**“By most mechanical … hand”: *Westworld*’s Shakespearean things, or Becoming Posthuman”**

Stephen O’Neill, Maynooth University Department of English

“What is it like to be a Shakespearean thing?”, asks Christy Desmet in her article, “Alien Shakespeares 2.0”. To this provocative question about the intersection of Shakespeare and digital technologies, one might respond: watch *Westworld*. HBO’s hit-show about an American western themed visitor experience, where human guests interact with humanoid hosts, provides a metaphor for understanding contemporary Shakespeares as non – or – posthuman, the consequence of tiny, often hidden, algorithmic operations that Desmet’s alien phenomenology tracks. Exploring *Westworld*’s Shakespearean intertexts, in particular host Peter Abernathy as Shakespeare quotation machine, this paper considers the uncanny loop effects of quotation and the idiomatic in the show and *King Lear*, itself a Shakespearean thing. I argue that these texts become mutually illuminating, reminding us that, to borrow from Donna Harraway, there is “no fundamental, ontological separation of machine and organism, of technical and organic”. *Westworld*does not simply quote Lear / Shakespeare but powerfully intuits these as alien ontologies.