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Introduction

From the dramatisations of classic fiction or the novelisations of blockbuster movies, to the cinematic style of modernist writing or the cinephilia of contemporary novelists, the interface between the written and the visual text has rarely been so busy or such a broad focus of critical interest. This our second issue of *EnterText* focuses on the relationship between film or television and the literary, dramatic or historical work.

Despite the scope of this interface between text and screen, the preferred topic for academic scrutiny remains the adaptation, as existing studies and a forthcoming

issue of *Screen* testify. The essays collected here are hardly different, and yet, at the same time, they make a crucial statement: that the visual reincarnation of source material should not to be analysed or, worse still, judged, on the grounds of fidelity to an original, but rather in terms of the cultural context that generated and greeted them, and the media that gave them new life.

Faithfulness is overrated. Especially in the study of adaptations.

Stella Bruzzi's piece on the filmic forms of Patricia Highsmith's *Ripley*, puts it most compellingly: "More interesting, arguably, than what each film does with its original material is what each film says about cinema". In her discussion of the French and Anglo-American versions, she uses the adaptation to explore how these different cinematic traditions enact different processes of transcription of the literary text to the screen. Sara Martin also takes as her focus the various incarnations of an 'original' text: George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion* and its progeny, the film *Pygmalion*, and the stage and screen musical *My Fair Lady*. For Shaw faithfulness was all. Martin, in tracking Shaw's resistance to the adaptation of his work, significantly re-forms the question of fidelity into a gauge of the author's status and of cultural change.

Similarly, in David Ellis's article, the evaluation of an adaptation's digression from its literary source is culturally contingent. His comparison of the literary and filmic versions of *Up the Junction* and *To Sir, With Love* aims to reconcile the grittiness of the 1950s with the more fickle pleasures of the 1960s. The issue, again, is not of the films' fidelity but of the periods' different socio-historical and political frameworks determining these productions.

The 1990s television adaptation, and, in particular, Andrew Davies's *Moll Flanders*, is the theme of David Fulton's piece. Astute to the social, political and

commercial meanings surrounding the status and popularity of the genre, Fulton examines how the literary source is reinvented for a very different cultural context and medium. Faithfulness, according to Fulton, was never an issue for Davies for other things are at stake in creating a successful classic serial. This article is followed by an interview with Andrew Davies.

The highly popular narrative is also the concern of Frederick Zackel, who offers an alternative perspective on the adaptation's fidelity. Interrogating the links between the screenplay and the successful film, Zackel distinguishes a paradigm for the structural passage of a popular text to which all successful films remain faithful. For Zackel this paradigm not only aids our understanding of a how a 'good' film works but can help us think about how any text works, fiction or film.

Perhaps it is not that faithfulness is overrated but that it is so often misunderstood or abused.

In addition to these five scholarly pieces we are very pleased to be including in this themed issue selected proceedings of the conference 'Hamlet on Screen,' staged jointly by The Globe Theatre and King's College London in April 2001. These articles will be introduced by the Conference organiser, Dr Gabriel Egan.

Once again, *Entertext* continues to insist on the interweaving of the creative and the critical. The meditative prose poem by Paul Breslin on George Herbert's "Virtue" fortuitously enables the edition to enrich its commemoration of the life of Zara Bruzzi, as she was a renaissance specialist. For the same reason, the supplement on screen adaptations of Hamlet has a particular appropriateness. Above all, we are

delighted that Zara's daughter Stella is a major contributor to the issue. This first edition of 2001 also inaugurates our special interest in translation to mark the designation of 2001 as Year of Languages. One of the senior languages of the British Isles is represented in the work of the Welsh poet Iwan Llwyd, who writes in both Welsh and English, and received the bardic crown in 1990. The poems published here are new, and result from a visit to Brunel University to read at the British Braids conference in April. One poem, in English and Welsh versions, reflects his response to London, and the other is a translation into Welsh of the last poem written by Dylan Thomas, "Elegy," about his father. New work from two fine women poets from different sides of the Atlantic also comes together here, with Marilyn Hacker's translation of three poems by the French poet Claire Malroux. Poems by two young writers working in northern Europe and drawing on more than one language make an apt conclusion to the issue's creative element. Maria Proitsaki who grew up in Greece but now lives in Sweden and writes in English is a promising new talent, as her poignant poem on the exclusions of "fortress Europe" indicates. Reciprocally, the urge for migration is one of the topics simply but eloquently addressed by the young Ukrainian writer Oleg Malakhov who uses Russian and English for his poetry and prose, though only English is represented here. We hope to develop *EnterText* as a forum for new translation and work from bilingual writers or those working between cultures in subsequent editions, and invite submissions to this end. Feedback from readers via the forum will also be appreciated.

One of *EnterText*'s main concerns, from the moment of its inception, has been with those new media which are the enabling environments of much contemporary creative and critical work. As an e-journal, *EnterText* is itself a testament to the growing power and scope of the new media to realign and revise existing forms, and

one of the journal's ambitions is to use the technology of the web to expand the possibilities of both creative and critical work, to move beyond the limitations of print, and to explore new areas of interactivity between different aesthetic forms. In this respect, the editors are pleased to be able to offer Petra Kuppers's meditation on the impact of hypertext on reading practices, and her piece involves fluid crossings of the boundaries of the visual and the virtual, the textual and the temporal.