

While Shakespeare's popularity has continued to grow, so has the attention paid to the work of his contemporaries. The contributors to this *Companion* introduce the distinctive drama of these playwrights, from the court comedies of John Lyly to the works of Richard Brome in the Caroline era. With chapters on a wide range of familiar and lesser-known dramatists, including Thomas Kyd, Christopher Marlowe, Ben Jonson, John Webster, Thomas Middleton and John Ford, this book devotes particular attention to their personal and professional relationships, occupational rivalries and collaborations. Overturning the popular misconception that Shakespeare wrote in isolation, it offers a new perspective on the most impressive body of drama in the history of the English stage.

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Cover illustration (inset): Rory Edwards (Sir Walter Whorehound) and Elizabeth Meadows Rouse (Mistress Allwit) in the Shakespeare's Globe production of *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside*, 1997.

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