

Kirk, Thomas, artist. Measure for measure, act V, scene 1. John Peter Simon, printmaker. London: John & Josiah Boydell, 1796. Folger ART File S528m2 no.58 (size XL)

In 1786, John Boydell began his Shakespeare Gallery to capitalize on Shakespeare's surging popularity. Boydell proposed to use Shakespearean subject matter to raise the prestige of an English school of "Historical Painting." He envisioned the project in three parts: a gallery where the public could pay to see original paintings; a series of prints based on the paintings, and an illustrated edition of Shakespeare's plays. Although not a financial success, the project produced a number of famous images of Shakespeare's works, among them this engraving of Act 5, Scene 1 from *Measure for Measure*.

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