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Once is an accident, twice is a coincidence, three times is a habit, and four times is... Michael Caine remade

...Or in other words, once is a remake, twice is a sequel, three times is a series, and four times signifies a serial engagement with the earlier work(s). Whereas certain genres and directors have been repeatedly revisited and updated, such as the case of Brian De Palma's serial if not always serious involvement with Alfred Hitchcock's classic oeuvre or the fad for Asian horror remakes and/or sequels show, less common seems to be a consistent and serial engagement with the output of one single actor. Michael Caine's four major iconic roles, two from the 1960s, *Alfie* and *The Italian Job*, and two from the 1970s, *Get Carter* and *Sleuth*, were all remade within a short space of time from 1999 to 2007, suggesting that such a proliferation of the remakes of the actor's earlier works was more than just an accident or a coincidence but a phenomenon worth investigation. What makes this case unique is that Michael Caine has embraced many of these remakes, extensively commented on them as well as participated in two of them. It is possible to discuss them in terms of adapting/updating/recycling of popular motifs and characters: the avenger, lover and thief, but it is equally possible to see them in terms of "seriality of *acteur*ship" or "adapting recurring actors", to paraphrase some of the suggestions in the Call for Papers for "Cinema and Seriality". What do we make of the fact that two of Michael Caine's British roles were taken up by the iconic figures of American movies: Sylvester Stallone and the actor-remaker extraordinaire Mark Wahlberg? How do we read Caine's own cameo appearance in *Get Carter* opposite Stallone? What has motivated Jude Law to take on Caine's previous roles not once but twice in the new versions of *Alfie* and *Sleuth*? Is Caine's decision to act opposite Law in the readaptation of *Sleuth* to be seen as a duel of actorship, a rite of passage or his opportunity to have a final word? This paper will try to answer these and other questions by looking at seriality in terms of a repeated engagement with the works of a single star, Michael Caine.

BIO

Dr Agnieszka Rasmus teaches drama and film at the Institute of English Studies, University of Łódź, Poland. She is the author of *Filming Shakespeare, From Metatheatre to Metacinema* (Peter Lang, 2008) and co-editor of *Images of the City* (CSP, 2009), *Against and Beyond: Subversion and Transgression in Mass Media, Popular Culture and Performance* (CSP, 2012), and *Multicultural Shakespeare: Translation, Interpretation and Performance* Vol. 12 (27) (Łódź UP, 2015). She has also published numerous book chapters and a few journal articles on Hollywood remakes. Her research interests include British cinema, Hollywood, adaptation theory, Shakespeare on film, remake studies, and new media. Currently, she is working on a book devoted to Hollywood remakes