Artist, Professional, Gentleman: Designing the Body of the Actor-Manager, 1870-1900

Helen Margaret Walter

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Abstract

In the historical record of British theatre in the latter half of the nineteenth century, the figures of London's actor-managers are constantly present. As such, over the intervening century, they have been subjected to detailed historical enquiry by any number of different scholars in terms of their theatrical achievements, management styles, and their role in the changing nature of theatre in this period. However, despite the vast amount of extant visual material pertaining to these individuals in British, and other, collections, little attention has been paid to the image of the actor-manager in this period, and still less to the role of the body in the legacy of such figures. Given the nature of the actor's craft as body-orientated, the explicitly visual nature of theatre in this period, and a burgeoning mass-media industry intent on the dissemination of such images, from a design history perspective this historiographical gap is surprising.

Taking as its starting point the contention that the primacy of London's actor-managers in this period was not, despite the claims of some contemporaries, an inevitable result of natural talent, but rather the outcome of carefully mediated verbal and visual discourses of theatrical and social achievements, this thesis examines how the framing of the body in such texts and images contributed to the legacy of the actor-manager as the central figure of late-Victorian theatre for a number of different audiences. It does this by using a synthetic approach which encompasses a number of distinct disciplines, including theoretical perspectives on the body, theatre historical scholarship that informs the context of the primary material, and design historical narratives of production and consumption. Ultimately, however, it is led by the depiction of actor-managers in the late nineteenth century, and the manifestation of multi-valent identities through the body, which constructed them for popular and critical consumption as artists, professionals and gentlemen of the late-Victorian era.

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Acknowledgements

Author's Declaration

During the period of registered study in which this thesis was prepared the author has not been registered for any other academic award or qualification.

The material included in this thesis has not been submitted wholly or in part for any academic award or qualification other than that for which it is now submitted.

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List of Abbreviations

Full Title	Abbreviation
Arts and Humanities Research Council	AHRC
National Portrait Gallery	NPG
Victoria and Albert Museum	V&A
Royal Academy of Arts	RA

Introduction

Writing for the *Nineteenth Century* in 1890, in an article entitled 'Actor-Managers', Bram Stoker (1847-1912) quoted John Ruskin's words on the discovery of the artist from his 1857 work on *The Political Economy of Art*:

> You have always to find your artist, not to make him; you can't manufacture him, any more than you can manufacture gold. You can find him, and refine him [...] you bring him home; and you make him into current coin, or household plate, but not a grain of him can you originally produce.[1]

In an attempt to combat contemporary criticism of the system whereby leading actors managed London theatres, financing productions that provided vessels for their own acting talent, Stoker's essay, and the two shorter pieces by actor-managers Henry Irving (1838-1905) and Charles Wyndham (1837-1919) that accompanied it, were three neat, explicit accounts of how actor-managers wanted their profession to be seen by the magazine's readership. Within this context, Stoker's analogy of the actor-manager with Ruskin's fine artist operated on at least two levels. It fitted with a growing desire in this period on the part of those associated with the theatre to establish acting as a legitimate art form, and to raise the status of the actor to that of an artist. Yet, as the article went on to say, it was also linked to the issues of publicity and public approval that were the cornerstones of the actor-manager's success. The financial risks of an actor taking on the lease and management of a theatre were not inconsiderable and, Stoker argued, 'Of course the actor who would thus capitalise his popularity and become a manager, without ceasing to be an actor, should first be assured of the support of the public.'[2] Stoker was constructing the identity of the actor-manager as a combination of brilliant performer, creative genius and shrewd businessman, but above all as a man who had so much capital with the public

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[1] John Ruskin, cited in Bram Stoker, 'Actor-Managers: I', *Nineteenth Century*, 27 (1890), 1040-1051 (p. 1045).
[2] Bram Stoker, 'Actor-Managers: I', p. 1045.

that, in Ruskin's words, he had become the 'current coin, or household plate' of the London theatre scene.

It suited Stoker, for the purposes of exonerating actor-managers from the charge of cynically manipulating their positions of power in the theatre for the purposes of their own advancement, to imply that the central role of such individuals in late-Victorian theatre stemmed largely from a popularity engendered by their natural talent for performance. They were then, in Stoker and Ruskin's record, elevated to success and shaped into a popular figure by 'you', presumably the theatregoing public, who recognized that latent skill, responded to it, and ultimately enabled them to go on to use that popularity as a basis for their careers in management. As shall be seen in the course of this thesis, this is not without basis in fact: an actor-manager's hold over the public, both within and outside the theatrical context, was indeed a key factor in his growing theatrical and social success in this period. Nevertheless, to suggest that the actor-manager played no part in the process of negotiating his relationship with the public, and creating himself as a popular figure, was disingenuous at best, belying the very real and constant self-promotion that was a key part of his working life. In fact, as the pieces by Irving and Wyndham indicated, these actor-managers were just as aware as Stoker of the need to cultivate and maintain their relationship with the public, and of the precarious nature of their place at the head of Victorian theatre.[3] Through essays, correspondence, autobiographies, a relationship with the contemporary press, and, last but by no means least, a constant flow of images provided for the voracious theatre-going public, London's actor-managers were actively involved in designing their own identities as the performers, artists and businessmen of Stoker's narrative, and shaping themselves, rather than being shaped, into 'current coin'.

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[3] Henry Irving, 'Actor-Managers: II', *Nineteenth Century,* 27 (1890), 1052-1053; Charles Wyndham, 'Actor-Managers: III', *Nineteenth Century,* 27 (1890), 1053-58.

It is this final category of evidence, the visual record of the actor-manager as a narrative of his status both within the theatrical context and outside it, and the active creation of his identity in the construction of the body through images and accompanying texts as artist, professional, and gentleman of the late Victorian period, with which this thesis is primarily concerned, and which represents an original contribution to knowledge. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, an era when London's actor-managers were in the ascendant, a time when dress and appearance were contiguous with character and identity, and a theatrical context where actors were urged to consider themselves 'as a figure in a picture', attentive to 'the harmony of the composition', the ways in which these men chose to construct their bodies for consumption were crucial to their artistic popularity, social success, and, eventually, the way they were presented for posterity.[4] Facets of the actor-manager's identity identified and outlined by Stoker, his skill as an actor, social standing as a businessman and artist, and 'his own reputation with the great public', were referenced and shaped through the presentation of himself for public consumption, in a body that, by the nature of his profession, was always dressed in accordance with his role. [5]

As designed objects in their own right, memorabilia of theatrical productions and images associated with the theatre are worthy of more detailed consideration by scholars of both design and theatrical practices that they have received to date. Using a synthetic approach that encompasses the academic disciplines of design and theatre history, and drawing on theories of the body in the performance context, histories of representation, and socio-historical discussions of the construction of identity through visual codes such as dress, this thesis takes one aspect of the visual record, the image of the actor-manager from the last thirty years of the nineteenth century, to show how a comprehensive understanding of visual- and object-based research methodologies can enrich the study of a theatrical subject. It examines the

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[4] Henry Irving, *Address to the Students of Harvard University* (London: Chiswick Press, 1885), p. 20.
[5] Stoker, 'Actor-Managers: I', p. 1045.

received view of the actor-manager as both an outstanding performer and as a social success, as a representative of the acting profession more widely, and as a nexus of performance and design within the theatrical context. In doing so, it shows that far from being simply a matter of finding and refining a talented individual, as Ruskin and Stoker would have us believe, the visual legacy of the actor-manager was a carefully constructed narrative of selfhood designed for presentation to a particular audience.

Acting Histories and Visual Culture

Bram Stoker's article in the *Nineteenth Century* was important in its own way, and is definitely useful as a defense of the actor-manager's position in Victorian theatre, but arguably his most important and lasting contribution to the legacy of such individuals was his extensive, detailed, and highly personal posthumous biography of Sir Henry Irving, arguably London's foremost actor-manager, with whom he had worked closely at the Lyceum Theatre (1878-1899).[6] Stoker's text, and the myriad of other contemporary biographies of actors and actresses, are an important part of the primary record, but more recent works of scholarship such as Jeffrey Richards' biography of the same actor-manager, or Gilli Bush-Bailey's recent book on actress-impresario Fanny Kelly (1790-1892), show how central biographical narratives continue to be in contemporary research methodologies.[7] As with biographical research trends in other historical fields, the scope of such enquiries, and the range of subjects they include, have broadened dramatically over the last thirty years, from the canonization of mainstream figures associated with so-called 'legitimate' theatre, to a nuanced and theoretically complex discussion of a wide range of figures involved in the acting world, many of whom had been formerly excluded from the record for reasons of gender, race, or involvement in more populist forms of entertainment. Nevertheless, the form of biography and the use of such

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[6] Bram Stoker, *Personal Reminiscences of Henry Irving*, rev. edn (London: Heinemann, 1907).

[7] Jeffrey Richards, *Sir Henry Irving: A Victorian Actor and his World* (London: Hambledon and London, 2005); Gilli Bush-Bailey, *Performing Herself: Autobiography and Fanny Kelly's* Dramatic Recollections (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011).

narratives to explore the histories of actors and actresses remain constant features of theatrical research and historical investigation.

If biographical narrative forms one of the major types of acting history, focusing as it does on the lives and work of the practitioner of the art, over the years scholars have developed a number of other approaches to the history of acting in the Victorian period. Drawing on the concept of acting as praxis, historians of nineteenth-century theatre, such as George Taylor and Joseph Donohue**,** have consulted technical manuals and descriptions of performances to try to reconstruct the methods used by actors in the Victorian period.[8] Concurrently, socio-economic studies have viewed acting, and the work of the actor-manager, as a profession at the heart of networks of cultural and financial exchange. Examples of this type of work include Michael Baker's use of census records to explore the development of the English acting profession, Benjamin McArthur's more recent, but methodologically equivalent, study of its American counterparts, and Tracy C. Davis' book on *The Economics of the British Stage*.[9] Finally, aligning with the theoretical concept of performance as a trope that can transcend theatrical boundaries, acting has been considered in a cultural context under the more general title of performance histories. Works such as Lynn Voskuil's book on *Theatricality and Authenticity* in Victorian Britain have shown how incorporating the notions of theatrical and cultural performances into a single work of scholarship can provide a nuanced and exciting acting history.[10]

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[8] George Taylor, *Players and Performances in the Victorian Theatre* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989; repr. 1993); Joseph Donohue, 'Actors and Acting', in *The Cambridge Companion to Victorian and Edwardian Theatre,* ed. by Kerry Powell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004; repr. 2005), pp. 17-35.

[9] Baker, Michael, *The Rise of the Victorian Actor* (London: Croom Helm; Totowa: Rowman and Littlefield, 1978); Benjamin McArthur, *Actors and American Culture, 1880-1920* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2000); Tracy C. Davis, *The Economics of the British Stage, 1800-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000; repr. 2007).

[10] Lynn Voskuil, *Acting Naturally: Victorian Theatricality and Authenticity,* (London: University of Virginia Press, 2004).

Each of these historians, coming from different academic and theoretical perspectives, has created a type of acting history that has added breadth and depth to the historiographical canon. The number and variety of primary sources used by these scholars also bears witness to the widespread preservation of the Victorian theatrical record: letters, account books, technical manuals, and performance reviews from the contemporary press, amongst other sources, have been used extensively to provide a rich and varied background for sophisticated research into acting in this period of history. Nevertheless, the focus on documentary sources in all of the works cited above also represents what has, until recently, been one of the most significant absences in the historiography of nineteenth-century theatre. Despite the myriad of images pertaining to acting in this period held in theatre-specific and more general collections, there had been little significant work on visual material in this period over the course of the twentieth century. For the most part, images included in theatre histories had primarily been used illustratively, with little acknowledgement of the complexities of visual representation. This has changed significantly even over the course of the research for this thesis, which has taken place over six years, and the constantly evolving nature of nineteenth-century theatrical research, which has inevitably influenced the direction and structuring of my own research, is reflected in the number of works in the bibliography published since the year 2000. In addition, the awarding in 2014 of an AHRC collaborative doctoral award to the University of Bristol and National Portrait Galleries to investigate theatrical portraits of the mid-nineteenth century is recognition of the place of such work at the leading edge of the field. Still, it is worth briefly examining the reasons for such a longstanding historiographical gap before looking at the efforts of historians attempting to close it.

In the 1980s and early 1990s three major works on theatre and visual culture provided the benchmark for the incorporation of theatre history and visual methodologies. Two of these, Martin Meisel's *Realizations,* and Michael Booth's study of *Victorian Spectacular Theatre,* were focused on the nineteenth century, with Meisel interested in the connections between narrative constructions in

fine art, theatre, and literature in this period, and Booth in the creation of visual, 'spectacular', effects and set pieces on the Victorian stage.[11] These were followed by Shearer West's study of the relationship between eighteenth-century portraits of actors and the acting methods they adopted in performance, discussed in further detail below.[12] What is particularly notable about these works of secondary literature, however, is how isolated they were methodologically; the fact that a quarter of a century on they are still cited as the major historical works on theatre and visual culture is evidence for the paucity of the field at the turn of the century. In this period, the publication at the end of the 1990s by Thomas F. Heck of a guide to iconographical techniques whose explicitly stated aim was to encourage historians of the performing arts to engage in a 'systematic study of the visual arts', and to use images as more than 'ancillary illustration', was symptomatic of the problem of a persistent and longstanding bias against the use of visual analysis in theatre histories.[13]

At roughly the same time, this perceived disconnect between theatre studies and visual culture was also highlighted by the *Theatre Journal,* whose editor, David Román, put together a special edition on the subject. He included in this work a number of cross-disciplinary studies, essays on portraiture and performance, theatre and fashion, and performance in modernist photography, and in the editor's comments at the beginning of the journal he acknowledged the prioritization of written over visual sources within the whole remit of theatre and performance history. He attributed this bias to the fact that, 'The Aristotelian tradition of privileging the text over the visual continues to inform the field of theatre studies.'[14] As this thesis explores, this was a bias that also

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[11] Michael R. Booth, *Victorian Spectacular Theatre, 1850-1910* (Boston, MA: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981); Martin Meisel, *Realizations: Narrative, Pictorial, and Theatrical Arts in Nineteenth-Century England* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983).
[12] Shearer West, *The Image of the Actor: Verbal and Visual Representation in the Age of Garrick and Kemble* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991).
[13] Thomas F. Heck, 'Introduction', in *Picturing Performance: The Iconography of the Performing Arts in Concept and Practice*, ed. by Thomas F. Heck (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 1999), pp. 1, 6.
[14] David Román, 'Editor's Comment: Theatre and Visual Culture', in *Theatre and Visual Culture,* ed. by David Román (=*Theatre Journal,* 53.1 (March 2001)).

informed Victorian ideas about their own theatrical practice, and necessitates the justification of the study of theatrical performance through visual material against not only modern but also historical ideas about theatrical performance. Nevertheless, Román's notion, that a historical concept of theatre was limiting the development of new methodological approaches to theatre history, has been a key concern in the narrative of twenty-first century theatrical historiography.

 In Jacky Bratton's *New Readings in Theatre History,* she identified the organization of theatre history as framed through the opposition of binary pairs, 'text and context, high and low [theatre], the written drama and the materiality of the stage', informed by the nineteenth-century idea of *Theatrewissenschaft,* 'the reified separation of text and context […] the dramatist is the creative artist, the theatre should serve his genius'.[15] Not only does this divide provide no room for the presence of the actor on the stage, and cancel any agency that he might have had in the theatrical process, but it also, as Bratton claimed, encourages a quasi-archaeological study of documentary material.[16] A similar dichotomy, between 'documentary histories' of theatre and 'cultural histories', has been outlined by historian Thomas Postlewait in his more recent *Introduction to Theatre Historiography*, where cultural histories are described as theoretical approaches encompassing the historical context of theatre without detailed descriptions of performances.[17] He argued that neither the exhaustive study and description of individual performance nor a focus purely on cultural concerns is a sufficient condition for sophisticated historical writing, and claimed rather that the development of new methodological approaches in theatre history is contingent upon reconciling these two types of history to create works of scholarship in which nuanced contextual and theoretical approaches are underpinned by a solid understanding of primary material.[18]

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[15] Jacky Bratton, *New Readings in Theatre History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 10-11, 16.
[16] Bratton, *New Readings,* pp. 5-14.
[17] Thomas Postlewait, *The Cambridge Introduction to Theatre Historiography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009; repr. 2012), pp. 27-85.
[18] Postlewait, *Introduction to Theatre Historiography,* pp. 225-269.

Whilst neither volume explicitly considered the use of visual materials or methodologies as a way of developing the study of theatre history, both authors were concerned with using the objects connected with theatre as a way to overcome these dichotomies. In a case-study on popular theatre in London in 1832, Bratton posited the use of playbills, traditionally 'the essence of theatrical antiquarianism' not just as a source of information on plays performed in London at certain theatres but as evidence of 'those most difficult and evanescent aspects of theatre history – the expectations and disposition of the audience, their personal experience of theatre'.[19] In a similar vein, Christopher B. Balme has recently written of the playbill as 'a crucial link between the inside and the outside of the institution, between the social world of the public and the socio-aesthetic practices of the theatre'.[20] Finally, in a recent special edition of *Nineteenth Century Theatre & Film* devoted to the connection between theatre, art and visual culture, Michael Diamond has provided a parallel analysis of the theatrical poster as a point of interaction between theatre managers and the expectations of their public.[21] All of these writers analysed their material sources as narrative tools that contain literal information about contemporary theatrical productions but also as objects, with form, substance, design, and historical context. As Balme has written elsewhere, images of theatrical performances deserve a similarly nuanced approach.[22]

Like playbills, images of the actor or actress sit at the centre of networks of exchange and on the boundary between the practice of theatre and the public consumption of the actor or actress. They also have a dual function for the

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[19] Bratton, *New Readings,* pp. 38, 39, 40-66.

[20] Christopher B. Balme, 'Playbills and the Theatrical Public Sphere', in *Representing the Past: Essays in Performance Historiography*, ed. by Charlotte M. Canning and Thomas Postlewait (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2010), pp. 37-62 (p. 41).

[21] Michael Diamond, 'Theatre Posters and How They Bring the Past to Life', in *Theatre, Art, and Visual Culture in the Nineteenth Century,* ed. by Jim Davis and Patricia Smyth (=*Nineteenth Century Theatre and Film*, 39.1 (Summer 2012)), pp. 60-77.

[22] Christopher B. Balme, 'Interpreting the Pictorial Record: Theatre Iconography and the Referential Dilemma', in *Theatre and Iconography,* ed. by Robert L. Erenstein and Laurence Senelick (=*Theatre Research International,* 22.3 (Autumn 1997)), pp. 190-201.

historian that could be used to overcome the dichotomies identified in Bratton and Postlewait's theoretical work, encompassing both the theatrical event and its historical context. Firstly, from the purely archaeological or documentary viewpoint, they provide a record of acting and performance useful to the historian seeking to reconstruct aspects of acting history, and seeking to relate performance to play text. It was this aspect of the art, the relationship between eighteenth-century theatrical portraiture and acting technique that Shearer West originally highlighted in her analysis of images of David Garrick (1717-1779) and John Philip Kemble (1757-1823).[23] However, despite her use of portraits as documentary evidence, West warned explicitly, as did Heck and Balme, against the treatment of theatrical iconography simply as an illustration of a play's performance.[24] Theatrical portraits of the eighteenth century, she stated, 'did not convey the specific nature of performances, but were coded responses to the performances which had as much to do with prevailing tendencies in art as with the minutiae of theatrical presentation'.[25] In her work on paintings of actresses from a similar period, which has comprised both academic research and the curation of the National Portrait Gallery's 2011 exhibition *The First Actresses,* Gill Perry has also described theatrical portraits as 'surfaces inscribed with meanings [... that ...] are neither self-sufficient nor finite' until analysed against the expectations and visual understandings of their viewers.[26] The writings of both these authors demonstrated in some detail that in order to successfully incorporate visual material into acting history it is necessary to consider its place not only in a history of theatre but also in more general histories of representation and contemporary cultural contexts.

In this sense, starting with the connection between Ruskin's artist and Stoker's actor-manager is both historically and historiographically apt. One of the major research outputs of the last few years on the dialogue between the visual

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[23] West, *Image of the Actor.*

[24] Heck, 'Introduction'; Balme, 'Interpreting the Pictorial Record'.

[25] West, *Image of the Actor,* p. 26.

[26] Gill Perry, *Spectacular Flirtations: Viewing the Actress in British Art and Theatre, 1768-1820* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), p. 21; Gill Perry, Joseph Roach, and Shearer West, eds, *The First Actresses: Nell Gwyn to Sarah Siddons* (London: NPG, 2011).

language of theatre and Victorian philosophies of representation has been the collection of essays *Ruskin, The Theatre, and Victorian Visual Culture,* published in 2009 as a result of Lancaster University's AHRC-funded Ruskin programme, run from 2004 to 2007.[27] Its central aim, according to editor Katherine Newey, was 'to think of the Victorian theatre existing not just in parallel to the visual arts, but as a cultural product which is *part* of this modernizing visual culture', and although hinged on the popular rather than so-called 'legitimate' theatre, the essays in this volume covered a wide range of theatrical styles and genres.[28] Ultimately, the project demonstrated how images could be used in a cultural history of theatre to address the second half of Bratton and Postlewait's dichotomy, the contextual element of theatrical practice. The work contained essays from a number of contributors who have published elsewhere on theatre and visual culture including Jim Davis, who has just completed a monograph on the iconography of Victorian comedy, and David Mayer, whose earlier study of actresses' photographs in this period successfully explored the networks of exchange and benefit that surrounded the production and dissemination of such images.[29] It also contained further work by Shearer West, this time on photographic portraits of actor-manager Henry Irving and his leading lady Ellen Terry (1847-1928).[30] Looking at Irving and Terry's engagement with the photographic industry in terms of celebrity culture, West's essay discusses the

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[27] Anselm Heinrich, Katherine Newey and Jeffrey Richards, eds, *Ruskin, the Theatre and Victorian Visual Culture* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

[28] Katherine Newey, 'Speaking Pictures: The Victorian Stage and Visual Culture', *Ruskin, the Theatre and Victorian Visual Culture*, ed. by Anselm Heinrich, Katherine Newey, and Jeffrey Richards (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 1-15 (p. 6).

[29] Whilst Jim Davis' monograph has yet to be published, an example of his work on the iconography of comedy in this period other than that produced in the Ruskin volume can be found here: Jim Davis, '"Chaste as a Picture by Wilkie": The Relationship between Comic Performance and Genre Painting in Early Nineteenth-Century British Theatre', *Nineteenth Century Theatre and Film,* 35 (2008), 3-16; David Mayer, 'The Actress as Photographic Icon: From Early Photography to Early Film', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Actress,* ed. by Maggie B. Gale and John Stokes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 74-94.

[30] Shearer West, 'The Photographic Portraiture of Henry Irving and Ellen Terry', in *Ruskin, the Theatre and Victorian Visual Culture,* ed. by Anselm Heinrich, Katherine Newey and Jeffrey Richards (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 187-215.

complex and different relationships that these two figures had with the photographic medium, and the way it was conceived of and used by them in relation to other arts such as painting and drawing.[31] It is an excellent example of the inclusion of imagery from the late nineteenth century in a history of acting, and an exploration of ideas about photography in this period, although she is less interested in Irving's role as an actor-manager in this piece than in his relationship with artistic practice.

Intriguingly, despite the fact that the scope of the field has changed drastically in the last few years, and that the use of visual material in histories of Victorian theatre is an ever-expanding field, a recent special edition on theatre, art and visual culture in the journal *Nineteenth Century Theatre & Film* suggested that this continues to be a result of the 'rewards of looking across disciplinary borders' rather than simply a development of theatre history *per se*, and this is evident in a number of the works discussed above.[32] West's work, for example, has always been positioned disciplinarily from an art historical perspective, rather than that of a theatre studies or literature department, and the same is true of Perry's work on fine art images of the actress.[33] As Bratton and Balme's work on playbills, or Diamond's on theatre posters, has indicated, it is in the materiality of both of the images that represented theatrical productions, and the subjects they depicted, that contemporary theatre and acting histories can truly explore the reality of the theatrical performance and the contexts that surrounded it.[34] As is demonstrated below, and throughout the course of this thesis, both the body of the actor-manager, and the images that represented him, can be read as material objects, created and received as manifestations of identity. The inclusion of cross-disciplinary narratives of design and

[31] West, 'The Photographic Portraiture of Henry Irving and Ellen Terry'.
[32] Patricia Smyth, 'Editorial: Theatre, Art and Visual Culture in the Nineteenth Century', in *Theatre, Art and Visual Culture in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. by Jim Davis and Patricia Smyth (=*Nineteenth Century Theatre and Film*, 39.1 (Summer 2012)), pp. xvii-xxv (p. xxiii).
[33] West, *Image of the Actor;* West, 'The Photographic Portraiture of Henry Irving and Ellen Terry'; Perry, *Spectacular Flirtations*; Perry, Roach and West, *The First Actresses.*
[34] Bratton, *New Readings,* pp. 40-66; Balme, 'Playbills and the Theatrical Public Sphere'; Diamond, 'Theatre Posters and How They Bring the Past to Life'.

embodiment and the nature of the actor-manager's role in theatrical practice makes design history, and its perspective on both visual and material culture, a natural fit for such scholarship.

Bodies, Images, and the Design of Identity

The inclusion of the image of the late nineteenth-century actor-manager in a narrative of his identity is historiographically important, and the rigorous interrogation of largely unstudied visual material forms a large part of the methodological approach embraced in this work. In this respect, it is important to understand the concerns outlined above, but it is equally crucial to recognize that the primary subject of the thesis is not the images themselves, but a deconstruction of the narratives of the actor-manager's identity specifically, and the centrality of the body to the construction of such identities. In theory, this body-centric understanding of identity applies both to representations of the subject in visual media, a mode of understanding identity that has been described as a 'para-social interaction', and also to interpersonal or social encounters, which feature to a lesser extent in this work.[35] Whether dealing with the interpretation of theatrical characters, or the presentation of the actor-manager off the stage, both of which are covered in some detail, it is important to understand several facts about the nature of the body in these contexts. Firstly, notwithstanding the different types of interaction, the body is always a major tool for conveying a sense of the subject's identity to the audience or viewer; secondly, whilst images may be crafted to give the impression that they convey a 'natural' body, particularly in terms of the subject's appearance, this is entirely disingenuous: within such images, the body must always be conceived of as a designed and crafted object, framed through dress and appearance. Finally, due to the body-centric nature of the acting profession, it can be argued

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[35] Chris Rojek used this terminology extensively in his study of celebrity to explain the experiential gap between interacting with a subject on a direct level, and seeing their identity only through mediated representations, particularly in mass-media images. It has also been adapted for this thesis to include the term 'para-theatrical', used to describe the difference between the experience of an audience member who had been to the theatre to see a production, and one who had experienced it through a mediating agency. Chris Rojek, *Celebrity* (London: Reaktion Books, 2001; repr. 2010), p. 52.

that the design of identity through representations of the body is more evident in the case of the actor, and therefore more influential on subsequent narratives, than that of other figures, and that therefore the use of the actor's body in a discourse of his identity involves a more theoretically nuanced approach than might be applied to that of other subjects.

The most immediate and obvious example of the translation of identity into visual media is portraiture, and in his comprehensive and influential work on the subject, art historian Richard Brilliant has acknowledged the importance of such images in the creation of individual identities that can transcend the life of the viewer in much the same way as a work of biography, seeing the portrait as 'the creation of a visible identity sign by which someone can be known, possibly for ever'.[36] However, as Elizabeth Edwards's and Janet Hart's work on photographs has indicated, the materiality of images, and their status as objects, can be as important to their narrative as their visual content, and in a more recent survey of the same subject, Shearer West has read the portrait not just as an image with signifying properties of identity but also as an object that can function as 'a proxy or a substitute for the sitter', and that therefore becomes his or her identity rather than simply standing for it.[37] In an explicit and theoretical positioning of the portrait as a biographical object, Linda Rugg discussed the symbiotic relationship between the photographs and autobiographical texts of Mark Twain (1835-1910), August Strindberg (1849-1912), Walter Benjamin (1892-1940), and Christa Wolf (1929-2011), and although her concern is autobiography, with the attendant complexities brought on by the conflation of author and subject, her statement that 'photographs in an autobiographical context also insist on something material, the *embodied* subject' could apply

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[36] Richard Brilliant, *Portraiture* (London: Reaktion Books, 1991; repr. 2013), p. 14. Initially published in 1991, Brilliant's work is now a quarter of a century old, but the existence of at least five reprints of the book over the intervening period is an acknowledgement of its continued importance as a work of scholarship at the centre of the art-historical canon.
[37] Elizabeth Edwards and Janice Hart, eds, *Photographs Objects Histories: On the Materiality of Images* (London: Routledge, 2004; repr. 2010); Shearer West, *Portraiture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 59.

equally to an image used in the context of biographical narrative.[38] Finally, closer to the subject of this thesis, and the period under discussion, Julie Codell examined the inclusion of portraits of artists in Victorian biographies. Following the theoretical work of Erving Goffman on theories of self-presentation, she viewed such images as a means of identity communication through which 'inferences may be made about […] the biographical subjects, which the authors may not wish to state directly.'[39]

Each of these authors embraced a slightly different perspective on the portrait, but all acknowledged that it was a key visual symbol of the subject's identity, and whilst also discussing the whole composition of the image in question, they invariably sited the expression of their subjects' identities in the composition and display of their bodies. For Brilliant, the first in his list of the 'essential constituents of a person's identity' was 'a recognized or recognizable appearance', and although West acknowledged that ideas of character and identity have evolved through time, she stated that portraiture 'represents the "front" of a person – their gesture, expression, and manner – in such a way as to contain their distinct identity'.[40] For Rugg, 'the integration of photographs into the autobiographical act highlights the presence of the author's body, and seems to claim the body as the source and focus of the autobiographical text', and in Codell's study 'a unique visual paratext of photographs […] represented the abstract issue of artists' sociality through images of the artists' body'.[41] Furthermore, intrinsic to each of the discussions mentioned above was the appearance of the body in the images in question, designed through a mixture of pose and dress to create the desired identity of the sitter for the eyes of the viewer and Codell, for example, noted the absence (or presence) of the working smock in the image of the artist as an important facet of their expression of the

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[38] Linda Haverty Rugg, *Picturing Ourselves: Photography & Autobiography* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), p. 13. Emphasis as original.
[39] Julie F. Codell, 'Victorian Artists' Family Biographies: Domestic Authority, the Marketplace, and the Artist's Body', in *Biographical Passages: Essays in Victorian and Modernist Biography*, ed. by Joe Law and Linda K. Hughes (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2000), pp. 65-108 (p. 98-99).
[40] Brilliant, *Portraiture,* p. 9; West, *Portraiture,* pp. 36-37.
[41] Rugg, *Picturing Ourselves,* p. 14; Codell, 'Family Biographies', p. 66.

artist's identity.[42] As framed by all of these texts, the art of expressing identity through portraiture lies in making the viewer or audience believe that the bodies that they see in these images are a true and natural manifestation of the subject's identity, a stripping bare of their personality for public consumption. However, as each of these authors acknowledged, nothing could be further from the truth; at the end of the day, the body within the portrait, and the identity expressed therein, has been carefully constructed in a conspiracy between artist, subject, and in some of these cases biographical author, to create this disingenuous impression of the natural body.

As indicated by Codell's reliance on Erving Goffman's theory of *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, the idea that the body is never natural, but is always constructed with an eye to conveying a specific type of identity, is not limited to discussions of portraiture, but is a longstanding feature of the analysis of social interaction.[43] In a terminology copied by West, Goffman referred to this crafting of identity through physical attributes as the creation of a 'personal front', divided into stimuli of 'appearance' and 'manner', both of which were defined through the construction and presentation of the body, and identity framed through the body as a synthesis of appearance and manner is a recurring trope of this thesis.[44] As Goffman acknowledged, whilst some physical elements of appearance could be considered fixed, many of them could be physically manipulated in the process of dressing to create a particular effect for the audience, and in this respect, the body functions as a conscious rather than reflexive feature of self-presentation, and should not be separated from its outward trappings. In *The Fashioned Body*, sociologist Joanne Entwistle discussed this link between the dressed body and social interaction as 'a means

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[42] Codell, 'Family Biographies', pp. 87, 97.

[43] Codell, 'Family Biographies'.

[44] West, *Portraiture,* pp. 20, 36-37; Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (London: Penguin Books, 1959; repr. 1990), pp. 34-35. Interestingly, given the subject matter of this work, Goffman also viewed social situations as a version of theatrical performance, using a theatrical metaphor as the basis for his study. The issue of separating theatrical performance and the performance of self in everyday life is discussed in more detail in '"On and Off the Stage:" Balancing the Record of Celebrity', pp. 164-180.

by which individuals orientate themselves to the social world', and similar assertions have been made by a number of other fashion theorists and historians, including Jennifer Craik, who saw fashion as 'an elaborated body technique through which a range of personal and social statements can be articulated', and Elizabeth Wilson and Amy de la Haye, who introduced their collection of essays on dress as *Object, Meaning, and Identity* with the idea that: 'The body is now explicitly understood not as a biological but as a social construct producing multiple meanings. Dress is clearly a part of that meaning.'[45] Although primarily concerned with the vagaries of the fashion industry, Entwistle's claim that scholars too often separate body and dress, when the body presented within the social context is almost always a dressed body, is important within the scope of any discussion of the construction of identity through the body.

From both a practice-based and research perspective, with several years' experience working in theatre costume departments, and a Master's degree in History of Dress, the genesis of this project lies with studies of the theatrical and social symbology of dress, and it is therefore unsurprising that scholarship on dress and fashion has been hugely influential on the approach to this thesis, and to the study of identities constructed in the body. It is also significant that most histories and theories of dress, including those discussed above, consider it as a means not only of expressing a personal, private identity, but also of aligning the subject with, and in opposition to, social and cultural groupings including, but not limited to, gender, class, nationality and professional status. Studies of both masculinity and menswear in the nineteenth century, such as the recent work of John Potvin on homosociality in this period, or John Tosh's longstanding interest in Victorian cultures of masculinity, Laura Ugolini's work on men's clothing choices and biographical narratives, or Christopher Breward's and

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[45] Joanne Entwistle, *The Fashioned Body: Fashion, Dress and Modern Social Theory* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000; repr. 2009), p. 39; Jennifer Craik, *The Face of Fashion: Cultural Studies in Fashion* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 16; Amy de la Haye and Elizabeth Wilson, 'Introduction', in *Defining Dress: Dress as Object, Meaning and Identity*, ed. by Amy de la Haye and Elizabeth Wilson (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), pp. 1-9 (p. 3).

Brent Shannon's work on, respectively, fashionable and middle-class male consumption at the end of the nineteenth century, have all identified the struggle towards both individualistic and group identities in this period as a key component of self-presentation in verbal, visual, and sartorial discourses.[46] As discussed below, the very category of the actor-manager was created as the result of concurrent needs to acknowledge the leading figures of the theatrical profession as outstanding individuals, and to define them as a group. As the title of this thesis 'Artist, Professional, Gentleman' suggests, it focuses on actor-managers' attempts to align their own identity with that of others in these particular social categories through the body, not simply as an expression of personal taste or interior character. It also discusses these as a result both of the presentation of the body in everyday life and of the construction of the body in the theatrical context; asking what differentiates the body of theatrical performer, and subsequently affects its role in the design of identity, from that of other subjects.

In many ways, it is an obvious statement that the body is crucial to a history of acting, the actor and, by extension, the actor-manager. The work of George Taylor, who traced the development of the movement and positioning of the body on the stage and its relation to the creation of character and emotion through an analysis of nineteenth-century acting handbooks, provided a direct and detailed correlation between the body and the actor's craft in the Victorian period.[47] At the other end of the scale, modern performance theorists such as Philip B. Zarrilli or Colette Conroy have explored processes of embodiment, whereby the mental state of the actor transforms his relationship with his own body in the course of creating character, as an overriding feature of acting in all

[46] John Potvin, *Material and Visual Cultures Beyond Male Bonding, 1870-1914: Bodies, Boundaries and Intimacy* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008); Michael Roper and John Tosh, eds, *Manful Assertions: Masculinities in Britain since 1800* (London: Routledge, 1991); Laura Ugolini, *Men and Menswear: Sartorial Consumption in Britain, 1880-1939* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2007); Christopher Breward, *The Hidden Consumer: Masculinities, Fashion and City Life, 1860-1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999); Brent Shannon, *The Cut of his Coat: Men, Dress, and Consumer Culture in Britain, 1860-1914* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2006).
[47] Taylor, *Players and Performances.*

periods of history.[48] In their essay 'Researching the Body in/as Performance',
Jennifer Parker-Starbuck and Roberta Mock have claimed that a current trend
for 'body-centred performance research' is the result of 'the ubiquity of acting
and performing bodies at the centre of theatrical activities', although the
research they are interested in is primarily contemporary and practice-based
rather than historical and archival. [49] These theories are important to an
understanding of the praxis and method of acting, but can also help to elaborate
the specific and highly self-conscious relationship that an actor has with body
and appearance, differentiating him from other possible subjects for this type of
enquiry. As is shown throughout this thesis, a hyper-awareness of appearance
implies a certain amount of agency on the part of the actor in the crafting of his
image for public consumption. However, as Dennis Kennedy has argued, the
constructed nature of the body in the theatrical performance means that the
body of the actor is not just created, but also read, in a different way. If, as this
thesis demonstrates, the bodies on the stage were framed with reference to
contemporary cultural standards, then, Kennedy stated, as the object of a
cultural gaze, 'the actor's body is probably more subject to historical forces than
the bodies of non-performers'.[50] Yet whilst it may have been subject to more
intense cultural scrutiny, as Michael Mangan pointed out in his historical survey
of masculinity on the stage, the reading of the gendered body in the theatre, like
that of social interaction, was dependent on being able to integrate individual
and group identities, and 'demand[ed] an interplay on the part of the audience
between the self as individual and the self as part of a collective entity'.[51]

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[48] Phillip B. Zarrilli, 'Towards a Phenomenological Model of the Actor's
Embodied Modes of Experience', in *Theorizing the Performer,* ed. by Harry J.
Elam, Jr. (=*Theatre Journal,* 56.4 (December 2004)), pp. 653-666; Colette
Conroy, *Theatre & the Body* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).
[49] Jennifer Parker-Starbuck and Roberta Mock, 'Researching the Body in/as
Performance', in *Research Methods in Theatre and Performance,* ed. by Baz
Kershaw and Helen Nicolson (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011),
pp. 210-232 (pp. 210, 212).
[50] Dennis Kennedy, *The Spectator and the Spectacle: Audiences in Modernity and
Postmodernity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 146.
[51] Michael Mangan, *Staging Masculinities: History, Gender, Performance*
(Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), p. 20.

Interestingly, Entwistle's concern that the separation of discussions of dress and the body weaken sociological studies of the presentation of self in social situations is also highly relevant to the study of the presentation of character and the actor's body in the theatrical context. Obviously, as stated above, there is a referential difference between the dressed body of the actor in the theatrical paradigm, where an audience is conscious of the act of construction and performance, and the body in a portrait, where that consciousness is deliberately repressed. Anne Hollander argued that theatre costume should be considered differently because 'the frame around the [theatrical] events invites intensified attention to what is being worn; we know it is there intentionally even though it represents something worn casually'.[52] However, in her study *The Actor In Costume*, Aoife Monks argued that costume is not just incidental to the body in theatrical performance, nor simply a symbolic representation of character stating that, in many ways, 'costuming is indistinguishable from the actor [...] it makes the actor's body possible, and is fundamental to the relationship between the actor and the audience.'[53] Whilst Hollander analysed theatrical costume as a facet in the manifestation of characters, Monk's insistence that it is integral to the dynamic of actor and audience, and implicitly the success of the actor, brings costume firmly within the remit of this study as a manifestation of the actor's own identity. If costume within the performance context is key to the public's relationship with the actor, then theatrical costume in the image of the actor must be crucial to a discussion of how the actor's skill was captured and memorialized for the public imagination.

From a design history perspective, accepting that the body is central to the visual narrative of the actor-manager's identity within and outside the theatrical context, leaves two major questions about the designed nature of that body, and its production and consumption, which are the subject of constant discussion throughout the chapters that follow. The first problem is one of consumption, and of the relationship between the intended and the actual visual

[52] Anne Hollander, *Seeing Through Clothes* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975; repr. 1993), p. 239.
[53] Aoife Monks, *The Actor in Costume* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p. 12.

consumer of the actor-manager's self-presentation. Both Monks' discussion of theatre costume and Entwistle's analysis of everyday fashion saw dress and the body as an interface between subject and audience, and the variation in the contexts, composition, and volubility of those audiences is a problem for the interpretation of the primary material.[54] If, as Jim Davis and Victor Emeljanow have discussed, the audiences of Victorian theatres, even those in the fashionable West End, comprised individuals from all classes and walks of life, and if the 'para-social' reach of images outside the theatrical context was wider still, it must be assumed that the body of the actor-manager was being presented to a wide-ranging group of consumers, with different levels of visual and cultural reference, and moral and social perspectives.[55] One of the questions asked by this thesis is not only how these different audiences might have had different readings of the body, but if they should be prioritized in different ways, particularly in a discussion of the communication of identity for posterity.

The second issue is that if the identity communicated through the body is a designed or constructed one, it must have a designer or constructor, and the relative agency of the actor-manager in the production of and dissemination of his image is a crucial element of any discussion. According to Brilliant's model of painted portraiture, the agency, including decisions about manner and appearance, lay almost entirely with the artist rather than the subject of the portrait, and Audrey Linkman has provided a similarly proscriptive view of the control of photographers over their subjects, including their dress and appearance, in her writing on photographic portraits of the Victorian Era.[56] However, what Rugg's case-study of Mark Twain and Codell's work on Victorian artists indicated was that subjects with a certain cultural capital and an awareness of both the commercial and popular implications of their image exerted a great deal of control over the creation and dissemination of

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[54] Monks, *Actor in Costume*; Entwistle, *Fashioned Body.*
[55] Jim Davis and Victor Emeljanow, *Reflecting the Audience: London Theatregoing, 1840-1880* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2001).
[56] Brilliant, *Portraiture*; Audrey Linkman, *The Victorians: Photographic Portraits* (London: Tauris Parke Books, 1993), pp. 35-51.

portraits.[57] As a figure who was not only hyper-aware of the construction of the body within the theatrical paradigm, but also supposedly viewed as a representative of the theatre itself within this period, the actor-manager appears to have had this measure of cultural capital, but as this thesis proves time and again, actual agency and perceived agency are not always synonymous, and the body of the actor-manager inside and out of the theatre could often be described as the product of joint authorship.

'Snobbish Paradigms': The Actor-Manager as Subject

With these historiological and theoretical concerns in mind, it is worth taking a moment to consider, from a methodological perspective, the bounds of the thesis, and in particular the choice of actor-manager as subject, as opposed to that of other theatrical figures of the period. In summarizing the state of the field of twenty-first century research into Victorian theatre, Nina Auerbach claimed that its great strength has been its willingness to embrace previously neglected branches and practitioners of theatrical entertainment, its 'determination to disentangle theatre history from the class snobbery and exclusions – our own as well as the Victorians' – that initially limited the field', and to counter the 'snobbish paradigms' that informed triumphalist narratives of Victorian theatre written in the latter half of the twentieth century.[58] A similar claim has been made by Tracy C. Davis and Peter Holland, who positioned this trend for the examination of under-researched players in theatre history as a symptom of the discipline's engagement with wider historical trends for the examination of theoretical constructs and debates surrounding issues such as feminism, post-colonialism and 'Marxist-inflected microhistory'.[59] This has fuelled re-examinations of the status of the actress in Victorian theatre, and renewed interests in musical comedy, pantomime, and other forms of popular entertainment, as well as encouraging more studies of regional and

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[57] Rugg, *Picturing Ourselves*, pp. 29-78; Codell, 'Family Biographies'.
[58] Nina Auerbach, 'Before the Curtain', in *The Cambridge Companion to Victorian and Edwardian Theatre,* ed. by Kerry Powell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004; repr. 2005), pp. 3-14 (pp. 4, 5).
[59] Tracy C. Davis and Peter Holland, 'Introduction', in *The Performing Century: Nineteenth-Century Theatre's History,* ed. by Tracy C. Davis and Peter Holland (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp. 1-9 (p. 3).

provincial theatres and touring companies.[60] As Edward Ziter pointed out in an essay in this same volume on portraits of the actor Charles Mathews (1803-1878) in the early nineteenth century, his choice of subject was inspired not by Mathews' status as a theatre manager, but by the relative obscurity of comedy in theatre history, stating clearly his aim to refute the fact that 'in the minds of most scholars, it would appear, comic acting was incidental if not irrelevant to the artistic movements of the early nineteenth century'.[61]

Against this current trend in scholarship, an examination of the late-Victorian actor-manager, allegedly the hero of these 'triumphalist' narratives, exposes this thesis to an accusation of following a more traditional, hidebound and male-orientated model of theatre history centered around London's West End, and could therefore be seen as a problematic regression in academic research on theatre history. In fact, Tracy Davis has pointed out elsewhere that the very category of the 'actor-manager' is insufficiently specific from an economic perspective because it encompasses both those actors who rented spaces to stage their own productions and also those who were the lessees or proprietors of theatres, and who therefore had a more direct financial stake in the running of specific venues.[62] Similarly, from a social perspective, Jacky Bratton argued that much of the reshaping of theatrical standards seen as the result of actor-

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[60] Examples of this include Maggie Gale's work on actresses, and Peter Bailey's work on popular culture and performance, as well as Thomas Postlewait's essay on George Edwardes and musical comedy, and recent books by both Jill Sullivan and Jeffrey Richards on pantomime. Maggie B. Gale and Viv Gardner, eds, *Women, Theatre and Performance: New Histories, New Historiographies* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000); Peter Bailey, *Popular Culture and Performance in the Victorian City* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998; repr. 2003); Thomas Postlewait, 'George Edwardes and Musical Comedy: The Transformation of London Theatre and Society, 1878-1914', in *The Performing Century,* ed. by Tracy C. Davis and Peter Holland (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp. 80-102; Sullivan, Jill, *The Politics of the Pantomime: Regional Theatre, 1860-1900* (Hatfield: University of Hertfordshire Press, 2011); Jeffrey Richards, *The Golden Age of Pantomime: Slapstick, Spectacle and Subversion in Victorian England* (London: Tauris Parke, 2014).
[61] Edward Ziter, 'Charles Mathews, Low Comedian, and the Intersections of Romantic Ideology', in *The Performing Century,* ed. by Tracy C. Davis and Peter Holland (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp. 198-214 (p. 198).
[62] Tracy C. Davis, *The Economics of the British Stage, 1800-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000; repr. 2007), pp. 163-170.

management in this period could equally be attributed to the work of female figures of the mid-nineteenth century.[63] Finally, as the subsequent chapters make clear, a blurring of the lines, in terms of both social status and theatrical fame, between leading actors and actor-managers in this period, makes it difficult at times to distinguish between the various categories, and to separate the body of the actor-manager from that of other leading theatrical figures.

In terms of their perceived roles as both businessmen and creative figures in the theatrical process, however, there is a clear argument for separating out the actor-manager at the end of the nineteenth century from other leading actors of the period. Although it touches on a number of individuals involved in different types of management, this thesis focuses primarily on subjects that Davis has termed 'entrepreneurs', lessees or proprietors of theatres whose 'business histories constitute the narrative norm posing as a "universal standard"'. [64] As the individuals responsible for the upkeep of the venue and the financial success or failure of the productions staged therein, these actor-managers were intrinsically linked in discourse to the theatres they controlled. Thus the Lyceum Theatre was synonymous with the name of Henry Irving for a twenty-year period, from 1878 to 1899, and, as David Schulz has pointed out in an article for *Theatre Journal,* the renovation of Her Majesty's Theatre in the middle of the 1890s was tied up entirely with the social aspirations and cultural capital of Herbert Beerbohm Tree (1852-1917).[65] Dennis Kennedy, whose work on audiences is examined in more detail in the first chapter, viewed such a financial stake in the business as inherently changing the role of such figures, and their interaction with both their audiences and the creative side of productions, as

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[63] Jacky Bratton, 'The Shaping of West End Management', in *The Making of the West End Stage: Marriage, Management and the Mapping of Gender in London, 1830-1870* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 145-169.

[64] Davis, *Economics of the British Stage,* p. 166.

[65] David V. Schulz, 'The Architecture of Conspicuous Consumption: Property, Class, and Display at Herbert Beerbohm Tree's Her Majesty's Theatre', in *Theatre and Capital,* ed. by Loren Kruger (=*Theatre Journal,* 51.3 (October1999)), pp. 231-250.

they were forced 'to attract spectators while at the same time denying they were pandering to the public'.[66]

Moreover, for individuals such as Irving or Tree, a managerial role did not just extend to the building in which productions were housed, but also to the control of productions themselves. By the nature of their work not only as actors and theatrical managers, but also as *de facto* directors, designers, and producers of plays, actor-managers were invested with a great deal of agency in the construction of theatrical performances. Kennedy framed them as forerunners of the twentieth-century theatre director, and Jeffrey Richards has gone so far as to liken the actor-manager's involvement in theatrical production to that of the more recent *auteur* of cinematic theory.[67] As a theoretical construct, the actor-manager's putative position at the heart of the theatrical process, in essence the boundary between the creative and business sides of theatre, between producing and performing, and as a liaison between the act of performance and the context in which it was performed, conveys upon the image of the actor-manager layers of meaning that do not apply to all actors of this period. From an inter-disciplinary perspective, and the inclusion of ideas of embodiment, and the design of identity, the agency of the actor-manager, and his switching of roles between actor, designer and manager, facilitates more theoretical analysis of the nature of identity as sited in the actor-manager's body.

As this thesis demonstrates in its analysis of the creative aspects of theatre productions, the *auteurial* role of the actor-manager, and his prominence at the heart of the Victorian theatrical process, were as much a product of discourse and perception as a reality. However, it is important to acknowledge that whilst the reality of Victorian theatre was much more complex and varied than the arbitrary category of the actor-manager implied, this research is not centred around the reality of the actor-manager's position *per se,* but rather on the construction of a mythology surrounding his life and career, the 'manufacture'

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[66] Kennedy, *The Spectator and the Spectacle*, p. 29.
[67] Kennedy, *The Spectator and the Spectacle,* pp. 26-29; Jeffrey Richards, 'Henry Irving: The Actor-Manger as Auteur', *Nineteenth Century Theatre and Film*, 32.2 (November 2005), 20-35.

of Ruskin's artist and the making of him 'into current coin, or household plate'.[68]
The idea of the actor-manager as a central figure in late nineteenth-century
theatre, and the exclusion of more populist theatrical forms from the official
record, Auerbach's 'snobbish paradigm', has not just been an arbitrary decision
on the part of twentieth-century historians but, as Auerbach herself
acknowledges, was as much a product of the 'class snobbery and exclusions' of
the Victorian era as a historiographical trend.[69] Although, as Bram Stoker's
defense of the model admitted, it was not without its contemporary critics, the
model of the respectable, fashionable theatre of the middle and upper classes,
embodied by the image of the artistic, literate, and professional actor-manager,
was a vision of theatre embraced by theatrical reviews, publications, and
contemporary biographical narratives.[70] As such, the reality of nineteenth-
century theatre provides a point of comparison and a benchmark against which
to measure this model of the actor-manager's legacy, a construction resulting
from contemporary perceptions, subsequent collecting practices, and the fact
that actor-managers appear to have had the most impact on the historical
record in this period.

In embracing a relatively new evidentiary perspective, based around visual
material, it is worth revisiting previously-studied figures, in this case actor-
managers, to see how a new methodology can be used to deconstruct old
narratives. Moreover, as discussed in the previous section of this Introduction,
one of the most tantalizing aspects of identity construction is its shifting nature,
and the ability to reshape the body to express different facets of identity in
different contexts and for different audiences. To fully interrogate the
representation of the identity of any individual, or group of individuals, it is
therefore desirable to experience this bodily flexibility by looking at as wide a
range of representations of the same subject as possible. Although, as James
Thomas pointed out in his work on Wilson Barrett (1846-1904), not all actor-
managers in this period have received the same retrospective degree of

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[68] Stoker, 'Actor-Managers: I', p. 1045.
[69] Auerbach, 'Before the Curtain', pp. 4-5.
[70] Stoker, 'Actor-Managers: I'.

attention, the fact remains that a substantial proportion of the extant primary material on acting in this period does relate to London-based actor-managers and the theatres with which they were associated.[71]. This applies to both textual and visual sources; for example, a survey of images of six actor-managers in the Theatre and Performance Collection at the V&A, discussed in some detail in later chapters, found over 1300 photographs of these subjects, not to mention any number of sketches, drawings, and caricatures.[72] Although many of the text-based sources have already been subjected to extensive research, similar academic rigour has not been applied to the range of images in these collections, and focusing on the image of the actor-manager therefore opens up a wealth of unstudied archival material for this study and a wide range of evidence for their multi-valent construction of identity.

It is worth considering briefly the nature of this archive in the propagation of the legacy of the actor-manager because, as discussed by Maggie Gale and Ann Featherstone, the creation and maintenance of theatre and performance archives, involving inevitable questions over 'the viability of archiving an essentially ephemeral artistic form', has always been both conceptually and practically problematic. This is reflected both in their inclusion of 'a multiplicity of document forms, including visual and aural material […that…] necessitates a broad conceptual approach by researchers', but also in problems of cataloguing, completeness and accessibility, which have resulted in 'random and planned inclusions/exclusions in the provision, formation, and maintenance of theatre and performance archives themselves, as well as in their actual contents'.[73] In the UK, they suggested, this is reflected in the fact that collections are mostly state funded, and are the product of personal collections and donations, reliant

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[71] James Thomas, *The Art of the Actor-Manager: Wilson Barrett and the Victorian Theatre*, Theatre and Dramatic Studies: 15 (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1984).

[72] For a summary of this survey, its methodologies and some conclusions, see '"On and Off the Stage": Balancing the Record of Celebrity', pp. 151-158, and Table 1, p. 151, and Appendix A.

[73] Maggie B. Gale and Ann Featherstone, 'The Imperative of the Archive: Creative Archive Research', in *Research Methods in Theatre and Performance,* ed. by Baz Kershaw and Helen Nicolson (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), pp. 17-40 (pp. 20, 25).

on the interests of the private collector or archival curator. This obviously leaves collections, particularly those of the Victorian and Edwardian periods, open to a number of biases, the most crucial of which is that of class. Amassing substantial collections of memorabilia required capital, leisure and the space to keep it, whilst the intention that such material should be preserved in archival or museum collections was predicated upon an education and the knowledge of the worth of cultural artefacts; thus, such collections are largely a record of the interests and concerns of the elite few rather than the popular many, and do not necessarily represent either the breadth of material extant in the Victorian period, or the reality of the everyday theatregoing experience in Britain. The Theatre and Performance Collection at the V&A, where much of the research for this thesis was conducted, is no exception to this model, and the origin and the structuring of the collections supports a number of biases that ensured the perpetuation of both triumphalist narratives of theatre and the paradigm of actor management, and which, because of their influence of the subject matter of this thesis, deserve consideration.

As the first systematized collection devoted to theatre history in the UK, the Theatre and Performance Collection was originally a personal collection of theatrical memorabilia, amassed by Gabrielle Enthoven (1868-1950) in the early years of the twentieth century. Having started collecting in the early 1900s, Enthoven persuaded the V&A to accept the material in 1924, and personally ran the collection at the museum until 1950; her work still forms the basis of the current collections, and especially informs its cataloguing system, and a recent article by Kate Dorney, curator of Modern and Contemporary Performance at the V&A, has provided some interesting insights into Enthoven's collection strategies that explain several biases in the nature and structure of the collections.[74] Although the material only became part of the museum's

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[74] Kate Dorney, 'Excavating Enthoven: Investigating a Life of Stuff', *Studies in Theatre and Performance*, 24 (2014), 115-215. A detailed study of Enthoven's methodology, and that of the slightly later but equally individual Roy Waters, whose collection of theatrical ephemera was acquired by Royal Holloway University in 2010, is also currently the subject of a V&A and Royal Holloway collaborative doctoral studentship.

collections in 1924, as early as 1911 Enthoven intended that her collection should take the nature of a public record of British theatrical productions 'to encourage practitioners to raise their standards and set a good example to students' and was supported primarily by members of the theatrical establishment, including George Alexander (1858-1918), actor-manager of the St. James's Theatre from 1891 to 1918, and Herbert Beerbohm Tree, who managed first the Haymarket Theatre (1887-1897) and then Her Majesty's Theatre (1897-1917).[75] The interest of these individuals in Enthoven's collection is indicative of the active role of actor-managers in the creation of a historical record that preserved their own place at the heart of theatrical narratives. Incidentally, Tree also created his own legacy by keeping the financial and administrative records, prompt books, photographs, programmes, correspondence, and sixty-five volumes of press cuttings from his tenure at the Haymarket Theatre and Her Majesty's Theatre, an archive that was part of the Enthoven collection but was acquired in its entirety by the Bristol University Theatre Collection in 1973.[76]

Finally, as Dorney explained, the cataloguing of the Enthoven collection was 'predicated on the information on the playbill: venue, date and cast', a system that was extensively copied by other theatre collections in the middle of the twentieth century, and is still the main cataloguing method applied to the collection.[77] It now comprises two major series of files: individual biographical or image files, which consist of all the information pertaining to a given actor or actress, and the production files, which are sorted by theatre, and contain information on specific productions staged at a venue over the course of its existence. As discussed above, biographical research and narrative continue to be important in the remit of acting history, and it is obvious that this concentration of primary material on specific individuals perpetuates this form of study. Unfortunately, however, apart from the arbitrary division between

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[75] Dorney, 'Excavating Enthoven', pp. 117, 120.
[76] As with the V&A collections, the Herbert Beerbohm Tree Archive, containing a great deal of material from the late nineteenth century, has been instrumental in the research for this thesis.
[77] Dorney, 'Excavating Enthoven', p. 121.

biographical, image, and production files, and an attribution of names, dates and venues to particular objects, there is little interpretative information or indication of provenance about the material. This is particularly problematic for the visual material, as it has been simply assigned to files, often without a full understanding of its content or context; photographs have been separated from their backings, newspaper illustrations give no indication of date of publication or even periodical title, and there are a number of confusions between theatrical portraits and images of the actor-manager off the stage, even for particularly well-known figures. In essence, amount of material appears to have trumped type or source, and such a bias against qualitative analysis causes problems that are particularly relevant to both visual research and narratives of identity. A study of the representations, bodies, and identities of actor-managers, therefore, may be a perpetuation of 'snobbish paradigms' of Victorian theatre, but they are paradigms that deserves further investigation because they were not only intrinsic to contemporary understandings of Victorian theatrical practice, but also to large sections of the historical record. As such, a new perspective on such figures, and particularly an examination of evidence that is at present insufficiently understood, can be just as valuable to deconstructing that paradigm as moving the centre of research away from the figure of the actor-manager.

Thesis Structure

As identified by Stoker in his role as apologist for the profession, the actor-manager seems to have had two main characteristics, both of which have passed into the legacy of such figures and influenced subsequent historical narratives. The first is that of the actor-manager's perceived status as creative genius, both in terms of his success as a leading performer, and also his reputation as a director or designer in the theatrical process. The second is the idea of the actor-manager as a man of means and professionalism, as part of a cadre of elite individuals who represented the theatrical profession more widely, and who were responsible for its social reputation. Put simply, in order to become a successful actor-manager, Stoker was keen to point out the necessity for a man to have an aptitude both for acting and management, and to be able to present

both of those sides for public appreciation. This thesis seeks to deconstruct these narratives through a study of the intersection of the design of the body, ideas about performance, and the influence of visual media in the production and dissemination of actor-managers' identities, and the public perception of their artistic and professional success. As such, it is structured primarily around the examination of two specific contexts: that of actor-managers in costume on the stage, engaged in the act of theatrical performance, and that of them adopting offstage personas redolent of the qualities they sought to have ascribed to the profession more generally.

Whilst, ultimately, with its study of the design and construction of identity through the framing of the body, this thesis is a work of design history, it is also a type of theatrical or acting history, and draws on theatrical historiography as much as it does on the literature of body, identity, and representation. One of the recurring concerns of this work, also discussed by Postlewait and Bratton in their studies of theatre historiography, is that the context- and time-specific nature of theatrical performances, and in this case also of the creation of the visual sources that expressed the identity of actor-managers, necessitates a joint approach, which tackles both the wider conceptualization of the subject and also the context-specific nature of the primary material and the original performance moment.[78] Here, the wider question is that of the acknowledged role of the construction of the body in identity formation, and its relationship to models of performance and display, and the more specific approach is represented by a close reading of primary material, largely visual, relating to specific moments in the history of theatre that revealed the actor-manager's display, and the subsequent reception, of these bodies and identities. Following this model, the chapters of this thesis are balanced between those that deal with relevant theoretical and conceptual models of performance, bodies, identities, and viewing, and those that focus on the visual material, and study the manifestations of identity laid down either in the images pertaining to specific theatrical productions, or in sets of offstage portraits, which performed the same function of identity creation.

[78] Bratton, *New Readings*; Postlewait, *Introduction to Theatre Historiography.*

The first two chapters therefore tackle the role of the body in the first of Stoker's criteria for the success of an actor-manager, the establishment of his identity as a popular actor within the theatrical context, and his subsequent association with practitioners of the fine arts. Chapter One, '"Distinctly Intended to be a 'George'": Character, Appearance, and the Skill of the Actor', seeks to reclaim the role of the body in the contemporary understanding of theatrical characters, and views the manipulation of the body as a key element of the nineteenth-century actor's craft, and a part of the establishment of the actor's identity as an artist. It shows that vigorous claims by contemporary actors, that an over-reliance on the external shaping of the body rather than the internal workings of the mind demonstrated an actor's weakness of technique, were disingenuous, and influenced by a need to separate legitimate theatre from more populist forms of entertainment, and that even actors who claimed to disregard the body were highly aware of its role in the process of characterization. It then considers the literal engagement of actor-managers with the processes of bodily transformation as a practice as well as a theory, and their awareness of dressing as a key part of the everyday working life of the actor. Finally, it tackles the role of the body as a perceived element in theatrical performance, and particularly its status as a site of interaction between actor's art and audience expectations, considering the audience for which these bodies were being created, and the fact that they were mediated for consumption outside the context of the theatre.

Following on from this Chapter Two, 'Embodying Artistry: *Charles I, Othello* and *The Corsican Brothers* at the Lyceum Theatre, 1872-1881' explores in some detail how the reading of a specific theatrical body could contribute to the perceived success or failure of a character, and subsequently reflect upon the skill of the actor creating these roles. Specifically, it discusses the principal characters in three major plays, W. G. Wills' (1828-1891) *Charles I,* Dion Boucicault's (1822-1890) *The Corsican Brothers,* and Shakespeare's (1564-1616) *Othello,* produced by Henry Irving at the beginning of his management career at the Lyceum Theatre between 1872 and 1881, in all of which the actor-

manager played the male leads. As well as examining the impact of these roles on contemporary opinions of the abilities of Irving as an actor, in looking at the creation of these bodies from both a visual and material perspective, it shows how the actor-manager sought to align himself with fine art disciplines, and to perpetuate an understanding of his role both as a performer and as a designer of theatrical productions, and how he was attempting to create an identity for himself as an artist. Whilst it describes Irving's ability to influence the reactions of his audience in his favour, it also acknowledges that this reaction was not always solely a result of his own practice. It finally demonstrates how necessary it was for theatrical bodies to conform to the limitations placed on them by the cultural expectations of theatrical audiences, and that a failure to do so resulted in the sacrifice of approbation.

Turning away from an exclusively theatrical context, Chapter Three, '"On and Off the Stage": Balancing the Record' tackles the necessity of differentiating between theatrical and social performances of identity, and the role of the celebrity body as an exposition of genuine character. It considers the makeup of the visual record, and how theatrical identities were balanced against images of the actor-manager off the stage. It discusses particularly how the idea of understanding a real identity tied in with burgeoning celebrity culture, and then discusses specifically how the impression of the actor-manager as a creature of theatrical performance complicated the recovery of his true character and identity. Lastly, it identifies two main strands of the actor-manager's offstage identity, as perceived by contemporaries and captured in photographs, which played into two specific models of celebrity in the late nineteenth century, and also echoed Stoker's combination of the actor-manager as artist and businessman. The first of these, discussed in 'Sociability and the Artistic Body', is the identification of the actor-manager as a member of contemporary artistic communities, reflected in the presentation of his body as explicitly theatrical and non-normative. It discusses the establishment of creative identities more generally in this period, and particularly the actor-manager's status in relation to the nineteenth-century concept of Bohemianism. Specifically, it then frames

this facet of the actor-manager's identity as a product of homosocial and personal interactions, and a function of the private sphere.

By contrast, the second element of the actor-manager's offstage presence, often characterized in secondary literature as an inferior genre of portrait, is discussed in Chapter Five, '"Bourgeois Blandness": Creating the Professional Body', which examines the inclusion of actor-managers' portraits as collectible objects in periodicals of the 1880s, namely several series of portraits distributed with the *Saturday Programme, Men of Mark,* and the *Theatre.* It looks at these as examples of collective biography, and as a result of an increased interest in making leading men of the day available to the general public, and examines them in terms of the emerging concept of the professional body in this period. Combining quantitative and qualitative modes of examination, and looking both at the content and composition of such portraits, and their juxtaposition with one another as part of a series, this chapter brings to the fore a growing awareness both on the part of actor-managers and publishers of the need to present the actor's body as normative and as part of an increasingly coherent dramatic profession. The inclusion of actresses' portraits in some of the same series allows also for a direct comparison between the portraits of actors and their female counterparts in this period, and the consideration of the professional body as a trait of discourses of masculinity.

Finally, Chapter Six, '"Modern Men": Blurring the Lines Between Actor-Managers, Authors and Audiences' examines an important elision between onstage and offstage in the last decade of the nineteenth century, with the increasing popularity of plays set in contemporary fashionable life. It explores these productions not as forerunners of Edwardian theatre, but as a continuation of Victorian ideas about design, character, and representation. It considers the problem of modern dress as a means of exposing character, and the worry that a confluence of body and character is less evident in such production. It then discusses the way actor-managers aligned themselves with particular types of characters, and the bodies that represented them, in modern productions as a means of shoring up their reputations beyond the bounds of

the theatre, and the problematically fluid boundary between modern men on the stage and the appearance of actors in everyday life. Turning to the issue of agency, it then explores the working relationship of actor-managers and contemporary dramatists in this period, with the idea that the identities, and bodies, of the actor-managers in these productions can only be discussed in terms of joint authorship, considering specifically the problematic case of the 'Wildean dandy' and his relationship with contemporary ideas of the gentleman. Lastly, it considers the changing nature of audience composition in this period, and the theoretical problem of the conflation of the bodies of actor-managers, characters, and specific sections of the audience, which must be seen in terms of their relationship with one another in order to understand how such productions functioned as a means of reinforcing the actor-manager's identity.

Like Ruskin in his work on artists, Stoker clearly wished his readership to believe that the actor-manager had come to power in the theatre naturally as a result of his talent for acting and an ability to manage the financial, directorial, and design constraints that governed theatrical performances, and that his subsequent power within London theatre, and his attendant social standing, were merely a by-product of this initial, latent, skill.[79] In the same way, images of actor-managers in the late nineteenth century, and particularly the representation of their bodies, purported to illustrate the end product of this process, showing them either in the moment of performance, or dressed for everyday life as an artist, professional, or gentleman. If this thesis has an argument, it is the assumption that 'you have always to find your artist, not to make him' was one of the great fallacies of nineteenth-century narrative, and that it was as applicable to the identity of the actor-manager as it was to that of any other public figure. However, rather than being argumentative, it is better to conceive of this study in terms of an exploration of different elements of the actor-manager's identity, and the crafting of these elements through narratives of the body and visual representations of the actor-manager in this period. If, ultimately, actor-managers have been considered as artists, professionals, and gentlemen, this has been the result of a series of complex decisions, numerous

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[79] Stoker, 'Actor-Managers: I', p. 1045.

levels of discourse, and even accidents of history. Hopefully, these chapters provide a way of illuminating some of these transactions, and deconstructing one element of the narrative of the late-Victorian actor-manager.

'Distinctly intended to be a "George"': Character, Appearance, and the Skill of the Actor

In February 1880, under the fledgling management of Edgar Bruce (1845-1901), and much to the dismay of contemporary critic Lewis Wingfield (1842-1891), the Prince of Wales's Theatre revived Florence Grove (1838-1902) and Herman Merivale's (1839-1906) *Forget-Me-Not,* originally produced the previous year at the Lyceum Theatre. Wingfield's scathing review of the production appeared in the periodical *Theatre* on 1 April 1880, and criticized extensively Bruce's choice of play and his staging of the piece, although he admitted the 'acting [was] good in most instances'.[1] Yet in the context of this thesis, the most intriguing part of Wingfield's piece was his description of John Clayton's (1845-1887) performance in the leading role of Sir Horace Welby. It revealed a connection in the mind of the critic between Clayton's skill as an actor, his relationship with the character of Sir Horace, and his physical appearance on stage in the part, and as such is worth reprinting at some length:

> Mr. Clayton, in the part of Sir Horace, finds a character which he grasps well and renders effective, though, at the same time, it does not show him off at his best. His largeness of style as well as of figure are cramped on the tiny stage of the Prince of Wales's. To show what he can really do – and there are only two or three English actors who are capable of doing it – he requires a big stage, a romantic part, picturesque attire. The square-cut of the Georges fits him better than his frock-coat; silk stockings and breeches, better than his rather short pair of trousers […] It is clear to me that Mr. Clayton was distinctly intended to be a 'George'.[2]

With this critique, Wingfield was not implying that Clayton was particularly unskilled as an actor, nor was he criticizing his approach to Sir Horace. Instead, he was suggesting that, for all the natural skill of an actor and his sympathetic

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[1] Lewis Wingfield, 'Forget-Me-Not', *Theatre,* 1 April 1880, pp. 228-233 (p. 232).
[2] Wingfield, 'Forget-Me-Not', p. 232.

relationship with a given part, the framing of his body on the stage could have a negative impact on the critical reception of his characterization.[3] He described this both in terms of the location of his body within the space of the theatre, in this case 'cramped' on the 'tiny' stage of the Prince of Wales's Theatre, and also its appearance on the stage, with Clayton wearing a 'frock-coat' and a 'short pair of trousers'.[4] Moreover, he showed that theatre audiences, and especially critics, had preconceived notions for the types of part that certain actors could and should play, fitting the Georgian period to the acting of John Clayton, and elsewhere in the review he mentioned that he had enjoyed Clayton's performance as Joseph Surface in R. B. Sheridan's (1751-1816) Georgian comedy *The School for Scandal*.[5]

Manifested by Wingfield's criticism, the idea that the construction of the actor's body on the stage through appearance and gesture could influence not only the success of his character but also the consolidation of his reputation as a performer in the 1880s is important because it sees such bodies as a meeting point between actor, character and audience interpretation, and highlights the necessity of negotiating the expectations of an audience for critical and popular success. In order to fully understand the reception of the actor's body, its appearance in the theatrical context, and finally the translation of that appearance into images of the actor in character, it is first necessary to examine the contexts and ways in which that body was produced and how it functioned not only as a meeting point for actors' and audiences' interpretation of character but also as a means of judging the skill of the actor and his prowess in the art of acting. If, as actor-manager Charles Wyndham claimed in his own article on the system of actor-management for the *Nineteenth Century,* part of 'the capital of the actor-manager' were 'his own talents as an actor, and his personal influence with the public', then obviously the actor-manager's success,

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[3] Wingfield, 'Forget-Me-Not', p. 232.
[4] Wingfield, 'Forget-Me-Not', p. 232.
[5] Wingfield, 'Forget-Me-Not', p. 232. Wingfield may have seen this when Clayton performed it at the Vaudeville Theatre in 1872.

predicated on his popularity as an actor, must have included an awareness of how his body and character would be interpreted by his audiences.[6]

The reasons for thinking of Mr Clayton as 'distinctly intended to be a "George"', may have stemmed partly from a personal bias on the part of Wingfield towards the 'romantic' natures of historical settings as opposed to dramas set in the contemporary or near-contemporary, and it is necessary to remember that different members of the audience might have had different experiences of actors and characters in any one production.[7] The problematic nature of considering the 'audience' as a homogenous body is one of the questions tackled in this chapter, and it also seeks to differentiate between the experience of attending a performance and of seeing or reading about characterisation after the fact, and explores the role of the critic in the mediation of such experiences. However, to fully explore what the audience thought they had seen, it is also important to understand what actors thought they were producing, and for this reason the chapter starts not with audience response but with the construction of the body in the theatrical performance from the point of view of the actor, and the theories of the art of acting that actor-managers in particular embraced explicitly in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. As a form of discourse, this deals less with ways of expressing character types and thus is not a history of specific acting techniques, but rather a conceptualization of character that deliberately excluded the physicality of embodiment in order to emphasize actor's status as an artist. The contrast of these narratives of art with texts that deal with the day-to-day working life of an actor reveal not only their close working relationship with physical appearance, but the disingenuous nature of such artistic theory, setting up a dichtomoy between art and work that informs much of the rest of this thesis. This also allows for a more theoretical examination of the audience's relationship with character, and finally a look at

[6] Charles Wyndham, 'Actor-Managers: III', *Nineteenth Century,* 27 (1890), 1054-58, (p. 1055).
[7] As artist, writer, designer, theatre critic, and advocate of the dress reform movement, Wingfield was known to have a bias in favour of historical settings and fashions. See Lewis Wingfield, *Notes on Civil Costume in England from the Conquest to the Regency* (London: Clowes, 1884).

some specific texts that highlight the processes of bodily transformation as a part of artistic skill and a meeting point between actors and audiences.

The Actor's 'Art' and Bodily Transformation

> He [Burbage] was a delightful Proteus, so wholly transforming himself into his part, and putting off himself with his clothes, as he never (not so much as in the 'tiring house) assumed himself again until the play was done […] never failing in his part when he had done speaking, but with his looks and gestures maintaining it still to the height.[8]

Taken from Richard Flecknoe's (c.1600-1678) review of the actor Richard Burbage's (1567-1619) performance as Proteus in Shakespeare's *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, this description was quoted by actor-manager Henry Irving in a speech entitled *English Actors: Their Characteristics and Methods,* delivered to students of Oxford University in June 1886. In this address he outlined the acting styles and biographical details of Burbage, Thomas Betterton (c.1635-1710), David Garrick and Edmund Kean (1787-1833), establishing them for his audience as the pinnacles of acting ability in the history of English theatre. Yet his inclusion of this particular quotation by Flecknoe was not just, as he claimed, an indication that 'Burbage's fame as an actor outlived his life', but also a description of his acting method.[9] For Flecknoe, writing in the seventeenth century, Burbage's ability as an actor, and specifically here his characterization of Proteus, was predicated upon the successful transformation

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[8] Richard Flecknoe, cited in Henry Irving, *English Actors: Their Characteristics and Methods, A Discourse by Henry Irving* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1886), pp. 9-10. It is likely that Irving's source for this quotation was the inclusion of Flecknoe's work in a collection of essays compiled by the contemporary theatrical historian William Carew Hazlitt (1834-1913). Irving's familiarity with Hazlitt's work is illustrated in the catalogue from the sale of the actor-manager's library in 1905, which includes several of Hazlitt's volumes. Richard Flecknoe, 'A Discourse of the English Stage', in *The English Drama and Stage under the Tudor and Stuart Princes 1543-1664,* ed. by William Carew Hazlitt (London: Roxburghe Library, 1869), pp. 275-281 (p. 279); *Catalogue Of the Valuable Library, And The Collection of Old Play-Bills And Theatrical Prints, Of Sir Henry Irving, Deceased* ([London: Christie, Manson, and Woods], 1905), pp. 10, 12, 53.
[9] Irving, *English Actors,* p. 9.

of his body from Burbage the actor to Proteus the character, epitomized in the combination of 'looks and gestures', incorporating movement on the stage and also Burbage's physical change of appearance, the 'putting off himself with his clothes'.[10] It was, however, slightly more problematic in the nineteenth-century context of Irving's address; whilst actors such as Irving were aware that their physical appearance on the stage was important, the idea that characterization could be intertwined so closely with specific physical aspects of embodiment, such as 'his clothes', was seen as a reliance on the surface at the expense of the interior, a negative trait in contemporary discourse on the art of the actor.

Nowhere is this clash between on the one hand an appreciation of the body's importance and its place in the visual landscape of the theatre, and on the other the avoidance of relying on appearance for the manifestation of character, more evident than in the writings and speeches of Irving and other actor-managers of this period, although Irving was arguably the most prolific and high-profile in terms of speaking and writing about drama and performance techniques.[11] In another address, this time on 'The Art of Acting', Irving lectured students at Harvard University on the importance of the actor's body and an awareness of its visual impact on the stage.[12] In answer to the question, 'what is the art of acting?', he described it as 'the art of embodying the poet's creations, of giving them flesh and blood, of making the figures which appeal to your mind's eye in

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[10] Flecknoe, cited in Irving, *English Actors*, pp. 9-10.

[11] Some of Irving's speeches and writings on drama, such as *English Actors*, were produced contemporaneously in pamphlet form, and four of his speeches on acting at various academic institutions were also published as a collection of essays entitled *The Drama.* He clearly encouraged and kept abreast of these publications, and multiple copies of these pamphlets and *The Drama* were listed as part of his book collection in the 1905 catalogue of his library. In recent scholarship, the extent of his public discourse on the stage has been made evident in Jeffrey Richards' edition of his collated 'Essays, Addresses and Lectures'. Irving, *English Actors;* Henry Irving, *The Drama: Addresses by Henry Irving* (New York: Tait, 1892); *Catalogue of the Valuable Library,* pp. 12, 14; *Sir Henry Irving: Theatre, Culture and Society: Essays, Addresses and Lectures,* ed. by Jeffrey Richards (Keele: Ryburn Publishing, 1994).

[12] Henry Irving, *Address to the Students of Harvard University* (London: Chiswick Press, 1885). It was reprinted in *The Drama* as 'The Art of Acting'; Henry Irving, 'The Art of Acting', in *The Drama: Addresses by Henry Irving* (New York: Tait, 1892), pp. 49-104.

the printed drama live before you on the stage'.[13] He also spoke of the importance of the visual elements of the body in terms of the production's overall aesthetics, stating that every actor 'should learn he is a figure in a picture'.[14] However, whilst acknowledging that 'The force of an actor depends, of course, on his physique', he at the same time warned of a 'current tendency to train the body at the expense of the mind', and framed his discussion of the techniques and methods of acting primarily upon the mental processes that allow an actor to engage with his character rather than the physicality of performance.[15]

Irving might have been the most well-publicized actor-manager writing and speaking in this period, but it would be a mistake to assume that he was the only one putting forward such ideas: a similar tension between the mental processes underlying embodiment and visual manifestations of the body can be found in a series of essays by the actor-manager Herbert Beerbohm Tree, collated and published towards the end of the actor's career under the title *Thoughts and After-Thoughts*.[16] Like Irving, Tree appreciated the visual aspects of performance and the appearance of character in terms of the overall composition of the drama, and in an essay on Shakespeare praised the author for the fact that 'he not only appreciated the value of costume in adding picturesqueness to poetry, but he saw how important it is as a means of producing certain dramatic results'.[17] Equally he was aware that the process of embodying a character involved the transformation of the actor's body, and in an 1893 lecture at the Royal Institution entitled 'The Imaginative Faculty', he spoke of the way that the actor's inhabiting of the mental landscape of character

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[13] Irving, *Address to the Students of Harvard,* p. 7.

[14] Irving, *Address to the Students of Harvard,* p. 20.

[15] Irving, *Address to the Students of Harvard,* p. 18.

[16] Herbert Beerbohm Tree, *Thoughts and After-Thoughts* (London: Cassell, 1913). Although published after the end of the period under discussion in this thesis, most of the essays and addresses included within in this volume pre-dated the turn of the century, and reflected ideas that were in circulation in the 1880s and 1890s.

[17] Herbert Beerbohm Tree, 'The Living Shakespeare: A Defence of Modern Taste', in *Thoughts and After-Thoughts* (London: Cassell, 1913), pp. 37-72 (pp. 63-64).

affected his physicality: 'By aid of his imagination he becomes the man, and behaves unconsciously as the man would or should behave […] Even the physical man will appear transformed.'[18] However, in this instance, he was clear that the actor's physical transformation was not effected by material goods such as costume and in his description of an actor impersonating a fat man he explicitly stated, 'It is not the outer covering, called the "make-up", which causes this impression; it is the inner man, who talks fat, walks fat, and thinks fat.'[19]

Presumably, the reasons for constructing the process of acting in this way, as first and foremost a mental technique connected to the actor's imagination, and only afterwards one of practical considerations and bodily representation, lie in both Tree's and Irving's use of the term 'art' to describe the acting process, and their construction of artistic ability as natural rather than acquired. In entitling his lecture 'The Art of Acting' Irving was deliberately trying to analogize the work of the actor with that of the painter or musician, mentioning the inspirational nature of both these artistic practices repeatedly throughout the lecture as comparative to the creativity of the actor.[20] Similarly, the word 'art' was omnipresent in Tree's lecture, with the work of the actor being compared variously to that of painters, musicians, poets, and philosophers.[21] Moreover, Irving and Tree also sought to convince their audiences that the artistic inspiration and creativity through which the actor created his parts was an ability that, like artistic sensibility, was a natural part of the actor's personality and, crucially, could not be taught. Tree went so far as to suggest that all education was essentially useless to the actor, and whilst Irving's position, that actors should undergo various types of training, was slightly more moderate, he described the actor's embrace of geniality in comedy and use of passion in tragedy as, 'the supreme elements of the actor's art, which cannot be taught by

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[18] Herbert Beerbohm Tree, 'The Imaginative Faculty: Being an Address Delivered at the Royal Institution', in *Thoughts and After-Thoughts* (London: Cassell, 1913), pp. 91-120 (p. 112).
[19] Tree, 'The Imaginative Faculty', p. 112.
[20] Irving, *Address to the Students of Harvard.*
[21] Tree, 'The Imaginative Faculty', pp. 95-97.

any system, however just, and to which all education is but tributary'.[22] To return to the opening statement of this thesis, Tree and Irving seemed to be in agreement with Ruskin and Stoker that, when it came to the talents required to be a successful actor, 'you have always to find your artist, not to make him'.[23]

As actors, Irving and Tree were known for specializing in similar theatrical genres, focusing on tragedy and melodrama, and given that Tree spent some of his formative acting years in Irving's company at the Lyceum theatre, it is not surprising that their ideas about acting should coincide. However, this type of discussion was neither limited to Irving and Tree, nor confined to one particular theatrical genre. Similar discussions of characterization as a mental 'art', necessitating an inborn imaginative quality that could not be taught, were also apparently held by actor-managers Charles Wyndham and John Hare (1844-1921), both of whom specialized in comedic and lighter theatrical roles than Tree or Irving, which appears to indicate that it was a concern across the upper echelons of the profession. According to Hare, 'Characterization is an art, and like music or literature, it demands a right temperament, an inclination, bent of mind, a fund of talent, and natural genius.'[24] However, Wyndham's comparison between the art of the actor and that of the painter illustrated explicitly how the conception of acting as an art was predicated upon separating the exterior aspects of character from the internal process of characterization:

> The actor's art begins where the painter's finishes. A painter, for instance, has a portrait to paint. He poses his model, and his experienced eye seizes upon traits of resemblance, fixes them upon the canvas by the magic of his art, and there his work is done. Not so the actor. He first has had to study diligently the spirit and intention of his author's words, and then conveys them onto an ideal canvas, which is represented by the conception of the part, by the dress of the character, and by the make-up of the man. So far he

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[22] Irving, *Address to the Students of Harvard,* p. 22.

[23] Ruskin, cited in Bram Stoker, 'Actor-Managers: I', *Nineteenth Century*, 27 (1890), 1040-1051 (p. 1045).

[24] 'Mr. John Hare on Acting', *Birmingham Daily Gazette,* cited in T. Edgar Pemberton, *John Hare: Comedian, 1865-1895* (London: Routledge, 1895), p. 191.

is on all fours with the painter. But now the actor must advance one

step further. He has, up to the present, the exterior of the character,

not the character itself. He must [...] endow it with a soul.[25]

If acting as an art form in theory was characterized by a reliance on the mental and imaginative faculties rather than the physical aspects of character, the other side of the coin was that acting that relied on physical properties, and particularly the framing of the body, could not properly be conceived of as 'art', and Irving expressed dismay that in London: 'You look into a shop-window and see photographs of certain people who are indiscriminately described as actors and actresses though their business has no pretence to be art of any kind.'[26] Similarly, Tree expressed 'the difference between the imaginative and un-imaginative actor' as one which, crucially, relied on stage management and external appearances, rather than internal characterization, and was essentially only imitative, and both Tree and Irving compared the difference between artistic and imitative acting to the gap between painting and photography.[27]

In their speeches and writings, Irving and Tree were clearly approaching characterization from the actor's perspective, but the opinions of both Hare and Wyndham have passed into the historical record through the critical biographies of T. Edgar Pemberton (1844-1921), and the collusion of actor-manager and critic in establishing acting as an art form, a discourse that historian Michael Baker has ultimately identified as a tool in the social legitimization of the acting profession, was reinforced continually in the critical press.[28] As the work of Percy Hetherington Fitzgerald (1834-1905), dramatic critic for the *Observer* and the *Whitehall Review,* indicated, critics as well as

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[25] Charles Wyndham, cited in T. Edgar Pemberton, *Sir Charles Wyndham: A Biography* (London: Hutchinson, 1904), pp. 244-245.
[26] Irving, *Address to the Students of Harvard*, p. 26.
[27] Tree, 'The Imaginative Faculty', p. 114; Irving, *Address to the Students of Harvard*, p. 24. This disavowal of photography as an art form is particularly interesting given the widespread use by all actor-managers of photography, even ostensibly 'bland' images, as a tool for self-promotion. See '"Bourgeois Blandness': Creating a Professional Body', pp. 221-260.
[28] Michael Baker, *The Rise of the Victorian Actor,* (London: Croom Helm; Totowa: Rowman and Littlefield, 1978).

actors allegedly differentiated between actors who had the appropriate mental qualities, and those who relied on the body to express character:

> The vice of the present day is *concrete* or realistic acting, which is imitation. If a policeman or a costermonger is brought on, the player labours to present him *ad unguem* in his clothes, mode of speech, and expression – gives a servile copy of some particular specimen he has encountered.[29]

As part of a piece entitled 'Hamlet on acting', his analysis was based on the two speeches that Hamlet gave to the Players in Act II of Shakespeare's tragedy, outlining his advice on the practice of theatre, and in opposing 'realistic acting' to Hamlet's claim that actors should be '"the abstract and brief chronicles of the time"', Fitzgerald equated true characterization with the interior or imaginative quality.[30] By contrast, his idea of the inferiority of imitation, which merely presents a precise (*ad unguem*) vision of the body through the use of exterior signs and symbols such as costume and expression is similar to Tree's and Irving's equation of the unimaginative actor with the work of the photographer, slavishly imitating real life.[31] Elsewhere, in his work on the *Principles of Comedy,* Fitzgerald specifically separated the physical world of the theatre from the intellectual artistry of the actor, claiming that inferior actors, 'with all the accompaniments of a theatre, the scene behind, the professional clothes, the paint and patches, reduce themselves [...] when the intellectual part is forgotten'.[32]

As the preservation of these works showed, the writings and spoken words of these figures were considered to be relatively influential within their fields of circulation, but none of the texts above should be considered as definitive, or all-encompassing descriptions of acting theory in this period. Rather, both the actor-managers' work and Fitzgerald's critical discourse are useful barometers

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[29] Percy Fitzgerald, 'Hamlet on Acting', *Theatre,* 1 September 1880, pp. 152-157 (p. 153). Emphasis as original.
[30] Fitzgerald, 'Hamlet on Acting', p. 53.
[31] Tree, 'The Imaginative Faculty', p. 114; Irving, *Address to the Students of Harvard*, p. 24.
[32] Percy Fitzgerald, *Principles of Comedy and Dramatic Effect* (London: Tinsley Brothers, 1870), p. 257.

of theory in this period, and indicative of the close relationships and cross-over of opinion enjoyed by leading actors and theatre critics. It must be remembered that these addresses and writings were produced in a specific context, and for a particular audience. For example, in both of the formal lectures under discussion, Irving and Tree were speaking in traditional bastions of British education and culture, the University of Oxford and Royal Institution respectively, to a presumably literate audience who expected a certain level of discourse, and both clearly stated their aim of aligning acting with accepted cultural and academic disciplines. Such discourses may have reached a relatively limited audience, but as biographer James Thomas has noted, flouting their precepts, particularly those of the body, could have a negative impact on the place of individual actor-managers in the historical record, whose canon was composed mainly of the works of such critics and theorists. Writing of the actor-manager Wilson Barrett, Thomas quoted an obituary of the actor written in *Athenaeum*: "'Possessing in the highest degree the weaknesses of his craft, he loved to exhibit himself in super-fine and sometimes inadequate array, and in doing so raised an obstacle against his acceptance as a serious artist.'"[33]

Nevertheless, Thomas was quick to point out that Barrett's appearance, and his 'ability to move with assurance and grace in historic costume' was 'an important part of his success' and, crucially, that he was, and continued to be, popular with the public throughout the course of his career despite such negative criticism.[34] In Florence Shore's (fl. 1905-1910) biography of Charles Wyndham, she quoted a 'well-known actor-manager who, like Wyndham, has endeared himself to the public largely by the charm of his own personality and appearance', an actor-manager that may well have been Wilson Barrett, and who differentiated between artistic acting and the realities of public expectation and approval:

> [He] regretfully remarked some little time ago that he would love to
> play old men and character parts, but his public would have none of

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[33] *Athenaeum,* cited in James Thomas, *The Art of the Actor-Manager: Wilson Barrett and the Victorian Theatre*, Theatre and Dramatic Studies: 15 (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1984), p. 170.
[34] Thomas, *Art of the Actor-Manager,* p. 170.

> him in them. 'If I paint wrinkles, round my shoulder, and generally
> disguise myself, my special public is disappointed. I must be myself
> or the play is doomed. No matter how artistic the acting, how fine
> the play, they don't want me in an old part. I am condemned to be –
> or appear, rather – eternally young.'[35]

What this example indicates is that, whilst an awareness of the theories of the art of acting and its repudiation of the body may have influenced critical opinion and the subsequent historical record, there was a distinct difference between the preaching and practice of actor-managers such as Wyndham, and that actor-managers who wished to retain contemporary capital public approval had, in some ways, to conform to their visual expectations, even if they claimed disingenuously not to do so. As Wyndham and Stoker both indicated in their essays on actor-management, public approval could be equated with financial success and as Irving, Tree, Hare and Wyndham were all financially as well as critically successful in this period, it would seem that they had balanced their theoretical disavowal of the body with an awareness of its role in contemporary theatrical practice. This was actually evident from their writings on characterization, and Irving's inclusion of Flecknoe's assertion that Burbage's success as an actor was a result of his successful 'putting himself off with his clothes' was an acknowledgement of the importance of bodily transformation in the actual work, if not the theoretical art, of theatrical characterization.[36]

Bodily Transformations in Theatrical Practice

> I take about a month to study up a character. I always wear the
> clothes I am going to play in for some time previously, so as to get
> them to my figure. The longest time I ever bestowed on a make-up
> was in 'The Profligate'. I took half an hour over it.[37]

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[35] Florence Teignmouth Shore, *Sir Charles Wyndham* (London: John Lane, 1908), p. 52.
[36] Irving, *English Actors,* p. 9.
[37] John Hare, cited in 'Actors' Dressing Rooms', *Strand Magazine*, February 1891, pp. 178-184 (p.182).

In the second issue of the monthly periodical the *Strand Magazine,* founded by editor George Newnes (1851-1910) in 1891 as a site for the meeting of 'the best British writers' and 'eminent artists' of the late nineteenth century, an unattributed article entitled 'Actors' Dressing Rooms' presented for the magazine's readership an analysis of the 'robing apartments' of five of London's leading actor-managers, Henry Irving at the Lyceum Theatre, John Lawrence Toole (1830-1906) at his eponymous Toole's Theatre, Herbert Beerbohm Tree at the Haymarket Theatre, John Hare at the Garrick Theatre, and Charles Wyndham at the Criterion Theatre.[38] Aside from a lengthy description of each of these rooms, the article also contained illustrations of the spaces in question, and in a couple of instances short interviews with the actor-managers themselves. In the case of John Hare, who by his own admission had been acting, primarily on the London stage, for the previous twenty-six years, the magazine claimed that 'previous to our finding him seated in his great arm-chair by the fireplace, [he] had never been interviewed.'[39] Whether this was true or not, having the opportunity to pose a question to Mr Hare, the interviewer asked him what his favourite role was and immediately after confessing that it was the one he was currently playing in Sydney Grundy's (1848-1914) *A Pair of Spectacles*, the actor offered the couple of sentences quoted above on his way of 'studying up a character' and making himself up for his parts.[40] These brief sentences indicated two things: firstly, that creating his characters' appearance, and fitting his clothes 'to my figure' was an important part of Hare's preparation for any role, and secondly that the elaborate construction of his appearance on the night of the play was a work that took some time and skill.

Following on from this short interview was a description of Hare's rooms at the Garrick Theatre, accompanied by two illustrations, of 'Mr. Hare's Dressing Room', and 'Mr. Hare's Inner Room' (Figures 1 and 2). These two rooms, both in

[38] George Newnes, 'Introduction', *Strand Magazine,* January 1891, p. 3; 'Actors' Dressing Rooms'.

[39] 'Actors' Dressing Rooms', p. 182. The part of Benjamin Goldfinch in *A Pair of Spectacles* was created by Hare in 1889 and was one of his most successful roles.

[40] 'Actors' Dressing Rooms', p. 182.

Images Redacted for

Copyright Purposes

Figure 1: Anon., 'Mr. Hare's Dressing Room', 1891. Published *Strand Magazine,* 1 February 1891, p. 182. Lithograph, 13 x 16cm.
Figure 2: Anon., 'Mr. Hare's Inner Room', 1891. Published *Strand Magazine,* 1 February 1891, p. 183. Lithograph, 13 x 7cm.

their visual manifestations and the written descriptions that accompanied them, were seen by the author as representing the two sides of Hare's business, as manager and actor respectively, with his 'Dressing Room' being described as an 'office', with speaking tubes that communicated with stage door, prompter, box office and acting manager. By contrast, the smaller, 'Inner' room was described as follows:

> There, hanging up, is the light suit worn as *Benjamin Goldfinch,*
> with the long black coat which flaps about so marvellously – the
> actor finds plenty of "character" even in a coat – and the
> shepherd's plaid trousers.
> The looking-glass is of walnut, with electric lights on either side
> shaded with metal leaves. In front of this he sits, amidst a hundred
> little oddments.[41]

Whilst not all of the actors described in the article had two separate rooms dedicated to the pursuit of their profession, the article was careful to differentiate in all cases between spaces that were considered 'offstage', used either for the pursuit of leisure, such as Toole's 'cosy parlour', or as in the case of Hare as more of an office, and the spaces within the dressing rooms, even if they were not partitioned off, which were dedicated to physical transformation and that were always described in terms of work.[42] In the case of Tree, for example, he is careful to say that the whole room 'is regarded rather as a workshop than a lounging-room, and it certainly possesses that appearance'.[43] These spaces contained mirrors, make-up and often elements of costume, and whilst Benjamin Goldfinch's coat and plaid trousers, described above, and illustrated hanging off the hooks in Fig. 2, referred to Hare's current role in *A Pair of Spectacles*, some of the other clothes present in the actor-managers' rooms were not from current characters, but were elements of dress from previous productions, or even ones that had been used several times in different roles. In the case of Henry Irving, for example, 'That old beaver hat was worn in "Charles I," and "The Dead Heart" – now it is the characteristic head-gear of *The*

[41] 'Actors' Dressing Rooms', p. 183. Emphasis as original.
[42] 'Actors' Dressing Rooms', pp. 180, 183.
[43] 'Actors' Dressing Rooms', p. 181.

Master of Ravenswood.'[44] As with the 'little oddments' of make-up arranged around the mirrors in each of these spaces, these costumes, and the bodily transformations they entailed, were clearly considered to be part of the work of the actor, rather than merely incidental to his art.

As a site of transformation, and a 'third space, between the stage and life', Aoife Monks has discussed the disorientating properties of images and descriptions of the actor's dressing room, focusing particularly on portraits of actors in their dressing rooms, either before or after performance.[45] She claimed that such images, and accounts of the process of changing in dressing rooms, are doomed to be disappointing, because, whilst promising to reveal the secrets of the acting profession, they cannot ultimately convey the magic of theatre, focusing instead on the 'everyday routine labour of being an actor', and that therefore 'acting remains unknowable: hermetically sealed from prying eyes'.[46] However, the difference between the portraits with which Monks was concerned, and the illustrations presented above is that whilst the 'routine labour' of the actor was still present in these images, in the form of the accoutrements of make-up and costume such as are shown in Fig. 2, the actors themselves were not pictured in the process of work or dressing.[47] Thus, the article gave the reader an insight into some of the elements of the actor's transformative processes, but without showing exactly how they were utilized. In only one instance, that of Tree, was the actor present, and in the midst of changing, but whilst the author described Tree's entrance into the room, and his exit from it, he chose to focus on an analysis of the actor's correspondence, and the appearance of his dog Bully Boy, whilst the transformative act was taking place, intentionally, it would seem, neglecting to describe Tree's method of dressing or making up other than to emphasize his haste.[48]

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[44] 'Actors' Dressing Rooms', p. 179.

[45] Aoife Monks, 'Dressing Rooms: The Actor's Body and Costume', in *The Actor in Costume* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp. 13-33 (p. 14).

[46] Monks, 'Dressing Rooms', pp. 17, 33.

[47] The only illustration which does include a figure is that of the actor-manager Charles Wyndham, shown not in the act of changing or making-up, but in posing for a portrait.

[48] 'Actors' Dressing Rooms', pp. 181-182.

In refusing to fully reveal the transformative process, this article may have preserved some of the illusions that Monks claimed were dashed by portraits of actors in situ. However, in concentrating on the mystification of the process of bodily transformation, Monks, like the theorists discussed in the previous part of this chapter, was ignoring the fact that the 'everyday routine labour of the actor' could be as constituent a part of his identity as the imaginative, transformative artist. Three of the actor-managers whose texts were discussed above also featured in this study of dressing rooms, and the focus of this article on physical transformation as a crucial part of the actor's practice, targeted at a similar audience as those essays and lectures on the art of acting, revealed the somewhat disingenuous nature of such discourse. The descriptions of these rooms clearly indicated the personal relationship of each actor with the process of bodily transformation before a performance and also, as the words of John Hare indicated, that an involvement in the practicalities of appearance was part of an actor's preparation for his roles.[49] Within the context of the article, this was not just limited to Hare's interview, but was also present in the author's description of Tree's dressing room; apparently, Henry Irving had visited Tree to confer with him on some possible schemes for make-up for *King John,* and Tree had sketched them out on the mirror in greasepaint during their discussion.[50] The transfer of certain items of clothing from one character to another, such as the hat that had appeared in *Charles I, The Dead Heart,* and *Ravenswood*, and Hare's wearing of his clothes to 'get them to his figure' before a performance was also an indication that appearances as portrayed on stage had as much to do with the actor's relationship with costume as they did with the representation of a fictional character, a relationship that had been disavowed in texts on the actor's art.[51]

This discussion of dressing rooms was one example of the insertion of bodily transformations into narratives of theatrical practice in this period, showing the

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[49] See quotation at the beginning of this section, p. 60.
[50] 'Actors' Dressing Rooms', p. 181.
[51] 'Actors' Dressing Rooms', pp. 179, 182.

involvement of actor-managers with the techniques of costume and making up at the height of their careers, but that such techniques were foundational to the practice of acting is also immediately evident in manuals of the nineteenth century directed not at an academic or critical public, but at aspiring members of the acting profession. One such handbook was Leman Thomas Rede's (1799-1832) *Guide to the Stage,* first published in London in 1837, and subsequently heavily revised, edited and reprinted throughout the mid nineteenth century, and into the 1890s, and which claimed to be a guide to the theatre for those who had no theatrical experience but wished to embark upon a career on the stage.[52] As such, it was far removed from Irving and Tree's late-nineteenth century artistic theories of acting in terms of its level of address, and would perhaps have found censure from critical theorists for its insistence on teaching acting a series of physical rather than mental techniques. However, it is useful for this study of actor-managers because it frames the situation of an actor starting out in his career, and how he might have been taught to engage with the body, and its popularity is attested by its continual reprinting. The five actor-managers discussed in 'Actors' Dressing Rooms' in 1891 had all started out in amateur and provincial dramatics, and all came from a non-theatrical background, and the kind of advice presented by Rede probably formed a key part of their early theatrical experiences, and presumably informed their subsequent relationships with characterization and the design of the body on the stage.

In histories of acting and the body, such manuals have been discussed by historians George Taylor and Joseph Donohue as evidence for the connections between theatrical gesture and ideas about emotional expression in the nineteenth century.[53] This is similar to the way that theories on the art of acting have been used to explore changes in acting techniques, and an excellent

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[52] Leman Thomas Rede, *Guide to the Stage: Or How to Enter the Theatrical Profession, Obtain an Engagement, and Become an Actor, Founded On, and Partly Taken from Leman Rede's Book,* rev. edn (London: French, [189-]).

[53] George Taylor, 'A Theatre of Feeling', in *Players and Performances in the Victorian Theatre* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989; repr. 1993), pp. 30-50; Joseph Donohue, 'Actors and Acting', in *The Cambridge Companion to Victorian and Edwardian Theatre,* ed. by Kerry Powell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004; repr. 2005), pp. 17-35.

example of such work is Lynn Voskuil's use of critical theories of acting written by George Henry Lewes (1817-1878) to examine the role of naturalism in mid-nineteenth century theatre.[54] However, in his work on male fashionability in the late nineteenth century, Christopher Breward discussed the utility of etiquette books in recovering normative patterns of male dress and consumption in this period. Whilst cautioning against the use of such texts as literal and all-encompassing representations of contemporary male fashion, he nevertheless stated that rejecting them as purely anecdotal or theoretical frames negated their function as an exposition of actual patterns of sartorial consumption, where the formalization of set rules of dressing was based on unspoken, but nevertheless existent, codes of fashionable practice.[55] In the world of acting, manuals for aspiring actors filled the same function of cohering inherent, rather than articulated, codes of theatrical practice, and whilst presumably not read or adhered to by every aspirant to the profession, they were not just useful in determining theoretical and philosophical aspects of acting technique, but also as a barometer of the skills desirable in acting practice, focusing, like the etiquette manual, on the elements of acting that could be taught.

In terms of the transformation of the body, and the practical relationship of the actor-manager to the manifestation of character through appearance, the most relevant section of this manual is that entitled 'Dress'.[56] This made clear for the aspiring actor that, though some basic elements of costume might be provided by the theatre management, for the most part they had to fend for themselves, stating that 'the following is something like an enumeration of the dresses required for the different lines of business'.[57] Directly after this came a two-page list of articles of costume, and a further two-page list of make-up techniques, which ought to be catered for by an actor, including wigs, stockings, shoes, hats (of various descriptions), collars, ruffs, pantaloons, and ornaments for period

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[54] Lynn M. Voskuil, *Acting Naturally: Victorian Theatricality and Authenticity* (London: University of Virginia Press, 2004), pp. 40-55.
[55] Christopher Breward, *The Hidden Consumer: Masculinities, Fashion and City Life, 1860-1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), pp. 41-45.
[56] Rede, *Guide to the Stage,* pp. 8-10.
[57] Rede, *Guide to the Stage,* p. 8.

pieces, 'military and naval dress and undress uniforms', and 'a well-cut modern wardrobe'.[58] Cynically, the author noted that being equipped in such as way 'often procures a young man an engagement when he could not get one for any of his other merits'.[59] Having learnt their trade through the stock system, where actors were attached to provincial companies, playing whichever part might be required of them, and often performing in a different play every night, some of the actor-managers in this study would definitely have been subject to these requirements for the provision of an actor's own wardrobe, and this rite of passage for an aspiring actor was recorded by Irving in a letter to his aunt of 1856. Describing the process of leaving his clerk's job at Thacker & Co. and preparing to start a new career in 'the Dramatic profession', Irving wrote that as well as getting a letter of reference from his elocution teacher for the manager at Newcastle Theatre, he used the twenty pounds he had 'to start with' to buy elements of theatrical costume and recorded that this 'has bought me many necessary parts of a wardrobe, and I shall begin with a fair stock'.[60]

Rede's guide was extremely pragmatic, and explicitly practice-orientated when it came to advice on constructing the surface of a character's body. Nevertheless, two further manuals from the period under discussion, written by Gustave Garcia (1837-1925) in 1888 and John Alexander Hammerton (1871-1949) in 1897, illustrated both the continuous presence of practical advice on the transformation of the body in such works, and the integration of the artistic theory and literal practice of acting through the advice given on transforming the surface of the body, with both works entitled *The Actor's Art.*[61] Each book was also explicitly linked by their authors to the theories and writing of Henry Irving, and thus presumably was intended to function not only as a practical treatise but as a tool of legitimization: Garcia dedicated his work to the actor-

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[58] Rede, *Guide to the Stage,* p. 8.
[59] Rede, *Guide to the Stage,* p. 8.
[60] Henry Irving, letter to Mary Ann Wilkins, reprinted in Laurence Irving, *Henry Irving: The Actor and his World* ([n. p.]: [Faber], 1951), pp. 65-67 (p. 66).
[61] Gustave Garcia, *The Actor's Art: A Practical Treatise on Stage Declamation, Public Speaking, and Deportment,* 2nd edn (London: Messrs Simpkin, Marshall, 1888); J. A. Hammerton, *The Actor's Art: Theatrical Reminiscences, Methods of Study and Advice to Aspirants* (London: Redway, 1897).

manager, and Hammerton's book contained a short prefatory note written by the man himself that praised it as 'an excellent manual of the actor's art [...] of much practical value to the novice'.[62] The two works were quite different in content and tone; Garcia's was primarily a programmatic training manual with advice on training the voice and movement and gesture on the stage, a model relatively similar to Rede's practical advice to aspiring actors, whereas Hammerton focused on the distribution of advice through anecdotes and theatrical history, adopting a tone reminiscent of the discourses on the art of acting discussed earlier in this chapter. Both Garcia and Hammerton included in their manuals specific sections on the physical transformation of the actor's appearance as an important element of his practice; Garcia devoted a whole chapter to 'Making Up the Face', and Hammerton included chapters on both 'The Art of Making-Up' and 'Concerning Costume'.[63] What is particularly interesting about Hammerton's work, however, is that, like that of Leman Rede, it was actually written from the perspective of a theatrical outsider, collating information gleaned from various theatrical sources, and therefore could be considered as a summary of received wisdom.

In much the same way as all of the authors discussed in the first section of this chapter, Hammerton devoted some time to the mental processes of characterization and the imaginative art of acting, but he was unequivocal when it came to the importance of appearance to the success or failure of character, and the question of physical transformation. In his chapter on making-up he stated that, 'It is as essential that the actor should *look* his part, as that he should

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[62] Henry Irving, 'Prefatory Note', in Hammerton, *The Actor's Art*, p. vii.

[63] Garcia, *The Actor's Art,* pp. 185-199; Hammerton, *The Actor's Art,* pp. 50-65. That Hammerton was aware of and influenced by Garcia's work in this respect is indicated by his inclusion of a two-page extract of practical advice from Garcia's work on make-up. Hammerton, *The Actor's Art,* pp. 56-8. The sections on Making Up drew their advice explicitly from mid-nineteenth century ideas of physiognomy, and whilst there is insufficient space to do justice to the complexities of physiognomic science here, there is little doubt that it influenced the appearance of theatrical characters; its specific intersection with theatrical practice has been discussed in some detail in Sharrona Pearl's work. Sharrona Pearl, 'Performing Physiognomy: Imitating Art and Life', in *About Faces: Physiognomy in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), pp. 57-83.

act it.'[64] He then went on to point out that this look was a combination of costume and make-up. Whilst he did offer some specific guidance on the way to create certain effects of both make-up and dress, he was quick to point out that the actual construction of a particular look was down to the individual actor, and dependent on his own abilities and skill with the transformation of appearance, saying that, 'There are many books which purport to give instruction in this connection; but it is doubtful if direct advice can be of any great assistance, further than in specifying the materials used for obtaining certain effects'.[65] Rather, it was the actor's 'experience and an artistic eye' that determined his literal transformation, a juxtaposition of practice and natural creativity that enabled the manipulation of the body to be reclaimed as part of an actor's natural creative abilities, aligning it with the power of imagination discussed earlier.[66] Finally, Hammerton advised his aspiring actors that they must always take account not only of the contributions of physical transformation to characterization, but also its relationship with the expectations of their audiences. In the closing paragraph of his section on theatre costume, he warned that this element of theatrical practice could impact on the individual actor's status as an artist:

> Audiences are so much better educated nowadays […] that the actor who dared to disregard an approximation to historical accuracy in his dress would speedily be reminded of the fact. But the actor of to-day who did anything of the kind would not be entitled to credit as an artist […][67]

An 'Artistic Conspiracy between Actors and Audiences'

When Hammerton discussed the relationship between actor and audience he further claimed that, 'Between the actor and his audience a subtle sympathy must exist, or else the audience will never be touched by the work of the actor.'[68] A similar rhetoric, of synthesis between actor and audience, was

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64 Hammerton, *The Actor's Art,* p. 53. Emphasis as original.
65 Hammerton, *The Actor's Art,* p. 54.
66 Hammerton, *The Actor's Art,* p. 54.
67 Hammerton, *The Actor's Art,* p. 65.
68 Hammerton, *The Actor's Art,* p. 72.

evident in Tree's lecture on 'The Imaginative Faculty', when he wrote of the perception of character within the theatrical context as a 'kind of artistic conspiracy between actors and audiences'.[69] This is particularly relevant to the framing of the theatrical body, because in this part of Tree's lecture, he was referring explicitly to the constitution and understanding of the actor's presence on the stage, and the changes to his physicality brought about by his characterization. As a result of this conspiracy, according to Tree, if any actor who was sufficiently skilled at inhabiting a character should 'imagine himself a tall man, he will appear so to the audience'.[70] Whilst the essay was primarily devoted to the power of a skilled actor to create character, Tree's phraseology here, particularly the use of the word 'conspiracy', implied an awareness on his part that a performed character was not solely the product of an actor's conception, but was constituted as part of a two-way transaction between actor and audience based on primarily visual understanding, an idea that was clearly sufficiently resonant with contemporaries to be repeated in Hammerton's later work. However, these models of performances also introduced a further, highly problematic, variable: the concept of 'the audience', united in its ability and willingness to read, and to be complicit in, the actor's interpretation.

Working on the construction of audiences in the modern and postmodern eras, historian Dennis Kennedy has written in some detail of the problem both of constructing a theatrical audience as a group that experiences theatre on a universal level as opposed to a collection of individuals, and also of the persistent application throughout writing on theatre of a semiotic model of reception to live performance, where the active performer presents a series of signs and symbols for passive interpretation by his or her audience.[71] Ultimately, he accepted that representation is always present in the theatrical process, but his message that 'relying on a semiotic scheme to explain spectatorship is an incomplete procedure that takes insufficient account of interactivity', rings true in the light of Tree's analogy of the relationship

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[69] Tree, 'The Imaginative Faculty', p. 112.
[70] Tree, 'The Imaginative Faculty', p. 112.
[71] Dennis Kennedy, *The Spectator and the Spectacle: Audiences in Modernity and Postmodernity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 9, 11-14.

between actors and audiences as a conspiracy.[72] Seeing an audience only as a passive recipient of the representational symbols it is presented with negates their power to engage with, and ultimately affect, the construction of a theatrical event and precludes the notion of them as an integral part of a synthetic theatrical relationship. Furthermore, Kennedy claimed, semiotic models fail to take into account the individual ways in which audience members might engage with a performance: 'Too often semiotically based analysis predicts an ideal spectator as reader, and thus can trap itself in a moral conviction about proper or correct reception.'[73]

Nevertheless, whilst the idea of the 'ideal spectator' might be a dangerous trap to fall into from a social or cultural perspective, it is undoubtedly useful in a discussion of the confluence of intention and design in the formation of the actor-manager's body for visual consumption. In constituting the design of the body in the theatrical performance as an intentional act, and a part of theatrical practice that ultimately resulted in cementing the reputation of the actor, and which was therefore an integral factor in the actor-manager's legacy, it is necessary to consider not only the actual consumption of performance, or physical makeup of theatrical audiences, but also the consumer for whom the body was designed. Whilst Kennedy viewed the 'ideal spectator as reader' as a 'trap' for the analysis of performance reception, as Marvin Carlson pointed out, the 'Model Reader' or, as applied to the theatre, the 'Model Spectator' is not only a function of the reception of the play but of the text itself that, following Umberto Eco's theory of semiotics in literature, 'postulates its own receiver as an indispensable condition of its potential for meaning'.[74] Looking at the performed play as a score, equivalent to a literary text, in which the design and realization of the characters play a substantial part, and taking the actor-manager as integral to the creation of that score, we must assume that the

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[72] Kennedy, *The Spectator and the Spectacle,* p. 12.
[73] Kennedy, *The Spectator and the Spectacle,* p.12.
[74] Marvin Carlson, 'Audiences and the Reading of Performance', in *Interpreting the Theatrical Past: Essays in the Historiography of Performance,* ed. by Thomas Postlwaite and Bruce McConachie (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1989; repr. 2000), pp. 82-98 (p. 84).

realization of production was also predicated upon a 'postulated reader' or 'Model Spectator'. The audience in Tree's conspiracy therefore reflects not necessarily the literal audience of his productions, but the audience with whom he intended to enter into a conspiratorial contract, for whom, if you like, he was designing his characters. As the remainder of his text makes clear, this was almost certainly the educated, critical audience of writers such as Lewis Wingfield or Percy Fitzgerald, who would also eventually mediate his performance for the outside world, and judge his status as an 'artist'.

With specific reference to the period under discussion, Jim Davis and Victor Emeljanow, the only scholars to have conducted an in-depth investigation into the socio-economic composition of London theatre audiences in the nineteenth century, asserted that they were so diverse that 'it is time to break away from the notion that the word "audience" can be used in a generalized or generic way in any discussion of the Victorian theatre', indicating that Kennedy's cautions about the dangers of assuming a theatrical audience as a homogenous body are as applicable to the Victorian period as they were to his case studies of avant-garde and postmodern theatre in the twentieth century.[75] Moreover, Davis and Emeljanow elsewhere argued that descriptions of theatregoing in that latter half of the nineteenth century, to which both actor-managers and critics contributed, and which portrayed it as an increasingly educated, elite and genteel practice, were a constructed version of the 'ideal' spectator propagated to further the legitimization of theatre in much the same way as did the framing of characterization in terms of artistic ideas of inspiration and inborn talent.[76] In this respect, it seems that the refusal of actor-managers in their speeches and writings to recognize the role of the body in characterization was tied up with a desire to align themselves with the critical, rather than the popular, reception of theatre.

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[75] Jim Davis and Victor Emeljanow, *Reflecting the Audience: London Theatregoing, 1840-1880* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2001), p. 226.
[76] Jim Davis and Victor Emeljanow, 'Victorian and Edwardian Audiences', in *The Cambridge Companion to Victorian and Edwardian Theatre,* ed. by Kerry Powell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004; repr. 2005), pp. 93-109 (pp. 102-107).

One reason for this may have been an equation between popular success and the visually exciting and overwhelming form of theatre discussed in this period in terms of the word 'spectacle', and which was associated, as Jeffrey Richards and Hayley Bradley have discussed, with productions such as pantomimes, or the Autumn Dramas at Drury Lane, large-scale dramas composed of extravagant set pieces.[77] Fitzgerald had implied in his *Principles of Comedy* that such a reliance upon visual effects in theatre went hand in hand with a perceived reduction in its intellectual capacity and implications about taste that were equally abhorrent to actor-managers, critics and academics in this period. In fact, Patricia Smyth has gone so far as to suggest that this assumption that any reliance on visual effects, of which the appearance of the actor constituted a part, was equated with pandering to popular taste and was the major reason for the exclusion of visual material in histories of Victorian theatre.[78] Irving characterized extravagant set pieces as 'the subordination of the play to a pageant [...] that is all foreign to the artistic purpose which should dominate dramatic work', although as analyses of his productions of *King Arthur* and *Robespierre* in Richard Foulkes' recent volume of work on Irving's career at the Lyceum Theatre indicated, he was not above the staging of extravagant visual effects if he felt the play required it.[79]

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[77] Jeffrey Richards, *The Golden Age of Pantomime: Slapstick, Spectacle and Subversion in Victorian England* (London: Tauris Parke, 2014); Hayley Jayne Bradley, '"Speaking to the Eye Rather than the Ear": The Triumvirate's Autumn Dramas at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane', in *Theatre, Art, and Visual Culture in the Nineteenth Century,* ed. by Jim Davis and Patricia Smyth (=*Nineteenth Century Theatre and Film*, 39.1 (Summer 2012)), pp. 26-46.

[78] Patricia Smyth, 'Editorial: Theatre, Art and Visual Culture in the Nineteenth Century', in *Theatre, Art, and Visual Culture in the Nineteenth Century,* ed. by Jim Davis and Patricia Smyth (=*Nineteenth Century Theatre & Film,* 39.1 (Summer 2012)), pp. xvii-xxi (pp. vii-viii).

[79] Irving, *Address to the Students of Harvard,* p. 23; Doug Kirshen, 'Embodiment of the King: Henry Irving's *King Arthur*', and Jean Chothia, '"Henry and 250 Supers": Irving, *Robespierre* and the Staging of the Revolutionary Crowd', in *Sir Henry Irving: A Re-Evaluation of the Late Victorian Actor-Manager,* ed. by Richard Foulkes (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), pp. 65-85, 117-134. This is discussed further in relation to *Charles I, Othello* and *The Corsican Brothers* in the second chapter of this these. See 'Embodying Artistry: *Charles I, Othello,* and *The Corsican Brothers* at the Lyceum Theatre, 1872-1881', pp. 93-145.

One of the problems with the narrative put forward by Tree, Irving, and Fitzgerald was that, setting aside the bias against such work as inartistic, there was a certain truth to the idea that visual spectacle made for popular entertainment in this period. Michael Diamond's analysis of theatre posters showed how theatre managements knew that the inclusion of visually exciting scenes made for good publicity.[80] And as Michael Booth acknowledged in his book, *Victorian Spectacular Theatre,* whilst carried to different levels in different productions, a taste for the visual, and reliance on visual frames of reference, pervaded all types of theatre in this period; the denotion of productions that emphasized visual effects and mounted particularly lavish set pieces, as 'pageant' as opposed to 'play', and their subsequent classification as 'foreign to the artistic purpose' of theatre.[81]As writers who actively commented on theatrical techniques, and its successes and failures, communication between actors and critics, with all their prejudices about artistic and inartistic productions, definitely created a more fluid dynamic between actors and spectators than might be expected from a construction of the audience as a passive receiver of theatrical symbology but their communication was disingenuous when it came to visual presentation and the construction of the body. Actors suppressed the manipulation of the body in their method whilst taking into account the visual expectations of an audience, whilst critics, much as they might deny it in more theoretical writings of characterization, clearly took physical appearance into account in writing about specific productions and performances. In fact, the differentiation between popular and artistic, between different types of audience members, between registers of authentic and inauthentic performance, and ultimately between the suppression and embracing of the body, seems to have been a creation of these types of legitimizing discourse, rather than a reality reflected in discursive texts.

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[80] Michael Diamond, 'Theatre Posters and How They Bring the Past to Life', in *Theatre, Art, and Visual Culture in the Nineteenth Century,* ed. by Jim Davis and Patricia Symth (=*Nineteenth Century Theatre and Film*, 39.1 (Summer 2012)), pp. 60-77.

[81] Michael Booth, 'The Taste for Spectacle', in *Victorian Spectacular Theatre 1850-1910* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981), pp. 1-29; Irving, *Address to the Students of Harvard,* p. 23.

A useful way of cutting through this fog of rhetoric, and establishing the role of the body in the appreciation of acting more generally, is to consider Tree's 'conspiracy of actors and audiences' outside the world of nineteenth-century theatre, and the presence more generally of the body in theories of acting and performance that transcend historical context.[82] As a performance theorist Phillip Zarrilli, in his work on 'Acting (Re)Considered', made a clear distinction between 'theories' of acting, which are culturally and historically specific, and wider 'metatheories', which consider the constants of the actor's practice and are not specific to any one theatrical tradition.[83] This was how Bert States constituted his model of the 'Three phenomenal modes' of the actor's presence in the performance context, which he was clear was not a historically or culturally specific study, but rather the result of his being 'interested only in trying to approximate the range of the actor/audience relationship' in the act of theatrical performance.[84] Using States's theory, and particularly its consideration of the interaction between actor and spectator, in an abstract sense as a metatheory, it is possible to momentarily bypass the historically-specific theories of acting put forward by actor-managers and critics, and to make a more general statement about the importance of the actor's body within the theatrical context that can then be regrounded in the nineteenth century.

In States's conceptualization of performance he stated that within any theatrical production three modes of performance are necessary to constitute the presence of the actor; the self-expressive mode, which demonstrates the actor's skill, the collaborative mode, in which the audience is acknowledged by and responds to the performance, and the representational mode, where a character is recreated by the actor in accordance with the demands of the play.[85] Whilst

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[82] Tree, 'The Imaginative Faculty', p. 112.

[83] Phillip B. Zarilli, 'Introduction' in *Acting (Re)Considered: A Theoretical and Practical Guide*, ed. by Phillip B. Zarrilli, 2nd edn (London: Routledge, 2002; repr. 2011), pp. 1-4 (pp. 3-4).

[84] Bert O. States, 'The Actor's Presence: Three Phenomenal Modes', in *Acting (Re)Considered: A Theoretical and Practical Guide*, ed. by Phillip B. Zarrilli, 2nd edn (London: Routledge, 2002; repr. 2011), pp. 23-39 (p. 24).

[85] States, 'The Actor's Presence'.

acknowledging that the relative weight of these modes within any performance was contingent upon a number of factors, including play genre and specific acting techniques, he was emphatic about the universality of his model, and the ubiquity of these three modes in all types of theatrical performance, saying that, 'above all, I want to avoid any suggestion that my modes have anything *at all* to do with style'.[86] With his emphasis on the third, 'representational' mode of performance, States acknowledged, like Kennedy, that representation is always present in the theatre, characterizing the actor-as-speaker, and the audience-as-listener, but it is important that he did not stick purely to a semiotic relationship between actor and audience but characterized it as a 'two-way street', with individual spectators able to 'hear' selective parts of the production and, more importantly, to respond to and feed back into it in a way that could differ drastically depending on the individual who was hearing and responding.[87] However, with his inclusion of the 'collaborative' mode, and its attendant implication that the presence of an audience of some sort is a necessary condition of theatrical performance, States was also defining the audience on an abstracted level that went beyond individual reactions to a given performance.[88]

The audience became in States's model a constituent part of the theatrical process, without which the actor's presence and his performance of a role could not be complete. Following this line of reasoning, the actual socio-economic makeup of the audience becomes relatively incidental within the confines of the performance, and its role less that of an arbiter of the piece than a presence against which the performer constitutes his own work. Coming to the same conclusion from a different theoretical starting point, Kennedy also reasoned that the only way to conceive of the audience in terms of its 'universal' traits was to lay aside its actual composition as a group of individuals, and to see its function as a gathering of people in a specific place at a specific time for the

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[86] States, 'The Actor's Presence', p. 24. Emphasis as original
[87] States, 'The Actor's Presence', pp. 33-39, 24.
[88] States, 'The Actor's Presence', pp. 29-33.

purposes of watching performance.[89] The development of the audience in this way, as a theoretical rather than a literal body, whose role was to interact with the actor collaboratively in the constitution of the performance, implies that a performed character is never created by the actor alone, and renders Tree's conception of a successful character as a result of a 'conspiracy' between actor and audience more plausible from a theoretical perspective. The application of States's theory of three 'modes' to the late Victorian period is further facilitated by the similarities of his structural model of performance to the work of nineteenth-century theorists writing of their own theatrical context. In *Principles of Comedy,* Fitzgerald described his idea of '*real* acting' in a tripartite structure that was a near-echo of States's terminology: 'It raises a mimic world before us [representational mode]: the actor is a man, one of ourselves [self-expressive mode], and we are with him in his struggles [collaborative mode]. His self-exhibition is but a means to an end.'[90]

A reading of the context of Fitzgerald's tripartite structure indicates that he equated 'self-exhibition' with the physical side of the actor's practice and that, in line with his established position as a proponent of intellectual acting, he believed that it should not be the focus of performance.[91] However, there is a difference between self-exhibition as the sole object of performance, and its role as an integral part of that construction, and Fitzgerald seems to have acknowledged that whilst 'self-exhibition is but a means to an end', it was an instrinsic part of that end.[92] In this respect, States's most important contribution to a debate on the formation of the body as a site of interaction between actor and audience was not, as might be expected, in either the representational or collaborative modes but in his description of the self-expressive mode of performance, designed specifically in his words to facilitate 'our awareness of the artist in the actor'.[93] In order to convey his own skill as an actor, States argued, the performer must be able to communicate directly with the audience

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[89] Kennedy, *The Spectator and the Spectacle*, pp. 13-15.
[90] Fitzgerald, *Principles of Comedy*, p. 260.
[91] Fitzgerald, *Principles of Comedy,* pp. 256-260.
[92] Fitzgerald, *Principles of Comedy*, p. 260*.*
[93] States, 'The Actor's Presence', p. 26.

in his own right, not just as the character he is impersonating. However, as the words that the actor speaks are part of the play's script, not the actor's own, this communication cannot be a verbal speech act but a visual one, and for States his 'presence and way of appearing constitute the act of direct speech' between actor and audience.[94] This premise, that physicality on the stage is the primary means of expressing the actor's presence as well as providing a representation of his character, is also central to the work of Colette Conroy and Aoife Monks, who have both written persuasively about the body as a site of interaction between actors and audiences in the performance context.[95]

As a succinct and densely-packed account of the many ways in which the body functions in the theatrical context, Conroy's short volume, *Theatre & the body*, discussed a number of different approaches to embodiment theory, and the idea that the body in performance fulfills a number of roles simultaneously. One of the multi-functional aspects of the body that she considered was that the physical body on the stage could actually be both an element of the play's world and a distraction from it, a manifestation of 'a tension between being engrossed in the physical world of the room where the performance takes place and being engrossed in the fictional world of the play'.[96] Thus, whilst an actor harmonizes entirely with the world of the play, the audience is aware only of the play's score, but when the body is allowed to disrupt this fiction, either with a moment of virtuosic performance or a mistaken disjunction between acting technique and characterization, the audience's awareness shifts from the play's world to the 'distraction of the real', resulting in either a positive or negative response from the audience not to the production, but to the skill of one particular actor, a shift from State's representational to self-expressive mode.[97] In line with Conroy's attempts to free the body from purely representational reading, Aoife Monks has applied a similarly flexible and theory-based approach to theatre costume that incorporated States's model. According to her work, the outer

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[94] States, 'The Actor's Presence', p. 24.
[95] Colette Conroy, *Theatre & the Body* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); Aoife Monks, *The Actor in Costume* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).
[96] Conroy, *Theatre & the Body,* p. 38.
[97] Conroy, *Theatre & the Body,* p. 38.

coverings of the actor can be as much a function of the self-expressive mode, indicating the skill of the actor, as they are representational. Differentiating the working actor from the artistic character, she stated that, 'The appearance, abilities and dimensions of the working body are produced and rendered meaningful through costume.'[98] Monks was also clear elsewhere in her book that, as with Conroy's model of the body, costume could be used both as a cohesive tool, to help an actor blend into the world of the play, or as a disruptive tool, to provide disjunction.[99] The idea of facilitating the audience's awareness of the actor through the disruption of the play's continuum was seen by both authors as particularly relevant to the need for 'star' actors to display their skill above that of others in this period. That this applied to the way the actor-manager designed his own body in specific performances is the contention of the second chapter of this thesis, but these theoretical positions also reinforce the fact that Hammerton's sympathetic relationship, or Tree's 'conspiracy between actors and audiences', must have applied as equally to the physical transformation of the body as to any other aspect of the actor's performance.[100]

Conclusion: Para-Theatrical Bodies

Establishing the physical transformation of the body as both a key part of the working life of the actor-manager, and also as central to the audience's experience of both character and the actor's skill within the performance context is important because, contrary to the legitimizing rhetoric of actor-managers and critics, it upholds the idea floated in Lewis Wingfield's review of *Forget-Me-Not* that the body was a key factor in an audience member's reception of theatrical characters. Whilst denying it in discourses of the art of the actor, an actor-manager's undoubted awareness of such a fact allows research to proceed on the basis that the bodies produced by such figures in the theatrical process were done so with the intention of bolstering their reputation as actors and performers. Audience members undoubtedly experienced these bodies on different levels, and critical and popular success were arguably two

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[98] Monks, *The Actor in Costume,* p. 21.
[99] Monks, *The Actor in Costume,* p. 81.
[100] Hammerton, *The Actor's Art,* p. 72; Tree, 'The Imaginative Faculty, p. 112.

Image Redacted for

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Figure 3: London Sterescopic Company, Photograph of Genevieve Ward as Stephanie de Mohrivart with John Clayton as Sir Horace Welby in *Forget-Me-Not*, 1880. Sepia Photograph, 15 x 10cm. London: V&A.

different barometers of opinion that did not necessarily coincide. However, there is an argument to be made that the reception and subsequent dissemination of an actor's performance outside the theatrical context was as important to the actor-manager's success as the original performance moment, and that cultivating a relationship with the specific expectations of the critical press was one way of ensuring the spread of an actor-manager's reputation. Another was the production and dissemination of images of actors in character where, with the elements of movement, gesture, and speech obviously absent, the body was clearly an even more important tool in the interface between actor and spectator.

It is crucial to recognize that in every instance where the theatrical body of the actor-manager was depicted, either by verbal or visual means, outside of the actual performance moment, it was a body that had been mediated for public consumption, and to understand that mediating agents, whether they be critical opinion or visual realization, could create very different interpretations of the same body. To differentiate between the experience of the body in the theatrical context, and a body experienced through a mediating agent, subsequent chapters of this thesis use the term 'para-theatrical', after Chris Rojek's definition of the 'social' and 'para-social' experience of celebrity.[101] Figure 3 is a photograph depicting John Clayton's performance of Horace Welby in the same role that inspired Lewis Wingfield to lament that he was 'distinctly intended to be a "George"'. The review written for the *Theatre* contained two distinct critiques of Clayton's embodiment of Sir Horace. The first was the relationship of his large gestures to the small space of the Prince of Wales's theatre. Whilst Clayton's gesture in Fig. 3 is undoubtedly expansive, the space in which he is shown was that of the photographic studio rather than the stage, and therefore Wingfield's concern that 'his largeness of style as well as of figure are cramped on the tiny stage of the Prince of Wales's' cannot be read solely from the photographic depiction of his character.[102] The second critique put forward by Wingfield was that Clayton did not suit the modern dress worn for this part, and

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[101] See Introduction, p. 25 (n. 36).
[102] Wingfield, 'Forget-Me-Not', p. 232.

that he was far better off in the costume of the eighteenth century. Reading the image without Wingfield's text would provide ample information about the representational elements of costume worn by Clayton to play Horace Welby; these could easily be described and analysed in terms of their fashionability, in comparison with the costume of his leading lady, Genevieve Ward (1837-1922), and as visual symbolism representing the character of Sir Horace. None of these would, however, suggest to the modern viewer that John Clayton would be better off in the costume of the previous century, that 'the square cut of the Georges fits him better than his frock-coat'.[103] This could only be established by both an understanding of the mediated nature of both critical opinion, and the photographic realization of Clayton's performance and also the effect of the audience's historically and culturally constituted eye upon the judgment of the performed body. These different forms of judgment, and the role of the para-theatrical body in the artistic success of the actor-manager, are the subjects of the following chapter.

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[103] Wingfield, 'Forget-Me-Not', p. 232.

Embodying Artistry: *Charles I, Othello* and *The Corsican Brothers* at the Lyceum Theatre, 1872-1881

Just over a week after the sudden death of Henry Irving following a performance of *Becket* at the Theatre Royal, Bradford, in 1905, the *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News* reprinted, alongside an obituary of the actor, an image originally drawn by the artist Fred Barnard (1846-1896) in 1891 and published in the illustrated magazine *Black and White.* Shown in Figure 4, this was a collation of a series of portraits of Irving's 'principal characters', thirty-seven roles acted at the Lyceum Theatre between 1866 and 1890, and as such are examples of the mediated, para-theatrical body discussed at the end of the previous chapter. They demonstrate the importance of a range of successfully created characters to the actor-manager's legacy, but they are also evidence of Irving's own complicity in the dissemination of such material, and his awareness of the importance of recording his characters in a visual medium. Barnard had based at least one of these character sketches, that of Digby Grant in *The Two Roses,* on preliminary sketches and notes made in Irving's dressing room at the actor's invitation, one of which (Figure 5) was later reproduced in Bram Stoker's biography of the actor-manager. The annotations in this image demonstrate the centrality of the character's body to such visual material, and the importance that Barnard, and presumably Irving, attached to the accurate representation of his costume. This is borne out further in records of correspondence between the two whilst Barnard was creating his sketches, for which the actor-manager sent the artist photographs of himself in roles, and costumes from a number of productions, presumably to enable him to accurately capture the characters.[1]

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[1] Letters from Fred Barnard to Bram Stoker in 1884, 1890 and 1891 attest to the borrowing of costumes and acquisition of photographs from the actor for the purpose of researching his sketches. They also reference correspondence between Irving and the artist about the composite in *Black and White* (Fig. 4), with which neither was particularly pleased due to the poor quality of the reproduction. Leeds University Library, BC MS 19c Stoker. Accessed through *Henry Irving, 1838-1905: Correspondence,* Henry Irving Foundation Centenary Project, <http://www.henryirving.co.uk/correspondence.php> [accessed 6 March 2015].

Image Redacted for

Copyright Purposes

Figure 4: Fred Barnard, 'Mr. Henry Irving in all his Principal Characters 1866-1890', 1891.
Published *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News,* 21 October 1905, p. 277. Lithograph, 38 x 26cm.

Image Redacted for

Copyright Purposes

Figure 5: Fred Barnard, 'Henry Irving as Digby Grant in "Two Roses"', 1870. Published in Bram Stoker, *Personal Reminiscences of Henry Irving*, rev. edn (London: Heinemann, 1907), p. 6. Photogravure, 14 x 10cm.

Given the actor-manager's obvious concern for his own reputation, and his aims to have acting recognized as an art-form, as outlined in the texts examined in the previous chapter, it seems likely that his involvement with images of himself in character was fuelled by the same impulses of promotion and legitimization, and this chapter considers how such images, and the critical texts that accompanied the actor-manager's productions, used Irving's body in order to highlight his artistic skill and sensibility. Specifically, after dealing briefly with some of the conceptual problems of transferring performed characters into a visual medium, it takes the four of Irving's roles, Charles I, Othello, Fabien dei Franchi, and Iago, all performed in his first ten years at the Lyceum Theatre, and analyses how the bodies of these characters were designed and mediated for public consumption to bolster Irving's theatrical reputation at the beginning of his London career. The characters have deliberately been selected to showcase a range of theatrical genres, but common to them all was the role of the body in the framing of Irving as a consummate performer, and in the establishment of the actor-manager's theatrical practice as an expression of artistry.

Capturing Performance

Whilst Barnard undoubtedly conducted rigorous research into each of Irving's characters, it seems from his descriptions of receiving photographs and costumes from Irving as part of his artistic process that many of the sketches that comprised Fig. 4 were not drawn from life, and it is entirely possible that Barnard had not seen each of these characters actually performed. Thus, whilst the images appeared to be a faithful rendition of Irving's theatrical repertoire, they could not be considered as literal reproductions of Irving's appearance and gestures as he performed each part, and instead entailed a second level of mediation between the original theatrical performance and the images of the actor-manager, which in turn made the consumer of these images, whether he recognized this fact or not, one more step removed from Irving's performances. This fallacy, of a perceptibly literal translation of theatrical performance into visual medium, undermined by the contexts in which the image was produced, is not unique such sketches, and any consideration of theatrical images as

depictions of actual performances, regardless of the medium, encounters three major stumbling blocks.

The first of these, as demonstrated by both Fig. 4 and Fig. 5, is the removal of the performer from the physical context of his performance and the complete fictional world of the play. None of the character sketches included in Fig. 4 contained a backdrop, and Fig. 5 indicates that Barnard did not even consider contextualizing Irving's Digby Grant in his preparatory sketches. Yet in some ways an absence of context is less problematic than the imposition of a false or imagined backdrop. This is particularly true of the photographic medium in this period, the other major way in which the actor's onstage characters were disseminated, and which purported to show the fictional space and to be a photo-realistic interpretation of the theatrical production. As technological limitations did not allow photographs to be taken actually in the theatre until the latter part of the 1890s, all theatrical photographs, even those with staged scenes, were therefore taken in the studio, and whilst elements of costume and properties were taken from the theatre to the studio, the backdrops and sets were, for the most part, the studio's own.[2] If the interaction of the body with the theatrical space was considered to be an important element of performance practice, this removal of context in both types of image provides one obstacle to recreating an actor's performance through the use of images.

Yet whilst the composition of such images outside the theatrical context was problematic in itself, it was further complicated by the intervention of the artist in the creation of such images and of their necessary relationship to contemporary artistic norms. In considering the body of the actor-manager as a designed object, it is necessary to consider any form of mediation, in which the intervention of the artist must undoubtedly be included, as an integral rather

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[2] For a discussion of the development of technologies which allowed photography to be used on the theatrical stage in the 1890s, and its impact on the composition of theatrical portraiture, see David Mayer, 'The Actress as Photographic Icon: From Early Photography to Early Film', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Actress,* ed. by Maggie B. Gale and John Stokes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 74-94 (pp. 89-90).

than extrinsic part of that design. As touched upon in the introduction to this thesis, the necessity of considering contemporary artistic and representational codes when looking at theatrical portraits was a central theme of Shearer West's work when she considered the acting techniques of eighteenth-century actors David Garrick and John Kemble through the lens of their painted portraiture, and of Gill Perry's examination of actresses' portraits of the same period.[3] Although both West and Perry were primarily concerned with painted images in these works, a similar approach should be applied in the context of Barnard's sketch and caricature work of this period, and discussions of photographic techniques such as those put forward by Audrey Linkman in her work on photographic portraits are necessary to help elucidate images of the actor-manager in character.[4] As West demonstrated throughout her work, and particularly in her chapters on the connections of theatrical depictions of tragedy and comedy to developing ideas in art theory, whilst the images she discussed could not be considered as direct representations of performance, considering contemporaneous examples of performance technique and artistic practice alongside one another could illustrate the similarities of their visual coding, as well as their referential differences.[5]

It would seem, then, that the problem of non-literal representation of performance in images, the lack of contextualization for figures, and the intervention of specific artistic trends and techniques, can be overcome firstly by a parallel reading of images and descriptions of performance, and secondly by a close consideration of the artistic methods and representational codes that mediated between the performance context and the visual representation of

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[3] See Introduction, pp. 22-24; Shearer West, *The Image of the Actor: Verbal and Visual Representation in the Age of Garrick and Kemble* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991); Gill Perry, *Spectacular Flirtations: Viewing the Actress in British Art and Theatre, 1768-1820* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007).

[4] Audrey Linkman, *The Victorians: Photographic Portraits* (London: Tauris Parke Books, 1993).

[5] Shearer West, 'Tragedy, History Painting and the Aesthetics of Action', and 'The Comic Actor: Caricature, Physiognomy and the Fallacy of Infinite Character', in *The Image of the Actor: Verbal and Visual Representation in the Age of Garrick and Kemble* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991)*, pp. 90-122, 123-147.

theatrical characters. However, the third problem of theatrical imagery, based upon the dynamics of the performance context versus the apparently static image, appears to be more insuperable. Instead of the direct interaction between an actor, a character and an active theatrical spectator, which allows for a flow of information and feedback between all parties and the creation of a collaborative mode of performance, the ostensibly passive viewer is presented with a finished character embodied by an actor (and mediated by an artist) in a primarily representational mode. Nevertheless, whilst it is necessary to acknowledge that the dynamic of the theatrical image is intrinsically different to that of the theatrical performance, it is still possible to counter this assumption of the image as a *fait accompli,* and instead to conceive of the designed body in this visual context as not only representative, but also collaborative and self-expressive, an extension of the model of the performed body presented the previous chapter.[6] This can be done firstly by considering the consumption of such images in the late nineteenth century as an active form of spectatorship, which allowed for feedback and the construction of an 'audience' against whose expectations an actor-manager could fashion and re-fashion himself. Secondly, it can be achieved by considering the presence of the self-expressive mode in such images, and seeing them consequently as expositions of the actor's skill, as opposed to simply representations of his characters. Finally, it is possible to view the image as a means of disrupting the theatrical continuum and highlighting the actor's body in much the same way as Colette Conroy claimed that the disruption of the fictional world of the play in the performance context created a moment where an awareness of the actor superseded that of his character.[7]

Some images of actor-managers in character, such as those of Irving in the souvenir programmes produced by the Lyceum Theatre, could definitely be

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[6] For definitions, and a more detailed discussion of this model, which is taken from Bert O. States's phenomenological discussion of theatrical performance, see '"Distinctly Intended to be a 'George'": Character, Appearance, and the Skill of the Actor', pp. 76-79.
[7] Colette Conroy, *Theatre & the Body* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p. 38.

considered as direct mementoes of productions, and their consumers were almost certainly theatrical spectators who had actually experienced the characters in performance whose souvenirs they were purchasing. However, just as Barnard had evidently not drawn all of the sketches of Irving's characters in Fig. 4 from live performance, it was unlikely that every reader of the *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News* in October 1905 had seen all of Irving's personifications in the theatrical context, and some may have never seen the actor-manager on the stage at all, but only experienced his characters through mediated representations. Therefore, a literal equation of the theatrical audience with the viewer of theatrical imagery is all but impossible. However if both the presence and complicity of the audience is necessary for the creation and interpretation of the actor's body in the performance context, and this constitutes a collaborative mode of theatrical performance, so not only the presence but also the complicity of the viewer is necessary for the assembling and preservation of any narrative of the actor's skill suggested by the theatrical image, rendering this a collaborative mode of narrative.

As both Dennis Kennedy and Tracy C. Davis have made clear, the option not only to accept but also to refuse spectatorship, to remain merely a witness rather than an audience member, which Davis termed 'volitional spectatorship', is one reason why participation in the theatrical context, and the constitution of a theatrical audience, is an active rather than a passive process.[8] Similarly, the viewer, and particularly the collector, of theatrical images, from whom most surviving theatrical material of this period originates, could be said to be embracing 'volitional spectatorship', and participating actively in the creation and preservation of narratives of performance and the body inherent in the presentation of the actor's characters for visual consumption. The reader of the *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*, by their very purchase of such a publication, was likely to have been a habitual theatregoer, familiar with the

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[8] Dennis Kennedy, *The Spectator and the Spectacle: Audiences in Modernity and Postmodernity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 22-24; Tracy C. Davis, 'Theatricality and Civil Society', in *Theatricality*, ed. by Tracy C. Davis and Thomas Postlewait (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 127-155 (pp. 129-131).

interpretation of theatrical performances. The same could be said for purchasers of souvenir programmes, *cartes-de-visite* or cabinet card images of actors, or periodicals such as the *Saturday Programme* or the *Theatre,* through which a number of theatrical images entered circulation.[9] Even where theatrical illustrations were included in a publication that was not specifically theatrical, the interpretation of such an image, and the absorption of it into a narrative of the actor-manager, was an act of volitional spectatorship. That Fig. 4 entered the V&A collections not in its original context, as a page in the *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News,* but as a cutting from the above newspaper, preserved by a collector of theatrical material from this period, emphasized the active nature of the relationship between Henry Irving and at least one viewer of his theatrical images.

The collection of character sketches presented by Barnard in his collated drawing were not grounded through any one theatrical characterization, but by a portrait of the actor-manager off the stage, foregrounded at the centre of Fig. 4. As such, seeing this particular image as a demonstration of the actor's skill and versatility (and thus a version of the self-expressive mode) is relatively straightforward, and was perhaps why the *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News* chose it to memorialize Irving's career. In individual sketches and other theatrical portraits, without the direct juxtaposition of actor and character, the self-expressive mode is less prominent, but the divorce of these characters from their theatrical scores aids an interpretation of theatrical portraits as being primarily concerned with the actor rather than his character and, as demonstrated below, as a construction of the self-expressive as well as the representative mode. For this reason, this study also intentionally differentiates between portraits that show the interaction of two or more actors in a staged scene, in which the characters were brought back within the play's remit, and more prominent images of the actor in isolation, termed the 'theatrical portrait', which deliberately highlighted one individual for public consumption, and which are more commonly found in modern actor-centric collections,

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[9] See '"Bourgeois Blandness": Creating a Professional Body', pp. 221-260.

suggesting that they were more readily associated with narratives of an individual's skill.

The very existence of the term 'theatrical portrait', and its implied differentiation from more mainstream portraiture plays with the tension between self-expressive and representative identities, and this play between actor and character, mediated through the understanding of the viewer, is an important aspect of this chapter; how the actor obtruded his own presence through the theatrical portrait. As Richard Brilliant implied in his work on portraiture, in order for an actor's portrait to reference his skill, it must be possible to see a trace of him in his roles: 'When the roles played by actors and actresses do not define their own characters but displace them, then the player may seem to be so submerged in the role that he or she almost disappears from view.'[10] This ties in with Conroy's theory of the disruptive body and, looked at in this way, the image of the individual actor, still embodying his character, but divorced from the theatrical context, functioned as an extension of this disruption in the production's afterlife, allowing the actor to stand out from the crowd, and to highlight his own abilities and skill above the rest of the production. The rest of this chapter is devoted to examining some specific instances of these disruptive moments, and how such images could, despite the fact that they represented a mediated rather than direct relationship with the performed body, stand as proxies for the actor's skill in performance, consolidating or undermining the actor's standing as an artist, as well as the successes or failures of his characters.

'Van Dyck in Action': *Charles I,* 1872

Given Henry Irving's later reputation as one of the leading tragedians of English theatre, it is surprising to read in Charles Hiatt's (1869-c.1905) biography of the actor-manager that:

> When it was noised abroad that Henry Irving was to be seen as
> Charles I., the news was received with something like

[10] Richard Brilliant, *Portraiture* (London: Reaktion Books, 1991; repr. 2013), p. 101.

contemptuous amusement […] his success in full-blooded
melodrama could not be disputed: but that he should succeed in a
part which required above all dignity and pathos seemed altogether
improbable.[11]

 In fact, Irving's Charles I was to become one of his most well-known and
successful impersonations, continuing to be an important part of the actor's
repertoire for the rest of his career, and Hiatt went on to say that it transformed
his reputation from being an 'erstwhile grotesque comedian' to that of a 'master
of unforced pathos'.[12] First performed in his second London season at the
Lyceum Theatre in 1872, in the following thirty years of Irving's career as both
actor and manager, fourteen saw productions of *Charles I*, and for proof of the
play's popularity when it first opened, it is necessary to look no further than the
fact that the play ran at the Lyceum Theatre for one hundred and eighty nights
of the 1872 to 1873 theatrical season. [13] Yet despite the fact that it was written
especially for the theatre by contemporary playwright William Gorman Wills,
Charles I's popularity and success have rarely been attributed to the play itself.[14]
Instead, discussions of the production and its characters revolved around its
visual effects, one of which was the creation of the eponymous protagonist, and
particularly Irving's interpretation of the role, described by Bram Stoker as akin
to watching '"Van Dyck in action"'.[15]

That the process of transforming Irving's body into that of the Stuart king was
seen by critics as a key factor in the play's success, and a measure of Irving's
personal skill as an actor, would have been obvious to any theatregoer who

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[11] Charles Hiatt, *Henry Irving: A Record and Review* (London: George Bell, 1899),
p. 108.
[12] Hiatt, *Henry Irving,* p. 109.
[13] A full timeline of Irving's career, including the roles played in each season can
be found in Austin Brereton, *Henry Irving* (London: Treherne, 1905), pp. 55-67.
[14] From a literary perspective the play was primarily criticized rather than
praised, and in his work on the production Jeffrey Richards noted that
favourable criticism focused instead on its visual aspects. Jeffrey Richards, *Sir
Henry Irving: A Victorian Actor and his World* (London: Hambledon and London,
2005), pp. 325-332.
[15] Bram Stoker, *Personal Reminiscences of Henry Irving*, rev. edn (London:
Heinemann, 1907), p. 89.

picked up a *Charles I* theatre programme in November 1872, a mere two months after the play had opened. As a way of promoting the piece, and incidentally an indication of the importance that theatres themselves placed on the opinions of the contemporary press, the theatre management had reprinted three extracts from favourable reviews of the production, from pieces in the *Times,* the *Daily Telegraph,* and the *Daily News.* As well as focusing on the delivery of Irving's lines, and his mental encapsulation of the king, each of these reviews contained a profoundly physical description of his performance:

> [*Times*] There were the somewhat gaunt figure, the lank face, the sharply cut features, the long hair parted in the middle, with which everybody is familiar; a painting of Vandyke's seemed to have started living from its frame.

> [*Daily Telegraph*] Physically gifted for such an attempt, it almost appears, as the character is unfolded, that to play Charles was the realization of the actor's ambition [...] the impersonation from first to last is stamped with a dignity and refinement most welcome to behold.

> [*Daily News*] Nothing more regal can be desired than his bearing, nothing more harmonious than the effect of every look and gesture [...] From the outward appearance of the King (he might be an incarnate portrait of Vandyke) down to each little detail of posture, every thing is elaborated with conscientious care, and the result is a vivid creation of art.[16]

The language of these quotations, particularly that of the *Times* and the *Daily News*, was explicitly pictorial, drawing parallels between Irving's appearance and the series of portraits of King Charles I by the seventeenth-century court painter Anthony Van Dyck (1599-1641), an analogy that was to become the central feature of the verbal and visual rhetoric surrounding the production. It

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[16] 'Opinions of the Press', printed in *Charles I,* November 1872. Theatrical Programme for Production at the Lyceum Theatre, Theatre and Performance Collection, V&A. Spellings of Van Dyck as original.

became accepted wisdom not only for contemporary reviewers, but also for biographers, that Irving's Charles I resembled the corpus of Van Dyck's portraits. Each of these contemporary and later accounts stressed three aspects of this analogy: that Van Dyck was brought to mind specifically by Irving's physical appearance, that the actor himself was largely the creative agency behind this transformation, and that the comparison was not merely a similarity but an almost facsimile reproduction of Van Dyck's portraits. Percy Fitzgerald named this a 'startling reproduction of Vandyke's figure', and Ellen Terry recalled 'he used to come on stage looking precisely like the Vandyck portraits'. [17] Bram Stoker went so far as to stress that 'each costume was an exact reproduction from one of the well-known paintings'.[18] However, what was evident from the contemporary reviews, but forgotten by later biographers was that the reason for Irving's successful appearance was not just his creative genius, but that it also met an arbitrary criterion, the audience's expectations of what King Charles I should look like, for which the *Daily Telegraph* considered Irving 'physically gifted'.[19] In conflating the audience's expectations for Charles and Irving's natural body, the description from the *Times* is particularly interesting, because when it said 'there were the somewhat gaunt figure, the lank face, the sharply cut features, the long hair parted in the middle, with which everybody is familiar', it was unclear whether the 'familiar' appearance was that of the distinctive body of the actor, or Van Dyck's Charles I.[20]

What these writers fail to take into account is that Irving was not, in and of himself, responsible for the production's initial design in 1872: while he was the Lyceum's leading actor, he was not its manager until 1878, and the idea for the play was conceived in his first season at the theatre. The conventional narrative for the play's inspiration, passed down primarily through biographers of Irving with a vested interest in cementing his place at the centre of the production,

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[17] Percy Fitzgerald, *Sir Henry Irving: A Biography* (London: Fisher Unwin, 1906), p. 56; Ellen Terry, *The Story of My Life* (London: Hutchinson, 1908), p. 180. Spelling of Van Dyck as original.

[18] Stoker, *Personal Reminiscences,* p. 89.

[19] 'Opinions of the Press'.

[20] 'Opinions of the Press'.

appears to have been that Irving persuaded both Wills to write the play, and the manager of the Lyceum, Hezekiah Linthicum Bateman (1812-1875), to stage it. However, realistically the responsibility, and the financial means to recreate lavish sets and costumes, would still have rested with Bateman, who was conveniently ignored, or deliberately denigrated, by both contemporary commentators and later biographers.[21] Likewise, when it came to the design and creation of the actual costumes worn by Irving in the production, and thus framing his bodily transformation, the hagiographic approach of Irving's commentators meant that the agency was attributed solely to the actor-manager. Looking at the actual evidence surrounding the production, however, the 1872 programme listed the costumes as 'Dresses from historical pictures by Mr. S. May'.[22] This was probably a reference to Samuel May (c.1822-1876), the largest London-based theatrical costumier of the 1860s and 1870s.[23] Although it may be impossible to reconstruct the exact instructions given to May the implication of the programme's text is that the management, probably with some input from their leading actor, commissioned May's establishment to make costumes for *Charles I* based on historical portraits, possibly including those of Van Dyck, whose paintings and prints were readily accessible in the 1870s.[24] However, by 1876, the point at which Irving was largely managing the Lyceum Theatre, whilst the names of the scene painters continued to be printed

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[21] For an example of this, see Fitzgerald, *Sir Henry Irving,* pp. 56-57.

[22] Front Cover of *Charles I,* November 1872. Theatrical Programme for Production at the Lyceum Theatre, Theatre and Performance Collection, V&A.

[23] The extent of May's business is mentioned in Tracy Davis' economic study of Victorian theatre, but it also featured prominently in an article on costuming in the *Stage* magazine in 1883, where it was referred to as an establishment that was 'the parent of all similar ones existing now'. Tracy C. Davis, *The Economics of the British Stage, 1800-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000; repr. 2007), pp. 317-321; 'Costumes: 26 October, 1883', in *Victorian Theatrical Trades: Articles from* The Stage, *1883-1884,* ed. by Michael R. Booth (London: The Society for Theatre Research, 1981), pp. 11-14 (p. 12).

[24] The South Kensington Museum was bequeathed a copy of a Van Dyck portrait of Charles I as early as 1868 (Gonzalez Coquez, *Charles I of England and Henrietta Maria,* 17th century. Oil on canvas, 45.5 x 78.5cm. London: V&A). See also, *Alphabetical List of Portraits and Busts in the National Portrait Gallery, Exhibition Road, South Kensington* (London: Eyre, 1873).

on the Lyceum's programmes, May's had been removed, and never appeared again in connection with Irving's production.[25]

Rather, the narrative perpetuated by commentators on *Charles I*, designed to reinforce Irving's reputation as both an actor and an artist, was that the creator of the actor's seventeenth-century appearance was Irving alone, who single-handedly in the words of his grandson Laurence (1897-1988) 'transformed himself into the twin of Van Dyck's portrait of Charles'.[26] The effect of such narratives was to conflate Irving not just with the king represented by Van Dyck, but also with the artist himself, and thus to associate the skill of the actor with that of the painter.[27] In the case of stories of transformation, the association of Irving with Van Dyck was most frequently expressed in the form of a tale about the way in which the actor-manager applied his make-up. According to several sources, including Terry and Stoker, Irving had the artist Edwin Long (1829-1891) make a copy of a triptych of Van Dyck heads of Charles I, which 'used to rest before him on his dressing-table on those nights when he played Charles', and which he used daily as a model for his make-up (Figures 6 and 7).[28] The implication in this story was clear; Irving's make-up brush, following in the footsteps of Van Dyck's paintbrush, was creating a similarly detailed masterpiece. However, putting the triptychs side-by-side, what is interesting is that the Long picture is not an exact copy of the Van Dyck heads at all but rather an interpretation of the seventeenth-century portrait through nineteenth-century artistic technique. Taking Irving at his word, if he was copying Long's portrait exactly, then he was embodying not Van Dyck's Charles I, but a Victorian interpretation of the monarch's appearance.

If the Long triptych in Fig. 6 represented the perceived intercession of Van Dyck

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[25] *Charles I,* 1876. Theatrical Programme for Production at the Lyceum Theatre, Theatre and Performance Collection, V&A.
[26] Laurence Irving, *Henry Irving: The Actor and his World* ([n. p.]: [Faber], 1951)*, p. 218.
[27] This is a similar effect to that of Irving's theories of acting, discussed in the previous chapter. See '"Distinctly Intended to be a 'George'": Character, Appearance, and the Skill of the Actor', pp. 54-56.
[28] Stoker, *Personal Reminiscences,* p. 89; Terry, *Story of My Life,* p. 180.

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Figure 6: Edwin Longsden Long, *Three Heads of Charles I*, c.1872. Oil on panel, 19 x 29cm. London: Garrick Club.

Figure 7: Anthony Van Dyck, *Charles I in Three Positions,* 1635. Oil on canvas, 84 x 99cm. Windsor: Royal Collection.

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Figure 8: London Stereoscopic Company, Photograph of Henry Irving as Charles I, c.1872. Sepia Photograph, 15 x 10cm. London: V&A.

Image Redacted for

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Figure 9: London Stereoscopic Company, Photograph of Henry Irving as Charles I, c.1872. Bromide Postcard Print, c. 1900, 15cm x 9cm. London: V&A.

into Irving's theatrical body, Figures 8 and 9 are evidence for the transfer of the triptych's motif into his para-theatrical body, mediated and disseminated for public consumption over the course of some thirty years. They are two photographs taken by the London Stereoscopic Company in around 1873, and later published as picture postcards, probably in the 1900s, and as further evidence for the widespread consumption of these images, Fig. 8 was also included in Percy Fitzgerald's 1906 biography of the actor-manager.[29] For theatrical portraits, which are usually full-length in order to showcase the actor in the midst of action, they are unusual in showing only Irving's head and shoulders, but in photographing the actor-manager wearing the garter medal underneath an elaborate pointed lace collar, and with a swathe of fabric draped over one arm in Fig. 9, and by taking images of the character from two different angles, they were clearly intended to echo the composition of the triptych, and the physical appearance of the king in the original painting. [30]

With this in mind, Figure 10, a more conventional theatrical image in terms of its composition as a full-length portrait photograph, was also designed to reinforce the iconographical pattern of Irving-as-Van-Dyck's-Charles-I, and to further establish the reference to Van Dyck through the design and display of the actor-manager's body. Originally taken by the Dickinson Brothers photographic studio, it was likely to have been published first as a *carte-de-visite* and then as a cabinet card. Unlike some of the other photographic companies operating in this period, theatrical portraits seem to have been outside their usual remit; this is the only surviving image in the collections examined of an actor in costume. Rather, portraits of artists or writers in this period appear to have been Dickinson's speciality, and several of them were collected and mounted in albums of 'distinguished persons' by Sir George Scharf (1820-1895), founder of

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[29] Copies of both the original photographs and the postcard prints exist in the V&A and NPG collections. For some more general information about picture postcards, see p. 175 (n. 65).

[30] The construction of the lace in these and subsequent images, and in surviving costumes, actually provided an interesting meeting point for issues of historical accuracy and concerns about the construction and readability of theatre costume. See Helen Margaret Walter, '"Van Dyck in Action": Dressing *Charles I* for the Victorian Stage', *Costume,* 47 (2013), 161-179.

the NPG and avid collector of *cartes-de-visite*.[31] Having started a firm of engravers and lithographers, however, they would presumably have been familiar with the oft-reproduced portraits of Charles I by Van Dyck, and this photograph must have been created as a deliberate response to the comparison between Irving's performance and the seventeenth-century paintings, as its composition and the appearance of Irving are clearly designed to imitate Van Dyck's hunting painting of Charles I (Figure 11, also known as the *Roi à la Chasse*), which was part of the original public collection at the Louvre.

Whether this was solely the province of the studio or inveigled by the actor-manager is not known, but correspondence from the late 1890s between Dickinson & Foster, as the photography studio became known, indicates a tension between photographer and actor-manager over the distribution of the photograph towards the end of Irving's career. It appears that Irving had become disenchanted with the images, and had turned to a solicitor to prohibit Dickinson & Foster from their distribution, despite popular demand on the part of consumers.[32] The duration of this debate, and the point at which Irving became dissatisfied with their photographs is not known, and the integration of this photograph into the legacy of Irving's Charles I was perpetuated when it was included in Stoker's biography alongside his claim that each of Irving's costumes was an exact copy of a Van Dyck portrait. The photograph is therefore evidence both of attempts on the part of the actor-manager to control the dissemination of his theatrical bodies, and the futility of such efforts; for Dickinson & Foster to know that the images were popular, and for Irving to have resorted to the use of a solicitor suggests that the images had been distributed without his consent in the first place. Finally, Stoker's inclusion of the image in his biography indicated

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[31] Dickinson Brothers, Photographs of Percy Carpenter, in George Scharf, *Distinguished Persons Vol. 1 A-Ch. Carte-de-visite* album containing 49 *cartes* collected in the 1860s. Photographs Collection, NPG. Album 112, Ax5050-Ax5098 (Ax5091, Ax5093).

[32] Letter from Dickinson & Foster to Henry Irving, 2 November 1898. Stratford-Upon-Avon, Shakespeare Centre Library and Archive, RL2/6/284. Accessed through *Henry Irving, 1838-1905: Correspondence*, Henry Irving Foundation Centenary Project, <http://www.henryirving.co.uk/correspondence.php> [accessed 6 March 2015].

Image Redacted for

Copyright Purposes

Figure 10: Dickinson Brothers, Photograph of Henry Irving as Charles I, c.1876-7. Albumen Cabinet Card, 16 x 10cm. London: V&A.

Image Redacted for

Copyright Purposes

Figure 11: Anthony Van Dyck, *Charles I (Roi à la Chasse),* c.1636. Oil on canvas, 266 x 207cm. Paris: Musée du Louvre.

that the desire to explicitly associate the body of Irving's Charles I with that painted by Van Dyck took precedence over the wishes of the actor-manager.

In a direct comparison of Figs. 10 and 11, the visual echo of the painting in the photograph is immediately apparent. The pose of the bodies in both images is identical; in each Charles's body faces to the right, while his head turns to look at the artist or photographer, and his right hand is extended to the top of his cane. This imitative construction invites the viewer to draw an exact parallel between Irving's Charles I and that of Van Dyck, down to the fact that the end of his garter hangs down over his left boot. In broad strokes, Irving's costume in the photograph, which he would have probably selected and brought to the studio, also corresponds to that of the *Roi à la Chasse*. Irving's Charles wears a similar wide-brimmed hat and bucket-topped boots, and it is even possible to distinguish in the photograph a butterfly spur, characteristic of leather boots of the 1630s and 40s.[33] However, a closer examination of the costume's details reveals that it could not have been, in the words of Stoker, an 'exact reproduction' of that worn in the hunting portrait.[34] Examples of differences in detail include the top of the doublet sleeves, cut in streamlined fashion in Van Dyck's portrait, and which in the photograph are topped by exaggerated wings. The colour palette is also wrong; Irving's doublet appears to be made of a dark velvet, where Van Dyck's Charles is wearing one of cream silk, and his light-coloured cordoban leather boots have been replaced in Irving's costume with boots of similar structure, but in a dark, polished leather.

A similarly muted palette, and a composition reminiscent of Van Dyck's portraits of Charles I can be seen in James Archer's (1822-1904) life-size oil of Irving in the role, painted in 1873, and now in the collections of the Russell-Cotes Museum in Bournemouth (Figure 12). Unlike Fig. 10, it does not appear to have been copied from a specific portrait, but Irving's pose in this portrait, with one hand at the waist, supporting a swathe of fabric, is reminiscent of a painting

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[33] See Aileen Ribeiro, *Fashion and Fiction: Dress in Art and Literature in Stuart England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), pp. 96-103, Figures 51-54.
[34] Stoker, *Personal Reminiscences,* p. 89.

Image Redacted for

Copyright Purposes

Figure 12: James Archer, *Henry Irving as Charles I,* 1873. Oil on canvas, 221 x 103cm. Bournemouth: Russell-Cotes Museum.

of Charles by Van Dyck in his robes of state, in which the monarch was also depicted against a pillared background. Archer's portrait formed part of a series of at least three paintings of the actor completed in this period by the same artist, and was exhibited in the Royal Academy (RA) in 1873.[35] The exact nature of the actor-manager's collaboration with Archer is not known, but he was definitely aware, and appreciative of, the artist's interest, writing to his father in 1872, 'Did I tell you that an oil picture of me in *The Bells* will be in this year's Royal Academy. I have been painted by one of the first artists in London–Mr. Archer.'[36] Whilst unlikely that Irving specifically commissioned Fig. 12, his interest in the piece is demonstrated by the fact that he acquired it for his personal art collection and kept it until his death in 1905, when it was sold at auction at Christie's.[37]

As with the Dickinson's photograph, a close reading of the costume in Archer's portrait reveals that, whilst the body of Irving's Charles I may have been framed as an exact reproduction of Van Dyck in contemporary narratives, it is more likely to have been an interpretation of Van Dyck's dress more suitable both for the theatrical context, and the expectations of Irving's audiences, than a literal rendering of Van Dyck's costume, a confluence of historical accuracy and audience expectation that was enacted through the consistently monochrome presentation of Irving's body. The consistent depiction of Irving's Charles as dressed entirely in relatively simple black attire, characterized not by flamboyance, but by austerity and sobriety of dress and particularly lack of detailing, was a dramatic departure from Van Dyck's portraits. It is borne out in surviving garments from the Lyceum's productions in the collections of the V&A and Museum of London where, leaving lace and accessories aside, the

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[35] The first of these, a half-length portrait of Mathias in the melodrama *The Bells,* was exhibited at the RA in 1872, and the third was a picture of *Macbeth* from 1875. James Archer, *Henry Irving in 'The Bells',* 1872. Oil on canvas, 66cm x 84cm. London: Museum of London, 38.41/6.

[36] Letter from Henry Irving to Samuel Broadribb, published in Laurence Irving, *Henry Irving*, p. 211.

[37] *Catalogue Of The Collection of Ancient and Modern Pictures, Water-colour Drawings And Theatrical Portraits, The Property of Sir Henry Irving* ([London: Christie, Manson, and Woods], 1905), p. 19.

predominant colour is black. Between them, the collections contain three almost complete costumes from Charles I comprising a doublet of black velvet and one of black satin, a black wool jacket, and two pairs of breeches, one in silk, and one silk and cotton, but both black, lacking the lavish trimmings one might expect in a regal figure. Whilst Charles I was known to have favoured a measure of sobriety in dress, and was depicted dressed in black in at least one Van Dyck portrait, his costume in that picture was still richly detailed, with braids and ribbons befitting his status, and a range of colours can be seen in the overall sweep of portraits.[38]

In terms of strict historical accuracy, this differentiated Irving's body from that of the king depicted by Van Dyck, but it makes perfect sense as a bodily synthesis between historical truth and the expectations of a Victorian audience, and in terms of Charles I as a character that marked the transformation of Irving from an 'erstwhile grotesque comedian' to 'a paragon of kingly dignity, a master of unforced pathos'.[39] By dressing his Charles in black from the beginning to the end of the play, incidentally also the colour of mourning, which was becoming increasingly codified in the Victorian period, Irving foreshadowed the inevitable end for the character, trial and execution, creating a consistent element of pathos in his characterization. This played into Victorian narratives sympathetic to the historical figure of Charles, which viewed him as a wronged martyr, and Irving's awareness of this context for Charles can be seen in the fact that, at the time of his death in 1905, alongside a folio of one hundred engravings after Van Dyck of 'Icones principium', and further engravings of Charles I, his book collection contained two copies of *Eikon Basilike*, the primary text in the cult of Charles the Martyr.[40]

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[38] See Ribeiro, *Fashion and Fiction,* pp. 92-110.

[39] Hiatt, *Henry Irving*, p. 109.

[40] *Catalogue Of the Valuable Library, And The Collection of Old Play-Bills And Theatrical Prints, Of Sir Henry Irving, Deceased* ([London: Christie, Manson, and Woods], 1905), pp. 6, 60; Raymond Chapman, 'For God and King Charles', in *The Sense of the Past in Victorian Literature* (London: Croom Helm, 1986), pp. 103-122.

In his analysis of Irving's production of Wills's piece in his excellent biography of the actor-manager, Jeffrey Richards made clear that the overarching themes of the play, and the audience's reactions to them, must be seen in terms of a Victorian appropriation of Stuart history, and a similar principle should be applied to the design of Irving's body, particularly when considering its role in the popularization of the actor-manager.[41] As Richards noted, between 1820 and 1900, 175 paintings were exhibited at the RA on the subject of the reign of Charles I and the Civil War, a large number of which included images of the king and queen and their children.[42] At least one of these, Frederick Goodall's (1822-1904) *An Episode in the Happier Days of Charles I,* exhibited at the RA in 1853, was also explicitly referenced in the Lyceum production of Wills's play, with the closing scene of Act I, on the river at Hampton Court, designed to resemble, both in aesthetics and composition, Goodall's painting.[43] Like the Long triptych, Goodall's work was based on Van Dyck's paintings, but was a Victorian interpretation of the king's life in which, incidentally, Charles, depicted in the midst of a family boating trip, was dressed all in black. [44] As Dianne Macleod has identified the RA as a forum for demonstrations of middle-class consumerism, and mainstream artistic values in this period, it seems likely that the pictures of Charles I exhibited there in this period, including both those of Frederick Goodall, which represented the man himself, and that of Archer, which represented Irving's Charles, were informed by a contemporary middle-class sympathy with the figure of Charles I, and his identification with normative bourgeois values.[45]

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[41] Richards, *Sir Henry Irving,* pp. 322-332.

[42] Richards, *Sir Henry Irving,* p. 331.

[43] In a souvenir prompt produced to accompany the production, a watercolour illustration of this closing scene is included which is an almost direct copy of Goodall's painting. J. H. Allen, *Charles I: An Historical Play in 4 Acts, by - , As Originally Produced at the Lyceum Theatre*, March 1882. Souvenir Prompt for production at the Lyceum Theatre. Theatre and Performance Collection, V&A. PLAYS WIL PROMPT.

[44] The painter's autobiography testifies to time spent at Windsor Castle, studying Van Dyck's portraits in research for this painting. Frederick Goodall, *The Reminiscences of Frederick Goodall, R. A.* (London: Walter Scott, 1902), p. 34.

[45] Dianne Sachko Macleod, *Art and the Victorian Middle Class: Money and the Making of Cultural Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996; repr. 1998), pp. 234, 244-245.

In terms of dimensions, value, and artistic medium, as physical objects the Dickinson photograph (Fig. 10), originally produced as a *carte-de-visite,* and Archer's painting (Fig. 12), represented opposing ends of the artistic spectrum. The same is true from the perspective of their intended consumers, as they were ostensibly targeted at different socio-economic groupings. As John Plunkett discussed in an essay on the 'Poetics' of *cartes-de-visite,* such images were distinct from painted portraiture because of their 'equalising agency', in the juxtaposition of different figures in the windows of photographic studios, and the perception that they granted all levels of society access to well-known sitters.[46] In theory, this allowed the Van Dyck metaphor to extend through the different social levels that made up the Lyceum's audiences, but whether the average buyer of a Dickinson Brothers *carte-de-visite* in the early 1870s would have recognized the specific reference to Van Dyck's *Roi a la Chasse* is by no means certain. However, the transfer of the photograph to the cabinet card format in the late 1870s, and the display of Archer's painting in the RA, links the two images, and provides a feasible ground for the public understanding of Irving's body as a Victorian recreation of Van Dyck through the medium of middle-class consumerism. Audrey Linkman has described the development of the cabinet card as the result of efforts by photographers to target a more affluent customer, and also to establish photography as a more 'technical and artistic' discipline, worthy of collection by a consumer of taste.[47] It could therefore also be argued that this sober, restrained Charles, dressed in black, designed by Irving, and mediated both through painting and photographs, was designed to appeal to a Victorian middle class who themselves embraced restraint as a central part of middle-class masculine identity, a trait that is discussed further in the fifth chapter of this thesis.[48] It was presumably no accident that in his reminiscences to Ellen Terry, the sculptor Alfred Gilbert (1854-1934) described Irving's Charles I as 'a masterpiece of conception as to

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[46] John Plunkett, 'Celebrity and Community: The Poetics of the *Carte-de-visite*', *Journal of Victorian Culture,* 8 (2003), 55-79 (p. 68).
[47] Linkman, 'The Cabinet', in *Photographic Portraits,* pp. 74-76 (p. 75).
[48] See '"Bourgeois Blandness": Creating a Professional Body', pp. 235-239.

the representation of a great gentleman', using a Victorian norm of masculinity to describe Irving's interpretation of the king. [49]

As mediated versions of Irving's Charles I, therefore, the body of the actor-manager in all of the images discussed, regardless of medium, performed several functions that boosted his popularity as an actor, and aided his struggle to have acting legitimized as a form of artistic practice. Firstly, each image played into the conflation of Irving's Charles I with the portraits of the king produced by Van Dyck in the seventeenth century, one of the main ways in which the character was reported in narratives of Irving's career. This performed the dual function of lending an air of authenticity to Irving's characterization, and also of associating the actor with both an accurate depiction of the Stuart King, and with the skill of the artist who had rendered him in paint for posterity. Secondly, by not just slavishly copying the portraits, but in bearing in mind the expectations of contemporary audiences, the material construction of Irving's dressed body, as evidenced through both image and surviving costume, presented a particularly Victorian portrait of Irving's king for public consumption. Bringing together these two aspects of the body, in both theatrical and para-theatrical narratives, enabled Irving's Charles I to appear as a particularly artistic moment in his career, and to chime with public understanding, with the result that it not only cemented his reputation as a tragedian, but that it also was popular enough to fill houses consistently over the thirty years of his career, and to perpetuate his reputation for posterity.

An Aside: *Othello,* 1876

The embodiment of Irving's Charles I, and the subsequent dissemination of images of his performance as the king, undoubtedly helped to consolidate his reputation as a tragedian and an artist, but if one way of measuring the importance of such work to the actor-manager's reputation is to look at an instance where the synthesis has been successful, another way of capturing the interplay of body, image and narratives of artistry, is to consider an occasion where a character has failed to win over an audience, and has subsequently been

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[49] Alfred Gilbert, cited in Terry, *Story of My Life,* p. 342.

denied a place in the visual and historical record. In this respect, *Othello*, produced at the Lyceum Theatre in 1876, provided a cautionary tale of the dangers for an actor who eschewed the aesthetic expectations of contemporary audiences, and a lesson in the power of critical opinion. Irving was becoming increasingly involved with the production aspect of plays; as the programme for *Othello,* performed in February 1876, stated, 'The Play produced under the Personal Direction of MR. IRVING.'[50] As part of the production, he commissioned the scene painters at the Lyceum to present lavish pictures of historical Venice and Cyprus and, allegedly following the advice given by Benjamin Disraeli (1804-1881) in his novel *Vivian Gray* that Othello was best dressed 'in the full dress of a Venetian magnifico of the Middle Ages', asked the artist and illustrator John Tenniel (1820-1914) to design him costumes that would accurately reflect Othello's role as a military commander of the Venetian court.[51]

Whilst this may have been a historically accurate reflection of Othello's actual status in Venice, by presenting the character in Venetian uniform Irving was flouting conventions for the presentation of Othello in Victorian theatre that, following contemporary orientalist trends, called for the Moor to be dressed in 'robes of an Oriental texture and device'.[52] Subsequently, whilst most of the

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[50] *Othello,* 14 February 1876. Theatrical Programme for Production at the Lyceum Theatre. Theatre and Performance Collection, V&A. Capitalisation as original.

[51] Benjamin Disraeli*,* cited in Edward Dutton Cook, 'Othello', in *Nights at the Play: A View of the English Stage*, 2 vols (London: Chatto and Windus, 1883), II, 306-310 (p. 307). For evidence of the close the relationship between Disraeli and Irving, see Bram Stoker, 'The Earl of Beaconsfield', in *Personal Reminiscences,* pp. 266-269, and for Irving's commissioning of John Tenniel see Laurence Irving, *Henry Irving,* p. 272.

[52] Dutton Cook, 'Othello', p. 307. A detailed discussion of the development of the presentation of Othello in the early part of the nineteenth century, and particularly its association with contemporary discourses of orientalism is, sadly, slightly beyond the scope of this chapter, but can be found in the following works. Michael Neill, 'Introduction', in William Shakespeare, *Othello,* ed. by Michael Neill (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 1-179 (pp. 40-117); Marvin Rosenberg, *The Masks of Othello: The Search for the Identity of Othello, Iago, and Desdemona by Three Centuries of Actors and Critics* (Newark: University of Delaware Press; London: Associated University Presses, [1961(?)]), pp. 55-119; Edward Pechter, *Othello and Interpretive Traditions* (Iowa City: Iowa University Press, 1999), pp. 11-29.

visual effects of the piece were praised in contemporary criticism, Irving's impersonation of the play's leading character was almost universally described as a failure. There were a number of different elements to this critique, but incorporated in most reviews were telling references to the fact that his body, and particularly Othello's costumes, did not conform to the audience's expectations of how the part should look. The satirical magazine the *Hornet* said that 'His impersonation does not fit the popular ideal of the "lusty Moor"', while the *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News* claimed that, 'from the beginning he looked entirely different from what any student of Shakespeare can imagine Othello to have been'. [53] The *Graphic* linked this explicitly to the design and realization of Irving's body, suggesting a lack of orientalist associations rendered the character unnerving:

> [...] though cogent reasons may be given for the assumption that a Moor who had entered the service of Venice would wear only Venetian uniforms, it is dangerous to shock the preconceived notions of playgoers in these matters, and it is certain that the swarthy skin is rendered more unprepossessing when the wearer is divested of those familiar associations. In point of fact Mr. Irving, when he presented himself in his long red burnouse, looked more like a fanatical Wahabee, nursing some long cherished scheme of vengeance, than the frank, brave, honest, genial Moor.[54]

This criticism made clear that Irving's costumes were not inaccurate, but that in taking Othello out of the orientalist tradition and juxtaposing a Moorish skin with a largely Venetian costume, and a single element of supposedly African dress, he had removed the audience's sympathy for the character. 'Our Captious

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[53] 'Buzzings at the Wings', *Hornet,* 25 February 1876, in Percy Fitzgerald, *Henry Irving: His Life and Characters*, 22 vols, II, 98; '"Othello" at the Lyceum', *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News,* 19 February 1876, in Fitzgerald, *Henry Irving,* V, 212. Comprising 22 volumes of material pertaining to Irving and his career, including extensive series of reviews and press cuttings for almost every production staged at the Lyceum, these scrapbooks were collated by Percy Fitzgerald and then given by the critic to the Garrick Club in 1910, where they form a core part of the library's collections. Unfortunately, not all of these reviews are attributed.
[54] 'Theatres', *Graphic,* 19 February 1876, pp. 174-175 (p. 174).

Critic' concurred with this view, and even linked it to the status of Irving as an artist, saying:

> His Othello I would willingly forget if I could [...] instead of giving a portrait of Shakespeare's noble Moor, he has produced a distorted and repulsive caricature. He has mistaken eccentricity for art, and has expended much labour and study to produce an utterly incorrect impersonation.[55]

Not only did these reviews reinforce the fact that theatrical spectators, and particularly critics, never approached productions from a cultural vacuum, but they also demonstrated clearly how an embodiment that jarred with the visual expectations of an audience could result in a condemnation of the actor's skill, and even have an impact on his future productions. As the *Westminster Papers* warned: 'on the next occasion that Mr. Irving attempts a Shakespearian character, his Othello will be remembered, and should he not improve upon it, the public voice will be much altered in its note'.[56] This may explain why, despite the fact that it was his first appearance in this role, there was no attempt whatsoever on the part of Irving to capture or memorialize it for posterity, and it has similarly been largely sidelined in accounts of his career, or excused as experimental and misunderstood; in Austin Brereton's detailed timetable of Irving's career, where the first appearance of a piece was usually accompanied by a couple of sentences, it is referenced simply: 'February 14th. Irving acted Othello.'[57] On a visual level, it is notable that in comparison with the many pictures of *Charles I*, Figures 13 to 16 are the only images found in the course of this research that can be attributed to Irving's 1876 performance as Othello,

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[55] 'Our Captious Critic', *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News,* 19 February 1876, p. 509.

[56] 'Dramatic Notes', *Westminster Papers,* 1 March 1876, in Fitzgerald, *Henry Irving*, II, 96.

[57] Brereton, *Henry Irving,* p. 57. The 1876 production of *Othello* was not discussed at all in Stoker's biography, which dwelt on a number of other early performances by Irving, and Percy Fitzgerald devoted less than one paragraph to the production, saying simply that the 'notion of the character was immature'. Fitzgerald, *Sir Henry Irving,* p. 64.

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**Figure 13: William Small, 'Mr. Irving and Miss Isabel Bateman in "Othello" at the Lyceum Theatre',
1876. Published 18 March 1876. Included in Percy Fitzgerald,** *Henry Irving: His Life and Characters*,
22 vols, II, 94. Lithograph, 32 x 27cm. London: Garrick Club Library.
Figure 14: Anon., 'Mr Irving as "Othello, or the Infuriated Sepoy"', *1876. Published* *Illustrated*
Sporting and Dramatic News, **19 February 1876, p. 509.**
Figure 15: Faustin Betbeder, 'Mr Henry Irving, as "Othello"', 1876. Included in Percy Fitzgerald,
Henry Irving: His Life and Characters, **22 vols, II, 353. 15cm x 15cm. London: Garrick Club Library.**

Figure 16: Alfred Thompson, Henry Irving as Othello, Detail from *Rinkomania*, 1876. Published *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News,* 1 March 1876, p. 552. 13 x 11cm.

and there appears to have been no attempt by the actor-manager himself to memorialize this part. If we consider that the bodily disruption of audience expectations through the design of the theatrical body had garnered negative criticism, it makes sense that further propagating this disruption by creating a para-theatrical motif of Irving as a Venetian Othello would not benefit the actor-manager's reputation.

Of these four images, Fig.13, which appeared on the front page of the *Graphic* in March 1876 and illustrates the confrontation in Act IV, Scene 2 of the play, is the only one that can be considered as an attempt to literally represent Irving's performance and it is telling that, in contrast to the relatively detailed representation of Isabel Bateman's (1854-1934) dress, little of Irving's Venetian costume can be seen, and he is instead swathed in what must be assumed to be the 'burnouse' mentioned in the *Graphic's* review of the production.[58] The cloak appears again in Figs. 14 and 15, and in Fig. 16, a detail from Alfred Thompson's (1831-1895) *Rinkomania,* a roller-skating, drum-playing Irving appears in a pastiche of faintly ridiculous oriental garments that he almost certainly did not wear in this production at all. What all of these images had therefore done was to pick and choose elements of Irving's theatrical body, and translate them into a version of the actor-manager's performance that served their own representational ends. For the *Graphic,* the inclusion of the burnouse was clearly intended to add some drama to the play's denouement, whereas in the caricature images, the construction of the actor's body was designed to emphasize the inappropriate nature of Irving's conception of the Moor in relation to contemporary understandings of the part.

In an article on the use of cartoons and caricatures in representations of the Victorian stage, Jim Davis argued that such images must be seen as representations of critique rather than performance, and that using them simply as illustrations applies an insufficient awareness of their function as vehicles not

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[58] 'Theatres', *Graphic,* p. 174.

only of theatrical critique but also social criticism.[59] In this respect, the explicit connection made between Irving's Othello, notions of orientalism and contemporary constructions of the British Empire in Fig. 14, with the description of Irving as an 'infuriated Sepoy', is probably a more crucial facet of the image than a simple criticism of Irving's performance.[60] However, caricature also adds another level to the para-theatrical body, in the consideration of representations of that ran contrary to actor-managers' own opinions of their art, and as a form of bodily design and mediation over which they had no control. Jim Davis stated that Irving in particular 'suffered more than most from the caricaturist's pen', partly as a result of his role as the perceived head of the acting profession in this period, but that in caricatures of the actor there 'is an element of denigration and distortion that at times seems unmerited and aggressive', and recognized that Irving, of all actor-managers in this period, seemed particularly sensitive about caricatures of himself.[61] This was possibly a result of their denigrating nature, but almost certainly also a function of his lack of control over such images.

Despite the obvious expense involved in the mounting of such a piece, it was never revived in this form at the Lyceum Theatre, and in refusing to create his own visual memorialization of the *Othello* production, Irving would have been allowing the critical discourse unopposed sway. However, his answer to his critics was not to present an antagonistic narrative of the 1876 production, nor to simply ignore them, but instead to produce a new version of the play, only five years later, in 1881. This was staged in conjunction with the American actor Edwin Booth (1833-1893), who was touring in Britain, and was designed so that,

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[59] Jim Davis, '"Auntie, can *you* do that?" or "Ibsen in Brixton": Representing the Victorian Stage through Cartoon and Caricature', in *Ruskin, the Theatre and Victorian Visual Culture,* ed. by Anselm Heinrich, Katherine Newey and Jeffrey Richards (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 216-238.
[60] Originally 'Sepoy' was a generic term for an Indian soldier serving European colonial powers, but after rebellions of Indian troops in 1857-58, known colloquially to contemporaries as 'the Sepoy Rebellion', it became a symbol of the untrustworthy nature of Indian troops, and was subsequently used as a term for Indian soldiers of lower rank in the colonial Indian army. See entry for 'Sepoy' in Carl Cavanagh Hodge, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Age of Imperialism, 1800-1914* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2008), pp. 645-646.
[61] Davis, '"Auntie, can *you* do that?"', p. 233.

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Figure 17: J. Bernard Partridge, *Irving as Othello,* **c.1880-1900. Pencil, Pen and Ink on Paper, 26 x 14 cm. London: V&A.**

on a weekly basis, Booth and Irving would alternate the parts of Iago and Othello, both of which Booth had played a number of times before in America, and in which he had appeared at the Princess's Theatre in 1880.[62] Arguably the most challenging part of this production for Irving was to combat the negative criticism engendered by his performance of Othello in 1876, and this is perhaps one reason that he chose to play Iago first. However, when he stepped out on the stage as Othello, it was in a completely different guise to that of his 1876 production; as *The Daily Telegraph* described it: 'Arrayed in costly garments of Oriental magnificence, in robes of stamped gold, and many coloured silks and draperies, Mr. Irving was a worthy figure in a gorgeous frame.'[63] As demonstrated, the result was judged by all a definite improvement on his 1876 effort, a judgment based not only on his performance, but on the visual appeal of his body in the role of Othello:

> Mr. Irving's performance of the Moor, which, as will be
> remembered, was not by any means the most successful of his
> efforts – has gained greatly [...] Certain eccentricities of attire also,
> which were not picturesque or otherwise effective, have given place
> to a remarkable succession of splendid costumes, which are both
> noble and appropriate.[64]

Unfortunately, the critical appreciation of the visual aspects of this new manifestation of Othello could still not quite reconcile Irving to the part, and this was the last time he played the Moor, but its place in the record of Irving's career is attested by the survival of a number of items of costume from this production in the collections of the Museum of London and the V&A, and also in numerous illustrations of him in the role, including that of Figure 17, a sketch by Bernard Partridge (1861-1945), another artist with close ties to the Lyceum Theatre, in which the mediated, visually pleasing aspects of the role could still be used to reinforce Irving's role as an artist. Based not on his own individual

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[62] Booth had produced Othello in 1869 at his own theatre in New York, where he and his leading actor Ned Adams had alternated the parts of Othello and Iago, and Booth had been seen in both roles in 1880 in London. Lawrence Hutton, *Edwin Booth* (New York: Harper, 1893), pp. 50, 55-56.

[63] 'Lyceum Theatre', *Daily Telegraph*, 10 May 1881, in Fitzgerald, *Henry Irving*, III, 353.

[64] 'Lyceum Theatre', 1881, in Fitzgerald, *Henry Irving*, IV, 333.

interpretation of the character, but on the active feedback of spectators, and a dialogue with the critical press, Irving had changed the representative aspect of his character in order to bring it back within the expectations of the audience, a clear illustration of both the active nature of audience participation in the design of an actor's body and of the ways in which the design and dissemination of the body could change the record of the actor's career.

Privileging the Disruptive Body: Fabien dei Franchi, 1880

Irving's *Charles I* was an example of how visual cross-referencing through the body could aid the reputation of an actor as both a performer and an artist, and ensure the continued success of a character across the span of his career. By contrast, the failure of Irving's 1876 *Othello* illustrated that neglecting to take account of contemporary artistic practice could result in the denigration of the actor's skill, that was only rectified by Irving's re-incorporation of visual cross-references in his subsequent 1881 production. While these plays obviously belonged to different theatrical traditions in terms of their writing, both Charles and Othello were the protagonists of dramas that fell within the genre of tragedy, and were attempts to establish Irving as a serious actor capable of bringing weight (albeit with mixed success) to tragic leads. By contrast, as a popular melodrama, *The Corsican Brothers,* staged at the Lyceum Theatre in 1880, seems to have been an odd choice for an actor-manager trying to establish himself as an intellectual, artistic actor. Yet in falling within the remit of the spectacular drama, it gave Irving, as a relatively new manager, license to prioritize the visual aspects of the production, which included several large-scale opportunities for visual display. It also required the actor to play two characters at the same time, but by intentionally focusing on one of these characters, the exotic Corsican, Irving used his body to make his presence on the stage stand out, and established a place for himself as the 'key-note of the composition', encouraging an almost fetishistic interpretation of his performance.

Based on a novella by Alexandre Dumas (1802-1870), *The Corsican Brothers* was a French melodrama that told the story of identical twin brothers living in very different contexts. One, Fabien dei Franchi, had stayed in their family home in

old-fashioned and traditional Corsica, whilst the other, Louis, had left to study law in modern Paris. The piece required Irving to play both brothers, parts that, theoretically, were balanced in terms of importance. However, in both the contemporary reception of the piece, and in subsequent representations of the actor-manager, it was abundantly clear that a deliberate decision had been made to emphasize the visually exciting Corsican at the expense of his twin, and to concentrate on the picturesque and melodramatic elements of the play. This was a visual rhetoric adopted in highly detailed drawings of Fabien dei Franchi by contemporary illustrators that seemed designed to support Irving's reading of the exotic Corsican as a hero of melodrama, in much the same way that portraits of the actor's Charles I were designed to bolster his reputation as a tragedian. Unlike *Charles I,* however, *The Corsican Brothers* had not been written specially for the theatre, but was staged by Charles Fechter (1824-1879) in Paris at the Théâtre Historique in 1850, and was brought to London by Dion Boucicault, where it was produced by Charles Kean (1811-1868) at the Princess's Theatre in 1852. Kean's production, in which he performed more than 250 times between 1852 and 1868, according to historian George Taylor, exactly caught the 'mood of the times' with its 'concern for accuracy of time and place' and scenery that 'accurately conveyed the social setting of the play'.[65] As Taylor indicated, the play was hugely popular, and was widely performed and burlesqued in London over the thirty years leading up to Irving's 1880 production, and therefore Irving had not only to fit in his own ideas about character, but also to perform to an audience that, as much as it had done for the production of *Othello*, had a preconceived idea of how the brothers ought to be presented.[66]

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[65] George Taylor, 'The Corsican Brothers', in *Players and Performances in the Victorian Theatre* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989; repr. 1993), pp. 23-29 (pp. 24, 25).

[66] The role of Victorian burlesques and their complex relationship with the 'legitimate drama' of the period was extensively explored by Richard W. Schoch in his book *Victorian Theatrical Burlesques,* where he devotes a whole chapter to a burlesque of *The Corsican Brothers* staged by H. J. Byron in 1869. Schoch also discussed the popularity of the play and the close association of the characters with Charles Kean in the mid-nineteenth century. Richard W. Schoch, *Victorian Theatrical Burlesques* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2003), pp. 151-208.

Taylor's analysis of Kean's production suggested that in both his acting and staging, he attempted to balance his performances of the two brothers, but reviews of Irving's production were polarized around his interpretation of the two characters, with Fabien the Corsican resident seen as being far more skillfully impersonated, and a far better fit for Irving's acting style than Louis. As one writer put it, 'as Fabien the stern and resolute, Mr. Irving is, of course, seen to better advantage than as the colourless Louis'.[67] A consistent feature of the reviewers' responses, epitomized here by the word 'colourless', was the idea that Louis was insufficiently developed by Irving as a character, with his impersonation of the Parisian brother also described as having 'a certain grave monotony which sometimes verges upon dulness,' being 'unduly sombre and inert', and 'needlessly depressing'.[68] By contrast, the last review considered Fabien 'a lesser Hamlet … most completely within Irving's range' and, as another critic wrote, 'Fabien is undoubtedly the chief character, and Irving made him chief and made him well.'[69] This was partly a function of the way that the play itself developed the two characters, as whilst Fabien was central to both the first and third acts, Louis was restricted to the second, and had both less stage presence and less dialogue. However, as these reviewers rightly noted, Fabien's prominence in Irving's production was also the result of devices employed by the actor-manager in the staging of the play, an effect that was encapsulated in the first entrances of the characters onto the stage at the beginnings of Acts I and II.

These opening moments, and the first entrances of the two brothers, were memorialized for the public in Figures 18 and 19, taken from a Souvenir Programme published by the Lyceum Theatre to accompany the production. In depicting the respective entrances of the two brothers, they show how the

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[67] '"The Corsican Brothers" at the Lyceum', 1881, in Fitzgerald, *Henry Irving*, IV, 55.
[68] 'Lyceum Theatre', 1881, in Fitzgerald, *Henry Irving*, IV, 21; 'The Theatre: "The Corsican Brothers"', in Fitzgerald, *Henry Irving*, IV, 99; 'Lyceum Theatre', in Fitzgerald, *Henry Irving*, IV, 61.
[69] 'Lyceum Theatre', in Fitzgerald, *Henry Irving*, IV, 61; [Untitled Review], in Fitzgerald, *Henry Irving*, IV, 89.

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Figure 18: Charles Cattermole, 'The Arrival', 1880. Published in *[The] Corsican Brothers: The Story of the Play* **(London: Marcus Ward, 1880). Souvenir for Henry Irving's production at the Lyceum Theatre***.* **Chromolithograph, 15cm x 16 cm. London: V&A.**
Figure 19: Charles Cattermole, 'The Wager', 1880. Published in *[The] Corsican Brothers: The Story of the Play* **(London: Marcus Ward, 1880). Souvenir for Henry Irving's production at the Lyceum Theatre***.* **Chromolithograph, 15cm x 16 cm. London: V&A.**

actual staging, and its reconstruction in these images, emphasized the body, and subsequently the role, of Fabien over that of Louis. West has written somewhat scathingly of these programmes, emphasizing the 'assembly line method' by which they were produced, saying that their construction 'reduces Irving and Terry to cardboard cut-outs', rather than giving a true idea of their characterization.[70] While West was dealing primarily with a later series of monochromatic souvenirs produced jointly by scene painter Hawes Craven (1832-1910) and Bernard Partridge, the illustrations in the souvenir programme of *The Corsican Brothers,* produced by Charles Cattermole (1832-1900), are similarly impersonal as theatrical portraits; it is difficult, for example to positively identify the man in the centre of Fig. 18 as Henry Irving except through the context of the programme. Yet, as a device employed by the theatre management to promote the Lyceum's show, and sold as a memento, the souvenir was invested in accurately representing the stage business of that particular production, in highlighting its artistic, picturesque, and dramatic moments, and also in presenting the production's main characters as the fulcrums of the plot; all seven of the colour illustrations in the souvenir programme featured Irving as one of the two brothers.

In any production, the first entrance is an important moment for establishing a character's credentials, and Taylor argued that this was even more true for plays that fell into the tradition of melodrama, where strictly formalized conventions meant that 'the motives, emotions and the trustworthiness of characters were signaled from the actor's earliest entrance'.[71] Louis' appearance at the beginning of Act II, illustrated in Fig. 19, seemed therefore to have been designed to emphasize his disempowerment within contemporary Parisian society, and to marginalize him within the play more generally, as he entered into a recreation of the masked ball at the Paris Opéra. This set piece was seen

[70] Shearer West, 'The Photographic Portraiture of Henry Irving and Ellen Terry', in *Ruskin, the Theatre and Victorian Visual Culture,* ed. by Anselm Heinrich, Katherine Newey and Jeffrey Richards (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 187-215 (p. 193).
[71] Taylor, 'The Conventions of Melodrama', in *Players and Performances,* pp. 119-133 (pp. 121-122).

by critics as one of the highlights of the play, a lavish and bustling recreation of the opera, with *Pierrots, Debardeurs,* and other traditional figures of the Paris Carnival all filling the space in the centre of the stage, framed by the construction of several tiers of boxes on either side of the set. In fact, the spectacular settings of the play, including the recreation of the dei Franchi's ancestral home in Corsica (Fig. 18) and the construction of the Forest of Fontainebleau (the setting for Act III), were repeatedly referred to as one of the key motivations for attending the drama, and are evidence for Irving's actual appreciation of the popularity of lavish visual displays.[72] They also, incidentally, showed that such constructions could boost Irving's reputation as a manager as well as an actor. One critic stated that, 'As a *spectacle*, the *Corsican Brothers* will command all of London, and deservedly, for no one will leave the house without feeling that he has had value for money through his eye.'[73] Another claimed that:

> As a manager Mr. Irving now appears to higher advantage than in either of his previous two seasons. The whole mounting of the piece speaks of keen artistic instinct […] and of a determination to do the utmost possible for the picturesque side of the drama.[74]

However, in all the many reviews of the play, there was only one reference to Louis' entrance, which stated simply that, 'with difficulty Louis dei Franchi is seen pursuing Emilie de Lesparre through all this medley', and as illustrated by Fig. 19, Irving's body in this scene contributed to Louis' disempowerment in two ways.[75] Firstly, he could not compete for attention with the more spectacular and eye-catching figures at the masquerade and secondly, he could not be easily distinguished from the other fashionable gentleman at the ball, as they were all dressed in the same way. In an image taken from the theatre's own promotional material, it would be difficult, even having seen the play, to say for certain which of the four characters in the foreground of the image showed Irving's Louis. By

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[72] See '"Distinctly Intended to be a 'George'": Character, Appearance and the Skill of the Actor', pp. 74-75.

[73] 'Notes by the Old Castilian: The Corsican Brothers', *Sketch,* 25 September 1880, in Fitzgerald, *Henry Irving*, IV, 41. Emphasis as original.

[74] 'Drama: Lyceum Theatre', 1880, in Fitzgerald, *Henry Irving,* IV, 21.

[75] 'Lyceum Theatre', in Fitzgerald, *Henry Irving,* IV, 79-81 (p. 81).

contrast the actor-manager's entrance as Fabien (Fig. 18) was designed specifically not only to highlight the presence of Fabien as the hero of the piece, but also to present the actor as the play's star. To effect a dramatic entrance for Fabien, the stage was extended into the scene dock, creating a seventy foot-long path roofed over with vine-covered trellises. This led to the back of the dei Franchi's reception room, and down this route Irving made a long, slow entrance, an approach that rendered him visible to the audience for a long time before he actually trod upon the stage upon which, when he arrived, he was undoubtedly the central feature. His eventual arrival on set was, according to contemporary reports, almost inevitably followed by a burst of applause from the audience, who recognized this as a set piece staged for such an effect. It thus fits in with Colette Conroy's description of the use of the body to disrupt the theatrical fiction of a play in order to highlight the presence of the actor; the audience was applauding the actor Irving, and not the character Fabien. Bram Stoker described Fabien's costume as making him into a 'conspicuous object' at this moment in the play, and another critic wrote, 'there can be no mistaking the true entrance as the gorgeously-attired Corsican strides the full length of this enormous stage'.[76]

As can be seen from Figure 20, the main elements of Fabien's costume, which are now held in the Museum of London's costume collections, consisted of a green velvet jacket with a high waist, pointed at the front and back, and matching breeches, a waistcoat of brown, stamped velvet, and a pair of soft leather spatterdashes with a leather fringe on the outside, and fringed sash (held on with the wide belt); a cape and a broad-brimmed hat completed the look (see Fig. 18). This broadly corresponds to a description of the costumes probably worn by Kean in the role of Fabien, listed at the beginning of a Thomas Hailes Lacy acting edition of the play as follows:

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[76] Interestingly, Stoker also related that the use of the same path for the entrance of another character, Alfred Meynard, some minutes earlier, initially caused some confusion amongst audience members, who mistakenly applauded the actor playing that part, a young Arthur Wing Pinero, instead of Irving. Stoker, *Personal Reminiscences,* pp. 105-6; 'Lyceum Theatre', 1880, in Fitzgerald, *Henry Irving,* IV, 79-81 (p. 79).

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Figure 20: Costume worn by Henry Irving in *The Corsican Brothers,* comprising Jacket, Breeches, Waistcoat, Spatterdashes, and Belt, 1880. 38.115a-e. London: Museum of London.

> FABIEN – *First* – Round, dark velvet jacket, trimmed with white
>
> metal buttons; and breeches (supported by a single broad brace)
>
> reaching to the knee; buff boots or leggings; fleshings seen between
>
> the knee and leggings; silk sash; conical hat, with feather. [77]

As Irving's audience was likely to have had experience with previous productions of *The Corsican Brothers,* particularly the popular impersonations of Charles Kean, it makes sense that his costume would follow the pattern established by that actor. However, while the basic elements of velvet suit and leather spatterdashes appear to be the same, they differ in details from the costumes listed in Lacy's acting edition. Of particular note is the tailoring of Irving's jacket, which was most definitely not 'round', but closely fitted at the waist and pointed at front and back, with lapels that resembled more closely those of contemporary fashionable menswear, and the replacement of the conical hat with one with a broad brim.

There is actually evidence that, in terms of geographical authenticity, Irving's Fabien may have been more appropriately dressed than the traditional Corsican costume outlined in the Lacy edition.[78] But as it is reasonable to assume that Irving's audience was largely unfamiliar with the technicalities of Corsican dress, it makes sense that a discussion of its archaeological accuracy should be entirely absent from reviews. The *Sketch* said: 'the hero of the evening looked the young Corsican gentleman to the letter, and that was all we wanted', suggesting that the audience's expectations for a Corsican costume had been entirely fulfilled.[79] It seems that, as he had done with *Charles I,* and failed to do with his 1876 *Othello,* Irving used existing iconography to fuse an element of

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[77]Dion Boucicault, *Les Frères Corses, or, The Corsican Brothers: A Dramatic Romance, in Three Acts and Five Tableaux* (London: Lacy, 1852), pp. 2-3.

[78] Sadly there is not room to discuss this in great detail, but Rennie Pecqueux-Barboni's extensive study on traditional Corsican dress illustrated not only huge variation in the materials, cut and decoration of menswear in the early nineteenth century, but also that dress from the region of Rocca in the 1830s, in which the dei Franchi's chateau was supposedly located, was constructed of a cut which closely resembled that of Irving's jacket, and consisted of a broad-brimmed rather than conical hat. Rennie Pecqueux-Barboni, *Costumes de Corse* (Ajaccio, Corse: Albiana, 2008), pp. 233-292, 404.

[79] 'Notes by the Old Castilian', p. 41.

historical and geographical authenticity with the idea of the 'Corsican' as framed in the public imagination. This was a figure that had been described in some detail by James Boswell (1740-1795) in the eighteenth century, who spoke specifically of the connection of traditional Corsican dress to both the rusticity of Corsican life and to the barbarous nature of its people, saying, 'The Corsican dress is very convenient for traversing the woods and mountains; and gives a man an active and warlike appearance'.[80] The emerald-green colour of Fabien's dress, particularly in combination with the browns of his belt, spatterdashes and waistcoat suggested the character's intimate connection with his rustic lifestyle. This emphasis on the outdoors was borne out in details of his waistcoat, made from brown velvet stamped with a floral pattern, embroidered with a motif of thistles on the lapel, and fastened with buttons on which an embossed milkmaid can be seen. Moreover, Irving's staging of Fabien's body was designed to reinforce this connection with nature; at no point did Fabien appear in a city interior.

However, the association of the Corsican with the natural environment also coincided with a perception that Corsica was a place where 'civilization' was largely absent. In *An Artist's Sketch of an Actor,* a posthumous set of vignettes about Irving's life, the caricaturist Harry Furniss (1854-1925) told a story that illustrated the translation of these rough social manners into his characterization. As one of his clearest memories of Irving, he recalled the way in which, in Act I of *The Corsican Brothers*, Fabien apparently rolled a cigarette with one hand, and subsequently took a flaming brand from the fireplace in order to light it, an action that was later described in *Punch* as behaviour of 'the wildest Corsican way'.[81] Yet his characterization of Fabien also brought to mind for contemporaries another 'warlike' figure of popular culture, the Matador or Toreador, which had made its way onto the London stage with the first

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[80] James Boswell, *An Account of Corsica: The Journal of a Tour to that Island, and Memoirs of Pascal Paoli* (Glasgow: Dilly, 1768), p. 183.
[81] Harry Furniss, 'Sir Henry Irving: An Artist's Sketch of an Actor', *Strand Magazine,* 1 January 1906, pp. 41-47 (p. 46); 'Evenings from Home', *Punch, or the London Charivari,* 23 May 1891, p. 245.

performance of Bizet's *Carmen* at Her Majesty's Theatre in 1878.[82] The reviewer for the *Illustrated London News* described Fabien's stance during his duel with Château-Renaud (the villain of the piece) at the end of the play in terms of a bull-fight: 'He stood precisely as the Spanish *matador* stands in the arena – his rapier in his right hand, his *muleta* or lure in the left.'[83] Whilst Irving's costume was clearly not intended to ape Toreador dress, a chorus ensemble from the original *Carmen* production shows that both costumes were made out of velvet, trimmed with furnishing braid in contrasting colours, had tassels hanging down from the knee, and produced a similar silhouette.[84] The connection between the Corsican dress and that of the matadors of *Carmen* was not lost on contemporaries and one critic commented on the similarities in their costumes, stating that even 'if his dress suggested somewhat too much the showy velvet-clad brigand of opera and ballet', he was still 'gallant of mien'.[85]

So, in the theatrical context, the costume of Irving's Fabien seems to have confirmed the rustic and warlike expectations of the audience, and also highlighted the character as the key figure in the production. However, the fetishistic way in which his body was described in the critical press demonstrated an approach to the appearance of the actor, and particularly the use of colours and velvets in this Corsican dress, which was seen not only to make the character culturally alien, but also picturesquely exotic. Several times in accompanying literature Irving's Fabien was termed a 'brigand', but he was in addition described as 'gorgeously', and 'richly' dressed, 'magnificently attired in emerald-green velvet [he] looks as if he had stepped out of an old picture-frame', and 'clad in a wonderfully picturesque costume of rich green velvet,

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[82] A contemporary review in the *Illustrated London News* described this production as 'one of the special events of the season', with an Escamillo who 'looked the Toreador to the life'. 'Her Majesty's Theatre', *Illustrated London News,* 29 June 1878, p. 611.

[83] G. A. S, 'The Playhouses', *Illustrated London News,* 25 September 1880, p. 303. Emphasis as original.

[84] Jacket and Breeches, S.620-1980. London: V&A.

[85] 'The Theatre: "The Corsican Brothers"', in Fitzgerald, *Henry Irving*, IV, 99.

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Figure 21: Harry Furniss, *The Corsican Brothers,* 1880. Pen and Ink, 33 x 27cm. London: NPG.

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Figure 22: Anon., 'Henry Irving as "Fabien" in Corsica', 1880. Published *Theatre,* 1 October 1880, p. 237. Lithograph, 15 x 11cm.

large hat, gaiters and innumerable brilliant scarves'.[86] In a particularly sensual review, one critic described him as follows:

> Mr. Irving is, at once, as ever, the key-note of the composition – the front of the picture. In his becoming costume of lustrous emerald green, giving out the shadows and softness of velvet; in the coloured sash at his waist, and the air and manner that well-arranged colours and materials never fail to give [...] we have just the Corsican Brother.[87]

As Figures 21 and 22 indicate, illustrators attempting to capture Irving's performance of Fabien, including Harry Furniss and the artist who illustrated the review for the *Theatre,* devoted a similarly rapt attention to displaying his appearance in detail, and to recreating the combination of rich, exotic textures and fabrics that made up his Act I ensemble; they meticulously detailed every aspect of this costume, from the fastening and detailing of his waistcoat, to the tassels at his knees, and the buttons lining the sides of his gaiters. The sidelining of the figure of Louis in Furniss' caricature (Fig. 21) added to the perceived dominance in the narratives surrounding the production of 'The Corsican Brother' rather than his Parisian twin. It is worth noting, however, that whilst many of the details of the costumes corresponded, they have been subjected to different shading and illustrative techniques, and different details are highlighted. Whilst this is an apt reminder of the fact that these images were translations of performance made after the fact, rather than a photo-realistic capturing of the body in the performance moment, the similarity of the two images, and the details evident in their depiction of Fabien's costume, suggests either that the memory of Irving in the role was particularly strong, or more likely that illustrators of productions drew inspiration from one another. Either way, these images clearly illustrated a disruptive 'Corsican', which highlighted the actor's body, and was firmly entrenched in the popular imaginations of

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[86] 'The Corsican Brothers', *Theatre,* 1 October 1880, pp. 236-239 (p. 236-237); 'Mr. Irving – The Corsican Brothers', in Fitzgerald, *Henry Irving,* IV, 25.

[87] 'Lyceum Theatre', in Fitzgerald, *Henry Irving,* IV, 79-81 (p. 79).

theatregoers in 1880 as a manifestation of Irving's instincts for the exotic and picturesque.

Bodily Transference: Iago, 1881

Each of the above examples showed how the framing of the body, and its intersection with contemporary ideas of representation and artistic practice, could impact on the success, and reputation of the actor-manager. In each of these instances, the referential paradigms of, respectively, Van Dyck's portraiture, the orientalist tradition, and the exotic and picturesque Corsican were taken from examples outside the bounds of Irving's own career. However, as indicated earlier, the production of an actor's body could cross between different productions, and both the article on 'Actors' Dressing Rooms' and the acting manuals considered as representations of the practice of actors referenced the physical re-use of costumes for more than one production.[88] Similarly, they demonstrated that an audience's expectations of an actor's performed body were formulated not only on cultural experiences outside the theatrical context, but on previous theatrical performances; one of the main reasons that Lewis Wingfield considered John Clayton as 'distinctly intended to be a "George"' was because he had already seen his success in plays of that era.[89] The final section of this chapter therefore considers how internal cross-referencing through the body, and building on a part that was already considered to be both successful and artistic, could link two ostensibly different roles, from different theatrical genres, forestall potential criticism, and bolster the success of a newly presented character.

The Corsican Brothers was withdrawn from its season at the Lyceum Theatre on 9 April 1881, at a point when the *Theatre* believed that it was 'in the height of its success' and by which time, presumably, Irving's Fabien was firmly entrenched in the imaginations of contemporaries.[90] Following on a mere twenty-two days later was his new production of *Othello* with Edwin Booth, in which Irving first

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[88] See '"Distinctly Intended to be a 'George'"', pp. 62-68.
[89] See '"Distinctly Intended to be a 'George'"', pp. 49-51.
[90] 'Our Omnibus-Box', *Theatre,* 1 April 1881, pp. 244-256 (p. 255).

took on the role of Iago. Freed from the problematics of racial difference, the part of Iago was less formalized by theatrical tradition than that of his Moorish commander, especially when it came to his physical appearance. In fact, as Edward Pechter has discussed, despite his centrality to the plot line, the character of Iago was often marginalized and heavily cut in the eighteenth century, and only emerged as a powerful character in his own right at the beginning of the nineteenth.[91] Even then, little consistent iconography for the part seems to have been established in early nineteenth-century theatre beyond an attempt to situate the character in wider attempts at historically accurate settings of the play, discussed by Virginia Mason Vaughan with reference to the Iago of William Macready.[92] Interpretations of the part varied from actor to actor, from overtly villainous to relatively jovial, and it therefore offered Irving plenty of scope, which the part of Othello had not, to make the role his own as, according to one critic, 'The actor who approaches the study of the part of Iago has the advantage […] of being able to find dignified precedents for more than one view of the character.'[93]

With the benefits of hindsight, it was easy for critics to state that they had always expected Irving's Iago to be a particularly successful character, but many claimed that the actor-manager had surpassed even their expectations with the sophistication and originality of his interpretation:

> That Mr. Irving ought to play Iago remarkably well has long been accepted as a fact, both by his admirers and his opponents, but I doubt if anybody was prepared for the singular excellence of his performance. Here was an entirely new Iago.[94]

In terms of his own reputation, Irving's Iago bolstered his status as a Shakespearian actor, but it has also found its way into modern critical histories of *Othello* in performance, fulfilling the prophecy of one contemporary that,

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[91] Pechter, *Interpretive Traditions,* pp. 53-55.
[92] Virginia Mason Vaughan, *Othello: A Contextual History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 139-145.
[93] 'The Special Performances at the Lyceum Theatre', 1881, in Fitzgerald, *Henry Irving,* IV, 331.
[94] 'The Editor's Note Book', 1881, in Fitzgerald, *Henry Irving,* III, 429.

'Whether it is a true Iago the future must determine and the balance of criticism must decide.'[95] In the works of Pechter, Vaughan, and Marvin Rosenberg, Irving's Iago, and that of his fellow-performer Booth, are held up as a turning-point in the performance history of the part for presenting Othello's 'Ancient' as an intellectual villain, whose performance depended on exploiting, according to Carol Carlisle, 'a sharp distinction between Iago's outward geniality and his real villainy'.[96]

All of these writers have discussed Irving's Iago as a construction of his performance style, and in terms of the traditions of the text, but none of them have considered the way that, for contemporaries, this performance was closely linked to other successes in Irving's career, and to the discourses of artistry and embodiment discussed in the course of this chapter. One critic claimed that, despite previous doubts about the actor, he would 'give it a place at once in my memorial portrait gallery side by side with his Charles I., which I regard as about very the finest embodiment he has given us since his connection with the Lyceum', not only using the visual metaphor of a portrait gallery to explain his recollection of theatrical performances, but drawing a line between the way the two characters were physically constructed in the plays.[97] Other parts to which Iago was frequently compared were Richard III, Vanderdecken and Louis XI, none of which have been discussed here, but all of which featured in Barnard's drawings of Irving's 'Principal Characters' (Fig. 4).[98] All of these cross-references suggested that it was Irving's characterization that linked his impersonation of the parts, but it seems likely that such connections were primarily triggered through visual associations. In the case of Richard III, there

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[95] 'Lyceum Theatre', 1881, in Fitzgerald, *Henry Irving,* IV, 321.

[96] Carlisle, cited in Pechter, 'Iago', in *Interpretive Traditions,* pp. 53-78, (p. 55); Rosenberg, 'The Victorian Iago', in *Masks of Othello,* pp. 120-134; Vaughan, *Othello,* pp. 175-180.

[97] 'Dramatic & Musical Gossip', in Fitzgerald, *Henry Irving,* IV, 311.

[98] References linking Irving's Iago to all three of these characters featured in 'Lyceum theatre', in Fitzgerald, *Henry Irving*, IV, 321. Other references to one or more of these three roles can be found as follows: 'Lyceum Theatre', in Fitzgerald, *Henry Irving,* IV, 309; 'Lyceum Theatre', in Fitzgerald, *Henry Irving*, IV, 304; [Untitled Review], in *Chronicles of the Lyceum Theatre, 1884-1898.* Cuttings Album. Garrick Club Library.

was possibly a literal connection between the bodies of the two characters: Martin Holmes' work on Irving's costumes when they were in the collections of the London Museum suggested that a doublet of rust and gold damask worn by Irving to play Iago, had been made up from his 1877 Richard III costume.[99]

As with *Charles I*, when Irving had performed in *Louis XI* his part had been seen by contemporaries as an artistically composed and primarily visual record of a historical character, and Percy Fitzgerald related that these two characters were so enshrined with their historical paradigms that admirers of the actor-manager put together companion volumes to these plays that formalized the 'character, manners, &c.', of these historic figures based on Irving's performances, and that were accompanied by illustrations of him in these roles.[100] Similarly, visual appreciation was key to audience impressions of his performance in *Vanderdecken,* a melodrama by W. G. Wills based on Wagner's (1813-1883) opera *The Flying Dutchman*. The establishment of Irving's character in the piece relied on a melodramatic entrance, and a visual construction of the ghostly figure, that could be analogized with Irving's performance in *The Corsican Brothers,* and was described by Bram Stoker in the following way:

> There was no appearance anywhere of a man or anything else alive.
> But suddenly there stood a mariner in old-time dress of picturesque
> cut and faded colour of brown and peacock blue with a touch of red
> [...] The effect was instantaneous, and boded well for the success of
> the play.[101]

This description is reminiscent of those of Fabien's emerald-green velvet costume, which had given a romantic air to the melodramatic construction of the Corsican Brothers, and were matched by the description of Irving's Iago as a part fitted for the melodramatic, rather than the tragic stage:

> [...] a handsome, expressive figure in this gay and multi-coloured
> composition, a man in rich velvets and glittering silver ornaments, a

[99] Silk damask doublet and spare sleeve, V&A, S.2751:1,2-2010. Martin Rivington Holmes, *Stage Costumes and Accessories in the London Museum* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1968), pp. 40-41.
[100] Fitzgerald, *Sir Henry Irving,* p. 75.
[101] Stoker, *Personal Reminiscences,* p. 35.

dark-eyed, dark-haired presentment, crowned with a semi-cavalier and semi-bandit hat, an embodied idea who in Mr. Irving's person, removes the stern and classical Shakespearian play into the mysterious regions of romance.[102]

As with the other productions examined in this chapter, the visual elements of Irving's Iago were attributed directly to the agency of Irving, but they were also co-opted into a discussion of his characterization and as shown above, into the concept of Iago as an 'embodied idea'. Whilst reviewers praised the intellectual conception of Irving's performance, and his technique in acting the part, he was also repeatedly referred to in positive terms as a 'picturesque' Iago, and this was highlighted as an innovative aspect of Irving's production.[103] One author referred specifically to Irving's 'picturesqueness' as a feature which differentiated his embodiment of Iago from the 'conventional rendering' of Booth's performance and the author for *Macmillan's Magazine* claimed of Irving that 'his Iago must always remain a singularly brilliant and picturesque performance, more striking to the eye than Mr. Booth's; at first more alluring to the sense'.[104] If the striking nature of Irving's appearance was intended to grab the attention of the audience and to highlight his own presence in the play he succeeded, but it was elided with the actor-manager's artistry by the idea that this presentation of Iago was not just visually arresting, but also an authentic expression of the character:

Nor did [Irving's] thoroughly artistic nature fail to grasp one feature essentially requisite to the completion of the poet's ideal. Mr. Irving presented us with an Iago handsome in mien and splendidly attired. That, depend on it, was the real Iago. He was

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[102] 'Lyceum Theatre', 1881, in Fitzgerald, *Henry Irving,* IV, 309.

[103] See 'Lyceum Theatre', 1881 in Fitzgerald, *Henry Irving,* IV, 304; 'The Lyceum – Revival of "Othello"', 1881 in Fitzgerald, *Henry Irving,* IV, 308; Clement Scott, 'Shakespeare's "Othello" at the Lyceum', *Theatre,* 1 June 1881, pp. 356-363 (p. 358).

[104] '"Othello" at the Lyceum', 1881, in Fitzgerald, *Henry Irving,* IV, 321; '"Othello" at the Lyceum', *Macmillan's Magazine,* July 1881, pp. 209-218 (p. 213).

good-looking, chivalric in bearing, gay of manner; and loved fine
clothes and high living.[105]

Nevertheless, many recognized that, when it came to actual historical and geographical authenticity, unlike Irving's Charles I, Othello, or even Fabien dei Franchi, Iago's physical presentation had little to do with the status of the character, and more to do with the idea that it represented, and that it provided 'a key note, as one might say, to Mr. Irving's conception of the character […] more like the dress, as it struck us, of a Spanish matador than a poor Venetian solder of fortune'.[106] The paradigm of the Spanish matador recurred in several reviews of the production, and it may have been an apt one in terms of Irving's characterization and his movement on the stage as Iago. Certainly, the actor himself embraced the metaphor in his description of Iago as one of his 'Four favourite' Shakespearian roles, saying of his duel with Cassio and Montano that, 'To me he has also a slight dash of the bull-fighter, and […] I used to enjoy a mischievous sense of mastery by flicking at them with a red cloak, as though they were bulls in the arena.'[107] One understanding of this could be that the critics were reading Irving's intentions of the character correctly through his visual manifestation of the bull-fighter, but given that this essay was written for the *English Illustrated Magazine* in 1893, it is worth considering the possibility that Irving had allowed the rhetoric of the bull-fighter created in the critical press to influence his own understanding of his performance.

On the understanding that the bull-fighter was considered to be an apt metaphor for Irving's Iago, it was also not one without precedent, and to look for a basis for the visual presentation of Irving's Iago, it was necessary for his audiences and critics to reach back less than a month in their imaginations to the embodiment of Fabien dei Franchi in *The Corsican Brothers.* This makes it all

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[105] 'The Playhouses', *Illustrated London News,* 7 May 1881. Cutting in the Theatre and Performance Collection, V&A.
[106] '"Othello" at the Lyceum', 1881, in Fitzgerald, *Henry Irving*, IV, 333.
[107] Henry Irving, 'Four Favourite Parts', in *Sir Henry Irving, Theatre, Culture and Society: Essays, Addresses and Lectures,* ed. by Jeffrey Richards (Keele: Ryburn Publishing, 1994), pp. 237-241 (p. 240).

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Figure 23: J. Bernard Partridge, *Irving as Iago,* **c.1881-1900. Pencil, Pen and Ink on Paper, 27 x 13cm. London: V&A.**

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Figure 24: [W.B.T.?], Henry Irving as Fabien dei Franchi, 1881. Lithograph, c. 20cm x 15cm. London: V&A.

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the more interesting that such a comparison was largely absent from the attempts of serious reviewers to site the part within the range of Irving's work, presumably both because *The Corsican Brothers* was deemed insufficiently weighty a work to sit beside *Othello,* and because to reference such a recent production would imply that Irving's characterization of Iago was derivative rather than original. Instead, it was left to the satirical magazine *Punch* to draw parallels between the physicality and the characterization of Iago and Fabien dei Franchi, and to insinuate that Irving's audiences were all too aware of the connection:

> [...] finally when on *Iago* being summoned by the watch, the upper part of Mr. IRVING unexpectedly appeared at a side window in the costume of a Corsican Brother's Ghost, it was unanimously declared that the climax of real fun had been attained.[108]

The transference of elements of Fabien into the body of Irving's Iago that was insinuated by the comparison of Irving to a matador, the vocabulary of the picturesque, velvet-clad villain, and even a reference to Iago's 'semi-bandit' hat was made far more explicit in the iconography of the two characters, and in the translation and mediation of Irving's body in visual material. Figure 24 shows a lithograph of Irving as Fabien dei Franchi, printed at least as early as 1881, and although the artist is not one known to have worked with Irving directly, its iconographic correlation with Figs. 21 and 22, and the presence of no fewer than three copies of this image in the collections of the V&A indicates its place in the memorialization of Fabien.[109] In addition, Figure 23 is an image that is undoubtedly part of the authorized visual history of Irving's career, being a drawing by Bernard Partridge of Irving as Iago. It was definitely drawn after the image of Fabien was produced, but the correlation between the two images, not only in terms of the physical makeup of his body (the costume of Iago, with

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[108] 'Two Stars; Or, Booth Together', *Punch, or the London Charivari,* 14 May 1881, p. 225.

[109] The image can be firmly dated as contemporary to Irving's performance in these two parts because in other copies of the image, as in Fig. 25, the date 1881 has been incised on either side of the monogram.

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Figure 25: 'Mr. Irving in *The Corsican Brothers',* and 'Mr. Henry Irving as Iago', c.1881. Mounted in *Chronicles of the Lyceum Theatre, 1884-1898.* Cuttings Album. Lithographs, c. 20 x 15cm. London: Garrick Club Library.

its ribbons at the knees of his breeches, short doublet worn open and prominent belt visually echoes that of Fabien) but also in terms of the actor's pose and demeanour, is startling. It suggests that, whether consciously or not, Partridge was influenced in his realization of Iago by the firmly entrenched iconography of Fabien dei Franchi, and his own understanding of the connection between the two parts. Finally, Figure 25, a page from a cuttings album in the collections of the Garrick Club entitled *Chronicles of the Lyceum Theatre* shows that theatregoers, and collectors of visual iconography, understood the correlation between both the bodies and characters of Irving and Iago, and that the transference of visual motifs from one to the other allowed for a tried and tested character type to be given a new lease of life as an 'original conception', and Iago has been depicted here with the cape with which Irving presumably enacted his bullfighting duel.

Conclusion

According to Austin Brereton, Irving played eighty-three parts in the course of his career in London, thirty-seven of which were immortalized by Fred Barnard in his 1891 drawing of Irving in his 'Principal Characters'.[110] The programmes, reviews, costumes and images of the four parts examined for this chapter therefore reflect only a tiny proportion of the material available for the study of Irving's characters, and more could even have been said about his performance in each of these productions. Yet a detailed examination of not only the creation of these characters, but also their reception in the theatrical context, mediations in the critical press, and translation into theatrical portraiture shows how central the body of the actor-manager was to the success or failure of his theatrical performances. Equally, it illustrates how compelling the body was in terms of the subsequent memorialization of the actor-manager's career, and as a proxy for the actor manager's theatrical skill once the actual performance had ended. If, as indicated in both the Introduction and first chapter of this thesis, the success of the actor-manager was predicated upon his success as an actor, it should be clear that his success as an actor was

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[110] Brereton, *Henry Irving,* p. 68.

predicated on successfully embodying his characters, and on meeting the visual expectations of his audiences.

Yet as each of these case-studies makes clear, in the creation of these characters the actor-manager was not just aligning his body with that of his role in the production, but with wider discourses of artistic practice, and ensuring that the creative agency in each instance was attributed to himself. He therefore also facilitated an understanding of the actor-manager as the creative driving force behind a production, whose own body was the canvas upon which he worked. Each of these characters as realized in performance, and in their subsequent mediation in theatrical portraiture must therefore also be seen as embodiments of artistry as well as examples of performance, which would function in narratives of the actor-manager's career, and build upon one another, to create a holistic view of the actor-manager as artist. Capturing the theatrical body therefore provided one way of building the reputation of the actor-manager as an artist, but as his creative agency extended beyond the bounds of the immediate context of theatrical performance, so there was also a need to establish the figure behind the performances, and to create a stable image of the actor-manager that transcended the shifting bodies and characters seen nightly at the theatre. This could not be achieved through theatrical portraiture, accounts of individual moments of brilliance, or a discourse of the actor's skill in characterization, but was centred upon the performance of self outside the theatrical context, and so it is the body of the actor-manager off the stage that is the subject of the following chapters.

'On and Off the Stage': Balancing the Record of Celebrity

On their first retirement from the theatre in 1885, husband and wife Squire Bancroft (1841-1926) and Marie ('Effie') Wilton (1839-1921), who had both made their names as actors and then managers at the Prince of Wales's and Haymarket Theatres in the 1870s and early 1880s, jointly recorded their experiences of life for posterity in a memoir entitled *Mr. & Mrs. Bancroft: On and Off the Stage, Written by Themselves.*[1] This was pre-emptive as it turned out, as both would return to the theatre repeatedly over the next twenty years, and go on to publish a further set of memoirs at the beginning of the twentieth century, but the structure of this first volume was notable for, as the title implies, skating through all aspects of the Bancrofts' lives, with descriptions of memorable productions and tales of performance juxtaposed alongside stories of personal holiday adventures, and interspersed with accounts of social occasions, dinners given in honour of foreign visitors, and sporting events, such as Squire Bancroft's regular attendance at the Epsom Derby.[2] The framing of the work by both title and content as a narrative of life within the theatre and outside it demonstrated a perceived interest on the part of the reader in the personal and private lives of actors as well as a desire to see them on the stage, vindicated by the popularity of the biography, and the printing of at least eight editions of the work in its first six years of publication between 1885 and 1891.[3] Throughout the narrative of *On and Off the Stage,* the inclusion of correspondence from members of the public, and stories such as a detailed reminiscence of their inclusion in Edmund Yates's (1831-1894) 'Celebrities at Home' series in the *World* in 1879, demonstrated the Bancrofts' awareness of their own place in a

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[1] Squire Bancroft and Marie Wilton, *Mr. & Mrs. Bancroft: On and Off the Stage, Written By Themselves*, 8th edn (London: Bentley, 1891).
[2] Bancroft and Wilton, *On and Off the Stage,* pp. 121-122, 132-133, 155-156, 158-159*.*
[3] Squire Bancroft actually claimed in his preface to their second autobiography, *Recollections of Sixty Years,* that *On and Off the Stage* had run to seven editions, but there is definitely evidence for the publication of an eighth edition in 1891. Squire Bancroft and Marie Wilton, *The Bancrofts: Recollections of Sixty Years* (London: Murray, 1909), p. vii.

burgeoning celebrity industry, and the necessity of maintaining their relationships with the public in general.

In the use of anecdotal narratives of social occasions, showing their subjects as both artistic professionals and private figures, *On and Off the Stage* aligned itself with a public interest surrounding not only the theatrical professions but also the lives of other celebrated creative individuals, particularly artists, whose biographical and autobiographical narratives in this period, containing various constructions of artistic identities, have been extensively interrogated by historian Julie Codell.[4] Identifying several different types of biographical narrative, including the autobiographical text and biographies written by an artist's family, she posited such narratives as a place where, depending upon the motivations of the author, artists 'could masquerade in multiple, bricolaged, and contradictory identities to become as consumable as their art works'.[5] Part of the structure of these biographies, particularly relevant as indexes of the artists' supposed identity, was the juxtaposition of texts and images, and Codell devoted a short section of her work to the inclusion of photographs of artists, often positioned in biographies beside reproductions of their works.[6] Whilst *On and Off the Stage* did not include any pictures of its subjects, the Bancrofts' second autobiographical text, *Recollections of Sixty Years,* published in 1909, contained thirty-four illustrations of a variety of subjects and formats.[7] As with Codell's artists' biographies, the Bancrofts' text was similarly concerned with the problem of their subjects' multiple identities and, as Figure 26 indicates, with the juxtaposition of Squire Bancroft with his artistic creations, but with the added complication that the work of art and the identity of the artist were sited in the same body.

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[4] Julie F. Codell, *The Victorian Artist: Artists' Lifewritings in Britain, ca. 1870-1910* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). For the specific use of social anecdotes within artists' autobiographical texts as a symbol of collective artistic identity, see pp.127-141.
[5] Codell, *The Victorian Artist,* p. 6.
[6] Codell, *The Victorian Artist,* pp. 196-200.
[7] Bancroft and Wilton, *Recollections of Sixty Years.*

Image Redacted for

Copyright Purposes

Figure 26: Window & Grove, 'Squire Bancroft (Aged 32)', and 'As Dr. Speedwell', 1873. Published in Squire Bancroft and Marie Wilton, *The Bancrofts: Recollections of Sixty Years* (London: Murray, 1909), p. 170. Photogravure, c. 11 x 14cm.

Biographies may have been one way of constructing artists' identities for public consumption but, whilst undoubtedly important and popular in their own right, they were only one aspect of an increasingly commodified approach to celebrated figures in this period, particularly those with a creative leaning, that has been seen as an antecedent of modern celebrity culture. Speaking of this phenomenon, Anne-Marie Millim noted that as early as the 1850s, 'Public recognition was already an industrialised, institutionalised and commercialised process that normalised […] the idea and existence of identifiable figures whose function it was to circulate within an expanding and pervasive mass media and mass market.'[8] This fits in with Chris Rojek's description that 'Celebrity culture', as consolidated in the nineteenth century, was 'overwhelmingly a culture of surface relations', where 'the relationship between celebrities and fans is typically mediated by representation.'[9] Taken in 1873, Fig. 26 shows two photographs of Squire Bancroft, one taken in everyday dress, and of one which is a theatrical portrait depicting his performance as Dr. Speedwell in *Man and Wife.* They were both probably taken in the same sitting by the Window & Grove photographic studio, as the caption says that they were 'taken on the same day'. They illustrated not only that Bancroft was actively involved in promoting his theatrical work through photography in the 1870s, but that he was concurrently aware of the importance of creating and distributing his photographic portrait, and of the depiction of his body off the stage*.*

This mediated representation of celebrity might take any number of forms but, as earlier chapters have illustrated, the representation of the actor's body was a key way of providing a direct interface between the actors and their critics and public. However, whereas previous chapters have examined the construction of the costumed body, and its translation into theatrical portraits of the actor-manager as a mode of artistic self-expression, and a means of highlighting his performances, this chapter and the two that follow take as their theme the use of the body, and the circulation of images of the actor-manager in everyday

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[8] Charlotte Boyce, Paraíc Finnerty, and Anne-Marie Millim, *Victorian Celebrity Culture and Tennyson's Circle* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p. 2.
[9] Chris Rojek, *Celebrity* (London: Reaktion Books, 2001; repr. 2010), p .46.

dress, to establish offstage identities for their subjects. These are as prevalent in contemporary collections as their theatrical counterparts, suggesting both a similarly wide distribution of such images, and that they were deemed as important in terms of posterity as the manifestation of theatrical characters. They may have been as carefully constructed as their theatrical counterparts, but these offstage images nevertheless purported, in line with contemporary desires to understand the character behind celebrated achievements, to offer up the actor-manager's 'true' self for public consumption. In the light of theoretical discourses that posit the actor's engagement with the world as fundamentally different from that of the layman, and a trend for viewing all manifestations of the self as a form of performance, the contrast between the actor's real body and his imagined, or acted, body was a potential source of concern for contemporary critics, who believed that the actor's predilection for performance left his offstage persona open to criticisms of inauthenticity. It is therefore necessary to ask the question also posed by Mary Corbett in her work on actresses' autobiographies, 'Where does performance-as-identity-construction leave off and performance-as-theatrical-work begin?'[10]

Balance in the Visual Record

So far, the visual material considered for this thesis has been examined primarily in a qualitative manner, looking at individual images and objects and teasing out layers of meaning from their content and form. In this way, visual material has exemplified and been used to explore, specific examples and micro-narratives of the actor-manager's manipulation of the body in furthering his reputation in the theatrical context. Similar readings of individual images are equally useful in a consideration of the offstage body, and will be examined in just such a qualitative manner in this chapter and the ones that follow. However, one of the themes of this research has been to establish the importance of visual narratives in the quests of both contemporary commentators and later historians for the identity of the actor-manager. With this is mind, and a view to

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[10] Corbett, Mary, 'Performing Identities: Actresses and Autobiography', in *The Cambridge Companion to Victorian and Edwardian Theatre,* ed. by Kerry Powell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004; repr. 2005) pp. 109-126 (p. 109).

	NPG	V&A – Image Files	V&A – Guy Little Collection	Total	% of Total
Images Examined	399	951	215	1565	
Photographs	224	915	215	1354	87%
Theatrical Photographs	70	469	97	636	41%
Offstage Photographs	154	446	118	718	46%

Table 1: Survey of portraits of six actor-managers in the collections of the NPG and the V&A, divided by collection.

	Charles Wyndham (1837-1919)	Henry Irving (1838-1905)	Squire Bancroft (1841-1926)	John Hare (1844-1921)	Herbert Beerbohm Tree (1852-1917)	George Alexander (1858-1918)
Images Examined	96	593	132	115	348	281
Photographs	87	456	116	108	313	273
Theatrical Photographs	52	147	8	28	234	167
Offstage Photographs	35	309	108	80	79	107
Offstage Photographs (% of Total Images)	36%	52%	81%	86%	23%	38%

Table 2: Survey of portraits of six actor-managers in the collections of the NPG and the V&A, divided by subject.

establishing some sense of the systematic representation and dissemination of portraits of actor-managers in this period, and particularly the balance between theatrical and offstage identities, a quantitative survey of the portraits of six late-Victorian actor-managers (Henry Irving, Charles Wyndham, Squire Bancroft, John Hare, Herbert Beerbohm Tree and George Alexander) in collections at the NPG and the V&A has been a useful research exercise. It comprised a detailed recording and examination of individual portraits of the actor-managers in three sets of images: the Reference, Photographs, and Main Collection, and Sitter Boxes at the NPG, the main run of Image Files pertaining to each actor in the Theatre and Performance Collection at the V&A, and the Guy Little Collection of theatrical photographs, held as a separate archive at the V&A.[11] Some basic results of the survey are detailed in Tables 1 and 2, where the balance between theatrical and offstage portraits is outlined first by collection and then by subject. [12]

Comprising over 1500 images in total, the survey revealed firstly that whilst sketches and illustrations may have provided an index of the actor's body in the contemporary press, and an everyday record of his performances for either the casual consumer or the focused collector, the importance of the photographic medium in the dissemination of the actor's portrait should not be underestimated, with 1354 (87%) of the images represented in the collections being forms of photographic representation (See Table 1).[13] This is probably the outcome of several factors, one of which is the status of the photograph as a collectible and sentimental object, making it more likely to be purchased as a memento and consciously preserved rather than discarded. It also, as Chris Rojek noted, had an increasingly important place in a nascent celebrity culture,

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[11] In line with the discussion of the difference between individual and group portraits in the previous chapter, this survey also deliberately excluded group portraits both of the actor-managers in costume, and of them with other individuals off the stage. See 'Embodying Artistry: *Charles I, Othello,* and *The Corsican Brothers* at the Lyceum Theatre, 1872-1881', p. 92.

[12] See Appendix A for a more detailed breakdown of the results of this survey.

[13] This includes *cartes-de-visite* and cabinet cards, but also a number of bromide postcard prints from the early twentieth century, and woodburytypes taken from contemporary periodicals.

as a medium that 'made fame instant and ubiquitous'.[14] If, as is argued in this chapter, actor-managers should be seen in terms of this celebrity culture, the photographic image must have been a part of that fame, and it is worth pointing out that for both of these reasons, this survey of portraits of actor-managers is probably representative of the range of material that was in active circulation, and of the prominence of the photograph within that range. Photographs must therefore also be considered as objects of conscious rather than passive spectatorship, although as the inscription on the back of a postcard of John Hare, 'tried to find a pic of Martin Harvey but couldn't', indicates, it cannot always be assumed that the purchaser set out with the intention of consuming that particular item.[15]

Taking the photographic record as the most common visual way of contributing a notion of self to the received understanding of the actor-manager, it is notable that, overall, the offstage portrait is at least as common in these collections as its theatrical equivalent. It can therefore be inferred that, as with the balance of theatrical performance and offstage activity memorialized verbally in the biographies of actor-managers, the type of self-expression represented by these offstage images was deemed as interesting, and worthy of collection and memorialization, as the representation of the actor-manager's theatrical performances. It should be noted that relatively few of the images bear captions, and that therefore the distinction between theatrical and offstage photographs is almost entirely a matter of reading the body in terms of both appearance and framing. In most cases, this is a relatively straightforward distinction, but in the case of actor-managers who specialized in productions staged in contemporary dress, for example George Alexander and John Hare, it has been necessary to exercise more careful discrimination, and it is worth mentioning that some items in both the collections of the V&A and the NPG have been miscatalogued,

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[14] Rojek, *Celebrity,* p. 128.

[15] This is a reference to John Martin Harvey (1863-1944), a leading actor at the Lyceum Theatre in this period. Inscription on reverse of postcard of Mr. John Hare, addressed to 'Miss E. Greenwood' and sent from Nelson on 11 September 1905. John Hare Image Files, Theatre and Performance Collection, V&A (marked 1973/A/104).

leading to a perceived elision between the expression of the actor-manager's true self, and that of his characters, discussed in more detail in the final chapter of this thesis.[16]

As discussed in relation to images of Irving's *Charles I*, photography was also a medium over which, in terms of composition and distribution, actor-managers actively attempted to exert some control, in contrast to caricatures and cartoons in the contemporary press, and could therefore also be considered as representative of conscious self-fashioning on the part of their subjects.[17] The balance of agency seems to have varied amongst individual sitters and studios, and was dependent upon their relative cultural capital, as historians including Barbara McCandless, Roger Hargreaves, and David Mayer have discussed, and therefore it must be accepted that such self-fashioning was as constructed as its counterparts in other media.[18] Even taking into account the relatively frequent name changes and re-formation of the management of photographic studios in this period, the work of forty-seven separate studios is included in the collection, and it is evident that over periods of time certain photographers enjoyed close relationships with particular actor-managers, suggesting that the arrangement had been mutually beneficial.[19] For example, of the eighty-six photographic portraits of George Alexander with identifiable provenance, twenty-two were taken by Alfred Ellis (fl. 1884-1899) between 1890 and 1906.

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[16] See '"Modern Men": Blurring the Lines between Actor-Managers, Authors and Audiences', pp. 272-282.

[17] See 'Embodying Artistry' pp. 102-106, 119-121.

[18] Barbara McCandless, 'The Portrait Studio and the Celebrity', in *Photography in Nineteenth-Century America,* ed. by Martha Sandweiss (Fort Worth: Amon Carter Museum; New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1991), pp. 49-75; David Mayer, 'The Actress as Photographic Icon: From Early Photography to Early Film', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Actress,* ed. by Maggie B. Gale and John Stokes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 74-94; Roger Hargreaves, 'Putting Faces to the Names: Social and Celebrity Portrait Photography', in *The Beautiful and the Damned: The Creation of Identity in Nineteenth Century Photography,* ed. by Peter Hamilton and Roger Hargreaves (London: NPG, 2001), pp. 16-55.

[19] For evidence of the frequent re-branding of photographic studios in this period, it is necessary to look no further than to Michael Pritchard's work on the names of companies as registered with the Post Office. Michael Pritchard, *A Directory of London Photographers, 1841-1908* (Bushey: ALLM Books, 1986).

There is also a noticeable difference in the balance of theatrical to offstage images when divided by subject (Table 2) with, for example, only 23% of images of Herbert Beerbohm Tree showing him off the stage, as opposed to 86% of those of his near-contemporary John Hare. This suggests that the received identities of some actor-managers were more focused on their theatrical performance than others, but it is not immediately clear whether this was the result of a choice made by the subject or a bias on the part of consumers. Some caution must therefore also be applied to the idea of the cohort of actor-managers as a completely homogenous entity, although patterns of representation within the collections suggest that it is still possible to talk of 'the actor-manager' as an abstracted as well as a person-centred category.

Clearly the selection of subjects has to a large extent governed the results of the survey, and it is apparent from the breakdown of images by subject that the images of some actors, for example Henry Irving, have had a larger influence on the overall balance of surviving collections than others. However, the subjects have been deliberately selected based on a number of factors, one of which is their relative prominence in terms of visual material: even for Charles Wyndham, the most poorly represented of the six actor-managers, it is possible to examine almost ninety photographic portraits from this period, and therefore to get a general idea of trends of representation. In the sweep of their managerial careers, these six figures also covered the whole of the period under investigation in this thesis; Squire Bancroft became joint manager of the Prince of Wales's Theatre in 1868 and retired from management in 1885; Henry Irving, Charles Wyndham, and John Hare entered management in the late 1870s, and continued right through to the turn of the century; Herbert Beerbohm Tree and George Alexander, rising stars of the acting world in the 1880s, both excelled in management in the nineteenth century's final decade and continued well into the twentieth. As the images covered the whole sweep of these actor-managers' careers, some do date from either before 1870 or after 1900, but it is worth noting that of those that can be dated, roughly 75% fall within the thirty-year period covered by this thesis. Finally, although this was a *post hoc* realization, and did not influence the selection of subjects in the first instance, these six

individuals also entered the national record at the turn of the century by being
the first six actor-managers to receive knighthoods, and are therefore arguably
the ultimate examples of actor-managers as heads of a newly legitimized
theatrical establishment.[20]

Despite the fact that many of these images originated in the collections of
individuals, and probably represented contemporary patterns of individual
consumption, as a means of perpetuating this legitimized model of theatrical
achievement, the status of the collections at both the V&A and the NPG as
national archives is crucial to the preservation of the actor-manager at the heart
of the theatrical record. This ties in with a model of celebrity images discussed
in a later chapter, in which portraits of celebrated individuals are used to shore
up social norms and establishments.[21] Yet whilst they are both examples of
national collections, they are also undoubtedly ones with different remits, as the
V&A is focused on the preservation of the theatrical record, and the NPG with
the collection of artistic images of prominent individuals. It might, therefore, be
reasonable to expect a different selection bias in each collection in terms of the
balance between offstage and onstage portraits, with the theatrical portrait
more prevalent in the theatrical collections and the offstage image more present
in the portrait collections. Table 1 shows that a slight bias is evident, with
theatrical photographs under-represented in the NPG collections, and the V&A
Image files leaning in the opposite direction, but that actually the difference is
less than might be supposed. This suggests that theatrical performances and
offstage identities were actually closely intertwined in this period, that the
celebrity of actor-managers was partly predicated upon their theatrical
achievements, and that the offstage image of the actor-manager, which

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[20] Henry Irving was knighted in 1895, Squire Bancroft in 1897, and Charles
Wyndham in 1902. John Hare received honours in 1907, Herbert Beerbohm
Tree in 1909, and George Alexander in 1911. However, whilst these were the
first individuals to be knighted specifically for services to theatre, it is often
conveniently forgotten that theatrical impresario and manager of the Drury
Lane theatre Augustus Harris (1852-1896) was knighted five years before
Irving in 1891 for arranging the ceremonial visit of the German Emperor to
London in his capacity as Sheriff for London.
[21] See '"Bourgeois Blandness": Creating a Professional Body', pp. 224-243.

supposedly represented his real identity, was considered important for the creators of theatrical narratives.

A Synthesis between 'Character' and Achievement

In Chris Rojek's seminal study of the historical development of the concept of celebrity, he characterized the difference between celebrity cultures of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as a development from a system of ascribed celebrity, where 'individuals may add to or subtract from their ascribed status by virtue of their voluntary actions, but the foundation of their ascribed celebrity is predetermined', to that of achieved celebrity, which 'derives from the perceived accomplishments of the individual in open competition', and results in celebrities being 'recognized as individuals who possess rare talents or skills'.[22] In this context, he positioned Samuel Smiles's *Self-Help* as 'an archive of achieved celebrity', a text in which celebrity was not only based upon a doctrine of work and self improvement, but also carried with it a sense of obligation to provide an example of 'human perfection to the masses' for others to emulate.[23] However, Smiles' work on *Self-Help* and his later books on *Duty* and *Character* were innovative not only for positioning celebrity as a result of accomplishments rather than ascribed status, as in Rojek's model, but also because they relied on the idea that such achievements were only made possible by the development of underlying character traits and that celebrities in this period were made great by conveying those characteristics, in conjunction with their deeds, to the general public.

Character, first published in 1871, and subsequently reprinted throughout the last quarter of the nineteenth century both in Britain and abroad, was one work in which Samuel Smiles developed his idea of the importance of certain, desirable, personality traits to the creation of celebrated men in the Victorian period, first outlined in *Self-Help* in the 1850s.[24] He was careful from the outset

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[22] Rojek, *Celebrity,* pp. 17-18, 115-117.
[23] Rojek, *Celebrity,* pp. 117-119.
[24] Samuel Smiles, *Character,* rev. edn (London: Murray, 1876). The work was structured around elements of character which Smiles considered particularly

to separate the achievements of his subjects, configured as the externalized demonstration of skill from an internal conception of character, formed primarily in the interactions of individuals in everyday life, and he believed that it was only in the combination of the two that truly great men were formed, although as might be expected, he privileged character in this building up of greatness.[25] Yet, despite his insistence that character and profession were not contiguous, his examples of the manifestation of his desired traits were often tied up with the achievements of his celebrated men, and contingent upon the field in which they had made their mark; he acknowledged for example that self-denial could be demonstrated as authentically, but in completely different fashion, in the academic realm as it could on the battlefield.[26] In part, this was due to the fact that he did not, as might be supposed, view these personality traits as innate or essential, but as consciously developed and cultivated by his subjects in the course of their lives. In this respect, to return to the opening statement of this thesis, he believed that his great men actively 'made' themselves, rather than being simply the passive recipients of desirable character traits.[27]

As well as being self-fashioned, and shaped by their achievements, such characters were also, in Smiles's own admission, externalized, shaped and mediated for posterity, particularly through the use of biography, so that their greatness could be conveyed to others. He identified two main ways in which a biographer should successfully convey character, by giving as full a picture as possible of the subject, and by capturing the ways in which character was expressed, stating, 'it is the principle of individuality which gives the charm and interest to all biography'.[28] Moreover, although he privileged text over image, it was clear from Smiles's analysis of biographical writing that, in his view, the

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desirable, wide-ranging traits such as self-control, courage, and duty, which he then proceeded to elaborate with individual examples.
[25] Smiles, *Character,* pp. 1-4.
[26] Smiles, *Character*, pp. 168-170.
[27] See John Ruskin's assertion that an artist should be 'found' and not 'made', and its use in the construction of narratives of dominance of the actor-manager in nineteenth-century theatre. 'Introduction', pp. 13-16.
[28] Smiles, *Character,* p. 273.

appearance of great men was a contributing factor in both understanding the full remit of their characters and in highlighting their status as distinctive individuals. Writing of Plutarch's (c.46-120) *Lives* and Boswell's biography of Samuel Johnson (1709-1784), works that he held up as apogees of the biographical art, Smiles stressed the importance in both works of physical descriptions of their subjects. For example, 'Boswell lets us know how Johnson looked, what dress he wore, what was his talk, what were his prejudices [...] perhaps the most complete picture of a great man ever limned in words.'[29] Similarly, Plutarch 'even condescends to inform us of such homely particulars as that Alexander carried his head affectedly on one side; that Alcibiades was a dandy [...] giving a grace and persuasive turn to his discourse'.[30] This was partly important to Smiles because, like many of his contemporaries, he saw appearance as a quantifiable physical reflection of character, and the science of physiognomy was undoubtedly, as Sharrona Pearl has discussed, also important to an understanding of the creation and interpretation of portraiture in the middle of the nineteenth century.[31] However, in each of these examples, Smiles also highlighted the authors' physical descriptions of their biographical subjects because they fulfilled his criteria for the exposition of character through biography, helping to finish off 'the complete portrait' of their subjects, and also delineating them as individuals through 'small details of character [...by which...] we are enabled to see before us the men as they really lived'.[32]

In the context of this discussion, of the importance of the offstage image to the popularization of the actor-manager, and as an aid in explaining the balance between theatrical and offstage portraits in contemporary collections, Smiles's work is important because it helps to situate any attempt to depict the actor-manager's 'character' in a broader discussion about the construction of the identity of celebrated individuals. Yet Smiles's influence was not, as might be

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[29] Smiles, *Character,* p. 284.
[30] Smiles, *Character,* p. 274.
[31] Sharrona Pearl, 'Portrait Physiognomy: Communicating Character', in *About Faces: Physiognomy in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), pp. 84-105.
[32] Smiles, *Character,* p. 275.

supposed from the initial publication dates of his works, limited to the middle of the nineteenth century, but spanned all three of the decades under discussion in this thesis, and intruded into the beginning of the twentieth century.[33] If the legacy of great men was predicated not only upon their achievements but also upon their personality more generally, recovering an actor's character behind his theatrical performances would be integral to establishing him as a mainstream celebrity. This was particularly true for the relationship between the actor-manager and the middle-class consumer, who formed not only a major constituent of the theatregoing public in the latter half of the nineteenth century, but also the section of society to which the majority of Smiles's avid readership belonged, and which was the primary target audience for the collection of portrait photography.[34]

Biographical texts like those laid out by Smiles could help to flesh out the personalities borne out in their subject's achievements, and provide an opportunity for the reader both to understand and sympathize with their personal characters, and the theatrical biography in this period provided one means of capturing the actor's character for public consumption. Similarly, the visual manifestation of an actor's personality, both in terms of descriptions of personal encounters, and in the viewing of his body through a portrait, could be viewed in the same light, as a way of developing a character for the actors that could complement their achievements on the stage. In Richard Brilliant's survey of portraiture, he acknowledged the commonly held notion, surprisingly

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[33] For an analysis of the continual importance of Smiles's work to the reputation of at least one individual over the latter half of the nineteenth century, see John MacKenzie, 'The Iconography of the Exemplary Life: The Case of David Livingstone', in *Heroic Reputations and Exemplary Lives,* ed. by Geoffrey Cubitt and Allen Warren (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), pp. 84-104 (pp. 92-93).

[34] Although historians such as Adrian Jarvis have questioned as over-simplistic the idea of Smiles' writings as a literal translation of Victorian middle-class values, particularly as regards his almost ascetic principles of self-restraint, there seems little doubt that the market for such literature, and particularly for the works of mainstream publishers such as John Murray, was primarily middle-class. Adrian Jarvis, *Samuel Smiles and the Construction of Victorian Values* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 1997), pp. 24-50; John Feather, *A History of British Publishing,* 2nd edn (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006), pp. 103-107.

consistent across the modern period, that portraits, in reproducing the features and bodies of their subjects, portray also their inherent characters, and as such are a window into an authentic version of selfhood.[35] Like Smiles's biographers, he explained that the success of portraits has traditionally been determined by a dual function of fully capturing and also individualizing their subjects, and moreover recognized that when it comes to celebrated individuals, the character in a portrait can never be completely removed from the notion of their achievements. This was particularly relevant, in Brilliant's opinion, to the notion of authenticity in portraiture in the mid-nineteenth century, and he cited two early examples of famous portrait photographs that demonstrated the role of this fusion between personality and achievements in the contemporary reception of such images and the preservation of their subjects' identities for posterity. These were Southworth and Hawes' mages of American statesman Daniel Webster (1782-1852) and Robert Howlett's (1831-1858) photograph of Isambard Kingdom Brunel in front of the launching chains of the Leviathan of 1857 (1806-1859).[36]

Brilliant's description of a surface interpretation of the Southworth and Hawes photograph of Daniel Webster as a mirror of his public reputation was very reminiscent of Smiles's paradigm of biography as a fusion between private character and public achievements, but it also testified to the immediacy of portraiture, and the perceived veracity of the photographic medium, which a biographical text could not hope to emulate:

> The image corresponds to his reputation and, being a photograph,
> we imagine it to be true. Here is a character likeness: the stocky
> torso of a middle-aged man, forthright, erect, dressed in
> contemporary, formal costume, and nobly bald. But here also is an
> elaborate portrait iconography […for example…] the grim, serious
> expression, reminiscent of Roman Republican portraits, reflecting
> the patriotic dedication of this distinguished citizen of the American
> Republic […] In sum, this 'honest', surely neutral photograph offers

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[35] Richard Brilliant, *Portraiture* (London: Reaktion Books, 1991; repr. 2013).
[36] Brilliant, *Portraiture,* pp. 55-59, 96-104*.*

up a composite portrait of the *public* Daniel Webster as 'a virtuous
statesman, a defender of the Republic, a great Senator ... *himself*'.[37]

Similarly, in his description of the Brunel image, Brilliant pointed out that the
relationship between personality and achievements in this period was not just
confined to celebrity culture but was endemic and symbiotic to the extent that,
in the composition of an individual's identity 'achievements themselves – the
work done – formed an extrinsic projection of the person that, nevertheless,
remained an integral part of his or her being', and could not be separated from
character traits.[38] In terms of the expression of celebrity identity through the
body, the two photographs are ostensibly different because, whereas Webster's
achievements and character were both sited in the same elements of his
appearance, the achievements of Brunel were marked by an external referent,
the chains of the Leviathan, but as Brilliant noted, Brunel's status as a engineer
was authenticated by his appearance, and the fact that he was not presented
formally, but 'appears in all his shabby glory like some splendid Dickensian
figure, his boots and trousers stained with mud'.[39]

If there is one further point on which Rojek, Brilliant, and even Smiles, were all
agreed, it was that the expression of a celebrity's identity in text or image,
notwithstanding its ostensible purpose to offer an insight into the genuine
character traits of its subject, is highly mediated and context-specific, and
almost inevitably not as real as it purports to be, but is a representation of what
Rojek called the 'staged' self of the celebrity.[40] Brilliant deconstructed Howlett's
photograph by Brunel by pointing out that whilst 'the apparent verisimilitude of
Brunel's appearance against the background of the iron chains confirms our

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[37] Brilliant, *Portraiture,* pp. 56-57. Emphasis as original.
[38] Brilliant, *Portraiture,* pp. 98-99.
[39] Brilliant, *Portraiture,* p. 99.
[40] Rojek describes as a prime factor in the development of celebrity the
differentiation between the public face of such individuals, their 'staged' self,
and their actual, 'veridical' self, which is never captured for public consumption,
and sees the preservation of that distinction as essential to a successful
relationship with the public. Rojek, 'Surface Relations and Celebrity
Involvement Shields', and 'The Rise of the Public Face', in *Celebrity,* pp. 45-49,
103-112**.**

expectations of such a person […] it is no less an ideologically determined convention for representing the self-made engineering genius'.[41] Similarly, he noted that 'Webster did not become '*the* Daniel Webster' right away […] the Daniel Webster in the photograph did not always exist, although some changeable being bore this name and eventually became the person we know'.[42] Nevertheless, all three writers were equally clear that, to a large extent ,the truth value of such narratives was inconsequential, because an audience's understanding of these individuals, and their reading of the subject's character, was constituted by these depictions rather than any direct experience of the celebrity, and was based on the illusion of veracity rather than its realization. For the identity of the actor-manager, the combination of these two factors, the fact that celebrity was based upon a synthesis of character and achievements, and the concurrent necessity of preserving the assumption that his offstage image was a true representation of genuine character, was particularly problematic, because an awareness of his theatrical skill involved the knowledge that his achievement lay in presenting the viewer with plausible, but ultimately false, identities.

The Theatrical Body in Everyday Life

When compiling a series of writings on the life and work of late-Victorian and Edwardian actor-manager Herbert Beerbohm Tree, his half-brother Max Beerbohm (1872-1956), who was incidentally also a critic and a caricaturist, asked the author Edmund Gosse (1849-1928) to complete a seemingly simple task, to 'send him a sketch from memory of his brother Herbert as I remember him'.[43] However, as the writer quickly realized, and the disclaimer with which he started his 'sketch' revealed, his recollections of Tree were not so straightforward, and any attempt to memorialize the man as a 'real person' with 'genuine characteristics' would be made necessarily more complex by the

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[41] Brilliant, *Portraiture,* p. 99.
[42] Brilliant, *Portraiture,* p. 59.
[43]Edmund Gosse, 'A Sketch', in *Herbert Beerbohm Tree: Some Memories of Him and His Art*, ed. by Max Beerbohm, 2nd edn (London: Hutchinson, [1920?]), pp. 203-205 (p. 203).

nature of his profession as an actor, and Gosse's memories of his body in performance:

> [...] while the recollection of what a man of some other class looked like may be simple and direct, that of what an actor was is bound to be complex, and confused with his manifold impersonations on the stage. Of most actors whom I have slightly known I should instantly refuse to make any portrait whatever, because I lose their reality in their assumed parts. Is there any real person at all, any bundle of genuine characteristics left, one asks one's self, under the Protean disguises?[44]

In explaining this conundrum, Gosse's text not only problematized the separation of the actor's real self from that of his parts, but also revealed that, from the perspective of memorialization, capturing the real nature of the actor was bound up with remembering his appearance, and finding a memory of his real body that contrasted with that of his 'manifold impersonations on the stage'. This appearance was obviously connected intrinsically in Gosse's memory with the character of the actor-manager because, as the author went on to say, he was able to give a portrait of Tree as a result of the fact that 'in spite of all the costumes and all the attitudes, an unusually hard core of personality did survive, and even actively protrude, in him'.[45]

Gosse may have encountered difficulties with remembering Tree's offstage persona, but he obviously thought that it was important to do so, crucial that there be a 'reality' distinct from the actor's 'assumed parts'. In fact, his insistence on the necessity of being able to separate the actor from his parts suggested that the importance of the actor's offstage life to his legacy was not merely a function of public interest in the private lives of celebrated individuals, but that it was also the result of a very real anxiety about the authenticity of actors in this period; by posing the question 'Is there any real person at all, any bundle of genuine characteristics left [...] under the Protean disguises?' Gosse

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[44] Gosse, 'A Sketch', p. 203.
[45] Gosse, 'A Sketch', p. 203.

presupposed that, in some cases, the answer would be no.[46] Following the line
of his argument, the implication was clear: in cases other than Tree's, where the
actor's 'core of personality' was not evident, one should not attempt to provide a
portrait, as the memorialization of such figures for posterity would be neither
possible nor appropriate. What Gosse appears to have been proposing as a site
of anxiety was that, for the actor, the construction of self, and particularly the
framing of the body as a manifestation of character, was specifically informed by
the nature of their profession, and the juxtaposition between real and imagined
bodies that characterized both their working method and the visual expression
of their lives. Gosse's concern was not therefore necessarily about the literal
reconstruction of the actor's appearance, but rather a fear that the theatrical
nature of his profession rendered even Tree's real body imagined, and that
therefore it could not be trusted; later in his sketch, he wrote, 'it seems to me
that the complicated aspect of the actor […] affected him externally'.[47]

Accepting, for the minute, the assertion laid out in the previous section of this
chapter, that all manifestations of celebrity identity are staged, and even the
claim that, as discussed earlier through Erving Goffman and Joanne Entwistle,
any display of the body or construction of identity can be seen as a form of
performance, there is still an argument to be made that there is a literal truth in
Gosse's assertion, that the actor-manager's pyscho-somatic relationship with
performance may have intrinsically affected the way he interacted with his own
character, identity,and bodily construction, in everyday life.[48] In Philip Zarrilli's
2004 essay on the actor's 'embodied modes of experience', he suggested that
one of the fundamental differences between an actor's relationship with his
body and that of other men is what he terms the development of 'extra-daily
perception and experience associated with long-term, in-depth engagement in
certain psychophysical practices or training […] embodied practice[s] which
engage the physical body and attention (mind) in cultivating and attuning both

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[46] Gosse, 'A Sketch', p. 203.
[47] Gosse, 'A Sketch', p. 203.
[48] See discussion of Goffman and Entwistle's work in 'Introduction', pp. 27-29.

to subtle levels of experience or awareness'.[49] Focused on training regimes in contemporary theatrical practice, Zarrilli drew his examples of such practices primarily from non-Western traditions, but the synthesis of mind and body described by nineteenth-century actor-managers could easily be read as a 'form[s] of embodied practice' such as Zarilli described. An acculturation of the body-mind relationship to the dynamic of performance, as described by both Irving and Tree in their acting methodologies and their appreciation of the role of the body in the conveyance of character, would presumably, as Zarrilli suggested, have profoundly altered their experience of the body not only in the performance context, but in the construction of self in the everyday sphere.[50]

One of the problems with discussing the design and reception of the actor-manager's body through the offstage photograph is that, despite its prevalence in the visual record, the production and reception history of individual images are relatively intangible and difficult to reconstruct. They are therefore unlike images of the theatrical body discussed in the previous chapter, where access to critical texts and material records, and evidence of design practices helped to determine the construction and reception of specific theatrical characters, their translation into certain images and the likely impact of those portraits on the actor-manager's reputation. The elusive nature of the relationship between performers and photographic studios was discussed in David Mayer's essay on actresses' photographs, and Shearer West's on the photographic portraiture of Henry Irving and Ellen Terry proved that reconstructing the actor-manager's relationship with his photographic portraiture encountered a similar problem of ephemerality.[51] She described illuminating their relationship with the photographic medium as recovering 'what could be milked out of an otherwise

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[49] Philip B. Zarrilli, 'Towards a Phenomenological Model of the Actor's Embodied Modes of Experience', in *Theorizing the Performer,* ed. by Harry J. Elam, Jr. (=*Theatre Journal,* 56.4 (December 2004)), pp. 653-666 (p. 661).
[50] See '"Distinctly Intended to be a 'George'": Character, Appearance, and the Skill of the Actor', pp. 52-57.
[51] Mayer, 'The Actress as Photographic Icon'; Shearer West, 'The Photographic Portraiture of Henry Irving and Ellen Terry', in *Ruskin, the Theatre and Victorian Visual Culture,* ed. by Anselm Heinrich, Katherine Newey and Jeffrey Richards (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 187-215.

ordinary image', a metaphor that intrinsically constructs it as a labour-intensive and relatively tenuous process, and she concluded that the construction of the images themselves left their interpretation, 'largely to the viewer's imagination'.[52]

Although she acknowledged the role of the photographic image in the public face of the actor-manager, West characterized the dissemination of Irving's image in the photographic medium as driven primarily by the consumer's appetite for such images rather than any specific desire or inclination on the part of the actor-manager to express himself in this way. This was largely due to Irving's silence on the subject of photography, but it conveniently sidelines the truth that the actor-manager's complicity in the creation of such images was evident in the fact of his agreeing to sit for them. Accepting that the actor-manager was engaged in the creation of the offstage photograph, one of the ways of using Zarrilli's theory is therefore to counteract the elusive nature of the relationship between actor-manager and studio in the nineteenth century context. Considering the awareness of self-fashioning that Zarrilli attributed to the performer, it could be seen as a means of granting an agency to the actor-manager and a form of intentionality to the images beyond that traceable through the actual record of studio encounters. In the creation of these photographs, it might be surmised, an awareness of the traits of characterization would allow the actor-manager to engage in active dialogue with a photographer about pose and appearance in a way that would not necessarily be possible for the non-performer. Such an approach also suggests an intrinsic connection between the theatrical portrait and its offstage equivalent that entails seeing the actor's body presented in everyday life as inherently 'theatrical'.

Although West was clear that both offstage photographs and their theatrical counterparts should be seen as portraits, she believed that Irving had a more straightforward relationship with the camera when posing for theatrical characters, implying that the two types of images must be different in terms of

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[52] West, 'The Photographic Portraiture of Henry Irving and Ellen Terry', p. 210.

conception and realization, with only one constituting an explicit performance.[53] This problem, of the conceptual separation of explicitly theatrical performance from the sociological idea of performance as an intrinsic aspect of everyday life, has been discussed by Bert States, who sought to reclaim the term performance for the study of theatrical events, and worried that the widespread application of the word to all aspects of social interaction was the result of being 'in the grip of "illusory transivity," or finding family resemblances between things that gradually become more different than they are alike'.[54] Comparing Erving's Goffman's idea about everyday life as an implicit performance, and Richard Shechner's notion that performance must always be explicitly framed and repeatable, States called them 'different kind[s] of performing beast' that should not be elided under the umbrella term of 'performance'. [55] A similar problem, that of the widespread use of the term 'theatricality' to encompass both the mimetic event and the wider concept of social dramaturgy has been discussed by Tracy C. Davis and Thomas Postlewait, who warned against 'an all-inclusive and singular idea of theatricality [that] may easily mislead us' in the consideration of such different applications.[56] Davis's essay on the nineteenth-century concept of theatricality as expressed by Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881) in the same volume indicated that theatricality could be understood in the nineteenth century as part of both theatrical and non-theatrical contexts, but only where there was a recognisably explicit mode of performance.[57]

A similar reading of theatricality in the Victorian period was presented by Lynn Voskuil in her study of the perceived disconnect in the Victorian period between

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[53] West, 'The Photographic Portraiture of Henry Irving and Ellen Terry', pp. 197-201.

[54] Bert O. States, 'Performance as Metaphor', *Theatre Journal,* 48 (1996), 1-26 (p. 3).

[55] States, 'Performance as Metaphor', p. 25.

[56] Tracy C. Davis and Thomas Postlewait, 'Introduction', in *Theatricality,* ed. by Tracy C. Davis and Thomas Postlewait (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 1-39 (p. 8).

[57] Tracy C. Davis, 'Theatricality and Civil Society', in *Theatricality,* ed. by Tracy C. Davis and Thomas Postlewait (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 127-155.

theatricality and authenticity, which she claimed could be reconciled through the commonly-held notion of 'natural acting' in this period.[58] Like Davis, Voskuil drew her examples of natural acting from both within and outside the theatrical context, but all of her examples were linked by the fact that they were framed for contemporaries as explicit, rather than implicit, modes of performance. In the theatrical context, Voskuil argued, natural acting techniques helped to foster a sense of intimacy between audiences and performers. Moreover, in a chapter where she discussed the status of Henry Irving and Ellen Terry as celebrities, framed through the 'power of personality', she argued not that this power was sited in genuine personalities or character traits that were naturally attractive, but that the intimacy and relationship created within the theatrical context, through their use of natural acting, was transferred onto the construction of their personalities outside it, and that 'the authenticity of Irving's personality, then, relied squarely on its state of theatricalized mediation'.[59]

Taking the arguments presented above, there seems to have been an awareness on the part of contemporaries memorializing the actor-manager that the recollection of his performances influenced the perception of his body outside the theatrical context, expressed by Gosse as an anxiety about the possibility of recovering his real personality. Given the acculturation of actors in this period to techniques of embodiment, there may be a literal truth in the notion that an actor's awareness of his body, developed in performance, influenced his relationship with the design and presentation of his body, and therefore the creation of his identity, in everyday life. Voskuil's work intimated that the same elision, created by the transference of the relationship between actor and character from the theatrical to the everyday context, also existed, and was considered relatively unproblematic, in the relationship between the actor and audience.[60] Whereas, therefore, the construction of the body in the explicitly theatrical performance is traditionally contrasted with the implicit performance

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[58] Lynn M. Voskuil, *Acting Naturally: Victorian Theatricality and Authenticity* (London: University of Virginia Press, 2004).
[59] Voskuil, 'Natural Celebrities: Henry Irving, Ellen Terry, and the Power of Personality', in *Acting Naturally*, pp. 182-223, (p. 204).
[60] Voskuil, 'Natural Celebrities'.

of self in everyday life, there is a case for creating a separate category for presentation of self in the social sphere by one who was habituated to the explicit, theatrical performance of self, and a separate category of image for the actor that accepts the nature of his body in the presentation of self in everyday life as explicitly theatrical. This allows for a reading of the actor-manager's body as part of a systematic rather than a haphazard programme of identity formation, but also allows for the application of the modes of theatrical performance, of self-expression, collaboration, and representation, to be applied to the offstage photograph.

Balancing Creative and Conservative Bodies

Establishing the offstage image of the actor-manager as explicitly theatrical, in conception if not always in motif, is important because it imbues these images with the quality of intentionality, but it is also intrinsic to the notion of celebrity identity, as it links the expression of the actor-manager's character to his theatrical achievements in the manner of Smiles's biographical narratives. As shown above, portraiture and biographical narratives share many common features, but as Shearer West has discussed in her survey of the history of portraiture, they differ in the sense of 'occasionality', the reality of the portrait as the encapsulation of one moment in a person's life that, whilst it may attempt to capture a person's character, 'is at odds with the sprawling and developed aspects of character and action that comprise biographical writing'.[61] In representing the subject at a point in time, rather than over the span of his lifetime, the portrait is ostensibly at a disadvantage compared to the biographical narrative, but it is also arguably more flexible, as it allows for concurrent and non-contiguous narratives of identity to be presented through differentiated images. Brilliant noted that this can be a problem for choosing images that encapsulate a subject for the process of memorialization as 'such an abundant repertoire of image may also present the viewer with a confusing

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[61] Shearer West, *Portraiture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 44, 50-51.

range of options, destabilizing the characterization of the person portrayed and obscuring the mental image of the subject'.[62]

When Gosse finally managed to reconcile himself to the task of describing Herbert Beerbohm Tree in his 'sketch' of actor-manager, despite the nature of his profession, it appears that he encountered this same problem of a multi-faceted, and therefore destabilized, recollection:

> I find it hard to bring into accord two visions of him, the one of a certain dandified elegance, the other sturdy, four-square, and a little Batavian. In youth – for he was still young when I met him first, – he had not arrived at that impressiveness which he achieved at last. He was then, in fact – with his red hair, his pale complexion and faint eyes – the reverse of impressive off the stage, and I think he may have adopted what I call his "elegance" of manner in order to remove this deficiency. At all events, as years went by, his increased solidity of form and authoritative case of address made him more and more a "figure" in social intercourse.[63]

It is clearly important to note the centrality of the body to Gosse's recollection of Tree, and that he saw it as a reflection of his character, with an 'increased solidity of form' accompanying an increased social authority. However, instead of, as Brilliant suggested, choosing one aspect of Tree's body as representative of the actor-manager, he has attempted to reconcile two presentations by characterizing Tree's style as a linear progression, with the framing of his body altering as a result of his changing social status. The result of this, according to Gosse, was that he achieved a transition from 'dandified elegance', to an 'increased solidity of form' once his social prominence had been achieved. In line with this narrative, these two aspects of Tree's self-presentation, of youthful 'dandified elegance', and older 'solidity' are shown respectively in Figures 27 and 28.[64] Fig. 27, a negative from the Alexander Bassano (1829-1913) archive,

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[62] Brilliant, *Portraiture,* p. 132.
[63] Gosse, 'A Sketch', pp. 203-204.
[64] Gosse, 'A Sketch', pp. 203-204.

Image Redacted for

Copyright Purposes

Figure 27: Alexander Bassano, Photograph of Herbert Beerbohm Tree, 1884. Half-plate glass negative. London: NPG.

Image Redacted for

Copyright Purposes

Figure 28: Photo Russell, ***The Wrench Series, No.993: Mr. Tree***, **c.1903. Postcard Print, 14 x 9cm. London: V&A.**

taken in 1884, shows Tree elegantly dressed in a formal morning coat, and posed in a manner reminiscent of Napoleon Sarony's (1821-1896) famous 1882 portraits of Oscar Wilde (1854-1900) in aesthetic dress. By contrast, Fig. 28 shows the actor-manager transformed into the 'sturdy, four-square' figure of his later life, an 'At Home' image of Tree that was widely reproduced and distributed in postcard format in the early twentieth century; three copies of this postcard are present in the V&A collections. [65] The inclusion in the background of this image of a portrait of Tree as Hamlet by Charles Buchel (1872-1950), one of the roles that had forged his reputation on the London stage, suggests that it was intended, as with other narratives of celebrity in this period, to remind the viewer of his accomplishments as well as his personality, and as a reminder of his success in Shakespearean parts.[66]

Looked at in isolation, these images seem to confirm Gosse's narrative of a progressive development from an elegant, fashionable figure with a hint of dandyism in his self-fashioning to a more conventional social figure associated with the high end of theatrical and social practice. However, Figure 29, another photograph in the same series of Bassano portraits from 1884, belies Gosse's linear narrative, and suggests rather that Tree was engaged in the concurrent presentation of himself in both a dandified and conservative manner even relatively early on in his career. Fig. 29 shows Tree in exactly the same morning attire, morning coat, collar and tie, and dark trousers, as in Fig. 27, and is

[65] Whilst developed at the end of the nineteenth century, the dissemination of celebrity images through postcards, which reached a peak of popularity in the Edwardian period, is slightly beyond the remit of this thesis, although it undoubtedly contributed to the legacy of late-Victorian actor-managers with the general public. Primarily, postcards examined as part of this survey were not taken especially for the postcard market but were reproductions of photographs that were already popular with the general public. Often, even if the postcards themselves were produced after 1900, the photographs were taken prior to that date. Further information can be found in: C. W. Hill, *Picture Postcards* (Princes Risborough: Shire Publications, 1987; repr. 2007).
[66] His wife Maud in her recollections of his career discussed the success of Tree's original production of *Hamlet*, and his subsequent revivals and touring appearances in the piece between 1892 and 1906. The Buchel image was painted in 1899. Maud Tree, 'Herbert and I', in *Herbert Beerbohm Tree: Some Memories of Him and His Art*, ed. by Max Beerbohm, 2nd edn (London: Hutchinson, [1920?]), pp. 1-171 (pp. 72-75, 84, 92, 124, 134).

Image Redacted for

Copyright Purposes

Figure 29: Alexander Bassano, Photograph of Herbert Beerbohm Tree, 1884. Bromide Print, 15 x 11cm. London: NPG.

Image Redacted for

Copyright Purposes

Figure 30: Herbert Rose Barraud, Photograph of Herbert Beerbohm Tree, 1890. Albumen Cabinet Card, 14 x 10cm. London: NPG.

almost certainly from the same sitting, but the pose and manner of Tree, and his face-on engagement with the camera creates a far more formal, and less 'aesthetic' image of the actor-manager. It is a cogent reminder of the constructed and fixed nature of memorializing narratives against the fluid nature of identity as expressed in everyday life, and is also an illustration of the dangers of selectively viewing images and portraits of anyone, and particularly those of celebrities, in isolation. Finally, it demonstrates the flexibility of one (material) body in the construction of identity, which can be designed and shaped through a synthesis of appearance and manner in the translation of that body into a visual narrative of identity. Interestingly, in contrast to Fig. 27, only preserved as a glass negative, this is the only one of Bassano's images of Tree from this sitting for which there are any printed copies, and it therefore suggests the possibility that Tree preferred this manner of self-presentation to that of the dandified body of the other Bassano image.

There is evidence, therefore, to suggest the longevity of a conservative self-expression within the range of Tree's photographic portraiture but, as Figure 30 indicates, there is also evidence of the persistence of his fashionable, mannered, body in the public eye. Taken by Herbert Rose Barraud (1845-1896) a number of years after Bassano's more conventional portrait of the actor-manager, this cabinet card shows Tree fashionably dressed in a single-breasted and square-lapelled lounge jacket accompanied by striped trousers that were used as a means of introducing individuality into the otherwise uniform lounge suit.[67] Whilst his dress is constructed with an eye for fashionability, it also, with its embrace of the modern lounge suit, and the doing up of only the top button of the jacket, seems designed to create an air of creative informality. As with Fig. 27, this manner is mirrored in his pose, sitting across his chair, although situating this image within the range of Barraud's portraiture reveals that whilst this was a pose more likely to appear in images of creative individuals, it

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[67] For the fashionability of this attire in the 1890s, see Christopher Breward, *The Hidden Consumer: Masculinities, Fashion and City Life, 1860-1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), pp. 39-41.

was not exclusive to those in artistic professions.[68] As a signed photograph, it was obviously distributed directly by the actor-manager, and implies at least a perceived, if not an actual, level of interpersonal interaction that was an important facet of the public's relationship with artistic figures, discussed in the following chapter through the lens of the 'At Home' image.[69] Although the inscription dates this particular cabinet card to 1890, four copies of this image exist in the collections examined, one of which is in a smaller, mounted format similar to that of the *carte-de-visite,* and two of which are engravings of the image by the Direct Photo Engraving Co., which suggests a relatively widespread dissemination for this identifying image of Tree over a number of years.

In both Figs. 29 and 30, the bodies presented by the actor-manager could be described as fashionable, but they are divided in terms of both physical appearance and manner into the categories of the slightly unconventional, or what might be called the creative body, and a more normative or conservative expression of masculine identity. This duality may have seemed counter-intuitive to Gosse in his efforts to memorialize and fix Tree's identity for posterity, but in terms of a conception of the actor's identity in everyday life, it was a fluid model that could be adapted for different purposes and audiences. As George Cubitt recognized, this duality, and a flexible construction of identity, has been intrinsic to the interpretation of celebrated individuals more generally, and the double-edged construction of heroic reputations and exemplary lives, where he stated that heroes 'may be both admirable and disruptive, both representative […] and exceptional', and that, 'Some co-existence of normative and disruptive tendencies remains, however, a common feature of heroic

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[68] Similar poses can be found in Barraud's portraits in the same period of poet Robert Browning (1812-1889), musician Charles Hallé (1819-1895), author Arthur Conan Doyle (1859-1930), and playwrights J. M. Barrie (1860-1937) and W. S. Gilbert (1836-1911), but also in images of explorer Thomas Heazle Parke (1857-1893), attorney-general Charles Arthur Russell (1832-1900) and financier Sir John Lubbock (1834-1913), although in the last two their appearances are characterized by a far more formal dress style.
[69] See 'Illusive Sociability: Actor-managers "At Home"', pp. 208-220.

personas.'[70] Following this logic, John Mackenzie's essay in Cubitt's volume on the iconography of explorer David Livingstone concluded that its key feature was 'the flexibility of the Livingstone legend [which] meant that it could be appropriated by all'.[71]Moreover, as Fred Inglis recognized in his *Short History of Celebrity,* a similarly dual approach was actually intrinsic to the nineteenth-century construction of the artistic individual, caught up, as he stated, in similarly competing narratives of celebrity. Inglis characterized this construction of artistic celebrity as requiring a multi-faceted approach to self-expression, saying, 'The oscillation between outlaw and legislator, creator and critic, checking out and joining in, finds its social and expressive form in the tense familiarity of avant garde and bourgeoisie.'[72]

Conclusion

Inglis tied his dual vision of nineteenth-century celebrity, and his distinction of the avant garde and bourgeoisie both to the accumulation of capital and a distinction between work and leisure: 'the new bourgeois and the old aristo kept an amicable peace for half a century or more [...] by inventing a new kind of city, a two-level stage for the enactment of desire '.[73] This new city space was constituted on the one hand by buildings for work and the accumulation of capital, and on the other by buildings for leisure in which said capital could be shown off amongst ones peers. In this narrative of bourgeois capital and avant garde sociability, the role of the actor-manager was intriguingly liminal, as expressed in his double-barrelled title. As an actor, he could be seen as part of the creative side of celebrity, but as a manager his success depended upon the accumulation of capital, a role that allied him with a professional, bourgeois identity. In the theatrical context, as seen in previous chapters, he had to achieve popular and critical success, which could be equated with bourgeois popular opinion and the avant garde or artistic perceptions of his peers, and it

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[70] George Cubitt, 'Introduction: Heroic Reputations and Exemplary Lives', in *Heroic Reputations and Exemplary Lives,* ed. by Geoffrey Cubitt and Allen Warren (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), pp. 1-26 (p. 9).
[71] Mackenzie, 'The Iconography of the Exemplary Life', pp. 102-103.
[72] Fred Inglis, *A Short History of Celebrity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), p.78.
[73] Inglis, *Short History of Celebrity,* p. 82.

seems that this model of different methods of audience perception should also be applied to the identity of the actor-manager off the stage. However, to this construction should also be added the caveat that all of the paradigms of celebrity presented in this chapter are implicitly masculine forms of identity, and that therefore the creative and conservative sides of the actor-manager's self-expression must be considered in terms not only of a celebrated, but also a gendered, status. Bearing all of these points in mind, and particularly the notion of a multi-faceted and balanced identity, explicitly constructed and performed in different ways for different audiences, the following two chapters tackle in turn the design and dissemination of the artistic and professional bodies of actor-managers in this period, and the place of their images in wider discourses of artistic status, professional identities, gender, and above all, narratives of the actor-manager's achievements.

Sociability and the Artistic Body

The idea expressed in the previous chapter, of the fluid and performed body of
the actor-manager, observed in interpersonal interactions in everyday life and
as a symbol of theatrical identity, was not unique to Gosse, but appeared in a
number of other pre- and posthumous descriptions of actor-managers. This
included Max Beerbohm's recollections of Henry Irving, written shortly after his
death on 21 October 1905 and later published in his collection of essays *Around
Theatres,* and which is perhaps most famous for its bestowal of the title 'The
Knight from Nowhere' on the actor-manager.[1] Imbued with less anxiety than
Gosse's narrative, Beerbohm's text nevertheless also recognized that the force
of the actor's offstage personality was as crucial to his public success and
memorialization as his theatrical performances, and that this personality was
explicitly performed and shaped through the adaptation of his body for different
circumstances and audiences. This was particularly evident in his description of
a sighting of Irving in 1895 when, crossing the road at Marble Arch, the actor-
manager passed Beerbohm in a brougham, on his way to catch a train at
Paddington that would take him to Windsor Castle to be knighted:

> Irving, in his most prelatical mood, had always a touch – a
> trace here and there – of the old Bohemian. But as I caught
> sight of him on this occasion […] he was the old Bohemian,
> and nothing else. His hat was tilted at more than its usual
> angle and his long cigar seemed longer than ever; and on his
> face was a look of such ruminant, sly fun such as I have never
> seen equalled. I had but a moment's glimpse of him; but that
> was enough to show me the soul of a comedian revelling in
> the part he was about to play […] I was sure that when he
> alighted on the platform at Paddington his bearing would be
> more than ever grave and stately, with even the usual touch

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[1] Max Beerbohm, 'Henry Irving', in *Around Theatres*, rev. edn (London: Hart-
Davis, 1953), pp. 396-401.

> of Bohemianism obliterated now in the honour of the honour
>
> that was to befall him. [2]

As an extract from a commemorative piece, and written ten years after the encounter allegedly took place, Beerbohm's recollection is obviously subject to suspicions about its literal accuracy, but his intention appears to have been to create an impression of Irving the artist, 'reveling in' his ability to fashion and re-fashion himself in the everyday context.

This re-fashioning was expressed by Beerbohm as a synthesis of dress and manner, shaped not only by the 'hat tilted at more than its usual angle', but also by the 'look of sly fun' on his face, and in his bearing, which Max predicted he would alter upon arrival at Paddington to become 'grave and stately' as befitted the occasion. The implication of Beerbohm's narrative, however, was also that such a highly fluid and contextualized identity could only be properly understood by an insider such as himself, who had encountered Irving in a number of different contexts, and could differentiate between the different types of identity that the actor-manager was accustomed to portray. Later in the essay, Beerbohm also linked this manipulation of identity to 'a certain dandyism' that Irving shared with the Earl of Beaconsfield, 'the fashion of their clothes carefully thought out in reference to their appearance and their temperament', with whom, as mentioned in the earlier discussion of *Othello*, Irving enjoyed a social relationship.[3] Beerbohm was therefore privileging the social experience in the creation and understanding of such individuals, and setting himself up as a mediator by virtue of his interpersonal relationship with Irving, as one who could read the actor-manager's body, and therefore his identity, on a more sophisticated level than the average consumer or theatregoer. He could then decipher the nature of its restructuring and, importantly, convey this in capturing the actor-manager's personality for posterity. Moreover, by framing this as a moment where the actor-manager was caught off-guard, considering himself unobserved, Beerbohm seemed also

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[2] Beerbohm, 'Henry Irving', p. 400.
[3] Beerbohm, 'Henry Irving', p. 400. See 'Embodying Artistry: *Charles I, Othello* and *The Corsican Brothers* at the Lyceum Theatre,1872-1881', p. 113 (n. 51).

to have been implying that this particular moment represented the authentic body and genuine identity of the actor-manager as a creative figure, caught up in the anticipation of performance, rather than actually engaged in the act of it.

This idea, that the creative body was constructed in, and disseminated as a result of, social interaction with other creative insiders is one of the themes of this chapter, which deals with the body as a means of aligning the actor-manager to artistic groupings characterized as the 'avant garde' in Fred Inglis's construction of nineteenth-century celebrity.[4] Arguably the most important element of Beerbohm's analysis of Irving's personality was that it was rooted in the explicitly artistic, and mutually-understood, concept of Bohemianism, which, as described in this passage, he manifested on a number of different levels, often as a 'touch and trace', but which was ultimately an integral part of his artistic personality. Taking sociability, and the performance of the body for one's peers as its starting point, therefore, this chapter examines the place of social interaction, and specifically masculine sociability, as a formative part of the actor-manager's identity. It considers this from three angles, the first of which is based on the distinctive appearance of actor-manager Squire Bancroft at first night gatherings at the turn of the century, a form of 'public sociability' and manifestation of an explicitly theatrical body in the public sphere. It then discusses the masculine body in private gatherings and artistic circles, and particularly the relationship between critics, writers and artists framed through the concept of Bohemianism. Finally, it discusses how the body of the actor-manager 'At Home' could, by means of its status as a perceived social rather than para-social interaction, be seen as a way of recovering creative identities for a wider audience, and as an acceptable sphere for the performance of the creative, as well as the normative, body.

Public Sociability and the Distinctive Body

In her 1908 memoirs, Ellen Terry, a member of late nineteenth-century aesthetic and artistic circles in her own right, described the

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[4] Fred Inglis, *A Short History of Celebrity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), p. 78.

appearances of both Squire Bancroft, and his wife Marie Wilton in the first decade of the twentieth century:

> I think that few of the youngest playgoers who point out on the first nights of important productions a remarkably striking figure of a man with erect carriage, white hair, and flashing dark eyes—a man whose eye-glass, manners, and clothes all suggest Thackeray and Major Pendennis, in spite of his success in keeping abreast of everything modern – few playgoers, I say, who point this man out as Sir Squire Bancroft could give any account of what he and his wife did for the English theatre in the 'seventies. Nor do the public who see an elegant little lady starting for a drive from a certain house in Berkeley Square realise that this is Marie Wilton, afterward Mrs. Bancroft, now Lady Bancroft, the comedienne.[5]

She then went on to describe the couple's tenure at the Prince of Wales's Theatre in the late 1860s and early 1870s, and the subsequent social cachet of its managers, recalling it as 'the most fashionable theatre in London'.[6] Given that almost forty years had elapsed between this time and Terry's memoirs, it was reasonable for her to suppose that their earlier work had been eclipsed by later successes, and even that their offstage personalities had persisted longer than their theatrical achievements in the minds of audiences. That this exact passage from Terry's work was included in Squire Bancroft's section of the narrative in their second autobiography, *Recollections of Sixty Years,* which was published the following year, with Bancroft introducing them as 'generous words' that he would 'refrain from the false humility of ignoring', suggests the actor-manager's approval not only of her comments on their management, but also on her description of Bancroft's 'striking figure', and his wife's 'elegan[ce]'.[7]

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[5] Ellen Terry, *The Story of My Life* (London: Hutchinson, 1908), p. 99.
[6] Terry, *The Story of My Life,* p. 100.
[7] Squire Bancroft and Marie Wilton, *The Bancrofts: Recollections of Sixty Years* (London: Murray, 1909), pp. 76-77. In both their autobiographies, the husband and wife alternated narratives of their lives and careers.

In Terry's narrative, neither Bancroft's theatricalized appearance at first night events, nor Marie's appearance as an 'elegant little lady' were imbued with any form of moral judgment; both were described as simple, factual representations of the self-presentation of these respective figures. However, the fact that Bancroft was almost certainly accompanied to many of these first night occasions by his wife, when she would have been dressed in a formal manner, indicates a certain amount of selectivity on the part of Terry in her image of the striking theatrical doyen and the elegantly reformed actress, and a concern for gendered notions of identity outside the theatrical process. Whilst Julie Codell noted that the autobiographies of female artists in this period primarily framed their subjects as overtly non-conformist, and akin to their male colleagues, Viv Gardner claimed that actress-autobiographers were more focused on presenting themselves as models of normative femininity, particularly evident in Terry's description of herself as a '"womanly woman"'.[8] Along these lines, Terry seems to see Marie's achievements in the framing of her body in a highly normative, feminine manner that contradicted contemporary notions of the 'comedienne'. By contrast, Squire Bancroft's appearance indicated his disjuncture with contemporary social norms of appearance and, in Terry's eyes, its connections with his celebrated status clearly enabled him to be singled out by the layman from other theatrical attendees. The reference to Major Pendennis, the fashion-conscious and dandyish villain of William Makepeace Thackeray's (1811-1863) 1849 novel *Pendennis*, suggests that his dress and manner were not only flamboyant and associated with dandyism (in the novel Pendennis was acquainted with Regency dandy George 'Beau' Brummell (1778-1840)), but also closer to that of fashionable life in the 1850s than to the turn of the century, and that despite 'keeping abreast of everything modern', the presentation of himself at first night performances in a formal and archaized manner was a deliberate strategy of dress and appearance.[9]

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[8] Julie F. Codell, *The Victorian Artist: Artists' Lifewritings in Britain, ca. 1870-1910* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 141-165; Terry, cited in Viv Gardner, 'By Herself: The Actress and Autobiography, 1755-1939', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Actress*, ed. by Maggie B. Gale and John Stokes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 173-192 (p. 179).
[9] Terry, *Story of My Life,* p. 99.

For everyday playgoers, as Terry described it, this constituted a version of what Chris Rojek described as a 'para-social interaction', with audience members identifying Bancroft-the-celebrity through his distinctive appearance.[10] Artist William Rothenstein, a close friend of the Beerbohm family, wrote of attending first nights at the Haymarket Theatre and Her Majesty's Theatre in the 1890s with the family in just such a way: 'It was exciting to see the house full of famous men and reigning beauties. Max knew them all by sight, and through him I became familiar with the appearance of many of the great social figures of the time'.[11] As Bram Stoker related in his memories of the Lyceum Theatre, a first night of a major production was hugely attractive as a theatrical experience to theatregoers, who were queueing at the pit door 'long before the house was, or could be opened, [and] there was no denying the hope-laden thrill of expectation with which they regarded the coming of the night's endeavour', and for whom the management provided tea at four o'clock.[12] Nevertheless, as much as it was a theatrical event, a first night at the theatre in the late Victorian period was also a social occasion of particular importance to those affiliated with theatrical and artistic social circles. At the Lyceum Theatre, Stoker recalled, an 'established custom of first and last nights' was to invite certain guests to stay behind after the production and to dine on the stage of the theatre, 'which had now been transposed into a room surrounded by supper-tables'.[13] As well as being a distinctive body by which Bancroft could be identified as a celebrity, his mannered and dandyish appearance on theatrical first nights was almost certainly staged for the benefit of his peers, and was a social, as well as a para-social, performance of identity.

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[10] Whilst Rojek viewed the 'para-social' interaction primarily in terms of mass-media representations of celebrity bodies, it could equally apply to the viewing of a celebrity in which a physical distance between viewer and subject prevented any actual social interaction. Chris Rojek, *Celebrity* (London: Reaktion Books, 2001; repr. 2010), p. 52.

[11] William Rothenstein, *Men and Memories: A History of the Arts, 1872-1922* (New York: Tudor Publishing Company, 1922), p. 274.

[12] Bram Stoker, *Personal Reminiscences of Henry Irving*, rev. edn (London: Heinemann, 1907), p. 80.

[13] Stoker, *Personal Reminiscences,* p. 81.

In an essay on posing and the shaping of the artistic body in the late-nineteenth century public sphere, Andrew Stephenson discussed Mortimer Menpes's (1855-1938) portraits of James McNeill Whistler (1834-1903) as a prime example of the 'carefully practiced and highly rehearsed nature of the Whistlerian public persona', that indicated both artists' awareness of the fact that the 'semiotics of the dandified male body were not left to chance' in depictions of artistic figures.[14] This 'rehearsed' and constructed quality of the actor-manager's body was intrinsic to both Beerbohm's description of Irving and Terry's of Bancroft, but both also cited the public nature of the venues as an aspect of that construction, and in this respect, Stephenson's positioning of modern art galleries as 'sympathetic venues for the encounter with fashionable manly posing and for the display of modern social and sexual identities' is particularly interesting.[15] As part of Bancroft's autobiographical narrative, he demonstrated a specific awareness of the art gallery as a place for the intersection of artistic and social identities:

> Social events, more or less public, included some of those charming
> gatherings which continued for a few years on certain Sunday
> afternoons in the picture-rooms of the Grosvenor Gallery. Nothing
> of the sort that we remember was ever more successful in the
> bringing together of people of every degree and kind, from princes
> and princesses of the land to humble dwellers in Bohemia, for an
> hour or two of *camaraderie.*[16]

The opposition here, between the 'princes and princesses of the land' and the 'humble dwellers in Bohemia' suggests that under normal circumstances, the Bohemian was not an appropriate identity to adopt in meetings with an elite social cadre, and this was supported in Beerbohm's description of Irving, and the transition of the actor-manager from a private, creative individual, imbued with a sense of the Bohemian, to a highly formalized and normative social context,

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[14]Andrew Stephenson, 'Posing and Performance: The Problem of Artistic Visibility and its Homosocial Performances in Late Nineteenth-Century London', *Visual Culture in Britain,* 8 (2007), 73-103 (pp. 75-77).

[15] Stephenson, 'Posing and Performance', pp. 81-82.

[16] Squire Bancroft, and Marie Wilton, *Mr. & Mrs. Bancroft: On and Off the Stage, Written By Themselves*, 8th edn (London: Bentley, 1891), p. 284. Emphasis as original.

that of Windsor Castle, where all trace of the Bohemian had to be removed. A similar sense, of the normative self in the normative context, was a feature of Terry's description of Marie Wilton, but Bancroft's 'striking figure' of first nights was presented in a public social context not unlike that of an art gallery, an environment in which 'acts of extended looking were easily accommodated and positively encouraged', and in which therefore an artistic 'posing' of the body may have been considered less problematic; it was an environment in which a distinctive, dandified, body could occasion comment but not censure.[17]

Finally, although Stephenson positioned his work primarily in terms of the male body's role in a clandestinely sexualized discourse, informed by a perceived necessity to work around anxieties about sexual deviance, his statement about Oscar Wilde's understanding of the significance of posing could be equally important to an understanding of an artistic social body informed by theatrical practice: 'the significance of posing, for Wilde, lay not only in the choreographed reality that it constructed; rather it was in its "disruptive strangeness" that threatened to expose the interrelationship between modern masculinity, sexual pleasure and cultural consumption'.[18] From the perspective of sexual ambiguity, the status of the actor-manager was no more problematic than that of other artistic figures of this period, but Wilde was referring here to the posing not just of the artist, but of the artist's model, whose body had a flexibility of form not unlike that of the theatrical performer. As previous chapters of this thesis have discussed, the notion of 'disruption' was important to the creation of a star actor in the theatrical portrait, and it seems that Bancroft was aware that there were occasions where the presentation of a disruptive body socially, in the public sphere, could contribute to its owner's celebrity, just as Beerbohm's Irving knew that, in the context of Windsor, any artistic disruption should be kept to a minimum.

Terry's likening of Bancroft's appearance to that of Thackeray's Major Pendennis may have been literally as well as metaphorically apt: the Major was described

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[17] Stephenson, 'Posing and Performance', p. 82.
[18] Stephenson, 'Posing and Performance', p. 94.

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Figure 31: W. & D. Downey, Photograph of Squire Bancroft, 1880-1890. Albumen Cabinet Card, 17 x 11cm. London: V&A.

on the opening page of the novel as a man who took great care of his appearance, as having 'the best blacked boots in all London, with a checked morning cravat that was never rumpled until dinner time', and it was noted that 'Pendennis' coat, his white gloves, his whiskers, his very cane, were perfect of their kind'.[19] Nevertheless, there is evidence that Bancroft's distinctive, dandified appearance, and the 'fixing' of Bancroft in the dress of the 1860s, framed in Terry's narrative as a literal description of the actor-manager's appearance at first night perfomances, was part of a deliberate mythologizing of the actor-manager's 'distinctive' body. This was echoed in the visual depictions of the actor-manager, in both photographs that he might have distributed himself and images produced in the contemporary press. Figure 31 is a cabinet card of Bancroft, produced by the W. & D. Downey photographic studio in the 1880s. Although the 'best blacked boots' are not in evidence, all of the other elements of Thackeray's description of Pendennis, coat, whiskers, white gloves, cane, and immaculately turned-out cravat, are all present in the portrait, and appear to present a dandified image of the actor-manager in line with Terry's narrative. Certain elements of dress, such as the closely fitted frock-coat, an article of clothing that Brent Shannon has discussed as associated in 1880s literature and satirical cartoons with the 'familiar stereotype, endlessly lampooned in prose and caricature' of the dandy, and which was being usurped in terms of fashionability by the more informal lounge coat in this period, aid a reading of the image as expressive of a deliberate, archaized and dandified appearance. [20]

This would be an appealing confirmation of Terry's description of Bancroft's 'striking figure' but, as with the images of Herbert Beerbohm Tree examined in the previous chapter, one of the most meaningful aspects of this expression of Bancroft's identity is that the body in the photograph is not actually, in and of itself, non-normative. As Shannon also pointed out, as a formalized element of menswear, 'many aristocrats and older men clung to the traditional uniform of

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[19] William Makepeace Thackeray, *The History of Pendennis: His Fortunes and Misfortunes, His Friends and His Greatest Enemy* (New York: Harper, 1850), p. 9.
[20] Brent Shannon, *The Cut of His Coat: Men, Dress, and Consumer Culture in Britain, 1860-1914* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2006), pp. 132-5, 162-163. (p. 133).

the regal top hat and dignified frock coat well into the 1920s and '30s',
supported by Christopher Breward's analysis of changing patterns of male
fashion in the same period, in which the frock coat was positioned as a garment
inherently associated with formality, and an upper-class ideal of
gentlemanliness rather than dandyism.[21] A plausible alternative reading of
Bancroft's portrait is therefore that, instead of a consciously self-fashioned,
dandified apperance, which was an attempt to align him with an artistic identity,
this was a demonstration of social class, and an expression of the actor-
manager's identity as a gentleman. This fits with Stephenson's assertion
elswewhere that, 'The fraught and sometimes unsure signifiers of a manly style
"performed" in public depended for its success (or failure) on the eyes and
cultural-sexual norms of others'.[22] Somewhat akin to the interpretation of the
theatrical portrait, the reading of identity through this image is therefore
dependent upon the cultural understandings and expectations of the viewer, and
the concurrent reading of the visual and verbal depictions of the actor-manager's
body in social encounters.

A further element of the disjunction between the surface readings of Bancroft's
body in Fig. 31 is that, sartorially, there was a fine line between artistic and
gentlemanly identities, linked through the concept of dandyism. Studying actual
practices of dressing in the late-nineteenth century, Laura Ugolini has
deconstructed the idea that the figure of the dandy, and particularly his concern
with dressing and appearance, was exclusively associated with non-conformist
identities, the result of 'a tendency on the part of historians to view dandyism
[…] as something apart from the clothing style of the majority of men'. Instead,
she argued that across social classes and professional categories, 'References to
individuals […] who invested time, money and energy in developing a
consciously dandified identity, with a wardrobe to match, are not difficult to

[21] Shannon, *The Cut of His Coat,* p. 162; Christopher Breward, *The Hidden
Consumer: Masculinities, Fashion and City Life, 1860-1914* (Manchester:
Manchester University Press, 1999), pp. 32-36, 46-49.
[22] Andrew Stephenson, 'Refashioning Modern Masculinity: Whistler,
Aestheticism and National Identity', in *English Art, 1960-1914: Modern Artists
and Identities* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), pp. 133-149
(pp. 134-135).

find.'[23] Similarly, in his study of literary manifestations of Victorian masculinity, James Eli Adams suggested that the dandy and the gentleman in Victorian culture were inextricably linked in their descriptive qualities, and were only seen as incompatible because of a constructed rhetoric describing the dandy as an anti-masculine form of identity.[24] Similarly, the notion that the artist and the gentleman were distinct categories in this period, and that artistic identities were of necessity non-conformist, has been debunked in Caroline Dakers's recent work on fashionable artists' residences in Kensington and the Holland Park Circle, where she argued that most of those artists wanted to be accepted by the establishment, and particularly the RA, as the 'badge of Academy favour also implied particularly social status: members were automatically deemed to be gentleman'.[25] The problem, as Dakers, Adams, and Ugolini all identified, has been that a historical tendency to divorce artistic and aesthetic values from social norms has obscured the literal connections between the artistic body and normative presentations of self.

Whether Bancroft's body was noticed in the theatre because of its non-conformist, artistic nature, or simply because of its distinctive sartorial coding was therefore open to interpretation, but that the fixed and consistent nature of his body over a period of time was a means of distinguishing the actor-manager from his contemporaries is evident from Figures 32 and 33. The first is a cartoon drawn by Leslie Ward ('Spy') (1851-1922) for *Vanity Fair* in 1891, and published as part of their 'Men of the Day' series, and is therefore undoubtedly intended to capture and represent the distinctive aspects of the actor-manager's appearance as part of his celebrity. Attempting to capture Bancroft's personal style, many of the motifs of the body displayed in Fig. 31, for example, the inclusion of top hat and cane and an elaborately tied silk cravat, are evident in Ward's image, playing into the perception of Bancroft's distinctive appearance as established by both

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[23] Laura Ugolini, *Men and Menswear: Sartorial Consumption in Britain, 1880-1939* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2007), p 65.
[24] James Eli Adams, *Dandies and Desert Saints: Styles of Victorian Masculinity* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995), pp. 192-210.
[25] Caroline Dakers, *The Holland Park Circle: Artists and Victorian Society* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), p. 5

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Figure 32: Leslie Ward ('Spy'), 'Men of the Day. No. 510: Mr. S. B. Bancroft', 1891. Published *Vanity Fair,* 13 June 1891. Chromolithograph, 36 x 24cm. London: V&A.

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Figure 33: London Stereoscopic Company, Photograph of Squire Bancroft, c.1870. Albumen Cabinet Card, 16 x 11cm. London: V&A.

Terry and W. & D. Downey. However, it appears to have been an almost direct copy of a London Stereoscopic Company photograph of the actor-manager (Fig. 32), dated around 1870, a fact particularly evident in the details of the concealed placket and velvet collar of his coat, the slightly jaunty angle of his top hat, and his cane. It is possible that Bancroft was wearing the same coat, and carrying the same cane in 1891 as he had been in the early 1870s, but it is equally likely that Ward, working from his impressions of the actor-manager as a striking figure, had access to, or even owned, a copy of the London Stereoscopic Company photograph, from which he drew inspiration for his illustration.

Given the construction of celebrity in the previous chapter as predicated upon professional achievement, it is probably not coincidental that the distinctive nature of Bancroft's celebrity body as displayed in the correlation of these two images, appears to have been formed in the 1870s, the period in which he was managing the Prince of Wales's Theatre, and was arguably most influential in contemporary drama. Whilst Terry's assertion that many ordinary 'playgoers' would not have been aware of Bancroft's exact theatrical achievements may have been true, it would be equally accurate to assume that his social and theatrical acquaintances, for whom he was displaying his body on theatrical first nights, were aware of his career, suggesting that the fixing of his body in the fashion that he had worn in the 1870s may have been intended as a reminder of his theatrical performances, and the achievements that gave him celebrity status. In this respect, Fig. 33, a watercolour of the actor-manager by Carlo Pellegrini ('Ape') (1839-1899) in the collections of the NPG, is a compelling example of the coalescence of Bancroft's theatricalized body and his onstage performances. It is listed in the gallery's catalogues as being a portrait of Bancroft that was published in the same edition of *Vanity Fair* as Fig. 31, on 13 June 1891 and, like the above images, it purports to show the offstage body of the actor-manager as deliberately dandified. As such, it could be read similarly, as evidence for the fixing of the actor-manager's distinctive appearance in a formalized and old-fashioned mode of attire, and as a memorialization of his 'striking' appearance in the contemporary press as a manifestation of celebrity. However, beyond this catalogue, there is no evidence that it was ever actually published in *Vanity*

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Figure 34: Carlo Pellegrini ('Ape'), Caricature of Squire Bancroft, 1891. Watercolour, 56 x 34cm. London: NPG.

Fair; Carlo Pellegrini died in 1889, two years before it was allegedly published, and the image appears nowhere in Roy Mathews' and Peter Mellini's catalogue of the magazine's caricatures, suggesting that maybe it has been confused with Ward's caricature in the cataloguing process.[26] In addition, it is probably not an offstage portrait of the actor-manager, but an image of Bancroft as Captain Hawtree in T. W. Robertson's (1829-1871) *Caste*, first produced at the Prince of Wales's Theatre in 1867, and last revived by the Bancrofts and Hare in 1883; Bancroft mentioned Pellegrini's caricature of himself in this character in *Recollections of Sixty Years,* and the iconography of the image is almost identical to a labelled sketch of the actor in this role in the *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*, published on 18 July 1885.[27]

As well as being a reminder not to take catalogue records, even at major institutions, at face value, this is an example of the historiographical problem of distinguishing theatrical portraits from offstage images in productions staged in everyday dress, an issue whose ramifications are discussed further in the final chapter of this thesis. However, Figs. 33 and 34 are also evidence that the memorialization of the actor-manager, and the presentation of his body as part of his celebrity status, occurred not just through a process of posed performance in the public sphere, but in the private relationships that he cultivated with contemporary artists. Whilst neither Ward nor Pellegrini's caricatures seem to have been drawn from life, both artists had a social relationship with Bancroft; Pellegrini was a fellow member of the Beefsteak Club, and the Wards and Bancrofts holidayed together in Pontresina, along with a number of other notable theatrical and artistic figures in the period.[28] Therefore their strategies of depicting the actor-manager's identity, which are clearly a form of celebrity memorialization, would have been drawn not only from extant images of him, but from their social interaction with his body in the realm of private, as well as public, sociability.

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[26] Roy T. Mathews and Peter Mellini, eds, *In 'Vanity Fair'* (London: Scolar Press, 1982). Ward's caricature for this date is listed on p. 233.
[27] Bancroft and Wilton, *Recollections of Sixty Years,* p. 103; 'Mr. Bancroft', *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News,* 18 July 1885, p. 168.
[28] Bancroft and Wilton, *Recollections of Sixty Years,* pp. 286-287, 412.

'That Delightful Land, Bohemia': Masculine Sociability and the Body

In the public context of social display, in the art gallery or the theatre, Squire Bancroft, as shown above, appears to have been aware of certain circumstances in which a particularly artistic, dandified, or Bohemian identity could be displayed without censure. However the formation of such an identity was, as he suggested in both his memoirs, based not only on his appearance in the public context, but in his attendance at occasions of private, and exclusively masculine, sociability. The first of these events, a supper party that Bancroft was taken to by actor John Clarke (1828-1879) at the house of playwright and journalist Charles Millward (1830-1892) in 1865, shows the beginnings of his association with a circle of performers and writers, 'the stars' of theatre in the mid-nineteenth century, that would not only prove to be important to his theatrical career, but also his self-identification with the artistic idea of 'Bohemia':

> I met for the first time […] Leicester Buckingham [1825-1867] and
> Joseph Knight [1829-1907], the dramatic critics, Arthur Sketchley
> [1817-1882], the entertainer, Andrew Halliday [1830-1877], writer
> and playwright, William Belford [fl.1860s], an actor then well
> known – and one who very soon was to influence my career,
> Thomas William Robertson. Boon companions, all: giants they
> seemed to me, for I was then not quite twenty-four, and my
> introduction to such men opened, as it were, the doors to a
> companionship with the stars that then illumined that delightful
> land, Bohemia.[29]

This masculine sociability was a continuous feature of Bancroft's recollections, and was also reflected in his accounts of other social occasions, and in his membership of a number of clubs in this period, such as the Garrick Club, the Beefsteak Club and the Arundel Club. He was also the founder member of a small club 'which had a short life, but a merry one' in the early 1870s, 'The Lambs', whose members 'were limited to twelve original "Lambs", and twelve subsequently elected "Lambkins"', and which circle included fellow actor-

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[29] Bancroft and Wilton, *Recollections of Sixty Years,* p. 66.

managers Henry Irving, John Hare and Arthur Cecil (1843-1896), several playwrights, two barristers, and two aristocratic theatrical patrons.[30]

Taking Bancroft at his word in this matter, and seeing his social identity as formed in an explicitly bohemian context, it is worth exploring the concept of the 'Bohemian' as a sub-set of artistic identity, and considering how it might have influenced the shaping of Bancroft's body. Defining Bohemianism as quintessentially oppositional to mainstream social norms, Elizabeth Wilson stated that nineteenth-century Bohemians used appearance to set themselves apart from society, and she identified four specific styles of dress that were associated with various nineteenth-century manifestations of the Bohemian, the 'poor look', 'romantic medievalism', 'Aesthetic' dress, and the 'Baudelairean' approach, based on Baudelaire's essay on dandyism, in which artistic and aristocratic ideals were elided and 'demonstrated the superiority of the artist over the vulgar bourgeoisie'.[31] Whilst Bancroft never explicitly spoke of the formation of his body as a product of his bohemian experience, a parallel reading of his bodily display in the act of public sociability as a manifestation of the dandified artistic persona, and Wilson's description of Bohemian dress, suggests that this might be an outward expression of a private, 'Bohemian', identity, formed in social interaction with other like-minded individuals.

As a facet in the formation of masculine identities in this period, John Tosh has written of masculine sociability, and particularly the world of the late-nineteenth century bohemian club, as a manifestation of 'the 'Flight from Domesticity', 'characterized by a bachelor ambience', and seen as 'a viable alternative to the married state', even though they were also frequented, as in Squire Bancroft's case, by married men.[32] They were therefore seen as spaces

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[30] Bancroft and Wilton, *On and Off the Stage,* pp. 177-178; see also T. Edgar Pemberton, *John Hare: Comedian, 1865-1895* (London: Routledge, 1895), pp. 169-171.
[31] Elizabeth Wilson, *Bohemians: The Glamorous Outcasts* (London: Tauris Parke, 2000; repr. 2011), pp. 164-5.
[32] John Tosh, 'The Flight from Domesticity', in *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), pp. 170-194 (p. 187).

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Figure 35: Alfred Ellis, Photograph of John and Gilbert Hare, c.1885. Albumen Cabinet Card, 16 x 11cm. London: V&A.

for the enactment of private relationships rather than the public performance of sociability. Whilst the influence of male friendship on the practice of clothing consumption at an individual level in this period is relatively under-researched, Laura Ugolini has explored how, more generally, all-male social groupings influenced the construction of sartorial identities: 'As boys and men moved between different paces – home, school, neighbourhood, workplace, club, and so on – so their clothes reflected their membership as a peer-group within each context.'[33] With this in mind, what is particularly interesting about Figure 35, which shows John Hare and his son Gilbert (1869-1951), is not the correlation between the appearances of father and son, but that the dress of John Hare is very reminiscent of that of his fellow actor-manager and close social acquaintance Squire Bancroft, seen in Figs. 32 and 33. Similarly, John Potvin has explored how intimacy between men beyond the familial sphere could be reflected in the representation of their bodies in double portraits and, although Potvin was mainly concerned with such images in terms of a psycho-sexual reading of portraiture, he acknowledged that a 'degree of socially sanctioned proximity' and like-dressing could be seen as a representation of social, as well as sexual, intimacy.[34]

Unlike most of the other images examined for this thesis, Figures 36 and 37 were probably never intended as part of the official visual record, although as the subjects in both images acknowledged, and posed for, the camera, they were clearly taken with their explicit permission. Both are informal snapshots taken in personal social settings rather than officially recorded in a studio and therefore arguably provide the least mediated version of these individuals as they appeared in social contexts, although they are clearly posed, and the role

[33] Ugolini, *Men and Menswear,* p. 43.

[34] John Potvin, '"Friendship as a Way of Life": Subjectivity and Visions of Desire', in *Material and Visual Cultures Beyond Male Bonding, 1870-1914: Bodies, Boundaries and Intimacy* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), pp. 113-151 (p. 122). A similar reading of double portraits that pertains to both female familial and friendship bonds can be found in Anna Marie Kirk, '"Composed of the Same Materials": Like-Dressing and the Dress of the Doppelgänger in Victorian Art and Culture, c.1855–c.1885' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Courtauld Institute of Art, 2012).

Images Redacted for

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Figure 36: Unknown Photographer, Photograph of Henry Irving and John Hare, c. 1895. Published *Sphere,* **4 June 1938. Newspaper Illustration, c. 12 x 15cm. London: V&A.**

Figure 37: Unknown Photographer, Photograph of W. Graham Robertson and Henry Irving at Boscastle, Cornwall, 1892. Black and White Photograph, 12 x 12cm. London: V&A.

of the photographer, who was also presumably part of this social makeup, is an unknown quantity. The first is an image of actor-managers John Hare and Henry Irving, taken in an unknown location, possibly on vacation, and the close relationship of the two figures is indicated by similarly constructed dress and pose, and the fact that their hands are actively entwined. As Potvin acknowledged, such images, despite their homo- as opposed to hetero-social status, are reminiscent of those in family albums, and are therefore related to John Tosh's idea of the homosocial space as a 'flight from', or alternative to, domesticity.[35] This makes sense in terms of Codell's assertion that the use of snapshots in official, ostensibly domestic, narratives of artistic figures was rare, partly because 'spontaneous images representing the great man as human, if careless, can thoroughly deflate a reputation', but it is perhaps also true that even if nominally acceptable, such images may have been be considered too candid for a public used to seeing celebrated figures through carefully mediated lenses.[36] Whilst Fig. 36 may have started as a private image, it passed into the public record when it was published in the *Sphere* in 1938, and the fact that the accompanying explanation was entitled 'Pillars of the Nineteenth-Century Stage' suggests that it had come to be seen as an exposition of theatrical celebrity and artistic identity rather than private sociability.

Yet snapshots also appear to have been linked to a performance of artistic identities and bodies that was common to the private as well as the public sphere, and in Fig. 36, of Walford Graham Robertson (1866-1948) and Irving at the seaside in Cornwall with Irving's dog Fussie, the appearances of the two individuals and their personal sartorial styles are different, but they are linked by a self-conscious 'posing' reminiscent of Stephenson's analysis of the public performance of artistic identity. The iconography of W. Graham Robertson as a distinctive, dandified, and ultimately aesthetic, individual in the visual record is perhaps best-known to posterity through John Sargent's (1852-1925) 1894 painting of the writer, described in the catalogue of the NPG's current (2015)

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[35] Potvin, '"Friendship as a Way of Life"', p. 116; Tosh, 'The Flight from Domesticity', p. 187.
[36] Codell, *The Victorian Artist,* p. 200.

exhibition of Sargent's portraits as an image that 'sums up the *fin-de-siècle* spirit of the 1890s'.[37] Yet, leaving its artistic qualities to one side, it is also a example of how personal social interaction in artistic circles could result in the depiction and dissemination of the body for public consumption, as the title of the exhibition, 'Portraits of Artists and Friends' indicates. Sargent painted both Ellen Terry and Henry Irving while he was sojourning in London, and although both were theatrical portraits (of Terry as Lady Macbeth, and Irving as Philip II), they undoubtedly contributed to the prominence of both artist and subjects through their mutual social cachet. Similarly, John Everett Millais (1829-1896) painted both Hare and Irving in this period, and their portraits now hang in a place associated with their own private sociability, the Garrick Club. While on the one hand masculine, and particularly artistic, sociability appears to have had an impact on the construction of the body of celebrated artistic individuals, it also had an effect on its memorialization that was particularly relevant to the actor-manager.

In Julie Codell's discussion of artists' biographies of the late-nineteenth century, she identified three major types of artistic memorialization, the first of which was the autobiography, 'written to salvage lost reputations'.[38] The second was the family biography, 'written to salvage post-mortem reputations', by presenting the artist as socially normative and primarily concerned with the work-ethic and domestic side of the artist, and the final form was that of the popular collective biography, 'written at the height of an artist's fame', and designed to position him alongside other celebrities.[39] The role of collective biography in the memorialization of the actor-manager is covered in the next chapter, but it is notable that hardly any of the actor-managers covered by this thesis produced anything resembling an autobiography, and likewise few conventional 'family' biographies of the type that Codell identified as constituting the legacies of fine artists exist to memorialize them for

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[37] Barbara Dayer Gallati, 'Sargent in London, 1889-1913', in *Sargent: Portraits of Artists and Friends,* ed. by Richard Ormond (London: NPG, 2015), pp. 119-172 (p. 153).
[38] Codell, *The Victorian Artist,* p. 204.
[39] Codell, *The Victorian Artist,* p. 204.

posterity.[40] Rather, actor-managers' biographers seem to have been largely drawn from the circle of critics and writers who associated with the theatre in this period. The playwright Thomas Edgar Pemberton wrote biographies of actor-managers John Hare and Charles Wyndham and, in the same vein, most of Henry Irving's major contemporary biographers were critics or theatrical associates.[41]

Following this reasoning, a return to Bancroft's definition of his social circle as 'Bohemian' is particularly apt because it indicated his association with not only other performers in this period, but also with the writers and artists who would ultimately be responsible for his memorialization, and justified Elizabeth Wilson's assertion that, 'The myth of famous, larger-than-life bohemians depended upon the cast of less known but equally flamboyant and eccentric characters surrounding them.'[42] This same theme, of a mythological construction of Bohemianism as it pertained to theatrical circles in the latter half of the nineteenth century, is present in Jacky Bratton's work on the gendered construction of the Victorian West End. However, she differs from Wilson in that, rather than considering theatrical Bohemianism in this period as oppositional to social norms, she discusses it as a function of the disenfranchisement of theatrical writers in this period, and suggests that the construction of the group as bohemiam was actually designed to counter contemporary notions of the feminized playwright or theatrical journalist through a discourse of sociability. Although she argued that, actually,

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[40] This makes an interesting contrast to the increasingly prevalent actress-autobiography in this period, discussed by both Viv Gardner and Mary Jean Corbett as a necessary way of establishing their credentials. Viv Gardner, 'By Herself'; Mary Jean Corbett, 'Performing Identities: Actresses and Autobiography', in *The Cambridge Companion to Victorian and Edwardian Theatre,* ed. by Kerry Powell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004; repr. 2005) pp. 109-126.

[41] T. Edgar Pemberton, *John Hare: Comedian, 1865-1895* (London: Routledge, 1895); T. Edgar Pemberton, *Sir Charles Wyndham: A Biography* (London: Hutchinson, 1904); Henry Irving's major contemporary biographers and commentators were English theatre critic Percy Fitzgerald, author Charles Hiatt, American theatre critic Joseph Hatton, his acting-manager Bram Stoker, and his secretary Austin Brereton.

[42] Wilson, *Bohemians,* p. 72.

Bohemianism was far more domestic in reality than in rhetoric, and that 'powerful theatrical women can be seen, either clearly or between the lines, in other Bohemian accounts', she acknowledged that the mythology of Bohemianism, as manifested in the English theatrical context, was primarily concerned with its homosocial aspects.[43]

Viewing 'that delightful land, Bohemia' in this way, as a community concerned with the creation of coherent identities through the body and the establishment of concrete masculinities through the context of homosocial interaction, Bohemianism becomes in many ways interchangeable with other terms of masculine identity in this period, including dandyism, aestheticism, asceticism, and even gentlemanliness, and the difference between these models becomes discursive rather than substantive, allowing celebrated creative individuals more flexibility in their alignment with types of artistic identity. This, as demonstrated above, inflected readings of the body in the performance of public and private sociability. However, it also ensured that the identities presented in these contexts had to be interpreted by an artistic insider for the general public, who were denied the privileged access to these celebrated individuals that was granted through actual social interaction. If the most authentic version of the creative self was presented in a private, social context, this led to a conundrum for creative individuals dependent upon public approval as well as the opinion of their peers. If they were to accept that they would only ever present a highly constructed and mediated form of creative identity to the public, then they would be faced with an audience unable to understand, or relate to them. This conundrum led to a focus on what is termed below 'illusive sociability', where the public was presented with artistic individuals caught in an ostensibly private moment. This could be done through supposedly 'candid' texts and photography, and the perfect example of this in the representation of actor-managers in the late-nineteenth century is their inclusion in the popular trope of the 'At Home' interview.

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[43] Jacky Bratton, 'Bohemian Domesticity: The City of the Mind', in *The Making of the West End Stage: Marriage, Management and the Mapping of Gender in London, 1830-1870* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp, 86-113 (p. 112).

Illusive Sociability: Actor-managers 'At Home'

For a public eager to discover the true character of great men of the Victorian period, there was ostensibly no better way to do so than to see them in their social environment, and as Charlotte Boyce described in her work on Alfred Tennyson's (1908-1891) homes at Farringford on the Isle of Wight and Aldworth in Sussex, the most extreme example of this fascination with private lives of celebrities was manifested in the desire of tourists to go and see celebrities in their home environment, a physical intrusion on their privacy.[44] However, a far more popular and widespread manifestation of this phenomenon was the concept of 'virtual literary tourism', and the description of the homes of literary celebrities in the press, first manifested in what Boyce termed 'literary tourism's urtext', William Howitt's (1792-1879) *Homes and Haunts of the Most Eminent British Poets,* in which the homes of both dead and living celebrated literary figures were the focus of detailed description.[45] As the century progressed, this was superseded by a focus on living literary celebrities, and particularly a growing trend for describing not just the homes of such figures, but their presence within them, and, as Richard Salmon has also discussed, the 'At Home' interview, and its accompanying visual culture, were seen, perhaps disingenuously, as the culmination of the 'project' both of literary tourism and also Victorian interviewing more generally, whose aim was to reveal the authentic selves of celebrated authors.[46] As such, it also provides the perfect milieu for exploring the relationship of the general public with an explicitly socialized image of celebrity, where the interview was related as a genuine social encounter, and presented the reader with an illusion of candour, an experience that could be defined as 'illusive sociability'.

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[44] Charlotte Boyce, 'At Home with Tennyson: Virtual Literary Tourism and the Commodification of Celebrity in the Periodical Press', in *Victorian Celebrity Culture and Tennyson's Circle,* ed. by Charlotte Boyce, Paraíc Finnerty, and Anne-Marie Millim (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013)*,* pp. 18-52 (pp. 18-19).
[45] Boyce, 'At Home with Tennyson', p. 21.
[46] Richard Salmon, 'Signs of Intimacy: The Literary Celebrity in the "Age of Interviewing"', *Victorian Literature and Culture,* 25 (1997), 159-177.

As Salmon noted in his article on interviewing as a way of exploring the realities of literary celebrity in this period, Edmund Yates' series on 'Celebrities at Home' in the *World* was one of the earliest and the 'most systematic codification' of the siting of 'the distinctive cultural and epistemological assumptions of the interview in the material substance of its location', the idea that the topographical arrangement of the subject's home, and particularly the nature of his possessions, was an external manifestation of the inner workings of the subject's mind.[47] Salmon viewed this as particularly relevant to the capturing of the literary celebrity due to Yates's conviction that objects could manifest 'the (supposed) inner nature of the creative mind', and in this context recognized Yates's interest in describing the supposedly private work-room or study as the space in which creativity was generated.[48] However, a reading of three collected volumes of 'Celebrities at Home' produced by Yates in conjunction with the series, demonstrates that, whilst literary and other 'creative' individuals did constitute a proportion of his subjects, well over half of his interviews were drawn from other fields, with lawyers, politicians, horse trainers, clerics, and scientists all present in his series of interviews.[49] In fact, in his interview with scientists Charles Darwin (1809-1882) and Sir William Thompson (1825-1907), Yates went to some lengths to stress their lack of artistic or creative sensibilities, saying of Darwin, 'the artistic element which dominated the Wedgwoods has been almost entirely overshadowed by the scientific instinct', and of Thompson's rooms that 'There is no artistic confusion here, but rather mathematical precision.'[50]

The notion that artistry was intrinsically associated with confusion is an important element of the 'At Home', and whilst Yates's subjects were not chosen

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[47] Salmon, 'Signs of Intimacy', p. 166.

[48] Salmon, 'Signs of Intimacy'.

[49] The 'Celebrities at Home' articles were collated and published in at least three volumes covering the period 1877-1879. This does not appear to be an exhaustive compilation (the Bancrofts, for example, were included in the series but not the compilation), but the range of subjects and articles seems to be relatively representative. Edmund Yates, *Celebrities at Home: Reprinted from 'The World',* 3 vols (London: Office of 'The World', 1877-79).

[50] Yates, 'Mr. Darwin at Down', and 'Sir William Thompson, F. R. S., at Gilmorehill', in *Celebrities at Home*, II, 223-230, 281-288 (pp. 226, 284).

exclusively for their insight into the creative process, they all had one thing in common: their homes as described by Yates were not only the site of their everyday lives, but also the achievements for which they were celebrated and, as Salmon correctly identified the literary celebrity's study as a particular object of interest, so the consulting rooms of Sir Henry Thompson (1820-1904) in his home in Wimpole Street, and even the stables at Heath House, where Matthew Dawson (1820-1898) trained his winning racehorses, were more the focus of Yates' scrutiny than the domestic arrangements of his subjects.[51] In her work on the connection between possessions and personality, Deborah Cohen cited the popularity of 'Celebrities at Home' as a manifestation not only of an 'increasingly avid appetite for celebrity gossip, but a function of 'the conviction [...] that the domestic interior expressed its inhabitant's inner self'.[52] However, whereas Cohen framed the expression of personality in the interior primarily around what she described as the feminine act of creating and redecorating the domestic space, in Yates' narratives such technicalities were deliberately suppressed in favour of seeing the interior of the home solely as the expression of the personality of his mostly male subjects, and a focus on the sites within the home that related to their achievement of celebrity.

In this respect, the home of the actor-manager, three of which were included in the first two years of 'Celebrities at Home' was particularly problematic because, whilst it retained its function in the exposition of the actor's character, it was explicitly not the site of his achievements. However, Yates appears to have made these spaces more plausible as a site of creativity firstly by excluding any mention of prosaic domestic arrangements, and secondly by emphasizing traces of the actor-manager's profession kept within the home. Walking through Charles Mathews' house to his study, the interior, and particularly the entrance hall, were described as 'literally lined with portraits of the owner in every

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[51] Yates, 'Sir Henry Thompson in Wimpole Street', and 'Mr. Matthew Dawson at Heath House', in *Celebrities at Home,* II, 27-36, 133-142.
[52] Deborah Cohen, 'Home as a Stage: Personality and Possessions, in *Household Gods: The British and their Possessions* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), p. 123.

character played by him in the last thirty years'.[53] Similarly, the images adorning the home of fellow comedian J. L. Toole provide 'a pictorial history of the British stage', and 'gossip says that the collection of pictures at Orne Square includes two hundred and seventy-three portraits of Mr. Toole, in as many different parts'.[54] The juxtaposition of the acted body and the real body, which in the case of Mathews was also dressed in a distinctively artistic manner, 'wrapped in a flannel dressing-gown, made gorgeous by cascades of azure velvet, his head covered with a smoking cap', served to combine their artistic achievements in performance with the social occasion of the interview, and also to demonstrate their ability to engage in social circles beyond the immediate bounds of the theatre; Mathews was described by Yates as 'separated by a gulf [of education and interests] from the actor who is "all actor", and knows no world beyond the stage he struts upon'.[55]

Just as the exhaustive cataloguing of a household's furnishing and arrangements was clearly an attempt to provide an insight into the workings of their inhabitants' personalities, the construction of Yates' pieces relied not only upon access to houses and rooms, but on the physical presence of his subjects within their houses, as his description of Mathews indicated, and tours of the home conducted and mediated by the subjects themselves with much of the narration framed not as Yates's own interpretation of his subjects, but as both direct and reported speech.[56] The physical presence of the subject at the site of the interview seems to have been designed to demonstrate the interviewer's close personal relationship with his subjects, making his narratives seems more legitimate and authentic; as the editor's preface of the first volume of 'Celebrities at Home' stated, 'in no case has an article been written without the full consent and authority of the subject'.[57] As Salmon and Boyce recognized, this was not just a feature of Yates's articles, but was common to most examples

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[53] Yates, 'Mr. Charles Mathews in Belgravia', in *Celebrities at Home,* I, 291-302, (p. 296).
[54] Yates, 'Mr. Toole at Orne Square', in *Celebrities at Home,* II, 65-77 (p. 67).
[55] Yates, 'Mr. Charles Mathews', pp. 291, 301.
[56] Yates, 'Mr. Toole', p. 69.
[57] Yates, 'Editor's Preface', in *Celebrities at Home,* I.

of the 'At Home' genre, and the intrusion of the interviewer's own personality into the encounter was often designed to give it the character of a social occasion that would raise the status of the interviewer as well as the interviewee.[58] However, it was also symptomatic of the complicity of his subjects and the subject's body, as much as Yates' description of his home, or catalogue of his possessions, was intended to provide a link between the achievements and personalities of his subjects, acting as an exposition of the features that, in separating them from their contemporaries, made them celebrities, in the way of Bancroft's first night posing.

This was tackled with a two-pronged approach; firstly, the bodies of Yates's subjects were often described as disruptive and unexpected in the context in which they lived or worked, and secondly they were viewed as a natural end product of the character, interests, and professional lives of the celebrity in question. It is important to note that, as with the descriptions of scientists' workrooms and studies, these depictions of the body were not always, as might be expected, based in discourses of creativity or flamboyance, as the case of Dr. Edward Pusey (1800-1882), cleric, Oxford academic, and key figure in the Tractarian movement, shows.[59] Famed for his reclusive and ascetic nature, and an insistence on self-discipline, Yates started his piece on Pusey by describing the academic's house as a place in which, 'there is an absence of all those signs of luxurious aestheticism which are so conspicuous a feature of the modern collegiate life at Oxford […] Everything is plain, simple, severe', went on to say 'as is the house, so is its venerable occupant', and finally gave an extensive description of Pusey in person as a man whose very distinctiveness was his lack of flamboyance.[60] Just as Pusey's theology was centred around self-discipline as opposed to excess, so his body as described by Yates was separated both from the 'luxurious aestheticism' of Oxford, and the garb that would have marked him as a clergyman.

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[58] Boyce, 'At Home with Tennyson', pp. 27-28; Salmon, 'Signs of Intimacy', pp. 162-163.
[59] Yates, 'Dr. Pusey at Christ Church', in *Celebrities at Home,* II, 79-92.
[60] Yates, 'Dr. Pusey', pp. 83, 84-85.

It was in this context, the presentation of the 'At Home' as an exclusive glimpse into a social experience of celebrity, and a tempering of house and body to suit professional achievement and underlying characters traits, that Yates's visit to Henry Irving's private study at his house in Bond Street, and his subsequent description of the actor's body, must be seen. Skating over the rest of the actor's rooms, framed as too full of 'ordinary trophies of the upholsterer's art', and insufficiently individualistic to be worthy of inclusion in his piece, Yates chose to focus upon Irving's study, 'his sanctum, the room in which he sits deep into the night, reading, musing, or chatting [...and which...] has much in its appearance that is quaint and special'.[61] Contrary to the mathematical precision of Sir Henry Thompson, or the ascetic simplicity of Dr. Pusey, Irving's rooms were described as a manifestation of his artistic and creative persona, with the summary conclusion that, 'Nowhere could be found a more perfect example of the confusion and neglect of order in which the artistic mind delights.'[62] The examples Yates gave of this room's disorder also seemed designed to underline Irving's work as a creative figure behind the scenes on theatrical productions. So, 'the yawning gaps in the bookshelves from which the volumes now strewing the floor have been dragged for reference or study', or the table 'pushing on one side, and groaning under its accumulated litter of books, prints, MSS.' were evidence of both his theatrical career and artistic personality. [63] Finally, there were also mentions of financial success, and indicators of a taste for high-end consumption, as the room contained 'boxes of cigars, bearing the name of a well-known tobacconist in Pall Mall', and 'a Louis-Quinze clock [that] ticks from an unsuspected corner'. [64]

A similar synthesis, of financial success, and artistic disorder, is evident in Yates's physical description of the actor and, as he makes clear, the distinctiveness of Irving's artistic body, was also clear to the public, fostering his celebrity in chance encounters in everyday life, and linking Irving's private, social appearance to a para-social understanding of his celebrity:

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[61] Yates, 'Mr. Henry Irving in Bond Street', in *Celebrities at Home,* I, 59-66 (p. 61).
[62] Yates, 'Mr. Henry Irving ', pp. 61-62.
[63] Yates, 'Mr. Henry Irving', p. 62.
[64] Yates, 'Mr. Henry Irving', p. 62

> The owner of these rooms is just now one of the best-known men in
> London. As he jerks along the street with league-devouring stride, his
> long dark hair hanging over his shoulders, his look dreamy and
> absent, his cheeks wan and thin, the slovenly air with which his
> clothes are worn in contrast with their fashionable cut, people turn
> to stare after him, and tell each other who he is.[65]

In her work on actors' biographies, Julie Codell discussed in some detail the
contrast between depictions of the artist's studio in fiction at 'the entropic
antithesis of the orderly Victorian home and hearth … male and messy', and the
studio as depicted in biographical narratives, which along with the art press,
worked to 'cleanse, demystify, and professionalize the studio for public
inspection', situating it as 'A nexus of professionalism, domesticity, and the
work ethic'.[66] Following this logic, it would seem that a parallel fictionalization,
of the actor-manager's study, and of his body, was evident in Yates's narrative,
bringing it closer to the 'anecdotal' mode of an autobiography than the
legitimizing mode of family narratives.

However, Yate's narrative in the *World,* and the composition of Figure 38
indicates, it was a mode of presentation that was clearly framed, and
sanctioned, by the actor himself. Whilst Yates' readers had to rely on textual
descriptions of the bodies and homes of his celebrities, as Codell and Salmon
have both discussed, the later part of the nineteenth century saw the
incorporation of photographic images in both newspaper features dealing with
Celebrities 'At Home', and in biographies that described the artist in his studio.[67]
Taken by Samuel Alexander Walker (1841-1922) in 1879, and therefore almost
contemporaneous with Yates's narrative, Fig. 38 is one of a series of five cabinet
cards depicting Henry Irving in his study, the room described in Yates'
narrative, and was an early example of 'At Home' photography; on the reverse
of one card, underneath the studio's address and royal warrant, the text reads,

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[65] Yates, 'Mr. Henry Irving', p. 65.
[66] Codell, *The Victorian Artist,* pp. 46-47.
[67] Codell, *The Victorian Artist,* pp. 51-56; Salmon, 'Signs of Intimacy', pp. 169-174.

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Figure 38: Samuel A. Walker, Photograph ofHenry Irving 'At Home', 1879. Albumen Cabinet Card, 14 x 10cm. London: NPG.

'Portraits "At Home" A new Application of Photography introduced by Samuel A. Walker, Sitters Taken At Their Own Residences.' This was definitely not the earliest 'At Home' photograph, but it was possibly the first registered commercial application in London.[68]

Irving is depicted here as if he has been surprised in the midst of his work, and Linda Rugg has suggested that the importance of such images lies in the impression of candour, and the idea of privileged access to a real man behind his creative achievements, that such a composition creates.[69] It purports, in the manner of the snaphsots examined in the previous section, to be a representation of the social, unmediated body, although it has undoubtedly been staged by both actor-manager and photographer, and this illusion of sociability may explain its appeal. Without being able to see much of the room behind the actor, the depiction of his desk, with papers scattered over it, a half-open drawer, and what appears to be a directory hanging down from a drawer handle brings this image more in line with the 'messy' study of Yates' than the clean studios of Codell's narratives. However, more importantly, Irving's body, as constructed in this image, fits with Yates' description of the actor's distinctive dressing, of a 'slovenly air with which his clothes are worn in contrast with their fashionable cut'.[70] This is partly achieved by the pose of the actor, turned slightly towards the camera, with his legs splayed out, rather than neatly positioned at his desk, but details such as the unbuttoned jacket and the protrusion of one end of his cravat over his waistcoat, contribute to the impression of a disordered body in a disordered space. As with the images of Bancroft and the snapshots of Irving with Hare and Robertson examined earlier in this chapter, it seems that Irving's artistic, creative body was primarily a function of framing, pose and mediation rather than intrinsically 'artistic' dress.

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[68] For a detailed examination of earlier, stereoscopic images of Mark Twain (1835-1910) 'At Home' at Quarry Farm, and particularly their connection to ideas of autobiography, see Linda Haverty Rugg, *Picturing Ourselves: Photography & Autobiography* (London: University of Chicago Press, 1997), pp. 49-66.

[69] Rugg, *Picturing Ourselves,* pp. 53-54**.**

[70] Yates, 'Mr. Henry Irving', p. 65.

As the handwritten signature, present on the bottom of all of the surviving photographs from this series, indicated, Irving was actively involved in the distribution of this image of himself, indicating his complicity in the presentation of his body. Yet the signed photograph has a number of further connotations that are important to an exploration of the 'At Home' image as a manifestation of illusive sociability. In terms of actual social encounters, the exchange of a signed photograph appears to have been one way of cementing professional and personal relationships: Bancroft recalled that, having spent the day with French playwright Victorien Sardou (1831-1908) at his home just outside Paris, 'At our parting he gave me a photograph of himself to hang up in our green-room, inscribed "Souvenir bien cordial au Directeur et aux Artistes du Théâtre du Prince de Galles. Septembre, 1878. –V.SARDOU."'[71] If one function of the 'At Home' image was to provide a proxy for social intimacy with its subjects, a signature added a further level to this perceived intimacy. However, there is ample evidence that the intimacy implied by the handwritten signature was just as false as the candour of the image itself; Edgar Pemberton related that in 1890 Charles Wyndham, having been bothered by 'that terrible nuisance to celebrities, the autograph hunter, he adopted the Right Hon. Joseph Chamberlain's [1836-1914] rule of only giving his sign-manual to those with whom he is personally acquainted' a vignette that suggested that he had already given a significant number of signed images to those with whom he was not.[72] Finally, as Charlotte Boyce noted in her work on Julia Margaret Cameron (1815-1879), the desire for signed photographs was such that a signature could boost the value of a celebrity photograph to as much as 21s., suggesting that they conferred an element of status upon their purchasers, as well as of the sitters.[73]

As Figure 39 indicates, Walker's photograph of Irving continued to play an important role in the distribution of his image to the public over a relatively long time period. In his Introduction to the first volume of the *Strand Magazine* in 1891, George Newnes stated explicitly that it would be the magazine's

[71] Bancroft and Wilton, *On and Off the Stage,* p. 271.
[72] Pemberton, *Charles Wyndham,* p. 248.
[73] Boyce, '"She Shall Be Made Immortal": Julia Margaret Cameron's Photography and the Construction of Celebrity', in *Victorian Celebrity Culture,* pp. 97-135.

Image Redacted for

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Figure 39: Various, 'Portraits of Celebrities at Different Times in Their Lives: Henry Irving', 1891.
Published *Strand Magazine,* January 1891, p. 45. Lithograph, 27 x 20cm

'special new features' as well as its stories and articles that would distinguish it from other publications. Two such features were the series 'Portraits of Celebrities at Different Times in Their Lives', and 'Illustrated Interviews', the *Strand*'s illustrated version of 'Celebrities at Home', both of which ran throughout the 1890s. In the paper's first edition in 1891, Henry Irving was included as one of eight subjects of the 'Portraits of Celebrities at Different Times in their Lives' feature (Fig. 39), and it included four portraits of Irving, the last of which, on the bottom right, was a reproduction of Walker's photograph of the actor in his study. Describing the penultimate and final images, the author of the text underneath the article stated:

> Ten years later, when Mr. Irving was preparing to amaze the world as *Hamlet,* at the Lyceum, his features had assumed the well-known aspect which they wear in our third portrait, and which is still more visible in the last of the series, which has been selected as among Mr. Irving's favourites among the stock of photographs which he has very kindly placed at our disposal.'[74]

The writer of this text was suggesting firstly that the actor-manager was recognizable and distinctive as a celebrity through an appearance that was created and perpetuated in his photographic portraiture. He stated explicitly that Irving was actively involved not only in the creation of photographic images, but in the selective distribution of them for public consumption, and that he kept a 'stock' of such images, but he also implied that Irving's personal preference was the informal 'At Home' portrait, with all its intendant implications of candour, and which intimated a social relationship between viewer and subject. However, he suggested that the 'well-known aspect' of the actor-manager was the result of a carefully crafted experience of the body on the part of both Irving, and the expectations of his consumers. This could be demonstrated in the 'At Home' image, but it was equally evident in the third portrait of Irving, which was taken when he was engaging in one of the most serious roles in the theatrical canon, that of Hamlet. This head and shoulders

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[74] 'Portraits of Celebrities at Different Times In Their Lives: Mr. Henry Irving', in *Strand Magazine,* January 1891, p. 45. Emphasis as original.

image has explicitly suppressed creativity and theatricality, and presented the actor-manager in a highly normative, 'bourgeois' mode of portraiture.

Conclusion

As demonstrated in this chapter, although certain items of attire and modes of depiction could lend 'artistic' elements to a body in this period, the 'artistic body' *per se* defied easy classification, and the difference between creative and normative bodies was therefore not as clear-cut as might be supposed. Rather, the distinction appears to primarily have been a function of context, pose and framing, reliant upon subtleties of both construction and interpretation that could only be read by a sophisticated viewer, and therefore it came to be associated more with social, rather than para-social, contexts, and as a product of sociability. In the visual translation of identity into portraiture, the artistic body could be implied through dress, pose, and framing, but was ultimately context-specific, and when it seemed that ostensibly private identities had transported into the public realm, as at theatrical first nights, or in the form of the 'At Home', these bodies were subjected to mediating narratives that attempted to explain their non-normative status in terms of theatrical practice, or a natural disorder associated with artistic talent. There were more aggressively artistic forms of dress available in this period, such as those adopted by proponents of the aesthetic movement, but they seem to have been eschewed by actor-managers, perhaps a result of the fact that they were attempting to establish for themselves a more mainstream, legitimate social identity in this period. Whilst it came with completely different implications, of professionalism, capital, and social class, rather than sociability and artistic instinct, the 'bourgeois' body, and its manifestation in photographic portraits, was therefore as important to the legacy of the actor-manager as the more explicitly creative body, and images of this kind, together with the professional and gentlemanly identities which accompanied them, are the subject of the following chapter.

'Bourgeois Blandness': Creating a Professional Body

Writing of photographs of the actress in the late-nineteenth century as a symbol of nascent celebrity, David Mayer created an opposition between images of actresses in 'theatrical' and 'portrait' modes, in his words 'intentionally forcing a distinction between the image which depicts the actress undertaking and physically engaged in that role, and the portrait: a pictorial likeness of the passive, almost expressionless actress, with no visible agenda apart from presenting the image of an attractive, well-gowned woman'.[1] Aside from the fact that, as Michele Majer, among others has discussed in some detail, photographs of the actress as a 'well-gowned woman' developed intrinsic commercial value in the late nineteenth century, as the actress developed into an icon not only of theatre but also of fashion, Mayer's statement appears to imply that unless the image of a performer is overtly theatrical or artistic, that is if it appears merely ordinary, it is not worthy of detailed investigation.[2] A slightly more nuanced approach was demonstrated by Shearer West in her essay on photographs of Henry Irving and Ellen Terry in this period, where she argued that images of the actor and actress, whether on or off the stage must be considered as portraits and interrogated appropriately because they not only 'served as proxies for the individual', but represented the complicity between artist and subject inherent to all forms of portraiture.[3] However, like Mayer, she differentiated between photographs that she judged expressive of the artistic nature of their subjects, and more commercialized images, particularly of Irving, which she characterized as 'masking the distinctions that set him apart from everyone',

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[1] David Mayer, 'The Actress as Photographic Icon: From Early Photography to Early Film', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Actress,* ed. by Maggie B. Gale and John Stokes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 74-94 (pp. 77-78).

[2] Michele Majer, ed., *Staging Fashion, 1880-1920: Jane Hading, Lily Elsie, Billie Burke* (London: Yale University Press, 2012).

[3] Shearer West, 'The Photographic Portraiture of Henry Irving and Ellen Terry', in *Ruskin the Theatre and Victorian Visual Culture*, ed. by Anselm Heinrich, Katherine Newey, and Jeffrey Richards (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 187-215 (pp. 200-201).

'lacking the eccentricity and verve that Irving took such pains to cultivate' and as, ultimately, imbued with a character of 'bourgeois blandness'.[4]

As demonstrated earlier in this thesis, this distinction between artistic and bourgeois images was not simply the reflection of a difference between theatrical and offstage portraiture, but of contemporaneous frames of bodily reference in offstage portraiture, with different depictions being chosen and discussed as representative of their subjects based on a combination of narrative choice and commemorative practice. Whilst the previous chapter explored the development of creative identities of actor-managers in this period, and the performance of identity for a creative peer group, the record of images developed for wider collection practices indicates the prevalence of images of actor-managers that depicted them in the ordinary manner so disparaged by Mayer and West. This chapter therefore seeks to develop the idea, floated but not fully elaborated upon by West that it was the very 'bourgeois blandness' of these images, and particularly their normative properties, which made them the focus of contemporary interest, and as such it centres on the inclusion of such images in published series that exemplify what Julie Codell has described as 'collective biography'.[5] Such images have a different range of meanings from the distinctive, artistic bodies framed in the previous chapter; as Stoker pointed out in his essay for the *Nineteenth Century,* the role of the actor-manager was not solely artistic, or even predicated upon his theatrical achievements entirely, but also that of a professional and, by virtue of his place at the head of specific theatres, as a representative of the theatrical professions more widely.[6]

The examination of collated bodies of material in the periodical press in this period allows not only for examining the portraits of specific actor-managers,

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[4] West, 'The Photographic Portraiture of Henry Irving and Ellen Terry', p. 203.
[5] Julie F. Codell, 'Biography as History: Anecdotage, Serialization, and National Identity', in *The Victorian Artist: Artists' Lifewritings in Britain, ca.1870-1910* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 204-170 (p. 204).
[6] Bram Stoker, 'Actor-Managers: I', *Nineteenth Century*, 27 (1890), 1040-1051 (pp. 1044-1045).

and the relationship of such individuals to photographic portraiture, as previous chapters have considered, but also how such photographs were integrated into a narrative of the theatrical profession more generally, and the nature of the actor-manager as a member of this wider grouping. These series included not only male theatrical professionals, but also their feminine counterparts, yet if professionalism was a part of the narrative of the actor-manager in the late nineteenth century, it was also a specifically gendered discourse, and the periodical was a similarly gendered space. Consequently, this chapter takes the opportunity to juxtapose images of actors and actresses in the same collections, and to consider the differences, and similarities in their portraits as distributed in the contemporary press. It argues that, just as professionalism has been seen as a cornerstone of Victorian masculinity, so the professional body, framed in terms of dress and appearance, was a concept only understandable in terms of male identities in this period, and that it was intimately tied to the 'bourgeois blandness' of these images, leading to a different treatment of female portraits in the collective biographical narratives examined in this chapter.

Given that in socio-economic studies of acting, such as Michael Baker's *The Rise of the Victorian Actor,* its assumption of traits of professionalism has been tied in with a progressive narrative of theatrical legitimization in the latter half of the nineteenth century, this chapter is structured around two temporal snapshots that demonstrate the inclusion of images of actor-managers in publications covering an approximately fifteen-year period (1876-1890) during which the acting profession was attempting to redefine itself for the general public.[7] These publications may have been targeted at different audiences, for different purposes, but they nevertheless demonstrated remarkable consistency in the normative presentation of the actor-manager's body, and the collation of the dramatic professions more generally. The first case study deals with images of actors and actresses distributed with the *Saturday Programme and Sketch-Book* (henceforth *Saturday Programme*)*,* a weekly offshoot of James Mortimer's (1833-1911) *London Figaro,* which was geared towards theatregoers but was

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[7] Michael Baker, *The Rise of the Victorian Actor* (London: Croom Helm; Totowa: Rowman and Littlefield, 1978)

specifically targeted at the popular end of the market. It demonstrates by comparison with the contemporary publication of Lock & Whitfield's first *Men of Mark* album how the image of the actor-manager could be directly situated in the context of the wider professionalization and hegemony of celebrated individuals in this period, and in a narrative of emulative celebrity. The second section deals with a range of images distributed over a ten-year period by the *Theatre,* a dominant theatrical publication of the 1880s under the editorship of critic Clement Scott (1841-1904). In standing as a proxy for theatrical institutionalization in this period, Scott's periodical attempted to frame the acting profession as a respectable and homogenous body for consumption by the general public, and to highlight the importance of literary aspirations to the social status of the actor.

'Artists', and 'Ladies' of the London Stage, 1876

> Nowadays the actor off the stage is merged in the individual; he is a gentlemanly, well-dressed man, and as little anxious to obtrude his profession as an officer or a barrister. In the older days a sort of "staginess" was in vogue.[8]

Writing in 1881, Percy Fitzgerald, in *The World Behind the Scenes*, devoted a whole section of his work to 'The Actors: Their Lives, Tastes and Accomplishments', in which he made a great deal of the 'higher estimation in which the profession is now held', portraying the actor of 1881 as more in line with contemporary social norms than his predecessors, and distinguished not only by his theatrical accomplishments but also by other artistic achievements such as painting and sculpture. He also characterized the profession as socially upwardly mobile, with new recruits being drawn progressively from more educated levels of society.[9] In this later quotation, Percy Fitzgerald made clear that a part of that normalization was the suppression of the visual manifestation of the actor as artist, and the divesting of '"staginess"' from his outward

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[8] Percy Fitzgerald, 'The Actors: Their Lives, Tastes, and Accomplishments', in *The World Behind the Scenes* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1881), pp. 115-221 (p. 213).
[9] Fitzgerald, 'The Actors', pp. 125-135 (p. 133).

appearance. Encompassing Fitzgerald's work, a narrative of progressive legitimization, and its association with the concept of acting as a professional category, was also a feature of Michael Baker's work on census records of the mid-Victorian period, which recorded the family histories, professional categories and addresses of actors, and in which he identified a shift from the actor as holding himself apart from society in 'actors' communities' to a determined effort towards integration.[10]

Like Fitzgerald's description of 'the older days', Baker linked the status of the actor as a marginalized social figure in the early part of the century to an unconventional, 'overtly theatrical' style of dressing:

> Early and mid-Victorian impressions of actors as a 'race apart"'must have been strongly reinforced by the histrionic individuals who so often represented the contemporary theatrical profession. These were performers whose off-stage manner and appearance was overtly theatrical, giving them an air of flamboyance or eccentricity which was quite at odds with the prevailing sobriety and gentility of contemporary manners.[11]

Baker implied that the situation was different in the latter part of the century, but as shown in earlier discussions of the competing bodily narratives of Herbert Beerbohm Tree, and the theatrical nature of Bancroft's presence at social occasions in the latter half of the century, the situation was not as clear-cut as either Fitzgerald or Baker would have us believe. However, as Figure 40 indicates, there does seem to have been a systematic attempt, at least by the mid-1870s, to present actors in a homogenous and normative fashion.

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[10] Michael Baker, 'The Decline of the Actor's Community', in *The Rise of the Victorian Actor* (London: Croom Helm, 1978; Totowa: Rowman and Littlefield, 1978), pp. 82-94.
[11] Michael Baker, 'The Actor's Community', in *Rise of the Victorian Actor,* pp. 62-81 (p. 73).

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Figure 40: Various, Photograph of a Group of Twenty-Nine Actors, c. 1876. From images published in *Saturday Programme,* 1875-1876. Woodburytype, 19 x 22cm. London: NPG.
Figure 41: Various, 'Ladies of the London Stage', 1876. From images published in *Saturday Programme,* 1875. Woodburytype, 20 x 24cm. London: NPG.

Depicting twenty-nine actors of the mid- to late-1870s, it would be easy to suppose that Fig. 40 shows a collection of individual photographs, mounted for the purposes of display, but it is actually one single nineteenth-century woodburytype.[12] The sitters comprise twenty-seven of England's leading actors at the time of publication, thirteen of whom might already reasonably have been termed 'actor-managers'.[13] A further five, including Henry Irving and Charles Wyndham, already leading London actors, would go on to be important managers in the last quarter of the century, and it therefore supports the idea of close connections and a fluid boundary between leading actors and actor-managers. Given that copies of almost all of these photographs are also present in the NPG photograph collections in the form of individual mounted woodburytypes in *carte-de-visite* format, dating from the middle of the 1870s, and that at least two of the pictures can also be firmly traced to photographs distributed with the *Saturday Programme and Sketch-Book* in 1875, it seems likely that this was an image produced in conjunction with that publication. [14] A similar single woodburytype of roughly the same size, and the same typeset for the names underneath the photographs, entitled 'Ladies of the London Stage' (Figure 41), with the legend, 'Life Likenesses from the Saturday Programme for 1875, published at the Figaro Office', appears to support this connection.

The *Saturday Programme* was published weekly between 1875 and 1877 by James Mortimer, the owner and proprietor of the weekly periodical the *London Figaro*, and seems to have been a theatrically-themed follow-on from the *London Sketch-Book* (published 1874 and 1875), which had also distributed a range of woodburytypes, entitled the *Wednesday Programme Gallery of*

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[12] See Appendix B for details of the sitters in the series of portraits from *Saturday Programme, Men of Mark,* and the *Theatre.*

[13] Although there are twenty-nine actors in this image, two of them, Tommaso Salvini and Ernesto Rossi, were based in Italy, but toured to London in the mid-1870s. The inclusion of their portraits is a useful dating tool as well as an indication of public interest in 'star' actors from overseas in this period.

[14] These photographs, of comedian Charles Mathews and melodrama actor Charles Warner, were published 18 September 1875 and 4 March 1876 respectively.

Celebrities.[15] In *Journalistic London,* an 1885 overview of contemporary journalists and periodicals**,** Joseph Hatton described the *London Figaro* as a 'serio-comic treatment of current news and literature' whose weekly editions 'reached an enormous circulation', with dramatic criticisms by Clement Scott being a particular highlight of the newspaper*.*[16] The *Saturday Programme* may have been an attempt to capitalize on that popularity, but as well as containing sixteen pages of mainly theatrical features, the retail price of the periodical*,* which appears to have been started at two pence and gone up to three pence in 1876, also put the publication, and its distribution of mounted celebrity photographs, well within the reach of a wide social grouping. By comparison, celebrity *cartes-de-visite* of the 1860s, which John Plunkett has identified as a means of democratization of the celebrity image, because of their low pricing and wide availability, retailed at around 1s. each and even in the 1870s, when demand had shrunk, at 5s. per dozen.[17]

As individual objects in their own right, the photographs distributed with the *Saturday Programme* provided the everyday theatregoer with a means of accessing what Plunkett described as 'a collective experience of well-known individuals', but the collectivity of this series of portraits was manifested not just in the consumer's experience of the individual image, but also in the fact that they were clearly intended to be viewed together, as a body of images assembled through collection.[18] Evidence for the actual collection of images from the *Saturday Programme* can be found in the Elizabeth Jane Andrews album, also in the collections of the NPG, where all but eight of the fifty-six portraits represented in Figs. 40 and 41 are also included as individual

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[15] Jane W. Stedman, 'Theatre', in *Victorian Periodicals and Victorian Society,* ed. by J. Don Vann and Rosemary T. VanArsdel (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), pp. 162-176 (p. 163).

[16] Joseph Hatton, *Journalistic London: Being a Series of Sketches of Famous Pens and Papers of the Day* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, & Rivington, 1882), pp. 93-94.

[17] John Plunkett, 'Celebrity and Community: The Poetics of the *Carte-de-visite*', *Journal of Victorian Culture,* 8 (2003), 55-79; Audrey Linkman, *The Victorians: Photographic Portraits* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1993), pp. 66-67, 73-74.

[18] Plunkett, 'Celebrity and Community', p. 57.

photographs mounted on card.[19] As this collection, which comprises more than a hundred images, indicates, not all of the celebrity photographs distributed with the *Saturday Programme* depicted actors or actresses, but performers of one description or another comprised the majority of sitters. Similarly, not all of the actors and actresses represented in the album appear in Figs. 40 and 41, which stemmed from an attempt on the part of the publishers to highlight the most prominent actors and actresses displayed in their series as a collected volume. *A Bibliographical Account of Theatrical Literature,* compiled in 1888, lists the following volume under 'Artists':

> 'The artists of the London stage. Musical and dramatic portrait gallery. London. 1876 (Ist No.). Sm. 8vo., with photographic portraits, Is.
> A reissue of portraits and memoirs which had appeared in a publication entitled *The Saturday Programme*, issued by the proprietor of the *London Figaro*.'[20]

Given that the caption of Fig. 41, 'Ladies of the London Stage', corresponds closely to this entry, it is likely that these images were designed as publicity material for these collated portraits and biographies that, for the price of 1s., appears to have offered readers the opportunity to own portraits of all twenty-nine of these actors.

One of the key differences between the subjects of 'Artists' and 'Ladies' of the London Stage, particularly important in terms of the relative status of the actor and actress, and in the context of Baker and Fitzgerald's narrative of a shift in self-presentation over the middle of the nineteenth century, was the relative age ranges of their subjects. All of the actresses were born between 1836 and 1855, whereas the difference in age between the oldest and youngest of the male subjects was fifty-five years, with Benjamin Nottingham Webster (1797-1882)

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[19] *Andrews Album,* c. 1875-1876. Photograph Album Containing Woodburytpes, and *Cartes-de-visite.* Photographs Collection, NPG. Album 107. Sadly, little is known about the original collector of the album, which was named when it was given to the museum in the 1960s after its donor, Elizabeth Jane Andrews.
[20] Robert W. Lowe, *A Bibliographical Account of English Theatrical Literature from the Earliest Times to the Present Day* (London: Nimmo, 1888), p. 9.

born in the eighteenth rather than the nineteenth century. The subjects of Fig. 40 therefore included both those classed by Baker as 'a post-1850 generation', and also the 'histrionic individuals' of the early part of the century, who appear in this image to have toned down their overtly theatrical bodies.[21] Whilst 'Ladies of the London Stage' implies a sudden surge in the popularity, and social status, of a new generation of actresses, the presence of the actor's body in the public eye, and the public recognition of leading actors and actor-managers, is presented here in terms of continuity, and of theatrical legacy, rather than in terms of the sudden generational shift described by Baker and Fitzgerald. In fact, the bodies of both actresses and actors in Figs. 40 and 41 appear to have been normalized in their portrait presentation, but in discussing Henry Irving and Ellen Terry as paradigms of the actor and actress, Shearer West characterized the gendered difference between contemporary understandings of the two figures by saying that 'Terry became a work of art in the critical imagination, while Irving was perceived to be an artist'. The title of the two volumes produced by the *Saturday Programme,* 'Ladies of the London Stage', and 'Artists of the London Stage' suggested that whilst both were normalized, actresses were defined by their gender, and actors were discussed in terms of their professional status, a slightly modified echo of Terry's own differentiation between the explicitly theatrical Squire Bancroft, and his elegant wife Marie.[22]

The normalization of the actor's body in this way may have been designed, as Baker and Fitzgerald suggested, to erode the distinctions between actors and members of other professions but, as the almost identical presentation of the sitters in Figures 42 and 43 show, they also had the potentially problematic effect of eroding the distinctions between different types of actors, and presenting the profession as more homogenous than perhaps their theatrical methods and achievements would suggest. Fig. 42 shows William Creswick (1813-1888), a leading tragedian who was acting with Samuel Phelps (1804-1878) at Drury Lane theatre in 1876, whereas the sitter in Fig. 43, John Sleeper

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[21] Baker, 'The Actor's Community', pp. 73-74.
[22] West, 'The Photographic Portraiture of Henry Irving and Ellen Terry', p. 190; see 'Sociability and the Artistic Body', pp. 185-186.

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Figure 42: Anon., Photograph of William Creswick, 1870s. Mounted in the Jane Andrews Album. Woodburytype, 9 x 6cm. London: NPG.

Figure 43: Anon., 'Mr. J. S. Clarke', Detail from Photograph of a Group of Twenty-Nine Actors, c. 1876. London: NPG.

Clarke (1833-1899), was a comedian and character actor. In terms of dress, appearance and manner, their similarity is such that there is no way in which these images could be read as an expression of theatrical or artistic method. This could be potentially dangerous given the wishes of actor-managers to distinguish between different levels of theatrical practice; in the texts examined in the first chapter of this thesis, whilst both tragedy and comedy were seen as equally valid types of acting, there was an insistence on the separation of different levels and styles of theatre, and a differentiation between 'art' and 'spectacle'.[23] By contrast, the images of the *Saturday Programme* are more likely to have reflected the actual theatrical tastes of a wide range of consumers, and the sitters in Fig. 40 also include a burlesque specialist, a pantomime impresario, and a tenor associated with the Savoy Opera.

In his work on celebrity portrait photography of the nineteenth century, Roger Hargreaves noted the difference between collecting individual *cartes-de-visite* and mounting them in albums, which involved the selective purchase and preservation of images on the part of the consumer, and published and bound volumes of portraits and accompanying biographies, which presented the consumer with a pre-selected range of figures, and therefore 'preserved a hegemonic order' established in the pre-photographic genre of letterpress biographies and accompanying engravings.[24] The programmatic nature of such publications also falls within the remit of what Julie Codell has termed the 'collective biography' in this period, narratives characterized by 'their appeal to a mass audience', which flourished in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and that, unlike autobiographical texts or expositions of artistic skill, brought Codell's artistic subjects into a 'master narrative' of the contribution of art to national identity.[25] The transformation of the individual images from the *Saturday Programme* into the bound volume of *Artists of the London Stage*

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[23] See '"Distinctly Intended to be a 'George'": Character, Appearance, and the Skill of the Actor', pp. 74-75.
[24] Roger Hargreaves, 'Putting Faces to the Names: Social and Celebrity Portrait Photography', in *The Beautiful and the Damned: The Creation of Identity in Nineteenth Century Photography,* ed. by Peter Hamilton and Roger Hargreaves (London: NPG, 2001), pp. 17-55 (pp. 23-4, 49).
[25] Codell, *The Victorian Artist,* p. 20.

therefore aligned Fig. 40 with the collectivization of the identity of public figures, and is best contextualized through the display of celebrity offered by publications that held up distinguished figures from a number of different professions as exemplary to the general public.

Men of Mark: **The Masculine Professional Body**

Men of Mark was started in 1876, the same year as the publication of *Artists of the London Stage,* and was produced by George Whitfield (fl.1860s-1880s) of the Lock & Whitfield photographic studio. As a monthly rather than a weekly publication, each edition, which mainly now survive in bound annual volumes, contained three large-scale woodburytype portraits and page-long biographies of contemporary celebrities, and retailed at a price of 1s. 1d. As the *Illustrated London News* pointed out, this made it not only 'the best' but also the ' cheapest series of photographic portraits hitherto issued', and from this assessment of the publication's cost it is possible to infer that although it was empirically more expensive than the *Saturday Programme,* it was also intended for popular rather than elite consumption.[26] However, the large format of the images suggest a slightly more affluent consumer, and a further comment on the series from the *World* that it made 'a dainty book for the drawing-room table' illustrated that such volumes were not just intended for private consumption but also as an exposition of taste, and a focus of social interaction in the home.[27]

An initial comparison of Figures 40 and 44, the latter of which is a composite of images from the 1876 issues of *Men of Mark,* illustrates that, despite the use of the term 'artists' to describe the sitters' identities in the *Saturday Programme's* collated work, there is little evidence of the distinctive creative bodies discussed

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[26] 'Opinions of the Press', Advertisement included in *Men of Mark: A Gallery of Contemporary Portraits of Men Distinguished in the Senate, the Church, in Science, Literature and Art, the Army, the Navy, Law, Medicine, etc.,* ed. by George Whitfield, 7 vols (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, and Rivington, 1876-1883), I.
[27] 'Opinions of the Press'.

Image Redacted for

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Figure 44: Lock & Whitfield, Photographs of thirty sitters for *Men of Mark,* 1876. Published *Men of Mark,* 1876. Woodburtypes, c.11 x 9cm Cambridge: University Library. Composite by Author.

in previous chapters.[28] Whilst there is a certain amount of individual variance in the bodies displayed in Fig. 40, the range of attire, and other bodily accoutrements such as hairstyles, is remarkably similar to that displayed in Fig. 44, suggesting that the individualism on display was more a matter of taste rather than artistic affectation. Moreover, the images from *Men of Mark* also bore out Fitzgerald's claim that neither the 'officer' nor the 'barrister' was particularly anxious to obtrude his profession in this period. The sitters in Fig. 44 comprise diplomats, judges, churchmen, academics, an archaeologist, an explorer, a painter, military figures, politicians, and at least one self-made man, but as the composite illustrates, whilst some of these, mainly clerics, chose to present themselves in dress specific to their profession, most were shown in everyday dress very similar to that embraced by the actors in the photographs distributed with the *Saturday Programme.* This is even true of some sitters who were entitled to wear a specific form of attire; for example, two of these figures had careers in the military, but only one is shown in uniform, and of the four legal professionals present, only two were shown in robes.

This does not, however, mean that the occupation of the sitters was an unimportant aspect of such collective biographies. On the contrary, the full title of *Men of Mark* as printed on the cover page of each edition, stated that its sitters were: 'Men distinguished in the Senate, the Church, in Science, Literature, and Art, the Army, Navy, Law, Medicine, Etc.' The biographical page of each individual, written by Thompson Cooper (1837-1904), stated their name, social status and then their specific occupational title and institutional affiliation, so for example in 1876, Sir Richard Baggallay (1816-1808) was listed both as a knight and a 'Judge of the Supreme Court of Appeal', Henry Fawcett (1833-1884) as M. P. and 'Professor of Political Economy at Cambridge', and John Millais as 'Esq.' and 'Royal Academician'.[29] Similarly, the biographical narratives

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[28] It is worth noting that Figure 44 is not one original photograph, like Figure 40, but a composite of portraits from the 1876 volume of *Men of Mark,* collated by the author for the purposes of comparison.

[29] Thompson Cooper, 'Sir Richard Baggally', 'Professor Fawcett, M. P.', and 'J. E. Millais, Esq., R. A.', in *Men of Mark: A Gallery of Contemporary Portraits of Men Distinguished in the Senate, the Church, in Science, Literature and Art, the Army,*

were more a catalogue of professional achievements than an attempt to capture the individual characters of each sitter, and focused upon their contributions to a wider gathering of knowledge and social instruction. Figs. 40 and 44 are therefore representative of the second dominant aspect of celebrity in this period, Inglis's narrative of the furthering of bourgeois social norms, termed by Rojek 'model[s] for emulation'.[30] In George Whitfield's own words, one of the aims of *Men of Mark* was that of 'bringing them [celebrities], by means of Photography, face to face with their fellow men', the middle-class public at whom *Men of Mark* was targeted.[31]

In this he was following on not only from previous works of collective biography but also an already established photographic construction of celebrity first explored by American photographer Mathew Brady (1822-1896) in the late 1840s and early 1850s. Discussing Brady's *Gallery of Illustrious Americans,* published in 1850, photographic historian Alan Trachtenberg, like Hargreaves, framed the publication as a follow-on from collective biographies of the previous century, but he also saw Brady's work as an exposition of a modern, democratic social order.[32] For Trachtenberg, this was achieved by the image's composition, and particularly the homogeneity created by the constraints on the pose and appearance of the sitter, and the blank backgrounds. Despite the twenty-six years that separated Brady's work and the date of the *Saturday Programme* and *Men of Mark,* Trachtenberg's description of Brady's sitters could easily be a description of either of the two more modern collections:

> We are struck also, on first opening the *Gallery,* by an unexpected
> homogeneity: each image an oval medallion centered on the page,
> each face turned at a three-quarters angle and centered in the
> opening, each figure gazing towards the distance [...] and most clad

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the Navy, Law, Medicine, etc., ed. by George Whitfield, 7 vols (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, and Rivington, 1876-1883), I, 3, 15, 93.

[30] Fred Inglis, *A Short History of Celebrity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), pp. 78-82; Chris Rojek, *Celebrity* (London: Reaktion Books, 2001; repr. 2010), p. 116.

[31] Whitfield, 'Prefatory Note', in *Men of Mark,* I.

[32] Alan Trachtenberg, *Reading American Photographs: Images as History, Mathew Brady to Walker Evans* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1989), pp. 33-52.

in plain republican garb of dark coat, waistcoat, stiff white
shirtfront, collar and scarf, and no hands showing [...] Like Roman
statues, the *Gallery's* faces project a public space, a space for
viewing men in the guise of republican virtue: *gravitas, dignitas,
fides.*[33]

Whitfield's subjects may not have been living in a republic, but it is interesting
that he explicitly acknowledged this American construction of democracy in his
list of professions, claiming to be depicting 'Men distinguished in the Senate'.[34]

This idea, of a quintessentially 'republican garb', translated into the British
context as a democratization of fashion, has been associated by fashion
historians with male appearance in the mid-Victorian period as a symbol of the
growth of the middle-classes and an increasingly conservative attitude towards
menswear, and specifically with the type of 'plain' and 'dark' attire that
Trachtenberg saw as characteristic of Brady's sitters. David Kuchta has
discussed the development of the three-piece suit, and the standardization of
male dress in such a politicized fashion, as a symbol of power and a 'display of
public virtue' that characterized burgeoning middle-class masculinity, and as a
link between the ideals of aristocratic gentility and middle-class mores.[35] John
Harvey has also outlined the association of the colour black in this period with
normative menswear, and the workplace environment, identifying a specifically
professional body in this period.[36] As a discussion of menswear more generally
in this period, the idea of its absolute homogeneity, framed in terms of a 'Great

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[33] Trachtenberg, *Reading American Photographs,* pp. 46-7. Emphasis as original.
[34] Whilst not concerned with photographic portraiture, Louise Purbrick has also
discussed the collections of bourgeois portraits as a representation of 'Civic
Power' in mid-nineteenth century Manchester. Louise Purbrick, 'The Bourgeois
Body: Civic Portraiture, Public Men and the Appearance of Class Power in
Manchester 1838-1850', in A. Kidd and D. Nicholls, eds, *Gender, Civic Culture and
Consumerism: Middle-Class Identity in Britain 1800-1940* (Manchester:
Manchester University Press, 1999), pp. 81-98.
[35] David Kutcha, *The Three-Piece suit and Modern Masculinity: England 1550-
1850,* Studies on the History of Society and Culture: 47 (Berkeley: University of
California Press, 2002), pp. 5, 63-64.
[36] John Harvey, *Men in Black* (London: Reaktion Books, 1995), pp. 146-147.

Masculine Renunciation' of dress, has been widely criticized as over-simplistic by a number of scholars, who have outlined the wide variety of dress styles and types of fashionable consumption available to late-Victorian men, but there is still a consensus that a concept of the 'professional body', an idea of occasion-appropriate attire, and the use of the suit as a frame around which individuality could be expressed, all existed in this period.[37] Whilst the subjects of Figs. 40 and 44 appear to be conforming to most of the aspects of dress described by Trachtenberg with the exception of the scarf, the 'dark coat, stiff white shirt front, [and] collar', there is actually a great deal of variation within the dress styles in both images, in terms of the colour and style of their waistcoats, and a wide variety of neckwear. One of the questions this raises is whether the 'blandness' ascribed to such images by West is in fact a product of the twenty-first century eye, and whether such slight variations of attire might be seen in a completely different light by a Victorian consumer.

Nevertheless, common to all of the expressions of identity through the body discussed so far in this thesis is the idea that character is not only expressed through the basic constituents of appearance, but as a synthesis of appearance and manner. In this case it appears to have been the constriction of manner and the concomitant suppression of individuality through pose, rather than a simple homogeneity of dress, that characterized the bodies of sitters in both the *Saturday Programme* and *Men of Mark.* Trachtenberg identified this same element in Brady's pictures as a visual metaphor for republicanism, but in his reading of Walter Pater's (1839-1894) *Marius* as an exposition of Victorian ideas of masculinity, James Eli Adams outlined a connection between an increasingly democratic state and professional status, envisioning the transfer of authority from aristocratic individuals to middle-class professional bodies, which contributed to the construction of nationhood, in much the same way as Rojek's notion of achieved celebrity and Kutcha's description of changing dress. Crucially, Adams linked the gentleman and the middle class professional

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[37] Christopher Breward, *The Hidden Consumer: Masculinities, Fashion and City Life, 1860-1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), pp. 245-51, 77-83; Brent Shannon, *The Cut of His Coat: Men, Dress, and Consumer Culture in Britain, 1860-1914* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2006), pp. 21-51, 174-183.

through the attribute of 'reserve', which he termed the 'paradox at the heart of bourgeois self-presentation in Victorian life: it makes a badge of personal and professional distinction out of the very quality that seems designed to efface individuality in social life.'[38] In effect, Adams was describing the attributes of professionalism in almost exactly the same way as West described offstage photographs of the actor, in terms of 'bourgeois blandness', but whereas West and Mayer appear to have associated these images with an uninteresting, and therefore negative, presentation of the actor off the stage, Adams' argument, and the repeated motif of constriction in the portraiture of both the *Saturday Programme* and *Men of Mark* suggested that, whilst it suppressed the artistry and theatricality of the actor's craft, it consolidated his status as a professional man.

Unlike the images in *Men of Mark,* which were taken by Lock & Whitfield specifically for the publication, the *Saturday Programme's* photographs were not specially commissioned for the periodical, and the collection includes the work of at least five different photographic studios. It is possible that the editors were supplied with these photographs by the actors themselves, or the theatres that they were associated with, or that they chose the images from a number of photographs sent to them.[39] The range of sitters may therefore have been determined by the number of actors who responded to the publication's request for photographs rather than by the careful selection of leading theatrical lights. However, it is equally possible that they were purchased wholesale from a retailer such as Marion & Co., whose publishing warehouse was one of the major distributers of celebrity images in this period.[40] In this case, the homogenized, professional images presented of the actors in the *Saturday Programme* were entirely the choice of the publication's editors, rather than a framing on the part of the sitter, whose agency in the construction of self was removed in this process.

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[38] James Eli Adams, *Dandies and Desert Saints: Styles of Victorian Masculinity* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995), pp. 193-194.
[39] See discussion of *Strand Magazine's* 'Portraits of Celebrities at Different Times in Their Lives' series. 'Sociability and the Artistic Body', pp. 217-219.
[40] Hargreaves, 'Putting Faces to the Names', p. 44.

Systematized Representation: The *Theatre,* 1880-1889

In his 'Prefatory Notes' to the first edition of *Men of Mark*, George Whitfield
stated that:

> One of the most important features of the work, and which will
> add greatly to its value and interest, is that the portraits will
> be taken expressly for this publication, and will not (with very
> rare exceptions) be used for any other purpose, nor be
> obtainable in any other form: to this circumstance is greatly
> due the success which has attended the efforts of the promoter
> to obtain sittings, and promises to sit during the coming
> season, from many of the most distinguished men of the day.[41]

Whitfield's suggestion here, that 'distinguished men of the day' could be induced
to sit for portraits only on the promise that such images would not be
distributed elsewhere, ties in with Roger Hargreaves's description of the
protracted negotiations that attended the formation of such collections.[42]
However, whilst the exclusivity of the photographs was framed by Whitfield as a
device for inducing celebrities to sit for his portraits, it was equally directed at
the consumers of *Men of Mark,* who could be enticed to believe that they were
enjoying a privileged access to celebrity figures through the ownership of a
portrait which was not in wide circulation. As seen above, such exclusivity could
not be applied to the images distributed by the *Saturday Programme,* but it did
apply to another theatrical publication that was distributing photographs of
theatrical luminaries in the 1880s, the *Theatre.*

Running from 1878 to 1899, the *Theatre* was one of the most consistent
theatrical papers of the last quarter of the nineteenth century when, as noted by
Jane Stedman, theatrical publications were 'not necessarily long-lived'.[43]
Arguably its heyday was from 1880 to 1889, when it was edited by bastion of
theatrical criticism Clement Scott, also the leading theatrical writer at the *Daily
Telegraph*. It contained a similar mix of articles to the *Saturday Programme*,

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[41] Whitfield, 'Prefatory Note'.
[42] Hargreaves, 'Putting Faces to the Names', pp. 50-51.
[43] Stedman, 'Theatre', p. 162.

Image Redacted for

Copyright Purposes

Figure 45: Herbert Rose Barraud, Photograph of Cyril Maude, 1889. Published *Theatre,* **1 August 1889. Woodburytype, 11 x 9cm. Author's Own Collection.**

with reviews, biographies, theatrical news and gossip and, like the *Saturday Programme*, its main pictorial feature was the distribution of photographs of popular actors and actresses. As Figure 45, showing actor Cyril Maude (1862-1951), later manager of the Haymarket Theatre, indicates, these were designed as a full-page feature, to be bound in with the publication rather than collected separately in an album. In the first couple of years of the *Theatre*'s publication, the photograph collection seems to have been acquired in much the same haphazard way as those of the *Saturday Programme,* but as the legend at the bottom of the page in Fig. 45 indicates, the majority of the photographs were 'specially taken for "The Theatre"', first by the St. James's Photographic Company (1883-1884) and later by Herbert Rose Barraud. Like the images of the *Saturday Programme* and *Men of Mark,* the framing of the actor's offstage body in Fig. 45, and particularly the constrictions of pose and appearance, suggested the persistence of the professional body as an iconographical motif through the 1880s, but it is the use of this type of body within the context of the *Theatre,* rather than the construction of the body itself, with which the rest of this chapter is concerned.

In Michael Baker's opinion, one of the key reasons why acting struggled to develop a distinct professional identity in the Victorian period was its failure to embrace the institutional structures favoured by other artistic professions, of which the RA or the Royal Academy of Music were two examples. These institutions, Baker argued, served a number of purposes for their respective professions that acting ultimately lacked; they provided a structured training for aspiring practitioners, and defined the upper echelons of the profession, regulating who could be considered a legitimate artist in this period.[44] This aligns with Codell's claim that a key part of the construction of art as a professional and gentlemanly occupation that contributed to the national interest, as discussed in the work of Samuel and Richard Redgrave (1802-1876 and 1804-1888), was a defense of the RA, which they framed as 'the major force promoting artists' professionalism'.[45] It is also supported by earlier references

[44] Baker, 'The Stage and the Professions', in *Rise of the Victorian Actor,* pp. 24-43.
[45] Codell, *The Victorian Artist,* pp. 214-232 (p. 221).

within this thesis to the RA as a forum for middle-class consumerism and a means for conferring on artists an elevated social status.[46] As Baker related, the practitioners and proponents of acting keenly felt the lack of such an institution, and actor-managers were among those periodically involved in trying to establish such a body.[47]

However, as Vann and VanArsdel noted in *Victorian Periodicals and Victorian Society*, the collectivization of professional interests in this period, and the process of institutionalization, was as clearly articulated in the development of the periodical press as the founding of national professional bodies, and specialized periodicals reflected not only the professionalization of artistic pursuits, but also that of science, law, religion, medicine, and architecture.[48] So, whilst the theatre may have lacked the cohesion that a national institution would have brought, theatrical periodicals could be seen as a proxy for such an institution in this period, with the same aim of collectivizing and legitimizing the profession. In her analysis of theatrical periodicals, Jane Stedman identified three publications, the *Theatre,* the *Era* and the *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*, as having the twin motivation of 'simultaneously defending the virtue and validity of the theatre and policing it so that it behave with propriety, dignity, and morality,' and claimed specifically of the *Theatre* that its essay and discussion sections 'attempted something more serious than the usual gossip columns of other journals'.[49] Controlled by a theatrical insider, the critic Clement Scott, the *Theatre*, like the RA, was set up as an arbiter of taste, which attempted to direct rather than reflect popular patterns of consumption, and it

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[46] See 'Embodying Artistry: *Charles I, Othello* and *The Corsican Brothers* at the Lyceum Theatre,1872-1881', pp. 110-111; 'Sociability and the Artistic Body', p. 193.

[47] Baker, 'Establishing a Profession', in *Rise of the Victorian Actor,* pp. 139-159 (pp. 149-159).

[48] J. Don Vann and Rosemary VanArsdel, 'Introduction', in *Victorian Periodicals and Victorian Society* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), pp. 3-8.

[49] Stedman, 'Theatre', pp. 167, 173. For an extensive discussion of the *Era's* role as an 'organ of the profession' in the 1850s, see Jacky Bratton, '*The Era*: Hierarchies, Seriousness and the Organ of the Profession', in *The Making of the West End Stage: Marriage, Management and the Mapping of Gender in London, 1830-1870* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011)*,* pp. 46-85.

	1880	1881	1882	1883	1884	1885	1886	1887	1888	1889	Total	Total	% of Total
Total	14	12	10	24	24	25	22	24	24	25	204		
Male	6	0	1	12	12	10	9	12	11	13	86		42%
Female	8	9	8	12	12	13	9	11	11	12	105		51%
Ensemble	0	3	1	0	0	2	4	1	2	0	13		6%

Table 3: Photographs published in *Theatre,* 1880-1889 (by gender)

	1883	1884	1885	1886	1887	1888	1889	Total
Male Performers (character portraits)	10 (1)	10 (1)	8 (7)	4 (4)	12 (5)	10 (2)	10 (1)	64 (21)
Managers of London Theatres (character portraits)	3 (1)	3 (0)	2 (1)	1 (1)	1 (0)	1 (1)	1 (0)	13 (4)
London-based Actors (character portraits)	7 (0)	7 (1)	6 (6)	2 (2)	9 (3)	8 (1)	8 (1)	47 (14)
Male singers (character portraits)	0	0	0	0	2 (2)	1	1	4 (2)
Foreign Actors (character portraits)	0	0	0	1 (1)	0	0	0	1 (1)
Male Dramatists and Critics	2	2	2	5	0	1	3	15
Women Photographed (character portraits)	12 (4)	12 (9)	12 (11)	9 (7)	11 (3)	9 (3)	12 (3)	77 (40)
Female Managers (character portraits)	2 (0)	0	1 (0)	1 (0)	1 (0)	1 (0)	0	6 (0)
London-based Actresses (character portraits)	10 (6)	11 (8)	10 (9)	8 (7)	9 (2)	5 (3)	11 (3)	64 (38)
Female singers (character portraits)	0	1 (1)	1 (1)	0	1 (1)	2 (0)	1 (0)	6 (3)
Foreign Actresses (character portraits)	0	0	0	0	0	1 (0)	0	1 (0)
Female Dramatists and Writers	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	3

Table 4: Photographs published in *Theatre,* 1883-1889 (by professional status and number of character portraits)

was also the only one of these three journals that embraced the programmatic distribution of photographs of actors and actresses. It may be safely assumed, therefore, that the images distributed by the *Theatre* represented a visual manifestation of such a schema, and a concrete attempt to present a specific narrative of the professionalism of acting in a far more systematic way than the *Saturday Programme.* As such, the *Theatre*'s images were more akin to the hegemonic nature of collective biographies than the personalized collecting practices of the album or the *carte-de-visite.*

On the presumption that, whilst the photographs in the *Saturday Programme* represented the construction of actors and actresses that the general press thought the public would appreciate, the *Theatre* represented the image of actors and actresses that the profession itself sought to propagate, it is worth considering the makeup of the series as a whole, demonstrated in Tables 3 and 4.[50] As with the survey of photographs in the collections of the NPG and V&A, a quantitative understanding of the material alongside qualitative analysis of the actual images themselves, has been useful in identifying trends or systems of representation. Table 3, which covers the whole span of Clement Scott's editorship of the publication, from 1880 to 1889, indicates that the systematization of the photographic publications, and the regular production of two photographs per month, on average one male and one female, started in 1883. Given the importance of exclusivity in the ability to negotiate sittings, it is presumably not a coincidence that this systematization, and the concomitant increase in the number of photographs produced annually, began in the same year that the *Theatre* started commissioning photographs from the St. James's Photographic Company rather than simply entreating submissions from their subjects. Viewing 1883 as the year in which the representational strategies of the *Theatre* were coalesced, Table 4 further deconstructs the 1883-1889 photographs to see what patterns can be identified in their subjects, and what types of body were being represented by the periodical. It breaks down the

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[50] For a fuller picture of the results of this survey, and some of the research concerns, see Appendix B.

subjects by two further criteria, the professional status of the sitter, and the relative numbers of character portraits present in each professional category. Like the *Saturday Programme,* the series of portraits is cross-generational in nature, and that the common coin of public acknowledgement went hand-in-hand with the role of the manager is evident not only because around one-fifth of all of the male photographs distributed by the magazine were at that stage also managers, but also because a further eight of the photographs were of actors who had been or would later be in management, bringing the total number of 'actor-managers' in the corpus of images to twenty, or around one third of the total.

Artists, Professionals, Literati

The analysis of images of actor-managers in the collections of the NPG and V&A, summarized earlier in Tables 1 and 2, indicated a balance between photographs of their subjects in costume (636/1354 or 47%), and images of actor-managers in everyday dress (718/1354 or 53%), a useful benchmark because the large sample size gives a better indication of the images in general circulation in this period. By contrast, between 1883 and 1889, the *Theatre* published 159 individual portraits, only 61 (or 38%) of which were of performers in character, and 98 (62%) of which were images of what is here called the professional body. Focusing on male performers, even when excluding writers and dramatists, the percentage of professional images rises to 67%. It is therefore reasonably safe to assume that even given a year-on-year variance, a faithful reader of the *Theatre* would encounter more images of actors framed as professional men than demonstrations of their artistic skill, at a higher proportion than that represented in more general collections. This ties in with Jane Stedman's assertion that Clement Scott's purpose for the *Theatre* was more to validate and establish the dramatic profession in terms of contemporary standards of 'propriety, dignity, and morality' than to provide an exposition of its artistic achievement. [51]

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[51] Stedman, 'Theatre', p. 167.

Given Scott's established role as leading critic at the *Daily Telegraph,* it does not come as a surprise that two sections of each month's issue were devoted to reviews of contemporary theatrical and musical productions, but these constituted a relatively small part of the periodical's overall textual output, with anecdotes, biographies and essays forming the majority of the text, and therefore the visual content of the periodical seems to have been editorially crafted in the same way as its textual equivalent: an element of memorialization of contemporary productions underlining a mainstream narrative of professional identities. Moreover, whilst the character portraits were often illustrations of parts that the actors had recently played on the stage, they were not, as might be expected, included as illustrations to accompany criticism; rarely does a portrait correspond to a review included in the same edition of the periodical. Instead a short biographical note about the actor's career, which sometimes, but not always, mentioned his appearance in that particular part, usually accompanied them, and the parts appear to have been chosen to represent the actor's career as well as to advertise their current theatrical offerings, and might therefore be read as a biographical rather than a critical tool. For example, on 1 September 1885, the magazine distributed a photograph of John Sleeper Clarke as Bob Acres in *The Rivals,* a role he had made famous in the 1870s, yet the accompanying text made no mention of any specific part played by Clarke but was a discourse on his general skill as an actor.[52]

Viewing the *Theatre* as an institution of professionalization analogous to the RA, which not only shaped the careers of artists, but also highlighted their works, the periodical appears to have been attempting to balance the product of acting and its creators to construct the upper echelons of the acting profession in terms of both its output and its membership. Not only does this suggest that character portraits were being used by the *Theatre* to highlight the artistic merit of an actor rather than simply to record the moment of performance, but they also indicate that both types of images distributed by the periodical in this period were imbued with the quality of abstraction. By bringing their subjects in line with contemporary middle-class norms of appearance and character,

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[52] 'Our Omnibus-Box', *Theatre,* 1 September 1885, pp. 167-174.

images of the actor off the stage, which displayed the professional rather than the artistic body, performed the function of abstracting the subject from their theatrical milieu whilst character portraits, despite rooting their subjects in a moment of performance, abstracted that artistic skill to illustrate the actor's whole career. As well as being a balance of images that demonstrated two distinct aspects of the actor's craft, weighted towards the professionalization of acting, therefore, the actors' bodies displayed by *The Theatre* showed the artist and professional as two sides of the same coin, as two modes of collective biography, both designed to raise the level of acting as a profession.

If so, this was a collective biographical narrative that, in terms of its male professionalism, did not just include performers but, as indicated in Table 2, a significant proportion of male dramatists and critics, all presented in the normative, 'professional' manner of Fig. 45. From a representational perspective, without knowing the individuals or being able to read the accompanying text, it would be impossible to distinguish the two categories of sitters. This ties in with the knowledge, discussed in the previous chapter, that actors and dramatists moved in the same circles socially, and also with the idea, elaborated in the next, that contemporary playwrights and actor-managers enjoyed a close working relationship.[53] However, it also suggests that in terms of social legitimization, the professional statuses of acting, playwriting and theatrical criticism were intrinsically linked. Bratton's work on bohemian communities, and John Stephens' on the profession of the playwright in this period, suggested that the association of dramatists with the stage undermined their masculine and social authority, but it is also possible to argue the opposite, that the professional association of actors with literary aspirations raised the profession of acting.[54] This is supported by the curious juxtaposition, particular to the *Theatre*, of quotations underneath photographs that, it must be assumed,

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[53] See 'Sociability and the Artistic Body', pp. 199-200; '"Modern Men": Blurring the Lines between Actor-Managers, Authors, and Audiences' pp. 282-287.
[54] Bratton, 'Bohemian Domestisticity: The City of the Mind', in *The Making of the West End Stage,* pp. 86-115; John Russell Stephens, 'The Smell of Lamps and Orange Peel', in *The Profession of the Playwright: British Theatre, 1800-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992; repr. 2006), pp. 1-24.

had been chosen by their subjects. Sometimes, these quotations were lines from a particular play with which the actor was associated but this was not always the case, even when the actor was shown in costume, and not all the quotations were even from play texts. Rather, they seem to have been chosen both as a demonstration of their subjects' literary knowledge and artistic credentials, and as a declaration of their professional philosophies and aspirations. For example, in 1888, actor Harry B. Conway (1850-1909) chose a quotation from the epic poem *Childe Harold* 'I live not in myself, but I become | Portion of that around me', and Cyril Maude's quotation, shown in Fig. 45, was simply, 'Let each man do his best.'[55]

As discussed elsewhere in this chapter, gaining permission to photograph and disseminate images of particularly well-known figures in this period was the result of a complex series of negotiations between the editors of such publications, the subjects of their enquiries, and the photographic studios who produced the portraits. Unfortunately, this was a process in which the particulars, and therefore the levels of power exerted by each of these protagonists, was often unrecorded and cannot be recovered for posterity, although it was almost certainly contingent upon their relative prominence in the public eye.[56] Whilst the actual contracts for the *Theatre*'s photographic sittings are no clearer than most other such transactions in this period, nevertheless the study of photographs distributed by the publication provides some clues as to the relative agency of subjects and photographers in the framing of the body for these images, and particularly the relative importance of the professional body to the role of the actor-manager. In 1883 and 1884, of the forty-eight photographs distributed by the *Theatre*, thirty-eight were definitely taken by the St. James's Photographic Company, three were the work of an unknown photographer, and seven were taken by other photographic studios; the clustering of the latter images around the beginning and end of 1884, and the subsequent switching of studios suggests a period of disagreement between

[55] Woodburytype of Harry B. Conway, published in *Theatre,* 1 December 1888.
[56] Barbara McCandless, 'The Portrait Studio and the Celebrity', in *Photography in Nineteenth-Century America,* ed. by Martha Sandweiss (Fort Worth: Amon Carter Museum; New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1991), pp. 49-75 (pp. 67-70).

the editors of the periodical and the photographic studios rather than a choice on the part of the sitters to have their images taken elsewhere.[57] However, it is also notable that in this period only eight out of thirty-six images of performers taken by the St. James's studio were images of theatrical characters, of which only one was male, of the actor-manager Wilson Barrett in *The Silver King.*

Comparing this to the following two years, 1885 and 1886, when the studio of choice had switched to Barraud, of the thirty images of performers taken by Barraud's photographic studio for the *Theatre,* twenty-six were of theatrical characters, with only one portrait of a 'professional' male performer once dramatists and critics were excluded. There seems little doubt that the shift in focus of the images distributed by the *Theatre* coincided with the change in photographer, and Herbert Rose Barraud appears, at least initially, to have been mainly interested in taking character portraits rather than their more conventional counterparts. Having originally started out in partnership as Barraud and Jerrard in the 1870s, Herbert Rose Barraud was first registered as having his own studio at 263 Oxford Street (the address listed at the bottom of the *Theatre's* photographic pages) in 1883, two years before he started taking photographs for the *Theatre*, and it may have been this series of images for the *Theatre* that cemented his reputation as a portrait photographer for the purposes of collection.[58] Writing of the development of *cartes-de-visite* collecting in the middle of the nineteenth century, Roger Hargreaves framed the photography of actors as a formative stylistic experience in the work of Nadar (1820-1910) and Camille Silvy (1834-1910), claiming that photographers could get more versatile images of sitters who 'were at home amongst the backdrops and props, [and] versed in the art of taking direction'.[59] Whilst such a description could apply to either character or offstage portraits, Barbara McCandless has suggested in her work on American photographer Napoleon Sarony that it was his ability to capture theatrical characters in the 1870s that

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[57] It is possible the studio was in the process of dissolution, as Pritchard's directory only lists it in the years 1883 to 1884. Michael Pritchard, *A Directory of London Photographers, 1841-1908* (Bushey: ALLM Books, 1986), p. 83.
[58] Pritchard, *Directory of London Photographers*, p. 27.
[59] Hargreaves, 'Putting Faces to the Names', p. 46.

catapulted the photographic studio into the public eye, and it could be argued that by experimenting with theatrical photography, Barraud was bolstering his own reputation as well as serving the interests of the *Theatre*.[60] Interestingly, after the first two years, the professional body began to reassert itself in Barraud's series of portraits and, perhaps not coincidentally, in 1888, alongside his work for the *Theatre,* Barraud also began to produce a work of collective biography very similar to Whitfield's *Men of Mark* entitled *Men and Women of the Day.*

The relative prominence of the professional and theatrical bodies of actors in the series as a whole may have shifted with the change of photographer in 1885, but an examination of the six male subjects who appeared twice in the *Theatre* between 1883 and 1888 (all taken once before the switch in photographers, and once afterwards) indicates some degree of agency on the part of the more prominent sitters for the publication, and a preference on the part of leading actors and actor-managers to be shown off the stage rather than on it. Reading the series as a collection, and the photographic portrait as a promotional tool for the periodical, the repetition of certain subjects presumably resulted from a combination of their relative prominence in the public eye, of the photographer's desire to take their image, and of their active involvement in the dissemination of their portraits for public consumption. At the time that the photographs were taken, two of the subjects, Squire Bancroft and Henry Irving, were actively managing West End theatres, and one, David James (1839-1893), had retired from theatre management but was still acting in the West End.[61] The other three, Harry Conway, William Terriss (1847-1897), and E. S. Willard (1853-1915) were all leading actors of West End theatres. Despite Barraud's initial preference for the character portrait, four of these actors and actor-managers retained the construction of the body familiar to readers of the

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[60] McCandless, 'The Portrait Studio and the Celebrity', pp. 64-65.
[61] Having founded the Vaudeville theatre with Thomas Thorne in 1870**,** James and Thorne managed the theatre together until 1881 when he returned to acting. Erskine Reid and Herbert Compton, *The Dramatic Peerage, 1892: Personal Notes and Professional Sketches of the Actors and Actresses of the London Stage* (London: Raithby, Lawrence, 1892), pp. 117-118.

Saturday Programme and *Men of Mark* in both images, embodying the serious, professional side of the drama. Conversely, David James, despite the periodical's emphasis on the professional body in 1883 and 1884, appeared in character in both portraits, a reminder both of his status as a character actor and perhaps of the fact that he was no longer in a position of responsibility at the Vaudeville Theatre. Only William Terriss appears to have been enjoined to change his image from the professional to the artistic sides of the theatrical body, appearing as *Romeo* in Barraud's first character portrait, in January 1885 (Figure 48), and Terriss' Romeo appears to have been a career-defining moment, acted opposite visiting American actress Mary Anderson (1859-1940) at the Lyceum Theatre whilst Irving was on his second American Tour.[62]

Gender in *Theatre*

As 'Ladies of the London Stage' illustrated, the offstage photograph was not solely the province of male performers, and as Table 2 shows, a significant number of the images distributed by the *Theatre* were of actresses in everyday, fashionable dress. A comparison between the iconography of both 'Artists' and 'Ladies' of the London stage, and between portraits in the *Theatre* of William Terriss and Kate Rorke (1866-1945) (Figures 46 and 47) indicates, for the most part, that offstage images of actresses in such publications utilized a similarly constricted framing of the body to those of male performers, although there was a greater variation in the colours and fabrics of their attire (possibly explained by the wider variance in female fashion more generally). If the homogenized framing of the male body in works of collective biography such as *Men of Mark* defined their subjects as members of a professional class, it is worth considering why, despite the surface similarities in the constitution of their images, the bodies of actresses have not been considered in the same light, especially since, as both Tracy Davis and Jackey Bratton have written, in terms of the actual

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[62] A description of Terris' Romeo, and its importance in terms of his overall career, can be found in Arthur J. Smythe, *The Life of William Terriss: Actor* (Westminster: Constable, 1898), pp. 80-84.

Image Redacted for

Copyright Purposes

Figure 46: St. James's Photographic Company, 'William Terriss', 1883. Published *Theatre,* **1 June 1883. Woodburytype, 11 x 9cm. Author's Own Collection.**

Image Redacted for

Copyright Purposes

Figure 47: St. James's Photographic Company, 'Miss Kate Rorke', 1883. Published _Theatre,_ 1 August 1883. Woodburytype, 11 x 9cm. Author's Own Collection

professional practice of theatre, women were also involved in the business of running theatres, and writing and staging productions.[63] This was actually acknowledged by the *Theatre* through the inclusion of portraits of actress-managers, and at least two female playwrights (See Table 2).

In part, this difference can be attributed to a historiographical connection between the concept of professionalism and the development of masculine identities in the Victorian period; taking James Eli Adams's analysis of 'the professional' as an example, he pre-supposed it to be a masculine form of identity in this period by drawing lines between the construction of the professional and that of the gentleman. [64] Moreover, when writing of profession-specific periodicals, the presumption of all of the contributing authors to Vann and VanArsdel's survey of Victorian periodical literature was that publications that were involved in the institutionalization of professions were written by men and for men.[65] Conversely, it is interesting to note that Fraser, Green and Johnston's work on exploring and reclaiming female engagement with periodical literature in this period, which included a discussion on women who were involved in the creation of periodicals, did not include any profession-specific material.[66] In a chapter on 'Editorship and Gender', however, they argued specifically that the exceptionally wide variety of periodical literature in this period means that the best way to consider gender assumptions within any one publication is to consider its 'house style'. Examining the 'house style' of the *Theatre* under the editorship of Clement Scott, it is immediately obvious that this is a discourse of legitimate, masculinized professionalism, designed to reinforce the role of male actor-managers at the head of theatrical practice, with a number of articles by leading actors, and male playwrights and critics, but

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[63] Bratton, 'The Shaping of West End Management', in *The Making of the West-End Stage*, pp. 145-169; Tracy C. Davis, 'Gender, "Gentlemanly Capitalism", and The Wo-Manger', in *The Economics of the British Stage, 1800-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000; repr. 2007), pp. 273-306.

[64] Adams, *Dandies and Desert Saints,* pp. 192-194.

[65] Vann and VanArsdel, *Victorian Periodicals*.

[66] Hilary Fraser, Stephanie Green, and Judith Johnston, *Gender and the Victorian Periodical*, Cambridge Studies in Nineteenth-Century Literature and Culture: 41 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003; repr. 2008).

little input from female members of theatrical professions; in the first six months of the *Theatre,* out of well over 130 individual pieces, only four can be identified as being by female authors.

Accepting that the male photographs in the *Theatre* represent a dominant contemporary discourse of masculine professionalization, but also of the legitimization of the theatrical professions, it is worth considering the female portraits as a manifestation of the same tendencies towards legitimization. Earlier mentions of actresses' autobiographies, and Terry's description of the relative appearances of Squire Bancroft and Marie Wilton, have suggested that, contrary to the identities of female artists, the dominant framing of successful actresses did not attempt to separate them from female norms, but to bring them in line with contemporary understandings of femininity.[67] Studying discourses surrounding the actress in the second half of the century, Kerry Powell wrote of just such a rhetoric in which, he claimed, contemporary actresses were largely complicit:

> Emanating largely from the theatre itself – [this discourse] functioned to neutralize the actress by bringing her under the auspices of domesticity instead of banishing her from it […] modes of representing the actress [that] served one purpose, that of monitoring and limiting the imagined excesses of women on the stage and reinforcing the battlements of male privilege.[68]

Seeing the professional periodical, and particularly the *Theatre* as a 'battlement of male privilege', it makes sense that the images within its pages would be interpreted by an audience used to seeing the actress as 'neutralized'. This terminology, of 'monitoring and limiting', and ultimately disempowering the actress is similar is similar to West's reading of Ellen Terry as fetishized and

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[67] See 'Sociability and the Artistic Body', pp. 185-186, 206 (n. 40).
[68] Kerry Powell, 'Masculine Panic and the Panthers of the Stage', in *Women and Victorian Theatre* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 13-63 (pp. 46-47).

Image Redacted for

Copyright Purposes

Figure 48: Herbert Rose Barraud, Photograph of William Terriss as Romeo, 1885. Published *Theatre,* **1 January 1885. Woodburytype, 11 x 9cm. Author's Own Collection.**

Image Redacted for

Copyright Purposes

Figure 49: Herbert Rose Barraud, 'Miss Kate Rorke as "Sophia"', 1887. Published *Theatre,* **1 July 1887. Woodburytype, 11 x 9cm. Author's Own Collection.**

made into an art object rather than an artist, a terminology in which the actress was neutralized in much the same way.[69]

Aside from attempting to reconstruct contemporary engagement with actresses' offstage images, and establish the perspective of the viewer, there is one further way in which the normalization of the actress in the *Theatre* can be viewed as a contemporary construction of their subjects in terms of gendered, rather than professional identities: by looking at the difference between portraits of the actor and actress on the stage, and comparing them to their offstage equivalents. Figures 48 and 49 show the same subjects, William Terriss and Kate Rorke, as Figs. 46 and 47, and the pairs of images were also taken by the same photographers; the first two photographs are from the series of St. James's Photographic Studio portraits, and the second pair were taken by Herbert Rose Barraud. The only difference between them is that the two earlier images are both offstage portraits, and the two later are, respectively, of Terriss as Romeo, and Rorke as Sophia Western, from a play based on *The History of Tom Jones*. Neither production was staged in contemporary dress, but whereas Terris is shown obviously engaged in the act of characterization, Rorke is depicted in much the same restricted manner as that of her offstage portrait (Fig. 47), to the extent that the editor has felt the need to clarify that the image shows 'Miss Kate Rorke as "Sophia"'.[70] This is the type of image that Mayer, cited at the beginning of this chapter, identified as the 'passive' expression of actresses' identities, in much the same way as West argued that Henry Irving's images were imbued with a form of 'blandness'.[71] Yet, ultimately, where Terriss has managed to escape this 'blandness', in the form of his character portraits, Rorke has continued to be defined as passive.

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[69] West, 'The Photographic Portraiture of Henry Irving and Ellen Terry', p. 190.
[70] This was not always the case, however, and there are a number of images within the series where the context of the actress' portrait is unclear.
[71] Mayer, 'The Actress as Photographic Icon', p. 78; West, 'The Photographic Portraiture of Henry Irving and Ellen Terry', p. 203.

Conclusion

Whether male or female, all of the portraits of performers examined in this chapter performed a function of homogenization, whether this was the bringing together of actors into one coherent body of professionals, or the normalization of their subjects within the context of wider social understandings of gendered identities. Whilst apparently very different in character from the images examined in the previous chapter, the 'bourgeois' portraits of actor-managers offered here were just as context- and audience-specific, and allowed for a particular type of social alignment, in this case with professional rather than artistic identities. They are further evidence of the ways in which the body of the actor-manager off the stage could be dressed, framed, and disseminated as a signifier of identity, and of the fluid nature of that identity, presented to the public in a number of different ways. The 'blandness' of such images, as they have been communicated to posterity, is arguably a result of both an art historian's way of seeing, and also of the opinions of avant garde contemporaries, who were used to seeing the creative body of the actor-manager, and did not appreciate this bourgeois presentation. However, to suggest that it was without its place in the popular consumption of the actor-manager would be to deny the successful social legitimization of such figures, a legitimization that periodicals such as the *Theatre* pursued vociferously and that, ultimately, was achieved by actor-managers in this period.

Modern Men: Blurring the lines between Actor-Managers, Authors and Audiences

In *Parts I have Played,* published in 1909, George Alexander, actor-manager of the St. James's Theatre from 1891 to 1918**,** divided the leading roles he had played in his career into three major categories: those associated with the 'legitimate drama' dominated by Shakespearean performances, those 'in the realm of romantic drama' by which he meant melodramatic leads, and a separate corpus of 'modern men', characters he had created in plays within contemporary fashionable settings, and for which he had become particularly renowned during his management of the St. James's Theatre in the last decade of the nineteenth century.[1] These 'modern men' were not an innovation of the 1890s, nor were they restricted to Alexander's work at the St. James's Theatre, but they featured prominently in the repertoires of actor-managers Herbert Beerbohm Tree at the Haymarket Theatre and Her Majesty's Theatre, Charles Wyndham at the Criterion Theatre, and John Hare at the Garrick Theatre in this period, indicating a dominance of this type of drama in the West End not seen in previous incarnations of the style.[2] The fact that the prevalence of these productions, with their high society settings, coincided with an era of West End theatre-going dominated by an increasingly elite, fashionable audience, lends credence to Peter Raby's assertion that the importance of such plays was that they 'trapped the audience within the action', and by extension forced the spectator to look at its performed characters not only as a metaphorical reflection of the audience's cultural concerns, but also as a literal mirror of their physical identities.[3]

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[1] *Parts I have played: Photographic and Descriptive Biography of Mr. George Alexander* (Westminster: The Abbey Press, 1909), p. 13.

[2] As mentioned above, the Bancrofts had achieved success in the 1860s and 1870s with plays such as T. W. Robertson's *Caste,* commonly known as 'cup and saucer dramas'. Whilst the success of these plays illustrated that contemporary settings were popular with audiences, the trend did not spread far beyond the Prince of Wales's Theatre. See 'Socability and the Artistic Body', pp. 196-198.

[3] Peter Raby, 'Theatre of the 1890s: Breaking Down the Barriers', in *The Cambridge Companion to Victorian and Edwardian Theatre,* ed. by Kerry Powell

Thus far, this thesis has examined the ways in which the body of the actor-manager in the late nineteenth century was framed in two specific contexts for the propagation of his legacy; in the theatre, an explicit site of performance, the body functioned within a carefully crafted setting as a manifestation of the actor-manager's artistic skill: his ability to correctly embody character, and to meet the visual expectations of his audiences. By contrast, in images of the actor-manager off the stage, the body, albeit sometimes an artistically framed one, was central to establishing his status within social and professional hierarchies, through interactions with his peers and the general public in both social and 'para-social' modes. Whilst acknowledging that the understanding of theatrical characters, and the design of their appearance, was informed by contemporary concerns, it has positioned these as a form of cultural discourse, distanced from everyday life, whereas offstage portraits, for all that they may have contained some level of theatricality and an implicit form of performance, have been viewed as a form of personal interaction. In presenting contemporary society on the stage, however, these actor-managers of the 1890s were eliding social experience and theatrical performance, a feat that appeared not only to erode the distinction between performance and everyday life, but also to conflate the bodies, and therefore the identities, of the actor-managers and the 'modern men' they inhabited.

For the most part, three major strands of secondary literature exist regarding these productions; the first, the perspective from which Peter Raby saw theatre in this period as 'breaking down the barriers', has been an analysis of their literary characteristics, the focus on plots centred around moral dilemmas and clashing ideological systems, and the emergence of a new generation of English dramatists such as Oscar Wilde, Arthur Wing Pinero (1855-1934), Henry Arthur Jones (1851-1929) and, at the end of the period, George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950).[4] The second, to which Dennis Kennedy's description of the regulation of

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(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004; repr. 2005), pp. 183-206 (p. 203).

[4] Raby, 'Theatre of the 1890s'.

audiences and David Schulz's assessment of the rebuilding of Her Majesty's Theatre belong, has seen them as a facet of the 'gentrification' of the theatre in this period, and the redesign of West End theatres to accommodate their increasingly well-heeled patrons.[5] The third school of thought, and the only one to deal primarily with the visual elements of such productions, has analysed them for better or for worse in terms of the relationship of women to fashionable consumption, and the body of the actress in society plays as a site for the display for contemporary fashionable attire.[6] For this construction, the gendered notion of the actress as displayed in the *Theatre,* where even in eighteenth-century attire the actress Kate Rorke was framed in terms of contemporary feminine norms (Fig. 49), is particularly relevant, and it is interesting that the male body in such productions has never been treated in the same way, despite the fact that many of the male characters, as they were written, were equally concerned with fashionable consumption.

Given the steady rise in the popularity of such plays, and the continuity of the theatre managements of Alexander, Tree and Wyndham, into the Edwardian period, it is understandable that many of these historians have viewed such productions as a precursor to Edwardian theatre rather than a culmination of the Victorian period. Essays by Dennis Kennedy, Victor Emeljanow and Sheila

[5] Dennis Kennedy, 'The New Drama and the New Audience', in *The Edwardian Theatre: Essays on Performance and the Stage*, ed. by Michael R. Booth and Joel H. Kaplan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 130-147; David V. Schulz, The Architecture of Conspicuous Consumption: Property, Class, and Display at Herbert Beerbohm Tree's Her Majesty's Theatre', in *Theatre and Capital,* ed. by Loren Kruger (=*Theatre Journal,* 51.3 (October 1999)), pp. 231-250. Interestingly, Victor Emeljanow suggested that for provincial and suburban theatregoers, this did not have as much of an effect as society papers implied. Victor Emeljanow, 'Towards an Ideal Spectator: Theatregoing and the Edwardian Critic', in *The Edwardian Theatre: Essays on Performance and the Stage*, ed. by Michael R. Booth and Joel H. Kaplan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 148-65.

[6] Joel H. Kaplan and Sheila Stowell, *Theatre & Fashion: Oscar Wilde to the Suffragettes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994; repr. 2004); Michele Majer, ed., *Staging Fashion, 1880-1920: Jane Hading, Lily Elsie, Billie Burke* (New York: Bard Graduate Centre, 2012); Viv Gardner, 'The Invisible Spectatrice: Gender, Geography, and Theatrical Space', in *Women, Theatre, and Performance: New Histories, New Historiographies,* ed. by Maggie B. Gale and Viv Gardner, pp. 25-45.

Stowell on these subjects all appeared in Booth and Kaplan's *The Edwardian Theatre,* and similarly Christopher Breward's article on fashionable consumption at the St. James's Theatre, whilst also dealing with material from the 1890s, characterized the drawing-room drama as synonymous with 'Edwardian thought and experience'.[7] However, as Richard Foulkes pointed out in his introduction to a volume of essays on theatre in the 1890s, it was the co-existence of the more traditional repertoire of managers such as Irving and J. L. Toole, and the new fashionable repertoire that made the theatre of the 1890s particularly compelling, and showed these two types of theatre to be more closely bound together than might be supposed.[8] Having begun his career by working with Squire Bancroft in the late 1860s, the management of John Hare in the 1890s is evidence of the continuity of both acting theories and staging techniques from the beginning to the end of the period under question, and it must also be remembered that Tree, Alexander and Wyndham all started their own careers as actors under Irving's management at the Lyceum Theatre, and this training undoubtedly influenced their approach to more modern drama. As Alexander pointed out in *Parts I Have Played,* 'while, as a manager, I have been associated a great deal with modern work, the record of my parts may possibly surprise some of the younger playgoers, to see how much early training I had in what is commonly called the "legitimate drama"'.[9]

At the end of the day, these actor-managers were not only continuing the legacy of figures such as Irving and Bancroft in terms of their acting techniques, but also perpetuating the very system of actor-management under discussion in this thesis, an arrangement that continued in English theatre well into the twentieth century. Whilst the conflation of actor-manager and audience undoubtedly

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[7] Booth and Kaplan, *The Edwardian Theatre*; Christopher Breward, '"At Home" at the St. James's: Dress, Décor, and the Problem of Fashion in Edwardian Theatre', in *The Edwardian Sense: Art, Design, and Performance in Britain, 1901-1910*, ed. by Morna O'Neill and Michael Hatt, Studies in British Art: 20 (New Haven: Yale Centre for British Art; London: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2010), pp. 141-163 (p. 141).

[8] Richard Foulkes, 'Introduction', *British Theatre in the 1890s: Essays on Drama and the Stage,* ed. by Richard Foulkes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992; repr. 2009), pp. 1-9.

[9] *Parts I have Played,* p. 7.

complicated the separation of the theatrical characters and offstage personas of actor-managers, there is an argument for seeing these 'modern men', and the actor-managers who staged and played them, not as a separate phenomenon of the 1890s, but as an extension of the debates of the skill and legitimization of the actor-manager outlined in the first five chapters of this thesis. This chapter therefore takes the same models of the body as a site of interaction between actor, character and audience, and explores the similarities, as well as the differences, of its manifestation in the 'modern men' of the 1890s. In particular it explores the issue of conflation; the conflation of appearance and character, of onstage and offstage selves, of actor-managers and dramatists, and finally of actor-managers and audiences. In each of these elisions, the body had an important role to play, and continued to function as a means of shoring up the figure of the actor-manager as the heart and soul of late-Victorian theatre.

Modern dress and Moral Ambivalence

Alongside its review of *The Notorious Mrs Ebbsmith* by Arthur Wing Pinero, staged by John Hare at the Garrick Theatre in 1895, the *Sketch* published a piece entitled 'Between the Acts at the Garrick'. In this sketch, two putative audience members, a Pretty Woman (PW) and an Old Playgoer (OP) discussed their experience of the play, with the following result, 'a cynical little woman of the world moved to feeling [and] an old playgoer converted to the new drama'.[10] As well as discussing the plot of the play, which chronicled the collapse of the extra-marital relationship between the free-thinking Mrs Ebbsmith and the young politician Lucas Cleeve, tempted to a reunion with his estranged wife by the allure of conventionality, the piece provided an interesting defence of the 'new drama', an analysis of its constituent parts, and a summary of its perceived appeal for contemporary theatregoers:

> PW: What we want to see on the stage now are real women like this
> Mrs. Ebbsmith and this Gertrude Thorpe; real men like this Lucas
> Cleeve and this Duke of St. Olpherts – living their lives before us,
> revealing their souls to us, so that through them we may be able to

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[10] M. C. S., 'Between the Acts at the Garrick', *Sketch,* 20 March 1895, p. 434.

see deeper into the hearts and lives of the people around us as well
as ourselves.

[…]

OP: What good do we learn from this painful story of a cranky
woman living with a weak, egotistical, sensual man in a lawless
union, of which they ought both to be heartily ashamed?

[…]

PW: Isn't it good to watch the gradual breaking down of
mischievously false theories, to realise the tragic futility of the
revolt of these people against the social and moral laws and religion
itself?[11]

As a means of exploring the 'hearts and lives of the people around us', the new
drama as framed by the Pretty Woman purported to catch and keep the
audience's attention by eliding the characters on the stage with individuals
personally known to audience members. The success of the drama therefore
depended on the successful staging of such a simulacrum, but as the Old Man
and the Pretty Woman both recognized, it was also a type of drama whose plot
was driven primarily by moral conflict, and particularly an exploration of 'the
futility of the revolt of these people against the social and moral laws' of
contemporary living.[12]

In the case of *The Notorious Mrs Ebbsmith,* the plot of the play was driven by the
ideological conflict between Agnes Ebbsmith, Lucas Cleeve, described by the Old
Playgoer as 'weak, egoistical [and] sensual', and Lucas's uncle, the Duke of St.
Olferts and representative of 'society', played by actor-manager John Hare.[13]
Clement Scott's review of the same production for the *Illustrated London News*
summed up his impression of these three protagonists, and their different
characters, in the following way:

The grim and fierce fight with nature by the woman, the natural
irresolution and wavering inconsistency of her lover, whose face

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[11] M. C. S., 'Between the Acts', p. 434.
[12] M. C. S., 'Between the Acts', p.434.
[13] M. C. S., 'Between the Acts', p. 434.

and manner change with every gust of emotion, and the exquisite
suavity, veiled sarcasm, and worldly indifferentism of the polished
little Duke will be treasured among my most cherished memories of
the English actor's art.[14]

For an exercise in siting these characters in contemporary models of theatrical
performance, Scott's acknowledgement that, despite its setting in a
contemporary social environment, the play still required actors to use their 'art'
in the creation of character, is particularly important, and he also linked the
personality of Lucas Cleeve, of 'irresolution and wavering inconsistency', with a
continual shift in the actor Johnston Forbes-Robertson's (1853-1937) facial
characteristics and bodily manner, indicating a perceived confluence of body
and character. Whilst his description of the Duke of St. Olferts was not similarly
explicit, the equation of the trait of 'worldly indifferentism' with the adjective
'polished', suggested a social refinement both of underlying character and
surface presentation. This is borne out in Figures 50a and 50b, illustrations
from Acts I and II of *The Notorious Mrs Ebbsmith* that show Agnes with,
respectively, Lucas Cleeve and the Duke of St. Olferts at two crucial plot
moments. [15] Whilst the illustrator has helpfully labelled each of the characters,
there is little doubt that anyone looking at the images would not be able to
distinguish between the vacillating Lucas and the 'polished' Duke. The Duke,
clad in a formal, and fitted, frock coat, complete with buttonhole and fashionable
spatterdashes, is depicted as a representative of the high society that Lucas and
Agnes have shunned with their unconventional relationship, whilst Lucas
appears to have embraced a more casual mode of both attire and bearing.

Yet what is particularly pertinent about this seeming contrast between the two
personalities in this specific case is the assertion in the play's text that at heart

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[14] Clement Scott, 'The Playhouses', *Illustrated London News,* 23 March 1895, p.
348.
[15] For the scenes from which these illustrations were taken, which both
involved a confrontation between Agnes and the male character in question, see
The Notorious Mrs. Ebbsmith, 13 March 1895. Prompt Script used by Mrs Patrick
Campbell for Production at the Garrick Theatre. Theatre and Performance
Collection, V&A, PLAYS BIN PROMPT, pp. 51-52, 89.

Images Redacted for

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Figures 50a and 50b: Phil Ebbutt, Scenes from Acts I and II of *The Notorious Mrs Ebbsmith,* 1895. Published *Queen,* 23 March 1895, p. 314. Lithographs, c. 9 x 10cm and 11 x 8cm. London: V&A.

the underlying characters of the two men are the same, and that therefore Lucas's casual appearance is not so much an indication of his true moral character, but a disguise of it. When discussing why he was chosen to persuade Lucas to return to a more socially acceptable lifestyle, the Duke of St. Olferts states:

> [ST. OLFERTS]: Set a thief to catch a thief. And by deduction, set one sensualist – who, after all, doesn't take the trouble to deceive himself – to rescue another who does.[16]

In modern commentary, the connection between contemporary fashionable appearances and the perceived moral fibre of characters in plays of the 1890s has been eloquently explored by Joel Kaplan, who discussed the plays of Arthur Wing Pinero alongside the society comedies of Oscar Wilde and dramas written for Charles Wyndham at the Criterion Theatre by Henry Arthur Jones. In all of these productions, Kaplan identified moral conflict as a driving force in the plot, and that this conflict could be traced through characters' appearances, although he was mainly concerned with the expression of this connection in the attire of female protagonists; in the costumes designed by Lucile (later Lady Duff Gordon, 1863-1935) for the *The Liars* at the Criterion, for example, Kaplan argued that the 'smart wickedness' of Lucile's risqué garments 'would be used to argue through the language of clothes a moral bankruptcy Wyndham was loath to let Jones put into words'.[17] Similarly, in *An Ideal Husband* at the St. James's Theatre, the 'overdressed', and licentious Mrs Cheveley appeared deliberately excessive and unfavourable in comparison to the 'chic understatement' of Mabel, the play's young ingénue.[18] Returning to the play in hand, his discussions of the performance of Mrs Patrick Campbell (1865-1940) as the eponymous *Mrs Ebbsmith* analysed the character, and her treatment within the plot, as an exploration of contemporary moral anxiety about the 'New Woman', rooted in the construction of her body as unfashionably dressed, and

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[16] *The Notorious Mrs Ebbsmith*, p. 93.
[17] Kaplan and Stowell, *Theatre & Fashion,* p. 40.
[18] Kaplan and Stowell, *Theatre & Fashion,* pp. 30-33 (p. 31).

therefore not sexually desirable to her paramour Lucas.[19] For Kaplan, Agnes's moral defeat was enacted in the moment where, giving in to the urging of Lucas that she become a more desirable woman, she 'exchanges her plain brown dress for a low-cut one of shimmering black gauze'.[20]

The connection between female dress and perceived moral standards is nothing new in the remits of either fashion or theatre history and, as Tracy Davis has discussed, the 1890s was 'in many respects deeply conservative' as regards women's bodies.[21] The issue of 'provocative performance', predicated upon the idea that the display of women's bodies in performance venues such as music halls encouraged moral depravity, was the subject of a great deal of campaigning, in which, as Davis recognized, the managers of fashionable theatres of the 1890s took a role, claiming to support the covering of women's bodies on the stage.[22] In this respect, in contrast to her previous attire, the revealing nature of Agnes's black gauze evening dress could have been seen as evidence of the character's moral corruption. In truth, as Kaplan pointed out, the construction of the gown itself, including its décolletage, was actually lauded as modish and fashionable in the contemporary press, and seen as far more socially appropriate than the dowdy gown that symbolized Agnes's status as a New Woman. However, he argues that unlike other society plays of the time, in which the dresses inspired the purchase of similar items, Agnes's gown was not viewed as a suitable subject for fashionable copies. This was not because the dress itself was seen as inherently immoral, but because the context of its wearing, and its role in the destruction of Mrs Ebbsmith, was deemed to have imbued the gown with a certain moral turpitude.[23]

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[19] Joel H. Kaplan, 'Pineroticism and the Problem Play', in *British Theatre in the 1890s: Essays on Drama and the Stage,* ed. by Richard Foulkes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992; repr. 2009), pp. 38-58.
[20] Kaplan, 'Pineroticism', p. 49.
[21] Tracy C. Davis, 'Indecency and Vigilance in the Music Halls', in *British Theatre in the 1890s: Essays on Drama and the Stage,* ed. by Richard Foulkes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992; repr. 2009), pp. 111-131 (p. 111).
[22] Davis, 'Indecency and Vigilance', p. 112, 124.
[23] Kaplan and Stowell, *Theatre & Fashion,* pp. 66-67.

This illustrated that when it came to a connection between fashion and contemporary moral standards, or even the viewing of contemporary dress as a basic manifestation of character, context was paramount, and earlier chapters on the offstage body of the actor-manager have demonstrated that this was also true of male dress in social settings.[24] However, it also marks the primary distinction between the manifestations of theatrical, historicized, characters by actor-managers such as Henry Irving, and the central figures of society plays. In terms of the representational perspectives discussed earlier, the body of Iriving's Fabien dei Franchi was described as inherently picturesque, just as Othello was defined as alien through an orientalized representation, and even Charles I as referentially both kingly and pathetic purely based on his external appearance. However, what Kaplan argued for contemporary dramas, which appears to apply equally to male characters, was that whilst modern bodies could be fashionable or unfashionable, 'polished', or 'intellectual-looking', they were always morally ambivalent and dependent upon the context of the drama. This not only required the performer to work in a slightly different way to use their bodies in the process of characterization, but also to work within specific social codes, presenting bodies that conformed to known social types rather than developing artistic codes of representation. Returning to Scott's assessment of the production, the use of the qualifying adjective 'English' to describe the actor's art could be read as having a double meaning in this context. It may have been an acknowledgment that the English school of acting was considered different to that of other nations in terms of technique.[25] Yet it could equally be seen as an assertion that, just as the acting in the play was specifically English, so were the characters created by the drama, springing from a situation and moral conflict that only made sense in an English social and cultural context.[26]

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[24] See 'Sociability and the Artistic Body', pp. 188-196.

[25] For an example of a discussion on the differences between French and English ideas of characterization in secondary literature, see George Taylor, *Players and Performances in the Victorian Theatre* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989; repr. 1993), pp. 149-154.

[26] This is not just a matter of English-speaking either, as an article for the North American Review from 1907 on reading the plays of Henry Arthur Jones suggested that American audiences also needed help to understand the social

Playing a Realistic Type: Conflating Actor-Managers and Characters

The Notorious Mrs Ebbsmith was not the first, nor the last, play by Arthur Wing Pinero that Hare staged successfully in the 1890s. He celebrated the opening of the Garrick Theatre under his own management in 1890 with a production of *The Profligate,* and at the end of the decade, in April 1899, he produced *The Gay Lord Quex* at the Globe Theatre*.* These three plays were not only indicative of the close relationship between Hare and Pinero, however, but also aligned in terms of the parts that Hare chose to play, all of which were fashionable, older gentlemen who might be termed 'rakes': Lord Dangars in *The Profligate,* The Duke of St. Olferts in *The Notorious Mrs Ebbsmith,* and the eponymous Gay Lord Quex, shown respectively in Figures 51, 50b, and 52. As illustrations in contemporary newsprint rather than photographs, these images do not necessarily represent the literal translation of the actor-manager's bodies onto the page, but the impressions of the characters received and remembered by the illustrator. Nevertheless, it is worth noting both a nod to actual consistencies of costume, particularly in the use of accessories such as the cane, buttonhole, and high collar, presumably related to the fashionable status of the characters, and also that all are seen as adopting highly formal codes of dressing. Given the context-specificity of fashionable menswear to different occasions and times of day, it is worth also noting that the scenes depicted in Figs. 50b and 52 were set at the same time of day, and whilst the male characters were involved in visiting, but a formality of dress and manner is characteristic of all three images.[27]

Juxtaposing the illustrations in such a manner flags up the repeated visual elements of Hare's characterization in these three performances, but the echoes of Lord Dangars in the Duke of St. Olferts, or of both these fashionable cynics

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settings of Jones's plays. W. D. Howells, 'On Reading the Plays of Mr. Henry Arthur Jones', *North American Review,* 186 (1907) 205-212 (pp. 210-211).

[27] For these scenes, see Arthur W. Pinero, *The Gay Lord Quex: A Comedy in Four Acts* (London: Heinemann, 1890), p. 18; *Notorious Mrs. Ebbsmith,* p. 89. For the temporal-specificity of menswear at the turn of the century, see Brent Shannon, *The Cut of His Coat: Men, Dress, and Consumer Culture in Britain, 1860-1914* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2006), pp. 101-104.

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Figure 51: Anon., 'Lord Dangars: John Hare', and 'Mrs. Stonehay: Mrs. Gaston Murray', c.1890. Printed Newspaper Illustration, c.10 x 6cm. London: V&A.

Image Redacted for

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Figure 52: J. D., 'Quex's first meeting with Sophy', 1899. Published *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper,* 9 April 1909, p. 1. Newspaper Illustration, c.9 x 8cm.

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Figure 53: Arthur Goodman, John Hare as Valentine Barbrook, Detail from '"Robin Goodfellow", The New Play at the Garrick Theatre'*,* **1893. Published** ***Illustrated London News,*** **11 January 1893, p. 40. Lithograph, 15 x 9cm.**

in his performance as the Marquess of Quex is not just a product of hindsight. Writing of *The Gay Lord Quex* in 1890, journalist Moy Thomas (1828-1910), described his character as 'a very substantial addition to his gallery of portraits of shrewd, polished and pleasing men of the world', using the visual language of portraiture to describe Hare's construction of these characters, and suggesting that Hare was known for capturing a particular type of character, especially in modern-day dramas.[28] As T. Edgar Pemberton noted in his biography of Hare, this was not limited to plays by Pinero, and on Hare's performance as Valentine Barbrook, the villainous hero of R. C. Carton's (1856-1928) *Robin Goodfellow*, performed at the Garrick Theatre in 1893 and shown in Figure 53, Pemberton quoted critic William Archer (1856-1924) as saying: '"It is not the first character of the same type which Mr. Hare has presented to us; but the beauty of the thing lies in the delicacy of its differentiation from its predecessors."'[29] As a proponent of the 'New Drama', characterized in terms of naturalism and realism on the stage, Archer claimed that Hare was matching a subtlety of acting style to his realistic characters, and it is equally possible that the subtle variations of body within a fashionable frame, evident in each of these images, contributed to the 'delicacy of [...] differentiation' between characters whilst maintaining what Archer referred to elsewhere as '"what we are accustomed to consider Mr. Hare's 'line'"'.[30] As demonstrated in the first chapter of this thesis, however, Hare's theory of the art of acting, and particularly his mode of characterization and bodily technique, was less different than might be supposed from that of more melodramatic actors such as Irving, and it appears to have been the constriction of the modern setting, and the subsequently small variations in Hare's appearance and manner, which affected the perception of his theatrical technique as different.[31]

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[28] W. Moy Thomas, 'The Gay Lord Quex', *Graphic*, 15 April 1899, p. 462.

[29] William Archer, cited in T. Edgar Pemberton, *John Hare: Comedian, 1865-1895* (London: Routledge, 1895), p. 137.

[30] Archer, cited in Pemberton, *John Hare,* p. 140.

[31] See '"Distinctly Intended to be a 'George'": Character, Appearance and the Skill of the Actor', pp. 52-60.

Yet despite some differences in realization, the underlying character traits of each of these roles was largely the same, and as indicated by George Rowell's essay on the society comedies produced at the Criterion Theatre in the 1890s, Hare was not alone in having a preference for a particularly type of character in modern-dress productions. Rowell identified that Charles Wyndham's type was what he termed the '*raisonneur* of Society's conventions' and said that, from his performance as John Mildmay in a revival of Tom Taylor's (1817-1880) *Still Waters Run Deep* in 1889 at the Criterion Theatre, 'This role of the discreet man of the world quietly exerting himself to rescue the susceptible from the consequences of their indiscretion was one Wyndham was to make peculiarly his own.'[32] This was particularly evident in the society comedies of Henry Arthur Jones, and the roles of Sir Richard Kato in *The Case of Rebellious Susan,* staged at the Criterion Theatre in 1894, and Sir Christopher Deering in *The Liars,* produced at the same theatre in 1897.[33] The key difference between Hare and Wyndham's two types of character was supposedly that, whilst both were representative of the upper echelons of society, Wyndham was emphatic that his characters should be representatives of conventional morality and social order; both Richard Kato and Christopher Deering were the moral arbiters of their peers. Crucially, Rowell tied Wyndham's preference not to a concern of comic potential, or acting technique, but to the actor-manager's concern for his own social reputation, stating that the actor did not wish to be seen in a part that would tarnish his own moral standing.[34] As Pemberton related in his biography of Wyndham, it was in this type of role, as the paternalistic Mr Kilroy in R. C. Carton's *The Squire of Dames,* that Wyndham chose to embrace for his command performance at Osborne House in 1896, 'a well-drawn character [...that...] was one after his own heart'.[35]

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[32] George Rowell, 'Criteria for Comedy: Charles Wyndham at the Criterion Theatre', in *British Theatre in the 1890s: Essays on Drama and the Stage,* ed. by Richard Foulkes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992; repr. 2009), pp. 24-37 (pp. 31, 28).
[33] Rowell, 'Criteria for Comedy', p. 30.
[34] Rowell, 'Criteria for Comedy', pp. 30-31, 35-36.
[35] T. Edgar Pemberton, *Sir Charles Wyndham: A Biography* (London: Hutchinson, 1904), pp. 273-4.

Perhaps aware of the ambiguous moral status of his fashionable *roués,* neither of Hare's two command performances in the 1890s featured his polished men of the world; as earlier chapters of this thesis indicate, there was a distinct difference between registers of masculine identity and their social acceptability in different physical spaces, of which Royal residences represented the most conservative of forums for masculine display.[36] In addition, whilst Wyndham's conservative gentlemen may have represented a more conventional, middle-class morality, St. Olferts, Quex, and even Dangars, functioned within their respective play texts as voices of 'society', arguably a slightly higher social equivalent to Rowell's *rasionneurs*. It seems rather that Hare's characters were designed to appeal to a different level of society than Wyndham's, and his aspirations off the stage to fit in, if not with the morals, at least with the refined and polished exterior of his gentleman characters, are evident in Figure 54. Painted by John Everett Millais in 1893, the original was given to Hare's wife by the painter '"for her lifetime and my own, on the understanding that it shall ultimately become the property of some National collection, to be named by him"', but it now hangs in the collections of the Garrick Club, and therefore arguably aligns Hare with the social, distinctive and gentlemanly identities outlined in earlier chapters; also used as the frontispiece to Pemberton's biography of the actor-manager, it was clearly intended to form a role in the actor-manager's legacy.[37]

Intriguingly, Hare apparently felt that to simply be painted by Millais was a sign of his artistic and social achievement, and he was quoted by Pemberton as saying '"I shall always feel that the greatest compliment ever paid me was

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[36] Hare's two command performances were Sydney Grundy's *A Pair of Spectacles* at Windsor Castle in 1891, and *Diplomacy,* the English adaptation of Victorien Sardou's *Dora,* at Balmoral in 1893. Pemberton, *John Hare,* pp. 176-180**.** See also 'Sociability and the Artistic Body', pp. 188-189.

[37] Hare, cited in Pemberton, *John Hare,* p. 166. As the opening gambit of a work of biographical literature, a frontispiece enjoys a privileged relationship with the identity of the subject, as it not only provides a prominent opportunity to showcase a particularly important portrait, but also to encapsulate the intentions of the biographer in constructing the subject for posterity. See Julie F. Codell, *The Victorian Artist: Artists' Lifewritings in Britain, ca. 1870-1910* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 173, 197.

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Figure 54: John Everett Millais (after), Portrait of John Hare, 1893. Photogravure, 58 x 41cm. London: NPG.

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Figure 55: Anon., Photograph of John Hare as Quex, Detail from '"The Gay Lord Quex" by Mr. John Hare's Company in America', 1901. Published *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News,* 19 January 1901, p. 772. Photographic print, 11 x 5cm.

Millais' desire to paint my portrait."'[38] As the last actor-manager to have been painted by Millais was Henry Irving, who sat for the painter in 1884, perhaps Hare felt that this painting also represented his relative status amongst fellow actor-managers. Peter Funnell noted in a catalogue of Millais' portraits that these images, like those of Sargent, were designed to allow the artist to achieve an 'integration into the highest levels of late Victorian society', and in the same volume, H. C. G. Matthew also recognized Millais as an artist of 'British public life', whose normative portraits of politicians aligned his sitters with the professional identities and collective biographical narratives of the previous chapter.[39] Fig. 54 may therefore have contained the triple connotation of Hare as artist, professional, and fashionable gentleman, depending upon the eye of the viewer, and its contextualization. What is especially remarkable about the image in a discussion of Hare's 'modern men' is the visual similarity between Hare as painted by Millais, and the characters being performed by the actor on the stage at the same time; there is a resemblance to this portrait in his Gay Lord Quex of 1899, shown in Figure 55 in an onstage photograph taken when Hare's company was performing the piece in New York in 1901. From a historiographical perspective, it is also relevant that the Production File of the Gay Lord Quex in the collections of the V&A contain a copy of the photogravure of Millais's portrait, possibly in the mistaken belief that it showed Hare in character, rather than the actor off the stage.

This confusion, between modern men on the stage, and the appearances of actors off it, discussed above in reference to Pellegrini's caricature of Squire Bancroft, is increasingly in evidence in the cataloguing of photographs of actor-managers in the last decade of the nineteenth century; a number of photographs and postcards from this period of Hare, Tree, and Alexander, in both V&A and NPG collections, are revealed on closer examination to be images of the actors in

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[38] Hare, cited in Pemberton, *John Hare,* pp. 165-166.
[39] Peter Funnell, 'Introduction: Millais's Reputation and the Practice of Portraiture', and H. C. G. Mathew, 'Portraits of Men: Millais and Victorian Public Life', in *Millais: Portraits,* ed. by Peter Funnell and others (London: NPG, 1999), pp. 10-35, 136-179 (pp. 31, 161).

character on the stage.[40] For a historian attempting to define the way portraits functioned in the legacy of the actor-manager, and for contemporaries being inundated with images of actors as both a promotional tool for their performances and a proxy for personal interaction off the stage, the elision between character and offstage persona is potentially problematic. It is easy to see both why Wyndham might have intentionally avoided onstage portraits that impacted negatively on his social standing, and also why Hare might have chosen to play characters that were polished and formal in appearance, of a social class and fashionable status that he wished to claim for himself in everyday life. The question of agency, that is the ability to decide upon the plays staged at a theatre, and the roles assumed by particular actors, therefore becomes relevant to this discussion, and this is where it becomes possible to differentiate between images of leading actors and those of actor-managers in character. In Hare's productions of Pinero's plays, for example, neither Lord Dangars nor St. Olferts was the central character of the play, but Hare chose to play these roles because they were suited to the way that he wanted to appear on the stage; his willingness to assume a main part such as the Marquess of Quex when it offered him the opportunity to develop his preferred type of character, demonstrated that he was not averse to leading roles *per se.* Similarly, Charles Wyndham turned down *The Importance of Being Earnest* when it was offered to him at the Criterion Theatre in favour of continuing in the role of Sir Richard Kato in *The Case of Rebellious Susan*, partly because he felt that he was not suited to the part of John Worthing, and Hare rejected *An Ideal Husband* for the Garrick Theatre.[41]

A Note on Joint Authorship

The very fact of Wilde's offering *Earnest* to Wyndham, and of Hare's association with Pinero, or Wyndham's with Henry Arthur Jones, illustrated a problem of agency particularly associated with theatrical developments of the 1890s: the mutual dependency of actor-managers and new dramatists, which had an impact on both the reality and the perception of the actor-manager as the

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[40] See Appendix A for more information.

[41] Rowell, 'Criteria for Comedy', p. 36.

creative driving force behind contemporary productions and character types. As historians including Leonard Connolly and Jeffrey Richards have discussed, one of the major criticisms leveled at what was seen as an old-fashioned model of actor-management in the 1890s, embodied by Irving's tenure at the Lyceum Theatre, was a persistent refusal not only to stage productions with contemporary settings, but to engage with the new generation of English dramatists producing such work.[42] Quoting a series of acerbic essays written by George Bernard Shaw for the *Saturday Review* in the mid-1890s, Connolly adopted the position that Irving's resistance to such work stemmed from an unwillingness to surrender any form of control over aspects of his productions. This did not just apply to the work of contemporary dramatists, in Shaw's opinion, but even to Irving's Shakespearian productions and when his '"own creation came into conflict with Shakespear's [...] he simply played in flat contradiction of the lines"'.[43] Similarly Richards, whilst recognising Irving's collaboration with contemporary playwrights, such as W. G. Wills, who wrote *Charles I,* or Victorien Sardou, who gave the Lyceum the rights to *Robespierre*, outlined Irving's attitude towards the production of such plays as one based on the idea of rights transfer: avoiding profit shares, playwrights for the Lyceum Theatre were paid a fixed fee for their work, and had little input in the staging of such pieces.[44]

However, if this was the criticism of Irving's theatre, that his refusal to embrace modern dramatists stemmed from a desire to retain control over all aspects of a production, the concomitant implication was that those actor-managers who did embrace such authors and texts were relinquishing some of their artistic authority over their staged productions, and this inevitably included a diminished control over the movement and design of the body. Even a cursory examination of the play texts written by Wilde, Pinero and Jones in this period

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[42] L. W. Connolly, 'The Matter with Irving: Bernard Shaw and Irving Reconsidered', in *Sir Henry Irving: A Re-Evaluation of the Late Victorian Actor-Manager,* ed. by Richard Foulkes (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), pp. 185-193; Jeffrey Richards, 'Playwrights', in *Sir Henry Irving: A Victorian Actor and his World* (London: Hambledon and London, 2005), pp. 163-195.

[43] George Bernard Shaw, cited in Connolly, 'The Matter with Irving', p. 190.

[44] Richards, *Sir Henry Irving,* pp. 190-194.

indicates a growing desire on the part of the authors to frame not only the words spoken by the actors in their productions, but also the visual elements of performance; detailed stage directions at the start of every act or scene, running in extreme cases to a page or more, give not just the time of day and setting, but the layout of the stage, and even detailed descriptions of the scene's furnishings. For example, the opening of Act II of Jones' *Wealth*, staged by Herbert Beerbohm Tree at the Haymarket Theatre in 1889, and revived in 1893, reads:

> SCENE:- MATTHEW RUDDOCK's private room in Threadneedle
> Street – a handsome business apartment – door at back a little
> to the right, a window with blind looking into Clerk's office a
> little to the left at back down stage right MATTHEW's desk with
> library revolving chair – down stage left secretary's desk with
> chair – a sofa with back against wall down stage extreme right –
> one or two other office chairs where required. Large iron safes,
> desks, drawers, ledgers, etc. all round room.[45]

A similar rigour was applied to the appearance of characters, with Percy Palfreyman described as 'a languid boy of seventeen, with the manners and air of a blasé man of 50', and Doctor Martin Driscoll as 'a grave, reserved, scientific man of forty', and stage directions even dictated in detail character movements, mannerisms, and their physical responses to emotional states.[46]

In John Russell Stephens' account of the changing nature of the playwright's profession in the nineteenth century, he described not only the growing prominence of dramatists in the 1890s, but also their working methods, and particularly their attendance at, and involvement with, the rehearsal process, describing their role as that of the 'author-director'.[47] In an attempt to control

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[45] *Wealth,* 23 October 1893. Act II Promptboook for Production Revival at the Haymarket Theatre. Bristol University Theatre Collection, Herbert Beerbohm Tree Archive. HBT/0000107/2, p. 1.

[46] *Wealth,* 23 October 1893. Act I Promptbook for Production Revival at the Haymarket Theatre. Bristol University Theatre Collection: Herbert Beerbohm Tree Archive. HBT/0000107/1, pp. 1, 5.

[47] John Russell Stephens, *The Profession of the Playwright: British Theatre, 1800-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1992; repr. 2006), pp. 164-133 (p. 167).

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Figure 56a and 56b: Pages from *Wealth*, 13 January 1894. Partbook for Matthew Ruddock (Herbert Beerbohm Tree) for Production Revival at the Haymarket Theatre. Bristol University Theatre Collection: Herbert Beerbohm Tree Archive. HBT/000057/3, pp. 2, 6.

the realization of their plays, for example, Jones and Pinero 'used printed rehearsal copies deliberately to underscore the privileged status of the author's text over any conscious or unconscious re-writing either by actors or managers'.[48] As Stephens acknowledged, this dictatorial attitude on the part of the dramatists often led to clashes in the rehearsal room between authors, actors and managers. This attempt at control was evident to contemporaries as well as to historians, and on 2 April 1892, *Vanity Fair*'s 'Spy' published a caricature of Henry Arthur Jones with the title 'Author-Manager'. However, as Figures 56a and 56b indicate, the presence of dramatists in the rehearsal room, and even the use of printed copies, did not prevent substantial alterations to the play's text by actor-managers, particularly when it came to their own characters. Taken from Tree's own part-book for his revival of a production of *Wealth* in 1889, in which he played the male lead, Matthew Craddock, the handwritten annotations indicate extensive changes: cuts to the text, amended stage directions, changes in the order and emphasis of words, and even a change of name for one of Craddock's business associates from 'Clarkson' to 'Patterson'.

In actual fact, therefore, whilst there was undoubtedly a need for actor-managers such as Hare, Tree and Wyndham to relinquish some control over aspects of the production, to work with increasingly restrictive texts and to negotiate with the ever-present authors of the dramas they were staging, the society plays as produced at the Garrick Theatre, Haymarket Theatre, Criterion Theatre and St. James's Theatre are best conceived in terms of joint authorship, with the managers asserting their role as author as much as the authors attempted to assert theirs as manager. This reflected on the artistry of both figures, on the construction of the drama, and on the creation of particular types of character within the context of the rehearsal room, and should be considered in the light of the close professional relationships between dramatists, critics, and actor-managers that have pervaded this thesis, and which have consistently been relationships keyed on mutual artistic and social benefit rather than

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[48] Stephens, *Profession of the Playwright,* p. 169.

antagonistic clashes.[49] Subsequently, in the analysis of the construction of character in such plays, and particularly in the delineation of character types within a dramatist's *oeuvre,* it is important not the privilege the printed text of the drama, but to consider the plays as they were staged and performed, including how characters were constructed visually on the stage. In the 1890s, this is particularly pertinent to one specific type of character, defined by the fashionable construction of the body and associated with different actor-managers, but nonetheless passed down as a dramatist's creation primarily through an analysis of play texts: the Wildean Dandy.

The Wildean Dandy

In an essay for *Modern Drama* in 1960, Arthur Ganz divided the characters in Wilde's society comedies of the 1890s into two major types, the 'Philistine', who 'admits that he has sinned in rejecting the mores of society' and the 'dandy', who 'denies that sin exists and creates a set of dandiacal standards by which he indicts society himself'.[50] These dandiacal standards were, Ganz claimed, based upon an appreciation of aesthetics and a 'reverence for the exquisite [...and...] the substitution of aesthetic values for moral values'.[51] Whilst acknowledging that the characters were influenced by earlier models of dandyism, however, Ganz claimed that this aesthetic element, based on an artistic appreciation for form, was 'peculiarly Wildean', and that both the dandy and the philistine were, in effect, manifestations of opposing and conflicting aspects of Wilde's own outlook on life.[52] Ganz's article may have been written over fifty years ago, but it has been particularly influential on the construction of the dandiacal characters in the comedies as 'Wildean dandies', based upon a conflation of the characters with the author's own social attitudes and anxieties as, for example, Kaplan

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[49] See '"Distinctly Intended to be a 'George'": Character, Appearance and the Skill of the Actor', pp. 57-59, 'Sociability and the Artistic Body, pp. 199-207.
[50] Arthur Ganz, 'The Divided Self in the Comedies of Oscar Wilde', *Modern Drama,* 3 (1960), 16-23 (p. 19).
[51] Ganz, 'The Divided Self', p. 21.
[52] Ganz, 'The Divided Self', pp. 20-21.

described the character of Lord Goring in *An Ideal Husband* as 'recast as a variant upon Wilde's own prelapsarian self'.[53]

Similarly, in her extensive work on the contemporary reception of Wilde's writings, Regenia Gagnier saw Wilde's own identity and self-images as a key factor in his literary creations, equating criticism of Harry Wotton's behaviour in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* with attacks on Wilde's own identity as 'a presumptuous social climber [...whose...] indefatigable self-advertisement was simply not acceptable behaviour for a gentleman'.[54] Both Gagnier and Ganz saw Wilde's dandies in terms of an opposition to social norms, and Gagnier pitted the Wildean dandy directly against the contemporary ideals of gentlemanly behaviour.[55] Yet, as outlined in an earlier chapter of this thesis, a reassessment of dandyism in terms of wider masculine identities in the late nineteenth century suggests that it was in general less oppositional than historians have claimed, and Norman Kohl qualified Ganz's essay by stating that 'the real problem of the plays [...] is the tension between individual and society', and that the dandy is characterized by an 'ambivalent [rather than antagonistic] attitude towards society'; this supports the assertion that even the Wildean dandy should be seen as a less fixed and more flexible character.[56] Nevertheless, what all of these writers were agreed upon was that from a class perspective, if not a moral standpoint, gentlemanly status was a pre-requisite for the Wildean dandy, and that the characters were highly specific products of the fashionable English upper classes.

In a lecture on 'The Delineation of Character in Drama', delivered towards the end of his career as a dramatist, Henry Arthur Jones spoke of the particular

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[53] Kaplan and Stowell, *Theatre & Fashion,* p. 27.
[54] Regenia Gagnier, *Idylls of the Marketplace: Oscar Wilde and the Victorian Public* (Stanford: Leland Stanford Junior University, 1986; Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1987), p. 65.
[55] Ganz, 'The Divided Self', pp. 21-23; Gagnier, 'Dandies and Gentlemen', in *Idylls of the Marketplace,* pp. 49-99.
[56] Norbert Kohl, *Oscar Wilde: The Works of a Conformist Rebel,* trans. by David Henry Wilson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989; repr. 2011), pp. 206, 216. See 'Sociability and the Artistic Body', pp. 191-196.

problem of outlining realistic characters in modern dramas, and finding the correct actors to play them:

> We find on the modern stage a demand for minute and exact photographs of our contemporaries [...] If the modern dramatist is to be called upon to give realistic and scientific delineations of character, he is surely entitled to ask for their precise duplicates in real life to play them [...] If a dramatist has drawn a character with certain marked qualities, or peculiarities, his creation may be maimed or altogether destroyed by an actor with a wrong, or deficient, or contradictory personality.[57]

Jones was clearly playing into a perceived conflation of theatrical characters and the offstage personalities of the actors who played them. Nevertheless, even accepting that Wilde and Jones were not always in agreement about dramatic principle, his advice on the selection of actors seems to be particularly relevant to the Wildean dandy, a type of character that was undoubtedly seen as having 'marked qualities' and 'peculiarities'. Given the primacy of aesthetic values in Wilde's own conception of art and the Wildean dandy's concern with fashionability, it was presumably not only the 'personality [...] manner and methods of the actor' that would be important in the realization these characters, but also the visual embodiment of the character on the stage, and as such, it is no surprise that Wilde, in line with the advice presented by Jones in this lecture, wrote his dandies with specific actors in mind.

When Kaplan analogized the character of Lord Goring in *An Ideal Husband* to that of the 'prelapsarian' Wilde, he focused on the description of Goring in the 1899 published edition of the play's text, and the visual motifs by which Wilde attempted to echo his own appearance in that of the character, who was described as carrying a 'Louis Seize cane', one of Wilde's known affectations, at the beginning of Act III, when he was also described as dressed '"in evening

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[57] Henry Arthur Jones, 'The Delineation of Character in Drama', in *The Foundations of A National Drama: A Collection of Lectures, Essays and Speeches, Delivered and Written in the Years 1896-1912* (London: Chapman & Hall, 1913), pp. 180-197 (pp. 195-196).

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Figure 57: Alfred Ellis, 'Lord Goring', 1895. Published in 'The Drama of the Day, "An Ideal Husband" at the Haymarket Theatre', Supplement to *Sketch*, 13 Feb 1895, p. VI. Photographic Print, c.12 x 9cm.

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Figure 58: Alfred Ellis, 'Lord Goring and Phipps (Mr. Brookfield)', 1895. Published in 'The Drama of the Day, "An Ideal Husband" at the Haymarket Theatre', Supplement to *Sketch,* 13 Feb 1895, p. VI. Photographic Print, c.12 x 9cm.

dress with a button-hole […] a silk hat and inverness cape"'.[58] As Kaplan rightly pointed out, this description was not included in the original manuscript, but was the result of substantial revisions made by Wilde for the purposes of publication. However, in February 1895, just after the play opened at the Haymarket Theatre, the *Sketch* published a booklet of twenty-one photographs with scenes from the production, a number of which, including Figures 57 and 58, showed Lord Goring. What these photographs illustrate is that some of the clothing accessories that Wilde worked into the 1899 published edition of the play, such as the Louis XVI walking cane, and the Inverness cape, the latter of which can be seen in Fig. 57 over the arm of Phipps, were already part of the character of Lord Goring as originally performed by Charles Hawtrey (1858-1923). The body retrospectively fitted by Kaplan to Wilde's dandiacal character was therefore a product firstly of the play's production, and only secondly of the dramatist's text. Moreover, in terms of the Wildean dandy as a 'type', designed for specific actors, Hawtrey's Lord Goring is also interesting because it was not originally intended by Wilde for the Haymarket Theatre, but for the Garrick Theatre and actor-manager John Hare, who had commissioned the drama and then abandoned it in the middle of Wilde's writing. It is presumably not coincidental that the eventual realization of Lord Goring, as shown in Figs. 57 and 58, was reminiscent of Hare's fashionable rakes, and Wilde's dandiacal character therefore appears less as an individuated type, and more as a reworking of a type that was already relatively common in contemporary drama, and that Hare was known for playing.

Wilde may have written Lord Goring for Hare, but the part was never performed by the actor-manager, and nor was Jack Worthing in *The Importance of Being Earnest* ever played by the author's first choice for the part, Charles Wyndham. Moreover, Wilde seems to have been equally unsure of the actor-manager Herbert Beerbohm Tree, who in 1893 played arguably Wilde's most aggressively dandiacal role, Lord Illingworth in *A Woman of No Importance.* In her recollections of Herbert's career, Maud Tree (1863-1937) related that Wilde came to stay with the couple in Glasgow while the play was in development so

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[58] Wilde cited in Kaplan and Stowell, *Theatre & Fashion,* p. 27.

that they could work on the script together, but whilst Wilde did write the play for Beerbohm, he was apparently reluctant to consider the actor-manager as capable of playing a 'Wildean dandy'.[59] He allegedly tried to restrain Tree's characterization of the part in a fraught rehearsal process, as part of which he told the actor-manager that Lord Illingworth was explicitly modeled on his own character.[60] This was not lost on reviewers, and the *Times* claimed that the character 'cultivates a philosophy *à la* Oscar Wilde', and that: 'Mr. Oscar Wilde's leading character, in short, can only be explained by himself; he is not otherwise to be understood.'[61] This was framed, according to the critic, by the character's epigrammatic dialogue, and in homage to this idea, many reviewers quoted at length the aphorisms written by Oscar Wilde as proof of both the author's social opinions and the personalities of his dandies; quoted phrases included Illingworth's self-definition as a dandy, the claim 'better be a dandy than a Puritan'.[62]

Yet a prompt copy for Tree's 1893 production of *A Woman of No Importance,* held in Bristol University's Theatre Collection, suggests this self-definition was not simply a translation of Wilde's ideas onto the stage. As with the prompt book of *Wealth,* shown earlier, the whole play has been heavily altered in rehearsal, and a transcription of the section of text that contains Lord Illingworth's declaration of the power of dandyism, is reproduced below and indicates that, as with many of his other characters, Tree's Wildean dandy was a product, literally, of joint authorship:

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[59] Maud Tree, 'Herbert and I', in *Herbert Beerbohm Tree: Some Memories of Him and His Art*, ed. by Max Beerbohm, 2nd edn (London: Hutchinson, [1920?]), pp. 1-171 (p. 77)*.*

[60] See Peter Raby's notes on the casting of *A Woman of No Importance.* Peter Raby, 'Introduction', in Oscar Wilde, *The Importance of Being Earnest and Other Plays,* ed. by Peter Raby (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. vii-xxv (pp. xv-xvi).

[61] 'Haymarket Theatre', *Times,* 20 April 1893, in *Haymarket Theatre,* 1893. Press Cuttings Album for Productions at the Haymarket Theatre. Bristol University Theatre Collection, Herbert Beerbohm Tree Archive. HBT/TB/000008, p. 214. Emphasis as original.

[62] Eothen, '"A Woman of No Importance" at the Haymarket Theatre', *Bury Post,* 6 June 1893, in *Haymarket Theatre,* 1893, p. 240.

LORD I: Profligate, Gerald, you will never be. You will choose your pleasures too carefully, too exquisitely for that. But Puritanism you will always reject. ~~It is not a creed for a gentleman. And, as a beginning, you will make it your ideal to be a dandy always.~~ [It is better to be a dandy, than a Puritan, any day].

GERALD: ~~I should like to wear nice things awfully, but my mother says~~ [I have always been told] a man should never think [much] about his clothes.

LORD I: ~~Women~~ [People] are so absolutely superficial ~~themselves~~ [nowadays], that they don't understand the philosophy of the superficial.[63]

Thus, while Wilde's original text did still align Illingworth with the dandy's creed, the assertion that 'It is better to be a dandy, than a Puritan', placing the two beliefs in direct contrast with one another was not an original line by Wilde at all, but an intervention into the text made by Tree. In an 1894 printed edition of the play, the line has been completely changed once again, this time to read, 'The future belongs to the dandy. It is the exquisites who are going to rule.'[64] It illustrated that if the dandy was to be entirely defined by his own words, Tree's dandyism was different to that of subsequent actors in the role of Illingworth.

Aside from being evidence of the synthesis of Tree's and Wilde's dialogue, this passage has two further implications for the view of dandyism as expressed in this production. Tree, through the character of Lord Illingworth, acknowledged that there were different levels of masculine respectability within upper-class social circles, but he distinguished between the dandy, defined by his relationship with clothing, but still able to control his passions and be a respectable member of society, and the more extreme profligate who chose pleasures neither 'carefully' nor 'exquisitely' and abandoned respectable

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[63] Items in square brackets show handwritten insertions into the text. *A Woman of No Importance,* 19 April 1893. Act III Promptbook for Production at Haymarket Theatre. Bristol University Theatre Collection: Herbert Beerbohm Tree Archive. HBT/000018/1-14.

[64] Oscar Wilde, *A Woman of No Importance* (London: John Lane, 1894), p. 90.

behaviour. An interest in dress and fashion and a veneer of gentlemanly behaviour defined Illingworth the dandy, but it was his more reprehensible conduct, that of the profligate, which undermined his social respectability. Reviews of the production, most of which acknowledged his appearance as 'elegant', 'good-looking', 'handsome', or 'fashionable', differentiated similarly between his appearance and conduct. The *Stage* characterized him as 'all polish and no heart', and the *Daily Telegraph* said that there might be 'some well-bred doubt as to which of the two great divisions of humanity, the sheep or the goats, was that to which so well-dressed a cynic belonged'. The *Chronicle* claimed 'externally he is a gentleman; at heart he is a libertine', and finally a reviewer for the *Westminster Gazette* recalled Tree's performance as that of 'the most aristocratic cad and caddish aristocrat imaginable'.[65] Tree's success in this part was mainly attributed to his ability to bring together these two parts of Illingworth's character to create a plausible performance and therefore it was viewed in terms of the skill of the actor, with the *Stage* also saying, 'To make such a cad acceptable to an audience requires great skill on the part of the actor, and fortunately Mr. Beerbohm Tree is ready for the trial [...] He looks the part admirably, and his easy, distinguished style lends a reality to the part it would not otherwise obtain.'[66]

This reality, of Tree the dandy, was, however, not without precedent and, like Hare's rakes, Tree's skill in the portrayal of Lord Illingworth was also a product of his previous theatrical performances. Two years before *A Woman of No Importance*, Beerbohm Tree had staged Jones' *The Dancing Girl,* where he played the Duke of Guisebury, a fashionable rake who may not have self-defined as a dandy, but was described in much the same terms as those often used to define the Wildean dandy, as a 'reckless man of fashion [...] utterly unable to control himself', a 'careless, indolent creature of fashion', and a 'man whose life

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[65] 'The Haymarket', *Stage,* 27 April 1893, 'Haymarket Theatre', *Telegraph,* 20 April 1891, 'The Haymarket', *Stage,* 27 April 1893, 'Oscar Wilde's New Play', *Chronicle,* 20 April 1893, and 'Mr. Oscar Wilde's New Play "A Woman of No Importance" at the Haymarket', *Westminster Gazette,* 22 April 1893', in *Haymarket Theatre,* 1893, pp. 230, 214, 215, 221.
[66] 'The Haymarket', *Stage,* 27 April 1893.

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Figure 59: Barrauds, Photograph of Herbert Beerbohm Tree as the Duke of Guisebury, 1891. Albumen Cabinet Card, 16 x 11cm. London: V&A

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Figure 60: Barraud, 'Mr. H. Beerbohm Tree as "The Duke of Guisebury" in "The Dancing Girl"', 1891. Albumen Cabinet Card, 15 x 11cm. London: V&A

is absorbed in useless, selfish pleasure'.[67] His appearance in Act I also used his clothing to define his status as a man of leisure and the upper classes, as he appeared on the windswept island of St. Endellion dressed for yachting (shown in Figure 59). In the second act, he reinforced his knowledge of the attire appropriate for different circumstances with fashionable morning attire (Figure 60, shown with his dog 'Bully Boy'), and in Act III formal evening wear for his final social extravaganza. The similarity between the roles of the Duke of Guisebury and Lord Illingworth in terms of both character and fashionability did not go unnoticed by reviewers, who claimed that 'the part of Lord Illingworth is fairly entitled to rank with Mr. Tree's Duke of Guisebury in *The Dancing Girl;* it has the same wickedness, elegance and polish'.[68]

Similarly, Lord Illingworth entered the set of *A Woman of No Importance* in an ensemble that emphasized his life as a man of leisure (Figure 61), in a pale suit, dark silk cravat and homburg hat, the dress of a man enjoying a sojourn in the countryside; the action of the play is set at a gathering at Lady Hunstanton's estate. He appears later in the play in at least two other similar suits, both of which appear in illustrations of the character, one plain, and the other made from a fabric with a large check (one contemporary commentator labelled him 'Mephistopheles in a big check suit').[69] As shown from a sketch that appears to have been drawn on the front page of Mrs Arbuthnot's Act II prompt book (Figure 62), suggesting that Tree was wearing his costume for the character in the rehearsal room, and by the fact that both of these costumes are repeatedly

[67] 'Haymarket Theatre', *Morning Post,* 15 January 1891; 'Haymarket Theatre', *Morning Advertiser,* 15 January 1891, in *Haymarket Theatre,* 1891. Press Cuttings Album for Productions at the Haymarket Theatre. Bristol University Theatre Collection, Herbert Beerbohm Tree Archive. HBT/TB/000007, pp. 3, 4; 'Haymarket Theatre', *Marylebone & Paddington Independent*, 15 January 1891. Cutting in Theatre and Performance Collection, V&A.
[68] 'Haymarket Theatre', *Times,* 20 April 1893, in *Haymarket Theatre,* 1893, p. 214. References to Lord Guisebury in reviews of *A Woman of No Importance* also appeared in, amongst others: [Untitled Review], *Gun News,* 6 June 1893, 'Babbly on Babylon', *Sunday Chronicle,* 23 April 1983, 'Mr. Oscar Wilde's New Play "A Woman of No Importance" at the Haymarket', *Westminster Gazette,* 22 April 1893', in *Haymarket Theatre,* 1893, pp. 237, 223, 221.
[69] 'Haymarket Theatre', *Morning,* 20 April 1893 in *Haymarket Theatre,* 1893, p. 216.

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**Figure 61: Burford, 'Mr. Beerbohm Tree as Lord Illingworth in "A Woman of No Importance"',
c.1905. Bromide Postcard Print, 14 x 9cm. London: V&A**

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Figure 62: Marginalia Showing Herbert Beerbohm Tree as Lord Illingworth. *[A] Woman of No Importance,* **19 April 1892. Partbook for Mrs. Arbuthnot (Mrs. Bernard Beere) for Production at Haymarket Theatre. Bristol University Theatre Archive: Herbert Beerbohm Tree Collection. HBT/000018/15-21.**

those chosen to go with illustrations in reviews, this image of Lord Illingworth, in suit and hat, and carrying a cane, remained the predominant impression of the character. Like the Duke of Guisebury, Illingworth also had the opportunity to appear in evening dress, as Act II was set at after-dinner drinks in the house, and what both plays therefore allowed for was the display of a large range of costumes, with the variety of the times of day and settings also permitting Tree's characters to be displayed truly as 'men of fashion', a great deal of flexibility for male protagonists to display a range of fashionability and express an aristocratic concern for clothes that might be called dandyism, even in a non Wildean context.

In line with James Eli Adams' description of the close connections between dandyism, gentlemanliness, and masculine identities, dandyism in its general context has been reincorporated in this thesis with more mainstream masculine identities, and divorced from a historiographical reading of the figure as sexually and morally ambiguous, but this is more difficult to do with the Wildean dandies, who are perceived to have been tainted by their close associations with the social morality of their author, tried in 1895 on charges of gross indecency.[70] Yet in Nicholas Freeman's excellent study on current events and popular opinion in 1895, framed through a close examination of contemporary newspapers, he is quick to point out that viewing the hysteria surrounding Wilde's trial in terms of a sudden turning point in understandings of masculine identity and homosexuality is largely a product of later commentators, invested in viewing it as a point of social change with the benefits of hindsight and in a similar way, studies of the Wildean dandy have privileged the texts of the social comedies, and particularly the liminal social status of the dandy partly because of the notoriety of the author.[71] Tree's performance as Lord Illingworth actually illustrated that, even in the face of this

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[70] Interestingly, Adams himself has recently discussed Wilde's personal dandyism in a more oppositional manner because of its post-trial association with sexual deviance. James Eli Adams, 'Dandyism and Late Victorian Masculinity', in *Oscar Wilde in Context,* ed. by Kerry Powell and Peter Raby (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 220-229 (pp. 226-228).
[71] Nicholas Freeman, *1895: Drama, Disaster and Disgrace in Late Victorian Britain*, rev. edn (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014) pp. 3-4.

later narrative, the character of the dandy contributed to, rather than detracted from, the actor-manager's reputation.

Not only was his characterization of Lord Illingworth praised in reviews of the piece as a manifestation of his skill but, interspersed in Tree's repertoire, his dandies demonstrated the actor-manager's versatility against the more traditional Shakespearean and melodramatic characters. Clement Scott, writing for the *Illustrated London News* in 1891, bemoaned, 'I wish we could see more of Mr. Tree in these characters [...] But I suppose we must allow him occasionally to dance off with his Romeos and Hamlets and Gringoires.'[72] As a manifestation of a recognizably fashion-conscious, and upper-class masculine identity, the dandy could also fit with Tree's social aspirations, allowing him to demonstrate a knowledge of elite dressing and tailoring, and the staging of dramas that were realistic to an upper-class audience attracted a society audience to the Haymarket and then Her Majesty's Theatres. There is evidence that *The Dancing Girl* had an influence in this respect, as Maud wrote: 'With summer, while *The Dancing Girl* danced victoriously on to its crowded houses, there were many gaieties of the usual kind, some of them unusual and consequently remembered. Our first Derby for instance: in Frank Lawson's box.'[73] Socially, the first night of *A Woman of No Importance* was equally successful, and one critic crowed:

> We can recall no more brilliant first night. [...] The stalls swarmed
> with peeresses and dramatic authors. At the close the "dress parts"
> applauded; and some of the remoter regions dissented; but Mr.
> Tree, taking his call with a feeling of chivalry rather rare
> nowadays, assured us he was proud to be connected with this
> "work of art".[74]

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[72] Clement Scott, 'The Playhouses', *Illustrated London News,* 5 August 1893, p. 170

[73] Maud Beerbohm Tree, 'Herbert and I', p. 60.

[74] 'Haymarket Theatre: A Conversation Piece', 20 April 1893, in *Haymarket Theatre,* 1893, p. 217.

Fashion Models and Fashionable Host

In attempting to establish a wider public appreciation for the works of Wilde, Regenia Gagnier seems to have been at pains to point out that the upper class characters in his plays were not just appreciated by the section of society that they were intended to ape; in her analysis of the society comedies, she stated: 'The sentimental interpretation allowed Society to love the playwright who mocked it, and the cynical or satiric interpretation allowed the reviewers to see that his sentimentality was merely a form of ingratiation.'[75] She went on to quote a statement in *Black and White* that '"As long as the pits of our theatres are filled with one kind of audience and the galleries with another, plays must exist to please both"', and claimed that Wilde's plays fulfilled this function with sentimental plots and epigrammatic critique.[76] Gagnier's reading of this double-edged sword of interpretability may be true, but in her opposition of 'Society' and 'reviewers' she failed to acknowledge that members of both categoreies belonged almost exclusively to the upper end of the social spectrum, the '"dress parts"' which had applauded at *A Woman of No Importance,* rather than the 'remoter regions' who had 'dissented'*.* A sophisticated understanding of such society plays, which was not limited to the society comedies of Wilde, seems to have been contingent upon a correct understanding of the plays' contextual setting in the upper ends of the English class system, and therefore it makes sense that those best able to read such contexts would also be the audience with whom the dramas would be most popular, and conversely that those unable to understand the social milieu would not be able to appreciate the plot or character interaction.

This seems to have been confirmed by a journalist for the *Pall Mall Budget,* who wrote of attending a performance of *The Notorious Mrs Ebbsmith* at the Garrick Theatre in order to find out 'How She Strikes the Man in the Gallery'.[77] After a suitably florid description of taking their seat between 'a red-faced lady with a

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[75] Gagnier, *Idylls of the Marketplace,* p. 106.
[76] Gagnier, *Idylls of the Markesplace,* p. 106.
[77] '"The Notorious Mrs. Ebbsmith": How She Strikes the Man in the Gallery', *Pall Mall Budget,* 21 March 1895, pp. 15-16.

pair of crimson hands, who perspired most generously, and sucked oranges', and 'an ungovernable old gentleman who had won his seat only to lose his temper', the writer went on to give a description of the gallery's reactions to the drama unfolding before them as ultimately one of misunderstanding and bewilderment, both as regarded plot and characters. Examples of this included the fact that, 'In some of the more sentimental passages, especially where Lucas Cleeve and Agnes talk knowingly together in tragic agony of love and passion, the gallery laughed immoderately.' Of Agnes, 'they couldn't understand her; she was a dweller in another world', and of the Duke of St. Olferts, one audience member allegedly said 'Rum old chap that Duke, isn't her? Can't make him out.'[78] Undoubtedly written from an exaggerated perspective, and therefore suspect in terms of the actual accuracy of the descriptions, the piece was nevertheless important for the distinction it drew between those seated in the gallery and the rest of the audience, described as 'of the *Daily Telegraph* order.'[79]

However, the one element of the play that the gallery engaged with, according to this reviewer, was the physical appearance of characters on the stage, saying that 'They talked dress and scandal for the most part', and quoting two examples of such talk: '"Oh, doesn't he look handsome! just like our Jack don't you think so?"'; '"Well I don't think much of her clothes. But still, I suppose she has a gift, or they wouldn't have engaged her here."'[80] Conventionally, a reading of the conflation between characters and audience members in such dramas, evident in the work of both Gagnier and Peter Raby, and in Joel Kaplan's reading of fashionable consumption in the theatre, has been that such a conflation happened because the upper echelons of the audience were literally mirrored by the performers on the stage, but these quotations suggest that, at least on a visual level, other audience members were attempting to relate to the characters through their own social experience, despite the differentiation between their social statuses and those of the characters.[81] Both male and

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[78] 'How She Strikes the Man in the Gallery', p. 16.
[79] 'How She Strikes the Man in the Gallery', p. 16.
[80] 'How She Strikes the Man in the Gallery', p. 16.
[81] Gagnier, *Idylls of the Marketplace*; Raby, 'Breaking Down the Barriers'; Kaplan and Stowell, *Theatre & Fashion*.

female characters also appear to have been visually objectified here, with the actor, possibly Forbes-Robertson, described as 'handsome', and the actress, presumably Mrs Patrick Campbell in terms of 'her clothes', a possessive that indicates that the personal identity of actresses in these productions was tied up with their ability to provide fashionable clothing for themselves and reinforces Joel Kaplan's and Michele Majer's readings of actresses as similar to fashion models in this period.[82]

Writing of the crossover between fashionable appearances on the stage and actual clothing consumption in this period, Joel Kaplan noted the development of an explicitly feminine fetishization of theatre costumes as items for fashionable consumption, through extensive descriptions of specific garments in reviews, columns devoted to fashion on the stage in female-orientated periodicals such as the *Queen,* and illustrations of characters side-by-side in which 'characters of major importance whose dress was not likely to be emulated by readers disappear entirely'.[83] Similarly, Michele Majer noted how the personal relationships between celebrity actresses and specific fashion houses was commercially mutually beneficial, with the fashion houses gaining advertisement for their wares through displays in the theatre, and actresses receiving a concomitant boost in social status because of their connection with fashionable modes of consumption.[84] Both writers see this primarily as a reflection of elite and upper-middle class consumption, and in her work on theatre and fashionable culture in America, Marlis Schweitzer coined the term 'copy acts' to describe the copying of theatrical costumes for everyday attire. Schweitzer is writing of a slightly different cultural and temporal context, dealing with American theatre after the turn of the century, but it is interesting that she does not exclude working-class women from this model, saying that 'most American women had the access and the means to emulate stage fashion, [but] their copy acts varied according to personal taste, financial resources, and

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[82] Kaplan and Stowell, *Theatre & Fashion*; Majer, *Staging Fashion.*
[83] Kaplan and Stowell, *Theatre & Fashion*, p. 21.
[84] Majer, *Staging Fashion,* pp. 28-31.

perhaps most importantly, age, class, and ethnicity'.[85] Whilst no such detailed work has been done on this period in England in relation to non-elite copying of female theatre costumes, Viv Gardner has analogized the theatrical space of the 1890s as akin to that of the department store, where the 'invisible spectatrice' of a range of classes could look and desire without fear of censure.[86]

However, while the relationship of women to fashionable attire on the stage can be viewed through the lens of fashion consumption, and the actress as a fashion model, no such clear-cut relationship appears to have been established for male fashionable consumption: a study of the programmes listed by J. P. Wearing in the 1890s volumes of *The London Stage* indicated that whilst dressmakers, or specialist theatrical costumiers, were usually named in programmes of this period, tailors were conspicuous by their absence, and that therefore the male bodies on the stage could not have been seen as adverts for their tailors.[87] Instead, the objectification of male actors as expressed by the 'gallery' seems to have been a more general awareness of their looks and a willingness to draw parallels between the actors and familiar members of a social grouping, and the gentlemanly bodies of male protagonists appear to have been tied to their identities as sociable individuals within such productions rather than viewed as an assembly of objects for fashionable festishization. In this reading, of the male body as a vehicle for a fashionable, social identity rather than a fashionable,

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[85] Marlis Schweiter, *When Broadway was the Runway: Theatre, Fashion, and American Culture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), pp. 162-177 (p. 163).

[86] Gardner, 'The Invisible Spectatrice', pp. 37-40.

[87] Wearing, J. P., *The London Stage, 1890-1899: A Calendar of Plays and Players,* 2 vols (Metuchen (NJ): Scarecrow Press, 1976). The programme listings in Wearing are an interesting object of study in their own right, and include no fewer than 2319 references to costume designers and makers. These comprised not only theatrical costume houses, such as Samuel May's, which was still successful in this period, but also major female fashion houses such as Worth and Redfern, and department stores Liberty & Co., Debenhams and Freebody, and Marshall and Snelgrove. It also included a number of theatrical seamstresses who later made careers in fashion, such as Mesdames Savage and Purdue, who were initially attached to the St. James's Theatre. However, references to tailors tended to be for companies that specialized in uniforms, livery, or court or legal robes, such as Firmin & Son, Ede & Son, and Cooling and Lawrence.

consumable identity, the role of the actor-manager, and the status of his parts as social *raisonneurs* and scions of fashionable life, is best seen in terms of the figure of the society host.

In an essay on Herbert Beerbohm Tree's refurbishment of Her Majesty's Theatre in the mid-1890s, David Schulz argued that the whole project was an exercise in 'conspicuous consumption', where audiences came 'to witness and participate in a commodity-driven spectacle'.[88] He focused on the restructuring of the theatre to accommodate the tastes of an increasingly fashionable and elite audience, providing separate entrances and bars for dress circle and stalls patrons, and encouraging social mingling in elegant salons. However, he also saw it as an opportunity for Tree to display his own taste and social aspirations, and stated that 'not only did the theatre cater to the upper classes, it provided a means for Tree to demonstrate that he was a legitimate part of it', through luxurious interior furnishings, and a prominent portrait of the actor-manager displayed outside his 'private apartments': finally he phrased Tree's management of the theatre as the actor-manager's assumption of the role of 'the gentlemanly host'.[89] A similar model, of George Alexander 'At Home' as the social host and head of a newly revitalized St. James's Theatre in the 1900s, has been floated in an essay by Christopher Breward; although Alexander's 'policy of understated gentility' seems to have been vastly different from Tree's love of conspicuous consumption, both theatrical managements seem to have been designed to establish an elite, gentlemanly status for their managers.[90]

The literal conflation of dining and elite theatregoing was touched upon earlier with the first- and last-night dinners on the stage of the Lyceum Theatre stage, and Schulz also discussed all-male banquets hosted by Tree at Her Majesty's Theatre as 'at the core of a professional and civic society where civic society congratulated itself on its achievements', aligning the role of actor-manager-as-host with the professional aspirations of theatrical practitioners laid out in the

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[88] Schulz, 'Architecture of Conspicuous Consumption', p. 231.
[89] Schulz, 'Architecture of Conspicuous Consumption', p. 241.
[90] Breward, '"At Home" at the St. James's', p. 148.

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Figure 63: Oliver Paque, 'Dining Room at Lord Windermere's', 1892. Published *Players,* 8 March 1892, p. 258. Lithograph, c.10 x 20cm.

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Figure 64: Alfred Ellis, 'Mr. George Alexander in "Lady Windermere's Fan, St. James's Theatre"', 1892. Albumen Cabinet Card, 16 x 10cm. London: V&A.

previous chapter.[91] However, setting themselves up as society hosts provided a further incentive, if any was needed, for actor-managers to portray the 'modern men' of Wilde's, Pinero's, and Jones's social comedies. As demonstrated by Tree's dandies, the elite status of these men was reinforced by the variety of social contexts in which they could display themselves, and their dress, whilst not the subject of consumer fetish in the same way as the dress of actresses, was designed to facilitate a reading of the characters as familiar with the codes, standards and variety of elite male dressing practices. The fact that, in many of these plays, the actor-managers were literally embodying social hosts on the stage, as well as metaphorically being the hosts of the theatrical experience could therefore only facilitate these narratives. For example, in *The Dancing Girl,* the climax of Act III was a ball at the Duke of Guisebury's residence, and in both *Lady Windermere's Fan* and *The Second Mrs Tanqueray*, George Alexander opened the play as the host of a social gathering.

Figures 63 and 64 are both images of George Alexander's production of *Lady Windermere's Fan,* showing how his acted role as social host might have helped to also establish a gentlemanly identity for the actor-manager himself. Fig. 63, an illustration from the *Players* magazine, shows the opening scene of the play, a social gathering in the drawing room at Windermere's home, with the host sitting at the left of the picture talking to Mrs Erlynne, the temptress of the piece. However, the scene could easily be an illustration of a society gathering, and neither actor nor actress is labelled with their character's name, but with their offstage identities. Although the title. 'Drawing Room at Lord Windermere's', presumably left little doubt for anyone abreast of theatrical developments as to the nature of the image, it seems to be playing into a conflation between actor-manager and society host. Interestingly, the accompanying text, which appears to have been a précis of current theatrical news rather than a review of the play, mentions, between news of one actor's rheumatism and another's travels, simply that '"Lady Winderemere's Fan" is a great success, partly owing to the clever tactics pursued by its author'.[92]

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[91] Schulz, 'Architecture of Conspicuous Consumption', p. 243.
[92] 'Stage Whispers', *Players,* 8 March 1892, pp. 257-258 (p. 258).

However, on the same page, there are no fewer than three consecutive pieces of gossip about portraits of Alexander that similarly put his offstage and onstage identities side by side:

> I have to acknowledge receipt of *Men and Women of the Day*, and congratulate Mr. Barraud more particularly upon the excellent portrait of Mr. George Alexander contained therein.
> Some admirable portraits of Mr. George Alexander and Miss Marion Terry [1853-1930] in "Lady Windermere's Fan" have been published by Mr. Alfred Ellis, of Baker Street.
> The Players also presents its readers with a portrait of Mr. Alexander, whose real name is George Alexander Gibb Samson.[93]

Fig. 64, one of Alfred Ellis's 'admirable portraits' of Alexander in *Lady Windermere's Fan* displays a similarly socialized body for the actor-manager as that in Fig. 63, dressed in formal evening attire, and fulfilling the double function of demonstrating his facility with fashionable, tailored evening-wear, and of showing the actor-manager in his role as fashionable host. As Schulz pointed out, one of the ways by which the audience were segregated and gentrified at Her Majesty's was the establishment of dress codes, where in the most expensive seats evening dress was required for all but matinée performances; conversely, one critic of *A Woman of No Importance* pointed out disappointedly that in Act I 'the speakers wear *matinée* dress'.[94] Alexander's body in this image is therefore a literal reflection of the audience-member who would have been watching his performance as Lord Windermere, and specifically the section of his audience who self-defined as late-Victorian gentlemen through their possession of capital, and pretensions to an elite social status. Despite the fact that portrait photographs of gentlemen in evening dress in this period are extremely rare, the cabinet card has been treated like the images of actresses examined in the *Theatre,* where a caption was deemed necessary to establish

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[93] 'Stage Whispers', p. 258
[94] Schulz, 'Architecture of Conspicuous Consumption', p. 233; 'Haymarket Theatre: A Conversation Piece', 20 April 1893, in *Haymarket Theatre,* 1893, p. 217.

the distinction between an onstage and offstage portrait, and labelled accordingly although, interestingly, it does not name his character, simply the play. In the text from the *Players*, the celebrity identity of Alexander as part of Barraud's series *Men and Women of the Day* has been descriptively juxtaposed with portraits of his role as Lord Windermere, and with his 'genuine' identity as George Alexander Gibb Samson, in an elision of actor, character, visual identities, and onstage and offstage bodies that is particularly compelling within the remit of this research.

Conclusion

The 'modern men' discussed in this chapter have all been described in a number of sources as characters that required a style of theatrical practice, management role, and relationship with the body that was distinctly different from a more traditionally Victorian model of theatrical practice. However, when viewed in terms of a continuity of theatre, as a bridging point between Victorian and Edwardian manifestations of the actor-manager, and as a site on which the identities of actor-managers, authors, and audiences could be elided, the modern bodies presented in these productions bring together many of the threads that have been discussed in this thesis. In the first instance, they demonstrated how an actor-manager could build upon his established theatrical reputation by presenting a corpus of characters, linked through bodily frames of reference to established visual and cultural paradigms. These helped to establish them as authentic characterizations, and the actor-managers who created them as skilled artists. Moreover, modern productions did not, as might be supposed, divest actor-managers of power over the process of staging and design, but rather were the products of joint authorship between actor-managers and contemporary playwrights, a fact which has been obscured in historiographical discussions of these plays as fixed texts rather than performed scores. The innate fashionability of these characters, despite their moral ambivalence, helped to position the actor-managers who played them not only within the theatrical context, but also in terms of their social aspirations, as members of a fashionable circle, and within the context of gentlemanly identities. Finally, they allowed the actor-manager to enact his role as society

host literally upon the stage as well as in the metaphorical context of theatre management, and to demonstrate his knowledge of contemporary male fashion in a way that, if not explicitly for emulative consumption, was nevertheless the subject of comment and admiration.

Conclusion: Collecting One Another

Whether speaking on behalf of the theatre, acting in it, managing it behind the scenes, or furthering themselves in the social arena, in none of the examples examined in the course of this work can the actor-manager be said to have been simply 'found', in an unmediated fashion, as a natural result of his talent. Rather, throughout the last thirty years of the nineteenth century, the identities of actor-managers were very definitely fashioned, by the subjects themselves, and through their interactions with peers and public, in theatrical and para-theatrical, social and para-social contexts. Whilst it was obviously not the only way in which these identities were created and mediated, the bodies of late-Victorian actor-managers, as material objects and as elements in the visual legacy of such individuals, had a part to play in establishing them as artists, professionals, and gentlemen in the later Victorian period and, like the identities of their subjects, such bodies were definitely not natural or found, but were the products of explicit and implicit modes of design. Drawn together by the common theme of the body as a site of interaction between actor-managers and various types of audiences, this thesis has explored the role of the designed body in the art of the actor-manager and in the creation and reception of theatrical characters, the translation, and modification of that body in the public sphere, and its role in the changing visual dynamics of the late-nineteenth century theatrical experience.

Obviously, there are areas that could have been developed, and pushed further, individuals who could have been included in the study, and material that fell by the wayside; it would have been nice, for example, to spend more time with J. L. Toole or to have included William Kendal (1843-1917) or Wilson Barrett as subjects, or even to have widened the net to consider impresarios who existed slightly outside the legitimizing narrative of mainstream actor-management. Yet one of the most compelling underlying and unexplored narratives common to these chapters, all of which focus, to one degree or another, primarily upon the relationship between actor-managers and those outside the profession, is the

very real awareness that actor-managers had of the bodies and images of one another, used to create the impression of theatrical continuity and of a legacy that started long before, and reached far beyond, the last thirty years of the nineteenth century. Each of the above chapters contains material that touches on these relationships. In the first instance, a mutual concept of embodied practice, running through discussions of the art of the actor-manager, translated into an actual confluence of ideas in the visit of Henry Irving to Herbert Beerbohm Tree's dressing room, and the compelling ephemerality of Irving's sketch of ideas for *King John* on Tree's mirror, fixed for posterity by the anonymous interviewer. Secondly, the idea that actor-managers working on plays with an established production history were actively involved in negotiating not only their own bodies but the ghosts of their precursors, the legacies of other great actors who had performed those roles, and even the work of near-contemporaries.

Equally, a sense of continuity in the line of leading actors, and a desire to live up to the theatrical, social, and artistic identities of his predecessors was formative in Squire Bancroft's introduction to Bohemia, and echoes of the bodies of his contemporaries have been seen in both the social and theatrical identities of actor-manager John Hare. The cross-generational nature of the series of photographs in both the *Saturday Programme* and the *Theatre* could equally be seen as an attempt to link past and present theatrical practitioners, and one of the remits of the *Theatre* was undoubtedly to create a 'body' of theatrical practitioners who would act as examples not only for their contemporaries, but also for a new generation of leading actors. Even when it seemed that the style of theatre was undergoing a radical shift in direction, with modern-dress productions in which actor-managers attempted to align themselves with their audiences, they still saw their theatre as a natural successor to that which had come before, and brought to their characters experiences of other roles and the training of other managers. One of the ways in which actor-managers fostered this sense of continuity in their private lives was in the active collection of images, and even bodily relics, of their predecessors, and the homes and dressing rooms of actor-managers were not just papered with images of their

own bodies, but also with those of their contemporaries. The collective, public aspects of this visual legacy was made clear in Percy Fitzgerald's *The World Behind the Scenes,* where he devoted around fifteen pages to a description of the gallery of paintings at the theatrically-orientated Garrick Club, which he described as 'the best and most satisfactory memorial that can be found of the English stage', a series of images that 'seem to give out clouds of old associations' and to which, during and shortly after the end of the period under discussion, several of the pictures in this thesis, including the Long triptych painted for Irving's *Charles I,* and John Everett Millais's paintings of both Irving and Hare, were given.[1]

Two compelling photographs (Figures 65 and 67), from relatively near the beginning and just after the end of the period under discussion in this thesis, make this point eloquently; both are pictures of actor managers 'At Home', and although they are different in tone, they are both reminiscent to an extent of the photograph of Herbert Beerbohm Tree next to the portrait of his Hamlet by Charles Buchel (Fig. 28). Tree's portrait was designed to illustrate his own theatrical achievements, but in these two images, the actor-managers in question have been pictured with other members of the theatrical profession. The first is a Samuel Walker photograph of Henry Irving 'At Home', discussed earlier using another photograph in the same series (Fig. 38) as an attempt to establish the creative identity of the actor, and as an implied form of social interaction, but there is a further level of interaction here between the actor-manager and the print.[2] By enlarging and clarifying this detail, it is possible to positively identify the image in question as an engraving after a painting by Benjamin Vandergucht (1753-1794) of David Garrick (Figure 66), which is attested as having been part of Irving's personal collection of prints.[3] Irving's

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[1] Percy Fitzgerald, *The World Behind the Scenes* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1881), pp. 166-200 (pp. 166, 169).
[2] See 'Sociability and the Artistic Body', pp. 213-219.
[3] *Catalogue Of the Valuable Library, And The Collection of Old Play-Bills And Theatrical Prints, Of Sir Henry Irving, Deceased* ([London: Christie, Manson, and Woods], 1905), p. 64.

Image Redacted for

Copyright Purposes

Figure 65: Samuel A. Walker, Photograph of Henry Irving 'At Home', 1879. Albumen Cabinet Card, 16 x 11cm. London: V&A

Image Redacted for

Copyright Purposes

Figure 66: Joseph Saunders (engr. after Benjamin Vandergucht), 'Mr. Garrick as Steward of the Stratford Jubilee, September 1769', c. 1770s. Engraving, 37 x 35cm. London: Garrick Club Library.

keen interest in Garrick is evident throughout this collection, and particularly in a five-volume series of folios containing 577 portraits, 55 autograph letters, and 66 original playbills pertaining to the eighteenth-century actor, which Irving had apparently collected and mounted himself; their relationship undoubtedly deserves further interrogation.[4]

Garrick was one of the four great actors included in Irving's speech to the students of Oxford University, and for this image it is particularly relevant that Irving praised not only the eighteenth-century actor's theatrical technique but also his social achievements, and his role in a discourse of theatrical legitimization similar to those examined throughout this thesis, saying that his 'remarkable success in society […] is the best answer to what is often talked about the degrading nature of the actor's profession'.[5] Whilst Irving owned a number of images of Garrick, it cannot be coincidental that the one he was photographed next to, in a series of images that was designed around the social identity of the actor-manager, was not an image of Garrick in character. Instead it was a portrait of the actor in his role as a representative of English theatre more generally, as Steward of the Stratford Jubilee in 1769, in which he in turn is holding a portrait medallion of William Shakespeare. The first thing to note about this particular painting is that, in contrast to the overtly theatrical bodies and vibrant garments that characterized some of the more famous portraits of Garrick by Johann Zoffany (1733-1810), the body in Vandergucht's portrait is relaxed rather than formal, with a plain wool waistcoat and coat. It is reminiscent of the fact that actor-managers in this period did not favour overtly artistic styles of dressing, but instead relied on the synthesis of appearance and manner, of posing and framing, to create an impression of candour, artistry and gentlemanly status. In Fig. 65, this has been achieved through the use of a contemplative pose that also echoes Garrick's contemplation of Shakespeare and, in contrast to the other photographs of Walker's series, Irving's body is no longer contextualized against a study filled with creative disorder, but rather

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[4] *Catalogue of the Valuable Library,* p. 38.
[5] Henry Irving, *English Actors: Their Characteristics and Methods, A Discourse by Henry Irving* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1886), p. 20.

with bookshelves in which all volumes are ranged, and which create the impression of a gentlemanly social identity.

In the second 'At Home' photograph, of actor-manager George Alexander (Fig. 67), a similar type of theatrical legacy is at play, albeit in a less explicit fashion. As manager of the St. James's Theatre, master of the drawing-room drama, and a figure in fashionable social circles in his own right, Alexander arguably represented the end product of the legitimizing processes discussed throughout this thesis. Like Irving, this photograph shows the actor-manager in his study, but the mannered air of the Walker photographs, and the contemplative, relaxed pose is noticeably absent, and has been exchanged for a more normative, domestic presentation of the actor-manager as a leisured gentleman and professional. Also unlike the Walker photograph, where the purpose of the image appears to be the deliberate juxtaposition of the bodies of Irving and Garrick, the framed photograph over Alexander's left shoulder is not the focal point of the picture, which is instead the book in the actor-manager's hand that aligns his identity with the legitimizing influence of literature rather than the liminal context of the performed play. However, given that this portrait was almost inevitably staged rather than natural, and that the angle allows for the photograph in the background to be seen in its entirety, it seems unlikely that the choice and positioning of the embedded image was coincidental. The eye is also drawn to this photograph by the presumably deliberate similarities in pose that link the two bodies and suggest a connection between the identities of the sitters. As with the Garrick print, an enlargement and clarification of Alexander's portrait enables this background image to be positively identified as a photograph of Henry Irving (Figure 68), taken by Herbert Rose Barraud in 1888, and published in the collective biography *Men and Women of the Day,* as a symbol of the actor-manager's standing as a social celebrity as well as a theatrical practitioner; it is an echo of Irving's own use of Garrick's portrait, and an image incidentally used recently as the front cover for Jeffrey Richards's biography of the actor-manager.[6]

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[6] Jeffrey Richards, *Sir Henry Irving: A Victorian Actor and his World* (London: Hambledon and London, 2005).

Image Redacted for

Copyright Purposes

Figure 67: Rapid Photo Co, 'Mr. George Alexander', c. 1905. Bromide Postcard Print, 14 x 10cm. London: V&A.

Image Redacted for

Copyright Purposes

Figure 68: Herbert Rose Barraud, Photograph of Henry Irving, 1888. Published in *Men and Women of the Day,* April 1888. Carbon Print, 25 x 18cm. London: NPG

However, Barraud's photograph of Irving, and its use by Alexander in this image is also further evidence for the context-specific nature of the body, its formation as a synthesis between dress, manner and framing, the flexible identities of actor-managers in this period, and the selective use of those bodies in the construction of the actor-manager's legacy. Comparing the Barraud and Walker photographs, it is immediately apparent that although they have been taken from slightly different angles, Irving's body is posed in almost exactly the same way in both images but to very different effects; in the Walker image his body is more reminiscent of an artistic construction of the actor-manager, and in the Barraud photograph it reflects his status as a figure in public life. This is obviously partly a function of contextualization, of the lighting and the presence of furnishings in the Walker image, but it is also a result of the actor-manager's attire. In contrast to the neat and matching lounge suit of the Barraud photograph, in Walker's image the actor-manager wears a suit of plain, dark jacket and constrasting tweed trousers, and a slightly askew necktie. As discussed earlier in relation to photographs of Tree, whilst not explicitly artistic, the contrast of trousers and jacket had the function of making his body slightly more distinctive, whereas the matching lounge suit represented a more bourgeois, normative identity, and his necktie brings to mind the hat 'tilted at more than its usual angle' which Max Beerbohm recognized as a facet of Irving's Bohemian identity.[7] Given that Alexander's attire in many ways mirrors the Barraud photograph, and that his 'at Home' image was equally intended to establish a bourgeois, fashionable identity for the actor-manager, his choice to align himself with this particular facet of Irving's identity, appears to have been based upon a specific type of embodiment rather than simply upon his relationship with Irving as an individual.

Looking at the two pairs of images together, although the Garrick print is arguably more recognizable as a portrait in its own right, neither of these embedded images has been identified with the naked eye, but through the use of

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[7] See '"On and Off the Stage: Balancing the Record', pp. 178-179; 'Sociability and the Artistic Body', pp. 182-183.

magnification and clarification techniques. They would probably not have been clear to a casual viewer, and this suggests that their use as references to the legacies of theatrical and social status embodied by these actor-managers may have been intended as much as a private reference as a public statement, or to be read by someone who had inside knowledge of the referential paradigms. However it is worth noting that, having personally spent a good deal of time with images of these actor-managers, the Barraud photograph was not as difficult to identify as might be supposed by someone not attuned to these frames of reference. Therefore it is possible that as well as being evidence of Alexander's owning and collecting of Irving's image, and of a private desire to align their identities by including a reference to the Victorian actor-manager in his photographic portraiture, this reference would be noticed by those contemporary consumers habituated to the viewing of such images. Both portraits can therefore also be considered as public statements of collective theatrical identities, created through the collection, depiction, and re-framing by actor-managers of the bodies of their predecessors.

As putative leaders of theatrical practice in the latter part of the nineteenth century, this thesis has therefore demonstrated that actor-managers were highly aware of their own identities on both a public and a private level. They were also cognizant of a need to affiliate themselves with broader social, collective, and creative identities, to align themselves with known categories of celebrated individuals, and to broaden the appeal of the theatre to the widest possible audience. They used both their bodies and the visual iconographies of identity to strengthen their own positions by making and remaking themselves as audience and context dictated, a fluid construction of identity that has been echoed in the preservation of the visual and verbal legacies of such individuals. Whilst a number of contemporaries and later exponents of actor-managers believed that they had cut through these fluid identities to 'find' the authentic identities of these figures and, like Stoker envisaged of Ruskin's artist, succeeded in exposing this natural self to the public, all they ultimately found was another level of made identities, something that is most clearly seen in the design of actor-managers' bodies in this period. Finally, these creative,

collective, and social identities translated neatly into contemporary definitions of Victorian artists, professionals, and gentlemen. The relationships that individual actor-managers had with these particular categories of identity, framed through constructions of their bodies and their mediations in visual media, has been explored and elucidated in this thesis in order to facilitate a more sophisticated understanding both of the surviving visual material and of the public perception of actor-managers in the last thirty years of the nineteenth century.

Appendix A: Survey of Actor-Managers' Portraits in the V&A and NPG Collections

Subjects: George Alexander, Squire Bancroft, John Hare, Henry Irving, Herbert Beerbohm Tree, Charles Wyndham

Collections Examined: Theatre Museum Image Files (V&A), Guy Little Collection (V&A), Sitter Files, Reference Collection, and Photographs Collections (NPG).

Research Objectives:

1. To ascertain the place of photographic representation in the visual memorialization of the subjects.
2. To determine the relative importance of offstage and theatrical photographs in the visual record of subjects.
3. To record the details of a number of uncatalogued or insufficiently described photographs of subjects.

Summary of Results:

Total Images Examined: 1565 (1166 V&A, 399 NPG)

Total Number of Photographic Representations: 1354

Theatrical Photographs: 636

Offstage Photographs: 718

Information Recorded about each Image (where possible):

All Images: Subject, Artist or studio, Format, Medium, Date, Signatures, Other Inscriptions.

Theatrical Images: Character, Play, Details of Costume and setting.

Offstage Images: Dress, Pose, Setting

Date Range of Photographic Portraits (where known):

1860s: 9

1870s: 71

1880s: 127

1890s: 158

1900 onwards: 150

Photographic Studios Represented:

Barraud, Bassano, Louis Bertin, Warwick Brooks, Lizzie Caswall Smith, Alexander Corbett, William Crooke, Daily Mirror, James Charles Dinham, W&D Downey, Dover St Studios, Ralph Dunn, Elliott & Fry, Alfred Ellis & Walery, Falke, Joshua James Foster, Foulsham & Banfield, R. Frier, R. Haines, Fradelle, Claude Harris, Hills and Saunders, Histed, Frederick G. Hodsoll , Langfier, Lock & Whitfield, London Stereoscopic Company, Mayall, H. S. Mendelssohn, Eveleen Myers, F. T. Palmer, Alexander Roberts, Robinson Photographic Artists, Roynon Raikes Studio, James Russell, St. James's Photographic Studio, Sarony, Lydell Sawyer, Photo Russell, T. C. Turner, Vandyk, Walker & Boutall, Samuel Walker, Reginald Fellows Willson, Window & Grove,

Number of Images by Subject:

George Alexander: 281 (of which 273 photographs), 62% theatrical portraits

Squire Bancroft: 132 (of which 116 photographs), 8% theatrical portraits

John Hare: 115 (of which 108 photographs), 24% theatrical portrait

Henry Irving: 593 (of which 456 photographs), 38% theatrical portraits

Herbert Beerbohm Tree: 348 (of which 313 photographs), 70% theatrical portraits

Charles Wyndham: 96 (of which 87 photographs), 56% theatrical portrait

Miscatalogued images:

42 x theatrical portraits catalogued as offstage images

14 x offstage images catalogued as theatrical portraits

Appendix B: Sitters in Series of photographs distributed with the *Saturday Programme, Men of Mark* and the *Theatre*

Sitters in 'Artists of the London Stage' (Fig. 40)

Top Row (L-R): William Creswick (1813-1888), John Ryder (1814-1885), Charles Mathews (1803-1878), Benjamin Webster (1797-1882), Samuel Phelps (1804-1878), Samuel Emery (1817-1881), Henry Neville (1837-1910)

Second Row (L-R): Tommaso Salvini (1829-1915), John Hare (1844-1921), William Farren (1825-1908), John Baldwin Buckstone (1802-1879), John Lawrence Toole (1830-1906), Squire Bancroft (1841-1926), Henry Irving (1838-1905)

Third Row (L-R): Ernesto Rossi (c.1827-1896), Lionel Brough (1836-1909), Harry Sinclair (1829-1879), John Sleeper Clarke (1833-1899), Charles Warner (1846-1909), William Rignold (1836-1910), George Conquest (1837-1901)

Bottom Row (L-R): John Clarke (1828-1879), Edward Terry (1844-1912), Claude Marius (1850-1896), David James (1839-1893) and Thomas Thorne (1841-1918), Edward Righton (1838-1899), Willie Edouin (1846-1908), Charles Wyndham (1837-1919).

Sitters in 'Ladies of the London Stage' (Fig. 41)

Top Row (L-R): Nelly Power (1855-1887), Madge Robertson (1848-1935), Ada Cavendish (1839-1895), Helen Barry (1840-1904), Nelly Bromley (1850-1939), Eleanor Bufton (1840-1893), Angelina Claude (fl.1870s)

Second Row (L-R): Ada Ward (fl.1870s), Teresa Furtado (1845-1877), Amy Roselle (1854-1895), Adelina Patti (1843-1919), Marie Wilton (1839-1921), Ellen Terry (1847-1928), Carlotta Addison (1849-1914)

Third Row (L-R): Marion Terry (1853-1930), Constance Loseby (1842-1906), Rose LeClercq (1843-1899), Nelly Farren (1848-1904), Louisa Henderson (fl.1870s), Amy Fawsitt (1836-1876), Genevieve Ward (1837-1922)

Bottom Row (L-R): Mrs. Charles Viner (fl.1870s), Rosina Vokes (1854-1894), Jessie Vokes (1851-1884) and Victoria Vokes (c.1850-1894), Minnie Walton

(d.1879), Lydia Thompson (1838-1908), Kate Bishop (1847-1923), Helena Ernstone (1840-1933), Rose Hersee (1845-1924)

Sitters in *Men of Mark,* 1876 (Fig. 42)

Figures in the composite are arranged in date order from left to right, starting at top left. The titles given here are verbatim transcriptions from the accompanying biographical pages of *Men of Mark.*

January 1876: 'The Earl of Dufferin, Governor General of Canada'; 'Sir Edward Shepherd Creasy, M.A., Late Chief Justice of Ceylon'; 'The Righ Hon. Sir Richard Baggallay, Judge of the Supreme Court of Appeal'

February 1876: 'Captain Richard Burton'; 'The Right Hon. Spencer Horatio Walpole, M.P.'; 'Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Chief Secretary for Ireland'

March 1876: 'Lord Lytton, Viceroy of India'; 'The Hon. Sir John Walker Huddleston, Baron of the Exchequer'; 'Samuel Plimsoll, M. P., "The Sailor's Friend"'

April 1876: 'Sir Garnet Joseph Wolseley, K.C.B, G.C.M.G., Major-General'; 'The Right Rev. John Jackson, D.D., Lord Bishop of London'; 'Lord Talbot de Malahide, President of the Royal Archaeological Institute'

May 1876: 'His Eminence Cardinal Henry Edward Manning, Archbishop of Westminster'; 'James Anthony Froude, M.A., LL.D. Historian'; 'Henry Fawcett, M.P., Professor of Political Economy at Cambridge'

June 1876: 'The Right Hon. Lord Chelmsford'; 'The Right Rev. Charles J. Ellicott, D.D., Lord Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol'; 'The Right Hon. Henry Bouverie William Brand, Speaker of the House of Commons'

July 1876: 'John Everett Millais, Royal Academician'; 'The Rev. F. W. Farrar, D.D., F.R.S., Canon of Westminster'; 'Lord George Hamilton, Under-Secretary of State for India'

August 1876: 'The Right Hon. Lord Selborne, Ex-Lord High Chancellor of England'; 'The Right Hon. Sir Henry Bartle Edward Frere, Bart., G.C.B.'; 'The Hon. Sir Charles Hall, Judge of the High Court of Justice'

September 1876: 'The Right Rev. Edward Harold Browne, D.D., Lord Bishop of Winchester'; 'Charles Jean Marie Loyson, "Père Hyacinthe"'; 'Sir James MacNaghten Hogg, K.C.B., Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works'

October 1876: 'The Right Hon. The Earl of Shaftesbury, K.G.'; 'The Right Hon. Lord Redesdale, Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords'; 'The Ven. George Anthony Denison, Archdeacon of Taunton'

November 1876: 'The Right Hon. John Bright, M.P. for Birmingham'; 'The Right Rev. Monsignor Capel, D.D., Rector of the Catholic University College'; 'The Right Hon. William Francis Cowper-Temple, M.P. for South Hampshire'

December 1876: 'His Grace the Duke of Abercorn, K.G., Lord Lieutenant of Ireland'; 'The Most Reverend Archibald Campbell Tait, D.D., Archbishop of Canterbury'; 'William Howard Russell, LL.D.'

Sitters in the *Theatre,* 1880-1889

In order to get as full a picture as possible of the pattern of images distributed in The *Theatre,* the following sources were consulted: the photographic pages bound in the author's own complete collection of original annual volumes of The *Theatre;* the textual descriptions which accompanied each photograph; the indexes produced annually by *The Theatre* which listed the photographs included therein; the collections of *The Theatre* held in the V&A.

The problematic nature of categorizing the professional status of the sitters is worth noting here, as a number of the subjects would, over the course of their careers, fall into more than one category, for example actors who had been or would go on to be managers, or dramatists who also dabbled in acting. The division of subjects presented in Tables 3 and 4 was therefore based on the following order of priority; firstly, what the subject was primarily involved with at the time that the photographs were taken; secondly, activities which were mentioned in any accompanying text; thirdly, mentions of the subject in subsequent theatre histories.

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