

Seeing the Sentiment: Eighteenth-Century Theatrical Portraiture and Garrick's Adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet*

by Emily Leach

Abstract: Not only did the theatrical portraiture of the eighteenth century contribute to the creation of celebrity by depicting the most prominent actors and actresses of the day in the roles for which they were most famous, but it also preserved some of the period's most iconic dramatic scenes. One such example is Benjamin Wilson's popular 1753 print of David Garrick and George Anne Bellamy in *Romeo and Juliet*, which sold very well, and in fact can be purchased on t-shirts and coffee mugs to this day. In this print, Garrick and Bellamy are acting the famous tomb scene, one of Garrick's own additions to Shakespeare's original script. Through a study of Wilson's famous print, along with the print, published by W. Herbert in 1753, of Henry Woodward as Mercutio reciting the "Queen Mab" speech, and William Elliot's 1759 print of Spranger Barry and Maria Isabella Nossiter acting the famous balcony scene, my paper considers Garrick's adaptation of Shakespeare's famous tragedy and its relationship to the theatrical portraiture that came out of it, in order to ask how the portraits speak to the text and the performances which they were intended to represent. Through a close reading of these three theatrical portraits alongside two earlier works, Charles Le Brun's *A Method to Design the Passions* (1734) and John Weaver's descriptions of theatrical gestures in *The Loves of Mars and Venus* (1717), my paper argues that the portraits affirm the desired increase in sentimentality that Garrick tried to effect within *Romeo and Juliet* through his adaptation.

Keywords: *Romeo and Juliet*; theatrical portraiture; William Shakespeare; David Garrick

David Garrick is often credited with reviving public interest in the works of Shakespeare in the eighteenth century, in large part by staging and adapting many of his plays as manager of the Drury Lane theatre. In fact, Garrick's 1748 adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet* was the definitive version of the play performed on stage for the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In what became known as the "battle of the Romeos" in 1750, Garrick's particular adaptation of the play was performed a staggering twenty-five times, with the Covent Garden theatre staging the play twelve times, with Spranger Barry and Maria Isabella Nossiter playing the lead roles, and the Drury Lane theatre thirteen times, with Garrick himself playing the role of Romeo alongside George Anne Bellamy as Juliet. Both theatres' companies strove to attract audiences away from the opposing theatre and towards their own productions.¹ Aside from the obvious draw of the competition between the two theatres, what was it that made Garrick's adaptation so successful that Francis Gentleman said "no play ever received greater advantage from alteration than this tragedy"?² The *Theatrical Review* of 1772 hints at one possible explanation when the author states that, in setting out to write his adaptation of Shakespeare's famous tragedy, Garrick "found... that Shakespeare had neglected to heighten the catastrophe to so great a degree of distress, as it was capable of being carried."³ In other words, one of the elements of Garrick's revision of *Romeo and Juliet* that made it so successful in drawing in the eighteenth-and-nineteenth-century crowds was the way in which it maximized the narrative's emotional impact by increasing the play's sentimental attributes.

One strong piece of evidence for this explanation can be found in the theatrical portraiture of Garrick's time. While eighteenth-century theatrical portraiture no doubt "fostered the 'celebrification' of actors," as Aparna Gollapudi suggests, by inextricably linking them to specific, definitive roles and attempting to recreate "the onstage impact of the player's celebrated genius,"⁴ the portraiture also serves a secondary function. In depicting the actors in their most iconic roles, the artists behind eighteenth-century theatrical portraiture also had to situate their portraits within the most recognizable moments from the play in which those roles originated, posing the actors as though they were in the midst of performing that significant scene. The scenes in which the actors were represented were presumably chosen because they represent some of the most stirring bits of performance on the part of the actor in question, and they determined for the artist the facial expres-

sion and posture in which the actor ought to be depicted. As a result, the necessity of selecting a specific moment from the performance in which to set the portrait meant that not only the actors, but also those moments themselves were preserved and promoted. As such, eighteenth-century theatrical portraiture reveal a great deal about how certain characters and scenes would have appeared in performance, as well as which moments from the plays would have been the most familiar amongst theatre-goers. Therefore, the theatrical portraiture coming out of Garrick's adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet* grants insight into the changes, both textual and performative, that Garrick made to the play. Through a study of three famous theatrical portraits—Benjamin Wilson's 1753 print of David Garrick and George Anne Bellamy acting the famous tomb scene, W. Herbert's 1753 print of Henry Woodward as Mercutio reciting the "Queen Mab" speech, and William Elliot's 1759 print of Spranger Barry and Maria Isabella Nossiter acting the famous balcony scene—this essay considers the place of sentimentality in David Garrick's adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet* and suggests that the portraiture coming out of this revision of Shakespeare's famous tragedy represents an affirmation of the sentimental mode within the play.

The sentimental mode, popularized by such authors as Samuel Richardson in his novels *Pamela* and *Clarissa*, becomes understood in the eighteenth century as "both public and private," in the sense that, while it is produced by an inward attention, sentimentality represents "a concern with feeling as articulated by the body—by its postures and gestures, its involuntary palpitations and collapses."⁵ The first half of the eighteenth century saw a move towards elevating the theatrical institution and making the theatre-going experience more respectable. Garrick, as lead actor and manager of the Drury Lane theatre, played an important role in contributing to this shift.⁶ One of the ways in which Garrick and other members of the theatrical community worked to change the attitude towards the theatre was by drawing on the sentimental mode through the use of the spectacle of bodies on stage. As Paul Goring notes, "[bodies on stage] performing according to innovative notions of theatrical expression became...a means of emblematising polite society and of showcasing modes of polite self-representation."⁷ In other words, the polite body image of the mid-eighteenth century theatre helped to promote a perception of the theatre as "a polite, moral institution."⁸ Similarly, in his discussion of sentimental art, Andrew S. Winston notes that, in many eighteenth-

and nineteenth-century paintings, not only softened facial features but also gestures such as “the averted gaze, tilted head, and partially turned body... all contribute to sentimentality by suggesting purity, innocence, and vulnerability.”⁹ Winston notes that the category of sentimental art does not become clearly defined until the nineteenth century. However, eighteenth-century theatrical portraiture, which this essay will address, does indeed function to produce in the viewer “idealized thoughts about the goodness and purity of the subject matter,” as Winston suggests that sentimental art should.¹⁰ In the case of theatrical portraiture inspired by Garrick’s adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet*, this means emphasizing the youth and innocence of the two protagonists and the purity of their forbidden love.

As such a physically expressive mode, eighteenth-century sentimentality lends itself very well to performance, and Shakespeare’s work was no exception, as the mid-eighteenth century saw a move towards “domesticating and sentimentalising Shakespeare.”¹¹ In the case of Garrick’s adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet*, this meant a shift from “the pathetic to the tender female and the emotive rather than heroic hero,” as well as an attempt to turn the narrative of the star-crossed lovers inward, “away from the wider social and political world, to concentrate on characters’ feelings and interactions at the personal and family level.”¹² This turn is evident in Garrick’s alteration of *Romeo and Juliet* with an elongated tomb scene, in which Romeo and Juliet are given additional time alone on stage together before their deaths. This extra moment directs the tragedy of the play back toward the young couple’s purity and sincerity of love and away from the effects of their actions upon the larger community of Verona. While these changes to Shakespeare’s text were significant, it is also important to note the changes to the way in which the play is acted. Cunningham observes that, in order to produce the increased sentimentality for which Garrick’s adaptation strives, “the facial expressions, gestures and movements of the actors were equally as important as the words they uttered.”¹³ Similarly, Janet Todd notes that this move towards sentimentality in *Romeo and Juliet* is also reflected on the stage beginning in the middle of the eighteenth century, particularly in the change in the style of acting promoted by popular performers such as Garrick himself, who is praised for his method which “stressed the feeling performance and the expression of attitude in all parts of the body.”¹⁴ It is into this performative element of Garrick’s adaptation that the related theatrical portraiture grants insight.

One of the major changes Garrick makes to Shakespeare's famous tragedy is the removal of the plot point of Romeo's initial love for Rosaline, as it was deemed "a blemish in his character."¹⁵ In Shakespeare's original version of the play, Romeo is in love with Rosaline before he easily abandons her to pursue Juliet, implying that he is fickle, that he moves his attention from woman to

woman without a thought and that therefore, he would likely have done the same to Juliet. In contrast, Garrick's version of *Romeo and Juliet* opens with Romeo already deeply in love with Juliet. This change in Romeo's character is reflected in William Elliot's 1759 print of Spranger Barry and Maria Isabella Nossiter acting *Romeo and Juliet*'s famous balcony scene (fig. 1).

An examination of Barry's posture and expression in this print reveals them to be a perfect model of the physical display of pure love, as described by Charles Le Brun in *A Method to Learn to Design the Passions*, as opposed to the lustful character Shakespeare may have originally intended. As Romeo, Barry's forehead is smooth, his brow raised, and his head "turn'd softly towards the beloved object."¹⁶ His cheeks are colored slightly, as Le Brun suggests true love presents with "a blooming blush to the cheeks" and his mouth is "somewhat opened, and the corners a little turn'd up," just as Le Brun says they ought to be, as Romeo glances upward at his beloved Juliet.¹⁶ Furthermore, his arms are spread open, and his torso is turned towards the audience, so that his body is completely open and exposed, the implication being that Romeo is completely sincere in his declarations of love to Juliet, and is hiding nothing. The presentation of true love is contrasted with that of desire, the signs of which include "the eyebrows being close-pressed and advancing over the eyes," "the pupil situated in the middle of the eye and full of fire," "the mouth also more open than in the preceding action, and the corners drawn back," and finally Le Brun notes that "the tongue may appear just upon the



Fig. 1. William Elliot. *Mr. Barry and Miss Nossiter in the characters of Romeo and Juliet, act 2d, scene 2d.* 1759. Graphic. Folger Shakespeare Library.

lips.”¹⁷ Elliot’s portrait shows no evidence in the image of Barry’s Romeo of anything that might be read as desire, suggesting that the portrait, and by extension the production upon which the portrait is based, is deeply concerned with ensuring that the audience perceived Romeo’s pursuit of Juliet as motivated not by physical desire, but rather by a pure and innocent love.¹⁸

The depiction of Maria Isabella Nossiter’s Juliet in Eliot’s portrait also reflects the desired shift in Juliet’s character towards a more sentimental figure, as mentioned above, from “the pathetic to the tender female.”¹⁹ This portrait reveals an instance in which it is not a textual change but a performative change that grants the scene its increased sentimentality. Although Garrick leaves the exchange between Romeo and Juliet in this scene mostly without alteration from Shakespeare’s text, the portrait reveals a possible change in the way Nossiter portrayed Juliet in this scene. In the text, Juliet is concerned through much of the scene with the danger that Romeo might get caught, warning him that her garden is “death, considering who thou art, / If any of my kinsman find thee here,” or that she is being too forward and revealing too much of her feeling towards Romeo, as she states that “I should have been more strange, I must confess, / But that thou over-heard’st, ere I was ware, / My true love’s passion.”²⁰ However, the Juliet represented in Eliot’s portrait of Nossiter is serene, her forehead smooth, not creased with worry or anxiety, and a faint smile plays upon her lips as she glances down at her beloved Romeo, her arms stretched out to him, open and inviting. Such a depiction of Nossiter’s Juliet suggests a change in the way in which the character of Juliet would have been acted in this scene, with the focus being less upon Juliet’s uncertainty and anxiety with respect to the potential danger of the situation, and more upon her tender affection for her new lover Romeo.

The character of Mercutio is also transformed in Garrick’s adaptation. Francis Gentleman praises Henry Woodward for his performance in the role of Mercutio, stating that Woodward’s “grimace and attitude, which so often diminish that gentleman’s merit in other characters, are here of singular advantage, and the peculiarity of stile is admirably set forth by his peculiarity of expression, especially in the capital speech relative to Queen Mab.”²¹ Woodward’s larger-than-life attitude and expression in performance is so well-suited to the role of Mercutio because he is a character of boldness and excess. Mercu-

tio, in a sense, represents the type of hero from which the sentimental is trying to move away: the charismatic man of wit who laughs in the face of danger. However, Garrick turns Mercutio's narrative into a didactic one, just as he does with the "Queen Mab" speech, as I suggest below. Although much of Mercutio's bawdy humor is redacted, such as his references to Juliet as a "popp'rin pear" or the fruit of a medlar tree, both of which are puns of the sex organs or sexual intercourse, what Garrick's version does preserve is Mercutio's flippant treatment of love—more specifically, of Romeo's love for Juliet. While the audience of Shakespeare's original play is tempted to agree with Mercutio's mockery when he likens Romeo to a sort of Petrarchan lover who speaks in rhymes, makes appeals to Venus, and appears "in the likeness of a sigh," Garrick's revision of Romeo's character into a more sincere, less fickle lover turns these words back around on Mercutio, making his words seem not witty and perceptive, but rather expressive of Mercutio's inability to grasp the true nature of Romeo's love for Juliet.²² Similarly, Mercutio's promise to Romeo that, if he attends Capulet's feast, Mercutio will find him a new love to help him overcome his current feelings, and in which he begs Romeo to "compare her [Juliet's] face with some that I shall show, / And I will make thee think thy swan a raven," takes on new meaning in Garrick's adaptation.²³ While in Shakespeare's unaltered version of the play Mercutio's words do, in fact, prove true, as Romeo casts off his love for Rosalind in place of his new love for Juliet, in Garrick's adaptation, Romeo's attendance at Capulet's feast only affirms his pre-existing love for Juliet, cementing the audience's view of Romeo as a loyal lover, and making Mercutio's advice seem nothing but ironic and perhaps even foolish.

While Garrick's revised *Romeo and Juliet* changes Mercutio's attitude toward Romeo, it preserves his bravado. The adaptation maintains Mercutio's taunt to Tybalt to "make it a word and a blow" in the scene in which he duels Tybalt to his death, and it retains his cries of "a plague o' both your houses!" before his own death, in which he rages at both the Capulets and the Montagues for making him a victim of their long-standing feud.²⁴ By preserving Mercutio's cynicism and grandiosity, and placing them against the adaptation's redeemed Romeo, Garrick's revision of *Romeo and Juliet* uses Mercutio's fate to show the inferiority of the model of heroism Mercutio represents and to promote a new model of heroism: the emotive Romeo. This

new perspective on Mercutio's character in Garrick's adaptation, and on his famous speech as well, is reflected in W. Herbert's portrait of Woodward as Mercutio (fig. 2). In the portrait, Mercutio is placed in the

forest, but unlike in Wilson's painting of Garrick's added tomb scene, which will be discussed later in this paper, there is nothing separating Mercutio from the disorder of the forest. In fact, Mercutio appears to mirror nature through his unkempt clothing: his vest is untucked, his jacket undone, and the buttons on his vest seem about to burst. Mercutio's expression is the very definition of bravado. The one hand placed upon his belly hints at laughter and mirth, which are qualities with which we can certainly associate Mercutio, and a knowing smile plays at his lips, but his mouth remains tightly closed, as though he must contain any strong emotion he should happen to feel. Furthermore, to problematize his proud, mirthful appearance, Mercutio's sword hangs conspicuously below his waist, a reminder of his impending tragic fate. By presenting Mercutio in this way, Herbert's portrait ties his qualities of bravado and wit to the disorder and chaos of the forest, reminding his audience of the dangerous nature of the kind of heroism Mercutio represents in Garrick's adaptation of the play, and of the superiority of the emotive hero, as represented by Romeo.

Another noteworthy change Garrick makes to Shakespeare's tragedy is the removal of the last several lines of Mercutio's famous "Queen Mab" speech, ending it with the image of the soldier who dreams of being in battle, then awakes and, frightened, prays before going back to sleep.²⁵ In doing so, Garrick removes all mention of Queen Mab's mischievous activities that go beyond inspiring sleepers with dreams, taking out Mercutio's statement that Queen Mab "bakes the elf-locks in foul sluttish hairs," or that she comes to sleeping maids "pressing them and learns them first to bear."²⁶ Not only does

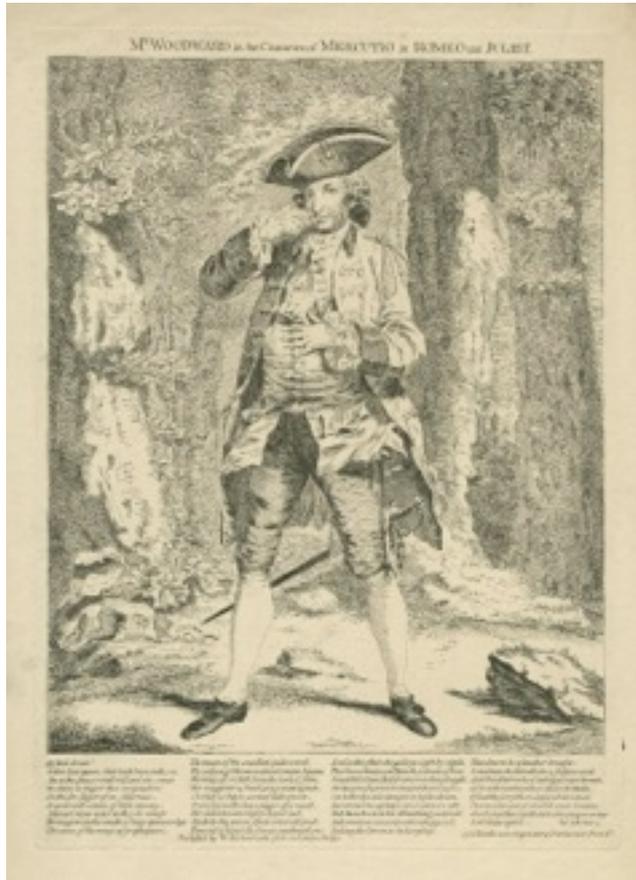


Fig. 2. W. Herbert. *Mr. Woodward in the character of Mercutio [in Shakespeare's] Romeo and Juliet: Ha! Ha! a dream.* 1753. Graphic. Folger Shakespeare Library.

this alteration limit Queen Mab's influence solely to the realm of dreams, denying her any agency in the physical world, it also removes the suggestion that maids might be less than virtuous. Garrick's adaptation of the "Queen Mab" speech also moves the emphasis away from Queen Mab's actions and towards the sleepers' reactions to their dream experiences. By ending the speech with the image of the praying soldier, the alteration emphasizes the emotional effects of dreams and, in this case, the sleeper's virtuous response of prayer. In John Mullan's text, *Sentiment and Sociability: The Language of Feeling in the Eighteenth Century*, he argues that the play has the potential to be morally instructive by staging "exquisite scenes of feeling and distress," representing the experience of extreme emotions in which the audience can share and from which the audience can learn.²⁷ By removing the final few lines from the "Queen Mab" monologue, Garrick transforms it into the perfect model of a morally instructive speech.

Perhaps the most significant change Garrick makes to *Romeo and Juliet* is the addition of the tomb scene, in which Juliet wakes up shortly after Romeo drinks the poison, and the two lovers have one final encounter before the poison takes effect and Romeo dies. In his work *The Dramatic Censor, or Critical Companion*, Francis Gentleman praises this addition, stating that, "bringing Juliet to life before Romeo dies is undoubtedly a change of infinite merit."²⁸ The *Theatrical Review* of 1772 similarly praises the added scene, stating that the effect upon Romeo of Juliet's waking up from seeming death—that he is so elated to find her alive that he forgets that he has just consumed a poison that will soon end his own life—sets the scene for an electric transformation of the characters' emotions, "from rapture to despair," and in doing so, makes the moment in which Romeo remembers what he has done "infinitely more affecting, and the distress of Juliet, as well as his own, much deeper than it stands in the Original Play."²⁹ Indeed, in the short scene, the characters do undergo a startling transformation of emotions, from Romeo's astonishment and relief when he sees Juliet awake, to Juliet's fear that Romeo, whom she does not recognize, has come to make her marry Paris and forsake her true husband, to the recognition and joy that she has been reunited with her beloved Romeo at last, and finally the lovers' lament at Romeo's remembrance that he has taken poison and will not survive for much longer.³⁰

It is noteworthy, then, that Benjamin Wilson's 1753 print of David Garrick and George Anne Bellamy acting Garrick's famous added scene (fig. 3) shows Garrick's Romeo and Bellamy's Juliet not in the throes of either rapture or despair, as the *Theatrical Review* suggests, but rather in postures of astonishment wherein, as John Weaver describes the gesture in *The Loves of Mars and Venus* (1717), "both hands are thrown up toward the skies; the eyes also lifted up, and the body cast backwards."³¹ Wilson's decision to cap-



Fig. 3. Benjamin Wilson. *David Garrick as Romeo, George Anne Bellamy as Juliet and Charles Blakes as Tybalt in Romeo and Juliet adapted by David Garrick from William Shakespeare. 1753.* Graphic. Victoria and Albert Museum.

ture the initial moment of shock upon Juliet's awakening, rather than the complex mixture of emotions which follows it, suggests a desire on the artist's part to preserve not the transformation of emotions which both characters undergo in the exchange that follows, but the exact moment in which, as Francis Gentleman states, "nature is brought to her most critical feelings" within the *audience*, who would have anticipated Romeo's terrible moment of realization from the second Juliet awoke.³² As Janet Todd suggests in *Sensibility*, the main emphasis within a sentimental narrative "is not on the subtleties of a particular

emotional state but on the communication of common feeling from sufferer or watcher to reader or audience,” and Wilson’s decision to recreate the audience’s moment of horror and realization rather than Romeo’s own reflects this emphasis.³³

In keeping with the importance of inspiring a particular emotion within an audience, Gentleman’s review of Barry and Garrick’s performances as Romeo also reflects this preoccupation with the audience’s emotional response. He writes of the two actors in their respective turns as Romeo:

I perceived that Mr. Garrick commanded most applause—Mr. Barry most tears: desirous of tracing this difference to its source, I found that as dry sorrow drinks our blood, so astonishment checks our tears, that by a kind of electrical merit Mr. Garrick struck all hearts with a degree of inexpressible feeling, and bore conception so far beyond her usual sphere, that softer sensations lay hid in wonder.³⁴

In other words, the success of Barry and Garrick’s performances is being judged not on any sort of technical skill, such as how true they are to their character, or how well they deliver their lines, but instead it is being judged by the strength of the emotions they inspire within their audience, reflecting the sentimental narrative’s concern with the communication of common feeling between the characters onstage and the members of the audience.

In *Sentiment and Sociability*, John Mullan states that the instrument of sentimentality in the eighteenth century was “a massively sensitized, feminine body,” and that feminine virtue was one of the sentimental mode’s primary concerns. It is noteworthy that Garrick’s added scene in the tomb also allows for a further emphasis of Juliet’s virtue, specifically her fidelity to Romeo, as her first act upon waking in the tomb is to vociferously protest that she will never marry Paris: “Why do you force me so—I’ll never consent/ My strength may fail me, but my will’s unmoved—I’ll not wed Paris,—Romeo is my husband.”³⁵ Wilson’s portrait also emphasizes Juliet’s virtue in this scene in a number of other ways. First, by choosing not to depict the corpses of Tybalt and Paris, which exist in the tomb along with Romeo and Juliet in both Garrick’s revised script and in Shakespeare’s own text, Wilson’s portrait eliminates the suggestion of any other male influence in Juliet’s life, implying that she is loyal and obedient only to Romeo.

Also, by including within the painting the darkness and the threatening woods through which Romeo has just travelled to reach Juliet's tomb, and in placing the dense, dark woods outside in direct contrast with the warm light and the clean, open space inside the tomb, Wilson's painting implies a connection between the order and light within the tomb and Juliet herself as a source of that order and light. This is a significant choice on Wilson's part, as the script calls for the tomb itself to be rather dark and dismal, with Juliet describing the vault as a place "to whose foul mouth no healthsome air breathes in," as she anticipates waking up in the vault to find herself surrounded by "the bones of all my buried ancestors" and seeing "where bloody Tybalt, yet but green in earth, / Lies festering in his shroud."³⁶ The fact that Wilson does not incorporate this description into his portrait suggests that Wilson's painting is more concerned with accurately conveying Juliet's pure and virtuous character than the setting in which Juliet finds herself in this particular scene, which is once again reflective of the sentimental concern with an outward expression of the characters' inner emotional lives, over and above maintaining a coherent narrative.

Wilson's portrait of the tomb scene also highlights another important feature of sentimentality: the exploration of the limits of language to fully capture moments of great emotion. As Mullan writes, in reference to the sentimental, "the special powers of feeling, the exceptional reaches of sympathy, are set against a world of twisted or broken communication."³⁷ This desire to convey unspeakable emotions in performance, and to inspire those emotions within the audience, is reflected in Garrick's alteration of the language of *Romeo and Juliet*, in which he claims to have removed the "jingle and quibble" of Shakespeare's original play in an effort to make the language appear more natural and spontaneous.³⁸ One particular instance of this can be found in Act 3, Scene 4, in which Juliet waits impatiently for Romeo to come to her, presumably so that they can consummate their marriage. In Shakespeare's version, Juliet laments: "O, I have bought the mansion of a love / But not possessed it, and though I am sold, / Not yet enjoyed".³⁹ However, in Garrick's adapted version, the last half of Juliet's lament is removed. While it is likely that Garrick simply wanted to eliminate the mixed metaphor, in which Juliet is both the purchaser and the object of purchase, the result of the removal of this particular part of Juliet's speech is, once again, that Juliet appears more virtu-

ous. While “the mansion of a love” can refer metaphorically to Romeo and Juliet’s marriage and love for one another, it is difficult to read Juliet’s claim, “I am sold,” as well as the idea that she might be “enjoyed” by Romeo, as referring to anything other than her own physical being. Garrick’s removal of these lines draws attention away from Juliet’s physical nature and physical desires, placing the emphasis instead upon Juliet’s virtue as she waits eagerly for her new husband, and on the purity of Romeo and Juliet’s love for one another. This attempt to minimize any reference within the play to Juliet as a sexual being is further evident as Garrick removes Juliet’s mention of the “amorous rites” of lovers, or the reference to Juliet’s “unmanned blood, bating in [her] cheeks” as she waits for Romeo.⁴⁰ Finally, an earlier alteration, in Act 1, Scene 3, sees Capulet asking Paris to “let two more summers wither in their pride, / Ere we may think [Juliet] ripe to be a *wife*,” disrupting the rhyme from Shakespeare’s version in which Juliet will be thought ripe to be a *bride*, not a *wife*.⁴¹ This adjustment serves another purpose aside from disrupting the rhyme scheme, which is to once again emphasize Juliet’s virtue and her potential to be a dutiful wife, while distancing her from the physical spectacle that the bride often becomes, as the object of the wedding guests’ gaze, as well as from the bride’s responsibility of consummation of the marriage on her wedding night.

As one of the most celebrated actors of his time, Garrick often used his celebrity to shape the tastes of the theatre-going public of London through the productions he staged at the theatre at Drury Lane.⁴² He did this not only by reviving the works of Shakespeare, but also by taking plays, which had been successful in the past and subtly (or sometimes not so subtly) altering and shaping them to reflect what he believed theatre ought to be. One example of this is Garrick’s *The Country Girl*, which he adapted from William Wycherley’s 1675 play *The Country Wife* in order to “clear one of our most celebrated Comedies from Immorality and Obscenity,” to reflect his beliefs that comedies ought to be “innocent without being insipid” and that, when it comes to writing for the theatre, “no kind of Wit ought to be received as an Excuse for Immorality.”⁴³ As this essay has shown, Garrick enforced similar theatrical and moral values upon *Romeo and Juliet* through his adaptation of Shakespeare’s famous tragedy, and this change carried over into the way in which the actors performed their characters onstage, the way in which the characters were perceived

by the audience, and finally, the way in which these performances were preserved in the theatrical portraiture coming out of Garrick's long-running adaptation.

Both through the use of language, by altering Shakespeare's text, and through the use of gesture, by changing the way in which the play was performed, as evidenced by the theatrical portraiture available from Garrick's time, Garrick translated Shakespeare's story of the star-crossed lovers into the language of eighteenth-century sentimentality. In doing so, not only does Garrick's adaptation make Juliet become less pathetic and more tender, chaste and virtuous, and Romeo become a more sincere, steadfast lover, but Mercutio too is transformed, from a witty and astute critic of the folly and fickleness of young love to a foil for Romeo's sentimental hero of feeling; Mercutio becomes an embodiment of the heroic wit and bravado which the sentimental, emotive hero looks to replace. Perhaps even more significantly, by emphasizing the sincerity, purity and depth of the star-crossed lovers before they meet their untimely ends, Garrick's sentimental adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet* achieves exactly what Garrick set out to achieve: to enhance the emotional impact for his audience and to "heighten the catastrophe to so great a degree of distress, as it was capable of being carried."⁴⁴

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Endnotes

- ¹ Theresa White, *The Plays of David Garrick: Garrick's Adaptations of Shakespeare, 1744-1756*. (Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1981), 409.
- ² Francis Gentleman, *The Dramatic Censor: Or, Critical Companion*, vol. 1 (London: J. Bell, 1770), 187.

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- ³ John Potter, *The Theatrical Review: Or, New Companion to the Play-house: Calculated for the Entertainment and Instruction of every Lover of Theatrical Amusements. By a Society of Gentlemen, ...* vol. 1 (London: S. Crowder, 1772), 62.
- ⁴ Aparna Gollapudi, "Selling Celebrity: Actors' Portraits in Bell's Shakespeare and Bell's British Theatre," *Eighteenth-Century Life* 36 (2012): 57-58.
- ⁵ John Mullan, *Sentiment and Sociability: The Language of Feeling in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 16.
- ⁶ Paul Goring, *The Rhetoric of Sensibility in Eighteenth-Century Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2005), 115.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, 116.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*
- ⁹ Andrew S. Winston, "Sweetness and Light: Psychological Aesthetics and Sentimental Art," *Emerging Visions of the Aesthetic Process*, eds. Gerald C. Cupchik and Janos Laszlo, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1992), 125.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 121
- ¹¹ Vanessa Cunningham, *Shakespeare and Garrick* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2008), 75.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, 75.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, 34.
- ¹⁴ Janet Todd, *Sensibility: An Introduction* (New York: Methuen, 1986), 34.
- ¹⁵ William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet. By Shakespear. With alterations, and an additional scene; by D. Garrick. As it is performed at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane* (London: T. Lowndes, T. Caslon, S. Bladon, and W. Nicoll, 1769), 5.
- ¹⁶ Shakespeare, 34.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 35.
- ¹⁸ William Hogarth's series "A Rake's Progress," specifically the third painting of the rake at Rose Tavern, is an example of an eighteenth-century work that conforms to Le Brun's idea of how to represent desire in art, as the rake in the foreground is depicted with flared nostrils, wide eyes, and his torso is angled toward the woman sitting next to him, the object of his desire.
- ¹⁹ Cunningham, 75.
- ²⁰ Shakespeare, 23.

²¹ Gentleman, 190-191.

²² Shakespeare, 20.

²³ Ibid., 13.

²⁴ Ibid., 34-35.

²⁵ Ibid., 14.

²⁶ (1.4.92-93)

²⁷ Mullan, 58.

²⁸ Gentleman, 187.

²⁹ *Theatrical Review*, 62-63.

³⁰ Shakespeare, 65-66.

³¹ John Weaver, *The Loves of Mars and Venus; a Dramatick Entertainment of Dancing, Attempted in Imitation of the Pantomimes of the Ancient Greeks and Romans; as Perform'd at the Theatre in Drury-Lane* (London: W. Mears, 1717), 21.

³² Gentleman, 187.

³³ Todd, 4.

³⁴ Gentleman, 190.

³⁵ Mullan, 61; Shakespeare, 65.

³⁶ Ibid., 54.

³⁷ Mullan, 61.

³⁸ Shakespeare, 2.

³⁹ Ibid., 3.2.26-28.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 3.2.8 and 3.2.14.

⁴¹ Ibid., 1.2.11.

⁴² Victoria and Albert Museum. "18th Century Theatre." Accessed December 10, 2013. <http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/0-9/18th-century-theatre>.

⁴³ David Garrick, "Advertisement," In the *The Country Girl, A Comedy, (Altered from Wycherley) as it is acted at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane*, (London: T. Beckett and P.A. De Hondt), 1766.

⁴⁴ *Theatrical Review*, 62.

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