

IASEMS



Italian Association
of Shakespearean and
Early Modern Studies

*Making Pictures Speak:
Working with Images in Early Modern England*

The Twelfth IASEMS Conference
University of Bologna, 8-10 June 2022

A thousand moral paintings I can show
That shall demonstrate these quick blows of Fortune's
More pregnantly than words
Timon of Athens, 1607 (1.1.92-94).

Sir Philip Sidney famously elaborated a notion of poetry as “an art of imitation [...] that is to say a representing, counterfeiting, or figuring forth; to speak metaphorically, a speaking picture, with this end — to teach and delight” (*An Apology for Poesy*, 1595). The interplay between text and image in early modern literature, language and culture intersects crucial issues related to post-reformation politics and agendas; like texts and theatrical performances, images are “ideologically charged” and debated (Elam 2017).

The Twelfth Iasems conference will focus on literary and dramatic uses of the visual, looking at how images, portraits, objects, props and similar ‘artefacts’ generate alternative ways of *speaking*, *telling* and *seeing* that confirm and/or re-signify literary norms, linguistic codes, moral values, and aesthetic standards. The conference aims at exploring speaking and spoken pictures, imaginative and material processes of ‘figuring forth’, semiotics of display, theoretical and performative modes of the visual, contexts of representation, circuits of signification, in order to reach a better understanding of the ways in which the visual is produced and mediated in early modern literature and culture.

Topics of interest include, but are not limited to the following:

- Images and affect
- Images and conflict / Visual representations of crime scenes
- Images and disease

- Images and memory
- Images of the self and collective images
- Absent images
- Iconophobia and iconoclasy
- Circulation of popular images
- Mental imagery
- Speaking, spoken and animated pictures
- Sameness and difference
- The language of objects on stage (paintings, letters, rings ...)
- The role of images in non-literary writing
- Maps and cartography
- Travelling images
- Visual representations of the human body
- Images of femininity and masculinity
- Visual representations of the Church and of the monarchy, of ceremonial objects and dress (coronations, parades, religious rites...)
- Images of the sacred
- Ballads, broadsheets, and emblems: the relationship between text and image
- Thaumatrography, thaumatology and chronologies of extraordinary events: apocalyptic thought and images
- Speaking pictures across genres
- Linguistic representation of images
- Ekphrasis

We welcome proposals for twenty-minute papers (maximum). Please send a 500-word abstract and 200-word curriculum vitae by **20 April 2022** to:

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