*Civic Drama*

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* Civic drama was made up by a large variety of performances.
  + Anything from simple public proclamations to history plays in the new commercial theaters.
* These types of dramas drew attention to what all was transpiring in the urban community.
* In Renaissance civic drama had elements of tradition and improvisation.
  + The improvisation was due to the reinvention of tradition. However, the reinvention went against the customary practices.

**City, Crown, and Royal Entry**

* The royal coronation and the Lord Mayor’s Inaugural Show were the two grandest types of pageantry in 16th century London.
  + Both events symbolized a relationship between the monarchy and a government that enjoyed its freedom, immunities, and privileges in exchange for political and financial support of royal policy.
* The royal coronation was an event that was rarely held.
* The Lord Mayor’s Inaugural celebration took place after the new mayor returned from taking the oath and Westminster.
* There was transformation of civic ritual and pageantry during the Reformation.
* In the 16th century ritual events took on an established procession route.
  + This route included both habitual pageant stations and a well-established ceremonial element that established them.
* The height of the pageants took place at the gateway into Paul’s Churchyard in front of the City’s chief officials.
* The pageants were a mix of classical and biblical symbolism.
  + These were termed “the King’s Advent” by Ernst Kantorowicz.
* During the climax of the ceremonial route, London officials offered the city’s loyalty and support. At the same time they also stated their wishes to the monarch.
* Gift giving became increasingly popular.
  + The presentations of gifts allowed for speeches to be made by officials that represented the city’s interest.
* In the 16th century these speeches happened regularly.
  + Eventually they became laced with political realities. Monarchs found themselves engaged in dialogue and were agreeing to contractual obligations.

**Time, Space, and Civic Ritual**

* Government was organized by ceremonial year.
  + This was a cycle of events that were divided into secular and religious semesters.
    - These events corresponded with the feasts of John the Baptist and Saints Peter and Paul.
* The Midsummer Marching Watch was London’s grandest civic procession.
  + The lord mayor and two sheriffs were accompanied my dancers, musicians, and several pageants sponsored by the London guilds.
    - They would parade through town at midnight while constables and citizens watched.
* Secular events lasted from June through the end of October.
  + These events lasted long enough for city officials to be in place for the religious events.
* Religious feasts began on November 1, with All Saints Day.
  + The religious feasts series lasted between November 1 and February 2.
* The religious events lasted as long as June 24.
* There were strict rules enforced during coronations in order to enforce civil order.

**From Civic Ritual to Civic Drama**

* The first Inaugural Show known to have made use of speeches and pageants can be dated back to 1541.
* In 1539 an order was made that suppressed the Midsummer Watch in favor of an environment more controlled by the military.
  + This was believed to be necessary due to the threat from the Catholic invasion
* Prior to the Reformation the real reason for the Watch was more civic than religious.
* From 1539-1568 there was a great debate and uncertainty between the Midsummer Watch and the mayoral inauguration.
  + Either one or the other was performed.
* During Elizabeth’s reign the Inaugural Show finally suppressed to the Midsummer Watch.
* There were final attempts to revive the London Watch on the 1560’s.
  + In 1568 Mayor Thomas Rowe finally put a stop to the Watch.
* The first printed calendar of London’s civic holidays was printed in 1568.
  + The calendar admitted the Watch all together, went in to detail with the mayoral inauguration, and made clear the plan for processions and religious feasts.
* Permanent public theaters began to appear in London in the 1570’s.
  + The plays at these theaters were more urban.

**The Lord Mayor’s Show**

* The professional theatres contributed to civic life and the Lord Mayor’s Inaugural Show.
* The show began with the lord mayor returning from taking his oath and arriving at his first pageant.
* The lord mayor’s shows were modeled after a military style triumph.
* Unlike in the past, pageants were performed by pageant wagons.
  + Things were more relaxed in this setting.
* There was an incorporation of symbolic evils into the mayor’s pageantry.
  + This revealed the ultimate faith in the city’s virtues and destiny.
* The lord mayor’s show encouraged the idea of citizenship.
* The idea of civic drama in London reflected the wealth of Londoner’s.
* Civic drama became a rival to courtly theatre, royal entry, and the masque.