



Research Seminar – BSA 2023 Conference
“To sleep, perchance to dream”
Dreamscapes in Shakespearean Plays and Adaptations

Deadline: Friday 20th January 2023

Seminar convenors:

Dr Charlène Cruxent

University Grenoble Alpes (FRANCE)

Institute of Languages and Cultures of Europe, America, Africa, Asia and Australia (EA 7356)

charlene.cruxent@univ-grenoble-alpes.fr

Dr Nora Galland

University Côte d’Azur, Nice (FRANCE)

Transdisciplinary Center for the Epistemology of Literature and the Living Arts (UPR 6307)

<https://www.noragalland.online/>

nora.galland@univ-cotedazur.fr

* * *

After falling asleep, a whole new world awaits. Sleep enables dreamers to get access to an imaginary location usually set up by their own mind more or less consciously. The oneiric world is intrinsically liminal; it is a threshold between fantasy and reality, as Demetrius argues in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*: “Are you sure That we are awake? It seems to me That yet we sleep, we dream” (4.1). Indeed, this imaginary location can be accessed either when we dream our night away or when we daydream. In *Richard III*, Ratcliffe also hints at this characteristic of dreams by reminding Richard that what happens in a dream is not real: “Be not afraid of shadows” (5.3).

Dreaming can be a wonderful experience as it is the case for Caliban who does not want his dream to stop: “In dreaming,/The clouds methought would open, and show riches/Ready to

drop upon me; that, when I waked,/I cried to dream” (*The Tempest*, 3.2). However, it may also prove a nightmare, something that terrifies the dreamers and makes them feel imprisoned.

In *Richard III*, Clarence admits to the keeper of the tower that he had a dreadful night: “I have passed a miserable night,/So full of fearful dreams, of ugly sights” (1.4). In this play, the dream gives expression to the guilty conscience, as the ghost of Buckingham implies when he tells Richard, as if to punish him: “Dream on, dream on” (5.3). In *King John*, Philip the Bastard tells John about “people strangely fantasied; Possessed with rumours, full of idle dreams, Not knowing what they fear, but full of fear” (4.2).

Dreamers have the possibility to share their dreams with others by telling the story behind it and interpret it: “And by the way let us recount our dreams” (4.1), asks Demetrius to his friends in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. Dreaming may thus be connected to story-telling and to the very nature of drama – “such stuff/ As dreams are made on” (4.1).

This seminar invites contributions on Shakespeare’s plays that include (but are in no way restricted to) the following topics:

- Representations and metaphors of dream and sleep
- Dreams and the mapping of desire (idealization)
- Space and place: the geographical construction of dreams (ecocritical approach)
- Fantasy and Imagination
- The (un-)conscious
- The liminality of dreams (reality/fiction, daydreaming, somnambulism)
- The memory of dreams
- Relation between dream and night time
- Dreams and nightmares (creatures of the night)
- Dreams and the supernatural
- Dreams and premonitions/omens/visions
- Dreams and morality/ethics
- Dreams on stage and on film
- Dreams in the visual arts
- Adaptations and appropriations of dream sequences

Selected essays of the seminar will be part of a book proposal on dreams in early modern drama.

The seminar enrolment for the 2023 British Shakespeare Association Conference automated via the BSA website. BSA members can log in to their accounts, go to the “Seminar Enrolment” page, and select their top four choices by **Friday 20th January 2023**. If you have any question, please send an email to Dr Charlene Cruxent (charlene.cruxent@univ-grenoble-alpes.fr) and Dr Nora Galland (nora.galland@univ-cotedazur.fr).

<https://www.britishshakespeare.ws/bsa-2023-seminars-and-workshops/>