Maker Not Muse: 
Kitty Clive, or The Fair Songster

Dr Berta Joncus
Senior Lecturer, Music
Goldsmiths, University of London
William Verelst, Catherine Clive (1711-1785). Oil on canvas, 1740.
Some Achievements

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

Cliveden near Strawberry Hill, Twickenham, formerly the Villa of Mrs. Catherine Clive. Watercolour, c1810
‘I am sorry to hear you have an indifferent part in the new Comedy, but I don’t at all wonder when you tell me the author. [H]e is a wretch of wretches, however I charge you to make a good part of it[.] Let it be never so bad, I have often done so myself therefore I know it is to be done[:] turn it & wind it & play it in a different manner to his intention and as hundred to one but you succeed’

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

Performance: Henry Carey, ‘How brimful of nothing’s the Life of a Beau’ (1738)
William Hogarth, *The Beggar’s Opera* [by John Gay, 1728]. Oil on canvas, 1731
Audio 'Now ponder well', Air 12 in John Gay, *The Beggar's Opera* (1728)
The following is a letter to the Author of the Novel, Polly Peachum.

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To the Author of the Novel, Polly Peachum,
John Faber after John Ellys, *Miss Fenton*. Mezzotint, 1728
While Crowds attentive
sit to Polly's Voice,
And in their Native harmony
rejoice;
Th'admiring Throng no vain
subscription draws,
Nor Affectation prompts a
false Applause.

Nature untaught, each
Pleasing strain
supply's,
Artless as her unbidden
Blushes rise,
And charming as the
Mischief in her Eyes.
Henry Carey (1687–1743), Kitty Clive's Mentor, Singing Teacher, Song Writer
Masque-like scenery
English Masque – Clive’s first stage line

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

Performance ‘Ye faun and ye dryads’ from *Comus*
LOVE IN A RIDDLE
A PASTORAL

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

Written by Mr. CIBBER.

LONDON:
Printed for J. WATTS, at the Printing-Office in Wild-Court near Lincoln's-Inn Fields.
MDCCXIX. (Price 1s. 6d.)
Love in a Riddle (1729) – a disaster

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

The Laureat: Or, the Right Side of Colley Cibber, Esq (London, 1740), p.46.
After Gottfried Schalcken

Miss Rafter in the Character of Phillida,
1729

D A M O N

AND

P H I L L I D A :

A

BALLAD OPERA

OF ONE ACT.

As it is Performed at the

Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane

BY

His MAJESTY's Servants.

With the MUSICK prefix'd to each SONG.

L O N D O N :
Printed for J. WATTS, at the Printing-Office in
Wild-Court near Lincoln-Inn Field. 1729.
[Price One Shilling.]
See native Beauty clad without disguise,
No art t’allure a paltry Lovers Eyes,
No stiff, sett Airs, which but betray the mind,
But unaffected Innocence we find:

Happy the Nymph with charms by Nature blest,
But happier Swain, who of the Nymph possest,
Can taste the Joys, which she alone can bring,
And live in Pleasures which alternate spring.
Francis Hayman and studio, *A Scene in ‘The Devil to Pay’*, Oil on canvas, 1730s.
‘But sure nothing has had a greater Run, than a little Farce called, *The Devil to Pay* … it has been perform’d almost every Night this Season; your little Favourite Miss Raftor appears a Prodigy in this Piece, it has render’d her the Darling of the whole Town’.

Audio: Words by Charles Coffey, music arranged by Mr. Seedo, ‘Was ever Man possest’ in *The Devil to Pay*, 1731 [2nd afterpiece version]. Based on George F. Handel, ‘Nò, non temere’ in *Ottone*, HWV 15, 1723.
Writer
Henry Fielding
(1707-1754)

Actor-manager
Theophilus Cibber
(1703-1758)
Henry Fielding's plays at Drury Lane 1731-1734

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Play</th>
<th>Led by Clive</th>
<th>Stage success</th>
<th>Ballad opera/spoken comedy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Lottery (Jan 1732)</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>hit</td>
<td>Ballad opera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Modern Husband (Feb 1732)</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>13 nights</td>
<td>Spoken comedy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Old Debauchees (June 1732)</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>flop</td>
<td>Spoken comedy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Covent-Garden Tragedy (June 1732)</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>flop</td>
<td>Spoken comedy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Mock Doctor (after Molière, June 1732)</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>hit</td>
<td>Ballad opera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Miser (after Molière, 1733)</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>hit</td>
<td>Ballad opera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Author's Farce (rev, 1734)</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>hit</td>
<td>Spoken comedy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Intriguing Chambermaid (after Regnard, 1734)</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>hit</td>
<td>Ballad opera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Old Man taught Wisdom, or the Virgin Unmask'd (1735)</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>hit</td>
<td>Ballad opera</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Audio: Words by Henry Fielding, arranged and composed by Mr Seedo, ‘Some confounded planet’ in The Lottery. Based on George F. Handel, ‘Son confus’ pastorella’ Poro, HWV, 1731
Clive’s First Spoken-only Principal Part

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

‘Dramaticus’, Grub-street Journal 15 June 1732

Clive’s first-ever epilogue:

‘In short, you are the Business of our Lives,
To be a Mistress kept, the Strumpet strives,
And all the modest Virgins to be Wives.
For Prudes may cant of Virtues and of Vices,
But faith! we only differ in our Prices’
John Faber after Pieter van Bleeck, *The Celebrated Mrs Clive, late Miss Raftor in the Character of Phillida*, 1734. Mezzotint.

Mezzotint after Jonathan Richards, *Anne Oldfield* (1683 – 1730)
Jeremiah Davison after Joseph van Aken. *Catherine Clive*. Oil on canvas, c1735.
Of all the Arts that sooth the human Breast,
Music (blest Power) the sweetest is confest:
Heightens our Joys, suspends our fiercest Pains:
This each One proves who hears thy heavnly Strains.
After Jonathan Richards, Anne Oldfield (1683 – 1730)
On Susannah Cibber: ‘very Young, and pretty; and has made innumerable Conquests, her Voice is exceedingly small, but exceedingly sweet; ... she has such a Warble, such a je ne scay quoy as tickles my very Soul’

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

Two RIVALS in Theatrick Fame, Fell out in France – and fight;
Two Nymphs in England did the same,
But cooler, chose to write …
Our Courage oft to France we’ve shown;
As oft our Folly in our Writing:
But your Examples prove, we’re grown,
In Wit superior, as in Fighting.
‘It is a received Maxim … that no Actor or Actress shall be depriv’d of a Part in which they have been well receiv’d, until they are render’d incapable of performing it either by Age or Sickness; and for no other Reason whatsoever, have I endeav’r’d to keep the Part of Polly’
-pro-Clive critic

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

-Catherine Clive
‘There was a prodigious uproar, with Clapping, Hissing, Catcalls &c. Mrs. Clive, who play’d the part of Polly, when she came forward, address’d herself to the House, saying Gentlemen, I am very sorry it should be thought I have in any Manner been the Occasion of the least Disturbance; and then cry’d in so moving Manner, that even Butchers wept. Then she told them, She was almost ready with her Part of Lucy, and at all Times shou’d be willing to play such Parts as the Town should direct, and desir’d to know if they were willing she should go on with the part of Polly; she behaving in so humble a Manner, the House approv’d of her Behaviour by a general Clap.’
Thomas Arne, *Comus* (1738)

Euphrosyne

*Comus, a Mask:*

*(Now adapted to the Stage)*

As Alter'd from

*Milton's Mask, &c.*

*(Price One Shilling,)*

Performance ‘Mirth admit me of thy Crew’
‘By dimpled brook’
Handel, from the edition of Alexander's Feast (1736)

At the Desire of several Ladies of Quality.
For the Benefit of Mrs. CLIVE.
At the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane, Monday, March 17, will be presented a Comedy, call'd The Way of the World.
Written by the late Mr. Congreve.
The Part of Millamant, to be perform'd by Mrs. CLIVE; In which Character will be introduc'd the Original Song, the Words by Mr. Congreve, and new set to Musick by Mr. Handel.
Mirabel, by Mr. Milward; Painall, Mr. Mills; Sir Wilful, Mr. Turbutt; Witwoud, Mr. Chapman; Petulant, Mr. Macklin; Waitwell, Mr. Shepherd; Marwood, Mrs. Butler; Lady Wishfor't, Mrs. Macklin; Mrs. Painall, Mrs. Pritchard; Foible, Mrs. Bennet.
To which will be added a Ballad-Farse of one Act, call'd The Devil to Pay;
The Part of Sir John Loverule, by Mr. Stoppelaer,
(Who has not appear'd on the Stage these three Years;)
Nell, Mrs. CLIVE.

With ENTERTAINMENTS.
** To prevent Mistakes, 'tis desired that those Gentlemen and Ladies, who have already taken Places, will please to send for Tickets.
Tickets and Places to be had at Mrs. Clive's House in Cecil-street in the Strand. And at Mr. Moor's in the Playhouse Passage.

From the Proprietor of Mrs. Moore's
Performance

‘Love’s but the frailty of the mind’

HWV 218
Dalilah ‘With plaintive notes and am'rous moan’
Charles Burney in 1789

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