaiming 'she's warm!' (5.3.107–9). Despite this physical contact, Leontes and the playhouse audience do not know for certain what Hermione's warmth means, merely that 'it appears she lives' (5.3.117). Similarly, in Arthur Golding's English translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, first published in 1567, Pygmalion uses touch in an attempt to test the status of the ivory image.<sup>100</sup> The sculptor:

believed his fingers made a dint  
Upon her flesh, and fearèd lest some black or bruised print  
Should come by touching overhard.<sup>101</sup>

Living skin is here considered identifiable by the markings that it may receive, such as the bruise that will appear if skin is touched 'overhard'. Yet Pygmalion's physical contact with the image leads him into further doubt as to its status, just as playgoers remain ignorant about the status of Hermione's image in spite of Leontes's contact with her 'warmth'. Golding affirms the possibility



that Pygmalion's image is not ivory by describing the sculptor's beliefs about the material condition of the statue as these apply to 'her flesh', rather than to a hard, ivory surface. Like Hermione's image, the statue in this version of the Pygmalion myth is not a firm, discrete object subsequent to its transformation into 'flesh'.

Although the statue of Hermione and Pygmalion's image can both be understood as unfixed matter, the role of touch in these evocations of a lack of fixity is distinctly different. As noted above, during the 'statue scene', and under Paulina's instruction, the Sicilian king and his daughter adopt a physically passive mode of spectatorship; Perdita, for example, states that she would be happy to 'stand by, a looker-on' to the image for 'twenty years' (5.3.83–4). Similarly, when Paulina demands that 'all stand still' as she orchestrates the transformation of the statue, Leontes uses his authority to ensure the passivity of all spectators present, assuring her that 'no foot shall stir' (5.3.95–7). The ambiguous matter of Hermione's sculpture transforms untouched, but Pygmalion's image is worked into being by the sculptor following the deific intervention of Venus:

Pygmalion did repair  
 Unto the image of his wench and, leaning on the bed,  
 Did kiss her. In her body straight a warmth seemed to spread.  
 He put his mouth again to hers and on her breast did lay  
 His hand. The ivory waxèd soft and, putting quite away  
 All hardness, yielded underneath his fingers, as we see  
 A piece of wax made soft against the sun or drawn to be  
 In divers shapes by chafing it between one's hands and so  
 To serve to uses. He, amazed, stood wavering to and fro  
 'Tween joy and fear to be beguiled. Again he burnt in love,  
 Again with feeling he began his wishèd hope to prove.  
 He felt it very flesh indeed. By laying on his thumb  
 He felt her pulses beating. (10, lines 304–16)

The ivory image pre-transformation resembles the potent matter of wax, 'drawn ... To serve to uses', and ready to be warmly loosened and reworked. Touch is once again a test of the status of the image as this time the press of Pygmalion's thumb yields the pulse that he wants to feel. This pulse does not, however, fully signify the presence of a living, conscious being; that is achieved only by Pygmalion's symbolic, practical action. Delighted that the image has been granted warmth and a beating pulse, Pygmalion 'at length ... laid / His mouth to hers who was as then become perfect maid' (10, lines 317–18). It is only at this point that sense is attributed to the statue, as 'she felt the kiss and blushed thereat' (10, line 319). The symbolic action of the kiss seals the transformation that is set in motion by divine action, imbuing the image with sensory experience and conscious responses. The attainment of supernatural 'perfection' is

therefore discursive and divinely ordained; Pygmalion uses touch to participate in the transformation, but certainty that this has taken place is out of his hands.

It is at this point that a significant difference between the Ovidian Pygmalion myth and the 'statue scene' emerges. In the former, the symbolic 'making' of the perfect woman is accompanied by material, tactile interaction with the image both pre- and post-transformation. In contrast, in *The Winter's Tale*, the symbolic kissing of Hermione is expressly forbidden by Paulina. Pygmalion's obsessive touching of his statue is in keeping with the association between this Ovidian figure and idolatrous sexual transgression. This association was certainly known to Shakespeare, since the bawd Pompey refers to prostitutes as 'Pygmalion's images newly made woman' in *Measure for Measure*.<sup>102</sup> Moreover, the biblical link between adultery and idolatry has been identified as a source of influence on the early scenes of *The Winter's Tale*.<sup>103</sup> It is appropriate, then, that the reunion of Leontes and the wife that he falsely accuses of adultery is couched in a modest version of the Pygmalion myth in which ecstatic physical contact is carefully managed. Kissing played an important role in pre-Reformation ritual, and so Paulina's strict monitoring of attempts to kiss the statue helps to contain the scene's otherwise intense engagement with Catholic iconography.<sup>104</sup> There is something else at work here, however; prohibiting symbolic contact with Hermione's image, Paulina encourages spectators to evade complicity as spectators in referential image-making.

In a pertinent discussion of Ovid's poem, Enterline has suggested that the transformation of Pygmalion's image reveals that "'figures" and "images" are less a representation of the world than a kind of force exercised upon it'.<sup>105</sup> In this configuration, the subject engages with the world by 'doing something about it' rather than 'knowing it', since touch 'exceeds the claims of will or intention'.<sup>106</sup> Enterline notes that 'doing something' opens the risk of 'being done to'; this is a concern particularly pertinent for early modern contexts, given the reciprocal tactility attributed to vision during the period.<sup>107</sup> We might note here that as Leontes views the ambiguous matter of Hermione's image, he is said to be reworked by the sight, Paulina regretting that 'my poor image' has left the king emotionally 'wrought' (5.3.57–8). Looking therefore always implies 'doing something', to borrow Enterline's phrase, as an unpredictable force acts upon the viewer who is thus a reactive participant in a material interaction with the viewed. Again, we might understand Leontes's physical contact with Hermione following her alleged transformation as his being worked upon, rather than his engaging with the image. He offers his hand to his wife only when instructed to do so by Paulina, who chides him for forcing Hermione to be the 'suitor' (5.3.109). After this initial contact, it is said that Hermione 'hangs about' Leontes's 'neck' (5.3.112). Leontes is not an agent of touch here; he is coerced into touching and is then touched in response.

Paulina, then, prevents Leontes and Perdita from 'doing something' with

the supposed statue that they view. In so doing, Paulina prohibits modes of materially interactive spectatorship that were in widespread use during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. For example, prints were functional objects rather than 'regarded as sacrosanct artworks' in the early modern period, and 'many exhibit obvious marks of physical intervention by their users'.<sup>108</sup> Many prints function on the basis of defacement, with readers folding and peeling back layers to reveal hidden meanings. Anatomical prints presented the figure of the human body with flaps which the viewer could lift up or displace so as to reveal the anatomical 'insides' of the figure, as in three broadsheets by Lucas Kilian, together titled *Mirrors of the Microcosm (catoptri Microcosmi)* (1613).<sup>109</sup> Defacement is inbuilt into these educational prints, since the broadsheets were probably 'purchased preassembled from their publisher', allowing users to 'dissect' the bodies depicted, and cover up anatomy and organs as preferred.<sup>110</sup> Most pertinently for *The Winter's Tale*, defacement is also encouraged as a mean through which to interrogate the reliability of female appearances. A highly misogynistic engraving by Conrad Goltzius, entitled *Pride* (figures 16–17), presents a female courtier as beautiful in appearance, but possessed of a corrupt interior.

It is through the physical engagement of the viewer in lifting up a flap in the shape of the woman's skirt that the interior view is revealed. In removing the outer layer of the image, and actually altering its appearance, the viewer receives moral instruction, and a moral understanding of the evils of the vanity presented by the engraving as it appears with the skirt in place. Defacement is similarly recommended as a way of 'testing' women's appearances in early modern English drama. In the anonymous play *Two Wise Men and All the Rest Fools*, for example, Levitia jokes with the courtier Insatiato that in order to tell whether or not a woman wears cosmetics, he should 'take a pin, and scratch her cheek pretie deepe to the bone, and if it bleed not, assure your selfe she is painted'.<sup>111</sup> Levitia depicts all women as distinguishable from painted objects only through violent defacement. Recalling Pygmalion's tactile search for 'proof' that his statue could bruise, image-breaking here provides a model for the violent assessment of female artifice.

These iconoclastic modes of 'doing something' with images produce new images by revealing previously hidden appearances. Defacement therefore contributes to the referential fracture of mimetic representation, splitting an image by scraping away one surface to expose another. The examples noted above suggest that defacement is considered a valid, meaningful practice in both early modern drama and visual culture. More than this, 'doing something' with that which you view is an advisable response given that the act of looking will entail being 'done to'. Paulina reflects on this reciprocal interaction between the viewer and the viewed when she advises Leontes that if he kisses the statue he'll 'mar' the painted surface of the image and 'stain' his 'own' lips (5.3.82).

16 Conrad Goltzius, *Pride* (1600), view with flap down

And yet Paulina gives this advice in order to prevent Leontes from touching the supposed statue, and therefore to remove the visible part of his complicity in the material exchange of spectatorship. As a result, the image of Hermione is not split or defaced; no 'new' image is produced. In the Ovidian Pygmalion



17 Conrad Goltzius, *Pride* (1600), view with flap raised

myth, the kiss symbolically makes the image into the 'perfect' woman. In *The Winter's Tale*, the prohibition on kissing and touching symbolically removes Leontes, and implicitly playgoers, from visible, tangible participation in referentiality. Ensuring that Leontes and Perdita do not touch the 'unknowable' image

allows Shakespeare to 'reach unto perfection', to present spectacle that exists on the boundaries of the fracture of *mimesis*, that can never be broken because its contours as an object are not known. Indeed, as noted above, Hermione is never a discrete, fixed object; Paulina's cautioning of Leontes makes clear that the statue is reworkable matter that changes and transforms untouched before spectators' eyes. Rather than engaging Leontes and playgoers in a celebratory acceptance of referentiality, the 'statue scene' therefore offers Leontes a close approximation to the realisation of his fantasy of a divine, non-referential 'wholeness'.

Paulina's working relationship with Giulio Romano therefore produces a protean image that recalls the amorphous 'unity' of Adam and Eve as depicted by Trevilian, the first woman still half-submerged in the first man's side. As much as the protean nature of this image is dependent on not being touched by spectators, it has been necessary to discuss the material construction of the statue in order to realise its identification with divine creativity. Of course, it is not possible for Shakespeare to fully stand outside discursive boundaries, and any 'wholeness' associated with Hermione's image is constructed in relation to notions of material fracture. She becomes a divine 'Other' because she is also the material other that may be defaced. In some ways, my argument has merely reproduced critical preoccupation with the unknowability of Hermione. The argument that Shakespeare may be interested in the 'making' of non-referentiality, however, points us in an important direction. As I discuss in the next chapter, Shakespeare's attempts to 'reach unto perfection' in *The Winter's Tale* reflect an interest in what it means to create, 'make' or 'unmake' a representation that is of greater significance for early modern dramatists than has previously been realised. As I noted at the beginning of this chapter, the 'statue scene' is often used as the focal point at which to draw conclusions regarding the aesthetic concerns of Shakespearean drama. In contrast, this chapter has discussed *The Winter's Tale* and its infamously beguiling statue in order to open up a detailed interrogation of early modern aesthetic meaning.

### Notes

- 1 See O'Connell, *The Idolatrous Eye*, p. 141; Meek, *Narrating the Visual*, p. 150.
- 2 Spectators are, for example, forewarned that Portia intends to appear before her husband disguised as a man before the scene in which she appears as a lawyer in order to resolve the dispute between Shylock and Antonio, in William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*, ed. John Russell Brown, The Arden Shakespeare, second series (London: Methuen, 1955), 3.4.60–78.
- 3 Meek, *Narrating the Visual*, p. 178.
- 4 On this narrative deferral, see Meek, *Narrating the Visual*, pp. 172–80.
- 5 Meek, *Narrating the Visual*, p. 185.
- 6 In a concluding chapter on *The Winter's Tale*, Knapp writes that 'the theatrical

- spectacle' of the final scene of the play 'is paradigmatic of a Shakespearean aesthetic in which characters and the audience alike are confronted with an impossibility that somehow gestures towards a deeper truth', *Image Ethics*, p. 161. *The Winter's Tale* is also discussed in the final chapters of: O'Connell, *The Idolatrous Eye*; William E. Engel, *Death and Drama in Renaissance England: Shades of Memory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Tassi, *The Scandal of Images*; Phebe Jensen, *Religion and Revelry in Shakespeare's Festive World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Knapp, *Image Ethics*. Including a final chapter on *The Winter's Tale* prior to his concluding 'Coda', Meek discusses the 'statue scene' in relation to its critical reception in *Narrating the Visual*, pp. 172–80.
- 7 O'Connell, *The Idolatrous Eye*, p. 141.
  - 8 See O'Connell, *The Idolatrous Eye*, p. 141; Julia Reinhard Lupton, *Afterlives of the Saints: Hagiography, Typology and Renaissance Literature* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), pp. 213–17.
  - 9 See Lupton, *Afterlives of the Saints*, p. 215.
  - 10 O'Connor, 'Imagine Me, Gentle Spectators', p. 380.
  - 11 O'Connor, 'Imagine Me, Gentle Spectators', p. 375.
  - 12 O'Connor, 'Imagine Me, Gentle Spectators', pp. 380–3.
  - 13 O'Connor, 'Imagine Me, Gentle Spectators', pp. 380–3.
  - 14 Richard Wilson, *Secret Shakespeare: Studies in Theatre, Religion and Resistance* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), p. 264.
  - 15 Jensen, *Religion and Revelry*, p. 228.
  - 16 T. G. Bishop, *Shakespeare and the Theatre of Wonder* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 169.
  - 17 Dawson and Yachnin, *The Culture of Playgoing*, p. 207.
  - 18 See Dawson and Yachnin, *The Culture of Playgoing*, pp. 4–5.
  - 19 Howard Felperin, "'Tongue-tied our queen?': The Deconstruction of Presence in *The Winter's Tale*", in Patricia Parker and Geoffrey Hartman (eds), *Shakespeare and the Question of Theory* (London and New York: Methuen, 1985), pp. 3–18, p. 16.
  - 20 John J. Joughin, 'Shakespeare, Modernity and the Aesthetic: Art, Truth and Judgement in *The Winter's Tale*', in Hugh Grady (ed.), *Shakespeare and Modernity: Early Modern to Millennium*, Accents on Shakespeare (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 61–84, p. 72. The emphasis is in the text.
  - 21 Knapp, *Image Ethics*, pp. 180–2.
  - 22 Felperin, "'Tongue-tied our queen?', p. 16.
  - 23 Knapp, *Image Ethics*, pp. 162–5.
  - 24 Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 1969), p. 43, quoted in Knapp, *Image Ethics*, pp. 164–5.
  - 25 Renuka Gusain, "'With what's unreal thou coactive art": The Problem and Possibilities of Beauty in *The Winter's Tale*', *Shakespeare* (2012), 1–24, 6–8.
  - 26 Gusain, 'With what's unreal', 4, 9, 16–17.
  - 27 Gusain, 'With what's unreal', 9.
  - 28 Gusain, 'With what's unreal', 8–9, 17.
  - 29 Johnson, *Mother Tongues*, pp. 25, 52, 61–4.

- 30 Johnson, *Mother Tongues*, pp. 17–25, 50–1, 65–9, 85–93.
- 31 See also Peter B. Erickson, 'Patriarchal Structures in *The Winter's Tale*', *PMLA*, 97:5 (1982), 819–29, Valerie Traub, *Desire and Anxiety: Circulations of Sexuality in Shakespearean Drama* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), pp. 44–9, and Janet Adelman, *Suffocating Mothers: Fantasies of Maternal Origin in Shakespeare's Plays* (New York and London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 220–38.
- 32 Adelman, *Suffocating Mothers*, p. 235.
- 33 See Jensen, *Religion and Revelry*, pp. 212–14.
- 34 Jensen, *Religion and Revelry*, p. 213.
- 35 See Hamling, *Decorating the 'Godly' Household*, pp. 143, 185–8. See also Belsey, *Shakespeare and the Loss of Eden*, pp. 36–46.
- 36 See Hamling, *Decorating the 'Godly' Household*, pp. 186–8.
- 37 See Johnson, *Mother Tongues*, pp. 50–1.
- 38 Leonard Barkan, "'Living Sculptures": Ovid, Michelangelo and *The Winter's Tale*', *English Literary History*, 48:4 (1981), 639–67, 640.
- 39 Stanley Cavell, *Disowning Knowledge: In Seven Plays of Shakespeare*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (1987; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 219.
- 40 O'Connor, 'Imagine Me, Gentle Spectators', pp. 375–6.
- 41 Sokol, *Art and Illusion*, p. 152.
- 42 Gusain, 'With what's unreal', 16.
- 43 Lowell Gallagher, "'This seal'd up Oracle": Ambivalent Nostalgia in *The Winter's Tale*', *Exemplaria*, 7:2 (1995), 465–98, 484–5.
- 44 Gallagher, 'This seal'd up Oracle', 485.
- 45 On Romano's works, see Manfredo Tafuri, *Giulio Romano*, trans. Fabio Barry (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).
- 46 See Barkan, 'Living Sculptures', 647–50; Ziegler, 'Parents, Daughters and "That rare Italian, master"'; Sokol, *Art and Illusion*, pp. 85–115; Stanford S. Apseoff, 'Shakespeare's Giulio Romano: *The Winter's Tale*', *Shakespeare Newsletter*, 52 (2002), 87.
- 47 Lupton suggests that Romano is 'a strangely fitting candidate for his role as maker of a fictive statue', since in his *Lives*, Vasari describes Romano's designs for the Villa Madama in Rome, which demonstrate this visual artist's skills in constructing 'a space that is both a theatre and a gallery, a semicircular building of niches that hold Roman statuary', *Afterlives of the Saints*, pp. 212–13. See also Giorgio Vasari, *The Lives of the Artists*, trans. Julia Conaway Bondanella and Peter Bondanella (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 360–1.
- 48 Julia Reinhard Lupton, *Thinking with Shakespeare: Essays on Politics and Life* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), p. 178.
- 49 Lupton, *Thinking with Shakespeare*, p. 184.
- 50 Lupton, *Thinking with Shakespeare*, p. 184.
- 51 Belsey, *Shakespeare and the Loss of Eden*, p. 112.
- 52 Belsey, *Shakespeare and the Loss of Eden*, p. 114; Belsey refers to Bruce R. Smith, 'Sermons in Stones: Shakespeare and Renaissance Sculpture', *Shakespeare Studies*, 17 (1985), 1–23, 20. O'Connor suggests that Hermione's statue is 'legible both as the devotional image of a saint and as the monumental portrait of a deceased lady',



- but does not discuss the context of monumental imagery in detail in 'Imagine Me, Gentle Spectators', p. 375.
- 53 Cynthia Lawrence, 'Introduction', in Cynthia Lawrence (ed.), *Women and Art in Early Modern Europe: Patrons, Collectors and Connoisseurs* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), p. 13. See also Tittler, *Portraits, Painters, and Publics*, pp. 54–5; Tittler refers to 'a general, if inflated summary' on this subject in Susan E. James, *The Feminine Dynamic in English Art, 1485–1603: Women as Consumers, Patrons and Painters* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), pp. 32–45.
- 54 I regret that in focusing on Clifford I contribute to critical overemphasis on elite examples of female patronage of the visual arts in early modern England. More research is needed on early modern English women patrons below the level of the elite; see Tittler, *Portraits, Painters, and Publics*, pp. 54–5.
- 55 See Alice T. Friedman, 'Wife in the English Country House: Gender and the Meaning of Style in Early Modern England', in Cynthia Lawrence (ed.), *Women and Art in Early Modern Europe: Patrons, Collectors and Connoisseurs* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), pp. 111–25, pp. 121–5.
- 56 Richard T. Spence, 'Clifford, Anne, Countess of Pembroke, Dorset, and Montgomery (1590–1676)'. *Oxford DNB*. [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/5641](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/5641). Accessed 25 September 2012.
- 57 Anne M. Myers, 'Construction Sites: The Architecture of Anne Clifford's Diaries', *English Literary History*, 73:3 (2006), 581–600, 581.
- 58 Myers, 'Construction Sites', 581–2.
- 59 Spence, 'Clifford, Anne'.
- 60 Spence, 'Clifford, Anne'.
- 61 Spence, 'Clifford, Anne'.
- 62 Spence suggests that the painting could also be the work of the English painter Peter Lely in 'Clifford, Anne'.
- 63 Edith Snook, *Women, Reading and the Cultural Politics of Early Modern England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), p. 1; see also Graham Parry, 'The Great Picture of Lady Anne Clifford', in David Howarth (ed.), *Art and Patronage in the Caroline Courts: Essays in Honour of Sir Oliver Miller* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 204.
- 64 Snook, *Women, Reading and the Cultural Politics of Early Modern England*, p. 1.
- 65 Inscription on *The Great Picture* (1646), Abbot Hall Art Gallery, Kendal.
- 66 Friedman, 'Wife in the English Country House', p. 125.
- 67 Friedman, 'Wife in the English Country House', p. 125.
- 68 Wilson, *Secret Shakespeare*, p. 248.
- 69 Wilson, *Secret Shakespeare*, p. 263; Wilson here rejects Lupton's assertion that 'Hermione was alive all along' in *Afterlives of the Saints*, p. 217.
- 70 See Jensen, *Religion and Revelry*, pp. 212–29, and Knapp, *Image Ethics*, pp. 161–82. Gusain speaks of the 'violence' of Leontes's response to beauty as presented in Hermione, 'With what's unreal', 2–4. See also Gallagher, who argues that the move from Leontes's rejection of Hermione to the presentation of the supposed statue 'rewrites iconoclasm, figuring it not as a destructive rejection of the iconic/idolatrous sign but as a creative appropriation, a reoriented reading of the narrativity

- of the sign', 'This seal'd up Oracle', 477, and 466. Notably, Gallagher implies the 'destructive' nature of iconoclasm by speaking of its 'creative appropriation', and therefore does not refer to iconoclasm as an act with a 'creative dimension', as described in Boldrick and Clay, 'Introduction', p. 9.
- 71 See Jensen, *Religion and Revelry*, p. 216.
- 72 See Jensen, *Religion and Revelry*, pp. 226–7; Knapp compares Leontes's responses to images in Acts 1 and 5 of the play in *Image Ethics*, pp. 161–82.
- 73 See Shakespeare, *The Winter's Tale*, ed. Pitcher, 2.3.103–5, n. 103–5, n. 105–6.
- 74 See Barbara Newman, *God and the Goddesses: Vision, Poetry, and Belief in the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), pp. 58–61. See also Peter Dronke, 'Bernard Silvestris, Natura, and Personification', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 43 (1980), 16–31.
- 75 See Leah Scragg (ed.), 'Introduction', in John Lyly, *The Woman in the Moon*, ed. Leah Scragg, *The Revels Plays* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), pp. 1–47, pp. 1–9. All subsequent references to *The Woman in the Moon* are to this edition.
- 76 On Paulina as a midwife, see also Caroline Bicks, *Midwiving Subjects in Shakespeare's England: Women and Gender in the Early Modern World* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), p. 141.
- 77 See Adelman's discussion of this scene in *Suffocating Mothers*, p. 227.
- 78 R. W. Maslen explains in his introduction to Sidney's *Apology* that this work is 'partly dedicated' to discussing poetry as the discipline that most successfully 'dispenses' the 'force' that may be necessary to 'bridge the distance' between 'the immense potential of humanity and the immense distance that lies between our current state and the fulfilment of this potential', 'Introduction', *Apology for Poetry*, pp. 1–78, p. 43.
- 79 D. H. Craig, 'A Hybrid Growth: Sidney's Theory of Poetry in *An Apology for Poetry*', in Arthur F. Kinney (ed.), *Sidney in Retrospect: Selections from English Literary Renaissance* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), pp. 62–80, pp. 71–2.
- 80 Felperin, 'Tongue-tied our queen?', p. 16.
- 81 Knapp, *Image Ethics*, p. 181.
- 82 See Jensen, *Religion and Revelry*, pp. 218–22.
- 83 Jensen, *Religion and Revelry*, pp. 222–3.
- 84 Gallagher, 'This seal'd up Oracle', 466.
- 85 Knapp, *Image Ethics*, p. 181.
- 86 See Clark, *Vanities of the Eye*, p. 11.
- 87 St Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. Henry Chadwick, Oxford World Classics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 63. Augustine's account of perceiving God is recalled in Rudolf Arnheim's writing on 'the paradox of seeing a thing as complete, but incompletely', in his *Visual Thinking* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), p. 105; Arnheim is quoted in Alan Ackerman's meditation on this subject in relation to Shakespeare in his *Seeing Things: From Shakespeare to Pixar* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), p. 8.
- 88 Augustine, *Confessions*, p. 127. Chadwick (trans.) explains in a prefatory note that Augustine uses the Old Latin Bible.

- 89 See Ian Green, *Print and Protestantism in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 262.
- 90 Brian Cummings, *The Literary Culture of the Reformation: Grammar and Grace* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 48–9.
- 91 Gallagher, 'This seal'd up Oracle', 475.
- 92 Gallagher writes that Archidamus's 'fantasy spells out the self-defeating logic of the double, which can sustain its idyllic proposition of unmediated reduplication only by invoking the oblivion of a drug-induced sleep', 'This seal'd up Oracle', 475.
- 93 Emphasis is in the text.
- 94 Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. Mary M. Innes (London: Penguin, 1955), X, p. 231.
- 95 Kenneth Gross, *The Dream of the Moving Statue* (1992; University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006), p. 100.
- 96 See Knapp, *Image Ethics*, p. 165.
- 97 See Traub, *Desire and Anxiety*, p. 45; Katherine Eggert considers that the 'statue scene' marks the 'de-eroticizing of Hermione's body' in a way that recalls 'Elizabethan portrayals of queenship', *Showing Like a Queen: Female Authority and Literary Experiment in Spenser, Shakespeare, and Milton* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), p. 165.
- 98 Lynn Enterline, *The Rhetoric of the Body from Ovid to Shakespeare* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 206.
- 99 On touch as an unreliable source of knowledge, see Enterline, 'Afterword: Touching Rhetoric', p. 248.
- 100 Although Golding's was the first English translation of Ovid's poem, it should be noted that the *Metamorphoses* was known to Shakespeare's contemporaries through 'diverse cultural locations' having 'entered English vernacular culture and texts with a powerful force not necessarily best located in relation to an "original"', Susan Wiseman, "'Popular Culture": A Category for Analysis?', in Andrew Hadfield and Matthew Dimmock (eds), *Literature and Popular Culture in Early Modern England* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), pp. 15–28, p. 17; see also Raphael Lyne, *Ovid's Changing Worlds: English Metamorphoses 1567–1632* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), and Liz Oakley-Brown, *Ovid and the Cultural Politics of Translation in Early Modern England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006).
- 101 Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. Arthur Golding, ed. Madeline Forey (London: Penguin, 2002), Book 10, lines 277–9. All subsequent references are to this edition.
- 102 William Shakespeare, *Measure for Measure*, ed. J. W. Lever, The Arden Shakespeare, second series (London: Methuen, 1965), 3.2.44–7.
- 103 See Lupton, *Afterlives of the Saints*, pp. 185–9, and Jensen, *Religion and Revelry*, pp. 215–16.
- 104 See Milner, *The Senses*, p. 151; Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, p. 125; Craig Koslofsky, 'The Kiss of Peace in the German Reformation', in K. Harvey (ed.), *The Kiss in History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), pp. 18–35.
- 105 Enterline, 'Afterword: Touching Rhetoric', p. 248. The emphases are Enterline's.
- 106 Enterline, 'Afterword: Touching Rhetoric', p. 248.
- 107 Enterline, 'Afterword: Touching Rhetoric', p. 248.

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- 108 Susan Karr Schmidt, *Altered and Adorned: Using Renaissance Prints in Daily Life* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2011), p. 9.
- 109 Schmidt, *Altered and Adorned*, pp. 82–5.
- 110 Schmidt, *Altered and Adorned*, p. 82.
- 111 Anon, *Two Wise Men and All the Rest Fooles: Or a Comicall Morall censuring the follies of this age, as it hath been diverse times acted* (London, 1619), p. 90.

## ‘But begun for others to end’: the ends of incompletion

To make something, it might be assumed, is to aim to produce a finished product. This assumption dominates many critical readings of spectator experiences in the early modern period. Stephen Greenblatt’s seminal analysis of Shakespeare’s *Henry V*, for example, turns in part on the complicity of the audience in the production of the image of the king:

The audience’s tension, then, enhances its attention; prodded by constant reminders of a gap between real and ideal, the spectators are induced to make up the difference, to invest in the illusion of magnificence, to be dazzled by their own imaginary identification with the conqueror.<sup>1</sup>

That spectators are ‘induced to make up the difference’ in what they see onstage is central to my understanding of viewers of plays and visual representations as interactive figures. But what would ‘making up the difference’ mean for those spectators? The place of the ‘finished product’ in the early modern imagination is called into question by my suggestion that images in this period are envisaged as matter ‘under construction’ at the hands of spectators. To dislodge early modern concepts of finish and completion is to suggest that the constant reproduction of incompletion may be a condition of cultural production in this period. This much is often suggested in early modern studies. Writing on *The Winter’s Tale*, for example, Knapp concludes that ‘the openness attributed to the Shakespearean text may well be a defining feature of the aesthetic object’.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, in her work on English visual culture in this period, Christy Anderson suggests that elite English viewers delighted in a varied visual regime at odds with the rigid regulation imposed on the eye by modes of representation such as linear perspective.<sup>3</sup> As Sir Henry Wotton writes in *The Elements of Architecture* (1624), the ‘Eye’ is a ‘raunging, Imperious ... *usurping Sence*’ which ‘can indure no narrow *circumscription*: but must be fedde, both with extent and varietie’.<sup>4</sup> The ‘openness’ of *The Winter’s Tale*, and the status of *Henry V* as a play under construction at the hands of spectators could therefore be understood as reflective of early modern English enthusiasm for aesthetic irregularity in addition to an incompleteness understood as inherent in aesthetic composition.

Accepting this position, however, the question remains as to what exactly it is that spectators aim to 'make' when they are confronted by supposedly unfinished spectacle. This question becomes even more urgent if we accept incompleteness as a functional part of cultural production in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England. Finally, we should be forced to address this question because it is a subject with which early modern English writers are themselves preoccupied. For example, John Lyly begins his second prose work, *Euphues and His England* (first published 1580), with a dedicatory letter to Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, in which he self-deprecatingly compares the making of *Euphues* to the production of an incomplete image:

For he that vieweth *Euphues* will say that he is drawn but to the waist, that he peepeth as it were behind some screen, that his feet are yet in the water; which maketh me present your Lordship with the mangled body of Hector as it appeared to Andromache, and with half a face as the painter did him that had but one eye, for I am compelled to draw a hose on before I can finish the leg, and instead of a foot to set down a shoe. (p. 159)<sup>5</sup>

Lyly suggests that *Euphues and His England* is a botched, rushed and consequently insubstantial job, equivalent to a half-finished drawing, or a picture which shows only a part of its subject in order to cover up faults, errors and a lack of content. The prefatory context invites us to read these allusions to unfinished images of semi-concealed subjects as examples of the sort of polite deference that also informs the appeals to the audience in the Prologue of *Henry V*, and Trevilian's deference to 'better stored' readers in his *Great Book*. Yet immediately prior to this display of the text's faults, Lyly refers to examples of classical painters including Apelles, Nichomachus and Timomachus, who 'broke off' the making of images 'scarce half-coloured' due to 'fear' and being 'threatened' (p. 159). Lyly claims that his depiction of *Euphues* follows the pattern of these interrupted acts of making, that he is 'enforced with the old painters' to 'colour' his picture 'but to the middle' (p. 159). Leah Scragg notes that there is no precedent for Lyly's claims that the 'old painters' were prevented by fear from completing their works.<sup>6</sup> It therefore seems that Lyly associates his prose work with representations which are left incomplete due to pressures from an unidentified source of authority.

The theme of 'enforced' incompletion is repeated later in the prose work. In 1563, the Elizabethan government drafted a proclamation suggesting measures for the regulation of the production of portraits of the queen. The plan was for one image of Elizabeth I to be made by 'some special commission painter', as a stock 'example' to be 'followed' in all other depictions of the queen.<sup>7</sup> *Euphues* alludes to these moves to control the pictorial representation of the monarch when he introduces his own attempt to verbally picture Elizabeth:

though it be not requisite that any should paint their Prince in England that cannot sufficiently perfect her ... I will set down this Elizabeth as near as I can; and it may be that as the Venus of Apelles not finished, the Tyndarides of Nicomachus not ended, the Medea of Timomachus not perfected, the table of Parrhasius not coloured brought greater desire to them to consummate them and to others to see them, so the Elizabeth of Euphues, being but shadowed for others to varnish, but begun for others to end, but drawn with a black coal for others to blaze with a bright colour, may work either a desire in Euphues hereafter if he live to end it, or a mind in those that are better able to amend it, or in all (if none can work it) a will to wish it. (p. 333)

The relationship between the portrayal of Elizabeth and the reader/viewer described here parallels the interactive relationship between audience and performance described by Greenblatt, as Euphues's image of Elizabeth is 'begun for others to end', stimulating the audience to 'make up the difference' in desiring to see the 'end' of the work. At the same time, Euphues's announcement of the production of a work which may or may not be finished cancels any certainty of arrival at a moment of completion, a concept idealised here as a state for which both image-maker and spectators may 'wish', but perhaps not witness. The suggestion that Euphues's endpoint in the production of the unfinished portrait may be followed by future endings in the course of the depiction of the queen evokes a Derridean understanding of endings as a part of an unending network of signification.

It might seem sufficient, at this point, to accept that the constant deferral of completion implicit in the description of Euphues's image of Elizabeth constituted a 'finished' state in early modern thought. This view is invited by the focus on fragmentation which has long dominated early modern research in a range of areas, particularly in studies of the body and the materiality of early modern texts.<sup>8</sup> Critical emphasis on fracture has been especially encouraged by post-structuralist theory, and my discussion in the previous chapter of the referential fracture implicit in *mimesis* might be taken as an example of the critical influence of a postmodern aesthetics of 'disunity'.<sup>9</sup> The discursive fracture noted by post-structuralists complements the view of early modern literary and playing culture as piecemeal that is articulated most usefully in Tiffany Stern's work on the patchiness of early modern rehearsal and performance practices and texts.<sup>10</sup> In emphasising playwrights' lack of a sense of a play as a 'whole', Stern's contributions offer a rare insight into the implications of fragmentation for our understanding of cultural production.<sup>11</sup> Although critical emphasis on dispersal and fracture calls concepts of wholeness into question, the place of such concepts in critical discourse on sixteenth- and seventeenth-century literature remains curiously unaddressed. Cynthia Marshall, for example, implies the pre-existence of a concept of psychic wholeness in the suggestion that 'a Renaissance literature of self-shattering' offers readers and spectators 'an experience of psychic fracture'.<sup>12</sup>

Such an analysis maintains an attachment to concepts of unity and finish, even as these are destabilised by engagement with discourses of fragmentation. In an effort to detach from unexplored attachments to aesthetic concepts that held a questionable place in early modern culture, this chapter aims to historicise late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century concepts of completion and incompleteness. I am especially interested in further opening up early modern concepts of divine, non-referential perfection as this relates to material, earthly incompleteness. To begin this exploration, I will attempt to sketch an outline of the ambiguous place of these concepts in the late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century imagination.

### A 'compleat discourse'?

In the early part of the seventeenth century, a proliferation of conduct manuals and texts were published with titles including the adjective 'complete'. For example, Henry Peacham's *The Compleat Gentleman* (1622), Sir John Doddridge's *A Compleat Parson* (1630), William Noy's *The Compleat Lawyer* (1651), Samuel Hartlib's *The Compleat Husband-man* (1659) and Stephen Blake's *The Compleat Gardeners Practice* (1664).<sup>13</sup> These texts present assembled information and 'absolute' learning on their various subjects.<sup>14</sup> In this sense, these uses of 'compleat' reflect the earliest meaning of this adjective noted in the *OED*, that is 'having all its parts or members, comprising the full amount; embracing all the requisite item, details, topics; entire, full'. At the same time, 'compleat' in these titles also indicates the perfection in conduct which readers may achieve. Thomas De Grey's *The Compleat Horseman and Expert Ferrier* (1639), for example, aims to instruct the reader so that he may 'be known to be exquisite in Horsemanship', and consequently 'have more eyes upon him as he passeth along, than are commonly cast upon a Comet or the Sun eclipsed'.<sup>15</sup> The popularity of 'compleat' as a title-word for these treatises of self-improvement emphasises an early modern link between concepts of completion and the attainment of idealised levels of ability in *praxis*. From the vantage point of dictionary record, then, the 'complete' of *The Compleat Horseman* aligns adjectival allusion to a highly practised 'end' with on-going practice.

This is not to suggest that the temporal senses of 'finish' and 'completion' were unknown in this period. The *OED* suggests that 'complete' had been used in a temporal sense since the fourteenth century. The phrase 'finished', meanwhile, had been used to describe an action as 'completed' since the sixteenth century, while the first known use of 'unfinished' occurs in the 1553 accounts of the Office of the Revels.<sup>16</sup> Although the state of finish or completion as an endpoint was envisaged during the sixteenth century, however, the *OED* suggests that terminology denoting the state of reaching the fullness of that endpoint does not come into use until the seventeenth century. This development



participates in what appears to be a seventeenth-century expansion in the discourse of completion. According to the *OED*, the first usage of ‘completeness’, meaning ‘the state or quality of being complete’, occurs in John Earle’s *Micro-cosmographie. or, a peece of the worlde discovered, in essayes and characters* (1628), in a discussion of ‘the Worlds wise man’, for whom ‘two or three Countries make up to this compleatnesse’.<sup>17</sup> *Micro-cosmographie* draws attention to a sense of ‘the worlde’ as a whole, assembled from pieces, and representable in a text. The difficulty of materialising this sense of wholeness in text form, however, is highlighted in a preface by Edward Blount, which exposes the origins of *Micro-cosmographie* in ‘loose sheets’ and ‘sundry dispersed Transcripts, some very imperfect’.<sup>18</sup> Recalling the apologetic tones of Euphues’s account of his image of Elizabeth, Blount admits that there may be ‘faults’ in *Micro-cosmographie*, since Earle, aware that ‘imperfect’ writings had gone to the printers, ‘was willingly unwilling to let them passe as now they appeare to the World’.<sup>19</sup> Early allusions to completeness as a ‘state ... of being’ in the terms of the *OED*, then, coincide with a sense of cultural production as marked by material faultiness and imperfection. In such a context, the possibility of attaining completeness as a state of material finish seems unstable. Indeed, ‘finish’ does not come into use as a noun until the eighteenth century. Early modern commentators, then, gesture adjectivally towards finish, but this term is associated ambiguously with a materially attainable state even in the 1620s.

Around the mid-to-late seventeenth century, concepts of completion begin to be linked with more conviction to notions of attainable finish. The *OED* suggests that the first-known published usage of ‘completion’, meaning ‘the act of completing or making complete; the condition of being completed or perfected’, occurs in a speech given by Oliver Cromwell on 21 April 1657, in which Cromwell refers to the ‘completion of the business’ of his speech.<sup>20</sup> Given the slippage between what Cromwell may have said in his speeches and what he is reported to have said, this source does not offer a very stable date for the emergence of this sense of ‘completion’.<sup>21</sup> It does not seem a coincidence, however, that a cluster of terms relating to completeness are claimed in the *OED* to come into use during the 1640s, 1650s and 1660s. For example, the now obsolete noun ‘completure’ is used in an account of the ‘high compleature of all devout expressions’ in a 1642 collection of the speeches of Sir Edward Dering.<sup>22</sup> The *OED* refers to Milton’s works as a key source of examples for this changing discourse on completeness. The 1667 first edition of *Paradise Lost*, for example, illustrates the earliest known deployment of ‘complete’ as a verb in the sense ‘to make perfect’.<sup>23</sup> Correspondingly, Milton is also credited with the first usage of ‘incompleatnesse’ in the second edition of his *The Doctrine and Discipline of divorce* (1644).<sup>24</sup> This mid-seventeenth-century expansion in the language of completeness suggests a growing sense of this state as an attainable condition that may be accounted for and described. On the basis of this brief overview, it seems that

the possibility of the attainment of states of completeness or incompleteness was fully articulated during the earlier part of the seventeenth century. The 'compleat' discourse of this earlier period describes the assemblage of a whole, but does not name the state or action of totalising finish and its corresponding absence.

The expanding discourse of completeness in this period suggests a growing interest in what it means to enter into a process of production with an anticipated endpoint. The growing nature of that interest, and earlier definitions' emphasis on piecemeal assemblage, indicate that we cannot take for granted the place of material finish in the early modern imagination. In other words, when the prologue to *Henry V* invites playgoers to 'make up the difference', this request may be made partly in recognition that that difference is unknown and unattainable. In the previous chapter, I suggested that Shakespeare depicted Hermione's statue as 'under construction' as part of the evocation of divine 'wholeness' and perfection. This perfect, creative wholeness was directly contrasted with earthly, referential incompleteness. As we have seen, however, Shakespeare was writing in a time before a fully developed notion of 'incompleteness' contrasted with an attainable state of 'completeness'. In the next section, I explore divine hierarchies of 'making' as the cause of what emerges as an early modern investment in incompleteness (as distinct from *incompleteness*).

### God the creator

In early modern England, a central problem posed by the act of image-making is how to explain the relationship between earthly acts of cultural production and divine creativity. Although the Reformation in England is famed for its supposed rejection of visual experience, it is notable that the relationship between mortality and divinity is often expressed in aesthetic terms. Man was made in God's image, and the divinity of that creation was thought to be especially visible in facial beauty.<sup>25</sup> Aesthetic bodily perfection was associated with divine unity and harmony, but as Naomi Baker points out, within the contradictions of early modern aesthetic discourse 'even the misshapen could be seen as an expression of divine creativity'.<sup>26</sup> As we have seen, God's creativity was associated with a non-mimetic, pre-linguistic 'perfection' in which there is a coincidence between sign and signified. God's creative activities, however, were accounted for in the language of material cultural production, as in Sidney's claim that through his literary work a poet gives 'right honour to the heavenly Maker of that maker, who ... made man to His own likeness' (p. 86, lines 2–3). Sidney's playful alignment of God as 'Maker' in such close juxtaposition with a reference to the poet as 'maker' suggests this writer's interest in God and poets as comparable practitioners. Sidney's argument is also, of course, that it is inherent to post-lapsarianism to want to reach beyond mortal limitations

imposed by 'our infected will' and towards divine 'perfection' (p. 86, lines 7–8). Sidney's attempts to legitimise post-lapsarian 'will' to transgress mortal limits indicates an underlying concern with the propriety of the 'figuring forth' of a 'speaking picture' (p. 86, lines 8–19). That concern is reflected repeatedly in early modern discourses on image-making, which call attention to the unmatched proficiency of divine creation. For example, writers who attack the cosmetic alteration of visual appearances are unsurprisingly preoccupied with notions of God as image-maker.<sup>27</sup> The author 'Miso-Spilus' attacks 'black-spotted faces', suggesting that women who paint on such spots erroneously prefer 'their own artificial Craft and Invention before the Syncere and uncorrupt Workmanship of their Creator'.<sup>28</sup> Discussing the adornment of the body in *The Droomme of Doomes Day* (1576), meanwhile, George Gascoigne complains that in the making of 'outward appearance':

An artyficial shew is layed on, and a naturall face and favour is hyd and taken awaye. As though the arte of man created, were above the excellent works of God the creator. Not so, not so, O men Consider you, (sayeth the Lord) the lillyes of the fyeld how they growe. They do neyther labor nor spynne. But I say unto you: that Salomon in all his glory was not clothed lyke unto one of them. God forbid that a counterfeit colour shoulde be to be compared unto a naturall collor. For whylest the face is painted with a counterfait collour the skine is marred w[ith] ... filthiness.<sup>29</sup>

God is the only creator, and 'artyficial' activities on earth cannot and should not attempt to compete. Indeed, artificial makings 'mar' and distract us from the appreciation of God's creation, since, as Calvin argued, 'invisible' God is visible to man in 'the workmanship of the whole world, wherein the glory of God doth shine unto us'.<sup>30</sup>

The discursive importance of divine creativity remains relatively under-explored in early modern studies. Rayna Kalas has considered the discursive relationship between earthly and divine acts of making, noting that in the early modern period the term '*frame*' can refer to both the "handie work of God" in creating the world, or, alternately, the imagined craftsmanship of "the divels workshop".<sup>31</sup> The connection between '*frame*' and 'studied obedience to God', Kalas observes, means that deployments of this term with reference to 'willful disobedience' have 'a strong rhetorical effect of dissonance'.<sup>32</sup> Natasha Korda, meanwhile, has noted that early modern treatises on accountancy insisted 'on perfection, while recognizing that absolute exactitude belonged only to the divine, as "there is no persone so perfight but that he shall sometyme misse, and entre some thyng wrong"'.<sup>33</sup> Writing on Golding's translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Susan Wiseman observes that 'the Christian creation story meant that claims to later transformations were highly controversial and brought into play the question of how to interpret "transformation" in a world

whose shapes were fixed by God and, in most theories, changed only by him'.<sup>34</sup> Catherine Belsey, finally, discusses the function of the creation myth in the early modern formation of the ideology of the family.<sup>35</sup> For the most part, however, the far-reaching implications of early modern belief in God as creator remain underexplored.

This neglect is significant, because slippages in the distinction between man and God shape the post-Reformation social and religious turbulence in which theatre is implicated. In the divinely ordained hierarchy of late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century England, the perfection of God is transferred to the head of state. In literary and visual depictions of Elizabeth as 'Gloriana', and in the glorifying spectacle of the Stuart court masques, cultural products throughout the period sought to deify the monarchy.<sup>36</sup> This deification was particularly reinforced by the impact of the Reformation on visual culture, as in churches the spaces previously occupied by religious images were replaced by symbols of Elizabethan and Stuart rule.<sup>37</sup> Where altarpieces in the celebration of Catholic mass had been used to strengthen the bond between celebrants and Christ's sacrifice, symbols of monarchic rule were deployed to strengthen the loyalty of English subjects. The replacement of religious images with royal visual representations is reflected in Haydocke's 1598 translation of Lomazzo, in which 'any discussion of images of God and the saints' was 'not dropped but ... simply transferred to a defense of the image of the ruler and the seals of the commonwealth'.<sup>38</sup> Given the 'privileged visibility' of power in this period, the visual representation of the monarch is a highly regulated area, subject to extensive state 'scrutiny'.<sup>39</sup> In such a context the state theoretically dictates what constitutes the deific 'perfection' of the monarch, whilst also defining the aesthetic appearance of a 'complete' visual representation of this supposed perfection. The completion of images is thus not within the remit of subjects. Under state regulation, theatre companies could never embark on the production of a play with a sense that they would define the moment at which that production was ready for performance.<sup>40</sup> A context of state surveillance thus demands that those engaged in the making of plays and visual representations continually produce unfinished material.

This is not to suggest, however, that in such a context monarchs have an unproblematic control over acts of representation. Given their supposed divine ordination, it is imperative that kings and queens are not seen to be engaged in processes of artificial construction which compromise their divinity. Significantly, sixteenth- and seventeenth-century critiques of kingship often exploit allusions to processes of material and visual construction, as is exemplified by the anonymous, unfinished play *Thomas of Woodstock* (c. 1591–95). This play presents Richard II as a vain, frivolous monarch, who favours the advice of low-born councillors over that of his noble relations, particularly his uncle, the Lord Protector, Thomas of Woodstock. Richard desires to 'exceed' all kings in

'bounty state and royalty', plans to 'ride through London only to be gazed at', and hopes also to 'every day ... feast ten thousand men'.<sup>41</sup> This self-indulgence is contrasted with the concern of the Queen and Richard's noble elders that the king 'starvest' his 'wretched subjects' to pay for his excesses (2.3.103). Complaints about Richard's behaviour, however, do not focus on descriptions of the impoverishment that he causes. Sir Thomas Cheney, for example, laments:

They sit in council and devise strange fashions,  
And suit themselves in wild and antic habits  
Such as this kingdom never yet beheld:  
French hose, Italian cloaks and Spanish hats,  
Polonian shoes with peaks a handful long,  
Tied to their knees with chains of pearl and gold.  
Their plumèd tops fly waving in the air  
A cubit high above their wanton heads.  
Tresilian with King Richard likewise sits,  
Devising taxes and strange shifts for money  
To build again the hall at Westminster  
To feast and revel in. (2.3.88–99)

Cheney's anxieties about Richard's rule are expressed here in revulsion at the king's enthusiasm for the construction of 'a hall to feast in' (2.3.102), and his pre-occupation with designing flamboyant, and notably foreign, outfits. Richard's enthusiasm for visual and material processes of construction is thus treated as symptomatic of his weak kingship.

The conflict between the imperfection attendant on post-lapsarian mortality and the supposedly non-artificial perfection associated with kingship seriously destabilises early modern acts of cultural production. Lyly, for example, explores the challenges faced by the court visual artist in the dedicatory letter to Lord Delaware with which *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit* opens:

Alexander, having a scar in his cheek held his finger upon it that Apelles might not paint it. Apelles painted him with his finger cleaving to his face. 'Why,' quoth Alexander, 'I laid my finger on my scar because I would not have thee see it.' 'Yea,' said Apelles, 'and I drew it there because none else should perceive it, for if thy finger had been away either thy scar would have been seen or my art misliked.' Whereby I gather that in all perfect works as well the fault as the face is to be shown.<sup>42</sup>

Alexander is depicted constructing an image of bodily and moral perfection, given that physical appearance could be taken as an indicator of moral character in the early modern period.<sup>43</sup> Apelles's claim that in an image which is not to be 'misliked' by authority, 'imperfections' must not be left out, suggests that a state-authorized representation will always be in some respect incomplete.

Yet Apelles also indicates that a mimetic image of an authority figure must depict the process by which perspectives damaging to that authority figure are concealed. This anecdote exposes the irresolvable conflict between the image-maker's desire to produce an aesthetically 'perfect work', their lack of authority to do so, and the need for that authority figure to construct what will appear as a non-artificial, 'perfect' appearance.

The impasse produced by the clash between Apelles's and Alexander's attempts at image-making is the condition which generates the repeatedly 'unfinished' status of literary and visual representations in this period. The gaps in the presentation of the king in *Henry V*, which, according to Greenblatt, prompt the audience to 'make up the difference' in the representation that they view, emerge from this context of a collision between different ends and aims of making. The avoidance of 'finish' enables the evocation of contrasting meanings, and hence a fluctuation between subversion and conformity within a cultural product. Building on this observation, the next part of this chapter explores the extent to which figures of incomplection are adopted by early modern writers in order to negotiate relationships between representations, audiences and authority.

### **'A frame without a face': political blank canvases**

In *Euphues and His England*, Euphues, discussing his depiction of Elizabeth, conceptualises the incomplection produced by the visual artist subject to state authority as an empty 'table':

When Alexander had commanded that none should paint him but Apelles, none carve him but Lysippus, none engrave him but Pyrgoteles, Parrhasius framed a table squared every way two hundred foot, which in the borders he trimmed with fresh colours and limned with fine gold, leaving all the other room without knot or line. Which table he presented to Alexander, who, no less marvelling at the bigness than at the bareness, demanded to what end he gave him a frame without a face, being so naked, and without fashion, being so great. Parrhasius answered him, 'Let it be lawful for Parrhasius, O Alexander, to show a table wherein he would paint Alexander if it were not unlawful, and for others to square timber though Lysippus carve it, and for all to cast brass though Pyrgoteles engrave it.' (p. 332–3)

According to Kalas, the term 'frame' did not start to take on the modern sense of 'the quadrilateral that surrounds a work of art' until around 1600 as a 'late estimate'.<sup>44</sup> The 'frame' presented to Alexander in Euphues's anecdote is therefore 'not the ornamental quadrilateral of a modern frame, but a prepared wooden panel', onto which paint would be applied to compose the portrait.<sup>45</sup> Parrhasius thus offers the emperor an early modern equivalent to a blank canvas: the bare base of a pictorial representation under construction. In the anecdote discussed above, Apelles's actions reflect the challenges faced by the court visual artist; here,

Parrhasius's actions expose the difficulties encountered by those who seek to represent authority without having the authorisation to do so. Parrhasius deferentially obeys the commandment not to depict Alexander, but the painter works with the limitations imposed on his professional life, repackaging the 'bareness' that is left to him as an accurate representation of those limitations. Emptiness, blankness, 'all the other room without knot or line', becomes an expression of the relationship between authority and the unauthorised image-maker. This anecdote could read as a cynical condemnation of this relationship, or as an affirmation of the propriety of artistic deference to a monarch. At the same time, however, the story of Parrhasius projects the empowerment of the disempowered visual artist through the deployment of a blank, naked, base for representation which placates as it critiques relationships between representation and absolute rule.

Parrhasius's exploitation of the empty frame intersects with a broader early modern tendency to use depictions of blankness and nakedness in the discussion of sensitive political themes. Earlier in *Euphues and His England*, the eponymous Greek character describes a popular example of the deployment of bareness in such a context. Describing English apparel, Euphues explains:

There is nothing in England more constant than the inconstancy of attire. Now using the French fashion, now the Spanish, then the Morisco gowns, the one thing, then another-insomuch that in drawing of an Englishman the painter setteth him down naked, having in the one hand a pair of shears, in the other a piece of cloth, who having cut his collar after the French guise is ready to make his sleeve after the Barbarian manner. (pp. 324–5)

This account of the inconstancy of English attire alludes to one of the most frequently discussed emblems of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, which first appears in Andrew Boorde's *The fyrst boke of the introduction of knowledge*, written in 1542 and published in c.1555 (figure 18).

In this work Boorde describes a range of regions, the 'natural disposicion' of the inhabitants, and 'theyr money and ... theyr speche'.<sup>46</sup> The first chapter is devoted to England and the 'Englishman', and opens with a woodcut depicting a bearded man walking in a rural landscape, naked but for a loincloth and a hat decorated with a feather. The man wields a large pair of shears, and carries fabric, folded over his right arm. The woodcut is accompanied by verse explaining the Englishman's situation from his viewpoint:

I am an English man, and naked I stand here  
Musyng in my mynde, what rayment I shal were  
For now I wyll were thys and now I wyll were that  
Now I wyll were I cannot tell what  
All new fashyons, be plesaunt to me. (sig. A3v)

Boorde's depiction of an Englishman obsessed with different styles of clothing intersects with anxieties about dress and the instability of national identity



18 Andrew Boorde, *The fyrst boke of the introduction of knowledge* (1555?), sig. A3v. Woodcut

widespread in early modern Europe.<sup>47</sup> Since ‘foreign cloth’ was seen as ‘sinister in its power to undermine England’s virtue’, critical readings of this woodcut have emphasised that the shears wielded by the naked man are suggestive of an ability to fashion individual identity which would have been unsettling for an early modern audience.<sup>48</sup> Keir Elam, for example, describes the scissors wielded by Boorde’s Englishman as ‘threatening’.<sup>49</sup> Roze Hentschell, similarly, comments on the extent to which certain authors, including Thomas Dekker, were alarmed by ‘the agency’ of the naked Englishman.<sup>50</sup> Dekker refers to Boorde’s emblem in a ferocious attack on the clothing choices of his male contemporaries in the plague-pamphlet, *The Seven deadly Sinnes of London*:

Wittie was that Painter therefore, that when hee had limned one of every Nation in [their] proper attyres, and beeing at his wittes endes howe to drawe an Englishman: At the last (to give him a quip for his follie in apparell) drewe him starke naked,



with Sheeres in his hand, and cloth on his arme, because none could cut out his fashions but himselfe. For an English-mans suite is like a traitors bodie that hath beene hanged, drawne, and quartered, and is set up in severall places: his Codpeece is in Denmarke, the collar of his Duple and the belly in France: the wing and narrow sleeve in Italy: the short waste hangs over a Dutch Botchers stall in Utrich: his huge stoppes speakes Spanish: Polonia gives him the Bootes: the blocke for his heade alters faster then the Feltmaker can fitte him, and thereupon we are called in scorne Blockheades.<sup>51</sup>

Dekker, as Hentschell highlights, ‘points out that only the Englishman “*himselfe*” has the ability “to cut out his fashions”’.<sup>52</sup> In brandishing the tools and material to construct a new, not necessarily English outfit, the man has subversive control of the shaping of his own visual and national identity.<sup>53</sup> In this reading, the nakedness of the man is representative of a vulnerability which emphasises the instability of national identity, and the economic fragility incurred by the consumption of foreign fashions.<sup>54</sup>

Boorde’s naked Englishman reflects anxieties about the stability of national identity, but also intersects with celebratory nationalistic rhetoric. Elam states that Boorde’s woodcut associates the Englishman with a ‘plainness in dress and in behaviour’ and Puritan ‘plain truthfulness’ by ‘negative inference’.<sup>55</sup> In my view, Boorde’s handling of the man’s half-dressed state appeals directly to nationalistic interests. The woodcut draws on early modern concepts of masculinity; the beard sported by the naked figure, for example, reaffirms his manliness.<sup>56</sup> Assuming that the man in the image is a gentleman and not aristocratic, furthermore, it can be said that the choice not to depict him in sumptuous attire protects his masculinity, since ‘social emulation of aristocratic splendour created ... effeminacy in upstart men’.<sup>57</sup> The appeal of the naked body as a symbol of strength in this context is also indicated by the fact that when using the template of Boorde’s image to describe French habits of dress, Robert Dallington depicts ‘the Frenchman’ holding shears, but does not suggest that he is naked. Dallington states:

Every two yere the fashion changeth. And hereof it commeth, that when ye see all other Nations paynted in the proper habit of their Countrey, the French man is always pictured with a paire of sheeres in his hand, to signify, that he hath no peculiar habit of his own, nor contenteth himselfe long with the habit of any other, but according to his cappricious humour, deviseth daily new fashions.<sup>58</sup>

Nakedness, it seems, provides a bold statement of moral strength which particularly flatters the interests of nationalistic self-representation.

The popularity of the deployment of the unadorned body for the discussion of national visual identity is indicated by the extent to which early modern authors who discuss the image are preoccupied with Boorde’s choice of this mode of representation. A reference to Boorde’s emblem in William Harrison’s

'An Historicall description of the Islande of Britayne', for example, emphasises Boorde's struggle to convey in a single image the fluctuating attire of English men:

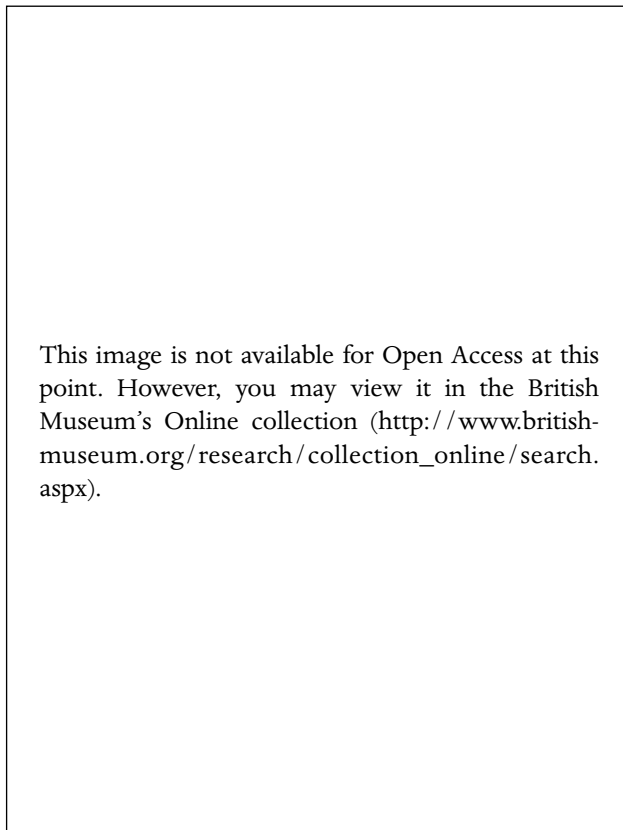
An Englishman indeavouring sometime to write of our attire, made sundry platformes for his purpose, supposing by some of them to find out one stedfast ground whereon to builde the summe of his discourse. But in the ende (like an oratour, long without exercise) when he saw what a difficult piece of worke he had taken in hande, he gave over his travelle, and onelye drue the picture of a naked man, unto whome he gave a paire of sheares in the one hand, a peece of cloth in the other, to the end he should shape his apparrell after such fashion as himselfe liked, sith he could find no kind of garment that coulede please him anie whyle togyther, and this he called an Englishman. Certes thys writer (otherwise being a lewde and ungracious priest) showed himselfe herein not to be voyde of judgement.<sup>59</sup>

Harrison notably devotes some time here to describing the process of the making of the image as undertaken by Boorde. Boorde is here a 'writer', who uses images, referred to as 'platformes', to formulate his ideas (pp. 171–2).<sup>60</sup> It is important for my argument that Harrison's commendation of Boorde's 'judgement' and skill in visual representation is echoed across the many sixteenth- and seventeenth-century accounts of this image, most of which refer to Boorde as a painter. Dekker sympathises with the 'wittie' painter of the image, driven to his 'wittes endes' by English fickleness in dress (p. 31). Karel Van Mander's account of the Flemish visual artist Lucas De Heere's attempt to depict English dress in a gallery of costumes in 1570 mirrors descriptions of Boorde's emblem.<sup>61</sup> The costume gallery has not survived, but there is an image extremely similar to Boorde's woodcut in a series of depictions of costume by De Heere, in a manuscript held by Ghent University Library, dated to 1550.<sup>62</sup> Van Mander reports that De Heere depicted the Englishman naked, holding shears and material, because the painter 'did not know what appearance or kind of clothing he should give him because they varied so much from day to day'.<sup>63</sup>

While the Englishman's possession of shears and fabric is, for an early modern audience, an unsettling sign of individualistic agency, the story of the making of the image is repeatedly presented as a triumph of visual representation achieved by an exasperated painter working in impossible circumstances. Boorde's emphasis on the practicalities of making in this example thus acts as a mode of evasive defence against the threats perceived to be posed by the potential results of the Englishman's acts of visual construction. The 'security' of the bareness of Boorde's Englishman, then, is bolstered by the shears that he wields, and by the incomplete, unconstructed state of his appearance. This suggestion is strongly supported by the fact that in the dialogue which accompanies the woodcut, 'the Auctor' implores the Englishman to improve his behaviour in order to become a moral example for 'al nacions' (sig. A4r). The implication that the Englishman might embark on the construction of an outfit less troubling to

English national identity demonstrates that in this image the naked body functions as a blank, unpolluted base upon which exemplary or subversive visual identities may be constructed.

Boorde's text does not explicitly invite viewers of the emblem of the naked Englishman to construct or contribute to the making of the man's appearance in their imaginations. The emblematic presentation of Boorde's account of the Englishman encourages interactive modes of reception, however, as readers are required to piece together the verbal and visual elements of an emblem in order to arrive at an overall meaning. Significantly, blank and unadorned spaces are deployed elsewhere in early modern culture in connection with interactive readers and viewers. In Jonann Posthius's *Anthologia Gnomica* (1579), Jost Amman's illustrations included blank spaces to be completed by the user (figure 19).



19 Jost Amman, 'An empty shield with a male figure holding a lute; standing at right'; illustration to Johann Posthius, *Anthologia Gnomica* (Frankfurt: Rab for Feyerabend, 1579).

Woodcut

Suzanne Karr Schmidt suggests that *Anthologia Gnomica* was 'designed and used as an autograph album in which travelling students collected the signatures and witticisms of their teachers and classmates'.<sup>64</sup> The playful interactivity of Amman's illustrations arguably partakes of a broader European interest in the aesthetic role of blank spaces, particularly in the context of monumental structures. Armando Petrucci explains that in the seventeenth century, 'empty plaques' were increasingly popular in Italian churches and the decorative schemes of aristocratic buildings.<sup>65</sup> Petrucci characterises the proliferation of blank plaques as a process of the 'negation of writing' which 'enticed viewers into the game of interpretation and placed them in the role of protagonist and even inventor of verbal meaning'.<sup>66</sup> Blank plaques are used in seventeenth-century English monuments, such as the Fane family monument in St Leonard's, Apethorpe, where a large blank plaque is displayed on the far side of the monument.

One of the most important aesthetic functions of blankness in the period was its use in the negotiation of religious sensitivities attendant on post-Reformation visual culture. In this context, figurative images are replaced with symbolic, blank and often more aesthetically abstract designs. The most obvious example of the latter is the whitewashing of religious wall paintings in pre-Reformation church interiors. Perhaps the most pertinent act of early modern English visual displacement, however, is the avoidance of figurative depictions of God through the presentation of an orange sun-like sphere inscribed with Tetragrammaton, 'the four Hebrew letters that correspond to YHWH (God's name, Yahweh)'.<sup>67</sup> Hamling explains that the deployment of the Tetragrammaton in the stained-glass window in the Mildmay chapel in St Leonard's, Apethorpe, produces a 'modified iconography' that in reformist terms was 'not unacceptable'.<sup>68</sup> The Tetragrammaton is also deployed in Trevilian's depiction of the creation of Eve, who is shown emerging from Adam's side into the light of a blazing Tetragrammaton situated directly behind the pair. The use of the Tetragrammaton in the portrayal of divine creation acutely highlights the difficulties attendant on visual depictions of acts of 'making' in this period. God is frequently referred to as an 'artificer', 'workman', he who 'framed' the earth, and yet even this originary creator cannot be shown completing the human material practices that these terms described. The making of Eve from Adam's rib, much like the transformation of Hermione's statue in *The Winter's Tale*, takes place without the 'touch' of an intangible God, but in the symbolic presence of an unrepresentable divinity.

How does this aesthetics of blankness function in the context of early modern drama, where audiences are encouraged to 'make up the difference' in light of what may be missing on stage? I will return here to the quotation discussed at the outset of this chapter, from Lyly's *Euphues and His England*, in which Euphues produces an image of Elizabeth that is 'but begun for others to end'. This

theoretical model for making an incomplete image provides the foundations for the court drama *Campaspe*, first performed at court and at the Blackfriars theatre in 1584. The play presents the story of Alexander the Great's love for Campaspe, who in turn falls in love with Apelles, who has been commissioned by Alexander to paint Campaspe's portrait. The prologue for the play's performance at the court sets up interactive relationships between spectators and the play-world, through allusions to modes of visual reshaping:

Whatsoever we present we wish it may be thought the dancing of Agrippa his shadows, who in the moment they were seen were of any shape one would conceive. (Prologue at the Court, 13–15)

The construction of the play as a fleeting visual impression which may change shape in the minds of spectators reflects the duality of meaning presented in the drama, which in this sense is very similar to *Henry V*. Lyly, for example, presents Alexander as a conqueror who displays 'courtesy' (I.i.2), and is interested in peaceful, intellectual pursuits such as meeting with philosophers including Aristotle and Plato. At the same time, however, this 'meeting' with the philosophers is not an open intellectual debate, as Alexander warns them that 'in king's causes', he 'will not stand to scholar's arguments', and that their 'lives' are 'answerable' to their 'learnings' (I.iii.89–93). Such revelations in the dialogue of a more threatening side to Alexander perhaps alert the audience to the fact that a less flattering depiction of the monarch can be gleaned from the performance. In particular, aspects of the play depict Alexander in an extremely demeaning manner. Most significantly for my argument, *Campaspe* hints at the weakness of the king by showing him failing to complete the production of a visual image. In one scene, Alexander attends Apelles's workshop, and, during his visit, attempts to draw, ordering Apelles: 'Lend me thy pencil ... I will paint and thou shalt judge' (III.iv.112). Almost as soon as he begins to draw, Alexander's 'coal breaks', and he is advised 'you lean too hard'. Attempting accordingly to lessen the pressure with which he applies the pencil, Alexander finds that the charcoal 'blacks not' (III.iv.115–17). After persevering for a short while, the monarch petulantly abandons the attempt:

ALEXANDER This is awty.

APELLES Your eye goeth not with your hand.

ALEXANDER NOW it is worse.

APELLES Your hand goeth not with your mind.

ALEXANDER Nay, if all be too hard or soft, so many rules and regards that one's hand, one's eye, one's mind must all draw together, I had rather be setting at a battle than blotting of a board. (III.iv.119–26)

It cannot be said with certainty that the audience would have seen what Alexander draws. There are no stage directions about the image itself, and it is unclear what Alexander draws on, let alone what he is trying to represent. Even if the audience

could not see Alexander's unsuccessful representation, however, this scene would remain a very visual demonstration of the king's limitations, from the moment at which 'Alexander takes the charcoal and draws' (III.iv.112SD), through the visible frustration and anxiety in the faces of both patron and painter, to the moment that the king finally replaces the charcoal in a clear sign of his artistic failure. Lyly began the play in appeals to the court audience, which included Elizabeth, to consider *Campaspe* to be 'any shape' they would 'conceive'. In the 'drawing-lesson' scene, the dramatist exposes the limitations of kingship through the demonstration of a monarch's failure to complete a visual image. The play is the uncarved timber, the unengraved brass of Parrhasius's anecdote, prepared for the impressions imprinted upon it by the audience. Using the empty 'frame without a face' as a conceptual framework for his drama, Lyly shifts the agency of image-making from monarch to subject-spectator. There is, however, no sense that this play could ever be anything but permanently under construction, since it is only 'in the moment' that the events of the play are 'seen' that spectators may 'shape' the play as they conceive. The base for interpretation offered in *Campaspe* is not only unfinished, it may be constantly remoulded and is thus unfinishable.

For a court writer such as Lyly, the constant deferral of the completion of a work in the presentation of a play as constantly 'under construction', is the only means appropriate for the production of a representation of a head of state. The deferral of meaning in plays such as *Campaspe* and *Henry V*, identified by Greenblatt as central to the containment of the subversion that is 'the very condition of power', can here be characterised as a form of blankness.<sup>69</sup> A bare 'frame without a face' may hold the potential to be filled out with transgressive ideas, but it is also the vehicle for expression upon which divine hierarchy insists for the making of representations. As symbolised in Alexander's swiftly aborted drawing lesson in *Campaspe*, the early modern English social framework restricted kings, as much as non-royal image-makers, to the production of unfinished material. In this context, discourses of making offer a means through which audiences, visual artists, writers and authority figures may negotiate the political sensitivities attendant on the making and consumption of verbal and visual representations. Frequent allusions to states of incompletion, however, draw attention to the unstable relationship between meaning, interpretation and the parameters which may shape a work even as that work is described as unfinished. The blank canvases presented by the examples that I have discussed so far are thus part of a growing consciousness about what is invested socially and culturally in the moments at which processes of making begin and end.

### **'Never ending it til they be caught with it': the idolatry of 'finish'**

*Campaspe* fully demonstrates the contested status of 'finish' in late sixteenth-century England. The problem faced by Apelles and Alexander in this play is that

in commissioning the portrait of Campaspe, the royal patron requires the painter to produce something more than a 'frame without a face'. From the conclusion of the scene in which Alexander the Great fails to learn to draw, therefore, a tussle develops between Apelles and his royal patron over the final completion and delivery of the portrait of Campaspe. Almost as soon as Alexander has set down the charcoal in humiliating defeat in Apelles's shop, Alexander tells the painter that 'Campaspe is finished as I wish; dismiss her and bring presently her counterfeit after me' (III.iv.129–30). Alexander here exerts his divinely ordained authority by declaring the portrait finished 'as I wish'; Apelles, in turn, is distraught by his patron's demand, as the ending of the portrait will entail the end of his access to Campaspe. The painter's reaction to the order, however, reveals the interdependence between 'finish' and image-breaking, as Apelles resolves 'by device' to give the portrait 'a blemish' in order to prolong the painting process and to declare his love to Campaspe (III.v.67). Apelles's choice to physically deface his own picture implies that the portrait has indeed reached a stage of completion and cannot be further perfected, or that Apelles accepts Alexander's concept of 'finish'. The painter's application of 'blemish' to Campaspe's portrait thus draws attention to the extent to which the destruction of an image is stimulated by its supposed completeness. Such a link between the breaking of images and their perfection can also be read into the idea of iconoclasm, since the impact of the destruction of an object is invested in the presence of belief in the 'wholeness' of the item destroyed. Certainly, the devotional objects which became the subject of iconoclasm during the Reformation are, as Aura Satz suggests, associated with 'finitude', since 'their sacred status is partly reliant on being conclusively polished ... canonized in both form and meaning'.<sup>70</sup> Satz exemplifies this view with reference to the story of St Luke painting the Virgin.<sup>71</sup> In this story, St Luke begins this painting when the Virgin appears to him in a vision; before he can complete the image, however, it miraculously completes itself.<sup>72</sup> As Satz states, it is its 'finite' completion 'by the agent of the divine hand' that makes a devotional object sacred.<sup>73</sup>

The story of St Luke as the first 'Christian painter' was a popular theme for sixteenth-century visual artists, with depictions of the evangelist painting the Virgin frequently commissioned for display in guild buildings.<sup>74</sup> Paintings of this legend were made by, for example, the follower of Quinten Massys, around 1520, Jan Gossaert in 1520–25 and Giorgio Vasari in 1570–71 (figures 20–2).<sup>75</sup> The earlier painting by the follower of Massys is the inner part of the right shutter of an altarpiece; also surviving from this shutter is *A Female Figure Standing in a Niche*, and both paintings are held by the National Gallery, London. As he works on what appears as a very completed portrait of the Virgin, St Luke looks towards the divine sitter, who was presumably depicted in the central part of the altarpiece. The ox resting at the painter's feet identifies him as St Luke, but beyond this symbolism there is little in this altarpiece fragment to indicate the



20 Follower of Quinten Massys, *Saint Luke Painting the Virgin and Child* (1520?). Oil on oak.  
113.7 x 34.9 cm





21 Jan Gossaert, *Saint Luke Painting the Virgin* (1520–25). 110.5 × 83.5 cm

miraculous nature of the painting process depicted. In contrast, Jan Gossaert's painting, which is in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, shows St Luke drawing an as yet incomplete portrait of the Virgin and child, his hand guided by an angel. This was the second time that Gossaert had painted St Luke as the painter of the Virgin. A painting on the same theme, composed between 1512 and 1515 and now in the National Gallery of Prague, presents 'a straightforward image of the artist and his model', and does not emphasise the miraculous nature of the scene as does the later painting.<sup>76</sup> Clifton Olds argues that the change in Gossaert's approach to the legend of St Luke in the later picture demonstrates a direct response to 'the growing threat of iconoclasm'.<sup>77</sup> The developments in



22 Giorgio Vasari, *Saint Luke Painting the Madonna* (1570–71). Florence, Church of Santissima Annunziata. 130 × 180 cm. © 2013. Photo Scala, Florence

Gossaert's paintings of St Luke suggest the significance of this story of miraculous painting for professional visual practice. The theme of St Luke painting the Virgin provided defence against Reformation attacks on the production and worship of religious images, since if 'this divinely inspired writer of the Gospel should find it permissible to paint a picture of the Virgin, then certainly such an activity was sanctioned by God'.<sup>78</sup> This connection between professional and miraculous visual artistry is also suggested by the example of Vasari's fresco, commissioned for the chapel of the Accademia delle Arti del Disegno, Florence, an institution which Vasari helped to found in 1563, and which was dedicated to

the promotion of painting in Tuscany.<sup>79</sup> The extent to which St Luke provides a mobilising figure for sixteenth-century painters is suggested by the fact that in his treatment of the legend of St Luke, Vasari presents a portrait of himself as the evangelist.<sup>80</sup> This legend is thus a story of a miracle that facilitates professional painterly practice and instructs spectators in accepting that practice as legitimate and capable of the attainment of divine perfection.

Although sixteenth-century English painters do not seem to have depicted St Luke as frequently as did painters in continental Europe, there is evidence that this subject was known in the British Isles. For example, St Luke is associated with painting in a painted panel that once decorated the ceiling of the gallery at Dean House, Edinburgh, home of William Nisbet, Lord Provost of Edinburgh



23 Ceiling panel from Dean House, Edinburgh, showing St Luke (1605–27).  
1070 mm H × 750 mm W × 40 mm Th. Wood, painted

in 1616 and 1622 (figure 23).<sup>81</sup> The panel, thought to have been painted between 1605 and 1627, shows St Luke reading; on the table-top at his side rest a pallet with daubs of colour, and four paintbrushes. In the left corner the ox sits at the foot of a slanted wooden post that could be interpreted as a part of the evangelist's easel.<sup>82</sup>

It is tempting to suggest that St Luke is shown reading rather than painting in this panel because of post-Reformation preference for the word over the image. This suggestion should be tempered, however, by the fact that not all pre-Reformation depictions of St Luke-as-painter show this figure engaged in visual activity. For example, in the Robertet Book of Hours, by Jean Fouquet, dated to 1460–65 and now in the Pierpont Library, New York, St Luke is shown writing the Gospel, his back turned to a painting of the Virgin propped against the wall.<sup>83</sup> Moreover, aspects of the iconography of St Luke appeared on the early modern English stage. St Luke is also the patron saint of butchers, and in George Chapman, Ben Jonson and John Marston's *Eastward Ho!*, Slitgut, a butcher's apprentice, displays 'a pair of ox-horns', which he has been ordered to 'set up, in honour of Saint Luke' and as 'a crest' of his 'master's profession'.<sup>84</sup> Invoking the horns of the cuckold, Slitgut's deployment of the ox's horns is very different in tone to the reverence for St Luke shown in paintings of this figure. This example, however, indicates that playgoers in early modern London were familiar with the iconography of this artisan-saint.

The divinity of completion in the legend of St Luke arguably provides an important context for the resistance of material completion in Lyly's play. Where this legend of a miraculous icon was used to justify visual artists' participation in a divinely sanctioned activity, in *Campaspe*, the impermissibility of reaching aesthetic perfection in the making of a secular image produces destructively idolatrous results. Apelles's deliberate defacement of the portrait causes a delay in the delivery of the work that heightens Alexander and his confidant Hephestion's suspicions about the painter's attachment to both portrait and sitter. Hephestion muses that the painter's avoidance of 'finish' is a symptom of idolatry:

Commonly we see it incident in artificers to be enamoured of their own works, as Archidamus of his wooden dove, Pygmalion of his ivory image, Arachne of his wooden swan – especially painters, who, playing with their own conceits, now coveting to draw a glancing eye, then a rolling, now a winking, still mending it, never ending it till they be caught with it. And then, poor souls, they kiss the colours with their lips, with which before they were loath to taint their fingers. (V.iv.15–24)

Here, 'ending' is only achieved in the consummation of idolatrous desire, as the painter plays with the image until 'caught with it'; the finality of this consummation is, however, destructive. The 'colours' that the painters kiss are the same that may be lifted and smudged during the painting process, and in touching their paintings with their lips, the 'poor souls' risk defacing the representations

that they adore. The idolatrous defacement of the image thus parallels the cycle of unending recycling, 'playing with their own conceits' that builds up to an idolatrous, unsatisfactory 'ending'. Hephestion's characterisation of painters 'finishing' their works as so idolatrous as to be destructive emphasises the impermissibility of the 'completed' image within the early modern English imagination. The impasse reached between the painter and the royal patron in the production of the royal image that neither can complete can now be understood as aggravated by the treacherous, idolatrous risks associated with image production. Campaspe's portrait exists in a state of continual remaking that is transgressive in that it is symptomatic of idolatry, but necessary in order to avoid the idolatrous achievement of finish. In *Campaspe*, the solution to this impasse derives from a context of violence against images.

As the head of state who cannot draw within a cultural framework in which completion is unreachable, Alexander turns to the threat of the destruction of visual images to end Apelles's idolatrous disobedience and to recuperate his own reputation as king. Hoping to prompt Apelles to reveal that he is in love with Campaspe, Alexander orders a pageboy to frighten Apelles into thinking that his 'shop is on fire' (V.iv.91). An alarmed Apelles immediately laments: 'Ay me, if the picture of Campaspe be burnt I am undone!' as he '*starts for the shop*' (V.iv.92–3SD). This exclamation enables Alexander to coax from Apelles that he loves the Theban prisoner, and consequently the king is able to seem to benevolently unite the lovers, whom he refers to as 'two loving worms', and tells to 'enjoy one another' (V.iv.141–6). At this point Alexander presents a new version of himself as a monarch who can 'resist love as he list', stating that 'it were a shame Alexander should desire to command the world if he could not command himself' (V.iv.165–9). The threat of the destruction of an image thus facilitates the production of a new, appealing perspective on Alexander that would have been highly flattering to the royal audience at the play's court performance.

Most significantly for my concern with Lyly's use of the idea of the breaking of images to combat the idolatrous implications of cultural production, this restoration of order circumvents Apelles's idolatrous relationship with Campaspe's portrait, as his affection is fully diverted into state-sanctioned union with the 'real' Campaspe. Significantly, the portrait, and the topic of painting in general, are not mentioned in the play from the point in the final scene at which Alexander states that 'Apelles ... loveth underhand', and begins to formulate the union between the lovers (V.iv.111). As Campaspe and Apelles are created as a couple by Alexander, the disruptive portrait becomes redundant, and is erased from the immediate concerns of the play-world. In the 'drawing lesson' scene, Alexander's limitations are signified by his failure to complete a satisfactory visual representation. Subsequent to this failure, the threat of the destruction of an image, and the absence of that image and the practicalities of its production, enable the presentation of a 'new' version of the central characters, in which the

subversive desires of Alexander's subjects are depicted as chiming reverentially with the king's own self-control.

*Campaspe* does not present the actual destruction of an image, but the play does demonstrate the usefulness of the concept of image-breaking for the negotiation of the idolatrous implications of image-making. The avoidance of the destruction of the portrait can be linked to the same contexts of making that produce the deferral of the completion of images throughout the play, since if it is impossible for earthly hands to perfect a visual representation, then it must also be impossible for an image to be obliterated by mortal means. By invoking the threat of the breaking of an image, rather than showing the destruction of that image, Lyly therefore incorporates the idea of iconoclasm into the continual deferral of completion that shapes his play. Importantly, while completion and full destruction are inaccessible within the play-world, audiences are fully encouraged to participate in the deferral of both. The notion of the destruction of images thus becomes a part of Lyly's broader understanding of image-making as an unending process of shaping and reshaping in which spectators may participate, approaching the play as 'wax' from which they 'may make doves or vultures, roses or nettles, laurel for a garland or elder for a disgrace' (Epilogue at the Court, 18–20).

### Notes

- 1 Stephen Greenblatt, *Shakespearean Negotiations: The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), p. 63.
- 2 Knapp, *Image Ethics*, p. 180.
- 3 Anderson, 'Secrets', p. 328.
- 4 Sir Henry Wotton, *The Elements of Architecture, Collected by Henry Wotton Knight, from the best Authors and Examples* (London: John Bill, 1624), p. 4. EEBO. <http://eebo.chadwyck.com>. Accessed 17 January 2007.
- 5 On Lyly and incompleteness see also my 'Idolatry, Iconoclasm and Agency', 4.
- 6 See Scragg (ed.), *Euphues and His England*, n. 1, p. 159.
- 7 Paul L. Hughes and James F. Larkin (eds), *Tudor Royal Proclamations*, 3 vols, 2: *The Later Tudors (1553–1587)* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969), p. 240. See also Louis A. Montrose, 'Idols of the Queen: Policy, Gender and his the Picturing of Elizabeth I', *Representations*, 68 (1999), pp. 108–61, pp. 108–9, and his *The Subject of Elizabeth: Authority, Gender and Representation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), pp. 220–1.
- 8 See, for example, David Hillman and Carla Mazzio (eds), *The Body in Parts: Fantasies of Corporeality in Early Modern Europe* (London: Routledge, 1997), p. xi; see also Margaret E. Owens, *Stages of Dismemberment: The Fragmented Body in Late Medieval and Early Modern Drama* (Newark, DE: University of Delaware Press, 2005). Memory is discussed in relation to a fragmentary materiality in Jones and Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing*. The notion of the stable, unified early modern text has been dislodged

- by studies including Roger Chartier (ed.), *The Culture of Print: Power and the Uses of Print in Early Modern Europe*, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1989); Gérard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, trans. Jane E. Lewin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Julie Stone Peters, *Theatre of the Book, 1480–1880: Print, Text, and Performance in Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).
- 9 Jonathan Dollimore, 'Art in a Time of War: Towards a Contemporary Aesthetic', in John J. Joughin and Simon Malpas (eds), *The New Aestheticism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), pp. 36–50, p. 43.
  - 10 Tiffany Stern, *Rehearsal from Shakespeare to Sheridan* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), p. 65.
  - 11 Stern, *Documents of Performance*, p. 1.
  - 12 Cynthia Marshall, *The Shattering of the Self: Violence, Subjectivity, and Early Modern Texts* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), pp. 1–4.
  - 13 Some titles are abbreviated for brevity here. See Peacham, *The Compleat Gentleman* (1622), Sir John Doddridge, *A Compleat Parson: or, A Description of Advowsons or Church-living* (London: printed by B. A. and T. F. for John Grove, 1630), Samuel Hartlib, *The Compleat Husband-man: Or, A discourse on the whole Art of Husbandry; Both Forraign and Domestick* (London: Edward Brewster, 1659) and Stephen Blake, *The Compleat Gardeners Practice, Directing The Exact Way of Gardening* (London: Thomas Pierrepoint, 1664).
  - 14 Peacham, *The Compleat Gentleman*, title page.
  - 15 Thomas De Grey, *The Compleat Horseman and Expert Ferrier* (London: printed by Thomas Harper to be sold by Nicholas Vavasour, 1639), sig. 2Bv.
  - 16 The word is used in the following phrase: 'the same ... surseased and were lefte of unfynnyshed', Albert Feuillerat, *Documents Relating to the Revels at Court in the Time of King Edward VI and Queen Mary* (Louvain: A. Uystpruyt, 1914), p. 150, quoted in the *OED*. For the earliest use of 'finished', the *OED* cites Richard Stanyhurst's 1582 translation of Virgil's *The Aeneid*: 'at leingth kept he silence, with finnyshed historye resting', *The First foure bookes of Virgil his Aeneis translated; ... wyth oother poetical divises*, ed. Edward Arber (1880), p. 93.
  - 17 Anon, *Micro-cosmographie, or, a peece of the worlde discovered, in essayes and characters* (London: printed by W. S for Edward Blount, 1628), sig. H2r, also quoted in the *OED*. This book 'was published anonymously by Edward Blount in 1628, but was soon known to be Earle's work', John Spurr, 'Earle, John (1598x1601–1665)', *Oxford DNB*. [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/8400](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/8400). Accessed 21 December 2012.
  - 18 Edward Blount, preface to *Micro-cosmographie*, sigs A2v–A3r.
  - 19 Blount, preface to *Micro-cosmographie*, sig. A3r.
  - 20 Oliver Cromwell refers to articles which 'may tend to the completion of the business', *Letters and Speeches*, ed. T. Carlyle, vol. 2 (New York: Wiley & Putnam, 1845), p. 326; also quoted in the *OED*.
  - 21 See John Morrill, 'Textualizing and Contextualizing Cromwell', *The Historical Journal*, 33:3 (1990), 629–39; see also Patrick Little and David L. Smith, *Parliaments and Politics during the Cromwellian Protectorate*, Cambridge Studies in Early Modern British History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 8–9.

- 22 Sir Edward Dering, *A collection of speeches made by Sir Edward Dering Knight and Baronet, in the matter of religion* (London: printed by E. G. for F. Eglesfield and Jo. Stafford, 1642), p. 96; also quoted in the *OED*.
- 23 'Womans domestic honour and chief praise; / Bred onely and completed to the taste / Of lustful appetence', John Milton, *Paradise Lost* (London: printed to be sold by Peter Parker, Robert Boulter, and Matthias Walker, 1667), 10, lines 613–15. *EEBO*. <http://eebo.chadwyck.com>. Accessed 6 November 2012; also quoted in the *OED*.
- 24 John Milton, *The Doctrine and Discipline of divorce* (London, 1644), sig. A2r. *EEBO*. <http://eebo.chadwyck.com>. Accessed 6 November 2012; also quoted in the *OED*.
- 25 See William A. Dyrness, *Reformed Theology and Visual Culture: The Protestant Imagination from Calvin to Edwards* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 108–9; see also Naomi Baker, *Plain Ugly: The Unattractive Body in Early Modern Culture* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), pp. 17–19.
- 26 Baker, *Plain Ugly*, p. 19.
- 27 See Baker, *Plain Ugly*, p. 158. Farah Karim-Cooper argues that post-Reformation humanism advanced a gradual movement away from 'the notion that the body belonged to God', although this idea continued to inform 'cosmetic arguments', *Cosmetics in Shakespearean and Renaissance Drama* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), p. 36.
- 28 Miso-Spilus, *A Wonder of Wonders: or, A metamorphosis of Fair Faces voluntarily transformed into foul Visages. Or, an Invective against Black-spotted Faces* (London: printed by J. G. for Richard Royston, 1662), title page, pp. 1–2. *EEBO*. <http://eebo.chadwyck.com>. Accessed 8 October 2012. Baker notes that since 'Miso-Spilus' considers female 'nature' to be 'fallen and corrupt', this author 'grudgingly' finds cosmetic alteration that may correct this corruptedness to be "tolerable", even if he is not optimistic about the end results', *Plain Ugly*, p. 134; see also p. 158.
- 29 George Gascoigne, *The Droomme of Doomes Day* (London: T. East for Gabriell Cawood, 1576), sig. D3r. *EEBO*. <http://eebo.chadwyck.com>. Accessed 18 January 2009.
- 30 Thomas Tymme, *A commentarie upon S. Paules epistles to the Corinthians. Written by M. John Calvin and Translated out of Latine into Englishe by Thomas Timme Minister* (London: printed for John Harrison and George Bishop, 1577), fol. 156; also quoted in Knapp, *Image Ethics*, p. 62.
- 31 Rayna Kalas, *Frame, Glass, Verse: The Technology of Poetic Invention in the English Renaissance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007), p. 88. Kalas quotes Reginald Scot, *The Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584). The italics are Kalas's.
- 32 Kalas, *Frame, Glass, Verse*, p. 88.
- 33 Natasha Korda, 'Dame Usury: Gender, Credit, and (Ac)counting in the Sonnets and *The Merchant of Venice*', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 60:2 (2009), 129–53, 148. Korda quotes from Jan Ympyn Christoffels, *A Notable and Very Excellente Woorke, Expressyng and Declaryng the Maner and Forme How to Kepe a Boke of Acco[m]ptes or Reckonynges ...* (London, 1547); quoted in B. S. Yamey, H. C. Edey and Hugh W. Thomson (eds), *Accounting in England and Scotland, 1543–1800: Double Entry in Exposition and Practice* (London: Sweet and Maxwell, 1963), p. 126.
- 34 Wiseman, 'Popular Culture', p. 16.



- 35 See Belsey, *Shakespeare and the Loss of Eden*, pp. 36–46.
- 36 See Roy Strong, *Gloriana: The Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1987). Montrose cautions that in observing the ‘extravagant metaphorical language’ used to describe Elizabeth, we must maintain an awareness of ‘the nuanced and coy performativity at the heart of Elizabethan courtly culture’, *The Subject of Elizabeth*, pp. 106–7.
- 37 See Phillips, *The Reformation of Images*, p. 119.
- 38 Phillips, *The Reformation of Images*, p. 119.
- 39 Greenblatt, *Shakespearean Negotiations*, p. 64; Montrose, *The Subject of Elizabeth*, p. 221.
- 40 Gurr, *Shakespearean Stage*, pp. 73–4.
- 41 Anon, *Thomas of Woodstock or King Richard II Part One*, ed. Peter Corbin and Douglas Sedge, *The Revels Plays* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), 3.1.81–92. All subsequent references to *Thomas of Woodstock* are to this edition and noted in the text.
- 42 John Lyly, *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit*, in *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit and Euphues and His England*, ed. Leah Scragg, *The Revels Plays Companion Library* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), p. 27. All subsequent references are to this edition.
- 43 For a discussion of early modern physiognomy, see Martin Porter, *Windows of the Soul: The Art of Physiognomy in European Culture 1470–1780*, *Oxford Historical Monographs* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).
- 44 Kalas, *Frame, Glass, Verse*, p. 29.
- 45 Kalas, *Frame, Glass, Verse*, p. 52, and her ‘The Language of Framing’, *Shakespeare Studies*, 28 (2000), 240–7, 241.
- 46 Andrew Boorde, *The fyrst boke of the introduction of knowledge* (London: William Copland, 1555?), sig. A2r. All subsequent references are to this edition.
- 47 See, for example, a discussion of this subject in Baldassare Castiglione, *Il Libro del Cortegiano*, ed. Ettore Bonora (Milan: Mursia, 1976), p. 132.
- 48 Roze Hentschell, ‘Treasonous Textiles: Foreign Cloth and the Construction of Englishness’, *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 32:3 (2002), 543–70, 548. A later version of this article appears as chapter 4 in Roze Hentschell, *The Culture of Cloth in Early Modern England: Textual Constructions of a National Identity* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008).
- 49 Keir Elam, ‘English Bodies in Italian Habits’, in Michele Marrapodi (ed.), *Shakespeare, Italy and Intertextuality* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), pp. 26–44, p. 28.
- 50 Hentschell, ‘Treasonous Textiles’, 547–8.
- 51 Thomas Dekker, *The Seven deadly Sinnes of London: Drawne in Seven Severall Coaches, Through the Seven Severall gates of the Citie Bringing the Plague with them* (London: printed by E. A for Nathaniel Butter, 1606), pp. 31–2. All subsequent references are to this edition.
- 52 Hentschell, ‘Treasonous Textiles’, 548; the emphasis is Hentschell’s.
- 53 Hentschell, ‘Treasonous Textiles’, 548.
- 54 See Hentschell, ‘Treasonous Textiles’, 547.

- 55 Elam, 'English Bodies', p. 29.
- 56 Bruce R. Smith explains that the beard was an 'essential sign' of masculinity, *Shakespeare and Masculinity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 31. See also Mark Albert Johnston in 'Playing with the Beard: Courtly and Commercial Economies in Richard Edwards's *Damon and Pithias* and John Lyly's *Midas*', *English Literary History*, 72 (2005), 79–103, 79, and Will Fisher, *Materializing Gender in Early Modern English Literature and Culture*, Cambridge Studies in Renaissance Literature and Culture (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 128.
- 57 David Kuchta, *The Three-Piece Suit and Modern Masculinity: England, 1550–1850* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), p. 20.
- 58 Robert Dallington, *The View of Fraunce* (London: Symon Stafford, 1604), sig. T4.
- 59 William Harrison, 'An Historicall description of the Islande of Britayne, with a briefe rehearsall of the nature and qualities of the people of Englande, and of all such commodities as are to be founde in the same', in Raphael Holinshed, *The firste volume of the Chronicles of England, Scotlande and Irelande* (London: John Harrison, 1577), fols 96v–97r. EEB0. <http://eebo.chadwyck.com>. Accessed 20 April 2012. The allusion to Boorde as a 'lewde and ungratious priest' may reflect the fact that this writer had been a member of 'the Carthusian order at the London Charterhouse', but was 'dismissed from his post by papal bull in 1521', for being 'conversant with women', Elizabeth Lane Furdell, 'Boorde, Andrew (c.1490–1549)'. *Oxford DNB*. [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/287](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/287). Accessed 5 December 2012.
- 60 According to the *OED*, a now obsolete meaning for the word 'platform' as a 'drawing, sketch or diagram' was in use from around 1544 until the late eighteenth century.
- 61 Karel Van Mander, *The Lives of the Illustrious Netherlandish and German Painters, from the first edition of the Schilder-boeck (1603–4): preceded by the lineage, circumstances and place of birth, life and works of Karel van Mander, painter and poet and likewise his death and burial, from the second edition of the Schilder-boeck (1616–1618)*, trans. Hessel Miedema, vol. 1 (Doornspijk: Davaco, 1994), p. 281.
- 62 See Frances A. Yates, *The Valois Tapestries*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975), pp. 20–1.
- 63 Van Mander, *Lives*, p. 281.
- 64 Schmidt, *Altered and Adorned*, p. 14.
- 65 Armando Petrucci, *Public Lettering: Script, Power, and Culture*, trans. Linda Lappin (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), p. 45.
- 66 Petrucci, *Public Lettering*, p. 45.
- 67 Hamling, *Decorating the 'Godly' Household*, p. 58.
- 68 Hamling, *Decorating the 'Godly' Household*, pp. 58–9.
- 69 Greenblatt, *Shakespearean Negotiations*, pp. 63–5.
- 70 Satz, 'Attacks on Automata', p. 40.
- 71 Satz, 'Attacks on Automata', p. 40.
- 72 Satz, 'Attacks on Automata', p. 40, and H. Perry Chapman, 'The Imagined Studios of Rembrandt and Vermeer', in Michael Cole and Mary Pardo (eds), *Inventions of the Studio, Renaissance to Romanticism* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), pp. 108–46, p. 112.
- 73 Satz, 'Attacks on Automata', p. 40.

- 74 Clifton Olds, 'Jan Gossaert's "St. Luke Painting the Virgin": A Renaissance Artist's Cultural Literacy', *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 24:1 (1990), 89–96, 92; Johan Dambruyne, 'Corporative Capital and Social Representation in the Southern and Northern Netherlands, 1500–1800', in Maarten Prak, Catharina Lis, Jan Lucassen and Hugo Soly (eds), *Craft Guilds in the Early Modern Low Countries: Work, Power, and Representation* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), pp. 194–223, p. 214.
- 75 Chapman, 'The Imagined Studios of Rembrandt and Vermeer', p. 112.
- 76 Olds, 'Jan Gossaert's "St. Luke Painting the Virgin"', 93.
- 77 Olds, 'Jan Gossaert's "St. Luke Painting the Virgin"', 93.
- 78 Olds, 'Jan Gossaert's "St. Luke Painting the Virgin"', 92.
- 79 See Mary Ann Jack, 'The Accademia del Disegno in Late Renaissance Florence', *The Sixteenth-Century Journal*, 7:2 (1976), 3–20, 9.
- 80 See Michael Wayne Cole and Mary Pardo, 'Origins of the Studio', in Michael Wayne Cole and Mary Pardo (eds), *Inventions of the Studio: Renaissance to Romanticism*, Bettie Allison Rand Lectures in Art History (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), pp. 1–35, p. 19.
- 81 See Hamling, *Decorating the 'Godly' Household*, p. in 192.
- 82 For the dating of this panel see Hamling, *Decorating the 'Godly' Household*, p. 192, and n. 145, and Michael Bath, *Renaissance Decorative Painting in Scotland* (Edinburgh: National Museums of Scotland, 2003), p. 241.
- 83 See Jenny Stratford, 'Jean Fouquet. Paris', *The Burlington Magazine*, 145:1203 (2003), 470–3, 472.
- 84 George Chapman, Ben Jonson and John Marston, *Eastward Ho!*, ed. R. W. Van Fossen, *The Revels Plays Companion Library* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1979), 4.1.1SD–9.

‘The brazen head lies broken’:  
divine destruction in *Friar Bacon*  
and *Friar Bungay*

If early modern image-makers and spectators did not have a fully formed notion of ‘completeness’, how exactly did they understand works which were defaced, ruined or destroyed? At various points in this book I have considered iconoclasm as a productive mode of interacting with spectacle in which ‘new’ images are produced as a result of image-breaking. Does this understanding of iconoclasm as a transformative process mean that iconoclasm cannot contain ‘full’, total destruction, that the destruction of images always produces spectacle? Literary critics often understand early modern England as the scene of destruction, shaped extensively by waves of ‘revolutionary violence against the image’ stretching across the early sixteenth century until at least the mid seventeenth century.<sup>1</sup> Ernest B. Gilman, for example, argues that English poetry of this period is shaped by iconoclastic sentiments; similarly, James A. Knapp has written on a post-Reformation English ‘iconoclastic sensibility’, ‘iconophobic sensibility’ and ‘iconoclastic and iconophobic atmosphere’.<sup>2</sup> Certain scholars have suggested that early modern English writers mobilised iconoclasm in the defence of literary work.<sup>3</sup> Most pertinently for the present discussion, Diehl argued that in attempting to ‘reform’ the stage in line with a new, Protestant aesthetics, English dramatists engaged in an iconoclastic act of self-destruction.<sup>4</sup> There is, then, widespread agreement that destruction was important for late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century English culture. But what does destruction mean in a context in which completion is conceptualised as transgression?

To begin to answer these questions, this chapter will explore image-breaking in Robert Greene’s *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* (first performed c. 1589), which presents an instance of onstage iconoclasm in the supernatural destruction of a demonic brazen head, a quasi-magical figure that had been depicted in English literature since at least the twelfth century.<sup>5</sup> Set in the reign of Henry III, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* draws on the sixteenth-century fable that the historical Roger Bacon (c. 1214–92?) was a magician who made a talking brazen head which disintegrated because Bacon failed to hear it speak.<sup>6</sup> This legend circulated via the prose romance, *The Famous Historie of Fryer Bacon* (c. 1555), the

earliest surviving printed edition of which was published in 1627. In this prose romance, the head falls 'downe', and following the event of 'a terrible noyse, with strange flashes of fire', is found 'broken and lying on the ground' when the smoke clears.<sup>7</sup> In contrast, Greene's play shows the destruction of the head by a disembodied 'hand' wielding a 'hammer' (xi.74SD). In comparison with the prose version of the story, then, the drama centres more overtly on the iconoclastic means by which the head is broken.

Mark Dahlquist suggests that the onstage breaking of images in *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* is unusual, since the portrayal of the destruction of idols was prohibited under the terms of the 1559 injunction against the depiction of religious subjects in drama.<sup>8</sup> While Dahlquist is right to point out the sensitivity surrounding onstage depictions of image-breaking, he exaggerates the rarity of iconoclasm in early modern English plays when he says that 'the destructive act itself was very rarely depicted, discussed, or even referred to in the drama of the period'.<sup>9</sup> As we have seen, image-breaking is alluded to in *Campaspe*, and there are other examples of violence against images in plays across the period. At the conclusion of Philip Massinger's *The Picture*, for example, the Bohemian knight, Mathias, who uses a magical portrait to spy on his wife, Sophia, while he is abroad, declares that he will 'surrender vp' the picture 'to a consuming fire'.<sup>10</sup> In an earlier play, Anthony Munday's *Fedele and Fortunio*, image-breaking is shown onstage, as Victoria, her servant Allia and the witch Medusa, disguised as 'Nunnes', burn and 'prick' a 'waxen Image', which has also been inscribed with Victoria's name, and the names of spirits, as part of a love spell.<sup>11</sup> This act of ritualised image-breaking significantly recalls instances in which images of Elizabeth I were dissolved in corrosive substances and defaced with abrasive materials in ritualised 'image magic'.<sup>12</sup>

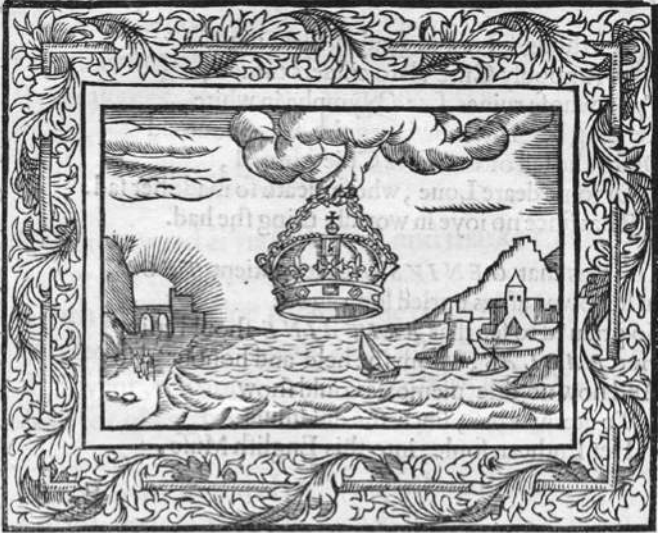
Violence against images of authority remained a concern in the early seventeenth century, as suggested by the example of Ben Jonson's *Sejanus, His Fall*, first performed in 1603–4 and first published in quarto in 1605 with significant alterations, according to Jonson's epistle to the reader.<sup>13</sup> Jonson appeared before the Privy Council 'for his *Sejanus*', accused of 'popery and treason', and Ian Donaldson speculates that 'the original acting text' of the play may have included 'even more daring and inflammatory material' than is evidenced by the surviving printed editions.<sup>14</sup> It does not seem coincidental that this apparently seditious play is so preoccupied with iconoclasm. Near the conclusion of the play, Sejanus declares that he will 'throw ... on the earth' the 'juggling mystery' of an altar bearing a statue of Fortune, lines taken by most critics and editors to indicate an iconoclastic moment during which Sejanus '*sweeps the altar clean*' (5.193–4SD).<sup>15</sup> In addition to this possible onstage display of iconoclasm, we hear that the 'head ... is ta'en off' the statue of Sejanus which is set up by the emperor Tiberius in 'Pompey's theatre' in the early stages of the drama (5.35). The head had been seen to be spouting 'smoke as from a furnace', and when removed,

'there leapt out / A great and monstrous serpent!' (5.30–7). Sejanus believes that the monstrous eruptions from the statue are an artificial 'imposture / To stir the people', but when 'a new head' is 'set upon' the statue, 'a rope is ... found wreathed about it', and 'a fiery meteor' is seen 'in the troubled air' (5.216–20). The alterations to Sejanus's statue align with symbols of supernatural intervention, so that the destruction of the sculpture echoes the destruction of Sejanus, who once was 'whole' and 'next to Caesar did possess the world', but becomes 'torn and scattered, as he needs no grave / Each little dust covers a little part' (5.838–41). Although it can therefore be said that Dahlquist overestimates the 'rarity' of iconoclasm on the early modern stage, the example of Jonson's play suggests the extent of early modern associations between subversion and the depiction of image-breaking.

*Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* is a forerunner to *Sejanus* in that Greene's play approaches image-breaking as a supernatural act. The onstage breaking of the brazen head is an apparently divine event during which '*a lightning flasheth forth, and a hand appears that breaketh down the Head with a hammer*' (xi.74SD).<sup>16</sup> A reading of the magic hand and hammer as divine is encouraged by the fact that disembodied arms were often used to symbolise divine action in emblems. For example, the first emblem in Henry Peacham's *Minerva Britanna* (1612) is dedicated to 'my dread sovereign James', and symbolises the king's divine right in the depiction of 'a secret arme out stretched from the skie' that 'in double chaine a Diadem doth hold' (figure 24).<sup>17</sup> Significantly, disembodied arms are also deployed to signify authorial intervention; the title page to Peacham's emblem book shows a hand emerging from behind a curtain to write on a scroll 'MENTE VIDE BOR' ('by the mind I shall be seen') (figure 25).<sup>18</sup>

If the disembodied hand could signal both divine and authorial intervention in emblematic contexts, then it may be possible to attach similar dual meanings to the breaking of the brazen head in Greene's play. In other words, supernatural image-breaking in *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* might comment on earthly processes of image-breaking as much as it reflects a divine position on the making of demonic automata. In this way, the supernatural iconoclasm in Greene's play arguably functions in the same manner as does supernatural image-making in the legend of St Luke, but with a reversal of the message of that legend. Where the legend of St Luke depicted a miraculous act of painting in order to legitimise pictorial representation as a profession, the breaking of the brazen head serves as a divine act of iconoclasm that recommends image-breaking as a means of interacting with visual representations. Furthermore, just as the legend of St Luke places divine 'completion' out of mortal hands, so *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* suggests that full destruction is the preserve of the divine. As a result, Greene's play recommends image-breaking as a mode of interacting with the visual world, but does not consider earthly iconoclasm to be capable of total erasure.

I . . . MAHDAE *Nisi desuper.* . . . MASTER OF  
*To my dread Sovereigne IAMES, King of great BRITAINNE . &c.*



**A** SECRET arme out stretched from the skie,  
 In double chaine a Diadem doth hold:  
 Whose circle boundes, the greater BRITANNIE,  
 From conquered FRAVNCIE, to \* THVLE sung of old:  
 Great IAMES, whose name beyond the INDE is told:  
 To GOD obliged so by two-fold band,  
 As borne a man, and Monarch of this land.

Thus since on heauen, thou wholly dost depend:  
 And from \* about thy Crowne, and being hast:  
 With malice vile, in vaine doth man intend,  
 T'vnloose the knot that GOD hath link't so fast:  
 Who shoot's at \* heauen, the arrow downe at last  
 Lightes on his head: and vengeance fall on them,  
 That make their marke, the Sovereigne Diadem.

\* Tibi seruiet  
 ultima Thyle,  
 Virgil:  
 THVLEM  
 procul Axe re-  
 motam.  
 Claudian .  
 Schecland .  
 et nautis nostris  
 nodie Thuleasel.

Διοτρεδες  
 βασιλευς.  
 Homer .

Basil: Doron.  
 lib. 2. pag. 2.

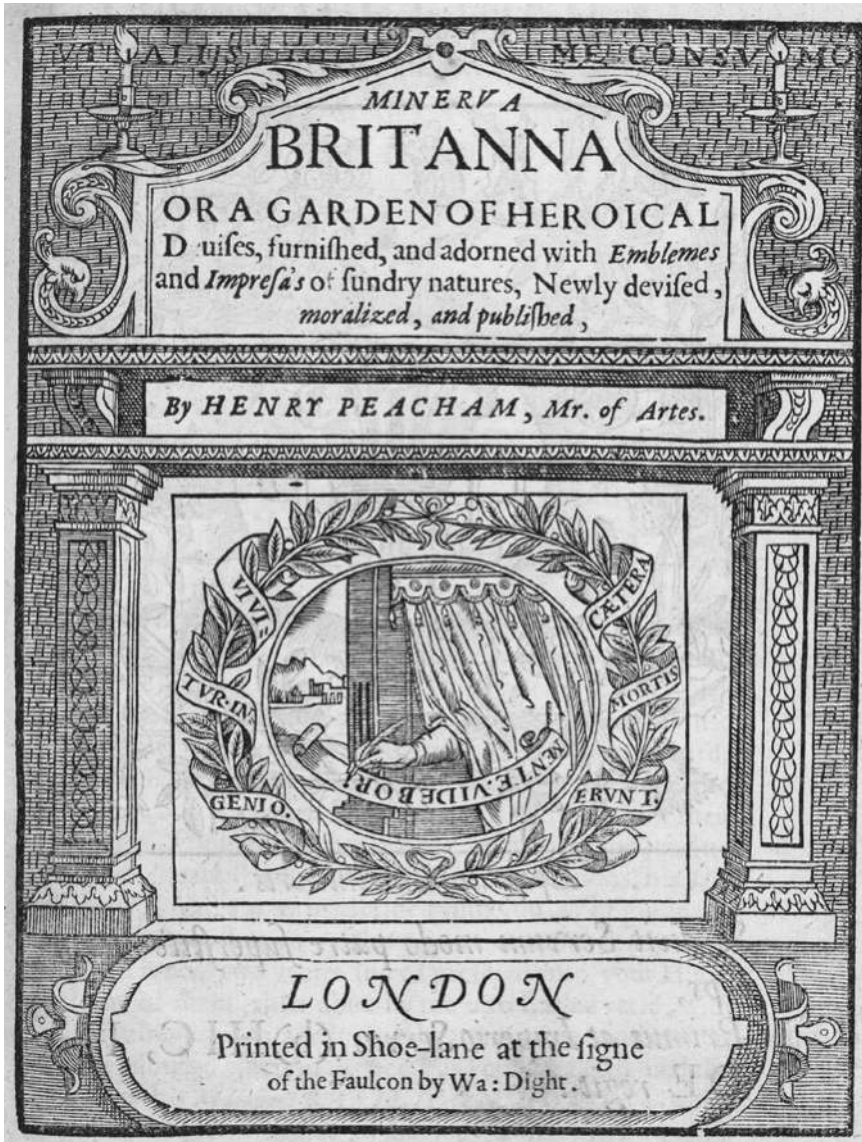
Nubibus ea duplici vincum Diadema catena,  
 Quod procul a nostro sustinet orbe manus:

Non alia te lege Deus (IACOBÆ) ligavit,  
 Quem regere imperio, fecit, et esse vitum.

24 Henry Peacham, *Minerva Britannia* (1612), p. 1

### Image-breaking as a means to an end

The observation that iconoclasm may not necessarily lead to total erasure is significant for studies of the early modern period, given the continuing influence of Collinson's view that early modern England moved from 'iconoclasm to



25 Henry Peacham, *Minerva Britannia* (1612), title page

iconophobia'.<sup>19</sup> In his discussion of iconoclasm in *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, Dahlquist adopts a modified view of Collinson's definition of 'iconophobia', understanding this condition as 'a fear of idols, usually associated with religious anxiety, such that the destruction of idols ... can serve as a ritual exorcism of religious doubt'.<sup>20</sup> In Dahlquist's view, then, Greene engages with image-breaking



as a means to spiritual purification via the cleansing erasure of idols. This argument also, importantly, hinges on the suggestion that iconoclasm in Greene's play sidesteps religious controversy because it is directed against technology, which was associated by many of Greene's contemporaries with 'atheism', rather than against idols in the sense 'narrowly identified with the Catholic Church'.<sup>21</sup> For Dahlquist, the cleansing role of technological iconoclasm in *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* is signalled by the relationship between image-breaking and the resolution of the play's love plot. This plot concerns a love triangle between Edward Lacy, Earl of Lincoln, Margaret, an innkeeper's daughter from the fictional 'merry Fressingfield', and Prince Edward (i.6). Lacy and Margaret fall in love when the former is sent to woo the innkeeper's daughter on behalf of the prince, who spies on the lovers at a distance using Bacon's 'glass prospective' (vi.5). We do not know precisely what this property looked like, but Ian Wright suggests convincingly that it is meant to be understood as 'a lens, probably in fact a lens-system, a kind of telescope', of the sort that may also be used in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*.<sup>22</sup>

A source of disorder throughout the play, the 'glass prospective' enables Prince Edward to take a glimpse of Margaret and Lacy's love that sends him into a jealous, tyrannical rage. A confrontation scene between the prince, Lacy and Margaret follows that significantly resembles Alexander the Great's confrontation with the 'loving worms', Apelles and Campaspe, in Lyly's play. At first, Prince Edward chastises Lacy, telling him that he 'canst not shroud' his 'trait'rous thoughts', since 'Edward hath an eye that looks as far / As Lynceus from the shores of Grecia' (viii.3–4). Bolstered by the experience of looking through Bacon's magic mirror, Edward here idolatrously envisions himself as a divine, all-seeing viewer. When Alexander is confronted with his mortal limitations in *Campaspe*, his humiliation is tempered by the deference of subjects who acquiesce passively to his orders. In *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, by contrast, Edward's order that 'Lacy shall die as traitor to his lord' is met with defiance from Margaret, who demands to be killed with Lacy so that their 'carcasses' may be joined 'in one tomb' (viii.89–111). Realising his limitations, the prince revises his position:

Is it princely to dissever lovers' leagues,  
To part such friends as glory in their loves?  
Leave, Ned, and make a virtue of this fault,  
And further Peg and Lacy in their loves.  
So in subduing fancy's passion,  
Conquering thyself, thou get'st the richest spoil. (viii.116–21)

This assertion of royal self-mastery echoes Alexander's similar conquering of passions at the conclusion of *Campaspe*. Edward's assertion of self-control marks one of the earliest signs in Greene's play that the magical spectacle with which

Bacon is associated must be rejected. The omniscient vision that seemed to be offered by the prospective glass is revealed here to be a source of distraction from the royal duty to which Edward now returns with purpose, announcing that he must 'go see and view my wife', Eleanor of Castile, to whom the historical Edward was indeed married (viii.148).

It is significant that Prince Edward's Alexander-like moment of self-realisation occurs midway through *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*. As Dahlquist points out, the love plot is not resolved until after the breaking of the brazen head and the 'glass prospective'. Playing on the metaphorical link between mirrors and self-reflection, Dahlquist understands Bacon's breaking of his glass as an act of 'interior' iconoclasm, 'figured as the natural playing out or the result of the primary worldly iconoclasm effected by God' in the destruction of the brazen head.<sup>23</sup> The need for this removal of idols is made particularly urgent by an incident in which two young scholars, Lambert and Sersby, 'stab one another' having witnessed their fathers fighting to the death 'within the glass' (xiii.36–71SD). Distraught at this violence, Bacon 'repents', and uses the 'poniard' that killed the scholars to smash 'the cause efficiat of their woes' (xiii.80–5). Following the destruction of the brazen head, the removal of the 'glass prospective' cleanses the national community depicted in the play, enabling the harmony of the final scene, in which Lacy is presented with Margaret alongside Prince Edward and Eleanor of Castile.<sup>24</sup> Although the climactic restoration of order rests in part on the presentation of these couples, Deanne Williams points out that Bacon's final speech emphasises 'singularity' in a flattering reflection of the status of Greene's monarch.<sup>25</sup> This flattery is made explicit when, at the request of Henry III, Bacon prophesises a glorious future for England ruled by Elizabeth, who is figured here as a 'matchless flower' and 'Diana's rose' (xvi.56–62).<sup>26</sup> Bacon is thus incorporated into the smooth operation of divinely ordered hierarchy, practising state-sanctioned magic 'for England's sake under the eyes of the king'.<sup>27</sup> Like *Campaspe*, Greene's play can be seen to use image-breaking in the presentation of characters' self-reformation and the evocation of celebratory Elizabethan iconography.

James Simpson suggests that iconoclasm is 'rarely a single or a containable act; it triggers multiple, further acts' halted only through 'stabilization' made possible by 'the erection of an alternative idol, an idol capable of disguising and disowning its status as idol'.<sup>28</sup> Following Simpson, it could be argued that the conclusion of *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* stabilises the wave of iconoclasm that it stages via the setting up of Elizabethan iconography as a 'new' idol. In the prologues and epilogues to *Campaspe*, audience members are invited to examine 'to the proof', and to rework like 'wax' the play that concludes with the projection of an Elizabethan 'idol' in Alexander's self-mastery (Prologue at the Blackfriars, 17; Epilogue at the Court, 18). In contrast to *Campaspe*, there is no surviving prologue or epilogue for Greene's play, although Philip Henslowe's

'Diary' records that a payment was made to Thomas Middleton in December 1602 'for a prologe & A epeloge for the play of bacon for the corte' that are now lost.<sup>29</sup> There is, therefore, no surviving evidence as to whether the audience were encouraged to rework, reshape or reimagine that which they viewed as were spectators watching early performances of *Campaspe*. Aside from the absence of prologues and epilogues for Greene's play, however, there is reason to suggest that the 'idol' set up at the end of *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* is far from stable. It is not clear that Elizabethan iconography was 'capable of disguising and disowning its status as idol', in Simpson's terms, since, as noted above, iconoclasm was directed against the image of Elizabeth.<sup>30</sup> Moreover, Dahlquist notes, the 1559 injunctions against the playing of religious matter were in part motivated by a desire to also limit 'iconoclastic Puritanism, which Elizabeth regarded – correctly, as it would turn out – as a serious threat to the authority of the English crown'.<sup>31</sup>

In addition, the technological concerns of *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* are not fully extricable from political contexts. As Jessica Wolfe has shown, new technologies, such as fantastical timepieces, were popular at the Elizabethan and Jacobean courts, and machinery could be used to support as well as to challenge state ideology.<sup>32</sup> It cannot therefore be assumed that the technological inflection of image-breaking in *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* creates a containing buffer against possible political and therefore religious ramifications. In this light, Greene's play associates unstable monarchic iconography with iconoclasm directed against aspects of post-Reformation culture implicated in Elizabethan government. The 'idol' presented by Bacon's climactic prophecy is too vulnerable to contain the iconoclasm of which it is the end product. Furthermore, the uncontainable nature of iconoclasm in *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* is in fact suggested by the dynamics of Dahlquist's argument. If Bacon's smashing of his 'glass prospective' is made possible by the supernatural breaking of the brazen head, then this suggests a view of iconoclasm as an instructive practice that encourages repeat performance.

### Iconoclastic *praxis*

As noted in the previous chapter, paintings of the legend of St Luke worked to legitimise painterly practice. This legend exalted visual representations as divine, but more particularly it exalted and exonerated the process of painting which it portrayed. Similarly, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* calls attention to image-breaking as *praxis* as much as the play encourages us to notice the image that is broken. As part of this meditation on iconoclasm, Greene considers image-breaking as an unending cycle in which spectators must participate if they are to avoid falling into idolatry.

Like *The Winter's Tale*, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* displays an obsession with

the frustration of spectator ability to 'do something' with images in the context of the production and reception of unearthly, inexplicable spectacle. For example, visiting Bacon's 'cell' in order to spy on Lacy and Margaret, Prince Edward is instructed to 'stand there and look directly in the glass' in order to view events in Fressingfield (vi.10). When Edward becomes agitated at the sight of Margaret and Lacy's love, Bacon orders the prince to 'sit still, and keep the crystal in your eye' (vi.15). Still more agitated, Edward threatens to 'stab' the couple and has to be reminded to 'hold' his 'hands' because Margaret and Lacy are not before him, 'it is the glass' (vi.127-8). Edward's misrecognition of the 'glass' for the distant spectacle that enrages him suggests the idolatrous function of this device in distorting perception and misleading the viewer, effects shown to be potentially fatal when the glass is used later in the play by the young scholars Lambert and Serlsby. It is important to note here that the scenes which Edward and the scholars view in the glass are 'true' within the 'reality' of the play-world; they see events which are 'really' happening in Henry III's England. The problem that the glass presents is that of how spectators should respond to seeing something which should be beyond their vision and which is not physically within their reach. The distortive 'fault' in this glass is therefore located in the way in which it allows spectators to see, rather than what they see.

When Bacon breaks the glass he does not engage in image-breaking so much as the breaking of the instrument that makes and mediates images. The breaking of the 'glass prospective' is therefore distinct from the breaking of the brazen head, since the latter constitutes a spectacle in itself, although these instances of iconoclasm can be seen as part of the same 'wave', in Simpson's terms. Importantly, the breaking of the brazen head is itself precipitated by an earlier act of iconoclasm against spectacle that occurs as part of a conjuring contest between Friar Bungay and the German magician, Vandermast. Vandermast is visiting Henry III's court in the train of the Emperor of Germany, and the competition is framed by Greene's nationalistic concerns, as Bungay boasts that Oxford scholars are superior 'to all the doctors' of the 'Belgic schools' (ix.17). The Friar begins with a spell that prompts the appearance of a 'tree' with a '*dragon shooting fire*', which is:

the tree leav'd with refined gold,  
Whereon the fearful dragon held his seat,  
That watch'd the garden call'd Hesperides.  
Subdued and won by conquering Hercules. (ix.79-83SD)

The spectacle that Bungay conjures shows the eleventh task of Hercules, in which this mythical figure was required to pick apples from the garden of Hesperides. Greene's play is here once again indebted to emblematic culture, since the Hercules myth was often depicted in emblem books and appears in decorative schemes from the period.<sup>33</sup> Given the presence of the fire-breathing

dragon, this tableau cannot be considered to be static, but it is a scene of relative calm on the precipice of alteration, since Hercules has not yet entered the mythical garden. Vandermast's response to Bungay's conjuring is to 'raise ... up' a spirit in the form of Hercules to 'tear the branches' of the tree 'piecemeal from the root' (ix.89–91). As the magical figure of Hercules tears apart the magical tree, Bungay's spectacle becomes the scene of supernatural iconoclasm.

Greene's preoccupation with the agency of spectators and image-makers resurfaces at this point as Bungay's limitations as a 'learned' scholar and conjurer are highlighted by his inability to halt the destruction of the tree (ix.101–2). Vandermast, in contrast, is able to 'set Hercules to work' and force him to 'cease' destruction of the tree (ix.103–33). Vandermast and Bungay are both outdone, however, by Bacon, who triumphs against the German scholar by casting a spell that 'binds' Hercules 'from yielding unto Vandermast' (ix.143). Bacon's authority is here centred on his ability to apply prohibition to the actions of mortal and supernatural agents in relation to spectacle, and recalls Paulina's prohibition on touching the image of Hermione in her 'chapel' in *The Winter's Tale* (5.3.86). In that play, a lack of physical contact with an image participated in the construction of Hermione's statue as a figure of 'unknowable' perfection; that lack of physical contact also signalled an avoidance of iconoclastic interaction. Bacon's prohibition on movement in Greene's play functions very differently, as the iconoclasm of the scene is continued rather than halted by the friar's interventions. Bacon triumphs in the conjuring contest by erasing the tree, Hercules and Vandermast from Henry's Oxfordian court; the demon follows Bacon's orders to 'transport the German unto Hapsburg straight', and transports the 'tree' offstage at the same time (ix.158–61SD). In *The Winter's Tale*, Leontes makes physical contact with Hermione, even though she remains substantially unknowable. In *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, by contrast, Bungay, Vandermast and Bacon conjure spirits and supernatural figures that interact primarily with one another. The spectacle of the golden tree is emphatically material; Belcephon-as-Hercules may 'tear', 'ruinate' and 'pull off' its 'sprigs' (ix.91–135). Yet nobody except for Hercules touches the tree, and physical contact with the spirits is, moreover, made only unwillingly when Vandermast is picked up by Belcephon-as-Hercules and transported to Germany. Bacon controls other characters' abilities to interact with that with which they are confronted, but it is notable that the friar also does not interact physically with the spectacle that he controls.

It could be argued that it is the idea of being able to control people and objects without physical contact that may have made Bacon's magic so tantalising for early modern audiences. The contest between Vandermast, Bungay and Bacon, for example, presents image-making and breaking as spectacular events occurring on a supernatural plain that is not accessed materially by the scholars of their own volition. At the same time, the presentation of supernatural spectacle

as beyond mortal reach demarcates that spectacle as alarmingly autonomous and self-consuming. The events of the conjuring contest therefore suggest the need for the divine iconoclasm directed against the brazen head, an idolatrous automaton designed to spill over into tangible earthly experience by consuming England in a 'wall of brass' (ii.41). The supernatural status of the hand and hammer that break the head therefore meets the supernatural level of threat posed by this item, as well as matching its hellish provenance.

### Making and breaking the brazen head

Like the carving of the supposed statue of Hermione, the making of the brazen head is a long-term project of 'seven years' tossing nigromantic charms', during which Bacon has 'fram'd out' the 'monstrous head of brass' (xi.15–17). And like the making of Hermione's 'statue', the process of construction has involved more than one figure; in this instance, Bacon is patron to the protean demon Belcephon, who in this context performs the role of artisan. The practicalities said to be involved in the making of the head are ambiguous, as is hinted early in the play when Bacon tells his fellow Oxford scholars that he has 'contriv'd and fram'd a head of brass / (I made Belcephon hammer out the stuff)' (ii.55–6). The use of 'fram'd' here especially adds to the difficulty of deciphering the way in which the brazen head is 'made'. In the late sixteenth century 'to frame' could mean 'to form, shape', when used in reference to a material object; the *OED* states that from the fifteenth century the verb could mean 'to make (something); to produce' especially 'by uniting parts together; to create'. As noted previously, 'frame' contributes to the discourse of divine creation, as demonstrated by an allusion to the moment at which 'God framed worlde' in 'The Historie of Englande' in Raphael Holinshed's *The firste volume of the Chronicles of England, Scotlande and Irelande* (1577).<sup>34</sup> Kalas points out that 'frame ... recalls God's framing of mortal flesh even when ... used in reference to human artifice or making', and was also used 'in a derogatory sense ... to describe accusations of supernatural meddling'.<sup>35</sup> The terms through which Bacon describes his framing of the head therefore draw attention to the idolatrous over-reaching of this practice.

Until the latter stages of the play, Bacon does not recognise the idolatry of his actions, and thinks instead that he is engaged in a pursuit that is philosophically and militarily useful to the whole of England. In this sense, Bacon's 'framing' of the head reflects the earliest meanings of 'to frame' noted in the *OED*: 'to do good, benefit', 'to be of use, value' and 'to gain ground, make progress'. This sense was current in Greene's lifetime, as during the sixteenth century 'frame' was 'used primarily as a verb to signify an implicitly beneficent activity'.<sup>36</sup> It is possible to speculate that Bacon's 'framing' of this magical object suggests his complicity in the advancement of the project, but not necessarily in material

ways. This speculation is further fuelled by the fact that, from the fifteenth century, 'frame' could also be used with an 'immaterial object' to mean 'to devise, invent, fabricate ... to contrive'.<sup>37</sup> Furthermore, the only figure unambiguously said to have acted materially in the construction of the brazen head is Belcephon, the demon employed to 'hammer out the stuff' from which the head is made (ii.56). Noting the ambiguity of Bacon's 'framing' and 'contriving' in comparison with the unequivocal evocation of 'manual labor' conjured by 'hammer', Todd Andrew Borlik concludes that the friar 'appears to claim credit for the head's design, but delegates the task of forging it to a diabolical agent'.<sup>38</sup>

Significantly, in *The Famous Historie of Fryer Bacon*, a devil is not involved in the initial making of the brazen head, which is undertaken by Bacon assisted by Bungay. In this prose romance, a devil is sought at a late stage in the construction process to consult on the animation of the head as a static object. Bacon and Bungay, it is explained:

with great study and paines so framed a head of Brasse, that in the inward parts thereof there was all things, like as is in a naturall mans head: this being done, they were as farre from perfection of the worke as they were before, for they knew not how to give those parts that they had made motion, without which it was impossible that it should speake: many bookes they read, but yet could not finde out any hope of what they sought, so that at the last they concluded to raise a spirit, and to know of him that which they could not attaine to by their owne studies.<sup>39</sup>

The nature of the 'framing' of the head undertaken is once again ambiguous, and the only physical action unequivocally attributed to the friars is the study of books resulting in the production of a brazen object that in form and content imitates a human head. Although the Bacon and Bungay depicted in the prose romance are magicians rather than sculptors, these characters resemble Pygmalion, in that they call on supernatural forces to achieve the animation of the 'lifelike' object that they have produced. In Greene's play, in contrast, when Bacon draws attention to Belcephon as a manual co-worker in the making of the head, that this work has been hellishly supernatural from the start is emphasised. In addition, Greene leaves unexplained the means by which the head attains speech, and so presents this item as a thoroughly and diabolically unfathomable work that resists mortal intervention.

That the head stands beyond mortal reach is most strongly emphasised in the scene in which it is broken. After seven years in the making, the brazen head is ready to 'awake'. Bacon, at this point, decides to sleep, and charges his scholar-assistant, Miles, to watch over the head, and to wake his master if the magical figure speaks. Miles, anxious about keeping watch over a demonic head by night, arms himself with weapons for the occasion. Shortly after Bacon has fallen asleep, the head awakes, and 'with ... a great noise ... speaks', saying "Time is" (xi.52SD-3). Miles is startled, but does not wake Bacon as instructed, and, declaring that he

will 'watch' the head 'as narrowly as ever you were watch'd', drifts off to sleep (xi.59). The head then speaks a second time, declaring: 'Time was' (xi.65). Once again, Miles does not wake Bacon, and the situation deteriorates:

MILES Yea marry, time was when my master was a wise man, but that was before he began to make the brazen head. You shall lie, while your arse ache and your head speak no better. Well, I will watch, and walk up and down, and be a peripatetic and a philosopher of Aristotle's stamp. [*Noise again.*] What, a fresh noise? Take thy pistols in hand, Miles.

*Here the Head speaks; and a lightning flasheth forth, and a hand appears that breaketh down the Head with a hammer*

HEAD Time is past. (xi.68–75)

Everything about this remarkable scene emphasises distance between mortal and supernatural experience. Miles's pistols seem utterly redundant in comparison with a disembodied, armed and aggressive magic 'hand'. Miles at this point becomes 'a figure of human resistance to the automaton', since he is unable to interpret the head's meaning, and finds the brevity and content of the head's statements preposterous.<sup>40</sup> Noting that Miles may have been played by Richard Tarlton, 'renowned for his ability to improvise', Borlik suggests that the scene endorses distinctions between 'humans and machines' through the juxtaposition of 'the automaton's laconic utterances with Miles' prolix soliloquies'.<sup>41</sup> While Miles's behaviour demarcates distinctions between what is 'human' and a hellish machine, Bacon's mortal condition is highlighted when he sleeps throughout the awakening and destruction of the head. As noted above, Bacon is initially associated with the over-reaching imitation of divine omniscience in his possession of the idolatrous 'glass prospective'. That Miles is required to watch the head because Bacon has remained vigilant for sixty days but is unable to stay awake any longer demonstrates the limitations of the scope of the friar's vision. The 'sleepy friar' Bacon has two mortal, blinking eyes entirely different to the single 'unblinking' eye that is depicted on so many early modern title pages (xi.103).<sup>42</sup> The divine destruction of the head is therefore facilitated by Bacon's mortality.

Significantly, the iconoclastic reach of the play extends not only to the magical, speaking head; the brokenness of the brazen head as idol is matched by the brokenness of Friar Bacon as a scholar who aimed to be idolised as a figure of deific power. Awakened by Miles to the news that 'the brazen head lies broken', the friar declares: 'Bacon, the turrets of thy hope are ruin'd down' (xi.96). In this broken state, and in his subsequent distress at the deaths of the young scholars, Bacon decides to 'end all thy magic and thine art at once' by breaking the glass (xiii.79). As noted above, Bacon's purpose in destroying the glass is the elimination of a disruptive mode of seeing, lamenting that 'this glass prospective worketh many woes', and that the 'glass' must 'fade' in order to 'end with it the shows / That nigromancy did infuse the crystal with' (xiii.76–83). The smashing




of the glass also means an end to the 'splitting' of the scene presented onstage. Wright points out that Greene was pioneering in *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* in presenting the effects of the 'glass prospective' as a doubling of the action, a 'play-beside-a-play'.<sup>43</sup> For example, when the actors playing the young scholars Lambert and Sersby look in the glass in Bacon's 'cell', the fight between their fathers that they 'see' through the glass would have been shown simultaneously on a separate part of the stage (xiii.26–71). When Bacon smashes the 'glass prospective', therefore, he ends playgoers' access to this 'double' spectacle, instigating a return to the more conventional limitations of the presentation of one location at a time. At this point it might be argued that the fusion of the 'split' scene into the depiction of a single location reflects the trajectory of the play's narrative towards the evocation of a distinctly Elizabethan 'singularity'. As noted above, however, that Elizabethan iconography is far from stable, and indeed suggests the possibility of future fracture by opening the way for further incidents of image-breaking.

The unstable 'singularity' of Bacon's speech participates in what Williams, following Paul de Man, identifies as the play's deconstructive insistence on 'doubling' that 'frustrates the fusion of sign and meaning by producing multiple signs'.<sup>44</sup> Williams refers to an allegoric and melancholic 'doubling' that is doubled at the level of the play's characters, with Bacon mirrored in Vandermast, 'a figure who recalls Marlowe's Doctor Faustus', as well as in 'Friar Bungay, the bungler'.<sup>45</sup> We might add to this list the doubling stage effects produced by the 'glass prospective'. In the next section, I discuss this 'doubling' as a display of brokenness and fracture that is shown to be revealed by image-breaking. The play therefore suggests that the corrupted fracture of the visual world is always present, although its corruption cannot always be perceived. Bacon may destroy the instrument which provides access to disruptive 'shows', but he does not destroy the 'shows' themselves, or the pretension to divine omniscience with which they are associated. Greene recommends that all that the viewer may do in such a context is to display and recognise the brokenness of that which they view. The play is therefore fully invested in image-breaking as a productive, image-making process that cannot contain total erasure. In *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, destruction that entails the removal or 'ending' of spectacle is therefore shown to be the preserve of the inaccessible, supernatural world of wholeness.

### Displaying brokenness

Earlier in this chapter I suggested that *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* is highly indebted to emblematic iconography. Building on this observation, it is reasonable to suggest that the play also draws on the modes of interactive reception encouraged by emblem books. To recall this briefly: emblem books require readers/viewers to piece together the verbal and visual elements of an emblem in order to arrive

*Merenti.* 24



**W**HEN Troian youth went out into the field,  
 With courage bold, against the Greekes to fight;  
 With \* naked Sword they marched, and their Shield  
 Devoid of charge, saue only painted white:  
 Herein the Captaine with his hand did write,  
 (The Battaile done,) some Ensigne of his fame,  
 Who had by valour, best deseru'd the fame.

Oh Age of Iustice, yet vnlike to this  
 Wherein wee liue, where *MOME* and *MIDAS* share:  
 \* In vertues merit, and th' inglorious is  
 Allow'd the place sometimes in Honours chaire,  
 Wherein Armes, ill; but worfer, Artes doe fare,  
 Times hast, be gone, with all the speede ye may,  
 That thus we liu'd, no after Age may say.

\* Ense levis nuda  
 pannaque inglo-  
 rius alba. Virg:  
 AEneid:  
 \* Virtutis Honoe  
 vberissima ali-  
 mentum. Valert  
 Max: de institutis  
 antiquis

*Falicitas*

26 Henry Peacham, *Minerva Britanna* (1612), p. 24

at overall meaning. In the emblem 'Merenti' (figure 26), in Peacham's *Minerva Britanna*, for example, the reader or viewer of the emblem arrives at a meditation on the desert of fame by combining the depiction of a disembodied hand painting a shield with a verbal account of a Trojan captain who writes ensigns 'of ... fame' on the blank shields of deserving soldiers once 'the battle' is 'done'.<sup>46</sup>

Showing a semi-blank surface 'under construction', this emblem usefully emphasises again the early modern association between beholding a visual representation and responding interactively to spectacle which is yet to be completed. This mode of interactive spectatorship was certainly perpetuated by emblem books and is likely to have been familiar to early audiences watching Greene's play. That *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* draws on a context in which spectacle is to be treated as 'under construction' is also suggested by the play's engagement with early modern technology. Most significantly, Kenneth J. Knoespel has shown that treatises on technology from the early modern period function like emblem books, requiring 'the reader to puzzle out hidden mechanical relations'.<sup>47</sup> Jonathan Sawday explains, for example, that in the illustrations in technological books such as Agostini Ramelli's *Le diverse et artificiose machine* (Paris, 1588), 'crucial' elements of the 'structure' of machines are not shown.<sup>48</sup> In addition to this illustrative incompleteness, machines are impractical, they 'simply would not "work" in the modern sense of that term'.<sup>49</sup> Following Knoespel, Sawday suggests that these incomplete, impractical diagrams were approached as 'visual exercises', in which 'the Renaissance reader is being educated in underlying mechanical principles, discovering the possibility of recombining the structures into new, and unforeseen, patterns'.<sup>50</sup>

Do these books of machines present an example of the deployment of incomplete images and text in recognition of the transgressive status of completion? That this conclusion is available is suggested by Sawday's comparison between early modern designers of machines and the poets described by Sidney as makers of things that never were in nature.<sup>51</sup> Certainly, the context of early modern machine books encourages a reading of Greene's play as participating in the strategic deployment of figures of incompleteness identified in the previous chapter. As noted above, Dahlquist finds that the technological nature of the idols in Greene's play limits the subversive implications of the staging of iconoclasm. In contrast, I propose that Greene plays on modes of viewing associated with early modern technological spectacle in order to recommend iconoclasm as an interactive, productive, non-idolatrous way of seeing.

Greene builds towards this recommendation of iconoclasm partly through an inversion of the dynamics of technological spectatorship. Where technological manuals such as that by Ramelli rely on interactive modes of reception, in *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* impractical machines that resist completion are often connected to inactive and therefore endangered spectators as users of these objects. Early in the play, the fool, Rafe Simnell, is disguised as Prince Edward so that the latter can visit Friar Bacon's 'glass perspective' and not be missed at Henry's court, which has also travelled to Oxford (i.97–101). The disguise does not fool other characters, and Rafe narrowly avoids being 'clapp'd in bolts' by a group of Oxford scholars affronted at his attempt to pass for 'Henry's son' (vii.91–4). As part of Rafe's faulty disguise, he and the prince's friends discuss

the construction of fantastic machines assembled from the parts of pre-existing objects and animals. Performing the role of the haughty prince, Rafe asserts that he'll 'have no more post horse to ride on', and declares:

I'll send to the Isle of Ely for four or five dozen geese, and I'll have them tied six and six together with whipchord. Now upon their backs will I have a fair field-bed with a canopy; and so, when it is my pleasure, I'll flee into what place I please. This will be easy. (v.4–12)

Rafe's idea for a flying, canopied 'field-bed' mockingly participates in the critique of early modern technological science that Dahlquist argues underpins the iconoclasm of Greene's play.<sup>52</sup> 'Artificial' birds were among the miniature automata popular in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries; in *The Famous Historie of Fryer Bacon* it is suggested that:

an Instrument may be made to flye withall, if one sits in the midst of the Instrument, and doe turne an Engine, by the which the winges being Artificially composed may beat ayre after the manner of a flying Bird.<sup>53</sup>

Other imagined machines combined technology and the efforts of living birds as a means by which to achieve flight. For example, in Francis Godwin's *The Man in the Moone: or A Discourse of a Voyage thither. By Domingo Gonsales. The Speedy Messenger* (1638), a Spanish nobleman flies to the moon in a contraption powered by 'Gansas' ('a certain kinde of wild Swan').<sup>54</sup> William Poole points out that although the machine described in Godwin's narrative 'may sound fantastical to the modern reader, it was less so in the late 1620s'.<sup>55</sup> In Greene's play, however, Rafe's idea for a flying machine registers as implausible, being a part of the fool's carnivalesque disguise. Indeed, the account of a geese-powered flying bed emphasises Rafe's grounded limitations, as he trudges through Oxford wearing 'boots' and riding a 'post horse' (v.4–14).

The extravagant flying bed is just one of a raft of fantastical modes of transportation and displacement imagined by Rafe and his carnivalesque companions. Drunkenly insulting the Oxford scholars who challenge his identity, Rafe exclaims that he is 'Edward Plantagenet' who, if displeased, 'will make a ship that shall hold all your colleges, and so carry away the Niniversity with a fair wind to the Bankside in Southwark' (vii.70–3). Since the play was in repertory at the Rose during 1592–94, this joking allusion to the transportation of Oxford colleges to Bankside emphasises the redundancy of Rafe's shipbuilding project.<sup>56</sup> The joke here is extensively directed at Oxford scholars, as later in the scene Miles compares the imagined vessel to 'Bartlet's ship ... / ... full loaden with fools', an allusion to Alexander Barclay's *The Ship of Fools* (1509), an English translation of Sebastian Brant's *Narrenschiff*, or the *Stultifera Navis* (1494) (vii.85–6). The anarchy implied by this allusion is reflected in the dangerous faultiness of Rafe and his companions' designs. Warren, deferring to Rafe as 'my good lord', offers to

construct a 'pinnacle of five hundred ton' using the 'cork' from 'old pantoffles' (vii.75–7). The *OED* explains that during the sixteenth century a 'pinnacle' was a small boat, 'often in attendance on a larger vessel'; Warren's suggestion of a hugely weighty, water-absorbent model of this type of craft reflects the turn of the dialogue towards the achievement of impossible physical feats. Addressing Rafe as 'my lord', Ermsby, another friend of Prince Edward, explains that he 'will have pioners to undermine the town, that the very gardens and orchards be carried away for your summer walks' (vii.79–81). The drunken friends' designs are anarchically unsustainable and impractical, envisaging the full-scale uprooting of Oxford University in ways that promise to leave its scholars in dangerous states of suspension. The comedy of these preposterous engineering projects is invested in brokenness, destruction and failure. Where early modern books on machines presented impractical designs for the furtherance of readers' technological capabilities, Rafe and his friends take the design faults of fantastical machines as desirable feats of engineering.

In his depiction of carnivalesque characters ignorant of the subtleties of early modern technological discourse, Greene also draws on a political function of technological rhetoric that is highly relevant for theatrical contexts. As noted above, new technologies were popular at the Elizabethan court and could be deployed to the advantage of the government. Wolfe explains that William Cecil, Lord Burghley, was the dedicatee of a number of scientific treatises from the period, including a work by the mathematical writer William Bourne on 'optical glasses' that was written 'especially for the Lord Treasurer'.<sup>57</sup> Wolfe argues that Bourne offers Cecil 'guardianship of his mechanical secrets', and thus enacts and justifies 'the political techniques of manipulating wonder, the error, or the ignorance of beholders'.<sup>58</sup> To support this point, Wolfe refers to the rhetoric of concealment and revelation in *Inventions or Devises* (1578), in which Bourne purports to reveal the workings of the Baconian brazen head 'that did seeme to speake' alongside other 'strange workes', such as 'a Dove of woodde for to flie'.<sup>59</sup> The brazen head in Bourne's account is a fathomable machine that functions like a clock, but which appears unfathomable to bemused spectators.<sup>60</sup> As Bourne explains, the head works:

by plummetts or by springs, and which might have time given unto it, that at so many houres end, then the wheeles and other engines should bee set to worke: and the voyce that they did heare may goe with bellowes in some truncke or trunckes of brasse or other mettall, with stoppes to alter the sound, may bee made to seeme to speake some words, according unto the fancie of the inuenter, so that the simple people will marvell at it.<sup>61</sup>

For Bourne, the function of a machine is dependent on audience ignorance of its internal mechanisms, and also spectators' passive acceptance of the impenetrable marvellousness of that function. In contrast, the comedy of Greene's

play functions in relation to playgoers' awareness of characters' comic, 'simple' ignorance of the workings of mechanical spectacle. Significantly, Greene's mocking display of ill-informed approaches to mechanical spectacle forms a part of his exploration of inactive spectatorship as a mode of dissident idolatry. This idolatrous dissidence is strongly evoked by Miles's responses to the awakening and breaking of the brazen head.

### Miles the idolatrous spectator

I have previously noted that Miles is a subversively comic figure who stands against the advance of machinery; this subversion can now be recast as a mode of wilfully inadequate spectatorship. When Bacon, exhausted by his conjuring labours, charges Miles with watching the head, he explains that the beginnings of the 'end' of the production of this item lie in the moments after the head has spoken:

This night thou watch; for, ere the morning star  
Sends out his glorious glister on the north,  
The head will speak. Then, Miles, upon thy life,  
Wake me; for then by magic art I'll work  
To end my seven years' task with excellence.  
If that a wink but shut thy watchful eye,  
Then farewell Bacon's glory and his fame.  
Draw close the curtains, Miles. Now, for thy life,

Be watchful, and – *Here he falleth asleep.* (xi.30–8SD)

Bacon's inability to withhold sleep in order to finish his sentence hints at the obliteration of the friar's work by means beyond his control that is shortly to be presented in the play. Up until the second that he falls asleep, however, Bacon seems in control of events, and is careful to point out to Miles that the 'task' of the brazen head will be incomplete at the moment that it speaks, hence the need for the friar to be awoken so as to 'end' his 'seven years' of work with 'excellence'. The material completion of the head as a fully functioning object is therefore dependent on Bacon's activities as a conjurer, activated by Miles's behaviour as a viewer. Miles has been informed emphatically of the interdependency between his watching the head and its reaching material, functional 'excellence'.

Miles ignores all of Bacon's instructions and forgets that although this is a diabolical object constructed by a demon, it cannot perform the expected philosophical and militarily defensive feats without intervention from Bacon. The young scholar thus mistakenly believes that the speaking brazen head is a completed object, and that its limited speech therefore represents an underwhelming achievement. Miles scoffs at the head's portentous declaration that "Time is":

Time is? Why, Master Brazen-head, have you such a capital nose, and answer you with syllables, 'Time is'? Is this all my master's cunning, to spend seven years' study about 'Time is'? (xi.53–7).

That the head may not be at full working capacity is acknowledged by Miles's decision to give the demonic construction a second chance, since 'it may be we shall have some better orations of it anon' (xi.57–8). When the head declares 'Time was', however, the young scholar repeats his disbelief that his master has spent 'seven years' study' to make a head 'speak but two words at once' (xi.66–7). Failing to wake Bacon at the crucial moment, Miles forgets, or does not understand, that the head at this juncture is not a finished work, able to 'tell strange principles of philosophy', but is still under construction and cannot yet progress beyond the semi-functional stage of speaking 'two words at a time' (xi.84–5).

Although Miles responds to the brazen head with a mixture of fear, disinterest and disdain, his investment in the head as a finished object constitutes a mode of idolatry. In the previous chapter, I discussed the 'finitude' associated with sacred objects, and the extent to which image-breaking is stimulated by perceptions of images as the perfect, finite and 'whole'. Despite everything that Bacon has told Miles, the young scholar resists recognition of the brokenness of the head as a semi-constructed item. Miles's comic admonishment of the head may demonstrate its limitations as a machine, but this attack on the automaton also betrays the young scholar's misrecognition of the head as something that might speak as he does. In other words, Miles indulges in the collapsing of type with prototype, berating the brazen head for not being sufficiently like a 'real' head. When the magic hand and hammer destroy the head, then, this not only prohibits Bacon's idolatrous, over-reaching designs, it also brings an end to the mode of wilfully disengaged spectatorship pursued by Miles. In this light, Bacon's breaking of his 'glass prospective' responds not so much to the actions of the magic hammer as to the idolatrous inaction of Miles as spectator. The diabolical extent of Miles's idolatrous outlook is suggested at the conclusion of the play. Cursed by Bacon to live as a vagrant haunted by a devil, Miles approaches the appointed demon as a 'friend' and requests (and secures) transport to hell, a place he has 'desired long to see', and where he wishes to serve as 'a tapster' (xv.33–44).<sup>62</sup>

Miles's comic failings as a viewer suggest that spectatorship that recognises and exposes the fractured incompleteness of spectacle is the only means of 'looking' that avoids idolatry. Just as Campaspe's portrait teeters on the brink of completion, the brazen head momentarily approaches completion before 'time is past' and it is broken by the supernatural agent. The destruction of the head thus seems to be a part of its completion, something which would have been emphasised across the play's repeated performances in the early 1590s by the material conditions of the performance of this act of magical iconoclasm.

The brazen head used in *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* may have been the same property that was used as the brazen head through which 'Mahomet' speaks in Greene's earlier, highly unsuccessful play *Alphonsus King of Aragon* (1588).<sup>63</sup> Philip Butterworth speculates that as a 'portable property' the head may have been carried on stage and placed on a post, or hooked to a post in front of a curtain, from behind which the magic hand might emerge.<sup>64</sup> Rejecting the modes of sound effect suggested in Bourne's account of a brazen head as too complex or even 'artificial' for the early modern stage, Butterworth suggests that the impression that the brazen heads in Greene's plays speak may have been achieved by ventriloquism, or a reliance on audience willingness to act imaginatively, 'compensating for any lack of precision'.<sup>65</sup> The performance of the brazen head was therefore dependent on the assemblage of spectacle and sound, on the part of either players or playgoers, or both. This potentially discernible 'split' in the presentation of the brazen head may have also been reflected in its appearance before and after its onstage destruction in *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*. The onstage breaking of a property must present certain practical problems for the theatre company if the play is to receive repeat performance, as this play did. Unless a new head was constructed for each performance, the property used must have served as the 'pre' and 'post' iconoclasm versions of this item. Was the head made so as to 'contain' breakage, perhaps splitting in two halves that could be easily reassembled? If the head was smashed onstage regularly, might the 'pre' destruction version start to show signs of this history of violence? In short, did the head appear damaged even before the hammer struck? An alternative mode of presenting the destruction of the head might have been to use two properties, switching the first version for the 'broken' head when 'hell' breaks 'loose' and the *lightning flasheth forth* (xi.74SD-76). Even in this instance, however, the brazen head 'contains' a split by comprising two different figures that try to pass for a single unit.

Playgoers might not be aware of the mechanical practicalities that contribute to performance, but the play repeatedly draws attention to the ongoing brokenness of the brazen head. If playgoers comprehend Bacon's explanation that the head is half-finished, then they know that when this item speaks, they hear the voice of a semi-functioning object. This much may have been further emphasised during the performance of the destruction of the head, as it is unclear as to whether the head speaks before, after or at the same time as the appearance of the hammer. The arrangement of the text in the 1594 and 1630 editions has the head speak the lines 'Time is past' after it has been broken with a hammer.<sup>66</sup> In addition, Miles tells Bacon that the head speaks its final words 'with thunder and lightning, as in great choler' (xi.92-3). It is therefore possible that in early performances the phrase 'time is past' was spoken by the head during the process of its destruction or immediately after it had been smashed by the hammer. In such an instance, the spectacle of the speaking broken head would have heightened



the finality of its destruction while also indicating that it was not fully destroyed. In deriving meaning from its own collapse and fragmentation, the broken brazen head would then reflect the late medieval 'iconography of disintegration' in depictions of idols, which has led Nicolette Zeeman to suggest that 'one of the central characteristics of the idol ... is its "brokenness"'.<sup>67</sup> Evoking a tension between finality and incompleteness, the broken yet still articulate brazen head parallels post-Reformation images that generate new meanings as a result of subjection to iconoclasm.

In the legend of St Luke, divine intervention legitimises the relationship between the image and that which it represents. In *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, supernatural intervention distinguishes the idol from the "'image," (*eikōn*), the truthful representation of an existing thing', by drawing attention to the brokenness of the idol.<sup>68</sup> As a false representation, the idol conceals the split between that which it claims to be or is taken to be, and that which it is. In early performances of *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, the brokenness of the brazen head may well have been made visible as well as being explained by Bacon even before this diabolical item became a victim of supernatural image-breaking. Similarly, the 'glass prospective' would have always displayed the brokenness of its perspective, even before Bacon recognises this. The dividing up of the scene that may have accompanied the staging of this property would have drawn attention to the incomplete brokenness of vision even as the audience enjoyed the spectacle of multiple displays of action. In breaking his glass, Bacon follows the play's supernatural iconoclast in damaging an object that has already been shown to operate through the containment of fissure.

Iconoclasm, in this view, articulates the deferential association between mortality and material incompleteness. Understood in this way, the difficulty of limiting iconoclastic behaviour becomes apparent. If we accept mimetic representation as based in splitting, through *différance*, and understood in relation to an inaccessible pre-lapsarian unity, then all signification contains the transgressive, broken potential of the idol. All signs may be idolatrously misrecognised in such circumstances. This is the fear which informed much Reformation controversy over the abuse of images, as governments debated the degree to which iconoclasm should take place.<sup>69</sup> Image-breaking therefore becomes a necessary tool for interacting with images, as spectators avoid misrecognition by drawing attention to the brokenness of that which they view. The total eradication of an image is thus contrary to the function of iconoclasm, since eradication implies that fractured incompleteness is avoidable. As noted in previous chapters, the avoidance of incompleteness is only possible within divine wholeness. An iconoclasm that achieves full erasure, avoiding the production of spectacle even at the moment of destruction, is impossible within mortal realms of cultural production. The unmaking that is involved in iconoclasm therefore risks becoming as conceptually transgressive as is making. It is against this backdrop that Greene

deploys iconoclasm as a means through which to repeatedly recall the ‘truth’ of spectacle. For image-breaking to constantly point to broken spectacle expresses deference to a perceived ‘whole’ picture of destruction beyond mortal fields of visual and tactile experience.

### Notes

- 1 James Simpson, *Under the Hammer: Iconoclasm in the Anglo-American Tradition*, Clarendon Lectures in English (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 83.
- 2 See Ernest B. Gilman, *Iconoclasm and Poetry in the English Reformation: Down Went Dagon* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986); Knapp, *Illustrating the Past*, pp. 78, 98, 119.
- 3 See Judith Dundas, *Pencils Rhetorique: Renaissance Poets and the Art of Painting* (Cranbury, NJ, London and Ontario: Associated University Presses, 1990), p. 91.
- 4 Diehl, *Staging Reform*, pp. 215–17.
- 5 Todd Andrew Borlik, “‘More than Art’: Clockwork Automata, the Extemporising Actor, and the Brazen Head in *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*”, in Wendy Beth Hyman (ed.), *The Automaton in English Renaissance Literature* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), pp. 129–44, p. 130.
- 6 George Molland, ‘Bacon, Roger (c.1214–1292?)’. *Oxford DNB*. [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/1008](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/1008). Accessed 9 September 2012.
- 7 Anon, *The Famous Historie of Fryer Bacon. Containing the wonderfull things that he did in his Life. Also the manner of his Death, With the Lives and Deaths of the two Conjurers, Bungye and Vandermast* (London: G. Purslowe for F. Grove, 1627), sig. C3r.
- 8 Mark Dahlquist, ‘Love and Technological Iconoclasm in Robert Greene’s *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*’, *English Literary History*, 78 (2011), 51–77, 77.
- 9 Dahlquist, ‘Love and Technological Iconoclasm’, 51.
- 10 Philip Massinger, *The Picture*, in *The Plays and Poems of Philip Massinger*, ed. Philip Edwards and Colin Gibson, 5 vols, 3 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), V.iii.213–14.
- 11 Anthony Munday, [*Fedele and Fortunio*] *The Pleasant and fine conceited Comoedie of two Italian Gentlemen, with the merie devises of Captaine Crack-stone* (London: Thomas Hacket, 1585), sigs C3v–D1r. *EEBO*. <http://eebo.chadwyck.com>. Accessed 19 December 2012; see also Elizabeth Williamson, *The Materiality of Religion in Early Modern English Drama* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), p. 51. O’Connor discusses idolatry and iconoclasm in *Fedele and Fortunio*, as well as allusions to iconoclasm in Thomas Dekker’s *The Whore of Babylion* (printed 1607), and Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher’s *Cupid’s Revenge* (1607–8), in ‘Imagine Me, Gentle Spectators’, pp. 370–5.
- 12 Montrose, *The Subject of Elizabeth*, pp. 176–85.
- 13 See Ben Jonson, *Sejanus, His Fall*, ed. Philip J. Ayres, *The Revels Plays Companion Library* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990), p. 52. All subsequent references are to this edition. See also John Jowett, ‘Jonson’s Authorization of Type in “Sejanus” and Other Early Quartos’, *Studies in Bibliography*, 44 (1991), 254–65.
- 14 William Drummond, *Informations to William Drummond of Hawthornden*, pp. 251–2,

- quoted in Ian Donaldson, *Ben Jonson: A Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 189–90.
- 15 The stage direction is an editorial addition by Ayres. See also Williamson, *The Materiality of Religion*, pp. 87–91.
  - 16 On the divinity of the magic hand and hammer, see Dahlquist, 'Love and Technological Iconoclasm', 68–73.
  - 17 Henry Peacham, *Minerva Britanna or a Garden of Heroical Devices, furnished, and adorned with Emblemes and Impresa's of sundry natures, Newly devised, moralized, and published* (London: Wa: Dight, 1612), p. 1. *EEBO*. <http://eebo.chadwyck.com>. Accessed 6 September 2012.
  - 18 Peacham, *Minerva Britanna*, title page. On the symbolic function of disembodied arms and hands in emblem books see Bernard F. Scholz, "'Ownerless Legs or Arms Stretching from the Sky": Notes on an Emblematic Motif", in Peter M. Daly (ed.), *Andrea Alciato and the Emblem Tradition: Essays in Honor of Virginia Woods Callahan*, AMS Studies in the Emblem (New York: AMS Press, 1989), pp. 62–3. Katherine Rowe discusses the function of disembodied hands in early modern drama in *Dead Hands: Fictions of Agency, Renaissance to Modern* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), especially pp. 24–110.
  - 19 Collinson, 'Iconoclasm to Iconophobia', p. 8; Dahlquist, 'Love and Technological Iconoclasm', 74, n. 8.
  - 20 Dahlquist distinguishes his understanding of iconoclasm from that suggested by Collinson, who identifies 'the number of images that are considered objectionable' rather than 'depth of fear as the distinguishing feature of iconophobia', 'Love and Technological Iconoclasm', 74, n. 8; Dahlquist refers to Collinson, 'Iconoclasm to Iconophobia', p. 8.
  - 21 Dahlquist, 'Love and Technological Iconoclasm', 55–9, 69.
  - 22 Ian Wright, "'Come like shadows, so depart": The Ghostly Kings in *Macbeth*', in Graham Bradshaw and Tom Bishop (eds), *The Shakespearean International Yearbook* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), pp. 215–29, p. 215.
  - 23 Dahlquist, 'Love and Technological Iconoclasm', 70.
  - 24 Dahlquist, 'Love and Technological Iconoclasm', 69–71.
  - 25 Deanne Williams, 'Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay and the Rhetoric of Temporality', in Gordon McMullan and David Matthews (eds), *Reading the Medieval in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 31–48, p. 44.
  - 26 See Allison Kavey, *Books of Secrets: Natural Philosophy in England 1500–1600* (Champaign, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 2007), p. 47.
  - 27 Kavey, *Books of Secrets*, p. 47.
  - 28 Simpson, *Under the Hammer*, p. 85.
  - 29 Philip Henslowe, 'Diary', in R. A. Foakes (ed.), *Henslowe's Diary*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (1961; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 207; see also Doris Feldman and Kurt Tetzeli von Rosador, 'Lost Plays: A Brief Account', in Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino (eds), *Thomas Middleton: The Collected Works* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 328–33, p. 330.
  - 30 Simpson, *Under the Hammer*, p. 85; Montrose, *The Subject of Elizabeth*, pp. 176–85.
  - 31 Dahlquist, 'Love and Technological Iconoclasm', 51.

- 32 Jessica Wolfe, *Humanism, Machinery and Renaissance Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 62.
- 33 See Ayers L. Bagley, 'Hercules in Emblem Books and Schools', in Ayers Bagley, Edward M. Griffin and Austin J. McLean (eds), *The Telling Image: Explorations in the Emblem* (New York: AMS Press, 1996), pp. 69–95; see also Hamling, *Decorating the 'Godly' Household*, p. 201.
- 34 Holinshed, *The firste volume of the Chronicles*, sig. 3A1r.
- 35 Kalas, *Frame, Glass, Verse*, pp. 86–8. The emphasis is Kalas's.
- 36 Kalas, *Frame, Glass, Verse*, p. 29.
- 37 See Kalas, *Frame, Glass, Verse*, p. 8.
- 38 Borlik, 'More than Art', p. 131.
- 39 Anon, *The Famous Historie*, sig. C1r.
- 40 Williams, 'Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay', p. 45.
- 41 Borlik, 'More than Art', p. 142.
- 42 Clark, *Vanities of the Eye*, p. 11.
- 43 Wright, 'Come like shadows', p. 216.
- 44 Williams, 'Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay', p. 47. William's essay is informed by Paul de Man, 'The Rhetoric of Temporality', in Charles S. Singleton (ed.), *Interpretation: Theory and Practice* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1969), pp. 173–209.
- 45 Williams, 'Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay', p. 47.
- 46 Peacham, *Minerva Britanna*, p. 24.
- 47 Kenneth J. Knoespel, 'Gazing on Technology: *Theatrum Mechanorum* and the Assimilation of Renaissance Machinery', in Mark L. Greenberg and Lance Schachterle (eds), *Literature and Technology, Research in Technology Studies*, 5 (London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1992), pp. 99–124, p. 110; see also Jonathan Sawday, *Engines of the Imagination: Renaissance Culture and the Rise of the Machine* (New York and London: Routledge, 2007), p. 97, and his "'Forms Such as Never Were in Nature": The Renaissance Cyborg', in Erica Fudge, Ruth Gilbert and Susan Wiseman (eds), *At the Borders of the Human: Beasts, Bodies and Natural Philosophy in the Early Modern Period* (1999; Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), pp. 171–95.
- 48 Sawday, 'Forms Such as Never Were in Nature', pp. 179–81, and *Engines of the Imagination*, pp. 103–4.
- 49 Sawday, 'Forms Such as Never Were in Nature', p. 179; see also Wolfe, *Humanism, Machinery and Renaissance Literature*, p. 237.
- 50 Sawday, 'Forms Such as Never Were in Nature', pp. 179–81.
- 51 Sawday, 'Forms Such as Never Were in Nature', p. 184.
- 52 Dahlquist, 'Love and Technological Iconoclasm', 69, 73.
- 53 Sawday, 'Forms Such as Never Were in Nature', p. 189; Anon, *The Famous Historie*, sig. C4r.
- 54 Francis Godwin, *The Man in the Moone: or A Discourse of a Voyage thither. By Domingo Gonsales. The Speedy Messenger* (London: printed by John Norton for John Kirton and Thomas Warren, 1638), pp. 22–5.
- 55 William Poole, 'Kepler's *Somnium* and Francis Godwin's *The Man in the Moone*: Births of Science-Fiction 1593–1638', in Chloë Houston (ed.), *New Worlds Reflected: Travel and Utopia in the Early Modern Period* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), pp. 57–69, p. 64.

- 56 See Seltzer, 'Introduction', in Greene, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, p. x.
- 57 Wolfe, *Humanism, Machinery and Renaissance Literature*, p. 63; see also G. L'E. Turner, 'Bourne, William (c.1535–1582)'. Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/3011](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/3011). Accessed 3 January 2013.
- 58 Wolfe, *Humanism, Machinery and Renaissance Literature*, p. 63.
- 59 William Bourne, *Inventions or Devises Very Necessary for All Generalles and Captaines, or Leaders of Men, As Wel by Sea as by Land* (London: for Thomas Woodstock, 1578), p. 98; see also Wolfe, *Humanism, Machinery and Renaissance Literature*, p. 63.
- 60 Borlik considers the brazen head in Greene's play as a clockwork device in 'More than Art', pp. 135–42.
- 61 Bourne, *Inventions or Devises*, p. 99.
- 62 Williams associates Miles's dissidence with this character's apparent liking for the 'verse forms of John Skelton ... the voice of dissent' who is 'associated with resuscitation of the classical past, radically reformulating it in the interests of cultural and political critique', *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, pp. 45–6.
- 63 Philip Butterworth compares the presentation of the brazen heads in Greene's plays in *Magic on the Early English Stage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 103–4. Although he does not focus on the material conditions of performance, Kevin Lagrandeur discusses both heads in 'The Talking Brass Head as a Symbol of Dangerous Knowledge in *Friar Bacon* and *Alphonsus, King of Aragon*', *English Studies*, 80:5 (1999), 408–22. See also Dahlquist, 'Love and Technological Iconoclasm', 67.
- 64 Butterworth, *Magic on the Early English Stage*, p. 103.
- 65 Butterworth, *Magic on the Early English Stage*, pp. 103–6.
- 66 Robert Greene, *The Honorable Historie of frier Bacon, and frier Bongay* (London: printed for Edward White, 1594), sig. G2v. EEBO. <http://eebo.chadwyck.com>. Accessed 13 December 2012, and his *The Honorable Historie of Frier Bacon, and Frier Bongay* (London: printed by Elizabeth Allde, 1630), sig. G1r. EEBO. <http://eebo.chadwyck.com>. Accessed 13 December 2012.
- 67 Nicolette Zeeman, 'The Idol of the Text', in Jeremy Dimmick, James Simpson and Nicolette Zeeman (eds), *Images, Idolatry, and Iconoclasm in Late Medieval England: Textuality and the Visual Image* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 43–62, p. 45.
- 68 Besançon, *The Forbidden Image*, p. 66.
- 69 See Phillips, *The Reformation of Images*, pp. 91–3.

## Going unseen: invisibility and erasure in *The Two Merry Milkmaids*

In the previous chapter I argued that total erasure is considered divine in early modern English thought. To counter this observation, it might be pointed out that early modern English playwrights are fascinated by the possibility of disappearing from the visible world, with the word ‘vanish’ recurring frequently in stage directions and related dialogue in plays across the period.<sup>1</sup> In addition, a number of plays present characters who become invisible on stage. In *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, Oberon, noting the approach of the lost lovers, Demetrius and Helena, declares ‘I am invisible; / And I will overhear their conference’.<sup>2</sup> The audience are invited to ‘see’ the actor playing Oberon as a character that is sometimes visible but at that moment cannot be seen by other characters. In Christopher Marlowe’s *Dr Faustus*, meanwhile, spectators are encouraged to accept that Faustus has passed out of visibility when Mephistopheles ‘charms’ him so that he ‘may be invisible’.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, in *The Two Merry Milkmaids*, the anonymous comedy that is my central example in this chapter, a succession of characters are shown passing in and out of invisibility by putting on and taking off a magic ring.

That playwrights and theatre companies chose to show the transformation of characters into invisible figures on stage is puzzling. It would surely have been possible to indicate that an invisible character was present in a scene without the need for a player to be shown on the stage in that role. This staging solution seems particularly viable when we remember the early modern audience’s supposed ability to ‘piece out’ the ‘imperfections’ of the spectacle with which they were presented. So why did theatre companies make such a point of staging invisibility? And how does stage invisibility relate to the concepts of material erasure that I have suggested were associated with divinity?

In answering these questions, this chapter follows to its logical conclusion my initial claim that early modern English drama is a part of visual culture. Plays in performance are visual, material representations, watched by spectators. The participation of drama in visual culture is therefore not confined to dramatists’ direct allusions to or depictions of visual representations. This chapter therefore differs from previous chapters, which have considered depictions

of the construction and destruction of visual representations such as paintings, sculptures and brass heads. In focusing on the portrayal of invisibility in *The Two Merry Milkmaids*, I explore early modern preoccupation with processes of visual construction in a play in which there is very little artisanal activity. Here, there is no representation 'under construction', except for the characters and the play-world that they inhabit. Since *The Two Merry Milkmaids* receives minimal critical attention and is to my knowledge never performed, it is worth beginning this discussion with an overview of the place of this play in relation to the popularity of invisibility on the early modern English stage.

### 'Bound about with the ring': popular stage invisibility

Critical neglect of *The Two Merry Milkmaids* is surprising given the play's impressive performance and publication history, which led G. Harold Metz to suggest 'that it must have been among the most popular stock comedies from the time of its original production until at least 1672'.<sup>4</sup> First produced at the Red Bull and at court in 1619, *The Two Merry Milkmaids* was revived in Oxford in 1661. Quartos of the play were published in 1620 and 1661, and an abridged version of Act 5 is included in Francis Kirkman's collection of 'drolls', *The Wits, or, Sport upon Sport*, published in 1662, with a second edition in 1672. The popularity of this play seems to have been connected to its comic depiction of the magic invisibility ring which first appears in Act 3, procured for the conjurer Landoffe by a 'spirit' (III.ii.262). The message from 'The Printer to the Reader' that prefaces the 1620 quarto, for example, assumes readers' easy familiarity with the events of the play, suggesting that the quarto has only been printed because of the circulation of 'false copies', and that the 'Author' had rather 'wisht' the drama 'bound about with the Ring'.<sup>5</sup> Kirkman's extract from the play in *The Wits* included the parts of the final act of the play in which Smirk, a clown, entertains the Duke of Saxony with a display of invisibility before overseeing a writing competition between the other characters. That the play was famed for this scene is suggested by the emphasis placed on this aspect of the plot in the titling of the droll as 'Invisible Smirk, or the Pen Combatants'.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, on the contents page, or 'Catalogue of the Several Droll-Humours', this excerpt is listed as '*Invisible Smirk, out of the Milk-maids*'.<sup>7</sup>

In its sustained depiction of invisibility, *The Two Merry Milkmaids* arguably marks the high watermark of a swell of depictions of and allusions to this visual state across the breadth of late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century English drama. In addition to those instances already noted in *Dr Faustus* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, both of which extensively influence *The Two Merry Milkmaids*, there are a number of depictions of invisibility on the early modern stage. In Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (first performed c. 1611), Prospero and his spirit Ariel both appear 'invisible' to the other characters marooned on

Prospero's island.<sup>8</sup> Richard Brome and Thomas Heywood's *The Late Lancashire Witches*, first performed in 1634, presents an 'invisible spirit' who wields 'a brace of greyhounds' and therefore gives the frightening impression within the play-world that the dogs are loose.<sup>9</sup> In James Shirley's *St Patrick for Ireland*, first performed in the Werburgh St Theatre in Dublin in 1639, the Irish prince Corybreus becomes invisible by means of a magical bracelet provided by the pagan priest Archimagus, an explicit reference to the deceitful, Catholic Archimago of Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*.<sup>10</sup> Corybreus uses the bracelet in a plot to rape a noblewoman named Emeria, and so invisibility is deployed as part of an anti-Catholic association between 'religious faith' and 'sexual violence', in a play that is otherwise markedly ambiguous in its attitude to religious controversy.<sup>11</sup>

Many allusions to invisibility in early modern plays mockingly associate this visual state with superstition and deceit. In Thomas Middleton's *The Puritan Widow*, also known as *The Puritan* or *The Widow of Watling Street* and first performed in 1606, the foolish Edmond is persuaded that he is 'invisible' when a wand is waved 'this, and thus, and again' over his head.<sup>12</sup> Elsewhere, invisibility is frequently referred to as a mode of disguise; always, in these allusions, the means by which one might become unseen form a part of the dialogue. In Shakespeare's *Henry IV, Part 1*, Gadshill declares that he and Chamberlain 'have the receipt of fern-seed; we walk invisible', to which the latter replies that Gadshill is more 'beholden to the night than to fern-seed for your walking invisible'.<sup>13</sup> In Munday's *Fedele and Fortunio*, surveying the methods via which Victoria might win the affections of Fortunio, the witch Medusa suggests 'an inchaunted Bean, / To make you go invisible', an option quickly dismissed by Victoria's maid, Attila, since 'if she be invisible ... beeing hid' she will not be able to 'enjoye' Fortunio's 'companye'.<sup>14</sup> In Barten Holyday's academic play *Technogamia*, first performed in 1617, meanwhile, in order to avoid being taken to 'prison', Magus arms himself, his wife, Astrologia, and the fortune-tellers Physiognomus and Cheiromantes with magic invisibility rings:

here are foure rings, there's each of you one, and here's a fourth for my selfe: put them in your pockets, and when your condemnation is pronounc'd, and they thinke to carry us away, privily slip those rings on your little-fingers, and then crie aloud Glassialabolas three times, and we shall all foure immediately become invisible.<sup>15</sup>

This plan unfortunately fails when the characters' pockets are searched and their magic aids revealed before they have had a chance to complete their spells. Holyday's play therefore associates invisibility with incompetent deception. Similarly, in Jonson's *Every Man Out of His Humour*, which was first performed in 1599, the possibility of invisibility is mentioned as part of a raft of unlikely, superstitious modes of evasion that Puntarvolo promises to shun on entering into a bond with the courtier Fastidious Brisk. Puntarvolo promises that he will not use:



the help of any such sorceries or enchantments as unctions to make our skins impenetrable, or to travel invisible by virtue of a powder or a ring, or to hang any three-forked charm about my dog's neck, secretly conveyed into his collar.<sup>16</sup>

These mocking allusions to magic invisibility suggest an intersection between the popularity of invisibility as a theme and comic scepticism about its credibility. In *The Two Merry Milkmaids*, invisibility is both a joke and very serious. Clown characters, including Smirk, are bewildered as they are ignored by all around them when wearing the invisibility ring; on the other hand, the young scholar Dorilus utilises invisibility to save his beloved, Dorigene, from execution on charges of treason. This mix of amused scepticism and investment in the efficacy and possibility of invisibility perhaps gives some insight into the nature of early modern audiences' engagement with this popular theme. Without entering into complex speculation regarding spectators' 'belief' in invisibility, we might tentatively suggest that since Shakespeare wrote mockingly of invisibility but portrayed it in two of his plays, it is possible that his audiences entertained, dismissed and mocked the possibility of 'going invisible' with equal measures of enjoyment.

Especially notable in allusions to invisibility in plays in this period is the emphasis on the material processes by which this state might be achieved. This emphasis coincides with dramatists' and players' enthusiasm for showing the act of 'going unseen' on stage. The constructedness of magic invisibility in early modern English plays can be explained partly through a comparison with medieval depictions of invisibility. The theatre companies inherited a tradition of stage invisibility from medieval religious drama, in which a number of stage mechanisms, disguises and effects were used to portray the inherent invisibility and miraculous vanishings of Christ. As Barbara D. Palmer explains, invisibility was portrayed in the mystery plays using six "'techniques" of invisibility': 'verbal markers', 'physical markers', 'prescribed and proscribed performance areas', the use of 'instruments ... to render actors invisible' and mechanical devices including 'winches, pulleys, traps, heavens, wires, other hoisting devices, and concealing devices, particularly clouds'.<sup>17</sup> The invisibility depicted in medieval drama is divine, as Christ vanishes having broken and blessed the bread in the Towneley cycle, or is rendered unseen in the depiction of the resurrection in the same cycle.<sup>18</sup> Divine, 'miraculous' invisibility requires no explanation, and so in medieval drama 'magical' objects are rarely invoked as the cause of the invisibility depicted.<sup>19</sup> In contrast, on late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century stages, where the imitation of the divine is forbidden, invisibility can have no biblical precedent or direct referent. The need to 'explain' invisibility as magical rather than miraculous arguably produces the focus on the making and unmaking of this visual state in plays.

The materiality of 'magic' invisibility in these examples is echoed in the

stage practices thought to have been deployed to convey characters' invisibility. Philip Henslowe's Diary famously alludes to 'a robe for to goo invisibell' that he acquired for the Admiral's Men in 1598, and many scholars take seriously the possibility that this type of cloak was used frequently in performances of invisibility on the early modern stage, including in *The Two Merry Milkmaids*.<sup>20</sup> We cannot be certain that the invisibility cloak was deployed in all instances of the depiction of invisibility. Such a cloak would not seem suitable for Ariel, ordered by Prospero to 'make thyself like to a nymph o' th' sea', and be simultaneously 'invisible' (1.2.303–4). It has been suggested that when dressed as a 'sea nymph', the actor playing Ariel wore a costume previously used by Richard Burbage as Neptune in Anthony Munday's *London's Love, to the Royal Prince Henrie* (1610), a pageant celebrating Henry's investiture as Prince of Wales.<sup>21</sup> If this were the case, it would suggest that early modern audiences were able to accept that they could 'see' invisibility when looking at a costume that might signify very differently in other performance contexts, or even within the same performance. For example, in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, when Oberon declares 'I am invisible' there is nothing to indicate that the fairy king puts on a 'robe' signifying his passage into invisibility, although we cannot rule out that this may have happened (II.i.186–7). It may be that in early performances spectators accepted that Oberon was invisible to the lovers in spite of the character looking precisely as he did at the moment before he became unseen. Notably, Oberon's verbally constructed invisibility is still material, in that the audience imagine the fairy king to be unseen while still watching the body and gestures of the actor who plays this role. In this way, the depiction of unseen characters echoes the 'gross materiality' of immaterial beings such as ghosts on the early modern stage.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, the example of Oberon's invisibility highlights the extent to which the material invisibility of early modern English plays is invested in engaging audience members in the construction of an imagined visual plain to which only they and the invisible character have access. Spectators watching *A Midsummer Night's Dream* are not invited to imagine that they cannot see Oberon; instead, they are encouraged to imagine that the lovers cannot see the fairy king that they can see. In this way, invisibility in early modern English plays is insistently visual as well as material, drawing meaning from the fact that unseen characters are always seen by an audience who also sees the moment of passage into a supposed state of invisibility.

While it may be fair to say that invisibility on the early modern stage is always 'on display' as a material state, it should be pointed out that this display usually evades absolute clarity. Much like the brazen head in *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, the making of the items which in turn 'make' invisibility is often obscured. In *The Two Merry Milkmaids* the magic ring is brought to Landoffe by a spirit from an unspecified location; earlier in the play, reading from Landoffe's 'Bookes', Bernard refers to 'Asmody, a great King' who 'giveth the Ring of Vertues' and 'maketh a man invisible' (I.i.8SD–53).<sup>23</sup> In the 1616 edition of *Dr Faustus*

Mephistopheles uses a 'girdle' to turn Faustus invisible; this item is presumably fetched from hell, and there is nothing to indicate that its making formed part of the dramatic action (B-text; III.ii.17). In *The Tempest*, Prospero's magic invisibility derives from years of 'secret studies' while Duke of Milan, and 'volumes' from his 'library', with which he was 'furnished' by Gonzalo when the latter was charged with ejecting Prospero and Miranda from Milan (1.1.161–8). The origins and content of these books, and also the origins of Prospero's magic staff, are not specified. Prospero's 'rough magic', however, is explicitly associated with necromancy, as by his own admission, 'graves' at his 'command / Have wak'd their sleepers, ope'd and let 'em forth' (5.1.48–50). Invisibility emerges therefore as a feat achievable through the sort of black magic condemned in Reginald Scot's *Discovery of Witchcraft* (1584), which provides the major source for much of the magic described by Bernard as he snoops through his master's books and papers in Act 1 of *The Two Merry Milkmaids*.<sup>24</sup> It is also worth recalling at this point that Belcephon's hammering of the brazen head in *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* is described rather than presented onstage in that play. Playwrights show characters such as Prospero and Faustus drawing magic circles and saying spells onstage, but the making of girdles, rings and staffs used in such necromantic practices is perhaps too sensitive to be shown in performance.

The ambiguity surrounding magic properties in these plays draws on a context of popular magic and superstition which combines the open wearing and exchange of charms with an investment in concealment and secrecy. The healing properties of minerals are explored in Pliny the Elder's *Historia naturalis*, a popular text in the early modern period, printed fifty-five times between 1469 and 1600.<sup>25</sup> 'Natural' stones such as the toadstone, which are actually 'the palatal tooth of a fossil fish', were highly popular in early modern England.<sup>26</sup> Jewels bearing such stones were often 'inscribed with talismanic incantations'.<sup>27</sup> Elizabeth I, for example, 'had the magic words *IESUS AUTEM* (Luke 4:30) inscribed on a ring' given to the Earl of Essex as protection 'from thieves when travelling'.<sup>28</sup> The popularity of 'healing' charms made using poisons such as arsenic was such that in 1603–4 the physician Francis Herring wrote against their use, firstly in a pamphlet advising on how to ward against the plague, and secondly in *A Modest Defence of the Caveat Given to the Wearers of impoisoned Amulets, as Preservatiues from the Plague*.<sup>29</sup> Herring's concerns centred on the fact that medicinal charms were worn close to the skin 'to allow ... magical powers to pass freely'.<sup>30</sup> Herring suspected that an amulet containing arsenic, 'worne next the skin' could secrete 'venimous vapours' which could be inhaled by wearers, or which would 'penetrate' their bodies.<sup>31</sup> Herring's advice was published 'for the behoof of the City of London', and highlights the extent to which the wearing of amulets straddles boundaries between 'public' behaviour and private, concealed practices.<sup>32</sup> Although open to public discourse and dispute in the form of Herring's printed text, amulets were considered most effective when placed



27 Signet ring with a fragment of bone set in the reverse of the bezel (1600–50), © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

next to the skin, and were therefore often concealed beneath clothing. The need for the talisman to be close to the skin also occasioned its concealment within some jewels. For example, a *memento mori* ring, dated to 1600–50 and now in the Victoria and Albert Museum London, is engraved with the words ‘EDWARD X COPE’, and has a fragment of bone set in the reverse of the bezel so that this would be worn next to the finger (figure 27).

Similarly, the logic of concealment is an integral part of the obscure but popular practice of hiding items of clothing in walls, chimneys, under floorboards and near doorways and windows, possibly as part of rituals designed to protect buildings and their occupants from evil spirits.<sup>33</sup> There is no contemporary documentation about this practice, a fact that Dinah Eastop speculates may be partly because secrecy added to the efficacy of any protective magic activated by the concealment.<sup>34</sup>

Veiled in secrecy, suppression and controversy in early modern life, talismanic and magic objects in early modern plays are not highly visible or carefully defined as functional objects. For example, in early modern England, rings given as gifts sometimes did not fit; in such situations, a ring might be 'worn elsewhere – on the hat, ruff, ears and on the sleeve', or secured with a chain or piece of string attached to the wrist.<sup>35</sup> In *The Two Merry Milkmaids*, however, the ring is alluded to as worn upon the finger, as in the final Act of the play, where Smirk states 'I will not lose this finger that I have the ring upon' (5.1.118–19); earlier in the drama, Dorilus loses the ring when it falls from his 'hand' while he is 'plucking off' a 'glove' (3.3.554–5). Whether or not the jewel fits the wearer's finger is not at issue in this play, as none of the characters that wears it comments on this subject. Furthermore, the ring in *The Two Merry Milkmaids* does not betray its magical properties through visual signs or inscriptions; hence the ignorance of wearers when they initially encounter the jewel. For example, spying the ring, Frederick surmises only that it is 'very pleasing ... unto the eye', and that 'some Lady lost it', or that 'it may be / Twas lost a purpose and here dropt for me' (4.2.592–5). Spectators in playhouses would of course not be able to see tiny inscriptions on jewels shown on stage, but this does not preclude characters from referring to such inscriptions. What is said about the appearance of the ring is tellingly ambiguous. Frederick is able to find the jewel on the ground and to appreciate its aesthetic appearance, but when the Spirit first gives the jewel to Landoffe, its invisible powers are said to be echoed in its matter and appearance:

here is the Ring  
Transparent as the day, that makes the wearer  
Lost to all sight. (3.2.256–8)

The ring is itself thus barely visible. Landoffe refers to the jewel as a 'little ring', 'purer than Christall' and 'full of subtiller flame / Then that which sparkles in the Diamond' (3.2.271–3). We might surmise that this tiny ring was not seen as such by the audience, although at indoor performances at court, or in Oxford in the 1660s, the jewel used in the performance may have glistened in the candlelight, or, at outdoor performances, caught the sunlight. Just as invisibility enables characters to be hidden from view, so the transparency of the ring can be seen as a mode of visual suppression. This interpretation is encouraged by the fact that the ring is not only transparent, but also, when worn by Dorilus, must

have been hidden by the glove which is removed at the point at which he loses the jewel. The visual suppression of the ring is echoed in its presentation as an object that circulates amongst closed communities, since much of the humour of this play derives from Frederick and Smirk's accidental acquisition of the jewel as an object that had been intended for use by Dorilus under Landoffe's instruction. Notably, *The Two Merry Milkmaids* concludes with further obfuscation of the provenance of the ring, as Landoffe tells the inquisitive Duke that 'at some fitter time' he will 'acquaint' him with 'the passages', presumably from his magic books, that will explain 'how, and the cause for what it was intended' (5.1.201–3).

Although ambiguous accounts of the appearance of the 'little ring' in *The Two Merry Milkmaids* indicate that the sight of the jewel may not have been emphasised in early performances of the play, that characters put on and remove the ring and so pass back and forth from visibility is central to the anonymous playwright's depiction of invisibility. The temporal, material nature of invisibility in early modern English drama demarcates these depictions as renderings of 'unseen' rather than invisible figures. The term 'invisible' does not accurately describe the invisibility of characters such as Prospero and Faustus, although this is the term that playwrights often use. The earliest adjectival sense of 'invisible' mentioned in the *OED* denotes that which 'cannot be seen; that by its nature is not an object of sight', and the example given of this usage is in Richard Rolle's *Pricke of Conscience* (1340), which describes 'How God invisible es, And unchangeable, and endles'.<sup>36</sup> Prospero, Faustus, Dorilus, Smirk and Frederick are 'by nature' objects of sight, and so, unlike God, are not inherently invisible. Instead, characters are 'unseen', a state that, Jean-Luc Marion suggests, 'falls under the jurisdiction of the invisible, but it should not be confused with it, since it is able to transgress it precisely by becoming visible'.<sup>37</sup> The unseen can be seen, 'appearing in the visible'; in contrast, 'the invisible remains forever as such'.<sup>38</sup> It is the material temporality of invisibility in these plays that distinguishes such portrayals of the unseen from divine, limitless and unending invisibility. Significantly, in *The Two Merry Milkmaids*, the invisibility ring is itself said to be only temporarily functional, since the spirit who brings Landoffe the ring tells the conjurer that 'when so ere / It is your pleasure it shall loose its virtue' he must touch the ring 'with this herbe and it fals in peeces' (3.2.259–61). The magic of the unseen is thus emphatically a part of the fractured material world.

The materiality of the invisible character marks the meeting point between dramatists' deference to God as invisible maker, and their engagements with modes of spectatorship which replicate divine omniscience. God's endless invisibility is linked to his omniscience, since being everywhere at all times means being observer of all at all times. The fantasy of being 'all-seeing' significantly influences early modern allusions to and depictions of the unseen. The conjurer Landoffe does not wear the ring himself, but is able, along with audience

members, to see all who wear it 'and walke invisible' (3.2.257). Invisibility is associated with special powers of discernment in other plays; in George Chapman's *Monsieur D'Olive*, for example, the foolish gallant of the title boasts to the King of France that while living in squalid obscurity with a 'poore rooffe, or a paint-house / To shade me from the Sunne', he thought himself 'as private as I had King Gyges Ring / And could have gone invisible, yet saw all / That past our states rough Sea both neere and farre'.<sup>39</sup> The differences between God's inherent invisibility as omniscient viewer of 'all' and invisibility as an earthly disguise are confronted in an allusion to invisibility in Robert Greene's *The Tragedy of Selimus, Emperour of the Turkes* (1594). Here, the tyrannical Selimus wants to eliminate his brother Corcut, whom he considers to be one of his 'corrivals in the crown'; Corcut is therefore forced into hiding in disguise as a shepherd.<sup>40</sup> Betrayed by a servant, Corcut is brought before Selimus, who tells his brother 'we thought you had old Gyges' wondrous ring, / That so you were invisible to us' (22.30–1). As Katharine Eisaman Maus has shown, the legend of Gyges was a well-known classical myth in the early modern period which spoke directly to Reformation anxieties about the reliability of external appearances.<sup>41</sup> The legend of Gyges is told in Book 2 of Plato's *Republic* and Cicero's *De Officiis*. In *The Republic*, Glaucon explains that Gyges:

was a shepherd in the service of the Lydian ruler of the time, when a heavy rain-storm occurred and an earthquake cracked open the land ... a chasm appeared in the region where he was pasturing his flocks. He was fascinated by the sight, and went down into the chasm and saw there, as the story goes, among other artefacts, a bronze horse, which was hollow and had windows set in it; he stooped and looked in through the windows and saw a corpse inside, which seemed to be that of a giant. The corpse was naked, but had a golden ring on one finger; he took the ring off the finger and left. Now the shepherds used to meet once a month to keep the king informed about his flocks, and our protagonist came to the meeting wearing the ring. He was sitting down among the others, and happened to twist the ring's bezel in the direction of his body, towards the inner part of his hand. When he did this, he became invisible to his neighbours ... he eventually found out that turning the bezel inwards made him invisible and turning it outwards made him visible. As soon as he realized this, he arranged to be one of the delegates to the king; once he was inside the palace, he seduced the king's wife and with her help assaulted and killed the king, and so took possession of the throne.<sup>42</sup>

As Maus observes, the magic ring allows Gyges 'a shocking liberty from the prescriptions of his social role', enabling him to commit regicide and to move rapidly from shepherd to King of Lydia and to therefore disrupt 'fundamental social relationships'.<sup>43</sup> The fatal and subversive uses to which the ring is put are reflected in the disturbingly 'uncanny and perhaps unethical means' by which Gyges acquires the object, taking it from a corpse concealed inside an artificial construction, in 'a space trauma has made newly accessible'.<sup>44</sup> Gyges's invisibil-

ity is therefore rooted in an original disruption of natural order that makes available to human use magical objects concealed deeply within the subterranean chambers of a 'more than human' body.<sup>45</sup> It is unsurprising that in Greene's play, Selimus, a paranoid despot who has himself committed regicide by killing his own father, associates Corcut's previous unseen state with an agency born of and threatening to social and natural order.

In contrast to Gyges, however, Corcut's experience of being unseen while disguised as a shepherd leads him to a spiritual revelation that would have appealed to an early modern Christian audience. Before he is put to death on his brother's orders, Corcut reveals:

Since my vain flight from fair Magnesia,  
 Selim, I have conversed with Christians  
 And learned of them the way to save my soul  
 And 'pease the anger of the highest God.  
 'Tis he that made this pure crystalline vault  
 Which hangeth over our unhappy heads.  
 From thence he doth behold each sinner's fault,  
 And though our sins under our feet he treads  
 And for a while seems for to wink at us,  
 It is but to recall us from our ways. (22.49–58)

While occupying the position of Gyges, concealed from his monarch, Corcut has come to understand the 'true', limitless invisibility of God, as distinct from the magic, material and deceitful invisibility recognised by the corrupt and irreligious Selimus.<sup>46</sup>

In his portrayal of Corcut's attainment of clarity of understanding, Greene engages with a popular contemporary interpretation of the Gyges legend. Maus notes that in Haggard's account, Gyges 'sees everything' when wearing the ring, and thus acquires 'special powers of discernment' not mentioned in the classical texts.<sup>47</sup> This is similarly the case in Nicholas Grimald's translation of Cicero, also printed in 1556, in which it is said that when Gyges 'had turned the hed of that ring toward the paulme of his hand: he was seene of nobodie, yet he sawe everie thing'.<sup>48</sup> As Maus suggests, early modern appropriations of the Gyges myth afford invisible viewers supernatural levels of agency that rival God as 'divine witness'.<sup>49</sup> Returning to *The Two Merry Milkmaids*, however, we may find that this agency is not used for corrupted ends, as in the Gyges legend, but is deployed to interrogate the corruption of visual experience that Gyges represents.

### **'Her Angel's voice': unseen agents in *The Two Merry Milkmaids***

In *The Two Merry Milkmaids*, visual appearances are frequently distorted and manipulated. Dorigene, an ambitious but 'poor' gentlewoman living in rural



Saxony, disguises herself as a milkmaid in order to secure a rapid rise in status (I.ii.496). As Dorigene becomes a Duchess, her father, Lodowicke, is made an Earl, and her drunken brother Frederick becomes, according to Smirk, 'a Count, or I know not what' (I.iv.799). The family's social advancement is marked by alterations in appearance. Smirk, who also rises up to become 'an Esquire', informs Frederick:

My Lord, as I am a Gentleman and an Esquire, I doe reverence the very invention of your Honours next Sute: I'll helpe you to a Draper shall give you all your Men Liveries, to make it of Cloth; my Haberdasher ha's a new Blocke, and will find me and all my Generation in Bevers as long as we last, for the first hansell. (I.iv.805–10)

When the family lose their recently acquired status due to slanders spread by the embittered, elderly politician, Lord Raymond, social manoeuvres are again marked by visual activities. Losing his position as esquire, Smirk turns to his 'old trade' of painting, with aesthetically unappealing results:

I have hir'd a Shop not far from Court. And I have painted the most horrible things that many men know not what to make of them, I drew *Hercules* a great while agoe in the likenes of a man, and now everyone saies he lookes like a Lion. Then I drew *Acteon* hunted with his owne dogs, & they say 'tis like a Citizen pursu'd with Serjants. (IV.i.342–8)

Smirk produces distorted images which disrupt the relationship between sign and signified; just as the invisibility ring hides wearers from view, so the 'real' subjects of Smirk's images are obscured when rendered visible in his 'horrible' work. Frederick here proves himself to be a spectacularly unwise spectator and patron, challenging the painter 'and thou beest so good a workeman, thou shalt / draw my Picture', despite the fact that Smirk cannot at this point see him, and has to invite this potential customer to 'come out of the Cloud' (IV.i.354–7). Having 'small store of mony', Frederick offers Smirk the ring in exchange for having his portrait painted (IV.i.359). In order to produce a visual image, therefore, Frederick loses his privileged visual state and ignorantly conveys this on the painter. It is only on realising that he can hear but cannot see Smirk that Frederick comprehends 'the vertue' of the jewel, and is left to lament that 'the losse / of my invisible Ring has broke my heart' (IV.i.372, 799–800).

Frederick's faulty spectatorship echoes the Duke of Saxony's more damaging failings as a viewer. The Duke repeatedly endorses the subversive malleability of visual appearances with an enthusiasm that betrays his ignorance regarding the implications of that malleability for social hierarchy. He is instantly persuaded that he loves Dorigene when she removes her milkmaid 'habit', presenting herself as a rural gentlewoman, 'Ambitious' of the Duke's 'Love, not of the Title' (I.ii.597). Congratulating Lodowicke on his earldom, meanwhile, the Duke advises his new father-in-law to decorate his previously 'naked' house

'with Countenance / Cheerful', making it 'More glorious then our Pallaces' (I.ii.637–40). More drastically, the Duke's insecure judgement is inflected with deceit, as he presents himself as a tolerant king and husband while behaving like a paranoid tyrant. Following her marriage to the Duke, Dorigene attempts to deflect Dorilus's continuing attentions by setting an impossible task in which he must bring her a magic garland of flowers in exchange for her body (II.ii.502). When Landoffe's magic allows Dorilus to obtain the garland, Dorigene, overcome with guilt, informs her husband of the bargain. The Duke gives permission for Dorigene to fulfil her promise to Dorilus, claiming it is 'but one houres losse' (II.ii.528), but secretly does not approve the liaison, and sends Raymond to spy on the couple to see if the promise is fulfilled. Dorilus and Dorigene resist their mutual desire, but the Duke's distrust and deceit provide Raymond with the opportunity to act as false witness, so that Dorigene is brought to trial for adultery.

In a world in which the instability of visual appearances is endorsed by a head of state lacking in visual judgement, standing outside the visual field becomes the only means by which to avoid complicity in deceit. I here return to the glittering transparency of the ring as described by Landoffe. The conjurer makes a direct connection between going invisible and speaking the truth when he offers Dorilus the magical ring:

Behold this little Ring  
 Purer than Christall, full of subtiller flame  
 Then that which sparkles i' the Diamond;  
 Of Vertue infinite beyond its Beautie.  
 With this Ring *Dorilus* thou shalt free the Princesse  
 At least endeavour; 'tis certainly reported  
 At her Arraignment, as the howre comes on,  
 She shall have none to pleade her cause for her,  
 But her supposed crime layde ope, and urg'd  
 Withall the mouth of law, and so condemn'd:  
 Yet thou that ever couldst speake well, without  
 A cause so full of matter and of Truth,  
 Shalt hidde to all eyes, by vertue of this Ring,  
 Become an Orator, and pleade for her,  
 And make the Court amaz'd to heare thee speake. (III.ii.271–85)

In contrast to Gyges's deployment of a magic ring for self-interested and immoral ends, the magic ring of this play offers access to an agency which is explicitly associated with 'Truth'. In contrast to the visual distortions found elsewhere in the drama, the ring is aesthetically and ethically coherent, as its appearance as an object 'purer than Christall', matches the efficacy of its 'vertue' (power) in the service of integrity. This supernatural jewel is the means by which 'truth' may be rightfully reunited with the word, healing a rupture caused by the

Duke's poor judgement and Raymond's rhetorical manipulations. It is this connection to the supernatural revelation of 'Truth' that highlights the efficacy of invisibility as a mode of disguise. Disguise is necessary for Dorilus at the trial, since he is associated with Dorigene's supposed guilt. Unseen, however, Dorilus acquires a divine agency that allows him to override Raymond's interjections, the latter being silenced by the Duke in favour of the disembodied voice:

Away, I will heare nothing but her Angel's voice,  
And that which spoke for her, which was no lesse,  
It held such musicke in it, besides Truth. (III.iii.517)

The success of Dorilus's invisible intervention attests to the flexibility of ducal opinion in this play; immediately after the trial, Raymond again 'with a breath' alters the Duke's mind, 'in spight of all those words wasted in aire' (IV.i.97). The court scene, however, momentarily demonstrates the efficacy of invisibility as a means of appearing in the visible that enables intervention in perceived corruption. Rather than acquiring special powers of discernment, in occupying the privileged space of the invisible spectator Dorilus acquires enhanced powers of oration and the platform to communicate the 'Truth'.

In his study of vision and ethics in Shakespeare and Spenser, Knapp explains that the 'central paradox of Christian epistemology' is 'that the only path to the invisible truth leads through the visible world'.<sup>50</sup> Knapp discusses Spenser's Protestant-minded negotiation of this paradox with reference to Marion's Catholic phenomenology, which claims that invisible truth can be reached through 'phenomenal lived experience'.<sup>51</sup> Spenser, in Knapp's reading of *The Shepherdes Calendar*, 'crosses the visible' in 'messianic' passages which function in the same manner as 'saturated phenomena' described by Marion, in which invisible divinity is glimpsed and fleetingly grasped through exposure to the sublime.<sup>52</sup> In contrast, in the depiction of invisibility in *The Two Merry Milkmaids*, 'truth' is articulated through crossings of the visible which include the imitation of the invisible in the trope of the unseen. As I explain in the next section, however, the incompleteness attendant on the unseen character in performance holds the idolatrous implications of this imitation of divinity at bay, drawing attention to the distinction between the unseen and the invisible. Like the brazen head of Greene's play and the 'frame without a face' described by Lyly, unseen characters deferentially display their brokenness.

### **'Nothing left certaine of mee': invisibility, incompleteness and erasure**

The incompleteness of unseen characters is multi-layered. They are discursively imperfect because they are material and not divine, but more than this, invisible characters on the early modern stage are imperfectly a part of the visible and material world depicted in those plays. This latter sense of incompleteness is

strongly expressed by characters who wear the ring in *The Two Merry Milkmaids*. The magic ring is first tested out in the play on Dorilus, and his friend Bernard, who is another of Landoffe's students. When Dorilus puts on the ring, Bernard declares his friend 'into aire vanished, or suncke into the earth', whilst Landoffe encourages his pupil to locate the missing Dorilus:

BERNARD Dorilus, Dorilus.

DORILUS Why here man, I am here.

BERNARD Here? Where?

DORILUS Why here, close by thee, now I touch thee.

BERNARD This is thy hand?

DORILUS Yes.

BERNARD It may be foote for any thing that I know, but that

Now I feel the fingers, thou maist hold it up at the Bar

And nere be burnt i'the hand Ile warrant thee.

DORILUS Why? I see thee plaine as I did before. And everything else.

BERNARD But that I have confidence in my Master and his Art, I wud never look to see thee againe. (III.ii.294–306)

Dorilus's invisibility is marked by incompleteness. Both imperceptible and palpable, a visually formless form, the young scholar is neither perfectly external to the perceptual world, nor is he fully a part of that world. So it is that Landoffe's assurances rather than his own physical contact with Dorilus convince Bernard that he will 'see' his friend 'againe'. The play reflects the ontology of a pre-Cartesian world in which existence is confirmed and adjudged through sensory experience, as characters' disappearances from view resemble but do not quite equate to disappearances from existence. When Frederick first wears the ring, he laments that he is 'lost', and that 'theres no hope that ever I shall be seene againe of mortals; I walke i'the clouds' (IV.ii.84–5). Of course, Frederick is not 'lost'; he is still alive, and is even able to speak to Dorilus, who recognises him:

DORILUS Frederick by the voice.

FREDERICK And Frederick by flesh and bloud as good as any man or woman wud desre, feele me else.

DORILUS I do feele a hand.

FREDERICK And yet perceive no body.

DORILUS Right.

FREDERICK: Right, but by your leaue all is not right; either your eies are drawn aside, or my bodie is taken assunder, and nothing left certaine of mee but a hand and a voice. (IV.i.303–11)

Frederick surmises that if there is no fault in Dorilus's vision, then he himself must have been partially removed from the earth, reduced into a 'nothing' that is significantly incomplete, since traces of his existence reside in a single hand and in his voice. Landoffe earlier describes Frederick's response to invisibility as

likely to be a sense of total erasure, anticipating that it will be entertaining to let Frederick keep the ring in order to hear him 'chafe on being lost to all mankind' (IV.i.286). Frederick's actual response indicates the ambiguities attendant on the experience of magically 'going invisible', registering a sense of being 'flesh and blood' but simultaneously not present.

Ambiguously part of the world, detectable through traces of a hidden body, invisible characters on the early modern stage thus resemble the incomplete figure to which Lyly alludes in his second prose work; they are like 'Euphues ... drawn but to the waist' so 'that he peepeth as it were behind some screen' while 'his feet are yet in the water' (p. 159). Functioning like the 'frame without a face' that Euphues describes as produced by Parrhasius for Alexander the Great, the material presence of these characters gestures to and explains the absence of their visibility (p. 333). The invisible character is therefore available as an effaced material 'trace' which points to a deferred presence in the Derridean sense, a configuration echoed in the dynamics of 'a robe for to goo invisibell', a visible item which indicates invisibility whilst concealing, and thus suppressing, the visible 'presence' of the body.<sup>53</sup> Such a view is further encouraged by Palmer's suggestion that the invisibility cloak may have been a black 'learned man's robe', chosen with 'the intent being to blend in rather than stand out'.<sup>54</sup> Accepting Palmer's theory, the function of the invisibility cloak as an indicator of deferred presence is reflected in the blank surface of the cloak, which demonstrates the disappearance from view of the visible body of the actor playing Dorilus, Faustus or Oberon.

If unseen characters in *The Two Merry Milkmaids* fear that they are fractured, physically present but visually absent, then the depiction of invisibility is even more piecemeal in the visual and imaginative experience of the spectator watching the play. In watching an invisible character, spectators engage with the performance on multiple levels, imagining, at once, that the player before them is the character depicted; imagining that the player that they can see cannot be seen by other characters, and therefore implicitly engaging with the visual experiences of the characters who can still be seen but who cannot see the invisible character. At the same time, spectators observe the privileged visual experiences of invisible characters, and engage with this perspective, enjoying the experience of 'seeing' into two visual plains: the visible world and the realm of the unseen. It is a split visual experience that echoes the broader fracture of 'seeing', which, spread between the eye, the imagination and the object, is always an incomplete process, even when the viewer seems to see the viewed as complete.<sup>55</sup> The fractured nature of vision has been noted in relation to other examples discussed in this book, such as the 'double' spectacle associated with the 'glass prospective' in *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*. Similarly, Shakespeare's treatment of spectatorship and spectacle in *The Winter's Tale* recalled Augustinian accounts of the fractured nature of mortal attempts to comprehend the invisibility of God. With these

examples in mind, the efficacy of the unseen character in highlighting the materiality and limitations of mortal vision can be seen as especially pronounced, since its dynamics engage viewers in a self-reflexive recognition of those limitations that simultaneously gestures towards the divine.

The agency of the unseen character complements the deference to God that is evoked by the incompleteness of the unseen. This complementary relationship is sustained by the talismanic nature of stage invisibility. By this observation I mean to suggest that the magic ring of *The Two Merry Milkmaids* is talismanic in function, but also that the invisible character becomes a talisman of sorts when they 'go invisible'. This understanding of unseen characters is encouraged by the early modern view of talismans as activated partly by closeness to the skin of the wearer. The close interconnection between the body of the wearer and the talismanic object is echoed in the instance in the 1616 text of *Dr Faustus*, in which Mephistopheles makes Faustus invisible through a spell which combines material objects, touch and incantation:

Whilst on thy head I lay my hand  
And charm thee with this magic wand.

[*Presenting a magic girdle*]

First wear this girdle; then appear  
Invisible to all are here.

The planets seven, the gloomy air,  
Hell, and the Furies' forkèd hair,  
Pluto's blue fire, and Hecate's tree  
With magic spells so compass thee  
That no eye may thy body see. (B-text; III.ii.15–23)<sup>56</sup>

In this spell, Faustus is enveloped in Mephistopheles's 'charm', as the demon touches Faustus, conducts the spell with a wand, dresses the scholar in a 'girdle' and encompasses him with further spells drawn from several occult sources. The sense that Faustus is smothered into a state of invisibility would have been heightened in early performances if Faustus also wore some form of invisibility cloak. The girdle that Faustus wears could have been a belt, made of fabric, and 'fitted with an ornamental buckle or pendant', or it may have been a chain of gold links which could be 'worn at the neck' or which may have 'encircled the waist'.<sup>57</sup> That Faustus is encircled here reflects the popular belief that a circle would protect a conjurer from any spirits summoned. Earlier in the play, Faustus calls on Mephistopheles whilst standing in a circle bearing 'Jehovah's name / Forward and backward annagrammatised' in the scene in which he calls upon Mephistopheles (A- and B-texts, I.iii.8–9). This scene is echoed in the opening scene of *The Two Merry Milkmaids*, in which Bernard draws out a circle within which spirits 'cannot hurt' him (I.i.66).<sup>58</sup> At the conclusion of *The Tempest*, the Neapolitans and Milanese are 'charmed' as they are herded by Ariel into a 'circle which Prospero had made' (5.1.57SD). As we have seen, in *Friar Bacon*

and *Friar Bungay*, finally, it is anticipated that once made, the talismanic brazen head will ‘compass’ and so ‘strengthen England’ with a protective ‘wall of brass’ (ii.30–58). The enclosure offered by the circle echoes the enclosure of veiled visibility offered by the state of being unseen, a dynamic explicitly materialised in instances in which characters wear a ring or girdle in order to become invisible. The material magic deployed in these examples encloses and protects characters in ways that match up to the enclosed protection supposedly provided by talismanic jewels. Wearing supposedly talismanic jewels, early modern people believed themselves to be protected wherever they travelled; similarly, to go unseen is to enter into a protected space that moves with the wearer and is activated by contact with the body of the wearer. We can now revisit the notion of going invisible as a material process and amend this to refer to a materialising process, during which the objects which make invisibility also become supposedly ‘unseen’, merging with the body of the wearer. Faustus’s body is in this view ‘girdled’ into the space of the unseen, becoming the blank thing which projects an incomplete vision of invisibility.

An encircled space that carries meaning at the same time as projecting visual nothingness, the unseen character is comparable to a cipher, a zero. It is not insignificant that the late sixteenth century sees a growing interest in ‘the figure and mathematical function of the cipher, due to its association with Hindu-Arabic numerals, which were only just coming into widespread use during the period’.<sup>59</sup> As the *OED* explains, in late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century England, a ‘character’ did not yet refer to ‘a personality invested with distinctive attributes and qualities, by a novelist or dramatist’; a character in the early modern theatre is more like the mark, or ‘graven figure’, denoted by the earliest meanings of the term. Indeed, characters and the dramatic representation of which they are a part are ciphers, as suggested by the prologue to *Henry V*, where the assembled cast of characters are ‘ciphers’ to the ‘great account’ of the production and the battle depicted (Prologue, 17). Significantly, like Faustus, the ciphers of Shakespeare’s play are encircled, as the audience are invited to ‘suppose within the girdle of these walls / Are now confined two mighty monarchies’ (Prologue, 19–20). The Prologue does not locate the presentation of the monarchies of France and England on the stage alone; instead, the depiction of the battle of Agincourt is held within a girdled, walled space which includes the audience, performance and fabric of the theatre. The theatrical action is thus contained by a shape which consists of performers, performance space and audience. The ‘unseen’ character functions as a microcosm of this confluence between materiality, performance and spectator interaction; a cipher, visible still to the audience who simultaneously imagine the character to be materially erased from the visible world depicted in the play.

Ciphers are active empty vessels; nothings which stand for something. In this, the unseen character becomes a performing, mobile, interactive model of the

trope of the blank canvas. The talismanic nature of unseen characters facilitates this agency in the position of incompleteness. The *OED* states that ‘Talisman’ derives from the Greek *telesm*, τέλεσμα, meaning ‘completion, performance, religious rite’, and later taking on the meaning of ‘a consecrated object endowed with a magic virtue to avert evil’. Variants of ‘telesm’ are used in early modern texts, for example in a translation of the Emerald Tablet in *The Mirror of Alchemy* (1597), which refers to the ‘worke’ of the philosopher’s stone as ‘the father of all the telesme of the world’.<sup>60</sup> According to the *OED*, the first usage of talisman in the sense of an ‘object engraved with figures or characters, to which are attributed the occult powers of the planetary influences and celestial configurations under which it was made’ is in Franciscus Junius’s *The Painting of the Ancients* (1638). Junius’s text indicates that the word is already in circulation in Europe by this date, referring to ‘inaugurated statues, which now adays by them that are curious of such things are called *Talisman*’, and:

which being set up by skilful enchaunters in some unaccessible chauncell of the temple, or else secretly digged in the ground, were thought to appease the wrath of the Gods, and to protect the Country from hostile invasions ... Such a one seemeth that same *Talus* to have been, mentioned by *Appolonius Rhodius*, and many other Authors. *Asius* the Philosopher also made an image of *Pallas* by a certaine observation of Astronomicall influences, tying the destinies of *Troy* to the preservation or losse of that *Palladium*.<sup>61</sup>

Talismans, in Junius’s understanding, are protective, consecrated objects such as the Palladium which, having been made under ‘astronomicall’ influences, protected Troy, and Talus, also known as Talos, or Talon, the mythological colossal brass statue said to have guarded Crete.<sup>62</sup> Talus presents a pertinent example for consideration of the function of talismanic objects in early modern drama. Talus is an active, consecrated object, a magical automaton that physically, aggressively protects a specific community. Talus’s active status reflects a performativity implicit in the etymology of ‘talisman’. The *OED* explains that the root of *telesm* is τέλος meaning ‘end’, via τέλειν meaning ‘to complete, fulfil, perform (rites), officiate (in the mysteries), consecrate’. The talismanic object is in this sense the product of a completed, sacred action which is at the same time not complete, in that the performance of the status of the object as consecrated is continually enacted as a condition of its efficacy. The talisman is then necessarily always active, always fulfilling the terms of the inscription that it bears, or the consecration under which it was made, until the moment that it is destroyed.

As mentioned above, the efficacy of the magic ring in *The Two Merry Milkmaids* is said to be undone when it is touched by herbs which will make it shatter into pieces, yet this process of destruction is never shown onstage. Given that, as I have argued, early modern playwrights are invested in destruction



as the preserve of divine agents, talismans may be seen as permanently active objects that cannot be stopped by mortal intervention. Such a reading of talismans as unstoppably active is encouraged by an appearance of Talus as an indestructible 'iron man' who accompanies Sir Artegal, 'the instrument' of 'justice' in the fifth book of Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*:

His name was *Talus*, made of yron mould,  
 Immoveable, resistless, without end.  
 Who in his hand an yron flae did hould,  
 With which he threshed out falshood, and did truth unfold.<sup>63</sup>

Spenser's Talus is a talisman that relentlessly protects the law, his want of feeling making him 'a perfectly detached arbiter' of justice.<sup>64</sup> In *The Faerie Queene*, therefore, the object of Talus's protection is not centred on a specific location, but is mobile, as he accompanies Artegal on a quest to rescue Irena, who is being kept from her 'heritage' by the tyrant Grantorto.<sup>65</sup> This notion of mobile talismanic activity is particularly useful for understanding the activities of unseen characters who function like Talus: mobile agents, supernaturally empowered to intervene in perceived falsehood.

In *The Two Merry Milkmaids*, such interventions in falsehood are often inflected with an iconoclastic tone. Smirk and Frederick both use invisibility to launch physical attacks on Lord Raymond and the servile flatterers of the court, represented by Callow and Ranoff, a knight. From the outset of the drama, these courtly figures are associated with artificiality. For example, Julia, Dorilus's sister and with Dorigene one of the disguised 'merry milkmaids' of the play's title, is amused by Callow's appearance and manner on meeting him at the Duke's procession. Julia declares:

I have lighted upon one of the Egyptian Idols, taught with some Engine to put off  
 his Hat, and screw his Face a little: I cannot speake to it like a man, yet I will to it  
 as if it were one. (I.ii.381–4)

Stage directions indicate that throughout this speech, '*stroking up his haire, complements with Fances and Legges*', Callow adopts artificial postures in the manner of an unnatural, mechanical 'idol' as described by Julia (I.iii.381–4SD). Later in the play, as they rejoice at Dorigene's imprisonment and imagine Frederick 'at the Gallowes' (IV.i.49), Callow and Ranoff are physically attacked by the invisible Frederick, who announces himself as 'one that'le bestow a little paines with you' and 'wipe your Noses for you' (IV.i.52). Reluctant to 'draw', and declaring that they are 'tender hearted', the terrified courtiers exit under the 'guard' of Cornelius and Ferdinando (IV.i.81). Frederick then encounters Raymond, 'my Lord of mischiefe with his two Faces, Winter and Summer', as the deceitful old politician woos Julia (IV.i.89–90). As Raymond pledges to raise Julia to the level of Duchess if she will give herself to him, Frederick again launches an attack,

threatening 'I will cut your throate', to which Raymond responds: 'Swoones it pincht me by the throate' (IV.i.168). Significantly, where the Duke associates Dorilus's disembodied voice with celestial figures, the corrupted Lord Raymond resembles Selimus in his attempts to comprehend invisibility, as he declares Frederick some form of idolatrous, mechanical trickery, a 'scurvie voice' that 'troubles' him because he 'cannot see / The thing that sets it going' (IV.i.166-7).

Smirk's time as the invisible painter-stainer similarly demonstrates the iconoclastic function of invisibility. Callow and Ranoff re-enter, speculating that it was 'heereabout' that they encountered the 'voice that kickt us' (IV.i.395). The courtiers are now attacked with paint; Smirk has earlier entered the scene carrying '*severall pots of colours*' (IV.i.313SD), and it seems that while the invisibility ring makes his clothing 'unseen', the paints he is holding remain visible when applied to visible surfaces. Smirk threatens:

SMIRK I wud kick you againe, but that I have Cornes on my Toes, I will only pencil you now. And because you have so much knavery and want colour for't I will begin with Orange tawny.

CALLOW What was that?

RANOFF What.

CALLOW Something crost my Nose.

RANOFF A Dore, a Dore, the fields are full of them.

SMIRK I'll give you the Dore too.

RANOFF There was another wip't me in the same place.

SMIRK Cause you are a Knight, you shall beare a Crosse

RANOFF How now? Zfoote I think some Bird has wraid in my eye. (IV.i.397-409)

Smirk's tendency to produce distorted images which do not resemble the subject depicted is put to iconoclastic use here, as his daubing of Callow and Ranoff exposes the distortions which underlie the pair's assertions of courtly superiority. Smirk mocks Ranoff's status as a knight, daubing him with a cross. Significantly, having been defaced through a splattering of paint, Ranoff believes that a bird has defecated in his eye. The link between iconoclasm and scatology in early modern visual culture and drama has been established by a number of scholars. Scatological satire is a feature of many anti-Catholic prints of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and early Tudor drama in particular exploits the iconoclastic aesthetic of scatology in anti-Catholic comedy.<sup>66</sup> In *The Two Merry Milkmaids*, then, paint is a scatological iconoclastic medium, the daubing and smearing of the courtiers in line with the conventions of satiric spectacle during the period.

The integral role of erasure and defacement in the construction of invisibility means that unseen characters function as active, performative versions of the deferential blank canvas that draws attention to its own incompleteness. In this, the dynamics of the performance of unseen characters reproduces the deployment of self-effacement in the defence of theatrical display. We might recall

here the self-effacing puppet Dionysius in Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair*, who 'takes up his garment' in order to confront Zeal-of-the-Land Busy with the material constructedness of performed spectacle (5.5.104SD). Satz understands this scene as presenting a 'gesture of desecration' that moves Busy 'from disbelief to the theatre spectator's "willing suspension of disbelief", or perhaps *consubstantiated* double-vision'.<sup>67</sup> From the perspective of advice on the conditions of spectating, however, Jonson's deployment of defacement in displaying the material construction of performance emphasises the role of knowledge about making in the 'making' of playgoers. In contrast to Julia, who fears she cannot speak to the artificial Callow, Busy proves what he believes to be the idolatrous status of the puppet by arguing with it as if it were a person, and so conflating type with prototype. It is only when he perceives the 'mechanism and materiality' of Dionysius that Busy is converted to a contented spectator who understands the conditions of his interaction with the spectacle of the puppet.<sup>68</sup>

The role of self-effacement in the rebuttal of Busy's antitheatricalism echoes the function of iconoclasm in distinguishing idols from icons as described by Marion. Marion argues that the icon effaces itself as a result of the intersection of 'two gazes', the first gaze being that of the spectator of the icon; the second gaze the intervention of the prototype. This iconoclastic process occurs because the viewer must 'feel' themselves to be 'seen' by the icon 'in order for it to function effectively as an icon'.<sup>69</sup> If it were not for the interactivity of spectatorship in early modern playhouses, the self-effacement of staged invisibility might seem to draw attention only to the status of the unseen character as 'profane image', before which the viewer remains 'unseen by an image that is reduced to the rank of an object (the aesthetic object remains an object) constituted, at least in part', by the spectator's 'gaze'.<sup>70</sup> The possibility that the viewer remains 'unseen' by the viewed is curtailed in a materially interactive early modern culture in which visual perception is understood to involve tangible contact with the viewed that may have physical consequences for the spectator.<sup>71</sup> In one of Prospero's most famous speeches in *The Tempest*, the interconnectedness of spectator and performance is reflected in the simultaneous erasure of both. When a masque organised for Ferdinand and Miranda by Prospero is 'suddenly' ended, the masquers having '*heavily vanished*', Prospero tells a surprised Ferdinand:

Our revels now are ended. These our actors,  
As I foretold you, were all spirits and  
Are melted into air, into thin air;  
And – like the baseless fabric of this vision –  
The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,  
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,  
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,  
And like this insubstantial pageant faded,

Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff  
 As dreams are made on, and our little life  
 Is rounded with a sleep. (4.1.138SD–158)

Performance in this view functions as does the invisibility cloak, the spectacle of the spirits made visible to spectators pointing to emptiness beneath, a 'baseless fabric' which is material and simultaneously nothing, in that it is not the same as the prototype. The dissolute immateriality to which Prospero refers is applied to 'all' including the spectators of the masque, Prospero, Ferdinand and Miranda. Through this revelation Prospero instructs the ignorant Ferdinand that he is complicit as a spectator in a self-effacing act of production that reveals its insubstantiality as a condition of performance.

The depiction of unseen characters presents a distorted version of Derrida's assertion that 'a stage which presents nothing to the sight' is a space in which the spectator 'will efface within himself the difference between the actor and the spectator, the represented and the representer, the object seen and the seeing subject'.<sup>72</sup> In the context of early modern performances, spectators engage in the self-effacement of the unseen in ways that reflect back on their own participation in a supposedly imperfect material and visual world. The interaction between spectator and representation that is central to the making of onstage invisibility means that characters are brought into the self-referential self-effacement; like Busy discovering the 'truth' about puppets, spectators are engaged directly with the mechanical structure of theatre and their position within this structure. Onstage invisibility is thus a dangerous, interactive and performative model of the 'blank canvas' through which Lyly defers to God as divine maker. Where Lyly's blank canvas alludes to divine perfection in a display of imperfection, the unseen character displays imperfection whilst simultaneously rehearsing the experience of standing outside the visible manifestations of imperfection.

### Notes

- 1 Alan C. Dessen, *Recovering Shakespeare's Theatrical Vocabulary* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 196.
- 2 William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, ed. Harold F. Brooks, *The Arden Shakespeare* (London: Methuen, 1979), II.i.186–7. All subsequent references are to this edition.
- 3 Christopher Marlowe, *Dr Faustus, A- and B-texts (1604, 1616)*, ed. David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen, *The Revels Plays* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), A-text, III.ii.56. All subsequent references are to this edition.
- 4 In the introduction to his edition of *The Two Merry Milkmaids*, Metz quotes Edmund Gayton, who recalls players at 'Festivities ... especially at Shrovetide' attempting to perform Marlovian tragedies, but 'forc'd to ... conclude the day with the Merry milkmaid's', *Pleasant Notes on Don Quixote* (1654), pp. 271–2, quoted in Anon, *The Two*

- Merry Milkmaids, ed. G. Harold Metz, *Renaissance Drama: A Collection of Critical Editions* (New York and London: Garland, 1979), p. cxiii. All subsequent references to the play are to this edition.
- 5 'The Printer to the Reader', in Anon, *The Two Merry Milkmaids*, ed. Metz, p. 5.
  - 6 Francis Kirkman, *The Wits, or, Sport upon Sport. In Select Pieces of Drollery, Digested into Scenes by way of Dialogue. Together with Variety of Humors of several Nations, fitted for the pleasure and content of all Persons, either in Court, City, Countrey, or Camp. The like never before published* (London: Henry Marsh, 1662), p. 65.
  - 7 Kirkman, *The Wits*, A4v.
  - 8 William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, ed. Virginia Mason Vaughan and Alden T. Vaughan, *The Arden Shakespeare*, third series (London: Methuen, 1999), 1.2.301–4, 375SD; 3.3.18SD. All subsequent references are to this edition.
  - 9 Richard Brome and Thomas Heywood, *The Late Lancashire Witches*, ed. Helen Ostovich, 2.3. speech 290SD. *Richard Brome Online*. [www.hrionline.ac.uk/brome](http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/brome). Accessed 30 October 2012.
  - 10 See James Shirley, *St Patrick for Ireland* (London: printed by J. Raworth for R. Whitaker, 1640). *EEBO*. <http://eebo.chadwyck.com>. Accessed 19 October 2012; see also Lucy Munro, 'Dublin Tragicomedy and London Stages', in Subha Mukherji and Raphael Lyne (eds), *Early Modern Tragicomedy* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2007), pp. 175–92, p. 183.
  - 11 Munro, 'Dublin Tragicomedy', pp. 186–8, 183.
  - 12 Thomas Middleton, *The Puritan Widow, or The Puritan, or The Widow of Watling Street*, ed. Donna B. Hamilton, in Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino (eds), *Thomas Middleton: The Collected Works* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007), 4.2.212–48. See also Barbara D. Palmer, 'Staging Invisibility in English Early Modern Drama', *Early Theatre*, 11:2 (2008), 113–28, 116.
  - 13 William Shakespeare, *Henry IV, Part 1*, ed. David Scott Kastan, *The Arden Shakespeare*, third series (London: Thompson Learning, 2002), 2.1.85–9.
  - 14 Munday, *Fedele and Fortunio*, sigs C1v–C2r.
  - 15 Barten Holyday, *Technogamia: or The Marriage of the Arts* (London: printed by William Stansby for John Parker, 1618), sig. M4v.
  - 16 Ben Jonson, *Every Man Out of His Humour*, ed. Helen Ostovich, *The Revels Plays* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), 4.3.33–7.
  - 17 Palmer, 'Staging Invisibility', 114–17.
  - 18 Palmer, 'Staging Invisibility', 114–15.
  - 19 Palmer, 'Staging Invisibility', 116.
  - 20 Henslowe, 'Diary', p. 325. In his editorial notes, Metz asserts that Dorilus would 'put on a special robe' in the parts of the scene during which he is supposed to be invisible, Anon, *The Two Merry Milkmaids*, III.ii.290, n. 290. See also Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, ed. Brooks, II.i.186, n. 186; Marlowe, *Dr Faustus*, ed. Bevington and Rasmussen, A-text, III.ii.58SD and n. 58SD, and Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, ed. Vaughan and Vaughan 1.2.303, n. 303.
  - 21 See Michael Baird Saenger, 'The Costumes of Caliban and Ariel qua Sea-Nymph', *Notes and Queries*, 42 (1995), 334–6; Gabriel Egan expands and supports Saenger's original suggestion that the sea nymph costume derived from Munday's pageant

- in his 'Ariel's Costume in the Original Staging of *The Tempest*', *Theatre Notebook*, 51 (1997), 62–72.
- 22 Jones and Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing*, p. 248.
- 23 These lines are taken from Reginald Scot's *The Discoverie of Witchcraft* (London: W. Brome, 1584), pp. 385–6. See Anon, *The Two Merry Milkmaids*, ed. Metz, I.i.45, n. 45.
- 24 See Anon, *The Two Merry Milkmaids*, ed. Metz, I.i.9, n. 9.
- 25 See Paula Findlen, 'Natural History', in Katharine Park and Lorraine Daston (eds), *The Cambridge History of Science*, vol 3: *Early Modern Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 435–68, p. 439. See also Roger French, 'Pliny and Renaissance Medicine', in Roger French and Frank Greenaway (eds), *Science in the Early Roman Empire: Pliny the Elder, His Sources and Influence* (London: Croom Helm, 1986), pp. 252–81.
- 26 Diana Scarisbrick, *Tudor and Jacobean Jewellery* (London: Tate Publishing, 1995), p. 52. See also John Cherry, 'Healing through Faith: The Continuation of Medieval Attitudes to Jewellery into the Renaissance', *Renaissance Studies*, 15:2 (2001), 154–71, 154.
- 27 Scarisbrick, *Tudor and Jacobean Jewellery*, p. 51.
- 28 Scarisbrick, *Tudor and Jacobean Jewellery*, p. 52.
- 29 Francis Herring, *Certaine Rules, Directions, or Advertisments for this Time of Pestilential Contagion: with a caveat to those that weare about their neckes imposed amulets as a preservative from the plague* (London: William Jones, 1603), and *A Modest Defence of the Caveat Given to the Wearers of imposed Amulets, as Preservatiues from the Plague* (London: printed by Arnold Hatfield for William Jones, 1604). EEBO. <http://eebo.chadwyck.com>. Accessed 12 December 2011.
- 30 Scarisbrick, *Tudor and Jacobean Jewellery*, p. 51.
- 31 Herring, *Certaine Rules, Directions, or Advertisments*, p. 9.
- 32 Herring, *Certaine Rules, Directions, or Advertisments*, title page.
- 33 See Dinah Eastop, 'The Conservation of Garments Concealed within Buildings as Material Culture in Action', in Tara Hamling and Catherine Richardson (eds), *Everyday Objects: Medieval and Early Modern Material Culture and its Meanings* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), pp. 145–56, p. 147, and her 'Outside In: Making Sense of the Deliberate Concealment of Garments within Buildings', *Textile*, 4:3 (2006), 238–55. See also June Swann, 'Shoes Concealed in Buildings', *Costume*, 30 (1996), 56–9, and Marina Hayward's examination of a doublet found concealed in the floorboards of a house in Abingdon, 'A Shadow of a Former Self: Analysis of an Early Seventeenth-Century Boy's Doublet from Abingdon', in Tara Hamling and Catherine Richardson (eds), *Everyday Objects: Medieval and Early Modern Material Culture and its Meanings* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), pp. 107–18.
- 34 Eastop, 'Outside In', 245, 251.
- 35 Scarisbrick, *Tudor and Jacobean Jewellery*, pp. 93–4.
- 36 Richard Rolle (attrib.), *Pricke of Conscience* (1340), 8231, quoted in the *OED*.
- 37 Jean-Luc Marion, *The Crossing of the Visible*, trans. James K. A. Smith, *Cultural Memory in the Present* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), p. 25.
- 38 Marion, *The Crossing of the Visible*, pp. 25–6.
- 39 George Chapman, *Monsieur D'Olive* (1606), in Allan Holaday (ed.), *The Plays of George*

- Chapman: *The Comedies, A Critical Edition* (Urbana, Chicago and London: University of Illinois Press, 1970), II.ii.83–8. All subsequent references are to this edition.
- 40 Robert Greene, *The Tragedy of Selimus, Emperour of the Turkes*, in Daniel J. Viktus (ed.), *Three Turk Plays from Early Modern England* (New York and Chichester: Columbia University Press, 2000), 22.86. All subsequent references are to this edition.
- 41 See Maus, *Inwardness and Theater*, pp. 36–47.
- 42 Plato, *The Republic*, trans. Robin Waterfield, Oxford World's Classics (1993; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 47. Andrew Laird argues that Plato's version of the legend is an invented response to the version found in Herodotus, in which Gyges is a friend of the king, and is persuaded to murder the monarch by the queen when Candaules, obsessed with his wife's beauty, forces a reluctant Gyges to view the queen naked; see his 'Ringing the Changes on Gyges: Philosophy and the Formation of Fiction in Plato's *Republic*', *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 121 (2001), 12–29. Gabriel Danzig challenges and modifies Laird's view, suggesting that 'Plato's version of the story makes sense as a reaction to Herodotus' story only if he interpreted it as the kind of story a usurper would tell in order to justify his deeds', and thus as a 'politically expedient tale', in his 'Rhetoric and the Ring: Herodotus and Plato on the Story of Gyges as a Politically Expedient Tale', *Greece & Rome*, Second Series, 55:2 (2008), 169–92, 170.
- 43 Maus, *Inwardness and Theater*, p. 39.
- 44 Maus, *Inwardness and Theater*, p. 37.
- 45 Danzig notes the connection between the cave that Gyges enters and the 'cave analogy' in Plato's *Republic*, in which 'citizens are portrayed as living ... in a cave ... in which enchained men are shown images by others who parade objects before a fire, throwing shadows on a wall ... It is no coincidence that, by descending into a cave and retrieving a magical ring, Plato's Gyges gains a rhetorical power that enables him to enslave the people of his political community', 'Rhetoric and the Ring,' 188.
- 46 Greene's Selimus is an atheist who declares 'scorn religion – it disgraces man', *The Tragedy of Selimus*, 2.21. Maus links investment in modes of visual concealment analogous to Gyges's invisibility to atheism when she observes that in Renaissance thought 'virtue requires God's surveillance in order to exist ... So hypocrisy becomes not merely the concealment of one's motives from other human beings, but an implicit denial of God's existence', *Inwardness and Theater*, p. 38.
- 47 Maus, *Inwardness and Theater*, pp. 38–9.
- 48 Nicholas Grimald, *Marcus Tullius Ciceroes Thre Bokes of Duties, to Marcus his sonne, turned out of latine into english*, by Nicholas Grimalde (London: Richard Tottel, 1556), fol. 123r–v.
- 49 Maus, *Inwardness and Theater*, p. 38.
- 50 Knapp, *Image Ethics*, p. 54.
- 51 Knapp, *Image Ethics*, p. 61.
- 52 Knapp, *Image Ethics*, pp. 59–64. Knapp quotes Jean-Luc Marion, *In Excess: Studies in Saturated Phenomena*, trans. Vincent Berraud and Robyn Horner (New York: Fordham University Press, 2004), pp. 112–13.
- 53 'The trace is not a presence but is rather the simulacrum of a presence that dislocates,

- displaces, and refers beyond itself. The trace has, properly speaking, no place, for effacement belongs to the very structure of the trace', Derrida, *Speech and Phenomena*, p. 156.
- 54 Palmer, 'Staging Invisibility', 124.
- 55 On the paradoxical incompleteness of visual experience, see Arnheim, *Visual Thinking*, p. 106; see also Ackerman, *Seeing Things*, p. 8.
- 56 The stage direction is an editorial addition, not in the 1616 text.
- 57 Scarisbrick, *Tudor and Jacobean Jewellery*, pp. 87–8.
- 58 The commonalities between Bernard and Faustus's conjuring here probably reflects a shared source in Scot's *The Discoverie of Witchcraft*, as well as the *Milkmaids* dramatist's borrowings from Marlowe. See Anon, *The Two Merry Milkmaids*, ed. Metz, l–lvi.
- 59 Korda, 'Dame Usury' 145. See also Michele Jaffe, *The Story of O: Prostitutes and Other Good-for-nothings in the Renaissance* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1999), and Brian Rotman, *Signifying Nothing: The Semiotics of Zero* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993).
- 60 Roger Bacon, *The Mirror of Alchimy composed by the thrice-famous and learned Fryer, Roger Bachon, sometimes fellow of Martin Colledge: and afterwards of Brasen-nose Colledge in Oxenforde. Also a most excellent and learned discourse of the admirable force and efficacie of art and nature, written by the same Author* (London: printed by Thomas Creede, for Richard Olive, 1597), p. 16. The translation of the Emerald Tablet is based on a transcription by Simon Forman; see Lauren Kassell, *Medicine and Magic in Elizabethan London: Simon Forman, Astrologer, Alchemist and Physician* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 36, n. 85.
- 61 Franciscus Junius, *The Painting of the Ancients in three Bookes: Declaring by Historically Observations and Examples, the Beginning, Progresse, and Consummation of that most Noble Art. And how those ancient Artificers attained to their still so much admired Excellencie* (London: printed by Richard Hodgkinsonne, to be sold by Daniel Frere, 1638), pp. 136–7.
- 62 On the 'confused' origins of Talus, see Lynsey McCulloch, 'Antique Myth, Early Modern Mechanism: The Secret History of Spenser's Iron Man', in Wendy Beth Hyman (ed.), *The Automaton in English Renaissance Literature* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2011), pp. 61–78; see also Wolfe, *Humanism, Machinery and Renaissance Literature*, pp. 203–35. For a discussion of Talus and Renaissance automata, see Sawday, *Engines of the Imagination*, p. 191.
- 63 Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. Thomas P. Roche, Jr (London: Penguin, 1978), 5.1.12.
- 64 Wolfe, *Humanism, Machinery and Renaissance Literature*, p. 210.
- 65 Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, 5.1.3.
- 66 See Helen Pierce, *Unseemly Pictures: Graphic Satire and Politics in Early Modern England* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press for The Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2008), pp. 51–7, and Robert Scribner, *For the Sake of Simple Folk: Popular Propaganda for the German Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 81–6; Robert Hornback, 'Reformation Satire, Scatology, and Iconoclastic Aesthetics in *Gammer Gurton's Needle*', in Kent Cartwright (ed.), *A Companion to Tudor Literature* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), pp. 309–23.



- 67 Satz, 'Attacks on Automata', p. 46. The emphasis is in the text.
- 68 Satz, 'Attacks on Automata', p. 46.
- 69 Marion, *The Crossing of the Visible*, p. 59.
- 70 Marion, *The Crossing of the Visible*, p. 59.
- 71 Clark, *Vanities of the Eye*, p. 45.
- 72 Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, p. 306.

## Conclusion: behind the screen

This book has suggested that early modern playwrights are preoccupied with processes of making, unmaking and remaking in light of the transgressive implications of 'finish'. The resulting emphasis on unfinished processes of construction in plays speaks strongly to the notion of early modern drama as 'an art of incompleteness: a form of display that flaunts the limits of display'.<sup>1</sup> The observation that playwrights are drawn to processes of 'making' partly because of the instability of notions of ending, 'completeness' and even erasure has raised questions about the terms of critical access to the decentred 'patchiness' of early modern culture. Throughout this study, I have alluded to early modern cultural investment in incompleteness as having implications for our critical vocabulary and for historicised accounts of 'finish', 'destruction' and 'under construction' as aesthetic terms. This conclusion further opens up those possible implications, although, appropriately for a study concerned with 'unfinished' work, I offer no firm statements on what those full implications might be.

My aim in this conclusion is in part to emphasise the connection between aesthetic discourse and critical constructions of early modern materiality. At points in this study I have noted that critics are drawn to characterisations of early modern culture as the site of the celebration of aesthetic incoherence or uncertainty. Discussions of the 'statue scene' in *The Winter's Tale* emphasise openness to Hermione's 'unknowable image'; early modern English spectators, meanwhile, revel in visual 'varietie'.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, as Harris suggests, early modern matter is 'untimely', palimpsestic and reworkable.<sup>3</sup> This critical emphasis on the fractured nature of early modern culture chimes with and is informed by the legacy of postmodernist 'decentring', through which critical activity became a mode of unmaking, 'reading against the grain' in order to open up fissures, fracture and faultlines in the text.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, Harris's discussion of 'untimely matter' in early modern England in part aims to situate work on 'objects' within Marxist and post-structuralist frameworks.<sup>5</sup> Harris's work arguably reflects what has been identified as a new aesthetics of disunity that is specific to the historical contexts of the twenty-first century.<sup>6</sup> Recognising that this aesthetics is made possible by 'our Postmodernist present', Hugh Grady explores 'the

age of Shakespeare' as a 'transitional' moment in the development of the idea of the aesthetic.<sup>7</sup> For Grady, the pre-Enlightenment, pre-capitalist status of the early modern period means that plays from this era are receptive to readings informed by the fragmented aesthetic of modernity and postmodernity, summarised in Theodor Adorno's dictum that 'the whole is false'.<sup>8</sup> Grady's work, then, engages with early modern England as a time that pre-dates concepts of aesthetic unity shattered by modernist aesthetics.

To be pre-aesthetic unity, however, is also to be pre-aesthetic disunity, something that is acknowledged implicitly by Grady in that he writes from a presentist perspective that recognises that 'the poetry of pre-modern cultures is aesthetic for us, but not for the members of the cultures which produced it'.<sup>9</sup> At the same time, in considering the early modern period as a time of 'impure aesthetics', Grady suggests that Shakespeare and his contemporaries were familiar with notions of fragmentation, 'differentiation' and disunity that are a 'crucial pre-condition for the concept of the aesthetic to emerge'.<sup>10</sup> But what is fragmentation in a time before completeness as a realisable end? As I have suggested, this aspect of the pre-history of our current aesthetic discourse remains underexplored, even as important studies of early modern English culture draw attention to the mismatch between our critical language and the protean forms presented by early modern evidence. For example, commenting on Stephen Orgel's assertion that 'the idea of a book embodying the final, perfected text was not a Renaissance one', Sonia Massai concludes that 'the early modern printed text was understood and treated as perfectible, and therefore never definitive'.<sup>11</sup> Referring to frequent prefatory invitations to readers to complete and amend early modern texts, Massai suggests that textual instability in this period is symptomatic of early modern investment in the assumption that the text could be perfected.<sup>12</sup> That 'process of perfection', moreover, is understood as spread between multiple agents, including 'non-authorial agents *and* ... the reading public'.<sup>13</sup> To a great extent, my argument continues the exploration of early modern materiality as highly unstable and 'worked' by multiple agents that is suggested by Massai's study. At the same time, my exploration of early modern dramatists' engagements with notions of completion demonstrates that the 'perfectible' cultural product was a contested, transgressive figure in this period. When this observation is coupled with the emphasis on the 'never definitive' status of early modern texts, the traces of what that 'perfected' endpoint might resemble appear increasingly distant. Similarly, for Grady, early modern culture appears in the twenty-first century as a fragmented world of aesthetic impurity, but what is disunity in a culture in which the production of a whole is discursively discouraged? And where fragmentation is a figure of incompleteness made in deference to divine wholeness, are politically progressive readings of early modern 'disunity' available?

To some extent, Harris's work on the untimeliness of matter offers answers

to these questions by lifting early modern material (including textual) culture out of the temporalising boundaries of form.<sup>14</sup> Descriptions of formal objects are invested in historical moments and thus a 'reified' temporal singularity.<sup>15</sup> Matter disrupts formal boundaries, being protean, malleable and 'designating a play of multiple temporal traces'.<sup>16</sup> My discussion of early modern investment in prolonged processes of making and unmaking echoes Harris's account of Shakespeare and his contemporaries as theorists of 'a tempo characterized by an untimely aggregation of matter, agents, and historical traces'.<sup>17</sup> In chapter 3, describing the production of incompleteness as a condition of early modern cultural production, I referred to representational activity as bound by an 'impasse'. The implicit stasis of this 'impasse' might easily be reconsidered as redolent of the 'polychronic alternative' to the 'diachronic movement from the past to the present' that shapes conventional temporal narratives.<sup>18</sup> In engaging with the making, unmaking and remaking of objects which resist stable, complete 'finish', in other words, playwrights disrupt notions of an endpoint and engage with the temporality of matter as 'sensuous, workable potentiality that implies pasts, presents, and futures'.<sup>19</sup> From this perspective, there is not necessarily a need to speculate about the nature of early modern aesthetic conceptualisations, as the untimeliness of matter offers a framework for the unstable formlessness suggested by the resistance of 'finish'.

And yet playwrights' engagements with representational activity as constantly in process demands that we consider what that formal 'finish' might have meant in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. In the examples discussed in this book, the limitation to constant processes of making and unmaking is a source of frustration for image-makers, from Alexander the Great's anxious failure to draw in *Campaspe*, to Sidney's allusions to indefinite 'reaching unto perfection' as characteristic of the production of 'speaking pictures' (p. 86, line 19). Consequently, examples in which dramatists grapple with the limitations of representational activity have been discussed here as a mode of problem-solving. This is the light in which I have viewed the deployment of defacement and erasure in *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* and *The Two Merry Milkmaids*; in addition, the evocation of the unknowability of Hermione's image has been discussed as a vehicle for 'reaching unto perfection'. For dramatists, the gap between mimetic and divine modes of 'making' is not bridgeable, but it may be interrogated through the figure of incompleteness as a synecdoche for *mimesis*. As noted in my second chapter, then, early modern playwrights' preoccupation with a material reworkability is produced by investment in divine 'wholeness'. Grady understands decentred, fragmented modernity as the perfect vantage point from which to explore the 'impure aesthetics' of early modern drama.<sup>20</sup> It might be countered that what actually connects the 'present' with Shakespeare's past is an investment in fragmentation that points constantly towards the possibility of the impossible 'whole'. This view is suggested by Johnson's claim

that the fragmented aesthetics of modernity draws attention to an unreachable wholeness while insisting on this as a fantasy.<sup>21</sup>

Even if we are alert to aesthetic 'unity' as a construct in the historicised present and the untimely past, then, there is no position within aesthetic discourse dissenting from this construct. Against this backdrop, Grady's discussion of the age of Shakespeare as a transitional period in the development of aesthetics becomes particularly important. What is at stake here is dramatists' engagement in the beginnings of a formalising aesthetic discourse that continues to shape critical attempts to account for the fluidity and instability of early modern materiality. Playwrights' preoccupation with processes of visual construction and 'unmaking' can be considered part of a developing dialogue about the status of representations as aesthetic objects. The discourse of making and unmaking therefore also becomes part of a dialogue about commodification, about the process by which, in Marxist terms, visual objects are assigned a separate, aesthetic category distinct from items such as clothing, furniture, tools, 'things'. In his *Capital*, Karl Marx argued that the process of commodification mystifies social relations of production.<sup>22</sup> Accounts of individual artistic and literary activity contribute to the construction of the ideology of the aesthetic, effacing the status of the art object as commodity by obscuring the social relations of its production. This is the effect that is achieved, for example, by the focus in the plays discussed here on interactions between an individual patron and individual visual artist. When playwrights such as Shakespeare, Lyly and Greene make metatheatrical reference to the unending process of image-making, then, they contribute to the emergence of a discourse that will eventually produce post-eighteenth-century concepts of 'fine art' and literary authorship. In other words, dramatists are complicit in making the aesthetic values that have led many critics to characterise post-Reformation England as a kind of visual desert in which images are never of the same quality as literary works.<sup>23</sup> A discourse of making and unmaking that describes the production of incompleteness is in this view the source of the notion of the aesthetic 'gap' between word and image that informs so many studies in this area.

From this perspective, playwrights' depictions of and allusions to incomplete objects that are 'under construction' contribute to the development of a mode of aesthetic formalism. This contribution to aesthetic discourse can be seen, for example, in the epilogue to Thomas Middleton and Thomas Dekker's *The Roaring Girl*. This epilogue tells of a painter's foolish reworking of a picture in response to consumer feedback:

A painter, having drawn with curious art  
 The picture of a woman – every part  
 Limned to the life – hung out the piece to sell.  
 People who passed along, viewing it well,  
 Gave several verdicts on it: some dispraised

The hair, some said the brows too high were raised,  
 Some hit her o'er the lips, misliked their colour,  
 Some wished her nose were shorter, some the eyes fuller;  
 Others said roses on her cheeks should grow,  
 Swearing they looked too pale, others cried no.  
 The workman, still as fault was found, did mend it,  
 In hope to please all; but, this work being ended,  
 And hung open at stall, it was so vile,  
 So monstrous and so ugly, all men did smile  
 At the poor painter's folly. Such we doubt  
 Is this our comedy.<sup>24</sup>

Spectator interaction with an image is here unhelpful, as a cacophony of conflicting opinions produces a work that is 'monstrous' in appearance. At fault also in this anecdote is the painter, who, in attempting to 'sell' the work, is ready to alter it according to the pronouncements of potential customers, analogous here to the playhouse audience. The combination of multiple spectator comments and the painter's attempts to answer them produces a chaotic reworking and a delayed, unsatisfactory ending. Significantly, this configuration echoes the prologue to *The Roaring Girl*, which laments that:

A play (expected long) makes the audience look  
 For wonders – that each scene should be a book,  
 Composed to all perfection; each one comes  
 And brings a play in's head with him: up he sums,  
 What he would of a roaring girl have writ –  
 If that he finds not here, he mews at it. (Prologue, 1–6)

The playgoer expects 'perfection', but that perfection cannot be found where playgoer interactions are accounted for, given the diversity of expectations with which 'each one comes'. Such a tone of regret at the function of spectators in the production of plays is also suggested by Middleton's epistle in the 1612 quarto of the play to *'the Comic Play-readers, Venerly and Laughter'* (epistle, unlineated).<sup>25</sup> Here, Middleton makes clear the connection between spectators and readers as consumers and the malleability of the representations that they consume, stating that 'the fashion of play-making I can properly compare to nothing so naturally as the alteration in apparel' (epistle, 1–2). Of course, this clothing analogy is highly appropriate for an epistle in *The Roaring Girl*, given that this comedy centres on the depiction of the cross-dressed Moll Cutpurse, the 'Venus, being a woman' that 'passes through the play in doublet and breeches' (epistle, 14–16). Similarly, the anecdote about the painting of a woman in the epilogue offers a fitting analogy for a drama in which the eroticisation of the central female character is founded on her disruption of signs of sexual difference. Significantly, the epilogue depicts audience members as complicit in the production of Moll's image, as it is suggested that Moll will reappear onstage 'some days hence', and

that Moll will 'woo' the audience by requesting the 'sign' of their 'hands' in order to 'beckon her' to them (35–8).<sup>26</sup> This figuring of audience applause as a mode of eroticised contact between viewers and that which they view deploys the conventional misogynistic discourse of women-as-objects to suggest that the faultiness of the current production may stimulate future 'performances'.<sup>27</sup> Where the painter fails to please his customers by attempting to reflect their multiple views, the writers and actors of *The Roaring Girl* offer up Moll's body to multiple, eroticised future meetings with varying audience opinion. This figuring of the commercial viability of *The Roaring Girl* is dependent on the idea that female imperfection is beyond repair, the site of the permanent fracture of sexual difference that horrifies Leontes in the early stages of *The Winter's Tale*.

In this epilogue, then, the fractured plurality of *mimesis* intersects with the distorting plurality of the commercial production and reception of a representation 'limned to the life'. The brokenness of representation is presented as aggravated by commercial modes of interaction. The epilogue expresses 'doubt' that *The Roaring Girl* resembles the distorted, reworked painting, but does not suggest that the play is able to 'pay full' the audience's desires for a work 'composed to all perfection' (epilogue, 15–34; prologue, 3). The story of the painter therefore discourages spectator interventions regarding the content of the play while encouraging the commercial input offered by playgoing. In other words, the painter anecdote recommends the roles of professional writers and players in producing drama and associates spectators' function in this process with disastrous aesthetic results that bring out the most limiting aspects of representational activity. As a result, the epilogue hearkens after a world in which work attains value through reference to secluded, specialised modes of production unavailable to consumers, idealised as passive except in their enthusiastic consumption. Significantly, the importance of specialist knowledge in the formation of aesthetic judgement is evoked in a source for the painter anecdote that first appears in Pliny's *Natural History* and is retold in Richard Taverner's *Proverbes or adagies* (first published in 1539).<sup>28</sup> The source is a story about Apelles in which the painter leaves his work out to view, while 'lurkyng in a corner to heare mens iudgements what faultes were found in his worke' so that 'he might amende it'.<sup>29</sup> A 'shomaker' views the work 'well' and observes a fault in Apelles's depiction of a shoe, which 'lacked a latchet'; Apelles amends this fault and once again puts the picture on display.<sup>30</sup> The shoemaker, proud to have discovered a fault in 'so kunynge a mans worke', starts to identify errors in the portrayal of the 'legge', at which point Apelles objects, crying 'let the shoemaker not passe the shoe'.<sup>31</sup> This tale recommends spectatorship informed by specialist knowledge, since Apelles rejects the shoemaker's advice only when the latter moves outside his field of expertise to comment on the painter's skill in drawing legs. As Taverner comments, 'every man ought to medle no further then he can skyll of'.<sup>32</sup> Transferred to *The Roaring Girl*, the shoemaker merges into multiple

spectators whose anonymity further emphasises the expertise of the playwright and players who 'make' the play.

I noted in chapter 1 that the singular figure of the painter in the rhetoric of *ut pictura poesis* enables the metaphorical effacement of the collaborative networks that produced early modern English drama. This dynamic is certainly at work in the painter anecdote in *The Roaring Girl*. The individual 'painter' alludes to the concept of a lone author; yet the painter also stands for the 'we' that is the writers and theatre company members (epilogue, 29). The collapsing of theatrical collaboration into this painterly figure therefore stands as a mode of commodification that simultaneously expresses disdain for the aesthetic effects of commercial reception. In this example, processes of making and unmaking are associated with the plurality of commerce and *mimesis*, while the play is presented as the aesthetic property of its authors, whose judgement is detached from that of their audience. It would be too much, on the basis of this brief analysis, to suggest that the rhetoric of *ut pictura poesis* contributes to the development of a commodifying discourse that foreshadows later aesthetic notions of creativity and authorial agency. At the same time, it might be expected that a discourse which emphasises modes of production, as does the discourse of making and unmaking, would be expected to fade into the background at the point of the reification of 'Art' as a distinct category from artisanal crafts.<sup>33</sup> Although this moment was far in the future in 1611–12 when *The Roaring Girl* was first performed and published, it is notable that the painter anecdote updates the story of Apelles and the shoemaker to suit the contexts of the seventeenth-century portrait market in London. As Robert Tittler explains, the retail industry in portraits that had grown up in indoor shops in London during the sixteenth century seems to have shifted by the early seventeenth century, 'to what sounds like a virtual open air market for such works along the Strand'.<sup>34</sup> William Painter, in the prologue to his *Chaucer Newly Painted* (1623), for example, refers to 'curious Painters' and 'Limners' who 'hang' their wares 'out on the wall' from "Temple-barre / along to Charing-crosse".<sup>35</sup> This commercial context provides a very different setting for the depiction of processes of making and unmaking to that explored in the examples discussed throughout this study. Where processes of visual construction in *Campaspe*, *The Winter's Tale* and *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* were produced by relations between a patron and a visual artist, in *The Roaring Girl* the commercial art market thrives on the anonymity of consumers. It does not seem a coincidence that this epilogue's disdain for the impact of playgoer opinion echoes what David Hawkes identifies as antitheatrical objection to the 'aesthetic effect' of the 'abuse' of poetry in its transformation 'into a commodity to be traded on the market'.<sup>36</sup>

It is often suggested that enthusiasm for the visual arts increased in England during the seventeenth century, partly as a result of the pioneering collecting activities of figures such as Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel.<sup>37</sup> Work by



Hamling and others has challenged this dominant narrative, suggesting that late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century England enjoyed a lively, changing visual culture.<sup>38</sup> As our understanding of the development of early modern English visual culture expands, new opportunities to explore the place of visual discourses in the making of aesthetics ideas also emerge. The intertwining of metatheatrical self-reflection with explorations of processes of 'making' suggests to me that more needs to be done to understand historicised aesthetic experience in conjunction with materialist analysis. It may be profitable for materialist studies of early modern English drama to take greater notice of both the visuality of plays of this period and the status of visual representations as 'matter'. This might enable the consideration of similarities and differences between processes of construction relating to visual representations, and processes of making relating to more conventional 'objects' such as clothing, furniture, even machines. At times, this study has skirted the boundaries of these connections, discussing, for example, fantastical contraptions in *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* and magic jewellery in *The Two Merry Milkmaids*. There are plenty of processes of construction depicted in early modern English drama that might be considered in relation to aesthetic discourse, most especially depictions of the making of apparel. In what ways might concerns about the possibility of 'finish' inform depictions of and allusions to shoemaking in Thomas Dekker's *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, tailoring in Jonson's *Every Man Out of His Humour*, or even alchemical practice in Jonson's *The Alchemist*? Studies of 'working subjects' in early modern English drama have contributed significantly to our understanding of the place of artisanal labour on the stage in this period, but the place of the visual artist in this picture remains curiously un-sketched.<sup>39</sup> This neglect is surprising, given the importance of visual experience and image-making in Marx's account of commodity fetishism and in his later use of the *camera obscura* as a metaphor for ideology.<sup>40</sup> W. J. T. Mitchell considers Marx's allusion to the *camera obscura* as an example of an iconoclastic rhetoric that informs Marxist discourse more broadly.<sup>41</sup> To an extent echoing this iconoclastic rhetoric, scholars of early modern studies have explored connections between commodity fetishism and idolatry.<sup>42</sup> In light of art-historical debates over the meanings and implications of iconoclasm and idolatry, as well as research on the history of early modern visual regimes, now seems the perfect moment to embark on new, material-visual explorations of early modern ideas about cultural production.

### Towards an end: *Terminus*

A problem with the above suggestion is that I approach the visual and material cultures of early modern England via the presumed-to-be-pivotal point of the development of an idea of aesthetic unity. This trajectory is implicit in my focus in chapter 3 on the mid-seventeenth-century development of a discourse

of 'completeness' and 'incompleteness'. The adoption of this moment of development as a vantage point from which to view early modern terminology for cultural production is invited by the tumultuous political changes of the seventeenth century. Given that early modern English playwrights' investment in incompleteness has been understood as an expression of deference to divine social hierarchy, it might be expected that the unreachable 'wholeness' invoked in *The Winter's Tale* would come within conceptual reach as hierarchies of divine right are brought under iconoclastic pressure. Further exploration is required into the extent to which notions of 'finish' alter in accordance with political and social change in the latter part of the seventeenth century. Such explorations may tell us more about ideas of completion and finitude in the period directly prior to this; however, it is not on this note that I wish to end this book.

The preoccupation with indefinite processes of making and unmaking that I have suggested is a condition of early modern cultural production gestures towards the irrelevance of linear temporal models for the discussion of early modern culture. If 'endings' are transgressive within early modern social hierarchies, then this means that processes of 'making' cannot be associated with realisable timelines of activity that may be terminated at a recognised moment. To present representations as permanently 'under construction' is therefore to simultaneously engage and disengage with linear temporality, because the indefinite status of the process resists temporal boundaries while necessarily being defined by those boundaries. It is partly because of this disruption to linear temporality that I am reluctant to pursue playwrights' preoccupations with incompleteness as part of a trajectory towards cultural, social and political developments that postdate the mid seventeenth century. At the same time, however, the trajectory of many writers' allusions to processes of visual construction is forward-facing, if not always linear. When Euphues describes his portrait of Elizabeth as 'but begun for others to end', he imagines a future moment of completion; when Shakespeare invites spectators to 'piece out the imperfections' of *Henry V* with their 'thoughts', he gestures towards multiple future moments of completion. Except that, as noted in my discussion of these examples, we cannot know what 'completion' is envisaged, since the possibility of 'finish' is discursively undone by social and political hierarchy. These examples present beginnings and therefore seem to look forward to endings, but exist in an indefinite state of deferral. Once again, Harris's notion of 'untimely matter' might provide a useful lens through which to understand and explain the disrupted temporality of playwrights' engagements with incompleteness. Harris's understanding of matter would enable us to read Euphues and Shakespeare's invocations of incompleteness as depictions of their works as reworkable matter that designates 'a play of multiple traces'.<sup>43</sup> And yet the untimeliness of Euphues and Shakespeare's works is shaped by appeals to formal coherence and therefore linear temporality. Similarly, the brokenness of the brazen head and the

incompletion of the erased, 'unseen' character reveal the permanent fracture of earthly spectacle, but in so doing gesture towards inaccessible divine 'wholeness'. As such, 'unmaking' is a mode of revelation that depends on untimely 'reworking', but is also an aesthetic, formal state that depends on a notion of unity.

Formal unity, however, is not necessarily a figure of temporal convention in early modern thought. Instead, playwrights gesture towards a divine form that is immaterial, invisible, infinite, out of time or, as discussed in chapter 2, 'outrépasse'.<sup>44</sup> Playwrights' deference to this unknowable divine wholeness produces the discourse that invokes what register in the twenty-first century as allusions to the desire to reach moments of aesthetic 'perfection' and hence formality. In this observation we are no nearer to understanding the way in which Shakespeare, Lyly, Greene or the anonymous *Milkmaids* playwright conceptualised 'finish' or 'completion'. At this point it might seem sensible to suggest that in not understanding we are perhaps closer to the mindset of a discourse shaped by a divine unknown. Such a suggestion seems evasive and unsatisfactory as a conclusion, and, moreover, guilty of investment in patriarchal fantasies of wholeness.

The only way forward to a conclusion, then, may be through the historicisation of the impasse between earthly and divine makers that produces the discursive instability of 'finish' in early modern English drama. In referring to an 'impasse' I invoke a diachronic notion of time, but do not mean here to eschew the useful critique of such temporal frameworks provided by Harris's discussion of 'untimeliness'. It is important to refer to an 'impasse' in this context because that is how mortal limitations are understood in early modern thought. That death is an unmoveable imposition is, for example, suggested by Henry Peacham's *Terminus* emblem in his *Minerva Britannia* (figure 28). Here, Jove is depicted in the process of failing to dislodge the 'pillar high' that is named '*Terminus*' and 'fram'd' in the 'upper part ... like a woman'.<sup>45</sup>

Jove, 'with sterne aspect', orders that the pillar 'remooove, and get him gone', but is disturbed when the pillar 'stoutly' refuses to move, being 'the bound of things, which God above / Hath fixt, and none is able to remooove'.<sup>46</sup> In a startling twist on the miraculous making described in the legend of St Luke and the divine destruction presented in *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, the *Terminus* statue resists pagan iconoclasm through divine permanence. In this emblem, classical statuary is mobilised to assert Christian notions of mortality as an aesthetic form, a 'bound of things'. It does not seem a coincidence that the *Terminus* statue is presented as a female figure adjoined to a phallic 'marble hard' pillar.<sup>47</sup> In this, the *Terminus* statue recalls the patriarchal function of the matriarch as the gatekeeper of unreachable original 'wholeness'; here, a matriarchal figure is said to encompass, to 'bound' mortal limitations. In this way, mortality is figured as a kind of matriarchal talisman, 'fixt' by supernatural intervention and constantly encompassing and working on its subjects.

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*Terminus.*

Symbollū fuit H-  
rasini Roteroda-  
mi quod licet  
Crambe a Poetis  
nostris toties re-  
petitum, illius  
postremo memo-  
riae delicio conse-  
croque.

A PILLAR high, erected was of stone,  
In former times, which *TERMINVS* they nam'd:  
And was esteem'd, a God of every one:  
The vpper part, was like a woman fram'd,  
Of comely feature downe vnto the brest,  
Of Marble hard a Pillar was the rest.

Which when *IOVE* passed by, with sterne aspect,  
He had this God remooue, and get him gone,  
But *TERMINVS* as stoutly did neglect  
His heste, and answer'd, I giue place to none:  
I am the bound of thinges, which God about  
Hath fixt, and none is able to remooue.

VARGO.

28 Henry Peacham, *Minerva Britanna* (1612), p. 193

Peacham's *Terminus* emblem presents mortality as a fixed boundary, but does not suggest an endpoint in the figure of death, although death is an unmoveable aspect of mortality. Significantly, early modern accounts of the afterlife emphasise the continuation of the incompleteness attendant on mortality, as the bodies of the elect are imagined to be remade and repaired by God in anticipation of

the resurrection. The importance of 'remaking' at the resurrection is visible in Trevilian's *Great Book* (figure 10). Here, Trevilian depicts a body wrapped in a winding sheet emblazoned with a quotation from 1 Samuel 2.6, 'The Lord killeth and maketh alive, bringeth downe to the grave, and rayseth up againe.'<sup>48</sup> The accompanying text anticipates that when the body is risen, God will 'clothe our bones with wonted skin, and make us for his prayse'.<sup>49</sup> Similarly, in Samuel Gardiner's *Doomes-Day Booke* (1606), God's remaking of the body using the dust of the decomposed corpse is compared to artisanal practice:

Goldsmiths, and such as worke in mettals, can dissolve confected substances, concreate of gold, silver, brasse, steele. And such are to be found, who can expresse Oyle and liquide matter out of anie drie bodie: Wherefore the illimited power of God, which made all things of nothing, shall reduce our bodies to their formes againe, howsoever formerly reduced to nothing. Lengthen out the matter so farre as conceit and imagination will let you, and put the case thus: That a man is eaten by a wolfe; that wolfe is eaten by a lion; that lion is deuoured by the foules of the aire; the foules of the aire are eaten by men; one of those men eats up another as *Canibals* doe: yet shall his owne bodie be given him againe: everie man shall have so much matter of his owne, as will serve to make him a perfect bodie.<sup>50</sup>

As Gardiner invokes the inability of mortal imagination to comprehend the estate of the elect after death, so he evokes God's creation of the bodies of the elect as 'perfect' as a mode of remaking. That these reformulated bodies are not made new is emphasised in Thomas Draxe's sermon of 1612 (published 1613), where it is stated that '*the same bodie that is sowen in corruption, in weakenesse, in dishonour, shall arise againe in incorruption, power, and honour*'.<sup>51</sup> In Lewis Bayly's *The Practise of Pietie*, the first-known edition of which is dated to 1612, meanwhile, the remaking of the bodies of the elect is figured as a mode of repair, since 'howsoever *Tyrants* bemangled their bodies *in pieces*, or consumed them to *ashes*: yet shall the Elect finde it true at that day, that *not an haire of their head is perished*'.<sup>52</sup> In these examples, death is not an endpoint, but, for the elect at least, a stage in the process of mortal existence that is marked by incompleteness until the moment of resurrection.

It has been pointed out before that early modern people understood death as a continuation of a 'cultural process', rather than as a 'binary' opposition to life.<sup>53</sup> This well-established observation, coupled with Harris's account of the 'untimeliness' of early modern matter, should encourage critique of the stability of concepts of linear temporality in early modern England. If we combine these observations with the suggestion that in this period finish is constantly deferred due to the impasse produced by the concept that the *Terminus* emblem represents, early modern concepts of temporality appear increasingly inscrutable. If finitude is constantly deferred, then how is the passage of events prior to that deferred ending understood in early modern thought? This is not to suggest that in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England people did not fear death as an

ending of sorts, and that this did not impact at all on the literature of the period. Writing on 'late style' as a Romantic construct, Gordon McMullan notes that early modern attitudes to the ends of life were shaped by 'downright negative' portrayals of the elderly, as well as complex models of the seven 'ages of man'.<sup>54</sup> The most famous early modern English rendering of the ages of man is of course in Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, where, having declared that 'all the world's a stage', Jaques describes seven ages of man, concluding:

Last scene of all,  
That ends this strange eventful history,  
Is second childishness and mere oblivion,  
*Sans* teeth, *sans* eyes, *sans* taste, *sans* everything.<sup>55</sup>

Jaques's metatheatrical allusion to old age as the 'last scene' of life as an 'eventful history' demonstrates an association between what we would think of as a narrative 'ending' reached by linear progression and the ending of life. At the same time, the 'last' scene is a moment of incompleteness, a degeneration to 'mere oblivion', a disembodied erasure that is still present on life's stage. It is not that Shakespeare and his contemporaries had no sense of an ending, but what this 'ending' may have entailed in social, material and aesthetic terms is highly ambiguous. As Jaques's speech suggests, the latter stages of life are associated with material loss, and there is reason to consider death as a point of material finitude that sits uncomfortably with cultural investment in incompleteness. For the living, death may be associated with finitude where material properties are concerned. This much is signalled by plays which comment on the remarriage of widowers, where the death of a wife is equated with a permanent loss of property. We might remember the instance in *The Winter's Tale* in which Leontes and Paulina discuss the possibility of the king's remarriage, and Paulina advises that this event may only take place if Leontes meets with 'another / As like Hermione as is her picture' (5.1.74–5). The loss of property occasioned by the death of the wife in this example is translated into the irreplaceable loss of an incomparable aesthetic object. As discussed in chapter 2, Paulina considers Hermione to be a 'picture' of unearthly perfection, but this allusion to the possibility of 'another' Hermione necessarily alludes to pictures as replaceable forms where a replacement is implicitly new. That formal newness arguably refers to the formal 'ending' of that which is replaced. The dynamics of this process of exchange are echoed in Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*, in which Enobarbus consoles and advises Antony following the death of the latter's wife, Fulvia:

When it pleaseth their deities to take the wife of a man from him, it shows to man the tailors of the earth; comforting therein, that when old robes are worn out, there are members to make new. If there were no more women but Fulvia, then you had indeed a cut, and the cause to be lamented. This grief is crowned with consolation:

your old smock brings forth a new petticoat, and indeed the tears live in an onion that should water this sorrow.<sup>56</sup>

Enobarbus envisages the death of a wife as an inevitable stage in a process of exogamy that is 'made' by the gods, figured here as 'tailors'. Here, importantly, the 'tailors of the earth' are engaged in providing a 'new' wife, figured as a 'petticoat' that replaces a disused (and implicitly inferior) 'smock'. Necessarily, Enobarbus speaks of replacement, rather than repair or 'remaking'; a description of replacement requires the terminology of newness. Finitude is also implicit in the process Enobarbus describes. Significantly, as Jones and Stallybrass explain, 'there were virtually no ready-made clothes in Renaissance England (except for certain forms of underwear, stockings and some loose gowns)'.<sup>57</sup> Accounting for spousal succession as a mode of material exchange, Enobarbus misogynistically figures death as a moment of material finitude in which the value of the broken object does not justify its repair, but does justify its replacement. Material finitude and newness here remedy the idolatrous over-evaluation of the commodified, replaceable wife.

A final example is offered by Chapman's *Monsieur D'Olive*, in which the widowed Earl of St Anne is persuaded to fall in love with and marry Eurione, who is the 'surviving image' of the Earl's 'Dead Wife' (IV.i.34–8). This remarriage enables the burial of St Anne's deceased wife, whose body the Earl has had embalmed and displayed in his home. St Anne, we are told:

Retaines his wives dead Corse among the living,  
 For with the rich sweetes of restoring Balmes,  
 He keeps her lookes as fresh as if she liu'd,  
 And in his chamber (as in life attirde)  
 She in a Chaire sits leaning on her arme,  
 As if she onely slept: and at her feete  
 He like a mortified hermit clad,  
 Sits weeping out his life, as hauing lost  
 All his lifes comfort: And that, she being dead  
 (Who was his greatest part) he must consume,  
 As in an Apoplexy strooke with death.  
 Nor can the Duke nor Dutchesse comfort him,  
 Nor messengers with consolatory letters  
 From the kind King of France, who is allyed  
 To her and you. But to lift all his thoughts  
 Vp to another world, where she expects him,  
 He feedes his eares with soule-exciting musicke,  
 Solemne and Tragicall, and so Resolves  
 In those sadde accents to exhale his soule. (I.i.155–73)

St Anne therefore creates a transgressive tableau that is notably Catholic in function and appearance, as the Earl worships at his dead wife's feet 'like a mortified hermit'. Where in *The Winter's Tale* music is deployed to 'awaken' the suppos-

edly stone Hermione, here St Anne 'feedes' on 'soul-exciting musicke' in an attempt to raise his own soul, quickening his own death in order to meet with his wife in 'another world'. The embalmed body of the dead wife is the antithesis to the supposed statue of Hermione, which reflects the passage of time, showing Hermione 'wrinkled' as Romano's 'excellence' as a sculptor 'lets go by some sixteen years and makes her / As she lived now' (5.3.28–32). Embalming prevents the natural decay of the dead wife's corpse, fixing her in a moment of life, 'fresh as if she liv'd', asleep in a chair. The Earl's intervention in natural processes of degeneration produces an inactive, sterile object which is complete and finished in that it is made so as to avoid decay. This sterile completion is simultaneously bound by spiritual incompleteness, since the corpse cannot 'consume, that it may reassume / A forme incorruptible' (III.i.43–4). The disturbing aesthetic 'finish' presented by the spectacle of the embalmed dead wife articulates the transgressive nature of St Anne's attempt to preserve her image and to quicken his death.

While the story of St Anne's dead wife pivots on the blasphemous idolatry of artificial 'finish', Chapman's play follows Shakespeare's treatment of remarriage by investing in notions of formal newness. As the 'surviving image' that replaces the dead wife, Eurione is both a mimetic copy, aesthetically connected to her predecessor, and necessarily separate, new; a replacement. As a replacement, Eurione is a 'new', although imitative, object. In this way, the discourse of wife-as-property in *Monsieur D'Olive* demonstrates that newness is permissible and even necessary within the boundaries of mortality, so long as this newness is prompted by the natural 'ending' of death. Newness, moreover, has a functional role in the mediation of divinely ordained processes of making and unmaking, since the replacement of the dead wife with Eurione allows the burial of the former and thus the remaking of her body in the grave. Importantly, the example of the displacement of the dead wife with her 'surviving image' is not an example of the exchange of one complete form for another. Instead, Chapman presents the exchange of a false representation of something that 'does not exist' for an image which is the 'surviving' copy and trace of the abused image which became the false representation.<sup>58</sup> St Anne's creation of an embalmed, sealed-off idol therefore demonstrates the transgressive associations of the 'whole' aesthetic form in a context in which deferral, incompleteness and the reworkability of matter are central functions of 'natural' process. Incompletion, fragmentation and material degeneracy are figures of social order, where aesthetic unity is a prohibited end that seriously disturbs the function of that order.

It is not surprising that attempts to 'control' death register as transgressive in early modern English drama, but the extent to which notions of formal completion are complicit in transgression disrupts our current critical framework. In light of the postmodern critique that exposed the oppressive patriarchal and colonial function of formal aesthetic 'values', we are not given to associate form with dissent. What is often considered the iconoclastic climate of post-Reformation



England meanwhile encourages us to connect the plays and literature of this period with dis-orderly fracture. My study suggests the extent to which dramatists negotiated images of destruction and brokenness within the immovable boundaries suggested by the contrast between man and God. In *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, and in *The Two Merry Milkmaids*, iconoclasm and erasure are means by which the brokenness of mortal, mimetic experience is deferentially displayed. In *The Winter's Tale*, meanwhile, unreachable 'wholeness' is transgressively invoked through modes of passive spectatorship that opt out of the deferential production of incompleteness. The notion of a formal, aesthetic 'endpoint' hovers somewhere between the wholeness of divine creativity and the possibility of material completion, its deferral a matter of important social decorum. When Euphues writes that his portrait of Elizabeth is but 'begun for others to end', and when Sidney suggests that poets must continually 'reach unto perfection', both posit early modern image-making as a process predicated on the resistance to finish. This investment in the constant deferral of meaning resembles the twenty-first-century celebration of 'disunity', but early modern investment in incompleteness is not celebratory.<sup>59</sup> Aesthetic unity, the notion of which is implicit in constant allusions to fragmentation, incompleteness and brokenness, is instead a radical, revolutionary position to which none ought to pretend.

This observation is not intended to contribute to the development of 'new formalist' studies or to suggest a recuperation of pre-modern aesthetic values.<sup>60</sup> Instead, I hope to draw attention to the very great historical difference between twenty-first-century concepts of cultural production and the ends and aims of 'making' as experienced by Shakespeare and his contemporaries. Allusions to processes of visual construction offered dramatists a means through which to reflect on representational practice at a time when aesthetic discourse is highly incomplete. While the discourse of making and unmaking offered a means through which to negotiate the politicised, idolatrous associations of 'finish', this discourse repeatedly gestured towards the possibility of formal ending. Depictions of plays as 'incomplete' and 'reworkable matter' therefore continually push towards the development of a notion of aesthetic 'finish'. Early modern investment in the resistance of finish is conditioned to work towards its own end; and yet by the mid-seventeenth century the language of completeness and incompleteness was still in the early stages of development. This study has suggested possible meanings invested in the terms of early modern aesthetic discourse, but I cannot say with certainty what Shakespeare, Greene or Lyly understood by a 'finished product' in a time before the aesthetic whole. Our understanding of the language of cultural production in this period remains tantalisingly incomplete, resembling Lyly's Euphues, who is 'drawn but to the waist' and 'peepeth as it were behind some screen' (p. 159). We may not be able to gain a full picture of this discourse, but in recognising the significance of incompleteness in early modern culture we can begin to obtain a better view.

## Notes

- 1 Maus, *Inwardness and Theater*, p. 210.
- 2 Wotton, *The Elements of Architecture*, p. 4.
- 3 Harris, *Untimely Matter*, pp. 16–20.
- 4 See Jonathan Dollimore, 'Introduction: Shakespeare, Cultural Materialism and New Historicism', in Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield (eds), *Political Shakespeare: Essays in Cultural Materialism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985), pp. 2–17; Alan Sinfield, *Faultlines: Cultural Materialism and the Politics of Dissident Reading* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1992), pp. 9–10, 22.
- 5 See Harris, *Untimely Matter*, pp. 5–8. Harris develops the notion of 'untimely matter' partly in order to refute charges of object fetishism made in David Hawkes, 'Materialism and Reification in Renaissance Studies', *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies*, 4:2 (2004), 114–29, 118; see also Douglas Bruster, *Shakespeare and the Question of Culture: Early Modern Literature and the Cultural Turn* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), p. 191.
- 6 See Dollimore, 'Art in a Time of War', pp. 42–9; a version of Dollimore's chapter appears as the introduction to the third edition of his *Radical Tragedy: Religion, Ideology and Power in the Drama of Shakespeare and his Contemporaries* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), pp. xiv–l. See also Grady, *Shakespeare and Impure Aesthetics*, pp. 3–4.
- 7 Grady, *Shakespeare and Impure Aesthetics*, pp. 3–5.
- 8 Theodor Adorno, *Minima Moralia: Reflections from Damaged Life*, trans. E. F. N. Jephcott (London: New Left Books, 1974), p. 50, quoted in Grady, *Shakespeare and Impure Aesthetics*, p. 3.
- 9 Grady, *Shakespeare and Impure Aesthetics*, p. 17.
- 10 Grady, *Shakespeare and Impure Aesthetics*, p. 16.
- 11 Stephen Orgel, 'What is an Editor?', in Stephen Orgel and Sean Keilen (eds), *Shakespeare and the Editorial Tradition* (New York and London: Garland, 1999), pp. 117–23, p. 117, quoted in Sonia Massai, *Shakespeare and the Rise of the Editor* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 199–200.
- 12 Massai, *Shakespeare and the Rise of the Editor*, p. 200.
- 13 Massai, *Shakespeare and the Rise of the Editor*, p. 200. The emphasis is in the text.
- 14 Harris, *Untimely Matter*, pp. 7–8.
- 15 Harris, *Untimely Matter*, p. 8.
- 16 Harris, *Untimely Matter*, p. 8.
- 17 Harris, *Untimely Matter*, p. 20.
- 18 Harris, *Untimely Matter*, p. 20.
- 19 Harris, *Untimely Matter*, p. 7.
- 20 Grady, *Shakespeare and Impure Aesthetics*, pp. 4–5, 16.
- 21 Johnson, *Mother Tongues*, p. 62.
- 22 See Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, vol. 1, trans. Ben Fowkes (London: Pelican, 1976), pp. 163–8; see also Harris and Korda, 'Introduction: Towards a Materialist Account of Stage Properties', p. 17.
- 23 See Gent, *Picture and Poetry*, pp. 1–4, Meek, *Narrating the Visual*, p. 15, and see. Hamling, *Decorating the 'Godly' Household*, p. 8.
- 24 Thomas Middleton and Thomas Dekker, *The Roaring Girl or Moll Cutpurse*, ed.

- Coppélia Kahn, in Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino (eds), *Thomas Middleton: The Collected Works* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), Epilogue, 1–16. All subsequent references are to this edition.
- 25 The emphasis here is reproduced in Kahn's edition of the play from the quarto.
- 26 This promise is thought to gesture towards the possible appearance of the 'real' Moll, Mary Frith, who is known to have sat on the stage at the Fortune theatre, wearing man's apparel, playing a lute and singing; see Middleton and Dekker, *The Roaring Girl*, ed. Kahn, p. 721.
- 27 On Moll's association with commodity exchange, see Valerie Forman, 'Marked Angels: Counterfeits, Commodities, and *The Roaring Girl*', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 54:4, 2 (2001), 1531–60.
- 28 Paul Mulholland, 'A Source for the Painter Analogue in the Epilogue of *The Roaring Girl*', *Modern Language Review*, 86 (1991), 817–20, 817.
- 29 Richard Taverner, *Proverbes or adagies with newe addicions gathered out of the Chiliades of Erasmus by Richard Taverener. Here unto be also added Mimi Publiani* (London, 1539), sig. C1v; see also Mullholland, 'A Source for the Painter Analogue', 817–18.
- 30 Taverner, *Proverbes*, sig. C1v.
- 31 Taverner, *Proverbes*, sigs C1v–C2r.
- 32 Taverner, *Proverbes*, sig. C2r.
- 33 See Shiner, *The Invention of Art*, p. 187.
- 34 Tittler adds that by the mid seventeenth century, 'paintings were also sold in London bookshops', *Portraits, Painters, and Publics*, p. 77.
- 35 William Painter, *Chaucer Newly Painted* (London: G. Eld and M. Flesher, 1623), sig. A4r. EEBO. <http://eebo.chadwyck.com>. Accessed 5 September 2012; see also Tittler, *Portraits, Painters, and Publics*, p. 77.
- 36 David Hawkes, *Idols of the Marketplace: Idolatry and Commodity Fetishism in English Literature, 1580–1680*, *Early Modern Cultural Studies, 1500–1700* (New York and Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), p. 79.
- 37 See Chaney, *The Evolution of the Grand Tour*, and (ed.), *The Evolution of English Collecting: Receptions of Italian Art in the Tudor and Stuart Periods*, *Studies in British Art*, 12 (New Haven: Yale University Press for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art and The Yale Center for British Art, 2003).
- 38 See Hamling and Williams (eds), *Art Re-Formed*; Hamling, *Decorating the 'Godly' Household*, and Gent (ed.), *Albion's Classicism*.
- 39 See Michelle M. Dowd and Natasha Korda (eds), *Working Subjects in Early Modern English Drama*, *Studies in Performance and Early Modern Drama* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011).
- 40 For example, the process of 'substitution' through which 'the products of labour become commodities, sensuous things' is compared to 'the impression made by a thing on the optic nerve' that is 'perceived not as a subjective excitation of that nerve but as the objective form of a thing outside the eye', Marx, *Capital*, p. 165.
- 41 Mitchell, *Iconology*, pp. 160–208.
- 42 See Hawkes, *Idols of the Marketplace*; see also C. Farago and C. K. Parenteau, 'The Grotesque Idol: Imaginary, Symbolic and Real', in M. W. Cole and R. Zorach (eds),

- The Idol in the Age of Art: Objects of Devotion in the Early Modern World* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), pp. 105–31, especially pp. 107–10.
- 43 Harris, *Untimely Matter*, p. 8.
- 44 Cummings, *The Literary Culture of the Reformation*, p. 49.
- 45 Peacham, *Minerva Britannia*, p. 193.
- 46 Peacham, *Minerva Britannia*, p. 193.
- 47 Peacham, *Minerva Britannia*, p. 193.
- 48 Trevilian, *Great Book*, p. 371.
- 49 Trevilian, *Great Book*, p. 371.
- 50 Samuel Gardiner, *Doomes-Day Booke: or, An Alarum for Atheistes, A Watchword for Worldlings, A Caveat for Christians* (London: Nicholas Ling, 1606), p. 54. EEBO. <http://eebo.chadwyck.com>. Accessed 23 April 2012. On the afterlife in the early modern imagination see Philip Marshall, *Beliefs and the Dead in Reformation England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 188–231.
- 51 Thomas Draxe, *The Earnest of our Inheritance: Together with a Description of the New Heaven and of the New earth, and a demonstration of the glorious Resurrection of the bodie in the same substance* (London: F. K. for George Norton, 1613), p. 52. EEBO. <http://eebo.chadwyck.com>. Accessed 23 April 2012.
- 52 Lewis Bayly, *The Practice of Pietie directing a Christian how to walke that he may please God* (London: John Hodgets, 1613), p. 152. For a discussion of *The Practice of Pietie* and Bayly's career, see J. Gwynfor Jones and Vivienne Larminie, 'Bayly, Lewis (c.1575–1631)'. *Oxford DNB*. [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/1766](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/1766). Accessed 24 April 2012.
- 53 Nigel Llewellyn, *The Art of Death: Visual Culture in the English Death Ritual c. 1500–c. 1800* (London: Reaktion in association with the Victoria and Albert Museum, 1991), p. 10.
- 54 McMullan, *Shakespeare and the Idea of Late Writing*, pp. 194–8.
- 55 William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, ed. Juliet Dusinberre, Arden Shakespeare, third series (London: Methuen, 2006), 2.7.164–7.
- 56 William Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra*, ed. John Wilders, The Arden Shakespeare, third series (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), 1.2.169–77.
- 57 Jones and Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing*, p. 185.
- 58 Besançon, *The Forbidden Image*, p. 66.
- 59 Dollimore, 'Art in a Time of War', p. 43. The emphasis is in the text.
- 60 On new formalism, see Marjorie Levinson, 'What is New Formalism?', *PMLA*, 122:2 (2007), 558–69; for new formalism and early modern literature, see Mark David Rasmussen (ed.), *Renaissance Literature and Its Formal Engagements* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), and Stephen Cohen (ed.), *Shakespeare and Historical Formalism* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007).

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# MAKING AND UNMAKING IN EARLY MODERN ENGLISH DRAMA

Why are early modern English dramatists preoccupied with unfinished processes of 'making' and 'unmaking'? And what did 'finished' or 'incomplete' mean for spectators of plays and visual works in this period? Making and unmaking in early modern English drama is about the prevalence and significance of visual things that are 'under construction' in early modern plays. Contributing to challenges to the well-worn narrative of 'iconophobic' early modern English culture, it explores the drama as a part of a lively post-Reformation visual world. Interrogating the centrality of concepts of 'fragmentation' and 'wholeness' in critical approaches to this period, it opens up new interpretations of the place of aesthetic form in early modern culture.

An interdisciplinary study, this book argues that the idea of 'finish' had transgressive associations in the early modern imagination. It centres on the depiction of incomplete visual practices in works by playwrights including Shakespeare, John Lyly, and Robert Greene. The first book of its kind to connect dramatists' attitudes to the visual with questions of materiality, *Making and Unmaking in Early Modern English Drama* draws on a rich range of illustrated examples. Plays are discussed alongside contexts and themes, including iconoclasm, painting, sculpture, clothing and jewellery, automata, and invisibility.

Asking what it meant for Shakespeare and his contemporaries to 'begin' or 'end' a literary or visual work, this book is invaluable for scholars and students of early modern English literature, drama, visual culture, material culture, theatre history, history and aesthetics.

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Cover image: Follower of Quinten Massys, *Saint Luke Painting the Virgin and Child* (1520?). By kind permission of the National Gallery, London

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