

## The Dances in *Dioclesian*

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### Introduction

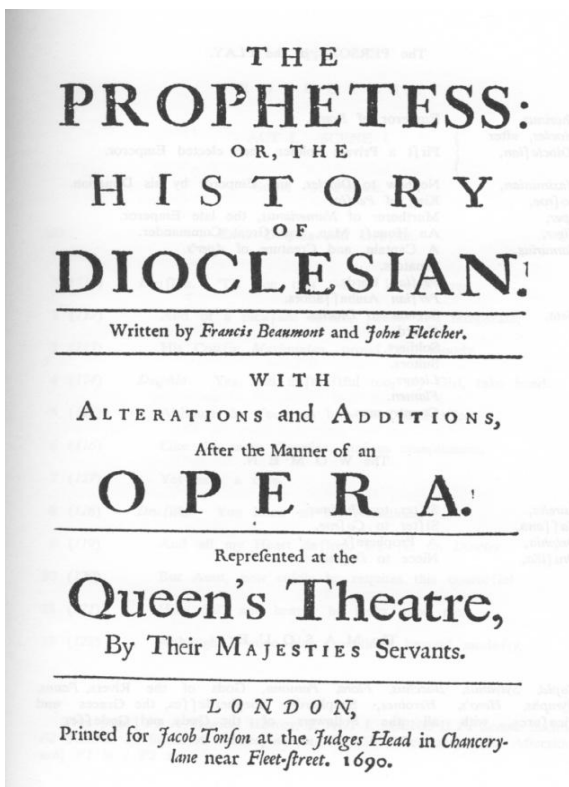
Towards the beginning of Act III in the ‘dramatick opera’<sup>1</sup> *Dioclesian* there is an extraordinary dance. The sorceress Delphia announces “They are all spirits; all at my command. My servants all, and they shall entertain you; come forth and dance before the mighty Edile; come forth and leave your shadows in your places.” Upon which “The Figures come out of the Hangings and Dance: and Figures exactly the same appear in their places: When they have danc’d a while, they go to sit on the Chairs, they flip from ‘em, and after join in the dance with ‘em.”

The function of this dance is to impress the character Maximinian (the ‘Edile’ or Roman magistrate referred to above) with the power of the sorceress Delphia (who is in fact, the central character of the opera, which was originally presented under the title *The Prophetess: or, the History of Dioclesian* – the ‘prophetess’ being Delphia). The way in which supposedly inanimate objects (the ‘chairs’ and ‘hangings’) are brought to life by Delphia represent her magical power to control the whole of the theatrical space. It is not just a simple dance upon a stage, but a transformation of ‘dead’ scenery into living beings.

There are another two dances of this ‘transformational’ kind in the opera. The first is a ‘dance of furies’: A dreadful monster enters, representing the wrath of the Gods (or, rather, of Delphia again, demonstrating her displeasure at Diocles accepting the hand of Princess Aurelia rather than of Delphia’s niece Drusilla). The cue then indicates that “the Musick flourish. They who made the Monster separate in an instant and fall into a Figure, ready to begin a Dance of Furies”. The dance then follows.

The third example is a ‘Butterfly Dance’ at the beginning of Act IV. Here Delphia again demonstrates her powers:

“She waves her Wand thrice. Soft Musick is heard. Then the Curtain rises, and shews a stately Tomb, Aurelia lying in the midst of it, on a Bed of State. Delphia stamps, and it vanishes: behind it is seen a large Cupola, supported by Termes on Pedestals. The Prophetess waves her wand, the Termes leap from their Pedestals, the Building falls and the Termes and Cupola are turned into a dance of Butterflies.”



**Fig. 1** Front page of published text of the opera

There are a total of nine identified dances in *Dioclesian*. Apart from the three listed above, none are described in any detail but are simply introduced as ‘A Dance of Bacchanals’, or ‘Enter Countrymen and Women; they Dance’, or simply ‘Dance’, and so on. For none of the dances do we have any existing choreography.<sup>2</sup> In addition to these nine, there are many other places in the opera during which nothing much is happening on the stage and the interpolation of a dance might be assumed.

As well as quantity, the dance music is remarkable for its quality: Curtis Price has remarked of *Dioclesian* that “when the gilt and paint are washed away the pure gold that remains is the dances”.<sup>3</sup> One can infer from both the dramatic importance of dance and the quality of the accompaniment that it was a major part of the performance.



**Fig. 2** Portrait of Thomas Betterton (Godfrey Kneller, 1690s)

Significantly, the three dances which warrant descriptions in the libretto all occur during the first four acts of the opera, and are quite crucial in advancing the plot, primarily by demonstrating the magical powers – and implied threats -- of the central character

Delphia. Most of the others are located in Act V, the so-called ‘masque’ which concludes the opera, as a spectacular presentation to the royal couple (Diocles and his new wife, the previously spurned Drusilla, Delphia’s niece) who have abdicated from public life in order to enjoy the quiet pursuits of marital bliss and country living. Here the dances are simple character pieces designed to enhance the spectacle and are of little dramatic consequence. Nevertheless, it can be asserted that for the work as a whole, the dance element is quite crucial to its overall design. To get a better understanding of the role of dance in Restoration theatre, and of *Dioclesian* in particular, we need to look at the broader issues of context, the time and place in which *Dioclesian* was first created.

### Who created *Dioclesian*?

There were four principal elements or agencies involved in the creation of the ‘dramatick opera’ *Dioclesian* in 1690:

- **Thomas Betterton** (c.1635-1710), actor/manager of the Duke’s Company, and later of the United company (formed in 1682 on merger of the King’s and Duke’s companies)
- **Josias Priest** (c.1645-1735), dancer and choreographer
- **Henry Purcell** (1659-1695), composer and member of the Chapel Royal
- **The Dorset Garden Theatre** (1671-1709)

Betterton (age 55), as manager, chose and adapted the play – a relatively unknown piece called *The Prophetess* by Philip Massinger (1583-1640) and John Fletcher (1579 – 1625) (though at the time thought to have been by Beaumont and Fletcher).<sup>4</sup> This had first been performed in 1622, but had lain dormant for some years (partly through the theatre closures of the Puritan, Civil War and Commonwealth periods). As the authors were now dead, there was little question of having to pay them directly.

Betterton also chose Priest (or 'Preist' in 17thC orthography) (age 45) as choreographer (he had previously worked with the company) who may in turn have chosen Purcell (age 30) as composer (his production in collaboration with Priest the previous year, 1689 – *Dido and Aeneas* – had received considerable critical acclaim even though it appears to have been performed only once and privately). Purcell had, in fact, worked for Betterton and the Duke's company as early as 1680, on music for the play *Theodosius*, but had done little for the theatre since then.<sup>5</sup> The implicit 'chain of command' thus led from Betterton to Priest, then to Purcell.<sup>6</sup> (this is also likely to have been reflected in the distribution of financial rewards). That we now regard *Dioclesian* as 'Purcell's opera' is a reflection of the latter's genius, rather than of any natural order (in fact, the 1690 printed text of the piece has no mention of any of the three).<sup>7</sup>

stage. He was responsible for choreographing most of the 'Restoration spectaculars' that were produced at Dorset Garden between 1673 and 1693 (including all three Purcell 'semi-operas') when he was replaced by his former assistant, Thomas Bray. Priest died in 1734.

The Dorset Garden Theatre (from 1685 known as The Queen's Theatre, and earlier as The Duke of York's Theatre) was the most technically advanced theatre in London at that time, with facilities to mount the most lavish of Restoration shows. It was also the home of the Duke's Company (originally named after James, Duke of York, brother to Charles II, later James II) from 1671 until the 1682 merger with the rival King's Company to form the United Company, who then used it for its more lavish spectacles. It was demolished in 1709 (at the end of the 39 year lease on the site granted to the Duke's company).



**Fig. 3** Portrait of Henry Purcell (by or after John Closterman (1695) National Portrait Gallery)

We have no contemporary portrait of Priest, although Weaver in *An Essay towards an History of Dancing* (London, 1728) describes him as the greatest master of grotesque dancing that had appeared on the English



**Fig. 4** Frontispiece of *Dioclesian*

The play *The Prophetess* was chosen by Betterton partly because it featured a character with magical powers (Delphia, the prophetess of the title) who could then be relied upon to create magic effects within the theatre space – the so-called ‘transformations’ so beloved of audiences at that time (and even today as part of the wonders of pantomime). Other works of this period featured similar agencies – viz. the magician Merlin in *King Arthur* or the sprite Ariel in *The Fairy Queen*.

The principal protagonists of this play are the prophetess, Delphia, and a Roman soldier, Diocles. The story revolves around the unrequited love that Delphia’s unprepossessing niece Drusilla has for Diocles, and how through the agency of Delphia’s magic she gets him in the end. It opens with Delphia predicting that by killing a wild boar Diocles will become co-emperor of Rome. He promptly goes around slaughtering all the wild pigs he can find – but without any great political success. Only when another Roman soldier, Volutious Aper, is charged with the assassination of the Emperor does he realize the truth of Delphia’s prophecy: *Imperator eris Romae, cum Aprum grandem interfeceris*, for Aper is Latin for boar. He promptly kills Aper and is rewarded by being made co-emperor, along with the offer of the existing co-emperor’s sister, the beautiful Princess Aurelia, in marriage. To the annoyance of Drusilla, and the anger of Delphia, he accepts. In view of the latter’s magical powers this is not a good move. Delphia prevents the wedding by conjuring up a fierce storm, a monster, and a set of dancing chairs; she then causes the princess to fall in love with Diocles’ rival Maximinian. She even ensures that the invading Persians defeat the Roman army. These magical intrusions are represented on stage largely in the form of elaborate dances as described at the beginning of this talk.

In the end, however, Diocles realizes the error of his ways, routes the Persians, cedes his half of the throne to Maximinian and retires with Drusilla to a life of domestic bliss in rural Lombardy, where they are entertained by the local rustics to a jolly Masque in honour of

Bacchus and Cupid. The whole may be seen as a morality play representing the triumph of **Love over Ambition**.

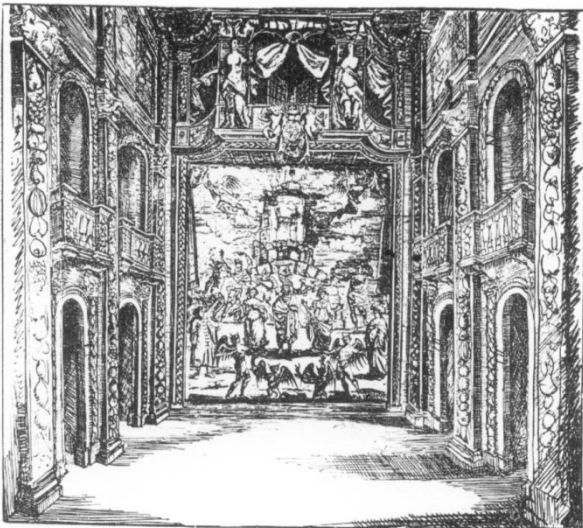
The value of such a plot is that it provides ample excuse for some elegant music and songs in honour of Heroic Acts, Love, Bacchus, etc., plus splendid opportunities for dances of Furies, Monsters, Chairs and Butterflies – along with Country Dances and Hornpipes for the rustic entertainers. As always, the presence of a character with magical powers is a great help in providing motivation for splendid theatrical effects.



**Fig. 5** The Theatre at Dorset Garden

It could be argued, however, that the real star of the show is our fourth agent in the production: the Dorset Garden Theatre. Without the particular form and facilities of this splendid performance space it is doubtful if *Dioclesian* would have been anything like as successful as it was, or indeed if the entire genre of ‘dramatick opera’ would have been at all viable.

Dorset Garden was built in 1671, a decade or so after Charles II and the Restoration of the Monarchy in 1660. This whole period was a time of great theatrical revival after many bleak years of Puritan control. As a theatre it retained some of the aspects of the great Elizabethan theatres – long thrust stage, side boxes, galleries and a music room above the stage – but it was built on a more intimate scale, with an audience estimated to be between 820 and 1200.<sup>8</sup> Its relatively small size, high ticket prices and early starting times (3.00 pm) ensured that the audience would be from the well-educated gentry rather than the general public, shopkeepers and apprentices that had previously frequented the Elizabethan playhouses.



Dorset Garden, London  
"The Empress of Morocco"

Fig. 6 Interior of the Dorset Garden Theatre

### Dorset Garden Theatre

The playhouse may have been designed by Christopher Wren, or possibly Robert Hooke. Betterton had been sent by Charles to France to study the grand baroque *tragedies en musique* (by composers such as Lully) with their spectacular staging, using perspective scenery and many machines. The objective was to re-create such a 'theatre of spectacle' in Restoration London, a 'machine house' with all the facilities for flying-in elaborate chariots from above or demons from below, and instant transformations of scene. It was

also designed to have moveable scenery in the upstage area, which allowed for very rapid scene changes or 'transformations'.

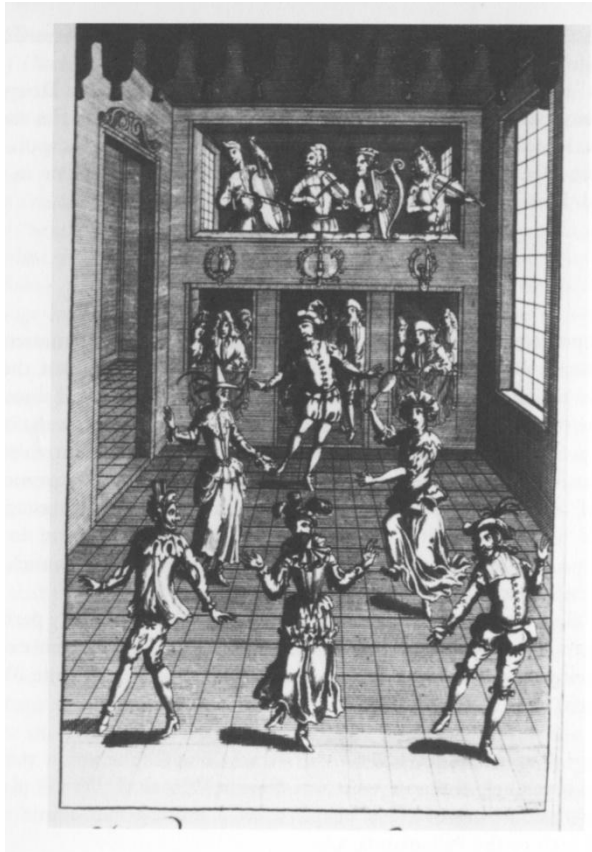
It should be recalled that this was also a period of intensive re-building in London following the devastating fire of 1666 (which had in fact destroyed the former Dorset House and the surrounding grounds, thus allowing the new theatre to be built). Christopher Wren alone was responsible for the design of some 52 new churches. Architectural experimentation was rife. Betterton's trip to France in the summer of 1671 was to create new ideas for the staging of grand spectacles.

The entire construction of the theatre was on a very lavish scale. It had cost some £9000, roughly twice that of the similarly-sized new Drury Lane Theatre built at around the same time.<sup>9</sup> The interior of the theatre was very ornate and featured a lot of carved decoration, much of it by Grinling Gibbons (on his first major contract since being 'discovered' carving ship decorations in the Deptford shipyards).<sup>10</sup>

### Locating the Music

An important consideration in the design of the new theatre was where to place the orchestra and the singers. In France it had become customary to place the orchestra in front of the stage, and for the comedy operas the singers would be on stage along with the actors. In England, when Killigrew built his Theatre Royal in Drury Lane (which was in use from 1663 until it burnt down in 1672) he followed the practice of continental theatres by placing the orchestra before the stage in what would be its present location, partly in the sub-stage area. Pepys, an inveterate theatre-goer at this time, comments on the newly opened theatre in his entry for May 8, 1663:

.. to the Theatre Royal, being the second day of its being opened. The house is made with extraordinary good contrivance; and yet hath some faults ... above all, the Musique being below, and most of it sounding below the stage, there is no hearing of the bases at all, nor very well of the trebles...



**Fig. 7** Stage for Fletcher's *Wit at Several Weapons*

It may have been in anticipation of problems of this sort that led the Dorset Garden theatre to be provided with a very large music gallery directly above and jutting out from the proscenium arch, at a height of some 20 or more feet above the stage. This of course was more or less its usual location in the earlier Elizabethan theatres (and likewise in the halls of medieval England). Estimates of its probable area indicate that it would have had room for perhaps two dozen or more musicians (standing, of course) along with a few singers (who might also have used the adjacent side galleries if necessary).<sup>11</sup> Given the relatively small size of the theatre and the close proximity of audience to the stage compared to the much larger continental theatres, it seems likely that this was the preferred position for the music throughout the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Sound from below the stage

might well accompany special effects (such as the emergence of the Cold Genius from a floor trap in *King Arthur*) but generally music came from above. Only in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, with the emergence of all-sung opera (such as those of Handel and others) with its larger orchestral requirements and onstage chorus (and of course, soloists) did it move permanently to its modern position.

Furthermore, at least in the 'dramatick operas' of Purcell and others, singers were not expected to act (nor actors to sing).<sup>12</sup> To place them above, where they could easily be heard as well as seen, makes more sense than having them hidden in the wings or as static objects on stage (getting in the way of the actors carrying the narrative). In addition, the extra space it allowed on the forestage (perhaps 10 feet or more, according to contemporary accounts) meant more room for the dancing – a very important element of restoration theatre.



**Fig. 8** Set for *The Empress of Morocco*

To hear music from above was also the expectation of the audience. Even in the humbler 'theatre' of the provincial church, the

development in this period of the West Gallery tradition can be seen in the same spirit – with musicians and singers of the ‘quire’ in the gallery (often itself a temporary construction) above the west door at the ‘secular’ end of the performance space. Only under the reformist pressure of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was it forced to move (without instruments) to the ‘sacred’ end of the choir stalls proper.

Much of the music in *Dioclesian* can be viewed as ‘chamber music’, with relatively small forces involved. The two recorders and continuo of the well-known chaconne ‘two in one upon a ground’, for instance, would be lost if placed below the stage, while the alto and trumpet duet ‘Sound, Fame, thy brazen trumpet’ needs both singer and instrumentalist to be clearly visible for it to work properly. These again are arguments for placing much, if not all, the music above the stage in the music box and galleries. In addition, stage directions or words in the spoken text clearly indicate that the music is to come from above. Here is an example from the beginning of Act II:

*Diocles*: Ha! Musick in the Air!

*Stage Direction*: A Symphony of Musick in the Air

*All*: This is miraculous!

*Maximinian*: This shows the Gods approve the Person and the Act

There then follows a short symphony from the (full?) orchestra that introduces the bass song “Great Diocles the boar has killed”, presumably also sung from above (ie. “in the Air”). Given that it would be rather impractical to employ two full orchestras (one above and one below), or even to move large numbers of musicians from one point to another during the performance, this seems to indicate that virtually all the music is from the music room above. Other similar examples can be given.<sup>13</sup>

The instrumentation of Purcell’s theatre orchestra is fairly standard and is likely to have consisted of a dozen strings (3 to a part) plus 2 or 3 oboes (a tenor oboe is included in

Dioclesian) and possibly a bassoon. While the strings had been standard in the court orchestra prior to the Civil War, the oboes (and bassoon) were new. This was a French fashion that may have been imported as a consequence of Betterton’s visit to France in 1671. The continuo group might have included a theorbo and possibly a small organ (?) (a harpsichord would probably be too quiet and too large for the limited space of the music room). For ‘colour’ there were recorders (called simply ‘flutes’ at this time and almost certainly played by the oboists). In addition there were invariably two trumpets playing high up in the clarino register – a skill of relatively recent origin. It is known that Purcell often employed the services of the Shore brothers, virtuosos in the art of natural trumpet playing. The use of kettle-drums is doubtful (their editorial insertion into the *Dioclesian* score is therefore questionable). It is also known that violinists often doubled on trumpet. This practice of doubling is another reason to believe that the orchestra may have been quite small, and fairly easily contained, for most purposes, in the limited space of the music room, together with the other upper galleries adjacent to the forestage.

What this suggests, therefore, is that music in the dramattick operas might best be regarded as part of the scenery rather than as a free standing entity in its own right. This was certainly its role in the Elizabethan or Jacobean theatre, where instrumentalists and singers might often be concealed in the foliage of trees or other parts of the masque decorations (though they might also appear temporarily as an onstage band as well). The key idea is that music was mobile and could emerge from anywhere, whether on a high balcony, or from under the stage, or descending in some cloud machine, or crossing above on a chariot.

### **The role of Dance**

Dance had a similar function: it was part of the overall scenic effect, the ‘spectacle’. It could be relatively ‘static’ as in a set piece such as the great chaconne that frequently concluded the whole performance, or it could

be engineered in some cunning way to create a spectacular transformation. In *Dioclesian*, the concluding stage directions indicate that ‘Those who are on the stage, and those who are in the several divisions of the Machine, dance a Grand Dance to the time of the Chorus.’ This I would regard as a ‘set piece’ dance. The three ‘transformation’ dances earlier in the proceedings, on the other hand, have a quite different function. The first is a ‘monster’ that after having terrified the principals (and presumably the audience) transforms itself into a tribe of furies, who dance as furies do. Such a transformation matches the rapid scenic transformations that adoption of the new moveable screens also enabled. We have, unfortunately, no description of exactly how this particular transformation was realized: Did the dancers first appear concealed within the monster (animating it from within) then allow it to vanish through a trap while they emerged to dance as ‘furies’? Or did they create the illusion of the monster by means of their bodies alone? (after the manner of *Pilobolus* dancers). What we can be sure of however is that such transformations were not at all uncommon within the earlier Jacobean court masque and that the professional dancers of the anti-masque would certainly have been familiar with the necessary techniques and skills.

Much the same is likely to be true for the other two ‘transformation’ dances: their roots will most likely be found in the techniques of Jacobean anti-masque. Of course, the choreographic skill needed to pull such an effect together is quite considerable. This, perhaps, is the real role of the company’s choreographer and dance master – Josias Priest, in this case (possibly with the assistance of Thomas Bray, who also appears to have been attached to the company at this time). Betterton was a highly regarded actor and a very effective director of plays, but he was no dancer, let alone likely to have had the skill needed to pull off the elaborate ‘physical theatre’ stunts demanded of these transformation pieces.<sup>14</sup> The success of John Rich in the succeeding generation may partly be due to his ability to combine both roles.

Within the whole work, there were other ‘theatrical spectacles’ that may have demanded considerable input from the choreographer. One such is the Dead March that follows shortly after the Dance of Furies, in which the body of the slain Emperor is carried off in state to be buried, presumably with actors – or dancers -- marching in step to the music. Similarly, throughout the piece there are great crowd scenes in which the stage is filled with marching armies of Persians or Romans. Who is responsible for choreographing such displays? Then there is the grand finale, during which “Those who are on the Stage, and those who are in the several divisions of the Machine, dance a Grand Dance to the time of the Chorus”. It is difficult to imagine Betterton, unable to lead a Country Dance, taking responsibility for organizing this!

The masque at the end of Act V involves some very elaborate stage machinery, as Palaces descend from above and Gardens rise from below.<sup>15</sup> “At the same time Enters *Silvanus, Bacchus, Flora, Pomona, Gods of the River, Fauns, Nymphs, Heros, Heroines, Shepherds and Shepherdesses, the Graces and Pleasures*, with the rest of their followers. The Dancers place themselves on every stage in the Machine; the Singers range themselves about the Stage”. What is obvious from this elaborate stage direction is that considerable choreographic input will be required to make the whole thing work – not likely to be a job for any terpsichorally challenged Betterton!

### **Conclusions: Lessons from attempts at re-creation**

It should be clear from all this that dance in one form or another is probably as much part of the whole show as is the music. Its usual perfunctory treatment in most modern productions may give a completely erroneous impression of its role in *Dioclesian*, or in the ‘Restoration Spectacular’ in general.

We still have no clear idea however of the directorial responsibilities of the principal Dancing Master, and very little even of the



Music Master. How were these elaborate choreographies controlled, where were the cues for entry? And with the music itself likely to emerge from any part of the stage or scenery – high or low – how could that itself be directed? There are some clues within the play script itself, of course, such as the role that Delphia, the Sorceress, might play with her stamping foot and waving wand to initiate both musical and choreographic action.<sup>16</sup> This is the kind of problem, however, that only a real experimental production can elucidate.

The great obstacle to re-creation is, of course, the play itself. The spoken text alone runs to some 2 hours' performance time, on top of which there is instrumental music and dance (30 mins) and vocal music (90 mins), giving a total running time of nearly 4 hours.<sup>17</sup> It is difficult also to engineer a performance space in a conventional theatre that might come even close to that of the original Dorset Garden stage, with its high music box, galleries and upper stage, let alone the array of stage traps and flying machines!

In the summer of 2008, Chalemie created a workshop performance that explored some of the features mentioned above. The unwieldy text was abbreviated and presented in a commedia dell'arte version. The over-the-top characters and somewhat implausible story-line lends itself quite well to this style of acting rather than to a more naturalistic one. To gain some impression of a high music box above a broad dance space, the auditorium was reversed, with the audience placed on the stage and the orchestra directly beneath in the body of the hall, while solo voices and several of the smaller instrumental groups (recorders, trumpets, etc.) were presented from a balcony above that spanned the whole width of the hall. This left the main body of the hall free for large-scale dancing and drama. Although the limitations of such an arrangement are obvious, it did at least give a feeling of what it might be like to perform *Dioclesian* in the more varied multi-tiered space of the Dorset Garden Theatre.

The style of production adopted in this workshop fitted very well with Chalemie's earlier attempts at re-creating some of the great pantomimes that appeared in the second

quarter of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Again there were obvious limitations in the theatre space, but the general conclusion is that the whole 'dramatick opera' of *Dioclesian* (as of all the other 'Restoration spectaculars'<sup>18</sup>) is much more like that of the pantomimes of John Rich that followed in the next century, than of the 'true' operas of Handel and others. *Dioclesian*, *The Fairy Queen* and *King Arthur* lead directly on to *The Necromancer* and *Harlequin Dr Faustus*, not *Rinaldo*.

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<sup>1</sup> In the late seventeenth century England, "opera" meant "semi-opera" (referred to at the time as "dramatic opera") done by the regular theatre companies in English with spoken dialogue. The Dryden-Davenant-Shadwell musicalized version of *The Tempest* (1674) was probably the most popular show of its time. Purcell's *Dioclesian*, *King Arthur*, and *The Fairy-Queen* (1690–92) were extremely elaborate productions that severely strained the finances of the United Company under Betterton. The reported costs of the major semi-operas ranged from £800 to £4,000. Since the usual annual receipts of the Duke's and United Companies totalled around £10,000, this represented quite incredible investment in a very small number of extravaganzas. Admission prices were apparently doubled at the time of a premier and raised by a shilling for revivals. Semi-operas were a special treat, probably given only a few times each season. Whether they were worth the cost and risk may be questioned, but acting company profits could pay for them and they were performed by the company's usual actors, supplemented with extra singers, dancers, and musicians.

<sup>2</sup> Although no choreography remains for any of these dances, two of them were later used as the basis for country dances – *Volpony* and the *Siege of Limerick*. We have only one existing notated choreography that can be attributed Priest and that is a minuet for 12 ladies.

<sup>3</sup> Curtis Price, *Henry Purcell and the London Stage*, Cambridge UP 1984. p288

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<sup>4</sup> The text of the original play, together with Betterton's adaptation (and much other useful information) is to be found in the book by Julia Muller van Santen: *Producing the Prophetess, or The History of Dioclesian*, Vrije Universiteit te Amsterdam, 1989

<sup>5</sup> Curtis Price, *Henry Purcell and the London Stage*, Cambridge UP 1984

<sup>6</sup> To some extent this is also likely to have been reflected in the distribution of financial rewards, though it is difficult to find reliable evidence as to what each of these primary participants earned from the production. All of the semi-operas were notoriously expensive to produce and few made the company much money. Betterton is likely to have come out on top, but the return to Purcell is unknown.

A helpful view of the economics of the London theatre about 1703 may be derived from the "Company Plan" drawn up by Vanbrugh when he was hoping to effect a new union and operate a combined theatre/opera company as a monopoly under his ownership in the Haymarket Theatre that he was building. He intended to pay salaries in full, and hence made no provision for actor benefits. Six senior actors and actresses were pencilled in at £120 to £150 per annum (with Betterton getting an extra £50 "to teach") and others at various levels from £100 down to £30. Seven dancers were to get salaries from £20 to £60 (with another £250 to be divided among them on a per-performance basis). As music director the distinguished composer John Eccles was to have a £40 salary, and twenty orchestral musicians were to get £1 per week (which Eccles would presumably have collected as well). Six singers were pencilled in at a total of £150 (plus £200 allocated for "when they sing"). The projected annual budget for 180 performance days was £9,000 (or £50 per diem). Vanbrugh probably got his figures from Betterton (a vastly experienced manager), and they are highly realistic. The United Company had grossed an average of some £47 per diem from 1682 to 1692.

<sup>7</sup> It is recorded that "in 1694 the patentees of the Theatre Royal paid £50 to Betterton to 'get up ye Indian Queen', he presumably then contracted the choreographer and composer, and organised rehearsals". Curtis Price, *op cit.* p.126

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<sup>8</sup> Hume 1979 gives the lower figure, while Langhans and Lawrence estimate the higher figure.

<sup>9</sup> The first 'Drury Lane' theatre was built at the behest of Thomas Killigrew in the early years of the English Restoration. It was initially known as "Theatre Royal in Bridges Street". In 1672 the theatre caught fire and Killigrew built a larger theatre on the same plot, designed by Sir Christopher Wren; renamed the "Theatre Royal in Drury Lane," it opened in 1674 and lasted nearly 120 years.

<sup>10</sup> It may be apocryphal, but the story goes that John Evelyn the diarist spotted Gibbons at work carving a relief image of an engraving of a painting by Tintoretto. He engineered a visit of the sculptor to King Charles to show this work, which led indirectly to his being employed by Betterton to decorate the Dorset Garden Theatre. See David Esterly, *Grinling Gibbons and the Art of Carving*, V&A Publications, 1998.

<sup>11</sup> Mark Radice, Theatre architecture at the time of Purcell and its influence on his "Dramatick operas", *The Musical Quarterly*, Vol 74, No 1, (1990), pp 98-130

<sup>12</sup> It is probably necessary to distinguish between the 'professional singers' (often recruited from among the voices of the Royal Chapel) for whom Purcell wrote in his dramatick operas, and the 'singing actors' for whom many of the less vocally demanding songs of the ordinary 'plays with music' were written by composers such as Eccles.

<sup>13</sup> The location of the orchestra and, perhaps more significantly, the music director is still a relatively contentious issue. It is known that the orchestra for *The Tempest* was in front of the stage, but it appears to have been much larger than usual. Peter Holman addressed the question of where the director was located in his paper "Politics in the Pit: directing from the keyboard [or not] in the Georgian Theatre" (Georgian Pleasures conference, Bath October 2013). See also M. Burden "Where did Purcell keep his theatre band?" *Early Music*, August 2009, pp429-443; M.Radice "Sites for Music in Purcell's Dorset Garden Theatre" *The Musical Quarterly*, Vol 81, No. 3 (Autumn 1997). pp 430-448;

<sup>14</sup> It has been recorded that Betterton was a failure even at doing a country dance.

<sup>15</sup> Wonderfully animated in a little video reconstruction by Frans and Julia Muller [http://www.julieandfransmuller.nl/Dioclesianmasque\\_eng.html](http://www.julieandfransmuller.nl/Dioclesianmasque_eng.html)

<sup>16</sup> The Butterfly Dance (along with the music) in Act IV might easily be cued by Delphia's actions – even if the band in the music box above has no direct view of the inner stage where much of the action happens.

<sup>17</sup> These estimates come from Julia Muller's book: *Words and Music in Henry Purcell's First Semi-Opera Dioclesian*, The Edwin Mellen Press, 1990

<sup>18</sup> Although all plays of this period 1660-1700 featured music and dancing and some scenery (and most of them songs as well) the true 'spectacular' was produced on a wholly different scale. Milhous counts only eight such pieces in the period, including *Dioclesian*, *King Arthur*, and *The Fairy Queen* from Purcell, along with *Psyche* (Shadwell, Grabu and Locke), *The Tempest* (Locke) and *The Empress of Morocco*.