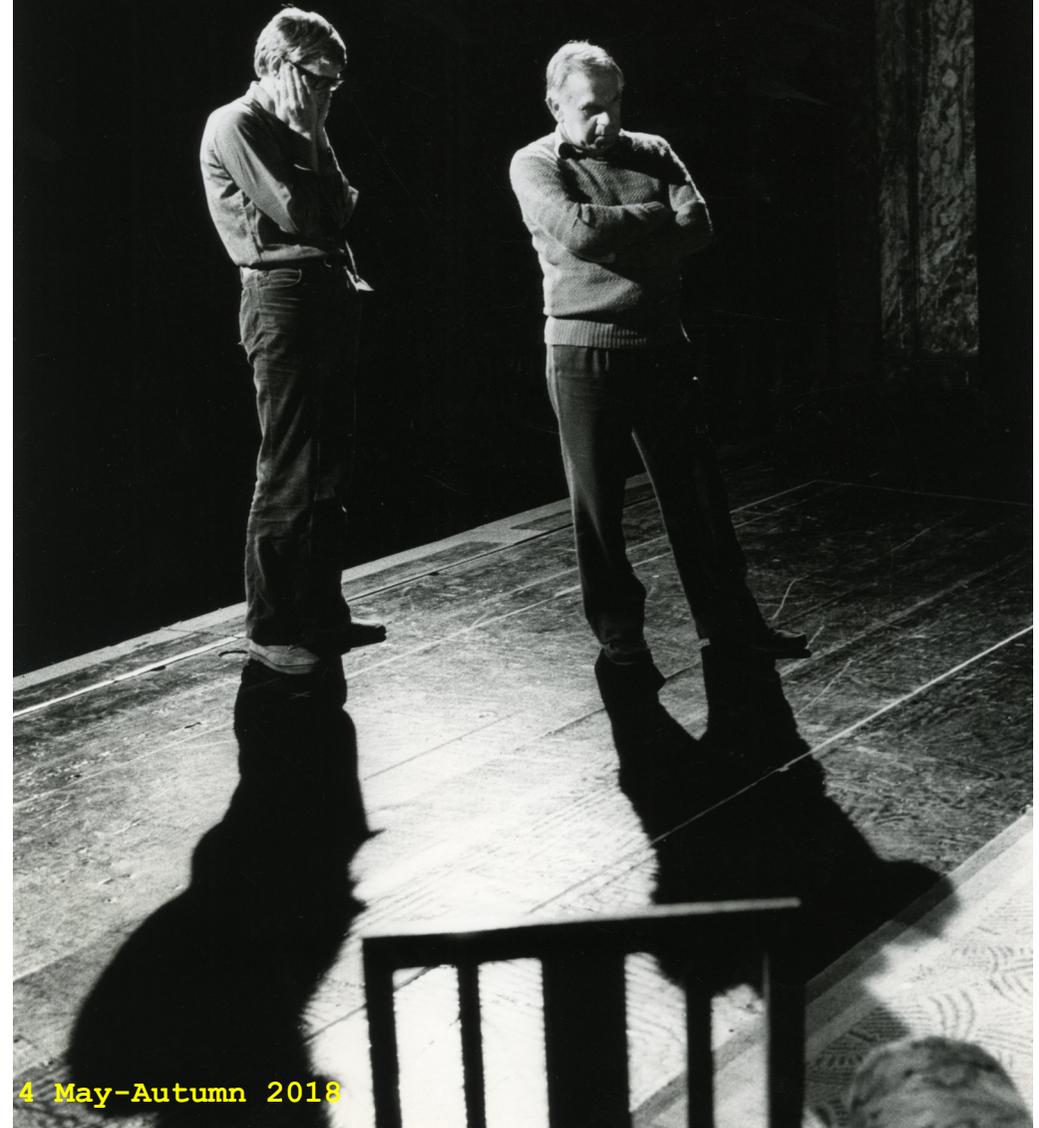


*All the world's a stage:*  
**EMOTION AND THEATRE**

An exhibition curated by History of Art BA students



4 May–Autumn 2018

Cover photograph: *Alan Bennett and Ron Eyre on stage at Her Majesty's Theatre during rehearsals of 'Enjoy', October 1980.*

Photographer: Graham Wyles.

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### **15. Cards distributed during a performance of 'How to Shop'**

Part of a series of seven colour prints, these intriguing visual analogies are the only permanent artworks that remain from Bobby Baker's first performance of *How to Shop: The Lecture* at LIFT '93. The show took the form of an academic lecture, during which Baker (a pioneering female figure of British Live Art) shared her expertise of the 'art of successful shopping' with the goal of inspiring virtue in her audience. Captured by Andrew Whittuck, the photographs - reminiscent of the Pop Art aesthetic - complete this exhibition's theme by ascribing emotions to material objects and blurring the boundaries between performed and natural emotional states. *How to Shop* transformed the spatial construct of the stage, a place traditionally home to scripted emotion. The display of these cards in the exhibition opens the performative space up to yet another dimension, by bridging the gap between art and theatre through the printed form (RLAP/B/87).

'All the world's a stage,' proclaims Jacques to Duke Senior in Act II, Scene VII of William Shakespeare's comedic masterpiece *As You Like It*, 'and all the men and women merely players'. In this exhibition, curated by University of Bristol final year History of Art undergraduates, we seek to explore the inherent truth behind this famous quote, through the lens of the relationship between theatre and emotion. We present a selection of artworks from the University of Bristol Theatre Collection, which all contemplate the central question of how emotion is conveyed through a theatrical setting. The works comprise a diverse range of media, including photography, etching, caricature, set and costume designs and Live Art documentation, and encompass not only the display of emotion on stage but also its manifestation behind the scenes and in other contexts. It is in this expanded theatrical realm of emotion that the truth of Jacques' declaration is profoundly evident, from the emotional reactions of an audience, to the raw emotion exercised in rehearsal and the performed emotion created by Live Art. We also consider the contradictions and inconsistencies between actual and artificial emotion, and the relationship between on-stage simulated emotion and off-stage emotion that might be reflected in audience and critical responses. From Ivan Kyncl's compelling photograph of Harold Pinter during a rehearsal for *Twelve Angry Men*, to Philip Youngman Carter's vehement etching of the Old Vic's raucous audience and Bobby Baker's satirical performance of domesticated mundanity, we hope that, after experiencing this exhibition, you too will come to believe that all the world is indeed a stage.

### **1. Prompt book for 'Twelve Angry Men', Bristol Old Vic**

The prompt book for this production contains the script and production cues. The open pages are from the final scene in Act I of *Twelve Angry Men*. In the moment presented, the characters Jurors 3 and 8 display various emotions, including frustration, anger and aggression. This item has been selected alongside Ivan Kyncl's production and rehearsal photographs in order to demonstrate the parallels between the emotional dialogue in the script and the images portraying off-stage and on-stage emotion (BOV/3/2).

### **14. The Old Vic Gallery**

In 1922 Philip Youngman Carter, referred to affectionately as 'Pip' by friends and family, took his future wife Margery Allingham, the famed writer of detective fiction, on their first date to the Old Vic in London. Six years later, when Youngman Carter and Allingham married, he produced this etching, *The Old Vic Gallery*, depicting the crowd in the galleries of that very theatre, which was subsequently exhibited at the Royal Academy of Arts as part of the 1928 Summer Exhibition. Youngman Carter portrays the Old Vic gallery audience as a baying crowd, a mostly faceless anonymised mass of humanity, all turned to face the on-stage action happening outside of the frame. This print also effectively captures an experience which is rarely covered in the canon of art historical documentation of theatre; the emotions experienced by an audience (TCP/T/158).

### **13. *Blind Man's Buff***

John Bertram Musgrave Wood, known in the artistic sphere as Emmwood, was a renowned theatrical caricaturist. This image is based on a production of *Blind Man's Buff*, which was created by Ernst Toller and Denis Johnston; an adaptation of Toller's German play *Die Blinde Götter* (1932). The plot presents a 'blind [legal] system' (Irish Theatre Institute, 2018), oppressing those who have behaved in a manner not accepted in quotidian society. In the exaggerated physiological features of each character *Blind Man's Buff* presents us with a snapshot of contrived emotion, as perceived by an objective viewer: 'I try and [create] cartoons people understand [...] Simplicity is the thing. I cut down on the characters in a cartoon - but I like to put a bit of fun in.' (Emmwood) (TCP/C/8).

### **2. *Harold Pinter during the rehearsal for 'Twelve Angry Men' at Bristol Old Vic***

Ivan Kyncl's photograph shows director Harold Pinter during a rehearsal for the 1996 Bristol Old Vic production of *Twelve Angry Men*. This image, in foregrounding Pinter, emphasises his prominence as a theatre director as well as an actor and writer. Compositionally, Kyncl captures the modest rehearsal setting: the scene Pinter inhabits is a non-theatrical space, rather than the finished 'spectacle' of the on-stage performance. Kyncl's decision to capture Pinter's side-profile, highlights a facial expression and posture which arguably exposes the development of an emotional script prior to the first night performance (BOV/3/2).

### **3. Scene from 'Twelve Angry Men', at Bristol Old Vic**

The photograph depicts one of many interpretations of the play *Twelve Angry Men* (7th March-6th April 1996). This particular production was directed by Harold Pinter and forms part of a larger series of photographs, including rehearsal images. This image by Ivan Kyncl of six of the Jurors expresses understated emotion. Facial expressions and bodily gestures suggest ambiguity and mystery, questioning the 'illusion of genuine emotion rather than the experience of actual emotion' (Kuritz, *The Making of Theatre History*, 1988). Kyncl focuses the camera lens on Kevin Whately (Juror 8) who appears to listen to the obscured figure on the left, whilst the four other jurors are partially unfocused, contemplative and unengaged. The photograph blurs the parallels between on-stage and off-stage. At first glance, it appears as though the image reflects the photographs taken of the off-stage rehearsals; instead it illustrates the on-stage abilities to reference emotion (BOV/P/541).

### **12. Scene from 'Jane Shore', Princess's Theatre, London. Published in the Illustrated London News**

A sense of misery is palpable in the image's central figure, who slumps on the snow-covered ground and averts her sorrowful eyes from our gaze. Published in the *Illustrated London News*, this wood engraving depicts the dramatic penultimate act from W.G. Wills' production of *Jane Shore* at the Princess's Theatre, London in 1876. Despite the subject matter, the artist has provided little indication of a theatrical setting, with neither curtains or audience. Instead, the realism of the scene appeals to the viewer's emotions by offering a sense of reality that is at odds with the perceived illusion of theatrical performance. For readers of the *Illustrated London News*, this spectacle of Jane's suffering may have aroused a deeper and more genuine empathy for the play's protagonist extending beyond the limits of the stage (RS/A7/0006).

#### **11. Scenes from 'The Rite of Spring'**

These publicity photographs, taken prior to the first night of The Ballet Russes' production of *The Rite of Spring*, display the archaic Slavic costumes and provide a glimpse into Vaslav Nijinsky's bizarre and angular choreography: reversing classical techniques, knees and toes point inwards and shoulders hunch forward. The cubist, flat forms of the painted background, radical in its dismissal of perspective, echo the remarkably two-dimensional, robot-like appearance of the dancers. Observing their jarred necks and wide eyes, one can understand how this ballet, an art form usually associated with grace and harmony, shocked and terrified its audience. Indeed, there was a riot at its premiere in Paris in 1913, and the police were called after fights broke out among an enraged audience. Before the premiere, Nijinsky had written that he hoped it would be a 'jolting and emotional experience.' This photograph demonstrates the fulfilment of those efforts (MH/REF/DA/CO/19).

#### **4. Scenic artist working in the paint shop at the Theatre Royal, Bristol**

Derek Balmer was the official photographer for the Bristol Old Vic Theatre Company from 1968. This photograph of a scenic artist employs *chiaroscuro* (the contrast between light and dark), which is here used to convey emotion. The light, which cuts the vertical column in half, illuminates the set, serving as a theatrical spotlight to highlight the action in the painting. The contrast between the large, over expansive, scenery and the significantly smaller figure of the painter himself, is accentuated by the composition. Balmer states: 'behind your air of self-confidence you are conscious that you have to turn up with the goods. There is no second chance.' Tension is created using lighting and composition, elements of representation which are seen as two of Balmer's particular strengths. He states that he could summarise a situation by lighting it in a simplistic manner, and in *Scenic artist*, he has done just this. As the viewer we gain a true insight into the struggles of working in the theatre (BOV/P/808).

### **5. Alan Bennett and Ronald Eyre on stage at Her Majesty's Theatre during a rehearsal for 'Enjoy'**

Captured by actor Graham Wyles, this extraordinary photograph discloses a moment of intense concentration in which playwright and director struggle to fathom the logistics of the final scene of *Enjoy*; Bennett holds his head in his hands, whilst Eyre solemnly crosses his arms over his chest. Stood in isolation before an ominous black background, the illuminated figures dominate the space they inhabit through both their posture and the dense shadows that precede their forms. Utilising the physical boundaries of the stage, Wyles frames the figures between the receding floorboards and the vertical beam in the upper right hand of the composition. A chair in the lower foreground contributes to this framing and creates a barrier that distances the viewer from the on-stage action just as the audience are separated from the performers during a performance. The viewer of this photograph, however, witnesses a 'performance' of another kind; one of raw, bona fide emotion (TCP/P/222).

### **10. Costume design for 'Cymbeline' (Queen)**

This piece is a painted sketch by Lila De Nobili for Joan Miller's costume for her character of Queen in Peter Hall's 1957 production of Shakespeare's *Cymbeline*, performed at the RSC in Stratford. De Nobili harnesses the overarching sense of darkness that the character experiences internally, using a sombre palette of murky blues and browns. It is as if she is emulating a creature rising from the deepest depths of the sea, with small bursts of sky blue and gold, mainly in the bodice, adding depth and contrast. De Nobili (1916-2002) studied in both Paris and Rome before beginning her career as 'a Parisian fashion illustrator and neo-romantic painter' (Guardian obituary, 2002). Her design for Queen Cymbeline was the first Shakespearean play on which De Nobili worked, marking the start of a rich and fruitful relationship with the director Peter Hall (and leading her to work on his 1967 production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*) (TCD/C/3).

### **9. Costume design for 'The Cenci' (William Hoyland as Cenci)**

This is a costume design by John Elvery for the character of Cenci from *The Cenci*. John Elvery spent his career in Bristol, where he was the Head of Design at the Bristol Old Vic from 1972-1986. The work was given to the Theatre Collection in 1999 by the scenic artist Jane Cooke, a great friend of Elvery's. A conventional method of expressing emotion in art is through facial expression, however Elvery has denied the viewer the privilege of engaging with this visual strategy by whitening the face of his character so that the facial features cannot be seen. Instead, Elvery has translated emotion through gesture, colour and mood. We are very fortunate to have fragments of the black and embroidered gold fabric used to make the costume attached to the work, as this provides additional insight into the design process (TCD/C/602).

### **6. Characters from 'The Tragedy Macbeth'**

This double-sided transparency depicts characters from Shakespeare's play *Macbeth*. When hanging the exhibition, on account of the unique nature of the space and its potential limitations, we were faced with a choice: whether, rather like Macbeth, to follow the path of the 'holy' and display the brightly coloured side of the image, or to showcase the 'murderous', dark side of the transparency. The image as a whole displays an array of different emotional narratives inspired by the play. We decided to display this side of the image as its impact comes from the violent juxtaposition of colouring on the darker side. This in turn entices a more dramatic engagement on the viewer's part. Additionally, the image's emotive impact echoes Lady Macbeth's proclamation: 'This is the very painting of your fear'. This quotation exemplifies the wonderful connection between the deceptive nature of the illusion produced by the transparency painting and the real fearful emotions that the play ignites (TCP/S/113).

### **7. Scene from 'Mary Rose', Haymarket Theatre**

Rendered in shadowy illusionistic light and producing an air of mystery, this black and white photograph depicts two characters from the play *Mary Rose* who have been reunited after many years. *Mary Rose* is a ghostly story of a young girl's disappearance on a strange island, written by J.M. Barrie in 1919 and first performed in 1920 at the Haymarket Theatre, London. This image is especially significant as it demonstrates experiments in photographic effects to create ghostly imagery. The photograph generates emotion through multiple layers: the actual onstage emotion of the performance, the artificial emotion of characters playing a role within a performance, and through the experimental nature of the photograph (MM/REF/TH/LO/HAY/30).

### **8. One of the four scenes used for visual backgrounds for the Sea Interludes in the opera 'Peter Grimes' (BBC Television)**

This image is an expressive depiction of a tempestuous seascape, concentrated on movement and light. It was created for one of the four sea interludes of Benjamin Britten's opera, *Peter Grimes*, which was due to be broadcast on television by the BBC in 1964. The character of Peter Grimes derived from a poem in George Crabbe's 'The Borough'. The opera was first performed at Sadler's Wells Theatre, marking the reopening of the theatre after the Second World War in 1945. There is no written evidence that the BBC did in fact go ahead with the televised version. The element of light is central to the seascape, which was inspired by the Aldeburgh coastline of Suffolk. Light shines from the moon, emanating across the image, illuminating the sea-spray cast off the waves. The uncertainty of the dark abstracted brush strokes adds to the notion of corrupted innocence which unfolds within the plot of the opera, where the protagonist becomes maddened by the guilt of his apprentices passing away under his ill treatment, resulting in his own death (TCD/C/341).