

*Maker Not Muse:
Kitty Clive, or The Fair
Songster*

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William Verelst, *Catherine Clive* (1711-1785). Oil on canvas, 1740.



Some Achievements

- First singing star in the playhouse
- First female player to triumph over a manager by using the press
- One of few mid-eighteenth-century female playwrights
- Main wage earner, supporting dependents until she died
- Rose socially, close friend of Horace Walpole
- 222 roles!



Cliveden near Strawberry Hill, Twickenham, formerly the Villa of Mrs. Catherine Clive. Watercolour, c1810

Clive on Clive

‘I am sorry to hear you have an indifferent part in the new Comedy, but I don’t at all wonder when you tell me the author. [H]e is a wretch of wretches, however I charge you to make a good part of it[.] Let it be never so bad, I have often done so myself therefore I know it is to be done[:] turn it & wind it & play it in a different manner to his intention and as hundred to one but you succeed’

Letter of Catherine Catherine Clive to Jane Pope of 15 December 1774

Performance: Henry Carey, ‘How brimful of nothing’s the Life of a Beau’ (1738)



William Hogarth,
*The Beggar's
Opera* [by John
Gay, 1728]. Oil
on canvas, 1731



Audio 'Now ponder well', Air 12 in John Gay, *The Beggar's Opera* (1728)

THE WHOLE
POLLY PEACHUM;

CONTAINING
An ACCOUNT of her Birth, Parentage and Education, Shewing how she jump'd from an Orange Girl to an Actress on the Stage, and
fin that to be a Lady of Fortune: To which is added, a List of her Admirers, also an Account of their several Amorous Intrigues &c.
Written by one of her Companions. Also, a merry Confession. Written by herself.

*Nullum crimen abest, facinusq; ibidinis, ex quo
paupertas Roma a pere Juv Sat. VI*

Here are so many things
Essentially necessary in
the writing of History,
that it is a very difficult
Task for any Man, who
has taken it upon him,
to write the Memoirs of
any Person, to escape the
Censure of some one

Critique or other; and indeed too certain it
is, that frequently *Hyperboles* are made use of,
and that sometimes, thereby the deserving
Merit, of a Man, is very much lessen'd; and
no less frequently advanced, from a mean
Capacity, to the Representating, of a *Seneca*,
a *Cicero* or *Demosthenes*, such and so extraor-
dinary old are the Humours of Mankind, that
they would far rather please their own In-
clinations, than do Justice to the World, by
giving a candid and fair Relation, when either
like or dislike, of the Person they are treating
of, happen to Come in the Way: But as I'm
a Person intirely disintrested, and no ways in-
jured or opressed by *Polly Peachum* it is to be
hop'd, that even the censorious World will
free me from any Imputation or Guilt of that
Kind which may be laid to my Charge, in Ex-
pectation of which I venture to declare that,

Polly Peachum the Subject of my present
Narration was born (about twenty two years
since) of pretty good Parents; her Father be-
ing a Mercer, and a Livery Man of the City
of London, where he Marrying a Woman of
good Fortune, kept House and lived very re-
putably for many Years, but at last falling to
decay, what thro' private Losses, and what
thro' the unfortunate Scheme of the *South-
Sea*, His Circumstances were reduced to the
lowest Ebb, and poor *Polly* oblig'd to Shift
her Brocades for a Linsey-Wolsey Gown;



Oh! ponder well
be not severe
So save a Wretches
WIFE:
For on the Rope
that hangs my dear
Depends poor Pollys
LIFE.

How many Chair-men, and How many Footmen
were attending her, and if I Mistake not they'd
ha' made about three Regiments, and all Stout
Men, in the Fields of *Genus*, fearing neither
Fire nor Smoak, but yet, I perceive they did
not love Gun Powder for they offer'd very
largely to that Goddess that the might Vouch-
safe to spare them their Lives.

The last time I went to see her I believe it
might be about 11 in the Morning, when a
certain Nobleman went to her to ask a Favour
to which the reply'd Lord Sr! what makes
you disturb me so Early, he answer'd readily,
'Tis your Beauty *Polly* that will not let me
Rest when absent from you: Can I have a
Favour? *Polly* takes out her Snuff-Box and
with an Air reply'd, yes Sr. Pray Miss (says
he) what is the Price? Says *Polly* 100
Guineas. Pray when can I be admitted, says
the Nobleman? *Polly* then takes out her pocket
Book and with a *Done Grace* crys hum!
hum! let's see 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. Right,
the seven and thirtien Night, and not before.
The same Person we hear went a way well
satisfy'd and has bespoke a Coach for her,
Upon which I sent Spuire D' *Answers* a Letter
and the Following Lines but he not inserting
them, put me upon the writing this Life.

On *Polly Peachum's* Customers.
Soft bending Willows give the watery Cell,
Where fall'd pretenders fumbling Mimnes
(dwell),
And Youth in Triumph buy their way to Hell,
A hundred Guineas for a Night's Debauch,
Out-does Don-John or Earl of Roch,
With fruitless Cring the Beggar tends the Door,
The Kitching's Riff'd to support a W--re,
Tradesmen unpaid, have dismal Cause to Rue;
Ludgate's their Doom abills! Bethlem gapes for you.

bestow'd their Favours on her: And One Day as she was hearing a
Rehearsal, she said I believe I cou'd make a Good Actress, upon which
she was order'd to repeat a Sentence or two which she did with so good
a Grace, that she was Entertain'd on that Account.
Being now fertild in the Play House as above she began to have Ad-

Polly Peachum's merry Confession.
By Birth I'm perhaps a Love Child, and
Father'd on my Mother's Husband, out of a
Tender good Nature she had for her Fam-

JESTS.

In which are comprisd most of the Witty Apothegms, diverting Tales and smart Repartees that

[5]



A LETTER TO POLLY.

To the Tune of O Jenny, O Jenny, where hast thou learn?



To Miss *Beswick*, alias *Fenton*, alias *Polly Peachum*.

BE not vain of your fancy'd Success I desire you,
Nor think that LORDS love you, because they admire you;

A *Monster* does, doubtless, deserve *Admiration*,
As much as the *Prettiest Girl* in the Nation;
And hourly Experience, *LAVINIA*, will shew you,
A *Gunny* is star'd at, as much as a *Chloe*.

This *Ballad-Singing-Beauty* (which our present Race of Beaus so much *Admire*) is a raw-board'd, large-featur'd Female *Virago*, and having the necessary Qualification, requir'd by *Serjeant Kite*, of being six Foot high, is, no doubt, born to be a *Great Woman*.

AN ANSWER TO

Polly Peachum's BALLAD.

The Following Lines being sent to the Author, as an Answer

POLLY PEACHUM ON FIRE, THE BEGGARS OPERA BLOWN UP, AND Capt. MACKHEATH Entangled in his Bazzle-Strings.

Tho' the Cocks are all running, there's not enough Water,
For the Girl is brimful of combustible Matter:
Then play with your Buckets, and work for your Soul,
Or the best Toast in Town will be burnt to a Coal.

Wherein also are contained,

A NEW BALLAD,

INSCRIB'D TO POLLY PEACHUM.

To the Tune of the Parrot say.

By the Author of LEHEUP's Ballad.



LETTERS IN PROSE and VERSE, To the Celebrated POLLY PEACHUM: FROM The most Eminent of her ADMIRERS and RIVALS.

Heav'n first taught Letters for some Wretch's Aid,
Some banish'd Lover, or some captive Maid;
They live, they speak, they breathe what Love inspires,
Warm from the Soul, and faithful to its Fires.

Pope's Eloisa to Abelard.

THE LIFE OF Lavinia Beswick, alias Fenton, ALIAS Polly Peachum:

CONTAINING,

Birth and Education. Her first Acquaintance with a certain Portuguze Nobleman. The when, and Person to whom she receiv'd her first Favours. A particular Account of her Conversation with a Mercer, now near the Royal Exchange. Her first Acquaintance with a Portuguze Nobleman, who was afterwards in the Fleet, and the manner in which she was rescued from his Liberty. A Copy of which was compos'd on a certain occasion, and which was presented to her Acquaintance with Mr. Huddy, for Benefit, at the New Theatre in Hay-Market, the first ap-

per Mr. Huddy's, at the same Theatre. Her first Admittance into the Theatre-Royal in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields: Her Weekly Salary, both now and then; and the time when, and the Cause why, it was rais'd. Of her Wit gaining her more Lovers than her Beauty. The Horse-Courser dismounted, yet saves his Distance. A Poet strutting under the Protection of the Nine Muses. Another Poet, who would attack Ulysses and Penelope in a barbarous Manner, is severely handled by Polly in a Satyrical Stanza. Her Judgment in Poetry, and History Painting. And the rea-

IRY and CH

**John Faber after John
Ellys, *Miss Fenton*.
Mezzotint, 1728**



J. Ellys Pinx.

J. Faber Fecit 1728

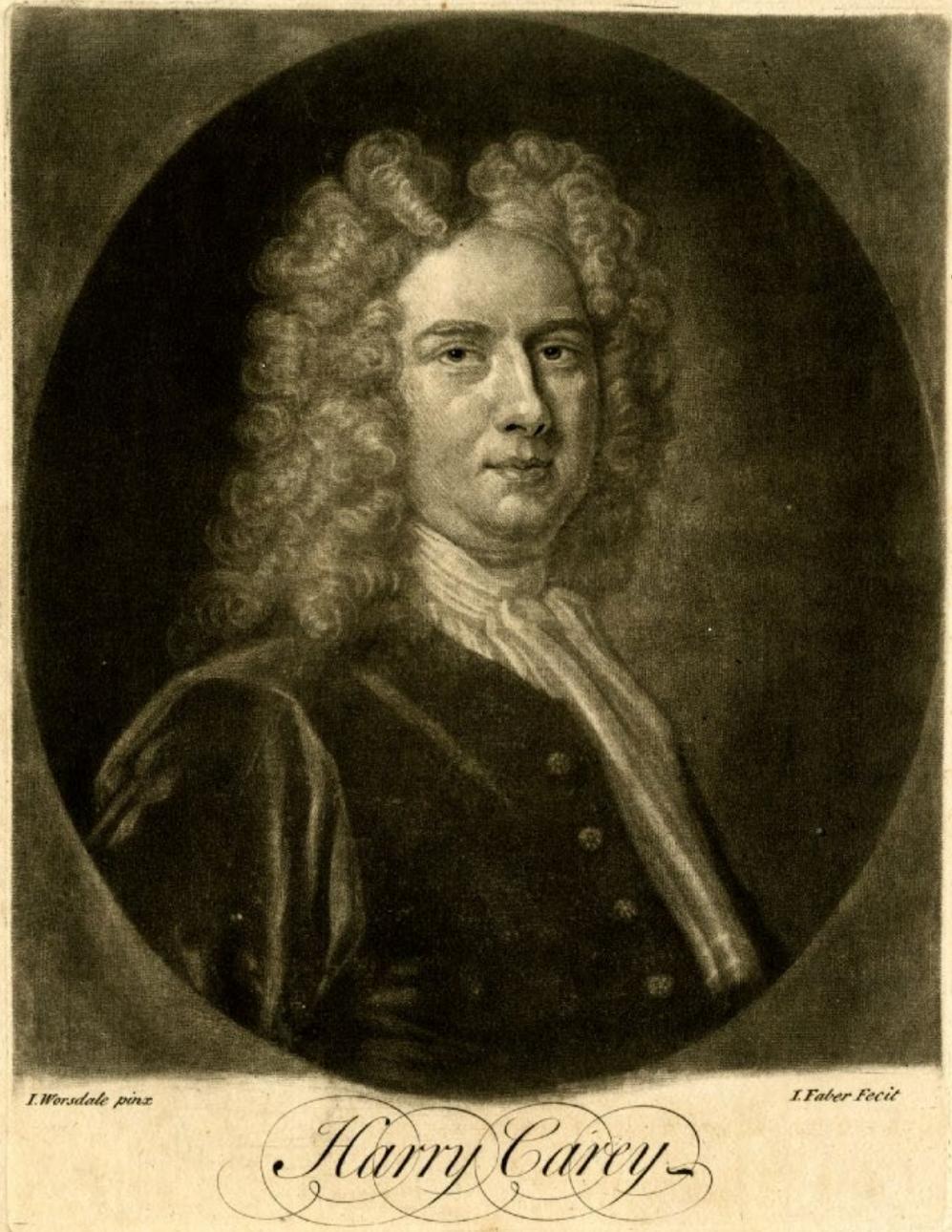
While Crowds attentive sit to Polly's Voice,
And in their native Harmony rejoice;
Th' admiring Throng no vain subscription draw
Nor Affectation prompts a false Applause?
Mifs Fenton
Nature untaught, each Gleasing-Strain supply
Artleß as her unbidden Blushes rise,
And Charming as the Mischief in her Eyes
The original Polly Peachen in the Beggar's Opera; afterwards married to Charles Paulet Duke of Bolton.



While Crowds attentive
sit to Pollys Voice,
And in their Native harmony
rejoice;
Th'admiring Throng no vain
subscription draws,
Nor Affectation prompts a
false Applause.

Nature untaught, each
Pleasing strain
supply's,
Artless as her unbidden
Blushes rise,
And charming as the
Mischief in her Eyes.

Henry Carey (1687–1743), Kitty Clive's Mentor, Singing Teacher, Song Writer



Colley Cibber,
Drury Lane
Theatre
Manager



J. Smith pinxit. Colley Cibber, Esq.
late Poet Laureat.
Ed. Fisher fecit 1728.
Printed for John Sturtevant Engraver, Map & Print Seller in Red Bull Court, Covent Garden, London.



Masque-like
scenery



English Masque – Clive's first stage line

Minerva (1728) in *Perseus and Andromeda* (John Pepusch)
Dorinda (Jan 1729) *The Tempest: Or, the Incharnted Island*;
Amphitrite in *Neptune and Amphitrite* (Pelham Humfrey);
Night (1729) in *Apollo and Daphne* (Henry Carey); title role
of *The Fairy Queen; or, Harlequin Turned Enchanter* (1730);
Procris (1730) *Cephalus and Procris* (Henry Carey) etc.

Performance 'Ye faun and ye dryads' from *Comus*



^{1743. 2. 10}
L O V E
²
I N A
R I D D L E.
A
P A S T O R A L.

As it is Acted at the
THEATRE-ROYAL,
BY
His **MAJESTY'S** Servants.

Written by Mr. **C I B B E R.**

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. W A R R S, at the Printing-Office in
Wild-Court near *Lincolns-Inn Fields.*

M D C C X I X.

[Price 1 s. 6 d.]

Love in a Riddle (1729) – a disaster

‘The People in the Beginning of the Play seemed inclinable to attend, and give it a fair Hearing; but when you [Cibber] ... began to sing ... not in a mimick, not in a false, but in your own real natural Voice, and they found that you intended to impose this upon ’em for Harmony, which they perceiv’d hurt their Ears extremely, they did grow somewhat outrageous, and in the second Act they call’d aloud several Times to have the Curtain dropt ... then damn’d his *new-fangled innocent Performance*’.

After Gottfried Schalcken
Miss Rafter in the Character of Phillida,
1729

D A M O N
AND
P H I L L I D A:
A
BALLAD OPERA
OF ONE ACT.

As it is Performed at the
Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane
BY
His MAJESTY's Servants.

With the MUSICK prefix'd to each SONG.

L O N D O N:
Printed for J. WATTS, at the Printing-Office in
Wild-Court near Lincolns-Inn Fields. 1729.
[Price One Shilling.]



G. Schalcken Pinxit. MISS RAFTER in the Character of PHILLIDAth
Her native Beauty clad without disguise, | *Happy the Nymph wth charms by Nature blest*
No art, allure a paltry Lovers Eyes, | *But happier Swain, who of the Nymph possess.*
No stiff, set Acts, which but betray the mind, | *Can taste the joys, which she alone can bring,*
But unaffected Innocence, we find: | *And live in Pleasures, which alternate spring.*

See native Beauty clad
without disguise,
No art t'allure a paltry
Lovers Eyes,
No stiff, sett Airs, which
but betray the mind,
But unaffected
Innocence we find:

Happy the Nymph with
charms by Nature blest,
But happier Swain, who of
the Nymph possest,
Can taste the Joys, which
she alone can bring,
And live in Pleasures which
alternate spring.

Francis Hayman and studio, *A Scene in 'The Devil to Pay'*, Oil on canvas, 1730s.



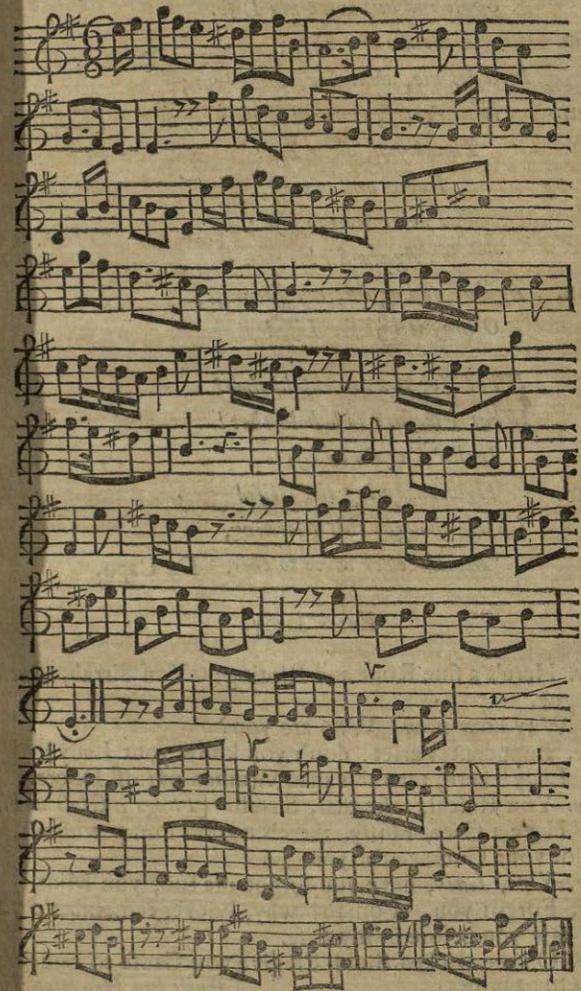
‘But sure nothing has had a greater Run, than a little Farce called, *The Devil to Pay* ... it has been perform’d almost every Night this Season; your little Favourite Miss Raftor appears a Prodigy in this Piece, it has render’d her the Darling of the whole Town’.

Aaron Hill? *See and Seem Blind: Or, a Critical Dissertation on the Publick Diversions, &c* (London, [1732]), pp. 8–9.

SCENE Sir John's.

Sir John and Company enter.

AIR XV. Duetto.



John. Was ever Man possess'd of
So sweet, so kind a Wife!

Nell,

Audio: Words by Charles Coffey, music arranged by Mr. Seedo, 'Was ever Man possess'd' in *The Devil to Pay*, 1731 [2nd afterpiece version]. Based on George F. Handel, 'Nò, non temere' in *Ottone*, HWV 15, 1723

26 *The Devil to Pay; Or,*

Nell. Dear Sir, you make me proud:
Be you but kind,
And you shall find
All the Good I can boast of,
Shall end but with my Life.

Sir John. Give me thy Lips;

Nell. First let me, dear Sir, wipe 'em;

Sir John. What ever so sweet a Wife!

[Kissing her]

Nell. Thank you, dear Sir!
I vow and protest,
I ne'er was so kiss;
Again Sir!

Sir John. Again, and again, my Dearest;
O may it last for Life!

Nell. What Joy thus to unfold thee!
What Pleasure to behold thee!
Inclin'd again to kiss!

Sir John. How revivish the Bliss!

Nell. I little thought this Morning,
'T would ever come to this. Da Capo.



Original frontispiece,
The Devil to Pay
 (London: John Watts,
 1731)

Nell and the Doctor over a Cup of Me.
For, I believe, I have been made a Bride.
She tells her wondrous Pleasures in a Song.
And soon a Coach shall ride her at the Door.

That, dress'd as lovely as a new-made Bride.
The honest Squire, she shall throw wide.
And the poor honest Pleas'd & young.
Tell her that she is more shall feel of Song.

NELL and the COBBLER!

But in the midst of all her fancied joys.
The price of Arms and Mail and Traps & Coats.
She sees her wretched Father and her Mother.
The poor old Man, & all poor Widdow's Regret.

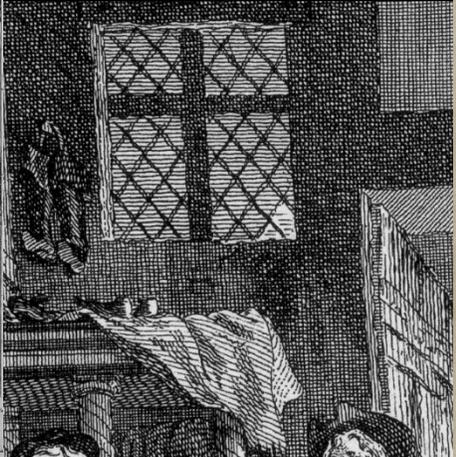
Thus Husbande thinks the Fortune selling part.
That every Day, the old Cobblers parents.
And Wives, find a Thrashing in their Lutes.
And cause the Conyer & his Cup for late.



From the Farce, The Devil to pay or the Wife's Metamorphos'd.

Jobson and Nell.

She thoughtly, but in haste, is made a Wife.
And looses her husband dearer than her life.
This lesson teach the unsuspected race behavior.
So wife's a story, whose spouse a jobson proves.



Layman inv. V. the fust





Canaletto, *The Grand Walk, Vauxhall Gardens, London*. Oil on canvas c1751





George Frederic Handel, marble statue by Louis Francois Roubiliac, England, UK, 1738. Museum no. A.3-1965





Writer
Henry
Fielding
(1707-
1754)

Actor-
manager
Theophilus
Cibber
(1703-
1758)



Audio: Words by Henry Fielding, arranged and composed by Mr Seedo, 'Some confounded planet' in *The Lottery*. Based on George F. Handel, 'Son confus' pastorella' *Porro*, HWV, 1731

Henry Fielding's plays at Drury Lane 1731-1734	Led by Clive	Stage success	Ballad opera/ spoken comedy
The Lottery (Jan 1732) -	yes	hit	Ballad opera
The Modern Husband (Feb 1732)	no	13 nights	Spoken comedy
The Old Debauchees (June 1732	yes	flop	Spoken comedy
The Covent-Garden Tragedy (June 1732)	yes	flop	Spoken comedy
The Mock Doctor (after Molière, June 1732)	yes	hit	Ballad opera
The Miser (after Molière, 1733)	yes	hit	Ballad opera
The Author's Farce (rev, 1734)	yes	hit	Spoken comedy
The Intriguing Chambermaid (after Regnard, 1734)	yes	hit	Ballad opera
An Old Man taught Wisdom, or the Virgin Unmask'd (1735)	yes	hit	Ballad opera

Clive's First Spoken-only Principal Part

'I appeal to last night's new
Entertainment, and particularly
to that part of it, called, *The
Common Garden Tragedy* ...
Such a scene of infamous
lewdness, was never brought, I
believe, before on any Stage
whatsoever!'

'Dramaticus', *Grub-street Journal* 15 June
1732

Clive's first-ever epilogue:

'In short, you are the Business of
our Lives,

To be a Mistress kept, the
Strumpet strives,

And all the modest Virgins to be
Wives.

For Prudes may cant of Virtues
and of Vices,

But faith! we only differ in our
Prices'

John
Laguerre,
*The Stage
Mutiny.*
Engraving,
1733





Mezzotint after
Jonathan Richards,
Anne Oldfield (1683 –
1730)



John Faber after
Pieter van
Bleeck, *The
Celebrated Mrs
Clive, late Miss
Raftor in the
Character of
Phillida*, 1734.
Mezzotint.

Jeremiah
Davison after
Joseph van
Aken. *Catherine
Clive*. Oil on
canvas, c1735.



Of all the Arts that sooth the
human Breast,
Music (blest Power) the
sweetest is confest:
Heightens our Joys, suspends
our fiercest Pains:
This each One proves who
hears thy heavnly Strains.



*Of all the Arts that sooth the human Breast,
Music (blest Power) the sweetest is confest:
Heightens our Joys, suspends our fiercest Pains:
This each One proves who hears thy heavnly Strains.*

Jos: Van Haerem Pinx. Alex: Van Haerem Fecit.



After
Jonathan
Richards,
Anne
Oldfield
(1683 –
1730)



*Of all the Arts that sooth the human Breast,
Music (blest Power) the sweetest is confess;
Heightens our Joys, suspends our fiercest Pains:
This each One proves who hears thy heavenly Strings.*
Jes. Van Haechen, Pinx. Max. Van Haechen Fecit.

On Susannah Cibber: 'very Young, and pretty; and has made innumerable Conquests, her Voice is exceedingly small, but exceedingly sweet; ... she has such a Warble, such a je ne scay quoy as tickles my very Soul'

Thomas Hudson,
Susannah Maria Cibber (née Arne). Oil
on canvas, 1749.



The Polly Row

Two RIVALS in Theatrick Fame,
Fell out in France – and fight;
Two Nymphs in England did the
same,
But cooler, chose to write ...
Our Courage oft to France we've
shown;
As oft our Folly in our Writing:
But your Examples prove, we're
grown,
In Wit superior, as in Fighting.



Clive's Press War

'It is a received Maxim ... that no Actor or Actress shall be depriv'd of a Part in which they have been well receiv'd, until they are render'd incapable of performing it either by Age or Sickness; and for no other Reason whatsoever, have I endeavour'd to keep the Part of Polly'

-pro-Clive critic

'The Injuries I have receiv'd at the Playhouse ... I determin'd patiently to submit to, well knowing, that by the Tenour of the Articles which I have unfortunately sign'd with Mr Fleetwood ... that it is not in my Power to refuse that [the part of Lucy] or any other Part'

-Catherine Clive



‘There was a prodigious uproar, with Clapping, Hissing, Catcalls &c. Mrs. Clive, who play’d the part of Polly, when she came forward, address’d herself to the House, saying Gentlemen, I am very sorry it should be thought I have in any Manner been the Occasion of the least Disturbance; and then cry’d in so moving Manner, that even Butchers wept. Then she told them, She was almost ready with her Part of Lucy, and at all Times shou’d be willing to play such Parts as the Town should direct, and desir’d to know if they were willing she should go on with the part of Polly; she behaving in so humble a Manner, the House approv’d of her Behaviour by a general Clap.’



Thomas Arne, *Comus* (1738)

Euphrosyne



Comus, a Mask:

(Now adapted to the STAGE)

As Alter'd from

Milton's Mask, &c.

(Price One Shilling.)



Performance 'Mirth admit me of thy Crew'
'By dimpled brook'

Handel, from the edition of *Alexander's Feast*
(1736)



At the Desire of several Ladies of Quality.

For the Benefit of Mrs. CLIVE.

AT the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane,
Monday, March 17, will be presented a Comedy, call'd
The WAY of the WORLD.

Written by the late Mr. Congreve.

The Part of Millamant, to be perform'd by Mrs. CLIVE;
*In which Character will be introduc'd the Original Song, the Words by
Mr. Congreve. and new set to Musick by Mr. Handel.*

Mirabel, by Mr. Milward; Fainall, Mr. Mills; Sir Wilful, Mr.
Turbutt; Witwou'd, Mr. Chapman; Perulant, Mr. Macklin; Wait-
well, Mr. Shepard; Marwood, Mrs. Butler; Lady Wishfor't, Mrs.
Macklin; Mrs. Fainall, Mrs. Pritchard; Foible, Mrs. Bennet.

To which will be added a Ballad-Farce of one Act, call'd

The DEVIL TO PAY;

The Part of Sir John Loverule, by Mr. Stoppelaer,
(Who has not appear'd on the Stage these three Years;)
Nell, Mrs. CLIVE.

With ENTERTAINMENTS.

* * To prevent Mistakes, 'tis desired that those Gentlemen and
Ladies, who have already taken Places, will please to send for Tickets.

Tickets and Places to be had at Mrs. Clive's House in Cecil-street
in the Strand. And at Mr. Moor's in the Playhouse Passage.

Performance
'Love's but
the frailty of
the mind'
HWV 218

andante

Love's but the frailty of the mind when tis not with ambition joy'd
Love when joy'd when tis not with ambition joy'd
a sickly flame which is not fed
and feeding waks in self consuming fires and
which is not fed
which is not fed
which is not fed

S A M S O N.
AN
ORATORIO.
As it is Perform'd at the
THEATRE-ROYAL in Covent-Garden.
Alter'd and adapted to the Stage from the SAMSON
AGONISTES of *John Milton*.
Set to Musick by GEORGE FREDERICK HANDEL.



- Dalilah 'With plaintive notes and am'rous moan'

Charles Burney in 1789

‘Her singing, which was intolerable when she meant it to be fine, in ballad farces and songs of humour was, like her comic acting, every thing it should be’.

Charles Burney, *A General History of Music, from the Earliest Ages to the Present Period*, vol. 4 (London, 1789) [‘Printed for the Author’], p. 654.