

# The Marlowe Society of America



Near the site of the 2011 MLA Convention in Los Angeles

## Marlowe Society of America Newsletter

Vol. 30, No. 2, Spring 2011

### A Message from the President

**Scholarship:** The MSA sessions at MLA (Los Angeles) went extremely well. Our own on the influence of Marlowe's poetical language consisted of papers on the commercial potency of the so-called weak sons of *Tamburlaine*, the influence of the Ovidian elegies on the fashion of the sonnet ("sonnetdom"), and the replication of Marlowe's Helen in Jonson's plays. [Photos and abstracts are available on the Web.](#) The session "Spenser and Marlowe" opened with a provocative essay on both writers' perception of the sublime, followed by papers on poetic stockpiling in "Hero and Leander" and "Muiopotmos," and the referentiality of Marlowe's characterizations and Spenser's allegorical methods. Many thanks to the International Spenser Society for its partnership

in this enterprise. [Abstracts for these essays are also available on the MSA website.](#)

**Planning for the MSA sessions at MLA in 2012 is in progress.** Our regular session, "Marlowe and the Book," is in its final stage; the joint session with the Medieval and Renaissance Drama Society will announce its program shortly after 1 April 2011. Check the MSA website for updates on these events. The 2012 conference will be in Seattle, 5-8 January.

**Membership Perquisite:** Speaking of scholarship, the MSA is happy to announce that it is offering a free copy of the inaugural issue of *Marlowe Studies: An Annual* to the first fifty members of MSA to request one (shipping included). The first criterion for this perk is that

you be a member in good standing with the MSA on 15 April 2011. The second is that you get your request in by 9 May 2011.

We are excited to promote this outstanding venue for Marlowe scholarship, and we are pleased to reward our membership for their loyalty to the MSA as well as support for our mutual scholarly goals. To receive your copy, send an e-mail jointly to Roslyn L. Knutson ([RLKnutson@ualr.edu](mailto:RLKnutson@ualr.edu)) and Sarah K. Scott ([sscott@msmary.edu](mailto:sscott@msmary.edu)) that provides (1) your current mailing address and (2) the status of your MSA membership (provide the year in which you joined, if you remember). Keep your reply as a receipt. We are receiving requests now.

**Please Note:** the deadline for this offer is **9 May 2011**. So act **NOW** to secure your copy.

**Upcoming Business:** Next fall, you will receive a ballot asking for your vote on the candidates for the positions of president, vice-president, and secretary (the terms of the two additional electoral offices, treasurer and membership chair, are being continued with current officers in place). These officers will guide the MSA in vitality and growth from 2012-15. An announcement of the time and venue for the next Marlowe International Conference will be made in the fall *Newsletter*.

## Exciting News for Marlovians: Film Adaptation of *The Jew of Malta*

MSA member and Performance Editor Ann Basso reports that director Douglas Morse's film version of *The Jew of Malta* is currently in preproduction and will be released through the Films for the Humanities and Sciences in 2012. The Fall issue of the *Newsletter* will feature an interview with Morse to bring our members up to date on all the details. In the meantime, visit <http://www.jewofmalta.com>

**Georgia E. Brown:** Let me take this opportunity to thank Georgia Brown for her long and fruitful stewardship of the MSA as member, officer, and scholar. As many of you know, Georgia, who was poised to become the president of the organization in 2011, resigned in December 2010. She explained with great regret that she had followed interests in another direction of late and believed it was best that she step down. Her recent publications illustrate that the world of Thomas Nashe has increasingly absorbed her attention. Proof is the volume on Nashe in the recently published multi-volume University Wits series edited by Bob Logan (Ashgate, 2011). Her book, *Redefining Elizabethan Literature* (Cambridge, 2004) is also a redirection, to literary authority, gender, and shame. However, Georgia's standing with the MSA and scholarly world continues to rest both on her insights into Marlowe's classicism (e.g., essays in *The Cambridge Companion to Christopher Marlowe*, 2004; *Constructing Christopher Marlowe*, 2000; *Approaches to Teaching Shorter Elizabethan Poetry*, 2000) and individual plays (e.g., essays in *Doctor Faustus: A Critical Guide*, 2010; *Marlowe's Empery*, 2002). For those of us who have worked and played with her in the context of Marlowe Society activities, we will miss her in ways for which this material scholarship does not compensate. All best wishes to you, Georgia, with our gratitude.

Roslyn L. Knutson

to view a promotional film clip and learn more about the project, which begins production in New York soon. Pre-orders of the DVD are available on the site; make a \$100 donation, and you will receive a DVD licensed for classroom use, a savings of over \$200. Other donation levels—and their accompanying gifts—are available on the site as well.



Photo by Roslyn Knutson

## MARLOWE SOCIETY OF AMERICA

Roslyn Knutson, President; Paul Menzer, Vice President; M. L. Stapleton, Editor, *MSA Newsletter* and webmaster; Lucy Munro, Secretary; Kirk Melnikoff, Treasurer; Sarah K. Scott, Membership Chair; David McInnis, Editor, MSA Book Reviews; Pierre Hecker, At-Large Member and Consultant.

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New memberships and renewals: 1) Use the PayPal option on the [Membership web page](#), or  
2) send your check, payable to The Marlowe Society of America, to:  
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**Membership Fees:** We can accept checks for U.S. dollars drawn on U.S. banks or checks in other currencies drawn on a bank in that country.

1 year = \$30 · 3 years = \$75 · Students = \$15 · Lifetime = \$100 (with 20 years of MSA membership)

*MSA Newsletter* publishes reviews of Renaissance drama, especially related to Marlowe; notices of recent and forthcoming publications; announcements; and brief articles or notes of interest to those who study Marlowe. The opinions expressed are those of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect those of the MSA. The editor reserves the right to refuse items, to ask for revisions, and to make stylistic changes that he deems appropriate.

Any and all inquiries, announcements, or submissions regarding the website or *Newsletter* should be sent to:

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*MSA Book Reviews* publishes reviews of books on Marlowe and his times. Send suggestions for reviews and other inquiries to the Reviews Editor:

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MSA web site: [www.marlowesmightyline.org](http://www.marlowesmightyline.org)

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## MSA Executive Committee Meeting, 8 January 2011: Minutes

Present: Brandt, Hecker, Knutson, Melnikoff, Menzer (via Skype), Scott, Stapleton

The meeting was called to order by the President at 9.35 a.m. on 8 January in the facilities provided at the J. W. Marriott, Los Angeles.

### I NEW BUSINESS

#### 1. Resignation of Vice President / Appointment of New Vice President

The MSA formally accepted the resignation of Vice President Brown. The President invited discussion of ways to resolve the matter to fill the vacancy. She noted that the Society bylaws contain key features that are meant to aid in the event of such an occurrence as a resignation, namely that if an Executive Committee member resigns or is unable to serve, the Committee "shall elect a permanent replacement." At first, a temporary replacement was suggested as an expediency, and it was agreed that the current Secretary (Menzer) be invited to fill this role, which the Committee ratified by vote. The President then suggested that the Committee indeed had the power to appoint a replacement in anticipation of the upcoming elections (2012) for President, Vice President, and Secretary, and it was decided that Menzer be appointed to this position. Membership seconded the motion and the election was effected.

#### 2. Appointment of New Book Reviews Editor

In December, via email, the MSA accepted the resignation of Book Reviews Editor Whitney. The President proposed that David McInnis, University of Melbourne, be appointed in his place, which the Executive Committee approved. The new editor will work with the *Newsletter* editor to solicit book reviews and ensure that they are received and edited in a timely fashion.

#### 3. Appointment of Secretary

Committee members suggested several possible replacements for the position of secretary. The President suggested that the temporary post be offered to various people. It was then reasoned that there was no reason to eschew the idea of appointing a permanent replacement, at least until the next election. The choice was Lucy Munro, Keele University, UK. (The offer was subsequently made and accepted.)

#### 4. Proposal to Move Executive Committee Meeting to SAA

Several members expressed a concern about continuing to meet as a committee at MLA since the benefits of doing so have seemed less apparent. Menzer and Knutson both suggested that SAA would be a better venue for this meeting, since most members are more likely to attend this professional event whether they have any pressing business or programmed participation there, and that the opportunity to recruit new members would be much more pronounced, the interest in the subject area already in place. Brandt observed that it

might be difficult to organize any type of regular Marlowe-themed event at SAA, such as a regular seminar or paper session, whereas this is guaranteed at MLA. Various members pledged to be more aggressive in submitting seminar proposals and requests for morning paper sessions at that convention. Knutson added that it costs the Society nothing to offer paper sessions at the national convention. Menzer then proposed a kind of compromise: that the Executive Committee meetings be scheduled for SAA, and that the present paper sessions be kept at MLA. Melnikoff motioned that the Committee adopt this plan, and it was seconded and passed unanimously. A second MSA Executive Committee meeting will be held at the SAA in Bellevue, WA, in April of the current year (2011).

#### **5. Joint Session with Medieval and Renaissance Drama Society at 2012 MLA in Seattle**

See below

#### **6. Modification of Date and Venue for next MSA International Conference**

Nafjplion, Greece, had been suggested as a possible venue for the next International Conference. It was then proposed that for the first time, the International Conference be held in the USA, specifically at the Blackfriars facility in Staunton, VA. The advantages of the new place were deemed to be substantial. A Committee member would be onsite and ideally situated for planning purposes. The theater possibilities for performance and interactions with conference members are many. Blackfriars and the ASC would also be experienced enough with conferences to help the MSA with its planning, and perhaps to put on Marlowe-oriented plays.

#### **7. Elections, Ballots, Nominations**

Brandt and Knutson raised the issue of the upcoming elections for Executive Committee posts. Some claimed that moving the MSA meetings to SAA would better facilitate the entire business of nominations, ballots, and so forth. Two questions occupied the discussion for some time: should a present Executive Committee member be promoted to President? Is a Vice President obliged to be President? It was agreed that it was not obligatory that either scenario be realized. Knutson said that a Nominations Committee needed to be formed in order to create an elections rubric for 2012 and asked Scott if she would be willing to chair such a group. Scott accepted the responsibility of soliciting the membership at large for nominations for President, Vice President, and Secretary. She observed that ballots could be sent out by post or by email. She also sought a timeline for member nominations as well as guidance on generating a form and advice about how much to contact members who do not respond promptly to solicitations for their participation and vote.

#### **9. Roma Gill Prize for 2011**

Knutson asked Stapleton to chair the committee to award the prize for the coming year, and he accepted, pending clarification of the process.

## **II OLD BUSINESS**

### **1. Scholarly Fund**

The President reported that there were no applications this year.

### **2. Non-Profit Status**

The President reported that the MSA was granted official non-profit status with the IRS this year. She expressed her thanks to the officers for signing the required documents by email, which helped speed the process. During the time of application, the Executive Committee finalized the Society's bylaws.

### **3. Archives**

No report was submitted.

## **4. International Conference** (see above)

## **III REPORTS**

### **1. Membership** (Scott)

Over the summer of 2010, the executive board members voted to revise the scale of dues so that everyone, regardless of country of residence, will be charged the same fees. Removed were the categories of UK, Canada, and overseas, and initiated were the following flat-fee amounts: a \$30.00 one-year institutional or individual membership; a \$75.00 three-year membership; and a \$15.00 one-year graduate student membership. The board also introduced a new lifetime membership category for those who have been MSA members for twenty years or longer. This status carries all of the privileges of regular membership for a one-time payment of \$100.

In 2010, MSA Membership reports eighty-five members (four lifetime members).

### **2. Treasury** (Melnikoff)

Checking and CD balances total \$14,958.31 (assets), as well as outgoing payments and various bank fees, an increase of over \$2000 from last year's amount. Since the Society now accepts membership renewals via PayPal on the website, the Committee agreed that coordination and communication between Treasury, Membership, and Webmaster should be clear and ongoing so that the list of current members can be maintained accurately in both Membership's records and Website's Members page, since Treasury receives online payments and Membership is sent checks and forms, but that neither party has exclusive access to all materials. It was also agreed that the PayPal software should be adjusted so that the fee amounts on the webpage and the proper payment category in PayPal can be properly aligned.

### **3. MSANL and Website** (Stapleton)

In 2010, the MSA published two issues of the *Newsletter*, which included performance and book reviews, the minutes of the 2009 Executive Committee meeting in Philadelphia, the abstracts from the two MSA sessions at that MLA convention, and those from the "Marlowe and Shakespeare" seminar at SAA in Chicago. We also distributed the issues (29.2 and 30.1) electronically to every member whose email address was working / accurate, and provided paper copies to those who requested them specifically. The Webmaster worked with Membership to keep current a list of active, dues-paying members on the Member Directory page of our site, and with the President to update the Presidential Message page at her request. Various sections of the website were updated to include more archival material on Marlowe and pages linked to *Early Theatre*, as well as pages devoted to the MLA paper sessions and the SAA seminar, which included photographs. The most significant development was working with Membership and Treasurer to make available the option to use PayPal to renew membership, which is now functional but still requires adjustment. Other types of site maintenance were performed at regular intervals.

### **5. MLA 2012** (Knutson)

Knutson reports that the International Spenser Society has declined to partner with us next year at MLA. We have affiliated ourselves with the Medieval and Renaissance Drama Society for a session entitled "Medieval Marlowe," or "Medievalism and Marlowe," a title that will be revised depending on submission.

The meeting was adjourned at 10.50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

M. L. Stapleton (Secretary *pro tempore*)



## MSA Theater Reviews

### The Hot Tap Theatre Production of D. E. Lillie's *Marlowe: A Tale of Deceit and Heresy*

A bare stage, a curtained tiring house to stage left, and auditorium seats set the tone for the bleak portrayal of Christopher Marlowe's martyrdom in a recent performance of *Marlowe: A Tale of Deceit and Heresy* at the Hot Tap Theatre, a block from Goldsmiths College in southeast London, 28 October-13 November 2010. The script, by D. E. Lillie, relies heavily on narratives of political intrigue in recent biographies of Marlowe such as Charles Nicholl's *The Reckoning* (offered as recommended reading on the playbill), and touches of *Shakespeare in Love* (Shakespeare has writer's block). There are gestures toward the conspiracy theorists as well: Marlowe rises from his deathbed to conspire with his friend Shakespeare to funnel his plays to the stage. "My voice must be heard," Kit proclaims.

The cast of nine players consisted of young professionals who brought considerable vigor to the performance, handling doubling-in-full-view with skill. One, Eugenia Low, played four male parts. She was particularly irritating, and therefore convincing, as Richard Baines, who connives throughout the play to ruin Marlowe, and whose blood-soaked body he spits on after the murder. Another, Rosey Tyler, played Eleanor Bull and a barmaid, but her star turn was as Lord Cecil. S/he calmly faces down Archbishop Whitgift, who sees the bridling of Marlowe as a way to get at his real political prey, Walter Raleigh. Cecil agrees that Marlowe is a troublemaker but is satisfied to have him out of the way. At Deptford, s/he offers Marlowe a horse to escape. Marlowe's friends—Thomas Watson and William Shakespeare—provide company but little useful counsel. Shakespeare is something of a drunk in the play, cynical and garrulous.

Marlowe himself, played energetically by David Swain, seems harmless enough but reckless in view of the signs he is given of imminent danger. Very little of Marlowe's own work is in the script, just a few scraps of *Doctor Faustus*. There were a couple of literary-theatrical in-jokes. A cadre of the politicians has a play *extempore*, and Marlowe and Watson give Shakespeare a mocking poetry lesson.

Watson is praised by both Marlowe and Shakespeare as the superior author. Marlowe, with a farewell kiss, indicates that he and Watson are also lovers.

As playgoer, I found the script the weakest feature, derivative and intellectually impoverished. The players did an earnest job, but they had too little to work with. There were only a few dramatically engaging moments, in Cecil's cold yet ineffectual rationality and Baines's bitterness. As a scholar, I was depressed that the audience might take any details of the script to be historically accurate. On the night I saw the show, however, just ten other people were in the playhouse, so the harm to Marlowe's reputation was limited.

Roslyn L. Knutson

University of Arkansas at Little Rock, Emerita

*Marlowe: A Tale of Deceit and Heresy*, by D. E. Lillie

Hot Tap Theatre, London, England  
28 October-13 November 2010

Director: Marysia Kay

Fight Director: Ronin Traynor

David Swain: Christopher Marlowe

Eugenia Low: Richard Banes Thomas Kyd,

Nicholas Skeres, and that Bradley fellow

Matt Mowat: Thomas Watson, Bishop Bancroft

Anthony Lewis: William Shakespeare

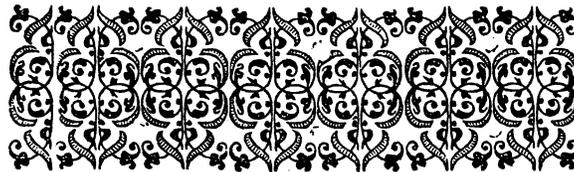
Andrew Welsh: Archbishop Whitgift, Thomas

Nashe, Ingram Frizer

Rosey Tyler: Lord Cecil, Eleanor Bull, barmaid

Freddie Hogan: Thomas Walsingham

Yusuf Bhaimia: Robert Poley, Lord Chomley





L-R: Anthony Lewis (Shakespeare), Andrew Welsh (Whitgift, Nashe, Frizer), Matt Mowat (Watson, Bancroft), Freddie Hogan (rear, Walsingham), Eugenia Low (front, Baines, Kyd), David Swain (Marlowe), Rosey Tyler (Cecil, Eleanor Bull). Photo by Roslyn Knutson.

**Stage on Screen DVD of *Doctor Faustus*, dir. Elizabeth Freestone**

See <http://www.stageonscreen.com/doctor-faustus.php>  
 (Region 1 version also available from amazon.com in an education pack)

This production, based on the A text, was filmed from a live performance at Greenwich Theatre (the audience can from time to time be heard laughing). As filmed performances go it is quite lively, with varying camera angles. Its principal weakness, though is the leaden verse-speaking: the mighty line is reduced to a shouted monotone, and too often characters seem not actually to understand the words they are saying. An over-emphatic and overwrought female Chorus delivers the first words of the play in full-on “I am acting” mode and with an absolute indifference to the rhythms of the verse. Faustus enters to find himself besieged by men offering him books and speaking lines from the opening scene before he sends them packing and says it all again himself. Presumably the aim of all this spelling-it-out is to ensure clarity, but this falls by the wayside as Faustus Emphasises Every Syllable and pronounces “Inviolatè” as if it were an Italian word rather than an English one. Later, we hear “The Cardinal of Florence,” a pronunciation natural in France but impossible in England; “doomed” when it needs to be “doomèd”; and most gratingly of all, “Semeel” instead of “Semele,” utterly destroying the metre. Mephistopheles, who appears at first with horns, is perpetually cross, although it is never quite clear why. He is also audibly Welsh, as is Robin, who sings the Welsh rugby anthem “Bread of heaven,” while the Chorus is Scots, though this seems to be only because the casting is accent-blind as it is gender-blind. The “wife” is a man with a mask, and the evil angel (who doubles Helen of Troy), is a young woman, though it is not clear if this is intradiegetic as well as extradiegetic.

Some relief for the ears is provided by the music: the Allegrì *Miserere* is heard as the Old Man makes his last effort, suggesting that there is perhaps a spiritual sphere of sorts, even if Faustus cannot access it. There is also some attempt at visual invention. Although the tricks at the Pope’s banquet are simply performed by a supposedly invisible Faustus rather than through the use of any elaborate staging effects, “Beelzebub” is a mask on the back of Lucifer’s head, offering a visual image which clearly recalls Lord Voldemort’s occupation of the back of Quirrell’s head in the first Harry Potter film, a shorthand that the director must have expected students to decode easily, since they seem to comprise the target audience of Stage on Screen’s efforts. Their other productions currently available include *The Duchess of Malfi* and *Volpone*, which like *Doctor Faustus* are widely taught at A level in the UK. There is a similar glance at an iconic moment from a popular cultural form when Faustus makes it snow on stage for the Duke and Duchess of Vanholt. Though snow in January is no great rarity in Germany, it has become a *leitmotif* of the hugely popular *Doctor Who* Christmas specials. At the end of these episodes the Doctor and his companion are gifted a sudden white Christmas, as when David Tennant’s Doctor points his sonic screwdriver at the sky to make it snow on Catherine Tate’s Donna. These are among the better moments of the production, but they cannot compensate for its linguistic weakness, and ultimately it is a relief when Faustus finishes his final soliloquy and the devils close in to pull him offstage.

Lisa Hopkins  
 Sheffield Hallam University

## MSA Book Reviews

*The Collected Poems of Christopher Marlowe*, ed. Patrick Cheney and Brian J. Striar. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006. 302 + xviii pp. ISBN: 0-19-514777-4

Anyone contemplating an edition of Marlowe's poetry faces several difficulties in establishing a proper text. Which version of his translation of Ovid's *Amores* should one use? It exists in two different forms: *Certaine of Ovids Elegies*, which is a collection of ten of the forty-nine poems from the Latin original, which followed John Davies's forty-eight *Epigrammes* in an undated octavo said to be printed at Middleburgh (Holland), but probably produced surreptitiously in London. This was one of the books that the Bishops included in their 1599 Ban and condemned to be burned. *All Ovids Elegies*, a more complete collection of the original forty-nine, was subsequently published, again undated and of supposed Dutch imprint, this time preceding the Davies text, which was probably the original target of the Ban anyway. Which *Hero and Leander* should an editor include? There is the first Blount quarto of 1598 not yet broken into "sestiaids" that concludes with the notorious *desunt nonnulla*, and then the various divided versions supplemented with the George Chapman and Henry Petowe continuations into tragedy. A further complication is the custom of moving certain passages around, such as the minor change by Samuel W. Singer (1821) and then the much greater transposition by C. F. Tucker Brooke of the many lines devoted to the lovers's consummation (1910). Object as one may to these non-Marlovian variations, they are still part of the editing and reception histories of the epyllion and should be included. Additionally, there is a relative dearth of criticism on both manifestations of the *Elegies* and a comparative bonanza of commentary on *Hero*, a dynamic duplicated with the other works, the relatively underappreciated *Lucans First Booke* and the Latin elegy for Sir Roger Manwood, and the fulsomely discussed "The Passionate Shepherd to His Love." Another impediment is, strangely, the many important twentieth-century editions of the poetry that one must consider: Brooke (1910), Martin (1931), Bullen (1935), MacLure (1968), Orgel (1971), Bowers (1981), Gill (1987), Burnett (2000). How much should such predecessors be consulted, emulated, disputed?

The present edition complements its predecessors handsomely and some ways improves on all of them. Like Brooke's, it includes the Davies epigrams so that one can see how *All Ovids Elegies* looked in context. It dutifully contains the continuations of *Hero* and the many responses to "Passionate Shepherd," such as Donne's "The Bait." It contains a fine opening essay, with short sections on Marlowe as an Elizabethan poet, authorship, and on each poetical unit: the *Elegies*, *Hero*, "Shepherd," *Lucan*, the Manwood epitaph, and even the Latin Dedicatory Epistle to the Countess of Pembroke.

Emma Smith and Garrett A. Sullivan Jr., ed. *A Cambridge Companion to English Renaissance Tragedy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. xi + 292 pp.

This attractive and elegant volume, which has an impressive range of contributors, is divided into two parts. First comes a series of essays grouped together under the rubric of "Themes" and discussing Renaissance tragedy in relation to theories and antecedents, family and household, the nation state, religion, revenge, subjectivities, generic forms, performance, and film adaptations, concluded by one on "Shakespeare and early modern tragedy." The second half consists of a number of short but incisive "Readings" of individual plays including *The Spanish Tragedy*, *Arden of Faversham*, *The Revenger's Tragedy*, *The Tragedy of Mariam*, *The Changeling*, *The Duchess of Malfi*, 'Tis Pity She's a Whore, and two of interest to

A reviewer should find little indeed here about which to complain. Cheney promotes his storied thesis (*Marlowe's Counterfeit Profession*, 1997) that Marlowe consciously followed an allegedly Ovidian literary career in studied opposition to the better known Vergilian-Spenserian *cursus*. Yet this modest advertising does not overwhelm either prefatory materials or textual notes for the *Elegies* or *Lucan*. It is possible to find the edition useful and disagree with the concept. Happily, the introduction takes up the idea of the *Amores* as proto-sonnet sequence, even quoting a general statement by Stephen Orgel (1971) to that effect. Yet it does not mention the detailed work already having been done in that area, long since in print (1996). Given the world-class annotating skills on display, it is unfortunate that more attention could not have been paid to the radical, and some think completely unwarranted, Brooke transposition of the consummation passage in *Hero*, a move no editor prior to 1910 thought necessary (save for Singer's minor change), yet one adopted unthinkingly by most subsequent scholars. The introduction does not mention the issue, and only a footnote alludes to the matter at all (218n763-4). Yet the editors may have been constrained by the choice of their copy text, Roma Gill's 1987 Clarendon Press offering, the first in a multivolume old-spelling set of the works that is now complete.

Yet the book's strengths are considerable, not the least of which is its liberality and capaciousness regarding the poetry. Cheney mentions his debt to his former master MacLure, and that excellent scholar's generosity toward the *Elegies* shines through here, since along with J. B. Steane's important monograph (i.e., *Marlowe: A Critical Study*, 1964), his was the first edition (1968) to appreciate the text as poetry and not constantly scold the young translator for "inaccuracies." The editors incorporate important work by Lee T. Percy (1980) that proves Marlowe used as source text the fulsome commentary edition by the great Venetian scholar Dominicus Niger (1543), one that may have encouraged some of the more questionable choices, even the much-derided phrase "snakes leape by verse." The excellent footnotes for the translation, like those for the other texts, annotate each poem fulsomely with parallel passages from the *Amores* and Gill's critical notes, and, best of all, short and clarifying passages from Dominicus at apt locations. Striar's brief essay on Marlowe and translation (26-8) explains these issues with admirable, even enviable, clarity and brevity.

This *Collected Poems* would be more than suitable for classroom purposes, either an enlightened undergraduate major authors course or a graduate seminar devoted to Marlowe or to sixteenth-century poetry. It should also be indispensable to scholars for many reasons, and surely already is.

M. L. Stapleton  
Indiana University-Purdue University, Fort Wayne

readers of this newsletter, one on *Doctor Faustus* by Mark Thornton Burnett and one on *Edward II* by Patrick Cheney.

In the first of these, Burnett, arguing that *Faustus* is distinctive for the ways in which it "simultaneously glorifies and debunks the aspirations to greatness of its titular protagonist," focuses on the artistic self-consciousness of the play and its pointed deployment of a range of conspicuously literary strategies, assigning particular importance to the appearance of Helen of Troy and to Faustus's final hour. (He bases his reading on the A text but offers undergraduate readers a careful introduction to the existence of B.) He provides an interesting argument that everything that the opening chorus promises not to show is in fact represented in the play, and then compares this to Faustus' own self-delusion, and the way that every aspect of his character and behaviour has its own opposite inscribed within it and

is mirrored by a diminishing and demeaning double of itself. Burnett also offers some very strong *aperçus* about individual lines and moments.

The second of the Marlowe essays, Patrick Cheney's on *Edward II*, argues that by presenting its tragedy in the register of the sublime, the play exalts the suffering it depicts. It traces the concept of the sublime back to Longinus in a text potentially available to Marlowe and argues for its presence, in different forms, in both Ovid and Lucan. Cheney identifies Gaveston as the architect of an ecstatic Ovidian sublime. He also traces Gaveston's strong association with

other works by Marlowe, which he sees as linking author and character. Gaveston, though, ultimately gives place to Mortimer, whom Cheney sees as associated with a much less erotic and far more violent Lucanian form of the sublime. Both essays thus offer suggestive analyses of the plays they discuss and both also provide suggestions for further reading which will make them, and the volume as a whole, even more useful for students.

Lisa Hopkins  
Sheffield Hallam University

## MSA at MLA, 2011, Los Angeles: Abstracts

Friday, 7 January 2011, 3:30–4:45 pm, Platinum Salon G, J. W. Marriott

**Christopher Marlowe's Poetical Influence · Presiding: Pierre Hecker, Carleton College**

### 1. "Strength Training for *Tamburlaine's* Weak Sons through Repertorial Commerce," Roslyn L. Knutson, University of Arkansas, Little Rock (Emerita)

In 1982 Peter Berek moved the focus on imitations of *Tamburlaine* and *Tamburlaine* away from biographical, psychological, and political analyses of Marlowe himself to a theory of reception by which the imitations on the early modern stage were indications of audience taste ("*Tamburlaine's* Weak Sons," *Renaissance Drama*, 13:55-82). Emphasizing commercial rather than aesthetic or philosophical decisions, Berek refuted Irving Ribner's argument that contemporary dramatists were "trying to correct Marlowe's erroneous ideas" with the observation that the more likely motivator was getting "a good price from the players" (57). Timely as this argument was in redirecting assessment of Marlovian poetical and theatrical influence toward the business of playing, it stopped short of considering the implications of these imitations for repertorial competition among the adult playing companies. Also, by the designation "weak sons," Berek perhaps unintentionally perpetuated a scholarship based on aesthetic judgment. In this paper I consider chronology and company ownership to argue that the so-called weak sons of *Tamburlaine* / *Tamburlaine* were strong participants in the burgeoning theatrical marketplace of 1587-93.

### 2. "Marlowe and the Epicenter of Sonnetdom," M. L. Stapleton, Indiana University-Purdue University, Fort Wayne

Two of *Shake-speares Sonnets* appear ten years earlier in William Jaggard's *The Passionate Pilgrime* (1599), later numbered #138 and #144 in Q1609, together a microcosm of the later work. Their apparent variations on Petrarchan sonnet conventions are anticipated in the *Amores*, the closest thing to a sonnet sequence from classical antiquity on which Ovid's successors could model their works that emulate some aspects of his. Marlowe's translation of this text appeared in two undated versions (c. 1595), *Certaine of* and *All Ovids Elegies*, the first collection an artfully truncated precursor of the latter, just as *Pilgrime* is of Q1609. The Bishops cast *Certaine* into the *auto da fe* of their Ban on satirical materials in 1599, the same year in which Jaggard's publication appears. I contend that these occurrences—publication, censorship, revision—are not coincidental. The twofold appearance of Marlowe's translations seems related to the vogue for sonnets reflected in the similarly dual emergence of

*Pilgrime* and Q1609, all four texts produced in the molten epicenter of what I call sonnetdom.

### 3. "Hellish Helen: Jonson's Marlowe," John Lyon, University of Bristol

It was Jonson who famously accredited Marlowe with his "mighty line." Just how mighty it was can be seen in Jonson's struggle to control and direct its influence in his own writings. This paper will focus on Marlowe's presentation of the figure of Helen near the close of *Doctor Faustus* and on Faustus's verbal and physical response to that representation. It will argue that this scene represents the playwright's characteristic thrilling ambiguity at its most intense, and that this particular scene was long felt to be such by London's theatregoers. We can infer the last point from the evidence, a generation later, of Jonson's own struggle to incorporate this Marlovian moment, first within Volpone's attempted seduction or rape of Celia and subsequently in Sir Epicure Mammon's fantasy in *The Alchemist*. Both dramatic episodes may signify tensions in Jonson's Christian humanism.

## President's Letter on 2012 Elections

Dear Members,

It is time to nominate members of the MSA to elective office. We do this every four years, unless there is a resignation that prompts a special election. We have five elected positions: president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and membership chair. As you see below in the excerpt from the MSA By-laws, the MSA Executive Committee serves as a Nominations Committee with the chair an officer who is not president or vice-president. I have asked Sarah Scott, our membership chair, to serve also as chair of the Nominations Committee, and she has graciously agreed. Therefore, forward your nominations to her at the following addresses:

e-mail: [sscott@msmary.edu](mailto:sscott@msmary.edu)

U.S. Mail: Sarah K. Scott, [Department of English](#), Mount St. Mary's University

16300 Old Emmitsburg Road, Emmitsburg, MD 21727

The positions that the Nominations Committee seeks to fill are the following:

President (Roslyn L. Knutson is retiring after a four-year term)  
Vice President (Georgia Brown resigned from this post and from the MSA in December 2010 [see below])  
Secretary (Paul Menzer, recently secretary, has accepted the position of "permanent replacement" of the vice presidency in the wake of Georgia's resignation; Lucy Munro has accepted my appointment as permanent replacement for Paul as secretary, and she will serve in that position for 2011)

The Nominations Committee is not seeking nominations for treasurer and membership chair because the persons now holding those offices (Kirk Melnikoff and Sarah K. Scott, respectively) have agreed to continue their service in those positions.

You may nominate from our membership by sending the name/s to Sarah, but do note in the By-laws below that a nomination needs the backing of at least three members to be placed on the ballot.

Please have your nominations in by April 1, 2011. The Nominations Committee will compile a slate at its meeting in April and circulate that ballot to you in early fall 2011. The announcement of the new officers will come in December 2011.

Sincerely yours,

Roslyn L. Knutson  
President, Marlowe Society of America

**Excerpt from the MSA By-laws:**

ARTICLE VI. Nominations to Elective Office

Section 1. The Nominating Committee  
Nominations for elective offices shall be made by the Executive Committee, which shall become the Nominations Committee. In this case the Chair of this special committee shall be an officer other than the President or the Vice-President of the organization.  
This committee shall prepare a list of nominees for the elective offices and in addition shall solicit names from the general membership for the various slots. These solicitations shall occur in the Spring prior to the election, which shall take place in the Fall before the conclusion of the current four-year period of office. The actual completed list of nominees shall be presented to the President, who will then present it to the membership with sufficient time for returns to be mailed (or e-mailed) to the Organization's main office and for results to be announced at the December meeting and in the subsequent NEWSLETTER.  
To be placed on the nominations list, a member must be nominated by at least three members, one of whom may be the prospective nominee. Functionally, the same rule applies to the Executive Committee in its selections, since a majority of three would be required to nominate a candidate. All candidates must be members in good standing of MSA.

## *Marlowe Studies: An Annual*

We've had quite a response for our 2011 submissions, and we're working now on 2012, actively soliciting contributions from Marlovians everywhere, our Board happy to read what you send. We seek essays on topics we see less frequently, such as performance studies and theater history; poetical method and craft in the corpus; reception history; the nineteenth-century editorial tradition; and the less heralded works, such as *Lucan*, *Massacre*, *Elegies*, and *Dido*. We have a contents page up on the websites, now that the entire rostrum for the 2011 incarnation is set. Our staff is in the process of advertising to as many institutions in North America and Europe as possible for subscriptions. We hope you can help us out in any way you can, and invite you to subscribe. All manuscripts should be of article length (20-25 pp.), be prepared according to the dictates of *The Chicago Manual of Style* (16th ed.), and include an abstract of approximately 100-150 words. List name and affiliation on a separate cover sheet but include only the essay's title on the manuscript itself to facilitate blind reading of submissions. We use Word (.doc or docx) and Rich Text (.rtf) as file formats. Include complete contact information, including electronic mail and street addresses. *Marlowe Studies* prefers essays that present well-focused arguments. We do not consider unrevised conference papers or dissertation chapters, material submitted elsewhere simultaneously or previously published, or articles on the authorship "controversy" in popular culture (i.e., that Marlowe wrote Shakespeare, or vice versa). Although a shorter article is not unwelcome, we do not publish notes or book reviews.

**General Editorial Information:** we solicit essays on scholarly topics directly related to the author and his role in the literary culture of his time. Especially welcome are studies of the plays and poetry; their sources; relations to genre; lines of influence; classical, medieval, and continental contexts; performance and theater history; textual studies; the author's professional milieu and place in early modern English poetry, drama, and culture.

Please submit manuscripts in electronic mail attachment to:  
The Editors  
*Marlowe Studies*  
Department of English and Linguistics  
Indiana University-Purdue University, Fort Wayne  
[mstudies@ipfw.edu](mailto:mstudies@ipfw.edu)

<http://www.marlowestudies.org>

**We now enjoy tax-exempt status.**

For details, visit the [website](http://www.marlowestudies.org).

**Editor's Note:** MSA Book Reviews provide descriptions and evaluations of recent publications on Marlowe and his period. It gives both new and established Marlowe scholars a forum for expressing their views from a variety of critical approaches. Although reviews of books are the norm, appraisals of recent articles on Marlowe are also welcome. The reviews should be no more than 1000 words in length and should cover the book's purpose, contribution, scholarship, format, and success and achieving its purpose. The editor reserves the right to ask for revision and to make appropriate stylistic changes. A review naturally reflects the opinion of the author rather than the MSA. Reviewers should be members of the organization.

**A Reminder to Our Members:** We'd like to be a better resource of information and notices for all scholarly activity related to Marlowe. To accomplish this, we depend on your support and involvement as members of the MSA. If you know of a germane performance or event, pass it on to us. Email the Newsletter editor directly: [stapletm@ipfw.edu](mailto:stapletm@ipfw.edu). We also wish to increase our membership rolls and to expand our range of contributors. If you have an idea for a brief essay or review, do pass it on to us.

