



Garrick's Temple to Shakespeare Newsletter



ISSUE 4 ~ SPRING 2011

Children at the Temple *Following in Garrick's footsteps*

David and his beloved wife Eva-Maria (see p.2) were childless but - to quote Fanny Burney, "How many pities he has no children for he is extremely - nay passionately - fond of them." Every year at Hampton, on May 1st, the Garricks held a big party for local children at which sweets were distributed, and Garrick entertained them.

When a friend's son, George (Georgy Porgy) was three, he and Garrick "were busy in the garden and played ninepins together". When George was older, he wrote of Garrick, "He produced a thousand monkey tricks on me; he was a Punch, a Harlequin, a cat in the gutters, then King Lear with a mad touch which almost terrified me".

Apart from comic roles, Garrick enjoyed imitating the songs of birds including blackbirds, magpies, nightingales and wag-tails. His friend Fitzherbert found him

entertaining a little black boy, who capered with delight as he imitated a turkeycock. The boy cried "Massa Garrick do so make me laugh, I shall die laughing!"

The Temple and its grounds now attract children in two ways - firstly, by concerts, parties and games (see below for details of this years Children's party on May 1st.); secondly, the Temple's Education Committee runs major programmes for primary and secondary school classes (see back page). The Temple, with its full size statue of Shakespeare and over 60 pictures and prints of Garrick's life and times, has been recently described as "The most beautiful classroom in the country." The Garricks would surely be delighted to learn that their Hampton riverside garden, with its splendid architectural tribute to the Bard, is giving today's children lots of fun and lots of learning.~



Garrick's Villa ablaze, October 25th, 2008

Restoration Starts on Garrick's Villa

Well over two years since Garrick's great villa at Hampton was devastated by fire, work finally started in February 2011. The delay has mainly been due to arguments about insurance (Moral - if you own a Grade I or II listed house, have it insured for the cost of re-building, not for the sales value).~

Children's Day May 1st, 2011 2-5pm

On the afternoon of May 1st (2-5pm) children will be welcomed and entertained at the Temple by David and Eva-Maria in period dress. Tea and cakes will be served and they will be given Garrick gold - wrapped chocolate coins (Courtesy of the Garrick Club).~



"Mr and Mrs Garrick by the Shakespeare Temple"(detail) by Johann Zoffany (1733-1810) Courtesy of Tate Britain

Garrick's beloved wife Eva-Maria (Violette)

by Clive Francis

David Garrick was the undisputed monarch of the 18th century stage. During his dazzling and successful career there were only two great loves; the Irish actress Peg Woffington, to whom he retracted an offer of marriage, and the Viennese dancer Eva-Maria whom he married in 1749.

Nineteen year old Mlle Violette, as she was known, travelled over to England in 1742 disguised as a young boy and was delivered into the safe keeping of Lord and Lady Burlington who became her legal guardians. She made her debut at Covent Garden a few weeks later in the presence of George II who proclaimed her performance as "exquisite".

In July 1742 the Duke of Richmond gave a riverside garden-party to honour the

Duke of Modena, and it was there that David Garrick first set eyes on Eva-Maria, and, according to Horace Walpole, ogled and sighed the whole afternoon, much to the amusement of others. "I beheld Eva-Maria", Garrick wrote, "for the first time on that warm, gentle afternoon, and was instantly struck by her elegance and charm. She transcended everything".

*"Beauty that charms all public gaze,
And humble amid pomp and praise.
These are the charms my heart
have bound,*

Charms often sought, so rarely found!"

Unfortunately such a relationship was frowned upon by the Burlingtons (the thought of their ward associating with anyone as low as an actor was something not to be tolerated) so Garrick and Eva-

Maria had to communicate clandestinely, and once a day would arrange to meet on opposite sides of the Burlingtons' garden where they would toss their heartfelt communications over the wall. Garrick, on one occasion, even disguised himself as a woman in order to slip a letter into Eva-Maria's sedan chair.

"My Treasure my Violette

Thy dear, dear note you sent me has bewitched me, I have read it and kissed it ten thousand times, and had I the hand that wrote it, I should eat it, glove and all, if I could not have it. Good God how I love you! How I dote upon you! You haunt me day and night; I have lost all my mirth, and my friends perceive it. I talk to you when my head is upon my pillow and cannot rest. I talk to you all the night and utter my soul to you. God bless you my sweet Adieu! Adieu! Thou Darling of my Soul, my all adieu!"

Eventually the Burlingtons gave way and David and Eva-Maria were married in June 1749, and Violette, "the finest and most admired dancer in the world", according to Horace Walpole, gave up a glittering and successful career to devote the rest of her life to Garrick. It was a marriage made in heaven, and for all their thirty years together they never spent one night apart; or so we are led to believe! Her gentle ways and exquisite manners endeared her to her husband's theatrical circle and to the many distinguished members of high society that he liked to associate with.

Seemingly, nothing could have been more harmonious than their marriage, and there was no reason for anyone to have thought otherwise if it hadn't been for an unpublished letter which I recently discovered indicating a possible rift within their relationship.

"Madam,

You have parted from me upon a suspicion of my having attachments elsewhere - can anything be more groundless or unjust? Can you possibly imagine that after the proofs I had



David and Eva-Maria (Violette) by William Hogarth (1697-1764) Courtesy of Royal Collection

offered of my sincerest regard to you (proofs that could only proceed from love) I could have an affection or even the least interest to any other person? You cannot believe it. The lady you suspect is of consequence to my affairs”.

(This may well have been Susannah Cibber who for a long time held a torch for Garrick) -

“If you sincerely wish to be satisfied of my sincerity and truth towards you in this affair, you will see me tomorrow morning between ten and eleven. If you do not come to me I shall be convinced that my suspicions are just, and I will not injure you, or love myself”.

Obviously Eva-Maria complied and all was resolved.

In 1778 Garrick was taken ill yet insisted on returning to their London home. Eva-Maria tended him throughout the night, and every time she gave him a drink he pressed her hand, and spoke to her affectionately. In 1779 as she administered his last dose of medicine, a single tear rolled down his cheek and with the softest of sighs said, “Oh, dear!” and fell back dead.

Loyal and loving, she went on to outlive her husband by over 43 years. Believing she had no money Eva-Maria lived meagrely, closing off most of the Villa in Hampton and living solely on the top floor with one servant. When Queen Charlotte called one day she found Eva-Maria peeling onions in the kitchen, and, not wanting to be outdone, took up an apron and joined in.

She died at the age of 98 and was buried, in a shroud made of her wedding sheets, beside her husband in Westminster Abbey. ∞

Open House Weekend 17th & 18th September

The temple is open to the public from 2-5pm every Sunday from April-October inc. (and for special events). During London Open House Weekend (17th & 18th September 2011)

It will be open from 11am-5pm both days

Behind the pictures in the Temple Exhibition NO.2



Courtesy of The Garrick Club, London

Garrick as Lord Chalkstone

by William Hogarth (1697-1764)

Garrick is normally associated with his great tragic roles - Richard III, Hamlet, Macbeth, King Lear - but in his time he was renowned as a comic performer. He also wrote many plays. The first of these was “Lethe”, which was first performed in 1740 when he was only 23. Later, he introduced into the play a comic character called Lord Chalkstone, a gouty and funny old nobleman. Garrick loved playing this role, and evoked mass laughter by looking down into the orchestra pit and saying “Upon my word, here’s a fine Haha, and a most curious collection of evergreen and shrubs!”

He also much enjoyed playing in “The Provoked Husband” (by Vanbrugh), which made George II laugh so much that he let the play be dedicated to him. It was thus for a good reason that Sir Joshua Reynolds (a friend of Garrick’s) painted him “between Comedy and Tragedy”. ∞

Crime at Garrick’s Temple

Four times in the last 18 months thieves have stolen lead from the Temple. The Council has agreed to improve security arrangements. ∞

Education at the Shakespeare Temple

This has been a busy year for the Temple Education Group. It has delivered its "Maths with Palladio" workshops to eleven local Primary schools, not only in the borough of Richmond-on-Thames but also from Hounslow and Elmbridge. The programme looks at the shapes contained within this octagonal classical building and the pupils use observation, movement, design and draughtsmanship skills to help develop their understanding of mathematical proportions and symmetry.

The new programme *Tea with the Garricks - a Conversation Piece*, to be delivered in the summer term 2011, is also for Primary schools it uses two Zoffany paintings in the Temple as inspiration for a session using drama and looking at the rich history of 18th century local characters, and the customs surrounding the new fashion for tea drinking. It is hoped it will prove an enjoyable session for schools.

It is also planned to increase connections with local secondary schools and sixth form colleges, and alert them to the potential of the Temple as an inspira-



tional resource for a wide range of subject areas including Drama and the Performing Arts, Art and Design, Maths, Local History and Environmental Studies. Earlier in the year, a group of students from Richmond-upon-Thames College performed movement pieces inspired by *Macbeth* and *The Tempest*.

The Education Group aims to further relationships with Garrick connections such as Hogarth House, Johnson's House and Strawberry Hill House which could

lead to some exciting joint ventures in the future.

A new Education Leaflet giving details of programmes, and how to get in touch, is now available to schools and Colleges and is on the Trust's website.

The Education Group is very grateful for the support given by Rachel Tranter, Miranda Stearn and the team at Orleans House Gallery. The cultural Olympiad and the Queen's Golden Jubilee are both important dates for 2012 calendar.

EVENTS 2011

Many musical or theatrical events have been arranged (see separate leaflet). They are mainly on Saturdays but on some Sunday afternoons the Actors' Richmond Company will recite sonnets and scenes from Shakespeare.

Volunteers needed

Garrick's Temple to Shakespeare urgently needs volunteer Temple Guides to welcome visitors, answer their questions, sell booklets, souvenirs and postcards - while keeping a watchful eye on the Temple itself.

During special events on Saturdays and Sundays, Catering Assistants serve tea and light refreshments. Extra help is always needed for the "London Open House" Weekend in September (see p.3). During school visits and other childrens' events, help is needed to assist in a wide range of educational and craft activities.

Artistic volunteers with hands-on experience are especially welcome.

The outside of the Temple and the grounds are maintained by the London Borough of Richmond-upon-Thames, but there is always plenty of work for the Temple's own garden team.

Charitable contributions needed

The Trust needs help towards the cost of Conservation, Education and Cultural events. Contributions to John Sheaf, Assistant Treasurer at 4, Thames St., Hampton, Middx, TW12 2EA



Garrick's Temple to Shakespeare Trust
www.garrickstemple.org.uk Charity no. 1107200

