Renaissance and Reformation
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Roger Clegg, principal investigator, and Eric Tatham, developer. Reconstructing the Rose: 3D Computer Modelling Philip Henslowe's Playhouse. Other

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database very user-friendly. One problem concerned the several discrepancies in labelling copies: on more than one occasion, I found that the indication of one letter as "copy of" another letter did not correspond to the ID number of the copy. Another problem is the fact that some letters have multiple addressees and correspondents, while others may be said to have been produced by "multiple hands," as in the letters officially written by the Privy Council. While this presents no problem for the historian, as the multiple nodes indicating different authors in the graphs allow for these possibilities, for linguists this could raise issues about the inclusion of such data, given the remaining uncertainty concerning the "speaker" that produced these letters.

Apart from this, however (and from any remaining inconsistencies, which will certainly be amended within the database maintenance), the database turned out to be a good resource to open a new line of research, as it will certainly be for any other similar research and many more in the future.

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Roger Clegg, principal investigator, and Eric Tatham, developer.
Reconstructing the Rose: 3D Computer Modelling Philip Henslowe's Playhouse. Other.
De Montfort University, 2019. Accessed 21 August 2019.
reconstructingtherose.tome.press.

Roger Clegg proposes early on in this impressive website that "[w]e are never going to fully understand the interior arrangements of the [Rose] playhouse" (in "Chapter 4," 4.5.2), but the research that he has gathered and presented here goes some ways towards demonstrating many aspects of the venue, including its dimensions, its construction, and its aesthetics. Reconstructing the Rose: 3D Computer Modelling Philip Henslowe's Playhouse, produced by Clegg with computer models by Eric Tatham and Mixed Reality Ltd, is, from the beginning, a very impressive digital output. Using Unreal Engine and funded by a Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF) grant from De Montfort University, it combines a detailed study of the Rose, an early modern theatre in London, from multiple perspectives. This graphically attractive model will likely be

persuasive in garnering favour for other such projects on similar theatres and other examples of cultural heritage. It will inevitably appeal to students and researchers alike.

Early modern theatre continues to be fascinating to both researcher and theatre audiences, as experience in the past two decades at the neighbouring Shakespeare's Globe Theatre indicates. The recent uncovering of the archaeological foundations of several other early modern theatres in London further reinforces the attraction of exploring and recovering theatres of this era. In response to this, the model reprises images of various other examples of what we might term "old-school" attempts to investigate the detail of the Rose, comparable theatres, and London history through the years. While some would wish to rebuild the uncovered foundations of lost theatres, the reality of funding and of land prices tends to push such a dream off into the distance. Digital versions of early theatres are a useful next option. Certainly, they are not a full replacement, but they have a range of benefits that, as this model demonstrates, are considerable.

There is close attention paid to all the features of the theatre building in this virtual version of the Rose, including the different renovations that it underwent. Some descriptions are lengthier than others, depending on the available evidence. In addition to the archaeological findings, the site incorporates information from Philip Henslowe's diary and various other historical records, as well as evidence from the scripts of plays known to have been performed at the Rose. The site is heavily referenced and finished with a substantial list of works cited.

 The model enables Clegg to investigate a range of aspects of the venue. It even documents the venue's sewers which may not initially be what one gravitates to or expects in theatre research, but with the Rose, the archaeological foundations are the chief "concrete" remnant. Quite a bit of the research that underpins the generation of this model is courtesy of the Museum of London Archaeology unit, members of which were involved in the dig of the foundations in 1989; the archaeology of the site and the topography of the area have generated the bulk of the evidence about the theatre.

The most significant aspect of this project is its creation of a full version of the interior and exterior of the Rose. Viewers can traverse the entire theatre building. The site provides detailed information about each segment of the venue, down to the gallery balustrades. The project includes information about

the walls, the roof, the height of the stage, the possibility of a trap door in the stage, and all the different aspects of the construction of this building. The detail even extends to the flag flying over the venue.

The reconstructed Rose is situated amid its immediate neighbourhood, not in the vacuum in which some virtual models exist. There has been careful thought as to what buildings might have surrounded the Rose, and in establishing the feel of a somewhat crowded Bankside. Aerial shots are useful, while a video guides viewers on the short walk from the Thames to the theatre. Virtual modelling facilitates the inclusion of several versions, and Clegg has taken advantage of this potential (which is simply not workable in the construction of a "real" building): for instance, he speculates on the possibility of two different exterior finishes. While the project settles on one, there is a helpful image of what the other option would have looked like. He also decides that Henslowe's office would have been on the top storey of the venue, a decision that is not impossible.

The site's appendix provides images that can be explored with inexpensive cardboard VR headsets (capitalizing on the assistance that mobile phones can provide to this technology when they are inserted into the cardboard viewers) to provide an indication of an immersive experience. Two informative videos depict the Rose as it would have looked in 1590 and in 1595. The site also includes numerous images (which are more readily able to be included in quantity than in a print book) from text-based sources. In addition, many images provide the facility to zoom in and out, and, using a panorama function, to get a full sense of location; users can access a 360-degree panorama from the perspective of what's being discussed (for instance, from the stage level, from one of the galleries, from the front entrance, etc.).

The painting of the venue is fantastic, especially since there are no remaining indications in historical records of exactly what the Rose's decoration looked like. Given that, Clegg has imagined a version for the model that is very creditable. In addition to the heavens and the embellishment of a scene to adorn the stage, Clegg has elected to paint the balustrades and pillars. Perhaps more interesting is the degree of wear that some of the painting suggests: the paint on the stage surface is appropriately scuffed and peeling, instead of the "too-fresh" look that sometimes accompanies virtual renditions. Having said that, the interior offsets a somewhat aestheticized version of the theatre's exterior where mud, dust, grime, and pollution have not yet settled. Overall, the model's visual

resolution is excellent, if it at times verging towards an "olde worlde" version of early modern times (with deer roaming around the grounds of the theatre).

Clegg has chosen to explore the documentation of the Rose as a historical object rather than examine it as a venue for performance. The revelations in the former are fascinating of course, but the discoveries of what this venue for performance can reveal about the theatricality of early modern performance await analysis. As yet, the model facilitates further, rather than new, research. Inevitably, others will be able to build on it to leverage research.

This fascinating scholarly site encompasses some of the best of virtual potential, but curiously it appears to work hard to replicate a traditional book format rather than be comfortable with its presence and value as a different type of scholarly output. Its scholarly underpinning is typical of a conventional book-length study (quotations, references, acknowledgements, building on others' scholarship that has come before, and even arguing with those who have worked in the same area and with whom one disagrees). Harvey Sheldon, the chair of the Rose Theatre Trust, provides a traditional foreword. The site is designed carefully to tell a print-like narrative (even with a few inevitable typos creeping in). This may be due to institutional pressure to produce an output that can be usefully "counted" and/or "assessed" by peers; or it may be a response to convention, or time pressures, or even the difficulty of determining adequate alternatives.

This aside, Reconstructing the Rose: 3D Computer Modelling Philip Henslowe's Playhouse presents a valuable resource for theatre goers and historians alike. User-friendly and well-documented, Reconstructing the Rose goes a very long distance in what is still a developing form.

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