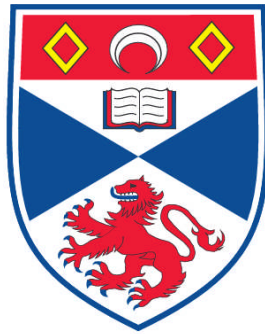


**THE THEATRICAL PORTRAIT IN EIGHTEENTH CENTURY
LONDON (VOL. I)**

Shearer West

**A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St. Andrews**



1986

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THE THEATRICAL PORTRAIT IN EIGHTEENTH
CENTURY LONDON

Ph.D. Thesis
St. Andrews University

Shearer West

VOLUME 1

TEXT



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ABSTRACT

A theatrical portrait is an image of an actor or actors in character. This genre was widespread in eighteenth century London and was practised by a large number of painters and engravers of all levels of ability. The sources of the genre lay in a number of diverse styles of art, including the court portraits of Lely and Kneller and the fetes galantes of Watteau and Mercier.

Three types of media for theatrical portraits were particularly prevalent in London, between c.1745 and 1800 : painting, print and book illustration. All three offered some form of publicity to the actor, and allowed patrons and buyers to recollect a memorable performance of a play.

Several factors governed the artist's choice of actor, character and play. Popular or unusual productions of plays were nearly always accompanied by some form of actor portrait, although there are eighteenth century portraits which do not appear to reflect any particular performance at all. Details of costume in these works usually reflected fashions of the contemporary stage, although some artists occasionally invented costumes to suit their own ends. Gesture and expression of the actors in theatrical portraits also tended to follow stage convention, and some definite parallels between gestures of actors in theatrical portraits and contemporary descriptions of those actors can be made.

Theatrical portraiture on the eighteenth century model continued into the nineteenth century, but its form changed with the changing styles of acting. However the art continued to be largely commercial

and ephemeral, and in its very ephemerality lies its importance as a part of the social history of the eighteenth century.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank the staffs of the following institutions which were indispensable to my research from the beginning : the Garrick Club, the British Library, the British Museum Department of Prints and Drawings, the Victoria and Albert Library, the Victoria and Albert Museum Department of Prints and Drawings, the Witt Library, the National Library of Scotland and the St. Andrews University Library, Department of Rare Books. I also thank the University of St. Andrews for providing me with the funds to pursue this research.

For academic assistance throughout the last few years, I am grateful to Professor Martin Kemp and Mr. Robin Spencer, my supervisors, who were always willing to read and comment upon my writing, no matter how inconvenient it was for them. I would also like to thank Dr. Geoffrey Ashton, Professor Michael Kitson, Professor Nigel Glendenning and Dr. James Lawson for helpful suggestions at various stages of my research regarding my focus and direction. Special thanks are due to Mr. Geoffrey Hargreaves, Mr. Peter Adamson, Mrs. Christine Heeley and Mrs. Dawn Waddell, who went well beyond the call of duty to assist me with technical matters with which I could never have coped alone.

Personal thanks are due to my parents for their confidence in me and Mr. John Moore for teaching me how to be organised. Finally, I owe a great debt of gratitude to Admiral Sir John and Lady Fieldhouse and especially Sarah Fieldhouse and Sue Lewis, whose continued hospitality and moral support on my frequent visits to London made completion of my research possible.

TO ROBIN

For all help, both professional and personal

CONTENTS

VOLUME 1 : TEXT

	Page Number
INTRODUCTION	1
PART I : SOURCES	
CHAPTER 1 : SOURCES AND PROTOTYPES OF THEATRICAL PORTRAITURE	8
Popular and Polite Art of the Seventeenth Century : The Broadsheet and the Court Portrait	9
The French Fête Galante and the English Conversation Piece ..	15
Hogarth : Theory and Practice	21
Other Prototypes and Early Theatrical Portraits	26
Conclusion	31
PART II : MEDIA	
CHAPTER 2 : PAINTING	32
From Roscius to Royalty : The Patronage of the Theatrical Portrait	33
The Theatrical Conversation Piece	41
Half-History	46
The Commercial Theatrical Portrait	58
CHAPTER 3 : THE THEATRICAL PRINT INDUSTRY	69
The Print Industry as Commercial Enterprise	70
Locations of Print Shops	76
Early Theatrical Mezzotints	78
McArdell, Wilson, Zoffany and Sayer	82
Later Mezzotints : Reynolds and the Rise of the Reproductive Print	86
Bell, Boydell and the Advent of Stipple Engraving	89
Etching and Line Engraving	95
CHAPTER 4 : BOOK ILLUSTRATION	100
From the Scenic Illustration to the Actor Portrait : The Early History of Play Illustration in Eighteenth Century London	102
Bell's First and Second Editions of Shakespeare's Plays ..	110
Bell's First <u>British Theatre</u> and the Rival Publications ..	118
The Quality of Print and Choice of Scene : A Stylistic Compari- son Between Portrait Frontispieces for Bell and His Rivals	131
Bell's Second <u>British Theatre</u> and the Problems with Cawthorne	143

	Page Number
PART III : STAGE AND IMAGE	
CHAPTER 5 : FACTORS GOVERNING REPRESENTATION	151
Painting	152
Popular Prints : Contemporary Images and What the Public Saw	157
Book Illustration : Nostalgia and Imagination	169
CHAPTER 6 : COSTUME AND SET	175
Contemporary Dress and the Beginning of Historical Accuracy ..	177
Foreign, Ancient and Historical Costumes	181
Distinctive Costumes for Distinctive Characters	186
Reynolds, the Empire Dress, and the Further Reformation of Stage Costume	192
Set	197
CHAPTER 7 : GESTURE AND EXPRESSION	204
The Posed Actor	207
The New Naturalism and Distinctions Between Tragedy and Comedy	211
The Expression of the Passions : LeBrun and the Art of Tragic Acting	217
Tragic Attitudes and Theatrical Portraiture	227
Stage Comedy and the Fallacy of Infinite Character	238
CONCLUSION : THE LEGACY OF THE THEATRICAL PORTRAIT	254
NOTES	269
APPENDIX	318
BIBLIOGRAPHY	332

VOLUME 2 : CATALOGUE OF LONDON THEATRICAL
PORTRAITS 1700-1800

VOLUME 3 : ILLUSTRATIONS

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

In the broadest sense, a theatrical portrait can be defined as a painting or engraving¹ of an actor or actors either in character or in every day dress. However, this thesis will deal only with the former category of theatrical portrait, that is a portrait of an actor or actors dressed for, or performing, roles, or presented in a way that makes direct reference to their profession. This definition encompasses everything from paintings of actors which are representative of specific theatrical performances to portraits which are more fanciful and imaginative or are related in only a rudimentary fashion to the realities of stage performance. This form of portraiture was particularly predominant in London from the 1740s and became so widespread that by the end of the eighteenth century, hundreds of engravings and paintings of actors in costume were produced each year.² The theatrical portrait represented the merging of painting and theatre, and the universal popularity of the London stage at the time was no less significant to the genre than the dominance of portraiture in English artistic circles.

One of the most important events in British stage history was the 1737 Licensing Act, which Robert Walpole encouraged in reaction to Fielding's subversive plays. The act served the purpose of filtering all sexual and political innuendo out of stage plays through the agent of the government appointed dramatic censor, thereafter severely limiting the nature of plays which appeared in London. Furthermore, the Licensing Act recognised only two London theatres - Covent Garden and Drury Lane,³ thus guaranteeing conformity and uniformity in what the London theatre-going public saw.⁴ This monopoly of public entertainment can be paralleled in our own day by the dominance of BBC-1 and BBC-2 on British television. With the cable revolution not yet off the ground, everyone in Britain who watches television, from the humblest workman to the Queen herself, sees more or less the same programmes and actors. In the intimate London society of the eighteenth century, this uniformity had a pronounced effect on the perceptions and expectations of any Londoner who attended the theatre.

When members of the London public went to see a play in the eighteenth century, they did not necessarily expect elaborate stage sets, compelling dramatic interpretations, subtle ideas or innovations; they, in fact went to see the actors. A mass of scandal sheets, biographies and general theatrical criticism began to emerge from booksellers, especially after the 1761 publication of Charles Churchill's sometimes scathing critique of actors, The Rosciad.⁵ This sudden upsurge attests to just how widespread interest in the stage had become and how much this interest focussed upon the personal lives, careers and talents of individual actors.

Concurrently, the art world saw the rise and development of portraiture as the most common form of painting practised by English artists. As early as 1759, Horace Walpole could write to his friend Sir David Dalrymple:

A very few years ago there were computed two thousand portrait-painters in London; I do not exaggerate the computation, but diminish it; ⁶ though I think it must have been exaggerated.

Exaggerated or not, Walpole's estimate was at least reflective of the truth that the percentage of practising portraitists in London was disproportionately high. The reason why so many artists eagerly turned to this genre was explained by Hogarth:

Portrait-painting ever has, and ever will succeed better in this country than in any other. The demand will be as constant as new faces arise; and with this we must be contented.⁷

and more bluntly:

Portrait painting is the chief branch [of the art] by which a man can promise himself a tolerable livelihood and the only one by which a money lover can get a fortune.⁸

But the practice of portraiture had its limitations. Artists of imagination were forced to curb their ingenuity in order to flatter their patrons' egos, and because of this, the Abbé Le Blanc's cynical dismissal of English portraiture was dangerously close to the truth:

At some distance one might easily mistake a dozen of their portraits for twelve copies of the same original. Some have their heads turned to the left, others to the right; and this is the most sensible difference to be observed between them. Excepting the single countenance or likeness they all have the same neck, the same arms, the same colouring, and the same attitude. In short, these pretended portraits are as void of life and action as of design in the painter.⁹

Lest Le Blanc's remarks be seen as chauvinistic and prejudicial, Hogarth, in his Apology for Painters, made a direct analogy between British portraiture and still life, revealing his frustration at the lack of imagination in contemporary painting.¹⁰

Theatrical portraits answered the desire to go beyond mere face painting because they offered a simultaneous chance to paint a likeness and develop a fictional characterisation. With a theatrical portrait went a number of associations which a straightforward portrait did not have. In our century, a film still has the same effect : it is a frozen moment, but if we know the film from which it was taken, our mind supplies the before and after and a diverse series of associations accompany our contemplation.

Because of its ephemeral nature and origins in popular culture, eighteenth century theatrical portraiture has been virtually ignored or dismissed by modern art historians, while theatre historians tend to use these works only as documentary evidence for specific historical arguments. However, despite the fact that few theatrical portraits

could be called "high art", their significance for eighteenth century art is none the less important. A form of portraiture practised by artists from Sir Joshua Reynolds to the most anonymous stipple engravers, cannot be justifiably ignored, and the characteristics which distinguish it from ordinary portraiture warrant a separate study. My thesis sets out to illuminate this unique genre, to clarify its functions and to recreate the theatrical situation in London which made such images possible.

Part I discusses the forerunners of theatrical portraiture from the allegorical portraits of Lely and Kneller, to Watteau's influence through the agent of his pupil, Mercier. This section sets up the background which made theatrical portraits readily acceptable in London after c.1745 and discusses the earliest examples of the genre, including Hogarth's crucial painting of David Garrick in the Character of Richard III.¹¹

Part II of the thesis outlines the various media which artists used for theatrical portraits, and is, therefore, divided into three parts : painting, prints and book illustration. The chapter on painting begins by explaining the importance of portraiture in eighteenth century London, and subsequently focusses on the theatrical conversation piece and the artists who practised it. The patronage of the theatrical portrait, as well as the growing social status of the actor, are also discussed in this chapter. The chapter on prints outlines the various forms of theatrical print sold in London throughout the eighteenth century, and describes the locations and output of print shops which specialised in such works. The third medium, book illustration, is the subject of the next chapter, which begins with a brief discussion of the early development of illustration in eighteenth century

editions of plays. The principal emphasis of this chapter is the rivalry between the publisher, John Bell, and various other booksellers and publishers in London. In addition, this chapter compares the different styles of portrait illustration for these rival publications, and shows how different artists illustrated similar scenes.

Having set up the forms in which theatrical portraiture appeared, Part III, Stage and Image, seeks to establish the relationship between what actually happened on the stage and what artists depicted. This too is divided into three chapters. Chapter 5, Factors Governing Representation, considers the temporal relationship between performances of plays and the production of prints and paintings. This chapter includes an examination of why some subjects were popular while others were not; as well as why some works were produced which bore no relation whatsoever to what actually happened on the stage. Once the artist had chosen the actor and the scene he wanted to represent, he had three major aims : to render the costume, to capture likeness, and to reflect the appropriate characterisation of the role which the actor portrayed. The next chapter therefore attempts to give an idea of the types of set and costume used on the eighteenth century stage, coming to terms with how prints and paintings reflected this reality. The final chapter on Gesture and Expression is the most important one in the thesis, as it concentrates on the faces and bodies of the actors depicted. It begins by discussing the various theories of physiognomy and expression, and how the artistic and dramatic forms of these theories reflected similar ideals. Built upon this foundation is a consideration of tragic and comic representation of man in the light of plays which were performed on the stage in the eighteenth century.

The conclusion draws together all the previous discussion by focussing on the legacy of the theatrical portrait. It emphasizes what happened to the genre in the nineteenth century and how nineteenth century images differed from, and how they were similar to, their predecessors.

In addition to these aims, I have explored throughout the thesis a number of issues which suggest further implications of theatrical portraiture. Among these are the social and economic factors which governed the production of such works, and a consideration of the relationship between patron, artist and sitter. On a more general level, theatrical portraiture is placed in the context of popular imagery and is seen in relation to events on the stage which gave rise to such representations. Because of radical changes in acting methods over the last 200 years, eighteenth century theatrical portraits have little or no meaning to a modern eye; the thesis therefore grapples with this problem by placing the portraits in their context and suggesting how an eighteenth century theatre-goer might have seen them.

These social issues are complemented by an examination of broader artistic issues. Throughout the thesis, stress is given to the need for caution when making parallels between the arts, and the limitations of any theory which automatically equates painting with acting are revealed. Finally, the conflation of faithful likeness and imaginary character common to theatrical portraits appears to be one possible prototype for nineteenth century narrative painting, and a case is made for this relationship.

The organisation of the thesis and the development of the discussion attempts to establish theatrical portraiture as a widespread and

important genre of painting in its own right, as well as to come to terms with other social and artistic issues with which the subject is directly concerned.

PART I

SOURCES

Chapter 1

SOURCES AND PROTOTYPES OF THEATRICAL PORTRAITURE

At a glance, it seems that the first theatrical portraits in Britain materialised out of nowhere, and indeed, the immediate precedents of the genre of depicting an actor in character are difficult to define. In truth, any attempt to categorise these precedents and to relate directly early theatrical portraits to specific works of art which preceded them will prove futile. A more useful method of determining the precedents of theatrical portraiture is to attempt to define the artistic climate in England at the beginning of the eighteenth century and to isolate those elements which helped contribute to the eventual development of the theatrical portrait genre.

To a great extent, social and religious concerns underlay the limitation of subject matter used by artists in England at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Not only had the British monarchy, centuries before, rejected the Catholic doctrines which later helped foster the European Baroque style, but this very rejection led to a distrust and abhorrance of the more lavish forms of history painting practised by post-Renaissance artists in Italy, Germany and France. Whenever the necessity for "pure" history painting arose in Britain, foreign artists were shipped in to fill the need, and many of the best artists practising in Britain prior to c.1720 had been born, trained and established in other countries.¹

Running concurrently with this rejection of religious history paintings was a strong tradition of portraiture which became crystallized in the seventeenth century by the growing desire of royalty and

the landed classes to perpetuate their images for their progeny. Had Charles I not been enamoured of his own image and Charles II not been desirous of retaining that of Nell Gwynn at her prime, some of the best masterpieces of van Dyke, Lely and Kneller would never have been painted. Thus this focus on portraiture - although serving a private rather than a public function - helped British painting maintain some standard of quality despite the general lack of trained and inspirational native artists.

By 1700, the lack of a national school of history painting, the practical need for portraiture and the reliance on foreign artists with more sophisticated training created an unusual and problematic artistic situation in Britain. Conservative patrons of the arts were resistant to dramatic change in the images painted for them, but foreign artists naturally brought with them the most novel ideas and techniques from the continent. A series of compromises were necessary, and foreign style and iconography were translated into a native idiom which could be digested by the aristocracy as well as by the increasingly influential middle classes. Theatrical portraiture was only one example of several tendencies in British art which grew out of this bizarre admixture of native portraiture and foreign infiltration. Its immediate prototypes ranged from the oblique influence of Watteau's fêtes galantes to the more obvious and direct impact of the art of Hogarth.

Popular and Polite Art of the Seventeenth Century : The Broadsheet and the Court Portrait

Rather than limiting itself to a strictly naturalistic rendering of the subject, the Baroque court portrait by its very nature had to

imply the status, respectability and ostensible moral elevation of the sitter. Artists working in this genre were thus allowed to expand beyond mere face painting into a type of half-history, complete with idealisation and moral implication. Largely by chance, this form of portraiture came to be associated in the court of Charles II with the actress, Nell Gwynn. Despite the fact that she was the royal mistress, and therefore royal by association, Gwynn practised a profession then considered little better than prostitution.² Thus the portraits which Charles commissioned from Lely showing Gwynn in various attitudes were, on the one hand, in direct breach of the decorum of this form of portraiture, but at the same time, they expanded the repertoire of the portraitist. These portraits by Lely and his studio retained elements of the traditional Baroque court portrait while incorporating other qualities which were to have implications for the development of the theatrical portrait.

For example, one portrait of Gwynn (Figure 1), attributed to Lely, shows that actress seated casually in a loose gown, her arm around a sheep, casting a sly, sidelong glance at the observer. This greater informality of pose and gesture freed Lely somewhat from the rigidity of formula which necessarily characterised portraits of those with legitimate blood links to the royal line. Their very looseness and freedom led subsequent generations to see them as reflective of the sort of licence that prevailed in Charles II's court, which encouraged, among other things, the strikingly profligate poetry of the Earl of Rochester. Lely's portraits of Gwynn were the prototypes for eighteenth century images of Perdita Robinson, Lady Hamilton and Dorothy Jordan - all of whom were love objects of royalty or aristocracy.³ In the hundred years or so between Lely's

portraits and those of Hoppner and Romney, the portrait of the actress in a dramatic role had come to occupy a prominent place within the genre of court portraiture. Although Charles II would never have conceived of a portrait of Gwynn in any role other than a vague pastoral or mythological one, William IV eagerly persuaded Hoppner to paint images of his beloved Jordan playing the roles for which she was famous on stage at the time (e.g. Figure 44). In the interim between Lely and Charles II and Hoppner and William IV, both social and artistic attitudes had undergone a radical change, and the theatrical portrait had attained a semblance of respectability.

However, Lely was not the only seventeenth century artist to depict an actress : his rival, Kneller, also included portraits of actresses in his paintings, although with a different intention. Kneller's 1697 equestrian portrait of William III (Figure 2) includes the allegorical figures of Britannia and Flora, represented respectively by Elizabeth Barry and Anne Bracegirdle - both of whom were popular actresses of the day.⁴ By using Barry and Bracegirdle as models, Kneller endowed his portrait with a certain amount of gestural freedom and the fluidity of the actresses' gestures contrast with William III's stately formality.

Kneller carried this tendency to its logical conclusion in his portrait of Anthony Leigh as Dominic in Dryden's Spanish Fryar (1689) (Figure 3). Here he actually shows the actor in character, wearing the frock and tonsure of the Dominican order, and performing an action which can be linked to a determinable moment in Dryden's play. However, the moment chosen by Kneller is a contemplative rather than an active one, in which Dominic's essential greed and hypocrisy are

revealed by his decision to aid an illicit love relationship for financial gain. His simple gesture of running his fingers through the coins in his coffer further reinforces the object of his unholy desire. Kneller has avoided the dynamics and expressive extremism of the more energetic moments of this tragi-comedy in favour of a quiet but significant point in the plot. Thus despite the costume and additional props, Leigh's static pose detracts from the theatricality of the work, and makes it more of a straightforward portrait of the actor than a portrait of Dominic, the Spanish Friar.

Kneller's depiction of an actor in character was not without its precedents; significantly, the earlier practitioners of this art were, unlike Kneller and Lely, British born. What is known about the scant few early theatrical portraitists is confined to the meagre scribbled lines in Vertue's notebooks, and it is essential to be aware that the portraits themselves were rare. The first of these artists mentioned by Vertue is Greenhill, significantly a student of Lely's. The only Greenhill portrait named by Vertue is a chalk drawing of Henry Harris as Henry VIII in Shakespeare's history play (1663) (Figure 4).⁵ As in Kneller's portrait of Leigh, the details of the commission of the work are lost to posterity, but since Vertue moralistically blames Greenhill's early downfall and death on his obsession with the theatre, this portrait of Harris could have been painted more as a token for a friend rather than as a seriously commissioned work.

Two years later another exercise in the genre emerged from the brush of Robert Bing who painted a stilted and unconvincing portrait of Cave Underhill as the Quaker Obadiah in Howard's play, The Committee (Figure 5). Unlike Kneller's portrait of Leigh, Bing's Obadiah is

merely a three-quarter length costume portrait without any direct visual references to a specific moment in the play. The portrait is totally lacking in the gestural and expressive variety that was later to characterise theatrical portraits, and the austere Quaker dress - seemingly the sole object of the portrait - does not reveal any great skill on Bing's part in the depiction of drapery.⁶

More significant was the Scots artist,⁷ Michael Wright. Aside from his unique costume portraits of a Highland Laird (Figure 6) and an Irish Tory, Wright painted an interesting and unusual portrait of John Lacy in three different characters (Figure 7).⁸ Speaking of Wright's costume portraits, Vertue asserts that they were:

in grate Repute, at that time when they were done, that many copies were made after them. Mr. Wright's manner of Painting was peculiar to himself.⁹

Vertue's emphasis on Wright's popularity and novelty is telling. Not only was he breaking new ground in his fancy dress portraits, but he was gathering a following in the process. Although Wright had few imitators at the time, his works were obviously well known, and his triple portrait of Lacy later found an admirer in David Garrick.¹⁰

Wright's portrait of Lacy (1675) takes a step closer to the eighteenth century theatrical portrait. Although the three figures are static and posed, Wright has varied both costume and physiognomy significantly in order to emphasize the actor's ability to change his personality to suit the dramatic situation. Walpole's identification of the three characters in the painting as Parson Scruple in The Cheats, Sandy in the Taming of the Shrew and M. le Vice in the Country Captain¹¹ is probably not correct, but regardless of the specific identity of the

characters, we can still discern the divine, the low servant and the fop, thanks to Wright's careful distinction between their physical aspects. This painting was also commissioned by Charles II,¹² but because of the nature of the subject, Wright was not confined, as Lely and Kneller had been, to the court portrait formula.

In addition to the formal court portrait and these costume portraits, other seventeenth century precedents of theatrical portraiture took a more popular form. From the sixteenth century, scenes from plays had been represented in book illustration, and the artists imported for this purpose by the publisher Tonson at the turn of the century brought this practice into England (see chapter 4). The very act of representing a scene from a play forced artists to think about the variety of possibilities of gesture and expression which could be employed in enlivening such scenes. But also of significance was a continuing native interest in human types which manifested itself on a popular level in the various editions of the Cryes of London.

The collections of figures representing itinerant sellers, beggars and performers which made up the Cryes of London were first issued in London in broadsheet form in the sixteenth century,¹³ but the most ambitious collection appeared in a folio volume of 74 plates in 1688 with engravings by Lauron.¹⁴ In Lauron's Cryes, the plates are artistically crude and the figures anatomically inaccurate, but although the characters lack expression, Lauron has varied their physiognomies from young to old, fat to thin, wrinkled to smooth. This variation suggests the possibility that Lauron's figures are actually portraits, and among his band of Cryers, Lauron has included street performers such as the Spanish Don, the Squire of Alsatia, a rope dancer and Clark the English posture master (Figures 8-11). The interest in physiognomy and low-life

characters which made the Cryes so popular was still prevalent in the eighteenth century when Paul Sandby (1760) and Wheatley (1790) produced their own rather more sophisticated versions of the subject.¹⁵ In addition, if Lauron's Cryes were part of the stock-in-trade of eighteenth century print shops, the awkward and casual postures of the low-life figures such as the mackerell seller or the beggar (Figures 12 and 13), could have provided inspiration for theatrical engravers grappling with the difficult problem of how to represent a comic figure.

From Lely's court portraits to Lauron's Cryes, both British and immigrant artists of the seventeenth century were grappling with the problem of how to present the human form in novel ways. To most of these artists, the theatre and its actors provided inspiration either directly or indirectly, and much of the more imaginative and varied art of the century involved the introduction of some form of actor portrait.

The French Fête Galante and the English Conversation Piece

The fête galante as developed by Watteau had its origins in the stock commedia dell'arte types and their characteristic gestures. Not only did artists of great originality such as Callot manifest an interest in such subjects, but less skilled engravers whose names are lost to posterity depicted Harlequins and Mezzetins in crude stage settings. Watteau's mentor, Gillot, carried this obsession a stage further in a series of seventeen drawings of actors in costume.¹⁶ Despite the fact that Gillot's drawings were intended as costume models rather than as dramatic personae, Eidelberg's description of these works could equally apply to the engravings for Bell's British Theatre and similar English

engravings of the later eighteenth century which bear a more direct relationship to contemporary theatre:

All seventeen drawings are of the same style ... have approximately the same measurements, and share the same format of a single figure casting a shadow to the right side of what is generally, but not always, a blank background.¹⁷

Specific parallels between the Bell and Gillot figures can also be drawn by comparing, for example, Mrs. Yates as Isabella (Figure 14) and Shuter as Falstaff (Figure 16) with Gillot's depictions of Folly (Figures 15 and 17), but these analogies must not be overstressed, since Gillot's works did not penetrate London directly, but rather through the work of his student, Watteau.¹⁸

From Gillot's literal costume portraits, Watteau further expanded the possibilities of using commedia characters by making them the basis of mysterious paintings about love and music with various exotic and dream-like settings which mingle the fantasy of theatre with an idealisation of French court life. Watteau's blending of fantasy and reality extended to the point of including portraits in his imaginary scenes,¹⁹ but he occasionally adopted the more straightforward approach of Gillot, by depicting a single figure of an actor in character, as is the case with his portrait of Philippe Poisson as Blaise in Dancourt's Les Trois Cousines.

Watteau came to England in c.1719 to consult Dr. Richard Mead, who, conveniently was also a great connoisseur and art collector.²⁰ Although Watteau left behind two examples of his art,²¹ his work was not generally known in England until years later, and then it mainly appeared in the form of copies, imitations and engravings rather than the products of

Watteau's own brush. Joshua Reynolds in one statement shatters the illusions which had been built up by an avid cult of Watteau in England. He says:

His works being extremely dear on the continent the brokers and dealers bring us over Copies of his pictures, or those of his imitators, Lancret and Pater, which they impose upon us as originals.²²

Because of these piratings, England lost the direct impact of Watteau's genius, but the innocuous engravings and genre paintings of his imitators were more influential on the developing English art than Watteau with his iconographical complexities could have been.

The most influential of Watteau's followers was the Hanoverian, Philippe Mercier, who came to London some time before 1723,²³ and contributed to the transformation of the whole face of British art. Mercier has been credited by modern art historians with the "discovery" of the conversation piece, largely because he was the first artist to combine the informality of Watteau's *fêtes galantes* with the formal group portrait.²⁴ Of course, the informal group portrait had existed prior to Mercier - most significantly in Netherlandish art - but Vertue, in his characterisation of Mercier's art, implies the particular importance of that artist's work:

[Mercier] has painted several pieces of some figures of conversation as big as the life conceived pleasant Fancies & habits. mixt modes really well done--and much approv'd off.²⁵

Vertue's reference to "Fancies" and "mixt modes" reveal what Mercier's work meant to his contemporaries - he did paint portraits - but portraits which took on the more imaginative iconography of the Watteau-esque subjects for which he was famed.

The conversation piece was one of the most significant prototypes of the theatrical portrait, and Paulson's definition of the genre stresses its links with the theatre:

They are conversations as long as they show actors in their roles, people at a masquerade party, members of a royal family who are also children or actors for the nonce, or any identifiable person consciously assuming a costume or role within a realistic situation.²⁶

Although Paulson's definition is perhaps overstated, the conversation piece was essentially an artificial genre in which the artifice was hidden under a layer of ostensible naturalness. Hogarth's introduction of a cupid and a stage curtain in his portrait of the Cholmondeley family cleverly underlines this artificiality which is belied by the seemingly natural activity of the Cholmondeley children in particular. Sitwell has suggested that the greater variety and informality which the conversation piece introduced into formal portraiture may well have been augmented by the artists' careful study of the theatre. Although this argument as such cannot be substantiated, the greater informality of conversation pieces is, in the broadest sense, theatrical.

However, to return to Mercier, his own particular blend of portraiture and fancy was also practised by the English artist Marcellus Laroon - a soldier, actor and artist who was a contemporary of Hogarth's.²⁸ In order to elucidate the significance of these artists to the development of theatrical portraiture, it is instructive to discuss several of their works which are more or less theatrical in nature. One of the earliest hints of the introduction of an essentially English theatrical motif into a French formula occurs in a Watteau-esque commedia scene painted by Laroon in 1735 (Figure 18). Aside from the usual stock commedia characters, Laroon has introduced a fat man and a robed figure

which Raines suggests are more in keeping with English pantomime than with Italian comedy.²⁹ Identification of many of Laroon's figures tends to be difficult, but he painted several costume scenes which may be portraits, but are more likely imaginative tableaux influenced by the theatre. For example, his so-called "stage figure" of c.1740 (Figure 19) was inscribed "Guy Fawkes" on the back of the canvas by a later hand - perhaps marking it as more romantic and fanciful than theatrical, since Guy Fawkes was not a character in any popular play. Whether or not the "Guy Fawkes" is a portrait, the figure is posed in a tense dramatic manner which was obviously meant to imply a specific action that has, unfortunately, been lost to posterity.

The problems which these works have caused for later art historians are considerable, as it is often difficult to discern where fantasy ends and reality begins. Such is the case in Mercier's portrait of "Peg Woffington" referred to by Ingamells and Raines as simply "Woman in Love"³⁰ (Garrick Club). The features of the woman who gazes fondly at a miniature certainly resemble those of other undisputed portraits of the actress, Woffington, but the implication that this work represents her infatuation with David Garrick is obviously erroneous.³¹ This later misjudgement of the subject matter is further confuted by the fact that the portrait was painted in 1735, several years before Garrick first appeared on a London stage, and thus before his relationship with Woffington had become green room gossip. Mercier endowed his "Peg Woffington" with an informal pose and a vaguely dramatic subject, breaking away from the formula of traditional single figure portraiture. The ostensible theatrical theme merely reinforces this new naturalism of pose and action.

However, Mercier and Laroon moved yet another step closer to the theatre by making the obvious transition from the French commedia dell'arte scene to the scene from an English comedy. Both artists chose to paint scenes from Shakespeare's Henry IV parts I and II - significantly only a few years after Hogarth's 1732 portrait of actors performing the Recruitment scene from II Henry IV (see below). Mercier painted both Falstaff at Boar's Head Tavern (I Henry IV, present location unknown) and Falstaff with Doll Tearsheet (II Henry IV, present location unknown); and Laroon's choice of subject was Falstaff, Bardolph and Mistress Quickly (Figure 20). Although these works are essentially illustrations of plays on a slightly grander scale, Raines suggests with some conviction that Laroon's Falstaff is a portrait of the actor, James Quin. Because of the paucity of portraits of actors at the time, it is difficult to determine whether or not Mercier's figures are meant to be portraits, but he also painted scenes from Farquhar's Recruiting Officer (present location unknown) and Cibber's Careless Husband (Figure 21), which - surely not coincidentally - were two of the most popular comedies of the day.

The sort of subject matter which Mercier and Laroon painted was also characteristic of the paintings which formed part of the decorative scheme of Vauxhall Gardens. Painted largely by Francis Hayman, the Vauxhall works reflected this infiltration of French mannerisms as well as formed the most daring experiments to date in respect to novel subject matter.³² Not only were costume subjects such as "Two Mahometans gaping in astonishment as the beauties of Vauxhall" part of the scheme, but scenes from plays such as the Mock Doctor, The Devil to Pay, and again Henry IV parts I and II were included in the supper boxes.

However, neither Mercier, Laroon nor Hayman entirely lost their French mannerisms and the influence of the theatre on their art was, for the most part, more figurative than literal. Only when Hogarth began to come into his own as an artist did the literal representation of an English actor playing a role become a reality.

Hogarth : Theory and Practice

Like Laroon and Mercier, Hogarth in his prime began to undermine the importance of the traditional hierarchy of artistic genres by creating novel subject matter which was impossible to categorise in any conventional way.³³ Hogarth's imagination and originality, particularly with regard to his "comic histories" was largely the result of his open mind and willingness to absorb ideas and influences from diverse quarters. In this respect, the theatre offered a natural inspiration both on his ideas about art as well as on his art itself. Hogarth not only used theatrical models as a means of elucidating his art theory, but he also painted scenes from plays with recognisable actors in character.

One of Hogarth's most quoted aphorisms occurs in his autobiographical notes, where he says:

Subjects I considered as writers do. My picture was my stage and men and women my actors who were by Mean of certain Actions and expressions to Exhibit a dumb shew.³⁴

This statement has been taken almost universally to imply that Hogarth used theatrical motifs directly even in his non-theatrical works, and many subsequent art historians have pointed out the stage-like qualities of his interiors.³⁵ But Hogarth's references to the theatre seem to indicate that he instead saw the theatre as a useful analogy by which

art could be understood:

If you call out a man of fine understanding to a scene represented in colours as on the stage and he exerts all his knowledge of propriety character action expression etc. and if added to this he has been aware of the effects of nature on the eye and customed himself to compare em with picture he bid a fair chance for judging of these most material part of a Picture with more precision than even a good painter wanting his understanding.³⁶

This use of theatrical analogy and model is further reinforced by a long passage at the end of the Analysis of Beauty where he criticises the contemporary stage and suggests that improvements could be made if stage action were to be:

as much as possible a compleat composition of well varied movements, considered as such abstractly and apart from what may be merely relative to the sense of the words.³⁷

Hogarth realized ahead of his time that stage composition could and should be as carefully contrived as artistic composition, and his insightful suggestion reveals also that he not only saw the potential influence of the theatre on painting, but the obverse as well. However, despite the fact that art and theatre were linked in his mind, in practice he showed his awareness of the essential differences between the two. The unsuccessful attempts of subsequent playwrights to adapt Hogarth's prints into interludes and pantomimes shows the impossibility of translating one art form into another. The very stillness of Hogarth's progress pieces allowed his audiences to "read" the pictures, but once transferred into a theatrical form, movement and action obliterated the beauty of his frozen moments and the richness of meaning in these comic histories was lost.³⁸

In practice, Hogarth's links with the theatre were more direct and less ideological. From the very beginning the theatre was to appear in Hogarth's art in the form of benefit tickets, play illustrations and satire. As early as 1724 Hogarth issued a satirical print entitled A Just View of the British Stage (Figure 22) in which he ridiculed Cibber, Booth and Wilkes at Drury Lane for their obsession with the profitable but soulless pantomimes which were beginning to dominate the stage at the time. The print is clumsy, but the satire is achieved through the devices of speech ribbons, an ironic inscription, and most effectively, Ben Jonson's ghost who rises from a trap horrified at what the British stage had become. The implication that pantomimes were usurping the importance of more serious or classic British plays on the stage was also the subject of Masquerades and Operas (Figure 23), where the plays of Congreve, Shakespeare and Jonson become mere waste paper as the public flock to see Harlequin Dr. Faustus - one of the most popular pantomimes of the 1720s. In addition, the theatre appears in Southwark Fair (Figure 24), where Hogarth reproduces on a show-cloth a theatrical print circulated at the time by Laguerre (Figure 25) which satirizes a quarrel between the actors and managers of Drury Lane (see below). It is significant that theatrical satire of this sort did not become prevalent until Hogarth showed how the faults of the contemporary stage could form a common and accessible artistic subject for different classes of London society.

From satires, benefit tickets and book illustrations, Hogarth took the logical next step in his art to the depiction of actual scenes from plays with readily identifiable actors performing the roles for which they were famed at the time. The sketches for both Falstaff Examining His Recruits and The Beggar's Opera (Figures 26 and 27) are hasty,

minimal and suggestive. Since such a quick sketch technique was uncharacteristic of Hogarth's usual practice,³⁹ it is possible that Hogarth could have sketched both of these in the theatre during performances of The Beggar's Opera and King Henry IV, Part II and that the final compositions thus echo the original stage performances.⁴⁰ Both works exist in several painted versions, but neither were engraved at the time. However the most important aspect of Falstaff Examining His Recruits and The Beggar's Opera is that they are both group actor portraits and are thus a direct prototype for the theatrical conversation piece.

The scene from King Henry IV, Part II (Figure 28) shows John Harper as Falstaff, Colley Cibber as Shallow and Josiah Miller as Silence,⁴¹ whereas The Beggar's Opera gives us Mrs. Eggleton as Lucy, Hale as Lockit, Walker as Macheath, Hippisley as Peachum, and Lavinia Fenton as Polly.⁴² The Beggar's Opera is particularly important not only because it came first, but also because the six very different versions of the painting show Hogarth grappling with the problem of how literally he should capture the theatrical scene. Although modern art historians refer to Hogarth's theatrical "realism" in The Beggar's Opera,⁴³ the various versions of the work indicate that Hogarth was not so convinced that realism was the proper choice of mode for this scene. For example, one of the six versions (Figure 29) offers slight caricatures of all the principal actors, eschewing careful reproduction of their features in a way that Hogarth would repeat in his 1762 design for Garrick in the Farmer's Return. In addition, the version which the manager, John Rich, commissioned (Figure 30) shows a grand and lavish stage set in no way reflective of the real cramped conditions at Lincoln's Inn Fields theatre. Ashton suggests that this grandeur is

indicative of Rich's aspirations for the new Covent Garden, which he founded largely from the proceeds of the performances of Gay's Beggar's Opera at Lincoln's Inn Fields.⁴⁴ Thus, in effect, Hogarth was founding a new genre of painting, and in doing so, he had to experiment with various possibilities of how best to represent it. "Realistic" depiction of actors performing their roles on a recognisable stage was only one possible solution.

This same combination of portraiture and imaginative elements occurs in one of the earliest single figure theatrical portraits painted by any artist - Hogarth's David Garrick in the Character of Richard III (Figure 31). In this one work all the various characteristics of the later single figure theatrical portrait are combined. The importance of this work as a reflection of pathognomic principles in both historical painting and tragic acting will be discussed in another chapter, but here it is crucial to point out how this painting functioned as both a portrait and as an imaginative scene. The earlier ambiguity of The Beggar's Opera paintings, which varied from being literal depictions to fanciful caricatures of a stage performance, are no longer prevalent in David Garrick in the Character of Richard III, and the duality between actor and character is emphasised rather than denied in this portrait. Hogarth says of the work:

[it] was sold for Two hundred pounds on account of its likeness which was the reason it was call'd Mr. Garrick in the character of Richard the 3d. - and not any body else.⁴⁵

It is significant that Hogarth felt he had to stress the importance of Garrick's place in this portrait. The implication of his defensive tone is that the portrait at the time was readily mistaken for a painting about Richard III rather than about Garrick. Even so, Garrick's

facial likeness would undoubtedly have been one of the first aspects of the work noticed by Hogarth's contemporaries, as Garrick's face was unquestionably the best known public face of the day.

By combining an actor's likeness with a moment of dramatic action, Hogarth established the single figure theatrical portrait that was to dominate paintings and print shops for the rest of the century. Rarely would theatrical portraiture again attain the ambitious heights of the David Garrick in the Character of Richard III, but the portrait served as a model for other artists practising the genre until the 1790s.

Other Prototypes and Early Theatrical Portraits

If arbitrary categories were possible, Hogarth's portrait of David Garrick in the Character of Richard III could be seen as the first single figure theatrical portrait, after which discussion of sources and prototypes would be irrelevant. However, running concurrently with Hogarth's development of the theatrical genre were prints and paintings by other artists which also had theatrical themes or included actor portraits. It is important to mention these works before progressing to a discussion of the theatrical portrait itself.

Moore points out that prior to 1729, satirical prints of theatrical scenes were very scarce, and he makes the assertion that Hogarth was the first to bring them into prominence.⁴⁶ Although this statement is certainly true, theatrical satire with direct portrait reference occurred as early as 1723 with an etched caricature of Handel's Flavio, attributed to Vanderbank (Figure 32).⁴⁷ In this print, the famous opera stars Cuzzoni, Berenstadt, and Senesino are inflated into larger

than life figures - an early and very significant example of British caricature. Hogarth notably pays tribute to this satire by reproducing it on a show-cloth in Masquerades and Operas, with the addition of a few speech ribbons to underline the suggestion that these three foreign entertainers were not only objects of public adoration, but they were also carrying off vast amounts of money accrued from these adoring British audiences.

By reproducing the Vanderbank print, Hogarth acknowledged the worth of a type of satire which he had not yet begun to practice - a satire which involved portraits of actors (or, in this case, opera singers) playing roles. Hogarth likewise paid tribute to a similar sort of satire in his Southwark Fair (Figure 24), in which he reproduces on a show-cloth in the background John Laguerre's print of the Stage Mutiny (Figure 25). Laguerre's contact with the stage came through his occupations as a scene painter, singer and actor,⁴⁸ so it was perhaps only natural that with his artistic and theatrical inclinations he should have produced a print of one of the biggest stage controversies of the day. The Stage Mutiny includes characterisations of all the principal Drury Lane actors - Theophilus Cibber, William Mills, John Harper, Joe Miller, et al, who had all walked out of that theatre in 1733 in protest against the tactics of the new manager, Joseph Highmore. In Laguerre's etching, the actors are dressed in costumes indicative of their principal roles. Thus we see William Mills wearing a Roman costume, and Theophilus Cibber attired as Ancient Pistol. Cibber as Ancient Pistol is also the subject of two other Laguerre etchings (see Figure 33), this time without any additional satirical trappings. These prints show Cibber in two different poses, wearing stage costumes, and they are essentially mild caricatures. Pistol was

one of Cibber's major roles and Genest tells us:

Theophilus Cibber was so famous for his acting in the 2d part of Henry 4th, that he acquired the name of Pistol - at first rather as a mark of merit - but finally as a term of ridicule.⁴⁹

Thus although these etchings of Cibber are caricatures, they represent one of the first attempts to depict in print a single figure portrait of an actor playing a role for which he was famous at the time.

Notably, most of these early theatrical portrait prints had a satirical, or, at least a comic, intention, and this is certainly true of one final example of the early theatrical print - Charles Mosley's 1747 engraving of a scene from Garrick's Miss in her Teens (Figure 34). The print shows Mrs. Pritchard as Mrs. Tag, Garrick as Fribble, Woodward as Captain Flash, and Mrs. Hippsley as Biddy Belair. The audience is visible to the left and right of the stage and the message of Miss in her Teens is carried through the crude device of speech ribbons. However, both of these devices were virtually to disappear from theatrical prints until the revival of theatrical satire by Rowlandson and Isaac Cruikshank in the 1790s. By showing the four players in the midst of speaking their lines in an identifiable moment of the action, Mosley has emphasised the actual physical qualities of the actors as well as the theatrical artifice in which they are involved. Garrick is particularly well characterised and his actual diminutive stature adds to the humorous cowardice of his persona - the fop, Fribble, who is threatened by the taller and bolder Captain Flash.

In addition to these comic and satirical prints, several paintings prior to Hogarth's David Garrick in the Character of Richard III also

focus on this duality of actor and character. Guiseppi Grisoni's portrait of Colley Cibber as Lord Foppington (Figure 35), although difficult to date, was painted before 1728 when Grisoni returned to Italy.⁵⁰ The portrait is conventional and straightforward enough to be mistaken as a mere portrait of Cibber, but Cibber's effete gesture of holding a pinch of snuff between his fingers represents one of the key tags of the Restoration stage fop. This one small action gives the painting an entirely different focus and we can see it as a portrait of both Cibber the man and Lord Foppington, the fictional character.

One final painter of theatrical portraits deserves mention, although his works, as many of Hogarth's, could be seen as types rather than prototypes. The Dutch artist, Pieter van Bleeck came to England in 1723 and became best known for his two grand theatrical portraits - Griffin and Johnson as Ananias and Tribulation in Jonson's "The Alchemist" (Garrick Club) and Mrs. Cibber as Cordelia in "King Lear" (Figure 36).⁵¹ Van Bleeck painted the former of these in 1738, but the work was not engraved until ten years later,⁵² possibly in reaction to the popularity of Hogarth's David Garrick in the Character of Richard III. The print from this painting was so popular that Davies refers to it as late as 1780:

Ben Griffin and Ben Johnson were much admired for their just representation of the canting puritannical preacher and his solemn deacon the botcher; there was an affected softness in the former, which was finely contrasted by the fanatical fury of the latter; Griffin's features seemed ready to be relaxed into a smile, while the stiff muscles and fierce eye of the other admitted of no suppleness or compliance. There is still to be seen a fine print of them in these characters, from a painting of vanbleeck; they are very striking resemblances of both comedians.⁵³

Art historians seem to have some difficulty categorising both this work and van Bleeck's Mrs. Cibber as Cordelia. Both paintings are too large and their style too elevated to be considered theatrical conversation pieces, despite the fact that their format is similar to that of such works by Wilson and Zoffany.⁵⁴ Antal offers the most satisfactory categorisation for Mrs. Cibber as Cordelia by placing it in the pseudo-historical mode of Hogarth's David Garrick in the Character of Richard III,⁵⁵ but this classification does not embrace van Bleeck's scene from the Alchemist. In essence, van Bleeck seems to have been sensitive to the marriage of theatrical and non-theatrical elements. For instance, his awareness of the differences in representation between a tragic and a comic scene is revealed by the contrast between the romantic grandeur of his Lear painting and the greater intimacy of the Alchemist scene. Here also he reveals an imaginative use of both tragic and comic gesture, breaking away from the full frontal formality of the seventeenth century English actor portrait. In addition, the painting of Mrs. Cibber as Cordelia - although hardly indicative of stage practice - represents a scene in Nahum Tate's stage adaptation of King Lear in which Edgar saves Cordelia from being accosted by two ruffians on the heath. No one in the eighteenth century actually read Tate's version of Lear, but everyone attending a theatrical performance of the play would have seen it.⁵⁶ Therefore, Mrs. Cibber as Cordelia is, on the one hand, a history painting, and on the other, a representation of a theatrical, rather than a literary or historical, scene. Subsequent commentary on van Bleeck's facility in capturing portrait likenesses further adds to the levels of understanding his two theatrical portraits. Van Bleeck, like Hogarth, combined in one work realistic likenesses and historical and literary fantasy.

Conclusion

Without Vauxhall and van Bleeck, Hogarth and Mercier, the British public possibly would not have been receptive to Zoffany's explorations into theatrical portraiture and the theatrical conversation piece in the 1760s. The sources and prototypes of the theatrical portrait genre established in Britain novel subject matter which combined in various ways, the British penchant for portraiture with more imaginative or fictional elements. Certainly other factors contributed to the eventual widespread popularity of the theatrical portrait. The stage monopoly of the patent theatres formed a common focus of the London public's attention; David Garrick's new naturalistic acting style fascinated numerous audiences, and a growing merchant class with buying power began to patronise art on a small scale. But without the artistic patterns set by the predecessors of Zoffany and Wilson, the peculiarly British theatrical portrait may never have come into its own.

PART II

MEDIA

Chapter 2

PAINTING

With the prototypes of theatrical portraiture firmly established, the increasing popularity of the stage made commercially-minded artists more aware of the potential of such images. The London portrait industry was growing, the London stage becoming internationally known; the combination of these circumstances made the situation ripe for the development of a type of painting which had been rare before mid-century.

An artist in eighteenth century London had to be a good businessman first and foremost, putting any idealism he might have harboured about the practice of art in the background. In order to be a successful portraitist, artists had to attract the right clientele, and this involved not only painting flattering portraits, but living in proper accommodation and assuming what Rouguet called "an air of importance".¹ The pressure on a portraitist in the eighteenth century in such a bloated and competitive environment must have been considerable, and in some ways theatrical portraiture relieved the pressure by providing an alternative possibility of artistic employment as well as a constantly changing market. The monopoly of the aristocratic portrait and the conversation piece was broken, and artists were finally able to try their hands at a type of portraiture which involved imagination and variety and was not confined by limitations of decorum. Ironically enough, such innovations were made possible by the rising social status of the actor and that of one actor in particular who imitated the art buying upper classes both in his life-style and in his patronage of the arts. That actor was David Garrick.

From Roscius to Royalty : The Patronage of the Theatrical Portrait

Garrick's biographer, Davies, sums up his 1780 account of Garrick's life and career by comparing that actor with the most famous of his ancient Roman predecessors, Roscius:

We know with certainty, that persons of the most elevated rank in the kingdom, as well as the greatest and bravest of our generals and admirals, have dined with Mr. Garrick, and thought it no favour conferred upon him, nor any mark of condescension in them - the Roman actor [Roscius] was in a state of patronage; the English comedian seems to have merited and commanded equality.²

The very amazement of Davies' tone suggests that such equality was still considered unusual at the time, and certainly the acting profession continued to be seen as suspect, despite Garrick's ostensible social respectability.

In the thirty-five years of Garrick's domination of the English stage, a new type of actor began to emerge, not necessarily introduced into the profession by thespian parents, or, in the case of women, slipping into it from the natural stepping-stone of the whorehouse. Significantly, more and more actors from respectable middle to upper class backgrounds and professions turned their backs on their past in order to pursue a career on the stage. Thus we see "Gentleman" Smith progressing from Westminster School to Cambridge to Drury Lane; Savigny leaving a secure job as a razor maker at age 40 to black his face and play Selim in Browne's Barbarossa, and Mrs. Barry being disowned by her genteel parents for eloping with a theatrical manager and starting an acting career.³ Paradoxically, running concurrently with this tendency was the continual scandal and denunciation of the morality of actors, begun by Jeremy Collier in his 1698 treatise, "A Short View

of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage". Gossip-mongering was particularly directed against actresses, and the anonymous Theatrical Biography of 1772, among other bits of scandal, refers to the actor Robert Baddeley's pimping of his own wife, Sophia, and to Mrs. Bulkley's affair with her teen-age step-son. Although vowels were omitted from names and sexually explicit scandal was tempered by innuendo, the Theatrical Biography was only one of many voices which served to perpetuate the public opinion of the seediness of the acting profession.

Garrick's elevation of the actor's status was largely due to the fact that he became a wealthy man,⁴ and that he used his wealth to perpetuate the image of himself as a connoisseur, philanthropist, and eloquent host. An actor to the last, Garrick mimicked the habits and attitudes of the upper classes by possessing both a town and a country house, taking a rather belated grand tour, entertaining the nobility, contributing money to charities, and patronising artists, architects and sculptors. In their early stages, Garrick's affectations did not escape the notice of Horace Walpole:

I have contracted a sort of intimacy with Garrick, who is my neighbour. He affects to study my taste : I lay it upon you - he admires you. He is building a grateful temple to Shakespeare : I offered him this motto : "Quod spiro et placeo, si placeo tuum est!" Don't be surprised if you should hear of me as a gentleman coming upon the stage next winter for my diversion. - The truth is I make the most of this acquaintance to protect my poor neighbour at Cliveden [i.e. Kitty Clive].⁵

Walpole's rather snide remarks reflect an essential distrust and indeed jealousy of a mere actor who could, by his own efforts, rise to the financial status of Walpole himself, and subsequent letters reveal that

his negative opinion never subsided entirely. But where Garrick had limited success in winning the respect of Walpole, he managed to do so with others of elevated rank, both native and foreign. Davies tells us that despite the initial contempt Italian noblemen felt towards Garrick when he first came to Italy:

Mr. Garrick's manner was so engaging and attractive that his company was desired by many foreigners of high birth and great merit.⁶

Garrick's trip to Italy may well have been for the purpose of studying theatrical techniques of other countries, or for his health,⁷ but it also served to equate him with young gentlemen who took the Grand Tour as part of their education and enlightenment. The fact that Garrick had five portraits of himself painted in Italy seems to indicate his pride in making this trip, especially since the portraits show him - not in theatrical character - but as a well-dressed and elegantly posed gentleman of leisure.⁸

Garrick's patronage of the arts was extensive and in many respects, his judgement on contemporary art was superb.⁹ Among other achievements he purchased Hogarth's Election series and was an early subscribing member to the Society of Arts and one of the founders of their first exhibition. He freely gave vast sums of money for objects which he wanted to buy; Roubiliac, for instance, was 300 guineas richer for sculpting the statue of Shakespeare for Garrick's Hampton shrine to the bard.¹⁰ Garrick also made quick judgements regarding the purchase of art as one of J. T. Smith's anecdotes reveals:

Whilst Mr. Nollekens was at Rome, he was recognized by Mr. Garrick with the familiar exclamation of "What! let me look at you! are you the little fellow to whom we gave the prizes at the Society of Arts?" "Yes, Sir," being the answer, Mr. Garrick

invited him to breakfast the next morning and kindly sat to him for his bust for which he paid him 12 l. 12 s., and I have not only often heard Mr. Nollekens affirm that the payment was made in "gold" but that this was the first busto he ever modelled.¹¹

But Garrick's generosity here was more than just an act of benevolence towards an out-of-work artist, and his commissioning of the Nollekens bust as well as other works of art representing himself had a particular significance for the development of theatrical portraiture.

Bertleson quite accurately categorises Garrick's encouragement of his own image in art as "practical aesthetics".¹² Possibly motivated by the sales potential of Hogarth's prints, Garrick from the 1750s¹³ began commissioning portraits of himself both in and out of character, the majority of which were subsequently engraved.¹⁴ The portrait in character was particularly important to him, and an anecdote of Henry Angelo reveals that Garrick was not oblivious to the precedents of the genre. Speaking of his early school days at Eton which he spent with Garrick's nephews, Angelo recalls a visit by the Garrick's (c.1767):

Before dinner we were taken by him to see the lions at Windsor Castle; and I particularly recollect the interest with which he enquired of the showman for a picture of a dramatic subject, which he was desirous to show to Mrs. Garrick. It was that wherein Lacey, a versatile comedian of the time of Charles II. is represented, the size of life, dressed for three separate characters, which he personated with great skill, namely Teague in the Committee, Scruple in the Cheats, and Gallyard in the Variety ...

Whilst looking at King Charles's beauties, and some other female portraits by Sir Peter Lely, he observed that the hands of these fascinating fair ladies were unnatural and affected, and I remember his playfulness in allusion to them, on many occasions; for, years after this, he would hand a lady a cup or a glass, with his fingers distended a la Lely. After dinner ... to amuse us boys over the dessert, he took some memoranda from his pocket, and read the three parts which Lacey played, in as many different voices.¹⁵

Making allowances for Angelo's often fuzzy memory, the above passage reveals a great deal about Garrick as a man, an actor, and a connoisseur of the arts. The image of the actor obviously held a deep fascination for him, and in his mind, he judged the worth of such objects and their relation to theatrical reality.

His knowledge of the theatre combined with his eye for art, led him to commission Zoffany to paint him as the Farmer in his own interlude, the Farmer's Return (Figure 37). This very popular but quickly dated interlude premiered at Drury Lane on 20 March 1762, and Zoffany's painting was exhibited at the Society of Arts exhibition in May of that same year. By moving so quickly, Garrick saw that the painting could be on display to the public before the play had run its course on the stage. Thus, the work not only served as a show-piece for Zoffany but also as a publicity item for Garrick's play.

Other theatrical conversation pieces commissioned by Garrick from Zoffany had a similar temporal relationship to a current performance of the play depicted, and many of these were also exhibited at the Society of Artists¹⁶ - making a name for Zoffany and capitalising on Garrick's already abundant success. But following Garrick's lead, other actors were beginning to realise the potential publicity value of a theatrical portrait,¹⁷ and as the genre developed, patronage began to extend also to the upper classes and the nobility.

Garrick was not the only actor to make use of Zoffany's talents as a theatrical portraitist. When he left for the continent in 1763 one of his biggest rivals, Samuel Foote, immediately snatched up the artist and had himself painted performing in his own farcical after-piece, The Mayor of Garratt (Figure 38).¹⁸ Likewise, William Powell,

an up-and-coming young actor who had been trained by Garrick commissioned Zoffany to paint him in the character of Posthumous in Shakespeare's Cymbeline (Figure 39) - a role in which, by audience estimation, he surpassed Garrick. Powell also took advantage of Garrick's trip abroad : since the London public was lost without the first rate excellence of Garrick's acting, Powell's pastiche of Garrick's style was the next best thing. The Zoffany portrait would have been a confirmation of Powell's success, and its exhibition at the Society of Arts would have provided additional publicity for the struggling young actor.

Despite the fact that actors in the 1760s saw the benefit of having portraits of themselves painted for the publicity of exhibitions and engravings, actors in the Kemble/Siddons era of the 1780s and 1790s no longer seemed so convinced of the worth of this pasttime. After Garrick, Charles Mathews in the nineteenth century was one of the few actors systematically to collect and commission theatrical portraits, and his prodigious collection today forms the bulk of the Garrick Club holdings. In addition, Thomas Harris, the manager of Covent Garden, commissioned Gainsborough Dupont to paint 24 portraits of actors at that theatre in 1793, but since these paintings were not engraved nor exhibited, they appear to be objects to satisfy Harris' affection for his theatrical company rather than publicity items.¹⁹

The question then arises as to why actors no longer seemed so taken with commissioning portraits of themselves after Garrick's influence had waned. A possible answer lies in the fact that as the century progressed, patronage of the theatrical portrait came to be accepted by the middle and especially the upper classes, and as these patrons were satisfied by images of their favourite actor in character, so the

actor could be satisfied by seeing such a portrait exhibited or by obtaining permission to have it engraved.²⁰ Thus the buying public purchased the paintings and the actor continued to benefit from the publicity.

Mr. Dunscomb of Yorkshire who paid an unprecedented £200 for Hogarth's portrait of David Garrick in the Character of Richard III (Figure 31) most likely inspired Garrick with the idea to commission such portraits himself. But Dunscomb's action was not repeated by the non-theatrical community until the late 1760s when theatrical portraits were in greater demand. J. T. Smith tells a story of how Garrick, having commissioned a portrait of himself in the character of Richard III from Nathaniel Dance (Figure 40) - discovered to his chagrin that Dance had subsequently attained a higher offer for the painting from the nobleman and amateur actor, Sir Watkins Williams Wynn, who was willing to tender fifty to a hundred guineas over Garrick's initial offer.²¹ Certainly portraits of actors in character became as acceptable as landscapes, paintings of horses and dogs, not to mention the array of ancestral visages which decorated the walls of country houses.²² Among other noblemen, Lord le Despencer may have commissioned Beach's Mrs. Siddons and Mr. Kemble in "Macbeth" (Figure 41)²³ and Lord Charlemont Zoffany's portrait of Mr. Moody in the Character of Foigard in Farquhar's Beaux Stratagem (private collection).²⁴ Obviously these men were happy to be reminded of an enjoyable night at the theatre and purchasing a theatrical portrait would have required from them no more cost or effort than buying a new suit of clothes or a saddle for a racehorse.

A final confirmation of the growing respectability of theatrical portraiture was a series of royal commissions from various theatrical

painters in the second half of the century. The day after a command performance of Garrick and Colman the Elder's Clandestine Marriage (DL 12 October 1769), George III and Queen Charlotte commissioned Zoffany to paint Thomas King and Sophia and Robert Baddeley playing Lord Ogleby, Fanny Stirling and Canton in that play (Figure 42).²⁵ The royal couple were presumably struck by the humour of the play and excellence of the acting, but they were also most likely amused by a certain irony in the personal lives of the Baddeleys. Although Sophia and Robert Baddeley were estranged at the time, they continued to act together, and Sophia's alleged promiscuity continued to run rampant in the green room. The scene in the Clandestine Marriage which the King and Queen chose for depiction was in Act IV where Lord-Ogleby played by King tries to seduce Fanny played by Sophia, and his servant, Canton, played by Robert, rushes on at stage left. The voyeuristic public, fully cognisant of Sophia's amours would have been thrilled by her coy rejection of Ogleby's advances as well as by her husband, Robert's, impotent witnessing of such a scene. The barriers between the personal lives of the actors and the dramatic roles they played were slim in the view of the eighteenth century public, much as today when characters on Coronation Street appear in the tabloids as if they were real people. King George and Queen Charlotte, needless to say, were no less intrigued by such irony.

One other major royal commission with a slightly different motivation was the series of Hoppner portraits of Dorothy Jordan in character painted for her lover, the Duke of Clarence, later William IV. Among these works were Mrs. Jordan as the Comic Muse (Figure 43) and in the character of Viola in Twelfth Night (Figure 44) and Hippolyte in Cibber's She Would and She Would Not (private collection). Although

they are comic subjects, the works themselves are more reflective of formal portraiture and lack the ease and informality of comic theatrical portraiture. This is most likely due to the fact that the Duke of Clarence expected some decorum in the depiction of his mistress, and the usual casual gesture and awkward posture of comic portraits were therefore not appropriate.

As the market for theatrical portraiture increased, so did the number of theatrical portraits and the number of artists who painted at least one essay in the genre. These portraits had an obvious publicity value for the actor, provided entertainment for the patron, and usually gave the artist a challenge of transcending the limitations of formal portraiture. All parties were therefore satisfied, and patronage of theatrical portraits flourished well into the nineteenth century.

The Theatrical Conversation Piece

Hitherto, all references to theatrical portraiture have been general ones, but before progressing to a discussion of the portraits themselves, it is necessary to make a distinction between the single figure theatrical portrait and the theatrical conversation piece. Since in most cases, these categories are mutually exclusive, I will confine myself in this section to the theatrical conversation piece, first defining the genre and then discussing briefly several examples of it.

Despite the fact that very few theatrical conversation pieces were painted in the eighteenth century, contemporary art historians are fond of speaking of this genre as widespread, ignoring the greater

prominence of the single figure costume portrait.²⁶ Several factors have led them into this error. First of all, the theatrical conversation piece, involving as it did several characters and a set, had an unusual format which viewers found and still find interesting and entertaining. Secondly, because of this novelty value, theatrical conversation pieces formed a substantial part of the engraved and exhibited theatrical portraits of the eighteenth century (see Appendix). Engravings of them were popular collectors' items, and it is significant, for example, that de Wilde, whose expertise was the single figure portrait, reserved his few conversations for exhibition at the R.A. These works were showpieces, more or less reflective of actual stage performances, whereas single figure portraits were primarily likenesses which often took on characteristics of more conventional portraiture.

Ellis Waterhouse offers the most concise definition of the theatrical conversation piece:

A "theatrical conversation" is by no means merely a scene from a play; it shows certain well-known actors in parts for which they were famous, and its rise to popularity coincides with a change in the social position of actors, just as the conversation piece proper had appeared with the emergence of the prosperous middle class.²⁷

The originators of the theatrical conversation piece were Hayman, Wilson, and Zoffany - all of whom were inspired to work in the genre by David Garrick. Hayman's 1747 painting of Garrick as Ranger and Mrs. Pritchard as Clarinda in Hoadley's popular comedy, The Suspicious Husband (Figure 45), contains all the seeds of the theatrical conversation which Zoffany was later to perfect. Despite a general tendency to use a standard facial type, Hayman has captured the actors' likenesses admirably, and he has carefully defined the details of their

stage costumes. They stand in an interior which is only suggested, but its box-like qualities are undoubtedly meant to recall a stage set. But what makes Hayman's Suspicious Husband more than a mere portrait is the fact that Garrick and Pritchard are captured in the middle of an immediately identifiable scene from Hoadley's play in which Clarinda unmask to reveal herself to her sheepish cousin, Ranger who, mistaking her for a courtesan, has just tried to seduce her. The telling prop of the mask, the gestures and expressions of the characters and their frieze-like disposition at the front of the picture plane are all essential elements of the theatrical conversation piece.

Benjamin Wilson was to develop the genre along slightly different lines, subordinating the actors to the scene itself; in effect, distancing the observer to the point that he could imagine being in the audience at the theatre and watching the play. Aside from his status as an amateur scientist and member of the Royal Society, Wilson had been a student of Thomas Hudson and thus portraiture was his primary interest. His paintings of Garrick as Lear (Figure 46) and Garrick and Mrs. Pritchard as Romeo and Juliet (Figure 225) transcend the studied informality of Hayman's Suspicious Husband. In Wilson's paintings, the rather excessive dramatic gesture is reflective of stage reality, and the set of Romeo and Juliet may well be a reflection of the actual disposition of the scenery (see chapters 6 and 7).

It was through Wilson that Garrick first met Zoffany, who had come to England from Germany in c.1760 and subsequently was employed as Wilson's drapery painter. The stories surrounding Garrick's discovery of Zoffany are all heresay and most likely apocryphal,²⁸ but it is certain that Wilson heartily resented Zoffany's usurpation of his patron,

to the point of sending out spies to observe Zoffany's behaviour while a guest at Garrick's Hampton estate.²⁹ Zoffany came to England as a well trained artist in his late 20s, having studied both in Germany and Italy, and possessing great natural skill. In the light of his background, Zoffany's frustration at having to endure the occupations of clock painter to Rimbault and drapery painter to Wilson must have been severe. Garrick's arrival and offer of patronage was well timed for both of them.

Zoffany's theatrical conversation pieces are the only masterpieces of the genre. They not only capture portrait likenesses and costume detail exquisitely, but they also reveal a disposition of set and characters which creates visually arresting pictorial compositions. In addition, Zoffany's understanding of how to represent a tragic as opposed to a comic scene, was thorough, as a comparison between any two such contrasting scenes will reveal. Not only did Zoffany understand the generic differences between tragedy and comedy, but he was also well versed in the London stage of the time. His choice of scene reflects his knowledge of the most popular dramatic moments with the Drury Lane and Covent Garden audiences. For example, he chose to paint the watchman scene from Vanbrugh's Provok'd Wife (Figure 47), despite the compositional difficulties involved in presenting seven figures all reacting to Sir John Brute's sudden outlandish aggression. The reason Zoffany braved such potential problems was that this scene was one of the most effective comic moments of the play, in which Brute, dressed in his wife's clothes, attempts to carry on his usual nightly rape and pillage, but is naturally stopped and questioned about his actions. Zoffany has particularly well captured the contrast between Sir John Brute's bullishness and his effeminate dress. Genest, speaking of Colley

Cibber's interpretation of this character, enlightens us as to why Garrick's representation was the more successful:

In the scene with Lord Rake and his gang, from deficiency of power and look, Cibber fell greatly short of Garrick, here the latter was most triumphantly riotous and kept the spectators in continual glee - Cibber's pale face and weak voice did not present so full a contrast to female delicacy, when in woman's apparel, as Garrick's stronger-marked features, manly voice, and more sturdy action.³⁰

So compelling were Zoffany's images of the theatre that they most likely altered somewhat the way audiences actually viewed the plays. One senses, for example, that Davies' description of Garrick and Mrs. Pritchard playing Macbeth is coloured by his knowledge of Zoffany's theatrical conversation piece of the scene following Duncan's murder (Figure 48):

The representation of this terrible part of the play, by Garrick and Mrs. Pritchard, can no more be described than I believe it can be equalled. I will not separate these performers, for the merits of both were transcendent. His distraction of mind and agonizing horrors were finely contrasted by her seeming apathy, tranquillity, and confidence. The beginning of the scene after the murder was conducted in terrifying whispers. Their looks and action supplied the place of words.³¹

Zoffany's early theatrical conversation pieces were his most successful ones, and those he painted after his return from India in 1789 lack the conviction of his early portraits of Macklin, Garrick and Foote. The scene from Reynolds' Speculation (Figure 49), for example, was painted in c.1795, possibly for George III,³² and since Zoffany fresh back from India, undoubtedly needed the work, he fell back on his old format in order to satisfy the royal commission.

In the wake of Zoffany's success with the theatrical conversation piece, several other artists tried their hands at it as well, most notably Wheatley, Mortimer and Parkinson. However, Wheatley's duel scene from Twelfth Night (Figure 50), Mortimer's King John (Figure 51) and Parkinson's She Stoops to Conquer (Figure 52) all lack the compositional unity of Zoffany's better works. These three paintings have a frieze-like format reminiscent of less successful Zoffany paintings such as the two scenes from Garrick's Lethe (National Theatre and City Museums and Art Gallery, Birmingham), and the characters are all disposed rather unnaturally before what looks like a series of stage backdrops. In addition, Parkinson's scene from Goldsmith's She Stoops to Conquer contains four actors made up to look more like 'clowns' than theatrical characters, revealing Parkinson's inability to strike the delicate balance between real-life portraits and stage persona.

In the right hands, the theatrical conversation piece could be an eminently satisfying genre, but after Zoffany carried it to its zenith, no artists dealt successfully with its problems until Clint revived the genre in the early nineteenth century. Problematic from the beginning, the theatrical conversation piece did not prove to be the best way to recall an actor's stage performance. The single figure portrait, although more limited in its potential and scope, was a more accessible format for a variety of artists and presented an understatement of a theatrical moment which allowed observers to complement the portrait with their own knowledge and memories of the contemporary stage.

Half-History

Single figure theatrical portraiture can roughly be divided into two categories : costume portraits which in some way conjured up an

actual stage performance and paintings which bore little or no relation to the stage but which borrowed elements from history painting or formal portraiture. The former type of portraiture was practised primarily by artists who specialised in the theatrical portrait, but because of its association with a more "elevated" genre of painting, the historical/theatrical portrait became the province of some of the greatest artists living in London at the time.

The links between history painting and portraiture were not lost on the art theorists of the eighteenth century. For instance, Richardson asserted that portraiture was an important part of history painting,³³ and Northcote argued most convincingly for the links between the two genres:

Portrait often runs into history, and history into portrait, without our knowing it. Expression in common to both, and that is the chief difficulty. The greatest history-painters have always been able portrait-painters. How should a man paint a thing in motion, if he cannot paint it still? But the great point is to catch the prevailing look and character: if you are master of this, you can make almost what use of it you please. If a portrait has force, it will do for history; and if history is well painted, it will do for portrait.³⁴

Thomas Lawrence was the first to use the term "half history" in reference to his portraits of actors in character - a term which Redgrave later reduced to the tag "costume portraits".³⁵ Even more significant was Reynolds' encouragement of the introduction of poses and attitudes normally associated with history painting into the formal portrait, the practice of which had far reaching effects not only on formal portraiture but on the theatrical portrait as well. The number of paintings exhibited at the R.A. which show noble ladies and gentlemen in

theatrical or allegorical roles attests to the ease with which Reynolds' historical trappings could be translated into a theatrical portrait. The theatrical portrait offered enough imaginative scope to satisfy the artist's pretensions to history painting while providing him with the necessary livelihood gained from painting portraits. After Reynolds, artists of reputation could also work in what had hitherto been considered a less than elevated genre, and they could justify their practice by recourse to these very historical trappings.

William Whitley, speaking of an exhibition at Romney's house in 1787, has the following to say about a theatrical portrait on show there:

A note on the portrait of Mrs. Crouch, the actress, explains that although she is painted in the costume she wore as Adelaide in The Count of Narbonne: "it is not meant as a theatrical representation the intention being merely to give a portrait of that charming performer"³⁶

The fact that Romney saw fit to attach such a note to this painting seems to indicate that he did not want to be thought of as a theatrical portraitist, and, indeed this painting of Mrs. Crouch is no more theatrical than Lely's portraits of Nell Gwynn. Many other artists seemed similarly to waver between painting a straightforward portrait of an actor and a portrait of that actor in character. Some solved the problem by presenting their stage subject in the role of the Tragic or Comic Muses, and others avoided the dilemma entirely. Beechey, for instance, exhibited a portrait of Mrs. Siddons at the R.A. in 1794 with the "emblems of tragedy" attached to her like the attributes of a medieval saint. Likewise, Sir Martin Archer Shee, later president of the Royal Academy, began his artistic career by painting theatrical

portraits which did not look like theatrical portraits. His portrait of Mr. Lewis as the Marquis in "The Midnight Hour" (R.A. 1792) (Figure 53) is a pastiche of van Dyke and Lawrence, with all the trappings of formal portraiture, including the ubiquitous column and curtain in the background. Redgrave's observation that this portrait had only a flavour of theatrical affectation was accurate³⁷ : Lewis' costume, rosy cheeks and slight smile are the only elements which set this work off from Shee's portraits of noblemen and ladies.

Reynolds offered a much more skillful blending of the formal or historical portrait with the theatrical portrait, and, ironically enough, his portraits of actors represent the few instances where his theory translated easily into practice.³⁸ Blake's annotation to Reynolds' third discourse - "Reynolds thought Character itself Extravagance and Deformity"³⁹ - is not without its truth. Reynolds' insistence that Alexander the Great not be represented in his true diminutive stature⁴⁰ is only one example of the Platonic idealism which dominated his theory of the human form. This idealism extended to questions of costume and setting in paintings, as he tells us in Discourse IV:

The power of representing [the] mental picture on Canvass is what we call Invention in a Painter, and as in the conception of this ideal picture, the mind does not enter into the minute peculiarities of the dress, furniture or scene of action.⁴¹

In his thirteenth discourse, he makes an analogy between this specificity and the theatre:

If a painter should endeavour to copy the theatrical pomp and parade of dress and attitude, instead of that simplicity, which is not a greater beauty in life, than it is in Painting, we should condemn such Pictures as painted in the meanest style.⁴²

The very specificity of characterisation, costume and set which, theoretically, should form the very essence of a theatrical portrait, were abhorrant to Reynolds. How then did he resolve the contradiction between his distaste for specificity and his own portraits of actors?⁴³

First of all, it is important to point out that most of Reynolds' portraits of actors were not character portraits, and in these cases, he avoided the problem entirely. Secondly, Reynolds was not as averse to specificity as he pretended to be for the sake of his discourses. His purchase of Zoffany's David Garrick as Abel Drugger (Figure 54) in 1770⁴⁴ attests to his admiration of a work containing great detail of characterisation and set. Not only is the interior of Subtle's den carefully rendered with vials, globes and astrolabe, but Zoffany's characterisation of Garrick seems to represent a faithful rendering of that actor's performance of Drugger as described by Davies:

The moment he came upon the stage he discovered such awkward simplicity and his looks so happily bespoke the ignorant, selfish, and absurd tobacco-merchant, that it was a contest not easily to be decided, whether the bursts of laughter or applause were loudest.⁴⁵

Another indication that Reynolds was not dogmatically opposed to specificity was his intention, never realised, to paint a multiple portrait of Garrick in 15 of his best characters.⁴⁶ A portrait such as this would have required a great deal of sensitivity on Reynolds' part to those very quirks and deformities of character which he insisted that painting should avoid, particularly in respect to Garrick's comic characters, which formed the bulk of his repertoire. Perhaps this is one reason why the portrait was never painted.

The theatrical portraits which Reynolds did paint followed his rules of decorum in a way that this multiple portrait of Garrick could never have done. As they are all different, it is instructive to discuss each one of them in turn to show how Reynolds put his theory into practice. Although Reynolds toned down the classical and historical extremism of his formal portraits after 1782 he continued to use the Grand Manner in his portraits of Mrs. Billington as St. Cecilia (Figure 55) and Mrs. Siddons as the Tragic Muse (Figure 56).⁴⁷ By choosing to personify these women on the basis of their respective roles as singer and tragedienne, Reynolds avoided the specificity which would have been required had he painted them in character. Mrs. Billington is surrounded by singing putti, and Mrs. Siddons by personifications of Pity and Terror - the Aristotelian essentials of tragedy.⁴⁸ Their attitudes are elevated and lack the blunt specificity of theatrical gesture.

But Reynolds did not always fall back on allegory and personification as his portraits of Garrick as Kitely (Figure 57) and Mrs. Abington as Miss Prue (Figure 58), Roxalana (Figure 59) and the Comic Muse (Figure 60) reveal. Despite his insistence in the discourses that period costume be avoided, Reynolds in his portraits of Mrs. Abington as Miss Prue and Garrick as Kitely in particular, ignores his own dictum and gives the actors carefully rendered costumes. However, in the Garrick portrait, he is no more forthcoming than that. A comparison between this portrait and a later straightforward portrait of Garrick (Figure 61) reveals that Reynolds varied his formal portrait format only slightly but significantly, in order to create a convincing theatrical portrait. Both portraits are half-lengths with minimal props and a blank background. Even the faces are similarly presented,

with the exception of a rougher finish and greater vagueness around the mouth and eyes of the Kitely portrait. In essence, the only quality which hints that the Kitely portrait is more than a mere portrait of Garrick is the van Dyke collar which itself was not an uncommon addition to costumes in more formal portraits.⁴⁹ Reynolds' portrait of Garrick as Kitely is cautious, hesitant and gives no indication of what point in the action of Every Man in His Humour (if any) we are meant to be witnessing.

Less caution is exercised in the portraits of Mrs. Abington, but even in these cases, Reynolds continues to be painfully aware of decorum. Since the portraits of Mrs. Abington represent her in comic roles, a certain amount of licence regarding pose, expression and gesture is obviously permissible. Thus we see the Comic Muse wearing an impish smirk, Roxalana peeping from behind a curtain, and Miss Prue seated in a state of naive confusion. Davies speaks admiringly of Mrs. Abington's performance as Miss Prue:

From an actress celebrated for characters of high life, and eminent for graceful deportment and elegant action, you would not expect the awkward and petulant behaviour of a girl just come from a farmhouse; Mrs. Abington, unconfined in her talents, rendered Miss Prue as naturally rude and diverting, as if she had been mistress of no other style in acting than rustic simplicity.⁵⁰

And indeed the simplicity of pose and wide-eyed expression of Mrs. Abington in the Reynolds' portrait reflects this "rustic simplicity" which Mrs. Abington projected to her audiences at Drury Lane.

Thus we see that although his theatrical portraits sometimes coincide with his theories about the aggrandisement of portraiture, Reynolds was not averse to descending the ladder a rung or two towards

what he called the "ornamental style" if the situation called for it. Other artists painting theatrical portraits in the grand manner were not so flexible. Hamilton and Lawrence in particular always kept their actor portraits firmly within the bounds of "half-history", and both artists primarily painted portraits of J. P. Kemble and Sarah Siddons, whose acting styles were, by all accounts, the equivalent of the Grand Manner in painting.

In a criticism of Kemble Leigh Hunt reveals why that actor was such a natural choice of subject for an aspiring history painter:

[Kemble] was too artificial, too formal, too critically and deliberately conscious. Nor do I think he had any genius whatsoever. His power was all studied acquirement. It was this, indeed, by the help of his stern Roman aspect, that made the critics like him.⁵¹

This formality, artificiality and "stern Roman aspect" combined to give Kemble an attitude and visage fully appropriate for the more elevated type of portraiture.⁵² Theatrical painting thus became at the end of the century simultaneously a reflection of the new declamatory style of acting and of Reynolds' theory of the Grand Manner in painting.⁵³

William Hamilton's theatrical portraits were the earliest to combine these elements.⁵⁴ His paintings of Mrs. Siddons as Isabella (Figure 62) and as the Grecian Daughter (Figure 62A) show that actress striking the type of attitudes which she allegedly struck on the stage, but the context in which Hamilton places these attitudes makes them more an expression of the mood of the painting than an echo of a specific theatrical gesture. For the scene from Southerne's Isabella, Hamilton chose one of the more pathetic moments of the play when the widowed and rejected Isabella and her young son

seek alms at the home of her father-in-law, but they are cruelly rejected by him. Hamilton has captured the pathos of this scene through his use of dark blues and blacks both in the sky and in the costume of the characters. He further expresses the situation through the distressed countenance of Mrs. Siddons. As a contrast, his portrait of Mrs. Siddons as Euphrasia in Murphy's Grecian Daughter shows that actress in a more violent moment - still desperate but now raging against her fate rather than accepting it passively. Her grand gesture and the setting give this painting the feel of history by subordinating the portrait likeness to the dramatic moment.

Mrs. Siddons' biographer reveals that this contrast between her characterisation of Isabella and Euphrasia was also apparent in her stage performance:

As to the charming representative of Euphrasia, some surprise was expressed upon her entrance. She was a perfectly different being from herself in Isabella. That settled sorrow that weighed down the wife, the presumed widow of Biron, had given place to a mental and personal elasticity obviously capable of efforts "above heroic". Hope seemed to brighten her crest, and duty to move her arm. She had parted with her husband and child upon the sea shore - the filial impulse had been triumphant - in the cause of her aged father she now came to perish or conquer.⁵⁵

Mrs. Siddons and J. P. Kemble were known for their tendency to strike attitudes, but lest these portraits be taken as too literally representative of stage practice, one must observe Hamilton's Portrait of Mr. Kemble in the Character of King Richard III (Figure 63), the attitude and action of which are a reinterpretation of Hogarth's 1745 portrait of Garrick in that same role (Figure 31).⁵⁶

Thomas Lawrence's portraits of Kemble were the first to be called half-history paintings, but Lawrence's idea to paint Kemble in his most noble character roles of Coriolanus, Hamlet, Cato and Rolla (Figures 64-67), was not original. He most likely got the idea from Sir Francis Bourgeois' two portraits of Kemble as Coriolanus exhibited at the R.A. in 1793 and 1797 (e.g. Figure 68). Bourgeois was an avid fan of the theatre,⁵⁷ so much so that his decision to cede the Desenfans picture collection to Dulwich College was in part due to the fact that the founder of the college Edward Alleyn, was an actor.⁵⁸ His portrait of Kemble in the Character of Coriolanus (1797) depicts the turning point of the action of the play when Coriolanus, shunned by the Roman citizens for his arrogance, in turn rejects the Romans and joins the forces of their enemies, the Volscians. Kemble's expression of disgusted misanthropy is particularised, but when Lawrence painted his portrait of Kemble, he divested the work of all particularity of gesture, expression and set, leaving behind a simple but noble image of the Roman emperor braving his fate. Lawrence's classification of portraits such as this as "half-history" reveals his intentions in painting such large, obsessive portraits of Kemble. Necessarily tied to presenting a likeness of Kemble, Lawrence nevertheless tried to transcend such a limitation by endowing straightforward portraits with dramatic significance. A further confirmation of Lawrence's intentions can be witnessed in the fact that his portrait of Rolla was painted over a scene from the Tempest. The Tempest subject, exhibited at the R.A. in 1793, showed Prospero raising the storm, and here we can see Lawrence grappling with the problem of how to turn a single figure painting into a historical composition.⁵⁹ By diverting his attention from imaginative history to the image of an actor, Lawrence discovered a solution to his problem.

Romney also avoided overt theatrical suggestion in his portraits of actors. For instance, his portraits of Mrs. Jordan as Peggy in The Country Girl (Figure 69),⁶⁰ and Mrs. Yates in the Character of the Tragic Muse (present location unknown), are more straightforward portraits than theatrical paintings; Mrs. Jordan's exuberant attitude and Mrs. Yates' Roman dress and sandals are the only real clues to the true nature of these portraits. In his portrait of Henderson as Macbeth (Figure 70), Romney takes a step closer to historical painting by showing Henderson on the heath with the three witches. This painting is not a theatrical conversation piece - its three-quarter length format as well as the unidentifiable faces of the witches are not characteristic of that genre. Romney's study for Henderson as Macbeth may well have been made in the theatre,⁶¹ but the more stilted and constricted final painting was most likely an integration of the theatrical source into the format of a history painting.

Romney's obsession with Lady Hamilton led him to a further fusion of the theatrical and the historical. Although Emma Hart Hamilton was never an actress per se, she was nevertheless famous for her theatrical attitudes, with which she entertained the nobility while in Italy.⁶² Her face appears over and over again in Romney's art, and it was perhaps only logical that he painted her visage into his scenes from the Tempest and Troilus and Cressida (Figure 71) for the Shakespeare Gallery.⁶³ His portrait of Lady Hamilton as Cassandra in Troilus and Cressida was exhibited at the Shakespeare Gallery under the title, "Cassandra Raving", signifying that Lady Hamilton's likeness was incidental to Cassandra's prophetic lunacy. Other artists also used actors as models for various characters in other Shakespeare Gallery paintings, making a logical link between the theatrical portrait and the brand of

historical painting perpetuated by Boydell.

When the Shakespeare Gallery opened in 1789 with its first 34 pictures on display, a critic in the Public Advertiser wrote:

There was some reason to fear that our painters would have sought for and gathered their ideas from the theatre, and given us portraits of the well-dressed Ladies and Gentlemen [of the stage] ... there was some reason to fear a representation of all that extravagance of attitude and start which is tolerated, nay in a degree demanded, at the playhouse.⁶⁴

What this critic feared was not a series of actor portraits per se, but the brand of theatrical portrait which bore a more direct relationship to the theatre and which I will discuss in the next section. Certainly this critic must have observed the portrait-like quality of many of the faces in Boydell's "historical" paintings,⁶⁵ and indeed, artists as various as Northcote, Fuseli and Downman used the faces of popular actors in their fictional scenes.⁶⁶ A very few of these portraits appeared in compositions which contained only one figure and which recalled directly the single figure theatrical portrait : Romney's Cassandra Raving was one such work, and Westall's Lady Macbeth (Figure 72) another.

Westall's Lady Macbeth bears a striking resemblance to Mrs. Siddons, and indeed an entry in Farington's diary reveals just how closely Westall had observed Siddons' interpretation of the character:

Westall observed that Mrs. Siddons expressed the following passage improperly, "I have given suck, and know how tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me. I would, while it was smiling in my face, Have pluckt, my nipple from its boneless gums.

"Mrs. Siddons', 'I have given suck &c,' in a tender, soft manner till she came to 'Have pluckt

my nipple' whereas in Westall's opinion the whole should have been expressed with indignation and spirit. N. Dance justified Mrs. Siddons by saying that Her object being to work upon the feelings of Macbeth artfully, tenderness in that instance was proper.⁶⁷

But Westall obviously found Mrs. Siddons' rage more appropriate than her tenderness, and his painting of Lady Macbeth shows a woman who indeed appears "unsexed" shaking her fist at heaven and vowing to improve her husband's fortune by her own ingenuity.

To the English easel painter, historical painting came to signify illustration of literature poetry and theatre rather than of mythology and religion. The passions of man thus came to be represented not through the archetypal struggles of heroes and gods, but through the more down to earth conflicts of Hamlet, Macbeth and Lear. The Shakespeare Gallery was only the climax of a tendency to conflate the theatrical with the historical which was characteristic of many of the best artists of the day.

However, not all theatrical portraitists aspired to these heights : such images were primarily reserved for respectable or famous painters who had to keep their dabblings in theatrical portraiture as elevated as possible. What could be considered the more popular or commercial brand of theatrical portraiture is the subject of my next section.

The Commercial Theatrical Portrait

The anonymous author of the 1762 Theatrical Biography, praising John Moody for his excellence in the roles of Major O'Flaherty in Cumberland's West Indian and the Irishman in Reed's Register Office, adds:

The critical public will then decide what degree of estimation he must be in, as to induce one of our first portrait painters to give a picture of him in two public exhibitions.⁶⁸

The significance of the actor's image being displayed in a prominent public place was also not lost on the tragedian, Samuel Keddish:

The character he first made his appearance in here [Drury Lane] was Posthumous in Cymbeline, a part which, from first appearance, he flattered himself he was original in; and for the sake of handing down to posterity such uncommon merit, he was at the expence of sixty-five guineas in having a whole length of himself painted in that character for the then exhibition at Spring Gardens, where he regularly attended above four hours every day, for the space of six weeks, like a second Narcissus falling in love with his own reflexion.⁶⁹

Reading between the lines and cutting through the theatrical biographer's cynicism, one can assume that Keddish's fascination with the exhibited portrait was not so much auto-eroticism as a desire to see how many people attending the Society of Artists exhibition actually took note of the painting. In effect, Keddish hoped that the Spring Gardens audiences were as large and enthusiastic as the Drury Lane ones. As I have mentioned before, the portrait of the actor had a strong commercial role in the eighteenth century as publicity for that actor's performance. Because these portraits were meant to remind audiences of actual performances, they necessarily took on some of the trappings of the stage, particularly in regard to costume and gesture. This lip-service to theatrical specificity and more blatant commercial utility of many of these actor portraits, tend to set them apart from the "half-history" portraits of Reynolds, Lawrence and Hamilton. The commercial theatrical portrait was usually painted to be engraved, exhibited and copied, and thus widely disseminated amongst all classes of the London public. This form of single figure portraiture also

tended to be the province of a handful of artists who made it their speciality, particularly Zoffany, Gainsborough Dupont and Samuel de Wilde.

Although famous for his theatrical conversation pieces, Zoffany also painted single figure theatrical portraits which were sometimes more satisfying than his conversation groups. Very little knowledge of his artistic practice survives, but in several of his conversation groups such as the scenes from the Provok'd Wife (Figure 47) and the Alchemist (Figure 54), Zoffany started from studies of the principal actor and built the rest of his composition around this.

One of the earliest wholly single figure works was his portrait of William Powell as Posthumous in Cymbeline (Figure 39). Zoffany has chosen the moment in which Posthumous believes his lover Imogen to be dead due to a rash jealousy which led him to order her execution. He enters the scene carrying her bloody handkerchief and begins a soliloquy mourning her passing. By displaying a specific moment in the action of Cymbeline, Zoffany has given this work the sort of dramatic life which characterises his theatrical conversations, but his emphasis on the image of Powell in character simultaneously satisfies the conventions of a straightforward portrait. Zoffany's focus on the pathos of this scene is also appropriate given what information we have on Powell's portrayal of Posthumous:

Mr. POWELL, who passed through this part with a considerable share of public estimation, was in his merit confined to tenderness alone; he much wanted the essential rapidity of expression, and the natural variety of sudden transitions, incident to jealousy, rage, and despair.⁷⁰

Indeed, Powell's strength was often said to be the pathetic scene, although when he took this to extremes, he was accused of "a propensity to whine and blubber".⁷¹

Thus Zoffany's portrait of Powell offers a dramatic moment which is also reflective of Powell's special talents as an actor. His portrait of Macklin as Shylock (Figure 73) is even more successful in this respect. Macklin's portrayal of the bitter Jew was one of the most significant reforms in the acting traditions of the eighteenth century, as Genest explains:

Macklin resolved to revive this play in opposition to the Jew of Venice altered from Shakespeare by Lord Lansdown; in which he had made Shylock somewhat of a Comic character - Macklin saw from the first that Shylock afforded a wide scope for the display of his abilities and the exhibition of capital acting; but he had a great deal to encounter and surmount - the Jew of Venice had for many years been received with approbation; the actors declared he would spoil the performance; Quin said he would be hissed off the stage for his presumption; and Fleetwood strenuously urged him to abandon his resolution; but Macklin, infinitely to the credit of his sound and acute discrimination, continued firm to his purpose, and the Merchant of Venice was announced for representation.⁷²

Macklin's dogged courage paid off, and so popular was his portrayal of Shylock, that he was still acting the part at age 92 when dotage eventually drove him off the stage. Zoffany's painting of Shylock attempts to capture Macklin's portrayal of the essential pathos of the character, and indeed his exquisitely anguished facial expression and despairing, ranting gesture provide a fair hint of what an eighteenth century audience must have seen.

Other single figure portraits by Zoffany have more of the formal portrait than the theatrical scene about them, but his Mrs. Abington

as the Widow Bellmour (Figure 74) and Robert Baddeley as Moses (Figure 75) are unquestionably theatrical in their characterisations if not in their sets (see chapter 6). When Zoffany returned from India, he painted several more theatrical portraits, including that of Mr. Knight as the clown in the farce of "The Ghost" (Figure 76), the format of which seems to have been influenced by de Wilde who had by then taken up in theatrical portraiture where Zoffany had left off.

Between Zoffany's burst of theatrical portraits in the 1760s and de Wilde's and Dupont's in the 1790s, a host of other artists attempted to paint single figure theatrical portraits in this commercial vein. Just as the Royal Academy exhibitions offered a showplace for the half-history theatrical portrait, so the Society of Artists exhibitions proved significant in the displaying of more commercial portraits (see Appendix). A perusal of the works exhibited at the Society of Artists prior to the foundation of the Royal Academy reveals how much variety of subject matter was encouraged there, and the theatrical portrait thus found a congenial home. It would be a task bigger than my present one to discuss all such theatrical portraits, whether exhibited or not, but in order to understand how the genre developed in various hands, a mention of several single figure theatrical portraits painted between 1760 and 1790 will be instructive.

De Loutherburg's job as a scene designer for Drury Lane gave him a repertoire of panoramic landscapes and stock scenes, one of which appears in his portrait of Garrick in the Character of Don John with a view of Naples by moonlight (Figure 77). In this painting the all encompassing focus on the individual actor which is characteristic of single figure portraiture is lost and the moonlit street scene becomes, in effect, the principal subject. Garrick's diminutive figure on the

left is shown holding the mysterious baby which was thrust into his hands while he pursued his nightly amours, but this is all incidental. De Loutherburg's portrait of Garrick was an interesting and unusual way to transform a mere portrait into a dramatic scene rife with atmosphere, but unfortunately, this formula was never adopted by other artists.

Hayman's approach to the genre was slightly more accessible and popular. His portrait of Garrick in the Character of Richard III (Figure 78), and the similar portrait by his pupil, Dance (Figure 40), have some of the qualities of half-history, but the moment of the action and the gestures and expressions of the characters are too specific to be classed as elevated or monumental. The torn stocking of Garrick's leg in the Hayman portrait is a particularly well placed detail, but one of which Reynolds would undoubtedly have disapproved.⁷³

Both Loutherburg and Hayman concentrated their attentions on the representation of a full dramatic moment with a focus on a single figure, but other artists found the dramatic moment not as important as the actor's likeness. Such is the case in Vandergucht's portrait of one of the century's finest comedians, Henry Woodward in the character of Petruchio (Figure 79). In this portrait, the specific moment of the action is impossible to identify, and Vandergucht concentrates instead on Woodward's persona. The three-quarter length format of this portrait is characteristic of formal portraiture, but Woodward's theatrical costume and swaggering manner transcend formula, and formal portrait thus becomes comic characterisation. Indeed, Woodward's imposing stance, contrasting as it does with a smile that plays about his lips seems to justify contemporary descriptions of the actor, such as the one below:

His person was so regularly formed, and his look so serious and composed, that an indifferent observer would have supposed that his talents were adapted to characters of the serious cast; to the real fine gentleman, to the man of graceful deportment and elegant demeanor, rather than to the affecter of gaiety, the brisk fop, and pert coxcomb. But the moment he spoke, a certain ludicrous air laid hold of his features, and every muscle of his face ranged itself on the side of levity. The very tones of his voice inspired comic ideas; and though he often wished to act tragedy, he never could speak a line with propriety that was serious.⁷⁴

Vandergucht captures this seeming grace and ludicrous air in a format which is usually reserved for formal portraiture.

In many ways, the three-quarter length format of Vandergucht's portrait is the least logical means of representing an actor in character, as it does not allow much room for props, gesture or other indications of the dramatic moment. Dunkarton's portrait of Henderson as Hamlet (Figure 80) to an extent avoids this problem by the inclusion of a single prop which focusses the moment of the action. The miniature which Henderson holds in his hand indicates that this is the scene in which Hamlet reminds his mother, Gertrude, of her late husband's image. No other clues are necessary and the confining format thus does not restrict the expression of a specific dramatic moment.

Gainsborough Dupont used the even more confining half-length for his series of theatrical portraits for Thomas Harris, but he too made the most of his limitations through the use of indicative gesture and well-placed props. Gainsborough Dupont, nephew of the greater Gainsborough, spent the majority of his career painting portraits in imitation of his uncle's style.⁷⁵ Despite the fact that he won the admiration of King George, Dupont's career was characterised by a series of disappointments and bouts of bad luck. His futile attempts

to be elected associate to the Royal Academy are recounted by Farington in his diary, and one cannot help but pity Dupont's fruitless ambition.⁷⁶ In the midst of these years of struggle, the Covent Garden manager, Thomas Harris commissioned Dupont to paint 24 portraits of actors and actresses in character.⁷⁷ Although certainly more theatrical than historical, they seem to have had no commercial function as they were neither engraved nor exhibited at the time. Farington offers a possible reason for the commission:

Mr. Harris of Covent Garden Theatre considering Dupont as wanting employ commissioned him to paint portraits of the Actors of that theatre and only to proceed with the commission when he had no others.⁷⁸

What amounted to an act of charity on Harris' part gave Dupont a chance to expand his skills as a portraitist, although his development, unfortunately, was checked by an early death. His portraits for Harris offer a great variety of costume and characterisation within the confines of a half-length format. In many instances, the addition of a prop clues the observer in to the specific moment of dramatic action. Thus Holman as Edgar (Figure 81) with his blanket and pole, Quick as Spado (Figure 82) pointing a gun and Farren as Carlos (Figure 83) drawing a sword all contain additional props which help isolate the dramatic moment. But although Dupont's portraits are unquestionably dramatic, the exact moment of the action is often difficult to discern. For instance, Alexander Pope as Hamlet (Figure 84) raises his left hand across his chest and looks out of the picture towards something which seems to cause him a mixture of distress and sadness, but whether he is seeing his father's ghost or Ophelia's corpse, contemplating suicide or speaking a soliloquy about revenge or procrastination, is impossible to say.

The third major theatrical portraitist, Samuel de Wilde, began his career as one of the first students of the Royal Academy schools in 1769, and the education which he obtained there never entirely left him as a glance at his later drawing of a boy in a smock (Figure 85) reveals. But despite de Wilde's early promise, he was never even considered for the post of A.R.A.,⁷⁹ possibly because he quickly became a theatrical portraiture specialist and neglected any expansion into other genres of painting. At his height, the series of paintings which he produced for John Bell (see chapter 4) gave de Wilde a great deal of fame and money, but by the time he moved into a Covent Garden studio in 1804, de Wilde was, by necessity, producing theatrical portraits with great rapidity and for hopelessly meagre sums.⁸⁰

Bell's characterisation of de Wilde's portraits as being of "incomparable similitude" referred to that artist's ability to capture a likeness, but could just as easily have pertained to the rather monotonous format which de Wilde adopted for his portraits. De Wilde's actor portraits are almost always whole length single figure works, showing an actor standing in a stock scene making some small action or gesture. Usually he avoided the extreme attitudes of tragedy and focussed his attention on the greater intimacy of comedy. In this case, characterisation took precedence over action in the majority of his works, and their "incomparable similitude" does not negate their dramatic significance (for a more detailed discussion of de Wilde's means of comic characterisation, see chapter 7).

De Wilde's portraits for John Bell's second edition of the British Theatre created the format which was later to become his trademark. These works are small (roughly 14" x 11") and must have been painted very rapidly, as they had to be completed in time to be engraved for

various numbers of the British Theatre. De Wilde was seemingly so dependent on Bell's patronage that when the publisher sunk into dire financial straits, de Wilde sunk with him and was reduced to offering his services to anyone who wanted his portrait painted and had a guinea to pay for it.⁸¹

To help pull himself out of this financial insecurity, de Wilde began to paint theatrical portraits by commission, and the low prices which he charged finally made the genre accessible to even the less worthy actors at Drury Lane and Covent Garden. This greater accessibility explains why many of de Wilde's portraits represent second-rate actors performing in plays which had a stage life of only a few years. Although Zoffany himself had occasionally strayed from the heights of Macbeth, School for Scandal or Venice Preserv'd, de Wilde's works rarely even attempted such heights. The comic actor in the short humorous afterpiece or farce was his province once he had broken off from Bell's patronage. A typical example will suffice. De Wilde's portrait of Mr. Suett as Dicky Gossip in "My Grandmother" (Figure 86) was exhibited at the R.A. in 1797. The painting shows the actor standing in an interior wearing his tradesman's gear and posing before an imaginary audience. My Grandmother had a limited stage life, but Suett at the time was one of the more popular and eccentric low comedians at Drury Lane. De Wilde was thus responding to an immediate popular sensation, and the fact that the sensation was fleeting did not negate the desire for propaganda and publicity.

Most of de Wilde's exhibited portraits contained two or more figures, but despite the development in these works of a dramatic scene, the portraits read like two single figure paintings fused together rather than as theatrical conversation pieces. In fact, his

portrait of Quick and Fawcett in The Way To Get Married (R.A. 1796) was later reduced to a single figure portrait of Quick as Toby Allspice (Figure 87) in that play.⁸² De Wilde shows Quick referring to a pair of spectacles which he holds in his hand while he speaks the lines, "I use 'em only to make me look knowing". Zoffany's penchant for detail is echoed in de Wilde's careful attention to the painting of additional elements such as the furniture, but unlike Zoffany, de Wilde does not develop this detail convincingly. De Wilde's details are mere stage props used sometimes to isolate the dramatic moment, but more often as mere space-fillers to avoid a theatrically unconvincing blank background in his portraits.

De Wilde's paintings represent the epitome of the eighteenth century theatrical portrait, but their immediacy and popular nature are aspects of theatrical portraiture which had never been explored to such an extent before. In effect, de Wilde crystallised the idea that a theatrical portrait could be a beneficial commodity and a useful investment for an actor. The full impact of this commercial value had hitherto only been fully realised and utilised through the medium of the popular print.

Chapter 3

THE THEATRICAL PRINT INDUSTRY

Three types of theatrical prints were sold in London in the eighteenth century : caricatures of one or more figures, scenes from plays, and single or double figure actor portraits. Caricatures were popular throughout the century, but scenes from plays were few and primarily restricted to prints after famous theatrical conversation pieces. By far the most popular form of theatrical print represented a famous or not so famous actor in costume and these portraits were either reproductive of famous paintings¹ or an invention of the engraver. Their format was most commonly half-length in an oval or full length in a rectangle - the former the more popular format for the so-called "furniture prints" (see below) and the latter used primarily for prints of actors in costume, allowing a full view of the dress and attitude of the figure. Before the 1770s mezzotint and, less frequently, line engraving, provided the most common graphic media for theatrical portraits, and by 1775, stipple had come into use in London. In addition, etching was occasionally employed for theatrical caricature from mid-century.

The media chosen often depended upon whether or not a print was based on a painting. Non-reproductive prints were often produced in direct response to a popular performance or a theatrical sensation (see chapter 5), and therefore, speed was necessary, in order to have them on the market before the sensation became only a faint memory in the audience's mind. Because of this necessity for speed, non-reproductive prints were most often stippled or etched, and the more laborious processes of mezzotint and line engraving were avoided.

Although some reproductive prints were executed in stipple as well, they were more commonly produced in mezzotint and line, both of which required more time and skill on the part of the engraver and more patience from the print seller. The reasons for this are apparent. Reproductive prints were inspired by a painting rather than by a performance. It was, therefore, more important for them to be carefully rendered in order to recall an artist's style as much as possible, rather than to remind the buyer of an actor's performance.

However, as I have pointed out previously, actors encouraged prints to be made from paintings because of this very publicity value, and before going into a discussion of the prints themselves, it is necessary to set the scene in London for both the mercantilism of the print industry in general and of the theatrical portrait print in particular.

The Print Industry as Commercial Enterprise

John Pye, a nineteenth century engraver, advocated the cause of his eighteenth century predecessors in his rather fierce, but matter-of-fact Patronage of British Art (1845). His estimation of the eighteenth century print industry is revealing:

Many of the powerful minds by which the country was enriched between 1733 and 1768 might have lived uselessly, and died neglected ... had not engraving, the printing-press, and the spirit of commercial enterprise, combined to render designs articles of trade. The vast number of plates engraved by British artists, and the immense quantity of prints exported during that period appear to be conclusive evidence that native talent in engraving had then so risen in general estimation, as to have turned the eyes of the Continent of Europe full upon British art.²

Pye's choice of dates for the zenith of the British print industry sprung from his observation that native print making had blossomed due to Hogarth's genius and then was stifled by the condescending refusal of the Royal Academy to admit engravers to their hallowed inner circle.³ Hogarth's originality lay in his dogged determination to foster a British "school" of engraving amidst the domination of foreign engravers in London at the time. On a more practical level, he successfully prompted Parliament to pass the engraver's copyright act in 1735, which prevented the piracy of an artist's designs for 14 years after their publication.⁴ "Hogarth's act", as it has been called, did not force the plagiaristic Grub Street hacks out of business, but merely allowed serious print-makers to continue their trade without fear of unfair artistic rivalry.

Hogarth's act, his knowledge of public taste, and his unashamed originality were major factors in the expansion of the print industry in London from a meagre two shops at the beginning of the eighteenth century to 72 by 1837.⁵ The foreign domination of the print market and the hand-to-mouth existence of the London print maker at the beginning of the century were eventually obliterated by a dog-eat-dog capitalism which encompassed monumental money-making schemes by the print sellers Boydell, Macklin and Bowyer in the 1790s.⁶ In a recent social history of the eighteenth century, Roy Porter sums up most succinctly the underlying tensions which also influenced the growing importance of the print market:

The Georgian century formed a distinctive moment in the making of modern England. It was a society which was capitalist, materialist, market-oriented; worldly, pragmatic; responsive to economic pressures. Yet, its political institutions and its distribution of social power, unlike those of more modern times, were unashamedly hierarchical, hereditary, and privileged.⁷

Appropriately enough, this strongly hieratic society made possible greater materialism, as the rational businessman began discovering new and more efficient ways of exploiting the needs of the upper classes. The popular print was one product where the desire of some and the needs of others met in a mutually satisfying way, for it benefitted not only the artist but the buying public as well. Thus supply and demand increased together.

This increased commercialism was also responsible for the growing popularity of theatrical prints. In addition to his more general contributions, Hogarth also had a great deal to do with the rise of the theatrical portrait print in England.⁸ It was only after Hogarth's prints and paintings signalled the marketability of contemporary theatre that other print-makers began to venture more readily into stage subject matter. The one or two theatrical portrait prints per annum in London before mid-century became dozens by 1790, as print sellers multiplied and became increasingly specialised. In order to understand how this commercialism functioned, it is important to discuss first what the buyers wanted from a theatrical print and secondly how both artists and actors benefitted from their sale.

To understand the function of a popular print, it is again best to look first at Pye, who, with retrospective omniscience, tells the story best:

This demonstration of the power of painting and engraving to originate articles of commerce, by diffusing pleasurable instruction among the public, was the commencement of that important chain of events, which, by extending the British print-trade throughout the civilised world, emancipated those arts from the extremes of neglect and uselessness in which they had hitherto been held among us. And thus the British public

became honourably distinguished as affording the first source of real patronage enjoyed by the British artist.⁹

Pye's emphasis on "pleasurable instruction" was intended to rationalise the true function of the popular print which was more pleasure than instruction. The popularity of certain types of prints points more to a fascination with political scandal, notable public figures and untouchable aristocrats than to artistic connoisseurship or the desire to be instructed. Also after mid-century, new types of subject matter satisfied the public curiosity about exotic places, contemporary military upheavals and, of course, the weekly happenings on the London stage. Certain periods of increased activity in theatrical portrait production indicate that print sellers were responding to events directly connected with the stage, such as Garrick's retirement (1776) and Mrs. Siddons' return to London (1782). Public taste and public curiosity were always a concern for theatrical portraitists; artistic quality was only of secondary importance.

A potential buyer of a theatrical print would want the image either as a simple curiosity, or as an object to be pasted into a scrapbook¹⁰ or placed on a screen. Henry Angelo observed one such screen, which belonged to Lord Byron, and his description of it gives an idea of how prints were used:

On one side were pugilists, from the time of Broughton, 1750, to the year 1814, with a biographical description of their characters and various battles; and on the other side, of the actors, commencing with the old school, Betterton &c. to the same period.¹¹

One of the earliest methods which print sellers used to attract the buying public was newspaper advertisement,¹² and theatrical prints were no exception. However, the detailed advertisement below for

prints of Woodward and Clive in Garrick's *Lethe* was no longer possible after 1770 when such prints became more numerous and commonplace:

This day at Noon will be publish'd and sold by the proprietor and the print shops, two portraits of these celebrated Comedians, Mr. Woodward and Mrs. Clive, in the character of the Fine Gentleman and Lady in *Lethe* (as they are to perform them tonight at Drury Lane) curiously engraved (in miniature) from original drawings of the same size. By J. Brooks, Engraver of Silver and Copper plate. N.B. the above prints may be had together or separate.¹³

The print itself served the additional function of self-advertisement. London print shops contained large show glasses¹⁴ where the prints were exhibited not just for the scrutiny of the monied classes, but for the perusal of anyone who happened to be passing by. At the bottom of each print appeared the print seller's name and address, and occasionally the cost of the print, which varied depending on size, type and date from a shilling to a guinea.¹⁵ Not every theatrical print sold contained this information, but it provided the most useful form of advertising for a print seller eager to dispose of his goods.

Aside from being lucrative to the engraver as well as desirable to the buyer, theatrical prints also benefitted the actor depicted, and reproductive prints offered a further bonus for the artist from which they were copied. Reynolds in particular encouraged the practice of having his portraits copied in mezzotint (see below), and the problems which arose in relation to his portrait of Mrs. Siddons as the Tragic Muse (Figure 56) signal just how important such a commission could be to the engraver concerned. Through a misunderstanding, the print-maker, Valentine Green assumed that he had the right to copy this portrait, but, at Mrs. Siddons' request, Reynolds gave the commission

to Francis Hayward instead. The subsequent exchange of letters between Reynolds and Green was bitter and accusatory.¹⁶ The intense frustration of Green's tone suggests just how important a commission involving both a famous painter and a famous actress actually was. However, it was this very mercantilism of the reproductive print to which the idealistic Rouquet objected:

5/ Painters of some reputation, as well as those who have none, equally strive to signalize themselves this way; they engrave one or more of their portraits in mezzotinto, under different sorts of pretences, while their real motive is to make themselves known. The painter's name is at the bottom of the plate, he reads it with secret satisfaction as he runs thro' the collections in printseller's shops; this is a public testimony of his existence which in other respects is perhaps very obscure.¹⁷

Rouquet was referring to artists, but his comments could equally apply to the actors which some of these artists represented. In the eighteenth century, the right of engraving rested more often with the owner of the painting than with the artist himself, and the object of controlling the engraving rights was undoubtedly one of the primary reasons why an actor such as Garrick commissioned so many portraits of himself.

Rouquet's principal objections to the British print industry were that it was indiscriminate and promoted interest in artistically feeble paintings. To an extent, this criticism is justified and holds equally for theatrical portrait prints. Hogarth had reiterated in his Apology for Painters the assertion that London artists could take their edifying Grand Tour vicariously by merely studying prints after old master paintings which were sold on their very doorsteps.¹⁸ But despite Hogarth's wholehearted faith in the London print market, the greatest

engravers London could boast of (excepting Hogarth himself) were rarely up to continental standard.¹⁹ This lack of high quality prints was largely a result of the necessary pragmatism of a London print-maker. Prints had to be produced and sold as rapidly as possible; they were marketable commodities but only rarely artistic masterpieces. Theatrical portrait prints in particular were usually executed with the intent of satisfying the public demand for a likeness of favourite or popular actors. They were, therefore, frequently simply or even crudely executed, but this very simplicity answered the public need most aptly.²⁰ A reconstruction of the development of the theatrical print in the eighteenth century, as well as an observation of the output of various print shops reveals how these practical considerations directly affected the popular images of actors circulated through London at the time.

Locations of Print Shops

While frequenting his favourite theatre, whether it be Covent Garden or Drury Lane, an eighteenth century London citizen would not have far to walk in order to obtain an image of a popular actor, since the majority of print shops which specialised in theatrical portraits were in reasonable proximity to the patent theatres which supplied their subject matter. The importance of having a central location for such a business cannot be overestimated - central London rents were high, but the profits accrued from the theatre-going public undoubtedly compensated.²¹

Most shops were within a mile of the theatres in three principal locations - the Strand, Holborn and Fleet Street. Fleet Street seemed an especially popular location, with more than six shops selling

theatrical prints, including the theatrical portrait specialists, Harding and Sayer. If a print shop was outside the bounds of this mile radius, other measures were found to ensure that theatrical prints could be sold closer to the theatres. For example, an early mezzotint by Faber of the actor, Robert Wilks, contains the inscription, "Sold by J. Bowles in St. Paul's Church-yard, & J. Bowles at Mercer's Hall, Cheapside. Sold by J. Faber at the Green Door in Craven Buildings Drury Lane". The "Green Door" appears to have been a temporary location for Faber, but one which was close enough to Drury Lane theatre to be convenient for the patrons of that establishment.²² Having several locations for the sale of prints was undoubtedly important as well, and collaborative ventures were perhaps motivated by the desire to solicit prints in more than one shop. This collaboration is true of some prints of Smith and Sayer, Sherwin and Hinton, and Bellamy and Roberts among others - all of whom had shops in different sections of the city and consequently could distribute prints to a wider audience.

Finally, these few print sellers who were located out of the centre obviously did not have the immediate and necessary incentive of being right next to the theatres. This is true of the Dublin born mezzotinter, John Dixon, who was located at Kemps Row, opposite Ranelagh, Chelsea. However, Dixon's out-of-the-way location did not hinder him in his task of producing mezzotints after paintings of Zoffany - a specially commissioned job which required time, skill and patience but was not pandering to the immediate needs of the masses of Londoners who went to the theatres each day.

Early Theatrical Mezzotints

After the invention of the process of mezzotint engraving in 1642, and its perfection by Prince Rupert in the 1650s, the art was quickly adopted by the Englishman, William Sherwin in 1669 and popularised in London by a group of Dutch immigrant engravers.²³ Mezzotint was a particularly useful media to English artists, since portraiture was the mainstay of their output and the soft tonal qualities of a mezzotint were perfectly suited to capture the texture of flesh and the subtleties and vagueness of human physiognomy.²⁴

Some of the earliest English mezzotints were based on portraits by Lely and Kneller representing actresses whose dubious reputations outweighed their theatrical popularity. Richard Tompson, a mezzotinter and print seller, scraped a portrait of Mary Davies after Lely around 1664, and in 1675, John Simon, a French born artist, engraved a similar portrait of Mrs. Oldfield after Jonathan Richardson.²⁵ However, neither of these actresses is represented in character, and it was not until the 1730s that mezzotints of actors in character began to appear sporadically in London.

The reasons why these mezzotints suddenly erupted are difficult to determine. Certainly, the first ones did not begin to appear until the engraver's copyright act had been passed in 1735. Since these early mezzotints were almost always non-reproductive, it is possible that the act freed artists to produce actor portraits of their own invention without fear of Grub Street pirates. Again, Hogarth's growing reputation, and his obvious interest in the theatre, rendered the stage a certain amount of respectability, and after Garrick's triumphant debut at Goodman's Fields Theatre in 1741, the stage became an

even more logical focus for the print market.

The few mezzotints which appeared before 1750 often represent actors and actresses whom Hogarth had also depicted at one time or another. For example, Miller and Toms in 1739 published a mezzotint of Harper as Jobson in Coffey's popular play, The Devil to Pay (Figure 88), a decade after Hogarth had painted that actor as Falstaff in a scene from King Henry IV, Part II (Figure 28).²⁶ Harper had been a popular comic actor at both Lincoln's Inn Fields and later Drury Lane, and the Miller and Toms print - despite its limited half-length format - attempts to capture some of Harper's suitably comic physiognomy, particularly his engaging double chin.

A similar recollection of an actor patronised by Hogarth occurs in another 1739 portrait of Joe Miller as Teague (Figure 89), designed by Charles Stoppelaer and engraved by A. Miller. Like Harper, Miller had appeared in Hogarth's scene from Falstaff, but the portrait by A. Miller is confined to a half-length format which attempts to capture that actor's characterisation of Teague within these limited confines. This time the moment of the action can almost be determined. The character of Teague was the focus of caustic slurs on the stupidity and uncouthness of the Irish in the play, The Committee, and his constant request for money was one of the comic leitmotifs of the play. The mezzotint shows Teague wearing his characteristic blanket and extended his hand in an equally characteristic demand for money.

In addition to the mezzotints mentioned above, Hogarth was also recalled in two prints by Faber representing Lavinia Fenton as Polly and Thomas Walker as Macheath, reminiscent of Hogarth's several paintings of scenes from The Beggar's Opera (Figures 29 and 30) showing these

actors playing these roles. Faber was a prolific engraver and a student of Vanderbanck's academy, and he engraved the above works from the original designs of Ellys - a student of Thornhill's. The education of these early print-makers endows their endeavours with a certain amount of respectability, and their designs are more carefully executed and artistically able than those of their later counterparts.

This striving for respectability was very important, and many early mezzotinters attempted to justify their choice of such contemporary and popular subject matter by endowing theatrical prints with elements usually associated with history painting. This is true of a print of Mrs. Clive as Phillida in Cibber's Damon and Phillida (Figure 90), which is as far removed from stage reality as a theatrical portrait can be. In a half-length oval setting, Mrs. Clive - one breast bare - leans out to accept a kiss from Damon who elaborately purses his lips in expectation. The elevated feel of the work is enhanced by the inscription which accompanies it:

See native Beauty clad without disguise
No art t'allure a paltry Lover's Eyes,
No still, sett Airs, which but betray the mind
But unaffected innocence we find
Happy the nymph with charms by nature blest
But happier Swain who of the Nymph possest
Can taste the joys which she alone can bring
And live in pleasures which alternate spring.

The designer of the print, G. Schalken, was most likely Godfred Schalken, the Dutch painter who visited England between 1693 and 1697. If this is the case, the design would only latterly have been said to be representative of Kitty Clive, who was not yet born when Schalken died in 1706. It seems as if a history painting by Schalken was adapted into a mezzotint portrait which ostensibly shows Kitty Clive en desh bille.

Another artist whose work took on some elements of history painting was Peter van Bleeck, one of the last of the Dutch immigrant mezzotinters in London, and himself a painter of theatrical portraits. His mezzotints after his own designs of Mrs. Cibber as Cordelia in Lear (Figure 36) and Jonson as Ananias, and Griffin as Tribulation in the Alchemist for the first time use the mezzotint as a vehicle for representation of a full theatrical scene rather than a single figure portrait, and these designs undoubtedly influenced the later, more sophisticated theatrical conversation pieces of Zoffany.

These early mezzotints of actors in character appeared infrequently, but their importance is confirmed by the fact that they were still on display in print shops many years after their execution. In 1780, Garrick's biographer, Davies, mentions that he has seen both the Schalken portrait of Miss Clive and the Faber mezzotint of Walker,²⁷ and as late as 1804, one dramatic biographer claimed that the latter mezzotint was even then available in some of the old print shops.²⁸ Mezzotints were the primary means of representation of actors in character prior to 1770, and their infrequency suggests that neither artists nor actors were yet aware of the possibility of using prints for promotional propaganda. Also, since a mezzotint only yielded about 30 impressions before the plate had to be reworked, the medium necessarily limited the number of reproductions which could actually be sold.²⁹ Awareness of the public market for theatrical prints increased after 1750 when print sellers began to specialise more frequently in theatrical portraits and the stipple process allowed a greater number of prints to be produced in a quicker and more efficient manner.

McArdell, Wilson, Zoffany and Sayer

James McArdell (1729-1765) was one of the first men to revolutionise both the print industry in general and the theatrical print industry in particular by exploiting public taste and shrewdly identifying marketable products well ahead of his contemporaries.³⁰ Horace Walpole in a letter to Grosvenor Bedford in 1759 builds up a picture of McArdell's clever and sometimes underhanded business methods:

I shall be much obliged to you if you can call as soon as you can at M'Ardell's in Henrietta Street, and take my picture from him. I am extremely angry, for I heard he has told people of the print. If the plate is finished, be so good as to take it away, and all the impressions he has taken off, for I will not let him keep one. If it is not finished, I shall be most unwilling to leave the work with him. If he pretends he stays for the inscription, I will have nothing but these words, Horace Walpole, youngest Son of Sir Robert Walpole, Earl of Oxford. I must beg you not to leave it with him an hour, unless he locks it up, and denies to every body there is any such thing.³¹

Despite Walpole's undertone of paranoid hysteria, his complaint was justified. Walpole himself had full rights to the mezzotint which McArdell was engraving, but McArdell, seeing his chance to capitalise on Walpole's popularity, obviously hoped to press a few extra prints of his own without his patron's knowledge. McArdell realised that there was a public curiosity about Walpole, and thus he intended to use a private portrait to satisfy the gossip-mongering public. McArdell's application of these principles to the theatrical print helped popularise this genre in London.

The first of an excellent line of Irish mezzotint engravers, McArdell came to London from Dublin before 1750, bringing with him the

expertise gained from his master, John Brooks.³² During his years in London McArdell sold or engraved over a dozen mezzotints of actors - this production encompassing 5% of his prolific output. Some of his theatrical prints were in the tradition of the earlier mezzotints discussed above in that they were inventions of the engraver rather than copies of paintings. This is true of McArdell's own mezzotint of Garrick in the character of an auctioneer speaking the prologue to Foote's Taste (Figure 91). In this print, Garrick reaches out his right hand, and speaks the lines, "Before this court, I Peter Puff appear/A Briton born, and bred an Auctioneer". Despite the theatrical subject matter, this print was more significant for its likeness of Garrick than for any theatrical content or characterisation. Characterisation is achieved instead in another McArdell mezzotint of Quin as Falstaff (Figure 92), after a painting also by that artist (Figure 93), now in the Folger Shakespeare Library. McArdell, a friend of Quin's, has represented that actor in all his fat and pompous mock-heroic glory, with the tavern bill on the floor to signal this portrait as representative of a specific episode in King Henry IV, Part I.

However, McArdell's output also included a number of mezzotints after famous theatrical paintings - thus bringing into the London mind the publicity value of a reproductive theatrical print. Aside from straightforward portraits of Garrick and Mrs. Woffington based on paintings by Pond, Liotard and others, McArdell also sold a mezzotint of Garrick and Mrs. Cibber in the scene from Venice Preserved (Figure 94) based on Zoffany's painting, and one of Garrick as Lear in the storm after Wilson.

Although Wilson and Zoffany usually painted theatrical conversation pieces rather than single figure portraits, engravings after their

paintings in the 1760s helped foster a growth of interest in the single figure theatrical print, leading eventually to a rise in production and a concurrent decline in the quality of such prints. Wilson had painted theatrical conversation pieces of Garrick as early as 1753, but it was not until 1761 that a mezzotint after his Lear in the Storm (Figure 46) was first published. The sudden appearance of this mezzotint 8 years out-of-date was possibly related to Zoffany's arrival in London, despite the fact that Zoffany did not paint his first theatrical conversation piece (scene from the Farmer's Return) until March 1762. The exact relationship between Wilson and Zoffany and the chronology of their estrangement and rivalry are difficult to determine, but it is certain that after Garrick switched his patronage from Wilson to Zoffany, the former artist stopped producing theatrical paintings while prints of his previous theatrical portraits began to appear.

From the beginning, Zoffany's theatrical conversations were reproduced in mezzotint and, less frequently, line. His scenes from Macbeth (Figure 95), The Mayor of Garratt, The Clandestine Marriage (Figure 42), et al, were engraved by the best mezzotinters in London at the time, from 1762 until as late as 1791.³³ The market for mezzotints was necessarily small due to the limited number of impressions obtainable from a copper plate, but the public saw these works in the print shop windows and the demand for them was undoubtedly in excess of the supply. A compromise between artistic quality and public demand had to be reached in order to allow such images to be more readily accessible to a larger populous, and to an extent, this compromise was attained by the print seller, Robert Sayer.

Sayer, about whom we know little,³⁴ seems to have appeared at the heart of the London print industry in 1769 - a classic example of being in the right place at the right time. Not only did he receive commissions for prints of Zoffany's and Wilson's theatrical conversations, but he entered into a partnership with one of the best theatrical mezzotinters of the century, J. R. Smith, and inherited the late McArdell's copper plates as well.³⁵ Sayer reissued several of McArdell's theatrical portraits with only slight reworkings and changes in the publication data. For instance, the portrait of Mrs. Chambers as Polly in The Beggar's Opera was published by McArdell, then later cut down several inches and re-published by Sayer.³⁶ In fact, McArdell's mezzotint of Garrick as the Auctioneer mentioned above was not published until 20 February 1769 - after that artist's death - allowing Sayer to capitalise on the continuing success of David Garrick.

In many ways, Sayer appears to have been more of an entrepreneur than an artist,³⁷ and he put his business acumen into the production of a tiny picture book of theatrical portraits, called Dramatic Characters or Different Portraits of the English Stage (1770). The book is prefaced by a syncophantic dedication to Garrick followed by a series of small line engravings, mostly by the French artist, de Fesch.³⁸ These engravings are minimal, and in many instances, lifted directly from a Zoffany painting. For example, Zoffany's painting of Shuter, Beard and Dunstall in Bickerstaffe's *Love in a Village* (Figure 96) is broken down by de Fesch into three separate portraits (Figures 97-99), showing these actors in the attitudes rendered by Zoffany, but the figures are wooden and sapped of all the life that Zoffany gave them. Other borrowings from Zoffany include Powell as Posthumous (Figure 100), Garrick as Lord Chalkstone, and Garrick as Sir John Brute (Figure 101), all superficially

like Zoffany's portraits but unconvincing in themselves. Strangely enough, although separate plates of Foote and Weston as the Devil and Dr. Last (Figures 102 and 103) are included, they are not copies of Zoffany's painting of these actors in the scene from The Devil Upon Two Sticks (Figure 104) but rather original designs. Why de Fesch copied some Zoffany works and not others is a mystery; equally ambiguous is how Sayer evaded the copyright act, since these engravings were only published within a few years of Zoffany's paintings.

To add to the puzzle, Sayer also produced very small prints of scenes from plays in oval formats of under two inches in diameter. These prints were called "watch-papers", since they could be fitted into the inside of a pocket watch.³⁹ Again several of these scenes were taken from paintings by Zoffany. It seems very likely that Sayer gained permission to have these designs copied in order to provide a larger public with reproductions of famous theatrical portraits. More impressions could be made from these small line engravings than from the larger and more refined mezzotints, and as they could be sold in a small and easily affordable set, a larger public would also be able to purchase them. Although these prints may seem minimal and insignificant to our eyes, the German professor of physics, Lichtenberg, saw them as accurate representations of contemporary performances.⁴⁰ Thus, even one step removed, Zoffany's ability to capture a theatrical moment was not lost on eighteenth century audiences.

Later Mezzotints : Reynolds and the Rise of the Reproductive Print

If Hogarth proved the potential for artistic originality in the designing of prints, Reynolds revealed that prints which slavishly

mimicked paintings had a potential of their own. It is a commonplace of Reynolds scholarship that the eminent P.R.A. often painted portraits with the eventual reproductive mezzotint in mind - keeping the effects of chiaroscuro broad and other tonal qualities simple to facilitate a speedy engraving.⁴¹ Reynolds' exploitation of the print industry began in 1754 when he commissioned McArdell to engrave his portraits of the Earl and Countess of Kildare and Lady Charlotte Fitzwilliam. Thereafter followed a partnership between the two men which resulted in 34 more mezzotints, and after McArdell's death in 1765, there were other mezzotinters available to keep Reynolds' art on view in the print shops for the rest of the century.⁴²

It was a matter of course that Reynolds' few theatrical portraits were engraved as well - some of them several times - but Reynolds' theatrical portraits themselves were not as significant to the later theatrical mezzotint as that artist's indirect encouragement of reproductive prints.⁴³ Many artists followed Reynolds' example and had their portraits engraved, and as theatrical portraits were in the repertoire of many artists, these works were reproduced as prints as well.

In addition, Reynolds' mania for the painting of old masters so dominated his presidency of the Academy that it created a revival of interest in the work of earlier English portraitists such as Lely, Kneller and Richardson. Because these artists painted portraits of actors and actresses of the seventeenth century, a series of mezzotints by various engravers of Nell Gwynn, Ann Oldfield, etc. appeared from 1770 onwards. Although some of these mezzotints were theatrical, they lacked the contemporaneity of many other theatrical engravings, demonstrating instead the successful reproduction in print of a past master's

style. Their publicity value was thus lowered, and occasionally, the printer had to compensate for a lack of theatrical contemporaneity by endowing the print with additional elements of public interest. This is true of Watts' large mezzotint of a seventeenth century portrait, allegedly representative of Nathaniel Lee (Figure 105). The mezzotint hints that the portrait depicts Lee as the hero of his own play, Oedipus, and the subject's parted lips and dishevelled appearance would have made such a theatrical attribution feasible to an eighteenth century viewer. But the image on its own would have meant nothing - it was not based on a famous painting, and Lee himself was not within the living memory of theatre audiences at the time. However, Watts has allowed for the obscurity of the subject by including the following inscription:

Author of Eleven Tragedies which were received with applause, two of them were written after he had been confin'd in Bedlam four years, he Attempted Acting, but did not succeed, he was found dead in the street, Anno 1690 after a Night of Riot and Extravagance.

This biographical data turns the print into an object of historical interest, even although the actor himself was outside living memory.

Aside from reproductive prints, theatrical engravers continued to invent new subjects, and as the century progressed, their invented mezzotints became more varied. Still prevailing in the last quarter of the century was the half-length theatrical portrait with a pseudo-historical format, similar to the Mrs. Clive as Phillida mentioned earlier. The 1780 mezzotint of Miss Hartley as Elfrida in Mason's Elfrida (Figure 106) by Nixon shows that actress in profile, her hands crossed historically over her chest and her mouth open, posed before a background of classical architecture. Despite the continued prevalence of

such archaic types, some artists used this half-length in an oval format to slightly different ends. Delegal's 1776 mezzotint of Jemmy Warner "the celebrated clown of Sadler's Wells" (Figure 107) is essentially a caricature. Warner is represented as having squint eyes and a crooked mouth, and his expression seems almost a parody of theatrical expression.

Furthermore, mezzotinters were no longer confined primarily to this half-length formula. Another slightly satirical portrait of 1770 by Fisher shows the juvenile actress, Miss Rose, in the character of Tom Thumb (Figure 108), threatening her enemies with a mock-heroic flourish of sword. This print, published a year after Miss Rose's first appearance in that role, was undoubtedly a sensation to London audiences who had yet to be exposed to the excesses of child actor, Master Betty.

There are many other examples, most of which reveal that artists began increasingly to use the mezzotint formula more freely. However, in the case of the theatrical portrait print, mezzotints were gradually superceded by the quicker and easier process of stipple engraving, which emerged in London c.1775 and changed the whole face of the theatrical print industry.

Bell, Boydell and the Advent of Stipple Engraving

An eighteenth century Londoner - eager for an object to adorn his wall - would not necessarily rely on an expensive painting to fulfill his needs, but would more likely pop down to the local print shop and choose an engraving to serve as the desired interior decorations. These so-called "furniture prints" were stipple engravings, either coloured or monochrome, of sentimental or pastoral subject matter and of a shape

and size suitable for framing.⁴⁴ The stipple or dot manner was developed in England in the 1770s by William Wynne Ryland, who had first encountered this technique in France. A stipple engraving was produced by using tools with rounded and spiked heads such as the roulette and the mattoir⁴⁵ to cut a series of dots or lozenges into a prepared ground. This technique had several advantages over previous intaglio processes. First of all, since stipple engraving often involved drawing the image onto an etching ground,⁴⁶ the laborious process of cutting into the plate itself - characteristic of line engraving - could be avoided. Secondly, the numerous dots created by the stipple method were concentrated into areas of differing densities to create tonal effects and to evoke the texture of flesh.⁴⁷ The latter qualities were common also to mezzotints, but stipple engraving was a more rapid process which yielded more impressions than mezzotint.

The speed at which a theatrical portrait could be executed in stipple is stressed by one author who tells the following anecdote of the engraver J. K. Sherwin:

In Sherwin's studio, I have frequently seen Mrs. Robinson, when in her full bloom, and he actually engraved her portrait at once upon the copper, without any previous drawing. Here I also saw Mrs. Siddons sit, in an attitude of the highest dignity, in the character of the Grecian Daughter; which portrait he also engraved in a similar way.⁴⁸

Stipple engraving was ideal for portraits, and more specifically, for portraits which required a hasty execution and which answered a large public demand.

Although Ryland was responsible for most of the experimentation with the stipple technique in England, the Italian Bartolozzi, capitalised on Ryland's experiments by engraving or sponsoring hundreds of

stipples during his sojourn in London.⁴⁹ Bartolozzi's London studio eventually employed a number of engravers who mass-produced stipples in order to answer this new public desire for cheap interior decoration, and among Bartolozzi's output were subjects which combined theatrical portraiture with the more fanciful format of furniture prints. For example, in 1796, Bartolozzi himself produced a stipple engraving after a Shireff design showing Dimond as Romeo and Miss Wallis as Juliet (Figure 109). Despite the seeming theatrical nature of this print, Dimond was not associated with the role of Romeo in London, and the format of the work equates it more with the imaginative pastoral scenes currently popular in London than with any event connected with the contemporary stage. The print, a three-quarter length, shows Miss Wallis as a distressed Juliet, wearing a fashionable empire dress, emerging from the Capulet tomb and looking away from Romeo who grabs her hand, puts his arm around her waist and gazes at her averted face anxiously. The whole image represents the sort of historionic scene that a Londoner, reared on the historical pretensions of the Shakespeare Gallery, would have desired. In effect, these furniture prints and other stipple engravings of actors in character were supplying the same public demand as Sayer's minimal and inexpensive collection of dramatic portraits.

Throughout the 1780s and 1790s, 132 Fleet Street was the province of Edward Harding - a stipple engraver and print seller who later became Queen Charlotte's librarian. In partnership with Edward was his brother, Sylvester who designed a number of theatrical portraits for public consumption at the end of the century.⁵⁰ Sylvester's connections with the theatre extended to his early years as a strolling player, and his interest in portraiture expanded beyond theatrical engraving to an

ambitious collection of engraved portraits and historical trivia - the Biographical Mirror of 1795. The Harding print shop had additional links with the theatre through the connections of another of its engravers, W. N. Gardiner, who had begun his working life on the stage as well but had been eased into the world of art by Bartolozzi.

However, the Harding shop produced theatrical furniture prints of a slightly different nature than the pseudo-historical efforts of Bartolozzi. Taking their cue from the current popularity of mezzotints both of old actor portraits and new theatrical sensations, the Hardings churned out stipple engravings of similar subjects which yielded greater profits but took less time to produce. The Hardings were sensitive to any design which potentially would be an attractive addition to a drawing room wall, and out-of-date portraits were equally as useful to the Hardings as up-to-date ones. For instance, in 1794, the Hardings published a stipple of the actor Pinkethman in the role of the crusty Don Lewis in Cibber's Fop's Fortune based on a drawing executed by George Vertue over 80 years before, and their stipple engraving of Harris as Cardinal Wolsey (Figure 4) recalled a portrait painted of that actor at the end of the seventeenth century. The tonal qualities and recreation of the earlier artists' styles seemed not so important to the Hardings as the production of a visually acceptable, marketable image which would be a complement, rather than an eyesore, to any interior.

As the Hardings were intent on pleasing their customers, they offered both the old and the new : in addition to the revitalisation of early actor portraits, they also rapidly produced stipples depicting actors in characters which they were currently portraying on the London stages. For instance, their stipple of William Parsons as Alscrip in

Burgoyne's Heiress (Figure 110) - designed by Sylvester Harding and executed by J. Parker - commemorates a performance of that play which premiered at Drury Lane on Saturday 14 January 1786 and ran for over 30 more nights that season. The print itself, dated 1 May 1786, emerged at the very end of the Drury Lane season and would have served to remind the public of both a popular actor and a successful run of a new play (see chapter 5).

The commercial possibilities of stipple engraving of theatrical portraits were more fully realised by John Bell - one of the shrewdest print sellers of the century. Bell's monumental editions of British plays are discussed in the next chapter, but here it is important to mention them in connection with the fuller scheme of which they were a part. Heartened by the success of his first edition of British plays, Bell embarked on a second edition in the 1790s. Not only did his new edition contain more plays, but the illustrations within were part of an ambitious project fully in keeping with Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery and similar enterprises of the decade. Like Boydell, Bell commissioned a series of paintings for his British Theatre, which were exhibited at the British Library on the Strand - within a stone's throw of the patent theatres.⁵¹ These paintings depicted actors in character and provided the basis for both the small line engravings in the editions and for a series of larger stipple engravings which were sold independently. This project with its paintings, book illustrations and independent stipple engravings was undoubtedly inspired by the similar tripartite focus of Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery, and Bell was intending to profit from a similar market.

Samuel de Wilde provided most of the paintings for Bell, and the stipples were from the hands of Condé and the ubiquitous Bartolozzi.

However, not every painting for the British Theatre was engraved in stipple and since most of the stipples produced for Bell were of actors in comic roles, it seems likely that Bell made a conscious choice to employ the stipple technique for a type of facial characterisation to which it was well suited. These engravings served as a further purpose of advertising Bell's other projects. Condé's stipple of Bannister as Ben in Congreve's Love for Love (Figure 111) contains an advertisement which became a part of each independent engraving:

Engraved by Condé from the original Picture
which was painted from life by de Wilde, from
the play entitled Love for Love by Congreve,
in the celebrated edition of Bell's British
Theatre, which is now publishing periodically.

Harding and Bell were by no means the only printers who employed the stipple technique for such practical ends. The technique became the tool of almost every shop in London, including that of John Boydell. Prior to 1780, Boydell's shop had specialised in carefully rendered mezzotint and line engravings, and the shop's only ventures into theatrical portraiture were several engravings of David Garrick after contemporary paintings. However, in the early 1780s, Boydell appears to have discovered stipple engraving, and it is no accident that this date coincides with the triumphant ascension of Siddons and Kemble onto the London theatrical throne.

Although Mrs. Siddons' career had blossomed through a successful tour of provincial theatres, her provincial popularity hardly presaged the reaction of London audiences when she arrived in that city at the beginning of the 1782-3 season.⁵² Immediately after her arrival, she played one role after another from Jane Shore to Euphrasia to Lady Macbeth, and her continued success was unprecedented. Later audiences

became slightly disillusioned with her excessively affected histrionics, but during her early days in London, she could do no wrong. The sudden Siddons mania - which extended to her equally popular brother, J. P. Kemble - created a demand for instant images of that actress, for which stipple engraving was unquestionably appropriate. Numerous stipples of Mrs. Siddons in her most famous roles appeared between 1783 and 1785, and Boydell was not the only businessman to realise the commercial potential of these images.

From the time of its introduction in London in c.1775 to 1783, the stipple technique appears to have been used only occasionally for theatrical portraiture - perhaps because these years represented a theatrical lacuna between the retirement of Garrick and the advent of the Kembles. However, after 1783, stipple engraving became a commonplace in the production of theatrical portraits, and appropriately, this new style of engraving coincided with a new era in theatrical history.

Etching and Line Engraving

Mezzotint and stipple engravings were the products of professional print shops or highly trained individuals, but the technical simplicity of etching made it accessible to a wider public. Prior to 1750, there are almost no etchings of theatrical subjects,⁵³ but after this date, George Townshend's simple caricatures created a cult of the amateur which spread very quickly into theatrical portraits as well.

Townshend's "card portraits" were the sensation of mid-century London; they were small provocative caricatures with only a limited amount of the iconographical trappings normally associated with caricature.⁵⁴ Townshend's cards not only endowed the art of etching with a certain amount of respectability, but they inspired a number of untrained

dilettanti to try their hands as well.

In a theatrical context, the cult of amateur etching was perpetuated by Mathew and Mary Darly.⁵⁵ The Darlys are most famous for their collections of amateur etchings of London types and notables, such as "Macaronis, Characters, and Caricatures".⁵⁶ Many of these caricatures were by anonymous dilettants, and most were of social types rather than theatrical figures. However, the Darlys occasionally produced a simple image of an actor in character which was fully in keeping with the amateur quality of their collections of caricatures. This is the case in Mary Darly's etching of the actor, Dodd, as Ali in Collier's Selima and Azor (Figure 112). This print was published on 24 December 1776 in the middle of a season of performances of that play in which Dodd appeared. The print itself is simple and schematic, consisting of only a few lines, and a comparison of the features of Dodd as Ali with those of other Dodd portraits shows that Darly has not even attempted to capture a likeness.

However, despite its bad portrait likeness, it seems unlikely that Darly's etching of Dodd was meant to be a caricature, but most etchings of theatrical subjects have something mildly satirical about them. Such is the case in Dighton's coloured etching of Stephen Kemble as Hamlet - "A LARGE manager in a GREAT CHARACTER" (Figure 113). This print, dated 1794, shows that actor ludicrously bursting out of his black suit while striking a tragic attitude and delivering a soliloquy. Certainly the print seems more than a little unkind, but allegedly, Dighton's approximation of Stephen Kemble's girth was no exaggeration.⁵⁷ However, Kemble had played Hamlet in Scotland, whereas Dighton published and sold this print in London - possibly satisfying a morbid sense of humour and a

curiosity about a theatrical event which the Londoners themselves failed to witness.

Etching was particularly appropriate in capturing a character or caricature - in part because it allowed a freer line than other media, but also because this line was often employed in a schematic or indirect manner.⁵⁸ Such is the case in the anonymous etching of Baddeley as Canton of 1 September 1794 (Figure 114). This etching is based on an engraving of 1772 for F. Torond (Burney Collection, British Museum) which shows Baddeley squatting and reading a paper, wearing a silly smirk and a ridiculously elaborate hairstyle fully in keeping with the Frenchified character of Canton. The later etching has avoided the hard lines and outré qualities of the engraving, leaving only a schematic suggestion of Canton's character and losing the portrait likeness entirely.

From the few examples of theatrical portrait etching, it appears as though likeness was never as important as elements of characterisation. Thus the ambiguous attack on Samuel Foote, Mr F-te, Orator (Figure 115) shows him in profile with an unnatural jutting chin, wide pop-eyes and an exaggerated grin. Not only are the physical features in this portrait unrelated to Foote's features, but the print is a reversed duplicate of a Ghezzi caricature of 1738. Therefore, the inscription on the bottom of the print is the only clue which ties this image to the actor Foote, and given the satirical nature of contemporary caricature, this would have been an effective enough attack.

There are only a few other theatrical etchings of the century - one or two of actual scenes from plays but most focussing on a single actor. However, etching never really caught on in this field possibly

because it did not satisfactorily answer the demand for a convincing portrait likeness, instead swallowing up that likeness in exaggerations of feature and free interpretation of character.

Whereas etching allowed a certain amount of freedom, line engraving was a demanding and time-consuming process which, in a theatrical context, was usually reserved for book illustrations. However, the process was used for several large reproductive prints of the 1760s and 1770s based on theatrical conversation pieces. Sometimes these line engravings reproduced theatrical portraits more successfully than mezzotints. For example, a comparison between a large line engraving by Ravenet of Wilson's Garrick and Mrs. Bellamy in Romeo and Juliet (Figure 116) to a mezzotint of the same subject by Laurie (Figure 117) shows how the use of linear rather than tonal effects creates more satisfying results - even in the countenances of the actors themselves.

Line engraving was also a common technique for theatrical subject pieces with a satirical intent - such as the attack on Foote, Buck Metamorphosed, or Foote as an Englishman returned from Paris (Figure 118) or the similar attack on Macklin, Love-a-la-mode, or a new whimsical cantata by Young d'urfey. Both of these prints contain several characters in a scene accompanied by long inscriptions full of allusions to the actors' stage careers. A similar use of inscription occurs in an odd line engraving of 1763 showing Yeates (sic) in the character of Launce in The Two Gentlemen of Verona (Figure 119). Here the inscription is from Launce's soliloquy about his dog, and the dog himself is present, looking up adoringly at his master. This print is unusual because The Two Gentlemen of Verona was not performed in the eighteenth century, and therefore the print's very existence smacks of something

more literary than theatrical. Here the line is employed in an original manner, the artist having used the burin to create a series of short, sharp strokes - avoiding hatching or any other depth-creating devices.

However, unless executed with the necessary skill and effort, line engravings could not satisfy the demand for a convincing likeness of the actor depicted, and given the necessity of quick production which governed the output of most theatrical portraitists, such a laborious process was impractical. Mezzotint thus seemed more suitable for reproductive prints and stipple for prints which needed to be produced in large numbers and at great speed. Theatrical portraitists - undaunted by the introduction of new processes of engraving - adapted these processes and moved with the times. The gradual increase of theatrical prints from Zoffany's arrival in England to the end of the century attests to a growing market and, implicitly, a growing desire among the buying public to possess images of favourite actors playing famous roles.

Chapter 4

BOOK ILLUSTRATION

In its current facsimile series, the Cornmarket Press includes a collection of theatrical portrait line engravings which John Bell published in conjunction with his first edition of Shakespeare (1774). The anonymous editor of this facsimile sums up the usefulness of the plates to a modern scholar in the following terse manner:

They are full-length contemporary portraits of actors and actresses in Shakespearian roles. They were the first set of this kind ever to be published and are important as evidence of the stage costume worn during the period.¹

No one would deny the truth of this statement, but only a fraction of the importance of the Bell character plates is revealed here. A less obvious but more substantial clue to the significance of these plates can be found in Bell's own advertisement which precedes this same edition of Shakespeare. He sells his work with these words:

When it is considered that the Artists of this Kingdom seldom or never have been employed in Miniature Engraving, beyond the scanty Encouragement of a Sixpenny Magazine, it need not be wondered that the French, at present, boast so much of their superior Excellence in this delicate Art; nor, when it is known that a Pencil Character in particular, who ranks himself with the first of his Profession, and some others, who but fancy themselves to be Connoisseurs in the Art, have been wantonly sportive on English engraving and cruelly endeavoured to impede and damp the progress of this work, rather than promote its success - no longer need it remain a Matter of Surprise, that the Genius of England in this particular Branch, has so long been enveloped in a cloud ...

Bell's remark takes the aggressive yet defensive tone of Hogarth's advocacy of English engraving, while it foreshadows Boydell's more positive stance in his later introduction to the Shakespeare Gallery catalogue.²

The most revealing aspect of Bell's advertisement for his first edition of Shakespeare's plays is the subordination of mention of the text to discussion of the frontispieces. Like any good advertiser, Bell realised that packaging was the most efficacious way of selling a product, and despite the literary pretensions of his clients, they most likely bought his works for what they considered good quality engravings.³

The frontispieces for his first edition of Shakespeare were scenes from the plays, and the dramatic character plates were sold separately, but his use of portrait frontispieces for the British Theatre a year later indicates that these line engravings of actors in costume must have been popular. They also must have continued so, as they appeared in his editions of plays until as late as 1797 when he finally gave up the enterprise.

In order to understand the importance of Bell's character portraits for his editions of plays, a context is necessary which establishes the standard practice of play illustration prior to Bell, and, following that, an examination of the various Bell editions and rival editions. This study will indicate the startling impact Bell had on the single figure portrait industry through his use of portrait frontispieces in his prolific publications of British dramatic works.

From the Scenic Illustration to the Actor Portrait : The Early History of Play Illustration in Eighteenth Century London⁴

Jacob Tonson was the first publisher to adapt successfully the French practice of including engraved frontispieces to editions of plays, his success largely dependent upon the assemblage of expert foreign engravers which he lured to England with offers of employment.⁵ The first illustrated collection of plays published by Tonson were those of Shakespeare, edited by Nicholas Rowe and released to the world in 1709. The choice of Shakespeare may seem rather natural to a modern mind, but, in fact, no complete English edition of Shakespeare had been published since the first folio.⁶ Thus the novelty of Tonson's edition lay first in the very fact of its publication and secondly in his inclusion of engraved frontispieces - a practice then unfamiliar in England. More than one art historian has pointed out the logistical problem Tonson must have had of how to illustrate a set of plays which had rarely been illustrated before, and thus had no iconographical precedent.⁷ The anonymous designers of the Tonson frontispieces solved this problem by recourse to the theatre where an established visual tradition existed. Another explanation for the use of theatrical motifs in the Tonson Shakespeare was tendered in 1916 by M. Salaman who suggested:

The day of the book-illustration in England had not arrived, and the readers of Shakespeare cannot, up to the publication of Rowe's edition, have been exceedingly numerous. The popular conceptions of the scenes of the plays were, therefore, inseparable from the stage-representations and the personalities of the players.⁸

Salaman's explanation is compelling, but not entirely accurate in relation to the illustrations themselves. The Tonson frontispieces include such theatrical motifs as obvious backcloths (Henry V) (Figure 120) and stage curtains (Twelfth Night) (Figure 121), but these motifs

are general, and related to all plays, rather than to specific ones. The one confirmable contemporary theatrical motif in the Rowe/Tonson edition is the fallen chair in the ghost scene of Hamlet (Figure 122) - a stage trick practised by Betterton⁹ - which, by itself, hardly substantiates Salaman's theory that all the illustrations represent "popular conceptions". Furthermore, Salaman's suggestion that "the personalities of the players" can be discerned in the Tonson frontispieces is not confirmed by the parade of anonymous cardboard cut-outs of Falstaff, Hamlet, Rosalind, et al, in the illustrations themselves. Portraiture, and other forms of theatrical specificity, therefore, play very little part. It is significant that even these theatrical allusions began to disappear in Tonson's second edition of Shakespeare (1714) when du Guernier took over the programme of illustration and rid the series of many of its more obvious stage props.

This depletion of theatrical formula in the 1714 edition is symptomatic and precursive of the gradual infiltration of the rococo into English illustration, largely through the agents of expatriate French illustrators.¹⁰ The very artifice of the rococo necessarily led book illustration on a course away from the naive theatrical realism of Tonson's first edition of Shakespeare. The movement gained momentum in England when the Prince of Wales began to patronise its artists,¹¹ and, in 1732, at the height of Prince Frederick's enthusiasm, Hubert François Gravelot came to England, and within a few years was called upon to illustrate Theobald's new edition of Shakespeare. Whether or not England had any influence on Gravelot is a moot point,¹² but it is certain that Gravelot had a profound effect on English illustration at that time. His illustrations for Theobald's (1740) and Hanmer's (1744) editions of Shakespeare did much to crystallise the fanciful, non-

theatrical portrayal of Shakespearian scenes in England for many years. However, Gravelot's rococo delicacy was particularly inappropriate for representation of the more robust Shakespearian characters, as a glimpse at his portrayal of Falstaff or Henry VIII (Figure 123) will reveal.¹³ Not only are these figures alienated from Shakespeare's text, but they reveal that Gravelot was oblivious to the standard characterisation of such figures perpetuated by actors on the English stage.

Gravelot's mannerisms were, to an extent, adopted by Hayman when the two worked together on Hanmer's Shakespeare in 1744.¹⁴ Hayman's choice of scene for this edition was substantially limited by his contract with Hanmer, which stated:

The said Francis Hayman is to design and delineate a drawing to be prefix'd to each play of Shakespear taking the subject of such scenes as Sr Thomas Hanmer shall direct ...¹⁵

A reading of Hanmer's instructions to Hayman indicate that the artists deviated in only minor detail from Hanmer's description for each scene, possibly out of a timid fear of not receiving the three guineas per drawing promised him should he diverge from the accepted formula. However, another possibility presents itself. Within the limitations of Hanmer's instructions, Hayman could express fully his rococo style largely because Hanmer's instructions were concerned almost exclusively with costume and characterisation. The focus of Hanmer's emphasis suggests that he not only knew the texts of the plays, but that he derived some of his more decisive ideas from contemporary stage practice. This is particularly true of costume. For example, Hanmer's choice of the casket scene for the Merchant of Venice (Figure 124) seems in part an

excuse to portray Portia's Moorish suitor in his national dress:

Towards the other side of the room Morocchus a
Moorish Prince richly habited in the garb of
his Countrey with a turban and scymitar.¹⁶

In other passages he refers to Italo-Spanish costumes, servants' livery, the dress of shepherds and shepherdesses, and, in his description of the scene from King John, he insists that "the habit of the times must be consider'd in this and the following designs".¹⁷ All of these types of costumes were standard stage dress, and theatrical managers of the period were beginning to attempt to promote historical accuracy in costume, albeit in a haphazard and non-archaeological way (see chapter 6).

It would be going too far to suggest that Hanmer's descriptions of character recall specific actors, and such a supposition would be unprovable in any case. However, his very obsession with the essential character and physiognomy of Shakespeare's creations was alien to the work of rococo artists who tended to integrate figure and landscape. Thus, Hanmer's instructions combined with Hayman's rococo style to create an anomaly between the theatrically expressive physiognomy of the characters and the stylistic virtuosity of the scenes. For example, amidst the feathery Athenian landscape of Hayman's Midsummer Night's Dream illustration (Figure 125), Quince, Snug, Flute, Snout, and Starvling run away from the metamorphosed Bottom "with different actions expressing their astonishment and fear".¹⁸ Hayman depicts each of these characters with gestures fully in keeping with John Bell's later dramatic portraits.

One cannot deny that an essentially English obsession with character prevented Hayman from whole-heartedly adapting the Gravelot

idiom, but Esther Gordon Dotson's attempt to see Hayman's figures for various Shakespeare illustrations as microcosmic examples of a more general shift of obsession from plot to character in all eighteenth century thought is simplistic.¹⁹ What is more likely is that Hayman's expression of character reflected a concern that had long been present in England with the predominance of portraiture and which began to re-emerge when Hayman combined rococo fantasy with a more literal interest in human character. The logical first step in this re-emergence was a recourse to the theatre as the most accessible visual source for play illustration.

Unlike Tonson's illustrators, Hayman never used obvious theatrical motifs such as rippling stage curtains or visible proscenium doors, but in at least two instances, it has been proven that Hayman borrowed ideas from David Garrick.²⁰ In his illustrations for Jennens edition of Shakespeare (incomplete, published 1770), Hayman follows instructions given to him in a letter from Garrick even more closely than he had followed Hanmer's - undoubtedly realising that, with regard to illustration, Garrick's unscholarly knowledge of the great Shakespeare plays was more useful to him than Hanmer's erudition. In his letters, Garrick offers suggestions for scenes in King Lear (Figure 126) and Othello - both of which were in his own acting repertoire. Not surprisingly, his ideas focus primarily upon character, and one can assume that his own experience formed the basis for his confident suggestions:

If you intend altering the scene in Lear ... what think you of the following one. Suppose Lear mad, upon the ground, with Edgar by him; his attitude should be leaning upon one hand & pointing wildly towards the Heavens with the other. Kent & Footman attend him, & Gloster comes to him with a torch; the real Madness of Lear, the frantick affectation of Edgar, & the different looks of

concern in the three other carracters (sic), will have a fine effect. Suppose you express Kent's particular care & distress by putting him upon one knee begging & entreating him to rise & go with Gloster.²¹

In his suggestions for Othello, Garrick offers to demonstrate the gestures mentioned,²² and this fact throws an additional light on Hayman's Lear illustration, and on Garrick's directorial habits as well.

However, these theatrical influences are still sporadic and it was not until Bell issued his Shakespeare character plates that the scene was dispensed with in favour of an unquestionably theatrical character portrait. As I have mentioned before, these plates were issued separately; the frontispieces to the editions actually sold were traditional scenes from the plays designed by E. Edwards. Several of Edwards' scenes were obviously influenced by Hayman's illustrations for Hammer, but Edwards' efforts are more literal. For example, both Hayman and Edwards illustrated act IV, scene ix from A Comedy of Errors (Figures 127 and 128) in which Antipholus and Dromio are cornered in the street. Hayman dwarfs his characters in a street which flows off in a recessive diagonal, but Edwards offers no recession, no strange angles, no virtuosity, only a mere hint of houses in the background, in effect, a stock theatrical scene. Edwards' works are, for the most part, minimal and hardly merit Bell's extravagant advertisements, but in his careful depiction of theatrical costume, Edwards carried some incipient tendencies in Hayman's 1744 illustrations a step further.

Before discussing the Bell editions, it is necessary to mention briefly the nature of the texts of plays in the eighteenth century. Tonson's editor, Rowe, was one of the first in a long line of scholars

who attempted to establish a definitive text of Shakespeare.²³

Shakespeare in particular was subjected to a series of atrocities unlike anything perpetuated on a less notable author. His plays were re-written, re-organised, made into operas; new characters and scenes were added, and others were taken away. A large amount of this manipulation was for the purpose of creating a satisfactory acting text, but often these adulterated acting versions were advertised erroneously in playbills as "by Shakespeare". These alterations necessitated a series of scholarly editions of Shakespeare, and an increase in the reading public as the century progressed created a greater demand for them.²⁴

Shakespeare was not the only author to have his plays appearing in multi-volume editions through the century : Johnson, Beaumont and Fletcher, and the popular French neo-classicists, Miliere and Racine appeared in print between 1709 and 1780, although these editions were only rarely illustrated. The ancient classics were also subjected to translation and published. Bonnel Thornton's translation of Plautus (1764-5) immediately preceded Colman the Elder's translation of Terence (1765-6); and the works of both Sophocles (1759) and Euripides (1781-2) appeared in English versions. However, despite the fact that plays by Voltaire, Moliere, Euripides, et al appeared in heavily revised and adapted versions on the English stage through most of the century, the texts mentioned above were meant to be perused and absorbed "in the closet" and thus bore only an academic relationship to the theatre. Popular and contemporary plays were usually published only in cheap un-illustrated individual editions, possibly for the purpose of being sold at the theatre where the play was currently being performed.²⁵ Aside from the novelty of adorning his editions with portraits, John

Bell was also the first man to publish multi-volume editions of the current acting versions of plays, thus moving away from the highly literary and scholarly text to a more popular and accessible one. Bell's concession to the more fastidious litterati was to include "Lines omitted in representation" in inverted commas, although he almost never indicates which bits and pieces were added at the whim of the Covent Garden or Drury Lane managers.

Bell's edition of Shakespeare's plays could be characterised by a purist as all the most execrable alterations of Shakespeare rolled into one, and, indeed, it has been dubbed the worst edition of Shakespeare that ever appeared.²⁶ However, perhaps even a lover of Shakespeare's original texts might be prepared to recognise the dramatic logic behind many of the altered and added lines. What was done to Shakespeare in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in the name of entertainment is no worse than what many modern directors do to his plays in the twentieth century in the name of artistic expression. Most of Bell's potential clients were men and women of leisure who were undoubtedly delighted at the prospect of reminding themselves of their favourite play by perusing the same text that the actors themselves used. In an eighteenth century polemic for the cause of authors, James Ralph characterises the reasoning behind the actions of book sellers:

The sagacious Bookseller feels the Pulse of the Times, and according to the stroke prescribes; not to cure, but flatter the Disease: As long as the Patient continues to Swallow, he continues to administer; and on the first symptom of a Nausea, he changes the dose.²⁷

Bell's shrewdness in choosing such non-academic works for the enjoyment of the theatre-going public also had a great deal to do with his own lack of literary accomplishments. As Leigh Hunt says of him:

He had no acquirements, perhaps not even grammar; but his taste in putting forth a publication, and getting the best artists to adorn it, was new in those times and may be admired in any.²⁸

Bell's First and Second Editions of Shakespeare's Plays

In 1825, George Clint painted a portrait of John Bell, then aged 80, with three books on the table in the background. One of the books which had the honour of being included in the portrait was a volume of his second edition of Shakespeare. Bell's pride in his engraved editions of plays was such that, despite a variety of other accomplishments, he trade-card emphasised these as paramount:

J. Bell near Exeter Exchange in the Strand, London. Bookseller and Publisher of the Poets of Great Britain from Chaucer to Churchill, Shakespeare's plays, the most elegant Edition, and the British Theatre &c. where Gentlemen for their Libraries, Merchants and Captains of Ships for Exportation, Booksellers and Shopkeepers to sell again, may be supplied on the most reasonable terms, with Books in Quires or in the various Plain and Ornamental Bindings.²⁹

Among his other accomplishments, Bell established a new form of type-set which made the long { obsolete, and he founded the popular newspaper as we know it today.³⁰ These innovations made him an essentially modern man in his time, reliant on his own intuition and not bound by the restraints of tradition.

It was possibly Bell's connections with the Morning Post and Daily Advertiser that initially inspired the project for the first complete acting edition of Shakespeare, for the Morning Post was one of the few London broadsheets which had permission from the patent theatres to print their playbills. In an inversion of modern advertising practice,

the newspapers had to pay the theatres for this privilege, but since few London journals had this right, the inclusion of playbills in a newspaper guaranteed sales.³¹ Thus, there was a direct relationship between Bell and the managers of Drury Lane and Covent Garden, and, in addition, the green room gossip which formed a major part of the Morning Post kept Bell right on top of the ever-changing theatrical situation in the 1770s.

Prior to Bell's first edition of Shakespeare, few acting editions of plays were published, and those that did appear were often in the provinces. One example from among the scant few is an edition of O'Hara's Midas published in 1771 by J. Davidson of Edinburgh. The title page reads, "Midas ... as perform'd at the Theatres Royal Covent Garden and Haymarket". This reference to London theatres indicates that the edition was more likely to have been sold in London than in Edinburgh, and the additional information given "sold by A. Maclardie" could substantiate this theory (see below).

However, such editions were rare and only appeared one at a time. When in 1773, Bell first began to produce his edition of Shakespeare's plays, he published one volume every Saturday,³² allowing the public to acquire them one by one or to subscribe to the whole set. By treating individual plays as numbers of a periodical, Bell created a precedent for popular publication which reached its zenith in the days of the Victorian serialised novel. The less affluent members of society thus had an equal opportunity to purchase individual editions of their favourite plays if they could not afford a full set.

But despite Bell's attempt to cater to a more popular audience, he cannot be categorised as a social reformer or a man of the people,

although modern references to Bell seem to rate him as such. Bell realised who his most useful benefactors were, and he found ways of making his editions attractive to "up-market" clients as well. In an advertisement for his second edition of Shakespeare's plays, he says:

The Plan and Execution of this Publication has met with the approbation and admiration of every class of readers in every part of the world where the Work has been seen ... (italics mine)

and then he adds significantly

Subscriber's names will be printed; and the Books are delivered in the order of application. Such, therefore, as are curious and desirous of obtaining fine impressions of the Splendid Embellishments, are requested to be early in giving their orders.³³

The implication here is that those who had the money to subscribe to the edition would have received good quality engravings, whereas those who were only buying the odd edition would have had to settle for whatever feeble impression the worn copper plate could manage.³⁴

This elitism is stressed in Bell's advertisement for his second edition of the British Theatre, which is quoted below since the different prices and bindings hold equally for his second edition of Shakespeare's plays:

The FIRST SORT will be printed on Vellum Paper, small size, price One Shilling and Sixpence, with Vignette and Characteristic Prints.

The SECOND, an ordinary sort, is printed on coarse Paper, price Sixpence each with inferior Impressions of the character Print only.

But, at the request of many Amateurs of fine works, another Sort is printed on ROYAL PAPER, with extensive Margins, and will contain PROOF IMPRESSIONS of BOTH THE PRINTS and sold at Five Shillings each Play.³⁵

Bell's word choice and his use of italics and block capitals is indicative and psychologically efficacious. It must have been a great boasting point among Londoners to have a complete edition on ROYAL PAPER with PROOF IMPRESSIONS, whereas undoubtedly few would have liked to admit that they could only afford an "ordinary sort". The subscription list which accompanies the first edition of Shakespeare's plays includes baronets, knights and Oxford dons, many of whom had purchased the royal paper version, but the list also includes anonymous "Sirs", "Mr's" and "Ladies" who had only managed to buy the cheaper version. The discontinuance of the subscription list in subsequent Bell editions could have related to the disapprobation of his wealthier clients who did not want to be seen as tight-fisted by the rest of London.

It is essential to establish such economic factors before moving on to a discussion of the prints themselves, since the response of the London public to Bell's works undoubtedly dictated his subsequent actions. In addition, as the illustrations were Bell's major bargaining point, it is instructive to see how the frontispieces changed from one edition to the next and, where possible, to establish to what extent the buying public effected these visual changes. A comparison between the character plates for the two editions of Shakespeare's plays is particularly relevant in this light.

The dramatic character plates for Bell's first edition of Shakespeare's plays were designed principally by three artists - Dighton, Parkinson and Roberts, the latter dominating the design programme. Despite the presence of three different designers and four engravers, the portraits have a uniform format; an actor or actress in costume exhibiting a dramatic gesture against a blank background. There is little variation in style between the portraits, although

several of Parkinson's efforts (e.g. Shuter as Falstaff, Baddeley as Trinculo, Macklin as Shylock) (Figures 16, 129 and 130) have an independent expressive life of their own. Parkinson's characterisations emerge as slightly superior to those of Roberts largely because he concentrated on portrait likeness and the essentials of character, avoiding Roberts' more obvious use of facial schema and excessive gesture.

Parkinson had painted a theatrical conversation piece in 1773, and thus had some familiarity with the genre, but Roberts seems to have had no connection with theatrical portraits prior to the Bell edition, his sole distinction being the acquisition of a Society of Artists prize in 1766.³⁶ Roberts later became portrait painter to the Duke of Clarence, which may seem rather amazing to us, but was hardly so in an age where efficiency, speed and technical merit was highly prized by the nobility, who wanted adequate yet flattering likenesses of themselves but were little concerned with the subtleties of artistic expression. Roberts was certainly adequate, and highly prolific, and Bell was pleased enough with his unexceptional illustrations to turn the entire programme for the first British Theatre over to him.

The third of the designers for the first edition of Shakespeare's plays, Dighton, received a commission for only four illustrations. As I mentioned in the previous chapter, Dighton was primarily a caricaturist, but none of this tendency appears in the Bell illustrations. In fact, it seems that Bell hired Dighton as a mere odd jobs boy, assigning him four of the most obscure of Shakespeare's plays, none of which was performed at the time. Dighton's designs for Henry VI, Part II, Love's Labour's Lost, Richard II, and Troilus and Cressida (Figures 131-134) are in keeping with those of Roberts, but Dighton had the

uninspirational task of depicting actors in roles they had never performed and of having to invent costumes and gestures to go along with the roles (for possible explanations, see chapter 5).

Despite the competence of their engraved portraits, neither Roberts, Parkinson nor Dighton could be considered great artists, nor is there any documentary evidence which indicates that they were particularly well known to the London public at the time. However, when the popularity of his first edition of Shakespeare incited Bell to publish a second one (1785-6), the relative anonymity of the illustrators concerned was no longer the case:

It is to be remarked, that this Edition has been honoured with the most marked and flattering approbation from all classes of readers, and in every country where it has been seen, the EMBELLISHMENTS are numerous and beautiful, consisting of not less than eighty scenes and characteristic prints, designed, originally and on purpose for this work, by Loutherbourg, Burney, Ramberg, Hamilton and Sherwin in England; and by Morceau of Paris - they are engraved too by Bartolozzi, Sherwin, Delattre, Heath, Cook, Collyer, Hall and Thornthwaite; and are esteemed by the Connoisseur as the most perfect and beautiful sett of prints, that ever was executed of the same extent, in any country. The Impressions are still in high preservation but they are growing worse every day - early applications therefore will be attended with advantage.³⁷

Bell's pretensions of catering to a popular audience are exposed here; although he was not yet able to boast the impressive list of Royal Academicians which collaborated on his second British Theatre, his acquisition of de Loutherbourg and Hamilton in particular is a step up from Roberts and Parkinson. The inclusion of Royal Academy artists thus gave a crown of distinction to Bell's second edition of Shakespeare's plays which his first edition lacked. Indeed, the very format of the new actor portraits moved away from the hard-edged accuracy of

the earlier edition and towards a softer, more fanciful approach which gave the new engravings more in common with fancy furniture prints than with accurate theatrical portraits. This can be seen in particular by looking at the non-portrait frontispieces which also accompanied each play. These frontispieces represented scenes from the plays, and they are often modelled on the frontispieces which E. Edwards engraved for Bell's first edition of Shakespeare. For example, de Louthenburg's design for the frontispiece to King Henry V (Figure 135) is in many respects merely a reversal of Edwards' illustration to the same play (Figure 136), but de Louthenburg minimises the details and exaggerates the curves of the composition to create an entirely different effect. De Louthenburg's design is softer and more fanciful than that of Edwards.

The main perpetuator of this softer approach in the portrait engravings was Johan Heinrich Ramberg who designed the majority of them. Ramberg had come to England in 1781 from Hanover, and he quickly became a scholar of both Reynolds and Bartolozzi, the latter of whom was in charge of the design programme for Bell's second edition of Shakespeare's plays. Ramberg de-emphasised theatrical verisimilitude, concentrating instead on a satisfying design - injecting a new but rather passé dose of rococo back into Shakespeare illustration. A comparison of an early and late Bell Shakespeare illustration on the same subject exposes Ramberg's new methods best. Both Roberts and Ramberg depicted Mrs. Abington as Beatrice in Much Ado About Nothing (Figures 137 and 138), and both showed her at the denouement of the play in which Beatrice unmask and reveals herself to Benedick:

Benedick. Which is Beatrice?

Beatrice. I answer to that name, what is your will?

Robert depicts Mrs. Abington in a full frontal pose, a mask in her right hand and a fan in her left, her face expressionless and her voluminous skirt dominating the illustration. Ramberg also shows her removing the mask, but he has created a more dynamic composition by altering her pose and replacing her bulging skirt with soft classical draperies, which billow in an imaginary wind. Ramberg shows much greater imagination than Roberts, in part because he was not tied down by the sort of theatrical convention which dominated the earlier set of Shakespeare illustrations. This can be seen in particular by comparing Roberts' portrait of Barry as Timon (Figure 139) with Ramberg's of Kemble in that role (Figure 140). Barry and Kemble were principal tragedians of their respective decades, and although Timon of Athens was rarely performed, its classical setting and archetypal themes made it an epitomal tragedy. Most illustrations of Timon focus on the scene where the prodigal Timon, having lost his worldly wealth, and retreated into seclusion and misanthropy, discovers a cache of gold. The irony of the play is centred upon this scene, as the wealth which was once so necessary to Timon no longer holds any meaning for him. Roberts shows Barry frowning, his right arm raised dramatically towards heaven, his left hand resting on a shovel, exclaiming, "Thou sun that comfortest, burn!" His gesture and expression are large, the feeling is general and the whole is reflective of the grandiloquent nature of stage tragedy at the time. Ramberg, on the other hand, presents us with a much more informal pose which is out of touch with the expansive theatrical gesture of Barry. Ramberg's portrait of Kemble shows that actor's body in an anatomically taxing curve, his foot on the barrel of money, his hand on his raised knee. Although the theatrical allusions are missing and Kemble's facial features are not captured convincingly, Ramberg's Timon design proves that he was not oblivious to the

character development necessary for a satisfying depiction of a scene from Shakespeare. This cognisance of characterisation - albeit non-theatrical characterisation - distinguishes Ramberg's neo-rococo scenes from Gravelot's more dehumanised ones. Ramberg's figures are not blurs on the landscape and his characterisation can be, at times, exquisite. In works such as his portrait of Quick as Launce in The Two Gentlemen of Verona (Figure 141), his playful caricature makes up for the more stagnant displays of stylistic mannerism such as his Mrs. Siddons as Isabella in Measure for Measure (Figure 142).

Ramberg's illustrations for Bell were more or less agents for a display of his personal style, disguised vaguely as portraits. They lack the essential links with the theatre that the earlier Bell Shakespeare illustrations had, but they are more lively illustrations because of this removal of constraint. The reaction against the literalness of the first Bell portrait engravings in the second edition of Shakespeare's plays was perhaps in part a response to public desire for greater variety in the portrayal of Shakespeare's vast array of characters. Although there is little conclusive evidence for this theory, it is a certainty that the portrait illustrations in Bell's first and second editions of the British Theatre followed a course which remained faithful to theatrical verisimilitude in the wake of a change of artistic style and theatrical convention.

Bell's First "British Theatre" and the Rival Publications

Shortly after he began publishing parts of his British Theatre in 1776, Bell issued the following angry announcement:

It is at present necessary, that the encouragers of the British Theatre should be particular in ordering BELL's Edition of each Number, and in observing that they are served with the right sort, as several interested Booksellers, actuated by selfish motives, have already employed every engine within their power to injure the reputation, and suppress the circulation of this Edition; not only by giving false accounts both in public and private, but also whenever the opportunity offers, by imposing false copies on the purchaser, and generally refusing to sell Bell Edition on any account; nay they have even gone so far as to copy the original Advertisement for this work, and nearly the Title Page, in order that they may obtrude their own futile productions with less suspicion, when the above may be wanted ... The First part of their conduct will be put to confusion by a sight of this genuine work, the purchase money for which will be returned if it is not approved and admired. As to the latter part, it yet remains to be determined whether the public at large will yield to these base attempts, and patiently accept what the booksellers are pleased to impose, or whether there will be spirit enough abroad to encourage the present work, wherein neither expensive elegance, or attentive correctness will be wanting to render it a valuable library.³⁸

At first glance, these remarks may seem to be the product of Bell's paranoia, or, if they are taken at face value, the excessive conduct of rival booksellers seems unbelievably harsh and greedy. To some extent, both of these observations are true : Bell's journalistic phraseology is often extravagant and expressive of his personal prejudices, but, on the other hand, his rivals did go so far as to use the name "Bell" in order to sell their publications.³⁹ However, the actual story of Bell's problems with rival publishers is more complex than this, and involved not only his British Theatre but his early edition of Shakespeare's plays and the British Poets as well. One of the major weapons used by Bell and his rivals against each other were editions of plays with illustrated portrait frontispieces, and because of this indirect involvement of theatrical portraits, the story of Bell and his rivals

needs to be reconstructed before a thorough discussion of the frontispieces is possible.

Without knowing the background, a modern observer may well wonder why other London book sellers used such harsh and seemingly underhanded offensives against Bell, even given the fact that he was responsible for releasing a potentially lucrative new product onto the publishing market. The first step in answering this question lies in the nature of the copyright law. The first copyright act had appeared in 1709 - the year of the Tonson Shakespeare - and established a formal standard for dispensation of rights including the stipulation that the author of a new book, or his assignee should have the sole rights to that book for fourteen years and a further fourteen years should be still be alive at the end of the first fourteen. The law appeared straightforward, but in the 1770s problems arose when copyrights expired and the assignees who held them attempted to maintain their hold even after the expiration. A series of court cases resulted, in which book sellers who held these expired copyrights tried to insist on the continuance of these rights in the wake of their rivals' insistence that the copyrights be released.⁴⁰

At first the original assignees appeared to win the day, but trouble arose when book sellers in Edinburgh published works which had previously been the sole province of certain London book sellers.⁴¹ One of the key figures in this controversy was an Edinburgh book seller called Alexander Donaldson, who was brought before the Court of Session in 1767 for publishing Stackhouse's History of the Bible, the copyright of which had only just expired.⁴² Not only did Donaldson win this case, but he also emerged victorious from a similar suit brought against him before the House of Lords in London in 1774.⁴³ The latter victory set

a precedent which served to make expired copyrights available to anyone and everyone who wished to make use of them.

However, the London publishing industry did not accept this decision lightly, as one letter "from a celebrated author" to the Public Advertiser reveals. Speaking of the Lords decision in favour of Donaldson, the "celebrated author" writes:

And what is the public utility derived from this decision? We shall be supplied with good and cheap Editions of Books. Just the Reverse. No Man will venture to print a splendid or good Edition of any Book, because he can never be certain that the same book is not printing at the same time by other persons ... Nay ... if the Trade lies open for any length of Time, many useful and necessary Books will never be reprinted at all; such as our Latin, French and other Dictionaries, and a Variety of School-Books, of which it is necessary to print eight or 10,000 at once to enable them to sell at the low Price they do now. And such large Editions are generally so long in selling off, that they are barely worth re-printing by their present Proprietors, secured as they have till now been in the exclusive Right of so doing.⁴⁴

Because of this resistance to the new legislation, many London book sellers agreed at the time to protect each others' continuing rights to books for which they had been assignees. However, in the wake of the legal justification of the Donaldson affair, John Bell arranged to have his editions printed in the provinces and then brought down to London to sell. Thus on the title page of his first edition of Shakespeare, are the words, "Printed for John Bell, near Exeter Exchange in the Strand, and C. Etherington at York", and Bell's first British Theatre has a similar origin in the Apollo Press of Edinburgh. The unwritten agreement among London book sellers that they would not attempt to undersell each other by resorting to such methods did not stop Bell.

Oddly enough, Bell's ownership of the Morning Post in conjunction with a syndicate of eleven, proved no deterrent to his breeching the oath respected by the majority of his fellow entrepreneurs. Obviously to Bell, all was fair in business, and suspect tactics were acceptable as long as they were legal.

Historians have reported that over forty book sellers - banded together under the common appellation "The Trade" - met in a coffee house in Pater-noster Row⁴⁵ to decide how to engineer the downfall of the man who had cheated them so flagrantly.⁴⁶ Wounded honour undoubtedly provided a strong motivating factor, but under the surface, "The Trade" more than likely hoped to capitalise on Bell's successes by putting into effect similar operations of their own. With the power of numbers behind them, they intended to break Bell's enterprise and then pick up the left-over pieces to benefit their own projects. However, the continuing strength of Bell's publications, as evidenced by his larger more copiously illustrated later editions of Shakespeare's works and British plays, proved too much for the blatantly derivative (and often blatantly inferior) efforts of his rivals. "The Trade" launched their principal attack against Bell's Poets by collaborating on a similar edition of their own and pooling the copyrights which Bell had not obtained. However, nothing has been written about the attempt which a smaller sub-group of publishers made to undermine the success of the British Theatre, nor has it been pointed out how Bell's rivals used portrait frontispieces to aid their endeavour to break his monopoly.

The individual plays in Bell's British Theatre appeared one at a time between 1776 and 1781, and the publication dates on the frontispieces of each play give a fair indication of the order in which they

appeared and the approximate time of publication. The first number of the eventual 105 plays in the British Theatre was Otway's Venice Preserved, with a double portrait frontispiece of Barry and Mrs. Barry as Jaffeir and Belvidera, published April 1776. This was followed in subsequent weeks by Zara, The Siege of Damascus, The Distres'd Mother, and Jane Shore, which were ultimately all bound together as the first volume of tragedies. The later bound version of the entire British Theatre ran to 21 volumes, and each volume contained four-five plays which were either tragedies or comedies.⁴⁷ Since Bell alternated a set of tragedies with a set of comedies, the next two plays published after The Distres'd Mother were Vanbrugh's Provok'd Wife and Congreve's Old Bachelor - the former a perennial favourite among the theatre-going public, but the latter one of Congreve's lesser performed and more sexually explicit plays. The Old Bachelor frontispiece was published on 4 June 1776, and on 5 June, an edition of the Busy Body was printed which, like the Old Bachelor, had a theatrical portrait frontispiece and claimed the distinction of being an acting text - but was not by Bell.

The Busy Body was the first in the series called the New English Theatre, the title page of which offered a direct and unabashed challenge to Bell's burgeoning enterprise:

New English Theatre ... containing the most valuable plays which have been acted on the London stage ... marked with the variations of the Manager's book.

The very title of this rival publication - with its emphasis on novelty - represents an attempt to out-do Bell at his own game, and the impressive list of 23 different publishers gives an idea of the staggering odds against which Bell was forced to contend. Despite the occasional superiority of the New English Theatre frontispieces, and a comparable

standard of printed text, it appears as though Bell had the upper hand from the beginning. Indeed, the New English Theatre ran to only eight volumes, the last one published in the autumn of 1777 with half of the British Theatre yet to come.

Because of Bell's larger repertoire, he eventually published nearly all the plays that his rival did (with the exceptions of Murphy's Grecian Daughter and Glover's Medea), but the converse, of course, did not hold true. A comparative examination of publication dates of the prints yields interesting results about the inter-relationship between the illustrations of the two editions. Bell and the rival coterie struck out on separate courses at the beginning, then - each taking note of which plays the opposition were publishing - saw to it that their editions were not without such plays either. For example, Bell published Hill's eastern tragedy, Zara, on 10 April 1776, and the New English Theatre produced their version a year later. Conversely, the New English Theatre's A Bold Stroke for a Wife (8 June 1776) was published three months later by Bell.⁴⁸ However, some plays were printed within days of each other, such as Brown's Barbarossa, which Bell published on 1 March 1777, only a single day after his rivals had printed the same play. Although such mutual publication of a rather obscure play reinforces the intensity of the rivalry, caution must be exercised here in speculation upon how many ideas one could have got from the other. All the illustrated frontispieces to these editions were line engravings which took several months, and up to a year, to perfect. Thus one set of engravers would have to see their rivals' frontispieces several months before their own engravings were to be published in order to have time to find ways of outdoing them. In addition, the "open secret" was undoubtedly a commonplace in the

claustrophobic London printing business, and the possibility that Bell and his rivals knew each other's plans long before publication cannot be dismissed. Once an illustrator was aware of what his rival was doing, he could act accordingly in his own illustrations : either by exercising superior technical skill, taking a more imaginative approach to illustration of the same scene, producing a more satisfactory portrait, or illustrating an actor or actress whose popularity was more immediate than that of actors chosen by engravers of the rival publication.

The choice of texts made by both Bell and his rivals was limited due to the copyright law, which, as I have mentioned, gave rights of publication to the author or his assigned book seller for a fixed number of years. Copyrights to new plays were hard to come by, either because the playwright himself held on to them or because he sold them to theatre managers anxious to secure the monopoly on a potentially popular play.⁴⁹ Before the height of his public success, Bell was possibly unable to afford such copyrights as were available, and despite their combined power, the New English Theatre publishers were unable or unwilling to do so either.⁵⁰ Thus many of the plays in both Bell's British Theatre and the New English Theatre are Restoration comedies or Jacobean tragedies, the authors of which were long dead. Therefore, Bell's and his rivals' implicit boasts about the contemporaneity of their plays and their relevance to performances on the modern stage were often empty. Although tragedies such as Rowe's Fair Penitent and Hill's Zara were still acted in the 1770s, some plays included by Bell in particular had never been acted, having been refused licences by the Lord Chamberlain. Brook's Gustavus Vasa and Gay's Polly were two such plays, the former banned in the 1730s because of its radical political

innuendos and the latter prohibited a few years earlier allegedly on the basis of the Lord Chamberlain's jealousy of Gay's success with The Beggar's Opera.⁵¹ Some rarely performed plays were included in both the British and New English Theatres, such as the Earl of Essex and Barbarossa - a further indication of the publication rivalry, since the demand for "acting" texts of rarely performed plays should hardly have warranted two such editions within a year of each other. As I will show later, the publishers, to an extent, attempted to make up for this lack of contemporaneity by seeing to it that the portrait frontispieces represented currently popular actors and actresses, whether or not they had ever played the role in which they were depicted (see also chapter 5).

To counteract his tendency to use easily accessible plays by then deceased authors, Bell issued in 1781 an edition of ballad operas and musical plays and in 1782 a four volume supplement to the British Theatre which contained short farces and afterpieces, many of which were only a decade old and most of which were still performed. The volumes of farces did not include portrait frontispieces, possibly because the greater number of short pieces in each edition would have required too many. Significantly, Bell's advertisement for this supplement had to rely on methods of encouragement unrelated to illustration:

It has long been a just complaint that copies of FARCES and DRAMATIC ENTERTAINMENTS are difficult to be procured, even at the exorbitant charge of one shilling each, the usual shop-price; and that many of them are not to be procured at any price ...

Bell continues by patting himself on the back for producing just such a collection, glossing over his own prices, which - although hardly exorbitant - were in keeping with that of other London publishers.

Only one similar edition of farces appeared in the eighteenth century, A Collection of the Most Esteemed Farces and Entertainments Performed on the British Stage (1786-8). This two volume collection was printed by C. Elliot of Edinburgh, and as there is no evidence of his having sold the edition in London, it is possible that Elliot's intentions were not that of rivalry to Bell. Also, Bell did not repeat his publication of farces when he produced the second British Theatre, and one can speculate on the more obvious reasons why he did not. First of all, farces were largely dependent upon slapstick, gesture, the quirks of individual actors, extemporaneous additions, and other forms of surprise, much as modern pantomimes are. Reading the script of a farce must have been as frustrating for an eighteenth century theatre-goer as reading a pantomime script would be for us. Without the visual aspect, the texts of the farces in Bell's supplementary editions seem dry, humourless, and boringly unreadable.⁵² Had Bell included portrait frontispieces to the farces, some flavour of the actual performance might have come across, and the supplements could have been more successful. Bell undoubtedly realised this fact, and he included one popular eighteenth century farce, Foote's The Minor, in his later edition of British plays, complete with a carefully developed character study of Henry Angelo in the role of the hypocritical Methodist, Mrs. Cole (Figure 143).

While Bell was publishing his later editions of the first British Theatre, the publishers of the New English Theatre lay dormant until 1782 when Thomas Lowndes, one of the members of the group, struck out on his own and continued to publish individual editions of plays with portrait frontispieces. These editions follow the general format of the New English Theatre with one major exception - the theatrical

portraits in them were right up-to-date, representing new stars on the British stage playing roles which they had only recently performed. The most notable of these rising stars was Mrs. Siddons, and her sudden popularity in London in 1782 explains in part why Lowndes saw fit to begin his play publications then. His editions of plays such as Garrick's version of Southerne's Isabella, complete with a portrait of Mrs. Siddons in the title role with which she was rapidly becoming associated, must have attracted a large market. These editions would have appealed firstly to Siddons' fans, anxious for memorabilia of her performance, and secondly to readers who, under the spell of Siddons' novel interpretation of character, would have been happy to peruse a play such as Isabella, which had been only a marginally popular tragedy prior to 1782. Lowndes also seemed to secure the copyright of one or two recent plays, and his 1786 edition of Arthur and Emmeline was the only one of that play at the time.

Bell could not have been oblivious to these publications in the 1780s, despite the fact that he was busy with his second edition of Shakespeare's plays, but it is difficult to procure evidence which attests to his reaction. One possible clue to Bell's response to Lowndes is a portrait frontispiece of 1787 showing Mrs. Belfill as Charlotte in Bickerstaffe's The Hypocrite (Burney Collection, British Museum), seemingly unrelated to an actual edition of the play. Bell's illustration follows the format of his actor portraits of ten years before, in no way foreshadowing the alterations which de Wilde would later make to the format or following the new designs currently in use for the second edition of Shakespeare. The strange appearance of this one-off print in 1787 is surely a response to Lowndes' publication of The Hypocrite of only a year before, which contained a frontispiece

showing Mrs. Abington as Charlotte - a role with which she (unlike Mrs. Belfill) was associated. It is possible that with this print, Bell was anticipating his second edition of the British Theatre and had not yet conceived of the idea of altering the style of his portrait frontispieces. He seemed at this time still reliant on the old formula of reacting directly against his rivals, and Lowndes' publication of The Hypocrite spurred him on to make the first effort to reawaken the dormant competition. Ultimately, this project would blossom into the second British Theatre, and Bell's old rivals one by one dissipated their energies into various other journals or publications, some of which had some connection with contemporary theatre.⁵³

However, Thomas Lowndes and the New English Theatre group were not Bell's only rivals in the 1770s. One other major rival industry was launched against him from a slightly different angle, and several independent publishers jumped on the Bell bandwagon as well. As most of these editions were badly printed and their portrait frontispieces weak, they would not have provided a very strong competition to Bell, but it is necessary to mention them in order to show the extent of the reaction to Bell's enterprise.

Aside from the New English Theatre, two publishers by the names of Harrison and Wenman issued a series of plays with engraved portrait frontispieces in 1777 and 1778. We know next to nothing about either, but it is certain that Harrison published his works under the auspices of his periodical, the Theatrical Magazine, and he printed individual plays in double columns in order to make the most economical use of his space. Both Harrison and Wenman, following the Bell formula, boasted that their editions presented plays "As [they are] acted at the

Theatres Royal Drury Lane and Covent Garden", and they gave each other mutual support as is evinced by further publication data:

Printed for J. Harrison, N^o 18, Paternoster Row and sold likewise by J. Wenman, Fleet-Street; and all other Booksellers.

and

Printed for J. Wenman, N^o 144 Fleet Street; and sold by all other Booksellers in Town and Country.

The "other booksellers" mentioned above prove that, like the New English Theatre, Harrison's and Wenman's individual editions of plays had the backing of the London market, a further indication of the tendency of book sellers to put the pressure on Bell. In fact, it seems that book sellers were willing to sell any editions of plays other than Bell's, justifying Bell's outraged reaction quoted at the beginning of this section.

Harrison and Wenman would hardly merit mention had not their attack on Bell involved publication of some modern plays - a practice for which, as I have shown, Bell was not noted. Harrison, for instance, published Calypso and Telemachus in 1781, only two years after the premiere of that play at Covent Garden, and the publication of Tom Thumb on 1 November 1780 was directly related to O'Hara's revised version of Fielding's satire at Covent Garden on Tuesday 8 October 1780. In the latter case, the frontispiece showed Edwin, Junior in the role of Tom - a part which he had played at the premiere of the O'Hara revival. Although the haste with which it was executed is obvious in the frontispiece itself, the portrait of Edwin, Junior was as up-to-date as the text of the play (see chapter 5). Harrison in particular can be commended for a certain honesty in his approach to the

frontispieces. Rather than following the Bell practice of showing contemporary actors in roles which were rarely, if ever, performed, Harrison's frontispieces often do not try to hide the fact that the plays themselves had not been performed in several decades. His editions of Addison's Rosamund and Fielding's Debauches include frontispieces of Mrs. Oldfield and Mrs. Clive - the former had been dead for many years, the latter had passed her prime as an actress, and both are shown in plays which had not been performed since the first quarter of the century. Had Bell included the same editions in his British Theatre, he would undoubtedly have chosen currently popular actresses, such as Mrs. Yates and Mrs. Abington in the place of Oldfield and Clive, despite the fact that neither was associated with the Addison and Fielding plays. Bell was too aware of what his public wanted to make such concessions to historical accuracy, and a discussion of his frontispieces in relation to those of his rivals reveals how each publisher attempted to satisfy this public desire.

The Quality of Print and Choice of Scene : A Stylistic Comparison
Between Portrait Frontispieces for Bell and His Rivals

Bell was pleased enough with James Roberts' work on the first edition of Shakespeare's plays to give Roberts the commission for all the portrait frontispieces of his first British Theatre. This commission had the effect of creating a stylistic uniformity in the British Theatre portrait design which was not present to this extent in the edition of Shakespeare's plays. Roberts' illustrations are characterised by a reliance on schematic feature and a careful attention to costume detail. The former of these qualities can be seen by comparing his portraits of Dodd (as Tinsel and as Lord Foppington) (Figures 144 and 145) or his portraits of Mrs. Hartley (as Cleopatra and Almeyda)

(Figure 146 and 147). Although in both instances the costumes and gestures of the characters are altered from one illustration to another, their expressionless faces show little variation. Roberts' excessive use of the profile also reinforces the argument for his schematic approach to facial likeness, as profiles are easier to approximate from one portrait to the next than full frontal views. Roberts had a basic conception of the Dodd forehead or the Hartley nose, which he would replicate in several portraits. Given the number of designs required of him, it is not surprising that this method of schematising facial feature was utilised.

Roberts' carefully detailed costumes seem to reveal a much more meticulous man than his unrefined faces, but this scrupulosity is possibly the result of his use of costumed lay figures. Although the final portrait frontispieces were monochromatic, Roberts' initial drawings for them were coloured, and despite a harsh and limited tonal range, the arbitrary use of colour in the costumes was more likely the result of the garish garb of lay figures than Roberts' personal choice. Occasionally, these coloured drawings reveal something about the character depicted which is not present in the subsequent engravings. For instance, Moody in the character of Teague had red hair - long associated on the stage with irascibility, simpletons or Irishmen (or, in this case, Irish simpletons). This choice of colour hints at the stage practice of giving Teague a red wig, rather than implying the actual colour of Moody's hair. The portrait engraving after this drawing (Figure 148) loses something in translation, but is more satisfactory in regard to facial expression, as Roberts' blaring colours are hardly appropriate for portrait likenesses and characterisation.

For the first few plays published as part of the British Theatre, Roberts included several double frontispieces which were ostensibly "scenes" from the plays, but with their lack of background and spatial coherence, often read as two single figure portraits fused together. This is true of the illustration for Isabella showing Mrs. Yates in the title role and Master Pullen as her son (Figure 149), and the portrait of Garrick as Tancred and Miss Younge as Sigismunda (Figure 150). The scene chosen from the latter play occurs near the beginning of the action, when Tancred, although forbidden to see Sigismunda for various political reasons, creeps into her boudoir and whispers, "Be not alarmed my love!". The choice of scene is hardly inspiring, and the relative positions of Tancred and Sigismunda in the engraving are not visually convincing. Certainly, the New English Theatre engraver of the previous month (Figure 151) offers a more dramatic moment later in the play when Tancred discovers that Sigismunda has been forced to marry Osmond. Also with its background and spatial regularity, it is more convincing as a theatrical scene than the Bell illustration. However, Bell's double figure illustrations must have been in high demand, since he reprinted most of them in single figure form in 1778 (e.g. Figure 152) - perhaps because by that time the original plates had been worn down by all the impressions taken from them.⁵⁴

The New English Theatre engravings follow a slightly different plan from the Bell ones, in part because Bell's rival publishers employed a diverse set of engravers, many of whom were not portraiture specialists. Interestingly enough, most of the New English Theatre designs were carried out by E. Edwards who only two years before, had completed the illustrations of scenes from Shakespeare's plays for Bell's first edition. The New English Theatre publishers also lured Parkinson and

Dighton away from Bell, although by what means and with what resistance, it is impossible to guess. The other principal designers were Dodd, about whom we know little, and Isaac Taylor who was secretary of the Incorporated Society at the time but whose background and training is otherwise obscure. What is important to note about the collection of New English Theatre artists is that they were all British born and British trained, and despite some French mannerisms in their work, their illustrations were as literal and stage-like as artistic licence would allow. The New English Theatre illustrations are unlikely to do any more than hint at specific stock scenes and stage sets, but the use of setting detail distinguishes them from Roberts' portrait frontispieces with their total lack of background and only occasional use of prop. One could argue that the New English Theatre engravings are hardly single figure portraits at all, some of them containing as many as five or six figures. However, the number of figures is misleading. All these engravings include inscriptions which only name one or two actors; the additional figures are merely there to set the scene, and are not representative of any specific performer. Thus in the portrait of Garrick as Sir John Brute (Figure 153), Taylor concentrated his wholehearted attention on the character of the choleric wife-abuser, and did not bother to differentiate between the facial characteristics of Belinda and Lady Brute, who stand gaping in the background like two stuffed dolls. Occasionally, a New English Theatre portrait offered a format similar to portraits for Bell. An example of this is the print of Lewis as Hippolytus (Figure 154), which shows him gesturing before a rather plain background. The inclusion of the stage curtain on the left pays lip-service to the theatrical setting, but otherwise the portrait offers us no more detail than those by Roberts.

When he began producing editions of plays on his own, Thomas Lowndes continued to employ the standard format of the New English Theatre for his illustrations - a theatrical setting with one or two actors represented in a specific scene of the play. However, Lowndes used the services of an additional artist, Thomas Stothard, whose softer lines and timid approach give the illustrations a less literal air. Closer in approach to the Bell frontispieces were the illustrations for Harrison and Wenman, the artists of which executed them anonymously.⁵⁵ Both Harrison and Wenman editions include frontispieces of actors in costume, which, like Roberts' efforts, are shown against a blank background. The anonymous engravers of these works were trying to follow the Roberts formula of retaining a facial schema of a particular actor while altering his costume and gesture from play to play, but unlike Roberts' work, these illustrations are technically feeble and unconvincing as portraits. A quick look at how the Harrison engraver tried to vary the Mrs. Pope schema from portraits of her as Ethelinda, Mrs. Clerimont, Artemesia and Louisa, reveals how ineffective such a formula was in the wrong hands.

The question arises here as to how much the artists of these editions of the 1770s and 1780s borrowed from each other, and whether or not they used each other's ideas or reacted against each other's productions. Inextricably linked with this problem is the question of why certain scenes or characters were chosen in the first place, as careful thought was undoubtedly necessary in order that the elements chosen would satisfy a potential buyer.

Certainly direct plagiarism was not practised, since it violated the law instituted by the first engraver's copyright act of 1734. The only obvious plagiarisms in the book illustrations were from paintings

and these were only rarely exact visual quotations. For example, Dodd's portrait of Dunstall as Dominick in the Spanish Fryar for the New English Theatre (Figure 155) recalls Kneller's portrait of Leigh in that same role (see Figure 3) - a portrait which was at that time available to the public in mezzotint form. The costume and gesture are both replicated with an alteration only in the portrait likeness. Another portrait of Dunstall as Dominick of a year later (Wenman) also recalls the Kneller costume, but the Wenman artist has altered the sedentary gesture of the friar by representing him with his arms flung out - a minor concession to originality. The New English Theatre illustrators also adopted one or two ideas from contemporary paintings. The 1777 portrait of Garrick as Don John in Fletcher's The Chances (Figure 156) quotes more or less verbatim from de Louthenburg's portrait of Garrick in that role of the previous year (Figure 77). Nor was Roberts averse to an occasional "quotation" from a painting : in several particulars his portrait of Garrick and Mrs. Abington as Ranger and Clarinda in Hoadley's Suspicious Husband (Figure 157) recalls Hayman's 1747 portrait of Garrick and Mrs. Pritchard in those same roles (Figure 45). The figure of Garrick particularly seems to be a reversal of the Hayman figure, right down to details of costume, which undoubtedly would have changed on stage in the 30 years between the Hayman portrait and the Roberts frontispiece.

Thus direct borrowing was limited to an occasional motif or idea lifted from a painting,⁵⁶ and because of the heated rivalry, any obvious plagiarism from an opposing publication would have ended up being resolved in the law courts - a luxury none of the publishers or engravers could afford. In order to see how different artists reacted to similar commissions, it is necessary to make comparisons between

frontispieces for rival illustrations : first of different depictions of the same actor in the same role; and secondly, of different actors in the same role.

Because many of the plays published in the 1770s were rarely performed, it was often difficult for the publishers to know what to do about choice of scene, character, actor, et al, for their frontispieces. However, some popular plays were not only associated at the time with specific actors, but specific scenes in those plays were exceptionally popular with the theatre-going public. This is true of the prayer scene in Rowe's Lady Jane Grey, which both Bell and the New English Theatre publishers included in their editions of that play (Figures 158 and 159). Bell's frontispiece was published on 26 December 1776, whereas his rivals' effort emerged from the press in April of the following year. Both show Mrs. Hartley in the title role. Roberts' rather clumsy illustration for Bell shows Mrs. Hartley kneeling before an altar hands crossed over her chest, her eyes looking towards heaven. Although he depicts the same moment of the action, Sherwin's illustration for the New English Theatre is much more aesthetically satisfying and dramatically convincing. Mrs. Hartley's expression is overtly rapturous, her kneeling more skillfully articulated and the theatrical curtain to the left as well as the hint of a church interior in the background create an ambiance around the figure of Mrs. Hartley which offers a further dimension to the lines quoted below:

Woman. her knee

Has known that posture only, and her Eye,
Or fixed upon the sacred page before her
Or lifted with her rising hopes to Heaven.

(Act V, Scene 2)

Interestingly enough, these lines were omitted in theatrical representation, and replaced by the following stage direction:

The scene draws, and discovers the Lady Jane kneeling, as at her devotion, a light and a book plac'd on a table beside her.

It is significant that what was, in the text, a reported event, became in performance a witnessed tableau. The choice of such a tableau for an illustration was logical and easily managed, confined as it was by the lack of variation possible in the depiction of a kneeling posture. Sherwin could have benefitted from seeing Roberts' engraving and improved upon the Bell artist's more obvious inefficiencies, but even without the Bell illustration for a guide, such a scene would have been a natural choice for a portrait.

A similar situation exists in Bell's and Harrison's frontispieces for Addison's Cato - both of which show Thomas Sheridan in the title role. Sheridan was associated with the character of Cato and similar classical roles, largely because his Roman features made him a logical choice for such characters. Both Harrison and Bell included the scene in Cato (Figure 160 and 161) in which Lawrence was later to paint J. P. Kemble. The scene occurs in the last act of the play, where, fraught with internal rebellion and incipient invasion, the old order of Rome is on the eve of its collapse. The Stoic senator, Cato, determined to take the honourable way out, reads his copy of Plato, and, like Hamlet, contemplates suicide. Both Roberts and the Harrison engraver show Sheridan with his copy of Plato seated in a chair beside a table on which is a dagger. The only essential difference between the two works is in the costume - Bell's Cato wears a classicising toga, whereas Harrison's Cato looks oddly out of place with a wig and contemporary

dress. The Harrison engraver - with his technical deficiency and concomitant lack of imagination probably copied from Roberts' illustration, altering the costume of the character to prevent the illustration from breaching the copyright law.

A further substantiation of this half-baked plagiarism can be seen by comparing the Bell illustration of Philaster of 1778 with the Harrison illustration of 1780 (Figures 162 and 163). Both show Miss Hopkins in the role of Arethusa, and, despite the use of different inscriptions from the play, the Harrison artist employs a similar pose to that of Roberts - showing Miss Hopkins with her arms flung out beside her and her head looking in the opposite direction. Philaster was rarely performed, and Miss Hopkins, who was not associated with the role, was rarely illustrated in any context. The fact that Harrison chose to depict her in such a part can only be the result of Bell's prior use of this same actress and character.

This sort of direct borrowing distinguishes the engravers for Harrison from those of the New English Theatre, who were both skilled and respectable, and may have adopted some of Bell's ideas without reproducing them too literally. Roberts and the New English Theatre artists certainly replicated a number of the same actors in the same roles, and this can hardly be attributable to coincidence. However, this repetition of character and scene was more the result of these artists' attempts to excell each other than a reflection of the sort of uninspired plagiarism to which the Harrison artist was prone.

A second set of comparisons which can be made between the frontispieces of rival editions involves illustrations which show different actors playing the same role. The choice of different actors sometimes

reflects the more essential conflict between Bell and his opposition. For instance, the New English Theatre was the first to emerge with an edition of Lillo's moralistic play, George Barnwell, but Bell was not far behind. The latter edition contained a frontispiece showing the Covent Garden tragedian Wroughton in the title role (Figure 164), but the former chose to depict Brereton (Figure 165) - an up-and-coming actor at Drury Lane, whose commanding presence challenged Wroughton at the rival theatre.⁵⁷ The fact that Bell and the New English Theatre publishers chose for their depictions actors at rival theatres seems to indicate that their own personal rivalry was carried beyond the mere publication of plays, and as they illustrate different moments of the same central action, this mutual challenge extends even further. The principal character of the play, Barnwell, is led astray from a diligent and hard-working apprenticeship by the soulless prostitute, Millwood whose demand for money leads him to steal, and, eventually, to kill. Like Lady Jane Grey's prayer and Cato's contemplation of suicide, the most commonly illustrated scenes in George Barnwell usually involved his emotional turmoil after the murder. For the New English Theatre, Dighton chose the moment when Barnwell had just stabbed his wealthy uncle and the feelings of remorse are beginning to set in. With his uncle's mansion looming in the background and his uncle's prone body only half visible in the illustration, Barnwell rears back in disgust at his own deed, the mask and dagger which aided his crime lying at his feet. His words, as indicated by the inscription below, are "Let heaven from its high throne in justice or in Mercy now look down on that dear Murdered saint, and me the murderer". Roberts chose a different moment of guilt, when the initial horror has past and the subsequent panic and fear of capture has set in. In his illustration of Wroughton, he shows an obviously agitated character

who speaks the lines, "Where can I hide me whither shall I fly to avoid the swift unerring hand of Justice?". The lack of visual detail in Roberts' illustration necessitates a knowledge of the play that Dighton's illustration does not. It should be noted that, like Dighton, Wenman published a frontispiece of *Brereton as Barnwell* (Figure 166), which shows him in the moments just before the murder. This illustration is certainly an unfortunate choice, since, before killing his uncle, Barnwell wears a mask, and the Wenman engraver faithfully adheres to this detail, obscuring the actor's face, and rendering the concept of a portrait likeness absurd.

As is evidenced in the case of George Barnwell, it appears that when the Bell and New English Theatre publishers decided to depict a different actor in a common role, they chose different points of emphasis for such a depiction. Often these differences of emphasis focus upon the varying talents of the actor depicted, and often they occur within only a few lines of each other in the text of the play. Such is the case for the Bell and New English Theatre frontispieces for Younge's Revenge (Figures 167 and 168) - a rarely performed tragedy. The New English Theatre illustration, which came first, shows Reddish in the character of Alonzo, exclaiming the lines, "Ye Amaranths! ye Roses like the morn", and looking at his wife, Leonora who lies asleep on a chair in the bower. This scene occurs in act five, and Roberts also chooses this act of the play, but depicts instead Brereton as Alonzo extending a dagger and muttering angrily, "Curse on all her charms I'll stab her thro' them all". The Revenge echoes a popular theme of eighteenth century drama - unjustified jealousy, the green-eyed monster which had its dramatic roots in Othello. In act five, Alonzo wavers between his love for Leonara and his murderous suspicion

of her, and like most eighteenth century tragic figures, he fluctuates rapidly between one extreme passion and another. Roberts and the New English Theatre illustrator chose different extremes of Alonzo's passion, again carrying their rivalry into the very engravings themselves.

Thus it seems that although the new English Theatre artists and James Roberts were willing to look to each other for basic conceptions of certain plays, they more often than not tried to out-do each other by focussing upon different actors or different scenes in the same plays. Certainly some distinction in the portraits must have been necessary since the rival publishers were producing nearly identical texts. However, one may well ask, why did the Bell enterprise continue, unscathed by all this opposition, so much so that he could afford to produce a second and more lavish edition of the British Theatre in the 1790s? No one answer is forthcoming, but various possibilities may be suggested. First of all, Bell was a great self-advertiser who referred to his own projects often in his periodicals. Not only were his advertisements frequent, but, as I have tried to show, his very word choice and emphasis had a psychological impact on his potential clients. Bell's exuberant advertisements convinced the London public that his editions were the ones to have and his affronted defensiveness at the exploits of his rivals undoubtedly created more sympathy for him than he perhaps deserved. Secondly, because his editions were the first to reach the market, they were also the first to be subscribed to and the first to be sold to individual buyers. The New English Theatre's arrival on the scene was a bit too belated to check Bell's already growing public patronage. However, Bell's boasts about quality for money hold equally true for the New English Theatre which often had

superior illustrations. It appears that the London public was gullible enough to be convinced by a man whose personality was possibly a greater attraction than his products. The publication of Bell's British Theatre, like any good business, involved quality, economy, and a manipulative ability which Bell's multitudinous rivals, in their corporate anonymity, were unable to achieve.

Bell's Second "British Theatre" and the Problems with Cawthorne

Despite a rush of new plays in the patent theatres in the last part of the eighteenth century, Bell's second British Theatre still contained a number of outmoded plays which had lost their stage credibility years before. The second British Theatre contained 49 "new" plays which had not been a part of the first edition, since the copyrights of certain authors such as Cumberland and Goldsmith had been released in the ten years or so that separated the first edition from the second. Bell only omitted 17 plays from his second edition, most of which had been mere space fillers in the first. At least one imagines that unperformed and dramatically frigid plays such as Rowe's Ulysses and Dryden's Sophonisba were only included in the first British Theatre because they were British and not because they possessed any theatrical or even literary merit. Thus, with a few exceptions, and a few more additions, the new British Theatre was textually a replica of the old one. This stagnance did not hold true for the illustrations, as Bell in his Oracle reveals:

On the Twenty-ninth of January, 1791, BELL's new and splendid Edition of the British Theatre will challenge the Admiration of the World.

The Original Design has been considerably enlarged and improved; most of the ROYAL ACADEMICIANS have been engaged to paint subjects from the Most

interesting passages in each Play, and the principal Performers on the London Stages will be painted in their most favourite Dramatic Characters from Life, on purpose for this work, by DE WILDE in a stile of incomparable similitude. These Subjects will be engraved by BARTOLOZZI, HEATH, HALL, DELATRE, FITTLER, THORNTHWAITTE, &c. &c. ...

This work will cost the Proprietors nearly Twenty Thousand pounds. It is conducted by Mr. BELL for a Society of private Gentlemen, who will enable him to execute it with the utmost spirit and Punctuality, most of the London wholesale Booksellers have laudably and liberally banished all interested prejudices, and propose to give this work a free circulation, as a means of convincing the world, that the productions of the BRITISH PRESS are not at present to be excelled by the Artists of any Country upon earth.⁵⁸

Several observations can be made at once by reading between the lines of Bell's advertisement. First of all, the rivalry which threatened to put him out of business in the 1770s had been dissipated in the 1790s to the point that book sellers had "Banished all interested prejudices" by opening their shops to Bell's publications. This acquiescence is no doubt due in part to the fact that the feeble efforts of his rivals could hardly stand up to the new patronage of "private gentlemen" who invested a staggering amount of capital in Bell's current enterprise. This patronage of the wealthy was undoubtedly responsible for the addition of several more R.A.s to Bell's collection of designers, and although many of these men had only recently acquired such a title, this insurgence of "name" artists such as Hamilton, Fuseli, Smirke, Stothard and Westall elevated the status of the second British Theatre.⁵⁹

Certainly, the second British Theatre was conducted on a massive scale, involving not only illustrations but paintings as well, which were exhibited at the British Library for all to see. Yet another new

enterprise on the scale of the Shakespeare Gallery had been launched,⁶⁰ with a similar chauvinism for things British and a Boydellian idealism which saw the British press as a bastion of quality with a growing international reputation. The sad story of the fate of the Shakespeare Gallery has been told many times, but the similar fate which beset Bell's second British Theatre had nothing to do with the French Revolution and the breakdown of international markets. Despite Bell's boasts of world-wide fame, most of his buyers were British men and women whose appreciation of theatrical illustrations and acting texts depended upon their knowledge of the London theatre.⁶¹ In fact, the decline and fall of the second British Theatre was the direct result of Bell's own impetuosity combined with the one major faulty business judgement of his career.

In 1792, Bell was imprisoned for libellous remarks tendered against the King's footguards in his broadsheet, the Oracle. Although he managed to secure a release from prison, the debts he incurred for his misguided journalism forced him to sell off parts of the British Library and to suspend the publication of the British Theatre between 1793 and 1795.⁶² In his attempt to stabilise his financial position and put the British Theatre into circulation again, Bell went into partnership with George Cawthorne, a former green-grocer and blacksmith who appears to have had a bit of capital and an eye for making it grow by fair means or foul.⁶³ The story of the conflict between Cawthorne and Bell, which resulted in the former claiming the British Library and the British Theatre, has already been told, although the details are difficult to fathom purely on the existing evidence of Bell's outraged accusations against Cawthorne which appeared in the Oracle throughout the 1790s.

What is certain is that when the volumes of the British Theatre reappeared in 1795, de Wilde eventually vanished from the scene, Cawthorne's name was printed firmly beside Bell's on the title pages, and the quality of the prints declined steadily from that point on. Cawthorne's initial ambitious plans for the British Theatre included the following assertion:

In order to render this work still more valuable, it is the Proprietor's intention to purchase the Copy-right of such NEW PLAYS as may meet the approbation of the public.⁶⁴

Had it been possible, or financially viable to implement such an acquisition of copyrights, Bell would undoubtedly have done it before, and it is no surprise that Cawthorne's plans never reached fruition. In fact, the plays in the Cawthorne editions of the British Theatre were often more obscure and out-of-date than those chosen by Bell. Why, for example, Cawthorne would have included Shakespeare's Pericles or Milton's poetic exercise, Samson Agonistes, is a mystery. These two plays had never been performed, and other works such as The Orphan of China and Busiris had not been performed in London for over 30 years. The texts of the British Theatre evince other signs of decline after Cawthorne's take-over, such as a lessening of the additional biographical data and critical evaluation that Bell had prefixed to each play before his financial downfall, and a use of obscure and provincial actors for portrait frontispieces.⁶⁵

Not only did the texts suffer, but the illustrations did as well. The eventual loss of de Wilde brought James Roberts back on the scene, and although he tried to adopt the de Wilde idiom, de Wilde's personal style involved a more subtle characterisation than that of which Roberts was capable. Roberts was also prone to taking short-cuts, in

more than one instance borrowing from his own earlier engravings for Bell's first British Theatre. Such is the case in the portrait of Mrs. Crawford as Mariamne (1794) (Figure 212), where Roberts adopted the same pose and gesture used in his portrait of that actress in the same role of 1777 (Figure 211). The only differences between the two works are the new suggestion of a background and a change in costume and dress. The former alteration was necessary due to the precedent set by de Wilde and the latter was dictated by a change in stage dress which would have rendered a duplication of the 1777 costume ludicrous (see chapter 6). In addition, Roberts copied from at least one work which de Wilde had abandoned upon terminating his role in the project. Roberts' 1796 illustration of Knight as Sir Jacob Gawkey in The Chapter of Accidents is copied from a de Wilde painting of a few years earlier.⁶⁶

However, de Wilde occasionally copied from Roberts' earlier Bell engravings, but with one exception⁶⁷ these copies came after Bell's financial downfall and are possibly reflective of the tension and uncertainty that surrounded the British Theatre before Cawthorne got his claws firmly into the project. Ian Mayes mentions that de Wilde's 1795 portrait of Garrick as Sir John Brute was an unusual addition to the British Theatre, as Garrick had been dead for 16 years, but he does not mention that this portrait is an exact duplicate of Roberts' 1776 engraving of Garrick in that role, this time right down to the details of costume.⁶⁸ But plagiarism such as this is rare, and the bulk of de Wilde's work for Bell could be categorised as taking new angles of emphasis on old plays and centring upon facial likeness and characterisation, usually of a comic nature.

The question should be posed here as to whether or not Bell himself actually chose the actors and moments to be illustrated. Certainly Bell must have made suggestions, but a comparison between the choice of comic moment in the first and second editions of the British Theatre indicate different minds at work. De Wilde's comic illustrations for Bell's second edition rarely exhibit the best known or most accessible moments of the play, in contrast to the illustrations of the first edition by Roberts. De Wilde tended to choose minor or low-life characters in his depictions of comedies, undoubtedly because such characters provided a broader scope for his imagination. For example his portrait frontispiece for the Conscious Lovers avoids depiction of Young Beville and Indiana, the genteel lovers of this sentimental comedy, choosing instead the more robust character of Tom. The same holds true for his illustration of Cibber's turgid piece, Love Makes a Man; where he avoids the two-dimensional lovers Clodio and Angelina and opts for a depiction of Quick as Don Lewis (Figure 169) - the only naturally comic figure in the play. In addition, de Wilde often made unusual selections of actors for his portraits, but they were well-chosen nevertheless. This is true of his portrait of the Earl of Barrymore and Captain Wathen as Scrub and Archer in Farquhar's Beaux Strategem (Figure 170) - certainly one of de Wilde's best efforts, but one which relies on a depiction of amateur actors playing perennially favourite roles.

As well as the portrait frontispieces, Bell's second British Theatre like his second edition of Shakespeare also included fanciful illustrations of scenes from each play. These illustrations warranted the efforts of the Royal Academicians, Fuseli, Hamilton, Opie, Smirke, Stothard, Westall and Wheatley - most of whom also painted scenes for

Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery. However, the majority of these artists backed out of the project after Bell's downfall, leaving Stothard and a few less prestigious designers such as Ryley and Graham to hold the fort. These frontispieces are intended to be scenes from the plays, but occasionally an actor's likeness is adopted from the facing character portrait. Scenes of plays in which Mrs. Siddons appeared particularly utilised that actress' features, possibly because many of these scenes were designed by Hamilton who was also responsible for the accompanying portrait frontispiece. For example, Hamilton's portrait of Mrs. Siddons as Mathilda in The Carmelite (Figure 171) shows her praying in a Gothic church interior, and the facing scenic illustration (Figure 172) depicts the character of Montgomery kneeling before Mathilda, whose features are still those of Mrs. Siddons.⁶⁹ Other forms of continuity between the portrait and scenic frontispieces also exist, and the printing dates of companion illustrations are more often than not the same. However, these attempts to link the scenic frontispieces with the companion portraits were sporadic and imply more of a collaboration of individual artists than an overall plan.

The British Theatre did not stop with the end of the century, although Bell abandoned his part in it after 1797. Cawthorne continued the project into the early years of the nineteenth century, but his efforts were quickly surpassed by those of others, most notably Cumberland. The impact that Bell's institution of illustrated pocket-size editions of plays had on the nineteenth century publishing market has been mentioned before and must not be underestimated. Certainly other illustrated editions were published in the 1790s - J. Roach, for example, published a series of plays "as performed at the Theatres

Royal, Drury Lane and Covent Garden" with frontispieces designed by Isaac Cruikshank, and W. Jones in Dublin printed his own British Theatre, having managed to kidnap the plates of de Wilde's character portraits.

But these projects were not far-reaching and never would have happened without Bell's precedent. Bell was an innovator, an intuitive businessman, whose obvious interest in the theatre combined with a sensitivity to public feeling inevitably helped make his books popular and much imitated. There can be no greater testimony to Bell's business acumen than the fact that despite cut-throat competition, imprisonment and penury, his endeavours succeeded, and when he died in 1831, he died a wealthy and famous man.⁷⁰

PART III

STAGE AND IMAGE

Chapter 5

FACTORS GOVERNING REPRESENTATION

Having considered the various forms of theatrical portrait in the eighteenth century as well as their commercial function, it is now necessary to examine how these works related to the stage performances they were meant to commemorate. Such a discussion involves two stages : first, an examination of the reasons behind the production of certain works, and secondly, the question of how accurately theatrical portraitists represented what was happening on the eighteenth century stage in regard to costume, set, gesture and expression. This chapter seeks to examine the first problem and to establish why certain subjects were chosen for representation instead of others.

It would be futile to claim that theatrical portraits were painted or engraved for some complex iconographical or theoretical end, as some modern art historians have endeavoured to do.¹ As I have pointed out, both painters and engravers were as in need of a living as any other professional men, and, as theatrical portraitists only rarely had the patronage of the upper classes, they were forced to produce theatrical portraits to public demand in order to earn their bread. To some, this pragmatism led to rapid mass production, and de Wilde's diaries reveal that he often churned out theatrical portraits like items on an assembly line.²

Because of the necessity of producing a popular image which would also be financially lucrative, painters and engravers had to choose their subjects on the basis of an evaluation of public demand. Of course, this evaluation would not have involved a committee of men

around a long table, eyeing the latest graphs of profit and loss; the gauge of public opinion would have been more intuitive but no less important.

Since theatrical portraits were necessarily representative of contemporary theatrical events or popular performers, a thorough examination of the relationship between the dates of performances and the dates of prints and paintings of these performances helps to establish a picture of the public demand for theatrical portraits which cannot be substantiated by the feeble existing documentary evidence. As the reason for choice of subject differed somewhat from painting to print to book illustration, it is necessary to examine each one in turn in order to understand why some eighteenth century actors or plays were more popular subjects for depiction than others.

Painting

Theatrical paintings were rarely fanciful and usually commemorated a specific performance of a play. This practice of commissioning a painting of a popular performance had its origins in the theatrical conversation pieces of Wilson and especially Zoffany. Zoffany's early success in Britain had much to do with the fact that he painted his scene from The Farmer's Return (Figure 37) in less than two months - between the time of the play's premiere on 20 March 1762 and the time of the painting's exhibition at the Society of Artists on 17 May.³ The play, The Farmer's Return, was a short piece, billed as an "interlude", and written by Garrick to capitalise upon contemporary events of interest such as George III's Coronation and the Cock Lane ghost hoax. The literary and dramatic qualities of the interlude are minimal, and, in effect, it was merely a flash in the pan, becoming quickly

out-of-date when the events with which it was concerned were no longer sensational. However, its extended first run attests to its immediate popularity, and Zoffany eagerly snatched the opportunity to associate himself with such an overwhelming theatrical success. Other paintings by Zoffany show a similar response to plays and actors which had only fleeting popularity. His portraits of Samuel Foote in The Devil Upon Two Sticks (Figure 104) and The Mayor of Garratt (Figure 38), pay tribute to Foote's ability as both a playwright and mimic. However, Foote wrote most of his plays with his own acting strengths in mind, and many of his short, farcical afterpieces contain allusions to contemporary public figures which are lost to posterity.⁴ Since Foote augmented his plays by successfully mimicking these famous figures, his audiences had the double delight of seeing both an amusing farce and an up-to-date satire. The momentary nature of Foote's farces and their dependence on his own performances is attested to by the fact that after his death, very few of his plays were ever performed again.

The majority of Zoffany's theatrical portraits were conversation pieces, and other conversations by Mather Brown, Parkinson, and William Hamilton almost always depict plays which had been only recently performed and actors who had recently performed in them. As a conversation piece was a major project and the result of a serious commission, this careful choice of subject was logical and necessary. Also, when these works were exhibited, their function became public as well as private. Single figure theatrical portraits were not as difficult to execute or as costly to commission, but they too were usually reflective of a contemporary theatrical event.

Samuel de Wilde's portraits were nearly always single figure works representing actors playing roles in comedies or dramas with which they were currently associated. For instance, his 1794 painting of Mr. Suett as Dicky Gossip in "My Grandmother" (Figure 86) was painted in response to the premiere of that play at the Haymarket on Monday 16 December 1793. The subsequent run of this afterpiece attests to its popularity, as it was still performed frequently at the turn of the century. Actors who commissioned de Wilde to paint portraits of themselves were usually minor stars such as Suett who wanted publicity as well as a nostalgic reminder of a sensational or popular performance. However, de Wilde's theatrical portraits which were exhibited at the British Library in the Strand ranged from works of startling contemporaneity to portraits of actors in roles with which they were not associated at all. However, these portraits were commissioned by John Bell solely to be engraved for his British theatre, and this purely utilitarian function made the choice of actor and scene of little importance (see below).⁵

Dupont made one monumental venture into the genre of theatrical portraits in the 1790s with a commission from the Covent Garden manager, Thomas Harris, to paint at least 24 of his actors and actresses in roles with which they were associated.⁶ It has been suggested that Harris' choice of actors for this commission often seems arbitrary and illogical and that this illogicality can be explained by the fact that Dupont died before he had completed his commission.⁷ However, using salary scales as a gauge for actor popularity, it can be proven that Harris chose primarily actors and actresses at the upper half of the Covent Garden scale, with few exceptions.⁸ Also, the choice of play, which may seem unusual to a twentieth century observer, inevitably had a special

significance for Harris. Most of the paintings were executed in 1793-4 and they depict actors in roles which they had played at Covent Garden in one of those theatrical seasons. The question arises as to why Dupont depicted some plays and not others, and the answer can usually be found by looking closely at the significance of individual theatrical events depicted.

For example, Dupont's portrait of Wright Bowden as Robin Hood (Figure 173) depicts that actor in a play which was rarely performed and was not immensely popular. However, Bowden had begun his stage career in the role of Robin Hood at Covent Garden in 1787 and he revived the role on Friday 21 May 1794. As the play had not been performed at all between his stage debut and his revival of the role, Bowden's association with the character of Robin Hood was complete, and a perfectly logical choice for the portrait painted by Dupont after the 1794 performance. Equally, Mrs. Clendenning was depicted in Brooke's Rosina, another play which was rarely performed, and the actress herself was only a minor figure in the Covent Garden company. She had played the role of Rosina only once in the years of Dupont's commission (19 March 1795), but Thomas Harris undoubtedly had fond memories of another date (June 1794) when Mrs. Clendenning donned breeches to play William in the same play, opposite her sister's performance in the character of Rosina "at the special desire of his excellency, the Turkish ambassador".⁹ The fact that none of Dupont's paintings were engraved¹⁰ proves that their function was private rather than public, and that they were painted to satisfy Harris' nostalgia rather than to satisfy a general public.

Reynolds' portraits similarly had more of a private than a public function, but, like the more obviously commercial theatrical portraits,

they were invariably related to specific performances. For example, Reynolds' portrait of Mrs. Abington as Roxalana in The Sultan (1784) (Figure 59) appeared at the Royal Academy only a month after a performance of The Sultan at Covent Garden (6 March). The premiere at Drury Lane (2 December 1775) had been characterised by a series of exciting new scenes, including the opening scene, described in the text as follows:

An interior apartment in the Seraglio, An arch in the middle of the back scene, which is shut with a curtain. On the right hand toward the front is a sopha in the Turkish manner, low, deep and long, covered with carpets and cushions. A little gold table about eight inches high and a foot and half square. Upon it a rich or gold set set with jewels, with two cupt of porcelain, and a spoon made of the beak of an Indian bird, which is redder than coral, extremely rare and of extensive price.¹¹

Although this description is possibly more literary than theatrical, the new scenes provided for The Sultan created a sensation among the 1775 audience, and similar scenes were most likely used in the 1784 production when Reynolds painted the portrait. However, the portrait does not contain even a hint of the scenic virtuosity which characterised the afterpiece; in fact, Reynolds compromised only enough to add an unspectacular curtain through which Mrs. Abington peers. It seems that this portrait was commissioned and painted to commemorate one of Mrs. Abington's most famous roles, and one for which she had been known for over ten years.

The same is true of Reynolds' portrait of Garrick in the character of Kitley in Every Man In His Humour (Figure 57). Garrick had performed Kitley from the play's revival on Friday 29 November 1751 to Wednesday 29 November 1768, the year of the painting. Since Garrick had been

associated with this role for some 17 years, Reynolds' portrait seems to be more commemorative than responsive to a specific theatrical event. His portrait of Mrs. Abington as Miss Prue bears a more direct relationship to a specific performance. This actress had first played in Love for Love at Drury Lane in December 1769, and Reynolds' portrait was exhibited at the R.A. in 1771. Only six months after this R.A. show, Mrs. Abington played Miss Prue again (Thursday 14 November 1771), and it is possible that with characteristic managerial shrewdness, Garrick specially arranged for her to play the role in order to attract a public who had been impressed by Reynolds' R.A. portrait.¹²

Reynolds was, of course, working on commission, and the choice of subject for his few theatrical portraits was due to the request of the actors who commissioned them rather than to his own preference.¹³ Also, despite the fact that these works were exhibited at the R.A., they were not primarily promotional propaganda for the actor, and even the prints based on them were of more interest as examples of Reynolds' work than as theatrical portraits per se.

Paintings nearly always represented the most popular actors and actresses on the London stages who could either afford to commission the works themselves or were friendly with people who could. The popular print was more immediately responsive to public sensations and could commemorate a wider range of interesting or important theatrical events.

Popular Prints : Contemporary Images and What the Public Saw

As I have pointed out in my chapter on prints, engravers of non-reproductive images had to keep their public in mind at all times,

because a print that did not sell was worse than no print at all. Determining the reasons why certain images were significant at certain times is usually a straightforward matter in the case of popular prints, since the evidence existing on the eighteenth century theatre includes a great deal of information about sensational plays and successful actors in particular. The only possible problem which arises when reconstructing the motivating factors for popular prints lies in the fact that a number of these prints are undated, and trying to determine their dates can sometimes be an art historian's nightmare. However, some prints can be tentatively dated on the basis of an examination of the plays performed season by season at Drury Lane and Covent Garden.

For instance, some confidence can be employed in the dating of the line engraving for John Ryall of Barry and Miss Nossiter in Romeo and Juliet (Figure 174). A terminus ante quem of 1765 has been suggested for this print on the basis of the archaic chandelier - a lighting device which was dispensed with after Garrick returned from the continent with knowledge of new stage lighting methods.¹⁴ As the print is a line engraving, it would necessarily have taken time to produce, but it is very likely that it went on the market within a year or two after the climactic "Romeo wars" of 1753, and that it was Spranger Barry's answer to Benjamin Wilson's painting of Garrick as Romeo of that same year. The story of the Romeo wars is a complicated saga which involved a number of actors and actresses, and received fuel from a scandal-mongering press, but the conflict centred upon the rivalry between Spranger Barry and Covent Garden and Garrick at Drury Lane. In 1750, the two men had played Romeo against each other night after night, and both had attempted to draw crowds by perpetuating various atrocities on Shakespeare's

original text. In response to Garrick's addition of a pantomimic and spectacular funeral procession to the Capulet monument, Barry adorned the play with a slightly more discreet funeral dirge and, in the process, condemned Garrick for his "recourse to mime and dance".¹⁵ In 1753, a new episode in the saga occurred when Mrs. Cibber, who portrayed Juliet at Covent Garden, suddenly deserted Barry to play opposite Garrick at Drury Lane. Barry fell back upon the resources of an unknown actress, Miss Nossiter, who, fortunately for him, handled the role of Juliet successfully.¹⁶

This rivalry fascinated the public to the extent that they would go to Covent Garden to see Barry being a romantic Romeo in the first three acts of the play and then they would hasten across the street to Drury Lane to watch Garrick rage through the last tragic moments.¹⁷ Aware that his *forté* was the tragic rather than the romantic, Garrick commissioned Wilson to paint him in the tomb scene in 1753; as Barry's expertise was in the opposite direction, the Ryall line engraving shows him in the most sentimental moment of the play - the balcony scene. Thus in a small way, the rivalry between the two actors extended into theatrical portraits, and the print must have been produced within two or three years of the play in order to answer the prevailing obsession with this rivalry.

Undated prints are fortunately rare, and attempting to date them often yields more questions than answers. More rewarding is an observation of dated prints and contemporary stage events to which they relate. Despite the fact that the format of the theatrical portrait varied little, the actual existence of such portraits was in response to a wide variety of theatrical events from the premiere of a play to a controversial performance of an actor.

One of the most negative reasons for the production of a print was a theatrical disaster or a poor performance, but ironically enough, this type of print was the most popular and immediately accessible to the heartless and demanding London audiences. Having payed to see the show, Londoners expected their money's worth, but in the case of blaring instances of theatrical miscalculation, they showed no mercy to the offending actor or manager. Print sellers were sensitive to these public opinions and often produced hasty etchings which echoed the public disgust. Such is the case in a print of Mrs. Edwards as Captain Macheath and Miss Webb as Lucy for Thomas Cornell (Figure 175) dated 16 July 1786 and commemorating a performance at the Haymarket of 10 July in which these actresses took on these roles. The likenesses here are not so important as the satirical slur on Mrs. Edwards' attempt to assume a breeches part. The etching shows the interior of Newgate prison where the two actresses stand side by side - Lucy significantly and comically taller than Macheath. However, the satirical message here rests in the accompanying inscriptions rather than in the features of the actresses. Below Mrs. Edwards' feet is a tombstone which expresses the public reaction to that actress' portrayal: "The Beggar's Opera, Capt. Macheath by Mrs. ~ Lucy by Mrs. ~ Here lies Gay." Thomas Cornell's print appeared in the shops only six days after Mrs. Edwards embarrassed herself on the stage in the role of Macheath, and the medium of etching was particularly suited to such a speedy response. However, it is very likely that Cornell had a good speculative eye for a potential theatrical disaster, as is evidenced by his one other theatrical print representing Mrs. Abington as Scrub (Figure 176) which was published three days before that actress' first performance in this role. Mrs. Abington first played the doltish servant Scrub at her own benefit at Covent Garden on Friday 18 February

1786, and the fact that this was her benefit night proves that she had chosen to play the role of Scrub herself, quite apart from the desire of either the manager or the audience. One wonders if this choice were a classic example of bad judgement or, as Henry Angelo suggested, a response to a personal bet.¹⁸ Certainly the caricature is scathing, attacking both the actress' personal appearance and her interpretation of the character. The etching presents her in men's clothes, squint-eyed, and wearing a ridiculous wig. In the centre of the print is a bust of Farquhar who glares down at her in anger, and to the left is an image of Thomas Weston screaming, "Murder" to the actress who slaughtered the role which had made him famous.

In her portrayal of Scrub, Mrs. Abington was possibly trying to expand her repertoire of roles by taking on an unusual and challenging part, but it seems as though such experimentation was an anathema to an eighteenth century audience who expected a certain stability from the stage and from the actors to which they were accustomed. One of the most glaring examples of this small-mindedness occurred in October 1773 when Charles Macklin - a noted comic actor - not only attempted to play the role of Macbeth but to do so in full Scottish highland dress. What began as an innocent effort on Macklin's part ended up as a nasty situation. His audience booed him, the public journals launched daily vitriolic attacks on him, and these disruptions resulted in his being forced to leave the stage for two years.¹⁹ Several etchings satirise Macklin's failure, and their titles, "Shylock turned Macbeth" and "Sir Archy McSarcasm in the character of Macbeth" imply that Macklin should have stayed with the parts for which he was famous and left the tragic roles to those who were more suited to perform them.²⁰

The severely critical eighteenth century public would go so far as to buy a print of a play which was so bad that it did not last a single full performance,²¹ but they were equally attracted to prints of successful, unusual or novel plays. If possible, print shops would produce an image of an actor playing a role in the middle of a season of performances, but occasionally, the print would not be published until the season was over. For example, Holland published a stipple engraving of Mrs. Jordan as Sir Harry Wildair on 10 November 1778, right in the middle of a run of the play which ended on the 19th of December of that year. The stipple process was the perfect vehicle for such an up-to-date rendering, but a mezzotint took more time and a print seller would be fortunate if he could produce a mezzotint within a few weeks of the end of a season. Whatever the media employed, the inspirations for publication of a print were many, and it is necessary to examine these inspirations to determine the focus of an eighteenth century audience's attention.

The most common impetus for the publication of a print was a premiere of a new play. In the first half of the century, new plays were rare, and actors relied instead on old stock repertoires to satisfy their audiences. But as the century progressed and theatres became more versatile and wealthy, new plays more frequently appeared at Covent Garden and Drury Lane. Whether or not these plays would ultimately be successful was difficult to determine, but engravers often gambled on the success of a new play by producing a print - usually one which showed a popular actor or actress in the new role. For example, with their usual speed, the Hardings in 1787 produced a coloured stipple engraving of Mrs. Wilson as Harriet in Holcroft's Seduction commemorating the premiere of the play at Drury Lane (Monday

12 March 1787) and its subsequent successful run. The Hardings relied on their observation of the play's immediate popularity; whether or not the play continued successful was irrelevant, providing the print was salable. Even the premiere of a poor play could inspire a print if the actor or actress appearing in it was certain to ensure the play's success. John Bell had such an individual performer in mind when he commissioned an original line engraving from Bartolozzi of the Irish singer, Mrs. Billington, who played the lead in a new opera, The Peruvian (Figure 177). The Peruvian - written by "a Lady" - is one of those operas which quickly faded into the annals of obscurity, but Mrs. Billington, with her powerful voice and imposing presence could allegedly coax the music of the spheres out of the melodic rubbish of an opera such as this one. Bartolozzi's engraving of Mrs. Billington appeared in 1786 - the year of the opera, but, more importantly, the year of Mrs. Billington's first appearance on the London stage.

First appearance of this sort were good crowd attractions, and they involved either performers new to the stage or those who had previously acted only in the provinces. When a new performer made his or her debut in London, the playbills would refer to this newcomer as a gentleman or lady "who never appeared on any stage", offering the public a tantalising lack of information which they would have to discover by going to see this newcomer for themselves. That the London public was perennially curious about newcomers is substantiated by the fact that daily journals would always devote long sections to thorough descriptions of any new theatrical performer - whether good or bad. The print market also responded to this curiosity, and provincial actors making their London debut were especially popular subjects for prints.

There are many examples of such prints, but an observation of one would suffice. In 1787, S. W. Fores published a coloured etching of Ryder as Sir John Brute in Vanbrugh's Provok'd Wife. Ryder had already made a name for himself at one of the most important of the provincial theatres, Smock Alley, Dublin, but like many other actors, he used his provincial success merely as a stepping stone to reach the heart of the more rewarding London stage. Ryder's debut in London was at Covent Garden on Wednesday 25 October 1786 in the character of Sir John Brute, and thus the etching had a double function of presenting a newcomer in a role which he had never performed before.

Novelty of one sort or another seemed to be a prerequisite for most theatrical prints, and if a play was graced by new scenes or costumes, a print inevitably followed. However, oddly enough these particular portrait prints rarely included enough details of costume or setting to give any flavour of what the new props would have looked like. For example, a stipple engraving published by Harrison, Cluse, & Co. in 1800 commemorates the premiere of Cumberland's adaption of Kotzebue's Joanna of Mountfauron showing Holman as Lazarra. Joanna was set in the fourteenth century, and the scenery was new and built by the most eminent set designers of the day - Richards, Philips, Lupino and Hollogan. However, the print itself does not give us a hint of these novel designs, described in the Universal Magazine as follows:

The appropriate beauty of the scenery, in which the rules of perspective are critically observed, the splendour of the decorations and the richness of the dresses have been rarely equalled.²²

Likewise, T. Macklin's stipple engraving of Miss Younge as the Countess of Narbonne (Figure 178) in Jephson's play of the same title was undoubtedly inspired by the fact that Horace Walpole had handled the

artistic direction of the play and had loaned some dresses from his collection at Strawberry Hill to give the play added antiquarian interest.²³ But the print itself is merely a half-length of Miss Younge which emphasizes her sad, frowning countenance and gives only a very small view of the costume with its yellow sleeves slashed through with purple.

Other sorts of theatrical sensations which inspired prints were the sudden emergence of a superb actor or a controversial play. An example of the former can be seen in the number of prints which appeared of Mrs. Siddons in various roles after her triumphal return to the London stage in the 1782-3 season. There are fewer examples of the latter, largely because controversial plays were kept off the stage by the Royal Censor from the institution of the Licensing Act in 1737. One notable exception to this rule was Sheridan's translation of Kotzebue's Pizarro which premiered at Drury Lane on 24 May 1799. Pizarro concerned the Spanish conquest of Peru and was rife with jingoistic lines which audiences saw as pertinent to the current relationship between Britain and Revolutionary France.²⁴ Sheridan, the manager of Drury Lane was also an MP and associated himself with the Fox faction which, in the 1790s was concerned with the political implications of George III's incipient madness. Since Pizarro was filled with royalist sentiment, audiences saw Sheridan's propagation of the play as contradictory to his basic political premises, and accused him of sacrificing his ideals for money.²⁵ Consequently, several prints of Sheridan and various other actors in the play appeared shortly after the premiere. These prints were either mild or severe caricatures which included inscriptions of the more satirically appropriate lines of the play. The most scathing of these was not actually an independent print but an

illustration for the Anti-Jacobin Review (Figure 179). It shows Sheridan, his face distorted and mouth open, lunging forward through space above an inscription which reads, "In Pizarro's plans observe the Statesman's wisdom guides the poor man's heart". In Sheridan's right hand is a scroll on which is an inscription beginning, "This season true to my Principles I've sold,/To fool the World & pocket George's gold ..." and continues in a similar vein. Other prints of Pizarro include several coloured etchings by Dighton of Kemble, Sheridan and Mrs. Siddons in the characters which they portrayed, and all the prints include lines from the play which served as similar condemnations of Sheridan.

Prints were also made to commemorate benefit performances,²⁶ a comeback of an old favourite or a revision of an old play. A performance with peculiar or unusual qualities inevitably inspired a print or two, as is the case with a series of engravings by Smith and Sayer showing Charles Bannister as Polly Peachum in The Beggar's Opera (Figure 180). These artists produced three prints of Bannister, all of which were executed in mixed media - etching, mezzotint and aquatint. These 1781 prints recalled Bannister's performances in this role at the Haymarket with an accompanying all male cast from Wednesday 8 August 1781 until Friday 14 September. Despite the odd casting, Bannister appears to have managed his fancy dress part reasonably well if the Morning Chronicle is any indication:

Bannister with great good sense played chastely and suffered the burlesque to arise out of his serious performance of Polly, not attempting to render the character ridiculous by making it more outre than it was rendered by his voice and figure.²⁷

Although this critique could be a "puff", its sincere tone smacks of an honest, studied opinion and lacks the excessive encomium usually characteristic of journalistic puffs. Certainly, the Smith and Sayer prints are not satirical caricatures, but attempts to capture Bannister's comic characterisation by employing stipple and mezzotint for his countenance and etching for his female costume.²⁸

Very occasionally, a print was out-of-date in that it bore no relation to the events on the contemporary stage. W. Richardson's etching of Kemble as Mentevole was not published until 1798, although Kemble had not appeared in that role since 1787. However, an inscription on the print which reads "S. Harding 1788" indicates that the etching had been made ten years before but was not sold until Richardson published it in 1798. As Kemble was at the height of his fame in 1798, the fact that he had not performed in Mentevole for ten years would have made little difference to a public eager for any new image of him. Richardson's act of dredging up an unused etching of a previous decade therefore makes good business sense.

Out-of-date prints do not always have such an immediately apparent raison d'être. A Molten's 1784 stipple of Mrs. Bellamy as Juliet shows that actress in a role which she had not played for 15 years. In addition, her last appearance on a London stage prior to this print was June 1780 when she concluded her acting career in the role of Alicia in Rowe's Jane Shore. This last performance was four years before the Molten print which itself was a year in advance of Mrs. Bellamy's last public stand at Drury Lane in May 1785 when she made a timid farewell speech to her adoring public.²⁹ So the print was published long after Mrs. Bellamy's successful acting career was over. The only possible

explanation for this phenomenon was that the engraving was possibly a furniture print intended to satisfy the desires of the audience who had supported Mrs. Bellamy throughout her stage career. However, the format of the print is unspectacular and would not have made a particularly exciting addition to anyone's wall. Independent prints of this sort were rare, but such anomalies of dating were common in book illustrations which I will now discuss.

Book Illustration : Nostalgia and Imagination

Bell's editions of plays were popular because they were inexpensive, easily portable and allowed a growing reading public to relive vicariously the sensations of watching a play at Drury Lane and Covent Garden. The illustrations in these editions offered an added bonus, and unlike popular prints, they did not necessarily require accuracy and contemporaneity in order to satisfy a potential buyer. An examination of illustrations for editions of British plays by Bell, the New English Theatre publishers, Lowndes, Harrison and Co., Wenman and others reveals that a certain amount of artistic licence was allowed in the production of illustrations, even to the point of including actors and actresses in roles which they did not play. Because of this freedom, the choice of actors and plays at times seems arbitrary, although as in the case of popular prints, the publishers of illustrated books rarely chose their illustrations haphazardly.

For example, between 1776 and 1779, illustrated editions of both single and collected plays suddenly erupted with portraits of David Garrick in all of his famous roles - Sir John Brute, Bayes, Abel Drugger, et al. Harrison & Co. in 1779 published an edition of Shirley's Edward the Black Prince with a frontispiece showing Garrick

in the lead role. However, the play had only lasted a few nights of its premiere season at Drury Lane in 1750. The diary of the Drury Lane prompter at the time, Cross, contains an entry about the premiere of this play, and given the eventual failure of the play, Cross' slightly dubious tone proved to be justified:

This play was wrote by Mr Shirly & was at Lisbon
when Acted - it was receiv'd with great Applause
- only a little groaning at some of the Love
Scenes.³⁰

Why then would Harrison see fit to depict Garrick in such a mediocre role 29 years after he had last played it? Even stranger is the question of why Bell, Wenman and the New English Theatre publishers all in 1777-8 brought out editions of Young's The Brothers which included frontispieces of Garrick in the character of Demetrius - a role he had not played since the premiere of The Brothers in 1753.³¹ This sudden boom of Garrick illustrations directly relates to the fact that 1776 was the year of his retirement and 1779 the year of his death, and book illustrators who were groping around for a popular image, could not fail with a depiction of the legendary Garrick. The significance of the retirement and death of a man who had reformed the stage as had Garrick cannot be overestimated.

The editors' decisions to include illustrations of Garrick because of, rather than in spite of, his retirement and death seems directly responsive to the buyer's desire for a nostalgic keepsake of a favourite actor or past role. Garrick was not the only actor subject to such treatment. In a series of small and simple editions of plays, Harrison and Co. often included illustrations of actors long dead performing in plays long out of fashion. Harrison's 1778 edition of Addison's Rosamund includes a frontispiece of Anne Oldfield in the lead role,

running towards the left and speaking the lines, "The Queen, th'offended Queen I see!". Although Anne Oldfield had died in 1730 and was a product of a much less advanced theatrical age, Harrison's illustration of her could be that of any other later eighteenth century actress playing any similar role. Equally nostalgic is Harrison's frontispiece of Wright as Don Carlos for an edition of Hill's Alzira (1779). Wright, too, was a long dead actor, but the fact that he had created the role of Don Carlos at the premiere of Alzira in 1736 somewhat justifies Harrison's choice.

Furthermore, because plays such as Alzira and Rosamund had not been performed for decades, a certain amount of historical research would have been required in order to recall these old productions. Harrison and Co. appear to have conducted such research, and so their images were historically accurate if not up-to-date. However, out-of-date actor portraits were not necessarily linked to out-of-date plays in the Harrison frontispieces. The 1779 engraving of Mrs. Mattocks as Hermione in A Winter's Tale shows that actress in a role which she had not played since May 1772 at the Covent Garden revival of the original Shakespeare play.³² Harrison and Co. would not have had to look far for a more up-to-date portrait, as Mrs. Hartley was creating a sensation at Drury Lane in 1779 with her own interpretation of the character of Hermione. The reasons why Harrison and Co. chose to depict Mrs. Mattocks in the role instead is impossible to determine and dangerous to speculate upon.

Although contemporaneity was not crucial for theatrical book illustration, it was, nevertheless, pleasing to a theatre-going public, and the New English Theatre publishers saw to it that their illustrated editions of British plays included actor portraits which were up-to-

date. This desire for contemporaneity and choice of subject matter reveals the implicit rivalry between the New English Theatre publishers and John Bell who was publishing volumes of his British Theatre at the same time (see also chapter 4). For their respective editions, Bell and the New English Theatre publishers commissioned a number of illustrations of the same actors in the same roles, and although their formats were different, each publisher undoubtedly hoped to sponsor a more successful illustration than that of his rival. The New English Theatre nearly always bettered Bell's British Theatre in terms of contemporaneity. For example, both publishers included in their editions of 1777 portraits of Garrick as Lusignan in Hill's Zara (Figures 181 and 182), but whereas Bell chose to couple this portrait with a companion piece of Mrs. Yates as Zara, the New English Theatre artist portrayed Miss Younge in the role. Although Mrs. Yates had been associated with the role of Zara in the 1760s, Miss Younge had played the role as recently as March 1776, so the New English Theatre image from Zara had a more immediate popular source.

Individual examples of modernity such as this were also characteristic of the independent publications of one New English Theatre publisher, Thomas Lowndes. Lowndes had also secured the copyright for contemporary plays such as Bickerstaffe's Maid of the Mill which Bell was thus unable to include in his first edition of British plays.³³ In addition, many of Lowndes' publications of plays included portraits of Mrs. Siddons in various roles which she was only just beginning to popularise in London - a bandwagon upon which Bell was unable to capitalise until the 1790s when the startling novelty of the Kemble era had worn off. Indeed, most plays contained in the first edition of Bell's British Theatre were old chestnuts rather than new sensations,³⁴ and

the question arises as to how Bell and other publishers chose illustrations for plays which were rarely or never performed or had no immediate or logical theatrical precedent. The solution to this problem was to include fanciful portraits of actors playing roles which they did not play, but which they might have played, had the occasion arisen. For example, Bell's editions of Shakespeare's plays naturally included works such as Henry VI Parts I, II, and III which were not performed in the eighteenth century. In cases such as this, the Bell engravers combined the portrait of a famous contemporary actor with a costume and gesture appropriate to the unperformed play. Thus although Richard II was not performed, Bell's first edition of Shakespeare's plays included a portrait of Francis Aickin as Bolingbroke, his general attitude borrowed from another engraving in the same edition. The same is true of the portrait of Miss Younge as Cleopatra in Antony and Cleopatra also for Bell's Shakespeare. Shakespeare's play was not performed at the time, but Miss Younge was associated with the role of Cleopatra in Dryden's All For Love and had played that role in the very year this print was published.

Usually fanciful actor portraits in Bell's editions of plays had a similar sort of logical foundation. Thus, although Mrs. Abington had never played Mrs. Pinchwife in the rarely performed Wycherly play, The Country Wife, she was associated with pastoral comic roles of this kind. Similarly, the portraits of Sheridan as Julius Caesar and Mr. Rock as Teague had no foundation in theatrical reality, but both reflected the speciality roles of these actors - Sheridan's association with tragic Roman heroes and Rock's with comic Irish idiots.

This role substitution also occurred in the British Theatre in a series of portraits of provincial actors in roles with which they were

not associated. The portrait of Miss Barclay as Clara in Goldsmith's Good-Natured Man was published in 1792 as part of Bell's second edition, immediately responsive to that actress' first appearance on a London stage (Wednesday 23 May 1792). However, Miss Barclay was not associated with the role of Olivia, and the Good-Natured Man was rarely performed at the end of the century. Indeed, the role in which she made her London debut was that of Anna in the premiere of Prince Hoare's Dido, Queen of Carthage - a play to which Bell did not have the rights. However, Bell's use of a provincial newcomer in a fanciful portrait such as this served the double function of allowing a contemporary portrait of a new performer and of filling in a gap caused by the problem of illustrating a play which was no longer performed. Other portraits of newcomers in similar unperformed plays formulated a great part of the illustrations of Bell's second British Theatre.

Some fanciful portraits showed actors playing one role in a play when they were associated with another role in the same play. Although Thomas Caulfield was illustrated in the role of Mirabel in Farquhar's Inconstant (Bell 1795), he had only ever been associated with the character of a Bravo in that play - an inconsequential supernumerary part. Likewise, Harrison's engraving of Bensley as Marc Antony in Julius Caesar has no foundation in reality, as Bensley's only connection with this play was in the role of Cassius on 15 February 1780.

Thus book illustrations of theatrical portraits offered an odd mixture of contemporaneity and fancy. Since the books themselves were as important as the illustrations within them, publishers had a certain freedom of choice not possible for print sellers who were concerned with the immediate marketability of a contemporary image, or painters who were dependent upon the desires of their patrons. However, for the

most part, theatrical portraits were related to contemporary performances of the plays they were representing. Whether or not the content of these prints and paintings was in any way indicative of costumes, sets and acting styles of the eighteenth century is the subject of the next two chapters.

Chapter 6

COSTUME AND SET

As the last chapter has shown, new costumes and sets were the inspiration for a number of theatrical prints in the eighteenth century. To a spectacle-conscious eighteenth century audience what the actors wore on stage was almost as important as how well they acted, and naturally theatrical portraitists would have been expected to depict as closely as possible the prevailing styles of stage costume. Accuracy of this sort would have been possible for the artist, since he could have access to the costumes when the actor was not actually performing on stage. Also, the accepted use of lay figures among artists as well as an emphasis on the skill of drapery painting would have concentrated artists' attentions on this aspect of the portrait.

Costume on the eighteenth century stage served two principal functions : it reflected the personality of its wearer, and it was a means of giving a play historical validity. Although choice of costume was ultimately left to the theatrical managers, actors as well were often exhorted to have knowledge of stage costume in order to augment the interpretation of the character which they portrayed.¹ A lack of such knowledge was felt to lead to glaring impropriety in character interpretation:

To suit the dress demands the Actor's Art,
 Yet there are those who over-dress the Part.
 To some prescriptive, Right gives settled things,
 Black Wigs to Murd'rers, feather'd Hats to Kings,
 But Michel Cassio might be drunk enough,
 Tho' all his Features were not grim'd with Snuff.
 Why shou'd Pol Peachum shine in sattin cloaths?
 Why ev'ry Devil dance in scarlet Hose?²

On the other hand, actors who took the time to consider the details of their costume, enhanced their characterisations. Lichtenberg extends this praise to David Garrick:

Sir John Brute is not merely a dissolute fellow, but Garrick makes him an old fop also, this being apparent from his costume. On top of a wig, which is more or less suitable for one of his years, he has perched a small, beribboned, modish hat so jauntily that it covers no more of his forehead than was already hidden by the wig. In his hands he holds one of those hooked oaken sticks, with which every young poltroon makes himself look like a devil of a fellow in the Park in the morning.³

Garrick's additions to his costume added a dimension to the character of John Brute which was not inherent in the text of the play but which was fully in keeping with the overall ridiculous nature of Vanbrugh's creation.

The second function of costume on the eighteenth century stage was as a signal for the historical setting of a play. Since the knowledge of the costume of past centuries was so limited, actors were encouraged to look to history painting to redress their ignorance.⁴ Of course, this reliance led to a vicious cycle, since history painters were often no more enlightened about ancient costume than their theatrical counterparts. However, certain types of costume came to be associated with certain types of setting, so that the audience - whether it knew a particular play or not - would discover in the first few moments of the action whether the setting was Greece or Italy, the legendary past or modern London. The set often aided this recognition, but the prevalent use of ahistorical stock scenes (see below) would have made the costume the most efficient means of evoking the setting. As the century progressed, historical accuracy of a sort became more and more important

to theatrical managers, and theatrical portraits reflect this development. Before going on to discuss costume on the eighteenth century stage and its reflection in theatrical portraiture, it is necessary to mention one word of caution. Modern theatre historians are prone to regard theatrical prints and paintings as a true reflection of eighteenth century stage costume, and they make their judgements about the stage on the basis of these visual reminders. But however minor the art may have been, theatrical portraitists were artists who undoubtedly used their own judgment when the reality did not suit their artistic needs. A modern artist or photographer will dress his model as he likes and pose the model as his fancy takes him; likewise, a theatrical portraitist would not necessarily have been tied down by the specifics of the actor's costume. In this chapter, I hope to show that theatrical portraitists followed the general tendencies, if not the specific details, of stage costume, and in conjunction with this discussion, what implications this had for the art itself.

Contemporary Dress and the Beginning of Historical Accuracy

Hogarth makes an observation in his Analysis of Beauty which reflects a major complaint of mid-century audiences. Speaking of incongruity and humour, he says, "So a Roman General, dress'd by a modern tailor and peruke-maker, for tragedy, is a comic figure".⁵ By the 1750s, audiences were beginning to abhor the stage anachronisms which had seemed so natural to them prior to Garrick's arrival on the stage. Foreign visitors in England had spotted these anachronisms as early as the late seventeenth century, hence Ludwig Muralt's remark:

In [British plays] the heroes of antiquity are travestied ... Hannibal appears in a long powdered wig, with his helmet on, with ribbons on his tabard, and holding his sword in a ringed glove.⁶

But it was only after Garrick began to take all aspects of an actor's portrayal into consideration that writers on acting began seriously to question the state of affairs. One writer, Wilkes, speaks of the costumes of Cato and Brutus in the plays by Addison and Shakespeare:

It is usual to dress these characters in large full-bottom'd or tye wigs; which is both contrary to history and the known character of each, and as great an impropriety as for a Lord Foppington to wear their shapes.⁷

It was considered equally unsatisfactory for the main characters in a historical play to be decked out in the costumes of the times while the minor ones paraded about the stage in contemporary dress.⁸ That such a situation was tolerated for so long without question may seem unusual to us, but the imagination of the audiences - fed with the poetry of the drama as well as the skill of the actors - must have been strong enough to be sustained by the ridiculous images of ancient heroes and heroines wearing bag-wigs and petticoats.

With some variation, the typical eighteenth century gentleman's dress consisted of a three piece suit - coat, waistcoat and breeches - as well as a wig. Styles of wig varied throughout the century and were worn only for special occasions after 1780.⁹ Women's attire consisted usually of a dress, petticoat and stomacher, but details of dress altered from season to season just as they do today.¹⁰ The length and overall cumbersome nature of the female dress was undoubtedly a hindrance to the stage mobility of actresses, and in order to compensate for this deficiency, they had to develop the expressive power of their

arms and faces.¹¹ Theatrical portraits emphasise this use of hands, for portraits of actresses generally include more hand and arm gestures than those of actors. However, despite the grace and ease with which actresses used their upper body, the problems caused by contemporary costume must have created a disharmony in stage action:

Our actresses often are deficient in expression; because their long trains and sweeping robes expose them to the danger of falling in an indelicate manner. Hurried on, sometimes by the real sentiment of the passion which ought to be expressed, they suddenly start back and, their feet entangling in the ample folds of their drapery, they frequently find themselves obliged, in the most interesting situations, to have recourse to their hands, to repair the awkward disorder of their garments.¹²

The men were made equally ridiculous by the fashion of wearing wigs, which may have been faithful to contemporary style, but bore no historical validity whatsoever.

Most of these problems concerned only tragedies, which had geographically and historically distant settings. Indeed, contemporary dress on the stage was only really relevant for comedies - most of which were set in the present day. The emphasis on contemporaneity in comic costume was strong, largely because the means of replicating contemporary fashions were easily accessible. Actors and managers could therefore afford to be as fastidious as Wilkes, who suggested that comic characters should be dressed according to the present age rather than that of the days of the poet:

For example, what should we think of a Lord Foppington, now dressed with a large full-bottomed wig, laced cravat, buttons as large as apples, or Millamont with a headdress four stories high.¹³

This emphasis on contemporary dress in comedy extended even to the plays of Shakespeare, and thus we see in the etching for W. Herbert of Woodward as Mercutio (Figure 184), that actor wearing the dress of a modern, rather than an Elizabethan, gentleman.¹⁴ Contrasts between upper and lower class costume also was a necessary aspect of the use of contemporary dress on the stage. A comparison between the Bell's British Theatre illustrations of Mrs. Yates as Lady Townley (Figure 185) and Miss Harpur as Patty (Figure 186) shows, for example, the distinction in dress between rich and poor, town and country. The lavish trappings of Lady Townley's gown contrast with the simplicity of Patty's dress. The apron and lacings of the latter's costume are further indications of the status of the wearer.

It is no coincidence that the first real stirrings of antiquarianism on the stage were at the hand of the great innovator, David Garrick. Garrick's interest in costume led him to consult a number of "experts" on the subject, including the dilettante, Dominic Angelo Malevotti Tremanondo, father of the more famous Henry Angelo.¹⁵ But Garrick's historicism only led him to the careful development of costume in some plays, such as Richard III¹⁶ where the novelty of a costume from the past would have enhanced the naturalism of his acting. Occasionally, Garrick would launch a new production of a play with characters dressed in period costume; his revival of Jonson's Every Man In His Humour of 1751 with "characters dressed in the old English manner" is only one example of such an event. However, these attempts at historicism were not based on any idealistic intentions. Garrick's principal aim was to draw an audience, and new costumes inevitably attracted big crowds who were tired of the moth-eaten dresses worn over and over again at the two patent theatres. With this in mind,

it is no surprise that Garrick's costumes were historically accurate only in the most general sense; associationism rather than anti-quarianism was the keynote of his innovations.

Nevertheless, contemporaries found Garrick's reforms impressive and effective, and the tribute below sums up the importance of his attempts:

As to the Stage Dresses, it is only necessary to remark that they are at once elegant and characteristic, and among many other Regulations of more Importance, for which the Publick is obliged to the Genius and the Judgment of the present manager of our principal theatre, is that of the Dresses, which are no longer the heterogeneous and absurd mixtures of foreign and antient Modes, which formerly debased our Tragedies, by representing a Roman General in a full bottomed Peruke, and the Sovreign of an Eastern Empire in trunk hose.¹⁷

This statement was made by Thomas Jeffreys who compiled A Collection of the Dresses of Different Nations, a catalogue of foreign and historical costumes. Jeffreys derived most of his visual material from history paintings or engravings of exotic scenes by various artists,¹⁸ but his conception of foreign costumes reflected and perhaps magnified the more general public conception of the time. Since stage costumes were also a concern of A Collection, it is enlightening to consider Jeffreys' pattern book in relation to the historic and exotic costumes in theatrical prints and paintings.

Foreign, Ancient and Historical Costumes

Although to our eyes, Jeffreys' Collection looks somewhat naive, to an eighteenth century observer, the work must have been something of a phenomenon. No other book of quite such a comprehensive nature

existed in England at the time, for Jeffreys not only examined the costumes of places as diverse as Turkey, China, Poland and Spain, but he included various costumes from different periods of English history as well as several examples from the stage. The stage costumes which Jeffreys chose to illustrate were confined almost exclusively to tragedy, since, as I have pointed out, exotic or unusual settings were generally confined to tragic plays. His illustrations and descriptions are non-committal and ostensibly objective, and given this seeming objectivity, it is interesting to study first his exotic costumes and in the next section his stage costumes, in relation to theatrical illustrations contemporary to them.¹⁹

One of the most popular settings for eighteenth century tragedies was Turkey during the Crusades.²⁰ Such a setting not only provided some exotic interest, but it allowed heroic characters to moralise about Christian virtues while condemning pagan barbarism. In theatrical illustrations of plays with Turkish settings the costumes of the men tend to follow a certain set pattern with slight alterations from play to play. The illustration of Bensley as Mahomet (BBT - I)²¹ (Figure 187) is typical.²² Bensley wears baggy trousers, slippers, a turban, and a curved scimitar - an outfit more or less in keeping with Jeffreys' illustration of the Grand Seignior or Emperor of the Turks (Figure 188). Notably Jeffreys' study was taken from Vien's Caravane,²³ and thus the costume of the Grand Seignieur can be dated to about 1700 - hardly the time of the Crusades. But the association of this costume with Turkey would have been indisputable - the question of whether it represented contemporary Turkey or Medieval Turkey would have made no difference to the audience.

A greater fidelity to the stage was expected in the costumes of characters from English history. Jeffreys' illustration of the habit of King Charles I and Roberts' illustration of Hull as Charles in Havard's play of that name (BBT - I) (Figure 189) differ in only minor detail. Both contain the Van Dyke collar, long coat, slightly baggy trousers and trunk hose. This similarity can be explained in part by the fact that portraits of Charles I by van Dyke and others were commonly known through prints, even as late as the end of the eighteenth century. His costume was thus as famous as his face, and theatrical illustrations conform accordingly, just as illustrations of actors playing Henry VIII inevitably echo Holbein's painting of that monarch. However, when dealing with ancient English history or pre-history, artists as well as actors had no such models to fall back on, and they had to use their imaginations to compensate. The result is often ludicrous. For example, de Wilde depicts Bensley as Harold in The Battle of Hastings (BBT - II) wearing a fur-lined cloak, crown, and what looks like a sort of pyjama suit. The other extreme was to minimise the costume entirely as shown in the portrait of Caulfield as Arviragus in Caractacus (BBT - II), where an animal skinned loin-cloth is the only thing which separates Arviragus from total nudity. Since Caractacus was rarely performed, it seems likely that this costume was invented by the artist, for such an unashamed display of flesh would have offended the sensibilities of eighteenth century audiences.

A third type of exotic costume worn on the eighteenth century stage can be defined as Italo-Spanish, and is recognised in theatrical prints by a diamond pattern and large ruffy collar in the men and an excessive use of veils in the women. Jeffreys' depiction of the habit of a Spanish gentleman (Figure 190) is again similar in some particulars

to Roberts' illustration of Yates as Don Manuel in She Would and She Would Not (BBT - I) (Figure 191). The trousers and hats differ slightly and the diamond pattern of Yates' dress is not present in Jeffreys' illustration. Because this diamond pattern was common in eighteenth century theatrical illustrations, it seems likely that the pattern was a stage convention rather than an attempt to reflect the true character of Spanish national dress. In regard to female costume, veils were so commonly associated with the Catholic modesty of Spanish women that their presence in plays was often written in the stage directions. Thus, in the Spanish Fryar, Act I the stage direction reads, "Enter Elvira, veiled", and the portrait of Mrs. Mattocks as Elvira (BBT - I) (Figure 192) shows that actress just so attired. It is important here to stress that the costume details of female dress were necessarily more limited than that of male dress, largely because women were expected to be covered completely.²⁴ Since women had to wear long dresses, exotic costumes could only be distinguished from contemporary dress by details of design or variations of head-gear. Veils were therefore almost exclusively limited to the Spanish dress, since they differentiated that style of costume from any other.

Since Jeffreys was dealing mostly with contemporary dress of different nations, the costume of the ancient world did not fall within his jurisdiction, but in this case, actors had accepted artistic models on which to rely. Again these models were used almost universally, with only slight variations from play to play and between Greek and Roman attire. Thus we see Farren as Orestes (BBT - II) (Figure 193) and Holman as Hippolytus (BBT - II) both wearing short tunics and cloaks, the only difference between them being in minor details of design.

One of the most interesting problems concerning costume on the eighteenth century stage, occurred when Charles Macklin went against convention to play Macbeth in full highland dress (1773).²⁵ Macklin's disastrous efforts have been outlined in another chapter (5), but with regard to his costume, the immediate audience reaction is important to note:

When the audience saw a clumsy old man, who looked more like a Scotch piper, than a general and prince of the blood, stumping down the stage at the head of an army, they were naturally inclined to laugh.²⁶

Why an audience should have laughed at real national dress and not at the absurd tunic affairs of neo-classical tragedy may at first seem inexplicable, but their expectations so coloured their reactions that any innovation of this sort was bound to seem ridiculous at first. After the initial shock of seeing Macklin in kilt and sporran audiences began to expect a Scottish Macbeth, and Davies could write only 11 years later:

We have, at length, emancipated ourselves from the usual mode of ornamenting our heroes, and are coming nearer to truth and nature. The tragedy of Macbeth would have been still dressed in modern habits, if the good taste of Mr. Macklin had not introduced the old highland military habit.²⁷

By the early nineteenth century, such garb was considered not only historically exact but dramatically efficacious as well:

When Macbeth appears on the wild heath, with his plaid-covered Chieftains, is not the fiction more aided by the substitution of the warlike Caledonian garb. than when he marched down the stage with a powdered head, and a gold-laced coat and waist-coat?²⁸

Thus what was once a laughable affront became later an expected convention. How often such changes occurred and how much theatrical portraits reflected the conventions of stage dress is the subject of the next section.

Distinctive Costumes for Distinctive Characters

Aside from the variations of stereotypical national or ancient dress, there is evidence that some roles on the eighteenth century stage were dressed the same way from year to year, actor to actor, or theatre to theatre. For example, Davies speaks of Garrick on his death bed:

He was wrapped in a rich nightgown, like that which he always wore in Lusignan, the venerable old King of Jereusalem.²⁹

and we see Garrick in just such a gown in the double portrait from Zara in Bell's first British Theatre (Figure 181). Likewise, Angelo mentions a false beard that "Baddeley had always used, as Moses, in 'The School for Scandal'",³⁰ but strangely enough, no such beard appears in Zoffany's depiction of Baddeley as the Jewish auctioneer (Figure 75). Conventions of costume were such that Quin refused to play the part of the ghost in Hamlet for reasons outlined by Walpole below:

[Quin] would give no other answer but "I won't catch cold in my --." I don't know whether you remember that the ghost is always ridiculously dressed, with a morsel of armour before, and only a black waistcoat and breech behind.³¹

Some such conventions were dictated by the action of the play itself. The stage directions of The Committee, for example, indicate that the Irishman, Teague, should appear at first dressed only in a

blanket, and both Bell illustrations (e.g. Figure 148) as well as the 1739 mezzotint by Stoppelaer (Figure 89) show him wrapped up in one. However, other distinctions in costume were the result of the efforts of the individual actor. Garrick's astute use of costume has already been mentioned, and Davies describes Garrick's development of the costume of one character in Villiers' play, The Rehearsal:

Mr. Garrick, when he first exhibited Bayes, could not be distinguished from any other gay well-dressed man; but he soon altered it to a dress he thought more suited to the conceit and solemnity of the dramatic coxcomb. He wore a flabby old-fashioned coat, that had formerly been very fine; a little hat, a large flowing brown wig, high-topt shoes with red heels, a mourning sword, scarlet stockings, and cut-fingered gloves.³²

This description fits the illustration of John Henderson as Bayes (BBT - I) (Figure 194) almost down to the last detail, and if this illustration is a true reflection of Henderson's costume, then Garrick's conception of the idiosyncrasies of Bayes' dress must have become a convention on the stage.³³

It is impossible to determine how common such conventions lasted in the wake of changing styles and tastes. However, an examination of the stage costumes depicted in Jeffreys' A Collection of the Dresses of Different Nations followed by a comparison between costumes in theatrical portraits gives some idea of the extent of specific conventions of stage dress. The Collection includes eleven different theatrical characters allegedly attired as they appeared on stage. No names of actors or actresses are mentioned in connection with these costumes, nor is the relevant theatre named. It is no surprise that the costumes sometimes conform to those of the same characters in theatrical portraits and sometimes they differ dramatically. Thus, Jeffreys' depiction of

the costume of the character, Imoinda, in Southerne's Oroonoka (Figure 195), bears no resemblance to Roberts' portrait of Mrs. Hartley as Imoinda (BBT - I) (Figure 196), of only a few years later. Jeffreys' Imoinda appears in a contemporary dress, but Mrs. Hartley is decked in furs more suitable to the exotic character of the play itself. Several explanations for this difference can be postulated : either stage dress styles changed in the six or more years between A Collection and Bell's British Theatre, or Jeffreys was depicting the costume as worn at Drury Lane whereas Mrs. Hartley was at Covent Garden.³⁴ A third explanation lies with the imagination of the artist himself; in order to emphasise the exotic setting or Oroonoko, Roberts perhaps added the animal skins to Mrs. Hartley's dress, even although that actress did not actually wear such skins on stage.

Some of Jeffreys' costumes are similar in form to the Bell costumes, but different in detail. This can be seen in a comparison between Jeffreys' illustration of the costume of Dorilas in Hill's Merope (Figure 197) and Roberts' depiction of Mr. Vincent in that role (Figure 198). Jeffreys describes the costume of Dorilas as follows:

Dorilas is the shepherd in the Tragedy of Merope. The Mantle is green sattin trimmed and puffed with green sattin and white Bugles; the waistcoat is white Sattin; and the Pouch red, trimmed with green Sattin, and white Bugles fastened to a sash of the same; the Breeches are pink Sattin; and the half Boots : yellow.³⁵

Although it is impossible to make colour comparisons, Jeffreys' Dorilas wears an outfit not unlike that of Roberts' Dorilas, but the former is more elaborately decorated than the latter. The same is true of Jeffreys' depiction of the habit of Zara in The Mourning Bride (Figure 199). Although similar in conception to the Bell portrait of Miss

Younge as Zara (Figure 200), the excessive width of the skirt in the Jeffreys illustration is not borne out by the modest size of Miss Younge's dress.

The very detail with which Jeffreys describes stage costumes, and the attention to specifics of colour and material which he devotes to his descriptions, certainly suggest that he had had a close look at the stage costumes of the day. In one particular instance, his depiction of a costume coincides with several theatrical portraits, indicating that this costume was most likely the accepted attire for the character who wears it. The costume referred to is that of Tancred - the Hungarian Hussar of Thomson's play, Tancred and Sigismunda.³⁶ Tancred's uniform consists of a kaftan with triple buttons and braid, a sash, epaulettes, fur-lined boots and high hat. The costume appears in this form not only in Jeffreys (Figure 201) but in Bell's first and second British Theatres (Figure 150), the New English Theatre (Figure 151), the 1752 painting by Worlinge, and in many other works (e.g. Figures 202-204). In fact, no theatrical portrait of Tancred seems to exist which shows that character wearing anything else. Because this costume seems to have been the only one of its kind on the eighteenth century stage, its association with Tancred must have been so fixed that artists would not have been justified in dressing Tancred in anything else.

Another distinctive dress of this kind was that of Posthumous in Shakespeare's Cymbeline. Although Jeffreys does not illustrate this costume, several theatrical portraits of various actors in that role all include this dress. Zoffany's portrait of William Powell as Posthumous (Figure 39) is one such work, and the soliloquy which Powell speaks in the moment chosen by Zoffany, alludes to his dress. After mourning Imogen's death, Posthumous says:

Hear patinetly my purpose: - I'll disrobe me
 Of these Italian weeds, and suit myself
 As does a British peasant: so I'll fight -
 Against the part I come with (V.i)

Therefore the simple garment worn by Powell represents the dress of a British peasant. The same dress appears in Parkinson's painting of Reddish as Posthumous (Figure 205) as well as the engraving for Wenman of that same actor (Figure 206). Reddish had also played Posthumous at Drury Lane, so it seems as if the rival actors performing the same role had recourse to the same costume in the Drury Lane wardrobe, and the various theatrical portraits on the subject are thus confined to this unusual but familiar dress.

Other theatrical portraits also coincide with regard to details of dress. The line engraving for Fielding and Walker of Weston as Scrub (1780) shows that actor in the same curly wig, buckled black shoes and long coat as the 1778 engraving for Wenman's edition of the Beaux Stratagem. Wenman's depiction of Miss Pope as Abigail in The Drummer (1777) (Figure 207) likewise shows that actress in the same costume as the engraving for the New English Theatre (Figure 208) of the same year, and here the details are even more exact. Not only does she wear the same apron and pearl choker in both, but the cross pattern on her dress is the same as well. Although the costume of a famous comic character like Scrub was bound to follow certain conventions, the dress of a stereotypical maidservant in a less popular comedy should not have been tied down to such details. The conclusion to be drawn here is that either Miss Pope really did wear the same dress every time she played Abigail, and this dress is reflected by the respective engravings; or the anonymous Wenman artist - who had access to the New English Theatre engraving - simply copied the dress pattern for the

sake of efficiency.

Sometimes, however, costume detail can vary slightly or even dramatically from print to print. Three illustrations of "Gentleman" Smith as Phocyas (NET, 1777; BBT - I, 1776; and anonymous, n.d.) all show that actor wearing a tunic, cloak and sandals, but the decoration on the tunics as well as the designs of the sandals vary slightly from engraving to engraving. Even more diverse are the illustrations of Sheridan as Cato for Bell (1776) (Figure 160) and Harrison (1779) (Figure 161). Both prints include the same setting details of a chair, table and dagger, and the same moment - Cato's contemplation of suicide - is the focus of both. However, the Roman tunic of Sheridan in the Bell illustration contrasts rather directly with the contemporary dress and wig of Sheridan in the illustration for Harrison. The Harrison engraving reveals succinctly the costume anachronisms which so many critics abhorred at the time, but the fact that the Bell portrait of Sheridan with its Roman tunic was earlier indicates that contemporary costume was no longer associated with the character of Cato. Why then did the later engraver choose to bring back the waistcoat and bag-wig when they were no longer considered suitable for a historical figure? Perhaps Roberts was again applying his imagination to the problem, but this speculation cannot be substantiated. The existence of vast differences in the costumes of figures engraved only a few years apart leads one to be wary about accepting the costumes in theatrical portraits as exact representations of the dresses worn on the stage.

Reynolds, the Empire Dress, and the Further Reformation of Stage Costume

Hitherto, discussion of costume has been limited primarily to the Garrick era and before when questions of historicism and associationism were most prevalent, but the last quarter of the eighteenth century saw changes particularly in female fashions and stage costume which reflected slightly different concerns. The hindrances to expression caused by the cumbersome female dress of the previous years were largely eliminated by the introduction onto the stage of the fashionable chemise or empire dress - a simple, high waisted, flowing robe which allowed women greater freedom of movement.³⁷ The astylar simplicity of this easily adaptable dress endowed it with associations of its own. Not only did it adhere to Reynolds' ideas about female fashion, but it served to enhance the style of acting practised by J. P. Kemble and Sarah Siddons.

The debate about whether or not a portraitist should depict his subjects in contemporary dress was one which dominated the Royal Academy in the last twenty years of the century. West's Death of General Wolfe - showing British soldiers in their common habilliments - was the catalyst of the argument, and Reynolds for years afterwards never fell back on his insistence that contemporary dress was inappropriate in painting. One statement from his third Discourse, will suffice in illustrating his opinion:

However the mechanick and ornamental arts may sacrifice to fashion, she must be entirely excluded from the Art of Painting; the painter must never mistake this capricious changeling for the genuine offspring of nature; he must divest himself of all prejudices in favour of his age or country; he must disregard all local and temporary ornaments, and look only to those

general habits which are every where and always the same.³⁸

The extent of the concern artists felt about such issues can be gauged by a long entry in Farington's diary in which the Royal Academicians, as late as 1795, discuss in ponderous and sober detail the proper dress for a proposed statue of Lord Cornwallis.³⁹

Reynolds' alternative to contemporary dress in women was a sort of bed-gown affair which appears in a number of paintings such as Lady Sarah Bunbury Sacrificing to the Graces (Figure 209).⁴⁰ Reynolds' ideas on fashion became so popular that the French chemise dress with its neo-classical simplicity, found a receptive market in London.

Reynolds' advocacy of a type of dress which had no specific historical associations was also expressed by J. P. Kemble and Sarah Siddons. Indeed, it is likely that Reynolds' ideas on dress may have directly influenced Mrs. Siddons' choice of the shroud-like nightdress of Lady Macbeth in the 1785 Drury Lane production.⁴¹ The novelty of her nightdress was such that the critic of the Morning Post seemed taken aback by it:

She appeared in three several dresses. The first was handsome and neatly elegant; the second rich and splendid, but somewhat pantomimical, and the last one of the least becoming, to speak no worse of it, of any she ever wore upon the stage. Lady Macbeth is supposed to be asleep and not mad; so that the custom itself cannot be alledged as a justification for her appearing in white sattin.⁴²

Indeed, Mrs. Siddons' experiments with dress often back-fired; for example her costume for Rosalind was ridiculed because it was "neither male nor female".⁴³ By trying to create a dress so general that it was not associated with either sex, Siddons carried to an extreme Reynolds' rule of generality in dress. Her intention in doing so was not solely

for mere visual effect - although this was important - but in order to free her body from any encumbrance which would have prevented her from striking the attitudes for which she was so famous.⁴⁴

Siddons' biographer, James Boaden, explains what Mrs. Siddons' costume meant to her, and for this reason, it is worth quoting in full:

Conspiring with the larger stage to produce some change in her style, was her delight in statuary, which directed her attention to the antique, and made a remarkable impression on her, as to simplicity of attire and severity of attitude. The actress had formerly complied with fashion, and deemed the prevalent becoming; she now saw that tragedy was debased by the flutter of light materials, and that the head, and all its powerful action from the shoulder, should never be encumbered by the monstrous inventions of the hair-dresser and the milliner. She was now, therefore, prepared to introduce a *mode of stage* decoration, and of deportment, parting from one common principle, itself originating with a people qualified to legislate even in taste itself. What, however, began in good sense, deciding among the forms of grace and beauty, was, by political mania in the rival nation, carved into the excess of shameless indecency. France soon sent us over her amazons to burlesque all classical costume ... What Mrs. Siddons had chosen remains in a great degree the standard female costume to the present day.⁴⁵

Boaden refers to the chemise dress, which, he infers, was worn by Mrs. Siddons to help fulfill her noble ambitions as a tragedienne, despite the fact that this type of dress was increasingly condemned for being too revealing and risqué.

Siddons' counterpart, J. P. Kemble, was also interested in costume reform, but the neo-classical dress which could be used by a woman in any context, could only be used by a man in a classical play. However, in his costume, Kemble was said to be more interested in the picturesque than in historical accuracy,⁴⁶ thus following Reynolds' idea that

generality was preferable to specificity. In his Companion to the Shakespeare Gallery, Humphrey Repton alludes to Kemble and makes an implicit wish that men's costume was more faithful to Reynolds' rules of generality. Speaking of Hamilton's painting of a scene from Much Ado About Nothing, Repton remarks:

The play is frequently acted; and the characters not only speak for themselves, but are habited in some measure as we are used to see them on the stage. This circumstance was not necessary to be attended to in general, because it might frequently mislead; but those who have seen the judicious taste displayed by Mr. Kemble in his Coriolanus, might perhaps declare there would be no danger in copying from so nice an observer of classic drapery.⁴⁷

The effect of such classic drapery in classical plays must have been visually stunning, and Kemble and Siddons - with their emphasis on tableau and attitude - exploited these classical costumes to further their effects. Lawrence's portraits of Kemble as Coriolanus, Hamlet, Rolla and Cato show just how imposing Kemble's classical drapes and tunics could be. The sheer size of Lawrence's portraits, combined with Kemble's attitudes and classicising dress, give these portraits the semblance of history paintings in as much as they follow Reynolds' suggestions of what a history painting should be.

The changes in stage dress brought about by Kemble and Siddons is reflected in theatrical portraiture as well, and again because of its costume detail, a look at Bell's British Theatre will prove enlightening. A comparison between the illustrations of actresses in Bell's first and second editions of plays gives the most obvious example of the alterations in theatrical costume in that 15 year interim. The actresses in Bell's second edition almost without exception wear the chemise dress in one of its variations. Gone are the heavy skirt and

thick petticoats. The importance of this change of style is emphasised by the fact that illustrations of the second edition which were copied almost directly from the first differ only in the costume. For example, Roberts' illustration of Mrs. Pope as Zara (BBT - II) (Figure 210) bears the same inscription and general appearance of the illustration from Bell's first British Theatre, when that actress was still Miss Younge (Figure 181). The only differences between the two portraits are a decreased emphasis on profile in the later work as well as the substitution of the empire dress for the large thick skirt of the earlier Bell engraving. So universal was this use of the chemise dress, that the historical concerns of the previous generations of actors appear to be forgotten entirely. Thus Roberts' depiction of Mrs. Crawford as Marianne (BBT - II) (see Figures 211 and 212) utilises the empire dress, which in itself offers no hint that the setting of this play is Jereusalem.

This concern for simplicity extended into the dress of the men as well, although here its manifestation is less obvious. The illustrations of Foote as Fondlewife for Bell's first and second editions of the British Theatre (Figure 213) are a case in point. Both illustrations are by the same artist, contain the same inscription and show Foote in the same pose, but the decorated waistcoat and elaborate wig of the former illustration are replaced in the latter by a subdued black coat and Foote's own unwigged hair. The irony of this particular difference is that by the time Bell's second British Theatre was published, Foote had been long dead, and he did not live to see the generation where men went wigless and women wore chemise dresses on the stage.

As in the case of the historicising dress of the Garrick school, the illustrations and paintings which reflect the style of costume

originated by Kemble and Siddons do not necessarily represent that costume down to the last detail. However, the very fact that the Bell artists found alteration in costume the most necessary ingredient to their revised illustrations indicates that theatrical portraitists had to adhere to contemporary stage fashions in order to give their art the authenticity and immediacy which it required.

Set

Theatrical portraits by definition were bound to depict actors in costume - whether it was the exact costume worn on stage or a costume which could have been worn on stage, but that other external trapping of the stage - the set - rarely appears in eighteenth century theatrical portraits. Several reasons can be postulated for this omission. First of all, given the fact that most theatrical portraits contain only a single figure, too many details of the setting would disrupt the harmony of the portrait as well as go against accepted conventions of portraiture. Secondly, the artist who specialised in theatrical portraiture were, for the most part, skilled only in depicting the face and body, and the omission of details of setting by such artists was undoubtedly as much a matter of convenience as of choice. But perhaps the most striking reason why eighteenth century theatrical portraits are devoid of setting details is that such details - if rendered accurately - would detract from any illusion of realism. If we see an actor on the stage where wings and flats are visible, we can suspend our disbelief, whereas if we see a picture of that same actor and those same wings and flats, the illusion of the moment is lost. In fact, theatrical portraits which depict the stage accurately tend to be caricatures - where such fidelity to truth would have been expected.

For instance, in the satire on Foote's play, The Englishman Returned from Paris (Figure 118), we see an unmistakable stage set, complete with visible floorboards, but these details enhance, rather than detract from, the satire. When they did venture to depict a set, serious theatrical portraitists avoided this problem of verisimilitude in two ways : either they selected enough details to suggest a stock scene, or they used their imaginations to create a scene which had artistic worth, if not theatrical validity.

The use of stock scenes was so prevalent in the eighteenth century, that a single set would be used over and over again for as many as forty years.⁴⁸ Nothing remains of these scenes today,⁴⁹ but contemporary accounts reveal that the scenes were limited to a few standard settings such as palace interiors, prisons, city walls, and rural prospects⁵⁰ and that these settings were generalised rather than referential to particular countries or historical periods.⁵¹ The stereotypical nature of eighteenth century tragedy and comedy - with their limited places of action - would have made the use of such sets possible. However, as is the case for costume, new sets would be got up occasionally when enough money was forthcoming, and these new sets would be advertised on playbills with the hopes that they would draw large audiences.

Because of the prevalence of stock sets, theatrical portraitists wishing to depict a set could be justified in merely evoking the particular stock scene in question. The Herbert print of Woodward as Mercutio in Romeo and Juliet (Figure 184) shows that actor before a rather generalised forest, and Zoffany's theatrical conversations of scenes from Lethe (National Theatre and City Museums and Art Gallery, Birmingham) show a similar stock wood scene which again appears to be a mere backdrop to the action. Book illustrations which include

settings also tend to present only the most general stock scenes. The New English Theatre, for example, contains illustrations of contemporary interiors which are devoid of detail and fairly obviously reflections of stock scenes, an example of which is Mrs. Abington as Lady Betty Modish in Cibber's Careless Husband (Figure 214). This generalising led to occasional negligence in the depiction of stock settings to the point that the setting no longer reflected what was intended. For example, the illustration of Mrs. Esten as Belvidera in Venice Preserved (BBT - II) (Figure 215) shows that actress on a balustrade from which trees are visible - even although trees are not traditionally associated with a Venetian setting. Likewise, the New English Theatre illustration of Yates as Lovegold in The Miser (Figure 216), shows that actor in a stock interior, despite the fact that the stage directions (Act II, scene 6) indicate that this particular scene is set in a garden.

De Wilde, more than any other theatrical portraitist, fell back on the stock scene, possibly to allow him the time to mass-produce his theatrical images at a rapid rate. Paintings and engravings by de Wilde with interior settings differ only slightly from each other. De Wilde signals his interiors by a window, a table, a door, a fireplace or a chair, and allows one or two of these awkwardly placed furnishings to suffice for the background of his paintings. To de Wilde, it was not the setting that mattered, but the portrait of the actor in character.

Aside from relying on generalised stock settings, theatrical portraitists could help evoke an atmosphere by piecing together sets out of their imagination. Only one theatrical artist was truly capable of carrying out such an artifice effectively and that artist was Johann Zoffany. Zoffany's blending of realism and imagination has been

observed by critics from his day to ours, but Mary Webster's evaluation of this quality sums it up most succinctly:

Although Zoffany often introduced furniture, pictures and features of interiors from the life, his patrons did not expect him to produce a literal rendering and were prepared to appreciate the fancy the painter had shown in his composition ... The paradox of Zoffany's art is its union of apparently objective presentation with pictorial invention.⁵²

Zoffany's painting of the Tribuna at the Uffizi and his portrait of Charles Townley in his library represent the supreme examples of how that artist altered and arranged the images at hand,⁵³ and such a use of imagination naturally extended to his theatrical conversation pieces, where fantasy could have a freer reign.⁵⁴ A discussion of three of Zoffany's theatrical portraits shows how he manipulated interiors either for greater dramatic efficacy or as a simple display of artistic virtuosity.

Whatever manipulations Zoffany made in his stage settings, he was always faithful to the text of the play. His painting of Baddeley as Moses in the School for Scandal (Figure 75), shows Baddeley standing in front of a wall full of paintings - each of which are described in the course of this scene. In the scene from the play, the good-natured but extravagant Charles Surface has been forced by his debts to sell off the family pictures, and he takes an inventory of these pictures, accompanied by Moses:

Well here's my Great uncle Sir Richard
Raviline - a Marvellous good General in his Day
... there's a Hero for you! not cut out of his
Feathers, as your Modern clipt Captains are -
but enveloped in Wig and Regimentals as a General
should be ... Here now is a Maiden Sister of his,
my Great Aunt Deborah done by Kneller thought to

be in his best Manner; and a very formidable Likeness - There She is you See - A Shepherdess feeding her flock ... Here now are two that were a Sort of Cousins of theirs - you see Moses these Pictures were done some time ago - when Beaux wore Wigs, and the Ladies wore their own hair. (Act IV, scene 1)

And we can see on the wall the paintings as described by Charles in the play; Zoffany has even been so careful as to reproduce the style of Godfrey Kneller in the painting of the shepherdess to the left of Baddeley's head. But what of the sofa behind Baddeley with its richly textured red velvet cover? It seems perhaps an unnecessary addition to the setting, and indeed a caricature representing a later moment in the action of this scene (Figure 216a)⁵⁵ leaves it out altogether. With his interest in furniture and interiors, Zoffany perhaps added the sofa as a punctuation to his portrait and as an example of his skill in rendering materials. Also, the presence of the sofa enriches the overall colour scheme of the portrait itself.

More obvious products of artistic imagination are Zoffany's portraits of A Scene in Love in a Village - with Shuter as Woodcock, Beard as Hawthorne, and Dunstall as Hodge (Figure 96). Two versions of this portrait exist, and they vary in only one particular : the painting on the back wall.⁵⁶ The first version of the portrait (Detroit Institute of Arts) includes a painting of the Judgement of Solomon, the artist of which has yet to be identified, but the second version of A Scene in Love in a Village (Figure 96) includes on the back wall the recognisable portrait of the children of Charles I by van Dyke. This portrait is particularly significant since Zoffany included it in his painting of the children of George III in a room in Buckingham House where the van Dyke actually hunt (Figure 217). If Mander and Mitchenson's dating of A Scene in Love in a Village is correct (1767-87),⁵⁷ then it was painted

four years after the children of George III. The implications of this seem obscure, but it is possible that Zoffany, in his Love in a Village scene was making a personal reference to this earlier work of which he was proud.

Another personal reference occurs in the unusual portrait of Mrs. Abington as the Widow Bellmour in Murphy's All in the Wrong (Figure 74). Again, Zoffany's setting in this case is faithful to the stage directions:

A Room at the Widow Bellmour's, in which are disposed up and down, several chairs, a Toilette, a Bookcase.

But the dressing table, fireplace and painting in Zoffany's portrait are nowhere mentioned in the stage directions, and one is led to question why Zoffany saw fit to develop the Widow Bellmour's boudoir in such detail. Again a comparison with a royal portrait proves helpful. Zoffany's painting of Queen Charlotte with her two eldest sons (Figure 218) not only contains furniture which reappears in the Mrs. Abington portrait, but the dispositions of the window, table and painting in the two rooms are the same.⁵⁸ Whatever Zoffany's reason for such a self-referential tribute, his portrait of Mrs. Abington as the Widow Bellmour does not reflect the eighteenth century stage as it was, or even as it might have been.

Zoffany's ingenuity was not matched by any of his contemporaries, and his treatment of sets in his theatrical portraits was unique. Zoffany had the versatility to concern himself with more than one aspect of a theatrical portrait; he considered the whole scene in all its detail, and balanced dramatic truth with artistic effectiveness. However, most theatrical portraitists of the century saw the set of a

play as an extraneous detail to be ignored or avoided, and they focussed their attentions on the faces and bodies of the actors, who were, indeed, the only indispensable element of the eighteenth century stage.

Chapter 7

GESTURE AND EXPRESSION

Like his eighteenth century predecessors, a modern theatre-goer expects to see an interpretation of reality which is credible in its own right and actors who are convincing representations of imaginary characters. What has changed in the 200 year interim between David Garrick and John Hurt or Sarah Siddons and Maggie Smith, is the means by which this illusion of reality is perpetuated and the methods by which suspension of disbelief is attained. The English school of acting has extolled, from its inception, naturalism as the goal of an actor's performance, but what was considered naturalistic to one generation seemed hopelessly artificial to the next. Charles Lamb's praise of Shakespeare's tragedies was inspired by thoughts which he had upon viewing the image of Garrick in Westminster Abbey. Lamb was appalled by the verses on Garrick's tomb which equated that actor's art with the genius of Shakespeare. In what was ostensibly a polemic for the complexities of Shakespeare's view of man, Lamb implicitly condemned the acting style of the previous generation as hopelessly affected and two-dimensional:

How people should come thus unaccountably to confound the power of originating poetical images and conceptions with the faculty of being able to read or recite the same when put into words; or what connection that absolute mastery over the heart and soul of man, which a great dramatic poet possesses, has with those low tricks upon the eye and ear, which a player by observing a few general effects, which some common passion, as grief, anger &c, usually has upon the gestures and exterior, can so easily compass. To know the internal workings and movements of a great mind, of an Othello or a Hamlet for instance, the when and the why and the how far they should be moved; to what pitch a passion is becoming; to give the reins

and to pull in the curb exactly at the moment when the drawing in or the slackening is most graceful; seems to demand a reach of intellect of a vastly different extent from that which is employed upon the bare imitation of the signs of these passions in the countenance or gesture, which signs are usually observed to be most lively and emphatic in the weaker sort of minds, and which signs can after all but indicate some passion, as I have said before, anger or grief, generally; but of the motives and grounds of the passion, wherein it differs from the same passion in low and vulgar natures, of these the actor can give no more idea by his face and gesture than the eye (without a metaphor) can speak, or the muscles utter intelligible sounds.¹

The gist of Lamb's eloquent, if rather long-winded, statement is that the plays of Shakespeare could not be acted convincingly, that the "signs" of the passions were inadequate shorthand symbols for a much richer development of character by the dramatist himself.

Not surprisingly, this same objection was tendered against portraiture, particularly in the eighteenth century when the question of how to represent a living man's features was a topic of great concern. Although the theoretical idealism of the century dictated that a portrait should convey a man's character,² the more detached observers realised the futility of this exercise:

Who is able to express or paint the look of love - the soft emotion of sensibility diffusing blessedness around? - the dawn or the decline of desire and hope? - the delicate traits of a calm pure and disinterested tenderness? ... Is the image to be conveyed by China-ink, light by a crayon, the expression of life by clay or oil?³

This passage from Lavater's Physionomy reflects a typical frustration of artists. Not only was the capturing of character an elusive and tantalising task, but conveying emotional complexity was equally as daunting and prohibitive. This problem had to be confronted by portraitists

and history painters alike - whether the artistic subject was a real baronet or an imagined literary figure, the means of communicating the appropriate character and emotion was problematic. In this respect, theatrical portraitists faced the most trying test of all : how to capture the emotions and personality of a fictional character while simultaneously presenting the portrait of a living man.

This problem was confounded further by the high proportion of attention which eighteenth century London audiences directed toward the individual actors. Because of the limitation of two patent theatres, the public focus on a handful of superior actors was extreme, to say the least. The more elevated and literary acting treatises and biographies concerned themselves with the actor's physical appearance and how that physical appearance could be altered or exploited in order to convey the illusion of character; the popular press, on the other hand, was rife with articles about the private lives of actors, including evaluations of their physical attractiveness and personal appeal.⁴ Although to an extent, this sort of voyeurism still persists today, it is rare that a modern stage critic will devote any attention to details such as how an actor's face is contorted in a death scene or where he puts his hands when he is startled or terrified. In the eighteenth century everyone knew what the strengths and weaknesses of individual actors were, and everyone expected a certain series of familiar manoeuvres and techniques from an actor playing a particular role.⁵ The theatre-going public, with their detailed scrutiny of the physiognomy of individual actors, would also have had certain expectations about the appearance of theatrical portraits. The question therefore arises as to how accurately theatrical portraits express a likeness of the actor depicted and, more significantly, how much they reflect stage

conventions of gesture and expression at the time as well as the idiosyncrasies of individual actors. In attempting to answer these questions, both artistic theory and practice as well as theory and practice of acting will have to be considered.

The Posed Actor

In his Life of Reynolds, Northcote reports an interesting and revealing story about the posing practices of actors:

David Garrick sat many times to Sir Joshua Reynolds for different portraits. At one of these sittings he gave a very lively account of his having sat once for his portrait to an indifferent painter, whom he wantonly teased; for when the artist had worked on the face till he had drawn it very correctly, as he saw it at the time, Garrick caught an opportunity, whilst the painter was not looking at him, totally to change his countenance and expression, when the poor painter patiently worked on to alter the picture and make it like what he then saw; and when Garrick perceived that it was thus altered, he seized another opportunity and changed his countenance to a third character, which, when the poor tantalised artist perceived, he, in a great rage, threw down his pallet and pencils on the floor, saying, he believed he was painting from the devil, and would do no more to the picture.

As a contrast to the foregoing anecdote of Garrick I remember that Mrs. Yates, the famous tragedian, when she sat for her portrait to Sir Joshua Reynolds, said to him, "I always endeavour to keep the same expression and countenance when I sit to you, Sir Joshua; and, therefore, I generally direct my thoughts to one and the same subject".⁶

The above anecdote outlines the essential problems an artist must have had painting an actor in character : either the actor would have to assume a gesture and expression which would undoubtedly become very quickly stilted and unnatural; or he would have to sit as still as a stone. Northcote himself found the actor's stillness unacceptable

when he painted J. P. Kemble in the character of Richard III for the Shakespeare Gallery. He complains:

When he sat to me for the Richard III. meeting the children, he lent me no assistance whatever in the expression I wished to give, but remained quite immovable, as if he were sitting for an ordinary portrait.⁷

Northcote's distinction between posing for an ordinary portrait and for a portrait with some dramatic efficacy reveals that artists needed help from the actor in creating a dramatically convincing painting.

The question of whether actors posed for theatrical portraits or whether the artists painted them from sketches or from memory, remains to be resolved, but it can be postulated that individual portrait likenesses in theatrical conversation pieces as well as single figure portraits were often painted from the posed actor. Northcote, who appears to have been something of an expert on the subject, reveals that Zoffany needed the physical presence of the actor in order to create a convincing image:

All those strong likenesses of players which you saw of Zoffany's were not done by memory (which is almost impossible) but they all sat to him as they would to any other painter.⁸

This assertion is backed up by Angelo's remarks that Zoffany painted his portrait of Moody as Foigard and studies of Garrick as Sir John Brute in his Covent Garden lodgings and took pains to see to it that Garrick in particular was posing with his stage dress on.⁹ Samuel de Wilde, likewise, painted his portraits of actors in character on the basis of sittings, as few as one or as many as eight for a more ambitious actor portrait.¹⁰

Whether or not the actor or the artist chose an attitude and gesture of the portrait possibly depended upon the circumstances of the commission. Zoffany, under Garrick's patronage, most likely allowed the actor to use his judgement of both painting and theatre to choose the appropriate attitude, but de Wilde sometimes demanded a certain pose and sometimes left the choice up to the actor.¹¹ The portraits in Bell's British Theatre by de Wilde and others often appear posed, particularly when they are representative of a role which the actor in question never played. Thus Roberts' portraits of Miss Wallis as Aspasia (Figure 219) and Master de Camp as Hengo (BBT - II) both show the actors in a standing cross-legged pose - one of the most popular poses for full-length portraits of the day.

Reynolds' remarks on the posing of portraits in general are revealing in a theatrical context as well:

It is better to possess the model with the attitude you require than to place him with your own hands: by this means it happens often that the model puts himself into an action superior to your own invention ... besides; when you fix the position of a model, there is danger of putting him in an attitude into which no man would naturally fall.¹²

The attitude of Mrs. Siddons in Reynolds' portrait of her as the Tragic Muse was allegedly the result of accident, but the obvious analogy between her pose and that of Michelangelo's Isaiah (Sistine Chapel) renders such an allegation absurd.¹³ Sir Henry Russell relates a similar anecdote surrounding Romney's painting of Mrs. Jordan as Priscilla Tomboy in The Romp (present location unknown):¹⁴

I recollect hearing Romney describe her [Mrs. Jordan], as she came to sit to him for her picture. For some time they could hit upon no

attitude that pleased them both; whatever one proposed, the other rejected. At last, Mrs. Jordan, pretending to be tired and to be going away, sprang out of her chair and putting herself into an attitude, and using an expression belonging to her popular part in "The Romp" she said, "Well, I'm a-going". Romney instantly exclaimed, "That will do!" and in that attitude and uttering that expression, he painted her.¹⁵

Although the above tale was undoubtedly embellished, actors certainly must have had some say in the posing of their character portraits, and their knowledge of the proper theatrical attitudes would certainly have assisted the artist.

The visual effect of the posing actor must have been unusual and unnatural, and it would have taken all of the ingenuity of the artist to give the pose the appearance of a transient theatrical moment. The very oddness of this situation is revealed by John O'Keefe, who visited Gainsborough Dupont's studio while that artist was painting Joseph George Holman as Edgar in King Lear:

On the door of the back drawing-room opening, I was surprised, and a little shocked, to see the room darkened (day-light shut out), and lighted by a large lamp hanging from the centre of the ceiling: there stood a man half naked, a ghastly figure with a blanket round him, staring wildly, holding a pole in his stretched-out hand. This was Holman in the character of Edgar, mad Tom; Gainsborough Dupont was painting him. I heard it was the custom of the latter to paint much by lamp-light.¹⁶

If this statement is to be believed, not only must we see Holman's facial control as phenomenal, but Dupont's use of costume and artificial light seem to be an attempt to recreate the theatrical situation in his own studio. The painting itself reveals the surprising efficacy of such a technique - Holman appears as O'Keefe describes him, a macabre wide-eyed figure standing in a grisly pale light.

The evidence, anecdotal though it is, points to the fact that actors did indeed pose for theatrical portraits, and art historians who attempt to relate such portraits directly to the stage practices of the day would be wrong to ignore such a fact. The posing of theatrical portraits suggests an active rather than passive attitude on the part of both the artist and the performer, and an awareness of this active attitude helps in the understanding of the portraits themselves. These factors must be kept in mind when exploring the relationship between acting theory and practice and theatrical portraiture.

The New Naturalism and Distinctions Between Tragedy and Comedy

Henry Fielding's admiration for David Garrick inspired him to praise that actor's talent indirectly through the misguided criticism of the pompous Partridge in Tom Jones:

"He the best Player!" cries Partridge with a contemptuous sneer. "Why I could act as well as he myself. I am sure if I had seen a Ghost, I should have looked in the very same manner, and done just as he did."¹⁷

The implication that Garrick's acting style was almost too real to be called acting is undoubtedly an exaggerated one,¹⁸ but from the time of Garrick's early successes at Goodman's Field's Theatre, actors were forced to question the monotonous declamatory style which had hitherto dominated the stage.¹⁹ Nevertheless, the claim for the naturalism of Garrick's acting seems the result of contemporary perspective rather than a tenable point in its own right.²⁰ Garrick's "realism" of character interpretation, phenomenon though it was, had to be subject to the same rules of acting which dominated the theoretical literature of the time. Garrick's own definition of acting indirectly underlines

these very limitations:

Acting is an Entertainment of the Stage which by calling in the Aid and Assistance of Articulation, Corporeal Motion, and Ocular Expression, imitates assumes or puts on the various mental and bodily Emotions arising from the various Humours, Virtues and Vices, incident to Human Nature.²¹

This emphasis on corporeal motion - the external manifestation of the workings of the mind - was the key to eighteenth century acting theory, and in many respects, had its roots in Aristotle.²² Before discussing how acting practice was manifested in theatrical portraits, it is important first to consider just what these theoretical roots were and what implications they had for the way in which an actor performed his role.

In his Poetics, Aristotle's distinction between tragedy and comedy is founded upon a contrast of types of people. Comedy is about inferior, base, or ugly people whereas tragedy concerns men who are extraordinary, elevated and beautiful. Significantly, the Augustan mind, with its emphasis on order and clarity, regarded Aristotle's Poetics as a Bible for representation - not only in the theatre, but in painting as well. Thus we see artists from Hogarth to Reynolds making analogies between comedy and genre painting, tragedy and history painting - the former because they are generally representative of baser sorts of men and the latter because they concern only kings and heroes.²³ The simplicity of Aristotle's argument made it easily adaptable to all the arts, and the several treatises on acting in the eighteenth century inevitably rely heavily upon it. Like Aristotle's Poetics, these treatises tend to place a disproportionate emphasis on tragedy, eschewing the more problematic discussion of comic acting. A glance at several of the basic

tenets of these treatises illuminates how Aristotle's theory crept into acting practice, and how the differences between tragedy and comedy on the stage were exaggerated.

Writing anonymously in 1744, David Garrick presents his version of Aristotle's contrast between tragedy and comedy:

The first [Tragedy] fixes her Empire on the Passions, and the more exalted Contractions and Dilations of the Heart; the last, [Comedy] tho' not inferior ... holds her Rule over the less enobled Qualities and Districts of human Nature, which are called the Humours.²⁴

The implication of Garrick's statement is that tragedy, by definition, concerns itself with transient emotions, the expression of the passions, or what can be called pathognomic values; whereas comedy focusses upon man's essential character, his foibles and quirks or physiognomic values. Of course, both physiognomy and pathognomy are external indications of the workings of the soul, and as Garrick quite rightly realised, the externals are the beginning and end of an actor's art.

Several acting treatises of the century also echoed Aristotle in attempting to define just what these externals should be. John Hill, William Cooke, Thomas Pickering, Samuel Foote, and Thomas Wilkes²⁵ all directed their attention towards attempting to specify the differences between tragedy and comedy. The consensus among these writers reflected first of all the belief that tragedy - by its very nature - had only a limited repertoire of characters:

The performer in tragedy, even tho' he push his success so far as to attempt every kind of character within the compass of it, and plays one night in the tender and affecting strain, another in the majestic, and a third in the fierce and terrible, has nothing more to study, than to be

able to represent with proper dignity the man of consequence; or, at the utmost, he has only a very few characters, and those all alike in many things, to copy.²⁶

This limitation of character was the result of the elevated quality of tragedy, which was meant to convey its moral through its very distance from common experience.²⁷ Any attempt to bring tragedy down to earth with a heavy injection of realism was shunned by eighteenth century critics. One German visitor spoke vehemently against naturalism in English tragic acting, with the conclusion that "Realism is for the historian, not for the dramatist"²⁸ and Garrick himself was criticised for his portrayal of Lear, because in the role "he looked as like a mad any thing else, as a mad king".²⁹

Thus, a certain amount of idealisation was considered a prerequisite for tragedy, and consequently, in practice, any detailed development of character necessitated a breach of decorum. The expression of the passions - love, hate, anger, fear - was the primary concern of the tragedian, and even Shakespeare's plays were subject to a great deal of cutting and chopping in order to fit them into such a two-dimensional mold. Comedy, on the other hand, was felt to involve an infinite variety of character, and English comedy - in contrast to its French counterpart - avoided neo-classical stereotyping in favour of a more varied slice of life.³⁰ Involving as it did common man, comedy was felt by some to be unlimited in its potential, and its presentation of character was expected to be as true to life as possible. The differences between tragedy and comedy were taken so seriously that as late as the 1790s John Bell could react with distaste to the idea of including comic relief in a serious tragedy,³¹ and even sentimental comedy was shunned by some literary critics largely because they felt that its

heavy morality was more in keeping with tragedy.³²

In practice, such rigid classification had an obvious effect on the way actors looked on stage and how artists depicted them in their tragic, as opposed to comic, roles. Hogarth's assertion that ideal characters are serpentine and comic characters are round,³³ represents the sort of somatotypical analysis which also had application to stage characters. Several theatrical portraits by various artists demonstrate the effects of these contrasts. Although he was not depicting an actual theatrical event, Reynolds in his portraits of Garrick between Tragedy and Comedy (Figure 220), Mrs. Abington as the Comic Muse (Figure 60) and Mrs. Siddons as the Tragic Muse (Figure 56) was faced with the problem of how to contrast tragic and comic types. In the Garrick portrait, he used the model of the Judgement of Hercules, and gave Virtue, in the guise of the Tragic Muse, a stark, theatrical gesture and an idealised countenance.³⁴ Comedy (or Pleasure) is allowed a more varied and unusual gesture and expression as she attempts to seduce Garrick away from her rival. The portraits of Mrs. Abington as the Comic Muse and Mrs. Siddons as the Tragic Muse, although painted years apart, offer an even more obvious example of the differences between the two types of character. Mrs. Abington stands in a casual, cross-legged pose, her head cocked to the side, her face wearing a slightly wry smile; Mrs. Siddons, on the other hand, towers monumentally in an imposing and meaningful attitude. The contrast between intimacy and familiarity on the one hand and elevation and detachment on the other is here made obvious. Mrs. Abington is an embodiment of human character; Mrs. Siddons represents the Aristotelian passions of Pity and Terror - the personifications of which stand behind her throne.

On a less elevated level, a similar contrast of gesture is apparent in George Carter's rather ridiculous tribute, The Immortality of Garrick (1782) (Figure 221). In his painting, Carter includes the leading Drury Lane actors and actresses all decked out as various Shakespearean characters. The tragic characters exhibit gestures which are large and meaningful : Miss Younge (Cordelia) kneels, her hands clasped, as does Mrs. Hartley (Desdemona) who also flings out both her arms towards the spirit of Garrick; whereas Mrs. Abington (Beatrice) casually removes her mask, and King (Touchstone) stands with arms crossed as if he is waiting for a bus. Some attempt is thus made in this painting to contrast tragic and comic types primarily through the use of body language.

However, these visual differences are only basic ones and are used here merely to defend the thesis that the tragic view of man and the comic view of man were essentially distinct and followed very specific rules. The theatrical portraitist, when confronted with the task of painting an actor playing a role had to concern himself both with the rules of acting and the equally prohibitive rules of painting. This inter-relationship between the arts was particularly important in respect to the expression of the passions in history painting and tragic acting. The remainder of this chapter will, therefore, examine the theoretical relationship between tragedy and history painting, and the representation of tragic roles in theatrical portraiture, followed by a discussion of comic actor portraits and their artistic and theatrical importance.

The Expression of the Passions : LeBrun and the Art of Tragio Acting

The question of how to depict a man expressing rage, joy or grief was one which became an obsessive concern for eighteenth century artists, and like much theoretical speculation of the time, English artists took their cue from the French. The attempt by Charles LeBrun in 1669 to establish categories of the passions and rules on how to depict them in art has been well documented,³⁵ but it would not be amiss here to summarise these facts again to create a greater understanding of the attitudes of artists in Britain.

Although there have been convincing philosophical justifications for LeBrun's Conference sur l'expression,³⁶ Hogarth, writing in 1753, called the work rather more appropriate, "a common drawing book".³⁷ Thus what was meant to be a serious aid for serious artists, became in little more than fifty years a pattern book for amateurs. LeBrun's initial desire seems to have been to put into artistic practice, the basic tenets of Cartesian philosophy. Descartes' definition of a passion is important in this respect:

nous devons penser ce qui est en elle [l'âme]
une Passion, est communement en luy (sic) [le
corps] un Action.³⁸

Given that our reading of the action of someone else's body is our only means of knowing the passion of the soul, the understanding of these external manifestations was considered of primary importance to the artist from the time of the Renaissance.³⁹ However, LeBrun's Conference was the first public attempt to categorise and define the passions in detail as well as to establish an artistic model for each one. Thus subsequent artists of little imagination wanting to depict, for instance, a terrified expression, would merely open their volume of LeBrun

and copy the open mouth and wide eyes of the terrified expression illustrated there. What was meant to be a helpful outline thus became an end in itself.

This obvious self-limitation has been the most potent criticism levelled at LeBrun by modern critics as well as critics of the time,⁴⁰ but artists in England in particular found much to disapprove of in more basic aspects of his theory. Alexander Cozens' definition of a beautiful face as one which, essentially, contains no character or expression, was placed in an artistic context by Reynolds who stated emphatically:

If you mean to preserve the most perfect beauty in its most perfect state you cannot express the passions, all of which produce distortion and deformity, more or less, in the most beautiful faces.⁴¹

The ugliness of grimace superimposed upon the noble countenances of the gods and heroes of history painting was felt to be improper and unreasonable, and this problem was, not surprisingly, a concern of tragic actors as well.

LeBrun's Conference was translated into English in 1701 and 1734, and was widely known amongst artists here, but more significantly his ideas were adapted by other theorists whose concerns were not primarily artistic. For example, Dr. James Parsons, an acquaintance of Hogarth's, delivered a lecture to the Royal Society in 1746 entitled "Human Physiognomy Explained". This lecture, published in 1747, ostensibly rejected LeBrun's Conference in several particulars,⁴² but nevertheless relied heavily on LeBrun's categories of the passions and descriptions of facial expression. Thus although Parsons' lecture was primarily

meant to be a medical tract on muscular motion, its descriptive and anecdotal passages appear to be aimed at the artist rather than the man of medicine. In his introduction, Parsons informs his audience:

I have endeavour'd to make these Lectures as entertaining as I could, and as instructive; whereby an one versed in the Art of designing, may be able to represent the Passions of the Mind upon the Face, by dint of his knowledge of the muscular structure.⁴³

Parsons' allusions to Hogarth⁴⁴ further confirm this focus of his tract, and a further reference to Benjamin Hoadley's play, The Suspicious Husband, confirms that Parsons also considered theatrical representation as falling within the same category.

Not surprisingly, LeBrun's influence extended directly into the acting treatises themselves. It is no coincidence that prior to the eighteenth century, the stage delivery of the passions was ignored in England,⁴⁵ but in the wake of LeBrun's categorisation of the passions, English theorists began to write treatises in which the actor's interpretation of the passions became a primary concern. The first acting tract of consequence in this respect was published the same month that Dr. Parsons delivered his lecture on muscular motion, November 1746.⁴⁶ The title of this treatise, written by playwright and poet, Aaron Hill, is illuminating and worth quoting in full:

The Art of Acting, Deriving Rules from a New Principle for Touching the Passions in a Natural Manner. An Essay on General use to those who hear, or speak in public and to the practicers of many of the elegant Arts; as Painters, Sculptors, and Designers: But adapted in particular to the Stage: with view to quicken the Delight of audiences, and form a judgment of the actors, in their Good or Bad performances.

Thus painting was not outside Hill's concern, and as I have shown previously, history painting and tragic acting were in many ways subject to the same rules. Indeed Hill's Art of Acting was so heavily reliant upon LeBrun, that certain passages appear to be taken directly from the Academician's Conference.⁴⁷ Certainly criticism levelled against the Art of Acting was the same as that used against LeBrun:

From so copious a treatise, one would be led to imagine he had exhausted the subject. But he has, in our opinion, rather mistaken the manner of treating it; attempting to give a rule for every thing, he has reduced those things to a standard of mechanism, which should be left to nature and observation.⁴⁸

Other acting treatises also had thinly disguised Le-Brunian roots. For example, Thomas Wilkes' A General View of the Stage presents a catalogue of the passions which deviates from LeBrun's in only minor particulars,⁴⁹ and Samuel Foote's description of rage alludes to the Cartesian animal spirits which formed the basis for LeBrun's argument about how a passion rises from the soul to the face:

In every degree of this Passion [Rage], the Muscles are contracted and their Force encreased, whether this be occasioned by the Blood or Spirits being rapidly drove from other Parts of the Body, to the extream and muscular ones, as the Arms, Legs and Face, we will leave to the Determination of the Physicians.⁵⁰

Thus we can see a limited system with a strong theoretical base dictating not only how artists should paint but how tragedians should act. In practical terms, these theorists who argued for such a system in acting had to consider just how an actor could exhibit these passions properly on the stage. The result of this consideration was the proto-Stanislavskian exhortation that an actor, in order to do proper

justice to his character, must genuinely feel the passion which he expresses:

Would the tragedian strongly impress the illusion of his performance upon us, he must first impress it as strongly upon himself; he must feel every thing strongly that he would have his audience feel: In order to his utmost success, it is necessary that he imagine himself to be, nay that he for the First time really is the person he represents.⁵¹

John Hill's matter-of fact assertion is presented in its most concise form by Charles Churchill, who insisted in his poetic critique of acting, "Those who would make us feel, must feel themselves".⁵² In fact, such an opinion was universal amongst acting critics of the century;⁵³ the affectation of assuming an unfelt passion was considered somehow morally heinous as well as dramatically ineffective. For example, a tragic actress such as Mrs. Baddeley, who had a series of scandalous affairs, was a product of some critical disgust - not because she was a bad actress, but because her presentation of the nobler passions was convincing despite the baser aspects of her personal life.⁵⁴ Conversely, Charles Churchill defended Mrs. Pritchard against critics who claimed that her latter-day plumpness detracted from the realism of her performance. Churchill wrote:

FIGURE, I own, at first may give offence,
And harshly strike the eyes to curious sense
But when perfections of the mind break forth,
'Humour's chaste sallies, Judgment's solid worth;
When the pure genuine flame, by Nature taught,
Springs into sense, and ev'ry action's thought;
Before such merit all objections fly;
PRITCHARD's genteel, and GARRICK's six feet high.⁵⁵

The insistence that actors become the parts they were playing led to procedures among actors which have a curiously modern feel to them. Dogget, for example, took up residence in Wapping in order to gather

background for his portrayal of Ben the Sailor in Love for Love, and John Bannister had a session amidst the Quakers in preparation for his role in Centlivre's Bold Stroke for a Wife.⁵⁶

As I have shown, acting theory derived from artistic theory a series of practical rules for displaying the passions, and acting theory took a step further in attempting to create a justification for this form of expression by insisting that the actor really feel the passions he represents. Unfortunately, what seemed to be a logical and airtight theory crumbled in practice, for despite this emphasis on feeling, eighteenth century tragedians were tied down by these very rules of expression. The formulaic approach to expression was partially responsible for a limited repertoire of tragic gesture which confined the passions of fear, love, sadness, etc. to a few standard gestures and expressions used by all actors in certain given moments:

Tragedy not only takes in but few passions, but all that it does employ, bear a sort of natural conformity to one another; they are all violent, and all serious ones; its heroes are always either in the most vehement transports, or in the deepest melancholy.⁵⁷

These extremes were facilitated by the long speeches which formed the basis of most tragedies in the eighteenth century repertoire. Each speech was seen to have a dominant passion, and it was the external manifestation of that passion - in the form of an attitude - which was to convey the prevailing mood to the audience.⁵⁸ A tragedian's skill lay in his ability to move from one passion to another,⁵⁹ but these transitions were hasty and abrupt. Subtlety was the last quality that audiences expected a tragedian to have. At first it may seem artificial to insist on the prevalence of the attitude school of acting throughout the whole of the eighteenth century, but in fact the

evidence indicates that despite changes in acting style, actors from Betterton to Kemble continually focussed upon the striking of attitudes as the means of expressing the passions in tragedy.⁶⁰

However, unlike French neo-classical theatre, the art of acting was never so confined by rules that each passion was limited to a specific attitude. The propriety of age and circumstance was felt to be a necessary consideration for the tragedian,⁶¹ and this concern created a certain amount of fluidity in the actor's physical interpretation of the passion. This sense of decorum was in itself limiting. The real hindrance to a strict formula of acting gesture was the idiosyncrasy of the actors themselves, whose knowledge of the proper way to express the passions never militated entirely against their own interpretations of the character. Logically enough, the specialities of individual actors were nearly always concentrated upon the expression of specific passions, and critical reaction to tragedians centred on these specifics. Mrs. Cibber and James Barry, for example, were known for their ability to express the softer passions such as love and sadness, whereas Mrs. Yates and Garrick specialised in the harsher passions of rage, fear and revenge.⁶² Criticisms levelled against tragedians nearly always focussed upon some inadequacy in their ability to express the passions, and most criticisms can be confined to essentially four categories - artificiality, monotony, parroting and formulaic use of gesture. An examination of these problems helps elucidate how eighteenth century acting theory worked in practice.

Because of the extreme bodily reaction necessary in striking a dramatic attitude, anticipation of that attitude was a problem which crippled the performance of more than one actor. In describing Barry's performance in Hamlet Charles Churchill accuses him of just such a

fault:

Some dozen lines before the ghost is there,
Behold him for the solemn scene prepare
See how he frames his eyes, poises each limb,
Puts the whole body into proper trim, -
From whence we learn, with no great stretch of art,
Five lines hence comes a ghost, and ha! a start.⁶³

This intense preparation suggests that certain attitudes were too pointed and artificial for an actor to fall into them naturally.

Lloyd's criticism of acting underlines this dominant artificiality:

Unskillful Actors, like our mimic Apes,
Will writhe their Bodies in a thousand Shapes;
However foreign from the Poet's Art,
No tragic hero but admires a Start.
What though unfeeling of the nervous line,
Who but allows his Attitude is fine?
While a whole minute equipos'd he stands,
Till Praise dismiss him with her echoing Hands.
Resolv'd, though Nature hate the tedious Pause,
By Perseverance to extort Applause.
When Romeo sorrowing at his Juliet's Doom,
With eager Madness bursts the canvas Tomb,
The sudden whirl, stretch'd Leg, and lifted Staff,
Which please the Vulgar, make the Critic laugh.⁶⁴

Ultimately this sort of excessive attitude was a mere claptrap which the audience expected and appreciated for its very excess.⁶⁵

The converse of this problem was an avoidance of extremes to the point of monotony. Accusations of this sort were made against most actors at one time or another, but the tragedian, "Gentleman" Smith seems to have possessed this problem to a greater degree than most:

Perch'd on the utmost summit of his voice,
Utt'rance proclaims monotony his choice;
RICHARD, CASTALIO are but change of name,
We find him everlastingly the same.⁶⁶

Aside from anticipation and monotony, an actor's expression of the passions was occasionally hindered by too heavy a reliance on the

techniques of another actor. This was particularly prevalent in the age of Garrick, when a series of younger men took their mentor's instructions too literally.⁶⁷ One of these men was Charles Holland, who appears in Churchill's parade of actors as a veritable clone of the greater Garrick:

Next. H-LL-D came. - With truly tragic stalk,
He creeps, he flies, - An heroe should not walk ...
Attitude, action, air, pause, sigh groan
He borrow'd, and made use of as his own.
By fortune thrown on any other stage,
He might, perhaps have pleas'd an easy age;
But now appears a copy, and no more,
Of something better we have seen before.⁶⁸

A final criticism levelled against the expression of the passions in tragic acting was the use of formulaic gesture. Sarah Siddons, who was responsible for injecting an element of classical formalism into tragedy, was not surprisingly also guilty of establishing set attitudes for specific passions:

The most confirmed ideot of the theatre, who has seen her exhibit but three different characters can tell by the extension of one arm, when to expect an Ah! and by the brandishing of another when to expect an Oh! The same gestures accompany her mad exertions in all parts; and it does not signify a rush whether the heroine of the place is an Eastern princess, or a private gentlewoman.⁶⁹

Siddons' brother, J. P. Kemble, was equally guilty of such abuse of attitude, and several theatrical prints of the period satirise this failing. One such print, entitled, The Theatrical Ranter appeared in the Carlton House Magazine in 1784 and showed Kemble as Richard III poised in an absurd fighting attitude - his legs akimbo in an anatomically impossible position. This same print was reissued in 1789 with a new title, How to Tear a Speech to Tatters.⁷⁰ Interestingly enough,

the latter print, although unaltered, was intended to depict Kemble as Henry V rather than Richard III. The implication is that a specific attitude was not necessarily associated exclusively with one role, but rather a certain type of attitude could stand for a number of similar situations.

The performances of Lady Hamilton carried this use of formulaic gesture to its logical conclusion. Hamilton's private theatricals in Italy consisted primarily of the Lady herself standing before a neutral background and striking a series of attitudes representative of specific passions.⁷¹ It is significant that such a performance was considered an end in itself, and Romney's admiration for Lady Hamilton undoubtedly rested as much on her pliant face as on her beauty.

Thus, from contemporary theory and biography, we can begin to form a mental picture of the nature of eighteenth century tragic acting. Of course, any modern interpretation of acting style, will be purely speculative and based almost solely upon the observations of theatre-goers at the time. What seems incontrovertible is the fact that eighteenth century acting theory - with its emphasis on the expression of the passions - derived largely from art theory of the previous century. In practice, despite claims of naturalism, acting the passions rested upon the striking of what seem to have been artificial attitudes.⁷² This sculptural tradition of tragic acting must have created an interesting situation for the theatrical portraitist, who had to be continually aware of the art of painting as well as the art of acting.

Tragic Attitudes and Theatrical Portraiture

A theatrical portraitist painting a tragic character had several limitations right from the beginning. First of all, a certain amount of idealisation was essential. Reynolds' exhortation that the low stature of Alexander the Great should not be depicted in art⁷³ had been placed in a theatrical context 16 years before by Pickering, who said:

Because Alexander had his Neck distorted must the Neck of his theatrical Representative be disfigured into the same Position? TRAGEDY, like PAINTING, must show us NATURE; but under as much Advantage as she will properly admit of.⁷⁴

The corollary of this argument was that tragic actors and actresses must look noble and beautiful enough to be convincing exemplars of the elevated characters which they portrayed. As this was not always the case in reality, a theatrical portraitist had to decide whether or not to alter the stable physical features of the actor depicted in order to make it more credible as a tragic representation. Garrick's low stature was one problem which theatrical portraitists had to face, because although Garrick's acting ability rendered his height almost unnoticeable on the stage, in a stable theatrical image, his unheroic stature would appear out of place.⁷⁵ Artists tended to avoid this problem by painting Garrick either in isolation or in a deceptive physical relationship with other characters. Zoffany's portrait of Garrick and Susannah Cibber as Jaffeir and Belvidera in Venice Preserv'd (Figure 222) offers one satisfactory solution. Because Mrs. Cibber is kneeling, one can be visually deceived into thinking that Garrick's height is greater than it is, whereas were she standing, Garrick's true shortness would be all too apparent.

Other problems faced by portraitists painting tragic characters were the choice of dramatic moment and how best to convey such a moment. As I have pointed out, stage attitudes followed certain patterns but were not totally formulaic. Thus an artist would realise what type of gesture and expression was appropriate for a certain situation, but the specifics of depicting that gesture would be up to him. It is best to look first at book illustration and prints to see how the artistic choice of gesture works on a general level.

Book illustration is particularly revealing in this respect, because the vast number of illustrations required for Bell's British Theatre, the New English Theatre et al made fidelity to the stage an unreasonable aim. Instead, the designers of portraits for Bell and others usually chose unambiguous tragic moments which required equally unambiguous gestures. The moments are inevitably climactic and the gestures large and general. For example, Mrs. Hartley in the character of Cleopatra (BBT - I) looks up to heaven, holds out a dagger and declaims, "I'll die, I will not bear it". Roberts' decision to render Cleopatra's first suicide attempt was undoubtedly based in part on the obvious dramatic efficacy of depicting a woman about to stab herself. Even without the inscription underneath, the point would be clear.

However, in other examples from Bell the inscription underneath the image is absolutely essential in understanding the dramatic focus, and these inscriptions often make up for a lack of legibility of the gestures themselves. For example, Wroughton as George Barnwell (BBT - I) strikes an attitude which is incomprehensible without the quotation, "Where can I hide me, whither shall I fly to avoid the swift, unerring hand of Justice?" Once we have seen the quotation, we can spot the dramatic moment : Barnwell has just murdered his uncle and is now

experiencing the guilty panic which subsequently set in. Other book illustrations were also very reliant on inscription, but often included a series of clues in the image itself which focussed the dramatic moment even without the words. Thus Mrs. Yates as Medea (BBT - II)⁷⁶ shakes her fist towards Heaven while her young son clings piteously to her robe. Even the most general knowledge of the legend of Medea would allow an observer to pinpoint this as the moment of indecision in which Medea invokes the gods before she kills her child. The inscription bears this out:

I once had Parents - Ye endearing names
How my torn heart with recollection bleeds.

The illustration of Mrs. Siddons as Isabella in the Fatal Marriage (de Wilde, BBT - II) (Figure 223) contains even more clues to focus the dramatic moment. In this illustration, Siddons is shown wearing a white dress, and standing in a room, the moon visible in the rear. Although her face is expressionless, her right hand is extended dramatically, while her left hand holds a ring. A quick recount of the story will reveal the moment represented. In the Fatal Marriage, Isabella's husband, Biron, has been lost and presumed dead, and her debts force her into marriage with another man - Villeroy. In what would have been seen as a symbolic gesture, Isabella abandons her mourning for a white wedding dress and marries Villeroy. Of course, at this stage, Biron returns, revealing himself to Isabella through the device of his ring. Isabella's receipt of the ring is the turning point of the action:

I've heard of witches, magic spells and charms,
That have made nature start from her old course:
The sun has been eclips'd, the moon drawn down
From her career, still paler, and subdu'd

To the abuses of this under world.
 Now I believe all possible. This ring,
 This little ring, with necromantic force,
 Has rais'd the ghost of pleasure to my fears.

The subsequent complexities of her situation drive Isabella mad, and in this passage we can see a sort of mania beginning to creep into the corners of her mind. The Bell illustration contains no inscription, but de Wilde has pinpointed the moment through the devices of the white dress, the ring, and the moon in the background - the latter of which visually reinforces the imagery of Isabella's soliloquy. Thus the gesture itself has no direction without these other clues.

From these examples, it seems that in minor or minimal illustrations, an exact replication of stage gesture was considered unnecessary. This point is further exemplified by comparing two different images of the same tragic moment. The New English Theatre engraving of Mrs. Hartley as Andromache in Philip's Distrest Mother (1776) (Figure 224) and the half-length stipple of the same actress and character for J. K. Sherwin (1782) (Figure 225) both contain the following inscription:

This pointed dagger, this determined hand
 Shall save my virtue, and conclude my woes.

These words allude to the widow Andromache's decision to kill herself after submitting to a marriage with an enemy which is necessary in order to save her son's life. The stipple engraving and the book illustration present different artistic interpretations of this passage. The half-length format of the print confines it to a mere hint of tragic gesture - Mrs. Hartley's mouth is open and her hand moves toward her side where she undoubtedly hides her dagger. The book illustration, on the other hand, contains a full dramatic scene in which Mrs. Hartley, clasping the dagger, runs rather desperately away from her

confidante, Cephisa, who follows her in distress. Both works use the same profile, but the difference between the print and the illustration is the difference between a stationary attitude and an active dramatic situation. However, since both are meant to represent the same actress in the same scene, some artistic licence was obviously used. The illustrations do not reflect the truth of what actually happened on the stage, but they are representative of what could have happened.

In painting, the choice of dramatic moment was subject to slightly different concerns. Because paintings were often commissioned by actors or regular theatre-goers, they nearly always represent the most famous and accessible scenes of the play depicted. For example, Hayman's and Dance's portraits of Garrick as Richard III (Figure 63 and 40) both show that actor in the midst of speaking the most famous line in the play, "A Horse, a horse! My kingdom for a Horse". Again without the additional clues in the painting - the battlefield and the dead horse - the attitude of Garrick would not be sufficient for an observer to identify the dramatic moment. In the Hayman painting, the attitude is an unequivocally tragic one - strong and decided, but not stilted and awkward - qualities which eighteenth century biographers time and again attributed to David Garrick. Thus we see the essentials of tragic acting reflected but not necessarily the particulars. The similarity of attitude between the Hayman and Dance portraits is as much a product of artistic copying as of theatrical truth.

As I have mentioned before, theatrical portraitists found it wise to undermine the weaknesses of individual actors in favour of their strengths. For example, portraits of William Powell by Zoffany and Mortimer both represent scenes in which Powell's strong points were

most apparent. Zoffany's portrait of Powell as Posthumous in Cymbeline (Figure 39) illustrates Francis Gentleman's remark about Powell's performance in that role:

Mr. POWELL, who passed through this part with a considerable share of public estimation, was in his merit confined to tenderness alone; he much wanted essential rapidity of expression, and the natural variety of sudden transitions, incident to jealousy, rage, and despair.⁷⁷

Zoffany shows Powell carrying a bloody handkerchief which Posthumous believes to be proof that his lover, Imogen, is dead. His expression is one of sadness and regret, and Mortimer reproduces it almost identically in his painting of Powell as King John (Figure 51). Thus both artists portray Powell putting on his most famous face - a tragic mask of unhappiness, the tenderness for which he was renowned. Likewise, J. P. Kemble's fame rested upon his classical attitudes which were facilitated by his height and pronounced Roman features. Lawrence's portraits of Kemble (Figures 64-67) reflect this strength, and their very size confirms the common opinion that Kemble's attitudes were the stuff of history painting.

From all the examples discussed so far, several points emerge regarding the relationship between tragic theatrical portraits and the stage. Artists were certainly aware of the rules of tragic acting which dictated that a tragic moment had to be signalled by a certain type of gesture. Artists also observed the particular strengths and specialities of individual actors. However, beyond these general correlations, it is difficult to prove that artists copied attitudes exactly as they were struck on the stage. Eighteenth century descriptions of performances - specific though they can be - are relatively unhelpful in attempting to determine just what attitudes actors assumed at

certain moments of given plays. The problem is further confounded by the fact that descriptions of stage attitudes nearly always appeared after paintings or prints of that attitude had been circulated. In this respect, one is tempted to suggest that the biographers or critics describing such attitudes were, in fact, referring to a published print as an aide memoir. Thus the striking similarity between some verbal descriptions of a stage attitude and a print of an actor assuming the same attitude could be as much a result of the accessibility of the artistic image as a reflection of stage reality. Furthermore, because the rules of how to depict the passions in history painting and tragic acting were so similar it is sometimes difficult to determine whether an artist was presenting a reflection of stage practice or merely relying on his copy of LeBrun. A discussion of two portraits of David Garrick highlights these problems. Wilson's portrait of Garrick as Hamlet (Figure 226) and Hogarth's David Garrick in the Character of Richard III (Figure 31) both agree with contemporary accounts of Garrick's acting in the specific scenes depicted, but each portrait poses interesting questions about the relationship between the arts of painting and acting.

Garrick's flexible facial features were proverbial, and this fluidity naturally assisted him in expressing the passions in a manner which impressed numerous audiences:

His mode was as follows: when he was in high spirits, and with intimates congenial to himself, he would suddenly start up, and placing himself behind a chair ... would convey into his face every possible kind of passion with an infinite number of gradations. At one moment the company laughed; at another cried; now melted into pity; now terrified; and presently they conceived in themselves something horrible, he seemed so much terrified at what he saw.⁷⁸

However, as I have mentioned before, Garrick was not totally exempt from the traditions of tragic acting against which he was rebelling, and "naturalistic" though his attitudes might have been, the essential artificiality of the acting could not be totally overcome.⁷⁹ Thus Wilson's portrait of Garrick as Hamlet shows that actor in a contrived attitude of surprise as he is confronted with his first sight of his father's ghost. Lichtenberg, writing in 1775, describes Garrick's acting of the scene as follows:

Suddenly as Hamlet moves towards the back of the stage slightly to the left and turns his back on the audience, Horatio starts, and saying: "Look, my lord, it comes," points to the right, where the ghost has already appeared and stands motionless, before any one is aware of him. At these words Garrick turns sharply and at the same moment staggers back two or three paces with his knees giving way under him; his hat falls to the ground and both his arms, especially the left, are stretched out nearly to their full length, with the hands as high as his head, the right arm more bent and the hand lower, and the fingers apart; his mouth is open: thus he stands rooted to the spot, with legs apart, but no loss of dignity, supported by his friends who are better acquainted with the apparition and fear lest he should collapse.⁸⁰

Certainly this description bears an almost uncanny relationship to Wilson's work, but Wilson's portrait of Garrick had been painted in 1754, 20 years before Lichtenberg came to England. Although the work had been engraved in mezzotint, copies of it would have been few and far between and not readily accessible so many years after they had been made. In his letters Lichtenberg shows some awareness of theatrical portraiture in his praise of Sayer's collection of line engravings, but his seeming ignorance of the source of these images in Zoffany's art attests to his general lack of knowledge of the subject.⁸¹ It therefore seems likely that Lichtenberg had not been influenced by

Wilson's portrait, and that he described Garrick's attitude exactly as he saw it. The corollary of this argument is that Wilson's portrait is a faithful representation of Garrick's attitude in that scene. This assertion is clarified by a passage in Pickering's Reflections Upon Theatrical Expression in Tragedy:

In Astonishment and Surprize, arising from Terror, the left Leg is drawn back to some Distance from the other; under the same Affection of the mind, but resulting from an unhop'd for meeting with a beloved Object, the right leg is advanced to some Distance before the Left. Thus the astonishment of HAMLET at the sight of his FATHER'S GHOST, is of a kind very different from that of OROONOKO at the unexpected meeting with his beloved IMOINDA.⁸²

From amidst Pickering's pseudo-LeBrunian jargon, another description emerges which seems to confirm the truth of Wilson's image. Although Pickering does not mention Garrick by name, Garrick's attitude in this scene must have been so famous that it became an entity unto itself.

Even more famous was Garrick's attitude of horror upon awakening from his ghostly dream in Shakespeare's Richard III, and Hogarth's portrait of David Garrick in the Character of Richard III was likewise the greatest theatrical portrait of the century. Several descriptions of Garrick's attitude have come down to us, all of which correspond directly to Hogarth's painting, but all of which also were written after the work was completed in 1745. One such description by Thomas Wilkes, reveals that Wilkes himself was thinking of Hogarth's portrait when describing Garrick's acting of Richard:

I do not recollect any situation in Tragedy in which he appears to more advantage than that in which he rises and grasps his sword before quite awake ... Mr. Hogarth, to whose comic powers I pay the utmost deference, has given us one representation of this in an engraved print.⁸³

Pickering, as in his description of the ghost scene in Hamlet, puts the scene from Richard III into a LeBrunian context. Pickering justifies Garrick's extended pause in the Tent scene:

where that monster in Blood and excessive Villainy, wakes in all the Terrors of an Imagination districted by Conscious Guilt.

Rich. Give me a Horse - bind up my wounds,
Have mercy, Heav'n! ...

A Man, awaken'd in Surprize, requires Time to recover himself for coherent Speech; One, awaken'd in Terror, more; because Terror retards the Motion of the Blood, and the Flow of Animal Spirits is check'd, in Proportion.⁸⁴

By referring to the "animal spirits" which dominated LeBrun's treatise on the passions, Pickering directly links Garrick's attitude of terror with LeBrun's description of horror in art:

In Horror the movements must be much more violent than in Aversion, for the body will appear drawn violently back from the object which causes the horror, the hands wide open and the fingers spread.⁸⁵

This link is no coincidence but it does pose several questions : did Hogarth borrow Garrick's attitude from LeBrun when he painted his portrait of Garrick? or did Garrick borrow his attitude from LeBrun when he acted the role of Richard III? In effect, is Hogarth's portrait of David Garrick in the Character of Richard III a true reflection of Garrick's acting style or an attempt to elevate a theatrical portrait through the use of an expression normally associated with history painting?⁸⁶

The whole problem is confounded from the start by the fact that tragic actors throughout the eighteenth century were continually exhorted to look at history paintings and statues in order to perfect their

attitudes.⁸⁷ Pickering's statement is typical:

I cannot conclude this Article, without recommending, to those who attempt to succeed Capitally upon the Stage, the study of the best Paintings, Statues, and Prints, many of which may be inspected upon easy Terms. Among these the four Limbs are express'd through the several Passions, in a very Grand and masterly manner, and, if happily hit of by an Actor, would place him to high Advantage upon the Stage.⁸⁸

Cooke even went so far as to make a list of statues that actors and actresses should study - all of which were casts after ancient sculpture.⁸⁹ The implication is that Garrick himself could have consciously adopted his attitude of horror from art theory or history painting, and if such is the case, Hogarth's portrait bears a direct relationship to the stage performance.

However, the composition of the painting itself - deriving as it does from LeBrun's Tent of Darius,⁹⁰ as well as the sheer size of the work (75" x 98.5") indicate that Hogarth had something more in mind when painting the portrait than merely replicating a popular stage trick. Paulson's assertion that David Garrick in the Character of Richard III was an early stab at a monumental history painting can in fact be seen to be credible. Not only was Hogarth aware of the links between tragic acting and history painting,⁹¹ but he saw the limitations of traditional history painting in England where images from the Bible in particular were regarded with some suspicion. His progress pieces were one attempt to create a novel form of history painting; his David Garrick in the Character of Richard III another. The literary as well as historical nature of the subject matter endowed the work with the nobility of a history painting, whereas the portrait of Garrick gave it popular appeal. By using such a carefully chosen gesture and attitude,

Hogarth was establishing a further link between the arts through this common denominator. The relationship between stage and image therefore melts into obscurity, and what could be an accurate depiction of a tragic gesture and expression, is also a means by which a history painting is created.

Stage Comedy and the Fallacy of Infinite Character

Unlike tragedy, eighteenth century comedy did not have a strong theoretical tradition, with a formal basis for the depiction of character. The self-limitation of tragedy, where characters are restricted to the small percentage of exceptional men in history was not true of comedy, where the foibles of all the rest of mankind were considered fair game for the dramatic humourist. Again, in this respect, eighteenth century art and acting theory bear some correlation to each other. Francis Grose's assertion that any slight deviation from perfectly proportioned classical beauty creates character⁹² is one manifestation of a general belief - originating in Aristotle - that comedy necessarily deals with deviation and deformity. The incongruity, deriving from such deviation was felt to incite laughter, which was of course, the opposite of the pity and fear which Aristotle claimed were the reactions to tragedy.⁹³ Painting and acting which did not contain character idealisation and which provoked laughter fell under the category of "comedy"; in effect, comedy was meant to be a reflection of true character rather than elevated character.

Because eighteenth century acting theory tends to avoid any but the most general discussion of comedy and character, it is necessary to look to art theory first in order to understand what the prevailing attitudes were. As I have mentioned already, the pathognomic basis of

tragedy, focussing as it did on the expression of the passions, was complemented in comedy by an emphasis on the more stable aspects of man's character, reflected by his physiognomy. In his Analysis of Beauty, Hogarth expresses the first rule of physiognomy:

It is an observation, that, out of the great number of faces that have been form'd since the creation of the world, no two have been so exactly alike, but that the useful and common discernment of the eye would discover a difference between them: therefore it is not unreasonable to suppose, that this discernment is still capable of further improvements, by instructions from a methodical enquiry; which the ingenious Mr. Richardson, in his treatise on painting, terms the art of seeing.⁹⁴

However, Hogarth was cautious in his speculations about how much could be discerned about a man's character merely by looking at his face. Although he acknowledged that man's face often seemed to be a fair indication of his soul, he was skeptical about how much of this seeming reality was confirmable in fact.⁹⁵

It was only in the last quarter of the eighteenth century that interpretation of man's character on the basis of his facial features began to be accepted as a science, and this was largely due to the work of one man - the Swiss theologian, Johann Caspar Lavater. Lavater's Physiognomy, although not published in England until 1789, was well known in this country through periodical literature long before that date.⁹⁶ Henry Hunter's lavish five guinea edition of the work included in its subscription list several theatrical portraitists, among them Samuel de Wilde, despite the fact that its price must have been somewhat prohibitive to most of these artists. The usefulness Lavater's Physiognomy would have had for theatrical portraits rested not only in its copious illustrations, but in its descriptions of how certain

facial qualities correspond to certain personality traits.⁹⁷ Despite the seriousness of his approach, Lavater's detailed evaluation of character would have been of more use in a comic, rather than a tragic, context, where such individual character traits were the foundation of the art.

Turning now to acting, this variety of individual character was the one concensus among theorists in the few discussions of the art of comic acting which have come down to us. For example Cooke answers the complaint made by his contemporaries that the repertoire of comic characters has been depleted, by pointing out that the infinite variety of man's countenance necessitates an infinite variety of character. Thus, according to Cooke, the repertoire of comic characters should never run dry.⁹⁸ The general conclusion was that English comedy was more liberal, free and "realistic" than its continental counterparts, largely because it did not contain character stereotypes.⁹⁹ Of course, in practice, such was not the case, and English comedy was restricted by a typology all its own. For instance, some of the most popular comedies in the eighteenth century were those written in the Restoration by Farquhar, Congreve, Vanbrugh and others. These comedies consisted of a limited series of character types, such as fops and flirts, who were named accordingly.¹⁰⁰ The illusion of infinite variety of character in English comedy rested largely on the modernity of the comic characters themselves, who reflected, or were made to reflect, contemporary concerns:

Whether the Comic Poet be unitedly to instruct and entertain, or to entertain only, his figures should be such as can at first be recognised; every body will subscribe to the likeness of Colonel Bluff and Sir Joseph Wittol, while Captain Bobadil and Master Stephen, the originals

from which they are drawn, shall not give near so much satisfaction because they have in them less of modern manners, consequently seem to have less of nature.¹⁰¹

Older plays such as those of Ben Jonson were made to fit into this mold by the ingenuity of individual actors who developed their own interpretations of the characters. For example, Woodward's version of Bobadil in Jonson's Every Man In His Humour was said to derive:

partly ... from his own conception, and partly from Ben Johnson the actor's Noll Bluff in the Old Bachlor. The calm and seemingly intrepid bully, was a part not easily portraited; and as the author is sparing of his colours in drawing the character, the actor is at liberty to wanton as he pleases in the exhibition of it.¹⁰²

Just as tragic actors became specialists in a type of passion, comic actors would be known for a type of character. The actor, Dodd, for example, was known for playing fops, largely because his stage manner consisted of "a pert vivacity, a quaintness of style, and impudent familiarity".¹⁰³ William Parsons' fame rested in his portrayal of old men, and a description of Parsons' acting in the Theatrical Biography implies that such stereotypical characters were associated with stereotypical gestures, just as tragic passions were associated with specific attitudes:

Parsons, by a happy attention to all the minutiae of his cast, shews a finished picture of doteage, avarice, or whatever infirmity or passions he would represent; - the tottering knee, the sudden stare, the plodding look, nay, the taking out of the handkerchief, all proclaim him a finished actor in this walk.¹⁰⁴

A comic actor's specialities often arose from whatever natural endowments he had, thus Shuter was renowned for his portrayal of low comic

types largely because of his face:

With strong features, a peculiar turn of countenance, and a natural passion for humour, he has the happiness of disposing and altering the muscles of his face into a variety of laughable shapes, which, though they may sometimes border on grimace, are, however, on the whole irresistible.¹⁰⁵

Thus we can see in comic acting, as in tragic acting, theory and practice were not absolutely related. The idea that comedy should contain an infinite variety of realistic characters was countered first by the presence of character stereotypes on the stage and secondly by the specialities and idiosyncrasies of individual actors.

However, turning to theatrical portraiture, it becomes apparent how the greater variety and informality of comic acting created greater problems for the artist than the established patterns of tragic acting. Again, an initial look at book illustration reveals these difficulties on an elementary level. Ramberg's illustrations for Bell's edition of Shakespeare's plays offer an initial example of how an interpretation of comic character differs in essentials from that of a tragic one. A comparison between Ramberg's designs for Mrs. Siddons as Isabella in Measure for Measure (Figure 142) and Quick as Launce in Two Gentlemen of Verona (Figure 141) reveals how the tragic and comic somatotypes differ. Mrs. Siddons is a veritable manifestation of Hogarth's serpentine line of beauty whereas Quick is short, mis-shapen and ugly. In effect, the image is a caricature, and his bodily deformities signal his status as a low comic character. In addition to distorted or unclassical bodily types, comic characters are usually singled out in book illustration by the informality of their gestures, such as that in de Wilde's illustration of Lee Lewes as Babadil (BBT - II) (Figure

227). In this scene from Every Man In His Humour Bobadil is instructing Master Mathew how to fence:

Hollow your body more, Sir, thus. Now stand
fast o' your left leg; note your distance;
keep your due proportion of time.

Once these instructions are given, Bobadil speaks the following lines, which constitute the inscription under the illustration: "Oh, you disorder your point most irregularly!". In de Wilde's illustration we see Lewes demonstrating the fencing posture, but at the same time cringing back from Mathew, whom we imagine is brandishing his sword rather too carelessly. The contrast between Bobadil's brave swordsman's stance and cowardly frown represents the essential paradox of Bobadil's character - he is both aggressive and pusillanimous, a bully and a coward. De Wilde captures this in a gesture and expression which are informal and even slightly awkward.¹⁰⁶

Indeed, de Wilde's representations of comic characters in his painting and book illustration were sensitive and well-judged, and a separate discussion of de Wilde in the context of his work for Bell will help elucidate how a theatrical portraitist depicted a comic figure. Despite the haste with which de Wilde had to produce paintings and designs for John Bell, his illustrations of comedy in particular were obviously well considered. Rather than choosing the most obvious comic moments of a play or even the most famous comedians, de Wilde often chose unusual moments and minor characters. In this respect, he made his own task harder, because unlike tragedy, such minor moments in comedy had no specific gestures and expressions relevant to them. For example, de Wilde's decision to depict John Bernard as Jack Meggot in Congreve's The Old Bachelor (Figure 228) seems at first unusual,

for Meggot's role in The Old Bachelor was peripheral. As in most Restoration comedies, Meggot functioned as a sort of companion and confidante to which the off-stage action of the play could be related. The few clues to his character in the play indicate that he is an eccentric old fop and a bit of an interfering gossip. Among his eccentricities, Meggot kept a monkey as a pet, and the inscription below de Wilde's illustration alludes to this:

Bel[mont] . Dead! Pray who was the gentleman?
 Meg[got] . This gentleman was my monkey, sir.

De Wilde shows Meggot standing in the ubiquitous Restoration hot spot, St. James' Park - making an equally ubiquitous gesture - taking a pinch of snuff. Contrary to tragic illustration, the inscription here seems to bear no real relation to the gesture and setting of de Wilde's portrait; indeed the words below the picture seem somehow superfluous. But their function is to act with Meggot's gesture to help give the observer a composite picture of Meggot's character - a technique not possible in tragic illustration where character is subordinated to expression. Therefore, the inscription reminds us that Meggot is eccentric, just as his gesture indicates his foppish character.

De Wilde's comic art also led him to avoid the noble and virtuous comic characters in favour of servants, rogues and rakes. The good and virtuous, but two-dimensional upper classes which peopled sentimental comedy and ballad opera in particular seem to have held no interest for de Wilde, because their very beauty and virtue negated their character. Thus, for example, when de Wilde illustrated a scene from Bickerstaffe's Maid of the Mill (Figure 229), he avoided the romantic moments between Patty and Lord Aimworth - which had been the focus of

most minor illustrations of that ballad opera prior to Bell's second British Theatre.¹⁰⁷ Instead, de Wilde focussed his attention on the comic relief of the opera - the rustic and illiterate Ralph. Ralph stands before the mill, his left hand in his pocket, his hat off in his right hand indicating his humble status. Given his posture no one would mistake Ralph for anything but a servant, for informality of this sort was inevitably associated with the lower classes.

Aside from indications of class, de Wilde attempted as much as was possible, to capture the essential humour or personality characteristic of the comic character largely through physiognomic details. In this respect, the edition of Lavater's Physiognomy in his possession must have been of great use. Although it is difficult to correlate specific physical details of de Wilde's comic characterisations with Lavater's descriptions of physiognomies, it is likely that de Wilde learned from Lavater how to mold a character's physical features in order to convey a general impression of the personality of that character. De Wilde's portrait of Moody as Commodore Flip in Shadwell's Fair Quaker of Deal (Figure 230) is one example of this. In the list of dramatis personae of the play, Shadwell describes Flip as "the Commodore, a most illiterate Wapping-tar". Other aspects of his character emerge in the course of the play, the most pronounced of which is an assumption of machismo so extreme that he reacts violently against anything even slightly effeminate. As effeminacy was proverbially associated with leanness and neatness, de Wilde registers Flip's brute masculinity by making him fat and dishevelled. In addition, the classical proportion and smooth features linked with intelligence by Lavater is absent from Flip's face which is slightly lopsided, signalling his illiteracy. Sometimes de Wilde's indications of the prevailing humour

of a character were slightly more straightforward and not so rooted in the complex science of physiognomy. The character of Dumps in Cumberland's Natural Son (Figure 231) was so named for obvious reasons, and de Wilde renders the actor Parsons literally "in the dumps" with a downturned mouth and wide, defiant gaze.

Certainly de Wilde's depiction of character was subtle enough to avoid lapsing into caricature. This can be seen by comparing his illustration of Fawcet as Maw-worm for Bell's second British Theatre (Figure 232) with the corresponding scene to the play by Smirke. De Wilde and Smirke both show the grocer turned preacher without a wig in plain dress and carrying a tricorne hat, but the difference in facial features between the two is obvious. De Wilde's illustration, despite the elements of comic characterisation, is obviously a portrait, whereas Smirke - without such limitations - exaggerates the thin weediness of Maw-worm in order to emphasise his prevailing humour.

De Wilde's fidelity to stage reality can be seen in several of his portraits which seem to capture comic moments just as they were described by contemporaries. His portrait of the amateurs Captain Wathen and the Earl of Barrymore as the servant Scrub and nobleman Archer (Beaux Stratagem) seems to reflect the scene as it was acted by Weston and Garrick, on whom the two noble amateurs undoubtedly modelled their interpretations. In light of de Wilde's print, Lichtenberg's description of this scene is worth quoting in full:

Garrick throws himself into a chair with his usual ease of demeanour, places his right arm on the back of Weston's chair, and leans towards him for a confidential talk; his magnificent livery is thrown back, and the coat and man form one line of perfect beauty. Weston sits, as is fitting, in the middle of his chair, through rather

far forward and with a hand on either knee, as motionless as a statue, with his roguish eyes fixed on Garrick. If his face expresses anything, it is an assumption of dignity, at odds with a paralysing sense of the terrible contrast. And here, I observed something about Weston which had an excellent effect. While Garrick sits there at his ease with an agreeable carelessness of demeanour, Weston attempts, with back stiff as a poker, to draw himself up to the other's height, partly for the sake of decorum and partly in order to steal a glance now and then, when Garrick is looking the other way, so as to improve on his imitation of the latter's manner. When Archer at last with an easy gesture crosses his legs, Scrub tries to do the same, in which he eventually succeeds, though not without some help from his hands.¹⁰⁸

Lichtenberg's description of 1775 bears a striking resemblance to the de Wilde work of 1793, despite the fact that de Wilde's portrait depicted two different actors performing in the same scene. But lest it should seem as though this comic attitude remained unchanged for 20 years, a note of skepticism must be registered. A very similar pose and gesture of that described by Lichtenberg appeared in Sayer's 1770 print of Garrick as Archer and Weston as Scrub - a print which Lichtenberg knew.¹⁰⁹ It seems possible that de Wilde also knew the Sayer print, and that he modelled his portraits of Wathen and Barrymore on it, merely adjusting the facial likenesses accordingly. Nevertheless, the print is striking and the contrast between Archer's aristocratic ease and Scrub's awkward admiration captures the essential character of Farquhar's creations.

Artists other than de Wilde possibly also represented comic gesture just as they saw it on the stage, but usually such replication involved gestures which were closer in form to tragic attitudes. The most notable example of this nature is Zoffany's portrait of Charles Macklin as Shylock (Figure 73). Macklin's Shylock was one of the most

famous roles of the eighteenth century, and biographers agree almost universally that he was responsible for elevating the Shylock character from a mere caricature of a stingy Jew to a rather pathetic and sadly misguided man. Zoffany captures some of Shylock's essential pathos in his single figure portrait where Macklin strikes an attitude fully in keeping with the grand gestures of tragedy. The scene depicted here is described by Lichtenberg as follows:

In the scene where he [Shylock] first misses his daughter, he comes on hatless, with disordered hair, some locks a finger long standing on end, as if raised by a breath of wind from the gallows, so distracted was his demeanour. Both his hands are clenched, and his movements abrupt and convulsive.¹¹⁰

Shylock's convulsive rage and frustration is conveyed superbly through Zoffany's careful handling of Macklin's face and body, and the observer is given a good idea of the kind of dramatic power with which Macklin endowed the role of Shylock.

Therefore, comic theatrical portraiture, like its tragic counterpart, reflected both the rules of comic acting and sometimes even the particulars of individual performances. However, given the physiognomic nature of comic acting, one further consideration must be made regarding the nature of the relationship between stage and image. Since comic acting concerned character development, the portraitist painting an actor in a comic role must have been confronted with the problem of whether or not to alter the stable physical features of the actor in question in order to make the artistic image closer to the conception of the comic character. Of course, the comic actor took care of this problem in part through the use of make-up and accessories : if a young man were meant to play an old one, or a thin man a fat one, a

few carefully applied lines and bulges could make up for what the actor himself lacked. An image from the nineteenth century of Charles Mathews in four characters (Henry Harlow, 1814) (Figure 233) offers an interesting starting point for this discussion, since the juxtaposition of the same man in four different roles is concerned with the question of how one man can become other men. The inscription underneath the print after the painting defines its intention:

The characters introduced are all taken from the life. The principal figure is an IDIOT amusing himself with a fly - the next to him a DRUNKEN OSTLER introduced in Killing No Murder. The third an extraordinary fat man whose manners and appearance suggest the idea of MR. WIGGINS in the farce of that name - and the last FOND BARNEY a character well known on the York Race Course. The intention of the artist is to present a portrait of Mr. Mathews as STUDYING those characters for imitation preserving at the same time his likeness as varied in the representation of each.¹¹¹ (*italics mine*)

The features of Mathew are discernible in each of the four characters, and deviations such as the paunch of Mr. Wiggins can be readily explained by make-up. However, the impression given by the work is that somehow Mathews is a different man in each, despite the fact that the stable features of his physiognomy are not significantly altered. Harlow therefore achieved what most theatrical portraitists undoubtedly set out to do - retaining the physical features of the actor while showing how those features could be made up or contorted to represent different comic types. Other artists did not achieve this end with as much success. For instance, I have already suggested that de Wilde had a tendency to fall back on Lavater in his comic representations, and if such is the case, the appropriate physiognomy for a particular comic character would take precedence over the totally accurate depiction of the actor's features.

In prints and book illustration this tendency can be seen time and again. Roberts' illustrations of Mrs. Bulkely as Mrs. Ford (Bell's Shakespeare - I) (Figure 234) and the same actress as Angelina in Cibber's Love Makes a Man (Figure 235) is one example of how such artistic licence works on a small scale. Although the features of Mrs. Bulkely from one illustration to the other are generally the same, there are slight differences as well. Angelina, the beautiful heroine of Cibber's play has a thin face, aquiline nose and wide eyes, whereas Mrs. Ford - the rollicking joker of Merry Wives of Windsor has a double chin, ski-jump nose and downward curving eye. Even make-up could not explain the differences here - a double chin, for example, would have been beyond the capacity of an eighteenth century make-up artist. Another example of such an alteration from Bell's British Theatre is a comparison between the portraits of John Henderson as Bayes in The Rehearsal (Figure 194) and the same actor as Don John in The Chances (Figure 236), both of which are in Bell's first edition. Don John, the hero of The Chances is shown with a smooth heroic countenance and the ubiquitous cavalier mustache. The face of Bayes, on the other hand, is wrinkled and the shape of his head differs immensely from that of Don John.

Such alteration of physical feature inevitably minimised the portrait likeness, and the next step from that was eschewing portrait likeness to the point of caricature. Mary Darly's etching of Dodd as Ali in Selima and Azor (Figure 112) is unlike any other theatrical portrait of Dodd to which it can be compared. But Darly's intention was perhaps not so much to create a portrait of Dodd as it was to characterise, in the simplest way possible, the Turk, Ali, from Collier's musical entertainment.

Any deviation from the comic portrait involved first a decision on the part of the artist and secondly a judgment on just what a comic personality is all about. Usually theatrical portraitists agreed on interpretations of comic character, so that two portraits of the same actor in the same role do not diverge in any physiognomic particulars. One instance where this is not the case are in the series of portraits of David Garrick in the role of Abel Drugger - where different aspects of Drugger's character are brought out by various artists. Abel Drugger is a minor figure in Ben Jonson's The Alchemist, and he appears in only two scenes of the play. But the simple-minded gullibility of the tobacconist inspired the imagination of David Garrick, who turned the insignificant Abel Drugger into one of his most popular roles. Zoffany's portrait of Garrick as Abel Drugger (Figure 54) depicts the scene in which Drugger has his first interview with Subtle - the con-man who claims to be in possession of the philosopher's stone. Interestingly enough, Lichtenberg's description of the actor, Weston, in this scene relates directly to Zoffany's image of Garrick:

Weston has an excellent opportunity of ridding himself of his own personality, especially in the long intervals when Abel Drugger is dumb and in a room where there are, besides a few astronomers and exorcisers, human skeletons, crocodiles, ostrich eggs, and empty vessels, in which the devil himself could sit. I can almost see him, rigid with terror at every violent movement of the astrologer or at the least noise of which the cause is not apparent, standing like a mummy with feet together; only when it is over does life return to his eyes and he looks about him, then turns his head round slowly, and so forth.

But Lichtenberg then admits Weston's debt to Garrick, and his ensuing description of the latter actor's portrayal of Abel Drugger refers to the moment captured by Zoffany:

He [Garrick] does not lack the language of gesture, if I may so express it, in an indolent all-embracing torpidity, which finally, indeed, becomes unnatural but every moment poor Abel is giving fresh indications of his character; superstition and simplicity. I only mention one feature, which Mr. Weston could not even imitate and assuredly could not have invented, and of which I do not suppose the author himself had thought. When the astrologers spell out from the stars the name Abel Drugger, henceforth to be great, the poor gullible creature says with heartfelt delight: "That is my name". Garrick makes him keep his joy to himself, for to blurt it out before every one would be lacking in decency, so Garrick turns aside, hugging his delight to himself for a few moments, so that he actually gets those red rings round his eyes which often accompany great joy, at least when violently suppressed, and says to himself, "That is my name". The effect of this judicious restraint is indescribable for one did not see him merely as a simpleton being gulled, but as a much more ridiculous creature, with an air of secret triumph, thinking himself the slyest of rogues.¹¹²

Zoffany's sketches for this painting (Figure 237) show his initial efforts in capturing this combination of secret triumph and gullible simplicity. In these sketches, the features of Garrick's face are minimised, and the stance of his body becomes the focus of Zoffany's experimentation. However, other images of Garrick as Abel Drugger focus on entirely different aspects of that character, and they differ greatly from Zoffany's image of the character.

The engravings of Garrick as Abel Drugger for Bell's first British Theatre (Figure 238) and the Universal Museum (Figure 239) magazine admittedly represent Garrick in a later scene of the play in which Drugger, discovering the deception played upon him, abandons his timid humility and assumes an aggressive stance. But the fighting stance of Drugger is not the only feature which differentiates the engravings from Zoffany's painting. The engravers for Bell's British Theatre and

the Universal Museum both present Drugger as a fat and rather large man, whereas Zoffany's image of Garrick is small and paunch-less. This difference arises partly from the fact that the engravers presenting the more brutal side of Drugger's character, naturally chose to represent him as larger and coarser than Zoffany's diminutive simpleton. Whatever the reason, the images of Garrick as Abel Drugger not only present him in different comic stances, but the essentials of his physiognomy differ in relation to the context of the scene in which he is presented.

This further dimension of comic theatrical portraiture distinguishes it from tragic portraiture where artistic choice is limited due to the lack of character development. All portraiture involves gesture and expression as well as likeness, and theatrical portraitists in particular had the difficult task of balancing the true likeness with the stage fiction. Knowledge of stage gesture and expression was undoubtedly essential, but this knowledge had to be used wisely, and sometimes sparingly, to create an image which had both artistic credibility and theatrical accuracy.

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION : THE LEGACY OF THE THEATRICAL PORTRAIT

It was not often that she visited a theatre ... but on the rare occasions when her wish was gratified, she had watched each actress with devouring interest, with burning envy, and said to herself, "Couldn't I learn to do as well as that? Can't I see where it might be made more lifelike? Why should it be impossible for me to go on the stage?" In passing a shop window where photographs were exposed, she looked for those of actresses, and gazed at them with terrible intensity. "I am as good-looking as she is. Why shouldn't my portrait be seen some day in the windows?" And then her heart throbbed, smitten with passionate desire.¹

The strong-willed but ill-fated Clara Hewett of George Gissing's 1888 novel, The Nether World, lived out her fruitless fantasies vicariously through the images of actresses in shop windows. Indeed, on the brink of a potentially successful theatrical career, the self-same Clara thought not of applause, but of the publicity photographs which would ensure her abandoned family of her success.² Although by Gissing's time the theatrical photograph had virtually replaced the theatrical print, the potency of the image of an actor in his role had not faded with time. The wish-fulfilment which Clara found in such photographs does not differ greatly from the reaction of young people today who see in super-size posters of their favourite pop stars the answer to all their frustrations and adolescent anxieties. The modern pop poster like the nineteenth century photograph and the eighteenth century theatrical portrait all show people dressed up for, and acting, roles. All of these images perform certain functions, which, in many respects render superfluous any question of their artistic quality or aesthetic validity. Because of this fact, the evolution of the commercial theatrical image after 1800 continues along the path opened up by Hogarth and Zoffany and perpetuated by artists such as Hamilton and

de Wilde. The differences in post-1800 images of actors in character arise primarily from changes in taste, new developments in print-making and novel forms of theatrical expression. An examination of these changes will reveal the importance of eighteenth century theatrical portraits and will show how these early portraits helped prepare the public eye for an acceptance of more sophisticated imagery - not merely in theatrical portraits, but in the peculiarly British type of narrative painting as well.

The abolition of the Licensing Act in 1843 was in many ways mere formality. The demand for theatrical entertainments had by this time become so high in London that various entrepreneurs and actor/managers found ways of presenting performances which did not violate the strictures on "legitimate" drama set down by the 1737 act. One way of avoiding such an illegality was to fill an evening's entertainment with music and dance, slipping in an occasional play as an interlude or an extra. Another means of doing this involved presenting plays which contained a large number of musical pieces or musical accompaniment. The latter technique had the effect of distancing the drama from reality and rendering the dialogue stylised and unnatural. Such was the origin of melodrama³ - one of the most popular entertainments of the nineteenth century, the far reaching effects of which can still be seen in films made as late as 1940. Running concurrent to the growth of melodrama was the Sturm und Drang emotionalism of Edmund Kean which imbued the legitimate drama with a new energy quite separate from the strivings for naturalism which had dominated the eighteenth century stage.⁴ Coleridge's remark that Kean's acting was like reading Shakespeare by flashes of lightning underlines the difference between Kean and his predecessors, Garrick and Kemble. Whereas Garrick and Kemble worked

within the traditions of their profession to achieve very different results, Kean's Romantic radicalism worked in opposition to the stereotypes of dramatic expression, opening his audience's minds to the greater possibilities of an actor's art.⁵ Other innovations on the stage were initiated by Charles Kemble in particular, who encouraged a historically aware approach to set and costume which resulted in increasingly lavish productions as the century progressed.⁶

All of these changes affected theatrical portraiture in the nineteenth century, but artists working within this genre were not oblivious to their eighteenth century predecessors. Several exhibitions of the century kept these earlier images in the public eye. The British Institution, for example, between 1813 and 1823 launched a series of exhibitions of the works of great eighteenth century portraitists. These exhibitions included works by Hogarth, Zoffany, Opie, Hoppner, Mortimer, Louthenburg, Dance, Bourgeois, Wheatley, Hamilton and Dupont, and featured theatrical portraits by several of these men.⁷ On a more monumental scale, the South Kensington portrait exhibition of 1866-68 included a total of 2,842 portraits shown over a three-year period, among which, the theatrical portraits of the eighteenth century featured.⁸ Following a proposal made by Lord Derby, this exhibition had two functions : to elucidate the history of English painting through the work of its best artists, and to present a perspective on British history through portraits of notable figures, often by obscure artists.⁹ The sheer scale of this exhibition must have been daunting and perhaps self-defeating : Reynolds alone was represented by 154 of his portraits. However, despite the size of the exhibition, a reviewer of the 1868 Art Journal focussed his attention on a theatrical portrait by Hogarth which was only one of 946 works exhibited in that

year. His remarks on Hogarth's portrait of David Garrick in the Character of Richard III are revealing:

Hogarth is certainly not seen at his best in the loud ranting figure of Garrick in the character of Richard III; it is hard to think that the great tragedian could descend to this vulgarity.¹⁰

The implication here is that acting styles had changed to the point that any acceptance of Garrick's LeBrunian pose was out of the question. The painting of David Garrick in the Character of Richard III seemed an oddity to the reviewer of the Art Journal, in part because he had never seen Garrick acting, and thus his acceptance of the image as illustrative of a scene from a play was contingent upon his own preconceptions and knowledge of contemporary acting style. Other theatrical portraitists were felt to be equally inscrutable. A series of 1890 Art Journal articles on the artists of "The Royal Academy in the Last Century" included the following indictment of Zoffany:

Zoffany was tied down by the thing before him, and could not project himself beyond it. He was dependent on the picturesqueness of that object - a picturesqueness which he rendered with wonderful felicity and grace, but which remained picturesqueness: and even his favourite practice of painting actors in character removed his pictures still farther from the illusion of being natural; they were the simulacrum of a simulacrum; the imitation of an imitation.¹¹

These accusations of literalness and lack of imagination were repeated later in the same article when the authors, speaking of Zoffany's Tribuna, contend, "It is like his portraits, which you know to be portraits, of actors whom you know to be acting".¹² In making such remarks, the authors of the article on Zoffany reveal their misconceptions about the purpose and methods of his art. The reasons for such reactions to Zoffany and Hogarth are apparent. In a hundred years or

so not only had acting styles changed but artistic styles had changed as well, and since the image of an actor in character was necessarily ephemeral, even the greatest of these images - Hogarth's Garrick - could only be seen as something of a curiosity by the later nineteenth century critics. Perceptions of such works were altered by the intervening 100 years, just as our own perceptions of these same works are coloured by the greater lapse of time.

Despite the general disdain and head-scratching that went on when a Victorian critic looked at an eighteenth century theatrical portrait, the type of theatrical conversation popularised by Zoffany as well as the single figure portraits of de Wilde both had nineteenth century proponents. An examination of some of these artists will show how the theatrical portrait tradition continued and how it changed.

After the completion of his work for Bell, Samuel de Wilde continued to paint theatrical portraits, and his well-known likenesses of actors were some of the earliest theatrical images of the nineteenth century. In fact, the height of his fame came between 1800 and 1810 when actors inevitably sought him out for publicity portraits. The young Macready was only one such rising star, who was sent by his shrewd father all the way from Birmingham in order to sit to de Wilde.¹³ De Wilde's portraits of the early 1800s are for the most part identical in style and format to his paintings of the 1790s, but changing styles of acting sometimes are reflected in the attitudes of his subjects. For example, his portrait of Charles Farley as Francisco in Holcroft's Tale of Mystery (Figure 240) shows that actor in an attitude which is more exaggerated than even the most excessive tragic poses of the eighteenth century. An explanation for this can be found in the nature of the play itself. It was one of the first melodramas to appear on

the English stage, adapted from a play by Pixericourt, which was ultimately based on an Anne Radcliffe novel. The pose of the mute Francisco as he earnestly endeavours to convey a life-saving message is perhaps reflective of the more stilted action of melodrama which relied as much on tableau and attitude as on dialogue.

De Wilde's theatrical portrait career had other permutations in the nineteenth century, particularly in the field of book illustration. His portraits for Bell's British Theatre, for instance, were the primary influence on Robert William Buss' portraits for Cumberland's British Theatre (1823-41). Like John Bell, Cumberland published cheap illustrated editions of British plays in monthly numbers, and Cumberland's eventual resignation of his series to another publisher is vaguely reminiscent of Bell's feud with Cawthorne in the 1790s. But a more significant parallel between the two men lies in their commission of theatrical portraits. Both Bell and Cumberland commissioned de Wilde and Buss respectively to paint a series of theatrical portraits from which book illustrations were taken, and both men eventually arranged exhibitions of these paintings. In Bell's case, de Wilde's works were on constant show in the British Library, whereas Cumberland - capitalising on a more receptive public attitude towards exhibitions - arranged in 1838 a major show of 190 works at the Colosseum, Regent's Park, among which 51 were theatrical portraits by Buss.¹⁴ Furthermore, Cumberland's advertisements for his series, like Bell's, emphasise the illustrations, which continued to be the most marketable aspect of the books. Indeed, the illustrations were in such demand that Cumberland arranged to have them published in monthly numbers, with the following justification:

Henceforth no Amateur, on the score of Price, will be without a theatrical Scrap Book! And when it is considered that these engravings not only illustrate Shakespeare, Massinger, Ben Jonson, and the most celebrated dramatic writers, ancient and modern, but exhibit the actual costume, positions, and economy of the scene, the curious in such matters cannot fail to patronise a work of such valuable and authentic reference.¹⁵

Despite changes in acting style and other theatrical reforms, Buss' images of actors in character are not significantly different from de Wilde's. The format of an actor posing in a vaguely defined setting continued in Cumberland's series to be the most logical means of presenting an actor portrait in such a context.

The commercialism of de Wilde's images was another factor which not only continued in the nineteenth century theatrical portrait, but became, if possible, even more important. Like eighteenth century portraits, most nineteenth century images of actors in character were distributed to the public in engraved versions, but the advent of steel engraving made a greater number of such images possible. An article in the Art Journal of 1851 on Maclise's portrait of Macready as Werner (Figure 241), emphasises the continued significance of the engraved image, and could apply equally to portraits of the previous century:

The work is in the process of engraving by Mr. C. W. Sharpe; it will be doubly valuable now that Mr. Macready is about to quit the stage; the artist exhibits him in one of his most effective characters, it will be valued as a likeness and also as a work of Art.¹⁶

Maclise's portrait could be said to derive ultimately from Zoffany's theatrical conversation pieces since it contains more than one character in a recognisable moment of dramatic action. But the

greater gestural ease as well as the more convincing set and costume give the work more in common with the popular narrative paintings of mid-century (see also below). Another artist who owed an ultimate debt to Zoffany was George Clint who showed a series of theatrical scenes at the Royal Academy between 1819 and 1831.¹⁷ Like Zoffany, Clint worked from oil sketches,¹⁸ and his results have the same feeling of compositional unity that many of Zoffany's do. However, Clint's paintings show a greater awareness of artistic effect which often overwhelms the theatricality of the image. All of his paintings contain a raking light which has more to do with the Dutch Caravaggisti than with stage footlights; the colour scheme is inevitably pleasing and well coordinated, and the gestures of his actors are subdued. The latter effect can be seen in Clint's portrait of Charles Mayne Young as Hamlet and Mary Glover as Ophelia (R.A., 1831) (Figure 242), and here the explanation is theatrical rather than artistic. The attitude school of acting which had reached its pinnacle in the Kemble/Siddons era, by 1831 existed only in the distorted gestures of the melodrama. Legitimate tragedy no longer respected the extremes of the attitude school, and thus a scene from Hamlet could have a domestic, rather than a sublime, flavour.

Maclise and Clint represent the rare continuation of the theatrical conversation piece, but other forms of theatrical portrait prevailed as well. The half-history portraits of Lawrence and Hamilton as well as the more straightforward portraits of de Wilde both had their nineteenth century counterparts. In fact, in the wake of the Shakespeare Gallery, the half-history portrait had a brief period of popularity at the beginning of the nineteenth century, before its significance was usurped by the growth of narrative painting. The most extreme examples

of Lawrence's influence on theatrical portraiture were the two portraits of the child actor Master Betty by Opie and Northcote. Both Opie's portrait of Betty as Norval (Figure 243) and Northcote's of Betty as Hamlet (Royal Shakespeare Gallery) were commissioned by Thomas Lister Parker of Lancashire and were exhibited at the R.A. in 1805.¹⁹ Their life-size formats depict the young superstar posing dramatically in two heroic roles, attempting to aggrandise the diminutive hero the way Lawrence ennobled Kemble. To our eyes, the effect is ludicrous, but an audience awed by the prodigy of Master Betty would undoubtedly have been more convinced by the half-historical nature of Opie's and Northcote's portraits of him. Perhaps the last, and certainly the most ambitious, exercise in the half-history brand of theatrical portrait was George Henry Harlow's Trial of Queen Katherine (1817) (Figure 244), which depicted Kemble and Siddons in their famous roles from Shakespeare's Henry VIII. Appropriately, Harlow had been taught by Lawrence, and his adaption of such a historicising format for a theatrical portrait could in part have sprung from the lessons of his teacher.²⁰ With its grand scale and multi-figured composition, Harlow's Trial of Queen Katherine raises the same sort of problems which had been suggested by Hogarth's David Garrick in the Character of Richard III. Redgrave's evaluation of the work points up its ambiguous nature:

Our own opinion of this picture is that it is clever, but stagey, with rather too much of the tableau and attitude school; and although the painter prided himself upon it as an historical picture, that it has none of the qualities to uphold its claim to that rank. All of the figures appear thinking of the spectator - posed for effect as to an audience, and looking out of the picture; which - no doubt, arises from the nature and source of the subject: still, it mars the effect when translated from dramatic to

pictorial art - the former differing wholly from what should be a painter's treatment of the subject, since with him the interest should be wholly within the picture. Here we see King Harry, seated on his throne in the background, and Katherine appealing, not to him, but to a supposed audience, while the Cardinal looks out, ²¹ as if to observe the effect she produced on them.

Redgrave's attitude is revealing. His observation of Harlow's portrait was made later in the century when the attitude school of Kemble and Siddons was merely a blur on the horizon. But the tragic attitude was not the only victim of time. The history painting as well had run its brief course in England, and the extremes of that genre would not be tolerated by a generation bred on the domestic intimacy of narrative painting. The eighteenth century theatrical portrait had become too blunt, too obvious, too theatrical for these later generations, but paradoxically, the very theatricality of such works was a contributing factor to the growth of narrative painting in England. Such a postulation needs to be examined further. I would like to conclude my thesis by suggesting that the legacy of the theatrical portrait was more than just a continuation of stale formulas and repetitious images - that it, in fact, helped pave the way for an acceptance of the narrative painting which was to dominate the British art world through most of the nineteenth century.

Writing about Hogarth and theatrical portraits, Frederick Antal arrived at an important conclusion:

In a wider sense, all stage paintings and "role portraits" by Zoffany and de Wilde ... derive from Hogarth, whose early Beggar's Opera was the foundation and Farmer's Return the immediate stepping-stone to the documentary trend of theatre pictures - an outstanding genre peculiar to English painting since Hogarth's time. But within this documentary guise, theatre pictures were increasingly apt to assume the character of anecdotal genre pictures.²² (*italics mine*)

And, certainly, despite the continuation of the theatrical portrait format in the nineteenth century, the differences between a theatrical conversation by Zoffany and a portrait such as Macclise's Macready as Werner (Figure 241), lies largely in the fact that the latter image could pass for a narrative painting with historical significance, such as those later popularised by the Pre-Raphaelites. However, the literal nature of the earlier theatrical portrait served its purpose in the formulation of these more imaginative scenes, despite the fact that theatrical portraits of the eighteenth century were regarded as somewhat mundane by nineteenth century observers. In fact, given the dominance of portraiture in eighteenth century England, theatrical portraits represented the most imaginative and unusual examples of the genre. Their fictional basis gave them a dimension beyond that of straightforward portraiture, and the image of the posed actor - however minimal - brought with it a myriad of associations which traditional portraiture lacked. Reynolds' attempt to elevate portraiture by using a series of allusions to suggest wider associations was in many respects only a glorified form of theatrical portraiture. Lady Sarah Bunbury is merely pretending to sacrifice to the graces, just as Kitty Fisher is acting the role of Cleopatra.

The late eighteenth century attempt to embody portraits with further significance through the use of literary or historical allusions was symptomatic. Although Britain had no tradition of history painting, the demand for art in the eighteenth century was sufficiently strong to create a need for more and more sophisticated imagery as the century progressed. By the end of the century, the traditional portrait was no longer enough. The changing trends in painting are reflected by the Royal Academy exhibitions. In the early years of

the Royal Academy, portraits accounted for up to 50 per cent of the exhibited works,²³ and any literary subjects in these exhibitions tended to be character portraits either of a theatrical or a historical nature.²⁴ The Shakespeare Gallery was one attempt to capitalise on the growing desire for literary imagery, but even beyond its commercial failure, its reliance on continental history painting made many of the works unsympathetic to the British eye. On the other hand, the more domestic, anecdotal, and indeed theatrical of the Boydell pictures bear a direct resemblance to the narrative painting of subsequent years.

The transition from theatrical portrait to literary subject to narrative painting was subtle, and for such a metamorphosis to occur in British art, the final breakdown of the traditional hierarchy of genres had to be enacted. History painting no longer could be considered the highest aim of an artist, and despite his own historical pretensions, Northcote's remark that "Portrait often runs into history, and history into portrait, without our knowing it",²⁵ reflects the pragmatism of a generation of artists who knew that "pure" history painting had no future in England. The result of this was that portraiture took on elements of history painting and vice versa. The Grand Manner portraits in the Reynolds' idiom exemplify the former, just as the Shakespeare Gallery - with the occasional actor portrait creeping in - signifies the latter.²⁶ From these blendings of artistic genre, a type of painting began to emerge in England which Redgrave describes as follows:

In the English school, pictures of this class may be said to take their rise from its great founder, Hogarth, whose works were of a cabinet size, and of a dramatic, rather than historic, tendency.²⁷

One of the earliest proponents of anecdotal genre painting in England was Charles Robert Leslie, whose use of literary subjects continued the tradition begun by the artists of the Shakespeare Gallery.

Redgrave's definition of Leslie's paintings as "refined drama-pictures"²⁸ is telling, since Leslie represents the most significant link between the eighteenth century theatrical portrait and the nineteenth century narrative painting.

It is no coincidence that even before he left Philadelphia, the young Leslie made a watercolour sketch of the itinerant British actor, George Frederick Cooke, as Richard III. Even more significant is the fact that his painting of the same subject (Figure 245) was the main exhibit in his portfolio when he came to England in 1813. Although he never painted another theatrical portrait, Leslie's fascination with the theatre imbued both his writings and his art. For example, the disproportionate emphasis which he places on Reynolds' theatrical portraits in his Life of Reynolds²⁹ indicates more about where Leslie's personal obsessions lay than it is in any way revelatory of Reynolds' work. The other great founders of the English narrative painting - Mulready and Wilkie - were similarly obsessed, and audiences in the day were encouraged to examine their works as they would a dramatic scene.

Such an examination was founded on the premise that in order to understand a narrative painting, the language of gesture and expression had to be comprehensible in itself. Just as eighteenth century audiences could interpret the stereotypical and rule-laden gesture and expression of theatrical portraits, so nineteenth century audiences learned to read the meanings of facial signs and body language in narrative paintings.³⁰ Since most other nineteenth century narrative

painters occasionally practised theatrical portraiture, it seems that the relationship between the genres was not lost to them. The greater sophistication of the later art form was what distinguished it the most from the earlier theatrical portraits. The eighteenth century artist, shackled by the commercial business of portraiture - had to subordinate his imagination to the faithful image of the person before him. With no such restrictions, nineteenth century artists could dispense with the portrait entirely and concentrate on the development of the literary or narrative subject. The half-breed paintings of the Shakespeare Gallery - sometimes history paintings, sometimes theatrical portraits - gave way to a more unified branch of art which no longer required academic justification. Although it represented only a small part of this development, theatrical portraiture helped make the public eye receptive to the language of gesture and expression in art as well as offering a portrait which had a dimension beyond the mere representation of a human being.

The advent of theatrical photography usurped the development of the theatrical portrait, and aside from a handful of stunning examples (e.g. Sargeant's Ellen Terry, Whistler's Henry Irving), theatrical portraiture degenerated into a rarely practised art form. Whereas the eighteenth century theatrical portrait had served a largely commercial function, by the end of the nineteenth century, the photograph offered a more efficient means of fulfilling this function. Ironically, when an actor today commissions a theatrical portrait, his reasons are the same as those of an eighteenth century aristocrat - he wants to retain an image of himself for private purposes - for posterity, for family, but not for the public. David Garrick's elevation of the social status of the actor has finally reached its logical conclusion, and the

theatrical portrait has become a stamp of distinction rather than an object through which to stimulate public favour. However, the legacy of the eighteenth century theatrical portrait has been extended even up to our own day in the publicity photograph and the poster. Ephemeral though these images are, their importance in shaping the public imagination cannot be underestimated, and the early images of Garrick, Siddons and others - with their potent immediacy - have thus left their mark on our own age.

NOTES

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1. My thesis will cover only two-dimensional imagery. Other modes of representation such as sculpture, porcelain figures, and images of actors on playing cards, fans, etc. are ultimately the result of the popularity of the two-dimensional theatrical portrait. Many of these images can be seen to be derived from specific theatrical paintings or prints. For a discussion of porcelain in particular, see Peter Bradshaw, Eighteenth Century English Porcelain Figures 1745-1798 (Suffolk : Baron Publishing, Antique Collector's Club, 1981); Brian Manvell, "Kemble Statuette", Theatre Notebook, XI (1956-57), p.108; Babette Craven, "Derby Figures of Richard III", Theatre Notebook, XXIX (1975), pp.17-18; and Raymond Mander and Joe Mitchenson, "The China Statuettes of Quin as Falstaff", Theatre Notebook, XII (1978), pp.54-58.
2. See my catalogue which accompanies this thesis (volume 2). Over 5,000 actor portraits are listed there.
3. The Haymarket was later in the century allowed a patent for the summer season.
4. For information on the eighteenth century stage, see William van Lennep, Emmett Avery, Arthur Scouten, George Stone and Charles Hogan, The London Stage, 5 parts, 11 volumes (Carbondale, Illinois : Southern Illinois University Press, 1965); and for a more general discussion, Allardyce Nicoll, The Garrick Stage (Manchester : Manchester University Press, 1980).
5. Charles Churchill, The Rosciad (London, 1761).
6. Horace Walpole, Letters, Mrs. Paget Toynbee, ed. (Oxford : Clarendon Press, 1903), IV, p.244, letter dated 25 February 1759.
7. Samuel Ireland, Hogarth Illustrated (London, 1751), supplement volume, p.76.
8. Michael Kitson, "Hogarth's Apology to Painters", Walpole Society, XLIV (1968), p.100.
9. Abbe le Blanc, Lettres d'un Francais, letter to Du Bos 1745 quoted in Bernard Denvir, The Eighteenth Century : Art, Design and Society 1689-1789, in the series A Documentary History of Taste in Britain (London : Longman, 1983), p.120.
10. Kitson, p.83:

The painter has no further views copying the person sitting before him who ought to sit as still as a statue and nobody will dispute a statues being as much still life as a fruit flower or a galipot.

11. In most cases, I have used the most convenient titles for portraits rather than the titles by which they were known at the time, e.g. "Mrs. Hartley as Lady Jane Gray" rather than the more laboured "Mrs. Hartley in the character of Lady Jane Gray". I have not underlined titles unless they were the titles by which the painting in question was exhibited or known in the eighteenth century.

CHAPTER 1 : SOURCES AND PROTOTYPES OF THEATRICAL PORTRAITURE

1. See, for instance, T. S. R. Boase, "Illustrations of Shakespeare's Plays in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries", Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, X (1947), pp. 83-98; and Hans Hammelmann and T. S. R. Boase, Book Illustration in Eighteenth Century England (New Haven and London : Yale University Press, 1975).
2. Leslie Stephen, ed., Dictionary of National Biography, 70 volumes (London : Smith, elder & Co., 1885) - hereafter cited as DNB. See also Thomas Betterton, The History of the English Stage from the Restoration to the Present Time including the Lives, Characters and Amours of the most Eminent Actors and Actresses with Instructions for Public Speaking; Wherein the Action and Utterance of the Bar, Stage, and Pulpit are Distinctly Considered (London, 1741), pp. 55ff.
3. It is significant that when these latter portraits were painted, eighteenth century mezzotints after Lely and his pupils were being freely circulated throughout London (see chapter 3).
4. Lucille Hook, "Portraits of Elizabeth Barry and Anne Bracegirdle", Theatre Notebook, XIV (1961), pp. 129-37.
5. B. Buckeridge, "An Essay Towards an English School" in Roger de Piles, The Art of Painting (London, 1706). Cf. Vertue, Notebooks, Walpole Society XVIII, XX, XXII, XXIV, XXVI, XXIX, XXX; I, p.30, and Horace Walpole, Anecdotes of Painting in England, Ralph Wornum, ed., 3 volumes (London: Chatto and Windus, 1876). Walpole more or less reiterates the information put forth by Vertue, who, in turn, relies to an extent on Buckeridge.
6. John Genest paraphrases Anthony Aston's description of Cave Underhill:

Aston says...that he was six feet high and corpulent - that his face was long and broad - his nose flattish and short - his upper lip thick - his mouth wide and his chin short - that his voice was churlish and his action awkward.

Some Account of the English Stage from the Restoration in 1660 to 1830, 10 volumes (Bath, 1832), II, p. 439.

7. Although Sara Stevenson and Duncan Thomson contend that he was born in England and only went to Scotland later. John Michael Wright : The King's Painter, exhibition catalogue, Scottish National Portrait Gallery, 1982, p.11.
8. Vertue, Walpole Society, XVIII, p.44.
9. Ibid.
10. For Garrick's interest, see below. One imitator was Edward Gibson who "drew in crayons very well his own picture in crayons, one dress'd as a Chinese another like a Quaker with a hat on" (Vertue, Walpole Society, XVIII, p.31).
11. Walpole, Anecdotes, II, p.123. Kerslake identifies the characters as Sawney, Galliard and Scruple. J. F. Kerslake, Catalogue of Theatrical Portraits in London Public Collections (London : The Society of Theatre Research, 1961), p.vii.
12. Frederick Antal, Hogarth and His Place in European Art (London : Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962), p.231, note 4.
13. See F. P. Wilson, "Illustrations of Social Life III : Street-Cries", Shakespeare Survey, XIII (1960), pp.106-110.
14. Robert Raines, Marcellus Laroon (London : Routledge and Kegan Paul, The Paul Mellon Foundation, 1967).
15. See Richard Godfrey, Printmaking in Britain (Oxford : Phaidon Press, 1978), p.56; and Mary Webster, Francis Wheatley (London : The Paul Mellon Foundation, 1970), pp.82-85.
16. Jacques Mathey, "Drawings by Watteau and Gillot", Burlington Magazine, CII (August 1960), pp.354-361; and Martin Eidelberg, "Watteau and Gillot a Point of Contact", Burlington Magazine, CXV (April 1973), pp.232-239.
17. Eidelberg, "Watteau and Gillot", p.232.
18. See Donald Posner, Antoine Watteau (London : Weidenfeld and Nicolson Ltd., 1984); and Martin Eidelberg, "Watteau's Paintings in England in the Early Eighteenth Century", Burlington Magazine, CXVII (1975), pp.576-582.
19. See Ronald Paulson, Emblem and Expression (London : Thames and Hudson, 1975). Paulson, speaking of how Watteau disturbs conventional arrangements of comic types, says:

The situation is further modified by introducing a portrait: Giles or Mezzetin is given the face of Uleughels or some other friend, or of Watteau himself, and the sense changes again. (p.96)
20. For Watteau's relationship with Dr. Mead, see John Hayes, "English Painting and the Rococo", Apollo, XC (1969), p.118; Martin

- Eidelberg, "Watteau's Paintings in England"; and William Whitley, Artists and their Friends in England 1700-1799 (London, 1928; reprinted London : Benjamin Blom, 1968), I, p.108.
21. Hayes, p.118, names the works as L'amour Paisible and Comediens Italiens (present locations unknown).
 22. Whitley, I, p.110.
 23. Martin Eidelberg, "Watteau's La Boudouse", Burlington Magazine, CXI (1969), pp.275-278. Eidelberg claims that Mercier's first dateable London work was painted in 1723, but there is a general lack of agreement as to when he actually arrived in London. Vertue believes 1711, but Waterhouse contends that he came in 1711 and then left, returning later. Finally, Ingamells and Raines opt for 1716 as his arrival date. Ellis Waterhouse, "English Painting and France in the Eighteenth Century", Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, XV (1952), pp.122-135; and John Ingamells and Robert Raines, "A Catalogue of the Paintings, Drawings and Etchings of Philip Mercier", Walpole Society, CXLVI (1978), p.1.
 24. See Hayes, p.119; Ingamells and Raines, p.2; and Mario Praz, Conversation Pieces (University Park and London : Penn State University, 1971).
 25. Vertue, Walpole Society, XXII, p.82.
 26. Paulson, Emblem and Expression, p.121. For other, more tame, definitions, see Praz, p.33:

The term "conversation piece" is used in England for paintings usually not of large dimensions, which represent two or more identifiable people in attitudes implying that they are conversing or communicating with each other informally, against a background reproduced in detail.

and Waterhouse, Painting in Britain 1530-1790 (Harmondsworth : Penguin, 1953), p.140:

The eighteenth century applied the term "a conversation" to all informal groups, whether small in scale or on the size of life, and whether the figures were portraits or productions of the painter's fancy.

Cf. Ellen D'Oench, The Conversation Piece : Arthur Devis and His Contemporaries (New Haven : Yale Centre for British Art, 1980); Waterhouse, "English Conversation Pieces of the Eighteenth Century", Burlington Magazine, LXXXVIII (June, 1946), p.152; and M. J. H. Liversidge, "An Elusive Minor Master : J. F. Nollekens and the Conversation Piece", Apollo, XCV (1972), pp.34-41.

27. Sacheverell Sitwell, Conversation Pieces (London : B. T. Batsford, 1936), p.40:

Perhaps the theatre in the art of the Conversation Piece, occupied the same place as the nude in any school of historical painting. The study of it was essential to success. The continual grouping and posing of the actors was their perpetual display of subject.

28. See Raines, op. cit.

29. Ibid., p.72.

30. Ingamells and Raines, p.49.

31. Ibid.

32. See J. G. Southworth, Vauxhall Gardens (New York : Columbia University Press, 1941); Hayes, op. cit.; and Rococo : Art and Design in Hogarth's England, exhibition catalogue, Victoria and Albert Museum, 1984, pp.78-79, on the supper box paintings:

The hunt for subject matter must have been frantic, and all possible sources would have been plundered, so any attempt to read into them grave moral messages, allegorical meanings or, indeed, any particular continuity is probably misleading and can make us forget the original purely decorative purpose intended for them.

33. See Antal, Hogarth and His Place in European Art; and Idem, "The Moral Purpose of Hogarth's Art", Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, XV (1952), pp.169-197.
34. Joseph Burke, Hogarth's "Analysis of Beauty" (Oxford : The Clarendon Press, 1955), autobiographical notes, p.209.
35. See Peter de Voogd, Henry Fielding and William Hogarth : The Correspondences of the Arts (Amsterdam, 1981); Paulson, Hogarth's Graphic Works, 2 volumes (New Haven and London : Yale University Press), I, p.35; and Lance Bertleson, "The Interior Structures of Hogarth's Marriage a la Mode", Art History, VI (June, 1983), pp.131-142. Bertleson makes the most out of this point in a rather overstated argument.
36. Kitson, pp.184-185.
37. Hogarth, The Analysis of Beauty (London, 1753), p.151.
38. See Robert Etheridge Moore, Hogarth's Literary Relationships (Oxford : Oxford University Press, 1948). The stage adaptation of Hogarth's Harlot's Progress - the Jew Decoy'd (1733) - reveals this limitation most obviously. In order to fill in the background of the situation, the author of the play had to introduce a "Time Teller" to link the scenes, whereas Hogarth could imply the whole tale through a series of well placed clues which the observer would have time to decipher.

39. Ronald Paulson, Book and Painting : Shakespeare, Milton and the Bible (Knoxville : University of Tennessee Press, 1982), p.38; and Antal, Hogarth and His Place in European Art, p.61.
40. A. P. Oppe, The Drawings of William Hogarth (London : Phaidon Press, 1948).
41. See Paulson, Book and Painting, p.39; and Robin Simon, "Hogarth's Shakespeare", Apollo, CIX (March, 1979), p.214.
42. Ross Watson, William Hogarth : A Selection of Paintings from the Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon, exhibition catalogue, Washington National Gallery of Art, 1971. The members of the audience can be identified as well due to a key that was published with a later print of the work.
43. Antal, Hogarth and His Place in European Art, p.26; and Waterhouse, English Painting, p.128.
44. Geoffrey Ashton and Iain Mackintosh, Royal Opera House Retrospective 1732-1982, exhibition catalogue, Royal Academy, 1983, p.116. Ashton calls this version:

a fantasy of what Rich, an entrepreneur of spectacular entertainment, would like to have staged after having made the money and after having embarked on the adventure of replacing tiny Lincoln's Inn Fields with the larger new house of Covent Garden.
45. See Oppe, p.40 quoting a letter from Hogarth to "T.H." attached to Hogarth's drawing of the comparative proportions of Garrick and Quin (letter dated 21 October 1746).
46. Moore, p.89.
47. See Harry Beard, "An Etched Caricature of a Handelian Opera", Burlington Magazine, XCII (1950), p.266.
48. Walpole, Anecdotes, III, p.263; and Geoffrey Ashton and Iain Mackintosh, The Georgian Playhouse, exhibition catalogue, Arts Council, 1975.
49. Genest, III, p.425.
50. Ashton and Mackintosh, The Georgian Playhouse, cat. 18.
51. Van Bleeck also painted a portrait of Peg Woffington as Phoebe in As You Like It, known now only from an engraving (Kerslake, p.vii).
52. See Waterhouse, English Painting.
53. Thomas Davies, Dramatic Miscellanies : consisting of several Plays of Shakespeare with a Review of his Principal Characters, and those of various eminent writers as Represented by Mr. Garrick and other celebrated comedians with Anecdotes of Dramatic Poets, Actors, &c., 3 volumes (London, 1784), II, pp.108-109. Genest (III, p.614) paraphrases Davies' description.

54. For a contrasting view, see Waterhouse, English Painting, p.228 on Mrs. Cibber as Cordelia:

This and Hogarth's Garrick as "Richard III" are both large pictures and have little of the stage about them and nothing of the conversation piece. The marriage of the two genres was due either to Zoffany or Benjamin Wilson.

55. See Antal, Hogarth and His Place in European Art, p.175.

56. The scene taking place in van Bleeck's work is certainly as far removed from Shakespeare's original as it can be. Edmund in Tate's version is not only Machiavellian, but he is also a potential rapist. In Act III he sends two ruffians out onto the heath to kidnap Cordelia for this purpose. Cordelia is at the time out to rescue her father, accompanied by her confidante, Arante. Her lines are a travesty of Shakespeare's text:

Blow winds and lightnings fall
Bold in my virgin innocence I'll fly
My royal father to relieve, or die.

This is the scene depicted by van Bleeck.

CHAPTER 2 : PAINTING

1. Jean André Rouquet, The Present State of the Arts in England (London : J. J. Nourse, 1755), pp.38-39. See also Marcia Pointon, "Portrait Painting as a Business Enterprise in London in the 1780's", Art History, VII (June, 1984), pp.187-205.
2. Thomas Davies, Memoirs of the Life of David Garrick, 2 volumes (Dublin : Joseph Hill, 1980), II, pp.272-273.
3. Anonymous, Theatrical Biography, 2 volumes (London : S. Bladon, 1772).
4. Joseph Farington speaks of a rumour still in circulation in 1790 that Garrick's will claimed more than £100,000 in his estate, although Farington's assessment is only half that amount. Kenneth Garlick and Angus MacIntyre, eds., The Diary of Joseph Farington, 6 volumes (London : Yale University Press, 1978), I, p.105.
5. Walpole, Letters, III, p.329 to Richard Bentley, 4 August 1755.
6. Davies, Life of Garrick, II, p.61.
7. Ibid.
8. Peter Walch, "David Garrick in Italy", Eighteenth Century Studies, III (Summer, 1970), pp.523-531.

9. See Davies, Life of Garrick, II, p.277; Lance Bertleson, "David Garrick and English Painting", Eighteenth Century Studies, XI (Spring, 1978), p.312; and Kalman Burnim, "The Significance of Garrick's Letters to Hayman", Shakespeare Quarterly, IX (Spring, 1958), pp.148-152. Both Bertleson and Burnim suggest that Garrick's influence extended to assisting artists in choosing their subject matter and influencing their means of presenting it.
10. J. T. Smith, Nollekens and His Times, 2 volumes (London : Henry Colburn, 1829), II, p.93.
11. Ibid., I, pp.6-7.
12. Bertleson, "Garrick and English Painting", p.309.
13. Or, if Adrienne Corri is to be believed, 1740. The Search For Gainsborough (London : Jonathan Cape, 1984).
14. See Bertleson, "Garrick and English Painting", p.316; Mary Webster, Johann Zoffany, exhibition catalogue, National Portrait Gallery, 1976; and Ian Mayes, The De Wildes, exhibition catalogue, Northampton Central Art Gallery, 1971.
15. Henry Angelo, Reminiscences, 2 volumes (London : Kegan Paul, Trench, Turbner & Co., 1904), I, pp.29-30.
16. For example, the scene from Love in a Village, 1768; the scene from The Provok'd Wife, 1769; the scene from The Devil Upon Two Sticks, 1769; et. al.
17. One anecdote reveals just how important the commissioning of a theatrical portrait by the actor himself grew to be. The nineteenth century actor, William Charles Macready says:

On the close of my Birmingham performance my father, who attached great importance to the different modes of giving publicity to a name, took me up to London in order to have a portrait of me taken and engraved.

Sir Frederick Pollock, ed., Macready's Reminiscences, 2 volumes (London : Macmillan, 1875), I, pp.42-43; and I, pp.50-51.
18. Webster, Zoffany, p.32.
19. It is strange that Gainsborough Dupont, who did mezzotints of his uncle's portraits, did not make mezzotints of his own theatrical portraits. See Cyril Davenport, Mezzotints (London : Methuen and Co., 1904), p.165. See also Ashton and Mackintosh, Royal Opera House Retrospective, pp.69-70, where Ashton makes an interesting analogy in describing this commission:

Rather like the owner of a successful stable such as Lord Grosvenor who commissioned George Stubbs to paint his favourite horses, Harris commissioned Gainsborough Dupont to paint a selection of the actors in his company.

20. Charles Macklin allegedly requested to be paid for lending his features to a portrait painted by Opie for a clergyman. He obviously realised that his face had become a valuable public commodity. Ada Earland, John Opie and His Circle (London : Hutchinson and Co., 1911), p.292.
21. J. T. Smith, I, pp.148-149. For further information on Dance, see David Goodreau, Nathaniel Dance, exhibition catalogue, GLC, 1972.
22. See Ashton and Mackintosh, Royal Opera House Retrospective, p.16:

Public demand for theatrical portraits had increased in the eighteenth century and the desire to own theatrical paintings or prints spread, in theatrical terms, from the stage boxes to the upper gallery. Amongst the family portraits, topographical views and sporting pictures in the country house collections of rich eighteenth century patrons of drama it is quite usual to find the occasional theatrical portrait.
23. Ashton and Mackintosh, Georgian Playhouse, cat. 99.
24. Webster, p.32.
25. Ibid., p.51.
26. See, for instance, Ellis Waterhouse, English Painting, p.228, whose chapter on theatrical portraiture is entitled, "Zoffany : Theatre Genre and Later Conversation Pieces". Waterhouse's discussion of "theatre genre" is limited almost exclusively to Zoffany - certainly the best, but certainly not the only, theatrical portraitist of the century. See also, my catalogue, where the dominance of single figure theatrical portraits is made obvious.
27. Ibid.
28. See, for example, J. T. Smith, II, p.132; Whitley, II, p.249; and Lady Victoria Manners and Dr. G. C. Williamson, John Zoffany (London : John Lane, 1920), p.8. The story on which most agree is that Garrick could not believe that Wilson, with his limited talent, was capable of painting certain excellent passages of his theatrical conversations, so, upon investigation, Garrick eventually determined that Zoffany had painted them.
29. See David Little and George Kahrl, The Letters of David Garrick, 3 volumes (Oxford : Oxford University Press, 1963), I, p.363, letter dated ante 21 August 1762.
30. Genest, IV, p.283.
31. Thomas Davies, Dramatic Miscellanies, II, pp.148-149.
32. Webster, Zoffany, p.83.

33. Jonathon Richardson, The Works, consisting of I. The Theory of Painting, II. Essay on the Art of Criticism so far as it relates to Painting, III. The Science of a Connoisseur (London : T. Davies, 1773); and see also Paulson, Book and Painting, pp.63-64.
34. William Hazlitt, "Conversations of James Northoote", volume 6 of A. R. Walker and Arnold, eds., The Collected Works of William Hazlitt, 12 volumes (London : J. M. Dent & Co.), pp.339-340.
35. Lawrence refers to these works as half-history in a letter to Mrs. Aynscough Boucherette. See Ashton and Mackintosh, Royal Opera House Retrospective, p.80; and Richard and Samuel Redgrave, A Century of Painters of the English School, 2 volumes (London : Smith, Elder & Co., 1866). Redgrave, II, p.19, says: "From time to time, Lawrence painted what he calls 'half history', but what we should call costume portraits."
36. Whitley, II, p.94.
37. Redgrave, II, p.61.
38. For discussion of Reynolds' theory and practice, see E. H. Gombrich, "Reynolds' Theory and Practice of Imitation", Burlington Magazine, LXXX (1942), pp.40-45; and Charles Mitchell, "Three Phases of Reynolds' method", Burlington Magazine, LXXX (1942), pp.35ff.
39. Reynolds, Discourses on Art, Robert Wark, ed. (New Haven : Yale University Press, 1975), p.299.
40. Ibid., Discourse IV, p.60.
41. Ibid., Discourse IV, p.58.
42. Ibid., Discourse XIII, p.240.
43. On the basis of Waterhouse's catalogue of Reynolds it can be calculated that Reynolds painted 18 portraits of actors both in and out of character, although previous authors list many more actor portraits than this. Leslie and Taylor, for instance, claim that Reynolds painted 7 portraits of Garrick and 5 of Mrs. Abington. Ellis Waterhouse, Reynolds (London : Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1941); and Charles Robert Leslie and Tom Taylor, The Life and Times of Sir Joshua Reynolds, 2 volumes (London : John Murray, 1865), I, p.240. The portraits listed by Waterhouse are as follows:

<u>Actor</u>	<u>Character (if any)</u>	<u>Date and Exhibition</u>
Mrs. Abington	Comic Muse	1764-65
	Miss Prue	1771 (R.A.)
	Roxalana	1784 (R.A.)
Mrs. Baddeley		1771-72
Mrs. Billington	St. Cecilia	1790 (R.A.)
Samuel Foote		1764-67

<u>Actor</u>	<u>Character (if any)</u>	<u>Date and Exhibition</u>
Garrick	Between Tragedy and Comedy Kitely	1760-61 1768 1778
Garrick and Mrs. Garrick		1776 (R.A.) 1778
Fanny Kemble		1784 (R.A.)
Mrs. Robinson		1782 (R.A.) 1784
Mrs. Hartley	Jane Shore	1773 (R.A.) 1773
Siddons	Tragic Muse	1784 (R.A.)
Woodward		1759-62
44. Reynolds gave 100 guineas for the portrait, then re-sold it to Lord Carlisle for 120, with the stipulation that the extra 20 guineas went back to Zoffany. See the letter from Mary Moser to Fuseli (1770) quoted Denvir, p.194; and see also Whitley, I, p.263.		
45. Davies, <u>Life of Garrick</u> , I, p.45.		
46. Whitley (II, p.293) quoting a letter from Northcote to his brother, Samuel, dated 19 November 1772:		
<p>Sir Joshua talks of painting a large picture of him [Garrick] in a great many different characters; he is to be in his proper character in the middle, speaking a prologue, and about fifteen of the most remarkable characters which he has acted to be standing round hearkening to him; and he will sit for all these. I heard him say he has acted in all a hundred and twenty characters, and out of these the most remarkable are to be chosen. It is to be painted in Sir Joshua's Great Room at Richmond next summer; you need not mention it as it may never happen.</p>		
Cf. Leslie and Taylor, I, p.206; and James Northcote, <u>Memoirs of Sir Joshua Reynolds</u> (London : Henry Colburn, 1813), pp.59-60.		
47. Waterhouse, <u>Reynolds</u> , pp.16 and 19.		
48. Paulson, <u>Emblem and Expression</u> , p.83.		
49. See J. L. Nevinson, "Vandyke Dress", <u>Connoisseur</u> (November, 1964), pp.166-171.		
50. Davies, <u>Life of Garrick</u> , II, p.245.		
51. Leigh Hunt, <u>Autobiography</u> , Roger Ingpen, ed., 2 volumes (London : Archibald Constable & Co., 1903).		

52. It must be said that some modern theatre historians have argued successfully that rant was as characteristic of Kemble's acting style as classical composure. For instance, see Alan Downer, "Nature to Advantage Dressed : Eighteenth Century Acting", Publications of the Modern Language Association of America, LVIII (December, 1943), pp.1002-1037. Downer (p.1018) suggests that:

Kemble's style of acting was better fitted to the high-sounding melodramatics of Pizarro, than the tall, preternaturally solemn character studies of Sir Thomas Lawrence would indicate.

53. Boaden, for example, makes such a comparison. After quoting from Reynolds' Discourse XIII, which speaks against the expression of a violent passion, he says, "Such I know were the conceptions, which Mr. Kemble entertained of his art". James Boaden, Memoirs of the Life of J. P. Kemble (London, 1825), p.179.
54. Hamilton's theatrical portraits were the first works which put him in the public eye. Prior to that, he was relatively unknown. See Boase, "Macklin and Bowyer", pp.152-153.
55. James Boaden, Memoirs of Mrs. Siddons, 2 volumes (London : Henry Colburn, 1827), I, p.312.
56. See Antal, Hogarth and His Place in European Art, p.178.
57. See Garlick and MacIntyre, I, p.211. Farington, after a visit to Drury Lane theatre, writes:

Sir F. Bourgeois was there. He told me he had had for 3 or 4 years past purchased a Ticket for the season for which he paid 6 guineas and was free of every part of the House.

58. J. T. Smith, I, p.362.
59. Ashton and Mackintosh, Royal Opera House Retrospective, p.80.
60. Humphrey Ward and W. Roberts, Romney : A Biographical and Critical Essay with a Catalogue Raisonné, 2 volumes (London : Thos. Agnew and Sons, 1904), II, p.87. The painting was meant to be Mrs. Jordan as the Country Girl, but the engraving after it was entitled The Romp, alluding to Jordan's role as Priscilla Tomboy in that play.
61. See Anne Crookshank, "The Drawings of George Romney", Burlington Magazine, XCIX (February, 1957), p.43; and Esther Gordon Dotson, Shakespeare Illustrated 1770-1820, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, New York University, 1973, p.67.
62. See Kirsten Gram Holström, Monodrama, Attitudes, Tableaux Vivants (Stockholm : Almqvist and Wiksell, 1967).
63. Winifred Friedman, Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery (New York : Garland Outstanding Dissertations in the Fine Arts, 1976), p.133.

64. Public Advertiser, 6 May 1789.

65. See Paulson, Book and Painting, p.27:

When the Boydell Shakespeare paintings and engravings began to be seen, it was the opinion of some critics that the best parts were the portraits - the character of the faces - which was the most "English" part of the compositions.

66. Friedman, Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery, pp.191, 165 and 203-204.

67. Garlick and MacIntyre, II, p.541, entry dated 4 May 1796. See also Boaden's description, Memoirs of Siddons, II, p.133:

When Mrs. Siddons came on with the letter from Macbeth (the first time we saw her) such was the impression from her form, her face, her deportment - the distinction of sex was only external - "her spirits" informed their tenement with the apathy of a demon.

68. Theatrical Biography, I, p.134.

69. Ibid., I, p.107.

70. Francis Gentleman, The Dramatic Censor, or Critical Companion, 2 volumes (London : Bell, 1770), II, p.98.

71. Davies, Life of Garrick, II, p.70.

72. Genest, II, pp.627-628. See also William Cooke, Memoirs of Charles Macklin (London : James Asperne, 1804); and James Thomas Kirkman, Memoirs of the Life of Charles Macklin, 2 volumes (London, 1799).

73. See Raymond Mander and Joe Mitchenson, The Artist and the Theatre (London : Heinemann, 1955), p.178.

74. Davies, Life of Garrick, I, p.215.

75. Whitley, II, p.184.

76. See, for instance, Garlick and MacIntyre, I, pp.88-89; I, p.178; I, p.249; I, p.255; II, p.324; and III, p.376. Dupont did get some votes at Royal Academy elections, and it seems that a point of order which prevented the 1794 elections from occurring also prevented him from becoming an associate. Farington writes:

Smirke came to tea and we talked over the ensuing election of associates. - Gilpin certain, and Shee, Downman & Soane, & Dupont considered likely to be supported. It was thought on the whole best to vote for Gilpin, Shee & Soane. - The last year had the election taken place we shd. have supported Downman, Dupont & Soane, but in the last Exhibition the merit of Shee was allowed to be greater than

that of the other two painters, which it was judged necessary to make the change as now proposed. (Diary entry 31 October 1796; II, p.394)

77. See Ashton and Mackintosh, Royal Opera House Retrospective, pp.69-79.
78. Garlick and MacIntyre, II, p.329.
79. See Mayes, The De Wildes, op. cit.
80. Sybil Rosenfeld, "A Diary by Samuel de Wilde", Theatre Notebook, XX (1965), pp.35-36. In addition to his paintings for Bell and independent portrait commissions, de Wilde also did a large number of watercolour drawings which served as a basis for illustrations in magazines such as the Monthly Mirror and Theatrical Inquisitor.
81. Ian Mayes, "John Bell, The British Theatre and Samuel de Wilde", Apollo, CXIII (February, 1981), pp.100-103.
82. Basil Taylor, Painting in England 1700-1850, 2 volumes, catalogue of the Mellon Collection in the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Virginia (Kent : Westerham Press Ltd., 1963), p.126.

CHAPTER 3 : THE THEATRICAL PRINT INDUSTRY

1. In this chapter, my use of the term "reproductive" refers to engravings which reproduce paintings, and "non-reproductive" for engravings based on original drawings or designs. See Brenda Rix, Pictures for the Parlour : the English Reproductive Print from 1775-1900, exhibition catalogue, Art Gallery of Ontario, 1983. Rix makes only passing reference to reproductive theatrical prints. See also David Alexander, "Painters and Engraving from Reynolds to Wilkie", Connoisseur, CC (January, 1979), p.61.
2. John Pye, Patronage of British Art (London : Longman, Brown, Green & Longman, 1845; reprint ed., London : Cornmarket Press, 1970), pp.159-160.
3. The stipple engraver, Bartolozzi, the only engraver allowed into the initial membership of the R.A., was a foreigner. Cf. Pye, op. cit.; and Robert Strange, An Enquiry into the Rise and Establishment of the Royal Academy of Arts (London, 1775).
4. See David Kunzle, "Plagiaries by Memory of The Rake's Progress", Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, XXIX (1966), pp.311-348.
5. Pye, p.42, following Rouquet, p.28 sets the number of pre-Hogarth print shops at 2, whereas Paulson claims that there were 12. Ronald Paulson, Hogarth's Graphic Works, 2 volumes (New Haven and London : Yale University Press, 1965), p.5. Paulson is possibly

- referring to a later date than Pye. See also Richard Altick, The Shows of London (Cambridge, Mass. : Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1978), p.106, for the state of the print industry at the end of the eighteenth century.
6. For a general discussion of the early development of the print market, see Louise Lippincott, Selling Art in Georgian London : The Rise of Arthur Pond (London : Paul Mellon Centre, 1983). For a discussion of these later projects, see Boase, "Illustrations of Shakespeare's Plays"; Idem, "Macklin and Bowyer", Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, XXVI (1963); Winifred Friedman, Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery. These projects were, from the beginning, totally mercantile. Even Boydell's idealistic intention of fostering a native history painting was only masking a careful consideration of what the public wanted. See Winifred Friedman, "Some Commercial Aspects of the Boydell Shakespeare Gallery", Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, XXXVI (1973), pp.396-401.
 7. Roy Porter, English Society in the Eighteenth Century (London : Penguin Books, 1982), p.16.
 8. Although neither Hogarth's Beggar's Opera nor his Falstaff paintings were engraved. See Paulson, Book and Painting, p.44.
 9. Pye, p.43.
 10. Richard Godfrey, English Caricature 1620 to the Present, exhibition catalogue, Victoria and Albert Museum, 1984, p.33. These scrap-books were also put together by print sellers who would hire them out for a party or informal gathering.
 11. Henry Angelo, Reminiscences, II, pp.100-101.
 12. Lippincott, p.48. Prior to 1750 only the more ambitious artists such as Hogarth and Pond used this method of promotion.
 13. General Advertiser, Tuesday 18 September 1750.
 14. Rouquet, p.119: "Everything is rubb'd clean and neat, everything is enclosed in large show glasses."
 15. It is difficult to reconstruct the fluctuations of cost of theatrical prints in the eighteenth century as some prints are not price marked and even fewer were advertised in newspapers. It seems as though certain types of prints inevitably cost certain sums, but these sums increased as the century progressed. For example, Walpole writes to Horace Mann on 6 May 1770:

Another rage is prints for English portraits. I have been collecting them above thirty years, and originally never gave for a mezzotinto above one or two shillings. The lowest are now a crown, most from half a guinea to a guinea. (Walpole, Letters, VII, pp.379-380)

16. See Frederick Whiley Hilles, The Letters of Sir Joshua Reynolds (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1929), see particularly p.247, the letter from Valentine Green to Reynolds 31 May 1783:

If ... in an instance like the present a subject should arise which should promise a Reward to an Engraver to produce, He who had executed a great number of your works, and that too at a considerable loss in many of them: whose claim was prior to every other, and whose claim was complied with on all hands, should surely have been secured in it. In this situation I stand and I may now demand that as a Right, which I originally solicited as a Favour from you.

17. Rouquet, p.82. Pye's observations of this situation is much less critical:

Portrait-painters, generally, became alive to the advantages resulting to their branch of art from the new state of things, and had recourse to mezzotinto for aid. As a means of becoming more generally known, they published, and exhibited in print-shop windows for sale, likenesses of distinguished characters, engraved after their own pictures. (p.55)

18. Kitson, p.86.
19. Of course there are exceptions to this generalisation. Some mezzotints after Reynolds' portraits by Green, Judkins and S. W. Reynolds often yield a more satisfactory image than the paintings themselves.
20. When Hogarth engraved his Industry and Idleness series, he made his images more stylistically simple than those of his previous series, keeping in mind that these prints were intended to be disseminated to a wider audience.
21. Pointon, pp.193-194, indicates the necessity of a fashionable London portrait painter to have his studio in the west end, where the upper class patrons could easily reach him.
22. There is no evidence about the opening times of print shops or whether or not theatrical prints were sold by the theatres themselves. It seems likely that since texts, musical scores, etc. were sold in the theatres, that prints may well have been sold also, but whether or not theatre managers had an arrangement with print sellers is impossible to determine. The financial accounts of Covent Garden and Drury Lane reveal nothing about money changing hands between printers and managers. See London Stage (Stone, Part 4, volume 1, introduction and Hogan, Part 5, volume 1, introduction).
23. Anthony Griffiths, Prints and Printmaking (London : British Museum Publications, 1980), p.85.

24. The art became so associated with Britain that it was nicknamed "la maniere anglaise" by continental engravers. See Rix, p.16.
25. Burlington Fine Arts Club, exhibition catalogue of engravings in mezzotint, 1881, cats. 46 and 56. Simon also mezzotinted Grisoni's portrait of Colley Cibber as Lord Foppington, making this one of the earliest reproductive mezzotints after a portrait of an actor in character.
26. See Paulson, Book and Painting, pp.39-40.
27. Davies, Life of Garrick, II, p.139 and I, p.20.
28. Cooke, Memoirs of Macklin, p.36.
29. Although since they were exhibited in print shop windows, they could be seen by everyone, even those unable to buy them.
30. One of McArdell's shrewdest deals was with Joshua Reynolds in 1754 (see below), a move which established McArdell's reputation as well as helped to build up the early popularity of Reynolds' paintings.
31. Walpole, Letters, VI, pp.261-262. The picture to which Walpole refers is a portrait of him by Reynolds.
32. See David Alexander, "The Dublin Group : Irish Mezzotint Engravers in London 1750-1775", Quarterly Bulletin of the Irish Georgian Society, XVI (July-September, 1973); and Burlington Fine Arts Club, James McArdell, exhibition catalogue, London, 1886.
33. The 1791 print was a single figure portrait of Garrick as Abel Druggier taken from the full scene from The Alchemist painted by Zoffany in 1770. See David Alexander, "Mezzotint Conversations after Zoffany", Antique Collector (January, 1977), pp.64-67.
34. Angelo, I, p.45, gives the most detailed account of Sayer's activities, but he is concerned only with Sayer's politics, in particular his partisanship of Wilkes.
35. See Hilles, p.46, letter from Joshua Reynolds to John Pringle 4 October 1775. The practice of passing on copper plates was common since copper surfaces could be re-used. For instance, Boydell bought the plates of the seventeenth century mezzotinter, John Smith, and these plates were sold at the Boydell sale as late as 1813. See Davenport, p.98. See also Alexander, p.77.
36. Davenport, op. cit.
37. There are several etchings with Sayer's name on them, but he seems to have had nothing to do with the highly trained techniques of mezzotint and line engraving which, nevertheless, were the primary products of his shop.
38. See Ashton and Mackintosh, The Georgian Playhouse, cat. 48. Sayer's dedication reads as follows:

Sir,

In search of a Patron for this little work, I find no one to whom I can so properly Inscribe it, as a Gentleman who has rendered the English stage, not only famous, by those universal Talents which no other Actor either Ancient, or modern is recorded to have profess'd, at least in an Equal degree, but who, as an Author, has Enrich'd the Roll of the English Drama, with several characters Equally excellent and admir'd.

Permit me then a compliment Justly due to your Merit in both capacities to dedicate these Dramatic Characters, or different portraits of the English Stage to you, And at the same time subscribe myself

Sir your noble obliged
Humble Svt,
Robt Sayer.

39. Griffiths, p.150.
40. Margaret More and W. H. Quarrel trans., Lichtenberg's Visits to England (Oxford : Clarendon Press, 1938).
41. See Alexander, "Painters and Engraving from Reynolds to Wilkie".
42. For instance, the mezzotinter, S. W. Reynolds seems to have devoted the majority of his life to reproducing Reynolds' work, engraving some 357 of his portraits. Davenport, p.178.
43. The financial success of Woollet's line engraving of West's Death of General Wolfe in 1776 was a further impetus to the engravers of reproductive prints, although theatrical portraitists only rarely ventured into the media of line engraving.
44. See Rix, p.33 and Griffiths, p.83, who assigns the origin of these furniture prints to the "galant" Watteauesque prints which appeared in France in the second quarter of the eighteenth century.
45. Griffiths, p.80.
46. Ibid., p.83.
47. Because of the appropriateness of stipple for rendering facial expression, it was sometimes used in conjunction with line engraving - stipple for the face and line for the body.
48. J. T. Smith, II, p.141. See also Angelo, I, pp.14-15, who attributes a similar speed and virtuosity to Bartolozzi.
49. Andrew Tuer, Bartolozzi and His Works, 2 volumes (London : Field and Tuer, the Leadenhall Press, 1885).
50. All biographical data on these engravers (unless otherwise stated) is taken from the DNB.

51. See Mayes, "John Bell", p.113.
52. See Boaden, Memoirs of Mrs. Siddons, I, pp.277ff.
53. With one exception - caricature from a Handelian opera (1723), a scene reproduced on the sign board in Hogarth's Masquerades and Operas. See Beard, p.266.
54. See Diana Donald, "'Calumny and Caricature', Eighteenth Century Political Prints and the Case of George Townshend", Art History, VI (March, 1983), pp.244-266. Walpole's praise of his cousin, George Townshend, is effusive. In a letter to Horace Mann, 20 April 1757, he writes:

Pamphlets, cards and prints swarm again. George Townshend has published one of the latter which is so admirable in its kind that I cannot help sending it to you. His genius for likeness in caricature is astonishing - indeed, Lord Winchelsea's figure is not heightened - your friend Dodington and Lord Sandwich are like; the former made me laugh untill I cried. The Hanoverian drummer Ellis, is the least like, though it has much of his air. I need say nothing of the lump of fat crowned with laurel on the altar ... This print, which has so diverted the town, has produced to-day a most bitter pamphlet against George Townshend, called The Art of Political Lying. Indeed, it is strong. (Walpole, Letters, IV, p.45)

55. There is no information in the DNB on Mary Darly, but Godfrey, English Caricature, p.33, contends that she is Mathew's wife.
56. M. Dorothy George, Social Change in Graphic Satire (London : Penguin, 1967). For a good example of the Darlys' work, see A Political and Satirical History of the Years 1756, 1757, 1758, 1759 and 1760 in a series of one hundred and four Humourous and Entertaining Prints, containing all the most remarkable Transactions, Characters and Caricatures of those memorable years, 2 volumes (London, [1761]).
57. George, p.57.
58. See Ernst Gombrich's discussion of the schematism of caricatures in Art and Illusion (London : Phaidon Press, 1960); and Ernst Gombrich and E. Kris, Caricature (Harmondsworth : Penguin, 1940).

CHAPTER 4 : BOOK ILLUSTRATION

1. Note to Dramatic Character Plates for "Bell's Edition of Shakespeare's Plays" (London, 1775-76; reprint facsimile, London : Cornmarket Press, 1969).
2. See Kitson, op. cit.; and A Catalogue of Pictures in the Shakespeare Gallery (London, 1792), introduction.
3. See the quote from Hunt, p.11. This emphasis on the illustrations continues in advertisements for the second edition of Shakespeare's plays and both editions of the British Theatre, indicating that this sales technique was used continuously by Bell until the end of the century.
4. For the sake of continuity, I will be using all my examples of early play illustration from editions of Shakespeare.
5. See Boase, "Illustrations of Shakespeare's Plays".
6. Ibid., p.86.
7. See W. Moelwyn Merchant, Shakespeare and the Artist (London : Oxford University Press, 1959); Montague Summers, "The First Illustrated Shakespeare", Connoisseur, XII (December, 1938), pp.305-309; and Malcolm Salaman, "Shakespeare in Pictorial Art", Charles Holme, ed., Studio, special number, 1916.
8. Salaman, p.12.
9. See Davies, Dramatic Miscellanies, III, p.108:

At the appearance of the Ghost, in this scene Hamlet immediately rises from his feat (sic) affrighted; at the same time he contrives to kick down his chair, which, by making a sudden noise, it was imagined would contribute to the perturbation and terror of the incident. But his, in my opinion, was a poor stage-trick, and should be avoided; it tends to make the actor solicitous about a trifle, when more important matters demand his attention.

See Boase, p.87; Salaman, p.12; Summers, p.307 more accurately calls these theatrical settings "largely imaginative".

10. See Hayes, pp.114-125; and Rococo : Art and Design in Hogarth's England.
11. Hayes, p.120.
12. W. Moelwyn Merchant believes that Hayman had some influence on Gravelot in between the latter artist's work on Theobald's Shakespeare and Hanmer's Shakespeare, but Bruand argues more convincingly for Gravelot leaving England unscathed - especially considering the fact that he had entered the country as a fully

trained, highly skilled artist. Merchant, "Francis Hayman's Illustrations of Shakespeare", Shakespeare Quarterly, IX (Spring, 1958), pp.141-147; and Bruand, "Hubert Gravelot Et l'Angleterre", Gazette des Beaux Arts, LV (1960), pp.35-44.

13. Hans Hammelmann, "Shakespeare Illustrations : the Earliest Known Originals", Connoisseur, CXLII (1958), pp.144-149:

His [Gravelot's] alight, graceful figures are, in the main, much too insubstantial to stand by the side of the text. Macbeth looks more like a rake than a warrior; and even so real and colourful a character as Falstaff hardly comes to life as a distinctive and recognizable type. In drawing Henry VIII, the artist was so far off the mark that beard and a proper stomach had to be added by the engraver at the last moment. (p.147)
14. Merchant, "Hayman's Illustrations", p.142.
15. Marcia Allentuck, "Sir Thomas Hanmer Instructs Francis Hayman : An Editor's Notes to His Illustrator 1744", Shakespeare Quarterly, XXVII (1976), p.288.
16. Ibid., p.300.
17. Ibid., p.307.
18. Ibid., p.295.
19. Dotson, especially pp.22-23. Dotson's substantiation of this zeitgeist theory of Hayman's illustration relies too heavily on Garrick's encouragement of naturalism on the London stage and glosses over the implications of the dominance of French engravers in England who prevented realistic character portrayal in art from emerging sooner.
20. Burnim, "The Significance of Garrick's Letters to Hayman", pp.148-152.
21. Ibid., p.149.
22. Ibid., pp.151-152.
23. See George Odell, Shakespeare from Betterton to Irving, 2 volumes (London, 1963).
24. Hammelmann and Boase, p.7. They suggest one of the reasons for this larger reading public was the birth of the popular novel, a genre which would appeal to more than intellectuals or academics.
25. See Stone, London Stage, Part 4, volume 1, p.lv.
26. DNB.
27. James Ralph, The Case of Authors by Profession or Trade, stated with regard to Booksellers, the Stage and the Public (London, 1758), p.21.

28. Hunt, I, p.164.
29. Stanley Morison, John Bell 1745-1831 (London : First Edition Club, n.d.), trade card reproduced in facsimile.
30. Ibid.
31. See Stone, London Stage, Part 4, volume 1, pp.lii, lvi and lxxii.
32. Genest, V, p.439.
33. Morning Post, Tuesday 10 January 1786.
34. It is difficult to imagine what the quality of an individual edition must have been, as many bound editions of Bell's works, now in major libraries, often have faded and inferior frontispieces. It seems as though Bell was guilty of a certain amount of public exploitation.
35. The Oracle, August, 1790.
36. George Williamson, ed., Bryan's Dictionary of Painters and Engravers, 5 volumes (London : George Bell and Sons, 1904).
37. The World, January, 1787.
38. Cited Morison, p.93, with the source not indicated.
39. Ibid., but not until the nineteenth century and in the context of newspapers.
40. Sir Frank Mackinnon, "Notes on the History of English Copyright" in Paul Harvey, ed., Oxford Companion to English Literature (Oxford : The Clarendon Press, 1967), pp.925-926.
41. Ibid., p.924; and Morison, p.94.
42. Donaldson's defence was supported by Boswell, who published The Decision of the Court of Session, upon the Question of Literary Property; in the Cause of John Hinton of London, Bookseller Pursuer: against Alexander Donaldson and John Wood, Booksellers in Edinburgh, and James Meurose Bookseller in Kilmarnock, Defenders (Edinburgh, 1774). See also Frederick Albert Pottle, The Literary Career of James Boswell, Esq. (Oxford : Clarendon Press, 1929), pp.98-101.
43. Mackinnon, p.926.
44. Public Advertiser, 4 March 1774.
45. According to the newspaper propaganda which surrounded the 1774 copyright controversy, Paternoster Row was the location of the hacks of the publishing world. One critic even goes so far as to refer to the productions of booksellers in Paternoster Row as "vile trash". (Public Advertiser, May, 1774, letter from "A-Z")

46. DNB; and Morison, pp.94-95.
47. With the exceptions of volumes IX and XXI which contained ballad operas and other musical entertainments.
48. There is also the possibility that Bell and the New English Theatre publishers were copying each other's texts as well, given the startling similarity between two separate editions of the same play. Considering the fact that these purported to be "plays as they are performed" and were thus technically subject to change, such similarity means little more than mutual plagiarism.
49. This practice of selling copyrights to managers caused problems for more than one author. For instance, when O'Keefe published his own plays in 1798, he was unable to obtain permission from the Haymarket to include several of his more popular plays, leaving the edition sadly lacking and unrepresentative of that author's talents. (Genest, VII, p.402)
50. Although Thomas Lowndes earned 1/8 of the copyright to the Maid of the Mill - one of the most popular ballad operas of the second half of the century. Stone, London Stage, Part 4, volume 1, p.cci.
51. See Genest, III, p.580; and III, p.245. Polly was a sequel to The Beggar's Opera. Genest states emphatically, "There can be no doubt of its having been forbidden to be acted, not so much for anything contained in it, as out of a mean, dirty, pitiful spirit of revenge for the honest and open satire of the Beggar's Opera".
52. This problem of publishing a farce was seen in the eighteenth century as well. After discussing two farces by Samuel Foote, the anonymous theatrical biographer has the following to say:

Neither of the above mentioned pieces have yet appeared in print; nor would they, perhaps, give any great pleasure in the closet; for consisting principally of characters, whose peculiar singularities could never be perfectly represented on paper, they might probably appear flat when divested of that strong colouring and projection, which he gave them in his personal representation.

Theatrical Biography, II, p.116.

53. For example, J. Bew edited a collection of songs in 1778 which included portraits of actors and actresses famous for singing them on stage.
54. Bell seems to have reprinted a number of his plates, perhaps for this same reason. In one notable instance, he printed two plates for the same play on the same date, seemingly anticipating sales. The illustrations of Garrick as Bayes and Henderson as Bayes in The Rehearsal, were both published on 16 September 1777, and represent two separate moments of the action in that play. Possibly Bell's anticipation of a large market for this play led him to offer this choice of actor portrait.

55. The only name attached to any Harrison or Wenman frontispiece is "Terry", who was evidently the engraver but not necessarily the designer of many of the plates. This elusive man was not likely to have been Garnet Terry who published a book of ciphers at the end of the century, but no other Terry that we know of was connected in any way with the eighteenth century engraving trade. The anonymity of the artists which Harrison and Wenman used, justifies the assertion that these frontispieces were mere hack-work, badly executed, technically unskilled and hastily produced.
56. The only elements borrowed unchanged from fellow illustrators were details of costume. These will be discussed in chapter 6.
57. This one-upmanship also worked in reverse. For example, Bell was the first of the two to publish Tamerlane, complete with a frontispiece of Barry and Mrs. Barry as Bajazet and Selima, but the New English Theatre's version of Tamerlane contained a frontispiece of Palmer as Bajazet and Miss Hopkins as Selima - the latter couple having succeeded Barry and Mrs. Barry in these roles at Drury Lane. Of Palmer's first appearance in this role, Hopkins says in his diary, "Mr. Barry being ill, Mr. Palmer played Bajazet - so - so". Stone, London Stage, Part 4, volume 3, p.16669.
58. The Oracle, August, 1790.
59. Hamilton had become an R.A. in 1789, Fuseli in 1790, Wheatley in 1791, Smirke in 1793 and Stothard and Westall in 1794.
60. This comparison between the Bell and Boydell projects was also made at the time. See, for instance, a newsclipping of 1790 entitled "The Competition of Bell, Boydell, and Macklin". Press Cuttings from English Newspapers on Matters of Artistic Interest, 6 volumes, 1686-1835, Victoria and Albert Museum, IV, p.586.
61. Bell's subscription list to his first Shakespeare mentions no foreign buyers, and one also wonders why a French buyer, for example, would want an inferior English adaptation of Voltaire (e.g. Hill's Zara) or Racine (e.g. Smith's Phaedra and Hippolytus) when he had the quality product right on his own doorstep.
62. Morison, p.31; and Mayes, p.113.
63. Mayes, p.103.
64. Quoted in Morison, p.40, from an advertisement of 10 October 1795.
65. For example, Cooper as Pericles and Master de Camp as Hengo. The former actor was from the Stockport Theatre and first performed in London at Covent Garden in 1795. Cawthorne hoped to satisfy his boast of buying copyrights to new plays by offering instead portraits of new actors as frontispieces to old ones. His choice of Master de Camp (whose acting repertoire did not include the Bonduca hero, Hengo), was perhaps the result of de Camp's relationship to J. P. Kemble's wife. Cawthorne obviously hoped that the young de Camp would go the route of his in-laws, the Kembles and the Siddonses. Unfortunately for Cawthorne, he did not.

66. C. K. Adams, A Catalogue of Pictures in the Garrick Club (London : The Garrick Club, 1939), p.68, speculates that a different situation may have related the drawing to the painting, i.e. de Wilde's painting may have been a copy of a drawing by Roberts. This idea is absurd to say the least, given the de Wildian style of the composition as well as the fact that de Wilde's paintings preceded his engravings for the British Theatre. Since this portrait does not appear until volume 34 - the last of the series in which Bell had a hand - the publishers and/or artist were possibly scraping the bottom of the barrel for new ideas. The de Wilde painting would have provided one.
67. Macklin as Sir Gilbert Wrangle, de Wilde's 1792 copy (with costume alterations) of Roberts' 1778 engraving. Copies such as this may have been the result of the necessity of speedy production.
68. Mayes, p.102.
69. Cf. Raymond Mander and Joe Mitchenson, The Artist and the Theatre (London : Heinemann, 1955), p.245, for a comment on the painting of the scene for Bell from Dodsley's Cleone.
70. Morison, op. cit.

CHAPTER 5 : FACTORS GOVERNING REPRESENTATION

1. Many of these excessively literary interpretations would have been so much gibberish to an eighteenth century public. For instance, see Paulson, Emblem and Expression; and Stephen Carr's "Verbal-Visual Relationships : Zoffany's and Fuseli's Illustrations of Macbeth", Art History, III (December, 1980), pp.375-387. In contrast, Pointon's approach to eighteenth century portraiture is both perceptive and pragmatic:

Considerations of ideology, aesthetics and artistic tradition are meaningful only if taken within the context of the means and constraints of production and ... the work of art does not result merely from the inspiration and application of the individual artist but is produced within social organizations of various kinds. (p.187)

2. See Sybil Rosenfeld, "A Diary by Samuel de Wilde", pp.35-36.
3. See Mary Webster, Johann Zoffany.
4. William Cooke, Memoirs of Samuel Foote with a Collection of his Genuine Bon-Mots, Anecdotes, Opinions &c., 3 volumes (London, 1805).

5. The sheer functionalism of these paintings as objects to be engraved is evidenced by a de Wilde painting in the Garrick Club which is numbered down the side. The engraver obviously made a grid for his print and then did not bother to erase the traces. See Adams, op. cit.
6. Ashton and Mackintosh, Royal Opera House Retrospective, cats. 123-135.
7. Ibid.
8. In 1793-95, the top salary for an actor at Covent Garden was £20 per week and for an actress £18, whereas the bottom of the scale for both sexes was £1 per week. Most salaries were between these extremes, and anything over £10 for men and £8 for women was respectable. The chart below indicates that Dupont's portraits were confined primarily to actors and actresses who earned at least £8 - £10 per week. The lower salaried actors which Dupont depicted were for the most part new and unestablished, although their reputations were climbing (e.g. Miss Poole and Mrs. Clendenning). The list is only a sample and is not complete:

<u>Actor</u>	<u>Earnings per week</u> <u>in pounds</u>	
	<u>1793-94</u>	<u>1794-95</u>
Clendenning (Mrs.)	4	5
Farren	9	9
Fawcett	7	8
Fawcett (Mrs.)	2	3
Holman	12	12
Inclendon	12	12
Johnstone	10	10
Lewis	20	20
Martyr (Mrs.)	10	10
Mattocks (Mrs.)	10	10
Mountain (Mrs.)	6	6
Munden	10	10
Poole (Miss)	8	8
Pope	10	10
Quick	14	14

Salary figures from Hogan, London Stage, Part 5, volume 3, pp.1575-1577 and 1683-1684.

9. Ibid.
10. In the nineteenth century, an occasional pirating of a Dupont image appeared in print, but these usually accompanied biographical articles about actors in periodicals.
11. Hogan, London Stage, Part 5, volume 3, p.1656.
12. A similar instance of a Reynolds portrait inspiring a theatrical event occurred at Drury Lane on 18 November 1785 during a revival of Garrick's Jubilee. Although the Public Advertiser called this

spectacle "worn out", the revival was virtually a carbon copy of the original 1769 event - with one exception. Mrs. Siddons played the Tragic Muse "whose car was fitted up exactly in the stile of the picture of the Tragic Muse by Sir Joshua Reynolds" (Hogan, London Stage, Part 5, volume 2, p.843). Reynolds had exhibited this portrait at the R.A. in 1784. For further implications, see Martin Meisel, Realizations : Narrative, Pictorial and Theatrical Arts in Nineteenth Century England (Princeton : Princeton University Press, 1983), p.106.

13. For details of Reynolds' practice, see Pointon, pp.193-194 and 197.
14. Kalman Burnim, David Garrick, Director (Pittsburg : University of Pittsburg Press, 1961), p.134.
15. This line is from Barry's prologue to his altered version of the play, spoken on 8 October 1750, when the funeral dirge had just been instituted. The prologue reads as follows:

If Shakespear's passion, or if Johnson's art
Can fire the Fancy, or can warm the heart,
That task be ours; - But if you damn their scenes
And heroes must give way to Harlequins,
We too, can have recourse to mime and dance,
Nay, there I think, we have the better chance,
And should the town grow weary of the Mute,
Why we'll produce a child upon the flute.
But be the food as twill, 'tis you that treat'.
Long they have feasted - permit us now to eat.
(Stone, London Stage, Part 4, volume 1, p.21)

16. Although the extent of her success is difficult to determine, as she faded into obscurity after her status as a substitute Juliet had run its course and she died young. It is likely that the praises for her which appeared in contemporary journals were more puffs than reflections of considered opinion and that these very praises served to increase the animosity between Garrick and Barry while fanning the flames of the public curiosity. For a concise discussion of the nature of theatrical reviews, see Charles Gray, Theatrical Criticism in London to 1795 (New York : Columbia University Press, 1931).
17. Stone, London Stage, Part 4, volume 1, p.xxx. The public eventually got very tired of the whole business, when Romeo and Juliet held the stages of both theatres for too many nights in a row. A popular jingle of the day expresses the public discontent best:

"Well what's to night?" says angry Ned.
And up from bed he rouses,
"Romeo again!" and shakes his head;
"Ah! pox on both your houses!"

(Originally appeared in the Daily Advertiser, quoted in Cooke, Memoirs of Macklin, p.160 and other sources.)

18. Angelo, Reminiscences, II, pp.213-214:

With all her endeavours to give new points to the character, she entirely failed. Her appearance en culottes, so preposterously padded exceeded nature. Her gestures to look comical could not get the least hold of the audience ... this jeu de benefice, comparatively speaking, was disgusting and absurd.

19. For the full story, see Cooke, Memoirs of Macklin, p.160.
20. A similar but much more lighthearted reaction occurred when another traditionally comic actor, Quick, tried his hand at Richard III. The Public Advertiser's remarks on this performance were as follows:

Most people expected from Quick a comic representation of Richard the third - but strange to tell, he was earnest in the attempt, and succeeded tolerably, the audience, however, were not disposed to be very serious and named him "Little Dicky".
(8 April 1790)

This journal's fair-sounding appraisal of Quick's effort was not in keeping with the general public opinion, and the Attic Miscellany caricature, "An Actor of Quick Conceptions" seems to reflect the opinion of audiences who could not accept a comedian in a serious role.

21. Holland's etching of John Edwin as Bob Dobbin in O'Keefe's Man Milliner of 1787. The first and only performance of this play was on 27 January 1787 at Covent Garden, and it was a dismal failure, as the Public Advertiser (29 January) attests:

The curtain was obliged to be dropt before the piece was finished, amidst the disapprobation of a splendid and numerous audience.

22. Universal Magazine, January, 1800.
23. Hogan, London Stage, Part 5, volume 1, p.476.
24. George, p.110.
25. DNB.
26. A benefit was a special performance in which a percentage of the profits were coded to the actor or actors for which the benefit was held. Usually an actor was allowed to choose the programme for his or her own benefit.
27. Morning Chronicle, 9 August 1781.
28. This mixture of media appears to have been an experiment on the part of Smith and Sayer, and not a particularly successful one. The stippled face and etched body create a glaring incongruity between two- and three-dimensional elements.

29. Hogan, London Stage, Part 5, volume 2, p.800.
30. Ibid.
31. Another Drury Lane prompter, Hopkins, has as mixed a reaction to this play as Cross had had to The Black Prince: "went off with Great Applause, only a little laughing". (Stone, London Stage, Part 4, volume 1, p.355)
32. A Winter's Tale was usually performed in the form of Garrick's shortened version, Florizel and Perdita, which reduced Shakespeare's haunting play to a lighthearted Arcadian pastoral.
33. See Stone, London Stage, Part 4, volume 1, p.cci. The Maid of the Mill - a transposition of the Pamela story into ballad opera form - was included in Bell's second edition of British plays, but was prefaced by a note which condemned the work as trite. One senses that Bell's sour grapes over Lowndes' early attainment of the copyright to this play lingered on into the 1790s.
34. With the notable exception of several ballet/operas, the illustrations to which Bell published in 1781 when these ballets were a sudden rage in London. One of these illustrations shows Vestris, jnr. dancing in the ballet, Les Amans Surprise - a role which he created at the King's theatre in 1780. Walpole, with characteristic exaggeration, tries to describe the sensation of Vestris, jnr. to the Countess of Upper Ossory:

The theatre was brimful in expectation of Vestris. At the end of the second act he appeared; but with so much grace, agility and strength, that the whole audience fell into convulsions of applause; the men thundered, the ladies, forgetting their delicacy and weakness, clapped with such vehemence, that seventeen broke their arms, sixty-nine sprained their wrists, and three cried bravo! bravissimo! so rashly, that they have not been able to utter so much as a no since. (Letters, XI, pp.340-341)

CHAPTER 6 : COSTUME AND SET

1. See William Cooke, Elements of Dramatic Criticism, containing an analysis of the stage under the following heads, Tragedy, Tragic-Comedy, Comedy, Pantomime and Farce, with a sketch of the education of the Greek and Roman actors concluding with some general instructions for succeeding in the Art of Acting (London : Kearsly, 1775), p.189; and Theatrical Biography, II, p.60. See also Burke (p.175) quoting a rejected passage from Hogarth's Analysis of Beauty:

We know the very minds of people by their dress. Character unjustly dressed would spoil the best otherwise represented play.

2. [Robert Lloyd], The Actor : A Poetical Epistle to Bonnel Thornton (London : Dodsley, 1760), p.15.
3. More and Quarrel, pp.17-18.
4. Thomas Wilkes, A General View of the Stage (London, 1759), pp.14Off.
5. Hogarth, Analysis of Beauty, p.31.
6. John Alexander Kelly, German Visitors to English Theatres in the Eighteenth Century (Princeton : Princeton University Press, 1936; reprint ed., New York : Octagon Books, 1978), p.9, quoting Ludwig Muralt, Lettres sur les Anglais et les Francois, et sur les Voyages, 3 volumes (1725), I, p.66.
7. Wilkes, pp.157-158.
8. Ibid. Not every critic agreed with this point of view. Lichtenberg quite shrewdly suggested that the familiarity of modern dress was less distracting than the odd trappings of historic attire. More and Quarrel, pp.22-23.
9. Aileen Ribeiro, A Visual History of Costume; The Eighteenth Century (London : B. T. Batsford, 1983).
10. Ibid.
11. See Lichtenberg's letter to Bori 10 October 1775, speaking of Mrs. Yates who never uncovered her arms:

In order to avoid the montony which such a costume might give to her arms, she sometimes winds round them a trimming that forms a marked contrast to the colour of her dress. The pleasing conical shape of the sleeves lends the arm an appearance of vigour, while it does not only dispose, but positively impels, every spectator to imagine the most lovely arm concealed by it. (More and Quarrel, p.14)
12. Henry Siddons, Practical Illustrations of Rhetorical Gesture and Action (London, 1807), p.88.
13. Wilkes, pp.145-146.
14. See Kalman Burnim, David Garrick, Director (Pittsburgh : University of Pittsburgh Press, 1961), pp.133-134.
15. Angelo, I, pp.7 and 11-12. Angelo's emphasis on his father's role in bringing about costume reform on the stage was undoubtedly exaggerated, as many of Angelo's stories appear to be. But the story itself proves that Garrick was receptive to any input which would help him achieve the accuracy which he sought.
16. See Siddons, pp.366-367; Dotson, p.230; and Davies, Dramatic Miscellanies, III, pp.81-83.

17. Thomas Jeffreys, ed., A Collection of the Dresses of Different Nations Antient and Modern particularly Old English Dresses after the Designs of Holbein, van Dyke, Hollar, and others. With an Account of the Authorities from which the figures are taken; and some short Historical Remarks on the Subject to which are added ten Habits of the Principal Characters on the English Stage, 4 volumes (London : Thomas Jeffreys, 1757-72).
18. For a complete discussion of Jeffreys' Collection see Aileen Ribiero, The Dress Worn at Masquerades in England 1730 to 1790, and Its Relation to Fancy Dress in Portraiture (London : Garland Publishing Inc., 1984). Ribiero also mentions J. Tinney's A Collection of Eastern and Other Foreign Dresses, a less substantial costume book published in London c.1750.
19. I will confine my examples primarily to Bell's editions of plays, where the details of costume are developed to a greater and more consistent degree than most other theatrical illustration.
20. Ribiero, The Dress Worn at Masquerades, p.222:

There was a certain amount of Confusion over the details of oriental dress; the term "an Eastern habit", which occurs frequently in masquerade accounts, could cover any kind of costume that had easily recognisable features such as turbans, ermine facings to robes, and it was often extended to the dresses of those countries, like Greece, which were subject to Turkey and whose costumes were "oriental" in certain aspects.
21. For the sake of convenience, I will be using the following abbreviations, where necessary, in subsequent chapters:

(1) BBT - I : Bell's first edition of the British Theatre
(2) BBT - II : Bell's second edition of the British Theatre
(3) NET : The New English Theatre
22. Cf. Harley as Caled (BBT - II), Richardson as Busiris (BBT - II).
23. Ribiero, The Dress Worn at Masquerades, p.287. This was an illustrated account (published 1748) of a Turkish masquerade held in Rome.
24. The unusual deviation from this rule appears in the portrait of Mrs. Powell as Boadicea (BBT - II) which shows that actress with naked arms. Since this play was rarely performed, it seems that de Wilde allowed himself a bit of artistic licence here.
25. See Kirkman, Memoirs of Macklin, op. cit.; and Cooke, Memoirs of Macklin, pp.283-284.
26. Genest, V, pp.427-428.
27. Davies, Dramatic Miscellanies, III, pp.81-83.

28. Siddons, p.368.
29. Davies, Life of Garrick, II, pp.255-256.
30. Angelo, II, p.163.
31. Walpole, Letters, letter to Horace Mann, 19 December 1750, III, p.27.
32. Davies, Dramatic Miscellanies, III, p.303.
33. See also Suett as Bayes for Bell's second British Theatre. Suett is attired in the same gear as Henderson.
34. Although Mrs. Hartley was not associated with the role of Imoinda, if the above facts are true, the costume still could have been worn by other actresses at Covent Garden.
35. Jeffreys, II, p.83.
36. The Hungarian Hussar uniform was also a popular masquerade dress. Ribiero, The Dress Worn at Masquerades, p.420.
37. Ribiero, History of Costume, p.15.
38. Reynolds, Discourse III, (Wark, p.49).
39. Garlick and MacIntyre, II, pp.369-370, diary entry dated 23 July 1795.
40. For Gainsborough's reaction to Reynolds' attitudes on dress see Mary Woodall, The Letters of Thomas Gainsborough (Bradford : Country Press, 1963), p.51, letter from Gainsborough to the Earl of Dartmouth dated 13 April 1771. The letter was Gainsborough's answer to Lady Dartmouth's desire not to be painted in modern dress. The craze for "classical" dress inspired by Reynolds must have upset the routines of more than one artist.
41. Boaden, Memoirs of Siddons, II, p.146; Joseph Donohue, "Kemble's Production of Macbeth (1794)", Theatre Notebook, XXI (1966-67); and Dotson, p.249.
42. Morning Post, 3 February 1785.
43. Ibid., 3 February 1785; and Genest, VI, p.341.
44. Dotson, pp.259 and 279.
45. Boaden, II, pp.290-292.
46. See Alan Downer, The Eminent Tragedian William Charles Macready (Cambridge, Mass. : Harvard University Press, 1966), p.22.
47. Humphrey Repton, The Bee, or a Companion to the Shakespeare Gallery (London : Cadell, 1789), p.19.
48. See Burnim, David Garrick, p.66, referring to Tate Wilkinson's remark that one scene from the Fop's Fortune had been used from 1747 until 1790.

49. Sybil Rosenfeld, Georgian Scene Painters and Scene Painting (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1981).
50. See Burnim, David Garrick, p.66, quoting The Case of the Stage in Ireland (Dublin, n.d.), pp.35-37:

The stage should be furnished with a competent number of painted scenes sufficient to answer the purposes of all the plays in the stock, in which there is no great variety, being easily reduced to the following classes. 1st Temples. 2dly, Tombs, 3dly, City walls and gates. 4thly, Outsides of palaces, 5thly Insides of palaces, 6thly streets. 7thly Chambers. 8thly, Prisons, 9thly, Gardens. And 10thly Rural prospects of groves, forests desarts &c.

51. Richard Southern, Changeable Scenery (London : Faber and Faber, 1951); and Rosenfeld, p.31. [Roger Pickering], Reflections Upon Theatrical Expression in Tragedy (London : W. Johnston, 1755), p.76 gives a typical complaint of contemporary audiences:

I am not extravagant enough to propose that a new Set of Scenes should be produced at every new . Tragedy; I mean only that there should never be a Scarcity of Scenes in the theatre, but, that, whether the Seat of Action be Greek, Roman, Asiatic, African, Italian, Spanish &c.: there may be one set, at least, adapted to each country; and that we, the Spectators, may not be put upon to believe ourselves abroad when we have no local imagery before us but that of our own country.

52. Webster, Zoffany, p.10.
53. For the Tribuna, see Oliver Millar, Zoffany and His Tribuna (London : Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966); for Townley's library, see Mary Webster, "Zoffany's Painting of Charles Townley's Library in Park Street", Burlington Magazine, CVI (1964), pp.316-323.
54. Several modern art historians have pointed out this possibility in relation to Zoffany's theatrical conversations. See, for example, Denys Sutton, "The Art of Zoffany", Country Life (December, 1953), pp.1822ff; Webster, Zoffany; Ronald Paulson, Book and Painting, pp.125-126; Ellis Waterhouse, Painting in Britain, pp.229-230; and J. Gower Parks, "The Somerset Maugham Collection of Theatrical Paintings", Theatre Notebook, VI (1952), pp.36-39.
55. This print was reproduced in Heinz Kindermann, Theatregeschichte Europas, 10 volumes (Salzburg, 1957), IV, p.198. Kindermann does not date the print, attribute it to any artist, or identify the medium in which it was executed. He states that the print was, at the time, in the Beard Collection, Cambridge.
56. See Mander and Mitchenson, The Artist and the Theatre.

57. Since Zoffany's portraits tended to follow very closely on the heels of a popular performance (see chapter 5), and these three men were all involved in a successful run of Love in a Village in 1767-68, there seems to be no reason to question the dating.
58. This was first pointed out by Mary Webster, "A Room at the Widow Bellmour's", Country Life (December, 1976), pp.1832-1833.

CHAPTER 7 : GESTURE AND EXPRESSION

1. Charles Lamb, "On the Tragedies of Shakespeare Considered with Reference to their Fitness for Stage Representation" in Thomas Hutchinson, ed., The Works in Prose and Verse of Charles and Mary Lamb, 2 volumes (Oxford : Oxford University Press, n.d.), I, p.125.
2. See, for instance, Jonathan Richardson, "Theory of Painting" in Works, p.54:

In portraits it must be seen whether the person is grave, gay, a man of business, or wit, plain, genteel, &c ... Every part of the portrait and all about it must be expressive of the man and have a resemblance as well to the features of the face.

Richardson's essays on painting were influential throughout the century and were echoed in more than one particular by Reynolds in his Discourses to the Royal Academy.

3. Johann Caspar Lavater, Essays on Physiognomy, T. Holloway, trans., 3 volumes (London, 1789-98), I, pp.99-100.
4. See A Collection of Cuttings from Newspapers and Magazines relating to Celebrated Actors, Dramatists, Composers, 2 volumes [1730?-1855?], British Library.
5. See Stone, London Stage, Part 4, volume 1, p.xcviii:

Each professional actor of note strove for an individuality of technique, one of the features which kept the repertory performance ever new. Every actor and actress was by nature first a traditionalist, who learned from observing his predecessors, and secondly an innovator. For each sought to make each part his or her own by some new imagining, by some slight variance in interpretation, or by some distinct way of doing the job.

See also Gray, op. cit.

6. Northcote, Memoirs of Sir Joshua Reynolds (London : Henry Colburn, 1813), pp.58-59.
7. William Hazlitt, "Conversations of James Northcote", p.342.
8. Letter from Northcote to his brother, Samuel, 19 December 1771 quoted in Whitley, II, p.286.
9. Angelo, Reminiscences, I, p.112.
10. Rosenfeld, "A Diary by Samuel de Wilde", p.35; and Pollock, pp.12-13 and 50-51.
11. Mayes, The De Wildes, introduction:

Macready's comments on de Wilde's Romeo make it clear that the artist posed his subject to suit his own pictorial requirements rather than to convey accurately the manner in which a particular passage in the play was delivered. On another occasion, however, De Wilde is praised specifically for his skill in conveying the manner of an actor's delivery. Clearly each portrait needs to be considered individually in this respect and any documentary evidence taken into account.
12. Reynolds, Discourse XI (Wark, pp.222-223).
13. Whitley (II, pp.4-5) tells four different anecdotes regarding the origin of Mrs. Siddons' pose. The stories are as follows :
 (1) she chose the pose herself; (2) it was accidental - she was turning to look at a picture on the studio wall and Reynolds captured her attitude; (3) Reynolds told her, "Ascend your undisputed throne and graciously bestow upon me some good idea of the Tragic Muse; and (4) she came into the studio exhausted and flopped down in that posture. Each of these stories, more than anything else, reveals the sentimental apochrypha built up around the portrait. Cf. Boaden, Memoirs of Siddons, II, pp.87-88; and Idem, Memoirs of Kemble, I, pp.155-156, who links the pose with Michelangelo's Joel - an obvious mistake, since there is no similarity between the Joel and the Siddons.
14. See chapter 2, note 60 and figure 69.
15. Ward and Roberts, II, p.87, quoting Sir Henry Russell's manuscript notes.
16. Quoted Ashton and Mackintosh, Royal Opera House Retrospective, p.70.
17. Tom Jones, Book XVI, chapter 5. For an interesting light on Partridge's reaction, see Davies, Memoirs of Garrick, I, pp.46-47, who describes this scene as follows:

When Mr. Garrick first saw the ghost, the terror he seemed to be impressed with, was instantaneously communicated to the audience.

18. This criticism of Fielding's passage in Tom Jones is put forth by Joshua Reynolds, Discourse XIII (Wark, pp.238-239).

19. Alan Downer, "Eighteenth Century Acting", pp.1002-1037.

20. Burnim, David Garrick, p.57:

Garrick's new "naturalistic" style retained much of the posing and posturing of the earlier actors; it was however infused with a vitality and spirit which took the town by storm.

21. [David Garrick], An Essay on Acting in which will be considered the Mimical Behaviour of a certain Fashionable Faulty actor, and the Laudableness of such unmannerly, as well as inhumane Proceedings, To which will be added a short criticism on his acting Macbeth (London, 1744), p.5.

22. Although in theory actors followed the theoretical tradition of Aristotle, in practice, tragedies did not adhere to Aristotelian formula, and this anomaly was noted at the time. See Thomas Franklyn, A Dissertation on Ancient Tragedy (London, 1768).

23. Hogarth, Works, John Ireland, ed. (London, 1791), quoted in Denvir, pp.241-242:

I have often thought that much of this confusion [between character and caricature] might be done away by referring to the three branches of the drama, and considering the difference between Comedy, Tragedy, and Farce. Dramatic dialogue, which represents nature as it really is, though neither in the most elevated nor yet the most familiar style, may fairly be denominated Comedy: for every incident introduced might have thus happened, every syllable have been thus spoken, and so acted in common life. Tragedy is made up of more extraordinary events. The language is in a degree inflated, and the action and emphases heightened. The performer swells his voice, and assumes a consequence in his gait, even his habit is full and ample to keep it on a par with his deportment. Every feature of his character is so much about common nature that, were people off the stage to act, speak, and dress in a similar style, they would be thought fit for Bedlam. Yet with all this, if the player does not o'erstep the proper bounds, and by attempting too much, become swollen, it is not caricatura, but elevated character. I will go further, and admit that with the drama of Shakespeare, and action of Garrick, it may be a nobler species of entertainment than comedy.

As to Farce, where it is exaggerated, and outré, I have no objection to its being called caricatura for such is the proper title.

24. Garrick, pp.5-6.

25. John Hill, The Actor : A Treatise on the Art of Playing, interspersed with Theatrical Anecdotes, Critical Remarks on Plays, and Occasional Observations on Audiences (London : R. Griffiths, 1750); Cooke, Elements of Dramatic Criticism, op. cit.; Pickering, op. cit.; [Samuel Foote], A Treatise on the Passions so far as they regard the stage; with a critical Enquiry into the Theatrical Merit of Mr. G-K, Mr. Q-n, and Mr. B-y (London : C. Corbet, n.d.); and Wilkes, op. cit.

26. Hill, pp.289-290.

27. Cooke, Elements of Dramatic Criticism, p.116:

Tragedy ... represents heroes with whom our situation forbids us to attempt any resemblance, and whose lessons and examples are drawn from events so dissimilar to those we are commonly exposed to, that the applications which we might be willing to make, would be extremely vague and imperfect.

See also *ibid*, p.37; and Davies, Memoirs of Garrick, I, p.24:

We never saw an Alexander or an Anthony, a Tamerlane or a Caesar; but a Wronghead, a Gripe, a Marplot, and a Sterling, we converse with every day.

28. Franz Paula Graf von Hartig, Lettres sur la France, l'Angleterre et l'Italie (Geneva, 1785), pp.116ff in John Alexander Kelly, trans., German Visitors to English Theatres in the Eighteenth Century (New York : Octagon Books, 1978), p.70.

29. Hill, p.171.

30. *Ibid.*, p.20:

A few only of the passions ... fall to the share of the tragedian; the comic player, on the other hand, has the whole series of them within his province.

and Wilkes, p.136:

The scenes of Comedy ... require the same variety of passions, but in different or inferior degrees [to tragedy]; their exertion is never quite so strong, nor do the occasions require it; but their transitions are endless; and 'tis this variety which constitutes the excellency of the comic Player as well as Poet.

See Kelly, op. cit., for a comparison between English and French comedy.

31. See Bell's notes for The Spanish Fryar and Isabella in his British Theatre, second edition.

32. See, for example, Cooke, Elements of Dramatic Criticism, p.142, who claimed that sentimental comedy catered to a sententious upper class who wished to cover up their own lack of virtue by insisting on virtue on the stage. For other reactions against sentimental comedy, see Genest, V, pp.171-172.
33. Burke, p.xli. Burke, pp.lxi-lxii, calls this "The most striking and original observation of the Analysis".
34. For a full discussion of the iconographical implications of this work, see Edgar Wind, "'Borrowed Attitudes' in Reynolds and Hogarth", Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, II (1938), pp.182-183; and "Harlequin Between Tragedy and Comedy", Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, VI (1943), pp.224-225; Meisel, p.326; Ronald Paulson, Emblem and Expression, p.80; and Dolores Yonker, The Face as an Element of Style : Physiognomical Theory in Eighteenth Century British Art, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of California at Los Angeles, 1969, p.144.
35. See especially Jennifer Montague, Charles LeBrun's "Conference sur l'Expression Generale et Particuliere", unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of London, 1959; Brewster Rogerson, "The Art of Painting the Passions", Journal of the History of Ideas, XIV (1953), pp.68-94; Rensselaer Lee, "Ut pictura poesis : the Humanistic Theory of Painting", Art Bulletin (1940), pp.197-269; William Guild Howard, "Ut pictura poesis", Publications of the Modern Language Association of America, XXIV (1909), pp.40-123; and Gerard LeCoat, "Comparative Aspects of the Theory of Expression in the Baroque Age", Eighteenth Century Studies, V (1971-72), pp.207-223.
36. Montague, p.22, shows how the roots of LeBrun's system lay in Descartes' Passions de l'Ame.
37. Hogarth, p.127.
38. Descartes, Les Passions de l'Ame, Genevieve Rodis-Lewis, ed. (Paris : Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1966), p.66.
39. See particularly, Leonardo's Treatise on Painting.
40. See, for instance, de Piles' criticism that the Conference is guilty of "degenerating into habitude". De Piles, p.341.
41. Alexander Cozens, Principles of Beauty Relative to the Human Head (London, 1778); and Reynolds, Discourse V (Wark, p.78). Others expressed a similar opinion in satirical form. Rowlandson's Le Brun Travested as well as John Collier's Human Passions Delineated were both parodies of LeBrun's Conference. The existence of such satire nearly a hundred years after the publication of LeBrun's treatise proves the far-reaching effects of his basic theories.

42. Parsons' criticises LeBrun in his introduction:

Had a certain great Man been learned in this Part of Anatomy [muscles], he would have made fewer [illustrations] serve his Purpose, and not allowed different Motions to different parts of the Occipito-Frontalis at the same time; nor have made the Wrinkles of the Forehead longitudinal, which should have been transverse, or horizontal, by the Action of this muscle: Nor is there, in a word, any Necessity to draw the Hair standing upright, to exaggerate his Figures in any wise, which is unnatural; for the Actions of the Countenance alone will be sufficient to express the Passions, since its Muscles are the sole agents.

43. Dr. James Parsons, Human Physionomy Explained in the Crounian Lectures on Muscular Motion for the year 1746 (London, 1747).

44. Ibid., pp.57-58:

But if the Passion of Desire be prompted and accompanied by any more engaging circumstances, then the Elevator of the Eye will act strongly, causing the Pupil to turn up; at the same time that the Action of the Aperiens Palpebram is more remitted, whereby all the Pupil, except a little of the lower Edge, will be hid, and the Lids come nearer each other; the mouth being a little more open, the End of the Tongue will be carelessly to the Edge of the Teeth, and the Colour of the Lips and Cheeks be increased.

Thus yielded Danae to the Golden Shower; and thus was her Passion painted by the ingenious Mr. Hogarth.

and p.iv:

I cannot omit taking this Opportunity of giving due honour to our Painters in England notwithstanding the Liberties a late French author has taken with them; many of whom are capable of any Branch of the Art, their several curious Performances in many Places* [*St. Paul's, St. Bartholomew's, Foundling & Greenwich Hospitals] about this kingdom can testify. We do not want those who paint in History, Landskip, Conversaion, and Architecture, in great Perfection, altho' there is scarce Encouragement here for any Branch but little Portraits.

For Parsons' relationship with Hogarth, see Kitson, p.81, note 6.

45. See Rogerson, p.76.

46. I am grateful to the Royal Society for supplying me with the date for Dr. Parsons' lecture.
47. For example, see Aaron Hill's emphasis on the Eyebrow. The Art of Acting (London, 1746), p.iv:

The SOUL, inhabiting the Brain, or acting, where it doubtless does, immediately behind the Optic Nerves, stamps, instantaneously upon the Eye, and Eyebrow, a struck Image of a conceiv'd Idea: ... no sooner can he [man] get himself to ponder, or intensely meditate, on any object, than he perceives his Eye, and Brow, imprintedly partaking and assisting to produce Conception: - if the Image is a pleasing one, the Brow dilates; - as if to give it Room - if painfull, it contracts itself, as if it would evade or guard against a half-admitted object.

Compare LeBrun, Conference sur l'expression, trans. Jennifer Montague, op. cit., pp.32-33:

As we have said that the gland which is in the middle of the brain is the place where the soul receives the images of the passions, so the eye-brow is the part of the face where the passions are best distinguished ...

And as we have said that the sensitive part of the soul has two appetites, from which all the passions are born, so there are two movements of the eye-brows which express all the movements of these passions.

These two movements which I have observed have a strict correlation with these two appetites, for that which rises up towards the brain expresses all the gentlest and mildest passions, and that which slopes down towards the heart represents all the wildest and cruellest passions.

48. Cooke, Elements of Dramatic Criticism, p.179.
49. Op. cit.
50. Foote, p.12. Foote's mention of muscular motion possibly indicates also an awareness of Dr. Parsons' Human Physionomy Explained.
51. John Hill, p.106.
52. Charles Churchill, The Rosciad, second ed. (London, 1761), p.28.
53. See Aaron Hill, p.18:

You - who infuse this Power, must first, have felt
No Heart, unmov'd itself, bids others melt.

Lloyd, p.4:

The strong-felt Passion bolts into the Face
The mind untouch'd what is it but Grimace?
To this one standard make your just Appeal
Here lies the golden secret; learn to FEEL.

Cooke, Elements of Dramatic Criticism, p.56:

none but those, who actually feel a passion can
represent it to the life.

Wilkes, p.92:

To do justice to his character, he [the actor]
must not only strongly impress it on his own mind,
but make a temporary renunciation of himself and
all his connections in common life, and for a few
hours consign all his private joys and griefs to
oblivion; forget, if possible, his own identity.

Pickering, p.3:

The Delicacy of Theatrical Expression can never be
expected from an Actor that does not feel his part.

See also Betterton, pp.47-48:

he [the Actor] must transform himself into every
Person he represents.

54. See, for instance, Theatrical Biography, I, pp.45-46:

As an actress the public may judge of her merit,
when we impartially declare, we have often seen
her plead the cause of virtue with such evident
symptoms of conviction, as led us, for the moment,
to imagine it natural.

55. Churchill, p.23. The latter comment alludes to Garrick's low
stature which never hindered him from playing tragic heroes.

56. Garrick, p.10; and Angelo, II, p.301.

57. John Hill, p.20.

58. See George Taylor, "'The Just Delineation of the Passions' :
Theories of Acting in the Age of Garrick" in Kenneth Richards
and Peter Thomson, eds., The Eighteenth Century English Stage,
Proceedings of a Symposium sponsored by the Manchester University
Department of Drama (London : Methven & Co., 1972), p.60:

In spite of [Steele's] sound criticism, tragic
writers continued to portray their characters as
strangely passive spectators of fictitious
battles between 'passions' within their souls,
who then in unruffled sentences would describe
these battles for their hearers.

Cf. Rogerson, p.80; Gray, p.46; and Cooke, Elements of Dramatic Criticism, p.108 condemns the use of long speeches in tragedy as deadening to the display of the passions.

59. John Hill, p.16.

60. For modern interpretations of this evidence see Rogerson, p.80; and Downer, "Theories of Eighteenth Century Acting", p.1005. Downer divides the eighteenth century into four schools of acting summarised below:

- (a) Betterton - restraint, few gestures
- (b) Cibber, Booth, Wilkes - exaggerated gesture
- (c) Macklin, Garrick - greater naturalism
- (d) Siddons, Kemble - stiffness, classicism

See also the arguments in the rest of this chapter.

61. Wilkes, p.115.

62. For Barry see Davies, Memoirs of Garrick, II, p.181; for Cibber, see Churchill, p.20, and Davies, II, p.83; for Garrick, see Foote, p.15; and for Mrs. Yates, see Theatrical Biography, II, pp.6-7.

63. Churchill, p.26.

64. Lloyd, p.7.

65. See the 1751 Guide to the Stage quoted by Stone, London Stage, Part 4, volume 1, p.clxxxi:

A previous knowledge of plays will also direct us when to time our applause; which I am not willing to encourage but on very singular occasions, and when the player appears in some extraordinary attitude ... The leading players will themselves give the signal when they are to be applauded; a secret but little known, and which I shall discover for the benefit of my readers. On those occasions Cato looks more than usually big, Hamlet stares with great emphasis, Othello has a most languishing aspect, Monimia is all sighs and softness, Beatrice will bridle, and pretty Peggy Wilder leers you into a clap.

66. Nicholas Nipclose, The Theatres : A Poetical Dissection (London : J. Bell, and York : C. Etherington, 1772), p.67. See also Kelly, p.13; and Theatrical Biography, II, p.43:

his face, though thus pleasing to be looked at, wants expression; and his voice, though clear and sonorous, wants variation; the same lines of expression, with very little difference, tell for contrary passions; and his tones - through

a continual sameness of inflection, strike on your ear towards the middle of a play like the even noise of a waterfall.

67. See, for example, Davies, Memoirs of Garrick, II, pp.68-69.
68. Churchill, pp.10-11.
69. Gray, p.303, quoting the critic of the Devil's Pocket Book, published 1786, speaking of Mrs. Siddons in the play Cleone by Dodsley. Siddons' attitudes were so specific that her brother-in-law, Henry, used portraits of her as Queen Katherine in Henry VIII to stand for the passions of Reproach and Supplication in his Practical Illustrations of Rhetorical Gesture and Action, op. cit.
70. See M. D. George, Catalogue of Political and Personal Satires Preserved in the Department of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum, 11 volumes (London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1938), VI, cat. 7590.
71. See Meisel, pp.47 and 340; Norah Lofts, Emma Hamilton (London: Michael Joseph, 1978); and Holmström, op. cit.
72. But these attitudes were often seen to have a strange realism about them. A German visitor expressed this reaction best:

The first time I saw an English tragedy performed, the gestures of the actors seemed to me grotesque, and the sound of their voices roared frightfully in my ears. But although I still consider their declamation on the whole too extravagant, I am no longer shocked by it. I even discover truthfulness in it sometimes, and invariably an extraordinary power which in the more pathetic passages of the plays is most effective.

Kelly, p.20, quoting translation of Baron Jacob Friedrich von Bielfeld, Lettres familiares et autres (La Haye, 1763).

73. Reynolds, Discourse IV (Wark, p.60).
74. Pickering, p.23.
75. Davies describes the scene in I Henry IV in which Falstaff labours to get a comatose Harry onto his back:

Quin had little or no difficulty in perching Garrick upon his shoulders, who looked like a dwarf on the back of a giant.

Dramatic Miscellanies, I, p.274. See also J. T. Smith, I, pp.145-146.

76. The designer of this illustration is not listed in the text, but it is most likely by de Wilde.

77. Francis Gentleman, The Dramatic Censor; or Critical Companion, 2 volumes (London, 1770; reprint ed. Hants, England : Gregg International Publishers Ltd., 1969), II, p.98.
78. Cooke, Memoirs of Macklin, p.112; and see also Johann Friedrich Karl Grimm, Bemerkungen eines Reisenden durch Deutschland, Frankreich, England und Holland, 3 volumes (Altenberg, 1775), III, p.219, quoted in translation in Kelly, p.65:

Whether it be nature or art (the former, I firmly believe), he has the slightest muscle of his body and especially of his face under such control that he can represent all the emotions of the soul so that others may see them plainly.

Wilkes, p.262:

I am of the opinion that he excels all his predecessors as he does all his contemporaries in the power of showing the distinguishing touches that separate passion from passion.

and Davies, Dramatic Miscellanies, III, p.78.

79. See Dotson, pp.70-73; Burnim, David Garrick, p.57; and T. S. R. Boase, "Illustrations of Shakespeare's Plays", p.92.
80. More and Quarrel, p.10; Kalman Burnim, "Eighteenth Century Theatrical Illustrations in the Light of Contemporary Documents", Theatre Notebook, XIV (1959), p.52; and Burnim, David Garrick, p.160 first pointed out the similarity between this description and Wilson's painting. Lichtenberg also alludes to Garrick's posture in his lectures on Hogarth's comic history paintings. Referring to a man who discovers a fire in White's Coffee House (Rake's Progress, plate*), Lichtenberg remarks:

One exactly in the posture of Hamlet when the ghost appears, had he held his right hand a little lower.

Although this man is seen from behind, his gesture parallels that of Garrick in Wilson's portrait. Innes and Gustav Herdan, trans., Lichtenberg's Commentaries on Hogarth's Engravings (London : Cresset Press, 1966), p.252.

81. More and Quarrell, p.26.
82. Pickering, p.31.
83. Wilkes, pp.239-240.
84. Pickering, pp.50-51. See also Wilkes' description, p.118:

Simple admiration occasions no very remarkable alteration in the countenance; the eye fixes upon the object; the right-hand naturally extends itself with the palm turned outwards; and the left-hand will share in the action,

though so scarcely to be perceived, not venturing far from the body; - but when this surprise reaches the superlative degree, which I take to be astonishment, the whole body is actuated: it is thrown back, with one leg set before the other, both hands elevated, the eyes larger than usual, the brows drawn up and the mouth not quite shut.

85. Montague translation, p.49.
86. For various discussions of these questions, see Alastair Smart, "Dramatic Gesture and Expression in the Age of Reynolds and Hogarth", Apollo, LXXXII (1965), p.93, who points out the similarity between Garrick's gesture and LeBrun's description of horror; and Frederick Antal, "The Moral Purpose of Hogarth's Art", p.185, who argues that the painting is a reflection of Garrick's naturalistic acting style. See also Ronald Paulson, Hogarth: His Life, Art and Times, 2 volumes (London: Yale University Press, 1971), II, p.29.
87. See Downer, p.1029.
88. Pickering, p.38.
89. Cooke, Elements of Dramatic Criticism, pp.199-200, e.g. men should study the Antinous and Apollo Belvidera, women the Venus de Medicis.
90. Paulson, Hogarth, Life, Art and Times, II, p.29.
91. This is implicit in Hogarth's comment quoted in footnote 23.
92. Francis Grose, Rules for Drawing Caricatures (with an essay on comic painting) (London, 1788), p.6.
93. See John Draper, "The Theory of the Comic in Eighteenth Century England", Journal of English and Germanic Philology (1938), p.219. The effect of this incongruity was dependent in part on a certain familiarity, so that deviations of character which were too outre were often not considered humorous. See Grose's Essay on Comic Painting, pp.19-23; and Hogarth's Analysis of Beauty, p.31:

When improper or incompatible excesses meet, they always excite laughter; more especially when the forms of those excesses are inelegant, that is, when they are composed of unvaried lines.

94. Burke, p.134. See Henry Fielding, "An Essay on the Knowledge of Characters of Men" in Miscellaneous Works, Henry Knight Miller, ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), p.157:

The Passions of Men do commonly imprint sufficient marks on the countenance; and it is owing chiefly to want of skill in the observer, that Physiognomy is of so little use and credit in the world.

95. See Burke, p.136; and see the illustration after Hogarth's design for the frontispiece to John Clubbe's Physiognomy; Being a sketch only of a larger work upon the same PLAN: wherein the different TEMPERs, PASSIONS, and MANNERS of men, will be particularly considered (London: Didsley, 1763). In the frontispiece, Hogarth adds his artistic skills to Clubbe's literary ones in satirising the extremes of physiognomists. Clubbe's device for determining man's character was a weighing machine, in which the weight of a man's head indicates his essential temperament.
96. Tytler, p.82. John Graham, "Lavater's Physiognomy in England", Journal of the History of Ideas, XXII, pp.561ff.
97. Lavater's focus on the silhouette as the means of isolating facial characteristics was even carried into theatrical portraiture on an amateur level. Lady Templetown's silhouette of Mrs. Siddons as Jane Shore shows that actress in profile, making an evocative gesture - a clever transference of the idiom of the standard actor portrait.
98. Cooke, Elements of Dramatic Criticism, pp.151-152.
99. Wilkes, pp.137-138:

There is a propriety in our comic Drama, wherein we have the superiority over all neighbours; and that is humour. The principles of liberty and freedom, which the excellence of our constitution has made natural to every man, have of course produced a greater variety and oddity of character than, I apprehend, any other nation can furnish.
100. Characters of certain nationalities were particularly prone to such stereotyping. See, for instance, A Scotsman's Remarks on the Farce of "Love a la Mode" Scene by Scene as it is Acted at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane (London, 1760), p.4:

There is nothing merely national in the Scotch or Irish man, but an apeing of the vulgar accent of both nations, with a few strained (not natural) blunders in the Hibernian hero's [Archy MacSarcasm] mouth, since such the author has been pleased to constitute him.
101. Wilkes, p.45.
102. Davies, Memoirs of Garrick, I, p.216.
103. Theatrical Biography, I, p.122.
104. *Ibid.*, I, pp.149-150.
105. Theatrical Biography, II, p.54.
106. It must be said that comic gestures in Bell's British Theatre were not always so informal, but if such was the case, the

reasoning behind it is clear. For example, de Wilde's illustration of Dimond as Don Felix in The Wonder (BBT - II) shows that actor in a lunge which - in direct contrast to Bobadil's awkward stance - appears almost to be a tragic attitude. But The Wonder, with its Spanish setting and swash-buckling plot, is essentially a mock-heroic comedy and the same description applies to Dimond's gesture.

107. With the exception of Zoffany's painting of Shuter, Beard, and Dunstall as Justic Woodcock, Hawthorne and Hodge.
108. More and Quarrel, pp.26-27.
109. Ibid.
110. Ibid., p.40.
111. Quoted by Ashton and Mackintosh, The Georgian Playhouse, cat. 131.
112. More and Quarrel, pp.3-4, letter from Lichtenberg to Heinrich Christian Bori, 1 October 1775.

CONCLUSION

1. George Gissing, The Nether World (London : Dent, Everyman's Library, 1973; reprint ed., 1982), p.82.
2. Ibid., p.208.
3. See David Grimsted, Melodrama Unveiled (Chicago : University of Chicago Press, 1968); Michael Booth, ed., English Plays of the Nineteenth Century, 5 volumes (Oxford : Clarendon Press, 1969); Michael Booth, ed., Hiss the Villain : Six English and American Melodramas (London : Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1964); and Allardyce Nicoll, A History of Late Nineteenth Century Drama, 2 volumes (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1949).
4. Raymond Fitzsimons, Fire From Heaven (London : Hamish Hamilton Ltd., 1976).
5. See, for example, William Hazlitt's criticisms collected in "A View of the English Stage" in The Collected Works, volume VIII.
6. For a general discussion, see George Powell, The Victorian Theatre (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1978), p.17.
7. Among the theatrical portraits exhibited at the British Institution in this period were Hogarth's scenes from The Beggar's Opera and Henry IV, Part II, Dance's Garrick as Richard III, Reynolds'

Mrs. Siddons as the Tragic Muse and the following works by Zoffany : Garrick as Abel Druggier, Macklin as Shylock, the scene from The Provok'd Wife, the scene from The Devil Upon Two Sticks, the scene from The Mayor of Garratt and the two scenes from Lethe. See British Institution, An Account of All the Pictures Exhibited in the Rooms of the British Institution from 1813 to 1823 Belonging to the Nobility and Gentry of England with Remarks Critical and Explanatory (London : Priestly and Weale, 1824).

8. Among the theatrical portraits at this exhibition were Reynolds' Mrs. Abington as Miss Prue and as the Comic Muse, Dance's Garrick as Richard III, Stuart's Kemble as Richard III and Zoffany's scenes from Love in a Village and Lethe. See South Kensington Museum, A Series of Historical Portraits Selected from the National Portrait Exhibition of 1866 (London : Arundel Society, 1868); South Kensington Museum, Catalogue of the First Special Exhibition of National Portraits (London, 1866); Idem, Catalogue of the Second Special Exhibition of National Portraits (London, 1867); South Kensington Museum, Catalogue of the Third and Concluding Exhibition of the National Portraits (London, 1868); and see also Art Journal (March, 1868), pp.58-59.
9. Art Journal (August, 1865), p.257.
10. Art Journal (April, 1868), p.95.
11. J. E. Hodgson and Fred Eaton, "The Royal Academy in the Last Century", Art Journal (July, 1890), pp.205ff.
12. Ibid., p.207.
13. Pollock, I, pp.30 and 50-51.
14. See Geoffrey Ashton, "Paintings in the Mander and Mitchenson Theatre Collection", Apollo, CXIV (August, 1981), p.91; and A Catalogue of the Cumberland Gallery of Pictures, containing a choice selection of the Ancient Masters with a sprinkling of the Modern, Exhibiting at the Colosseum, Regent's Park (London : The Colosseum, 1838).
15. Cumberland's Theatrical Illustrations, Consisting of portraits of celebrated performers, engraved on steel from original drawings by Thomas Wageman and Interesting Scenes from the most popular acting plays engraved by G. W. Bonner from drawings sketched in the theatre by Robert Cruikshank (London, n.d.). Also, like Bell's second British Theatre, each play in Cumberland's series contained one actor portrait and one scene from the play.
16. Art Journal (February, 1851), pp.65-66.
17. See Ashton and Mackintosh, Royal Opera House Retrospective.
18. See Ashton, "Paintings in the Mander and Mitchenson Theatre Collection", p.90.
19. See Ashton and Mackintosh, Royal Opera House Retrospective, cat. 141.

20. Ibid., p.89.
21. Redgrave, II, pp.74-75.
22. Antal, Hogarth and His Place in European Art, p.178.
23. See Pointon, op. cit., p.189, who breaks down the subjects for 1781-85.
24. This has also been pointed out by Meisel, p.32.
25. Hazlitt, "Conversations of James Northcote", pp.339-340.
26. An anonymous writer in 1818 makes a similar link between history painting and theatrical portraiture which is indicative of this growing tendency to blend artistic genres. Speaking of the Royal Academy exhibition of that year, the writer says:

There is a grand defect in all our Portraits - and that is, the want of character. No head is a good subject for Portrait, that has not enough of expression for an historical painting ... We only omit Mr. Sharp's admirable scene from "No Song No Supper" (No.336) because we do not know whether to place it among the portraits, or in the class of Historical Painting. The heads of Liston, Emery, Fawcett and Mrs. Liston, have at once all the authenticity of living portraits, and the delightful air of theatrical recollections about them; and yet so far elevated above mere theatrical expression as to give to the whole picture the character of history.

Press Cuttings, V & A, IV, p.1155.

27. Redgrave II, p.213.
28. Ibid., II, p.345.
29. Leslie and Taylor, e.g., I, pp.166-167.
30. See Meisel, p.5; and Lindsay Errington, Tribute to Wilkie, exhibition catalogue, National Gallery of Scotland, 1985, p.49.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

List of Theatrical Portraits Exhibited at the Society of Artists (1760-1791), Free Society of Artists (1761-1783) and the Royal Academy (1769-1800)

Note: I have attempted to make this appendix as complete as possible, but several problems arise when making such a compilation. First of all, portrait titles are often misleading; a work entitled, "Mrs. Siddons" may or may not be a portrait of Mrs. Siddons in character, and sometimes there is no additional evidence to confirm such an attribution one way or another. Likewise, a painting entitled, "Scene from The Beggar's Opera" or "Macheath and Polly" may be a portrait of actors in character or, alternatively, it may be an imaginary reconstruction of the scene by the artist. Finally, a painting entitled, "Portrait of a Lady in the character of Miranda" may be a portrait of an actress or of a gentlewoman in fancy dress. It is important to observe these cautions, particularly with reference to works which I have included under the Society of Artists category. My information was compiled from two sources: Algernon Graves, The Society of Artists of Great Britain, 1760-91 and The Free Society of Artists, 1761-83 (London : George Bell & Sons, 1907) and Idem, The Royal Academy of Arts, 4 volumes (London : George Bell & Sons, 1905; reprint ed., S.R. Publishers and Kingsmead Reprints, 1970).

SOCIETY OF ARTISTS

1760

1. Handasyde, Charles : Mr. Holland in the character of Tancred and two other miniatures, No.24.
2. Hayman, Francis : Mr. Garrick in the character of Richard the Third, No.25.
3. Pine, R. E. : Mrs. Pritchard in the character of Hermione in the Winter's Tale, No.43.
4. Read, Catherine : A portrait in crayons of Mrs. Cibber in the character of Calista, No.46.

1762

1. Downes, Bernard : Mr. Shuter in the character of Scapin, No.28.

2. Hauck, Philip Elias : Mr. Holland in the character of Jachimo in Cymbeline, No.37.
3. Webb, Westfield : A whole length of Miss Brent in the character of Mandane in the opera of Artaxerxes, No.127.
4. Zoffany, Johan : Mr. Garrick in the character of the Farmer returned from London, No.138.

1763

1. Barber, Christopher : Selima imploring Bajazet to spare her life, No.7.
2. Zoffany, Johan : Mr. Garrick and Mrs. Cibber in the characters of Jaffeir and Belvidera, No.137.

1764

1. Zoffany, Johan : Mr. Foote in the character of Major Sturgeon, in the Mayor of Garratt, No.140.
2. Zoffany, Johan : Small whole length of Mr. Moody in the character of Foigard, No.145.

1765

1. Kettle, Tilly : Portrait of a lady (Mrs. Yates as Mandane in The Orphan of China), No.64.
2. Leake, Henry : Mr. Powell in the character of Posthumous, No.73.
3. Zoffany, Johan : Mr. Garrick's drunken scene in the Provok'd Wife, No.167.

1766

1. Seaton, John Thomas : Mrs. Lessingham in the character of Lady Dainty in the Double Gallant, No.151.
2. Zoffany, Johan : Mr. Garrick in the character of Lord Chalkstone, No.198.
3. Zoffany, Johan : The miser in the same entertainment, No.199.

1767

1. Taylor, Isaac : A scene in the opera of Love in a Village, No.283.
2. Zoffany, Johan : A scene in Love in a Village, No.194.

1768

1. Cosway, Richard : Portrait of a lady in the character of Sigismunda, No.25.
2. Finlayson, John : A metzotinto of Mr. Shuter, Mr. Beard and Mr. Dunstall, from Zoffany, No.240.
3. Hone, Nathaniel : Signora Zamperini in the character of Cecchina, No.66.
4. Pine, R. E. : Mr. Reddish in the character of Posthumous in Cymbeline act the fifth, scene the last, No.126.
5. Taylor, Isaac : A Scene in the comedy of False Delicacy, No.212.

1768 (Special Exhibition)

1. Finlayson, John : A metzotinto of Mr. Shuter, Mr. Beard and Mr. Dunstall, from Zoffany, No.182.
2. Mortimer, J. H. : A scene in King John, act the fifth, scene the fifth, No.74.
3. Zoffany, Johan : Mr. Beard, Mr. Shuter, and Mr. Dunstal (sic), a scene in Love in a Village, No.138.

1769

1. Finlayson, John : Mr. Garrick in the character of Sir John Brute; a mezzotinto, No.266.
2. Finlayson, John : A proof print. After Mr. Reynolds (possibly Garrick as Kiteley), No.267.
3. Williams, William : A small whole length of Mr. Chalmers, of the Theatre in Norwich, in the character of Midas, No.204.
4. Zoffany, Johan : A scene in the "Devil upon Two Sticks", No.214.

1770

1. Berridge, John : Miss Rose in the character of Tom Thumb, No.10.
2. Finlayson, John : A mezzotinto. After Mr. Zoffanij (probably Samuel Foote and Thomas Weston in The Devil Upon Two Sticks), No.204.
3. Pine, R. E. : A whole length of Mrs. Yates in the character of Medea Act 1, scene 7, No.97.

1771

1. Dickinson, William : A drawing in chalks from a portrait of Mrs. Yates (by Mr. Pine) in the character of Medea, No.239.
2. Dixon, John : A mezzotinto print of Mr. Garrick in the character of Abel Drugger, Messrs. Burton and Palmer, in the characters of Subtle and Face, Alchemyst Act 2 from a picture of Mr. Zoffanij, No.236.
3. Lawrenson, William : Mr. Smith in the character of Jachimo in Cymbeline, No.78.
4. Mortimer, J. H. : Mr. Moody, in the character of Major O'Flaherty and Mrs. Parsons in the character of the Lawyer (in Cumberland's West Indian), No.85.
5. Romney, George : A whole length portrait of Mrs. Yates in the character of the Tragic Muse, No.139.

1772

1. Dickinson, William : A mezzotinto of Mrs. Yates in the character of Medea; from a picture of Mr. Pine's, No.80.
2. Dixon, John : Mr. Garrick in the character of Richard the Third; a drawing from Mr. Dance, No.66.
3. Dixon, John : A mezzotinto, whole length, of Mr. Garrick in the character of Richard the Third. After a painting of Mr. Dance, No.67.
4. Green, Valentine : Mrs. Yates in the character of Melpomene; a mezzotinto, from Mr. Romney, No.111.

5. Judkins, Elizabeth : A portrait of a lady. After Sir Joshua Reynolds (Mrs. Abington as Roxalana), No.150.
6. Parkinson, Thomas : Mr. Weston in the character of Billy Button, in the Maid of Bath, No.253.
7. Paxton, John : Signora Zamparini in the character of Cechina in the Buona Figliuola, No.252.
8. Wheatley, Francis : A scene in Twelfth Night Act 3, No.374.

1774

1. Beach, Thomas : Mr. Henderson and Mr. Jackson in the characters of Richard the 3rd and the Duke of Buckingham, No.18.
2. Saunders, Joseph : Mr. Moody and Mr. Packer in the Register-Office, a mezzotinto, No.248.
3. Saunders, Joseph : Mr. Johnston in the character of Gibby in the Wonder, No.249.
4. Smith, John Raphael : A scene in the twelfth (sic) night, &c., from a painting of Mr. Wheatley's - a mezzotinto, No.263.
5. Young, Mr. : A portrait of a character of Rosamond, from Mr. Hull's new tragedy, No.334.

1775

1. Smith, John Raphael : Mr. Woodward as Petruchio, from Mr. Vandergucht, No.224.

1776

1. Dickinson, William : Mr. Parsons and Mr. Moody, in the characters of Varland and Major O'Flaherty, in the West Indian; from Mr. Mortimer, a mezzotinto, No.203.
2. Wheatley, Francis : Mr. Webster in the character of Comus, No.134.

1777

1. Barney, Joseph : Portrait of a lady in the character of the Comic Muse, No.6.

1780

1. Brompton, Richard : Portrait of a lady in the character of Miranda, No.9.

1791

1. Jones, John : Portrait of Mrs. Jordan in the character of Hippolyta, from J. Hoppner, No.113.
2. Keate, Miss : Mrs. Jordan in the character of Hippolita; drawn from recollection, No.120.

FREE SOCIETY1779

1. Archer : Jobson and Nell, No.8. -
2. Hagarty, J. : A drawing, in chalk, of a gentleman in the character of Jessamy in the "School for Fathers", No.83.
3. Hagarty, J. : A drawing, in chalk, of a gentleman in the character of Guiderius in Cymbeline, No.84.

ROYAL ACADEMY1769

1. Cotes, Samuel : A portrait in miniature of Mrs. Yates in the character of Electra, No.29.

1770

1. Kitchingman, John : Mr. Powell in the character of Cyrus, miniature, No.120.
2. Kitchingman, John : Mrs. Yates in the character of Jane Shore, miniature, No.121.
3. Zoffany, Johan : The last scene of the 2nd Act in the Alchymist, No.212.

1771

1. Dance, Nathaniel : Mr. Garrick in the character of Richard III, act V, No.54.
2. Reynolds, Sir Joshua : Portrait of a lady, three quarters (Mrs. Abington as Miss Prue), No.161.
3. Vandergucht, Benjamin : A portrait in the character of Merlin, No.272.

1773

1. Vandergucht, Benjamin : A scene in the Register-office, No.298.
2. Vandergucht, Benjamin : Gibby in the Wonder; kit-cat, No.299.

1774

1. De Louthenburg, Philip : Mr. Garrick in the character of Don John, with a view of Naples by moonlight, No.164.
2. De Louthenburg, Philip : Mr. Weston in the character of Tycho, fighting off Evil spirits in "The Christmas Tale", No.165.
3. De Louthenburg, Philip : Mr. Garrick in "Richard III", No.166.
4. Nixon, James : A frame with three miniatures. No.1 Mrs. Hartley in the character of Elfrida. No.2 Portraits of two children. No.3 A portrait of a lady, No.189.
5. Parkinson, Thomas : A scene in She Stoops To Conquer, act V, scene 1, No.356.
6. Vandergucht, Benjamin : A portrait in the character of Petruchio (Woodward), No.305.

1775

1. Parkinson, Thomas : A scene in Cymon act iii, scene 1; small whole length, No.217.
2. Roberts, James : Portrait of a lady in the character of Violante in the Wonder, Act 2, scene 1, No.245.
3. Vandergucht, Benjamin : Bobadil's disgrace; a scene in Every Man in His Humour, Act IV, scene ii, No.320.
4. Vandergucht, Benjamin : A scene in The Committee, or the Faithful Irishman, Act iv, scene iii, No.321.

5. Vandergucht, Benjamin : A scene in the Farce of the Irish Widow, No.322.

1776

1. Parkinson, Thomas : A scene in the Duenna, Act iii, No.210.
 2. Parkinson, Thomas : A scene in the Duenna, Act iii, No.210+
 3. Vandergucht, Benjamin : The Steward of the Stratford Jubilee (Garrick), No.309.

1777

1. Roberts, James : Portrait of Miss P. Hopkins in the character of Maria in the Maid of the Oaks, No.297.

1778

1. Parry, William : Mrs. Jackson in the character of Merope, Act the Third, No.224.
 2. Roberts, James : Portrait of a lady in the character of Andromache, No.428.
 3. Roberts, James : Portrait of a lady in the character of Mrs. Page in the Merry Wives of Windsor, No.429.

1779

1. Kitchingman, John : Mr. Macklin in the character of Shylock; miniature in oil, No.173.
 2. Roberts, James : A scene in the School for Scandal, No.268.
 3. Roberts, James : Signora Zuchelli in the character of a Turkish slave in the ballet of the Couronnement de Zemire, No.269.

1780

1. Cosway, Richard : Portrait of a lady in the character of the Comic Muse (Mrs. Abington), No.93.
 2. Hamilton, William : Mrs. Siddons in the character of the Grecian Daughter, No.339.
 3. Pine, R. E. : Portrait in the character of Jaques, No.109.

4. Roberts, James : Portrait of Mrs. Yates in the character of Melpomene, No.40.
5. Roberts, James : Mrs. Abington in the character of Mrs. Ford, No.362.
6. Sherwin, J. K. : Mrs. Hartley in the Winter's Tale, No.343.
7. Taylor, Alexander : Mr. Brereton in the character of the Prince of Wales in Henry IV; in miniature, No.240.

1781

1. Hone, Nathaniel : Portrait of Mr. Brereton in the character of Douglas, No.113.
2. Roberts, James : Mrs. Mahon in the character of Elvira, No.106.
3. Vandergucht, Benjamin : Portrait of Mr. Moody in the character of Teague, No.70.
4. Zoffany, Johan : A character in the School for Scandal (Mr. Baddeley), No.246.

1782

1. Zoffany, Johan : A character, (Morigi in Viaggiatori Felici, a comic opera), No.92.

1783

1. Birch, William : Mrs. Siddons in the character of Isabella, No.325.

1784

1. Alefounder, John : Mr. Parsons as Sir F. Plagiary, No.9.
2. Alefounder, John : Mr. Edwin as Lingo, No.82.
3. Alefounder, John : Mr. Williamson and Miss M. Stagledoir, as Harlequin and Colombine, in the last scene of "Harlequin Junior", No.182.
4. Alefounder, John : Mr. Suet (sic) and Mrs. Wrigton as Ralph and Fanny in "The Maid of the Mill", No.198.
5. Carter, George : The immortality of Garrick with portraits of the principal actors, No.336.

6. Reynolds, Sir Joshua : Portrait of a lady (Mrs. Abington as Roxalana), No.14.
7. Reynolds, Sir Joshua : Portrait of Mrs. Siddons (as the Tragic Muse), No.190.
8. Shelley, Samuel : Mr. Brereton in the character of Douglas, No.297.

1785

1. Paye, Richard : Portrait of a girl in the character of Falstaff in Henry IV, No.79.
2. Ryley, Charles : A scene in the Carmelite, No.129.
3. Shirreff, Charles : Portraits of Mrs. Siddons and Mr. Kemble in the characters of Tancred and Sigismunda, No.310.

1786

1. Anonymous (by a lady) : Edwin in the character of Caleb, No.553.
2. Beach, Thomas : Mrs. Siddons and Mr. Kemble in "Macbeth" Act 2, scene 3, No.199.
3. Bowyer, Robert : Mr. Holman in the character of Hamlet, No.258.
4. Brown, Mather : Miss Brunton and Mr. Holman in "Romeo and Juliet" act V, No.138.
5. Brown, Mather : Mrs. Martyr and Mrs. Bates as the Countess and Page in the "Follies of a Day or Marriage of Figaro", No.410.
6. Hoppner, John : Mrs. Jordan in the character of the Comic Muse, supported by Euphrosyne who represses the advances of a satyr, No.163.

1787

1. Brown, Mather : Mrs. Pope, Mr. Pope, Mrs. Wells and Mr. Hull in the last scene in the tragedy of the "Gamester", No.426.
2. Downman, John : Miss Farren and Mr. King (Vide "The Heiress"), No.505.
3. Hayward, Francis : Mrs. Siddons in the character of the Tragic Muse. From Sir Joshua Reynolds, No.512.

4. Lawrence, Thomas : Mrs. Esten in the character of Belvidera, No.234.
5. Nixon, James : Portrait of Miss Farren in the character of Thalia, No.314.

1788

1. Downman, John : Lingo and Cowslips (sic) (Vide "Agreeable Surprise") (Edwin and Mrs. Wells), No.452.
2. Hamilton, William : Portrait of Mr. Kemble in the character of King Richard III, No.22.
3. Russell, John : Portrait of Mrs. Wells, as Madge in Love in a Village, No.170.

1789

1. Barry, John : Mrs. Crouch as Selima, in Selima and Azor, No.281.
2. Hamilton, William : Portrait of Mrs. Wells as Mrs. Ford, No.81.
3. Nixon, James : Portrait of a lady in the character of Miranda in the Tempest, No.333.

1790

1. Benazech, Charles : Mr. Whitfield in the character of Williams in Henry V, No.291.
2. James, George : Mr. Dimond of the Bath theatre in the character of Young Norval, last scene, where he is wounded, No.445.

1791

1. Dagley, Richard : Mr. Holman as Romeo, No.357.
2. Hoppner, John : Portrait of Mrs. Jordan in the character of Hippolita, No.440.
3. Nixon, James : Portrait of a lady in the character of Beatrice, No.297.

1792

1. De Wilde, Samuel : Portrait of Mr. Fawcett in the character of Jerry Sneak, No.342.

2. Shee, Martin Archer : Portrait of Mr. Lewis as the Marquis in The Midnight Hour, No.205.

1793

1. Bourgeois, Francis : Mr. Kemble in the character of Coriolanus, Act IV, sc. 3, No.98.
2. De Wilde, Samuel : A Scene in the "Village Lawyer" (Bannister and Parsons), No.285.
3. Mosnier, Jean : Mr. Kemble in the character of Coriolanus, No.212.
4. Shee, Martin : Portrait of Mrs. Stephen Kemble in the character of Cowslip in the Agreeable Surprise, No.32.
5. Wellings, W. : Mr. Kemble and Mrs. Siddons as Cromwell and Queen Catherine, "Henry VIII", act 4, scene 4, No.514.

1794

1. De Wilde, Samuel : Portrait of Mr. Johnstone as Tully in the London Hermit, No.72.
2. De Wilde, Samuel : Portrait of Mr. Bannister, Junr. in the character of Gradus in "Who's the Dupe?", No.93.
3. De Wilde, Samuel : A scene in the "Children in the Wood" (Bannister, Junr., Mrs. Booth, Mrs. Bland), No.124.
4. De Wilde, Samuel : A Scene in "Who's the Dupe?" (Bannister Junr. and Parsons), No.200.
5. Dupont, Gainsborough : Mr. Quick in the character of Spado, No.268.
6. Jean, Philip : Maternal Happiness. In the centre Signora Storace in the Character of My Grandmother, a Turkish Jew and six others, No.529.
7. Shee, Martin : Portrait of a young lady as Miranda, Shakespeare's Tempest, No.87.

1795

1. Barbier, G. P. : Miss Wallis in the character of Juliet, No.208.

2. De Wilde, Samuel : Scene in the "Village Lawyer", No.201.
3. De Wilde, Samuel : Scene in "Hartford Bridge", No.242.
4. Sherriff, Charles : Miss Wallis and Mr. Dimond in Romeo and Juliet, No.562.

1796

1. De Wilde, Samuel : Scene in the "Way to Get Married", No.272.
2. Graham, John : Miss Wallis as Juliet, No.343.
3. Hopkins, J. : Portrait of Miss DeCamp in character, No.662.
4. Saxon, James : Mr. Palmer in the character of Cohenberg, No.465.
5. Zoffany, Johan : Mr. Townsend as the beggar in the pantomime of Merry Sherwood, No.85.
6. Zoffany, Johan : Mr. Knight as the clown in the farce of the Ghost, No.110.

1797

1. Bourgeois, Francis : Mr. Kemble as Coriolanus Act IV, sc 1, No.344.
2. De Wilde, Samuel : Mr. R. Palmer as Tag in the "Spoil'd Child", No.277.
3. De Wilde, Samuel : Mr. Suett as Dicky Gossip in "My Grandmother", No.288.
4. De Wilde, Samuel : Mr. Fawcett as Frank Oatland in the "Cure for the Heartache", No.329.
5. Joseph, George : Mrs. Siddons as the Tragic Muse, No.203.
6. Porter, Robert Kerr : Portrait of a gentleman as Hamlet, No.208.
7. Shee, Martin Archer : Portrait of Mr. Fawcett as Touchstone, No.354.

1798

1. Barry, John : Portraits of Miss de Camp (in the Romance of Bluebeard), Miss Phyn, Mr. Brooks, No.772.

2. Devis, Arthur : Mrs. Powell in the Castle Spectre,
No.287.
3. De Wilde, Samuel : A Scene in "Sylvester Daggerwood",
No.159.
4. Lawrence, Thomas : Mr. Kemble in the character of
Coriolanus at the hearth of Tullus
Ausidius, No.225.

1799

1. De Wilde, Samuel : Portrait of Mr. Munden in the character
of Verden, No.81.
2. De Wilde, Samuel : Portrait of Mr. Fawcett in the charac-
ter of Dr. Pangloss in the "Heir at
Law", No.91.
3. Porter, Robert Kerr : A portrait of Mr. H. Johnson in the
character of Carrol in Oscar and
Malvina, No.315.

1800

1. Barber, John : Portraits of Mr. H. Johnston in
"Douglas", Lord Amherst, Colonel of St.
James's Volunteers, Miss Trotter, Miss
Gibbons, and a Lady of Quality, No.807.
2. Barber, John : Mr. H. Johnston in Douglas, No.918.
3. Clarke, Theophilus : Mrs. Gibbs as Cowslip in the "Agreeable
Surprise", No.240.
4. De Wilde, Samuel : Mrs. Gibbs as Cicely Homespun in the
Heir at Law, No.796.
5. Drummond, Samuel : Design for a picture of dramatic por-
traits, No.214.
6. Lawrence, Thomas : Rolla (J. P. Kemble), No.193.
7. Nixon, James : Portrait of a celebrated actor in the
character of Hamlet, No.159.

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