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RESCUING *RICHARD CŒUR DE LION*: RIVALRY, REHEARSAL AND PERFORMANCE AT SHERIDAN'S DRURY LANE

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Utopia might always prove impossible.¹ But it should not be entirely abandoned as a concept, or as a goal to which work might be directed. It is hard to see how meaningful change could arise without at least some sense of utopian possibility. The architectural historian Nathaniel Coleman argues in this vein that simply 'making-do with reality may be compensatory, but limits possibility, transforming apparent pragmatic agency into its capture by enclosing realism'.² Dealing with reality, yet keeping an eye on more magical possibilities has often appeared, and has certainly been claimed, as the founding experience of 'making theatre'. Theatres have seemed unique places where much might happen. If they are indeed special places, able to achieve special things, then they are not simply ebullient, but like Foucault's 'heterotopias' able to combine dissident elements at the margins. Even when viewed at considerable historical distance, theatrical companies can appear truculent, wayward, and unsettling, even when they remain exploitative, manipulative, hierarchical; as many utopias are.³ Inequities and exclusions based on race, sexuality, gender and class are not absent from theatrical life. However, Coleman's point, however, is really to argue that that it ought to be possible to imagine sites and patterns of work that are not already foreclosed by the demands of the market, the law, or other forms of curtailment. It should be equally possible to imagine people coming together bringing their skills, working out how they might be combined. Reality and its utopian antithesis might then valuably contradict and coalesce. The combination is never easy. Imperatives, financial and otherwise, loomed large over theatres, in Georgian England, as today. But improvisation and collective effort can both respond and resist such downward pressures, to make something which is at least potentially dissident, as much as a way of working as the work it produces.

This article begins with these reflections because it risks telling the story of a single production, that of the opera *Richard Cœur de Lion* at Richard Brinsley Sheridan's Drury Lane Theatre in 1786. That production though in many respects an instance of a fine and engaging collective effort, is equally a moment of eccentric, even sloppy 'making do' upon which commercial realities press all too evidently. Although under pressure to deliver a successful production, Drury Lane appears to have been somewhat chaotic. Decisions were made last minute, or not at all. Actors pursued their own agenda, while

the theatre's craftsmen and women were put under perhaps unnecessary pressure. Yet it works out – *Richard Cœur de Lion* is a triumph - because the collaborative, though not well-coordinated space of the theatre permits success amidst the chaos. This way of working can be theorised deploying Michel de Certeau's theorisation of the nature of artisanal work, as co-productive and potentially dissident, thereby avoiding the closure to which Coleman objects.⁴ To reveal these processes this article introduces previously neglected resources, including financial records and the hugely revealing letters of Mary Tickell, whose somewhat contrary perspective reveals not just the effort and expense demanded by the production, but also the anxieties generated by the theatrical duopoly. The imperative to succeed (or at least not fail) in such a competitive world ensured that theatre practitioners were forever aware of the need to satisfy audience expectations. Tickell's letters reveal the vibrant and conflicted inner life of the theatre, where different aspirations and clashing views of what could or should be achieved, both propelled and inhibited the progress of all aspects of pre-production and ultimately. Analysis of this material makes possible a new multi-dimensional examination of the social dynamics of eighteenth-century theatrical production.

I

In January 1786 Frances Anne Crewe recorded that she had enjoyed an opera in Paris that was 'beautiful' and 'splendid' with a 'Gradation of Interest from the beginning to the End of it'.⁵ She had seen Michel-Jean Sedaine and André Ernest Modeste Grêtry's *Richard Cœur de Lion*, an *opéra comique*, first performed at the *Comédie Italienne* on 21 October 1784. The opera depicted Blondel de Nesle's search for King Richard I, styled *Cœur de Lion*, imprisoned in Austria since attempting to return from the Crusades. It began with Blondel's arrival at the house of Sir Williams, a Welsh exile. Sir Williams tells Blondel of a mysterious prisoner held at a nearby castle. Blondel then sings 'O Richard, Ô mon Roi' [Oh Richard, Oh my King'], lamenting his monarch's loss and asserting his own loyalty: 'L'univers t'abandonne;/ Sur la terre, il n'est que moi/ Qui s'intéresse à ta personne' ['The universe has abandoned you/ On earth there is no one but me/ Who is interested in you']. Blondel then meets Sir Williams's daughter, Laurette, and discovers that she is in love with the castle's governor, Florestan. Countess Marguerite, King Richard's consort, and her knights arrive soon afterwards and offer their assistance. Blondel goes to the castle alone, where he sings 'Une fièvre brûlante' [a burning fever]. Richard sings in reply, enacting the most celebrated episode in the Blondel-Richard

legend. Blondel is immediately seized by the castle's guards; freed only when he proposes an assignation between Florestan and Laurette. Once released Blondel plans Richard's release with Williams and Marguerite. In the last act their combined troops storm the castle and free their King, ensuring a finale pleasing to late-century metropolitan audiences, who enjoyed medieval pageantry, high spectacle, and rousing music enormously.⁶ It is a coherent piece of work for all that: *Richard Cœur de Lion* articulated Sedaine's admiration of strong kings, not least by making Blondel's unstinting loyalty its greatest drama. Florestan and Laurette's affair compliments the royal rescue plot; while the repeated theme - 'Une fièvre brûlante' – ensures a powerful sense of a romantic as well as political purpose.⁷

Crewe may have recommended what she had seen to Sheridan, co-owner of Drury Lane theatre and her sometime lover. If she did then she proffered an ambiguous gift. Despite her enthusiasm, it was not obvious that translating an ambitious and potentially contentious French opera to London would prove successful. English audiences were notoriously hostile to foreign plays, especially opera. Nor was kingship understood in Britain as it was in France. British kings could not claim political pre-eminence, too jealously did parliament guard its privileges.⁸ Nor could the 'people' (however defined) be ignored or their loyalty assumed as still seemed possible in France. This would be a particular challenge for Drury Lane, given that theatre's somewhat whiggish orientation.⁹ Regardless and perhaps because of these challenges, both London theatres raced to produce the opera in the autumn of 1786, making the theatrical season of 1786-87 distinctive for its rival productions of *Richard Cœur de Lion*. The theatrical duopoly created by the 1737 Stage Licensing Act, which both assured the status of the two patent houses and locked them in a feisty 'competitorship', rarely produced such direct rivalry over a single play, still less a new work.¹⁰ More often the contending managers organised their repertoire to counter-offer and thereby disrupt the plans of the other house; offering tragedy against comedy, or a new play against a proven crowd-pleaser. Actresses were often the medium of this rivalry, and its most active agents.¹¹ But such a direct challenge did happen, occasionally. Most famously John Rich and David Garrick had sparred with rival productions of *Romeo and Juliet* in the 1740s, each adding a new and expensive element: Juliet's funeral cortege. Its introduction meant that costly spectacle was critical to the competition between the two theatres, as it would be when *Richard Cœur de Lion* entered pre-production.¹²

To have both houses hastening to gain the stage with their version of a new work was striking. In such cases it is probably an advantage to win the race. On this occasion it was Covent Garden that staged its production first on 16 October: the performance starring Elizabeth Billington, Margaret Martyr and George Inchbald. But Covent Garden had avoided the challenge posed by Grêtry's score, replacing it with better-known English tunes, much in the manner of *The Beggar's Opera*. Leonard McNally, who furnished the script, enlarged Sedaine's pastoral subplot, adding characters and some bawdy scenes as a carnivalesque counterpoint to the main plot.¹³ Such a heterodox approach did not disguise the often crass patriotism which dominated the Covent Garden production, never more in evidence than when the English knights are preparing to rescue their King, sing: 'Soldiers strike home!/Britons ne'er flee', they chorus, 'Glory's our cause/Richard we'll free'. The echo of the patriotic standard 'Britons Strike Home' was unmissable. The sentiment recurs when Richard's Queen Berengaria (Macnally corrected Sedaine in this respect) sings: 'victory lies before us;/Liberty and Old England'. Throughout Richard appears as an exemplary King. Macnally's re-writing of 'O Richard, Ô mon Roi' has Blondel hail 'Richard, my friend, my patriot king'.¹⁴ Macnally's additions struck some reviewers as contrary to the opera's elevated themes. The *Morning Chronicle* deplored Macnally's 'violent professions of loyalty'. Despite these complaints and some other missteps, the production opened successfully. Takings were encouraging, even if aspects of the production remained uncertain or open to criticism.¹⁵

It was Drury Lane, however, who eventually triumphed. When Drury Lane's production opened on 24 October newspaper paragraphs commended performances by Dorothy Jordan, John Philip Kemble, and William Barrymore. The singing was thought particularly excellent. The costumes, scenery and music were equally admired, and praise was bestowed on the managers' generosity for providing them.¹⁶ The arrival of competing productions of the same opera provoked considerable excitement in the press in the weeks prior to the first performances. The *Morning Post* reported tellingly that 'hostilities' had commenced as early as 13 October and referred the 'abilities of opponent actors', tabulating both casts for their readers, as if they were competing teams. It would have been evident from the papers that the two theatres were intending to devote their most exciting talent to the project: Jordan and Kemble, for Drury Lane, were to play *against* Billington and Inchbald at Covent Garden.¹⁷ These are puffs of course, in all probability placed by the theatres' managers but they underline nonetheless how much each theatres' efforts were animated by the theatrical duopoly. Competition was intense and to a degree

unprecedented. The desire for artistic and commercial superiority prompted the theatre to invest in a risky and expensive production. Both Thomas Harris, manager at Covent Garden, and Sheridan at Drury Lane were eager to attract audiences and gain prestige by staging expensive, visually daring productions. Harris was especially keen to offer spectacle, in many ways it is the keynote of his management practice.¹⁸ The competition was financial too. The theatre needed to make money, at the very least cover its costs.¹⁹

As theatre historians explore more and more of Georgian theatre's commercial as well as artistic endeavours, there is a need to better understand the place of crowd-pleasers like *Richard Cœur de Lion* in the repertory. Paula Backscheider, Jane Moody, John O'Brien, and Daniel O'Quinn have reappraised the spectacular forms of late century drama and the expensive means by which it was produced.²⁰ Drury Lane was certainly unstinting in its commitment: calling upon their director of music, Thomas Linley, whose talents allowed them to retain more of Grêtry's rich and complex music, while the experience comic dramatist (and former General) John Burgoyne adapted the text. Thomas Greenwood the scenographer and carpenter produced ambitious new sets, exploiting the scenic possibilities of a gothic romance set in a distant European location. The actors were, as ever, extraordinary. Beyond these individual abilities, the production depended upon a collective effort, through pre-production, rehearsal, and towards performance. Supernumeraries had to be marshalled, lines learnt, and everyone costumed. This was not an enterprise to be undertaken lightly. Tom King as manager of Drury Lane, Sheridan as owner, Burgoyne, Linley, Greenwood, and many others had much to concern them. There was not much, as yet, that was utopian or dissident to witness. Legal and commercial realities were all too obvious, there was much with which to 'make-do'. Drury Lane had to beat Covent Garden, or at least not lose. Exploring the resulting anxieties and the dynamic combination of skills and initiatives brought forward in response, forever pressurised by the demands of theatre finance and duopolistic rivalry, which will be critical in this discussion, not least as an illuminating and intense instance of what Joseph Roach has termed Georgian theatre's 'deep play'.²¹

II

There was therefore much at stake when Burgoyne revised Sedaine's work. He needed to be mindful of the potentially dangerous politics of the original, the need to please audiences, and the theatre's capacity to replicate the success of the French opera. An experienced dramatist, Burgoyne made several changes. He changed the name of

Richard's consort: Marguerite became Matilda, while Williams became Sir Owen. Sir Owen gained a second daughter, Julie. Most significantly, Burgoyne transformed Matilda's part, transferring much of Blondel's role to her. Consequently, it is Matilda who sings:

Oh, Richard! Oh, my love
By the faithless world forgot;
I alone in exile rove,
To lament thy hapless lot.²²

She performs these words disguised as a blind man, a decision which made it ideal for Jordan, a much-admired performer of breeches parts.²³ There is a political difference too: Sedaine's Blondel sings of Richard's abandonment with a subject's love; his declaration is the expression of a political passion: a desire to serve his King. Matilda sings not as a subject, but as his lover. The new emphasis on romance drains politics from the scene, replacing it with heterosexual passion. The substitution of power for love is most evident when Matilda sings beneath the castle walls, discovering Richard through the strength of her attachment:

A mighty king doth languish,
Within a prison's gloom;
Ah! Could I share his doom.
Ah! could I soothe his anguish.²⁴

The couple join their voices singing together: 'My tender hopes recalling,/Have love and life restor'd'. To make this love match work Burgoyne altered the crusader King's character, softening his manner and limiting his role to emotional effusions.²⁵ His transformation was too much for Horace Walpole, who complained that 'turning the ferocious Richard into a tender husband is intolerable. If an historic subject is good, but wants attention, why will not an author take the canvas, cut it to his own mind, but give new names to the personages? It only makes confusion...to maim a known story'.²⁶

Walpole's phrasing is telling but serves mostly to underline his deliberate non-comprehension of the Burgoyne's new direction. Burgoyne did not maim his story, he feminised it. Women are central to his gothic sentimentalism not heroic monarchs, a realignment with implications, as we shall see, for the ways in which the opera would be cast, staged, and marketed.²⁷ Burgoyne must have been proud of his work (or at least anxious to have it recorded) as he ensured the speedy publication of a print edition, advertising it as a 'Historical Romance'. A copy of which was in the hands of the

company at Drury Lane by 23 October, while they were still rehearsing.²⁸ This was only days before the planned premier. The Larpent manuscript and the print edition have been judged ‘almost identical’.²⁹ However, the printed text provides longer stage directions, allowing the home reader to consume the text more easily. The print edition also provides the songs entire, including repeated choruses. The copyist at Drury Lane could not be bothered with such completeness. There is one notable difference: at the beginning of Act III, Julie sings to her father. Her performance distracts him, allowing the romance and rescue plots to go forward. The song adds considerably to her role, but is absent from the Larpent save for the direction: ‘Julie/Sings’. The spoken line introducing the song also differs.³⁰ Evidently the text was not quite finished when it was sent to the examiner; but the song was decided upon, indeed, printed, shortly afterwards. The shorter stage directions might point to unfinished business too. Decisions were probably still being made after the licencing submission and prior to the first performance. The development between the two versions suggests that the text submitted for licensing was not the final text: much still required working out. We need to be careful when using Larpent MSS as indicators of theatre practice, the Larpent is but one artefact in an open-ended process. This is especially at Drury Lane, who were habitually tardy and slipshod in their presentations to the Examiner of Plays. Most pertinently, the evident looseness in the Larpent confirms that theatre is made rather than written: rehearsal prior to performance is a key site of mediation and experimentation rooted in temporal, financial resources.

Despite advances in scholarship on the material circumstances of Georgian theatrical production, especially Tiffany Stern’s work on rehearsals, which has overturned the false assumption that they were limited or of little importance during the eighteenth century, most scholars continue to overlook the details on the pre-production process.³¹ The potentially contested means by which a play becomes viable theatrical performance are multiple and complex. Several factors exert their influence: the creation of the script and any subsequent revision; the casting, requiring negotiation with actors, who may have their own needs or prove difficult; the manufacture of scenery and costumes, which incur costs; and, in a commercial theatre, uniting all, the delineation of audience desires so that revenues can be guaranteed. The internal economy of a commercial theatre like Drury Lane, was a variously-enacted endeavour with authority often deferred or devolved; especially so when a production called for music and scenography, or the casting of crowd-pulling celebrity actors.³² Discovering how decisions were made and how they were implemented is vital; but it is important to do so in ways that are sensitive to the

plasticity of processes which first constrained but ultimately compelled by the exigencies of business, celebrity, and profit. It is necessary therefore to understand the relationship between these pressures, and their role in shaping production. The theatres' needs and demands were responded to, and indeed counteracted by forces from within Drury Lane. De Certeau describes how work practices, the behaviours of artisans, employees, workers of all sorts, become independent, adaptive, even resistant. There is an element of disobedience as well as 'making do'. Like authors, managers might seek control, but their efforts are only partially successful, de Certeau's method emphasizes role of other workers as the co-producers of culture.³³ In this instance the rehearsal process and backstage activities clearly played a role (not recoverable from the Larpent MS or any other text), and to these efforts that it is now necessary to turn.

III

Finally getting round to it, Drury Lane submitted its script for licensing on 16 October, the day Covent Garden's version premiered. The rival theatres were now almost fully engaged. Press coverage was extensive. Articles anticipating the Drury Lane production soon filled not just paragraphs but whole columns. The theatres were active in this process, gaining from the publicity the rivalry necessarily produced.³⁴ Drury Lane's belatedness put the theatre under pressure. Though they had, however, the advantage of a better script and a superior music; to realize this advantage required deploying and corralling their staff as well as some adventitious, even haphazard 'making-do'. A perspective on Drury Lane's tribulations emerges from the archive Mary Tickell letters, now held at the Folger Shakespeare Library. It is from her that I have already taken the term 'competitorship'. Tickell was the daughter of Thomas Linley; her mother, also Mary, was the wardrobe mistress. Tickell exploited the opportunities these connections afforded, attending performances and rehearsals, including those for *Richard Cœur de Lion*, where she offered her opinions despite having no designated role. She recorded these encounters writing to her sister, Elizabeth Sheridan. Her purpose at least in part was to prompt a response or better, action, from Sheridan himself.³⁵ Tickell exposes the sometimes tense relationships between the management and staff at Drury Lane. Tickell told her sister who was doing what, and who might do better. She is clear sighted about the business of running a theatre: it must make money. She reports proudly, for example, the successes of a recent command performance, by Sarah Siddons, and the continuing

success of *The Romp*, owing entirely, she claims, to Jordan's performance. Actresses brought in money: 'more than £300' in the case of Siddons's performance in James Thomson's *Tancred and Sigismunda*.³⁶ Burgoyne's carefully adapted *Richard Cœur de Lion*, would seem a smart choice in this context. However, the story Tickell imparts is uncertain of success. The chaos, delay, and indecision she reports reveals much about the way in which Drury Lane operated, working from dispute and dissent and through tribulation to triumph.

Tickell's first letter concerning *Richard Cœur de Lion* is dated simply 'Friday', but her reference to a 'Michaelmas Goose' means that it must be Friday 29 September 1786. She reports that the musical part of the 'first act...is to be rehearsed Monday'. Scheduled for 2 October this first rehearsal is over three weeks before the premier. That work has been devoted to the production so early underlines its importance. Although Tickell reports progress, she worries that 'the [Covent] Gardeners are working away as fast as possible – and have some how or other bungled upon ^{our} idea...of changing the friend to the Mistress - & Mrs Martyr is pitched upon'.³⁷ Tickell refers to the alteration of the Matilda part, revealing how duopolistic competition is enacted through actresses, who are pitched against other. It is this, precisely and particularly, that she understood as the 'competitorship'. She understood vividly the implications that Burgoyne's adaptation had for the way in which the opera could be staged; not least the prominence of actresses. The new role of Julie, Sir Owen's second daughter, was taken by Maria Theresa De Camp, making her debut. Tickell enthuses: 'I admire the idea of a part for Decamp of all things', knowing that it adds to the interest of the piece, while developing a new performer. Her expectations confirm Nussbaum's assessment of the importance of actresses and their publicly performed rivalries.³⁸ For a new production, which might easily go awry, actresses, especially if they are young or famous, generated interest in the press. The place they occupied on the stage and in the audience's mind is critical. Even so, their introduction required careful management within the burdens and risks of the commercial 'competitorship'. This point will require further theorisation, but it is clear that casting of the production was sensitive to the commercial pressures that the duopoly develops as a consequence of its inherent complexity: stable because the Licensing Act limited the number of theatres; but highly unstable in its internal competition. Anxiety and pressure resonate throughout Tickell's correspondence. By mid-October she knew that the Covent Garden production was leading the race; keen to reassure her sister, she got tickets for the premier: 'I shall be in such agony if it is good - & yet I think there is

not much chance with Mr Macnally's alterations and additions w:ch I see are publicly advertised with new music by Shaw...you may depend upon having a very impartial Account of its merits or faults'.³⁹

Animated by her self-appointed responsibility, and clutching 'a new pen for the purpose', Tickell wrote a superbly detailed account the next day, relishing the production's deficiencies and improprieties.⁴⁰ Alongside her own theatrical knowledge, Tickell based her judgement on her recent reading of Sophia Lee's *The Recess*. Lee's novel, which had given rise to a 'fine cry', suggested how the medieval past could serve as an opportunity for pleasurable historical difference, epitomized by the return of chivalry.⁴¹ Macnally's work completely lacks this dimension. It is, she explains, a 'vulgar, stupid representation' with little 'resemblance' to 'the French'. The performances by male actors, central to Macnally's bawdy revisions are specifically censored: 'instead of our exiled Sir Owen, they have [John] Quick as a dirty vulgar Keeper of an Ale House, before whose Door the piece opens – with a very faint view of the Castle in the Back-Ground'. The want of spectacle is compounded by the cast's vulgarity. She rattles through them, admonishing each in their turn: Ralph Wewitzer, who played Bergan, 'is a Country Clown...quite new to the piece, as is...Mrs Kennedy, a sort of stupid Mrs Bundle in the Waterman only she chose to leave out most of her Songs, Lauretta made a pert bold country Girl not very unlike Jenny in the Deserter abusing her clod Pate Lover'. Worst of all, is the character of La Bruce (played by Edwin), he is 'quite a Creature of the Author's imagination in a Dress something like Touchstones – he is called Berengeria's Valet, tho' I saw nothing he came in but to babble his nonsense & delight the Audience with his Vulgarity'. The dignity of the gothic past has been traduced, as much by smut as by incompetence. Beyond this polite regulation, Tickell's commentary exhibits her deep knowledge of the repertoire: it rests on comparisons and allusions she expected her sister to comprehend with equal facility. This confidence is poignant testimony to their shared, though now suppressed skills as performers. They knew what they were talking about, as their letters always make plain. But most of all Tickell offers a gleeful revelation of tumble and mess at Covent Garden. It should all be better: but she is glad that it is not.

While Tickell's gothic-inflected sense of gendered proprieties gave zest to her appraisal, her main concern was to judge a commercial rival, to appraise the 'competitorship', and the means by which that battle might be won. This meant attention to the performance of Covent Garden's lead actress, Elizabeth Billington (Tickell had been wrong to claim Martyr in the role, she played Lauretta). Billington is described

forensically. What is striking about Tickell's commentary is extent to which distaste for the actress's peculiar costume develops into a wider criticism. Historical accuracy is not her sole concern, but underwrites an admonition directed at the actress herself:

I must introduce you to Madam La Countess or as they call her Queen Consort – in the Middle of a High Wood she is discover'd in a very pretty Gray Sattin Dress with an immense Plume of Feathers on her head, leaning on a very jolly Confidante in Blue Sattin – she comes forward, but what she said, I did not hear, & then sings the Air beginning “once more my Lyre” – w:ch by the Bye are beautiful words,...prettily set too, I believe by Shield – in this scene, Edwin and Quick join the Lady and invite her to the Public House (the audience in amaze all the while who this fine Lady sh:d be, or how she got into the Wood - but by the bye Ma'am – Ecod out she comes in the ale house the finest Queen you ever saw with a Train from one side of the Stage to the other, & all over Glitter – you may think perhaps it look'd a little odd to see her talking with Quick in his blue apron but I can't help that.

Behind her claims for inappropriateness of 'grey sattin' is a critique of Billington's desire to dazzle. Her dress and plume enact what de Certeau terms '*la perruque*, “the wig”': the 'workers own work disguised as work for his employer'.⁴² He cites a variety of artisanal subterfuges and secretarial appropriations; the category applies here even as its disguise is seen through. Billington has performed more than her contracted work; her performance, essentially as herself, as costumed celebrity, eclipses her performance as Berengeria. She has attempted an act of visual dominance, a *coup de theatre*, against character and historical precedent. This superadded work of self-display, comparable to Quick's vulgarity in its intrusiveness, is too disruptive. In Roland Barthes's terms, Tickell has witnessed the actor all too clearly, preventing the operation of a myth.⁴³ Furthermore George Inchbald, playing Richard (similarly overdressed) cannot sing, provoking laughter. Tickell closes triumphantly: 'there was a good deal of hissing when the Curtain drop'd'. Her solitary note of praise is for the Blondel's harp, which was 'very picturesque & we mean to have one'.⁴⁴ Her attention to this detail, confirms her reliance on gothic myth-making and its signs, an enthusiasm that underwrites her report of rehearsals and eventual performance at Drury Lane.

But there were limited grounds for confidence at Drury Lane at this point. The day after the Covent Garden premier, 17 October, Tickell sent her sister 'word of our side'. There is some good news to impart: Kemble, she writes, is 'vastly delighted with

his part & my Mother says has the sweetest voice'. Her father is similarly 'delighted with De Camp'. But there is confusion about whether the opera would work best as a main or afterpiece. Covent Garden wrestled this problem: for its first four nights their version served as a mainpiece but was reduced to an afterpiece for the fifth and all subsequent performances.⁴⁵ The choice between mainpiece and afterpiece was a critical decision with significant implications for how the theatre organised its repertoire, so it is surprising to find each theatre unable to decide. Tickell regards the problem as only partly technical. It is more obviously, a consequence of inertia and ineptitude:

They are one and all violent about it being a First Piece - I don't know what to say about it, [Sheridan] must determine but I wish he w:d let them know his final Determination as at any rate it is quite necessary it sh.d come out as soon as possible. [Sheridan] has had all the Objections to its being an afterpiece...stated to him, therefore pray let him decide - for we are in a great hurry - we have wrote one verse for Decamp - & must [find] another if we can - but pray send [Sheridan]'s word & let something be fix'd. Texier, King, Kemble, Smith - they are all of the Opinion that it should be a first Piece - & my Mother says we don't want afterpieces - but let [Sheridan] use his own judgement about it - there must certainly be a few additional Songs as a first Piece...the sooner they are set about the better.⁴⁶

It is already too long: 'they say it will be two hours in Representation & therefore twelve o'clock before it is over'. She is exasperated with Sheridan especially. Her letter assumes that he has the final word, or should demand it. She writes imploringly, hoping to gain his attention: 'I hope [Sheridan] fix'd everything about the Scenery for I shall die if it has not a good effect'. The state of the scenes is critical, not least because new scenery was an expense not always undertaken. However, it is not clear what Tickell means. She could mean that Sheridan had agreed the financial outlay, or that he had commissioned them directly, or even that he had submitted design ideas of his own. It matters less which option is correct than the realisation that, even at this late hour, nothing is 'fix'd'.

Sheridan's role at Drury Lane at this juncture is unclear. Though he owned the theatre, he was not in charge routinely, at least not officially and certainly not on a daily basis. King was the manager at Drury Lane in 1786. The choices Tickell describes were his responsibilities, though she never thought him very competent.⁴⁷ Cecil Price suggested Tickell's letters disclosed that Sheridan had a 'considerable hand in the production if not the actual writing' of *Richard Cœur de Lion*. He certainly sought a role,

however vaguely. Tickell acknowledges the arrival of some material from him – ‘poetical alterations’ she calls them - but dismisses them as mistaken.⁴⁸ Her correspondence more obviously indicates a shared and familial effort, one in which she and her husband, Richard, played a role. Although there is the suggestion of guidance from Sheridan, Tickell is annoyed by his intermittent attention.⁴⁹ Sisterly collaboration is much more evident. Elizabeth Sheridan’s letters have not survived; but Tickell’s side of the correspondence indicates that they discussed the music in detail and may have supplied their father with material. Tickell certainly asks her sister to send additional music: ‘any thing operatical must do well’, she suggests.⁵⁰ There is a dynamic operating here, both consultative and competitive. The two women are working together, unofficially but diligently; it not surprising therefore that the Duchess of Devonshire thought they were responsible for the work entirely.⁵¹ Less speculatively, their exchange occurs after the play had been submitted for licencing, further suggesting that the production was still evolving after that point. There was certainly much to finish, determine, and adjust, especially concerning the singing. The theatre is ‘making do’, botching its way along. Tickell’s next letter supports this view. This crucial letter took three days to write; Tickell beginning it at some point during Wednesday 18 October, writing again on Thursday and Friday morning before having it franked and posted. She begins: ‘I have just dispatch’d T- [Richard Tickell] to the Rehearsal’, though, she confides, ‘my Lord is rather delicate about interference...I don’t think he will be entirely useless – we have fabricated another verse, such as it is, for Decamps and I have charg’d my Father to put a little tic tac Accompaniment, but whether he will or no, is another matter’. More worryingly, ‘they are still in doubts about it being a First piece’. The sticking point is the second act, which, though ‘very interesting’, does not have ‘music enough’. She asks that Sheridan take the final decision, but probably did not expect he would; suspecting him of wasting time with his aristocratic friends.⁵²

Nor are the performers ready. Jordan ‘continues very imperfect but I think if this was advertised for a Day she w:d take care to be ready for her own Credits sake’. The idea that Jordan runs to her own timetable recurs when Tickell complains (with her mother’s concerns on her mind) that she dislikes Jordan’s costume change prior to the storming of the castle. It is, she claims, implausible and impractical: ‘She says, there will be plenty of time for her, while the Assault is going on. To change her Dress, & make her appearance to her Lover in a fine flowing Robe of White Sattin – it strikes me that such an attention to her Dress at the time she must be so strangely agitated for the safety of

Richard w:d be very unnatural'.⁵³ Tickell makes it clear that the burden of the duopolistic rivalry falls most heavily on the shoulders of the actresses each theatre employs.⁵⁴ Part of the armoury chosen by the actresses for the conflict is their dresses (which is a key part of their performance in role, and as celebrities). Tickell reveals this arming even if she remains stoutly unsympathetic. She sees only *la perruque*: Jordan working for herself. By the time Tickell has finished writing her account, her husband has returned with news. He reports that 'the scene between Richard and Matilda is charming, & Greenwood has executed inimitably the great Masters Designs – Decamps is likewise charming – but I find the song is too slow for her, so I must give my Father a fillip. Mrs Crouch wants to rival the Billington I suppose in a fine flourish Bravura – but it is done as an afterpiece, it w:d be surely madness to add a note or word to the present length'.⁵⁵ Tickell remains concerned with how the production is progressing, or rather not progressing. The date for the premier is slipping back. Worse, the Covent Garden production has been commanded by the King. Although their production continues only with what she derides as 'dull safety', she is anxious because Drury Lane's version is 'not even advertised for any time'. Managerial confusion is referenced repeatedly: a state of indecision not helped by Sheridan's failure to communicate and made worse by King's allowing Anthony Le Texier, installed by Sheridan at the King's Theatre, to swan about 'quite the Master of Cappello' while running up expenses. Everything is muddled and mistaken. Defeated, she concludes admitting that Jordan is so attached to her white satin dress that she cannot dispute it with her any further.⁵⁶

IV

Like the young Jane Austen, Tickell is a partial and prejudiced historian. She is never ignorant. Nor does she lack access to the scenes she describes. Above all, Tickell is protective of her family's interests. Having been a professional singer, she is familiar with theatres. She knows how they could and should work.⁵⁷ She provides detailed, precise information, reporting directly on events at Drury Lane. Her acuity is evident throughout the lengthiest letter on Drury Lane's *Richard Cœur de Lion*, which reports the 'night Rehearsal' and subsequent premier. A night rehearsal was a sizeable investment. Drury Lane did not have designated large-scale rehearsal space. The only place to rehearse *en masse* was the theatre itself. To rehearse at night, meant closure. Drury Lane was consequently 'dark' on Friday 20 October. Drawing slyly on familial knowledge, Tickell

judges Crouch’s performance of Laurette’s song in Act I ‘a great deal too slow, but I fancy my Father alter’d the time according to your Direction’. She continues:

The Rondeau...between Mrs Jordan & Mrs Crouch was too slow – my Father and I, had a fine squabble when we came home, not so much about this, as Mrs Jordan’s being singing Oh Richard! Not according to contract – she begins



makes the stress sound exactly like the French, w:ch you know is exactly wrong. You know how monstrous obstinate our good Parent is; so whether my violence will do any good or no I can’t tell.⁵⁸

Quite a scene, clearly: Jordan’s performance of ‘O Richard’, not ‘according to contract’, but in her own manner, perhaps with her own purposes and audience in mind. This is the clearest example of her independence as professional and celebrity, able to define her own work and to perform it. Linley appears to be unable to stop this, much to his bossy daughter’s outrage. Elsewhere she laments that: ‘Father mistook entirely the intervention of [Sheridan] about Decamp’s Song and told T- [Richard Tickell] it was to be an invitation to the Pilgrim to stay to partake of their merriment – w:ch we affected at a Rate, & then found by the Dialogue it was to be a Song she had studied for the purpose – it was too late to be alter’d & as it is a pretty little acting childish Song, I don’t think it matters much’. This really does seem botched. Tickell even asks her sister to send material: ‘any thing operatical must do well’.⁵⁹ Such fluidity of making do and last-minute rushes of inspiration seems endemic and a little desperate. New material is added or sought, and adjustments made only days before the production opens, and seemingly not very thoughtfully either. The process is contrary, and very obviously so, to the apparent singularity of purpose and assurance implied by both the licensing process and Burgoyne’s eager publication of the text.

The scenery, which remains unfinished is another source of anxiety, as are the costumes: ‘poor Greenwood was in woeful Fright that so many men in the last Scene w:l spoil his Scene w:ch is a very fine one – so many says my Mother? Why how many? – why Ma’am replied Johnson, Texier has ordered Dresses for sixty six, Pioneers & all - you can easily conceive my mother’s Rage at this intelligence – in short half the number will be found more than enough to release [King] Richard’. Theatre workers like Greenwood and Mary Linley are often voiceless in accounts of Drury Lane, so it is pleasing to have their anxieties recorded, if not quite accepted by Tickell. Later she

reports that her father has been prevailed upon the cut ‘the long Symphony at the end I believe of the first Act, w:ch had nothing to do with the Business and now I think it will do very well in point of length – if they make haste [with] the Scenes’.⁶⁰ Tickell’s confidence is justified when she attended the first three performances. She reports the opera’s success excitedly; it has, she coos, ‘gratified’ even ‘the most sanguine Expectations’. ‘What delighted in all more than anything’ was that the:

Carpenters exerted themselves so much, that there was not the least degree of impatience shew’d by the audience before the 2nd Act opens with such a wonderful Alteration of beautiful scenery, that it seem quite the effect of magic to have had it there, so soon – I know not where to begin, or w:ch part to give the Palm of Praise so excellent was every part of the Performance – and as to the Battle, I assure you it was so very much in earnest – that T-[Richard Tickell] told me, in the front Boxes the People were quite elbowing one another in expressions of animations & admiration – Governor Wrihten I understand had the Management of this admirable Siege, & most entirely does it do credit to his taste and knowledge of Stage effect.⁶¹

Work has come successfully to fruition. Something emphatic even potentially utopian is realized but note who is responsible for this ‘magic’. James Wrihten’s efforts, officially Drury Lane’s prompter, had a long genesis. The ‘Assault’, as Tickell terms it, a key part of the final spectacular scene, was rehearsed separately a week earlier, indicating just how much resource was allocated to it.⁶² Helpfully, an image of the castle set has survived (**Fig. 1**). Although the image is stark and rather naïve, it reveals the gothic massiveness of Greenwood’s design. It would take a lot of personnel to fill it convincingly. Drury Lane’s Journal, a fair copy of the nightly account books, provides corroboration. The entry for the 21 October (following the night rehearsal) records significant payments to Greenwood and to the carpenters: £13.3s.8d, including for ‘extra’ work. The entry for the day of the premier, 24 October, contains payments for ‘Carpenter’s Bill & extras & rehearsal’, in total, £37 3s 4d, while £1.10s is paid to John Foulis for ‘Music Copying’. There is also over £19 laid out for ‘Supernummaries’, in this case for additional cast members, recruited from the backroom staff, necessary to storm the castle in the final act.⁶³ Sheridan had lowered the rate for supernummaries to one shilling in 1776 (it had been 1s 6d).⁶⁴ Though probably a weekly total, the figure of £19 is still exceptionally high indicating a mass deployment, one which served to render the final scenes all the more impressive. Precisely who the supernumeraries were is likely to remain obscure, though

elsewhere in her correspondence Tickell reports the giddy excitement with which the theatre's tailors were costumed to appear in the Shakespeare *Jubilee*, one even appearing as Cardinal Wolsey.⁶⁵ As elsewhere in Tickell's account, apparent inclusion may mask exploitation, a binary too frequent in the experience of theatrical supernumeraries; but it might be as well to be open to other possibilities as well.⁶⁶

The investment required to create the spectacle demanded by *Richard Cœur de Lion* was huge. To storm the castle required an army, who needed to be dressed, drilled and paid off. Tickell's warm description of the supernumeraries' costumes underlines the scale of investment, contravening her mother's parsimonious instincts: 'I assure you they looked like they could fight any battle'; 'such knights have never been seen since the age of Chivalry'. The sight of them storming over the bridge produced was, she writes, a 'very picturesque effect'. Individual performances were also excellent, including Jordan. Tickell even admits the 'good stage effect' achieved by her dress change. The prison scene, when Matilda sings with Richard, was a particular triumph:

I believe you might have heard a Pin drop in the Upper Gallery – but when the Guards seiz'd Matilda & Kemble was oblig'd by the Governor to retire (& by the bye [Kemble] acted that part particularly well) the whole of the Situation struck so forcibly on the minds of the audience, that it was like an electric Shock – and they gave such repeated Applause & Bravo's that it was quite charming I never saw an audience applaud so properly, and with such genuine feeling in my Life – Mrs Jordan was frighten'd excessively...but she was overpower'd with Applause.⁶⁷

After seeing the opera for a third time, she boasts: Jordan 'is better and better as she gets more mellow and perfect in her part'.⁶⁸ This last comment may indicate that, for Tickell, Jordan's performance now conforms to both her required dramatic role and gender identity. Tickell confirms Jordan's accommodation ('according to contract') when she reports the audience's applause for the poignant scene between Matilda and King Richard, Jordan and Kemble, kept asunder by fate and the officiousness of the castle's guards. The focus of sentimental gothic on the predicament of a woman at once active, yet engagingly vulnerable achieves much in the way of theatrical affect. Medieval history is recast as romance; in a simultaneous movement Sedaine's royalist politics are side lined in favour of modern chivalric pleasure, to which the Drury Lane crowd responded very rapturously, demanding many encores.⁶⁹

V

Eventually a very good job had been done. The opera was staged thirty eight times, far more than Covent Garden's version which soon proved unprofitable in the face of superior competition. Only the closure of the theatres after Princess Amelia's death interrupted the Drury Lane production's lucrative run.⁷⁰ Receipts were consistently high: nightly takings of more than £200 were frequent. Many audience members paid only the after price, attending the theatre late to see *Richard Cœur de Lion* regardless of the mainpiece.⁷¹ First night takings were impressive; £226 in total with £32 14s paid at the after-price rate (the mainpiece was *The Winter's Tale*). For the six nights prior to Princess Amelia's death revenues were more than respectable (Table. 1):

Date	Mainpiece	Total Receipts	After Price Receipts
25 October	<i>A Bold Stroke for a Wife</i>	£177 16s 6d	£50 2s
27 October	<i>The Wonder</i>	£193 11s	£43 5s
28 October	<i>The Chances</i>	£138 19s	£40 19s 6d
29 October	<i>Rule a Wife, Have a Wife</i>	£176 12s	£39 14s 6d
30 October	<i>The Miser</i>	£184 4s	£37 4s
31 October	<i>A Trip to Scarborough</i>	£191 18s 6d	£39 9s

The consistency of the after-price receipts, presented in the right-hand column, is striking. Receipts for the entire evening vary more significantly, probably reflecting the relative popularity of each mainpiece and its leading actors. Casting decisions, as Roach argues, were critical to the 'orature of stage production'.⁷² When star actresses appear in the mainpiece revenues rise; pairing *Richard Cœur de Lion* with *Love for Love* or *A Trip to Scarborough* proved lucrative as Jordan appeared in both, alongside Farren. There was support for personal Burgoyne too. His benefit night, 20 November, when *Richard Cœur de Lion* appeared after *The School for Scandal* took a princely £220 4s 6d. Higher receipts were obtained when the opera appeared with *The Heiress*, Burgoyne's comedy from the proceeding season: 30 November, for example, netted £285 76s, while the double bill took £238 15s 6d and £213 4s 6d when repeated on 20 and 27 February.

Such high receipts support Tickell's repeated if exasperated view that Jordan was the crux of the production; perhaps because, in many ways, *Richard Cœur de Lion* is about her and how she might be presented, artistically and commercially. The business

was not straightforward. Tickell discloses an essential paradox. The theatre must organize the sale of someone – their star – who was already possessed of the idea of selling herself. Jordan knew how to value herself; rather too much as far as Tickell was concerned. She had acquired celebrity astonishingly fast. After her first performance at Drury Lane, Tickell judged her a ‘valuable acquisition’ who would prove ‘a treasure to us’.⁷³ The language of commerce is used precisely; freighted with an awareness that keeping a celebrity (by keeping them happy) invariably proves expensive. White silk dresses do not buy themselves. Managing Jordan and integrating her into the repertoire was a challenge. Drury Lane already had two leading actresses: Siddons and Farren, though neither succeeded in the comedic styles Jordan made her own, nor would they provide the sexual charge of Jordan’s cross-dressing. Jordan’s performances as Miss Hoyden, Miss Prue, or Viola catered to these pleasures and gave her a range of parts. But there was still a need to provide her with her own new roles. Burgoyne had created leading roles for Frances Abington as Lady Bab Lardoon (in *The Maid of the Oaks*) and for Farren in *The Heiress*. Now notorious as a defeated general, Burgoyne might be valuably reconsidered in terms of his ability and above all willingness to write prominent roles for star actresses. He had wanted Jordan for *The Heiress*, but the management refused his request deeming the part too small for her.⁷⁴ *Richard Cœur de Lion* answered the demands of both parties: Jordan gained a role while satisfying Burgoyne’s desire to have her grace in his work. The role of Matilda enabled Jordan to develop a more ‘plaintive’ and artfully natural mode of feminine performance, which would help extend her career.⁷⁵ To sing ‘O Richard’, as she did, was central to process, something that Tickell did not quite understand, believing it to be a performance of something beyond the required role.

Though wrong about Jordan, what Tickell discloses an immense amount about how Drury Lane staged *Richard Cœur de Lion*. She reveals how soon and how often Burgoyne’s text was placed to one side or least formed only as a basis for rehearsal. Adjustments were made and songs added to create greater parts for other actresses. Other matters are finessed, or even added late in the rehearsal process, and probably afterwards. None of this additional material – whether it was good or bad - survives and we only have Tickell’s account of it. Her sisterly though sharp bulletins are forensic in their detail; serving as a reminder that we need to balance an account of the ambitions and intentions which might be thought to derive from the play text, and its competitors or antecedents, with an appreciation of what might have occurred in rehearsal. In this instance the process was long and disputatious: dominated by a need to find roles for cast members, roles that

fitted their abilities and reputations, and which brought in paying customers. Jordan's casting is indicative of their ambition, equally Kemble as King Richard, though not an obvious choice for a singing role. *Richard Cœur de Lion* enabled the theatre to bring forward other players, notably De Camp. Another player brought into the team. But theatre is always about more than those on stage. Drury Lane relied on the talents of the Linleys, Wrighten, and Greenwood, their skills ensuring Drury Lane's superior production. This work, especially its success, might be considered as utopian, or at least somewhat joyous, in so far as it exceeds, and in a measure evades, the requirements, strictly understood, of theatrical commerce. The duopolistic imperative – the need to succeed - is met but something more occurs. Jordan 'gets more mellow' but keep her 'perruque'; perhaps even the tailors, dancers, and carpenters maintain some sort of self-possession. On this point, it is hard to be sure, and perhaps wisest to doubt. But when the cast and the backstage staff swarm onto the stage, for what Tickell calls 'the Assault', clad in their medieval best, there is a sense in which they have come together to rescue not only Richard *Coeur de Lion* himself, but the whole enterprise. This is more than good practice, better than simply 'making-do'. Tickell both sees and denies this potential. Her exasperated perspective is not always appreciative of discordant possibilities. Amidst all this bustle, Sheridan's role is difficult to define, harder to pin down. He emerges from Tickell's account as an unreliable but necessary figure. Without a willing or commanding central authority, the culture and practice of Drury Lane is varied and mutable, subject to daily emergencies. It is centred on the interaction of different members of the theatre's staff, both before and behind the curtain. With a somewhat utopian flourish, though this is not without evident limits, Drury Lane's social production of theatre overcomes its central organizational failures. Management may be weak, but the wayward, truculent and much put upon staff succeed anyway.

Endnotes

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² Nathaniel Coleman, 'Utopian Prospect of Henri Lefebvre', *Space and Culture*, 16, (2013), 349.

³ Michel Foucault, 'Of Other Spaces', *Diacritics*, 16 (1986), 22-27; and Frederic Jameson, 'The Politics of Utopia', *New Left Review*, 25 (2004), 35-54.

- ⁴ Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans Steven Rendell (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988).
- ⁵ Frances Anne Crewe [11 January 1786], *An English Lady in Paris: The Dairy of Frances Anne Crewe*, ed. Michael Allen (Oxford: Stockley, 2011), 105.
- ⁶ Michel-Jean Sedaine, *Richard Coeur de Lion: comédie en trios acts en prose et en vers mis en musique* (Paris: Brunet, 1786), 8, 25, 44.
- ⁷ Mark Ledbury, *Sedaine, Greuze and the Boundaries of Genre* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2000), 283-4, 288-9; and David Charlton, *Grétry and the Growth of Opéra-Comique* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 231-2, 240-8.
- ⁸ Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 204-17; J.C.D. Clark, *English Society 1660-1830: Religion, Ideology and Politics during the Ancien Regime* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 232-56.
- ⁹ David Francis Taylor, *Theatres of Opposition: Empire, Revolution, and Richard Brinsley Sheridan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).
- ¹⁰ Vincent J. Liesenfeld, *The Licensing Act of 1737* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1984).
- ¹¹ Felicity Nussbaum, *The Rival Queens: Actresses, Performance, and the Eighteenth-Century British Theater* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010); Chelsea Phillips, *Carrying All Before Her: Celebrity Pregnancy and the London Stage, 1689-1800* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2022).
- ¹² Olive Baldwin and Thelma Wilson, 'One Hundred Years of the Funeral Procession in *Romeo and Juliet*', *Theatre Notebook*, 76 (2022), 26-40.
- ¹³ Leonard Macnally, *Richard Cœur de Lion* (London: T. Cadell, 1786), 21-4. 43-5.
- ¹⁴ Macnally, *Richard Cœur de Lion*, 53, 8. For discussion of a 'patriot king', see Isaac Kramnick, *Bolingbroke and his Circle: The Politics of Nostalgia in the Age of Walpole* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968).
- ¹⁵ *Morning Chronicle* (17 October 1786); and *General Evening Post* (17 October 1786); *General Advertiser* (18 October 1786); and *Morning Post* (17 and 20 October 1786).
- ¹⁶ *General Advertiser* (24 October 1786); *Morning Chronicle* (26 October 1786); *Public Advertiser* (25 October 1786); and *Public Advertiser* (31 October 1786). There are positive notices in *The Devil* (October 1786), 73-8; and *European Magazine* (October 1786), 297-8.
- ¹⁷ *Morning Post* (13 October 1786).
- ¹⁸ See Warren Oakley, *Thomas 'Jupiter' Harris: Spinning Dark Intrigue at Covent Garden Theatre, 1767-1820* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018).
- ¹⁹ See Tracy C. Davies *The Economics of the British Stage, 1800-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); and Judith Milhous, 'Reading Theatre History from Account Books' in Michael Corder and Peter Holland (eds.), *Players, Playwrights, Playhouses: Investigating Performance, 1660-1800* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 101-31.
- ²⁰ Paula Backscheider, *Spectacular Politics: Theatrical Power and Mass Culture in Early Modern England* (Baltimore Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993); Jane Moody, *Illegitimate Theatre in London, 1770-1840* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); John O'Brien, *Harlequin Britain: Pantomime and Entertainment 1690-1760* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 2004); and Daniel O'Quinn, *Entertaining Crisis in the Atlantic Imperium 1770-1790* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011).
- ²¹ Joseph Roach, *Cities of the Dead: Circum-Atlantic Performance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 153, 159.

- ²² Burgoyne, *Richard Cœur de Lion*, 6-7.
- ²³ Burgoyne, *Richard Cœur de Lion*, 3-5. See Fiona Ritchie, *Women and Shakespeare in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 121-2, 127-8; and Claire Tomalin, *Mrs Jordan's Profession: The Story of a Great Actress and a Future King* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1994).
- ²⁴ Burgoyne, *Richard Cœur de Lion*, 27.
- ²⁵ Burgoyne, *Richard Cœur de Lion*, 24.
- ²⁶ Horace Walpole, 'To Lady Ossory', 15 December 1786, *The Correspondence of Horace Walpole*, ed. W.S. Lewis, 48 vols (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1937-83), 33: 546.
- ²⁷ See Harriet Guest, 'The Wanton Muse: Politics and Gender in Gothic Theory after 1760' in Stephen Copley and John Whale eds., *Beyond Romanticism: New approaches to texts and contexts*, (London: Routledge, 1992), 118-39; and James Watt, *Contesting the Gothic: Fiction, Genre, and Cultural Conflict, 1764-1832* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).
- ²⁸ John Burgoyne, *Richard Cœur de Lion: A Historical Romance* (London: J. Debrett, 1786); and Mary Tickell to Elizabeth Sheridan, 'Monday the 23rd [October 1786]', 'Letters from Mary Tickell to her sister Elizabeth Ann Sheridan', Folger MSS Y.d.35 ff. 279-80, Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, DC.
- ²⁹ Douglas Macmillan, *Catalogue of the Larpent Plays in the Huntington Library* (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1939), 124.
- ³⁰ Burgoyne, *Richard Cœur de Lion*, 36-7.
- ³¹ Tiffany Stern, *Rehearsal from Shakespeare to Sheridan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 240-90. For further work, see David Worrall, *Celebrity, Performance, Reception: British Georgian Theatre as Social Assemblage* (Cambridge University Press, 2013).
- ³² See Joseph Donohue, 'Evidence and Documentation' in Thomas Postlewait and Bruce A. McConachie eds., *Interpreting the Theatrical Past: Essays in the Historiography of Performance* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1989), 177-97; and Robert D. Hume, 'Theatre History, 1660-1800: Aims, Materials, Methodology' in Michael Cordner and Peter Holland eds., *Players, Playwrights, Playhouses: Investigating Performance, 1660-1800* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 9-44.
- ³³ de Certeau, *Practice of Everyday Life*, 68-9, 80-91.
- ³⁴ *Morning Post* (16 October 1786); *Morning Chronicle* (17 October 1786); and *General Advertiser* (20 October 1786).
- ³⁵ Tickell to Sheridan, 'Friday [29 September 1786]', Y.d.35 f. 250.
- ³⁶ Tickell to Sheridan, 'Sunday [8 October 1786]', Y.d.35 f. 253-5; and Tickell to Sheridan, 'H. Court: Friday Oct: 6th [1786]' Y.d.35 f. 258.
- ³⁷ Tickell to Sheridan, 'Friday [29 September 1786]', Y.d.35 f. 250.
- ³⁸ Nussbaum, *Rival Queens*, 110-40.
- ³⁹ Tickell to Sheridan, 'Friday Morn: [13 October 1786]', Y.d.35 f. 263.
- ⁴⁰ Tickell to Sheridan, 'Tuesday Morn: [17 October 1786]', Y.d.35 f. 267.
- ⁴¹ Tickell to Sheridan, 'Tuesday Morn: [17 October 1786]' and 'Monday the 23rd [October]', Y.d.35 f. 267-269, 279.
- ⁴² de Certeau, *Practice of Everyday Life*, 25.
- ⁴³ Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*, trans. Annette Lavers (London: Paladin, 1973), 26-8.
- ⁴⁴ Tickell to Sheridan, 'Tuesday Morn: [17 October 1786]', Y.d.35 ff. 268-9.

- ⁴⁵ *General Advertiser* (23 October 1786).
- ⁴⁶ Tickell to Sheridan, ‘Tuesday Morn: [17 October 1786]’, Y.d.35 f. 270; and Tickell to Sheridan, ‘Wednesday – the 18th [October]’, Y.d.35 f. 274.
- ⁴⁷ Tickell to Sheridan, ‘Tuesday Morn. [17 October 1786], Y.d.35 f. 271.
- ⁴⁸ Tickell to Sheridan, ‘Wednesday – the 18th [October 1786]’, Y.d.35 f. 274.
- ⁴⁹ See Tickell to Sheridan, ‘Tuesday Morn. [17 October 1786]’; and ‘Wednesday – the 18th [October 1786]’, Y.d.35 ff. 268, 270, 274.
- ⁵⁰ Tickell to Sheridan, ‘Sunday Morning [8 October 1786]’, Y.d.35 f. 254.
- ⁵¹ Cecil Price, ‘Revisals’ in Richard Brinsley Sheridan, *The Dramatic Works of Richard Brinsley Sheridan*, 2 vols., ed. Cecil Price (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), 2, 836.
- ⁵² Tickell to Sheridan, Wednesday – the 18th [October 1786]’, Y.d.35 f. 273.
- ⁵³ Tickell to Sheridan, ‘Wednesday – the 18th [October 1786]’, Y.d.35 f. 273.
- ⁵⁴ Robert W Jones, ‘Competition and Community: Mary Tickell and the Management of Sheridan’s Drury Lane’, *Theatre Survey*, 54 (2013), 187-206.
- ⁵⁵ Tickell to Sheridan, ‘Wednesday – the 18th [October 1786]’, Y.d.35 f. 274.
- ⁵⁶ Tickell to Sheridan, ‘Wednesday – the 18th [October 1786]’, Y.d.35 ff. 274-276.
- ⁵⁷ See Philip H. Highfill, Kalman A. Burnim & Edward A. Langhans, *Biographical Dictionary of Actors, Actresses, Musicians, Dancers, Managers*, 16 vols (Carbondale: University of Southern Illinois Press, 1973-1993), 9, 307-310.
- ⁵⁸ Tickell to Sheridan, ‘Monday the 23rd [October]’, Y.d.35 f. 277. I am grateful to Niki Zohdi for enabling me to add the music Tickell included in her letter.
- ⁵⁹ Tickell to Sheridan, ‘Monday the 23rd [October]’, Y.d.35 f. 277.
- ⁶⁰ Tickell to Sheridan, ‘Monday the 23rd [October]’, Y.d.35 ff. 278-280.
- ⁶¹ Tickell to Sheridan, ‘Wednesday Morn [25 October 1786], Y.d.35 f. 281.
- ⁶² Tickell to Sheridan, Wednesday – the 18th [October 1786]’, Y.d.35 f. 275.
- ⁶³ ‘Drury Lane Journal’, Folger MSS, W.b.288.
- ⁶⁴ ‘Nightly Accounts (1776-1777)’, Folger MS, W.b.319 f. 48, Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington DC. Cecil Price attributed these practices to Sheridan. See note inserted in MS.
- ⁶⁵ Tickell to Sheridan, ‘Sat: Morn [22 October 1785], Y.d.35 f. 166.
- ⁶⁶ Sara Reimers, ‘Body Parts: Theatrical Supernumeraries and the Politics of Performance’, *Theatre Notebook*, 76 (2022), 117-31
- ⁶⁷ Tickell to Sheridan, ‘Wednesday Morn [25 October 1786], Y.d.35 ff. 281-82.
- ⁶⁸ Tickell to Sheridan, ‘H: Court Friday Oct the 27th [1786], Y.d.35. f. 285.
- ⁶⁹ Tickell to Sheridan, ‘Sat Morn [28 October 1786]’, Y.d.35. ff. 292-93
- ⁷⁰ Princess Amelia died on 31 October 1786. The Lord Chamberlain closed the theatres, prohibiting all performances until her burial on 11 November. See *General Advertiser* (2 November 1786) and *Morning Post* (2 November 1786).
- ⁷¹ ‘Drury Lane Journal (1786-87)’, Folger MSS, W.b.288, Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington DC; and Charles Beecher Hogan, ed. *The London Stage, 1660-1800: A Calendar of Plays, Entertainments...Part 5, 1776-1800*, 3 vols (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1968).
- ⁷² Roach, *Cities of the Dead*, 157.

⁷³ Tickell to Sheridan, 'Tuesday Moring, N: Street [25 October 1785]; 'Saturday Morning [29 October 1785]'; and 'Saturday Morning' [19 November 1785], Y.d.35. ff. 170, 177, 203.

⁷⁴ Tickell to Sheridan, 'Monday [9 January 1786]', Y.d.35. f. 233.

⁷⁵ Ritchie, *Women and Shakespeare*, 137-9.

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