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FROM THE EDITOR

On the front cover of this issue is a 1772 painting by Thomas Gainsborough of Mary Tickell (sitting) and her sister Elizabeth Sheridan (standing). What intrigues me most about the painting is Mary's piercing eyes. Her facial expression conveys confidence, yet it is ambiguous and even secretive. As she looks at us from the past, she seems to know much more than she is willing to say. Mary is the subject of Robert Jones's article, "Competition and Community: Mary Tickell and the Management of Sheridan's Drury Lane," which is about what she wrote in her private letters to her sister. The letters, as reconstructed by Jones, show that Mary indeed knew more than perhaps anyone else about the management of Drury Lane during the mid-1780s. The articles in this issue are about the layered ambiguity inherent in what we know (or claim to know) of theatre history. In any particular historical moment, who really knew what happened? How was the knowledge documented? How do we engage with ambiguity in theatre historiography? How is the past looking back at us? Jennifer Buckley's article, "'Symbols in Silence': Edward Gordon Craig and the Engraving of Wordless Drama," questions what we have assumed to know about Edward Gordon Craig's vision for "wordless drama" and his use of wood engraving. Because Craig never demonstrated his ideas onstage, his intention with his writings and engravings has been unclear. Buckley argues that Craig used wood engravings as the primary theatrical medium for the visual realization of his theory of wordless drama. According to Buckley, Craig's ambivalent comments on his designs need to be contextualized within the broader context of avant-garde "retheatricalization."

Yair Lipshitz's article, "Scrolls and Scandals: The Ritual Object as Stage Prop in *God of Vengeance*," describes the controversy caused by a prop Torah scroll used in a Yiddish play in the early twentieth century. As an ambiguous symbol, the Torah scroll onstage is both secular and sacred, and the play received outraged reactions from all sectors of society. Lipshitz provides a nuanced study of what he describes as "a period of semiotic crisis" during which the ambiguity of the prop demarcated what it meant for Yiddish theatre to be "modern." In his article, "Selling the President: Stand-Up Comedy and the Politricks of Indirection," David A. Donkor articulates how a comedic performer can navigate and survive a volatile political landscape with trickery and humor. In the mid-1990s, President Jerry Rawlings of Ghana enlisted the political support of Bishop Bob Okala, the most famous comedian in the country at the time. Donkor skillfully explores the Akan concept of "speaking to the wind" to illuminate the ways that Okala blurred his public persona and personal identity at a key political rally for Rawlings and the ways that this blurring jeopardized his career. The "indirection" and uncertainty of Okala's actions, Donkor argues, are what make his performances effective and potent.

Although these four articles raise similar questions in historiography, they vary greatly in methodology. Robert Jones's thorough detectivelike work in the archive is an excellent demonstration of neopositivist and microhistorical approaches to theatre

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history. Jennifer Buckley asks us to shift our perspective of Craig's designs from one that privileges the stage to one that expands the notion of theatrical media. We have known about Craig's wood engravings, but seeing them as inherently theatrical revises our understanding of them. Yair Lipshitz's attention to one play is both familiar and innovative. In Lipshitz's analysis, the play informs his understanding of the history, while the history is made more complex through his interpretation of the play. David Donkor's methodology stems solidly from performance studies, and his explanation of Okala's multilayered performances opens new possibilities for addressing the intersections of parody, politics, and mimesis.

In "*Re:* Sources," Beth Kattelman invites Sharon Marcus to expound on theatrical scrapbooks as archive, medium, and genre. "Librarian's nightmare or researcher's dream?" Marcus asks in her opening sentence. Audience is the most elusive topic of study in theatre history because spectators do not leave much evidence behind. Scrapbooks provide a rare glimpse into what theatregoers found interesting as fans, but they also create challenges for librarians and researchers as they attempt to interpret the meaning of each page in all of its idiosyncrasies. Marcus shares the questions she had while examining the theatrical scrapbooks of Sarah Bernhardt and offers an instrumental primer for using scrapbooks in theatre history.

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I need to acknowledge the work done by the former editor Leo Cabranes-Grant in selecting and recommending the articles featured in this issue. The editorial team is settling into the triannual publication cycle, and this issue required the collaboration of the outgoing and incoming editors. Leo and I are pleased to present a group of essays that showcase the excellence and diversity of methodologies and topics in our field. If the submissions to the journal are any indication of the state of our field, our collective scholarship is more rigorous and relevant than ever.

I would like formally to welcome Harvey Young as the new associate editor of *Theatre Survey*. My note in the preceding issue went into production before Harvey was selected, so I missed the opportunity to introduce him to the readers. At the reception hosted by Cambridge University Press at the 2012 ASTR conference in Nashville, I introduced Harvey to ASTR members, who welcomed him enthusiastically. Harvey is a leading scholar and an experienced editor in theatre and performance studies, and I am thrilled to have such an esteemed collaborator in taking the journal to its next phase. I thank Susan Bennett, the outgoing chair of the Publications Committee; Catherine Cole, the incoming chair of the committee; and members of the committee for selecting Harvey Young and for their continued support of the editorial team. Many thanks go out to Kate Babbitt, the assistant editor, whose cogent thinking and precise copyediting make my job as the editor manageable and enjoyable. The journal profoundly depends on the invisible labor of the external reviewers and the members of the board, who provide expertise and intellectual guidance. I give each one of them my sincere thanks. Last, but certainly not least, I would like to welcome Susan Manning to the editorial board. I am certain that her specialization in dance and performance will provide invaluable support to *Theatre Survey*.

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