

School of English and Theatre Studies  
College of Arts  
University of Guelph

THST 6250  
Bodies and Spaces in Performance

Space and the Advent of Commercial Theatre

Winter 2013

**Instructor:** D. O'Quinn  
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**Course Description:**

This course offers an introduction to a range of issues pertaining to the emergence of the commercial theatre in Britain. Using an extensive range of on-line materials, students will be examining the interplay between commercial theatrical performance and other entertainment media in London from 1750 to 1830. Garrick and Sheridan will loom large in the course, but we will also be looking at a host of illegitimate venues and "low" genres. Wherever possible we will be working from primary archives and will be attempting to reconstruct performances with an eye for how they were remediated in the press. Along the way, a consideration of theoretical issues in historicization will animate the course.

**Required Texts:**

Frank Felsenstein, *English Trader, Indian Maid* (Johns Hopkins)  
David Garrick and George Colman, *The Clandestine Marriage* (Broadview) 9781551110271  
Richard Brinsley Sheridan, *The Rivals* and George Colman, *Polly Honeycombe* (Broadview)  
Richard Brinsley Sheridan, *The School for Scandal and Other Plays* (Oxford) 9780199540099

+ Courseware pack  
CourseLink materials

**Evaluation Structure:**

|                              |      |
|------------------------------|------|
| Intro assignment             | 5%   |
| Design assignment            | 15 % |
| Newspaper assignment         | 20%  |
| Independent Research Project |      |
| Proposal                     | 10%  |
| Prospectus                   | 20%  |
| Final Paper                  | 30%  |

**This course will be composed of seminars and in-class discussions. Attendance therefore is crucial to the success of this course.**

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THST 3650  
Theatre Historical Studies Seminar  
Space, History and the Advent of Commercial Theatre

Fall 2012

**Syllabus**

1. One night at the Theatre

Introduction

Charles Macklin in *The Merchant of Venice*

Macklin, *Love a la Mode*

Emily Anderson

Michael Ragussis,

2. Ethnic Spectacles/Ethnic Sentiments

Charles Dibdin, *The Padlock*

Richard Cumberland, *The West Indian*

Freeman

**Intro assignment due**

**I Space and History: Meditations on Garrick's Theatre**

3. The Advent of the Commercial Theatre

David Garrick, *The Clandestine Marriage* (1766)

Stuart Sherman, "Garrick Among Media"

Garrick, *Florizel and Perdita*

4. Celebrity and Canonicity

Deelman chapters re. Jubilee (courselink)

Garrick, *The Jubilee* (1769)

*Jubilee* dossier

Dobson chapters

5. Spectacle and Generic Controversy: Re-constituting the repertoire (workshop)

Oaks Gazette Extraordinary (1775)

Larpent submission

John Burgoyne, *The Maid of the Oaks* (1775)

O'Quinn, "Diversionary Tactics and Coercive Acts"

**Scenography Assignment Due**

6. Celebrated Bodies in Performance

Mary Robinson, *Memoirs*  
Lichtenberg re. Garrick  
Russell, "Lady Bab and Mrs Ab"

7. Theatrical Sociability

Sheridan, *The Rivals* (Broadview)  
Sheridan, *School for Scandal*  
Russell,

8. The End of Theatre

Sheridan, "Monody on the Death of David Garrick" (1779)  
Newspaper accounts  
Sheridan, *The Critic* (1779)  
King, *The Prophecy, or Elizabeth at Tilbury* (1779)  
Jones,

9. Re-mediation in the Repertoire

Hannah Cowley, *The Belle's Stratagem* (ECCO)  
Misty Anderson  
Elizabeth Kowaleski Wallace  
Hannah Cowley, *Which is the Man?* (ECCO)  
Elizabeth Inchbald, *Every One Has its Fault*  
**Social/Media Assignment Due**

**II Theatre and Geo-political space in the Post-Garrick world**

10. Imperial Fantasy (workshop)

O'Keefe, *Omai* (1785)  
Lewis, *Timour the Tartar*

11. Bodies in Performance (workshop)

George Colman, *Inkle and Yarico* (1787)  
Fawcett, *Obi, or Three-Fingered Jack*  
Colman, *The Africans*  
Astley, *Kongo Kolo*

12. Political Theatre (workshop)

Elizabeth Inchbald, *The Mogul Tale*  
Elizabeth Inchbald, *Such Things Are*  
Moncrieff, *The Cataract of the Ganges*

## Assignment 1:

### Research problems

Any engagement with theatre or performance history involves the formulation of research questions to guide your enquiry. In the first week of the course you will have been introduced to the strange phenomenon of Charles Macklin's celebrity and the often anarchic deployment of ethnicity on the London stage. In many ways, this is a perfect introduction to the problems raised by *The Padlock* and *The West Indian*. This assignment has two parts. The first is aimed at getting you to think about the problem of thinking historically and the second is aimed at getting you to imagine paths of enquiry.

#### Part 1.

After considering all of the readings for week 2 I'd like you to devise **three** questions that might drive further enquiry. For each question I'd like you a) to postulate the kind of materials you'd have to collect to answer the question and b) speculate on how this research would impinge on larger social and cultural questions. All three questions, with their brief elaborations, should take up no more than one page (i.e. I'm looking for three 3-4 sentence paragraphs).

#### Part 2.

In her important book *The Archive and the Repertoire*, Diana Taylor asks theatre historians to think about how performances begin to permeate everyday life. She calls the development of this performance memory "the repertoire". In the case of Macklin, we have a practitioner whose entire career is built on re-tooling pre-existing materials—pre-existing scripts, prejudices and social dispositions—and yet his work clearly shapes what comes after. I want you to write a single page that addresses some aspect of this phenomenon. I'm not looking for definitive discussions of these issues, I merely want you to start imagining the implications of thinking about these materials. And I want you to confine your remarks to one page of prose.

**Due: Jan 17**

## Assignment 2:

### Design

The eighteenth century is a period of extraordinary innovation in the realm of scenography and design. Realizing that receipts were directly related to spectacle, Garrick employed some of the most important artists of his generation to paint sets, build processions and design complex lighting effects.

This assignment is about *The Maid of the Oaks*—a less than thrilling play, but an extremely innovative production in terms of its design and its deployment of dance and costume. As you will discover from the syllabus, the play dramatizes a complex performance that was held on a private estate. To prepare for the assignment you need to read a) the Oaks Gazette Extraordinary and the play script, and look at the images associated with the party (all in the course pack) and b) scour the web for information about Philip Jacques de Louthembourg and Robert Adam.

Now the fun part. I want you to choose some element of either production (either the party itself or the Drury Lane play) and attempt to offer a coherent design for the spectacle. You could think about how to dress the druids, or how to construct De Louthembourg's rendition of Adam's pavilion, or you could think about how to dress Philly Nettletop, or you could do some research into what the ballet components would look like. You should isolate one key moment or concern and work that up in detail, rather than take on an entire scene.

Whatever you choose to do, I want you to fit your designs to the expectations of a Drury Lane audience circa 1770. This means that you will have to learn some things about eighteenth-century social history.

Format: this will vary with the project, but I imagine that the assignments will have both a visual component and a three page discussion of how you came to make the decisions you made. I'd also like a list of any source material that you found useful. I know that not everyone has the same skills at visual representation, so I am interested in your decisions and how you argue for them.

If everyone is agreeable I'd like to upload all of the work onto Courselink to generate a kind of shared project on the play. This will then serve as a source of inspiration for the workshops in week 9, 10, 11 and 12.

**Due: February 7**

## Assignment 3

### Social/Media Assignment

It is one thing to make theatre the object of historical enquiry, but it is also possible to use theatrical practice as a window into social and cultural history. In the eighteenth century, the theatre and the press were mutually constitutive media. This assignment asks you to reflect upon the convergence of these media in the work of Sheridan and Cowley. This assignment has two parts:

- A. Build a review file for one of *The Rivals*, *The School for Scandal*, *The Belle's Stratagem*, *The Critic*, or *Every One Has His Fault*. The Library now has access to the Burney Collection online so you will be able to collect a wide range of reviews and notices for these plays. I want you to print the reviews and offer a brief discussion (3 pages) of the press coverage.
- B. Pick one of the following questions and write a brief three page discussion of how the daily papers and the nightly performances are entangled.
1. David Brewer's edition of the *The Rivals* provides a great deal of newspaper information related to production and the play itself is very much about reading. What kind of historical issues do these documents raise about audience reception?
  2. Hannah Cowley's plays often dramatize events from the society news and they frequently replay (with a difference) other successful plays. Her re-enactment of key scenes from the papers and from Sheridan's plays poses interesting questions about the prior knowledge that audiences brought to the theatre. Pick one of these repetitions/representations and use it as a jumping off point for thinking about audience reception and social performance.
  3. *The Critic* opens with newspapers scattered over a table and ends with a meta-theatrical enactment of spectacle from another play. In a very tangible way Sheridan's play is theorizing how the press and the theatre engage with historical events. Discuss in relation to one small element of the play and its strange use of the theatre itself.

**Due: March 7**

## Independent Research Project

### 1. Project Proposal

10%

In week 6 I will be asking for a single page proposal for a major research project. The project could choose to focus on a particular problem in theatre history or performance studies in the eighteenth century. Whatever the project I want you to clearly articulate the extent of the archive you are consulting and the critical problem you seek to address.

### 2. Prospectus/Bibliography

20%

After your proposal has been accepted I want you to develop a paragraph by paragraph account of your argument. In other words, I am looking for a detailed outline of the paper you are going to write. The prospectus should be detailed enough to show when and how close readings will enter your argument. It should also give a sense of how secondary critical material will enter your argument. With this in mind, the prospectus should be accompanied by a select annotated bibliography. This will be due at the end of Week 10.

### 3. Final Paper

20%

Using your prospectus as a guide, you will be asked to write a 15 page research paper that takes into account the suggestions made during the process of writing.

## **College of Arts Regulations:**

### **E-mail Communication**

As per University regulations, all students are required to check their <uoguelph.ca> e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the university and its students.

### **When You Cannot Meet a Course Requirement**

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor (or designated person, such as a teaching assistant) in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. See the Undergraduate Calendar for information on regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration:

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-ac.shtml>

### **Drop Date**

The last date to drop one-semester Fall 2012 courses, without academic penalty, is **Thursday November 1**.

For regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses, see the Undergraduate Calendar:

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-drop.shtml>

### **Copies of out-of-class assignments**

Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

### **Student Rights and Responsibilities**

Each student at the University of Guelph has rights which carry commensurate responsibilities that involve, broadly, being a civil and respectful member of the University community. The Rights and Responsibilities are detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar:

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c14/c14-strightsrespon.shtml>

### **Academic Misconduct**

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and enjoins all members of the University community – faculty, staff, and students – to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar:

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-amisconduct.shtml>

### **Recording of Materials**

Presentations which are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded in any electronic media without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a classmate or guest lecturer.

### **Resources**

The Undergraduate Calendar is the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations which apply to undergraduate programs. It can be found at:

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/>

If you find yourself in difficulty, contact the undergraduate advisor in your program, or the BA Counselling Office:

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/baco/contact.shtml>