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The Royal Shakespeare Company expands its repertory at the Shakespeare Institute

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Between May 20th and May 24th 2013, a team of 24 RSC actors - divided into four teams of six, each led by a director and an academic expert on the drama of Shakespeare's time - filled the Shakespeare Institute as they explored some 16 hitherto unrevived Elizabethan, Jacobean and Caroline plays for possible performance in the RSC's Swan auditorium. On Friday May 24th scenes from the four plays deemed most promising were tried out in the Institute's hall before an audience including RSC artistic director (and Honorary Senior Research Fellow) Gregory Doran, and Dame Cicely Berry.

Their casts included Natalie Dormer (recently seen on television worldwide in *The Tudors* and *Game of Thrones*), Russell Tovey (of *Being Human* fame), Clive Wood, John Ramm, Sylvestra le Touzel, and Richard Cordery. The project, known as 'Scholars' Pitch,' was the brainchild of the Institute's Dr Martin Wiggins. Gregory Doran would not be drawn as to which of the plays might be seen on an RSC stage in a forthcoming season, but there was considerable enthusiasm in the hall for each of the shortlisted four – John Marston's *The Insatiate Countess*, James Shirley's *The Cardinal*, John Ford's *Love's Sacrifice*, and Lording Barry's *Ram Alley*.

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