

"A Crowned and Selected Band of Women"



YOUNG AUSTRALIA AT THE THEATRE.

Tasmanian Actress/Celebrities of the Nineteenth Century & "Home-grown" Identity

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Declaration of Originality

This thesis contains no material accepted for a degree or diploma by the University or any other institution, except by way of background information and duly acknowledged in the thesis, and to the best of my knowledge and belief no material published by any other person except where due acknowledgement is made in the text of this thesis.

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Statement of the Topic

Australian celebrity culture of the nineteenth century combines personal success, and the ideal constructions of the individual and homeland, with the persuasive power of the media to offer the celebrated a means of public visibility and nationality. This thesis engages with the intersections between media and celebrity culture of the nineteenth century by exploring the intimate relationships between the construction of gender and the “localisation” of place. It examines the representation of a number of Tasmanian-born actresses received as celebrities during the period and historicises about the slippery nature of state of origin when contextualised in what developed into a greater picture of global media culture. It places these representations alongside those of off-shore actresses and presents a “new” picture of women’s engagement in colonial culture and their social power. The thesis also argues that the Tasmanian provenance of celebrated stage women such as Emma and Clelia Howson, Hattie Shepparde, the Carandini Sisters, Lucy Chambers, Amy Sherwin, and others, offered the State’s population a lively and highly visible collection of cultural exemplars. The thesis will interweave the narratives of their careers into an analysis of contemporary and modern-day understandings of Australian identity in two ways. First, it contends that these women heralded the dawn of a new public visibility for women as professionals, decades before the mobilisation of women’s groups and suffrage leagues in this country. Second, it traces their international successes as a way of demonstrating their contribution to establishing the cultural roots of what is now known collectively as “the Australian context.” My research reveals that an important cultural breakthrough coincided with the international tours of these women because their achievement popularised, and therefore revolutionised, a new means of gesturing Australian homeland offshore. A historicised and “localised” concept

of celebrity is a valuable tool of analysis when considering that actresses generally are continually overlooked as proactive conduits of social change, and especially since their achievements as legitimate cultural agents were celebrated in an era that is routinely considered as oppressive and restrictive for women. The aim of the thesis is to explore how colonial society relied on Tasmanian-born actresses as sources of cultural identification and how such figures enabled the performance of identity as a result. There is, in the development of Australian celebrity culture from the 1840s until the early twentieth century, an overt politicisation of Tasmanian cultural identity. Coupled with this phenomenon is a social evolution in changes to attitudes about "Tasmanian-ness" that can be traced directly to the instrumental achievements of Tasmanian-born celebrity actresses of the period.

Women, Performance, Tasmania

Tasmania has enjoyed a long tradition of producing “home grown” theatre stars. Errol Flynn is probably the best known of the twentieth century exports. The antics of the dashing, charismatic and thrice-married actor of the 1930s were so notorious that they earned for him the epithet “the Tasmanian Devil.” One of the better known female stars was Merle Oberon, whose publicists claimed during the 1930s and 40s that she was Tasmanian-born: specifically into a wealthy Hobart family. While her provenance has since been the subject of some debate, Oberon’s rank as “Tasmanian-born” did cast a glowing light on the island’s cultural credibility, despite the fact that she was 10 000 miles away and only once set foot on the island, in 1978.

The more recent Tasmanian-born actresses, such as Genevieve Picot, Alison Whyte and Essie Davis similarly experience an emphasis on homeland. Domestic audiences are perhaps more familiar with Picot and Whyte than those internationally, but actress Essie Davis has received considerable attention since her role playing the wife of Dutch artist Vermeer in Peter Webber’s film, *Girl With a Pearl Earring* (2003). When Danielle Wood wrote in the *Sunday Tasmanian* on 7 March 2004 that, “Essie Davis is making her Tasmanian family feel proud for good reason,” she used a traditional journalistic practice that recruited the “home grown” star to uplift Tasmanian community pride. Wood makes a direct connection between Davis’ provenance and her success. Tim Cox’s ABC Radio interview with Davis, which went to air on Wednesday 12 March 2003, also places significant emphasis her provenance. “When Essie Davis is in London she is known as an Australian actress,” claims Cox, “but when she arrives in Australia she is known as a Tasmanian actress.”

Any examination of how women such as Davis inform the process of constructing versions of identity leads to questions concerning women’s social

power. Reflected in the narratives claiming Davis' significance are traditional approaches to writing about public women, specifically theatre women, formalised in the colonial era. The publicity of profoundly popular Tasmanian-born theatre women of the period—such as Emma and Clelia Howson, the Carandini sisters, Lizzie, Fanny, Rosina, Emma and Isabella, Hattie Shepparde, and Maggie and Docy Stewart, and singers including Lucy Chambers and Amy Sherwin, as well as others—all read remarkably like those written by modern-day journalists about this century's contemporaries of the theatre world. This suggests that not only do modern day actresses retain a level of social power comparable to that of their colonial contemporaries, but also that the practice of looking to actresses as exemplars of culture has its roots in the nineteenth century.

This thesis examines “celebrated” Tasmanian-born actresses and singers of the nineteenth century such as Shepparde, Chambers, Sherwin, the Howson, Carandini, and Stewart sisters, and others, to explore how theatre women informed processes of cultural meaning-making in order to exemplify how little this faith in actresses as markers of social meaning has changed over time. Clearly, in the case of stage women, there are connections between popular culture and colonial social life that need to be made in order to understand their public visibility. In the case of some women, particularly the Tasmanian-born women studied here, they were “celebrated” because of the successes they achieved in the dramatic and musical arts, and this was manifest as “celebrity”: a valuable asset to local culture. Celebrity in the colonial era was a powerful tool legitimising the social and cultural worth of the communities in which the celebrity was born, and if the lion's share of their social meaning was linked to provenance—and their publicity suggests that it was—then discrete cultures could gesture ownership of a celebrity as a way of legitimating community. The process is very clear in Tasmanian press culture's response to the women

studied here, and one of the most interesting phenomena this case study reveals is that it is possible to take the process one step further. Once the public visibility of these celebrity women grew to embrace the global market, then their social meaning was, like that of Essie Davis nowadays, specifically linked to nationality, and this connection therefore validated not only Tasmanian community culture, but also the Australian homeland.

Women's crucial significance in this reciprocal interchange is the central issue at the heart of this thesis. Women's "otherness" of course facilitated this cultural meaning-making, and any analysis of women's social activity must explore this "otherness" as integral to their public visibility and their popular utility as cultural exemplars. But before proceeding to offer a more in-depth discussion of the theoretical objectives of the thesis, as well as its organisation, there are a number of issues relating to women, performance, and Tasmania requiring examination.

In order to understand the importance of these women to defining what, to paraphrase Graeme Turner, "Australian-ness" *was* and *did*¹ in the colonial period, one must first recognise the marginalised "place" of women generally in contemporary scholarship. For instance, it is not too surprising to find that most historiographies about the Australian stage reflect meticulous research into the careers of many male actors and entrepreneurs. But history, however, has not been as kind to its theatre women, and recognising why scholarship continues to underplay the significance of stage actresses as proactive catalysts of change in Australian social history is a crucial step in redressing their underrepresentation. I argue that the root cause of the problem is twofold: approaches to writing women's historiography, and generalisations about colonial actresses that seriously underestimate their social power.

Gaps in scholarship are traceable to traditional approaches to writing and researching women's historiography. For the most part, the usual approach

of researchers has been to track specific social outcomes, usually political in nature, back to women's cultural activity. Australian historiography has documented the rise of, for instance, influential "women's groups" or "suffrage leagues" of the late nineteenth century very well. This is of course an important process. It identifies the forerunners of a movement that gathered momentum by the late 1870s and peaked in the 1890s and beyond. But while a number of American writers have managed to effectively blend the activities of theatre women into feminist historiographies—like Sue Ellen Case in *Feminism and Theatre*, Susan A. Glenn in *Female Spectacle; the theatrical roots of Modern Feminism*, and Gardner and Rutherford (eds.) in *The New Woman and her Sisters; Feminism and Theatre 1850-1914* to name a few—domestic researchers in Australia have been less successful. In fact, Australian scholarship has tended to either completely overlook, or seriously minimise the activities of theatre women during the nineteenth century.

Arguably, an examination of the influence of nineteenth century actresses on the Australian cultural geography does not yet exist. Kate Pritchard Hughes' *Contemporary Australian Feminism* and Norma Grieve and Ailsa Burns' *Australian Women; New Feminist Perspectives* ignore the activities of stage actresses in their feminist accounts. The case is replicated in Moira Gatens and Alison Mackinnon's *Gender and Institutions; Welfare, Work and Citizenship*, with the implication being that theatre is not viewed as an institution in Australian cultural life (a trend which overlooks nineteenth century perspectives). Similarly, it is possible to note the tendency to neglect theatre women in Marilyn Lake's *Getting Equal; the history of Australian feminism*, Susan Magarey's *Passions of the first wave feminists*, and Barbara Caine's edited volume of *Australian Feminism; a companion*. While the two former texts make no mention of women and theatre at all, the latter makes only a cursory observation of nineteenth century actresses, instead shifting the focus to the activity of the twentieth century,

stating, "women have only recently begun to influence the artistic and aesthetic values of theatre and become the central subjects of plays."²

Statements such as these are not entirely true. This is particularly clear given that it was a woman, Anne Clarke, who effectively changed the face of Australian theatre in 1842 by "importing" with her to Hobart a number of players who became very popular throughout the pre-Federation decades of Australian theatre. Anne Clarke was not only "the first woman to manage an Australian theatre for an extended period,"³ she provided previously unheard of opportunities for Tasmanian colonial women interested in a career on the stage in her capacity as a manageress of Hobart's Theatre Royal. Anne Clarke did affect the aesthetic and artistic standards of theatre practice during this period. In fact, it is likely that no other woman had previously attempted her initiative in importing players from England to Australia.

So why have such oversights occurred? It could be that the concentration on the more patent political influences of women occurring much later in the century has created a disparity in scholarship. Having said this, the aim of this thesis is not to question the significance of women now considered as the early pioneers of the Australian women's movement, nor to challenge the position of such women in feminist historiography. Rather, I am proposing that their dominance in contemporary scholarship has left us with many proactive and highly visible cultural heroines, sometimes at the expense of other important figures. I am also suggesting that stage women were, although not expressly political, nonetheless significant agents of social and cultural change, and that failing to acknowledge them as such appears to be a contemporary trend. It is especially odd to omit stage actresses from feminist historiographies given that many of the women now claimed as exemplifying the early feminist heroine themselves looked to stage actresses for inspiration.

It is worth noting, for example, that Louisa Lawson, founder of *The Dawn* (1888), which was later heralded “the mouthpiece for Australian women”⁴ did specifically support looking to theatre women as vanguards representing another kind of nineteenth century womanhood. In an extract from the 1 January 1896 edition of *The Dawn*, under an item entitled “Odds and Ends,” the article’s writer examined the notion of “the self made woman.” Of the six women the contributor selected as forging their way to become successes in their own right, to become, so to speak, “self-made” women, all were stage actresses:

We hear a great deal about the self-made man, and a self-made woman has compiled some interesting facts concerning some women who are well known at the present time, from which it appears that some of the most noted began life very humbly. Sara Bernhardt was a dressmaker’s apprentice. Adelaide Neilson, began life as a child’s nurse. Miss Braddon the novelist, was an utility actress in the provinces. Charlotte Cushman was the daughter of poor people. Mrs Langtry is the daughter of a country person of small means, but the old story of a face being a fortune proved true in her case. The great French actress Rachel had as hard a childhood as ever fell to the lot of a genius. Ragged, barefooted and hungry, she played the tambourine in the streets, and sang and begged for a dole.⁵

It is particularly noteworthy that only women distinguished for their achievements in theatre defined a self-made woman to the *Dawn’s* readership during the late 1890s. Certainly, it was a time of significant activity in Australian theatre, one characterised by the unprecedented arrival of many of the world’s most famous stage actresses, prima ballerinas, and classical singers.

They included the opera star Fanny Simonsen (she arrived in 1882, but was at the height of her fame as an impresario in the early 1890s), two international ballet stars, Catherine Bartho (from the Bolshoi Theatre in 1893) and Enrichetta D'Argo (from Naples in 1893), as well as Grace Palotta, the Viennese musical comedienne (in 1895). Finally, there was the "divine Sarah,"⁶ Miss Sarah Bernhardt herself, who toured in 1891. Such a dazzling collection of stage women probably played a significant role in redefining notions of nineteenth century womanhood, and the extent to which Bernhardt's Australian tour contributed to the inspiration of the *Dawn's* "self made" women article in 1896 can only be guessed. What can be stated with some certainty, however, is that some women of the period did regard Bernhardt (and Braddon, if not many others) as an important prototype of womanhood in the late nineteenth century.

In *The Real Matilda; Women and Identity in Australia 1788 to the present*, Miriam Dixon observes that historians rarely consider women as "serious historical subjects,"⁷ particularly in discussions about Australian national identity. Further complicating the matter is the fact that defining what represents a "serious historical subject" is at best a problematic business, as Dixon's own examination illustrates. Her analysis omits actresses altogether, thus creating the impression that their social activities were inconsequential to Australian cultural development or the representation of "nationality." Such omissions do contradict print media of the period, which evidence that actresses contributed significantly to the articulation of an Australian cultural identity. Reports of their contributions varied from their influence as theatre managers (such as Anne Clarke and Marie Carandini) to their successes on the international stage (Lucy Chambers, Emma Howson, and Amy Sherwin). And it is important to note that common to such reports were questions concerned with how the influence of these women affected representing "Australian-ness," and what, in turn, "Australian-ness" *was* and *did*.

While it is important to recognise the discursive habits that continue to marginalise theatre women in Australian historiography, what feminist cultural scholars such as Dixon do show is that the treatment of historical figures as “serious” is largely selective. There is an active decision that determines one figure in favour of another, and ironically, such acts of bias must also take place in this thesis. The act of positive discrimination in this examination is, however, necessary in both re-articulating the place of colonial stage actresses in Australian women’s historiography generally and in highlighting the cultural scope of Tasmanian-born theatre actresses specifically.

Many nineteenth century actresses were not simply compliant to established theatre practice and aesthetics. In fact, because women such as Anne Clarke, Marie Carandini, and Emma and Clelia Howson (to name only a few) furthered the revolutionary role of women during the period, it is possible to regard them as nineteenth century proto-feminists. Some had songs and plays especially written for them, others managed their own theatres, and most (if not all), achieved relative economic independence from men. Importantly, this they achieved in an environment some scholars see as a rigid and prescriptive milieu, wherein “the stage was not a career favoured by respectable middle class girls.”⁸ The women studied in this thesis provide ample evidence to suggest that such generalisations are, to some degree, open to debate, but if indeed such a prejudice existed, it was probably exacerbated by virtue of the fact that it was convict women who were involved in the very first recorded theatre productions.⁹ But even aside from whether or not the prejudice was a “real” nineteenth century phenomenon, the fact that feminist histories still regularly exclude stage women does require particularly urgent attention as it suggests that a suspicion of actresses does linger as a bias in feminist historiography.

An impressive list of plays written by women for women, all of which various women examined in the course of this thesis at sometime presented, attests to women's contribution to dramaturgy and aesthetics in the colonial era. As well as *Lady Audley's Secret* and *Aurora Floyd* by Mary Elizabeth Braddon, such plays included: an adaptation of Mrs. M. Deverell's historical tragedy *Mary Queen of Scots* (1792); Mrs. G. W. Lovell's *The Beginning of the End* (1855); the highly successful *East Lynne* by Mrs. Henry Wood; a comedy of manners by Hannah Cowley entitled *Belle's Stratagem* (1790); a comedietta by Mrs. James Robinson Planche known as *A Handsome Husband* (1851); Susanna Centlivre's comedy *The Wonder, or, a Woman Keeps a Secret* (1714); Anna Cora Mowatt's *Armand, or, the Peer and the Peasant* (1847); and adaptations of Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Dred* and *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. A number of the women examined in this thesis also performed material works written for them alone. These include *Kathleen Mavoureen, or St. Patrick's Eve*, "a piece written by W. Travers, Esq., and never before acted in the colony"¹⁰ for Lady Emilia Don and Don's solo pieces: such as *Lady Don Valse* by J. Winterbottom in 1856, and Baron Alfred Tennyson's (1809-1892) composition entitled *Circumstance*, with music by Issac Nathan (1792-1864). Another work includes Clelia Howson's *The Winged Fate*, the piece written for her by Issac Nathan and successfully performed for the first time on 30 December 1861.

Women have of course been traditionally included in works chronicling Australian stage history, but it is clear that texts that are more recent offer only a conditional representation of women's influence and activity. The place of women in Australian stage history remains only marginal because the recognition of Australian theatre women continues to be not nearly as comprehensive as the documentation of male performers in many instances. Furthermore, scholars rarely deal with women independently of their husbands if the couple were both players, and, typically write about women players in a

way that generally lacks the scope given to actors. For instance, Philip Parson's edition of the Currency Press *Companion to Theatre in Australia* does contain citations for a number of women considered in this thesis in relative detail but does not deal, in general, with women as comprehensively as with men.¹¹

Harold Love's edited version of *The Australian Stage: a documentary history* offers some information concerning Anne Clarke, and makes two passing references to Hattie Shepparde, but Jane Thomson (Mrs. C. Young), Emma Young (Mrs. G. H. Rogers), and Marie Burgess (Madame Carandini) are mentioned in name only. The Howson and Carandini sisters, Lucy Chambers and Amy Sherwin all remain unnoticed and for the most part, the text again deals with men in more detail than women. John West's *Theatre in Australia* offers some information on Anne Clarke, with only cursory details about Marie Carandini, and asides referring to Emma and Clelia Howson. None of the other actresses rates a mention. Meanwhile, John Kardoss' *A Brief History of the Australian Theatre* does include minor sketches of Anne Clarke, Hattie Shepparde (misspelled as "Sheppard") and Marie Carandini, and offers passing references to Mrs. G. H. Rogers, Mrs. C. Young and Amy Sherwin, yet makes no mention of Emma and Clelia Howson, the Carandini sisters, or Lucy Chambers.

One of the major problems, it seems to me, is that theatre writers often overlook nineteenth century understandings of "actress" or "actor" in favour of contemporary ideals. One particular trend is the tendency to overlook operatic performers as "actresses," which, by extension, appears to define vocal performers as "musicians" rather than stage players. Both tendencies run counter to colonial understandings: nineteenth century journalists understood opera as "lyric drama" and opera singers as actresses. For instance, Emma Howson's presentation of the "Rose of Castille" (from Balfe's opera) in 1860 impressed critics because she communicated drama through her vocal performances, even when sometimes these were characterised by "the absence of

all muscular or facial effort.”¹² Similarly, the Hobart *Mercury* claimed of Amy Sherwin’s debut as Norina in Donizetti’s *Don Pasquale* in 1878 that: “Her conception of the character, gained after only a weeks study, during which the whole opera has been learnt, is considered faultless.”¹³

Opera stars are commonly overlooked as “actresses” nowadays for much the same reasons as female balladists, and perhaps the generalisation that vocal performance implies a static presentation is one of the reasons behind the trend. Balladists commonly accompanied vocally affecting pieces with presentations called *tableaux vivants*, which was a style of pictorial illustration used to complement the narrative of a song. This substitution of illustration for action was successful for performers of this style and often highly theatrical as specialist pieces or interludes, although in this day and age, their performances seem to be (unfairly) interpreted as non-theatrical.

Colonials viewed stage women as a collective cohort, even if they appeared almost exclusively in operatic roles, or specialised in comic, melodramatic, and/or dramatic plays, and it is for this reason that this thesis will do precisely the same. The discussion treats popular Tasmanian-born female stars as “actresses,” and therefore includes women who specialised in various genres; including dance, opera, drama, comedy and ballad (and many other styles). It will become clear, however, that there is a common specialty in opera among the majority.

I would argue that one of the major reasons for opera’s exclusion from the world of acting is that contemporary historiographies undervalue the achievements of women in popularising the form as an entrepreneurial venture. The *Companion to Theatre in Australia*, for instance, includes citations for nineteenth century opera magnates such as William S. Lyster (1860s), James C. Williamson (1870s and 80s) and George Musgrove (1880s), but curiously ignores the contributions of Marie Carandini’s “Concert and Ballad” troupe

(beginning in the late 1850s), Rosina Carandini's (later Rosina Palmer) venture with Armes Beaumont called the "Palmer-Beaumont Company" (1890s), and "Amy Sherwin's Grand English Opera Company" (1888). The acknowledgement in the *Companion to Theatre in Australia* of entrepreneurs such as Lyster, Williamson, and George Musgrove, and the omission of women such as Marie and Rosina Carandini and Amy Sherwin creates the impression that the inclusion of opera in theatre history is only appropriate if managed as an entrepreneurial venture (by men?). Granted, it is true that the Carandinis did not usually perform complete operatic works, or even present an entirely operatic program. But the fact that contemporary reports of the nineteenth century specifically claim the Carandini family as responsible for "laying the foundation for . . . [the] cult"¹⁴ of musical appreciation through their operatic performances, must earn for them some level of recognition in Australian theatre history.

Texts such as Alison Gyger's *Civilising the Colonies; pioneering opera in Australia* and Katharine Brisbane's *Entertaining Australia; an illustrated history* have helped to provide a more inclusive approach to opera stars as theatre stars. Gyger does concentrate on "lyric drama," but her discussion of many of the pioneers of opera in Tasmania explores how closely their theatrical careers were coloured by classical music and performance. Brisbane, on the other hand, discusses all manner of stage players under the umbrella term of "entertainer," and this approach has created another valuable historiography of opera stars as stars of the stage. Both Gyger and Brisbane's texts are particularly valuable in offering a more inclusive historiography of theatre women.

Miriam Dixson's contention that "Australian historians—overwhelmingly male—honestly don't see women as serious historical subjects"¹⁵ does apply to theatre women generally, but this trend is, in my opinion, not so much a long-standing tradition as it is a more recent

phenomenon. *The Romance of the Sydney Stage*, taken from a manuscript written in the early twentieth century by Humphrey Hall and Alfred J. Cripps, is one of the most comprehensive texts documenting Australian theatre history. It includes references to a great many actresses in significant detail: all the women considered in this thesis (with the exception of Hattie Shepparde, Lucy Chambers and Amy Sherwin, who appeared after the text's scope), are mentioned, often more than once, while some are discussed with quite remarkable specificity.

For Hall and Cripps, writing about 1910, it was obvious that actresses represented a steadfast, if not essential part of Australian stage history. Their detail indicates that Hall and Cripps considered women as "serious" and legitimate historical subjects in their own right. So it would seem that although women have been traditionally neglected from, or underplayed in, many historical narratives—an arena of scholarship usually dominated by men—the trend to overlook or minimise the achievements of theatre women is particularly evident in more recent years. I would propose, therefore, that one of the most pressing problems frustrating the writing of actresses into historiography is an unclear understanding of what actually defines a "serious" historical subject.

The publicity of Tasmanian-born, and even bred, theatre women offers a valuable cultural source attesting to the credibility of the women studied in this thesis as "serious" historical subjects, both in terms of their popular influence, and their social interest as "serious" agents of cultural change. It is true that, as a group, stage women frequently exercised only limited authority over various aspects of mid nineteenth century theatre practice. However, the women examined here show that there were a great many individual exceptions to that trend. Their absence from feminist historiography, therefore, suggests that the prevailing theoretical and practical tendencies of important historiographical works such as *Getting Equal*, *Australian Feminism*, as well as *The Real Matilda*

and Ann Summers' *Damned Whores and God's Police* have inadvertently limited the scope of women's historiography in a variety of ways. Ann Summers in *Damned Whores and God's Police* demonstrates this in the claim: "The social and economic conditions for the first fifty years of white colonization of Australia fostered whores rather than wives."¹⁶ Summers' statement insists on the categorisation of women into two essential polarities, with the overarching homogenisation of all colonial women as victims. The sentiment that "women have only recently begun to influence the artistic and aesthetic values of theatre and become the central subjects of plays" also echoes this homogenisation—a process that, to some degree, continues to pervade how scholars write women's historiography.

Understanding current trends in writing women's history helps to explain the contradiction between theatre women's lack of visibility in current scholarship and the remarkable public identity many enjoyed in Australian popular culture of the colonial era. If we consider for a moment in what ways these women were of particular importance to Tasmanian cultural life, a clearer, more localised, picture of their significance emerges.

Life in Hobart and Launceston during the period could be brutal. Transportation finally ended in 1853 but residents blamed the policy for enduring cultural woes: from "disorder, spoliation, poverty and crime," to "the waste of property [and] the expulsion of free colonists."¹⁷ The press detailed the conditions of "felons" in the "female factories" of Launceston and Hobart throughout the early 1840s and mid 1850s, and public hangings were frequent until legislation abolished the practice in 1855. Beyond the State, however, narratives of "Tasmanian-ness" frustrated efforts to bolster the island's cultural realities, specifically the result of the caustic and often hostile, relationship between local and "mainland" media cultures.

A long tradition of disparaging “Tasmanian-ness” in the media meant that sometimes colonials had no choice but to understand their community as “other.” Journalistic hostilities between domestic and offshore journalists are traceable to the 1840s, but undoubtedly found utility much earlier. The Hobart *Courier* saw nothing patriotic in the *Port Phillip Patriot’s* accusation in 1844 that “the whole of the convicts [were let] loose upon the town [of Hobart] on Christmas Day, [and] who, to the number of fifty, had availed themselves of the opportunity to take to the bush!”¹⁸ Later, while the Melbourne *Punch* reported of “Vandemonian abuse”¹⁹ on the island, the *Ballarat Times* kept its readership apprised when Tasmania was “on the eve of another political crisis.”²⁰ The *Age* followed suit by publishing stories about “Parliamentary scenes”²¹ in the State, and the *Illustrated Melbourne News* reported on “the sound caning” and “horsewhippings” between *Tasmanian Daily News* writer Mr. Yates and ex-alderman Mr. Thomson.²² This evidence alone implies that cultivating a sense of “otherness” did not only affect how Tasmanians viewed and experienced “the Australian context,” but also suggests that narrative practices invariably influenced the popularisation and articulation of notions of “Tasmanian-ness” over many decades.

Evidence that “Tasmanian-ness” is still constructed as an unfavourable “other” is clear in a statement made by Tasmania’s first top-10 *Australian Idol* finalist Amali Ward, who reiterated the emphasis on the Tasmanian homeland in a comment she made before leaving the competition in 2004. When asked why she wanted to be an Australian Idol, Ward replied; “To prove to mainlanders that Tasmania is not just about incest! The amount of jokes I’ve heard is ridiculous.”²³ Ward’s remark reveals, among other things, how alongside her “Tasmanian-ness” are pressures concerning State identity not necessarily projected onto the girl from Queensland or the guy from New South Wales. Ward’s aim to “prove” a point to “mainlanders” is akin to Woods’s

claim that Davis “is making her Tasmanian family feel proud.” While Ward seeks approval, and Davis has apparently earned it, each construction narrates and enacts gestures of “Tasmanian-ness.” Furthermore, Ward’s gesture to “prove” a point in her challenge of this “otherness” also speaks to a traditionally reactive performance of Tasmanian identity that is similarly traceable to counter-performative responses evident in colonial media.

Such collisions between contemporary realities and colonial pasts contextualise a number of ideological positions evident in the thesis; first, the position that the State’s “need” for cultural exemplars was, and is, unique; second, that women were integral agents validating the State’s “otherness” as a rich and valuable reality, in effect challenging the politicised narrative that “Tasmanian-ness” was culturally regressive; and third, that engendering a notion of identity that explicitly relied on gender in the promotion of homeland is identifiable at a macro-level in the textual practices of Australian media in the period. All three positions converge to establish the ideological basis of the thesis and inform its objectives. These are: to “tell” the stories of a remarkable collection of women so as to realise the intersections between media, celebrity culture, identity and women’s social power in the colonial era; to explore the intimate relationships between the construction of gender and the “localisation” of place; to present a “new” picture of theatre women’s engagement in colonial life and revise an understanding of their social power; and finally, to interweave the narratives of the careers of these women into an analysis of colonial and contemporary understandings of Australian identity by arguing that they heralded the dawn of a new public visibility for women as professionals, decades before the mobilisation of women’s groups and suffrage leagues in this country.

Bearing in mind that no work has been done on researching the formation of an understanding of Tasmanian identity, and in particular women’s

significance to such a process, key theorists include Veronica Kelly, whose notions of colonial identity formation have been invaluable, and Graeme Turner, whose work in *National Fictions* has grounded the approach in “textual practices.” Other vital work includes research in performance studies, in particular John Austin’s *How to Do Things with Words* and Marvin Carlson’s *Performance: a critical introduction*. Also important is Jean-François Lyotard’s concept of the “meta-narrative,” specifically his subsidiary idea of “mini-narratives.”²⁴ Performing identity (Kelly), assimilating a “cultural inventory of myths” (Turner), and the locution of discrete experiences of hegemonic culture through localised forms are important concepts when dealing with the cultural dimensions and consequences of performing “meaning.” At the heart of these concepts is an attempt to examine the narration of culture via specific social practices and behaviours.

A brief word about materials and definitions is need before explaining the arrangement of the thesis. The texts considered in the course of this analysis are largely “non-literary,” therefore suspending the notion of canonical works of literature. Rather, I am more concerned with print artefacts produced by colonial popular culture, largely non-literary but nonetheless occasionally dealing with material works of literary performances. For the most part, texts in the forms of theatre reviews and sundry publicity are of primary interest because they deal with the relationships between representation, “the celebrity” and the “celebrity’s” engagement with performance and culture. Reading texts publicising Tasmanian stars of the nineteenth century as acts of counter-performativity facilitates making connections of meaning between a variety of performative gestures (theatrical and social) and the articulation of cultural difference (“island” and “mainland”). Both the performative gestures and the practices of textual production that resulted are particularly important

measures of tracking the rise of celebrity culture, shifts in colonial women's social power, and the representation of "native" "Tasmanian-ness."

The "native" in this discussion of theatre women's influence on notions of "Australian-ness" I define as an Anglo-Celtic subjectivity. The "native-born" subject was a "new" breed of colonial within the settler community and the usage of the "native" epithet is not to be confused with its application to identify indigenous communities (although colonials did sometimes use the term in this way). Rather, "native" typically nominated that share of the colonising population bearing the first generation Anglo-Celtic strain—the children of immigrants, convicts, "bounty ticket" holders, commissioned officers and other Imperial forces personnel—anyone born of the early colonials or their Australian-born offspring.

Finally, the organisation of this thesis requires some explanation before we begin. The introduction is followed by four parts: each spanning a particular historical period and each comprising specific information concerning the careers of a number of different actresses either born or "received" as "Tasmanian." Most actresses, with the exception of three, are dealt with in a complete chapter. **Part One, Colonial Actresses:** *"The vanguard of others who are to follow"* focuses on (but is not limited to) the period 1835–1845. Its three chapters discuss the early beginnings of professional theatre in Tasmania, the factors influencing its development, and details the careers of four actresses in particular: Anne Clarke, Jane Thomson, Emma Young, and Marie Burgess. The latter, Marie Burgess, will be dealt with in an entire chapter because her career was much longer than the others, and because the discussion includes her ventures as an entrepreneur and her tours to Tasmania including the reception of her daughters. Clarke, Thomson and Young will be examined together, but in separate sections, in one chapter.

Part Two, *International Players and Tasmanian Cultural Identity* deals with the advent of the “celebrity” and “celebrity” touring stars in the mid 1850s in one chapter and offers in another a case study of the American child star Anna Maria Quinn in Tasmania (c. 1855). Both chapters contextualise women’s social power and explore the notion of celebrity by foreshadowing media’s role in the representation of stage actresses as “popular.” This positioning is integral to a discussion of the rise in Tasmania of the “native” star in the 1860s and will be further emphasised and explored in **Part Three**, *“First Wave” “Home grown” Celebrities*. This section brings together conceptual themes, introducing the relevance of a number of non-domestic touring stars to Tasmanian-born stars, and re-familiarises the reader with a variety of key personalities previously introduced. It begins by first discussing *“The Tasmanian Nightingales and their Repertoires,”* and establishes connections between the reception of actresses (both domestic and offshore) with a view to investigating the aesthetic and performative links between dramatic and operatic works. Of importance here is formulating an understanding of how the themes of some works, both operatic and non-operatic, had the potential to problematise gender relations in the larger picture of a frontier society. I argue that the phenomenon of transferring problematised representations of femininity onto some non-domestic actresses achieved important social outcomes in relation to the cultural power of stage women generally. Three separate chapters follow examining the careers and significance of Tasmanian stars such as the Carandini Sisters, Emma and Clelia Howson, and Hattie Shepparde respectively. Finally, **Part Four**, entitled *The 1870s: Tasmanian “Stars” and “The Music of the Future,”* first offers a summary of important “home grown” celebrities of the era before specifically dealing with the career of Amy Sherwin, the last “Tasmanian Nightingale” of the nineteenth century.

**Part One: Colonial Actresses –
“The vanguard of those who are to follow”**

Chapter One

Setting the Stage; Nineteenth Century Media Culture and Theatre

Tasmanian theatrical history is one of Australia's oldest. It is a rich tradition that has its roots in the early days of European settlement. Prior to the establishment of professional theatre (productions staged by experienced and reasonably expert players) on the island in 1833, public "amusements" in Hobart consisted mainly of amateur novelties, such as musical recitals, from 1826; intellectual lectures, from 1831; and later, a reading room, established by John Davies in 1835. Theatre life in Launceston followed soon after. Established in 1806, Launceston inevitably took its lead from Hobart in terms of what it offered settlers as public entertainment. This is an especially obvious trend when examining the development of professional theatre in the settlement, as many of the founding personalities in Hobart journeyed on to Launceston for short seasons thereafter.

Elizabeth Webby has already proposed that the real dawn of professional theatre in Tasmania arrived with husband and wife duo Samson and Cordelia Cameron in late 1833.¹ She credits the Camerons with inaugurating professional theatre on the island by providing first Hobart, and then Launceston, with their premier dramatic performances: Hobart in December 1833 and Launceston beginning June 1834. However, although Webby highlights the Camerons' remarkable contribution to the growth of Tasmanian theatre during the period, it is equally important to bear in mind that the island played no small part in the success of such performers.

In Tasmania, for instance, Samson Cameron could persistently, albeit episodically, attempt to make a permanent impression on theatre in a way not possible on the mainland. In Tasmania, audiences were limited and oftentimes

fickle in their dramatic tastes, but the fact that Cameron had offered theatre-goers a never-before-seen glimpse of “professional” theatre ensured him some measure of loyalty. For a brief period, Cameron happened upon a winning combination. He inaugurated a level of professionalism entirely new in Tasmanian theatre, and he managed to satisfy the tastes of theatre-goers to boot.

Yet, when his fortunes changed in Tasmania, as they invariably did, so too did Cameron change his locality. Cameron’s mobility between settlements was typical of theatre performers of the period. In fact, the stop-start nature of Cameron’s career figured the nature of the theatre industry itself, especially in Tasmania. After leaving the island in mid 1834 (in a failed attempt at securing a theatre in Sydney) Cameron’s desire to secure a career as a theatre manager largely influenced his later movements between Tasmania and the mainland during the years 1834 to 1842. But even though for much of the next decade, Cameron’s comings and goings to the state saw success and failure in equal proportions, Cameron found replicating his Tasmanian influence in mainland centres a difficult task. Moreover, by the 1840s, the entrepreneurial activities of other men successfully challenged Samson’s attempts to maintain an industry stronghold on the island. It was not that audiences had tired of him. Rather, it was more the case that rivals of greater financial means challenged his monopoly.

Cameron turned hundreds away from his first ever dramatic offering in Hobart (Friedrich Von Kotzebue’s *The Stranger* in 1833), but his fortunes ebbed and flowed until his rivalry with Launceston theatrical entrepreneur F. B. Watson in 1844 ended in Cameron’s insolvency. This situation was not unique. Actually, the scenario typified the business of theatre during the period. Insolvency, rivalries and the movements of players between houses were all characteristic and familiar features of the industry. But despite his eventual

collapse, Cameron was among a small circle of especially unique actors and actresses who began their careers in Tasmania.

Behind the innovative enterprise of Samson Cameron was Cordelia, his wife and theatrical draw-card. If Samson's career closely figured the industry itself, then Cordelia's career was also typical of that experienced by many stage women during the period. The professional lives of Cordelia and her married contemporaries either closely paralleled that of their husbands, or otherwise were influenced by other, usually immediate, family members. Yet, this is not to suggest that these women lacked independence. Comparatively speaking, it was quite the contrary. Cordelia managed a theatre in Launceston during 1834 in her husband's absence and even spent time away from Samson during the Christmas season 1839/40 to perform independently in Launceston while her husband remained in Sydney.

As a stage professional, not only did Cordelia exercise greater independence than most of her non-theatre contemporaries, as her reputation grew she became more noted for her stage abilities than her husband. On stage, Cordelia was as equally innovative as she was bold. Other actresses imitated many of her stage mannerisms and there is a wonderful story recounted by Helen Musa that, "in the first *King Lear* at the Theatre Royal [Sydney] on 23 January 1837 her dead Cordelia laughed in the face of Conrad Knowles when he forgot his lines."²

Yet, without her Tasmanian experience, Cordelia might never have had the chance to perform opposite as well regarded an actor as Knowles, let alone laugh in his face. She was among a collection of players who had Tasmania to thank for her later recognition. In fact, that Van Diemen's Land functioned as her spring-board was particularly salient in that media claimed Cordelia prior to her Sydney debut as "the celebrated Tasmanian actress."³

Theatre scholars generally point to Tasmania's distance and smaller play-going population as obstacles to industry growth. It is my contention however, that despite Tasmania's separation from mainland Australia by a rough and often unpredictable strait of ocean, the State's relative isolation actually nurtured a fertile theatrical environment. Granted, theatre as an enterprise in Tasmania had its limitations, as the Camerons soon discovered, and similarly to other states, pure economics typically determined theatrical success or failure. However, the State's unique social and cultural aspects facilitated opportunities for budding professionals that might not have occurred elsewhere. "Hobart Town," wrote Alec Bagot in the 1960s, "with its smaller population of some 15,000 people [in 1845], was more like an English provincial town. Its theatre was homelier, its inhabitants more insular, with a closer sense of community feeling."⁴

Tasmania's relative isolation, its tolerant implementation of immigration procedures, or a combination of these and other contributing factors help to explain why the island incubated some of the most well known theatre personalities of the era. The reality that many stalwarts of Australian theatre began in their careers in Tasmania makes it plausible to suggest that the colony's separation, both geographically and administratively, was in many ways advantageous to the island, rather than obstructive. John Reynolds has speculated that "Although separated [from Launceston] by over 100 miles of indifferent road, it was far easier to seek decisions, grants and permits in Hobart Town than sail over 500 miles of often tempestuous seas to Sydney."⁵ Reynolds makes the claim in relation to the administrative and judiciary changes in the wake of Van Diemen's Land's separation from New South Wales in 1825, and suggests that parting "from the New South Wales governing establishment made commercial and industrial life easier in Van Diemen's Land."

It was true that the play-going public in Tasmania was not as large as that in Sydney, yet professional theatre—however small—provided performers

with the valuable opportunities they needed to practice and develop their craft. Such experiences included refining stage presence and performances skills, developing production values and gaining an appreciation of dramaturgical aesthetics, fine-tuning musical and repertory arrangements, as well as forays into set design.

For pioneers like Samson Cameron (from 1833), Anne Clarke (from 1840) and later, George Selth Coppin, the man whom Alec Bagot has called “the father of the Australian theatre” (from 1845), the smaller houses of Tasmania provided a litmus test for many aspects of theatre practice. Given that Van Diemen’s Land seemed beyond the reach of the prohibitive theatrical licensing provisions in place on the mainland, theatre managers probably enjoyed a greater sense of creative freedom than that of their mainland contemporaries. This is especially clear given Elizabeth Webby’s observation that “A similar licensing system [to that of New South Wales] does not, however, appear to have operated in Tasmania or South Australia during this period [the 1840s].”⁶

The repertory diet of the early Tasmanian theatregoer lay in the hands of the initial prime-movers of theatre, for it was the scores, scripts and compositions which the immigrant players had remembered to import with them from England that determined dramatic fare. Sometimes versions of plays were rewritten from memory, while other times scores too were based on recalling past performances. Nellie Stewart claimed of Clarke’s company’s production of Donizetti’s opera *Lucia di Lammermoor* (c. 1835) that: “the score of which Mrs Clarke had omitted to bring out [to Hobart], . . . had to be taken down in its entirety from my mother’s [Mrs. Stirling’s] voice.”⁷ Michael Roe suspects that some of Stewart’s memoirs are “dubious,” yet suffice to say that Stewart’s recollection does underscore the influential role of the early players in effecting the kinds of theatrical performances that took place in Hobart and Launceston during the 1840s.

As in Tasmania, opera had of course appeared in other states before 1840. Theatre historian Eric Irvin notes that, "in 1833 alone the Theatre Royal [Sydney] had produced at least seven operas or semi-operas."⁸ However, it took someone with a more concerted interest to change the frequency of opera in Tasmania from its occasional appearances to regular presentations throughout the late 1840s. That someone, at least in Hobart, was Anne Clarke. Her presentations of operas such as *Fra Diavolo* and *La Sonnambula* as early as 1842 attracted regular praise "for the pains she has taken to get together such an orchestra, as is rarely seen or heard in any provincial theatre in Britain."⁹

We can only imagine how well the productions of the early operatic pioneers came to recapturing the imaginative essences of their composers, but glowing reports of Anne Clarke's "pains" do suggest that critics of the day appreciated her efforts. Some histories of the genre in Australia characterise the early productions as undercooked attempts at opera holding little comparison to that which we understand of the scale of productions today. John Cargher in *Opera and Ballet in Australia* contends that most operatic productions in the early period were primarily distorted versions of the original in which the ultimate aim was to fill all the necessary parts, even if this meant that a woman took on a tenor role, a male dancer sang instead of danced and that the sets and backdrops were amateur designs painted by members of the company.

It may well be true to suggest that making the most of what little the early players had was their theatrical reality, and that as a result, perhaps the productions were not quite exact translations, or even rich visual treats. But to claim, for instance, as Cargher does that Anne Clarke's productions "bore little resemblance to the titles we find in history books," or that Marie Carandini's "initial efforts in Hobart are of curiosity rather than musical value"¹⁰ does underestimate the significance of too many of the variables that actually make their contributions of great interest.

Cargher does admit to “spending some time in rubbishing early Australian performances of opera in an attempt to shock the reader into reassessing history.”¹¹ No doubt this is a worthy mission and well intended, but arguably one which ultimately fails in the end to redeem the reader’s trust considering his claim that Marie “was at least Australian herself,”¹² which of course is not true, remains unchallenged. But despite Cargher’s sincere yet misfired attempt at “shocking” as a means of historiographical reassessment, reading such histories does create the picture that the early presentations, both operatic and non-operatic, were ultimately exercises in resourcefulness, and that this is where the most powerful significance of the early pioneers, particularly the women, really lies.

Women such as Dinah Rudelhoff, Emma Howson (the wife of Frank Howson), as well as Theodosia Yates (who, like the Howsons also debuted with Clarke’s company in Hobart in 1842), and Marie Carandini (wife of Jerome, who also debuted with Anne Clarke), were among a number of well-known personalities to launch their careers in Tasmania. Others included musicians such as John Philip Deane (the first to organise public concerts in Tasmania in 1826) and actors including J. H. S. Lee (who debuted in Hobart in 1834), Gustavus Arabin (who appeared in 1836),¹³ Maria Taylor (she debuted with Cameron’s company in 1834), Albert Spencer (who also debuted with Cameron, in 1834), and George Herbert Rogers (debuted professionally with F. B. Watson in 1841), as well as actor/managers such as F. B. Watson (in 1836).

Such figures indicate that the gender ratio of actors to actresses appearing in Tasmania during the early days of professional theatre was of roughly equal proportions. Some theatre historians state that Tasmanian theatre was top-heavy with actors during this period, although Cargher’s claim that some women took on tenor roles suggests that this was not always the case, at least not in some “lyric arts.” I will examine the notion of gender, and the

implications of stage women to gender dynamics and frontier culture in a later section, although I will offer two observations at this point. First, it is just as accurate to suggest that some actresses took on additional female parts because of a lack of women to fill all available roles, and second, that of the better-known players who arrived in the State and proceeded to become synonymous names in Australian theatre, the ratio of actresses to actors was roughly the same.

A characteristically perpetual movement between Tasmania and the mainland by both female and male players during the period does highlight the fact that mobility was an essential aspect of the profession for most. Eric Irvin has noted that “the almost continuous shuffle and re-shuffle between Hobart and Sydney” during the 1830s had become “commonplace.”¹⁴ Irvin’s claim implies that even despite its comparative distance, Tasmania enjoyed strong ties with theatrical centres such as Sydney and Melbourne, a fact appreciated by many players of the era. This “shuffling” was a rich and reciprocal relationship and many of those women who went on to become very successful players on the mainland might not have achieved their later reputations without first having the benefit of their early experiences in Tasmania.

In many ways contextualising the backdrop to this rich and busy culture of theatrical “shuffling” was the island’s lively press culture. “Grog-peddlers” and religious men helped to establish its character as well as broker its function to define “news” and broadcast “intelligence.” Of the teetotaler-cum-publican and sometime expeditioner John Pascoe Fawkner, the *Age* reported that, “The first newspaper ever published in Launceston, the *Advertiser*, was brought out by Mr Fawkner on the second Monday in January, 1829,”¹⁵ but for a time the most influential paper in Launceston was actually the *Cornwall Chronicle*, which was owned by one William Lushington Goodwin. Thanks to him, the *Chronicle* curried popular favour because it often “satisfied those whose fare included

biting criticism of men and institutions.”¹⁶ The *Examiner* later forged ahead in popularity once James Aikenhead enlisted the reporting services of Reverend John West (1808-1873), because “when West hit an abuse he hit it hard but avoided savagery, and therefore libel.”¹⁷ This contrasted to the fortunes of Andrew Bent, owner of one of Tasmania’s earliest publications, the *Hobart Town Gazette* (first published in 1816), who, unlike West, was less cautious with his blows. Officials promptly charged, tried, and found Bent guilty of three counts of libel shortly after the Government’s take-over of the *Gazette* in 1826.¹⁸

Frontier pressmen took very seriously their mission to report on the conduct of theatres; their choice of managers, actors, the performance of pieces true to a text, and their character as places of decency and respectability. Ken Stewart characterised this shift thus: “As the social influence and intellectual significance of theatre increased, the standard of criticism improved, and the importance of critics as catalysts of awareness and framers of issues became more marked.”¹⁹

Press of the period illustrates that initially, two main figures established, and indeed revolutionised, the ideological function of theatre in Tasmania: Samson Cameron and John Meredith. Their somewhat turbulent relationship began as early as November 1835, and even though by early April 1837 the two had seemingly patched up their differences and had entered into a co-leasing arrangement of the “new” Theatre Royal, it was a short-lived truce. The *Courier* later sensed the possibility of trouble and hotly debated the appearance of not one, but two, theatres in Hobart, claiming that: “the attempt to keep open *two* theatrical establishments in Hobart town, will soon prove ruinous to *one*, if not both of them.”²⁰ The reference was to both “the New Theatre in Campbell-Street,” otherwise known as the Royal Victoria, and the Argyle Rooms, which was a little theatre annexed to a pub on the corner of Argyle and Liverpool Streets that had opened in February 1834 under the management of J. P. Deane.

The issue was clearly about divisions and oppositions: between managers, between theatres, between classes and between play-goers. The following was part of a treatise published in the *Courier* on 21 April 1837:

The playgoers are divided into the Meredithions who chiefly compose the Pit and Gallery audience, and the Cameronians who patronise the Boxes—The first of these parties has all the clamour on their side, while the latter had all the wealth and influence.—Thus posited what hope can exist of success with the theatre—if the influential party withdraw the other cannot support the house, and if the noisy ones gain ascendancy the respectables will withdraw as a matter of course. In either case the house must close. Under these circumstances the retirement of Mr. Meredith seems inevitable, and in fact the only thing which can restore harmony among the Theatricals.

Pierre Bourdieu's maxim that "Theatre divides its public and divides itself"²¹ was, therefore, nowhere more obvious than in the colonies. On the one hand, theatre was a contradictory social institution, sometimes phenomenological—changing as community needs changed—and sometimes viewed as a kind of "folly," given one critic's charge that it was one of a number of "English" institutions transplanted "in a soil in which it is impossible they can grow."²² On the other hand was theatre's arrangement as an arena emphasising colonial class divides, such as that between the "respectables" and "the noisy ones." Some spectators sat on bench seats in the pit (this space would later become the stalls), while others occupied the gallery and upper boxes. Pricing for tickets in the pit and upper boxes (or family circle) were usually the same, while those in the gallery were the cheapest. Theatre also

divided the amusements it offered by boasting a diversity of genres from “rollicking”²³ pantomimes and “racy” burlesques to pathos and tragedy, high drama, opera and melodrama.

Discerning how audiences conducted themselves within such a dynamic sphere of social life was a journalistic concern because public behaviours were considered as markers of community culture: as illustrated by the *Courier* on 21 April 1837 when it wryly observed that no-one in the audience stood for the singing of “God Save the King.” Instead, the whole house (except of course for the company) remained “very gravely sitting.”

Such details mattered to theatre writers in Tasmania. Smaller settlements placed a greater emphasis on “community” wherein players, and of course audiences, were subject to scrutiny. The fact that only the company stood for the singing of the anthem is telling. Players were not likely to alienate themselves from the community, even if on rare occasions audiences ignored protocol and remained “very gravely sitting” for the singing of “God Save the King.” Players were also much more likely to become socially involved with smaller communities than in larger mainland centres because of their collective function as ideological agents. Again, this meant that communities expected players to follow traditions, even if audiences occasionally snubbed such customs to make a (highly ephemeral) point. Fostering or strengthening a sense of “community” was, therefore, a reciprocal relationship between players and the community in which they appeared. Just as theatre performers, both domestic and non-domestic, relied heavily on one another and the various communities for support (or patronage), audiences, too, looked to a community of players to fulfil a variety of vital cultural functions. Later, in the same year that Tasmania secured responsible government, in 1856,²⁴ the Hobart Town *Courier* was very clear that the role of “Sterling actors” was a pedagogical one:

that of “literally teaching them [the colonists] the art of dramatic observation, and preparing them for entering upon a critical analysis.”²⁵

Theatre’s phenomenological function was, in many ways, formalised throughout the 1850s and beyond by one of the most colourful media men in Hobart: John Davies. He was born in London on 10 June 1810 and there is a story that on his journey to Sydney via India “His ship was wrecked on King Island in Bass Strait, and he had to swim for his life.”²⁶ The many hats Davies wore included actor (1842), journalist (1840s), publican (1850), theatre manager (1853), newspaper man (1854) and parliamentarian (from 1862). In fact, Gillian Winter states that Davies spent the years 1831 to 1837 in New South Wales as a convicted fraudster: a fact not mentioned in the profile of his life printed by the *Mercury’s* Centenary Edition on 5 July 1954.²⁷ Interestingly, the edition does mention that Davies wrote for the *Port Phillip Patriot* sometime in the early 1840s, (ironically, perhaps the same time the *Patriot* reported on the mass break-out of convicts to the bush from Hobart Town on Christmas Day in 1843?).

Davies was as ubiquitous an institution in Hobart as were its many public houses. As early as 18 December 1835, the *Courier* announced that Davies had opened a reading room and circulating library at 23 Elizabeth Street Hobart: one of the first of its kind in Tasmania. Among his other commercial pursuits was an interest in publishing. He founded the *Mercury* newspaper in 1854, and by 1859 he had absorbed the *Guardian* (among others) and with it any other competition. Davies managed to establish an intimate connection between theatre, players, and criticism throughout the period with no real rivals in the publishing industry, coupled with his own love of drama. For a time he was both the lessee of the Theatre Royal (1853), and theatre writer for the *Mercury*, which he of course owned. It is no surprise then to discover that reviews regularly encouraged theatre-goers to patronise the theatre.



THE LATE JOHN DAVIES,
Founder of "The Mercury" in 1854. He died
in 1872.

An illustration of John Davies published in the Centenary
Edition of the *Hobart Mercury*, 5 July 1954.

Davies' cultural influence was significant, and perhaps best illustrated on Thursday, 13 June 1872: the day of his funeral. Over five hundred people joined the concourse of mourners, and they proceeded in heavy rain past businesses that were closed and against a backdrop of docked ships, which had lowered their flags to half-mast. Davies' obituary, which the *Mercury* printed on 15 June 1872, occupied almost one complete page. In it, the writer wrote that without Davies' "personal labours . . . Tasmania, which some make it so much the custom to decry, would not have occupied the favourable position that it does." Even in 1872, it was clear that Tasmania remained sensitive to anti-provincial sentiment that alienated the State as "other," and one of Davies' most respected legacies therefore, at least according to the report, was his loyalty as a "public" advocate, in both his defence of, and commitment to, Tasmania and its settlers. It was those sentiments, those implying that Tasmania was persistently "so much the custom to decry"—and Davies' efforts to counteract that "custom"—which dominated the obituary. The fact that the obituary was so concerned with detailing Davies' activities in offsetting the anti-provincial bias (such as his "labour for the good of the colony"), perhaps explains why his efforts as a theatre manager were ignored. Yet, this is particularly odd because the Centenary Edition of the *Mercury* in 1954 claims that Davies became mortally ill in 1872 after braving heavy floods in an effort to ensure the homeless had a place of refuge in the Theatre Royal.

A more accurate source of his theatrical zeal is to be found in nineteenth century back issues of the *Mercury*. Much of the *Mercury's* reviews between 1854 and the late 1860s came straight from Davies' pen. In reading many of these we see that the function of players was, in part, to lessen the blows of discredit occasioned by "the custom to decry" Tasmania. Under Davies' regime, players were typically recruited to exemplify the colony's cultural authenticity. This is remarkable because, comparatively speaking, Davies was quite unlike most of

his mainland contemporaries. Generally, of the more well-known mainland journalists, such as James Edward Neild and James Smith, most were well-educated, with some measure of professional training (though not always as a journalist) and reasonably well-to-do. This was in contrast to Davies, who had perhaps parlayed his suspected criminal tendencies as a fraudster into the desire for a better life. One edition of the *Mercury* claims he was interested in journalism as a young man, and worked as a freelance journalist in England and India,²⁸ but makes no mention of any formal education or schooling.

Davies was also unlike Neild and Smith in his involvement with theatre. Smith did dabble as an actor, but Davies was “an enthusiastic supporter of the drama and opera. As proprietor of the Theatre Royal . . . he introduced many leading players and companies to Tasmania.”²⁹ In fact, an important aspect of Davies’ singularity as a culture writer was that he successfully blended his interests as a theatre lessee with his economic motives as an entrepreneur. Davies’ drive as a theatre-lover successfully inspired confidence in drama and opera as a measure of cultural credibility and a reflection of social unity.

Davies’ managerial career illustrates that he was probably appreciative of theatre’s cohesive function as a domicile and inward-looking space “with a closer sense of community feeling.” Therefore, one can conclude that Davies would have understood his own role as a journalist quite differently to that of his mainland counterparts. One historian has claimed that Smith was “a perceptive critic [‘influenced by the mid-Victorian concept of the morality of arts and letters’],”³⁰ and another contends that Neild “was himself the supreme critical egotist” and “a dark, Swiftian humorist and remorseless crusader against those traditions of the Regency stage.”³¹ By contrast, Davies, in my opinion, viewed theatre as an effective means of defending Tasmania—as it was “so much the custom to decry”—against the discourse of anti-provincialism. In fact, during the 1850s, it is possible to trace the recruitment of successful

players to cast a credible light on Tasmanian colonial culture and community directly to John Davies.

Tasmanian theatre did experience the periods of fluctuation typical of the mainland industry, and it is true that the community was smaller, more insular and probably less spoilt for choice. Yet Tasmanian media articulated and rearticulated the significance of theatre stars based on a localised agenda that survived for many decades. Recent generations forget that provincial journalists took seriously the tradition of exemplifying theatre, and its stars, as a function of a literate community—a small, local, and somewhat disconnected community—well into the late 1870s and beyond. This is, I believe, not only a measure of the importance of such stars, but also a reflection of their influence in defining the identity of Tasmanian community culture.

The early stars of Tasmanian theatre were integral to intoning what journalists of the period understood was the value of a “successful theatre” to community identity:

MR. GEORGE COPPIN.—This gentleman has not visited Tasmania for 26 years. This is a very singular circumstance, when we take into consideration that we are indebted to his enterprise for the gratification derived from the entertainments of the late G. V. Brook, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Heir, Professor Anderson, the Wizard Jacobs, the Bell Ringers, the Glass Blowers, and many more other talented artistes. Up to the present time one of Mr. Coppin's agents accompanied his speculations ; it is therefore, gratifying to notice the importance he places upon Mr. Robert Heller's visit to Tasmania by undertaking the management himself, more particularly as it will afford us one more opportunity of seeing him in one of his most popular characters. It will scarcely be believed that when M. Coppin gave his star performances in the Hobart Town Theatre, 26 years ago, that he was supported by a better stock company than can be witnessed in any colonial Theatre at the present time. It was then under the management of Mrs. Clark, who was herself an excellent actress and singer ; Mrs. Guerin was the leading lady ; Mrs. Thompson and her daughter—now Mrs. Hermann Vezén, the most popular leading actress in London ; the Howson family, to whom the colonies are indebted for the first introduction of opera ; Mr. Rogers, most certainly the best representative of old men in Australia ; Mrs. Rogers ; Messrs. Charles Young, Thompson, Opie, and many others we cannot remember, were all permanent members of the company. In those days the drama was well supported in Tasmania, and it is to be regretted that the present manager cannot command the same amount of talent and patronage. A successful

theatre is the very best circulating medium that any community can have, as it takes from those that can afford to pay for amusement, and distributes the receipts amongst the working classes. We regret to hear that Mr. Coppins visit has not been remunerative.³²

The *Mercury's* claim that theatre was "the very best circulating medium that any community can have" might have been tongue-in-cheek, but the quip does suggest that the *Mercury's* report was perhaps not as concerned with theatre as a mechanism for economic equity as it was with the cultural utility of theatre as an institution of social meaning-making.

Of course, audience tastes had altered since theatre's early development in the 1840s, as had the structure of the industry. Much of the report's narrative romanticised the theatrical world of Coppin's heyday, reminiscing that: "In those days the drama was well supported in Tasmania."³³ Yet it was arguably naïve to suggest that Coppin's ventures were regularly "well supported" in Hobart generally,³⁴ even in 1845. In fact, Coppin had better success in Launceston than he had in Hobart during that year. It is perhaps therefore more fitting to describe theatre's relevance to a frontier culture as a "circulating medium" sustaining the community's ideological economy. Although Coppin's 1871 season was less than successful compared to that of twenty-six years earlier, the greater legacy was that his significance to Tasmanian theatre was still "circulating." So even despite the fact that Tasmanian theatre was just as vulnerable to industry changes as elsewhere, and the fact that the industry itself was so notoriously unstable, it is certain that throughout the nineteenth century, the ideological resonance of theatre was as meaningful as the key personalities used to popularise its cultural function.

Chapter Two:

Stage Actresses in Tasmania, c. 1835 – 1845

Women such as Marie Burgess, Anne Clarke, Jane Thomson, and Emma Young were all highly popular stage actresses in the early days of theatre. Their contribution to Tasmanian colonial life was, as their stories will show, significant. Their profession led to their direct participation in the community's cultural life and their footing as respected actresses also influenced the role of theatre in a relatively isolated colony. This study therefore aims to examine the social and cultural forces that affected their Tasmanian careers and discuss the ways in which women defined the cultural meaning of theatre on the island during the period.

Most of the details about these actresses come from nineteenth century print media. Such reviews offer a significant yet imperfect picture. Theatre criticism from this early period was sometimes printed anywhere between one to seven days after the event. This is perhaps because review writing as a genre was, in many ways, still in its infancy in Australia. But it may also have been because publishers more regularly printed many types of news media bi-weekly or weekly, and not daily. Of such frontier publications, reviews typically discussed plays and performances, but also debated the place of theatre in Tasmanian colonial culture as an ongoing concern. This is not surprising given that socially it was very much a time of flux. Theatre was still a new social institution in a developing colony and perhaps because of this "newness," the tenets of an older, and imported, order were recruited as a means of organisation. Those factors contributed to the establishment of theatre as, to borrow Robert Connell's phrase, a "heavily masculinized" institution.¹

In a period when theatre was still developing a profile as a professional arena for women, representing actresses was problematised by ideological and social tensions. Socially, popular actresses of the day were independent in a way their contemporaries were not: casting them therefore as ideologically atypical. Actresses straddled the often gruelling demands of their profession—in which women literally made spectacles of themselves—and the demands of living in a relatively isolated and oftentimes brutal colony. Newspapers regularly reported sudden deaths, murder, drunkenness, and infanticide, as well as outbreaks of small pox and sundry diseases.

Situated close to, or sometimes adjoining, theatres were public houses, and Hobart's "New theatre"² (known today as the Theatre Royal) stood out as probably one of the first theatres in Australia furnished with its own saloon. Not only was drinking in theatres therefore encouraged, but the steady supply of readily-available liquor often contributed to declines in "reason," therefore encouraging and inflaming playgoer's passions. A very dark space in Hobart's "New Theatre" motivated the *True Colonist* to comment in 1837 on the "very equivocal remarks about the purpose for which this passage was (said to be avowedly) kept in darkness."³ Theatres, therefore, whether fairly or otherwise, attracted a reputation for nurturing socially illicit activities in their "dark corners," including prostitution. Scores of "*Swaggering smokers*" ambling along the theatre's corridors and within its confines similarly compelled the *True Colonist* to call for a ban on smoking in the saloon because the "fumes" "annoyed some hundreds" of patrons in the theatre. Play-goers were also advised to wear hats, lest some troublemaker in the upper tier takes it upon himself to pat the "bald pates" of the fellows underneath as they walked to their seats. Nightly performances, not surprisingly, attracted mostly male audiences, and their occasional whistling, hissing or proclivity to throw fruit to

show their disapproval was a risk to any (amateur or unsuccessful) stage player engaged to entertain.

A woman on the stage in this period was very much a woman on show. Her enactment of various roles was, and continues to be, reliant on the gesturing and movement of her body through space. The embodiment of a role, therefore, was both a literal and metaphorical positioning. Being “in-character” was both representational (playing a part) and utilitarian (using the body to do so). What a reviewer of the time “received” during a performance was influenced by the subjectivities of taste and then standardised into a discursive practice. And because theatre as a physical space was above all else “heavily masculinized,” what occurred within its walls, even if the theatre was managed by a woman, was reproduced by male journalists in texts (reviews) made publicly available.

Review writing reproduced textual versions of masculine desire. Men came, men saw, men wrote. Plays were advertised by managers and then attended by male theatre critics, who were admitted free-of-charge. Women such as Clarke, Thomson, Young, and Carandini were all the regular subjects of theatre reviews throughout the 1830s and 40s and such reviews shed important light on how these women were received, the kinds of plays they performed and their active engagement with frontier culture and colonial life. Consequently, it is possible to piece together a more complete picture of their Tasmanian careers in tandem with the more recent work of theatre historians. When writing about their “seasons” therefore, I will be using the term in a way compatible with that of contemporary colonial players. In the colonial sense, a “season” typically lasted only a matter of weeks (or months at the very best). This was a period when “professional” theatre was still in its infancy, and of the expatriate English-born women appearing in and around the decade 1835 to 1845 one of the first to consider is Anne Clarke.

Anne Clarke (English, born c. 1806)

"...to whom we are indebted for the only permanent existence of a public place of rational entertainment."

Hobart Courier, 1844¹

It is clear from the opening sections that Anne Clarke was a woman of great significance to Tasmanian theatre. Her initiative is now recognised as having a remarkable impact on the course and quality of Australian theatre. Her company of 1842 consisted of Jerome (sometimes "Germone" or "Gerolamo") Carandini, Theodosia Stirling, and the Howson brothers, John and Frank. Not only did the brothers become noted performers in their own right, Frank Howson and his wife Emma produced a whole family of theatrical stars. Even Emma herself performed for a short period. Signor Carandini took a wife, English-born and Hobart-bred Marie Burgess, and her exceptional vocal abilities later earned her the epithet, "The Australian Jenny Lind." Finally, there was a well-regarded actress who initially performed under the nom-de-théâtre, Mrs. Stirling (her real name was reported by her daughter, Nellie Stewart, to be Theodosia Yates, although Alison Gyger claims she used "MacIntosh" on official documents²). Stirling later became Mrs. James Guerin (she married Guerin in Hobart) until she remarried for the third time. Her daughter by her third husband, Richard Stewart (also known as "Towzey") was Nellie Stewart (born Eleanor Stewart Towzey, 1858-1931) later claimed Australia's first-born superstar: a claim I argue is debatable.

Interestingly, of Clarke's party, none of the troupe listed their "trades" as theatrical. John and Francis (Frank) Howson, for instance, were recorded as pianoforte makers, while Theodosia Yates and Jerome Carandini were each recorded as a "Milliner" and a "Bookbinder" respectively. Actually, imagining Carandini as a bookbinder is a difficult task, particularly given that history tells

us that Carandini was born an Italian nobleman and later sought asylum in Tasmania as a political refugee. No records indicate that any of Clarke's troupe functioned as workers in the trades listed in the shipping records of their arrival. In fact, the brothers Howson actually formed a school in Hobart offering instruction in music and singing, featuring violin, violoncello, pianoforte, bass and vocal tuition, and boasting, according to the *Hobarton Courier and Van Diemen's Land Gazette*, on 25 February 1842, "a selection of all the new and popular Music from the first publishers in London." Carandini did the same, teaching classical dance and languages such as Italian and French. Interestingly, baptismal registers for Hobart reveal yet another picture of "trades" and theatre players. Upon the births of his daughters, Emma and Clelia, Frank Howson, for instance, cited his profession, not as a "pianoforte maker," but rather a "Professor of Music."

I want to now pursue the twofold nature of Clarke's contribution to Tasmanian colonial culture during the period: her contributions as an actress to the development of theatre as entertainment, and, her contributions as an actress/manager to the development of theatre as an industry. Anne's success in attracting significant cultural authority lay in her efforts to further the artistic maturity of theatre and in her systematic promotion of theatre as a viable commercial enterprise. As such, it is important to first examine some of the finer points of her Tasmanian career as a point of origin, before proceeding on to investigate the scope of her engagement with the island's colonial culture.

Anne Clarke arrived in Hobart in August 1834 aboard the female immigrant ship, the *Strathfieldsay*; a barque weighing 478 tons that had departed Gravesend on 1 May. When the ship docked in Hobart on 13 August, she had aboard her a cargo of general merchandise and 286 female emigrants. Included in that group of women was Dinah Rudelhoff, who, like Clarke, also managed a theatre (the Geelong Theatre in 1845) and in so doing became the

only other woman besides Clarke to do so with reasonable success. Unlike Clarke however, who appeared to have a supportive husband in Michael, Dinah's husband, James Murray (whom she married in 1836) was reportedly against her career as an actress. Both Clarke and Rudeloff debuted with J. P. Deane at the Argyle Rooms on Saturday 23 August 1834. Anne was commonly referred to during her early stage career as "Miss Remens." However, the marriage register on the day of her wedding records her maiden name as "Remains."³

Clarke's first appearance was in the role of Annette in John Burgoyne's opera *The Lord of the Manor*⁴ (Dinah played Peggy). The *Courier's* advertised notice on 22 August 1834 suggests that both Anne and Dinah had some theatrical and operatic experience prior to appearing in Hobart. It read: "Annette—Miss Remens, Peggy—Miss Rudelhoff (from the Theatre Royal English Opera House [London], being their first appearance on this stage)." Anne was not appearing at Hobart's Royal Victoria at this stage because although the laying of the foundation stone took place in 1834 amid much pomp and ceremony, shareholders defaulted on loans in 1836 and construction ceased for some time.

Anne filled dual roles in the company during this period. She played comic parts, such as performing the role of Lady Racket in Arthur Murphy's comedy *Three Weeks after Marriage* (1810), in which Rudelhoff played the role of Dimity. Concurrently, Anne's talents as a songstress were an essential part of an evening's program. Following the performance of *Three Weeks after Marriage*, and before the afterpiece, *The Rendezvous* by Richard Ayton (1818), for example, she sang songs such as "Meet Me in the Moonlight," "The Soldier Tired of War's Alarms," and the cavatina, "Fra tante angoscie paepiti" (possibly by Augustus Meves). In the afterpiece *The Rendezvous*, she appeared as Sophia to the Rose of Rudelhoff.

THEATRE ARGYLE ROOMS.

FOR THE BENEFIT OF
MISS REMENS.

ON Monday evening, 13th Oct. 1834, will be represented, the comedy of,

THREE WEEKS AFTER MARRIAGE.

CHARACTERS:—

Sir Charles Racket, Mr Spencer, from the theatre Launceston, (his first appearance on this stage)—Druggett, Mr Capper—Woodley, Mr Hodges—Lovelace, Mr Hulkes—Lady Racket, Miss Remens—Mrs Druggett, Mrs. Henson—Nancy, Miss Watson—Dinny, Miss Rudelhoff.

In the course of the evening the following songs:—Meet me by Moonlight—Miss Remens, Bavarian Broom Girl (in character)—Miss Rudelhoff. A Comic Song, by Mr. Spencer. The Soldier tired of War's Alarms—Miss Remens. Why did I Love—Mrs Henson.

Miss Remens will sing the favourite Cavatina,
Fra tant' angoscio e paeppiti.

The whole to conclude with

THE RENDEZVOUS.

CHARACTERS:

Snake, Mr Russell—Bolding, Mr Capper—Charles, Mr Hulks—Simon, Mr Lee—Smart, Mr Campbell—Sophia, Miss Remens—Lucretia, Mrs Henson—Rose, Miss Rudelhoff.

Boxes, 4s. Second tier, 2s

Tickets to be had at Mr Deane's, at the Theatre, at Mr. Hedger's, Elizabeth street, and at the Prompter office, Elizabeth street.

N.B.—Doors to open at 7 performance to commence at half-past 7 o'clock precisely.

THEATRE, ARGYLE ROOMS.

THIS Evening, Friday, 10th October, will be performed

BAMFYLDE MOORE CAREW,

OR

The Gipsy of the Glen.

AFTER WHICH,

THE TURNPIKE GATE.

Lower seats 3s. Upper tier 2s.

Mr Spencer, from the Launceston Theatre, will make his first appearance on this stage on Monday next.

An advertisement for a performance at the Argyle Rooms printed by the Hobart Courier, 10 October 1834. The bill features a newly arrived Anne Clarke, then "Miss Remens" and a host of familiar names in Tasmanian theatre during the period. Among them were Dinah Murray, then "Miss Rudeloff," and J. S. Lee.

Clarke's arrival at this time placed her at the forefront of theatre development in Tasmania. Anne began her career under J. P. Deane in 1834, less than a year after Samson Cameron had inaugurated "professional" theatre in Hobart. In fact, throughout this period, Anne also played in Cameron's company, and with Cameron's latter-day rival, John Meredith. This suggests that while she was sometimes a beneficiary of their successes and a casualty of their failures in the industry, she also learnt from them. These were influential men whose triumphs and downfalls were her teaching tools. With J. P. Deane she conceivably learned the value of versatility. With Cameron during November 1834 and throughout 1836—the year the Royal Victoria was finally operational—it was probably the value of mobility and the potential of theatre in Launceston. In 1837, under Meredith's guidance, her performances indicate that she fine-tuned her theatrical skills and extended her repertoire. As such, with the benefits of their tutelage, and in combination with her own initiative, Anne Clarke was reasonably well equipped when she claimed her mantle as a theatre manager in Hobart, in April 1840.

Before I proceed with an examination of the managerial phase of Anne Clarke's career, it is important to pay some attention to the other man in her life: her husband Michael, whom she married on 25 October 1834 (while she was with Deane's company). Michael seemed more comfortable as a behind-the-scenes man, both literally and metaphorically, as he does not appear to have been an actor, although he was reportedly at one stage a musician. And whether or not Anne was the sole bread-winner in the family or whether Michael was perhaps a man of independent means is unknown. The fact that one register records his profession as a "Gentleman,"⁵ gives the latter possibility some credibility. It was a title implying some degree of social respectability and status that presumably extended to Anne herself. In fact, there is nothing in her press to indicate that the community regarded Anne as anything other than a

respectable woman: perhaps because even while she continued to perform, she also had a child by Clarke during 1835, thus indicating that she successfully managed to balance the demands of her professional career with the duties of being a wife.⁶ In fact, the assumption among some scholars that society presumed theatre was a somewhat suspect occupation for women is questionable considering that Michael and their young child appear to have journeyed with her to England in February 1841. This evidences considerable support of Anne's vocation, particularly because return passenger lists also record the arrival of Michael and Anne's child with the rest of her small troupe on 28 February 1842.

Anne became the manager of the Royal Victoria Theatre Hobart in April 1840. In so doing, she became one of the first women in Australia to control a theatre for an extended period. During her tenure as theatre manager, Anne Clarke effected significant changes in Tasmania's theatre industry. In importing players from England—a venture that had never been done in Tasmania before—a new kind of professionalism was born. Those players thereafter represented an influential nucleus that resonated for decades in the theatre world. In fact, many of those artists became the era's most recognised players and had Clarke's initiative to thank for their success. Clarke also provided opportunities, training, and a "profession" for women interested in a stage career, and contributed in no small way to the development of musical theatre. In addition, in writing to local government authorities in July 1842 seeking a license that distinguished the Royal Victoria, as "respectable," from the less reputable places of amusement in Hobart at the time, Clarke was responsible for redirecting theatre away from the less civilised amusements that had so offended many earlier theatre critics of the day. In fact, this activity probably redefined theatre's social respectability as a profession for women as well as explaining why the Tasmanian press was so especially loyal to her. Press

continually acknowledged her enterprise, possibly because her activities had diverted theatre away from its predicted decline into vulgarity, and instead restored faith in its cultural position as a “rational” and “legitimate” institution.

Anne’s actions suggest that she believed that legislative reform was the key to changing the course of theatre development in Tasmania. She wrote to Parliament in July 1842 seeking a license to distinguish the respectability of the Theatre Royal, which was then under her management, from the less reputable places of amusement in Hobart at the time. On 23 September 1842, Hobart passed “An Act for regulating Places of Public Entertainment and for punishing Persons Keeping disorderly Houses.”⁷ Any offenders charged under the Act were required to pay a fine of no more than £50. Those desiring to obtain a license were required to seek written permission, and only after the Colonial Secretary had received the written application, and the Lieutenant-Governor had reviewed and signed the petition, could authorities grant certification to the applicant (conditional upon payment of a 20 shilling fee).⁸

Throughout Clarke’s tenure, journalists consistently congratulated her on her style of management, remarked on the superiority of her company, and recognised her contribution to, not only theatre culture, but also the cultural development of the colony itself. Despite the fact that towards the late 1840s, before her retirement from the stage, Anne Clarke’s efforts failed to attract large audiences, theatre-watchers regularly praised her struggles. The claims that she spared “neither trouble nor expense”⁹ were as familiar as comments regarding her great “spirit and enterprise.”¹⁰ Further, when Clarke’s was the only theatre remaining open for business in Hobart, the *Courier* on 16 August 1844 commended her efforts, voicing the hope she would “draw the attention of even the would-be-thought fastidious and critical to the only place of amusement which exists for the inhabitants of this dull city.”

MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT.
TO-MORROW EVENING, FEBRUARY 26,
 at the **THEATRE**, **Liverpool Street.**

Mrs. CLARKE, in consequence of having been disappointed in obtaining the Theatre in Campbell-street, she has taken the above Rooms, which she purposes fitting up as a THEATRE as soon as possible; and, meanwhile, intends to give, twice a-week, a Theatrical Olio and Musical Mélange, and earnestly trusts to merit and receive a continuance of their kind patronage and support.

PART I.

Overture—"La Gazza Ladra"—ROSSINI.
Glee—"When shall we three meet again"—Mrs. Clarke, Mr. J. Howson, and Mr. F. Howson.—KING.
Song—"Bourne Prince Charlie"—Miss Young.
Song—"The Night," Mr. F. Howson.—B. HIME.
Duet—"At close of day"—Mrs. Clarke and Mrs. Stirling.—ROSSINI.
Song—"The blighted flower"—Mr. J. Howson.—BALFE.

The celebrated **TARANTELLA**, from the favourite ballad of "The Brigand of Terracina," (as danced at the Italian Opera House, London,) Mrs. F. Howson and Signor Carandini.

After which, the celebrated Scene from
JACK SHEPPARD,
 In which is introduced the Song of "Jolly Nose."
 Blueskin, Mr. F. Howson, Jonathan Wild, Mr. J. Howson.
 Mr. Wood, Mr. Williams. Mrs. Wood, Miss Young.

PART II.

Waltzes—"L'Aurore"—LABITZKY.
Song—"The Gondolette," Mrs. Clarke.—A. LEE.
Song—"How soft the air," Mrs. Stirling.
Duetto—"Quando di Sangue Tinto," (Belisario)—Signor Carandini and Mr. F. Howson.—DONIZETTI.
Song—"They have given her to another," Mr. J. Howson.

The celebrated **SCOTCH MINUET** from "Lochinvar,"
 by Mrs. F. Howson and Miss Young.

To conclude with a favourite Scene from
JACK SHEPPARD,
 As played in London with the most unbounded success, in which is introduced the celebrated Air—"Nix my dolly, pals-fake away."
 Jack Sheppard, Mrs. Clarke. Edgeworth Bess, Miss Young.
 Pol Muggott, Mrs. Stirling. Blueskin, Mr. F. Howson.
 Kneebone, Mr. J. Howson. Baptiste Kettleby, Mr. Williams.
 Leader, — LEFFLER. Director, J. HOWSON.

Doors open at Seven - commence at half-past Seven precisely.

ADMISSION, ONE DOLLAR EACH.

Tickets to be had of Mr. Tagg, Bookseller; of Mr. Davis, Musical Repository, Elizabeth-street; and of Mr. Lester, Ship Hotel.

This is an advertising bill featuring the entertainment offered by Anne Clarke and her company in Hobart, in 1842. It features many of the names that became among the most recognised during the period including; Miss Emma Young, Mrs. Stirling, Emma, Frank and John Howson, Jerome Carandini and of course, Anne Clarke herself.

Clarke presented many plays during her managerial career that Tasmanian play-goers had not seen previously. But, as Alison Gyger has noted, it is often difficult to verify what performances actually took place during the period, as newspapers were infrequently produced and therefore unreliable at best. Among the Tasmanian premieres were probably *Die Freischütz*,¹¹ an opera by Carl Maria Von Weber (1821), Thomas Morton's *A Roland for an Oliver* (1819), both on 12 February 1844, a three act melodrama called *The Bell Ringer of St. Paul's* which was an adaptation of Harrison Ainsworth's (1805-1882) novel of the same name (on 8 April 1844), and a version of Victor Hugo's novel *Esmeralda; or The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, a three-act drama (26 August 1844). Of the Australian premieres there was Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* (in 1842), Auber's *Gustavus III* (in 1843), and Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* in January 1845 (which may also have been, according to Alison Gyger, a version by Henry Bishop).¹² Because Clarke also advertised for "respectable" women interested in a stage career, she offered Tasmanian women professional opportunities unlike those more commonly available, such as the vocations of governess, seamstress, or maid.

Actress, manager and businesswoman, Anne Clarke was an anomalous early nineteenth-century woman. She was not a neat "fit" when compared to the cultural role and social activities of her (theatrical and non-theatrical) contemporaries. Moreover, she was arguably shrewd enough to do whatever was necessary to survive in the industry, even though the unpredictability and stresses of the industry eventually got the better of her. From refurbishing a theatre, to discharging a member of her company,¹³ Anne was apparently not squeamish about commercial necessities. Her efforts regularly attracted support from the day's local press culture—even the dismissal of actor Francis Nesbitt in 1844—because in her, Tasmanian journalists had found a pacesetter. Evidence substantiates that even as late as 1860s, Anne Clarke's legacy still lingered.

Some twenty years after her tenure as manager, a reporter claimed (during the 1865 tour of English actress Lady Emilia Don) of actor G. H. Rogers' performance in *The Seven Ages of Man* that "those who had witnessed the same representation years ago, in Mrs. Clarke's time, expected something great and they were not disappointed."¹⁴

Anne Clarke was a woman of progressive ideas. She did for Tasmanian theatre in the early 1840s what Cameron had done a decade before but in her own unique way. Where Cameron had inaugurated professional theatre in Tasmania, Clarke had been the only woman of her time to manage a theatre with any degree of success and for any consistent period. In fact, Michael Roe has suggested, "Mrs Clarke began the tradition whereby her sex has played somewhat the more distinguished part in Theatre's history."¹⁵ Roe's statement is interesting because it begs the question whether Clarke distinguished her part in theatre history simply because she was a woman, or because she was a woman of some commercial wisdom. I suspect it is possibly a little of both although it is certain that she altered not only the climate of Tasmanian theatre during the period, but was equally influential in altering the ideology surrounding theatre women in the colonial labour market, and their public visibility as respected professionals.

Ironically, while she enjoyed a high public profile for over a decade, Anne faded abruptly from Hobart life after ending her tenure as manager of the Royal Victoria in 1847. By that time, most of her original company (of 1842) had moved on, some other enterprising agent now managed the Royal Victoria, and Anne was at this point estranged from her husband Michael. Yet despite these developments, the press continued its traditional practice of eulogising her efforts as theatre's driving force. Fittingly, even though Anne Clarke seems to have disappeared into complete obscurity after 1847, and the industry's highly volatile nature was witness to her defeat, her many contributions to theatre

continued to resonate in Tasmania (and indeed in New South Wales and Victoria) as an influential cultural after-shock. In 1854, the young up-start George Coppin, who had lured many of Clarke's players to Melbourne in 1845, took a leaf from Anne's book and began "importing" players from England.

ROYAL VICTORIA THEATRE,
Campbell Street.
**PROMENADE VOCAL & INSTRUMENTAL
CONCERTS.**

THURSDAY, MARCH 21, 1844.

Mrs. CLARKE begs to inform the Ladies and Gentlemen of Hobart Town and its vicinity, that she is about fitting up the Theatre as a **G R A N D S A L O O N**, for the purpose of giving (previous to Easter) **TWO PROMENADE VOCAL and INSTRUMENTAL CONCERTS**, upon the same principle as the Promenade Concerts at Paris and London, the first of which will take place on Thursday evening, 21st instant.

The Pit will be covered over, to form (with the Stage) one large Saloon, where every possible comfort and attention will be paid to the patrons of the house.

Admission, 4s. each.

Refreshments, of the best possible description, can be obtained in the Upper Saloon, which will be supplied by Mr. Haines, Pastrycook, Murray-street.

Further particulars will be announced in the next advertisement.

A typical feature of Anne Clarke's management was her investment into upgrading of theatre venues or even modifying them to meet other demands. Here, Clarke actually alters the Royal Victoria to accommodate a specialised form of entertainment: the Promenade Concert. It is likely this was a first in Hobart.

Jane Thomson (English, b. 1827 d. 1902)

"This deserving artiste has long labored amongst us and proved one of the mainstays of the companies which have played at the Royal and the Olympic."

Melbourne Age, 1857¹

Jane Thomson was a young up-and-coming actress who did spend some time with Coppin, but who initially appeared in Tasmania with Anne Clarke's company around 1843, debuting as a dancer. She spent a considerable portion of her early career with Clarke and her skills as an actress later earned her popular acclaim as "a great favourite in London."²

Jane (also "Eliza," "Elizabeth," "Jane Elizabeth," or "Elizabeth Jane") Thomson arrived in Hobart with her parents, John and Martha, in 1837. Her mother, an actress of some reputation, was Martha Mary Thomson. She reportedly performed in the company that supported Edmund Kean at Drury Lane the night he first appeared as Shylock.³ Martha opened a season at the Theatre Royal in Hobart on 6 March 1837 and for a time supported Samson and Cordelia Cameron. The Thomson family then moved to New South Wales in 1838, where Martha appeared at Sydney's Royal Victoria Theatre until 1840. Jane seems to have made her debut in Sydney in 1842 apparently at the age of 5 years old (and after the family's brief return to Hobart in 1840). While in Sydney, Jane and her sister received ballet instruction from the dance master Monsieur Charrière, and he was reportedly "so impressed by Jane Thomson's talent and progress that he begged her mother to send her to Paris to study."⁴

Theatre historians commonly accept much of the previous information; however, it is worth noting that there appears to be some confusion amongst scholars as to the woman referred to when using "Jane Thomson." Michael Roe reports that Martha Thomson had two daughters, Eliza Jane and Christina (both born around 1830), and that both daughters appeared with Anne Clarke's

troupe in 1845. Roe also states that Eliza married actor Charles Frederick Young⁵ and continues by noting that “one vague story tells of Eliza, when very young, winning a Tasmanian Governor’s praise.”⁶

Elizabeth Webby, however, observes that Martha Thomson had three daughters (not two); Jane Elizabeth, Eliza and Mary Christina, and that it was Jane Elizabeth (not Eliza as claimed by Roe) who married Charles Young.⁷ Further complicating the picture is Alec Bagot’s comment that Martha Thomson had two daughters, both dancers, Jane and Eliza, with Eliza (not Jane) being the girl who married Charles.⁸ In addition, Hall and Cripps refer to one “Elizabeth Jane Thomson” as the woman who married Charles Young after his arrival in Hobart Town in 1843. However, after the claim “Elizabeth Jane,” Hall and Cripps refer to her as “Jane Thomson.”⁹ Even more confusing is Hal Porter’s contention that Jane was “Miss Jones, who was a Coppin player and an Australian.”¹⁰

I intend to address a number of points in relation to these discrepancies at a later stage, but for the time being, I will refer to the woman who regularly danced with Anne Clarke’s company and later married Charles Young as “Jane.” There are two quantifiable reasons for using “Jane” as opposed to the other possible references. First, she used “Jane” on her marriage papers,¹¹ and second, the name “Jane Thomson” denotes the mother of Charles Young’s first child recorded on archival documents.¹² Edward H. Pask also uses the name in the *Currency Companion to Music and Dance in Australia*.¹³

Jane married actor Charles Frederick Young (1819-1874) at Launceston’s Trinity Church when she was fifteen years old,¹⁴ so it is highly unlikely that she ever made it to Paris. That Jane’s mother officially witnessed the ceremony also exemplifies the reality that girls married quite young during this period.¹⁵ Ironically, therefore, when the pair were referred to as the “Young” couple, it was (at least in reference to Jane) quite literally true.



ROYAL PANTHEON THEATRE,

LATE MUSIC HALL, COLLINS STREET.

Under the Management of Mr. Young and Mrs. Thomson.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14.

THE Public are respectfully informed that a Theatrical License having been granted to the above well-known place of amusement, it will be opened for the first time on the above evening, when the Management trusts, from the great expense and difficulty they have encountered in fitting up a neat and **RESPECTABLE** Theatre for their reception and amusement, to merit a share of their kind patronage.

The Company will consist of

Mr. and Mrs. YOUNG, Mr. and Mrs. JONES,

Mrs. and Miss. E. THOMSON,

Mr. SMITH, &c. &c.

Previous to the rising of the curtain "God save the Queen" will be performed by the Orchestra.

The Entertainments selected for the opening night will commence with the truly comic and laughable Farce of

THE KING'S GARDENER;

OR, NIPPED IN THE BUD.

In the course of the Piece, the original and favourite Comic Song of "The Horticultural Wife" will be sung by Mr. Young.

The Interlude will consist of

THE KRACOVIANNE (by particular desire and for the last time in this colony).....Miss E. THOMSON.

After which, a series of Beautiful and Novel LIVING PICTURES, arranged from the *First Fratricide*.

To be followed by a COMIC SONG.....Mr. YOUNG.

The Interlude will terminate with

THE WREATH DANCE.....Miss E. THOMSON.

The whole to conclude with the laughable Extravaganza, entitled

THE LITTLE BACK PARLOUR.

Prices of Admission—Reserved Seats, 3s.; Body of House, 2s. 6d.; Gallery, 1s. 6d.

Doors open at half-past Seven, to commence at Eight precisely.

N.B.—The most scrupulous attention will be paid to order and regularity. 1461

A bill advertising the rival theatre to that of Anne Clarke's, formed by Charles Young and Martha Thomson (Jane's mother) and including "Miss E. Thomson" (arguably Jane). Also note the warning that "scrupulous attention will be paid to order and regularity," undoubtedly a stipulation inspired by Clarke's management. *Courier*, 12 September 1846.

Charles (whose sister Emma follows in the next section) was twenty-four years old at the time and had already debuted in October 1843 at Hobart's Royal Victoria under the management of Anne Clarke. Jane reportedly spent part of her youth in Launceston, and in 1844 began performing with Clarke's company. She was at this stage of her career more noted as a versatile dancer than an accomplished actress.

Anne Clarke attracted the industrious George Coppin to Tasmania in 1845. This is somewhat ironic considering that his engagement with her shortly sounded the death knell for her own enterprise. It was a harsh reality of the industry that when Coppin left Launceston for Melbourne in 1845, he took most of Anne's company with him: including Jane and Charles Young. A day after their nuptials on 7 June 1845, the pair sailed with Coppin's company to Victoria and began appearing in Melbourne one week later. Audiences appreciated the efforts of the troupe, and publicity throughout their season at Melbourne's Queen's Theatre billed the company specifically as "The Launceston Company."

Jane, her mother Martha, and Charles Young all returned to Launceston via the *Swan* in the first week of December 1845 and were it not for Anne Clarke, the trio would not have found work again so easily upon their return to Hobart some six months after their initial exit. Their gratitude, however, seemed short-lived. In 1846, Jane joined the rival outfit to that of Clarke's company established by Martha (Jane's mother) and Charles. Also in November of that year, Jane gave birth to her first child, a daughter named "Dolly" (probably the child's pet-name). Jane continued to perform in Hobart throughout 1847, and by 1848, she, Charles and their child lived at the Duchess of Kent Hotel of which Charles was also the innkeeper. The family departed for Melbourne later in the year.

During early 1849, both Jane and Charles appeared in Hobart. Jane had taken charge as “ballet mistress” and Charles as (the Royal Victoria Theatre) stage manager. On the evidence of the publicity of their respective benefit nights, it would be accurate to observe that Jane was more popular amongst Hobart play-goers than her husband; “the Victoria has not been so thronged for a considerable time,” observed the *Hobart Courier* on 21 March 1849 following Jane’s benefit performance on Monday 12 March the previous week. Jane’s talent as an actress impressed audiences as much as her versatility impressed critics. She appeared as Constance de Mereville in the historical drama *The Battle of Austerlitz*¹⁶ on her benefit, and played four separate characters in the play *Batchelor’s Buttons*, before dancing a polka with Charles during the evening. In advertising her benefit, the *Courier* saw an opportunity to emphasise Jane’s acting skills (in characters such as Miami in *Green Bushes* and Miss Morville in *The Bride of the Desert*) as well as promoting a calibre of dancing it claimed had earned “for her a well-deserved fame.” Jane also performed for Charles’ benefit on Friday 16 March: the same week as that of her own.

While the *Courier* made the excuse that a greater turnout for Jane was most likely the reason for the poor audience for Charles’ benefit, it seems likely that Jane was simply more popular. The *Courier* claimed her performance as Madeline in Edward Bulwer-Lytton’s *Eugene Aram* (1832)¹⁷ “was a chaste, lady-like, and truthful performance, and deserves to be recorded.”¹⁸ The *Courier* also admired Jane’s performance in the farce *Continental Frolics* noting that it “showed off” her “versatility of talent to advantage” because she successfully played five different characters.

This contrasted with some of the presentations that characterised Jane’s seasons in Melbourne between the late 1840s and 1850s, when she appeared in a number of plays that were not very well received (usually by no fault of her own). For instance, her role as Nina in a version of Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Dred*

was, claimed the *Age*, “a most absurd one,” with the critic further lamenting that: “it was grievous to see so much ability thrown away.”¹⁹ In the same way, the critic claimed that Jane’s performance as Susan was the redeeming feature of a “very much curtailed, and proportionately damaged” version of *Black-eyed Susan* which “covered a multitude of sins.”²⁰ But these were exceptions, rather than the rule, and the couple (in particular Jane) was eagerly welcomed in Tasmania in 1857 when they re-appeared “for two nights, and for two nights only.”²¹

Reports of the day claimed the pair was planning to depart together for London, although one more recent claim disputes this.²² Shipping intelligence into Launceston reported that their two daughters, Anna and Isabella, accompanied their parents²³ and the *Mercury* on 6 March claimed that it was the couple’s “first appearance, after a lapse of eight years.” During their hiatus, Jane appeared as Perdita in the Theatre Royal production of *The Winter’s Tale* (1 & 2 September 1855) as well as Desdemona opposite the tragedian G. V. Brooke on 28 September 1855 (at the Olympic). Also in the cast for *The Winter’s Tale* was Emma Young (then Mrs. Rogers) as Dorcas a shepherdess. Jane also played Emilia in *Othello*, with Brooke in the name part, at Coppin’s Olympic Theatre in Melbourne during 1855.²⁴

Their long absence from Tasmania did not prevent the *Mercury’s* reporter predicting that their many “old friends” would greet the couple. The critic also referred, on a number of occasions, to the “fame” the pair had garnered for themselves on the mainland since their Tasmanian departure almost a decade before. Their popularity among play-goers suggests that even though their season was so short, and their absence so long, their timing was perfect. Jane, supported by Charles, appeared hot on the heels of the sisters Josephine and Adelaide Gougenheim, of whose Hobart season it had been claimed, they “have created a pleasant rae (sic) in the annals of our Tasmanian Stage.”²⁵ Later, in

1860, Jane appeared in “a new piece from the French” entitled *Gossip* at London’s Princess’s Theatre playing “the heroine [Mrs. Chatterton] . . . who suffers persecution from the husband of a lady whom she made the subject of scandal.”²⁶

Jane’s cultural impact in Tasmania was perhaps not in the tradition of Anne Clarke, but nonetheless influential. Her story offers, among other things, an interesting case study of a married actress’s professional life. Considering that she debuted at around the age of five, married at fifteen, and then performed in companies which included both her mother and her husband, Jane’s career closely followed the agendas of those to whom she was in some way related. The fact that she left Tasmania immediately after her marriage aptly illustrates this. As a minor under her mother’s care, and then later as a child-bride, Jane’s career throughout the 1830s until the 1860s was intimately affected, and effected, by the decisions of others. This is especially important to note because if the early portion of Jane’s stage career was largely determined by her marriage (and it was), then the later phase was crystallised by her divorce; ironically, an aspect of her life she actively engineered.

Media of the day reported that Jane (recorded as “Elizabeth Young”) divorced her husband in May 1862. Previously, she had joined him to perform in England in the years 1857 to 1861,²⁷ where she reportedly performed under the stage name “Eliza Young.” Jane became particularly successful in England, having apparently debuted on the English stage at Sadler’s Wells Theatre supporting Mr. Samuel Phelps as Julia in *The Hunchback*, although it must be noted that there is some confusion as to whether or not the actress billed as “Eliza Young” was actually Jane. Hal Porter’s claim that she was “one of the notable actresses on the London stage of the middle and late Victorian age,”²⁸ does, however, suggest that she was a notable figure of the period. It seems true to speculate, as others have, that such brilliant success was the catalyst leading

to her separation from Charles Young.²⁹ After all, Jane herself did not attempt to hide the fact at the time of her divorce hearing that she believed her popularity did outshine the lustre of Charles' fame. She claimed on record in 1862 that, "Since we came to England [in 1857] I have received larger salaries than he has."³⁰ However, Jane's divorce application also reveals that her separation from her husband was not simply a case of professional jealousies or personal envies, but rather, that there were in fact other, more threatening reasons for their split.

In 1862, although Jane sought a divorce from Charles on the grounds "of her husband's adultery," other information suggests that it is possible to conclude that such a charge was perhaps the lesser of a greater evil. Charles denied all the allegations, but the court proceedings proved that he had regularly beaten Jane throughout her marriage to him, and that in 1860, he took up residence with another woman and that they had a child together. Later, Charles married for the second time (a woman named Ellen Curby) and continued to appear professionally in Sydney and Melbourne.

The roles Jane played on the Tasmanian stage often contradicted the gloom of her personal life during that time, and for many years after. Although she entertained play-goers with her dancing and versatile comic style, her divorce petition exposes the darker side of her life; "The first time I remember [being struck] was in 1848, while we were staying at the Duchess of Kent hotel, Hobart Town, of which he [Charles] was the keeper at the time." That Jane was beaten, sometimes (according to her testimony) immediately before she appeared on stage in comic roles, seems a cruel irony. Jane and others also alleged that Charles "used to drink excessively," and this claim was sustained based on the evidence offered by a number of credible witnesses at Jane's divorce proceedings, including her sister-in-law (wife of Charles' brother), and her mother, Martha.³¹

It is obvious that many aspects of Jane's "actual" life were either unknown, or perhaps known, but prudently left unpublished by print media of the day. It is somewhat ironic, therefore, that she was among a number of stage women who contributed to a sense of cultural identity in colonial Australia. This is contradictory given the reality that actually verifying who Jane and many of these women "really" were is so problematic. Jane's representation as "Australian"³² was, after all, only one of many claims made about her without any real basis in fact and this contradiction illustrates the complexities of Peter Berger's concept of "objectivation,"³³ because the process itself relies so completely on externalisation. For Berger, "objectivation"³⁴ is the creating of "objects" of communal and social significance within particular cultural contexts. Stage women such as Jane, for instance, were creations of communal and social significance "outside" of themselves and quite independent of their day-to-day existence and the actuality of who they "really" were.

The extent to which newspapers such as the *Melbourne Age* and *Bell's Life in Sydney* printed lengthy articles on her petition for a divorce suggests that her cultural significance still mattered to colonials in 1862, despite the fact that she had not been living in Australia for some years. Jane was by that time a very successful London-based actress, and her triumphs on the English stage had no doubt been newsworthy to Australia's press. It is clear, however, when reading the lengthy testimony of her divorce petition that part of the story's appeal probably lay in its sensational claims and graphic descriptions. Publicity detailed Charles' "adulterous intimacies with a ballet girl named Soward" and his excessive consumption of alcohol, alongside incidences including his "brutal assaults," "foul names" and accusations that Jane was "any man's woman."³⁵ Jane's own account similarly offered highly emotive disclosures such as her introduction to marital relations as a child-bride, and her miscarriage in 1850 after Charles had "struck [her] violently upon the head and face."³⁶ All the

elements of a tragedy were there, and the reporting itself probably read to many colonials like a well-known melodrama. But the fact that the social drama actually involved personalities whom the community believed they “knew” as distinguished players sealed the social currency of the story as one “localised” by a “relativity” to Australia and Australians, and therefore meriting coverage.

Jane’s star power added a cultural value to the story that is important to examine, particularly in discussions concerned with the catalogues of meaning-making colonials assembled to reflect contemporary concerns. What made Jane meaningful to colonials was the fact of her early beginnings in Tasmania (particularly her marriage in Hobart and that she had given birth to two daughters in the colony) as well as her maturity as a player on the Australian stage. However, the greater weight of her significance, especially in light of the level of intimacy offered to readers of the publicity of her divorce case, no doubt lay in her “stardom” as an actress boasting an English reputation. Seldom were the details of a couple’s split so publicly circulated, and it is for this reason that it is possible to argue that accessing such intimate insights heralded a “new” shift in celebrity press culture in this country. Indeed, the beginnings of a trend to celebrity reporting are identifiable in the establishment of this textual practice dealing with a “high degree of personalisation . . . used routinely within media reports as a means of producing drama.”³⁷ Jane’s story produced this drama in that Australian readers could infuse the narrative with a high degree of personalisation, of “knowing,” but the incident also retained a particular currency to colonial culture because of the story’s relevance to actual social concerns.

Where nowadays there is a suspiciously superficial side to celebrity, in the colonial era there was substance to the reporting of “celebrated” actresses such as Jane Thomson, particularly because accounts of her divorce drama coincided with crucial cultural shifts in attitudes towards the institution of

family and family life. The Melbourne *Punch* glossed over the complicated reality of separation and divorce with a sardonic refusal to believe in 1858 that its readership had any matrimonial problems that could not “be instantly settled with a laugh and a kiss.”³⁸ How fortunate for Jane that she lived in England and not in Melbourne. Because England passed its first Matrimonial Causes Act in 1857, she at least had some legal recourse more satisfying than “a laugh and a kiss.”

Imperial realities contrasted obviously with conditions in Australia at the time. Victoria did not pass its first Victorian Matrimonial Clauses Act until seven years after that of the English Act, in 1864.³⁹ So-called “protectionists” remonstrated against the Matrimonial Clauses Bill when it was presented to the House of Assembly in Sydney in 1862 (a week after Jane’s case was publicised) on the grounds that “With respect to matrimonial ‘cruelty,’ . . . ‘the husband was as much to be pitied as the wife and required as much protection as his better half’.”⁴⁰ The paper reporting the matter decided that the objections raised by “the eccentric enemies of the Bill” were “puerile,” “frivolous” and “agonies” “so extreme, that one is almost inclined to fancy that they can only spring from a fear of one day figuring in court as ‘respondents’.”⁴¹

Whether it was serendipity, coincidence, or editorially calculated, the fact that the Matrimonial Clauses Bill story came only one week after the publication of Jane’s divorce dealings in 1862 is important when examining the “inventory” of colonial meaning-making operating at the time. Jane’s case was a powerful image of the future. Much of what occurred politically and socially in England inevitably followed in Australia, and such stories were a sign of changing times. Jane’s symbolic function can be argued as a *présage* for future trends, especially when considering that Australians, at least in Melbourne, did not have the luxury of entertaining the idea of a divorce, let alone actually having one granted, for another two years *after* either story was first published.

Emma Young (English, born c. 1820s)

*"A fair singer . . . she was equally at home in male and female parts."*¹

Emma Young's life was typical of other early pioneers influenced by the shifting fortunes of Anne Clarke, as well as the societal conventions of marriage and children. Jane Thomson would have been very familiar with her. In fact, she became Jane's sister in law. Reports claimed Emma an "agreeable actress"² although like Jane, she debuted as a dancer with Clarke in the same year that she arrived in Hobart, in 1842.³ Her dancing became a staple of Anne Clarke's programs, and many a presentation put her skills as a talented comic performer and singer to good use. As early as 1842, Emma danced solo and partner parts as in-between or after-pieces to many of the theatrical headliners on Clarke's bill. Emma's solo repertoire included a medley *Pas Seul* (26 August 1842) and a Hornpipe (19 August), while her skills as a double-act dancer included the Scotch Minuet from *Lochinvar* (29 July 1842), with Emma Howson (Frank's wife, named Elizabeth, but billed as "Emma") and regular performances opposite Jerome Carandini. Emma commonly paired with Carandini in pieces such as *The Plouga* (1 August 1842), a *Grand Pas de Deux* (23 September), a Venetian and/or other national *Furlana* (1 September), as well as a *Mazurka* (17 October). The latter three were usually performed wearing the traditional costumes of Venice, the Isle of Murana (7 October) or the national garb of the nobles of Kracovia (17 October).

Emma's performances alongside Frank Howson illustrated her comic flair to great effect. In fact, Emma seems to have particularly enjoyed her comic duets with the actor. In her part as Zerlino in a version of Daniel Auber's opera *Fra Diavolo* (1830) during Frank's benefit on 3 October 1842,⁴ the *Courier* claimed:

Miss Young played the part [of Zerlino] . . . with much taste and feeling, executing the difficult music allotted to her with great precision and effect . . . when we consider the many and varied characters in which Miss Young has endeavoured [sic]—and with much pleasure and credit—to amuse our little community, we do think that her exertions ought to—as we expect they will—be rewarded with an ample return.⁵

Four days after John Howson's benefit (10 October) however, while the *Courier* complained that Emma "walked through" her part in *La Sonnambula*⁶ "without her usual animation" it observed of her that whilst performing the song "I've journeyed Our Many Lands" and then the comic medley with Frank Howson, "Miss Young became herself again."

Clarke's presentations offered Emma regular opportunities to highlight her talents as a singer and actress. She typically performed ballads and melancholic duets as in-between fare, and as an actress, her repertoire was equally diverse. Emma appeared in the two-act melodrama, *The Smuggler's Daughter* on 5 January 1844, and may have danced the Chinese Quadrille as the after-piece prior to *Jack Sheppard* on the same evening. She performed a double hornpipe (with Mr. Young, probably her brother Charles) as the after-piece to the two-act comedy *The Country Squire* on 9 February 1844 and received the *Courier's* commendations on 16 February 1844 after appearing in the ballet *The Maid of Perth* for her benefit on 15 February 1844.

Emma married actor George Herbert Rogers (1820–1872) in Hobart on 2 March 1844. George was "styled as the Farren of the Australias"⁷ by critics in deference to English actor George Farren and his son William, who was later better known as a manager. Rogers initially served as a soldier stationed at Hobart Town where he "speedily became the hero of the garrison theatricals."⁸

Legend has it that George was “bought out” of his regiment with a “subscription” raised by friends after the then corporal incurred the rancour of Sir John Franklin, who caught Rogers “reciting to the soldiers and [convict] prisoners as his audience!”⁹

Emma was aged twenty-eight when she married George, who was four years her junior.¹⁰ Billed thereafter as “Mrs. Rogers,” Emma sang “The Mountain Flower” during the two-act farce by William Dimond called *Youth, Love, and Folly* (1805) on 26 August 1844. The farce was an after-piece to a version of Victor Hugo’s *Esmeralda; or The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. Emma and George Rogers left Hobart for Melbourne in June 1845 to perform, as did Jane and Charles Young, with George Coppin’s company. The couple returned to Tasmania not long after, and in Hobart, Emma baptised her baby son, George Herbert Rogers on 10 October 1845.¹¹ Later, after following her husband to Sydney, in 1847, Emma spent the remainder of her Australian career predominantly in Melbourne. Emma seemed quite committed to Anne Clarke prior to marrying Rogers in 1844: as was Jane Thomson before she became Mrs. Charles Young. Also like Jane, her husband’s loyalties largely influenced Emma’s career following their marriage. George’s fidelity lay first with Coppin (in 1845), but later he was won over by the appeal of Sydney (1847–1854 and 1862/3) and soon after by the attraction of Melbourne (from 1854).



G. H. Rogers, husband of Emma Young, is pictured here as the "Country Squire" as seen in the *Illustrated Sydney News*, 21 April 1855. Years later, during the tour of English actress Emilia Don, Rogers was praised by the *Mercury*, 18 May 1865, in the following prose: "This gentleman is an old Tasmanian favourite, and indeed exhibited the first symptoms of histrionic talent on this little island. It is not too much to say that Tasmania may well be proud of Mr. Rogers if only for the energy and perseverance which he has displayed during a long series of years, during which he has raised himself to the very highest position in his profession, and has won golden opinions from every critic whose opinion is worth having in the colonies."

Emma met some familiar faces in Sydney at the beginning of the 1849 season at the Victoria. Recognisable members of the company included Marie Carandini, Theodosia Stirling (by that time "Guerin"), and John and Frank Howson. The opening piece was G. Soane's romantic melodrama *Zarah* (1835). As an alternative to such pieces, Emma along with Marie Carandini, Theodosia Guerin, and an actress called Mrs. Willis formed an ensemble that appeared in Sydney as "Ethiopian Serenaders" (a popular form of "black-faced" entertainment during the 1840s and 50s). Their male equivalent was "The Ohio Serenaders," a troupe composed of Frank Howson, G. H. Rogers, and young Walter Howson. Like Emma's ensemble, George's party similarly appeared "black-faced" and accompanied themselves on the banjo, with castanets and tambourine providing percussive rhythms.

Like Jane before her, her husband's setbacks influenced Emma's life choices, and her marriage similarly went the way of her sister in law's. The fact that both Emma and George appeared in different companies during 1857 and 1858 implies that the couple had not performed together for quite some time. Whether this was simply due to limited engagements or perhaps the precursor to a separation is difficult to ascertain. Elizabeth Webby's entry on G. H. Rogers in the *Companion to Theatre in Australia* does not mention the couple's separation, although reports in 1871 claim that Rogers was "twice married . . . [and that] His first wife was a sister of Mr. Charles Young."¹² Such accounts of Rogers' later career do evidence that Emma and the actor were estranged, and the fact that he later married for the second time implies that perhaps their separation was legalised in divorce.

Emma's estrangement (and eventual divorce?) from Rogers was serendipitous. The obituary printed by the *Mercury* on 19 February 1872 following Rogers' death reported, "his career was one of ups and downs, but unfortunately the sunny portion did not come at the end." George left his

second wife and their children destitute when the actor died in 1872. George was reportedly “compelled to linger on the stage for his bread,” although his severe gout in the months before his death forced him to retire from the production of *Snare* (in which he appeared as Mr. Burton) after only a night or two. A benefit for the actor’s widow was organised by Coppin shortly after Rogers’ death.

It is difficult to determine whether Emma retired from the stage after April 1857, or whether she separated from Rogers and performed under an assumed stage name. Another possibility is that Emma departed Australia for England where she returned to performing under her maiden name. This likelihood is conditionally supported by the following report:

Sadler’s Wells.—The management of this theatre has introduced this week a lady of the name of Young, who is fresh imported from the Australian boards. Her *debut* in the character of Julia, in the *Hunchback*, has been of the most decided success. Her style is remarkable for elegance and refinement; her voice, though rather light for parts requiring much power, is clear, distinct and sweetly toned, and her action graceful, easy and expressive. With a figure corresponding in its light and graceful outline to these traits, and small but expressive features, she interpreted the character of Julia with extraordinary intelligence and feeling.¹³

But even the suggestion that this quote refers to Emma is debatable. After all, the report could just as easily have alluded to Jane Thomson, Emma’s sister in law, who reportedly appeared in London as “Eliza Young.”¹⁴ What Emma’s career does underscore is that the culture of “shuffling” between stages (linking Tasmania, the mainland, and elsewhere) was highly energetic. Further, hers illustrates that Tasmania’s role in that shuffling was particularly significant in

that while these actresses may have fortified successful careers on the mainland, they had activated them on the island. This also suggests that Tasmania was especially important as a fertile setting, not only in establishing a unique theatrical culture, but also in nurturing some of the nation's most celebrated theatrical talent.

* * * * *

Before moving on to the next chapter, it is important to contextualise professional theatre actresses like Emma Young and her contemporaries within the frontier milieu of Australian cultural life during the nineteenth century. It is true that their husbands (or other family members) often determined their life choices, but their public reception as professional women does challenge a number of common falsehoods in relation to theatre actresses that merit comment before proceeding further.

Tracy C. Davis argues that "Victorians were deeply suspicious of women whose livelihood depended on skills of deception and dissembling, and the circumstances of actresses' work belied any pretences to sexual *naïveté*, middle-class immobility, or feeble brain power."¹⁵ The fact that Victorians were unsettled by actresses because they were clearly not naïve, immobile or dim-witted might have been true in England, but I do not believe that the same can be said of colonial attitudes to theatre women in Australia. In fact, I am suggesting two important opinions to the contrary. First, I am proposing that some historiographies have typically taken at face value the assumption (offered by English scholars) that all Victorians were suspicious of theatre women, and have not, for instance, considered the ways in which Australian theatre culture developed independent realities that supported women's participation. Second, and by extension, I am also proposing that Australian

colonial audiences and critics generated a different set of cultural responses to the figure of the female performer which were anchored in this independent reality. Based on the reception and popularity of the women examined in this thesis, I am putting forward the idea that an actress's mobility, her brain power, and her capacity for "pretence" was seen as empowering among colonials, and that as a consequence, capable actresses attracted much more respect than we might expect.

The theatre industry in Australia of course followed Imperial traditions. Australia's theatres were typically built to Georgian standards, the first play ever presented in the country, *The Recruiting Officer*, was Georgian, the industry's founding "fathers" were, not surprisingly, English men, and most of the country's theatres were named the "Royal," "Princess's," and/or "Victoria." But if we consider for a moment the development of theatre in Australia historically, the grounds for my views concerning a different cultural response to the figure of the female performer become more apparent. Women's involvement in professional theatre in this country experienced rapid shifts in progress for, unlike Europe and England, colonials never excluded women from the Australian stage (except of course convict women, but only after 1833). This meant that women figured in the establishment of theatre practice from the very beginning and were not, as in England and Europe, subject to the same legacies of exclusion that played such an influential role in defining the extent to which women engaged with theatre elsewhere. Australian actresses never had to compete with boys for female parts, nor was it necessarily odd that women began appearing in "breeches" parts from very early on in the country's theatre history.

The progress to managing theatres within the first decade of "professional" theatre was rooted in a long tradition of women consistently appearing in theatre productions from the early 1800s. Anne Clarke established

the tradition of the actress/manageress in this country, although women had actively established new traditions as early as the 1830s (if not before). Eric Irvin claims that when Mrs. Chester appeared in Sydney from “Drury Lane and Covent Garden” in late 1835, and promptly specified her own terms for appearing at the Theatre Royal, it “was something entirely new to Sydney and the theatre.”¹⁶ Chester’s debut as Margarettta in Prince Hoare’s *No Song, No Supper* (1790) was ironic considering how shrewd she was in ensuring she sang and supped very well indeed. This actress’s move to demand her own fees clearly evidences that competent actresses commanded considerable authority during the period, as well as illustrating the fact that women were actively changing the face of Australia theatre from its earliest beginnings.

Chester’s reputation as a woman who “knew all the stage tricks of the time,”¹⁷ implies that not only were women bringing new traditions to the Australian theatre industry, but also that perhaps there were fewer familiar traditions embedded in its cultural character than at first thought. In fact, comments concerning women’s “original destination in life as domestic servants — house-maids, cooks, and charwomen,” were typically only offered in relation to theatre women if the performances of (usually amateur or semi-professional) actresses were considered “complete failures,” and even then such comments were stated with some regret.¹⁸ When the *Geelong Advertiser* made the aforementioned remark, it was not critical of the fact the stage players were women, but rather that their performances were unconvincing. The inability to act convincingly was what the *Advertiser* considered was somewhat unbecoming of women, especially in an age when theatre, generally speaking, took itself quite seriously. And it must be noted that the *Advertiser* was just as critical of the “male performers” on that particular occasion, readily observing that they “possess neither ability nor tact for their professions.”

The Hobart *Courier's* observation in 1837 that, "Nothing can be more abominable, than to see a piece murdered by a set of imperfect actors,"¹⁹ underscores that "professionalism" was the key in determining how critics received women as theatre performers. Comments such as those offered by the *Advertiser* and the *Courier* do not evidence a tradition of dissuading women from the stage simply because they were women, but rather a convention supportive of women who were skilled as theatre artists. This seems to support a view that the industry generally was not as encumbered by the customs that had founded theatre elsewhere, particularly in England. This, if true, and it appears that it was, perhaps explains why advancements in greater public credibility and "respectability" continued to transform the context of professional theatre for women as the nineteenth century progressed.

Based on the evidence of their publicity, theatre actresses such as Anne Clarke, Jane Thomson and Emma Young commanded considerable respect, and the profession offered these women a vital means of ascending the social ladder. Their publicity also tells us that colonials were eager to offer actresses credit where credit was due. Bestowing honours on such women not only implies that they were received as "respectable" and professional, but also that acknowledging them as such was important in a cultural context of theatre that was distinct from, though nonetheless influenced by, mainland organisation and Imperial traditions. These women established close ties with the community in which they lived and worked, and the fact that they contributed so notably to the early days of theatre in Tasmania assured them of a more influential role in defining the State's colonial culture than elsewhere.

These women played a proactive part in the "localisation" of theatre in Tasmania: a process that took many forms. One feature of the practice was the development of plays featuring notions of "Tasmanian-ness" that had been appearing on the London stages as early as the 1820s. J. Amherst's *Michael*

Howe, the Terror of Van Diemen's Land and W.T. Moncrieff's *Van Diemen's Land; or, Settlers and Convicts* were each produced in London in 1821, and 1830 respectively. Later, plays reflecting "localised" content thrived. Such works were traditionally abridged and infused with culturally specific references, thus reflecting how dramatic genres were subject to localisation. Some of the more notable examples include: Henry Melville's *The Bushrangers* (1834);²⁰ *South Polar Expedition, or, The Discoveries of Captains Ross and Crozier* (reportedly written by the then lessee of the Theatre Royal Hobart, in 1841);²¹ *Tom Thumb in Tasmania* (performed at Hobart's Royal Victoria Theatre in September 1855); *Demon Discord, or, Harlequin of Van Diemen's Land* (played as the afterpiece to Marie Carandini's *Anima in La Sonnambula*, on 9 February 1855); and George Fawcett's *Van Diemen's Land in 1820* (performed in the 1860s).

But the other crucial feature of localisation was the part played by theatre women in developing unique aspects of Tasmanian theatre culture. Theatre women contributed to a more localised sense of "place" in that they shared a greater level of propinquity to their immediate community than was possible in bigger cities (with a larger population of the play-going public and more players and theatres competing for their attention).

It is for this reason that these personalities of Tasmanian theatre were so instrumental in influencing the State's idiosyncratic cultural identity. Emma Young, Anne Clarke and Jane Thomson became fundamental figures in the discursive logic of successful theatre as "the best circulating medium a community can have."²² During their heyday, Tasmanian press specifically offered an opinion as to the significant position of such theatre women: "There are many ramifications connected with the management of a theatre," claimed one Hobart journalist of Anne Clarke in 1844, "[and] the prosperity of our little Victoria [theatre] affects the welfare of many others [in the community]."²³ This was no small burden and this immediacy of players to the welfare of local

audiences and the economic sustainability of community meant that actresses (and actors) were far more likely to influence cultural life by also developing closely-knit social ties and personal associations. This, to some degree, must also imply a greater level of cultural acceptance of theatre as a professional vocation for women than at first thought.

It is possible to argue that this greater acceptance of skilled professional actresses was a direct consequence of the activities of a select group of women, and only in Tasmania. Perhaps this generous degree of social approval was not as widespread in the larger centres on the mainland, where more theatres, more actresses and more rivalries competed for the public's purses. How often can it be said, as the *Hobart Courier* once did, for instance, that Anne Clarke's influence on the "good taste" of colonists was in part due to her company's delivery of "operatic characters," which, it was said, "rendered" the "enjoyment of music . . . more homely."²⁴

This "more homely" experience of players meant that the textual traditions developed by the State's media standardised a set of practices much more reflective of the culture in which these women developed social currency. The journalistic tendency to credit theatre with a vital position also contributed to the storehouse of cultural narratives documenting Tasmanian social life and the ways in which women enriched it. Journalists represented theatre as a crucial social institution in which women (and men) engaged on many levels, and so long as these actresses played their parts as polished performers, their station in life as women was one of great respect.

Colonials in Tasmania believed that the futurity of "the community"²⁵ rested in the social power of women such as Clarke, Young and Thomson, not only in their day, but also for decades to come. The resonance of their names in the early 1870s, long after their fame, speaks powerfully to their popular influence and to the lasting value of Tasmanian theatre (and its personalities) as

an enduring medium for the cultural articulation of sources of meaning and belonging.

Chapter Three:

Marie Carandini

"one of the best known and most popular singers we have had, and being a Tasmanian by adoption, she interested Australian audiences, and had a very successful musical career."

Launceston Examiner, 1894¹

It is possible to trace the dawn of the stage actress's primacy in a narrative of "Tasmanian-ness" directly to Marie Carandini, the woman dubbed "Tasmania's Nightingale" in 1855.² No other woman considered thus far attracted such a variety of similar claims as did Marie, and this distinction alone suggests that not only was she a woman of considerable visibility during the period, but also that she was a woman of significant social power. In fact, the sheer anthology of similar epithets she inspired, such as Melbourne's "prima donna,"³ our "cantatrice,"⁴ "the Tasmanian nightingale,"⁵ "the Australian Jenny Lind,"⁶ and Australia's "Queen of Song,"⁷ was a collection unmatched as a source of cultural record resonating well into the twentieth century. Both as a star, and together with her daughters, Marie took the female voice out of the private domain of the drawing room and into the public sphere of popular entertainment as one of the most remarkably successful women-centred enterprises of the nineteenth century.

Marie Burgess⁸ was born in Brixton, England in 1826.⁹ She arrived in Hobart with her mother Martha and father James in 1833. James Burgess passed away before he saw the promise his daughter showed as a child develop into a full-blown career as "Australia's Queen of Song,"¹⁰ but perhaps he had an inkling of her fame given that she was born of such talented stock. Her grandfather was a relative of Percy Bysshe Shelley and her mother was cousin to

Captain Medway, Lord Byron's companion and biographer. There is even a story that claims that the first (official) Lieutenant-Governor of Tasmania, Sir John Franklin and his wife Lady Jane witnessed the beginning of Marie's career.¹¹ In 1840, the couple reportedly heard the fourteen-year-old Marie's singing during the inaugural ceremony of the Wesleyan Church in Melville Street, Hobart. Perhaps that performance, if it occurred, augured that Marie Burgess was to become at the very least a gifted performer, if not a celebrated opera singer.

Her potential as a vocalist soon led her to the services of Signor Jerome Carandini¹² who, after arriving in Hobart from London courtesy of Anne Clarke in 1842, began teaching classical dance and offering language tuition in Italian and French (but curiously did not advertise services in vocal training). His "card" published by the *Courier* reads that Jerome was "Principal Corifé at the Italian Opera, London, for the last four years"¹³ (presumably between 1838 - 1842), and that he had taught languages in France and England for eleven years. One writer has rather quixotically claimed that, "a romance developed between them,"¹⁴ and although it is difficult to substantiate why they married (love or perhaps even convenience), the fact that Marie and Jerome's marriage lasted twenty-seven years (at the least) suggests a compatible union. Marie persisted with her vocal training after her marriage to Jerome in Hobart on 11 March 1843¹⁵ and continued studying under her husband's instruction for the next year. She serendipitously made her stage debut as "Madame Marie Carandini" almost one year to the day after her wedding: at Hobart's Royal Victoria Theatre on the evening of 15 March 1844 in William Collier's romantic opera *Kate Kearney* (1836). The fact that it was Jerome's benefit night might explain why Marie's name failed to appear on any of the newspaper bills that advertised the event.

ROYAL VICTORIA THEATRE,
Campbell Street.

LAST NIGHT OF THE SEASON.

SIGNOR CARANDINI'S BENEFIT,

FRIDAY, 15th MARCH.

SIGNOR CARANDINI begs most respectfully to inform his Friends and the Public generally, that
HIS BENEFIT

takes place on the above Evening, when their kind patronage is respectfully solicited.

The Evening's Entertainments will commence with (for the first time in this Colony) the very beautiful Opera, with New Scenery, Dresses, and Decorations, entitled

KATE KEARNEY;

Or, **THE FAIRY OF THE LAKES OF KILLARNEY.**

*The whole of the Music arranged by
Mr. Francis Howson, Senior.*

To be followed by (for the first time) an Entirely
NEW MYTHOLOGICAL BALLET.

Diana...Mrs. Stirling. Daphne...Mrs Rogers.
Pan.....Mr. Young.

Paris (a Shepherd) Signor Carandini.
Silenus Mr. F. Howson.

Cupid.....Master F. Howson,
Nymph.....Miss Stirling.

Nymphs &c.

During the Ballet there will be introduced an
Entirely New

PAS DE TROIS,

Mrs Rogers, Mr. Young, & SIGNOR CARANDINI.

The Music arranged by Mr. G. F. Duly.

GRAND ARIA, with Variations (from Il Pirata)
on the **TENOR TROMBONE**, with Full
Orchestral Accompaniments (by particular
desire,) Mr. J. Howson.

After which,

THE NEW MAZURKA,

With the True Costume of the Nobles of Kracovia,

MRS. ROGERS AND SIGNOR CARANDINI.

The whole to conclude with the very laughable
Farce, entitled

THE VALET DE SHAM.

Tickets to be had of Mr. Tegg, Bookseller; Mr. Davis, Stationer; the Ship Hotel; Mr. Haynes, Pastrycook; Mr. F. Howson, No. 10, Liverpool street; and at the Theatre, where Private Boxes can be secured.

— Boxes 4s. ; Private Boxes, 5s. ; Pit, 2s.

It was at this performance that Marie Burgess made her debut as Madame Carandini. Curiously, however, she is not mentioned on the bill.

It is interesting, if not ironic however, that one review published seven days after the event, focused on Marie's appearance on the occasion. The *Courier* printed on 22 March 1844 that: "The debut of Mrs. Carandini, in the opera of Kate Kearney last Friday evening, on the occasion of Signor Carandini's benefit, was very successful ; the house was well and fashionably attended, and the whole entertainment gave general satisfaction."

It is plausible that many of Hobart's settlers knew precisely who Jerome Carandini was at the time of his marriage in 1843. Passenger lists of the *Sydney* into Hobart published by the *Hobarton Courier and Van Diemen's Land Gazette* report his arrival with Clarke's dramatic company on 28 January 1842. Carandini advertised his services in the *Courier* as a classical dance and languages teacher one month after his Tasmanian arrival.¹⁶ Frequenters to Hobart's theatre would have known that his singing was an occasional feature in some of Anne's productions, although they were probably more familiar with his dancing, as he was more likely to appear in the range of pieces that complemented many of her presentations. But Jerome's notoriety also embraced his private life outside of the theatre as a dancer and away from the public eye as an instructor of classical language. Perhaps modesty or even regret explains why he did not seem to publicise his lineage as an Italian nobleman openly. As he walked the streets of Hobart Town, it was probably with the involuntary air of an aristocrat, and as he made his way to the theatre, or to his teaching rooms, the looks he noted in the eyes of passer-bys probably reminded him that his presence as a "new" and rather distinctive settler was obvious. It is safe to suggest that a man reported to be an Italian exile and the tenth Marquis of Saranzo (a title that dated back to the 1600s) was not likely to pass by unnoticed in a small and relatively remote community such as Hobart.

Fluctuating theatrical conditions hampered Marie's efforts to consolidate her reputation in the colony after making her stage debut. The decline in

theatre's sustainability persisted, and in time, none of the players that formed the imported nucleus of Anne Clarke's troupe could afford to remain in Tasmania, gravitating instead toward the superior prospects of Sydney in 1845. The depression in Hobart's theatrical scene precipitating the exodus did improve in later years, yet the departure of figures such as the Carandinis and the Howson brothers was a blow to the State's theatre culture. Hobart's hard luck, however, was a blessing for Sydney. Marie made a good impression on theatre critics following her first appearance in *La Sonnambula* on 11 March 1845, again indicating that she thought the anniversary of her wedding day opportune. Despite having Theodosia Stirling attempt to rival her as a singer, the *Australian* in early August decided that, "Madame Carandini still retains her position as prima donna at the Victoria [theatre]." It claimed that "As a cantatrice [Marie] is very superior to Mrs. Stirling," further suggesting that her "better quality of voice and more agreeable style" surpass that of Stirling's vocal technique and presentation, which the critic judged "shrill" with "a feebleness of tone."¹⁷

Marie's reception as both a "cantatrice" and a "prima donna" did in fact augur how popular she was to become in later years. It is conceivable that news of her appearance in the Australian operatic premiere of Edward Loder's *The Night Dancers* in November 1847 (at Sydney's Theatre Royal) had made it to Van Diemen's Land. For many of those who came to hear her sing when she reappeared in Hobart Town in 1849, it was probably very gratifying to know that a "local" girl had proven so accomplished. And perhaps the achievement itself made a fitting metaphor recognising her rise from a somewhat humble debut in the colony only three short years earlier, in 1844. Hobart's press was not only eager to welcome her back, but also quick to highlight her successes on the mainland. Claims that "Madame [Carandini's] . . . vocal abilities are well known in Hobart Town and highly appreciated in Sydney"¹⁸ clearly articulate

that garnering fame offshore was important to record, as well as making clear that the “shared cultural paradigms” which had since “established, developed and manifested”¹⁹ facilitated a reciprocal media flow between discrete print cultures, both in Tasmania and on the mainland.

Marie piqued the appetites of Hobart theatre-goers upon the occasion of her reappearance, as it was an uncommon treat for a “prima donna” of such high calibre vocal talent to appear, no less one accompanied by such a large troupe of musicians. “In addition to the military band” noted by the *Courier* was the observation that: “the instrumental corps [was] strengthened by an accession of performers on stringed instruments.”²⁰ Marie’s appearances promised virtuoso vocal performances and a large ensemble of musicians sometimes playing solo pieces to complement her bill of fare. It was not unusual during Marie’s tour in 1849 to have over 30 musicians playing on her musical program at any one time. The bills that advertised her appearances in the local press regularly claimed Carandini would “be assisted . . . by all the available Musical talent in Hobart Town.”²¹ This implies that Marie implemented a deliberate strategy to recruit many local professionals to perform alongside her, thus achieving the “grand” effect and scope of her concerts. Local musicians probably understood that these were important, and all too rare, occasions that promised an opportunity to stand out and perhaps even nurture an invitation to appear elsewhere. The budding violinists, cellists, and pianists of the future perhaps saw these opportunities as their chance to established vital professional contact, not only with Marie herself, but also with other musicians.

Marie’s concerts were a boost to Tasmania’s vocal and musical culture because local musicians were able to perform alongside a well-known professional who boasted a mainland reputation, as well as playing a repertoire of material works that often required them to extend their range and abilities. While some musicians did occasionally perform together publicly, it was

unusual for them to play anything other than instrumental pieces. When Her Majesty's 99th regiment band had performed at the gardens of the Royal Society on the afternoon of 22 March 1849, the selection they played consisted of a military march, two cavatinas by Rossini, a waltz, gallop, and a polka. When the same musicians were assimilated into the larger group that supported Marie soon after, however, her repertoire demanded several ballads, such as "The Spell is Broken," a "scena" by Wallace, and the finale which included *The Railroad Gallop*.



GRAND EVENING CONCERT.

MADAME CARANDINI

Has the honour to inform her friends and the public generally that her CONCERT will take place on

TO-MORROW EVENING, 19TH APRIL,

At the HALL of the MECHANICS' INSTITUTE, when their kind patronage is most respectfully solicited.

MADAME CARANDINI will be assisted on the above evening by *all the available Musical talent in Hobart Town*, and by the kind permission of COLONEL DESPARD

The Excellent Band of the 99th Regiment.

INSTRUMENTAL PERFORMERS—Principal first violin-leader, Mr. H. Howson; second violin, Mr. A. Howson; tenor, Mr. Duly; violoncello, Mr. Curtis; flutes, clarionets, oboes, horns, trumpets, ophocleides, drums, &c. &c., including the full strength of the Military Band; the whole comprising a grand and effective orchestra.

Herr Imberg has kindly offered to preside at the Pianoforte.

PROGRAMME, PART I.

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Overture, "Zampa," <i>Herold</i> | Military Band. |
| 2. Ballad, "The Spell is Broken," | Madame Carandini. |
| 3. Duet, Pianoforte and Violin, <i>Kreutzer</i> .. | { Herr Imberg and
Mr. H. Howson. |
| 4. Ballad, "Under the Tree," | Amateur. |
| 5. Cavatina, "Tu al Cui Sguardo," <i>Verdi</i> .. | Madame Carandini. |
| 6. Ballad | Mr. Howard. |
| 7. Potpourri | Military Band. |

PART II.

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 8. Overture, "Semiramide," <i>Rossini</i> | Military Band. |
| 9. Scene, "One Gentle Heart," <i>Wallace</i> | Madame Carandini. |
| 10. Ballad, "The Night," | Amateur. |
| 11. Duet, "Anticipations of Switzerland," .. | { Madame Carandini
and Mr. Howard. |
| 12. Glee | Amateur. |
| 13. "Jeptia's Daughter," <i>Nathan</i> | Madame Carandini. |
| 14. Song | Mr. Howard. |
| 15. Ballad, "Jeannette and Jeannott," | Madame Carandini. |
| 16. "Railroad Gallop," | Military Band. |

TICKETS OF ADMISSION—Single, 5s. each; double to admit a lady and gentleman, 8s. To be had of Mr. I. W. H. Walch, Elizabeth-street; Hawley and Co., Murray-street; Mr. Rolvegau, Collins-street; Mr. Haynes, Pastrycook, Murray-street; and at the *Courier*-office.

The Concert will commence at 8 o'clock precisely.

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This bill advertising Marie Carandini's concert in Hobart was published in the *Courier* on 18 April 1849. Note that Henry Howson supported her as first violin, and that also in the company was Sam Howard, with whom Marie had appeared in Sydney.

It is important to note that Marie was by this time a soloist in the sense that her concerts revolved around her as the central attraction. When theatre-goers went to see a Carandini concert during this period, they went to hear a Hobart-bred performer whom offshore audiences respected. The *Courier* on the 25 April 1849 was confident enough in Carandini's popularity to predict that her success at pleasing devotees of classical music was almost fail-safe. "The satisfaction unequivocally expressed by her audience at her last concert," claimed a reporter, "is of itself sufficient to guarantee a large and respectable attendance."

Marie's credibility as a performer was especially important to Tasmanian cultural growth during this period. One significant reason was that the then governor, Sir William Denison, had received a missive from Earl Grey only five months before Marie's tour advising that Launceston, and by extension Van Diemen's Land, was to continue "as a penal settlement."²² Despite the fact that reaction against the policy had been gathering momentum for quite some time, protests originating out of Launceston and elsewhere had regularly been ignored. The most recent dispatch had been a bitter disappointment, particularly (as reported by the *Courier* on the same occasion) because Grey had agreed to continue the practice indefinitely after "mistaking the wishes of the colony [and Sir William Denison]." The various obstructions to cultural development residents blamed on transportation, such as "disorder, spoliation, poverty and crime,"²³ were destined to continue. Marie's status as a Hobart-bred theatre personality with an undisputed mainland credibility offered colonists some measure of cultural legitimacy that perhaps counteracted the worrying news. The patronage that Marie's appearances attracted testified that theatre-goers were actively nurturing a cultivated society in Tasmania, despite the continuation of a policy some colonials considered was socially debilitating.

Marie's influence as a source of civility was perhaps most evident in the fact that each of her successive appearances in 1849 necessitated a change in

venue, possibly because the number of Marie's on-stage musicians continued to grow as rapidly in scale as the number of music lovers she attracted. Marie presented her first performance at the Mechanics Institute on 19 April, while the second on 10 May was held at Hobart's musical hall, and the third, scheduled in the wake of the *Courier's* complaint of want of room, was given at Hobart's Victoria Theatre on 23 May.²⁴ Two days later, it was reported that, "Madame Carandini will give another concert before her departure for the 'metropolis of the south'."²⁵ It seems no small coincidence that the third performance, delivered as it was at the Victoria, the colony's first purpose-built venue, was also patronised by Sir William and Lady Denison and followed hot on the heels of the *Courier's* claim that Marie was "the best singer in Van Diemen's Land since Mrs. Bushelle."²⁶

This was high praise not given lightly. Visiting female opera stars from England had first appeared in Tasmania as early as the mid 1830s. In July 1835, press claimed that the first performance of Mrs. Chester, "from the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane"²⁷ was "the only occasion on which a first-rate singer had . . . so far appeared in Van Diemen's Land."²⁸ Later, in 1843, Elizabeth Bushelle (nee Elizabeth "Eliza" Wallace) appeared in Tasmania together with her husband John. She was the sister of composer William Vincent Wallace (sometimes "Vincent Wallace"), whose operas *Maritana* (1845),²⁹ *Mathilda of Hungary* (1847) and *Lurline* (1860) were great Australian favourites throughout the nineteenth century. Eliza was highly regarded because she lived up to the publicity that claimed her as a woman of high vocal talent favoured with an international and mainland reputation. It was therefore a measure of Marie Carandini's potential that media claimed her Eliza's equal after only her fourth ever professional performance in Hobart in 1849.

Marie continued to train her voice under the guidance of professionals, and following her return to Sydney from Tasmania in 1849, reportedly became

the pupil of a brilliant young contralto named Sara Flower (sometimes “Sarah Flower”³⁰). Flower had graduated from the Royal Academy of Music in London and had experience in Milan.³¹ Her Australian debut was at the Mechanics Institute, Melbourne in February 1850, and she debuted in Sydney in May that same year, with both occasions creating a flurry of acclamation in publications of the day.³² Marie performed regularly with Flower at this time, and her appearances at the Victoria Theatre in Sydney during the 1849-1851 (and later) seasons were typically in supporting roles. For instance, in Frank Howson’s production of Bellini’s *Norma* in February 1852, Flower took the name part to Marie’s Adalgisa (sometimes “Adelgiza”).

Norma narrates the life and loves of its heroine, a Duridical priestess and a woman with whom the character of Pollio (a Roman) is enamoured. Adalgisa is a virgin of the temple of the Druid and attendant to Norma. Tropes of forbidden love, deception, murder and revenge abound in a world where the women are adept at wielding sickles and daggers and protesting with flashes of fire “Traitor! I am all powerful here!” Such representations play on the classical Roman imagery of women as spiritually and supernaturally empowered. Sara Flower supported Catherine Hayes’s representation of Norma at Melbourne’s Theatre Royal in the “male” part of Pollio, and Marie Carandini in the part of the virgin who is herself in “unholy” love with Pollio.

Norma’s central heroine inspired *Bell’s Life in Sydney* to print its particular views regarding what it defined as a successful interpretation of Bellini’s conception of the part. Not only did the role require “a more complete union of vocal, dramatic, and physical powers than any other character in the repertoire,” it demanded:

A conformation of the larynx, such as Nature does not often bestow, to enable any *cantatrice* to do justice to Bellini’s

magnificent conception of the outpourings of an injured woman's jealousy, rage, and despair ; and the slightest excess of energy on the part of a Prima Donna unequal to the task would not only change the thrilling intonation into dissonance, but might ruin an organ capable of such effect when less severely called upon.³³

Flower's success in such a demanding role was what earned for her a reputation as "brilliant." Flower was one of a number of high profile operatic luminaries in Sydney during the 1850s. Another was Catherine Hayes, who took the name part in *Lucrezia Borgia* in December 1855 to the Gennaro of Marie (incidentally a tenor role). Later, Marie reprised the performance in the Pitt Street Theatre production of *Lucrezia Borgia* on 9 June 1857 when she again sang the part of Gennaro, this time to the Orsini (another "male" part) of Theodosia Stirling (then Mrs. Guerin) who sang contralto. As a contrast, Marie also appeared as Princess Eglantine in pantomimes such as *King Pippin* (26 December 1849) and briefly donned "black-face" makeup with a small group of domestic women singers calling themselves the "Ethiopian Serenaders" (to capitalise on the success of the touring American minstrel troupes that were so popular at the time).

Such high-profile stars as Sara Flower and Catherine Hayes probably account for the fact that the repertory arrangements of mainland metropolitan theatres at this time were geared toward ensemble and large company performances, or those showcasing the talents of a particular (usually "imported") soloist. Musical directors typically headlined an off-shore soloist as the principle performer to draw on their popularity in attracting larger crowds. Yet directors did not always overlook domestic singers such as Marie when assigning prestigious roles because she did appear as Elvira in Verdi's *Ernani* on 18 April 1857 at Sydney's Prince of Wales Opera House. She performed the part

opposite the Don Carlo (sometimes "Don Carlos") of Émile Coulon, the renowned baritone who had garnered great success supporting Catherine Hayes in 1854. Marie might have spent considerable time away from Sydney touring other states (such as Tasmania in 1854/5) because it was noted in one review following her reappearance with Coulon in 1857 that Marie had been absent from the Sydney stage for three years.



Catherine Hayes as she appeared opposite Monsieur Émile Coulon in Donizetti's opera called *L'Elisir D'Amour* or, "The Elixir of Love" (*Illustrated Sydney News*, 21 October 1854). Hayes was dubbed the "Sweet Songstress of Erin," a phrase taken from the first line of a poem set to music by T. W. Meymott and dedicated to her.

Sara Flower's instruction stood Marie in good stead as a solo artist when she returned to Tasmania in 1854. Perhaps Tasmania's "homelier" community made Marie's step to spread her wings as a soloist much easier, as her frequent reappearances in the colony since 1844, coupled with the fact that her siblings probably still lived in the settlement, did assure her of some measure of loyalty. She was no longer limited to performing in concert with her husband by this time, nor was she restricted to appearing in ensemble parts, as was the case in Sydney. Clearly, she had taken great leaps in her career since music lovers in Hobart had last heard her perform, as evidenced by the *Courier's* claim on 1 July 1854 that Marie was one of "the Great Five Stars now in the Australias."³⁴

Marie's public visibility as belonging to such a select group of great "Stars" as Louis Lavenue, Mrs. John Brougham, Sefton Parry and Kemble Mason, probably contributed to the fact that popular interest in her concerts exceeded what was at first anticipated. Lavenue was a noted composer and musician, Mason a well-respected tragedian, Parry "an eccentric comedian,"³⁵ while Brougham had confirmed her reputation as a favourite after successful performances alongside the tragedian G. V. Brooke, including appearances as Madame Deschappelles in Bulwer-Lytton's drama *The Lady of Lyons* (at Coppin's Olympic in Melbourne in July 1855). Hall and Cripps claim Brougham was "a talented London actress" and that she had "acquired much celebrity in London" offering oppositional lectures challenging the "'anti-feminine costumes'"³⁶ advocated by Amelia Jenks Bloomer (1818 - 1894) in the early 1850s.



A SKETCH AT THE THEATRE.

"A GOOD USEFUL BROUGHAM."

(A dvertisement of the period).

This illustration of Mrs. Brougham with a very formidable bust-line appeared in an edition of the *Melbourne Punch* after her visit to Tasmania with Marie Carandini in 1854.³⁷ Mrs. Brougham was manager of Richmond's Theatre Royal in England when Laura Keene made her first public appearance as Juliet on 8 October 1851.³⁸

The *Courier* incorrectly promoted her performance on 15 June as “the first and only night of Marie Carandini,”³⁹ because she did in fact appear frequently throughout the month. If this was a clever ploy to create interest in her performances, it worked very well because her concerts were quite regular and Marie typically stole the show. She had already performed in an impressive array of Australian operatic premieres at Sydney’s Theatre Royal prior to her Tasmanian reappearance. These included Wallace’s *Mathilda of Hungary* (1847) in March 1850, Donizetti’s *The Daughter of the Regiment* (1840) in October 1851, and in Frank Howson’s presentation of Bellini’s *Norma* (1831) in February 1852. No doubt she capitalised on such leading events because the *Courier* noted that the “brilliant style” in which she sang the Grand Scena from Wallace’s *Matilda of Hungary* had warranted two encores in Hobart.⁴⁰ Other performances included Julia in Daniel Terry’s *Guy Mannering* (1816) on 31 June, and later singing the “choicest of Bellini’s morceaux” as well as acting Amina in *La Sonnambula* on 3 July. She was claimed an “extraordinarily gifted lady” prior to her benefit night on 12 July 1854 in which she appeared first as Maritana in Wallace’s operatic drama of the same name (1845), and also as Amina in Bellini’s *La Sonnambula* (1831).

Sefton Parry appeared as Colin de Trop to the Anima of Marie in *La Sonnambula*, which was the afterpiece to Mrs. Centlivre’s *The Wonder* (on 23 July 1854) “for the first time.”⁴¹ Marie’s Anima elicited “boisterous manifestations of applause”⁴² on that occasion, and the truth that she was blatantly preferred by journalists is illustrated by the fact that within only one passage, she was dubbed “the favourite cantatrice,” “this extraordinarily gifted lady,” and “an acknowledged favourite.”⁴³

Jerome made a rare appearance on the same bill as his wife by dancing an Irish Lilt with Miss Lavinia Watson (conceivably a relative of F. B. Watson, the then lessee of the Royal Victoria) at Marie’s performance in Wallace’s

Maritana for her benefit on 12 July 1854. Marie also appeared in theatrical roles supporting Brougham that highlighted her singing and acting. Her appearance as Julia opposite the Meg Merriles of Brougham in *Guy Mannering* was one the *Courier* considered deserved particular mention:

The high-spirited, light-hearted, yet firm and constant Julia found a fascinating representative in Madame Carandini, who not only sang the beautiful music of the drama with consummate taste, but also acted with a degree of elegance and spirit for which we were not prepared to give her credit.⁴⁴

Marie performed until July 1854: the end of the season at Hobart's Royal Victoria Theatre. She was by that time around four months pregnant because on 12 December 1854, the *Courier* reported the following: "BIRTH - This morning, at Kelly Street, Marie Carandini of a daughter."⁴⁵ During Marie's recovery, Jerome presented various ballet pieces opposite Madame Thérèse Strebinger. Strebinger arrived in Australia with her husband, a composer and violinist, in 1853, having earlier achieved great renown in London for her creation of roles in the ballets *La Esmeralda* and *La Vivandière* in 1844. Thérèse's performances in Hobart with Jerome supported a well-respected English tragedienne named Eleanor Goddard during late December 1854 and throughout January 1855. Goddard was a highly popular tragedienne and Hobart critics regularly praised her talents. The *Mercury* even went so far as to make the claim that as a tragic actress "she ranks preeminent in these colonies."⁴⁶

Marie had recovered sufficiently from the birth of her daughter to reappear in Hobart, and the *Courier* claimed on 18 January 1855 that it was "after having been absent from the stage a lengthened period." While media deemed her four-week convalescence as a "lengthened" absence in the colonial

era, it was far too short a time to influence Marie's popular appeal in a negative way. The four other "Great" "Stars" "in the Australias"⁴⁷ had departed Tasmania months ago, leaving Marie to take centre stage as a star in her own right. The *Courier's* claim on Monday 22 January that Marie sang "several of her most favourite ballads with more than unusual taste and feeling," suggests that she succeeded in showcasing her own talents.

Colonial print culture was just as eager to associate the Carandinis' tour of 1854/55 as significant to Tasmanian cultural development as they had been in 1849, and this they achieved by publicising their concerts as a crucial means of building stronger international ties. Cultural diversity was a feature of the ensemble that media men identified as socially significant. Strebinger was French, Jerome an Italian, and Eleanor Goddard was an English woman, while Madame Carandini was English-born but Tasmanian-bred. Such a colourfully diverse ethnic mix thus facilitated print media's inclination to promote the combination as important in easing cross-cultural tensions. "We trust," claimed the *Hobart Courier*, on 23 January 1855, "that the Anglo-French alliance which results in such a bill of fare will command universal sympathy."

The "Anglo-French alliance" was an important concern in 1855. Domestically, colonial policy makers were still anxious that the French had plans to annex parts of New Holland, New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land.⁴⁸ Ernest Scott claims that throughout the 1820s, "the only possible colonizing rival to Great Britain was France,"⁴⁹ and this fear of French annexation remained a recurring theme in Australian history, and affected Imperial policy throughout the first half-century of colonisation (at least). Fear reached its height in England at various periods throughout the early 1800s, and Australian colonials continued to establish military outposts, even by 1835, when political manoeuvring again reawakened old anxieties.⁵⁰ An ever-expanding trans-global seafaring industry commandeered international relations

throughout the 1840s, and this only exacerbated original fears. Anxieties relating to possible annexation continued to reoccur sporadically throughout the 1850s, even despite the fact that no actual instances occurred to substantiate any legitimate basis for the unease.

Commanding “universal sympathy” sheds important light on a flourishing, and at first glance highly implausible, ideology among the island’s press concerning how a performance in Hobart affected international relations. Theatre critics seemingly saw themselves not as culturally isolated or even geographically remote, but rather as part of an “imagined community” wherein even apparently blithe events, such as a theatrical performance, had the power to alter global affairs. But if we consider for a moment that Tasmania, and Hobart in particular, maintained a geographic and economic advantage because of its proximity to the profitable whale and seal colonies off the Island’s coast, then the production of the ideology makes good sense. If New South Wales rode on the sheep’s back, then Tasmania rode on the mighty whale. Pure economics translated the immediacy of breeding grounds so close to this far-flung settlement into a ready-made industry. It heralded the appearance of hundreds of foreign whalers—the French among the fleets of ships—into Hobart’s port per annum, and the subsequent injection of thousands of pounds into the settlement’s economy via its thriving shipbuilding industry. Geoffrey Blainey estimates “that each foreign vessel in port spent an average of £300.”⁵¹ Commands of “universal sympathy” or an “Anglo-French alliance” were, therefore, more than simply callow terms; they were symbolically optimistic expressions of the easing tensions between nations, and the continued futurity of a lucrative and in some sense global, economic partnership between the state and other nations.



The Daily Mirror published this image of a young Marie Carandini on 22 March 1971. It was the likeness that accompanied the front page of the ballad written for Marie called "I Cannot Sing To Night" by Louis Henry Lavenu, the composer laureate of the New South Wales colonies in the 1850s.

At a concert in Melbourne with Catherine Hayes after Marie's Tasmanian tour in 1855, the *Age* suggested that her performance of "Home, Sweet home" "excited a hurricane of applause" and that her delivery of the "Last Rose of Summer" (an encore) "afforded her an opportunity of exhibiting the power, continuity, and unbroken ring of her *sostenuti* notes."⁵² It was then recommended that, "Madame Carandini may take an honourable pride in her success" as just congratulations evidencing her "unwearied self-culture."⁵³ In time, one of her major breaks in Melbourne city occurred after her return from Sydney in 1858. Marie's appearances in yet more Australian premieres—including *Lucrezia Borgia* (1834) at Sydney's Theatre Royal in December 1855, as well as that of Verdi's *Ernani* (1844) in April 1857 at the Prince of Wales—were distinctions succeeded by her performance in the first Australian presentation of Verdi's *Il Trovatore* (1853) at Melbourne's Princess's Opera House in October 1858. Her lead performance to that of the French tenor Monsieur J. B. Laglaise was a presentation that commenced the Princess's four-month season of opera, and was just one of many more Australian premieres of her operatic career.⁵⁴ Melbourne's Theatre Royal considered Marie's reprisal of the performance a fitting way to commence its own opera season in October 1859 and her press suggests a similarly successful conception of the role.

Marie's "unwearied self-culture" never appeared to diminish during the 1850s, but her professional career did have periods of decline. This was the case in 1856, when she and Jerome negotiated a contract with Frank Howson and Samuel Howard to appear in Sydney.⁵⁵ The fact that the couple brokered the arrangement with Howson and Howard together suggests that Jerome did figure in some kind of managerial role in her career, but that Marie herself was actively involved in formalising her own professional opportunities. How successfully the arrangement might have been barring any unforeseen problems is now only a mystery considering that the closure of the Prince of Wales Theatre

in 1857 (no doubt an unexpected complication) put an end to that agreement and thrust the Carandinis into Insolvency Court. Marie, however, did join Charles Poole's company at the Prince of Wales for the opening of the 1859 season on 25 June, (after her reappearance in Hobart in early May that same year) and in the cast on that occasion was Frank Howson. Business was business, so even their previous failure to negotiate an agreement did not prevent their success in maintaining an amicable relationship. In fact, Marie appeared together with Frank's daughters, Emma and Clelia, when the sisters supported her for the first time at a concert held at the Australian Library on the 11 January 1861. Her long-lasting association with Frank endured for some twenty-three years, until the Howson family departed Australia for good, in 1866.

Somewhere in between the commitments of her theatrical career beginning in the mid 1840s until well into the early 1860s, Marie bore seven children.⁵⁶ Such an achievement is remarkable for any woman, but perhaps was doubly so in Marie's case considering that her consistent reappearances in Tasmania attest to her professional mobility and that she seldom took long respites. Her reappearance on stage in Hobart just four weeks after giving birth, coupled with the fact that she only seems to have enjoyed a four-month rest prior to delivery, suggests that she was no stranger to short periods of recovery before again returning to the stage. In fact, Marie made her professional debut when she was four months pregnant with her first daughter, Rosina, in 1844.

The same gene pool that contributed to Marie and Jerome's own abilities was a bud of promise shared among their brood. Not all of their children took to the stage, but the couple's commitment to nurturing their children's appreciation of the arts saw all five daughters, Fanny, Lizzie, Emma, Isabella, and Rosina,⁵⁷ follow Marie's path as professional concert singers. Their performances on stage were moments of renaissance punctuating their mother's

career. With the support of her talented offspring, Marie Carandini revitalised herself as well as creating the "The Carandini Operatic and Ballad Company": one of the most successful female-led concert companies of the 1860s and 70s. This marked a significant moment in Australian concert history. It is unlikely that Marie had the chance to look to prototypes in developing a business venture in which a woman headlined a touring company. There simply does not seem to have been any other women in a similar position during the period, at least not in Australia. The only consistent male performer in Marie's company was Walter Sherwin,⁵⁸ with Henry Gordon and Robert Farquharson appearing with the ensemble at alternate times during her career. Sherwin commonly sang tenor in duets such as Balfe's "The Sailor Sigh's" (1871), and quartette pieces such as Michael Costa's "Ecco quel fiero istante" (1833) and "Oft in the Stilly Night" by Thomas Moore (1815). Sherwin rarely sang solo, but Gordon performed a range of mostly secular pieces as a soloist including Mozart's aria, "Great Isis," Weiss's "The Slave's Dream," and Westrop's patriotic song "England, Glorious Land." Farquharson's rich baritone voice added a deep timbre to the troupe's pieces that traditionally attracted critic's praise.

Considering Marie's reputation and the fact that Jerome rarely appeared to join her on tours to Tasmania after 1855, Marie, in all likelihood, made all the executive decisions dealing with the day-to-day running of the troupe and therefore exerted considerable power. Jerome had, by the 1860s, faded from occupying a public face in Marie's career, which is perhaps not surprising considering that Marie and Jerome's professional lives suggest they seemed to have shared a more unusual (some might even say unconventional) domestic arrangement than that of Marie's contemporaries. In fact, out of Jane Thomson, Emma Young, and Anne Clarke, Marie's was the only marriage that actually survived.

Professionally, Marie and Jerome's engagement with theatre was very different to other "theatrical" husband and wife teams comparative speaking. For Jerome, theatre seemed to function as a supplement to his income as a teacher of dance and languages. For Marie, theatre was a professional mainstay. Jane Thomson and Emma Young only appear to have achieved better outcomes once they separated from their first husbands, perhaps because they no longer controlled their opportunities. But Marie's union seems another kind of partnership. She not only enjoyed a longer and more profitable career than her husband, it is clear that her accomplishments and popularity actually outshone him. Certainly, the domestic arrangements of the couple must have been unique considering the success of Marie's business venture, and the fact that she was still having children during the 1860s (then in her 40s). Whether this was because Jerome was willing to share in the more domestic realm of offspring care, or whether Marie relied more on her older daughters for child care is unknown.

Additionally, it is difficult to qualify with any real certainty whether the couple's age difference, or indeed Jerome's ethnicity, religiosity, and/or royal lineage, played a role in how the pair negotiated their relationship. Marie was seventeen years old when she married the Italian, who was then around ten years her senior. Presumably, Jerome's ethnicity and nobility (even despite his political exile) were twin characteristics of the couple's lives that must have exerted some pressure on their union. Certainly, the fact that the family was so large, and that in the 1860s Frank Carandini lobbied sovereign powers to secure his father's pardon, does indicate that both religious and patriotic ideologies were patent forces in the family's reality. Perhaps these pressures engendered Marie's uncommon level of independence as a colonial woman. Jerome's return to Italy, seemingly without Marie in 1869, and his death in January 1870 all

suggests that he had long ago retreated into a more private (and conceivably more domicile) sphere of the family's everyday life.

Madame Carandini, together with Walter Sherwin, Robert Farquharson, Marie Chalker and Fanny Carandini, appeared in Launceston in 1865 to commence a three-night engagement at Launceston's Mechanics Institute beginning on 24 April. Shipping intelligence does not include Jerome's name in the passenger list, implying he was not one of the party. Marie's ensemble was warmly welcomed in the north, as evidenced by the *Launceston Examiner's* claim that, "Madame Carandini sings even better than when she last appeared in Launceston," and the observation that "Miss [Fanny] Carandini has a full, rich, musical voice, and cannot fail to please all that listen to her."⁵⁹ The troupe followed their Launceston performances with appearances in Campbell Town and Longford, before performing again in Launceston on May 1, 2, and 3 as well as giving a "Morning Concert" under the patronage of Sir Richard and Lady Dry (at their residence "Quamby" on Friday 5 May). That same day (but in the evening) the ensemble performed at East's Assembly Rooms, Deloraine, and then at the Prince of Wales Theatre, Westbury, on Saturday 6 May 1865. Consistent performances were clearly an important part of the company's organisation. Performances every day, and sometimes twice a day, evidence an abundance of work in the north of the state, as well as formidable staying power. The troupe left Launceston aboard the *Black Swan* bound for Melbourne soon after their Westbury concert.

It was a premeditated decision to play in the north of the state. Earlier, the ensemble was to have appeared together for a limited number of performances at Del Sarte's Rooms in Davey Street, Hobart (which Marie was then managing) commencing on Tuesday 11 April 1865. Publicity promoted Marie as "The Queen of Song," with Marie Chalker "the Admired Vocalist," Walter Sherwin "Principal Tenor from the Melbourne Opera Company," and

Robert Farquharson “The Renowned Basso and Descriptive Vocalist.”⁶⁰ Yet the plan was plagued with problems from the very beginning. Marie arrived in Hobart from Melbourne aboard the *Derwent* on 7 April, while Sherwin and Farquharson followed her the next day aboard the *City of Launceston* (also from Melbourne). The fly in the ointment was that the other member of the troupe, Marie Chalker, had failed to arrive by 11 April: the day of the ensemble’s first appearance. Fanny was substituted for Chalker, implying that she was readily available, and although the *Mercury* claimed on 12 April that all “were in excellent voice” after their concert, it predicted that the season would not be a successful one. Sixty people reportedly attended the first night, but the small number the following evening forced the postponement of the performance. In fact, poor turnouts forced Marie to cancel the series of concerts altogether. The *Mercury* cited Passion Week and Passover celebrations as possible reasons for the poor attendance, and although this may have been true, the fact that the Theatre Royal was gearing up for English actress Lady Emilia Don’s second visit to Hobart may also have motivated playgoers to save their pennies.

Marie might have been hoping to capitalise on Don’s popularity. Emilia’s second visit to the State was scheduled to commence on 17 April 1865, and the fact that her earlier tour (in 1862) was so successful, but had ended tragically after the unexpected death of her husband in Hobart, created a lingering sympathy that probably added greater interest in her reappearance. Marie also knew Don professionally. Carandini, together with Sherwin and Farquharson, had supported Emilia’s concert at Melbourne’s Theatre Royal a few years before (in March 1861), and Marie had come close to upstaging her. The *Age* reported that Carandini delivered a scena from *Ernani* “so spiritedly as to ensure one of the most determined encores of the afternoon.”⁶¹ A shame then that Sherwin’s presentations of “Riflemen Form” and the ballad “I’m a simple Muleteer” (from

Balfe's *Rose of Castile*) so irritated the critic because of his "painfully lack-a-daisical" acting.⁶²

Walter Sherwin was a long-time member of Marie's ensemble, while both Robert Farquharson and Henry Gordon appeared regularly, but separately and for different tours. Sherwin began with the small troupe as a singer. He married Fanny later; accounting for the fact that he appeared with the ensemble for so long.⁶³ Sherwin and Gordon both appeared with Madame Carandini in the 1850s, toured with her in the 1860s, and remained with her into the early 1870s. As it happens, in the 1860s, when Marie was in New Zealand for a series of concerts, Fanny and Rosina, as well as Sherwin, supported her as a smaller ensemble. *Bell's Life in Victoria* reported the following on 14 September 1867:

DUNEDIN—Madame Carandini, with Miss Fanny and Rosina Carandini and Mr. Walter Sherwin, were giving concerts on the 23rd [August]... at the Princess Theatre, and were reported to be drawing good audiences.

This was not Marie's first appearance in New Zealand. She had already appeared there two years before her Tasmanian tour in 1865. Peter Downes claims that Marie's troupe of 1862, called "the English Opera Company," consisted of Marie, Madame E. Whyte, Walter Sherwin and Mr. T. Small. It was this ensemble that Downes credits as bringing "Dunedin—and probably New Zealand—its very first complete opera production when they staged Bishop's grand musical drama '*Guy Mannering*' [at Dr. Shadrach Jones' Royal Commercial Theatre], with the assistance of the regular dramatic company."⁶⁴ In fact, Downes further asserts that "All through the sixties, seventies and on into the eighties the Carandini name was a household word in New Zealand musical circles."⁶⁵ It is therefore accurate to suggest that the Carandini heredity

was as influential an aspect of colonial life in New Zealand as it was in Australia and elsewhere during the era.

By October 1867, after what *Bell's Life in Victoria* claimed was “a most successful season in Dunedin,”⁶⁶ the company proceeded to Wellington. Their presence there implies a return visit to New Zealand not long after their Tasmanian tour in 1865. It was a sign of high opinion that *Bell's Life in Victoria* appeared interested enough in Marie Carandini to keep the Victorian public (and by extension an extensive readership) aware of her overseas movements.

In contrast to 1865, Marie's Tasmanian tour in 1872 was incredibly popular—so popular in fact that the ensemble's initial engagement was extended for a second series of six additional performances. Marie seems to have taken well to managing her own career. Jerome, her husband and sometime manager, had died in Italy only two years earlier, in 1870,⁶⁷ perhaps motivating Marie to look to less traditional methods of ensuring the ensemble's feasibility. As a female entrepreneur, Marie tried various approaches—expanding tours to include overseas commitments, diversifying the repertoire while maintaining popular staples, showcasing personalities with various specialities and styles, and maintaining a reliable profile domestically with consistent touring—in an effort to secure the company's viability. Her success at achieving popularity and ensuring the troupe's survival was somewhat ironically illustrated in the *Mercury's* observation that, “She [Marie] completely overlooks the fact that nightly a large number of persons assemble in the street, near the Town Hall, and listen to the singing throughout the performance, and for these outside admirers Madame Carandini has provided no accommodation whatever.”⁶⁸ It was as close to criticism as Marie would come while in Tasmania.

What so many people, both those inside as well as those outside the venue had gathered to hear was Carandini's blend of choral and solo pieces. Marie's was an “Operatic and Ballad Concert Company” not an “opera

company" by the day's definition. Their repertoire consisted not of complete operas, but rather a diverse arrangement of secular, non-secular, novelty and operatic works. This is not to suggest that the Carandini Company, specifically Marie and Walter Sherwin, did not have the capacity to present complete operas, as their season in New Zealand in 1862 proves otherwise. Rather, it suggests a deliberate strategy whereby the troupe maintained diversity in their repertory preparations perhaps as a means of appealing to a wider cross-section of music lovers. Selections included: "My Lady the Countess" from Domenico Cimarosa's *The Secret Marriage* (1792); "Lament of the Irish Emigrant" by George Barker (c. 1843); duets such as William Wallace's "Sainted Mother" (1845); trios including Giuseppe Verdi's "Home to Our Mountains" (c. 1850s); and quartettes such as Gioachino Rossini's "La Carita" (c. 1820s). Operatic compositions including Jacques Offenbach's "The Grand Duchess" (1867) and Daniel-Francois Auber's overture "Fra Diavolo" (1830) sometimes appeared on the same bill of fare as Jewish songs, such as Henry Russell's "The Old Arm Chair" (1840), to offer a highly diverse program.

Marie always attracted a large share of the company's publicity, although press does indicate that her daughters were also the objects of much admiration. Lizzie's debut at the Town Hall on 12 February 1872 singing Lanley's ballad entitled "Constance," motivated the *Mercury* to claim the following day that her voice was "a beautiful contralto, clear, full and rich enough to justify all that has been said in its praise."⁶⁹ The *Mercury* also reported that because "Miss Lizzie, as a *debutante* here, was the subject of some little curiosity . . . her appearance on the platform was looked for with something akin to eagerness." Hobart's press was already familiar with Rosina Carandini since her sensational debut in Hobart in 1859 as Adalgisa to her mother's lead performance in the name part of *Norma*.⁷⁰ In fact, the level of delight inspired by the reception of that performance was such that even her

mother was claimed "our native cantatrice."⁷¹ Rosina's presentation of "the pretty little love song 'Robert toi que J'Aime,' . . . was so exquisitely rendered," claimed the *Mercury* on 27 February, "that it commanded a rapturous *encore*."⁷² After regularly being "firmly but respectfully rejected," the audience was probably surprised and delighted that Rosina sang "Ring on Sweet Angelus" in response to their call. In fact, almost every review published by the *Mercury* throughout the period of their season mentions the fact that audience's "demands for repetitions were firmly but respectfully rejected." Yet, while Rosina indulged the audience with a repeat, Fanny on the same night disappointed them. The prolonged applause following her rendition of "Take Me to Your Heart Again" was the way a grateful audiences showed their appreciation, with the hope their fervour might seduce the singer into offering an *encore*, but the *Mercury* observed that this was only "silently acknowledged."⁷³

How the Carandini ensemble dealt with the reality of encores makes for an interesting analysis in colonial work ethics and capitalism. The capitalistic form the ensemble took as, quite literally, a family affair, was part of an attitude, which Max Weber identified as seeking "to profit rationally and systematically."⁷⁴ For instance, the *Mercury* critic repeatedly congratulated Marie "on her firmness in putting down the exacting attempt [by the audience] to exhaust the performers"⁷⁵ in their persistent demands for an *encore*. The repeated denial by performers in the ensemble to offer encores was as much a strategy of restricting labour as it was an economic tactic. Always leaving the audience wanting was a powerful motivator for enthusiasts to pay again for the pleasure of hearing more. This was, in a Weberean sense, deliberately entrepreneurial.

Marie's enterprise successfully traded on her capital (that is, the voices in the ensemble that maintained a monetary value as "accomplished masters") to turn a profit. Those voices represented, quite literally, the means of (musical

and economic) production. Marie did own this means of production in that she alone probably determined the troupe's membership. Her outlays (primarily wages, the cost of the venue, travel expenses, and wardrobe, etc) were on-going expenses usually offset by her lucrative selling of the product. From a Weberian perspective then, "the capitalist form" of Marie's enterprise and "the spirit" in which it was run stood very successfully in, as Weber has observed of other capitalistic enterprises, "some sort of adequate relationship to each other."⁷⁶ That relationship was not only economically determined, but also familial, as Marie's organisation and promotion of the troupe, itself indicates that she appeared astute enough to exploit that characteristic as a unique feature of the ensemble's bill of fare.

When Marie toured Tasmania with her daughters in 1872, media interest was immediate. Launceston reporters were just as mindful of Marie's international success as were their counterparts in Hobart. Moreover, local journalists were eager to demonstrate an equal sophistication among Tasmanian play-goers as audiences in California, the Sandwich Islands, Fiji, and New Zealand: all the places Marie's troupe had visited since her last appearance in the State, in 1865. "Such music is seldom to be heard, and the people of Hobart Town should show they can appreciate it," claimed the *Mercury* on 24 February 1872.⁷⁷ And show them they did. Not only were audiences regularly described as "fashionable and numerous," the fact that the then Governor of Tasmania Sir Charles Du Cane and his wife attended a Carandini concert—not once, but twice—seemed to affirm the community's appreciation of the ensemble's cultural value.

Tasmanian reporters were also ready to insist that, despite some years since her last appearance, Marie had remained well known to them. The *Mercury* on 13 February 1872 invited "the audience to judge of the difference seven years had made of our old friend, Marie Carandini," concluding that her voice was

“as steady and rich and clear as it was in the old days—if indeed not more so.”⁷⁸ In fact, Hobart journalists on that occasion were especially keen to stress that, “the fact of the ladies being natives of this colony should lend an increased attractiveness, [which] we may confidently anticipate.”⁷⁹

Anticipating the power of the “native” to strike a cultural chord in music-lovers suggests that not only did colonists expect the “native” to achieve a specific social goal, but also that the epithet itself was by then formalised in Tasmanian parlance. Again, Peter Berger’s concept of “objectivation”⁸⁰ is helpful in theorising about the function of “home grown” stars as creations of communal and social significance within particular cultural contexts. The representation of the Carandini sisters as “natives” assisted in promoting an image of Tasmanian society as, in some sense, an independent reality. From this perspective, the “native” term externalised a desire among the State’s colonials to legitimise “Tasmanian-ness” by virtue of the objective “facticity”⁸¹ of “stars” such as Lizzie and Rosina Carandini. Similarly, stressing “the ladies” as “natives of this colony” suggests that their currency to local play-goers was such that they qualified how Tasmania experienced “the Australian context” differently. But there was more to these narratives than simply qualifiers of one State’s difference. This is especially clear given that similar textual practices characterising the Tasmanian publicity of Marie’s forty-year career endured in various print cultures long after the Carandini fame faded. In fact, even almost ninety years after her death, Marie’s story remained compelling enough to attract twentieth century journalists for dailies such as the *Daily Mirror* in 1971 and *The Sun* in Sydney in 1983. Andrew Ferrington claimed Marie “is considered [the] ‘mother of Australian Opera’”⁸² and credits her with founding “the first all-Australian concert troupe.” Later, the “Historical Feature” in the *Daily Mirror* announced that Marie “did more to introduce grand opera to Australian audiences than any other prima donna on record.”⁸³

Such statements are interesting when read as evidence of contradictions in standardised textual practices that attempt to source figures of myth and popularise a homogenised image of the "Australian context" as one Australians experience in much the same way. The claim that Marie "did more to introduce grand opera to Australian audiences than any other prima donna on record" promotes a homogenous cultural climate in which theatre-goers experienced Marie's influence as a uniform social encounter. Yet such assertions clearly juxtapose epithets such as "the Tasmanian nightingale,"⁸⁴ "the Australian Jenny Lind,"⁸⁵ and even the "mother of Australian Opera" which in fact attempt to express diversity in experience and reception.

Such appellations functioned as "folkloric texts"⁸⁶ that recorded the exchange between players and audiences as "a strategy for encompassing a situation."⁸⁷ Identical missions "to record" are clear in the *Courier's* claim in 1849 that Jane Thomson's performance as Madeline in Edward Bulwer-Lytton's *Eugene Aram* (1832) "deserves to be recorded,"⁸⁸ and the *Courier* being "glad to record" in 1858 that "Tasmanians have watched the career" of Marie and Rosina Carandini "with pride."⁸⁹ Similarly, the *Daily Mirror's* announcement in 1971 that Marie "did more to introduce grand opera to Australian audiences than any other prima donna on record"⁹⁰ likewise follows this traditional practice "to record."

Yet even if Ferrington's claim is questionable (after all, Anne Clarke is perhaps more likely as a candidate as "the mother of Australian opera" considering her influence as a key figure introducing opera to Tasmania) what the assertion underscores is how influential such women were in establishing markers of cultural significance. Similarly, despite the fact that the *Daily Mirror's* claim that Marie founded "the first all-Australian concert troupe" was not strictly correct (Sherwin was, after all, just one member who was in fact

English-born), the greater power of such assertions is their need to “record”⁹¹ women’s cultural place as active instigators of cultural development.

Nowhere in any of their publicity is there evidence to suggest that print media considered women such as Marie Carandini, Anne Clarke, Jane Thomson and Emma Young as anything other than professional women of significant cultural utility. There is no scorn cast upon their choice to appear on their stage, and there is no question that the press recognised and valued how their vocation effected “the welfare of many others [in the community].”⁹² In fact, there is no evidence to suggest that generally speaking, the social context of a frontier culture did not endorse their activities as women of considerable public visibility. This is not to suggest that a married woman’s husband did not usually influence her position or regulate her opportunities, or that spousal arrangements sometimes limited some women’s personal and professional freedoms: Jane Thomson’s story provides a vivid sketch of the drama of male violence. But the individual achievements of these actresses suggest that they represented a vital collection of exceptionally empowered women. Anne Clarke made her mark as a woman who effectively altered the course of Tasmania’s theatre culture, and of course, Marie Carandini’s contributions as a pioneer of female-led concert ensembles arguably resonated as an influential force in New Zealand, as it did in various states and territories in Australia. Emma Young likewise made an important impression on the theatre arts, and even Jane Thomson actively engineered her divorce and stated for the record that she consistently earned more than her estranged husband.

The fact that colonials sought to represent Marie Carandini as, for instance, “Tasmania’s Nightingale,” was unique to her publicity and not evident in that of Clarke, Thomson or Young. It is true that her contemporaries figured with considerable regularity in the narratives of meaning-making produced by colonial media, and that each one affected unique changes in the industry of

theatre during the period. Yet the diverse collection of epithets that accompanied Marie's publicity suggests that colonials actively invested her visibility as a professional woman with another, "new" kind of cultural value. She seemed to be the motivation behind many of the textual practices—the use of epithets, the emphasis on the "native," the production of narratives that articulated diverse cultural experiences of "the Australian context"—that later became commonplace in most media institutions. Marie's public visibility was a compelling influence in popular culture, and a potential not lost on merchandisers. Advertisers approached her for product endorsement in later years, and in 1883, used her testimonials to sell "Gamble's Safe Hair Vigour."⁹³ But the mere fact that it was these four women that featured so prominently in print artefacts of the day as vanguards of considerable accomplishment in frontier society suggest that perhaps the colonial era was not as restrictive for women as at first thought, and that actresses in particular maintained significant social power as cultural influences. If this is true, and their publicity suggests that it was, then their achievements deserve to be "recorded" as a future concern just as boldly as colonial print media evidences that it was a vital source of cultural wisdom in the past.

Part Two: International Players and Tasmanian Cultural Identity

Chapter Four:

Celebrity Touring Stars and Tasmanian Theatre Culture in the 1850s

Tasmanian journalists consistently reinforced the “symbolic visibility” of “native-born” women players as pole stars of “Tasmanian-ness” throughout the 1850s: an era in which an unprecedented influx of “non-domestic” players, most often “celebrities,” arrived on the island. The arrival of many offshore touring players into Tasmania coincided with advanced innovations in transportation and changes to the Island’s human demographic principally brought about by the Victorian Gold Rush, which began in 1851. Both the shifts in human mobility and changes to Tasmania’s social makeup were integral aspects of cultural life influencing the popular reception of stars, and in particular, the treatment, and engagement of women players.

Census information reveals that Tasmania’s population in the early 1850s was heavily masculine. Contemporary surveys undertaken in 1851 indicate that the highest share of the total population was between the ages of 21 – 45, and that of this cohort, men outnumbered women just in excess of 2:1 (men: 24 992, women: 10 877).¹ In the group of 14 – 21 year olds, however, the ratio of males to females was about equal (males: 2 733, females: 2 896). Of the total Tasmanian population, recorded at 70 130, the number of single men was given as 33 447 (not including convict males on public works, which would of course have increased this number), with the number of single women being 15 709.

This number would have decreased in the years immediately after the census because of the Victorian gold rush. News of strikes in Victoria in 1851 sent populations in Tasmania into some decline, but those in Melbourne and the

nearby port of Geelong skyrocketed by more than 20, 000 in 1853 compared to the previous year. Feeding into the thriving mass that converged onto the goldfields were males from Tasmania. Later, in an effort to boost numbers, the Colonial government offered free passage to bounty ticket holders from England (London or Liverpool) to Van Diemen's Land (Hobart or Launceston) after brokering an agreement with the owners of a shipping enterprise known as the "Black Ball Line of Packets." The *Courier* was impressed, extending special commendations to the Hobart Town immigration society and Sir William Denison for their efforts.²

Despite the decline in population experienced in Tasmania, as more and more stars from America and England began to appear on the island local and regional ideologies about identity and nationality evolved. Entertainment such as the Ethiopian Serenaders (1850 and 1854), and the New York Serenaders (1851), as well as bands of musicians from Europe and elsewhere was Tasmania's entree into global and cultural diversity during the mid nineteenth century. This pivotal shift to cultural multiplicity in theatre is crucial to any discussion of the impact of international touring stars on Tasmanian provincial culture because many such stars influenced a residential sense of identity.

After decades of "domestic" players "shuffling" between the island and mainland Australia, gathering experience and forming reputations, it was only a matter of time before international artists followed. Many of the most successful players visited the island, including Americans Mr. D. Wilmarth and Mrs. Emma Waller (1855), Canadians James and Mrs. Stark, Irish tragedian Gustavus Vaughan Brooke (who toured a year before his ex-lover Marie Duret in 1857), English tragedienne Eleanor Goddard and American tragedian McKean Buchanan (both in 1857).

This decade ushered in the dawn of "celebrity" in Tasmania because although the pioneer actresses were among the nucleus of players that

inaugurated theatre on the Island, the pageant of male and female international touring stars visiting the colony in the 1850s further accelerated a greater momentum in Tasmanian theatre culture. Alongside the tragedians and tragediennes were English-born dramatic duets, such as siblings Adelaide and Josephine Gougenheim, as well as opera stars, minstrel shows and magicians. Promoters and agents guaranteed an eager play-going public that with each new “novelty” that appeared, something wonderful and fresh was sure to follow.

Before I go on to detail some of the important off-shore players to visit Tasmania, I want to briefly overview the cultural encounter of the Irish-born actress and dancer Lola Montes (sometimes “Montez”). Montes never appeared on the island, but she is an important personality to consider when examining the parameters of colonial press culture and its implications for the perception and representation of women, specifically stage women. Lola’s feisty persona and on-stage (as well as off-stage) antics in Australia shook the very nature of play-going to its Imperial roots and her publicity substantiates that she was quite unlike any other theatre woman of the day. She was famous for her Spider Dance; a presentation the Melbourne Age critic judged was “a hard, rigid, inflexible piece of pantomime.”³ Yet audiences nonetheless flocked to her performances, probably eager to witness the reportedly provocative gyrations Montes’ dance promised, and this invitation in turn prompted moralists’ calls to have the performance banned. Montes publicly defended the piece on more than one occasion, and in the process successfully motivated even more publicity in its promotion. But more interesting perhaps than the moral implications of her Spider Dance and the obvious commercial nous of the woman was the fact that Montes appeared ready to reprimand audiences publicly for behaviour she found inappropriate:

After Lola had proceeded with a few steps of the dance, the audience commenced to hiss, which put a stop to Lola's dancing, and brought her forward to the footlights, when she abused those who had given utterance to the expressions of dissatisfaction, applying to them the epithet of cowards, and the curtain fell amidst very great confusion.⁴

"Cowards"! That instance was arguably one of the first occasions that an actress took such blatant measures to enact a degree of audience censure. This has important implications for understanding frontier culture, but also for an analysis of the conditions and reception of domestic actresses appearing around the same time. Her somewhat punitive measures in controlling audience behaviour were characteristically Montes, and this strategy actually became fundamental to her stage persona and public image. In fact, Montes' antics were broadly publicised, particularly her dealings with a media man named Henry Seekamp in Ballarat, and his bitter experiences as a target for the sharp sting of Montes' horse-whip. Such escapades, not to mention the extensive press coverage, undoubtedly both dispelled and created particular myths about stage women that are crucial in contextualising the milieu of the 1850s.

Media culture was central to recreating cultural narratives about theatre-going, and even though print media sensationalised Lola's adventures, her encounters with colonial culture were instrumental to shifting media attention to non-domestic touring actresses specifically and to the social position of actresses within the frontier community generally. According to the Melbourne *Punch*:

Cow-hiding is not a Colonial Institution, but has been imported with other valuable 'notions,' by managers from the States ... as a

precautionary measure ... actresses ... may judiciously provide themselves with silver-mounted hunting whips ; and perhaps it would be well if such ladies, when single, were accompanied by an elder brother, sinewy, stalwart, and six feet high.⁵

The caution that actresses arm themselves “as a precautionary measure” can create the impression that male aggression posed the greatest threat to their safety. Reading on a little further, however, it becomes apparent that another aspect of gender dynamics in this period influenced relationships between women and men, especially when considering the quote accompanied details of an altercation between Montes and the *wife* of James Crosby, “her so-called manager.”⁶ A dispute over her box-office earnings resulted in Mrs. Crosby (sometimes “Crossby”) beating Montes with a horsewhip: certainly ironic as a contrast not only to Montes’ previous escapades with the implement (and Seekamp), but also to the traditional case study of colonial women as victims of male hostility.⁷ This is not to suggest that men were not usually instigators of violence against women, or that women were not commonly the victims; Jane Thomson’s story is a compelling reminder that proves otherwise. But what it does demonstrate is that generalisations about the lives of colonial stage women, and in particular the extent of their social power, are not always clear-cut.

MARCH 6, 1856.]



T A G E
COACH-WOMEN
AND THEIR
WHIPS.

The above illustration features a formidable looking Mrs. Crosby bending Lola Montes into a position that she was seemingly most unfamiliar with; submission. While the use of a riding crop to "cow-hide" an opponent was a fashionable means of retribution among men, it was less so for women. Therefore, to have first Montes, then Mrs. Crosby taking to horse-leather to exact revenge was quite a sensation in and of itself.⁸

Montes was still in the country when the noted tragedian G. V. Brooke appeared in Tasmania in 1856. Brooke enjoyed an established, albeit chequered, reputation in the colonies. He was arrogant, reportedly something of a drunkard and occasionally alienated his audiences. He once infamously claimed, "I am not 'farmed', nor am I in the hands of any speculators. I am what I always was, my own master."⁹ Yet despite the fact that critics generally accepted Brooke's "ranting" style of acting as a standard by which others were measured throughout the mid 1850s, it failed to impress Tasmanian play-goers. Many times audiences greeted Brooke in Hobart with only a lack-lustre reception. Even despite his publicity as "the most celebrated genius of the day and age,"¹⁰ he fell short of audience tastes on the island, and it was a continuing point of some dismay among Tasmanian journalists that it was only during the last days of the tour that attendances began matching expectations. The *Courier* speculated that this pattern of attendance was due in part to the increase in admission prices and to the "proverbial cautiousness of our fellow-colonists, who have always a tendency to wait for the well-digested opinions of other sections of the community before they place implicit reliance on their own."¹¹

The *Courier* did, however, use Brooke's appearances to both gauge and offer other such "mini-narratives" in the form of social homilies concerning Tasmanian community culture. The *Courier* argued that considering Governor Young had patronised three of Brooke's performances, and Lady Young four, their combined patronage assured Tasmania's reputation as a "civilised" colony. Not only had the "vice-regal" couple offered their patronage to Brooke, so had "the intellectual aristocracy of the metropolis."¹² As such, the *Courier* felt confident enough to ask, "if in any other of the Australasian Colonies such a graceful concession has been paid by the representatives of royalty as that which we have now the pleasure to record."¹³



An illustration of G. V. Brooke as Cardinal Richelieu in Edward Bulmer Lytton's drama *Richelieu, or The Conspiracy* (1839), as published by the *Melbourne Punch* on 3 February 1859. Toward the end of his career, Brooke's drunkenness on stage received more and more attention, as did his tendency to miss performances altogether. He exited Australia in 1861 and married Avonia Jones. Brooke drowned at sea in 1866 after the vessel the *London* sank en route to Australia from England. His last words, reportedly "If you succeed in saving yourself, give my farewell to the people of Melbourne" immortalised him as a nineteenth century superstar.

It is clear that the *Courier's* "pleasure to record" Brooke's influence in movements regarding cultural taste was a mission the press generally took seriously. On the one hand, even though Hobart audiences had met Brooke with what the actor himself called "'beggarly accounts of empty benches'," the *Courier* claimed "the Press has had the pleasurable opportunity of analysing the merits of his impersonations, to aid in imparting a purer and loftier tone to theatrical appreciation."¹⁴

Tasmanian critics were especially loyal to G. V. Brooke perhaps because of his iconic representation as the personification of "legitimacy." Claims that he was "a real London star,"¹⁵ that his "Every movement was the step of a giant 'star',"¹⁶ or praise of his "startling descriptions"¹⁷ and "masterly performances,"¹⁸ were as ubiquitous in theatre reviews as the "as usual very thin"¹⁹ attendance and the "wet blankets"²⁰ the *Courier* claimed greeted most of his performances.

If Brooke personified the male archetype of "legitimacy" to colonial culture watchers during the 1850s, then Eleanor Goddard was his female equivalent. Her publicity evidences that she was one of the finest of the early (both "imported" and "self managed") English tragediennes to appear in Australia, and one of the few early English touring stars to appeal equally to critics and patrons alike. Such was the power of her appeal that media typically dubbed her "the greatest modern Tragic actress."²¹ She first visited Tasmania during late December 1854 and throughout January 1855 with her leading man (and husband) John Caple, and even though the couple were "self managed," meaning they were independent acts and not "imported" as name-stars by domestic theatre managers and entrepreneurs, the pair did manage to earn popular acclaim as favourites, particularly in Tasmania. Goddard's performances seemingly never failed to please, if not her audiences—particularly on nights when the weather was foul—then typically

her critics, specifically the *Mercury's* owner and theatre reviewer, John Davies. Both the *Mercury* and the *Courier* regularly published favourable reviews of Eleanor's appearances, but Davies seemed especially partial to her. While the *Courier* claimed, "Miss Goddard ranks the highest in the profession at present,"²² the *Mercury* suggested she was "the most powerful actress that has yet appeared on the boards of the Victoria [Theatre]."²³ The twin stars supporting her tour were Jerome Carandini and Madame Thérèse Strebing, who were of course familiar personalities to Tasmanians.

Goddard's Shakespearean performances were her signatures, and it is interesting to note that reviews of her performances in the Bard's characters juxtaposed the "loftier tone to theatrical appreciation" encouraged by Brooke's appearances with a heartier and more mesmerising flair. Of her Queen Katherine in *Henry VIII* the *Mercury* on 1 January 1855 claimed: "Miss Goddard as Queen Katherine passed that boundary [of perfect representation] and ascended into genius."²⁴ Her Hermione in *A Winter's Tale* "drew repeated rounds of applause"²⁵ and on 19 January, she offered playgoers "a treat in colonial dramatic history"²⁶ as Lady Macbeth, a performance of which the *Mercury* claimed: "Miss Goddard, in her own line of characters, transcends both Mrs. Stark and Mrs. Waller."²⁷ Stark was Canadian while Waller was English-born and American-bred. Both women had toured Tasmania prior to Goddard's appearance and typically played the lead female parts to the male roles of their husbands. Both women were highly praised in Tasmania, so it was no small distinction to be claimed their superior.



From the beginning of colonial theatre, women had taken up playing so-called "breeches" parts. Shakespeare was a particularly favourite source and an epidemic of female Hamlets, Othellos and Romeos, among others, motivated the *Melbourne Punch* to publish this illustration on 1 May 1856. Here, a tongue-in-cheek sketch of G. V. Brooke playing Juliet to the Romeo of George Coppin was accompanied by the satirical suggestion that Lola Montes was "deeply engaged in studying" Richard the Third, Charles Young (Jane's husband) the part of Lady Anne, and Mrs. Robert Heir (nee Fanny Cathcart) the Moor of Venice. Eleanor Goddard, however, was unlike other players in such roles because critics received her skills as a tragedienne as beyond question, at least according to her press. She appeared in a range of Shakespearean roles opposite Buchanan's leads, including Lady Macbeth in Sydney on 19 May 1857.

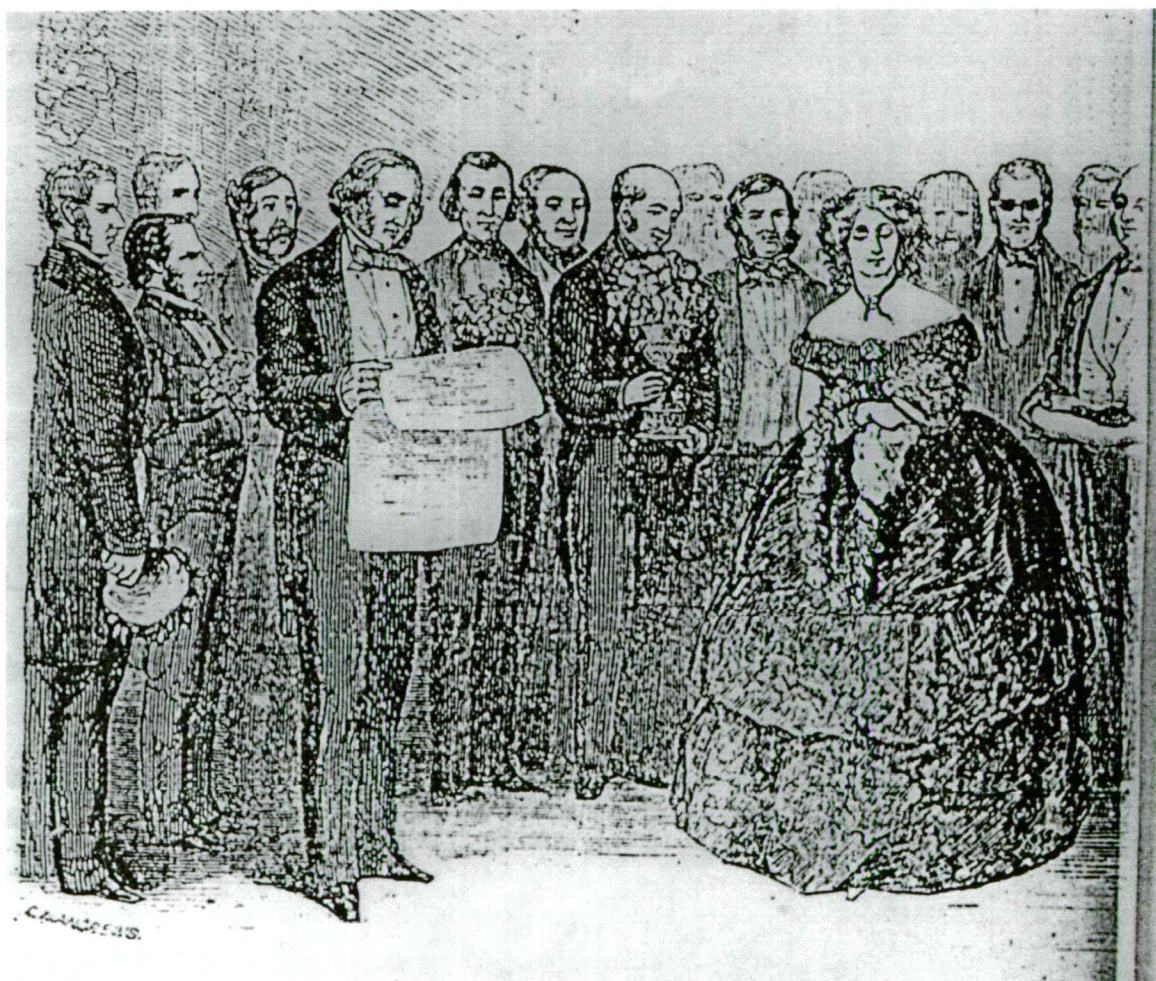
Eleanor must also have been quite an innovator of “male” parts throughout the 1850s. Critics often described her as “masculine” with a “deep-toned voice,”²⁸ which was perhaps why her characterisations of a number of Shakespeare’s tragic heroes were so well received in provincial and metropolitan communities alike. The *Ballarat Times* on 7 July 1857 claimed her representation of Hamlet was “a most triumphant success” and equally admired her appearance as Romeo for its “truthfulness of conception, energy, and correctness.”²⁹ The visiting American tragedian McKean Buchanan considered Eleanor’s grasp of Shakespearean dramaturgy unrivalled, and reportedly stated as much to *Bell’s Life in Sydney* on 19 June 1858. Of her acting *Bell’s Life* quoted him as saying: “Miss Goddard was the best interpreter of Shakspeare that he ever had the good fortune to play with, or even to see.”

Representations of both Brooke and Goddard suggest that not only were “legitimate” stage players instrumental in the production of particular textual practices concerned with civic sophistication, their utility was influential as cultural barometres of good taste and “cultivation.” Eleanor’s performances in roles such as Lady Macbeth, Queen Katherine, Hermoine, Cleopatra and Beatrice, as well as in “male” parts such as Romeo and Hamlet earned her the title “that stern votaress of her art”.³⁰ In Hobart, as in the Victorian provinces, print media invested Goddard with a particular cultural function. “It will be our aim, during Miss Goddard’s impending engagement,” claimed one publication, “to aid the public in appreciating that lady’s efforts to cultivate the intellect, and invigorate the taste.”³¹



An illustration of the American tragedian McKean Buchanan published in the Melbourne *Punch*, 8 January 1857. Buchanan appeared twice in Tasmania during the 1850s and his Shakespearean characters included Shylock, Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, Richard III, and of course Macbeth. In 1860, Buchanan appeared in Australia together with his daughter, Virginia, who fittingly debuted as Virginia in *Virginius* at Melbourne's Prince of Wales Theatre. She also played Malcolm opposite the Macbeth of her father at the Prince of Wales on 11 August 1860.

Aside from the dramatic talents of Eleanor Goddard were the “cantatrices” such as Irish star Catherine Hayes and English songstress Anna Bishop. Hayes, like Anna Bishop, was a very popular attraction in Tasmania. Both women found favour with the Governor of Tasmania, and while in Hobart, both Bishop and Hayes enjoyed his patronage. Hayes seemed equally able to appeal to all class of play-goer. Critics in Sydney were especially fond of Hayes: as illustrated by *Bell's Life in Sydney's* claim, “The more we hear of this delicious *cantatrice*, the more are we entranced with her ‘Vocal emanations of the soul’.”³²



When Catherine Hayes claimed at her farewell benefit that she was “completely overpowered by the kindness” of colonials, it was probably a euphemism. Here, the “bewitching lady’s” body language gives away her discomfort. She is “surrounded by her admirers”—exclusively male—eager to offer over bouquets, address, and testimonial cup. *Illustrated Sydney News* reported that Justice Therry wrote her address on the occasion, and that “The Attorney – General entertained her at a sumptuous and *recherche* luncheon, to which all of her friends were invited.”³³

Hayes' associations with high-class colonial elites did not diminish her capacity as an Irish woman to strike a powerful social chord amongst other ranks of the frontier population. "One poor fellow of the labouring classes, a true son of Erin," claimed the *Illustrated Sydney News* on 21 October 1854, "was so anxious to obtain some memento of his countrywoman . . . he asked her to 'touch his hat, only to touch it for ould Ireland's sake'." Neither did Catherine's skills as a vocalist apparently overshadow her talents as an actress. *Bell's Life in Sydney* claimed that "To separately criticise her different *roles*, is an unnecessary task ; for where all is excellent, all must please."³⁴ In fact, the critic went on to report of her signature dramatic part in the "mad scene" of *Lucrezia Borgia* that:

Miss Hayes surpassed all that mortal could imagine of human power in the conception and embodiment of character. The maniacal smile, the distracted glance, the perfect *abandonment*, were all portrayed so nearly like life, that every heart, which was not stone itself, melted.³⁵

In the same year that Tasmania saw Catherine Hayes and G. V. Brooke, audiences were introduced to an American actress called Mrs. Charles Poole. Although she was not known as a vocal star, or even a solo artist, her publicity suggests she was well-respected. Her husband Charles was better known as a comic actor and he appeared with her during her tour of Tasmania in 1856. The *Argus* was impressed enough with Mrs. Poole's appearance as Lady Teazle in R. B. Sheridan's *School for Scandal* on 16 July 1855, that it claimed her "the bright and particular star of the evening," and decided she was "certainly the finest actress we have seen in Melbourne."³⁶ It was then that a six-year-old named Anna Maria Quinn debuted in Melbourne as "the most extraordinary example of infant talent that has ever made itself public"³⁷ (but more of Quinn later).



MRS. CHARLES POOLE.

The *Illustrated Sydney News* published this flattering portrait of Mrs. Charles Poole on 28 April 1855 prior to her visit to Tasmania in 1856. W. M. Ackhurst wrote the address she delivered for the grand opening of Melbourne's Theatre Royal on 16 July 1855. Later, in 1865, we find her appearing as Othello at the Prince of Wales, Sydney (13 November) only to follow that performance as Iago (opposite the Othello of C. W. Barry) again at the Prince of Wales, the following evening. She also re-appeared in Tasmania around the same time.

Mrs. Poole excelled in Shakespearean parts, and regularly played opposite the more noted tragedians of the day, including Brooke when he was between leading ladies. In Sydney, she appeared as Desdemona opposite Brooke's Othello (13 July 1858) and played the part of Viola to the Malvolio of Henry Edwards in the Prince of Wales production of *Twelfth Night* (26 May 1859).

In Hobart, Mrs. Poole appeared in the Royal Victoria Theatre production of *Richard III* on 11 April 1856, and later as Gertrude to the Hamlet of Australian-born acting star Henry Neil Warner on Monday 21 April 1856. When the Pooles took their benefit at the Royal Victoria Theatre, Hobart, on 20 May 1856, the *Courier*, reported the following day that it was "very well attended" and concluded that Mrs. Poole's appearance as the Countess in J. S. Knowles' drama *Love, or the Countess and the Serf* (1839) "pleased with [her] graceful, dignified, yet womanly bearing." She appeared at Launceston's Lyceum in June and was very well received there, as evidenced by the *Cornwall Chronicle's* claim that "To criticize the respective merits of these artists would be a work of supererogation" because "they are above censure – above praise."³⁸

Another noted soprano to perform in Tasmania toward the late 1850s was the English "cantatrice" Anna Bishop (1810–1884). Critics were fond of promoting such women via cultural epithets that "celebrated" their skills but also distinguished them from domestic women via markers of provenance. The *Illustrated Sydney News* christened Hayes as the "Sweet Songstress of Erin"³⁹ and *Bell's Life in Sydney* hailed Bishop as "This Empress of Song."⁴⁰ Given the array of offshore songstresses, it was no wonder that dubbing Marie Carandini as "Tasmania's Nightingale" (around the same time) was important to distinguishing the symbolic visibility of a domestic, meaning more "local," actress.

Bishop visited Tasmania in 1857 and performed a series of concerts, including one at Government House on Tuesday 10 February 1857. The *Courier*

claimed the following day that “the selections were of the highest order of composition” and included Giacomo Meyerbeer’s aria *Ah Come Rapida* (1824), and a “Musical Bouquet” of vocal pieces including *Coming Through the Rye* (c. 1796), a Scottish ballad with words by Robert Burns (1759–1796) and Samuel Lover’s *Rory O’More* (1826). Bishop also played the first flute in a quartet arrangement for the instrument entitled *The Morning Chaunt of the Albinos*. Hobart critics regularly admired Anna’s talents and were in fact very happy to report that her talents were appreciated. A writer for the *Hobart Mercury* claimed of her farewell performance, “We rejoice, therefore, for Tasmania’s sake, that Madame Anna Bishop has had a reception worthy of her unquestioned genius.”⁴¹ Again, we see that the island’s media were eager to promote theatre patronage as a marker of enculturation. “Rejoicing” “for Tasmania’s sake” was, therefore, a “performance” motivated by something akin to cultural relief. In receiving Bishop as they had, audiences had “performed” their sophistication sufficiently to warrant the critic’s praise. Perhaps, in an odd way, it was for this reason that the Tasmanian *Daily News* questioned the propriety of holding one of her concerts at Government House.⁴² Patronising a performance to gesture cultivation was one thing, but using the sanctified abode of “the representatives of royalty”⁴³ for “amusements” (however accomplished) was something altogether different.

But such criticism might just as easily have been inspired in part by the stories of Anna’s personal life. In the 1830s, Anna had fallen in love with the composer of *The Morning Chaunt of the Albinos*, Frenchman Nicholas-Charles Bochsa (sometimes “Boscha”). This was not ordinarily problematic but for the fact that she was still married to the composer Sir Henry Rowley Bishop at the time (they married in 1831). Thereafter, the lives of Anna and Nicholas—with whom she apparently eloped in 1839—consisted of constant touring. Bochsa was twenty years her senior and a very un-well man. In late 1855 and early

1856, so ill was Bochsa in Sydney that he had to be carried to his place on the stage. He died at the age of 65 on 6 January 1856 at the Royal Hotel. Always the star, Bishop honoured her engagements, falsely advertised her final appearance as 21 January (not an uncommon practice), and actually extended her performances until September. Two days before her so-called "farewell" at the Prince of Wales in Sydney, her performance in two acts of Bellini's *Norma* and Zingarelli's *Romeo and Juliet* had occasioned one writer to note "the presence of one of the most brilliant auditories ever assembled within the walls of [the Prince of Wales] . . . theatre."⁴⁴ Bishop left Australia on 23 September 1856 but she re-appeared again twice in later years.⁴⁵ Interestingly, in the company with which she appeared at Sydney's Theatre Royal in 1856 was Marie Carandini (and Walter Sherwin), and Theodosia Guerin (known in Hobart as "Mrs. Stirling") who supported Bishop during her re-appearances at Sydney's English Opera House in August 1856.

Also appearing in Tasmania in the late 1850s were the sisters Adelaide and Josephine Gougenheim. The siblings arrived aboard the steamer the *Tasmania* on 4 February 1857 having already performed in New South Wales and Victoria. The Hobart Town *Courier* on 12 February promptly claimed them "bright [and] particular stars"⁴⁶ after having earlier questioned on 7 February what had made a star in the colonies if not the ability to establish, as the siblings had in California and Sydney, "their success in a single night." As in Sydney, the Hobart press similarly took to inventing "localised" epithets for the sisters. The most common trend among Hobart's theatre critics was to refer affectionately to the sisters as "Miss Joey" and "Miss Ady." Later, they earned the more intimate endearment "the Syren Sisters,"⁴⁷ which was probably coined by Hobart *Mercury* critic John Davies.

The duo excelled in what the *Courier* reported was "the extreme rarity of the most novel attractions."⁴⁸ In fact, comedies by Charles Reade and Tom

Taylor such as *Court and Stage* and *Mask and Faces* motivated the *Courier's* claim that Joey's "dashing sprightliness, vivacity, and *abandon*" produced "an electrical effect,"⁴⁹ while it was reported that Adelaide's "lady-like bearing and natural grace" was also impressive.⁵⁰ Joey's Neighbour Constance in Sheridan Knowles' comedy *The Love Chase* (1837) "strongly reminded" the *Courier* "of Mrs. Nisbet in her best days"⁵¹ and this comparison was similarly a marker of high esteem given that Nisbet (sometimes "Nisbett") was a particularly popular actress with a Drury Lane reputation who had visited the colony earlier that decade.⁵²



SCENE FROM THE CHRISTMAS PIECE AT THE PRINCESS'S THEATRE. (THE DRAGON SLAIN BY FORTUNIO.)

Adelaide (left) and Josephine (right) in the production of J. R. Planche's *Fortunio, or the seven gifted servants* (possibly c. 1843). That production was not only another Australian premier but enjoyed a comparatively successful run of 13 consecutive performances at Melbourne's Princess's Theatre between 26 December 1856 and 9 January 1857. *Illustrated Melbourne Post*, 16 January 1857.

Other performances by the siblings included a version of Charles Dickens' *The Cricket on the Hearth*⁵³ and John Baldwin Buckstone's comedy *Victorine; or I'll Sleep On't* (1831). A relatively large number of pieces in their repertoire were reported as Tasmanian premiers including: Buckstone's *Nan, the Good for Nothing* (1851) on 27 February 1857; a comedy "extravaganza" adaptation called *Richard Ye Third* (advertised on 20 February 1857 for later performance); Augustus Harris' *The Little Treasurer* (1855) on 4 March; and, E. Stirling's drama *Clarisse* (1845) on 11 March. Throughout their 1857 season the sisters reportedly, "[showed] the delights of American variety to Hobart"⁵⁴ play-goers and not only that, the *Mercury* also claimed:

... they have introduced a new style of drama, and opened up fresh treasures of delight by their admirable impersonations of their lively and pathetic characters ... both combined, have created a pleasant rae [sic] in the annals of our Tasmanian Stage which will long be remembered, and as long admired.⁵⁵

The fascination with stage women and femininity was also typical in press featuring the Gougenheim sisters (and many other off-shore actresses, not all of whom visited Tasmania). Their press is laden with highly sexualised comments and epithets. Joey's "dashing sprightliness, vivacity, and *abandon*," according to the *Hobart Courier* on 7 February 1857, produced "an electrical effect," and the *Punch* had earlier speculated that both Adelaide and Joey were oddly alluring. "[You] cause a strange titillation," it had claimed, "Both so charming, so perfect in each part ... But you, wicked Joey," it had marvelled "with your joyous, thrilling laugh ... Why will you act and look so bewitchingly?"⁵⁶ And while the sisters were applauded for their efforts to "show the delights of American

variety to Hobart,"⁵⁷ the *Mercury* thought it fitting to claim them "the Syren Sisters."⁵⁸

So on the one hand, such actresses were, of course, held accountable to high dramatic standards, while on the other, they served a valuable ideological purpose, even if their characterisations of "male" roles were highly titillating. One reviewer claimed that Joey's performance as Neighbour Constance in Sheridan Knowles' *Love Chase* was "no less than correct delineation,"⁵⁹ while another noted her "saucy airs" and flamboyant style suited her many "boys" roles.⁶⁰ On 11 February, the *Courier* was "charmed by the deep feeling of simplicity which pervaded [Adelaide's] personation of Mabel Vane" in *Masks and Faces*, but was equally transfixed by the sexual themes of the play. The play, essentially about deception, features "the heroine of the tale, the celebrated actress Peg Woffington."⁶¹ Peg (also performed by Joey) contends with the ardent (and unwanted) attentions of a married man, Ernest Vane, and must reconcile Vane and his wife Mabel via a series of comic ruses. The *Courier* on 11 February printed a synopsis of the sequence of the play including the scene when Mrs. Vane happens upon her husband "making hot love to the actress," as well as when Mrs. Vane is informed of her husband's "unfaithfulness" by Sir Charles Pomander, who is himself in love with Mabel. Hobart audiences delighted in the scandals and subterfuge of the play. When the Gougenheim sister presented *Masks and Faces* in Hobart, in 1857, the *Courier* claimed it a hit, noting that, "the favourites were greeted with loud acclamations [sic], and a shower of bouquets at the termination of the play."

Even in later years, Joey's performance as Desdemona to Barry Sullivan's Othello was described as "rather too boyish and modern" for the classical tastes of one observer,⁶² implying that she continued to disarm critics as "an old Melbourne favourite"⁶³ as well as a socially powerful woman.

One of the most vital points to consider in relation to this decade is, I believe, the increasing rise of the significance of "celebrity." Non-domestic actresses (and actors) were essential to the personification of the "star," and it must be noted that during this period the terms "celebrity" and "star" were often used interchangeably in theatre promotion. Theatre scholar Janette Gordon-Clark uses the term "star" to describe an actress "who charmed rather than dominated audiences."⁶⁴ This, I believe, may have appeared true in larger centres where there was more competition. However, I would argue that this usage underestimates their cultural import in "metropolises" such as Hobart and Launceston. Perhaps audiences were overwhelmed by their publicity, or simply unused to their notoriety, but "stars" in Tasmania were compelling cultural forces that attracted more "localised" articulations of significance. On the evidence of the publicity of visitors such as Eleanor Goddard (another of the "new stars"⁶⁵), the Gougenheim sisters (claimed "stars"⁶⁶) and G. V. Brooke (also dubbed a "star"⁶⁷), the "star" was emblematic of much more cultural utility than simply "charming" audiences. "Stars" were, at least in Tasmania during the 1850s, a charismatic and magnetic ideal that popularised a heady mix of dramatic glory and "celebrity."

But the worrying by-product of "star power" was, according to theatre critics, "the star system." That some performers (stars) were more popular than others meant that theatres often raised the prices of admission when celebrities were engaged. These hikes emphasised the economic aspects of theatre as a "circulating medium," so much so that when the noted critic of the day, James Edward Neild, wrote "The truth is, the star system has well nigh disgusted the public, ruined the managers, and destroyed the drama,"⁶⁸ he was probably reacting to twin concerns. One was the custom of inflating admission prices (as did Brooke in Tasmania), and the other was the practice of so-called "second-rate stars" trading on an artificial celebrity reputation.



MISS LAURA KEENE AND MR. BOOTH IN BULWER'S PLAY OF THE "LADY OF LYONS."

While the *Courier* claimed English-born and American-bred Laura Keene visited Hobart in 1854, she in fact priced herself out of ever appearing there. The illustration captures her in the character of Pauline opposite the Claude Melnotte of a charismatic-looking, twenty-year-old Edwin Booth in the Sydney production of Edward Bulwer-Lytton's *Lady of Lyons*.⁶⁹ Although many probably assumed Keene was "single," she was estranged from her first husband, John Taylor, whom she wed in England in 1846 (having two children from that union) and was probably linked to Booth romantically, who was her junior. Interestingly, on 5 October 1855, Eleanor Goddard appeared as Hermione in *The Winter's Tale* at the Metropolitan Theatre (New York) opposite Edwin's relative, John Booth. Keene was on stage when Abraham Lincoln was shot at Ford's Theatre on 14 April 1865. Keene later married American John Lutz in the United States in 1863.

Tasmania's distance from the mainland did not make it immune to increases in what the Hobart *Courier* called "the Dramatic Tariff."⁷⁰ In fact, the *Courier* observed that, "The Dramatic Tariff would rule enormously high at present, to judge from the scale of remuneration required by Miss Laura Keene upon her recent visit to this city."⁷¹ The reporter noted that she had out-trumped F. B. Watson's terms to appear at Hobart's Victoria Theatre, so neither the journalist nor the manager was optimistic. Her asking price of £100 for a two-month season was one that the *Courier* decided was "a salary which in the palmiest stage of the British Drama was attained by few of the choicest spirits of the age." And it happened that Keene was not one of the "choicest spirits of the age," at least not in Hobart.

Alongside the "star system" came the concerted effort among journalists to ensure the credibility of some players billed under the banner of a "star" merited such promotion. The regular practice of sharing textual modes of promoting celebrity meant that critics in Tasmania and elsewhere urged the public to be well informed before celebrating a player as a star. The false promotion of second-rate players as stars or celebrities necessitated other qualifying terms to accompany such symbolic gestures in an effort to ensure validity. Typically, critics used terms such as "authentic," "legitimate," and "genuine" as escorting criteria to sanction celebrities who were justifiably praised. The "legitimacy" of the celebrity, or first-rate star, distinguished them from the "mountebanks," or the "second-rate" players, and although this emphasis was a consistent part of the custom of classification, it was not always reliable. Some second-rate players were in fact celebrities in their own way, but were, according to critics, revered by an uninformed public often hungry for "vulgarity." One such fellow was a touring tragedian by the name of Henry Kemble whose "breakdowns" were highly popular in the provinces. During most of his Shakespearean "medleys," Kemble was usually "assailed

with a shower of eggs”⁷² for his troubles. In fact, the *Hobart Mercury* claimed of one his performances at the Theatre Royal that: “a whirlwind of missiles, such as above described [‘potatoes, onions, cabbages, carrots, bread, butter, flour, sheep’s heads, eggs, apples, empty bottles, &c, &c, &c, &c. . . .’], induced the great Kemble to make a precipitated [sic] exit, and the curtain fell amid yells of delight.”⁷³

Whether “authentic drama” or “vulgar” amusements, public patronage was thought to reflect a measure of social enculturation. To this end, journalists sincere to the tenets of the fourth estate believed that the role of ensuring a credible source of authority (regarding a justifiable star) rested with them. This was especially important in relation to non-domestic players arriving in Australia during the 1850s. While the publicity they often carried with them claimed them as stars, colonial journalists preferred to see for themselves whether or not this was true. For theatre critics therefore, credible information about performances (as eye witnesses) was required before any player could truly be regarded a star or celebrity.

A star’s popular appeal and box-office drawing capacity was as important in Tasmania as their cultural function to elevate the dramatic sensibilities of audiences. This is clear in the publicity of an especially influential arrival from America: the seven-year-old infant prodigy, Anna Maria Quinn (b. 1848). Critics documenting her tour of Tasmania in 1855 decided that her delivery of Shakespearean passages were not to be missed by “the rising generation”⁷⁴ because her histrionic mastery “would shame the performances of many an adult actor.”⁷⁵ Quinn was exceptional not only because of her age, but because her cultural impact in Tasmania even inspired the short-lived career of a Tasmanian-born contemporary called Miss Helen Mackenzie (aged 9).

Examining Quinn’s Tasmanian tour is invaluable as a case study of how “non-domestic” players influenced local culture, and perhaps most

importantly, how Tasmania played an important role in the rise of pre-Federation celebrity culture.

Chapter Five:

A “pretty little [child] star”;¹ Anna Maria Quinn in
Tasmania, 1855

“the most extraordinary example of infant talent that has ever made itself public.”

Melbourne Argus, 1855.²

Tasmanians were delighted by the arrival of the seven-year-old “histrionic genius”³ Anna Maria Quinn in April 1855. Her tour was eagerly anticipated because earlier Quinn had taken Sydney by storm after her first appearance in the closing weeks of 1854. Although it was a relatively smaller location, her Tasmanian reception matched, if not exceeded, that which she experienced on the mainland. Her reputation preceded her months before her arrival, which added to a great sense of anticipation. Hobart press, for instance, began publicising her arrival as early as 2 February 1855, two months before she was due to make her theatrical debut.

Quinn was not the only child appearing on colonial stages at this time, but she was probably its brightest star. Most of the “prodigies” of the era, male and female, were measured against an Imperial archetype by the name of William Henry West Betty (1791-1874). Betty was hailed as “the young Roscius” as homage to the Roman actor of the Ancients called Roscius Gallus Quintus (c. 126-62 B. C). Betty reportedly first appeared in Belfast at the age of twelve and legend has it that he committed the part of Hamlet to memory in just three hours. Betty’s son, also called Henry Betty (1819-1897) was also an actor.

Of the other little “prodigies” who appeared in Australia before Quinn there was John Lazar’s ten-year-old daughter Rachel.⁴ She was a leading dance attraction at Barnett Levey’s Theatre Royal (Sydney) from May 1837 until

March 1838. In fact, Rachel performed the Australian premier of *La Cachucha*—the dance earlier made famous in Europe by the Austrian ballerina Franziska Elßler (commonly “Fanny Elssler,” [1818-1880])—at the Royal Victoria Theatre Sydney in September 1838. Ten years later, another wonder called Miss Lee began appearing in Geelong. She was the daughter of J. H. S. Lee, the actor who made his debut in Tasmania in 1834.⁵ Lee’s prodigy, however, named Clara, never seems to have appeared in the land where her father made his first stage appearance. In fact, little Clara Lee seemed more of a fly-by-night “amusement” than a serious personality, and was therefore no match for Quinn, who managed to attract an enduring appeal. But like Quinn, she also performed in Adelaide (only much earlier, at the Queen’s Theatre in May 1847).

Of the young males, there was Master Pole, also an infant prodigy who appeared in 1858, the year Quinn reappeared in Australia after performing in London. Pole’s repertoire was not all that dissimilar to that of Quinn, with the young master’s characters including Hamlet, Macbeth, and Richard III. Yet Pole found no favour with the *Argus* who claimed on 2 September 1858, “Master Pole has no genius, and not much talent.” It was in that year that, Pole performed opposite a leading lady. She was another “infant prodigy” called Kate O’Reilly. She appeared as Lady Macbeth opposite the Macbeth of Pole in Pleasant Creek on 28 May 1858, and she even appeared with Marie Duret (as did Jane Thomson’s mother), in *Jack Sheppard* at Melbourne’s Olympic in 1857.

In between these dramatic acts came pocket-sized singing sensations such as Miss King.⁶ King was promoted as an “infant vocalist” and an up-and-coming protégé of Catherine Hayes. The *Argus* on 6 July 1855 raved about King’s potential, claiming:

Our opinion ever since we first heard this little girl has been that she possesses an amount of natural ability which is rarely exhibited by children of her age ; and we are happy to find it supported by such an authority as Miss Hayes. Under such an instructress we have little doubt that a brilliant future is in store for her clever little *protégé*.⁷

Yet Quinn's closest rival was in all likelihood Julia Matthews. Julia, who at thirteen was almost twice Quinn's age, had arrived in Sydney from London in August 1854, four months before Quinn. Julia debuted as "the celebrated infant Prodigy from London"⁸ in *The Spoiled Child*, and like Quinn, Julia Matthews also visited Tasmania, appearing in May 1856 (one year later than her rival).

Julia's appearance opened the first night of the new season at the Royal Victoria Theatre, Sydney on 28 August 1854. She performed the part of Little Pickle in Issac Bickerstaffe's *The Spoiled Child*, which was interesting because both Mathews and Quinn did share a number of common pieces, including principle roles in non-Shakespearean productions such as *Actress of All Work*, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, the *Spoiled Child* (sometimes known as *The Spoilt Child*) and *Middy Ashore*. Ten years later, in 1867, they even performed together.⁹

The public visibility of both performers during the mid 1850s is of interest here. Similarities between their repertoires and their publicity as "infant prodigies" indicates that the epithet was somewhat loosely applied during the period, though in the case of Quinn this worked in her favour. In the 1850s, Anna Maria stood out because at the age of seven, and compared to teenagers such as Julia Matthews—who was being greeted in Sydney at the same time as an "infant prodigy"¹⁰—she truly was an "infant" by comparison.



MISS JULIA MATHEWS.

The "infant prodigy" Miss Julia Matthews (also "Mathews") as printed by the *Illustrated Sydney News*, 23 September 1854. Matthews appeared in Tasmania just prior to the tour of G. V. Brooke, and she did join the company for performances (usually afterpieces) such as Little Pickle in I. Bickerstaffe's *The Spoil(t)ed Child* (1790) and *The Manager's Daughter*.

Quinn presented a range of pieces, usually only an act from one of Shakespeare's plays, as well as one or two-act comedies, farces, and occasionally five or six-act domestic dramas. But, unlike her rival Matthews, Anna Maria was renowned as an infant tragedienne whose specialty was Shakespeare. Her performance of a number of the Bard's most notable "heroes" attracted regular, but critically divided press. In Tasmania, as on the mainland, critics were drawn to her talent, but also strangely perplexed by it.

Quinn's first public appearance in Hobart was not dramatic, but theatrical nonetheless. Four days before she performed Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (Act I) on 9 Monday April 1855, Quinn was spotted attending a performance of *Hamlet* by a distinguished and provincially recognised tragedian named Charles Kemble Mason at the Mechanics Institute Hobart (on 5 April).¹¹ Quinn's unexpected appearance on that occasion offered audiences a proximity to touring stars rarely enjoyed. It also provided colonial journalists with access to Quinn as a human-interest story. A seven-year-old infant tragedienne witnessing a performance of *Hamlet* by an adult male tragedian was an unusual engagement with local society that journalists found intriguing. Quinn's presence, at least according to journalistic reports, was certainly provocative. The *Courier* even noted that Mason's performance (when Quinn attended) had been received with even greater enthusiasm than usual. "We do not presume to say that Mr. Mason was aware of the presence of this singularly gifted child," speculated the *Courier*, "but we do assert that never have we heard him to such advantage."¹² Evidently, Quinn's reputation as a Shakespearean performer was compelling enough to motivate critics to speculate on the performative scope of her cultural influence in Hobart on that occasion.

One of the first reviews to appear following her debut at the Royal Victoria Theatre on Monday, 9 April was that published by the Hobart *Courier* the following day. The review likened Quinn's talents to the "scientific savants"

puzzled over by Master Henry Betty, “the Young Roscius, [who] started our native isle from its propriety.”¹³ Aside from age and gender disparities, it seems to be a legitimate association to make between Quinn and Betty given that both were theatrical “prodigies.” However, the claim is also quite odd because I have found no evidence to suggest that Betty ever visited the colony, yet having said this, the *Courier’s* reference to “native isle” could also have been an allusion to England, and not Tasmania, as well as a quote from Shakespeare’s *Othello* (2.3.175-6).

There is no doubt however, that the “Young Roscius” epithet was a powerful designator of dramatic pedigree. After going on to question “Under what influence, supernaturally marvellous ... or otherwise, this young child has imbibed such a clear conception of the actor’s work,” the same review determined that Quinn had proven herself worthy enough to evoke the fame of Henry Betty, thus acquiring the Tasmania endearment: “the Roscius in petticoats.”¹⁴ Such an epithet illustrates how powerful was the drive to localise figures of importance relative to Tasmania as a unique cultural context. Tasmanian critics seemingly experienced Quinn differently to those on the “mainland” and were eager to make this clear.

Quinn’s mystic quality as a “prodigy” became a regular theme in her publicity. The *Courier* regularly assured Hobart theatre-goers of the range of Quinn’s genius, suggesting on 20 April 1855 that her exceptional talents could not fail to “reward with pleasurable excitement.” Meanwhile, after Quinn appeared in the comic farce the *Actress of All Work*, the *Courier* on 10 April even claimed that “the prodigy [had] out-prodigied ... her former attempt” as Hamlet because she appeared in all six characters, and her antics had kept house guests in a constant uproar.

A critic for the Hobart *Mercury* agreed with that of the rival publication. Despite delaying Quinn’s first review until two days after her debut

performance, the *Mercury*, like the *Courier*, similarly emphasised the fact that Hobart theatre-goers had, in the opportunity of seeing Quinn, the chance to see what was promoted in Tasmania as the dawning of a bright new star. Easter holiday makers were urged by the *Mercury* to see “for themselves this early development of artistic talent,”¹⁵ and the *Courier* claimed: “The rising generation should see Miss Quinn.”¹⁶ The *Mercury* critic’s recollection of Quinn as Hamlet contended that the seven-year-old had actually excelled as a tragedienne where most mature actors had failed; “Her cast of Hamlet is remarkably well conceived,” wrote the critic, “and which to our thinking, more than one of the most celebrated male tragedians, sadly misrepresent.”¹⁷ Sydney critics had already echoed those sentiments. One journalist noted, according to the *Courier*, “her delivery of some of Shakespeare’s finest passages would shame the performance of many an adult actor on the Sydney boards’.”¹⁸

Despite the fact that the *Mercury* critic had little to say about Quinn’s appearances as Shylock in the fourth act of *The Merchant of Venice*, and even less to say about her performance as Prince Arthur in the fourth act of *King John*, the *Courier* on 11 April, again made repeated references to Quinn as “a truly wonderful little girl, a prodigy, which may not appear again in the longest lifetime,” and repeatedly congratulated the “highly discriminating audience” who came to see her.¹⁹ In fact, Quinn’s appearance as Shylock on that same evening attracted such a large house, that she also appeared in an unscheduled performance as Prince Arthur “in consideration of so many persons from the country, who probably may not have,” predicted the *Courier* the following day, “another opportunity of seeing Miss Quinn.”²⁰



MR. VINSON AND MISS A. M. QUINN, IN "THE MIDDY ASHORE."

The *Illustrated Sydney News* on 20 January 1855 published this image of Anna Marie Quinn playing one of her staple roles in William Bayle Bernard's *Middy Ashore*. In such roles, she regularly played opposite J. H. Vinson, her sometime theatrical tutor and guardian.

Prior to her departure from Hobart Town for appearances in Launceston, the *Courier* made the startling claim that Quinn was “the youngest actress in the world!”²¹ Not to be upstaged, the *Mercury* claimed that not only was Quinn a “fascinating ‘little stranger’,” it “promised” audiences that her performances were guaranteed to be “one of the greatest treats they ever had.”²² By this time F. B. Watson, the lessee, and manager of the Royal Victoria theatre, was overseeing and planning the remainder of her season. It was little wonder then that there was a flamboyant flair to Quinn’s publicity, considering Watson’s associate was also the founder of Hobart’s the *Mercury* newspaper, John Davies. Davies founded the publication a year before Quinn’s tour but had become Watson’s joint partner in 1853.

Watson was determined to take Quinn to smaller rural towns such as Green Ponds, Oatlands, and Campbell Town en route to Launceston. Quinn’s farewell performance attracted several hundred people to the theatre in Hobart on the evening of 20 April 1855. So unusual was the size of the crowd, in fact, that the *Courier* noted the following day that “many families of respectability” were turned away. Further, because many play-goers could not acquire seats in the “boxes,” it was noted that the pit “was consequently more respectably filled than usual.”²³

Publications of the day regularly commented on the assortment of play-goers who attended Quinn’s performances. In Oatlands, for instance, it was a class-conscious crowd indeed that included not only the Chairman of the Quarter sessions (J. C. Gregson, Esq.) and Lady J. Whitefoord, but many “ladies ... [who] formed the majority” of play-goers that evening. The observer complimented the women on their “taste” and similarly noted that “most of the respectable inhabitants”²⁴ of Campbell Town had attended Quinn’s performance on 25 April 1855.

In Launceston, within minutes of the Clarence Theatre opening its doors on 1 May 1855, an unprecedented scramble for standing places occurred. Throngs of people arrived at the theatre for seats causing a major upset. Not only was it reported to have been "the most respectable audience ever [seen] within the walls of a theatre in Launceston," Quinn's appearance again caused such a scramble, that adequate seating was a problem. The *Courier* claimed that "a large number of the most respectable families [had] to go away for want of room."²⁵ In fact, many "respectable" families regularly robbed themselves of public occasions to be "seen" within the dress circle of theatres in Launceston during Quinn's tour. The problem of crowds of people arriving well before notable families meant that even though "respectable families" were regularly seen, it was oftentimes outside the theatre as they left empty-handed.

Popularity and celebrity attracted particular audiences to Quinn's performances, meaning that audience composition featured regularly in the textual practices of colonial journalists covering her tour. The press was especially alert to reporting who, exactly, of the "respectable families" attended her performances, that is of course, when such families made sure to arrive early enough to secure seating before the crush invariably took place. Quinn created such a mania in Launceston prior to her appearance on 7 May that, according to the *Courier* two days later, "the streets approaching the [Clarence] Theatre were crowded, and when the doors were opened a regular Drury Lane crush took place."²⁶ The *Courier* also noted in that instance "Not more than one half the peoples presented could gain admission."²⁷

How Quinn mobilised the play-going community provides a useful "frame" in which to explore the encounter between audience and culture. A "frame," according to Gregory Bateson and Erving Goffman, is "any device or convention which allows certain messages or symbols to be set apart and considered to have a special relationship to everyday reality."²⁸ Quinn's

publicity was rich with symbolic meaning that set her performances apart as maintaining a singular relationship to the day-to-day lives of colonials. Quinn's performances avowed a different world, one that almost suspended the routine existence of everyday life. She was a "celebrity,"²⁹ "a great sensation,"³⁰ and "a truly wonderful little girl, a prodigy," promised the *Courier*, "which may not appear again in the longest lifetime."³¹

Because Quinn's talents could not, according to journalists, "be accounted for in the ordinary way,"³² such claims offered Tasmanian print culture a valuable means of organising knowledge, of "framing" Quinn's abilities and of marking off her exceptional talents as maintaining a "special relationship to everyday reality." A medical hermeneutic fashionable during the period—that of the so-called "double" or "divided consciousness"—attributed to the writings of Dr. Henry Dewar was employed in the matter of explaining "the possession of such talents." At the centre of the preoccupation with the nature of Quinn's consciousness while in Tasmania, was the incommensurable disjuncture between the outer manifestation of Quinn's talents, and the inner mechanism that presumably governed such genius:

...there are times in which she passes into a state of *double consciousness*, or, to express ourselves more properly, *divided consciousness*, wherein, to use the language of Dr. Henry Dewar, are exhibited, "two separate and independent trains of thought, and two independent mental capabilities in the same individual; each train of thought and each capability being wholly dis severed from the other" ... We fervently trust, however, that the efforts of her friends to develop her marvellous science of mind may be attended with the happiest results - that when this pretty little star ceases to shine in the Southern hemisphere, she may shine

with equal brilliance upon those British boards where the proud aspirations of her parental love will shortly lead her.³³

Aspects of that “frame” were repeated time and again in Quinn’s publicity, typically in the consistent references to Quinn as a “prodigy” and a “genius.” What such mini-narratives communicated symbolically was that audiences, “respectable” and otherwise, had in the chance of seeing Quinn a unique opportunity to experience an out-of-the-ordinary cultural event. That promise was particularly appealing to audiences in and around Launceston for a number of reasons, although I believe Quinn’s popularity in the north was especially remarkable because her appearances in Launceston almost never happened at all.

The political interests of Launceston’s colonial bureaucracy hampered F. B. Watson’s efforts to secure theatre space for Quinn’s appearances in Launceston from the start. Watson had an established theatrical reputation, one in fact crystallised as early as 1842, when he was in direct competition with Samson Cameron for venues in the settlement.³⁴ Nevertheless, bureaucratic officials staunchly resisted Watson’s applications for a license to acquire a suitable venue for Quinn in 1855. Bureaucrats remained unfazed even though Watson reportedly visited Launceston furnished with a letter of commendation from the Police Magistrate of Hobart Town (Mr. Burgess). When news of the impasse reached Hobart, the *Courier* claimed that the public authorities in Launceston had, without grounds, denied “his application for a license for the Cornwall Assembly Rooms, wherein to hold the performance!!”³⁵ The *Cornwall Chronicle* found the stalemate so offensive and such an intrusion on subjective freedom, that it remarked: “We doubt that no instance can be found in the whole civilised world similar to that now patent in this town . . . If this is not

slavery of the mind and of the body it was never yet perpetuated on human nature.”³⁶

Press of the period mobilised the population of “some ten or fifteen thousand souls”³⁷ in the wake of the refusal. Launceston at this stage enjoyed a thriving print culture, making the task of self-expression and the emphasising of social values two important concerns. In fact, since the Act to establish a Parliament in Tasmania was not passed until October 1856 (prior to that Tasmania was still Van Diemen’s Land³⁸) the press remained an important means of articulation. Before such Acts were conceded, the “press,” according to J. J. Auchmuty, “became the opposition, where every critical mind could get full play for self-expression.”³⁹ We see this ideology at work in the *Cornwall Chronicle’s* report. Journalists insisted that not only was Watson’s denial also the denial of “the privilege to witness the progress of intelligence in the form of a public exhibition,” it was an offence to the interests of commercial enterprise. “Mr. Watson, the well-known highly respectable comedian and theatre manager,” insisted the *Courier* (via the *Cornwall Chronicle*), “[had] deserved well of the public for raising theatrical performance to a credible level, and for introducing some first-rate talent into the colony, at an expense that would have deterred most persons.”⁴⁰

This encounter between audience and culture is important. Not only does it shed light on the significance of theatre in Tasmanian colonial life, it illustrates that communities did successfully mobilise to inspire bureaucratic change. For a time, Watson and Quinn made a formidable combination. Watson’s status as a “well-known highly respectable comedian and theatre manager” and the obvious support Quinn enjoyed from the colony’s “respectable families” did not go unnoticed by Launceston’s press culture. Neither did it go unnoticed that Watson himself was clearly alert to that sponsorship. The *Cornwall Chronicle* reported that Watson intended to “re-

decorate [the Clarence Theatre] and put it in thorough order for the reception of families."⁴¹

"Respectable families" were of course keen to support Watson because, based on her publicity, Quinn's symbolism as a star and a celebrated prodigy was crucial to the agenda of promoting Tasmania as a whole, but Launceston in particular, as a family-friendly location. Quinn's credibility as a "legitimate" theatrical attraction for "respectable families," was a point driven home during the second week of May 1855 when Watson was requested by "many influential heads of families in Launceston" to schedule more appearances featuring Quinn at the Clarence Theatre.⁴² This occasion underscores the importance of family as a powerful and persuasive institution in Tasmanian social life during the mid 1850s, but also shows that such families appreciated how their patronage of Quinn might be useful to "performing" a renewed, and more sophisticated and class-conscious version of "Tasmanian-ness" offshore.

Denying the bureaucratic middle-classes valuable occasions for cultural development was a short-lived affair. Theatre was a particularly important means for the wealthier and upwardly mobile classes to gesture cultivation. Quinn's publicity illustrates that although theatre was viewed as an active means of cultivating "tastes," it also made the business of exposing class divisions much easier. Her performances attracted an eclectic mix of play-goers. Her skill as a Shakespearean tragedienne, coupled with her novelty as an infant prodigy, captivated both the elites and working classes. That it was important that "respectable families" be "seen" in such a public way as at one of Quinn's performances speaks to the rich symbolism of a "legitimate" child star as an exceptional event in the ordinary lives of colonials. Quinn was iconic of family values, particularly in relation to the social value of education and an appreciation of the arts. Granted, her lifestyle as an "infant" stage celebrity was an unorthodox one, but that she was part of what George Murdock would later

describe generally, as a “nuclear family”⁴³ was never in dispute. It was the ideal of the family as a relationship that was significant here, not necessarily its adherence to conventional social norms. This is particularly notable given that Quinn was in all likelihood the primary bread-winner in her family.

The bureaucratic squabbling with Watson also highlighted the relationship between the family as a social institution, and the respectable family as a specifically middle-class institution, each in an increasingly capitalist social reality. Countless children in the colonies during the 1850s led dispirited lives. Poverty was a problem, as was the threat of disease and early mortality. Husbands eager to strike it rich deserted many women following the news of Victoria’s gold rush in 1851, and in Tasmania, it had not been all that long ago that many boys were being detained in an adjunct facility close to Port Arthur. Schooling, unlike criminal correction, was not so much a formal institution during this period as it was a class-based affair. Regular education was very much the privilege of the middle classes. In the mid 1850s, “about one-half of children aged between eight and twelve attended school at any particular time.”⁴⁴ Because it was not until 1885 that education was compulsory and free in Tasmania⁴⁵ one could in fact argue that the theatre was an important pedagogic “circulating medium,” even for children, both fortunate and not so fortunate.

That it was “many influential heads of families in Launceston” who had requested that Watson schedule further appearances of Quinn, also suggests that the extolling of a specifically middle class value system was quite powerful in the north of Tasmania at this time. The middle classes, according to Ken Buckley and Ted Wheelwright, were all “large and mobile”⁴⁶ and were comprised mostly of merchants, farmers and gold prospectors as well as professionals and officials in social bureaucracies. Watson was a businessman. The officials who had refused him a license were bureaucrats. The families who

urged further performances, and for whom Watson had refurbished the Clarence Theatre, were respectable and responsible for the edification of “the rising generation.” Given the situation, it was ironic that on 4 May—the same day “many influential heads of families in Launceston” petitioned Watson for more performances featuring Anna Maria Quinn—a public meeting “of the Working classes of Launceston” was held in that city to appeal “the abnoxious [sic] clauses” of the Masters and Servants Act.⁴⁷

Anna Maria Quinn’s final benefit performance in Launceston on Friday 18 May 1855 was newsworthy for Tasmanian readers. Not only was she “recognised by the crowd” on her way to the theatre and “absolutely cheered on her passage through the streets,”⁴⁸ but the then mayor of Melbourne, John Thomas Smith, Esq., had even attended one of her performances “in full civic costume.”⁴⁹ The *Courier* was also quick to report that the “boxes were well sprinkled with ladies.”⁵⁰

It is also important to note that theatrical drama in Hobart had almost come to a complete standstill while Quinn appeared in Launceston. There was Burton’s Equestrian Troupe, and a mesmerist and conjurer called the Wizard Jacobs, who dazzled his audiences with what the Melbourne *Argus* in 1855 called “his clever tricks and contrivances,”⁵¹ but aside from such “amusements,” little in the way of dramatic productions were offered in the city.

Quinn returned to Hobart for a round of repeat performances subsequent to her Launceston visit, although her reception was not the culture-quake she had excited in the north. Perhaps the reason lay in the fact that by that time she was no longer the sole attraction. Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Holt, who performed their own (almost complete) versions of Shakespeare, including *Richard III* (21 May), joined her at the Royal Victoria Theatre. Yet, despite the low-key reception, and the fact that the Holts had overshadowed her, Quinn did

end her tour on a high note. Her appearance as Little Eva in an adaptation of Harriett Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was a hit. In fact, Frank Flower had written the part specifically for Anna Maria in 1855 (and she performed it for the first time in Sydney that same year).



GYMNASTICS FOR LADIES.

ANNA MARIA HAS MISSED HER GUARD FOR CUT NUMBER FOUR.

Quinn undoubtedly inspired this illustration that appeared in the *Melbourne Punch*, 21 August 1856. The combination of "Anna Maria," the word "Guard" (as in the "Old Guard" from *Middy Ashore*), and the fact that the picture features sword-play (from *Hamlet*) are unmistakable.

The critics' "framing" of Quinn as a genius of no ordinary relationship to everyday life was such that she even rivalled the dramatic capabilities of her male contemporaries. Quinn's critical reception in Tasmania repeatedly referred to her dramatic "genius," particularly when compared to her more experienced, and male, counterparts:

MISS QUINN. — It becomes our duty to pass a valedictory notice upon the varied acquirements and astonishing precociousness of intellect of the infant phenomenon, the Roscius in petticoats, Miss Anna Maria Quinn, who departs for Melbourne we believe to-morrow, where she is engaged to come out at Black's new theatre. Thus the Victorians may probably have an opportunity to witnessing the remarkable contrast (never perhaps to be seen again in the brief span of a single life) between the histrionic acquirements of Gustavus Brooke, the full-grown man, the popular old stager, and the incipient efforts of a girl of tender years. And thus extremes will meet the world around.⁵²

Quinn's influence on the Tasmanian cultural imagination was still being felt while she appeared in Adelaide (again under Vinson's theatrical charge) and was claimed to be "a general favourite in this city."⁵³ In fact, such was her influence in Tasmania that Quinn inspired not one, but two imitators. There was Helen Mackenzie, a nine-year-old promoted as "the Young Tasmanian Prodigy,"⁵⁴ and also Master Drury, "a boy of singularly precocious dramatic instinct."⁵⁵ The fact that both acts appeared within the months immediately after Quinn's Tasmanian departure suggests that she was largely responsible. Master Drury appeared in the play *Tom Thumb in Tasmania* (c. 1855) just before the debut appearance of Helen Mackenzie. *Tom Thumb* was scheduled as the afterpiece to Kemble Mason's appearance in *Richard the Third* on 19 September 1855 (for the benefit of F. B. Watson's daughter [?], Miss A. M. Watson). Master Drury was promoted as a Tasmanian "local"⁵⁶ before his appearance as "a lilliputian hero,"⁵⁷ and although his dramatic performance in the piece attracted favourable comment from the *Mercury*, the critic was disappointed to note that, "His abilities were kept in the back ground by the rough burlesque of the other

characters, who seemed to us to enter too much into competition with the youthful hero."⁵⁸

Two press reports attesting to the performance of Helen Mackenzie indicate that her debut at Hobart's Royal Victoria Theatre on Friday 21 September 1855 was much more significant than that of her male counterpart. It occurred three months after the departure of Quinn, and considering their age, gender and dramatic speciality, it was of course inevitable that journalists made comparisons between the two. Prior to her debut, the *Courier* dubbed Helen as the "Tasmanian prodigy," an "intellectual girl of nine years of age" and Tasmania's "little countrywoman."⁵⁹ In fact, Helen's representation as a "prodigy" mimicked that of the American, who had been claimed earlier as a "child in years . . . [but by] no means juvenile."⁶⁰ But Mackenzie's localised marketing as thoroughly "native" was not surprising for other reasons: Watson, in charge of her promotion, was still the manager of the Royal Victoria Theatre at the time, and had successfully proven his entrepreneurial flair as Quinn's agent.

Mackenzie performed what appeared to be only abbreviated sections of Shakespeare, namely the first act of *Hamlet*, which perhaps explains why her debut occurred so close to the end of the Victoria's season. Helen was an "un-tested" "amusement" and her novelty therefore was simply not enough to warrant more time. Mackenzie's choice for her debut was identical to that of Quinn. Perhaps like Quinn, and indeed similar to more mature players of the day, Mackenzie too hoped her choice would showcase her "authenticity" as an actress. "The character is a most arduous one," observed the *Courier*, "and is invariably chosen as the test by which actors of larger growth ground their claims to histrionic fame."⁶¹ Mackenzie's claim to "histrionic fame" received mixed reviews. Although the *Courier* observed that she had talent, it predicted

that Helen could only “form a great acquisition to her parents” through more careful study.

Mackenzie’s reviews, however scarce, do suggest she was a patent source of provincial pride at the time. In fact, Hobart’s press tended to discuss both Quinn and Mackenzie as contemporaries of equal potential. Reports even went so far as to declare that Mackenzie “equals, if not excels, the ‘Phenomenon’ Miss Anna Maria Quinn.”⁶² Not surprisingly therefore, when the talents of both Quinn and Mackenzie were compared, Mackenzie maintained a distinctly sympathetic advantage as “local.” The fact that the press popularised claims that were open to debate illustrates that the symbolic value of such claims was much more important than their authenticity as “fact.” Quinn eclipsed Mackenzie in every possible respect: she was younger, boasted much more stage experience, was a touring veteran by the time she arrived in Hobart, and had regularly appeared on American stages prior to her Australian debut. However flawed were the claims of Mackenzie’s genius, the fact that she inspired such fervent localisation in the production of print media suggests her symbolic visibility was considerable. Helen’s visibility as the “Tasmanian prodigy” and Tasmania’s “little countrywoman” was in high relief, but also intensely relative. Her absolute relativity to place was aptly emphasised by the fact that Mackenzie appears not to have toured beyond Hobart, either prior to Quinn’s arrival or subsequent to it. In fact, she appears to have disappeared from the stage altogether after her brief brush with fame in September 1855.



ROYAL VICTORIA THEATRE.

IMMENSE ATTRACTION

For the Benefit of

MESSRS. ARABIN, TURNER, LEWIS, MIRAN
STEWART, and MRS. BURDETT.

First appearance of

MISS HELEN MACKENZIE,

(Nine years of ago)

THE YOUNG TASMANIAN PRODIGY,

Who will appear, on this occasion, in the character of

H A M L E T .

First night of the new thrilling Drama of

M A R Y , Q U E E N O F S C O T S ,

and revival of the

B O T T L E I M P .

In which Mr. F. B. WATSON has kindly consented
to appear in his favourite character of the BOTTLE
IMP.

On FRIDAY EVENING, 21st SEPT, 1855,

Will be produced a new Drama of intense interest,
entitled

MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS;

To be followed by the first act of Shakespeare's sub-
lime tragedy of

H A M L E T .

Hamlet Prince of Denmark - Miss Ellen Mackenzie,
Her first appearance.

The Evening's Entertainment concluding with the
seriocomic drama of the

BOTTLE IMP.

The Bottle Imp, Mr. F. B. Watson

The Box-office is now daily open, from 11 to 4, for
securing places. Doors open at a quarter to 7, com-
mencing at half-past 7. Admission as usual.

The Royal Victoria Theatre (later renamed as the Theatre Royal) advertises the appearances of Helen (sometimes "Ellen") Mackenzie, "the young Tasmanian prodigy" of Shakespearean part-performances, who was inspired by the Tasmanian tour of the American seven-year-old tragedienne and comic actress Anna Maria Quinn (1855).

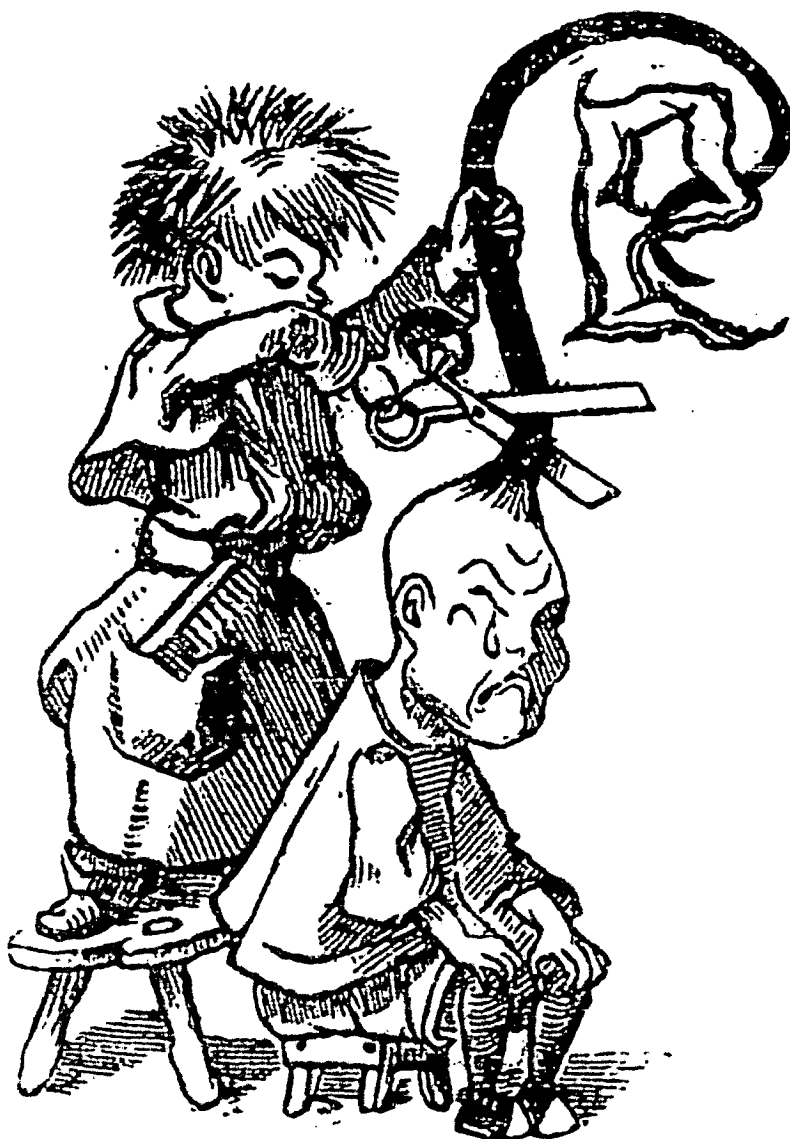
Shortly before Mackenzie slipped quietly out of the colonial consciousness, Quinn's publicity resonated again in Tasmania, even though she had left the island some four months earlier. The *Courier* once more brought her to mind by reprinting a piece first published by the Melbourne *Punch*. The "Papers from the Portfolio of 'Melbourne Punch'"⁶³ was a hybrid genre of biography. Although claiming "all the charms of originality, and all the novelty of truth," the piece was actually a novelty written in a popular style of the day and made an unusual addition to the variety of textual practices her appearances inspired. The piece suggested that, "The effect of her acting upon the minds of an excitable and admiring public, was almost indescribable. Bill-brokers, have become on a sudden so tender hearted . . . A susceptible Chinaman, cut off his pig-tail, and flung it on the stage, at the feet of the heart-subduing actress." It was even humourously claimed that "A gentleman of the Hebrew persuasion, was so overcome by the acting of the infant phenomenon, that he declined to complete 'a deal,' by which he would have realized a profit of 1500 per cent. — 'the force of acting could no further go'."⁶⁴

Quinn did reappear in Tasmania again, in 1857. However, her tour that year did not live up to the cultural encounter she managed to inspire two years before. The *Cornwall Chronicle* observed that Quinn's "thin houses" at Launceston's Lyceum Theatre in late January were odd "taking into consideration how very popular Miss Quinn was during her last visit."⁶⁵ It later reported her departure for Melbourne prior to her visit to London (via New Zealand).⁶⁶

What is in fact more remarkable about her tour in 1857 is what it can tell us about the career of F. B. Watson. Elizabeth Webby has written that nothing is known of Watson following his partnership of Hobart's Royal Victoria with John Davies during 1853-56,⁶⁷ but Quinn's publicity during her tour in 1857 helps to fill in the gap:

THEATRICAL.—The celebrated juvenile phenomenon, Miss Anna Maria Quinn, has been the leading attraction at the Lyceum Theatre for some time past, and has attracted good audiences. The word phenomenon is certainly justly given to this precocious child ; her impersonations in one play of characters numerous and diverse is truly wonderful. Her engagement, and that of Mr. Vinson, whose delineation of the Old Guard is one of the best pieces of acting ever seen here has just terminated, and Mr. Watson, the entertaining though unfortunate lessee of the theatre, now introduces to the theatrical public of Launceston Mademoiselle Marie Duret, an actress of high reputation in the neighbouring colonies. We have seen some of the notices the Press has bestowed upon the acting of this lady, and the admirers of a superior style of acting will not, we should think, be disappointed in the performance of Mademoiselle Duret. This is, we believe, the last theatrical speculation in which Mr. Watson intends to engage. He proposes retiring shortly from theatrical life.—*Examiner*.⁶⁸

Quinn's reception in Hobart was remarkable in 1855 and in Launceston it was unprecedented. Her ability to inspire crowds of on-lookers in the streets was as important an indicator of her cultural impact as encouraging a "Tasmanian" counterpart in the figure of Helen Mackenzie (and indeed Master Drury). In fact, I have yet to find another performer who inspired other "home grown" imitations in Tasmania as had Anna Maria Quinn. The fact that Mackenzie and Drury appeared at all suggests that Quinn's theatrical authority was a powerful cultural force, not only during her tour, but also in the days and months following her departure in 1855.



This illustration of Quinn accompanied the Melbourne *Punch* "Papers of the Portfolio" series featuring a summary of her powers.

Quinn came to define "star power" to Tasmanian audiences in that year, and it is not an overstatement to suggest that she was one of the first offshore international actresses heralding the rise of celebrity culture in this country. In fact, I would like to go one step further and suggest that the *Hobart Town Courier* on Tuesday, 10 April 1855 made one of the first references to "celebrity" in Tasmania in its publicity about Anna Maria Quinn. This introduction of the

term into the textual practices of Tasmanian print culture makes for an interesting topic of speculation when attempting to explain the differences between Quinn's popular receptions in Launceston compared to Hobart. It may be true that Launceston audiences were less catered to for choice (especially considering Watson's problems in leasing the Clarence Theatre), which is why so many people flocked to see her. However, it may be equally true that Quinn's star-power was simply more appealing to audiences in the north. If Quinn's celebrity star power did resonate more strongly in Launceston, could this explain why dramatic entertainment had all but come to a complete standstill in Hobart during Quinn's season there? Was Quinn's celebrity such that it created a greater degree of anticipation in Launceston than in Hobart?

Because Launceston readers would have been kept informed as to Quinn's appearances in Hobart, and considering the symbolic power of narratives that claimed her "matchless," "first-rate," and a "celebrity,"⁶⁹ it was no wonder that she was regularly mobbed by crowds by the time she reached Launceston. A longer publicity campaign promoting Quinn as a "celebrity" had succeeded in perhaps creating a more penetrating measure of excitement in the north. Adding to that momentum was Watson's unexpected, but nonetheless sensational publicity resulting from his struggles with bureaucrats to secure for her a suitable venue, and indeed the "respectable families" lobbying for more of her appearances. Therefore, I am proposing that not only was Anna Maria Quinn one of the first actresses to be claimed a "star" in Tasmania, and the first actress to inspire a "Tasmanian" "native" counterpart, but also that she, and other actresses like her who travelled internationally after Australian appearances, were central to the textual practices used by media cultures to represent the "native" identity of "home grown" stars, particularly those that came later, namely, the Carandini and Howson sisters, Lucy Chambers, and later still, Amy Sherwin.

This is perhaps ironically demonstrated in the fact that while Quinn left Australia in March 1857 as a “histrionic celebrity,”⁷⁰ by the time she reached England in September, she was not initially known as an American at all, but rather as an “Australian.” This suggests that the appeal of “Australian-ness” was sufficiently current to an English media culture, but also implies that “Australian-ness” was an important signifier to the textual practices used to communicate celebrity and identity between offshore press cultures. When London’s *Theatrical Journal* claimed that “Miss Maria Quin, the clever juvenile Australian actress” had recently been performing at the Haymarket,⁷¹ we see how slippery was the notion of identity in the rise of celebrity culture. Also evident is how the shared textual practices between distant print journalists relied more and more on theatrical stars as an organising principle in the cultural meaning-making of identity.⁷²

**Part Four: “Home Grown” Stars and
Tasmanian Celebrity Culture in the
1860s**

“First Wave” “native” Celebrities

During the 1860s, print culture thrived and the manufacture of stage players as stars or celebrities was actively promoted worldwide, as well as in Australia generally and Tasmania specifically. The ideology that successful theatre represented “the best circulating medium a community can have”¹ was reaching a new peak in emphasis, and performers—whether “imported” from America or Europe, domestic companies, or solo artists—were more mobile and toured more often than in previous decades. This shift represented two important developments; that theatre and print media as cultures of circulation paid more and more attention to the recruitment of “home grown” stars in state and homeland identity representation; and, that a greater emphasis was placed on the profound impact of the children of colonial immigrant players on provincial culture. These points are well illustrated by the Tasmanian tours of the Carandini sisters (all first generation operatic singers), as well as the Howson sisters, Emma and Clelia (both singers and actresses and similarly first generation children of immigrants), actress Hattie Shepparde (a comic actress of considerable ability according to her publicity), and later, the operatic singing sensations Lucy Chambers and Amy Sherwin (also first generation).

Another important shift discernible during this era was the effect on “native” talent of visiting offshore “stars” such as Lady Emilia Don, Marie Duret, and the American superstar Joseph Jefferson. These three players require some consideration because they were especially influential to the careers of the Howson sisters and Hattie Shepparde. Emilia Don will be discussed in relation to both the Howson sisters and Hattie Shepparde, while Marie Duret will only be considered in relation to Hattie Shepparde. Joseph Jefferson will also be discussed for two reasons. First, not only did Hattie appear with Jefferson

during his Australian tour, second, the actor was rumoured to have significantly influenced Emma Howson's career.

Joseph Jefferson was perhaps best known in Australia for his performances as Asa Trenchard from *Our American Cousin*, Bob Brierly in *Ticket-of-Leave Man* and as Hugh de Brass in a version of Washington Irving's *Rip Van Winkle*. Jefferson appeared in Tasmania between February and April 1864 during his three-and-a-half year Australian tour. He wrote in retrospect of "a most refined society in Tasmania"² and perhaps his observation was more than a little influenced by the flattering criticism he regularly received in the *Mercury*. The critic, probably John Davies, remarked many times on Jefferson's "great genius as an actor,"³ the "sheer force of his histrionic genius,"⁴ and his "effective" style which mingled "the intensest of eccentricity with the most admirable pathos"⁵, in the end deciding that "he is really a most versatile actor."⁶

But Jefferson's fascination with the "convict flavour" of Hobart and Tasmania's "most refined society" was not the only thing about Tasmania that captivated him: the other was two of the colony's "home grown" stars. He was sufficiently impressed by Hattie Shepparde's talents as an actress to offer her many parts during his Melbourne season (although it is debatable whether the actor was aware of her "home grown" origins), and there is another story which claims that it was at the urging of Jefferson that Emma Howson went to America (in the end permanently) in 1866.



JOSEPH JEFFERSON, ESQ.—

Joseph Jefferson, as he appeared in the *Illustrated Sydney News* on 10 January 1863, (almost two years after his arrival in 1861) appeared in Tasmania between February and April 1864. He was so popular in the colony that many times hundreds of people were turned away from Hobart's Theatre Royal. He concluded after his appearance as Bob Brierly in *Ticket-of-Leave Man* ("for the first time" according to the *Mercury* on 4 April) that his characterisation was "extremely popular with some of the old 'lags' of Hobart Town" because he was "often accosted by some of these worthies [addressing him as old 'pal'] and told some touching tale of their early persecutions." (Jefferson 259-60).

Another visiting player to influence the success of the Howson family and Hattie Shepparde was Lady Emilia Don.⁷ She and her husband, Sir William Henry Don,⁸ arrived in Australia in 1861 courtesy of theatrical entrepreneur George Coppin. Their publicity suggests that the couple was promptly well regarded, as after their first performance on 22 January 1861, *Bell's Life in Victoria* claimed the pair were "really refreshing, after the imposters and mountebanks, by whom [the] colony [had] been overrun."⁹ Their colonial appearances were typically popular, especially given the perception that William Don was, according to *Bell's Life* on 26 January 1861, "the first man of rank who [had] ever taken to the stage as a profession."¹⁰

The couple's flamboyancy was evident in Tasmania even before they arrived in Launceston for their first tour in February 1862. A grandiose bill that announced their arrival featured the word **DON** in "letters in six feet."¹¹ It was obvious from the start of their tour that Emilia commanded the attention of her audience; "The sauciness and independence of Lady Don as 'Milly' [in *Maid with the Milking Pale*] were very amusing," noted the *Launceston Examiner*.¹² What is also obvious is the fact that Emilia was granted particular concessions as a stage performer that other women did not enjoy, as evidenced by the claim, "the frequent vulgarities introduced by her were very characteristic."¹³ The fact that the presentation of "frequent vulgarities" would likely have attracted some criticism if presented by any other player suggests that Emilia's rank as a "Lady" was a unique social force. In fact, that Emilia was so well received as both a "Lady" and as an actress enjoying her public visibility does give good grounds to question how widespread was an aversion to the stage as a "respectable" profession for women in the period.



The illustration of *Kenilworth* was published by the *Melbourne Punch*, 29 September 1864, and was undoubtedly inspired by Emilia Don's appearance in the burlesque of the same name. The following lines accompanied the image: "Knight *sans peur sans reproche* / They one and all confess'd her / So gracefully she trod the stage / AS DUDLEY, EARL OF LEICESTER . . . Some thoughts arose as these I saw / Of one whom charmed us lately; / Brimfull of quirks, and quips and cranks / A monarch tall and stately."

After performing to particularly good crowds for over three months, the couple's tour ended prematurely with just as much spectacle. The irony of the size of the lettering proclaiming the arrival of the Dons was probably not lost on those who witnessed Sir William Don being laid to rest in a grave six feet deep close to the end of May in 1862 after he died unexpectedly of an "Aneurism of the Arch of the Aorta."¹⁴ A private ceremony that included over one hundred mourners was organised and he was buried in St. David's cemetery, Hobart, on 22 March 1862. The fact that the body was later exhumed and transported back to Scotland via the *Harrowby* added yet another spectacle to the couple's cultural presence.¹⁵ Such was their effect that even today there is a public house in Elizabeth Street, Hobart called "The Sir William Don" that is commonly known as "The Don."



"Sir William Don is very tall, and a most accomplished man as an actor, whether in English, French, or German plays it is alike to him, and no matter what sphere or phase of life."¹⁶

Emilia Don did not let the unpleasant experience of her husband's death in 1862 prevent her from launching a solo Tasmanian tour in 1865. Her troupe included the Howson Family and Hattie Shepparde and under Don's rigorous direction they presented lavish productions characterised by a "strict accordance with historical truth."¹⁷ The *Mercury* was very impressed by productions such as *The Daughter of the Regiment* (1840), J. G. Byron's classical burlesque *Perseus and Andromeda*, and Blanchard Jerrold's *Cool as a Cucumber*, claiming: "On the scenery much pains seem to have been bestowed, and everything exhibited is new."¹⁸

Also "new" to Hobart were a number of Don's dramatic choices. *Kathleen Mavourneen* was claimed not to have been seen in Tasmania before,¹⁹ and so-called "fairy extravaganzas" such as *Prince Amiable*, were claimed "a New Burlesque Extravaganza."²⁰ Her version of *Ali Baba, or the forty thieves* featured "new Local Allusions, written expressly by a Gentleman of Hobart Town,"²¹ and *Ali Baba* was publicised as an "entirely original spectacular Extravaganza, adapted expressly for Lady Don."²²

Emilia typically sang a range of pieces in the course of an evening's entertainment as many of her burlesques, musical comedies and dramas all relied on instrumentation and song. Sometimes the Howson sisters supported her, but it was far more common for her to present a selection of songs as interludes or afterpieces to showcase her own solo performances. While her voice suited pieces such as "The Garter Song," and so-called "marital songs" such as "Step Together," Don's specialty was as a balladeer. Her interludes of "National Ballads" were very popular as powerful anthems. Pieces such as "Death of the Nelson," "Rory O'More," "Auld Lang Syne," "John Anderson my Jo," and "Macgregor's Gathering" were perennial favourites to a colonial class still loyal to the ideologies of British Imperialism.



This illustration of Emilia, like the first, also appeared in the *Melbourne Punch* (24 November 1864) and similarly was accompanied by verse:

"With figurehead unmatched, And lines so shapely laid,
And sailing power out-stripping all ; Of nought afloat afraid,
She bounds upon the stage a tar, With voice of cheery tone;
And Dibdin's songs she carols forth, As she can pipe alone . . .
In song and dance alike alert, At Llyod's esteem A1,
We'll own this jocund tar to be 'Mong sailors quite a Don."

The other overseas actress to appear in Tasmania and influence the career of a “home grown” star was Marie Duret. Duret’s reputation as an actress was already well established when she appeared in Tasmania for the first time in 1857. During the late 1840s, she appeared together with G. V. Brooke in England, when the two were romantically involved. For a time she even was billed as “Mrs. Brooke.” However, the couple’s split was by all accounts a sensational one. One theatre writer suggests that Brooke “was often asked to dinner by the gentry to the disappointment of his companion [Duret], to whom the invitation was not extended,” and that she later “poisoned herself in the street . . . [while Brooke] succeeded in saving her life.”²³ It was a dramatic gesture if the story was true and probably provided Duret a certain level of genuineness as an actress because theatre critics regularly admired her specialisation as “a melodramatic actress.”²⁴ Her affair with Brooke ended sometime in 1849, and he later complained to a friend that “after having robbed him ‘on all sides’ [Marie] had eloped, and was on her way to America.”²⁵ How much of their love affair was known by Australian theatre critics can only be guessed. Yet, the fact that *Bell’s Life in Sydney* greeted her in 1856 as “another ‘star’ of considerable brilliancy”²⁶ implies her credibility was secure.

Duret also included one of Joseph Jefferson’s staples. During her second visit to Hobart in 1870, she presented Tom Taylor’s *Ticket of Leave Man* (on 10 December 1870) playing the part of Bob Brierly, the role made famous by Jefferson in Hobart back in 1864. Duret’s performance was as well received in Hobart in 1870, as were afterpieces such as the *Spectre Bridegroom*,²⁷ a piece called *The Omnibus*,²⁸ another called *The Limerick Boy*,²⁹ and a version of James Kenney’s *Turn Him Out* (1812) which probably had the desired effect of leaving audiences in a good mood at the end of each evening.

VICTORIA THEATRE.
WEDNESDAY EVENING, 8th APRIL.
MADAME MARIE DURET.

GREEN BUSHES,



TO-MORROW EVENING.

Whose Extraordinary Talented Performances, have gained for her the highest renown throughout England, America, California, and Sydney.

The Evenings Entertainments will commence with Buckstone's celebrated Drama, in three Acts, entitled,

GREEN BUSHES;

OR,

THE HUNTRESS OF THE MISSISSIPPI.

Miami, the Huntress of the Mississippi MADAME DURET.

This bill featured Marie Duret in one of her most successful roles, as Miami in J. B. Buckstone's *Green Bushes* (1845). The play was sometimes also known as *A Hundred Years Ago*, and it should be noted that a bill of this size (appearing in the *Ballarat Times*, 7 April 1857) was quite unusual as it would have been very expensive to run.

Duret was a talented woman. Her “masterly touch,” claimed the *Mercury*, placed her “on par, or almost so,”³⁰ with the art of Madame Céleste and the range of “Miss [Isabel] Bateman.” Later, on 17 November, the *Mercury* judged Duret’s skills as a ballerina were equal to that of Madame Céleste, with the *Mercury* critic further commenting on 16 November 1870 that Duret’s appearance in *French Spy* provided him the opportunity “of witnessing what has never before been seen here, the representation of a character in which Madame Céleste is so celebrated, and which will be rendered by Madame Duret in a style commensurate with her great abilities.”³¹ Comparisons between Duret and Céline Céleste were common and not altogether surprising. Céleste toured Australia for one year beginning in 1867 (courtesy of George Coppin), and like Duret, who was still in the country at the time, Céleste too performed the role of Miami in *Green Bushes* (but Céleste appeared before the Duke of Edinburgh at Melbourne’s Haymarket Theatre).

It is easy to see that Duret, Don and Jefferson were all powerful figures in the period’s theatrical world, but their direct influence in the careers of a number of “home grown” stars must also be discussed in light of the ways in which other off-shore arrivals altered the landscape of colonial theatre culture. A number of other figures, exclusively female, also merit some discussion.

Chapter Six:

The Tasmanian Nightingales and their Repertoires

History evidences that Tasmanian women were at the forefront of opera in Australia since the early days of settlement and that their activities crystallised as a valuable legacy for future generations. Immigrants of theatrical skill such as Anne Clarke and Marie Carandini paved the way for the first generation of “home grown” “Tasmanian Nightingales” that included women such as Fanny, Rosina, Emma, Isabella, and Lizzie Carandini and of course the Howson sisters, Lucy Chambers, and Amy Sherwin. Of the Carandini sisters, Fanny, Lizzie and Isabella all later settled in England after their Australian careers, while Rosina and Emma established Australian reputations as popular *prima donnas*. Notably, Marie Carandini’s frequent return visits to Tasmania throughout the period helped to establish the careers of all her daughters, with more than one in fact making their stage debuts before hometown audiences. This is especially significant because their tours provide valuable insight into the life of a female star, and emphasise women’s contribution to the cultural function of opera in a relatively isolated community such as Tasmania.

Before examining these women in detail, it is first important to contextualise theatre actresses generally within the cultural milieu of the 1860s. Colonisation in Tasmania by that decade was some sixty years old, although community ideologies remained in keeping with frontier social values, meaning on the border/limits of settler establishments. Tasmania was still understood as a “sister colony”¹ of Victoria at this time, and this encapsulated closely how Australia itself legitimated its position in relation to Imperial sovereignties. Newspapers typically printed summaries of Australian events as a month-by-month convention for readers “at home,” ostensibly to keep the mother country

informed. This practice, in effect, institutionalised ideologies about “the Australian context” as “other,” and this central idea was as instilled in processes of meaning-making as the construction of the Tasmanian subjectivity as “other.” Media institutions of the period reflected both processes of “otherness,” and their artefacts, in particular theatre reviews and criticism, of course propagated this “otherness” in critiques of theatre women.

Women’s social position from the 1850s and into the 1860s was characterised by a dichotomy of conflicting ideologies in an era when men significantly outnumbered women, and indeed at a time when most audiences attending theatrical performances were male. Not only were women living in a social environment characterised by an over-supply of men, but also the cultural imperative assigning women their duty as gatekeepers of morality was as deeply imbedded in Australian society as it was in other communities during the mid Victorian age. Yet the social visibility of actresses does show that not only were there cultural loopholes, but also that gender mores were sometimes more pliable in Australia than elsewhere.

What did, to some degree, complicate the position of women on the stage was the reality that most operas were adaptations of pre-existing novels or stage plays written by men, and many operatic narratives tended to focus on themes of incest, abortion, suicide, infanticide, insanity and sex. This was generally not problematic in and of itself, but for the fact that the representations of women in most of the popular compositions were often circumscribed by these very tropes. Women either actively engineered twisted dramatic situations, or took on parts as victims in narratives that, in the end, often plotted women’s own undoing.

Clearly, subversive tropes did have the potential to problematise gender relations throughout the nineteenth century and one of the most important mechanisms that played a significant part in diminishing the potential of a

backlash against domestic stage women in light of such socially problematic themes was print culture. I specifically identify domestic actresses in this process of transference because it is interesting to note that when social commentators raised and hotly debated such themes, they typically involved the performances of offshore touring stage actresses. This is an important phenomenon and deserves some attention before engaging in detail with the reception of “home grown” opera stars in particular. An apparent discrimination between how critics received and represented actresses is crucial in illustrating where the loyalties of Australian media culture really did lie during the period, and how this transference of problematised femininity to non-domestic stage actresses affected local women players.

Three such notable women to shift the attention of problematised femininity away from domestic actresses during the 1850s and 60s were Mary Provost, Sarah Stark, and Avonia Jones; each was a specialist tragedienne and all were reportedly well-respected actresses. Not only is their press fascinating when considering issues influencing the representation of women, it is also particularly valuable in offering quite vivid portraits of the power of theatre women generally as proactive catalysts of cultural change. And although neither Provost nor Jones appeared for performances in Tasmania, their publicity is important to discuss as it contextualises the media culture that detailed the achievements of “home-grown” actresses appearing around the same time.

Mary Provost was the daughter of a distinguished and pious family.² Her grandfather was reportedly the Right Reverend Samuel Provost, who had held the post of “Chaplain to Congress and officiated in that capacity at the Inauguration of the first president of the United States, George Washington.”³ Mary took to the stage as a “legitimate” profession, and her publicity suggests that audiences and critics held her in high esteem as an actress. Media described her as “almost faultless in form, being tall, graceful and active, and in feature,

without being positively beautiful, she yet possesses one of those playful, expressive, and mouldable faces.”⁴ Of her skills, it was said by the *San Francisco Herald* that, “Miss Mary . . . possesses a good person, a musical, sweet and flute-like voice, [she] sings like a nightingale and smiles like an angel.”⁵

Her performances of the domestic tragedy *Camille* in 1858 brought another representation of stage women to the fore. The play had as its source Dumas fils’s *La Dame aux Camélias*, the work which in turn inspired Verdi’s opera *La Traviata*, and it was common to find operatic versions of dramatic works such as *Camille* and *La Traviata* (among many others) appearing coincidentally at rival theatres during the period.⁶ *Camille*’s name part was one the *Age* once called “the Parisian coquette,”⁷ and after Provost’s appearance as the character in September 1860, the same publication remarked: “That it is possessed of much dramatic power is undoubted, and that it has called forth the just indignation of the press and the pulpit will not be denied.”⁸ It was not Mary’s acting or modesty as an actress that was under scrutiny. Rather, the main objection to *Camille* was that the heroine was a courtesan. It was surely this fact that motivated one critic to claim that *Camille* offered audiences:

one of the most striking pictures of a phase in woman's history.

None who have seen the play will refuse to acknowledge that the *denouement* exceeds in horror anything they have even before witnessed. Why is this? Because there is a depth of infamy to which a woman can sink which in the other sex has no parallel.⁹

Provost’s compelling performances had the power to mobilise public opinion about the depth of woman’s “infamy.” Despite warnings of “the danger to . . . unsophisticated townspeople”¹⁰ in Victoria of the piece, Mary’s performance

actually motivated one theatre-goer to “defend” *Camille* and “Miss Provost’s fascinating impersonation of the heroine.”¹¹



Mary Provost as *Medea*, another “problem” female character of the theatrical imagination, in 1859 (the script of which Provost held sole copyright). “Hers is the virgin gold of genius,” claimed the *Melbourne Punch*, “and something more, — the delicate skill which mints it, and the authority which gives it currency.”¹²

Provost’s representation of *Camille* contrasted to the protagonist played by the Canadian, Sarah Stark, only two years before. Sarah arrived in Australia together with her husband James in June 1853 and she apparently “appealed so much to the Australian public that at one of her benefit performances they subscribed several hundred pounds and presented her with a diamond

brooch.”¹³ Sarah’s financial success was obvious, and perhaps explains why she was sometimes the target of harsh criticism. One playgoer wrote to the *Ballarat Times* complaining that Stark’s impersonation of the “man-killer” Camille was spoiled by her “inharmonious” voice and her (Stark’s) “large share of egregious vanity.”¹⁴ The critic further commented on the impropriety of claiming Sarah as dramatically brilliant, but it is interesting to note that Sarah’s “egregious vanity,” which so offended the (male) theatregoer, was apparently very attractive to a number of other men. As one writer notes “Sarah was no great beauty but a great personality who in her lifetime attracted five husbands ([James] Stark was her third).”¹⁵

“Egregious” or not, the playgoer’s criticism of Sarah, like similar comments inspired by Provost, does evidence a number of important features influencing an off-shore actress’s reception in the frontier milieu. The quips that appeared in relation to both women suggest that while some plays were publicised as “sensational” by virtue of their salacious themes, an actress’s personality and nationality played a major role in influencing her popular reception amongst playgoers. What such press also indicates is that it was these factors that influenced the degree to which critics and commentators intertwined an actress’s subjectivity with the moral dimensions of the characters she sometimes played.

The American actress Avonia Jones offers yet another picture of the power of genre to both paint a picture of colonial womanhood, as well as to provoke audience response. Avonia was born Avonia Stanhope Joannes¹⁶ on 12 July 1839 to American tragedian George Jones¹⁷ and actress Melinda Jones. Although she was claimed in Australia as “the first tragedienne of the age,”¹⁸ it was later said that, “Such a name as hers was bound to be blackballed from immortality.”¹⁹ She too played the heroine in “Dumas great tragic drama”²⁰

Camille, and in Australia her female lead as Juliet to the Romeo of her mother must surely have been a colonial first.²¹

Although Jones' heavy dramatic style later earned for her the rather unkind epithet (in England) of "*Avonia Groans*,"²² in Australia, she seemed to have the right theatrical touch. She, like Provost, also performed in a number of dramatic versions of plays inspiring operatic works, such as a version of Victor Hugo's *Lucrezia Borgia* (1833) and an adaptation of Sir Walter Scott's *Bride of Lammermoor* (1819). Avonia's performances in *Lucrezia Borgia* at Melbourne's Princess's in November 1859 rivalled that presented by Marie Carandini (in the operatic version) at the Theatre Royal. In fact, Jones' characterisation was, according to one provincial publication in 1860, particularly important because "It was very gratifying to witness dignified talent overawing the vulgar whistlers and brawlers who ever attended a theatre . . . During every speech delivered by Miss Jones, the most illiterate seemed to hold their breath."²³

Jones spent significant time touring the provincial areas of Victoria (as did the Carandinis) where, as in metropolitan theatres but to a lesser degree, drinking was often encouraged. Therefore, part of the importance of "dignified talent" was what this skill of "overawing" suggested about the power of players generally, but women in particular. According to another publication, "Miss Avonia Jones took amazingly well, as that sort of actress must do with such audiences as usually assemble in unsettled localities."²⁴



Avonia Jones (La Trobe Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria²⁵) was perhaps most noted in Australia for her elopement with G. V. Brooke,²⁶ who, at the age of almost forty-three, was almost twice Jones' age (she was twenty-one).

But more sensational was the fact that the man was already married. In fact, Marianne Elizabeth Woolcott Bray, who had wed the tragedienne at the age of twenty-eight in Birmingham in 1851, was also still living in Melbourne at the time of the couple's Australian departure for England on 30 May 1861. Brooke finally (and illegally) married Avonia Jones at the St. Philip's Church in Liverpool on 23 February 1863.

The effect in “unsettled localities” of “that sort of actress” probably included most actresses. Their profession confronted women with a myriad of socially problematic obstacles. Assumptions that an actress was open to romantic advances or available (meaning “unmarried”) were caused in part by her public visibility but also by the potential conflation of her “real life” personality with the characters she played. Playing “saucy” or “racy” women or tragic females whose downfall was their capacity to love the forbidden, perhaps inflamed the imaginations of their male-dominated audiences, even, one should note, in “female” genres such as domestic dramas and melodramas.

The publicity of “local” stage women, particularly in Tasmania, was quite distinct but did achieve similar social outcomes to that of non-domestic actresses. “Home grown” stars, like the offshore women players, popularised specific cultural narratives of femininity (as representation) and feminine activity (as public mobility). And even though domestic actresses inspired differences in the kinds of cultural encounters compared to non-domestic stage women, the fact that actresses generally were doing things publicly that media institutions determined merited closer, and regular, attention, means that little distinction was made between operatic and non-operatic women players during this period. Even if Provost, Stark, and Jones appeared in versions of *Lucrezia Borgia*, *Bride of Lammermoor*, and *Camille*, while the Tasmanian-born nightingales appeared in their operatic counterparts (*Lucrezia Borgia*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, and *La Traviata*), critics made no distinctions between the professional visibilities of these women based on their specialisation: they received all with equal acceptance as “actresses.” In fact, many of the “home grown” women, such as the Carandini and Howson sisters, Hattie Shepparde, Amy Sherwin, and others, did perform in the operatic versions of plays based on literary works presented by non-domestic actresses like Provost, Stark and Jones, including *Lucrezia*

Borgia, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *La Sonnambula*, *Maritana*, *Faust*, *Rose of Castille*, and others.

Theatre genres, in particular drama and opera, were discursive catalysts that each facilitated a kind of moral posturing in response to many women players in light of the kinds of characters they played on stage. This emphasises the fact that women were explicitly involved in influencing a variety of social behaviours that spilled out into the cultural climate of play-going generally. Many of the reviews that appeared after the performance of “*Tasmanian Nightingales*,” for instance, acted as cultural diffusers if the roles they played were morally contentious. This was achieved by concentrating attention on the theatrical achievements of these women in technically performing their parts rather than on labouring the point of the moral susceptibility of the characters they played.

This is not to say that many reviews were not fascinated with the darker (and more sensual) sides of femininity characterising the female roles of many operas and melodramas. It is true that many journalists did remain transfixed by the wickedness and alluring tragedy of Donizetti’s, Verdi’s or Dumas’ women. This is clear in the fact that presentations featuring women, such as *Lady of Lyons*, *Cinderella*, and *The Colleen Bawn* not to mention those named after a woman, such as *Maritana* (the opera) and *Camille* (the drama), were among the most popular plays of the nineteenth century. However, many reviewers were equally careful not to conflate the at times morally questionable dimensions of the roles assigned to “local” stage actresses with their real-life realities as part of a local community. This is not surprising given that the trend came at a time when media culture popularised quite specific ideals about the moral expectations placed upon theatre personalities; such as the *Punch*’s claim that:

Indecency, stupidity and vulgarity are utterly abhorrent to public taste, which is fastidious almost to prudery and severely critical in the judgments it expresses. 'Sensation dramas,' so popular in America, would not be listened to in Australia; and an exigent audience demands that the private lives of those who amuse it should be as immaculate as the characters they present.²⁷

Even if the quip was tongue-in-cheek (as similar retorts so often were in the *Punch*), a nub of truth probably inspired it. Why else make a point of publishing news of the marriages of "Tasmanian Nightingales," or print reports concerning the births of their children, and reproduce updates tracking their career developments over so long a period time? These were important women, inspiring important cultural documents that made a clear distinction between life and art by personifying domestic actresses as "real" people. Critics typically reserved parts of their reviews for crediting the technical merits of their work, while also setting aside ample space to emphasise their close relationships to the local community.

The "exigent audience" noted by the *Punch* in 1861 took to eagerly embracing the cultural contribution to opera of "home grown" stars such as the Carandini and Howson siblings, Amy Sherwin (and Lucy Chambers) with vigour. Perhaps this was of even greater importance to colonial culture considering that the "private lives" of some of opera's fictional women—Bellini's Norma, Donizetti's Lucrezia, Gounod's Marguerite, and many others—were so far from "immaculate." And the fact that the publicity of "real" home grown stars such as Chambers, Sherwin, the Howson sisters and Hattie Shepparde, promoted their "private lives" as seemingly "immaculate" as their dramatic abilities, perhaps lent even greater credibility to their cultural significance and social power.

But even aside from their “real” private lives, stage women generally—domestic and non-domestic, stars of opera or drama, pantomime or tragedy—all assumed quite powerful positions as figures of public attention in the colonial era. These women affected audience behaviour, changed social attitudes, and, at the very least motivated public debate (as was the case with offshore actresses such as Montes, Stark, Provost, Jones, and many others). All, I would argue, probably contributed to the comparatively rapid changes in social ideologies about theatre and women as professionals occurring throughout much of the second half of the nineteenth century. Therefore, the significance of female Tasmanian stars of the 1860s—as exemplars to colonial women—deserves much closer attention.

Chapter Seven:

The Carandini Sisters

"When we were children we always lived in Hobart, and one of my first appearances as a singer was when I took part in the services held at St. Mary's Cathedral . . . One of the two operatic performances that I have ever given was also in Hobart, when, as a little girl, I took part in Norma with my mother."

Rosina Carandini, 1894¹

Of the array of "lyric artists" Tasmania produced throughout the nineteenth century, the Carandini family was probably the first and for a time conceivably the most well known.² Marie's return visits to Tasmania ensured her of a loyal following, and the inroads she made in furthering opera throughout the Australian colonies was a legacy she left to her daughters. Their extensive involvement in opera, concert music, and touring made it obvious that Marie and Jerome Carandini loved classical material works, and that they had instilled this appreciation of the genre in their offspring. This is important in illustrating how crucial "immigrants" were in affecting musical culture in Tasmania during the early days of settlement. Through the nurturing of their gifted daughters, Rosina, Lizzie, Fanny (sometimes billed as "Fannie"), Isabella, and Emma (sometimes billed as "Marie"), the Carandini name (like that of Emma and Clelia Howson) became synonymous with the operatic arts during the 1860s and well into the early twentieth century. It is highly unlikely that any other first-generation "native" family involved in the development of the genre during the nineteenth century can eclipse their contribution to opera and concert music in this country.



Marie Carandini as she appeared in a photograph "kindly lent by Mrs. John Tait" and posthumously published in *The Theatre* on 1 February 1910 (sixteen years after Marie's death). The edition includes the following note: "In opera and concert she was for many years a big factor in the colonial music world, and with her five daughters, one of whom is Mrs. Gilbert Wilson, of Brisbane, repeatedly toured Australasia."

Marie raised her daughters in Tasmania at a time when some of the most notable opera stars of the 1850s appeared in the colony. The “celebrated cantatrice”³ Octavia Hamilton arrived in February 1855, followed by the Irish singing sensation Catherine Hayes in 1856, with the popular English vocalist Anna Bishop, as well as Miss Julia Harland appearing the following year.⁴ These were significant women of significant fame, and Marie’s appearances with superstars of the day including Hayes (at John Black’s Theatre Royal in *La Sonnambula* in October 1855) and Bishop, Julia Harland and Sara Flower (at Melbourne’s Theatre Royal in *Norma* during June 1856) must have had an impact on her daughters. Rosina was old enough in the mid 1850s to appreciate the fame of these women and indeed the significance of her mother’s appearances alongside them. Rosina illustrates the profound effect this had on an impressionable young girl with operatic inspirations because she took up singing at the age of only twelve, and began performing with Marie as early as 1858, when her mother reappeared in Hobart for a “flying visit” only one year after Bishop’s tour. In fact, it was during that visit that Rosina made her stage debut at the age of fourteen.

Marie’s concerts that year consisted of selections from Verdi’s *Il Trovatore* (1853) and Donizetti’s *Lucia di Lammermoor* (1835), as well as some of her favourite ballads, including the piece written for Catherine Hayes by William Wallace called “Why do I weep for thee?” The “exquisite passages from the favourite Opera”⁵ of *Lucia di Lammermoor* noted by the *Mercury* probably included Marie’s version of Lucia’s marathon aria from the third act. Her “Mad Scene,” where she sings, demented and on the brink of death, “*Alfin son tua*” (At last I am yours) exemplified one of opera’s most enduring tropes: the centralisation of fatal femininity in a climax of tragedy.

Music lovers were tempted by such an arrangement, as illustrated by the *Courier’s* reported that Marie had attracted “a numerous and brilliant throng”⁶

to her concert on the evening of 15 December. News of Rosina's debut excited interest amongst both the *Mercury* and *Courier* newspapers a day before, although each communicated their curiosity in alternate ways. The *Mercury* took a reserved approach to news of her debut as a somewhat unknown quantity by announcing that "Reports speak highly of this young lady's talents, both as a singer and a pianist,"⁷ but the *Courier* regarded Rosina's debut as much more momentous. "We may venture to state on belief," it claimed on 14 December 1858, "that tomorrow night's concert will prove an important event in connection with the musical annals of Tasmania, in consequence of the *debut* of a native, Miss ROSINA CARANDINI."⁸

Rosina's first professional stage appearance was by all accounts very successful. The *Courier* judged her a "gifted *debutante*" and announced: "Her voice is a *soprano* of extensive register, very skilfully controlled and modulated,—and as a performer on the piano she elicits the most ravishing sounds."⁹ It was perhaps this singularity of talent that motivated both the *Mercury* and the *Courier* to underscore her provenance as "home grown" so readily. The *Mercury* reported that, "Miss Rosina Carandini, who is a native of Hobart Town, will make her first appearance,"¹⁰ and the *Courier* claimed the "native of Hobart town, is about fourteen years of age."¹¹ But of course, print culture had already fortified this kind of localisation via the industry's initial response to Marie in the late 1840s and mid 1850s. And we see this re-enforced in the fact that while the *Courier* claimed her "our native cantatrice,"¹² the *Mercury* similarly dubbed her "'our own cantatrice',"¹³ noting too that she was en route to Victoria "where she has accepted an engagement as the *prima donna* of the Melbourne Opera Company."¹⁴ In fact, the *Mercury* was particularly "glad to record" that "Tasmanians have watched the career of the mother with pride," stating unequivocally that Tasmanians "will share in the expression of

gratification which pervaded last night, to find she is blessed with such a talented and accomplished daughter." ¹⁵

To the Ladies and Gentlemen of Hobart Town.

MADAME CARANDINI

HAS the honor to announce to her Tasmanian friends, and the Public, that she has made arrangements with the Edouin Family, and is thereby enabled to give a

C O N C E R T

Before her departure for Melbourne on Friday next the 17th inst., between the Vaudeville and the Ballet at the Theatre Royal

WEDNESDAY EVENING, 15TH INST.

The Concert will consist of choice selections from *Il Trovatore*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, interspersed with a wreath of favorable ballads.

MISS ROSINA CARANDINI

a native of Hobart Town will have the honor to make her appearance before the public, for the first time, as Singer and Pianiste.

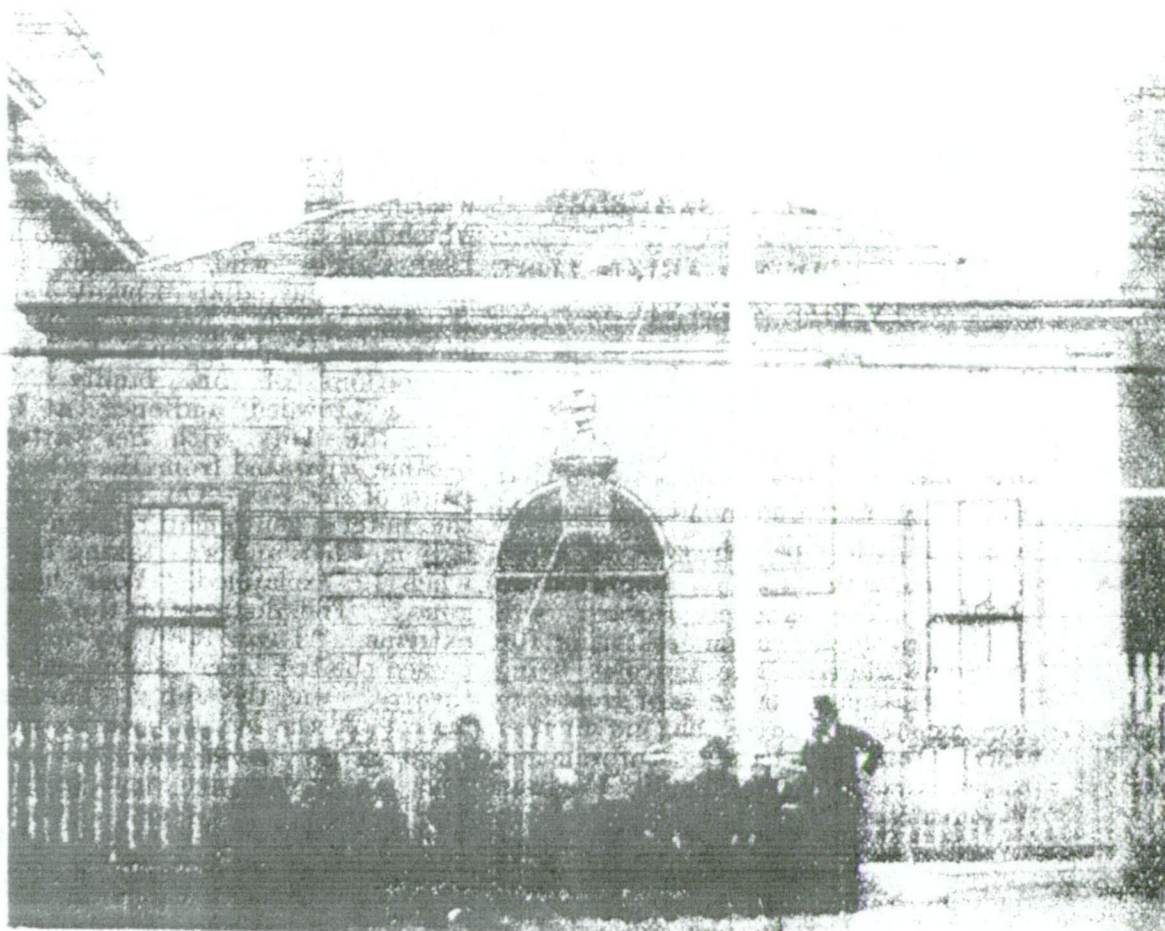
Mr. BUDDEE will preside at the pianoforte.

In consequence of the commercial depression now complained of Madame Carandini respectfully announces that it is not her intention to raise the existing prices of admission.

This bill for Marie's "flying visit" to Hobart appeared in the *Mercury* on 15 December 1858. Note that Rosina's provenance as a "native" of Tasmania (and Hobart Town) is emphasised, and also observe the promise that it was not Marie's "intention to raise the existing prices of admission" on the occasion.

The *Courier's* prediction of the significance of Rosina's skills in the "musical annals of Tasmania" was a proven fact within six months of her debut, when Rosina reappeared with Marie in Hobart in May 1859. This time she performed much more demanding roles, such as Adalgisa in Bellini's opera *Norma* (1831), which was quite an accomplishment if not only for the fact that Rosina was just fourteen years old at the time.

At the age of only fifteen, Rosina appeared at the Alliance Rooms, in Macquarie Street Hobart, supporting the celebrated harpist T. H. Brooks and the Bavarian violinist Herr W. Carl Schmitt. She sang the cavatina from Verdi's opera *La Traviata* (1853) on 13 February and sang "by desire" the ballad "Ever of Thee." She appeared again with Brooks and Schmitt later that month, but this time in support of a grand concert given by Marie at the Mechanic's Institute. There she performed Vangano's rondo "Ah Che Assorta" and Linley's ballad "Beautiful Bells," as well as singing two duettas with Marie: "Moment so bright" from Verdi's *Eriani* (1844) and the Grand Duetto from Bellini's *Norma*. Such a selection suggests a versatile and skilled voice, and the *Mercury* offered no hesitation in claiming all the performers "accomplished masters of their art" and announcing that "irrespective, however, of the promising excellence of the entertainment Madame Carandini has peculiar claims upon the patronage of the public."¹⁶ This was yet another important way of alerting "the public" to Marie's numerous ties to the community, as well as a means of articulating how the community's experience of Marie was therefore different, or "peculiar," to that of other cultural contexts. Marie's "frame" as having a "peculiar" (meaning special) bearing on the everyday lives of colonials was an ideology naturally extended to the cultural utility of her eldest daughter: especially since she was herself a gifted "native" born in the colony.



This is an early photograph of the Alliance Rooms in Macquarie Street, Hobart, appearing in the *Tasmanian Mail* on 7 August 1897. The caption reads that the image was taken by "W. Chappel, Mail Guard, for the children of the Ebenezer Band of Hope, who appear in the foreground." The building itself had probably changed little in the thirty-seven years since Rosina appeared there with Marie in 1860.

Concerts by the Carandini Company were a characteristic feature of the colony's musical culture throughout the 1850s and 60s. Even though the configuration of the troupe sometimes changed, music-lovers were probably not surprised to find that Marie was always a lead attraction. It was no wonder then that the press in Hobart received Marie as "our old friend, Marie Carandini"¹⁷ when she invariably reappeared. This was no different in 1865, when the poor showing in Hobart that year, and Marie Chalker's no-show, were disappointments probably

cancelled out by the troupe's success in the north and Fanny's reception as a delightful performer that "cannot fail to please all that listen to her."¹⁸ It was a credit to Fanny's skill that she was so popular, particularly considering her name did not appear on any of the initial bills advertising the concert: implying she was never the first choice.

In the interim, Marie joined forces with another "old friend," Frank Howson, offering frequenters of Melbourne's Haymarket Theatre from late 1863 to March 1864 a joint programme of operatic pantomimes and extravaganzas featuring Emma and Clelia Howson, and in-between operatic and concert pieces featuring Marie Carandini and a number of her daughters. It was an unashamedly shrewd enterprise in highlighting the talents of both the Howson and Carandini daughters, and audience numbers, coupled with the fact that the season lasted for some months, attest to its popular success.

Each of the Carandini sisters achieved significant fame as well known singers in their own right, but their cultural visibility did differ in a comparative sense. While Fanny and Lizzie did appear regularly with Marie, and Isabella materialised as a newlywed for performances together with her husband in 1875, it was Rosina and Emma who followed more closely in their mother's footsteps as professional opera singers. Marie's most successful daughter however, was probably Rosina. Rosina, Fanny and Marie appeared together at the Intercolonial Exhibition in Melbourne on 31 Dec 1866, but when Marie was managing Melbourne's Duke of Edinburgh Theatre in 1869, Rosina's name appeared most regularly on the bills. In fact, Marie's management of the Duke of Edinburgh Theatre paid remarkable dividends for Rosina considering that H. R. H. Prince Albert, the Duke of Edinburgh, took such a keen interest in her career. The *Tasmanian Times* reported that, "H.R.H. Duke of Edinburgh, so rumour hath it, has promised to provide the means for that young lady's musical education by first-rate European masters."¹⁹



A dashing-looking H. R. H. (Prince Albert) Duke of Edinburgh as published by the *Tasmanian Mail* on 26 June 1897. While it seems that Rosina never took up the Duke's offer of support, it was a memorable gesture just the same given the belief that: "It is not often . . . that a family gifted even as the Carandinis, can win such favour in the eyes of a royal personage, as to obtain his patronage in the manner Miss Rosina Carandini is reported to have done."

Consistent changes to the configuration of the Carandini troupe imply that it was a dynamic enterprise. This was true in a general sense, although it actually varied little from a simple recipe: Marie Carandini as figurehead, with Walter Sherwin the usual mainstay. Sometimes the troupe's concert seasons, whatever the configuration, were very successful, and it appears that even in the periods when the ensemble was out of favour (for there were a number), it was not so much that talent was a problem, but rather economic fluctuations and shifts in audience tastes. When Marie, Rosina and Fanny appeared in 1869 at Melbourne's Academy of Music (formerly the Princess's Theatre) for a short season of appearances accompanied by the ever-present Walter Sherwin and newcomer John De Haga (of Lyster's Opera Company), their first concert was given under what the *Age* reported were "very un auspicious circumstances."²⁰ Critical opinion was that their reception failed to match that deserving of such a commendable quintet, although the many "gems" of the performances nonetheless impressed the *Age* journalist. Highlights deserving comment included Rosina and Fanny's rendition of the duets "Trust Her Not" (on 31 August) and "Maria Padilla" (on 2 September), a version of John Parry's buffo duet "The Temptations of Switzerland" by Marie and Sherwin (on 1 September), and the trio from *Lucrezia Borgia* by Rosina, Sherwin and De Haga (on 7 September).

Presenting selections from an opera did risk diluting the masterwork of its thematic interest. This then raises the question of how conversant audiences were with, for instance, the trio from *Lucrezia Borgia*. One might expect that most were familiar with Donizetti's work: that it was set in Venice and boasted a female protagonist famous for her treachery, her participation in a range of disturbing family plots (incest, illegitimate children), and her personal vices. Most would have known the character Maffeo Orsini's so-called drinking song, called "Il segreto per esse felice" ("O the secret of bliss in perfection") and how

the song encourages the drinking of a gathering of patrons (Orsini's enemies) at a banquet. Many had probably seen the operatic version and known that Lucrezia had poisoned the wine and unwittingly also poisoned her illegitimate son (Gennaro) who denounces her with his last breath.

"Popular" was as ubiquitous a word in the *Mercury's* publicity heralding Marie's return tour to Tasmania in 1872, as was the trend to stress "the fact of the ladies being natives of this colony."²¹ Daughters Lizzie and Rosina accompanied "our old friend, Marie Carandini,"²² and their "popular concerts"²³ featured "very popular ballads and selections from opera."²⁴ "Miss Fannie," claimed one report, "was, of course, popular,"²⁵ and "Miss Rosina," claimed another "was in excellent voice and her singing throughout was most popularly received."²⁶ "Crowded" audiences,²⁷ "bumper" houses²⁸ and the theatre's "back seats" "densely packed"²⁹ with "lovers of genuine music"³⁰ were not the only signs of their popularity. It was obvious to critics that their concerts were a hit given the "rapt attention"³¹ of listeners and the fact that the troupe's rendition of "The gypsies' laughing chorus" from Balfe's *The Bohemian Girl* was so well done and their laughter so infectious that the whole house erupted in genuine hilarity.³²

Their "programme being very nicely arranged so as to suit all tastes,"³³ included selections from such well-known operas as Bellini's *La Sonnambula*, Verdi's *Il Trovatore*, Cimarosa's *The Secret Marriage*, Offenbach's *The Grand Duchess*, and Wallace's *Maritana*. "A concert of such music, by such singers," suggested the *Mercury* "cannot but prove attractive."³⁴ In fact, so popular was the ensemble that the troupe had to extend their initial engagement for a second series of six additional performances to meet the demand. Lizzie's voice was "a beautiful contralto, clear, full and rich enough to justify all that has been said in its praise."³⁵ Similarly, the *Mercury* also reported that, "as a *debutante* here, [Miss Lizzie] was the subject of some little curiosity, and her appearance on the

platform was looked for with something akin to eagerness."³⁶ Rosina "accompanied herself in the serenade 'I'll watch for thee,' and was very warmly applauded" with the critic further noting that:

Her rendering of 'When the roses bloom again,' in the second part, was also given with great expression, and elicited a decided manifestation of a desire for an *encore*, to which she responded by singing a sparkling little composition by the pen of Mr. F. A. Packer, 'Wouldn't you like to know?'.³⁷

Fanny sang "O! ye tears" so "very sweetly" according to another review, that it "elicited genuine tokens of admiration,"³⁸ and although her rendition of "Take Me to Your Heart Again" a few days later motivated the audience to express its delight by appealing for an *encore*, the *Mercury* observed that this was only "silently acknowledged."

Despite the seven-year absence, Marie's "Carandini Ballad and Operatic Company" was the most successful female-led ensemble of the era. Critics were impressed by "the harmony which can be produced by six cultivated voices"³⁹ and struck by the fact that "Madame Carandini and her company have resources of so broad a character as to enable them to change the programme every evening."⁴⁰ Marie and her daughters, Rosina, Lizzie, Fanny and Emma, figured heavily in the troupe and their solo and combined performances popularised operatic material works in a unique way. Marie's was unlike most other troupes in that hers demanded versatility, which suited her daughters because they were all very skilled musicians and well-trained vocalists. Selections showcased a range of styles in concert form, meaning that women performed a variety of pieces in concert with one another as well as in harmony with both male and female voice.

Platforming the skills of Marie and Rosina, Lizzie, Fanny or Emma contributed an additional meaning to the arrangement of a “concert” as the collaboration of a mother and her daughters was a powerful marker of the ensemble’s distinctiveness. This is perhaps why the *Mercury* thought it fitting to dub the Carandinis as the “talented songstresses,”⁴¹ and, not long after their arrival, made the unprecedented announcement that Marie and her daughters were the “Tasmanian warblers”!⁴² This colourful epithet was idiosyncratic to time, place, and specific to individual journalists because it was unique to the ensemble’s press in 1872, as it is not to be found in company’s publicity when Marie returned to Tasmania in 1880.

One of the Carandini sisters who appeared in Tasmania during the interim was Isabella, in 1875. She and her husband, George Cotterell, first performed in Launceston before presenting “their popular drawing-room entertainment,”⁴³ a production called *Quiz*, at Hobart’s Mechanics’ Institute on 11 January 1875. One wonders whether appearing in Tasmania outside of the Carandini Company was an issue for her, particularly since the troupe’s past seasons had generally been very good. She likely recalled the story of her parent’s nuptials, and how, almost a year to the day after their marriage, her mother had made her debut. Perhaps she might even have considered it a lucky omen that her mother’s appearance at her father’s benefit was so successful. Optimistic publicity, such as the *Mercury*’s claim that “Mr. Cotterell requires no recommendations in Hobart Town, where he is so well and favourably known,”⁴⁴ implied a profitable season. George had already appeared in Tasmania in June 1871 for a round of appearances featuring *Quiz* and *Faces and Fancies*. The *Mercury* concluded at the time that his success was due to the fact “that Mr Cotterell thoroughly knows his business.”⁴⁵ Yet in 1875, reports of “meagre” houses (on 15 and 16 January), a “somewhat scanty” audience (on 19

January), and the “not so numerous audience” at their farewell performance on 21 January 1875, all suggest a disappointing experience.⁴⁶

The Cotterells’ company consisted only of Isabella, her husband George, and a musician named “Mr. Landergan,” “an instrumentalist of reputation.”⁴⁷ Isabella Sara Carandini had married George James Cotterell in Sydney only three months earlier on 13 October 1874. Even though George’s skills as a “mimic and delineator of character, . . . [had] earned for him a colonial reputation of long standing,”⁴⁸ and Isabella’s “vocal powers . . . [had], for a number of years, been justly regarded as equal to those possessed by any member of the lady’s talented family,”⁴⁹ the couple’s performances failed to attract large audiences in Hobart after opening night. Perhaps the fact that play-goers had already seen George’s wares a few years before accounts for the poor season. But the odd combination of entertainment might also have contributed to its falling short of expectations in Hobart. George’s “wonderful facial powers and admirable mimicry”⁵⁰ seems a curious companion to Isabella’s reportedly high calibre singing and repertoire of songs. His “grotesque appearance, and the ludicrous manner”⁵¹ in which George sang, perhaps contrasted too wildly with Isabella’s “highly cultivated voice and admirable taste”⁵² in the performance of ballads and love songs such as “Once Again” (by Arthur Sullivan), “Esmeralda,” “When the Roses Bloom Again,” and “I Love My Love.”

The couple’s other “drawingroom entertainment” was called *A Melodrama in Five Acts* (also known as *The Tar, the Tear, and the Telbury*), and featured much the same style of performance as *Quiz*—a medley of George’s “ludicrous” “mimicry” and Isabella’s poignant vocals set to a narrative—but produced similarly disappointing results. Equally responsible for dwindling audiences was perhaps the curiosity surrounding the appearance of a troupe called the Amateur Christy Minstrels at the Oddfellow’s Hall. The ensemble was not the original “black-faced” musicians called the Christy Minstrels, but rather

"some persons styling themselves as the *Amateur* Christy Minstrels [my italics]." ⁵³ Reviews suggest only a moderate reception, but the impersonators might have distracted potential theatre-goers away from the Cotterells.

What the couple seemingly lacked in audience appeal, however, was more than made up for by their publicity courtesy of the *Mercury*. Its reporters were clearly fans of the Cotterells' entertainment and eagerly promoted their talents, particularly George's "personifications" over the "exceptional culture" ⁵⁴ of Isabella's voice. The couple's publicity generally, but George's especially was particularly admiring after 12 January 1875, when the Christy Minstrels impersonators failed to forward "the usual tickets to our [the *Mercury's*] . . . reporters," causing the *Mercury* to presume that perhaps "the performers preferred that their performances should not be criticised" ⁵⁵ (not surprising if the troupe were only amateurs).

Important in Isabella's publicity was of course her heredity as a "Carandini." Promoting Isabella's lineage was vital in denoting her credibility as a theatre player, particularly because she was usually billed as "Mrs. Cotterell." We do not see an emphasis on Isabella as a "native," meaning Tasmanian, most likely because she was in fact born in Sydney. What we do see, however, is the regular promotion of her maiden name as "(Miss Isabella Carandini)," ⁵⁶ and "Mrs. Cotterell, who is better known as Miss Isabella Carandini" ⁵⁷ fulfilling a similar function. "Carandini" was all the narrative needed to communicate Isabella's relativity to Hobart, and indeed her musical authenticity as a member of a "talented family." ⁵⁸

By the 1870s, most of Marie's daughters had married and adopted their husband's names, yet the Carandini title retained significant influence in the association of "Tasmanian-born" provenance and credibility. Rosina had married Edward Hodson Palmer, an employee of the "Bank of Australia," at St. David's Cathedral in Hobart on 8 November 1860. ⁵⁹ Lizzie Carandini married

John Adams sometime around November 1875 and later gave birth to a son in Bombay on 7 October 1876. After her first husband, Walter Sherwin, Fanny married one H. Morland (then becoming Lady Morland) around December 1875, also giving birth to a son. It was of course the same year that Isabella had married George Cotterell.

This is what makes Rosina's billing as a "Carandini" during the 1870s so unusual, particularly when considering she married Palmer some ten years earlier. It could be that the local press continually referred to her as "Rosina Carandini" as a way of re-emphasising her "native" origins in Tasmania, yet the fact that mainland press also characteristically promoted her as a "Carandini" suggests there was another reason. Theatre women typically kept their maiden name for a time after their marriages, ostensibly as a way of slowly weaning the public to accept their "new" nomenclatures. It is certain that the press was integral to this process because while reporters usually used a recently wed actress's new name in the first instance, traditionally they would immediately follow this by enclosing her maiden name in brackets to signal the change. This was customarily included in publicity material for some weeks. However, it was somewhat unorthodox for Rosina to persist with her maiden name for so long without embarking on a scheme of gradual change. In fact, it was only in the 1890s that Rosina appeared to adopt her married name as her stage name. It is difficult to explain the shift however; it is possible to conclude that she only decided to use "Palmer" after she established a co-venture following Marie's retirement in 1892.⁶⁰

The Hobart press took seriously the task of keeping its readership informed as to the personal lives of the Carandini sisters. Occasionally, this included reprinting correspondence, such as when the *Mercury* published details taken from a private letter received from Bombay and dated 9 December 1875 concerning Lizzie's marriage to Adams and Fanny's intended marriage to

Morland.⁶¹ This might imply that the person to whom the letter was originally sent forwarded such information to the *Mercury*, or perhaps correspondents sometimes sent letters directly to its offices (reflecting the usual tradition of relying on commercial media to publish missives to keep family and friends informed collectively).

Isabella's appearance in 1875 preceded Marie's return visit to Tasmania by five years. Even after eight years since the ensemble's last tour, the "Carandini Operatic and Ballad Company" remained intact as a viable venture. This suggests that Marie was an opera entrepreneur of sorts despite, or perhaps because, her company did not present complete operas. In fact, during Marie's New Zealand tour in 1873, the company "were able to sustain a single Christchurch season of as many as thirty-one different concerts,"⁶² which implies that not presenting complete operas was far from a handicap to the troupe's success and wide-ranging appeal. Similarly, the eight-year gap between visits to Tasmania (and indeed to other parts of Australia) suggests extensive touring. She preceded her visit in 1872 with tours of New Zealand, the Sandwich Islands, Fiji, and California, and her return tour in 1880 was no different. One theatre historian notes that Marie's tour that year "was especially strenuous as the little company had been shipwrecked the previous year on the way out [to New Zealand] from New South Wales."⁶³

It is plausible that the tour was quite "strenuous" also considering that Marie was then aged fifty-four and that the troupe had lost part of their wardrobe as well as most of their manuscripts and compositions. Yet, the company arrived in Hobart directly from New Zealand via the *Rotomahana* after a successful trans-Tasman tour⁶⁴ and the *Mercury* was quick to offer that Marie's "long absence had not alienated old ties and old associations."⁶⁵

By 1880, only the performers had changed from the earlier configuration to include Madame Marie and "Miss [Emma] Marie Carandini,"⁶⁶ Josephine

Deakin (a soprano), Walter Sherwin (as earlier), and a basso named Huxtable. It is unclear why Rosina was not among them, but Isabella's associations with her own trio suggest that her loyalties remained with her husband. And the fact that Lizzie and Fanny had since married and were no longer in the country explains their absence. In fact, the *Mercury* reported in 1876 that, "The two Misses Carandini's have been removed by Hymen from the stage, not of life, but of the concert room."⁶⁷ It appears then that the sisters had since retired from the profession some four years before Marie's company returned to Tasmania (incidentally, the same day the *Examiner* in Launceston printed Jacques Offenbach's obituary).⁶⁸ Yet just as before, the troupe boasted an extensive repertoire of vocal works including grand operatic pieces, ballads, duets (both classical and comic), trios, and English, Irish and Scotch melodies. And because of "Miss Marie's" provenance as "local," and "Madame Marie's" reception as having "always been a great favourite in Tasmania,"⁶⁹ the *Mercury* found it difficult to "review the many excellencies of the entertainment."⁷⁰

A wide variety of performance styles and diversity of vocal material characterised the ensemble's program in 1880. Because the ensemble performed some pieces in concert with other voices and not accompanied with instrumentation, while a variety of solos, duets or trios (and quartets) were pieces performed with, and occasionally without, musical accompaniment, it is easy to see why the *Mercury* noted that "concerted music"⁷¹ was a central feature of the ensemble's program. Some pieces included arrangements specifically for female voices that were either unaccompanied or self-accompanied with instrumentation. Similarly, Sherwin and Huxtable performed a selection of pieces (typically ballads) featuring tenor and basso voices, while unaccompanied quartets by the complete ensemble, such as Purcell's "Dama Durden" also proved very popular.



Sources printing this early photograph of Mrs. Gilbert Wilson believed it to be Marie Carandini's daughter, Emma (the image is signed "E Marie Carandini"). Emma married Robert Walter Wilson in 1882 (see Victorian "Digger Index 1836 - 1888," Registration: 853). The image of Emma was reportedly taken in 1878 and published by *The Theatre* on 1 July 1912. Brisbane, however, states that Mrs. Gilbert Wilson was "a daughter of Rosina Carandini" which appears to be incorrect based on the claims printed by *The Theatre* (see Brisbane 124). Emma appeared in Sydney with the distinguished Polish virtuoso Chevalier Antoine de Kontski (who claimed himself to be the last surviving novice of Beethoven) in August 1896 singing his own composition entitled "Mes Adieux à Sydney."

Emma's publicity is very clear in demonstrating that critics really enjoyed her performances. Her solo of C. E. Horn's "Cherry Ripe" was sung with "birdlike daintiness,"⁷² and "the beauty of her method" stood out in her delivery of "Once Again" (as an encore). Her self-accompanied performance of Linley's "I cannot mind my wheel" using her "well-trained mezzo-soprano voice"⁷³ was judged, "beautiful in its pathos, and won thunders of applause."⁷⁴ Emma typically earned many encores, and the *Mercury* was happy to report that her execution of Pontet's "Carissima" "won her a tribute, not only of applause but of bouquets, which fell in profusion."⁷⁵

An enthusiastic reception by theater-goers necessitated the need to schedule additional appearances by the ensemble. And it is interesting to note the shift in the troupe's response to encores compared to that of Marie's earlier tour, in 1872. The *Mercury* often noted the frequency of the *encores* at each successive concert, and regularly reported that the program on many evenings was "considerably enlarged" because of the number of "re-calls."⁷⁶ Perhaps the lapse of some eight years had mellowed Marie's approach to encores because not only was the program regularly "enlarged" because of repeated demands, but also the troupe itself appeared more compliant to special requests. A "Special concert" was given under the patronage of the mayor (Mr. Burgess) on 22 October, after the company appeared in New Norfolk (18 October), Kangaroo Point (19 October), Sorell and Richmond (20 and 21 October), and Governor Sir John Henry and Lady Lefroy reportedly acted as patrons of the company's subsequent concert on 25 October. The performance opened with Diabelli's "Fantastique" played as a pianoforte duet by Emma and Josephine. This was followed by quartettes from Balfe's *Siege of Rochelle* and the *Bohemian Girl*, operatic selections such as "O' Mio Fernando" from Donizetti's *La Favorita* (by Emma), and ballads including Linley's "Katie O'Shane" (Emma) and Lavenu's "My Molly Asthore" (one of Marie's signature pieces).

A program of such “high” material works demanded particularly discerning listeners, and the *Mercury* took the opportunity to report that audiences were “large, and at the same time distinguished” at each of the Company’s performances. Not only had the Lieutenant-Governor and his wife attended the farewell appearance of the Company on 25 October, their “*suite*” was joined by the Premier (W. R. Giblin), the Attorney-General (J. S. Dodds), the Mayor and members of the Legislature. The *Mercury* also observed that the audience knew how to conduct themselves in honouring such a distinguished entourage, reporting that they “were received by the audience standing, followed by the company singing the National Anthem.”⁷⁷

The fact that Sherwin was still in the company in 1880 is interesting. His presence suggests he retained a professional relationship with Marie, even though Fanny, who Taylor claims was Sherwin’s wife,⁷⁸ had since married a Lord called Morland, thus becoming Lady Morland. Second marriages were common to most of Fanny’s sisters. Rosina reportedly married again after Edward Palmer, and Isabella, like Fanny, married into nobility after George Cotterell, then becoming Lady Campbell.

Publicity generated by the Carandinis in the twenty-one years since Rosina’s first appearance suggests that Tasmania played an important role in launching the careers of Marie’s daughters. Rosina had debuted in Hobart in 1858 while Lizzie was publicised as a *debutante* in 1872 (which could also imply that she had already appeared professionally for the first time elsewhere). But it seems true that the island had retained its significance as a career catalyst long after the days of the early pioneers. Perhaps Marie understood the significance of Tasmania to a successful career better than anyone did because of her own beginnings as an opera star. In the forty years from her first ever appearance in 1840, until the most recent in 1880, Marie’s long association with Tasmania

almost guaranteed her of a welcome reception. Also built-in to that rapport was a valuable legacy for her daughters.

Rosina re-appeared in Tasmania in 1894 claiming that it had been some nineteen years since her last appearance in 1875.⁷⁹ And just like her previous appearances with her mother, the island's press was eager to gesture a long-standing relationship. A publicity campaign launched two weeks prior to her arrival promoted her scheduled concerts at Hobart's Town Hall. Advertising claiming Rosina was "the leading soprano of the time,"⁸⁰ was accompanied by the statement that she was "a member of the famous Carandinis" for those unsure who, precisely, "Mrs. Palmer" was.⁸¹

The *Mercury* suggested that Rosina's troupe, the Palmer-Beaumont Company, be "regarded not as a company with one star, but as a combination of stars, each of the first magnitude in their respective spheres."⁸² Here, a direct interchange between star-power and popularity characterised celebrity print artefacts of the late nineteenth. Such products also reveal that intertextuality was, by this time, commonplace. Local print media recruited publicity generated in New Zealand to feature the unique "spheres" of each individual. Not only was publicity at this time typically intertextual (in the sense of inclusive of "other" print media texts); its traditional inclusion into the textual practices of "local" media suggested increased reciprocity between offshore media cultures. The *Auckland Star* claimed that Rosina's voice "is as sweet and marvellously true as of yore,"⁸³ thus complementing the *Mercury's* assessment that Rosina's delivery of Weber's aria "Romance" (*Perciosa*) showed "her voice has maintained its purity to a degree that is as rare as it is beautiful."⁸⁴ Meanwhile, the *Star's* characterisation of Maggie Stirling's voice as one "of uncommon range and power,"⁸⁵ supported the *Mercury's* observation that she sang the "florid passages in the aria from Rossini's 'Cenerentola,' . . . with the ease and facile clearness of a well cultivated artist."⁸⁶

Rosina's re-appearance as a founding member of the "Palmer-Beaumont Company" was auspicious considering the *Mercury* dubbed the ensemble as "by far the best in the colonies."⁸⁷ It included Armes Beaumont, by then probably completely visually impaired, but no less "the acknowledged premier tenor of the colonies"⁸⁸, Rosina Palmer (of course a soprano), A. H. Gee (a baritone), John Lemmone (a flautist), and Walter Barker (harpist). Gee's voice was reportedly one of "great power,"⁸⁹ while Barker's "manipulation of the harp . . . gained for him a very high musical record."⁹⁰ Also in the six-member Palmer-Beaumont Company was Maggie Stirling.⁹¹ Hobart playgoers were familiar with the name "Stirling," as it was reminiscent of Theodosia Yates, who launched her career in the colony as "Mrs. Theodosia Stirling" with Anne Clarke's company in 1842. The "Maggie Stirling" in the Palmer-Beaumont Company was, however, no relation. The *Mercury* claimed at the time of her arrival that Maggie was "a mezzo-soprano of renown"⁹² and "an Australian pure and simple."⁹³ It reported that Melbourne was her "native city" and that she had not previously performed professionally beyond Victoria, which was of course untrue given that the *Auckland Star* had earlier praised her efforts in New Zealand.⁹⁴

Armes Beaumont, Rosina's co-partner in the venture, had not always been blind. He lost one eye, and suffered severe visual impairment in the other, after a shooting accident with William Lyster in late February 1867.⁹⁵ He debuted in Sydney in 1856 with classical musicians Horace Pousard and M. Douay and later appeared with the Lyster Opera Company in 1861. In fact, both Rosina and Armes had performed together in Melbourne as early as the 1860s, and one admirer once claimed that, "both had beautiful lyric tenor voices."⁹⁶ The supposed fact that both Rosina and Beaumont were romantically involved perhaps explained the pair's reported capacity to make exceptional music together.⁹⁷

One report that “the only regret heard [by their large audiences was] that their season was so short,”⁹⁸ was superseded not long after by news of real regret. Two months to the day after Rosina concluded her season in Tasmania, bulletins of Marie Carandini’s death in England on 13 April 1894 reached Australia. Many publications, including the *Melbourne Age*, as well as the *Hobart Mercury* and the *Launceston Examiner*,⁹⁹ ran distinguished obituaries attesting to her Australian influence, and indeed her cultural visibility despite the fact that she had been living with Fanny (then Lady Morland) in England for the past two years. Reports claiming Marie “was perhaps one of the best known and most popular singers we have had,”¹⁰⁰ supplemented the opinion that “in the Australian musical world [she] is one of the prominent features of musical history.”¹⁰¹ In fact, the *Examiner* in Launceston even suggested that “being a Tasmanian by adoption, she interested Australian audiences . . . and up till quite recent years she continued [as] one of the most popular favourites in the musical world of Australia.”¹⁰²

Such wide-ranging public esteem explains why Rosina’s origin as “home grown” was integral to her publicity as a “celebrity.” Yes, the virtuoso Mancusi claimed “‘You are an artist. You make my flesh like a chicken’s’,”¹⁰³ the “world-famed” baritone Charles Santley “oft-repeated” the “expression . . . ‘What a pity that you never came to London’,”¹⁰⁴ and the Italian tenor Rosnati, who upon learning that Rosina had never visited Milan because of her children quipped “‘put them in a hospice’.”¹⁰⁵ But Rosina’s provenance as a “native” inspired a range of much more localised claims amongst Tasmania journalists in 1894 that stand out. “Hobart is the city of her birth,” reported the *Mercury*, “of her entrance upon that profession which she has so long graced, [and] of her marriage.”¹⁰⁶ In fact, the *Mercury* even went so far as to claim her “the fair and talented daughter of Hobart.”¹⁰⁷

Strong in this eagerness to claim state of origin was the reciprocity of that desire. Palpable in the speech she delivered at a civic reception in Hobart was Rosina's own urgency to express her differing experiences of "the Australian context" as a "Tasmanian." She stated that, "When we were children we always lived in Hobart, and one of my first appearances as a singer was when I took part in the services held at St. Mary's Cathedral to celebrate the arrival of the organ which is still there." She recalled her christening at the Cathedral, at that time officiated by the then vicar-general: her godfather. And her confession that she had a "personal interest" in the Town-hall organ because she sang "at all the concerts arranged in aid of the funds to pay for it," was probably given even greater emphasis considering that her speech was delivered in the very same venue, probably in eyeshot of the organ itself.

The speech is a rare record actually giving voice to one of the women studied in this thesis, and is therefore valuable in underlining the importance of stage women to cultural meaning-making as an inter-relational exchange between celebrities and media culture. The *Mercury* dubbed Rosina "the leading soprano of the time"¹⁰⁸ and her response to this kind of social reception was clearly important to contemporary ideals of community in 1894. If Rosina intended that her speech motivate an outpouring of provincial sentimentalism among the island's media, then the *Mercury* proved she succeeded in achieving just that in the following claim:

Although well known from one end of Australia to the other under the name she now bears, Mrs. Palmer is perhaps more familiarly known to Tasmanians as Rosina Carandini, and one of the sister members of that concert company which in bygone days did such valuable work in educating Australia up to a high standard of musical appreciation, and in laying the foundation of

a cult which has resulted in the myriad societies and circles which are to be found in every part of the colonies.¹⁰⁹

Of course, we can never really know what Rosina hoped to achieve when she addressed the Town Hall full of her fans and admirers on that summer's day in February 1894. It is certain, however, that her memories as "the fair and talented daughter of Hobart"¹¹⁰ were important markers of provenance and community identification, and that her oratory came at a time when some kind of social revolution for women was in an early stage (although debates about "the woman question" had been appearing in print media since the early 1850s). It was an era in which more and more women had attained public visibility as activating particular (usually political) concerns relating to women, and it is interesting then to speculate how Rosina's speech resonated among her female contemporaries in the audience considering the political milieu. Elsewhere, Vida Goldstein had been actively championing the cause of the women's movement in Victoria for some time and Louisa Lawson had of course been overseeing *The Dawn* since 1888.

Growing concerns for, among other things, women's right of choice over *self*, personal autonomy, and equitable labour conditions had similarly affected Tasmanian social life. Women had been mobilising in the colony for various reasons (mostly charitable) since the early days of settlement, and the groundswell in a shift to movements more concerned with women's own social and political place in everyday life was merely a question of time. In the months leading up to Rosina's tour, a group of women had held another suffrage meeting at the library in Richmond on 10 November 1893,¹¹¹ and a police superintendent had even arrested one young woman in the streets of Hobart just before Christmas for wearing "male attire." The *Mercury* commented soon after that "She may well have been enamoured of the comfortable appearance of

those talented ladies who interpreted *The Amazons* so well at the Theatre Royal a day or two back.”¹¹²

The snapshot illustrates quite effectively that actresses either directly affected their female contemporaries, or attracted comment among members of the press as capable of considerable influence among other women. The *Mercury's* reportage implies that the press saw a direct and causal relationship between the performance of gender by theatre women and the event of a young woman donning “male” garb. This speaks to not only theatre women’s social power, but also their importance as influential prototypes in the social performance of gender. Even despite the *Mercury's* (probably) facetious comment about the girl being “enamoured” by other actresses, the report does highlight that it was not illegal for women to wear men’s garb. In fact, the newspaper even supplied an overview of the legal precepts of contemporary dress codes for men and women: perhaps in an effort to explain why the superintendent could only charge the accused young woman with “disturbing the peace.”

So we know that actresses were influential, and that the social and cultural manifestations of their consequence were varied, sometimes quite radically so. Granted, Rosina’s specialisation was different to the actresses performing in *The Amazons* just two months prior to her tour, but there is no doubt that the popular manifestations of her encounters evidence that she was considered an authoritative cultural prototype.

For some women, maybe those younger and eager to find a professional place in the immediate social world, Rosina might have represented a somewhat emancipated public figure of mobility and economic independence. She likely personified the fact that stage actresses enjoyed an engagement with public life that remained an ongoing battle for other women. This double-bind “otherness” of women, theatrical and non theatrical, was clear in the fact that the women

playing *The Amazons*—much like Lola Montes’ proclivity in the mid 1850s for wearing breeches in public and smoking a cigar—seemed immune to the bylaws imposed on “other” women. Similarly, the fact that Rosina’s marriage had not put an end to her career, unlike the careers of her sisters—in particular Lizzie and Fanny, or in the case of Isabella positioned her as subordinate to her husband’s talents—might also have signalled to other women that a balance between public and domestic life was entirely possible.

Rosina was one of the few “public” women to have managed reasonably well the demands of marriage and pregnancy: probably the twin realities that were potentially the most difficult obstacles for a female stage performer to navigate. Again, Rosina most likely had her mother to thank for that. Marie, after all, was the perfect prototype. She had given birth to seven children in the course of her career, juggled the competing tensions between the domestic demands of house, and the public demands of career, had toured Australia extensively and even toured New Zealand, India, and the United States, and had come out of the experience on top with significant notoriety and popular acclaim. In fact, the reality that Marie suffered from asthma, sometimes chronically, further exemplifies her drive to succeed as a vocalist, and the fact that this tenacity further inspired her daughters.¹¹³

If Marie was a “new” woman of her time, then Rosina too was a “new” woman of the late nineteenth century. But despite, or perhaps even because of her public profile, Rosina like many women generally, was not immune to the ideology that a women’s foremost duty often lay with her family. The *Mercury* took the opportunity in 1894 to applaud Rosina’s choices, because, like that of her own mother Marie, she never let her fame as a performer compromise her obligations to motherhood:

But the artist was a mother also, and the care of her children was of greater moment to her than the thunder of applause, so she elected to remain where she could live with her bairns around her, robbing the world of a brilliant favourite, but giving Australia a singer and teacher of great service, and her family a devoted mother.¹¹⁴

It is difficult to know for certain what Rosina meant when she said in 1910, "As it happened, I lost five children,"¹¹⁵ but she was clearly proud of her offspring, and considered herself a caring mother, claiming; "No matter how tired I was on coming home from a concert, I always looked after my babies. I am a mother first, and then an artist."

It was in that year, at the age of 66, Rosina retired from the stage and taught singing in Melbourne.¹¹⁶ Many fans attended her farewell performance at the Melbourne Town Hall on 19 October, and despite "suffering from a severe attack of hoarseness . . . she was recalled again and again, and loaded with flowers."¹¹⁷ Although Rosina's visibility as "the well-known Melbourne singer"¹¹⁸ had replaced her "Tasmanian-ness" at this stage, the *Argus* took the opportunity of her benefit to update its readership about other members of the Carandini family. Rosina's brother Frank had been granted a warrant by His Majesty King George V for "him and his male heirs his Royal license and authority to use and bear in this country the titles of Marquis of Saranzo, Patrician of Modena, and Noble of Bologna."¹¹⁹ Updates of Frank's military career appeared in the Tasmanian press as early as 1880, when the *Mercury* reported his promotion as "Adjunct of his regiment, the 8th (King's Royal Irish) Hussars."¹²⁰ Similarly to his sisters, the *Mercury* took full advantage of the news to promote Frank's "home grown" provenance; "Mr. Carandini is a native of the

colony," it claimed, "being the only son of the family of that name so well known as residents here."¹²¹

The extent to which the Carandini sisters informed Tasmanian colonial reality testifies to women's public visibility and the cultural power of stage actresses during the nineteenth century. All five sisters enjoyed places of varying vividness in the cultural consciousness. These were strong, influential women who, as well as influencing ideologies about state of origin, each contributed to the country's musical culture and creative development. Imagine, for a moment, this lucid account once recalled by Rosina, who, together with her mother, Fanny and Sherwin, once travelled by pack-horse to the Victorian gold-town then known as Stringer's Creek (now Walhalla), and painted the following picture of their journey:

While we halted, Fanny's horse, being accustomed to lie down with his burden at stoppages, went down on his knees, and we found my sister in the bush. We really slid down into to township. We had no time for a proper meal, only a cup of tea. In the middle of the concert, Fanny fainted. We, however, went through the program just as if nothing had happened.¹²²

Of course, the level of hardship Rosina's portrait offers was as real as the troupe's performances in lush and spacious theatres, before "fashionable throngs" of patrons, sometimes including a score of colonial elites: governors, mayors, premiers, and famously the Duke of Edinburgh. Eliot Yorke, the Duke's equerry, even played the part of Richelieu at Rosina's benefit concert in Sydney on one occasion, sporting the make-up the Duke himself had applied to Yorke's face.¹²³ Rosina later recalled that the theatre was so crowded on the evening that the orchestra played "behind the scenes" and because audiences occupied

Rosina's seat at her own benefit, she and Marie were "accommodated in the Duke's box."¹²⁴ Other notable performances before royalty included appearances before Dowager Queen Emma of Honolulu, and the Fijian (cannibal) King Thakambau.¹²⁵

Metropolitan theatre-goers recognised the influence of the Carandini sisters and of course their parents, as vital personalities of mainstream culture. But in the towns, in the smaller centres, some of which were still cities in their own right but not as large as Sydney and Melbourne, their resonance was distinctive (particularly in Tasmania). Tasmanian settlers had good reason to esteem the Carandinis with such high regard. The radiance of their credibility cast a lasting light on the island, which of itself was a bright reminder that Tasmania had been home to a number of mainstay family figures of particularly important social currency throughout the 1850s and beyond.

Chapter Eight:

“The New Prima Donnas”: “home grown” Tasmanian “stars” of the 1860s Emma and Clelia Howson¹

Coincidental with the success of the Carandinis was that achieved by the Howson Family. Frank Howson in particular (and his brothers Henry and John to a lesser degree) retained an eminent position among colonial devotees of music as “pioneers” of opera, despite the fact that the span of this regard is either all but forgotten or seriously underestimated nowadays. First-generation offspring such as Frank’s daughters Emma and Clelia rose to the status of Tasmanian-born “stars” of colonial theatre, and each became vital to enacting gestures of “Tasmanian-ness” throughout the 1850s and 60s. Like the ideologies about “Tasmanian-ness” traceable to the Carandinis, the Howson sisters, as well as their talented family, represented “serviceable identities”² through which colonials could continually rehearse and renew their own sense of distinctiveness. Also like the Carandini sisters, Clelia and Emma’s story sheds important light on the social power of colonial actresses during the nineteenth century indicating that women’s cultural activity was not as circumscribed as some accounts would have us believe.

Lawrence Zion could easily have been referring to the development of touring concert companies such as the Carandinis and the Howsons when he noted that, “Music has never developed independently of business interests.”³ Of all the “amusements” offered to Tasmanians throughout the mid to late nineteenth century—the cavalcade of domestic and non-domestic stars, the tragediennes and tragedians, and the many other “novelties” such as the

circuses, minstrel troupes, wizards, Japanese contortionists, acrobats and dancing dogs⁴—musical ensembles enjoyed a cultural stronghold as a viable business for many “theatrical” families.

Emma and Clelia Howson’s cultural utility is rarely acknowledged in modern historiography or feminist scholarship but their publicity suggests that various print cultures considered the siblings significant agents of social change. Their father, Frank (Francis) Howson,⁵ was a stalwart of Australian theatre and those in the business who had heard his daughters sing were not surprised to find them so gifted. Not unlike the Carandinis, and also the “Hobartionians” Docy and Maggie Stewart, Emma and Clelia’s bloodline too promised brilliance. Their aunt, Frank’s sister, was one Madame Albertazzi “who, twenty years ago,” according to the *Illustrated Melbourne Post* in 1864, “took the musical world by storm as an operatic actress.”⁶

Together with his fine pedigree in the theatre arts was Frank’s other legacy to his daughters: a powerful place in the State’s social history as serious conduits of change. “It is not generally known,” claimed one report printed in Tasmania in 1864, “that the lovers of music are mainly indebted to the Howson family for the institution of the opera in Australia. When their chapter of history is written, the name of Frank Howson and his brother John will stand prominently as the pioneers of this beautiful and refined branch of the art in the Southern hemisphere.”⁷



Emma Howson, sporting a very provocative costume, baring arms, shoulders, and décolleté, and showing stockinged legs from a photograph (c. 1860s) from the La Trobe Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria.

Emma and Clelia were born in the mid 1840s, around ten years after the establishment of “professional” theatre in Tasmania, in 1833. The sisters left Tasmania too young to have appeared on the stage, so their experience and reputation developed almost entirely in Sydney, and thereafter in Melbourne, as well through extensive touring across mainland Australia. This was an appealing truth for some culture-watchers eager to establish a unique experience of the Howson sisters as potentially powerful icons of “Australian-ness.” “Who is Emma Howson?” wondered one theatre critic “armed with the play-bill of ‘Somnambula’ [sic]” in 1864, immediately concluding: “A lovely apparition . . . Emma Howson, the youthful Prima Donna, possesses a rare, rich voice of great extent, masterly cultivated.”⁸

Emma’s social currency as a “lovely apparition” probably offered “Hobartionians” a welcome alternative to the “strong flavor of the convict element”⁹ that so fascinated the American dramatic superstar Joseph Jefferson. Upon his return to America, the actor immortalised his opening night experience as Bob Brierly in Tom Taylor’s *The Ticket-of-Leave Man* (1863) when, shocked by the appearance of “at least one hundred ticket-of-leave men”¹⁰ in the pit of Hobart’s Theatre Royal, the actor wrote:

Before the curtain rose, I looked through it at this terrible audience; the faces in the pit were a study. Men with low foreheads and small, peering, ferret-looking eyes, some with flat noses, and square, cruel jaws, and sinister expressions,—leering, low, cunning,—all wearing a sullen, dogged look.¹¹

While Jefferson’s snapshot conceptualised theatre as a “class-cultural” institution,¹² the picture he painted also underscored a cultural identity many settlers were keen to dispel—an identity created by the “convict taint.” Rose

Gaby notes that the project of creating the illusion of Tasmania as “little England” was actively pursued,¹³ and this process of illusion undoubtedly inspired a counterpoint to the public visibility of the frontier felon. Similarly, the publicity of representatives such as the Howson and Carandini sisters illustrates how print culture also adopted a role in this cultural transformation. Promoting a unique experience of these exemplars of identity was crucial in promoting an idiosyncratic culture that offered a respectable alternative to the “terrible audience” popularised by Jefferson’s observation.

“Tasmanian Nightingales” such as Emma and Clelia Howson¹⁴ followed in the ideological footsteps of figures such as Marie Carandini and her daughters. Major shifts in theatre industry trends saw theatre move toward more specialised genres, such as “localised” burlesques and pantomimes, which the Howsons, among others, made very popular.¹⁵ Although the Howson family excelled in “popular” entertainment such as extravaganzas and pantomimes, their forte in classical music and operettas enabled the ensemble to capitalise on audiences eager for both “high” and “popular” theatre entertainment. This made the Howsons particularly unusual. While the early 1850s had ushered in an industry trend toward the separation of “legitimate” (or “high”) and non-legitimate (“popular”) entertainment, the Howson family found that by the 1860s they could offer “popular” theatre without necessarily compromising on their appeal as a more classically oriented troupe. The ensemble’s hybridity would in fact lessen the tensions of distinction necessarily implied by “high” and “popular” material works and I would suggest that this was, in part, due to Frank Howson’s inventive approach to production.

It was said after witnessing the Howsons that, “The truest test of the excellence of a musical composition is its popularity,”¹⁶ arguably because in contrast to non-domestic ensembles—such as the Lyster Company, as well as solo artists, such as sopranos Octavia Hamilton, Anna Bishop and Catherine

Hayes—Frank Howson took opera quite literally back to its “home grown” roots. This was something Marie Carandini also achieved. Frank’s daughters, as “home grown” performers, were of course vital to the development of “home grown” icons, and Frank’s finesse in nurturing Emma and Clelia’s potential paid significant dividends. *Bell’s Life in Sydney* claimed as early as 14 January 1860 that Emma possessed “one of those rare voices which must be heard to be fully appreciated ... two octaves and a half; ranging from low G to D in alt.”¹⁷ Clelia, on the other hand, was described as a “mezzo soprano.” “Her intonation is perfection,” reported *Bell’s Life* in the same year, “and like her sister, she sings with the most perfect ease and self-possession.”¹⁸

Frank Howson was well experienced in understanding audience demand. Since his attraction to the superior prospects of Sydney in 1845, when Emma was less than one year old and Clelia only a few months, Frank’s rise through the musical ranks of that city seemed meteoric. After a period of typically organising the musical arrangements of many performances as a musical director, on 14 January 1854 *Bell’s Life in Sydney* reported that Frank had assumed “the management [of the Royal Victoria Theatre and] . . . intended that OPERA shall form one of the most prominent features of the new regime.”¹⁹ Soon, the sisters too figured under this “regime.”

The siblings could not have better timed their joint debut in 1859 in relation to bolstering Tasmanian cultural authenticity. Clelia, of course, had already made her debut singing a solo at a benefit for Anna Bishop at Sydney’s Prince of Wales theatre in September 1857, which is odd considering the fact that she was younger than Emma.²⁰ But the “future fame”²¹ of both sisters was a powerful social force in the late 1850s because through them journalists could state: “Australia may well be proud of having produced two such excellent and accomplished musicians, who seem to have inherited the talents of their gifted relative, the late Madame Albertazzi, the celebrated English prima donna.”²²

Their heredity as Tasmanians was particularly important at a time when the mainland press traditionally referred to the colony as a kind of geographical extension of Victoria and generally typified the island as distant and indolent. The *Age* published stories about “Yankee rowdyism”²³ in Tasmania, and, at the same time the sisters debuted in 1859, the *Melbourne Punch* asserted that: “the youth of Tasmania were more at home in the stable than in the drawingroom.”²⁴ Aspects of this discourse contested Tasmania’s reputation as a progressive and thriving cultural entity by shifting the focus away from cultural achievements, such as the fact that Dr Pugh in Launceston performed the earliest surgical procedure using anaesthetics in 1847,²⁵ to the ongoing conflict between local and mainland print journalists.

While claims of “rowdyism” and the suspect maturity of Tasmania’s “youth” did contribute to media exemplifying the social climate of the colony as delinquent and sluggish, it was however, to borrow Evan Willis’ suggestion, “a powerful stimulus to action.”²⁶ Press culture was a vital institution in producing counter-narratives of pro-provincialism that relied heavily on the Howson sister’s popularity. “Claiming” the cultural importance of the Howson sisters (in particular Emma) did witness the development of some consensus between media cultures concerning the commentaries of difference that emphasised place and dissimilar experiences of “culture” and cultural icons.

Sometimes, journalists offered quite grandiose statements in an effort to emphasise cultural specificity and an important proximity to a star’s success, such as one reporter’s claim that “The sun of the Italy of the Southern Hemisphere, ‘Tasmania,’ beamed on the day of her [Emma’s] birth and the first years of her life. Under the always clear sky of Sydney the bud developed to full beauty, till she, not long ago, commenced her triumphant career in Victoria!”²⁷



Miss Clelia Howson from a photograph held in the La Trobe Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria (c. 1860s).

Popularising Tasmania as the “Italy of the Southern hemisphere” evidences a number of important developments in media culture that merit comment. The reporter’s analogy clearly dealt with issues of cultural difference and the eccentricities of “place” (Sydney, Melbourne and Tasmania), but it also concentrated greater emphasis on the importance of communicating unique experiences of culture by exploiting the “star” as an ideological vehicle. Such comments show that the Howson family, but in particular the sisters, were important catalysts in motivating journalists to look beyond domestic representations of identity to instead consider how offshore communities might consume such representations. This issue came to the heart of negotiating what Australian-ness *was* and *did* during the period.

On 15 October 1859, around the time that a reporter for the *Examiner* defended how “at home” Tasmanians were with “a fist for their slanderers,” *Bell’s Life in Sydney* reported that “immense applause” and “showers of bouquets” had greeted Emma’s performance of the Sylph to the Jessie of Clelia in John Barnett’s opera *Mountain Sylph* (1834).²⁸ The applause following Emma’s appearance as Adalgisa in Vincenzo Bellini’s *Norma* (1831) three days later was so great that it motivated *Bell’s Life in Sydney* to claim that, “it might reasonably have been expected to have embarrassed her.”²⁹ Emma was then only fifteen years old, but such accolades do suggest that even at this reasonably young age, her public visibility was considerable. This was a point driven during the era because, “the Howsons were the first to introduce and create a public taste for the lyric drama, which has now attained such fair proportions.”³⁰

Colonials credited music, particularly opera, as a curative panacea for a range of social ills, from minimising disorderly behaviour to edifying the working classes. Opera’s concurrent appeal as “high” culture was also very attractive to a flourishing group of colonials eager to enact their social mobility.

This class-conscious bourgeoisie found social value in material works such as the “lyric arts” as an expression of refinement and taste. Both the Carandini and Howson families were among a number of ensembles specialising in classical music to appear in the two decades from 1861 to 1883 and realise a peak in popularity just after the beginning of what Manning Clarke has termed the “Age of the Bourgeoisie.”³¹

The fact that Emma and Clelia, like the Carandini sisters, inspired such a complete range of localised epithets, including the “Tasmanian Nightingale,”³² the “Australian Prima Donna,”³³ and the “New Prima Donna,”³⁴ reflects their social power, and by extension, their cultural influence. That these were so clearly expressions of State of origin suggests that both sets of sisters informed understandings of cultural identity and nationality. While the *Illustrated Melbourne Post* claimed on 24 March 1864 that Emma Howson was “our new prima donna,”³⁵ the *Mercury* on 17 April 1865 reported that, “The Misses Howson and Mr Frank Howson require no introduction from us, they are Tasmanians.”³⁶ On 31 December 1859, *Bell’s Life in Sydney* claimed Frank Howson as “gifted” and congratulated his “lengthy and indefatigable services ... in the introduction and promotion of Opera in this city.”³⁷ Later, the *Illustrated Melbourne Post* in 1864 commented that: “Miss Emma Howson is a member of a family which, in more than one instance, has made itself celebrated throughout the world.”³⁸ This is not to suggest that one narrative was specifically responsive to another, but rather that textual practices of communicating homeland relied on actresses as central figures connecting identity and social futurity.

Mainland journalists sometimes printed misguided claims about Emma’s heredity in the drive to connect her bloodline with “lyric artists” most noted for their fame. For instance, one critic for the *Melbourne Age* declared that in the part of Giselle, Emma’s “comprehension of the music [of Loder’s *The*

Night Dancers] is due in part to the taste and admirable instruction of a relative . . . Miss Sara Flower"³⁹ who was then in Sydney. It is almost certain that the critic was mistaken because, although Flower had appeared in the 1846 Princess's Theatre London production of the opera alongside Emma Albertazzi—who was of course directly related to Emma as her aunt—there is no evidence to suggest that Emma Howson and Sara Flower were blood-related. But the claim itself illustrates that the real importance here was Emma's connection to a community of operatic stars, and not necessarily the truth of the claim as "fact," because in suggesting Emma and Flower were related, journalists could simultaneously promote "the Australian context" through the popularisation of a unique experience of such stars.

The potential stardom of Emma and Clelia predicted by many mainland journalists was soon realised as fact: as evidenced by the sisters' reception in Melbourne in late 1863 and early 1864. The first opera of their season at Royal Haymarket Theatre in December 1863 was, quite literally, a family affair. In fact, most, if not all of the operas staged over the next two months were organised, produced, and performed by the Howson family. The orchestra for Rossini's *Cinderella* was "Augmented and Conducted by J. HOWSON, Junr"⁴⁰ and appearing in the cast were of course Frank, John, Emma and Clelia Howson (as well as Walter Sherwin and Marie Carandini).



Clelia Howson, not wearing "a semi-diaphonous short skirt" but nonetheless showing off a well-turned ankle and uncovered arms (from the La Trobe Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria)

Initial performances of *Cinderella* received mixed reviews from the *Age*. These were concerned not so much with the aesthetic values of the piece, but rather with Emma's status as a star on the rise. While the *Age* reported that the "prompter was audible more than once" and was particularly disappointed that he was "chiefly required to aid Madame Carandini,"⁴¹ the critic predicted that Emma would continue to gain in confidence as *Cinderella*, and felt the epithet "the new prima donna"⁴² was fittingly applied. Criticism about the success of the production does reveal that any fault on the part of the ensemble's performance was nothing more than a short-lived setback. A short time later, Marie reportedly "sang and acted the Gipsy Queen [in Balfe's *The Bohemian Girl*] with brilliancy and dramatic effect" when her "clear searching tones and impressive manner" were judged "quite thrilling."⁴³ Emma's performance as the gipsy girl Arline in *The Bohemian Girl* also received warm praise. The *Age* announced that it was "completely successful" and reported:

From her first appearance on the stage, when she gave such charming freshness to the hackneyed, organ-ground ditty, which little London boys and girls call "The Marble Halls," till the fall of the curtain, Miss Emma Howson's efforts were a succession of sweet, feeling, and often powerfully expressive vocalization, all pervaded with an artless simplicity of style and manner – the freshness of a charming spring, ripe with the promise of future excellence. Her acting, too, is very natural, easy, and lady-like, and full of modest grace.⁴⁴

Emma's "often powerfully expressive vocalization" and her "very natural, easy, and lady-like" acting are claims that underscore the reception and acceptance of opera stars as stage stars throughout the nineteenth century.

Such criticism illustrates that female domestic opera stars were largely sheltered from the confusion between the vices of the dramatic characters they played and their “modest grace” as “real” life stage women. Rather, what is far more explicit is the expectation on the part of critics that “lyric artists” be at least adequately skilled as actresses and at best highly trained as vocalists. This demand is regularly emphasised by a variety of critical reviews printed after the sisters’ performances much more so than concerns over feminine representation. Again, there is a distinction here between the expectation that women generally exhibit “modest grace,” and the “grace” of a stage actress somehow being compromised if she plays the part of a “fallen” woman or murderous shrew too convincingly. For instance, one reviewer conceded that Clelia sang her part as Florestein, a “male” role, in *The Bohemian Girl* with “spirit and taste,” but decided that her voice was “hardly weighty enough for the part.”⁴⁵

The parts taken by the sisters in the opera emphasise how easily the genre facilitated confusion in the performance of gender. At one point Emma’s Arline points to a lady’s heart and sings “Pretty maiden, pray, take care, take care / Love is making havoc there, love is making havoc there!” Emma’s character as the object of some romantic interest raises questions about what colonial audiences made of Clelia Howson’s performance as Florestein “the little coxcomb solider”⁴⁶ who upon espying Arline (played by her sister) says to friends “It’s no use restraining me . . . I’m positively smitten.” Here realities of sexuality and gender are confused in the opera’s themes of sexual attraction and flirtation. Consider for a moment what audiences thought when Clelia/Florestein says to Emma/Arline: “Do not mock me, but pity my too susceptible nature, and let me print one kiss upon . . .” and Emma/Arline slaps her violently on the face in response.

This confusion and interplay of colonial performances of gender shifts the concern not onto the fact that Clelia played a “male” part, but rather that

Clelia's limited success at creating "weightiness" in her vocalisation caused problems in her representation of a male, Florestin. She did, however, present a "fresh and natural"⁴⁷ Lisa in the production of Bellini's *La Sonnambula* to the "decided triumph" of Emma as Anima. Similarly, the *Age* reported that Emma's performance as Giselle in the production of Edward Loder's *The Night Dancers* (the part made famous by her aunt Emma Albertazzi) "exhibited a thorough conception of the character," but decided that her singing was disappointing.⁴⁸ Meanwhile, Clelia "sang prettily" and with "her usual intelligent regard"⁴⁹ the character of Mary.

There was no anxiety over the moral dimensions of Clelia's characterisation of Lady Alleash in Auber's *Fra Diavolo*. In fact, the only flaw in her performance was that her figure apparently "lacked the matronly form necessary for the true embodiment of the part."⁵⁰ The *Age* critic's comment does imply that opera performers were not only required to sing and act the part, but also that they had to look and "embody" the part just as convincingly. This demand sometimes meant evacuating one's performance of all personal traits and Clelia seemed especially adept at achieving this successfully. Critics claimed her Lazarillo in Wallace's *Maritana*⁵¹ was "accomplished" because of the "complete abnegation of her own personality . . . by a pensive sadness which suited her part admirably."⁵² Again, this suggests there was no confusion between the ideological consequences of Clelia's characterisation (playing, for instance, a "male" part to complement her sister's heroine), but rather that an actress's success at "abnegation" mediated the distinctions between her personal and public subjectivities as feminine.

Contrary to this abnegation of personality was the insistence on the distinctiveness of voice; a feature which critics necessarily demanded be individual and unique in terms of expression and skill. One curious and apparently contradictory measure by which a player's success at individualism

was judged was to carefully monitor how well their voice intermingled with the vocal performance of others when required to sing a duet. The sisters' presentation of "Sainted Mother, guide his footsteps" was dubbed "the gem of the evening," and the *Age* critic was so impressed with how completely the sisters complemented one another's distinctiveness that the edition ran the following observation:

This is sung most exquisitely by the Misses Howson, whose voices blended together sweetly in the portions which were rendered with the most delicate modulation. Clelia decidedly carried off the palm, appearing to have the more correct concept of the sentiment. The contralto notes were just suited to the compass of her voice, which is pure and distinct in the middle and lower register, and she conveyed into the words of the song a pathos and depth of feeling apparently quite spontaneous, which rendered it irresistibly fascinating. The duet commanded pin-fall attention while it was twice sung, and deafening applause followed its conclusion.⁵³

Similarly, although the *Age* reported that, "Opinion will differ on the intellectual merit of Verdi's *Il Trovatore*," it claimed, "no one with an ear can deny the rich, sensuous enjoyment of the work."⁵⁴ Marie Carandini's Azucena, "the vengeful gypsy," was claimed "a complete success" while the Leonora of Emma was praised as "a very successful one, and as successful as any other lyric effort she has made on our stage."⁵⁵ Perhaps Emma had Marie to thank for her success in the role; after all, *Bell's Life in Sydney* had suggested only five years earlier, "that we think that Madame Carandini will hardly surpass her *Leonora* in any

character that she may hereafter assume . . . her vocalisation sufficiently shows the most attentive study to the music."⁵⁶

Emma's publicity close to the end of the Haymarket's opera season claimed her performances "fully sustained her well-earned reputation"⁵⁷ despite the fact that earlier the *Age* had cautioned Emma "not to be carried away by popular plaudits into the belief that she has accomplished an artistic career."⁵⁸ Even though the *Age* warned that the "vox populi is fickle"⁵⁹ and instructed Emma that "it is only patience and hard industry that secure the firm position of an artist,"⁶⁰ only a month later it claimed she achieved just that in her role as Eolia in Barnett's *The Mountain Sylph* (on 22 February 1864). The *Illustrated Melbourne Post* summed up Emma's season with this: "Miss Emma Howson, the new prima donna, created a real sensation in the character of Amina; and again as the heroine of Wallace's opera."⁶¹ It was also claimed by another critic that "If I boldly place Emma Howson's voice as perfectly equal to that of the universally admired Lucy Escott, I can only add the wish that she may also attain that lady's dramatic fire, so as, in every respect, to satisfy the claims of the music-loving public."⁶²

Emma's comparison with Lucy Escott was not surprising given that Escott,⁶³ an American, was appearing as Reiza at the Theatre Royal's production of Carl Von Weber's fairy opera *Oberon and the Magic Horn, or, The Erle King's Oath* coincidental with Emma's appearance as Lady Ethelinda in Akhurst's *Baron Munchausen* at the Haymarket (in January 1866). Even though Emma was associated with Escott in name only (they never seemed to have performed together), it was an important symbolic gesture nonetheless. Escott caused quite a sensation in Australia in parts such as Alice in Meyerbeer's *Diavolo*, Anima in Bellini's *La Sonnambula*, Donna Elvira and Violetta in Verdi's *Ernani* and *La Traviata*, and also as Lenora, Lucia and Lucrezia in Donizetti's *La*

Favorita, *Lucia di Lammermoor* and *Lucrezia Borgia* respectively (to name only a few).

Lucy arrived in Melbourne via San Francisco with William Lyster's company in March 1861. The leading Italian composer Saverio Mercadante had written and dedicated *The Lucy Escott Polka* to her in the 1860s⁶⁴ (although Escott had appeared as *Violetta* in Mercadante's opera of the same name at its world premier in Naples during the early 1850s), and her reception in Australia was such that the poet Henry Kendall dedicated a poem to her called *Lurline*. Most of Lucy's appearances in the country were supported by the tenor Henry Squires (whom she later married), and Katharine Brisbane reports that Escott's co-star at J. H. Tully's English Opera Company at London's Drury Lane sometime during the period 1855–1858 was Robert Farquharson, who of course appeared regularly with Marie Carandini.⁶⁵

That Emma Howson's name had been uttered in the same breath as that of Madame Lucy Escott was significant given Escott's wide-ranging colonial appeal and brilliant star power. It was clear to some critics, particularly quite early in Emma's career, that her dramatic skills were no match for Escott's. While it was claimed that, "Miss Emma Howson sings with the skill of an accomplished musician"⁶⁶ (during appearances at the Prince of Wales, Sydney in the burlesque *Orpheus and Eurydice*),⁶⁷ and "safely asserted that she will attain a high position in the profession she had adopted,"⁶⁸ one report did earlier claim that, "as an actress, she has much to learn."⁶⁹ In fact, reports suggest that Clelia was probably in a much better position to mimic Escott's "dramatic fire" given critics admired her skills as an actress often over those of Emma. Clelia's appearance as a fairy in *Harlequin Baron Munchhausen* motivated *Bell's Life in Victoria* to declare; "One could scarcely desire ... a smarter, sprightlier, saucier Fairy Pariboo than Miss Clelia Howson." Especially

fascinating to the reviewer were the “troops of young creatures in semi-diaphanous short skirts”!⁷⁰

That production burst forth onto the stage with three notable sets of siblings. Alongside Emma’s appearance as Lady Ethelinda to the Fairy Pariboo of Clelia were fellow “Hobartonian” Docy Stewart, as Queen Aurora, and her sister Maggie making up the chorus of fairy attendants. In addition, performing a selection of in-between fare during *Baron Munchhausen* were members of the Nathan Family, a troupe consisting of the siblings Julia, Louis, Edward, Selina and little Marion, billed in 1866 as “a child of only four years old.”⁷¹

The troupe’s specialty as gymnasts complemented the elements of burlesques such as *Baron Munchhausen* as “extravaganzas” founded on elements of fantasy and fairytale. The production values of such genres needed to reflect an understanding of, and loyalty to, the increasing introduction of practicable scenery and spectacle on the nineteenth century stage. Dynamic feats of flexibility, balance, and human endurance certainly complemented that agenda.

One might then conclude that with such a focus on spectacle, Clelia’s “saucy” rendition of Fairy Pariboo might easily have been confused with her “real” life subjectivity as a young woman. Yet, this was far from the case. It is true that the reviewer’s fascination with “troops of young creatures in semi-diaphanous short skirts” reveals a partiality to the production’s titillating allure, yet spectacle was more a case of genre than simply a question of the sexualisation of the subjectivities engaged in its performance. Certainly, media and audiences sexualised women, but in critical terms, spectacle was a twin function of style; it was inclusive of an actress’s dramatic representation and the production values of the piece as true-to-life. Here, a “true to nature” style of acting was as important as the outward aesthetics of “correct judgment” in a “high” or “popular” piece. Frank’s inventive approach to material works and

mise-en-scène was especially noteworthy because of his success in popularising a repertoire of “high” compositions while simultaneously achieving grander production standards of both “high” and “popular”⁷² pieces.

In 1864, Tasmanians had an opportunity to see for themselves the accomplished performances of the Howson sisters. Their Hobart homecoming represented a major turning point for the city, which is fascinating considering that there is no evidence to suggest that any of the family members had appeared publicly in Tasmania since 1845. Publicity claimed that even despite the twenty-two years since Frank Howson (and arguably any of his family) had last appeared, the lapse of two decades had not undermined his former glories in the city. His “capabilities ... as a low comedian,” reminded the *Mercury* on 15 June 1864, “were many years ago favourably known to the Theatre frequenters of Hobart Town.” Moreover, Frank received particular credit on that occasion as “the introducer of operatic music in this colony.”⁷³ The program on the evening of 27 June 1864 began with the opening overture from *William Tell*⁷⁴ and was followed by a selection of vocal pieces designed to display Emma and Clelia’s talents. After the sisters’ performance of Constanzo Festa’s madrigal, “Down in a Flowery Vale,” Frank senior and Frank junior performed the “Bijou” song from Charles Gounod’s “new opera” in five acts called *Faust* (1858), which was of course inspired by Goethe (1808). Frank’s productions in Tasmania, as in Melbourne, highlighted the talents of his children in general and his daughters in particular. Clelia’s rendition of “When all was Young” was reported in the *Mercury* on 28 June 1864 to have “received a flattering ovation and an unanimous call for a repetition,” and Emma was claimed as both “the gem of the vocal division of the concert,” as well as a “prima donna.”⁷⁵



An illustration of Emma Howson, "The Australian Prima Donna at the Haymarket Theatre [Melbourne]" as published by the *Illustrated Melbourne Post* on 25 February 1864.

On 31 May 1864, the *Mercury* reported that the family had visited Tasmania so that Emma Howson could pay “her native city, Hobart Town, a farewell visit, prior to her departure for Europe.” Perhaps this is why the fact “that three out of five of them are natives of this city [Hobart]”⁷⁶ was so actively promoted as a source of pride. In fact, “the triple claim upon the sympathies of the lovers of music in Tasmania” noted by the *Mercury* also included their status as “beyond question, artists of the highest order,” and the particularly influential role Frank Howson played in “naturalising” “the lyric drama in the leading settlements of the Australian group.”⁷⁷ As it was, the family’s appearances in less noted “settlements of the Australian group” also included provincial locations such as New Norfolk (2 July 1864), Oatlands (13 July) and Campbell Town (14 July) while *en route* to Launceston for a one-night-only concert prior to their departure for Melbourne. Colonel Eagar, Major Wilson, and officers and members of the Southern Division of the Tasmanian Volunteer Force attended Emma’s grand complimentary benefit on Monday 11 July. The performance even took precedence over the previously scheduled civic rehearsals in aid of the Hobart Town Hall organ, which were postponed.⁷⁸

Emma’s promotion, even in Tasmania as the “Celebrated Australian Prima Donna,”⁷⁹ implies two important shifts in nineteenth century Australian media practice. First is the trend to define Emma in her homeland as a “celebrity,” and the second is the tendency to position her as ideologically important in the narration of “Australian-ness.” Publicising Emma as the “Australian prima donna” made communicating a version of “Australian-ness” possible, and emphasising her nationality was especially important considering her impending “departure for Europe.” Both Tasmanian and mainland journalists appeared unified in publicising a culturally differentiated experience of her that did not compromise her importance as “an Australian.” This is crucial to consider because it illustrates some level of domestic consensus

concerning what was an “accepted mode of *representation* of the meaning of the nation.”⁸⁰ Emma Howson’s symbolic identity as “the *Australian* Prima Donna [my italics]” simultaneously embodied “Australian-ness” while also creating a mode of representation that expressed “Australian” nationality and its utility.

When the Howson family re-appeared in Hobart in 1865 as part of Lady Emilia Don’s “greatest galaxy of talent,”⁸¹ it was more in support of Don’s star-power. This was evident in that Clelia and Emma were generally, though not always, allotted the subordinate parts in Don’s repertoire of material works, thus ensuring her status as principal. The sisters, however, did share laurels with Don by virtue of the piece composed for her by Issac Nathan (1790–1864). In fact, Don introduced a number of vocal arrangements while she appeared in Australia. The song “Circumstance” was “composed expressly for the admirable and talented Lady Don, and sung with classical effects at the Australian concerts, by Miss Amelia [sic] and Miss Clelia Howson, nieces of the accomplished Madame Albertazzi.”⁸² Almost a decade earlier, J. Winterbottom⁸³ had written a solo piece especially for Don: *Lady Don Valse*, which he composed in 1856.⁸⁴

Emilia Don’s acquaintance with Frank Howson dated back to her earlier tour of 1861. Frank had appeared with William and Emilia in the Theatre Royal, Melbourne production of *Harlequin Valentine and Orson; or, the task of romance and the tricks of the spirit of fun aka Valentine and Orson*.⁸⁵ The spectacular production enjoyed a twenty-one run performance between 26 December 1861 and 18 January 1862 (with benefit performances on 15 and 21 January 1862). Later, the Howson family appeared with Emilia Don in a repertoire featuring both burlesque and comic opera. Akhurst’s adaptation of *The last of the Ogres; or, Harlequin Prince Amiable and the four wishes*, for instance, was a hit for the company with twenty-three performances between 26 December 1864 and 20 January 1865, at the Royal Haymarket Theatre Melbourne.⁸⁶

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 POET LAUREATE,

MUSIC BY

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Author of the "Hebrew Melodies," "Musurgia Vocalis," &c., &c.

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[♩ 88.]

Piano---forte.

The first page of the musical arrangement that was arranged and composed for Lady Emilia Don, but which featured the vocal contributions of the Howson sisters (also note the pride-of-place reference given to their aunt, Madame (Emma) Albertazzi.⁸⁷

The last of the Ogres; or, Harlequin Prince Amiable and the four wishes was not only performed again on 31 March 1865 for Don's benefit at Mason's Concert Hall Brisbane, featuring appearances by Frank, Clelia and Emma Howson for the second time,⁸⁸ the play was repeated on 1 April 1865 at the same venue by the same company. The company's success on the mainland inspired an eager

reception in Tasmania, although the *Mercury* did wryly conclude after the troupe's presentation of the "localised" extravaganza *Aladdin* that: "we fear some of the best and most ludicrous of the puns fall harmless upon colonial ears."⁸⁹

Before the Howson Family left for America in early 1866, they performed a highly successful round of concerts and extravaganza productions at Melbourne's Haymarket Theatre between December 1865 and January 1866. Audiences attended their benefit performance of Bellini's *La Sonnambula* in good number on 23 January, and the *Age* reported that Emma was "a very graceful exponent of the village beauty *Anima* ; and her sister [Clelia] makes almost too dangerous a rival as *Lisa*."⁹⁰ The significance of the evening was suitably reflected in the fact that the performance was patronised by the then Governor Darling, as well as his daughter and "*suite*," and their patronage was a fitting marker of the Howson family's long journey from their early beginnings in Hobart as assisted immigrants to their influential position as the flagship of cultural development. And taken as a whole, the sisters' publicity over the years since their respective debuts clearly suggests that developing an "accepted mode of *representation* of the meaning of the nation"⁹¹ was a specific priority previous to their departure for America. The gradual progression from their initial reception as the talented daughters of Frank Howson, to the explicit focus on Emma Howson as a woman of particular significance to Australian popular identity traces the roots of promoting "nationality" as a specific ideological agenda very well. I believe the reasons for this evolution to be quite clearly traceable directly to Emma's reception as a celebrated star, the likes of which the country had not previously enjoyed.

At the time, Emma Howson represented an exemplar of nationality never before seen in Australia. Previous to 1866, Australia appeared not to have exported any internationally successful, domestically born-and-bred stage stars

of its own, only ever receiving them from other parts of the world. Eliza Winstanley is generally “hailed as the first Australian-trained actress to be successful overseas,”⁹² but she was not Australian born. In 1867, vocalist Julia Matthews was probably the first Australian-trained performer to appear at Covent Garden, but like Winstanley, Matthews too was English-born. In fact, I would like to suggest that not only does Emma deserve recognition as the first Australian-born singer to appear in London, but also that it was Emma Howson, and not Nellie Stewart, who was Australia’s first “native-born” star. I say this for two reasons. First, Emma was probably the first Australian born and trained singer to debut in America when she appeared as Amina in *La Sonnambula* at Maguire’s Academy of Music, San Francisco, in June 1866. Second, publicity in Tasmania during the late 1870s, almost twelve years after her Australian departure, hailed Emma as “our Australian Nightingale” and “the first prima donna born in Australia that has appeared on the London stage.”⁹³ So while some twentieth century historians somewhat cautiously claim that, “Emma Howson appears to have been the first Australian Prima Donna,”⁹⁴ for Australians in the nineteenth century there was no doubt that Emma was the “first.”

In America, the Howsons performed for a time with Emilia Don but the alliance, however, did not go well. What promised to be a profitable arrangement was destined to end “in a rather inglorious manner.”⁹⁵ Don’s American agent, Mr. H. D. Wilton,⁹⁶ had written to *Bell’s Life in Victoria* claiming “‘The Howsons Family, or rather, the ‘Howson English and Italian Opera Troupe,’ having made a complete failure in the lyric business, have now dropped down to small farces and burlesques, at the Metropolitan Opera House, San Francisco, and are playing to very bad business’.”⁹⁷ Frank Howson responded to the allegation in his own epistle to *Bell’s Life*, counter-stating: “I

would never have any more dealings with that lady . . . if she came on the stage I and my family would walk off.”⁹⁸

Although mainland publications such as the *Illustrated Melbourne Post* reported that it was through Frank Howson that “the people of this division of the southern hemisphere were first made acquainted with the beauties of the musical drama,”⁹⁹ he was never really afforded due credit. In fact, “the Nestor of Australian dramatic critics,”¹⁰⁰ journalist James Smith’s eulogy of the efforts of Howson’s rival, the American businessman William Saurian Lyster, allots Lyster much credit for a movement that had already been in existence in the colonies for the previous twenty years, at least. Frank Howson’s significance in developing opera began in Tasmania (then Van Diemen’s Land) as early as 1842 – almost two decades before the first appearance of Lyster’s Opera Company in 1861. In fact, it was claimed of Frank in 1865 that to “Frank Howson belongs the honour of being the first member of the musical profession to naturalise the lyric drama in the leading settlements of the Australian group.”¹⁰¹ In 1888, Lyster may have “contributed in no unimportant degree to raise the taste of the play-going public in many instances,”¹⁰² but Frank Howson still deserves recognition. After all, almost twenty-five years before the recollections of both Smith and the *Argus*, publicity crowned Howson as “the pioneer of opera in Australia.”¹⁰³

Emma enjoyed a long and successful career in America. After debuts in San Francisco in 1866 and New York in November 1869, she left for Europe in 1873 and studied in Milan. Emma continued the tradition of vocal instruction that began in Australia with Sara Flower after training under the virtuoso bel canto teacher Francesco Lamperti (1813–1892) when she reached Milan.¹⁰⁴ Emma later performed in Livorno (the city in Tuscany, Italy known in English as “Leghorn”), as well as in Malta, England and Ireland. She completed Italian seasons in both July and October 1876, being particularly well received in

"Figaro, La Sonnambula, and Martha,"¹⁰⁵ and later also created her most acclaimed role as Josephine in *HMS Pinafore* in London, in May 1878. Emma never appears to have married. She died in New York a well-remembered star in 1928. Clelia did marry,¹⁰⁶ but never eclipsed her sister's success. She died in New York, also well remembered, on 24 October 1931, the same year as Nellie Stewart.



Miss Nellie Stewart, beautiful, vibrant, and as she appeared at the height of her fame during performances in Sydney in 1894, as printed in the *Illustrated Australian News*, 1 August 1894.

Emma's obituary in the *New York Times* raises many questions not only about what it meant to be "Tasmanian," but also about what "Australian-ness" *was* and *did* by the 1920s. Reportedly born in "Sydney" Australia, Emma's connection to Tasmania at the time of her death seemed as distant as the miles that separate Hobart and New York. Whether she chose not to publicise her origins as "Tasmanian" or whether the *Times* was merely unaware of her exact birthplace is unknown. Perhaps, after some sixty-two years, it was conceivable that Emma simply no longer regarded herself as anything other than American and only ever promoted her past as "Australian."

What is especially curious, however, is the fact that not so long after Emma's death, actress Merle Oberon's publicists took seriously the project of advertising her identity as "Tasmanian." In the same way, actor Errol Flynn's antics were such that they earned for him the epithet "the Tasmanian Devil." How is explaining such contrasts of provenance possible? Being "Tasmanian" clearly held some currency during the height of Oberon's (and indeed Flynn's) career. Alternatively, was the island's distance particularly attractive to Oberon's publicists in concealing her Anglo-Indian identity? If so, was it that very "otherness" that Emma possibly found out-of-place?

Despite the fact that by the time of her death, Emma's provenance as "Tasmanian-born" had been written out of her history, the word "Australia" was still pliable enough to accommodate the tension of ownership between disparate countries. Remote though Australia was the word itself was nonetheless potent as a gesture of distinctive nationality. Still, the context of the reference was, quite literally, a world away from Hobart back in 1865. Then, the *Mercury* on 3 June printed what now seems in retrospect a poignant epitaph: "May you even think upon this visit to Hobart Town with pleasure, and never regret, that Tasmania is the land of your birth."¹⁰⁷

EMMA HOWSON DEAD.

Once Star in Royal Italian Opera—
Original Josephine in "Pinafore."

Miss Emma Howson, creator of the rôle of Josephine in the Gilbert and Sullivan operetta "H. M. S. Pinafore," and at one time prima donna of the Royal Italian Opera, died on Monday at the home of her sister, Mrs. H. B. Parsons, 325 Clinton Avenue, Brooklyn, at the age of 84.

Born in Sydney, Australia, in 1844, Miss Howson came to this country in 1866 with the Howson Opera Company, directed by her father. Later she went to Italy to study voice and became the prize pupil of the elder Lamperti. She created the rôle of Josephine in the first presentation of "Pinafore" in London about 1879 and was also the original Betina in "The Mascot," another light opera.

Miss Howson retired from the stage about thirty-five years ago and afterward, until five or six years ago, taught voice in New York and Brooklyn, making her home with her sister, who is the only surviving member of her family. A brother, Frank A. Howson, musical director and composer, died in June, 1926. John Howson, another brother, who died about forty years ago, was a well-known comedian in Gilbert and Sullivan operettas in New York. He scored his greatest success in "The Sorcerer."

Funeral services for Miss Howson will be held privately this afternoon in Mrs. Parsons's home. Burial will be in Greenwood Cemetery in the plot where Miss Howson's mother was buried in 1869.

Emma Howson's obituary, published by the
New York Times, 6 June 1928.

Emma Howson's story illustrates that being dubbed "Tasmanian" was only one aspect of a complex process in which performance and homeland collide.

Identity, state of origin and women's social power as figures emphasising the Australian motherland were clearly important in the nineteenth century. And while it is true that subjectivity and place were nebulous and slippery constructs in the print representation of women such as Emma Howson, the mere fact that actresses figured so prominently in narrating Australian nationality during the period draws attention to how powerful some theatre women really were. A woman Emma knew intimately further illustrates this phenomenon: Hattie Shepparde, "the Launceston actress."¹⁰⁸

Chapter Nine:

“A Native of Launceston”: Hattie Shepparde

1846 - 1874

“Miss Shepparde is a native of Launceston, Tasmania, and although she has played in most of the theatres in Australia and New Zealand, her professional experience has not extended north of the equator, so that her successes have been won unaided by such advantages as are supposed to be derived from European associations.”

Australasian Sketcher, 1873¹

Being truly mourned as a cultural icon depends on whether an artist passes away before ever reaching their full potential as a star, or whether their absence inspires grief for what was lost not for what could have been. Hattie Shepparde was a woman who fell into the latter category. She was twenty-seven, very talented, married less than a year, with a newborn baby daughter; and her unexpected death in the spring of 1874 shocked many colonial theatre-goers as a tragedy of what was lost. Hattie was familiar to many having received considerable attention as a talented actress from the early 1860s, after making a name for herself supporting big-name off-shore stars such as Joseph Jefferson, Emilia Don, and later, Marie Duret, in 1871. The figure of womanhood that materialises in her publicity radiates the idealised myth of early 1870s Victorian femininity, the period when her star power was that of a celebrity.

Tropes of her superior talents and markers of the Australian homeland appeared repeatedly in Hattie’s press: a common feature of the Carandini sisters, and “Tasmanian” Lucy Chambers around the same time.

So similar, in fact, was the press of these women that it is clear that pre-Federation media of the 1870s had standardised the practice of producing media publicising women's social power as figures of identity well into the new decade after the 1860s.

The emphasis on Hattie's state of origin is particularly salient because unlike the Howson and Carandini sisters, whose media regularly referred to them as "native" when in Tasmania, Hattie's reception in the colony rarely (if ever) mentioned her "home grown" roots. It is unclear whether this was because critics in Tasmania did not realise that she had been born in the colony, or perhaps because Hattie herself chose not to promote her "home grown" provenance. Conceivably, her somewhat infrequent appearances in Tasmania—first with Emilia Don's "Greatest Galaxy of Talent"² in 1865, and then again with Marie Duret, in 1871—contributed to journalists overlooking her as "local." It is unlikely that this was the sole cause, however, because even though Hattie, like the Howson sisters, only returned to Tasmania twice, journalists always promoted the Howsons as "natives."

Little scholarship dealing with Hattie Shepparde exists, and I must point out that rarely does existing material include documentary evidence to support the claims made about her. Hal Porter in *Stars of Australian Stage and Screen* describes Hattie as "the Launceston actress"³ and Harold Love in the *Companion to Theatre in Australia* notes that she was Launceston-born,⁴ but neither Porter nor Love backs the assertion. In fact, if you search, as I did, Tasmanian archival records using "Shepparde" as a point of reference, you will find, as I did, absolutely nothing. This goes some way towards explaining why many scholars do not validate claims of Hattie's heredity or

birth place with archival evidence, as there simply is no such material if using "Shepparde." Another troublesome aspect of the character created by historians is the contention that Hattie was born "into a theatrical family."⁵ This too seems more a fiction than a claim with any real basis in proven fact.

"Shepparde" was not Hattie's maiden name at all, but rather, either her stage name or maybe even her married name (although this is doubtful). Archival evidence in the "Digger" Pioneer Index, Tasmania 1803-1899, as well as the Victorian "Digger" Index 1836-1888 supports my claim that "Hattie Shepparde" was born Harriet Langmaid (sometimes "Langmede") on 3 August 1846.⁶ That Hattie's father, Amos Langmaid,⁷ was recorded on the electoral list of Launceston in 1851 as a boot and shoe maker⁸ suggests that Hattie's upbringing was rather more humble than the "theatrical family" she is claimed to have had. Yet, this listing of Amos' trade as a cobbler may also have been a cover to facilitate migration, which was certainly characteristic of the other "assistant immigrants" (players) noted earlier. It is probably true that someone in Harriet's family might have been "theatrical," but one should note that the actual phrase in reference to Hattie is misleading for a number of reasons. It implies the immediacy of a kinship bond to facilitate opportunities, as well as suggesting the potential of such bonds to cultivate Hattie's own specific talent within a collective and highly organised familial structure. Hattie probably did show some dramatic flair as a child, but there is no explicit archival evidence to support the claim that she was born "into a theatrical family," at least not in the sense that direct access to "theatre" through kinship bonds is patent. In fact, while there is some evidence to suggest that she came from a very large (and extended)

family, what little direct evidence there is of Hattie's heredity does not support a background in the theatre arts.

According to one source,⁹ Amos Langmaid married twice: first at the age of twenty-seven to Harriet Hill¹⁰ in Launceston in 1836, and then again at the age of forty-three to a twenty-one year old Hobart-born woman called Hannah Hall on 24 July 1852, in Melbourne. The same source claims Amos fathered, in total, fourteen children between his two wives (although not all survived): six to Hill¹¹ and eight to Hall.¹² Official archival evidence in Tasmania does record that Amos married his first wife, Harriet Hill, in Launceston on 7 June 1836,¹³ and also that Hill gave birth to another daughter three years before Hattie: on 1 March 1843. However, Louise Jane Langmaid died at the age of 11 months and twenty-four days on 24 February 1844.¹⁴

Evidence also supports the claim that Amos married a second time. According to the Victorian "Digger Index 1836-1888," Amos "Langmaid" married Hannah Hall in 1852 at Melbourne's Church of England in the parish of St. Peters.¹⁵ The same index also records that their first child, Arthur William Langmaid, was christened in 1853 at the same church and parish.¹⁶

The figure of Amos Langmaid must have influenced the extent to which Hattie chose to disclose, or perhaps conceal, her family heredity. Parish records of Amos' marriage to Hattie's mother, his first wife, reveal that he was then a convict and that Harriet Hill was a free woman.¹⁷ Whether or not this was a source of embarrassment to Hattie is unknown, but it is clear that there was another, perhaps more compelling reason to hide her origins. The mere fact that one source claims that Amos married his

second wife in 1852 and that his first wife did not die until 1874 suggests that Amos was guilty of bigamy. Evidence supporting the fact that Amos married his second wife while his first wife was still living, decades before divorce was legally available, goes some way towards explaining why Hattie's press did not promote her as "a Tasmanian" in Tasmania. Her father's background as a convict was probably forgivable, but presumably, his culpability as a bigamist was a family truth no one, least of all Hattie, was keen to promote.

Another source similarly vague about Hattie's background was the *Australasian*. At the height of Hattie's popularity in 1873, it published a promotional piece that provided more of a snapshot of her career than an account of any significant detail—a conventional approach as far as such pieces went—but most probably maintained some elements of truth. Harold Love claims that noted nineteenth century theatre critic James Edward Neild, who wrote for a number of publications including the *Australasian*, was one of Hattie's "devoted admirers,"¹⁸ which could imply that he sourced his information directly from the actress herself. In fact, Love makes the further claim that Neild's "relations" with Hattie, among a number of other actresses, "all led to public scandal."¹⁹ Love leaves the words "relations" and "scandal" dangling, inviting the reader to draw their own conclusions, and I will present my own at a later stage.

The *Australasian* reported in 1873 that Hattie moved to California with her parents "at a very early age" where she was schooled at the Convent of San Jose, San Francisco.²⁰ The fact that the family was relatively peripatetic—from Launceston, to California, and then back to Australia—implies mobility but not necessarily theatrical activity. Perhaps

the Langmaids were swept up in the hunt for gold once the American boom was in full swing, thus taking them to California, and then on to San Francisco (conceivably the gold-fields [?]) in the late 1840s. The *Australasian* does not elaborate (so again I can only speculate) but it does make the claim that Hattie's Australian stage debut was as an angel in a burlesque called *Atalanta* in Adelaide while still a young girl. Following this she reportedly appeared at Castlemaine under the management of Clarence Holt (her first Victorian appearance), and in 1861, she is said to have made her debut before a Melbourne audience as "Agnes" in *David Copperfield* at the Princess's Theatre (under George Fawcett Rowe's management). The *Australasian* also claims that Hattie played the "sick gal" in the *American Cousin* opposite American superstar Joseph Jefferson in 1862, at the Haymarket.

The brevity of Hattie's career highlights printed by the *Australasian* does gloss over how noteworthy her career throughout the 1860s really was. In fact, Hattie played many more roles with Jefferson while he performed in Melbourne than the account suggests, and it would be therefore accurate to propose that her experiences with him helped to develop her professional career.

One of Hattie's first roles with Jefferson was as Rowena in *Rip Van Winkle* on 1 April 1862. The *Age* rather ambiguously claimed that Hattie played her part "with rather more confidence than usual, and was proportionately successful."²¹ The observation is puzzling in that it could imply that Hattie's style was already known to the critic (which if true does not explain why there is no evidence to suggest that Hattie had performed in Melbourne prior to this) or that the part was generally played with less

"confidence" by other actresses. By 4 April 1862, however, the critic did offer a more direct opinion in a review recommending that Hattie's characterisation as Rosa "would certainly be improved by the infusion of a little more energy in the scene where she rejects the advances of *Van Strauss* [played by Mr. Ireland]."²²

Hattie played many more parts in reasonably quick succession, and this suggests that she was competent enough to learn a variety of roles in a limited amount of time. Expatriate English (now domestic) actresses including Rosa Dunn and Mrs. Robert Heir (*nee* Fanny Cathcart) supported Jefferson in the lead female parts, leaving Hattie to fill only minor roles. She played Georgina (otherwise known as "the sick gal") in Tom Taylor's *Our American Cousin* (1858) as well as Julia in a version of J. M. Morton's farce *The Irish Tiger* (1846) for close to four weeks beginning 21 April 1862. Following this Hattie played Mrs. Clairbone in Dion Boucicault's *Octoroon* (c. 1859), Clementine in the comic drama *Robert Macaire* (27 and 28 June), and Kate Nickleby in Boucicault's three-act comic drama *Newman Noggs*, which was based on Dickens' *Nicholas Nickleby*. However, many of the parts in some of the adapted versions were heavily abridged. Thus, Hattie received either little, or no press, or, disapproving criticism. Her watered-down role as Kate in *Newman Noggs* was, with "scarcely half-a-dozen sentences," one that the *Age* critic suggested "might as well have been altogether dispensed with."²³

Hattie's many minor (and perhaps not very fulfilling) parts were probably off-set by the considerable experience she was getting: not only playing in a company featuring an American dramatic star, but also in the opportunity to appear in such a variety of genres. She played Hippolyta for

three weeks in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (21 August – 6 September), took the part of Ursula in *Much Ado About Nothing* (10 and 11 September), and seems to have finished her season in Melbourne at Coppin's Royal Haymarket Theatre in October. She played Julia in Henry Mayhew's farce *The Wandering Minstrel* (1834) on 4 October and then appeared as Eliza in a version of C. I. M. Dibdin's *Paul Pry* (1826) on the same bill. Between 9 and 11 October 1862, Hattie performed the part of Mary in *The Turnpike*.

After October, however, Hattie seems to have disappeared. It is difficult to substantiate whether she appeared as part of Coppin's "Star Company" at the Haymarket, given that the performances of Fanny Heir, Rosa Dunn, and Richard Stewart dominated publicity. Another possibility is that she left Melbourne to appear elsewhere, but probably not with Jefferson after his season in the city. Hattie was not included in the cast that appeared with Jefferson during October and November 1863. False promotion publicised the actor's farewell performances in Melbourne on 23 November 1863 (apparently prior to his departure for New Zealand) because Jefferson did in fact appear in Hobart during February/March 1864. Neither did Hattie perform with Jefferson when he really did appear in Melbourne for a round of farewell performances in October 1864. This was likely because she was then appearing with Emilia Don and the Howson sisters at the Haymarket Theatre, Melbourne.

If Joseph Jefferson kick-started Hattie's career, then Emilia Don really did help to launch her. Hattie performed in more plays with Don's company and for a longer period than her previous tour with Jefferson. Emilia Don opened at the Haymarket Theatre Melbourne on 6 August 1864: about a week after the Howson sisters arrived in the city from Launceston aboard

the *Black Swan* on 30 July 1864 (having concluded Emma's "farewell" tour). Don presented her usual opening fare, *The Child of the Regiment*, receiving support on the occasion from the Howsons: Frank, Frank junior, Emma, and Clelia as well as Hattie. The *Age* critic was especially impressed by the ensemble's "English voices" as they sang the National Anthem.²⁴

That Hattie only appeared in Tasmania as the supporting talent of visiting stars was probably attributable to the fact that—unlike the Carandinis, the Howsons, and later Richard Stewart's ensemble—Hattie did not have the advantage of rising through the ranks of a family troupe. This is another basis for my suggestion that the claim that Hattie came from a "theatrical family" is somewhat erroneous. If her family was in "the business" of theatre, how does one explain the fact that in the early part of her career Hattie appeared only occasionally, without any other "family," and usually only in minor parts? Yes, she was young and relatively inexperienced, but a "theatrical family" (in the configuration of ensembles such as the Carandini, Howson and Stewart families) would arguably have been in a very strong position to create for her more opportunities to perform.

This also seems to suggest that her apparent connections to a "theatrical family" are based on a somewhat loose interpretation (and incorrect understanding) of what colonials regarded as a "theatrical family" throughout the nineteenth century. During this period at least, the phrase implied a closely-knit kinship nexus in which the "theatrical family" typically headlined as a familial unit that usually specialised in a particular genre, and also performed together (although not necessarily exclusively).

This then begs the question that if such a family existed for Hattie, would they not have figured more prominently in her career?

Hattie consolidated her skills as an actress with considerable ensemble work throughout the 1860s, even though it is obvious that in this situation she probably lacked opportunities to distinguish herself at the risk of upstaging the company's star. Similarly, this meant that she probably lacked creative freedom. Yet, because Hattie performed mostly in Melbourne, at least until the mid 1860s, she was able to appear before larger audiences and occasionally in more demanding parts. Importantly, this environment offered her a greater chance of acquiring a reputation and building a résumé of industry contacts during the 1860s, such as the associations she formalised with the Howson Family, who were then domestic, and her industry contacts with international stars such as Jefferson, Don, and Duret. Hattie's appearances opposite Jefferson in 1862 coincided with the Dons' performances in Melbourne. Hattie had probably become acquainted with both the Dons and Jefferson in 1862, and then again later in 1864 when Jefferson was appearing at Melbourne's Haymarket Theatre and Emilia was keeping an engagement at the Royal (it was also highly likely that Hattie met Joey Gougenheim during 1864, as both actresses were in Melbourne at the time). Even though Hattie was not a leading lady at this stage of her career, her appearances with the companies of Jefferson, Don and Duret did contribute to her later fame.

Hattie appeared with Don in Tasmania in 1865, but Don, like Jefferson, dominated publicity and productions. Hattie played Louise in J. R. Planche's two-act drama *Not a Bad Judge* and Mrs. Flighty in Charles Selby's farce *The Married Rake* (1838). She also appeared as Mrs. Wiley in

Buckstone's *Rural Felicity*, as Eugenia in Kenny's *Sweethearts and Wives* (c. 1846) and as Julia in Sheridan's *The Rivals*. She surely played many other roles (such as in *Lady Audley's Secret*, *Perfection* and *The Little Treasure*) but Emilia's stranglehold over publicity makes it difficult to know which ones. For instance, the *Mercury* was too busy claiming that Don's presentation of *Ali Baba, or the forty thieves* boasted an original musical score (composed especially for Don by Frank Musgrave Esq., of London and with "new Local Allusions"²⁵) to report on Hattie's dual roles as Zaide and as Ardinehe in the production.

Hattie did appear in her hometown of Launceston with Don's "Star Company" in 1865, although her publicity makes no mention of her origins as "native," probably due to one of the possibilities mentioned earlier, or perhaps because Don's publicity in the city left little, if any room for disseminating information about the rest of her company. In fact, even the Howson sisters' publicity in Launceston rarely promoted their "home grown" roots because, as was the case in Hobart, Don dominated the company's press. If the other company members (usually the Howson sisters) did receive attention, however, the rest of the support cast usually only attracted notice in the form of one or two line asides. But unlike Hobart, Don's appearance in Launceston was limited to only a week, so when the *Cornwall Chronicle* claimed that "Miss Shepparde was excellently got up as the 'Duchess de Grantete' [in *Child of the Regiment*],"²⁶ it was more publicity than many of her colleagues attracted.

The *Australasian* offers little information concerning Hattie's career between 1865 and 1870 aside from a single sentence: "In 1865 she went to New Zealand, where she stayed for five years, visiting nearly all the towns

where there was a theatre, and playing with Miss Julia Mathews, Mrs. Heir, Mr. J. L. Hall, and Miss Gougenheim." In September 1870, Hattie apparently went straight to Sydney from New Zealand and thereafter toured New South Wales country districts "accompanied by Mr. O'Brien, with a portable entertainment, consisting of comediettas and scenes from large plays." The *Australasian's* report does not substantiate Hal Porter's claim that during her time in New Zealand Hattie was Walter Montgomery's "leading lady."²⁷

This is not to suggest that the story is not true, it probably was.

Montgomery (1827-1871) appeared in Australia from July 1867 until 1869, implying that if Hattie did appear with the actor, it was in all likelihood outside of that period. Peter Downes helps to verify this in his claim that Shepparde appeared at the Theatre Royal in Christchurch in June 1866 while it was under the leadership of John L. Hall and R. B. Dale.²⁸ One claim, which is verifiable, also appears in the *Australasian's* report: that Hattie "went in 1871 to Hobart Town, to play in conjunction with Madame Duret."

Hattie's Tasmanian tour with Duret in the early 1870s is more noteworthy than other seasons—first with Jefferson in Melbourne and then later her tour with Don—for a number of reasons. Hattie's publicity indicates that she was very well received after a somewhat stop-start beginning to the season. Shipping intelligence published by the *Mercury* indicates that Hattie initially arrived together with Duret (and Duret's husband, actor/theatre manager John Le Roy) on the *City of Hobart* (via Sydney) on 5 November 1870. Curiously, it was only after Duret formed a new ensemble early in 1871 however, that Hattie's name featured on the bills. In fact, Hattie left the island soon after the 1870 season commenced and only returned in the New Year. It is very difficult to explain the reason

for this departure although it may have been due to Marie Duret's forte as an actress and Le Roy's management of Hobart's Theatre Royal.²⁹ Most of the plays presented at that time favoured dramas and melodramas: two of Duret's specialties.

Duret's repertoire in 1870 included a number of plays she had previously presented during her first Tasmanian visit in 1857. She reprised her roles in "the grand historical and sensational drama"³⁰ *The French Spy*, Miami in J. B. Buckstone's *The Green Bushes*, Lady Isabelle in *East Lynne*, Jack Sheppard in Buckstone's *Jack Sheppard*, and Martha in John Daly's *Leah the Forsaken*. Marie also included pantomimes and extravaganzas over the Christmas season, such as a "sensation play" called *Frou Frou* and H. M. Milner's *Mazeppa*, as well as some classical drama in the form of Shakespeare, such as playing Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet*, Lady Macbeth in *Macbeth* (3 December), and Kate in *Taming of the Shrew* (8 February 1871).

Actresses Clara Stephenson and Kate L'Estrange supported Duret's concentration on heavier dramatic pieces. The more melodramatic plays included two adaptations of novels by Mary Elizabeth Braddon; *Lady Audley's Secret* (1862) and *Aurora Floyd* (1863), coupled with Dion Boucicault's "sensational Irish drama"³¹ *Arrah-na-Pogue* (1864), a version of Von Kotzebue's *The Stranger*,³² Boucicault's *After Dark* and *Octoroon*,³³ and an adaptation of Victor Hugo's drama *Lucrezia Borgia* (1833).

Hattie began appearing with Duret from 13 April 1871: an engagement coincidental with the re-opening of the Theatre Royal for the winter season. The season had begun to wind down after Christmas and into the closing days of 1870. During December and early January performances were reasonably regular; *Frou Frou* and the extravaganza *Mazeppa* were

presented on 31 December, and were followed by *The Stranger* (4 January), *After Dark* (11 January),³⁴ *Jack Sheppard* (16 January), *Ellen O'Neil* (30 January) and *Taming of the Shrew* (8 February). Yet by late February, performances became only occasional. It was only after Easter that performances appeared with greater regularity (and with a renewed sense of enthusiasm).

Unlike the first season, which was characterised by so-called “safer” pieces in which Duret had already appeared, the winter season promised “a new style of entertainment” in the form of comedy, vaudeville, extravaganza and burlesque. This indicates two very different seasons in terms of theatre-going. The first had largely concentrated on content while the new style of entertainment promoted in the second season shifted the focus back to form. Vaudeville, extravaganza, and burlesque were energetic and robust styles, and usually featured lively dancing, spirited singing and humorous (though occasionally bawdy) allusions. These more vigorous and dynamic presentations were generic forms emphasising the outward visual presentations of plays—as well as witticisms, quips and comic dialogue—while at the same time remaining true to the tenets of realism. A commitment to realism was vital, even if the narrative of a play contained elements of imagination, comic hi-jinx, and fairytale.

It was clear from the *Mercury* feature on 13 April 1871, (six days before the new season was to commence) that the new company had created a renewed sense of excitement and anticipation. The revised troupe consisted of the Misses Shepparde,³⁵ Taylor and Sutherland, and Messrs Herbert, Leonard and Taylor. It was with enthusiasm that the *Mercury* declared: “These form the vanguard of others who are to follow,”³⁶ and their

status as prototypes of a "new" more stylish company was emphasised by the *Mercury's* later claim that the "The management have a good deal to contend with on account of the inferior class of actors engaged last season."³⁷

T H E A T R E R O Y A L
LESSEE & MANAGER Mr. J. H. LE ROY.

MONDAY EVENING, APRIL 17TH, 1871.

GRAND RE-OPENING
FOR THE WINTER SEASON.

AN ENTIRELY NEW COMPANY.

NEW STYLE OF ENTERTAINMENT.

VAUDEVILLE, EXTRAVAGANZA, AND
BURLESQUE.

M I S S S H E P P A R D,

MISS SUTHERLAND,

MISS TAYLOR,

MR. CHARLES HERBERT,

MR. G. H. LEONARD,

MR. J. R. T A Y L O R.

MR. W. KINSELLA, SCENIC ARTIST.

ALTERATION IN TIME.—Doors open at 7, commence at half-past 7 precisely.

The Orchestra will be under the direction of **SIGNOR GAGLIARDI.**

WANTED a Property Man, and a few Respectable Young Ladies and Gentlemen for the Ballet.

The Theatre Royal, Hobart, re-opens for the winter season in grand style in 1871. Hattie Shepparde heads the alphabetically arranged list of new female players signalling a change of company, repertoire, and "style" with new scenic designs courtesy of W. Kinsella. Also note the call for "a few Respectable Young Ladies and Gentleman for the Ballet."³⁸

After “the inferior class of actors engaged last season” Duret was either shrewd enough to have saved the best for last, or simply unaware that the first season had been so marred by mediocre performances. Le Roy retained command of the Theatre Royal as lessee and manager, and had commissioned the painting of new scenic designs. Marie took charge as directress while also occasionally appearing in lead roles. Charles Dance’s two-act drama called *A Wonderful Woman* (1849) opened the season with Hattie’s performance as Hortense Bertrand receiving favourable attention. Hattie followed that performance with Meg in Henry Craven’s *Meg’s Diversion* (1866), a “heroine,” claimed the *Mercury* on 22 April, “whose frolicsome yet amiable disposition was delineated with much vivacity by Miss Shepparde.”³⁹

Hattie’s performances in a range of title roles began to challenge the interest shown in Duret earlier in the season. Even despite the fact that Duret appeared as the lead character Marie in *The World of Fashion*, “Miss Shepparde,” claimed the *Mercury* on 25 April, “played the part of the ‘Marchioness de Bellerose’ with considerable dignity, and gave evidence of a histrionic talent which must render her a favourite member of the company.”⁴⁰ Hattie’s other roles included Mrs. Delcour in *War to the Knife* and Countess Beauvilliers in *Nothing Venture, Nothing Win*. In the former, Hattie’s character drugs one Captain Thistleton with “an opiate” so she can get her hands on a private letter hidden in his pocket-book revealing an intimate liaison between Mrs. Harcourt (whom she has befriended) and Thistleton (who now seeks her own favours).

Hattie’s appearance as Mrs. Crotchet in Leicester Buckingham’s comic drama *Don’t Lend Your Umbrella* (c. 1857) was a role the *Mercury*

termed a "*femme concertée*."⁴¹ The sequence of events created by the passing of an umbrella from one character to the next comprised a narrative of "alarming situations" which audiences seemed to enjoy. By then, playgoers were probably quite familiar with Hattie's style because, earlier, she successfully appeared in a version of Charles Dibdin's "ballad opera" called *The Waterman, or, the first of August* (1774). The *Mercury* decided that her duet with J. R. Taylor "was sung remarkably well" and "narrowly escaped an *encore*,"⁴² thus warranting further comment:

Whether in the full glow of excitement accompanying her playing love to the simple Jasper Pigeon or her heartfelt regret at having by her thoughtlessness caused pain to the credulous butt of her practical jokes, she was equally happy in the rendering of her parts.⁴³

Hattie also played the part of Prince Pompetti in *Cinderella, or the Lover, the Lackey, and the Glass Slipper*. The *Mercury* claimed that in her role as the Prince, Hattie "made a great hit, her easy style of performing, her capital singing and elegant dancing, [drew] from many hand floral testimonials of approval'."⁴⁴ What was important to note as far as the *Mercury* was concerned was the fact that Duret's commitment to realism even necessitated the use of actual ponies to draw "Cinderella's fairy car" across the stage!⁴⁵ In fact, the same critic noted with some relief that the ponies behaved themselves with much more control than on a previous evening when their on-stage antics (shying "at the side scenery"⁴⁶) inspired roars of laughter from a surprised house of theatre-goers.

It is also interesting to note that with the shift to “new” styles of entertainment that focused on light-hearted comedy and fantasy, came a renewed emphasis on families and children. The *Mercury* very clearly illustrates this shift in light of its earlier complaint, on 10 November 1870, that the performance of *Green Bushes*, “was occasionally considerably marred by the crying of infants who had been brought by their parents.” The *Mercury* suggested that, “it would be wise policy on the part of the management, if a prohibition fee were fixed to their admission” whereby an additional cost was incurred by parents holding babes-in-arms. By contrast, extravaganzas, particularly “fairy extravaganzas,” were flexible enough to appeal to adults and children alike, and perhaps even desensitised the *Mercury* critic to the wailing of infants on 6 May 1871, when the Royal presented *Cinderella* as a matinee. The *Mercury* noted Le Roy’s generosity on 5 May given his invitation to the children of the Queen’s Orphan Asylum to attend the special performance. Admission prices were set at half-price, excluding of course the children from the orphanage, who gained entry at no cost. The production was quite a contrast to the operatic performances featuring Lucy Chambers at the Town Hall during the same week.

The *Mercury* claimed that the troupe’s performances in the extravaganza, *La Sonnambula* were “given in a style throughout which proved that the *forte* of the company lies in burlesque.”⁴⁷ Based on the *Mercury*’s critiques, Hattie’s specialisation as a comedienne was well suited to such styles. After playing her character with what must have been considerable comic flair, the critic suggested that, “we can truly say that those who wish to enjoy a hearty laugh should see Miss Shepparde as ‘Alessie’.”⁴⁸ The *Mercury* critic also enjoyed the company’s presentation of a

“new dramatic parody” called *The Babes in the Wood, and the Good Little Fairy Birds* reporting that:

The dialogue is for the most part a travesty on Shakespearian plays, the text of *Macbeth* being closely followed at the beginning, and later the celebrated scene between ‘Hubert’ and ‘Prince Arthur’ in *King John* [was] smoothly introduced. The piece teemed with witticisms, which were truly appreciated.⁴⁹

Duret’s tactical approach to theatre presentation did benefit Hattie to a certain extent, primarily because the pieces highlighted her forte for the comical while at the same time did not compromise Duret’s own star-power. Duret and Le Roy wisely introduced the “new styles” of burlesque, vaudeville and extravaganza at a time when audience taste for heavy drama and multi-character roles in Hobart was waning. But when dramas were scheduled, as they occasionally were, it is more likely that Hattie took minor roles to the central parts of Duret. Marie took on three dramatic parts in *Sea of Ice, or the Wild Flower of Mexico*⁵⁰ and her hallmark versatility in such roles dominated much of the criticism that followed the next day. The *Mercury*, however, did observe that the character “assigned to Miss Shepparde . . . though comparatively unimportant, [was] gracefully and appropriately rendered.”⁵¹

Hattie’s publicity offers insight into complex processes of constructing identity, of women’s social power, and of the dynamic interchange between colonial media and popular theatre actresses. The ways journalists “said” things about Hattie are as various and difficult to

distinguish as John Austin's "speech acts": as Judith Butler writes, "The distinction [between Austin's speech acts] is tricky, and not always stable."⁵² Therefore, Erin Striff's claim that: "The theatrical metaphor is a fundamental tool we use to understand culture"⁵³ is helpful here. Because what we actually "know" about Hattie has been achieved through interpreting surviving texts that wittingly attest to her encounters with audiences, the subjectivity that materialises as "Hattie Shepparde" is not necessarily someone "real," but rather a valuable means of engaging with ideas about women's social power and their relationship to colonial processes of meaning-making. Who Hattie really "was" becomes a question not of fact (because we can never really "know"), but rather, a question of how her power as a theatre actress resonated in her social world.

Traces of Hattie's influence are nowhere more obvious than in Neild's reviews. He eulogised her efforts when the sudden illness of the actress playing the part of Miss Grannett in Byron's *Cyril's Success* necessitated Hattie taking on the role in what was reported to be "24 hours" notice.⁵⁴ Clear in Neild's review was his devotion. "Miss Shepparde" he wrote, "showed that she was quite as much at home with the character of an acid old maid as that of an elegant and fascinating widow." "Her success, indeed, may be considered as something in the nature of a triumph," he continued, "... she is to be congratulated, with a particular emphasis upon the word."⁵⁵ For Hattie's benefit at Melbourne's Theatre Royal during June 1873, she chose Robertson's *Caste* and W. S. Gilbert's *Pygmalion and Galatea* in which she played Cynisca. The *Australasian Sketcher* claimed "Miss Shepparde did well to select [*Caste*] for her benefit, both because of its own merit, and for the reason that she plays the part of Esther Eccles with a rare

grace, which demands unusual praise."⁵⁶ Neild was probably delighted to report that Hattie received a diamond bracelet and "a life governorship in the Dramatic Association"⁵⁷ following her performance.



MISS HATTIE SHEPPARDE.

An illustration of Hattie Shepparde published by the *Australasian Sketcher* on 27 December 1873 just prior to her departure to appear in Sydney.

Later, Neild complained when the Theatre Royal management withdrew *Pygmalion and Galatea* to schedule a "Shakspearian Revival" instead. After Hattie's appearance as Marco in *The Marble Heart*, he lamented:

that one is almost necessarily compelled to consider whether the Melbourne managers would not do better to cultivate the talent which is local than go to the other side of the world for talent, which, without any wish to be offensive, we are bound to regard as inferior [a non-domestic actor named Mr. Fairclough] to what we have on the spot.⁵⁸

Hattie continued to receive very favourable reviews from Neild regarding a number of other performances. Neild mused of her appearance as Mrs. Singleton Bliss in Byron's *Cyril's Success* on 19 July 1873 that it was "sustained with such perfect completeness that it is difficult to believe it was not written for her."⁵⁹ Neild also appreciated Hattie's "easy, natural manner" as much as her taste in costume. In fact, "her acting of the part," claimed the writer "may be selected as one of those 'bits' of high comedy it is a real pleasure to witness at any time."⁶⁰

Of course, Harold Love's allusions to the so-called "relations" between Neild and Shepparde cast the critic as an unreliable source. After all, taken from this perspective, Neild's reviews can be understood as tactical in diverting attention away from, what: his "scandals" as a philanderer? If this is accurate, then one can also read his reviews of Hattie's theatrical performances as public statements defending her character.

It is true that the *Australasian's* criticism was ever clear in emphasising a distinction between the dubious traits of the characters Hattie sometimes played and the "real-life" personality of the woman herself. Reviews fixate on Shepparde's authenticity as an "unaffected" actress, suggesting that her power lay in her infectious personality and her naturalness. Her characterisation of Darine in Gilbert's "poetic comedy" called *The Wicked World* on 14 April 1873 was a case in point. While critics identified a number of "less agreeable features of the character," it was Hattie's "natural grace and beauty of person . . . [that] freed even the baseness from any quality of repulsion."⁶¹ She often played roles depicting "less agreeable" representations of womanhood quite convincingly, but it is easy to see that journalists took very seriously the role of creating a veneer between the public and private domains of her visibility as a theatre actress. This shroud between life and art was, in Hattie's case, perhaps even more necessary considering the somewhat dubious figures of both her father, Amos, and her "devoted" admirer,⁶² Neild. Perhaps Neild knew all her secrets, thus explaining his deliberate mission to construct a public figure that was above censure, above reproach.

The short biographical account of Hattie published by the *Australasian Sketcher*, together with a very flattering illustration of her, was printed as a kind of testimonial following Hattie's departure for Sydney for a six-month engagement (at the Victoria Theatre). The *Australasian* was ambivalent about her departure, claiming that: "This removal will be a great gain to the Sydney stage, and an equally great loss to that of Melbourne."⁶³ Neild apparently wrote the reviews in the *Australasian* under the pseudonym

"Tahite": an anagram of "Hattie" (as a mark of his esteem) and Harold Love claims that another of her "devoted admirers" was Marcus Clarke.⁶⁴

Hattie Shepparde personified a strong tradition of Tasmania theatre, despite the fact that journalists did not generally promote her "Tasmanian-ness." The unusually close proximity that many "home grown" actresses shared with one another, and also the ranking of a domestic actress within a company organised around a central star are emphasised in Shepparde's associations with Jefferson in 1861/2, Don in 1865, Duret in 1871, and of course the Howson sisters. The fact that she remained in New Zealand for five years suggests that either she was kept busy honouring engagements with Joey Gougenheim, Julia Matthews,⁶⁵ and the "gaudy but brilliant"⁶⁶ Walter Montgomery, or perhaps supposes that there was something in her past—revelations of the "scandal" of her "relations" with Neild(?)—keeping her away.

Hattie's social power as a theatre actress, like that of other "native" stage women such as the Carandini and Howson sisters, inextricably connected talented theatre women with homeland. In this sense, the social functions of Shepparde, the Howson and Carandini sisters were reasonably identical. Especially popular "home grown" actresses reinforced communal narratives of identity and particular contexts of place. Perhaps the *Australasian* illustrates the complexities of this process best when it claimed on the one hand that Hattie was a "native" of Launceston, while on the other declared that "Miss Shepparde might very fittingly be selected to represent our stage in the old country . . . her thorough devotion to her art single her out most conspicuously as well fitted for such distinction."⁶⁷



A furious-looking Eleanor Carey (centre) as the fairy queen Selene (in the act of renouncing the mortal Ethais, played by Mr. R. G. Ireland) is looked on by Hattie Shepparde (right) as Darine in the Theatre Royal, Melbourne production of Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Wicked World* (see the *Australasian Sketcher*, 17 May 1873).

An actress's social power was a vital force in articulating cultural integrity while at the same time communicating understandings of what "Australian-ness" meant during the period; specifically because what people in "the old country" thought about Australia still mattered to many colonials throughout the 1870s. High-profile English actors such as Charles Mathews (1803-1878) complained in detail to publications such as the *London Era*, in 1871, about the "awful discoveries" he had made about Australia's isolation during his 1870 - 1871 tour. Such expositions did nothing to boost Australia's popular image overseas especially given that Mathews found, to his horror, Australian towns were:

. . . so far from being in any way united, these various places were not only five or six hundred miles apart, but were separated in every other conceivable way, under different governments, jealous of each other, and as divided in feeling, in manners, and in prospects as though they were foreign countries having no sympathies in common. Now, this is an awful discovery, for if there is one thing that I detest more than another, it is the sea.⁶⁸

It was ironic that Mathews emphasised many of the same aspects of Australian cultural reality—distance, alienation, and fractured intercolonial relationships—which mainland press culture had deemed were characteristic of "Tasmanian-ness" in the previous decade. Australia was, as evidenced by Mathews' account, just as vulnerable to attacks against cultural integrity as was Tasmania, and often by deploying identical notions of "island-ness."

Mathews' observations, just like those of Joseph Jefferson before him, were perhaps a timely reminder of how persuasive "stars" could be when exercising their prerogative to popularise their own versions of "Australian-ness."

The writings of Mathews and Jefferson each demonstrated how potent noted dramatic stars were as agents of popular opinion, but such encounters also evidence how readily Australian journalists publicised counter-performative responses to such imagery. The potential of actresses such as Hattie to "fittingly . . . represent our stage in the old country" was exactly what "[singled] her out" as exceptional while at the same time countered Mathews' "awful discoveries" about what "Australian-ness" *was* and *did*. Hattie's social power was therefore no longer a question of her state of origin, but more specifically, her promise as a compelling source of "Australian-ness."

Hattie married Henry Hallam, "the tenor of the Allen Opera Company" at St. Jude's Church, Carlton on 8 November 1873.⁶⁹ She continued to perform regularly and her reviews suggest she maintained her position as a great favourite in Melbourne over that period. "She has evinced," reported the *Melbourne Age* " . . . superior talents, extreme intelligence, and that finished style of acting which, particularly when combined with natural graces of person and an irreproachable character, seldom fail of rendering an actress popular."⁷⁰ The *Australasian Sketcher* also noted earlier that Hattie, and actress Eleanor Carey, "proved themselves to be such elegant, refined and finished actresses that Mr. Lyster engaged them for his forthcoming English opera season."⁷¹

Hattie Shepparde (then Mrs. Henry Hallam) died on 22 September 1874 shortly after the birth of her first child, Hattie Cynisca Bella Hallam ("Cynisca" was obviously from W. S. Gilbert's *Pygmalion and Galatea*). Harold Love claims that Hattie died of "puerperal fever" and suggests that the argument that erupted between Marcus Clarke and Neild over Hattie's funeral arrangement sparked a life-long feud.⁷² Accounts of the day reported that "she died at the residence of her mother," and that her husband "is now professionally engaged in New Zealand,"⁷³ implying that she died without him close by. The couple had earlier left for New Zealand together, but the fact that Henry remained there suggest that Hattie probably returned home to have her baby. The *Age's* eulogy claimed that Hattie "was born in Tasmania," and emphasised that, "although in early life she paid a short visit to California, her professional career is entirely Australian." Interestingly, the tribute also alludes to Hattie's rather impoverished childhood in the claim, "After receiving an excellent education, family arrangements made it necessary for her to gain her own livelihood, and, when still almost a child, she made her first appearance."⁷⁴

Hattie was so popular, and her social power so compelling, mourners caused a riot at her funeral. The *Age* reported the day after her interment that "a large concourse of people most rudely pushed their way amongst the mourners, jostling them right and left, so as to catch a glimpse of the coffin." The elbowing mass of women at Hattie's gravesite also gave the *Argus* reason to speculate that most had attended the ceremony to "gratify their curiosity,"⁷⁵ rather than show their respects. And as the crowd swelled and the mob surged forward, the railings and tombstones of those unfortunates interred in graves close by offered some spectators higher

perches from which to view the proceedings. Even the pall-bearers—all women—“were fairly mobbed by the crowd, who crowded around them and stared at them as if they were so many wild beasts.”⁷⁶ Had they been able to see, the crowd would have noted that the inscription on her casket read: “I am not lost but gone before.”⁷⁷ Fellow Tasmanians, Maggie and Docy Stewart were two of Hattie’s pallbearers, and Hattie’s baby daughter survived her mother by only a few months. She died in 1875.⁷⁸

Ironically, Amos Langmaid died on 15 August 1894 at the age of 101 years old; outliving his famous daughter by almost two decades.⁷⁹

**The 1870s – Tasmanian “Stars” and
“The Music of the Future”**

Chapter Ten:

“Home grown” Celebrities of the Era

Despite losing one of its brightest stars in Hattie Shepparde, the 1870s continued as a vibrant era in theatre, bringing celebrity to a number of other “home grown” stars and promoting theatre actresses’ visibility as figures of wide-ranging popular appeal. The reputed “Tasmanians” Lucy Chambers,¹ and Maggie and Docy Stewart, as well as the undeniably Tasmanian-born Amy Sherwin were each particular favourites of the period’s theatrical world. And because each of these women toured extensively overseas, their non-domestic tours remained newsworthy for many Australians, particularly at a time when communicative technologies was changing the relationships between Australian media cultures both domestically and offshore.

Where in earlier decades, journalists in Australia relied on the ocean voyages of mail steamers to bring them news of the world, now they looked optimistically to faster and immediate means of messaging. “Hour after hour,” announced the *Mercury*, “the wires will speak or print their messages, and news of important events transpiring in any of the capitals of Europe will be read in the streets of Hobart Town as early as the Strand or Broadway.”² This suggests that the changing topologies of the global landscape were affecting Tasmania’s futurity and social history. With more immediate forms of transmission came the reality that the relationships between the world’s media cultures had shifted. Tasmania was now no longer a satellite community to that of mainland Australia. The advent of a communications system that changed how news was transmitted also changed the island’s place in the shared narratives of world events:

The extension of the wire from Batavia to Australia will, . . . change all the relations of the Australian and Tasmanian press as regards English news. London correspondents will no longer be of any importance, for their latest news will at best be but a twice-told tale before it can reach the Colonies . . .³

Such developments meant that media reported the overseas successes of “native” Australian theatre women on European stages concurrently or at least soon after the performances had actually taken place. Lucy Chambers’ Australian reception is an important case in point in this respect. Granted, there is some confusion as to where, exactly, her “native” allegiances lay, but the fact that she was Australian-born was never in doubt.

Lucy was a well-known opera star in Europe as early as 1864, but it took months for the news to arrive in Australia that she had reportedly debuted in Florence, and by then the report was woefully out-of-date. Lucy’s story is therefore remarkable as an analysis of the reciprocal relationships between celebrities and media cultures in the production of “news” during the 1860s, particularly regarding women’s prominence in narratives of the “native” celebrity as “news-worthy.”

Lucy spent many years training and performing in Europe at a time when it was impossible to transmit her successes in a timely, or concurrent way. This makes the fact that she was well-known in Australia when she returned “home” all the more significant because even despite the “lag” in media exchange, many of her achievements did make it to the Australian presses and she was therefore received as a “celebrity” when she re-appeared in the country in the early 1870s.

Like Hattie, media of the day consistently promoted Lucy domestically as a “native,” but whether this specifically alluded to her being “Tasmanian-

born" is unclear. W. Arundel Orchard makes the claim that Lucy was "Sydney-born"⁴ while Katherine Brisbane and Alison Gyger both report that she was a Tasmanian.⁵ Orchard's claim might be correct, but the fact that much of his information regarding Emma Howson comes almost word-for-word from contemporary reports indicates that he did not typically question his sources. Brisbane and Gyger do not support their claims about Lucy's state of origin either, which only adds to the confusion.

Debates about a celebrity's state of origin are neither surprising nor new given the time-period and available sources, or occasionally lack thereof. For instance, some sources assert that Ada Crossley, reportedly: "the first great Australian singer to be captured on record"⁶ in the early twentieth century was Melbourne-born⁷ while another states that she was a Tasmanian.⁸ Yet the claims about Lucy's state of origin are particularly interesting, albeit perplexing, because the woman herself seems to have enjoyed keeping her provenance a mystery by never entering her own opinion about the subject one-way or the other.

The confusion about Chambers' birthplace, and her own silence on the matter, is also clear in her overseas publicity. All the references I have managed to find speak of her as a "native" almost exclusively as a marker of her provenance as "Australian-born." When the *Sydney Morning Herald* reported her successful appearance at "the Pergola, the first opera house in Florence,"⁹ in the role of Azucena in Verdi's *Il Trovatore* in 1864, it referred to her as a "native" and qualified her reception as "brilliant" among Parisian and Italian journalists with reference to her voice of "unusual range" and "extreme richness."

This concentration on intertextuality was also crucial to the report printed by *Bell's Life in Victoria* after Lucy's successful appearance at La Scala the following year. The article quoted publications such as *La Lombardia*, *La Revista Melodrammatica*, and *La Ghironda* in illustrating the breadth of her fame,

and of course her European appeal. Similarly, the Australian report also drew on a number of Milanese newspaper reports to qualify her triumph as a “native.” While *La Revista Tealvale* characterised Lucy’s voice as “Californian in its richness,” *La Perseveranza* claimed Lucy’s superb grasp of Italian “shames many of the native *artists* who mumble their words preposterously.”¹⁰

Lucy’s press is important in illustrating how important women were in narratives of the “native,” and how their figuring personified an imagined vision of homeland, usually constructed independently of the “real” cultural realities of the women themselves. The “Californian” richness of Lucy’s voice was an imaginative “reality” quite independent of her birth as an Australian. In fact, there is no evidence to suggest that Lucy even studied in America, but instead spent the greater portion of her training first in London under the guidance of Manuel Garcia, and then later in Italy, under the tutelage of the Italian baritone Professor Luigi Vannuccini (c. 1818–1884) in Florence. One report also claims that, “At an early age her musical powers were so marked as to attract the notice of Catherine Hayes, who expressed the wish to take her to Europe, where her voice might be properly trained.”¹¹ The offer, however, went the way of similar proposals extended to other women such as Jane Thomson and Rosina Carandini: unaccepted.

Lucy’s press, even despite the confusion surrounding her origins as a “Tasmanian,” emphasises that women were crucial in ensuring that the “native,” even as an imaginative gesture, was pliable enough to accommodate common cultural concerns, even between geographically disparate countries. “The Paris journalists are as loud as their Italian brethren,” claimed one report, “in proclaiming the triumph of the Australian cantatrice, whom, however, they persist in designating a ‘creole’.”¹² So even overseas in the 1860s, Lucy’s somewhat troubling provenance was such that it inspired the creation of “new”

subjectivities, perhaps to fill in the fissures of nationality evident in her public persona.

The “creole” term denoted in the nineteenth century much the same figures of distinct cultures and “places” as is the case nowadays. Using the term in reference to Lucy is peculiar, but not altogether unexpected, if Lucy’s role as Azucena in *Il Trovatore* was the inspiration behind the Italian and Parisian “brethren’s” usage. Verdi’s opera of an insane woman (Azucena) bent on avenging the death of her mother lent itself to associations of identity given that the part was that of a Spanish gypsy woman. But the opera’s backdrop of civil war lent particular credibility to using the term “creole” to describe the shades of Lucy’s character as a woman of “mixed” blood and born in the “New World” (North and South America). This may, or may not, have contrasted to Lucy’s outward appearance off-stage. It is conceivable that Lucy might have looked the part of a “creole” in “real-life,” even without the benefit of her on-stage make-up and costuming as Verdi’s Azucena.

What Lucy’s offshore publicity clearly reveals is the development of a common set of concerns among nineteenth century press cultures about imaging and representing nationality and identity (“foreign,” “native,” and otherwise). *La Perseveranza* expressed a similar fascination with homeland and the cultural value of identity in its observation that a “young foreigner” could articulate the mother tongue, not only without “the slightest foreign accent,” but also in a more superior fashion to that of the “native” Italians. In fact, *La Perseveranza’s* observation that its “native artists . . . mumble their words preposterously” specifies that the paper’s press culture were disappointed in the performance of its “native artists” as cultural exemplars of identity.



MADAME LUCY CHAMBERS

The *Illustrated Australian News* reported at the time of her death (given as 8 June 1894) that Lucy Chambers had close family in Tasmania: "her sister, Mrs. Gilmore widow of the late Captain Gilmore of Crosby Lodge, Launceston ; and her nephew, Mr. G. C.

Gilmore, a member of the Legislative Assembly of Tasmania." The same report, however, only adds to the mystification of Lucy's state of origin by stating that she was "a native of Sydney"¹³ which goes against recent claims that she was a Tasmanian.

By extension, Lucy's offshore publicity also suggests that not only was there a similar reliance between countries on stage women to appropriately gesture versions of homeland identity abroad, but also that the function itself was distilled into a subjectivity called the "native." This then places the struggle with "social and discursive abjection" noted by Veronica Kelly on a world stage. Lucy Chambers' publicity reveals that this grappling against cultural disavowal was taking place not only in the world of the colonials, but also in the world of the continental Europeans.

Lucy's publicity for her *début* appearance in Melbourne (with Lyster's operatic company) on 14 February 1870 is also an interesting example of women's power in re-configuring and converging versions of identity. Lucy obviously inherited her billing as "Signora Lucia Chambers" abroad and the title itself makes for an interesting analysis of Lucy's various subjectivities. First, Lucy's representation as a "Signora" implied that she was married, but there is no evidence to suggest that she was married at all. It could be that the "Signora" epithet was then used in a way similar to that of "Madame" in attempting to personify a more "mature" (or experienced [?]) figure, although this is doubtful as Lucy was then around thirty-six years old. "Signora Lucia Chambers" implied, quite rightly, Lucy's well-developed experience with Italian culture. She certainly seems to have had the right to boast this distinction given the breadth of her popularity and her extensive training there.

It is perhaps likely that Lucy felt some unease in media promoting her as "a local" from Tasmania or New South Wales after her triumphs on the Italian stage. Her European reception as "a creole" and her reputation as a woman whose grasp of the Italian language was devoid of a "foreign" accent (at least on stage in her operatic roles) were larger-than-life constructions of offshore identity. Media dubbing her "a native of Australia"¹⁴ was perhaps a source of embarrassment for Lucy after distinctions of such worldwide acclaim. Was

being known as “Miss Lucy Chambers” a problem after being received as “Signora Lucia,” and if so, were the subsequent references to her “Australian” name of “Miss Lucy Chambers” an obvious move among domestic media to re-situate her geographic provenance with specific locutions of (“local”) homeland?

Consistent references to her as “Miss Lucy Chambers” shortly after her billing as “Signora Lucia” shifted her provenance to a clearly “localised” version of identity, relative to the Australian homeland in general and Melbourne city in particular. In fact, from this perspective the statement that she “has now returned [from overseas] to charm those amongst whom her earlier years were passed”¹⁵ was not so much a “welcome home” as it was a way of “saying” things about Lucy’s “home/land” provenance with a particular kind of force. It was true that Lucy had “studied under the best masters in Europe, and having in many cities in Germany, Italy and Spain, achieved great success”¹⁶ as a “Signora.” But perhaps it was because of those very achievements that it was equally important that Chambers be “localised” as “an Australian” by Australian media as soon as possible after her return home.

“Signora Lucia Chambers” never appeared in Lucy’s billing when she appeared in Tasmania, primarily because after almost one year, her Italian associations had conceivably lost all significance. One of the few occasions that Lucy was referred to as “native” in Tasmania was when she appeared in the colony for what the *Mercury* claimed was a “flying, and much too short visit” in 1871,¹⁷ and even then the reference only came at the very end of her tour, in one notice publicising her farewell.¹⁸ Given that her state of origin is so difficult to qualify, the claim in Tasmania at the time that Lucy was “a native of this colony” is ambiguous.¹⁹ Past usage of “this colony” or “the colony” in reference to the state of origin of the Carandini and Howson sisters implies that it referred to Tasmania, but this of course is only speculation.

Even despite the reality that her exact home state is uncertain nowadays, the fact that Lucy received such a “hearty welcome” as a famous star when she appeared in Tasmania for a “flying visit” in 1871 suggests that her community reception was as a “local.” The *Mercury* suggested that her performance of the grand scena “Ah quell giorno” “at once proved her a vocalist of the highest order” and claimed that her rendition of “the celebrated drinking song from *Lucretia* [sic] *Borgia*” so completely carried away the audience that “it narrowly escaped a triple encore.”²⁰ This was also the case in Melbourne the previous year because the *Age* reported that, “Miss Lucy Chambers, as Maffeo Orsini [in *Lucrezia Borgia*], of course received an encore in the favourite drinking song, *Ill segreto*.”²¹ Although modern-day historians differ in opinions as to whether Chambers was a contralto²² or a mezzo-soprano,²³ some critics of the day observed that “Miss Chambers possesses a voice of great compass in the lower register,”²⁴ suggesting notability as a contralto.

In fact, the *Mercury* claimed Lucy’s “true contralto voice of great power” was supported by some members of Lyster’s Opera Company, such as Italian “natives” Enrico Dondi (a bass) and Ugo Devoti (a tenor), as well as performers such as Charles Lascelles (a tenor/bass) and Mrs. Fox (a soprano claimed by the *Mercury* to be the sister of Armes Beaumont²⁵). Lascelles arrived in Australia in 1868 with Anna Bishop, for her second tour, and was later appointed as Lyster’s choirmaster. Later still, Lascelles again supported Bishop during her final Australian visit in 1875.

Despite Lascelles’ seasoned background as a professional, two problems seem to have marred the 1871 performances of Lucy Chambers’ troupe according to the *Mercury* critic. One was the “outrageous harmonies” “vamped” by the incompetent accompaniment of Lascelles at the pianoforte (at one point Lucy had to correct his error in timing by “beating her foot on the stage”²⁶) and the other was the “intolerable nuisance of the [Town Hall] door being constantly

opened and shut during the performance.”²⁷ This criticism came around the same time that the *Mercury* was complaining of wailing infants at the Theatre Royal performances of Duret’s company featuring Hattie Shepparde.

These occasional blights, however, did not deter the *Mercury* observer from speculating as to the cultural significance of Lucy’s appearances in Tasmania, particularly because of the island’s relative disconnectedness from the mainland. “One of the evils of our isolated position” reported the critic at the time “is the necessary absence of a first-class and rational entertainment.”²⁸ The *Mercury* went on to assert that, “These concerts supply that, and afford besides a means of enjoyment of the highest class.”²⁹ The social value of Lucy’s troupe in “supplying” “first-class and rational entertainment” of “the highest class” was greatly valued culturally. In fact, the *Mercury* critic optimistically hoped that the “augmentation of the company may be arranged as to allow . . . entire operas, or extensive portions thereof, being given.”³⁰

Opera entrepreneur William Lyster (and partner John W. Smith) seems to have been aware of Lucy’s accomplishments. Upon her return to Australia in 1870, Lyster enlisted her to help him assemble a top-class opera company for performances in Melbourne. Lucy joined what later became the “Lyster and Smith Royal English and Italian Opera Company” (as did Armes Beaumont). The largest contingent of singers in the company, however, was the Italian virtuosos and prima donnas, such as Lucia Barratti, the baritone Luigi Contini and the tenor Mariano Neri. Later, in 1871, Lucy joined the Cagli and Pompei Company (who were reportedly managed by Lyster) for a number of performances including Verdi’s *La Traviata* (1853) and *Un ballo in maschera* (1859), Mozart’s *Don Giovanni* (1787), Pacini’s *Saffo* (1840) and Cimarosa’s *Il matrimonio segreto* (1792).

MISS LUCY CHAMBERS

Begs to announce

THAT SHE WILL GIVE

A

GRAND OPERATIO CONCERT,

IN

THE TOWN HALL,

THIS EVENING, MARCH 14TH

PROGRAMME—PART I.

1. Solo, Pianoforte—Valse Caprice, "The Brooklet" PACKER
MR. F. A. PACKER.
2. Grand Cavatina — "Cruda Funesta (*Lucia di Lammermoor*) ... DONIZETTI
SIGNOR ENRICO DONDI.
3. Romanza — "Ah! non aven. pisi Lagrime" (*Maria di Rudenz*) ... DONIZETTI
SIGNOR UGO DEVOTI.
4. Cavatina—"Ah! quel giorno (*Semiramide*) ... ROSSINI
MISS LUCY CHAMBERS.
5. Great diabolical Song—"Dio dell'Or (*Faust*)... GOUNOD
SIGNOR ENRICO DONDI.
6. Aria—"No, No, No, No" (*Figlia del Reggimento*) ... DONIZETTI
SIGNOR UGO DEVOTI.
7. Song—"I cannot sing the old songs" MISS LUCY CHAMBERS.
8. Grand duetto Buffo—"Oh! che onest uomo" (*Roberto il Diavolo*)... MEYERBEER
SIGNORI UGO DEVOTI & ENRICO DONDI.
9. Grand Terzetto—"Quasi se sfuggi" (*Lucia Borgia*) ... DONIZETTI
MISS LUCY CHAMBERS AND SIGNORI DEVOTI AND DONDI.

PART II.

1. Air—"Yes, let me like a soldier fall" (*Maritana*) ... WALLACE
SIGNOR UGO DEVOTI.
2. Song—MISS LUCY CHAMBERS.
3. Cabaletta—"No, my courage now regaining" (*Maritana*)... WALLACE
SIGNOR ENRICO DONDI.
4. Transcription—"Faust" ... LIST
MR. F. A. PACKER.
5. Grand duetto Buffo—"All'idea di quel metallo" (*Barbiere di Siviglia*) ROSSINI
SIGNORI DEVOTI & DONDI.
6. Song—Cruller Song—"Sweet and low, wind of the western sea" ... WALLACE
MISS LUCY CHAMBERS.
7. Canzone—"La Donna e Mobile" (*Rigoletto*) ... VERDI
SIGNOR UGO DEVOTI.
8. Duetto—"Ai nostri monti" (*Traviata*) ... VERDI
MISS LUCY CHAMBERS & SIGNOR UGO DEVOTI.
9. Serenata di Mephistophele—"Catarina Idolatra" (*Faust*) ... GOUNOD
SIGNOR ENRICO DONDI.
10. Terzetto Buffo—"Zitti, zitti, piano, piano" (*Barbiere di Siviglia*) ... ROSSINI
MISS LUCY CHAMBERS & SIGNORI DEVOTI AND DONDI.

Admission: Reserved Seats, 3s. Second Seats, 2s. Back Seats, 1s.

Doors open at half past 7, to commence at 8.

Tickets can be obtained at Messrs. Welch and Sons and at Webb's Hotel.

Lucy received a glowing review from the *Melbourne Age* following her first appearance as Maffeo Orsini in the Lyster and Smith Royal English and Italian Opera production of Donizetti's *Lucrezia Borgia* on 14 February 1870. The reporter claimed the night was "a great success," further suggesting it was:

... remarkable for giving an opportunity for the first appearance of Miss Lucy Chambers, a lady—a native of Australia—who having studied under the best masters in Europe, and having in many cities in Germany, Italy and Spain achieved great success, has now returned to charm those amongst whom her earlier years were passed. Miss Chambers possesses a voice of great compass in the lower register and has also much histrionic talent.³¹

Perhaps purposefully emphasising Lucy as a talented "native," meaning an Australian-born artist, was particularly important in her case because of her extensive European experience. Considerable time spent overseas, specifically in Europe, and her successes there, probably lent greater motivation to re-situate her geographically as Australian and re-cast her ideologically as a "native." Descriptions of her return "to charm those amongst whom her earlier years were passed," were, after all, "saying" very specific things about her past as a Australian, and by extension, emphasising Australia's unique experience of her as a "local."

Like the publicity of Lucy's tour, the media generated by the appearances of the Stewart Family in Hobart during 1870s did not actively "say" things about their "native" connection with Tasmania, but their cultural encounter nonetheless offers us important information surrounding the prevailing attitudes of colonials to notions of identity, and also theatre women's social power to popularise contemporary ideals. Richard Stewart, together with

his three daughters, Docy (also “Docie”), Maggie and Nellie, appeared at Hobart’s Town Hall in 1878 in direct competition with the Theatre Royal’s performance of Royal Italian Opera Company (featuring a twenty-three year old Amy Sherwin). It is important to discuss the Stewart Family as an unusual contrast to the other “home grown” theatre companies and individuals already examined.

Richard Stewart was the third husband of Theodosia Yates, who launched her career in Hobart as “Mrs Stirling” with Anne Clarke’s company in 1842 (together with Jerome Carandini and Frank Howson). Theodosia Stirling’s second marriage was to a local Hobart musician named James Guerin, a union Richard Lane claims produced two daughters, Maggie and Docy, sometime between 1842 and 1845;³² the period Theodosia lived and performed in Hobart. Marjorie Skill in *Sweet Nell of Old Sydney* supports this claim,³³ as does John West.³⁴ However, I have been unable to either substantiate or challenge the suggestion that both Maggie³⁵ and Docy³⁶ were Hobart-born with documentary evidence. In fact, shipping intelligence published in the Hobart *Courier* on 28 January 1842 lists “S. Macintosh and child” as having arrived in Hobart onboard the *Sydney* via London the same day. This implies that “S. Macintosh” (Theodosia Stirling) already had a child (perhaps a baby daughter [?]) before marrying Guerin: a general claim Skill does make.³⁷

Docy and Maggie were, like the Howson and Carandini sisters, born of talented stock. Their mother, Theodosia, was the great-granddaughter of Richard and Mary Ann Yates, “celebrated thespians in 18th century London and prominent members of Garrick’s Drury Lane company.”³⁸ Their mother’s theatrical heredity, coupled with father James’ (less publicised) talent as a musician, was a potential realised by their two daughters. What precipitated their parent’s separation (in Hobart [?]) is not known, but the fact that James Guerin retreated into the shadows of history perhaps explains why the story of

his daughters is usually only offered as an accompanying footnote to the achievements of Nellie Stewart.³⁹ She was the daughter of Theodosia's third husband, Richard Stewart, a man of significant "visibility" in the colonial public eye.

Media of the day qualifies Richard's high-profile colonial presence in a way that contrasts quite distinctly with the very obscure historical picture that remains of James Guerin. In fact, Peter Downes makes the claim of Guerin that, "his duty done [in fathering Docy and Maggie], this gentleman thereupon disappeared."⁴⁰ Such assertions play on the fact that little in the way of documentary evidence remains to offer a voice that speaks in Guerin's own defence, and his "disappearance" conveniently opens the door to paint what might actually be (if we only knew) what appears to be a rather biased picture of him as a casual father. Ghosts make for useful vehicles in history, as Downes' own claim shows. If anything, it is reasonable to argue that James Guerin's obscurity, and the deafening silence created by all that historians have not said about him, perhaps explains to some degree why the public visibility and cultural encounter of his two daughters, Docy and Maggie, have been scantily documented.

The sisters' provenance as Hobart-born is a point that most scholars do agree upon, and their state of origin makes them important in an examination of the influence of "home grown" Tasmanian stars: particularly because their significance is usually overshadowed in Australian stage history by the achievements of their step-sibling. Nellie was something of a prodigy of great charm and talent, and for decades she entertained Australian and offshore audiences. Five-year old Nellie took her first part in a benefit performance of Von Kotzebue's *The Stranger* for visiting English dramatic stalwarts Charles and Ellen Kean in January 1864. From then on, she sang, she danced, and she delighted (particularly as "Yum Yum" in the *Mikado*), and when her vocal skills

faded—as was inevitably the case for most singers—she reigned supreme as a comedienne. To many, Nellie Stewart undoubtedly earned her title as “Australia’s outstanding star of the pre-1914 period.”⁴¹ Yet their publicity reveals that her sisters were also important personalities of the era, to both mainlanders and to Tasmanians.

Both siblings had garnered significant stage experience in their early childhood. Like the other Tasmanian sisters appearing around the same time (the Carandinis and the Howsons), both Maggie and Docy came from a “theatrical family” in the truest sense of the word. These were familial units that boasted a long tradition of theatre as both a way of life and a means of existence. Performance was as much a livelihood for the Howsons and the Carandini sisters as it was for Maggie and Docy Stewart, and publicity credits both sisters with notable achievements in their own right. Docy Stewart appeared with Lady Emilia Don on the eve of her Australian farewell at Melbourne’s Haymarket on 25 November 1865 where she sang as duets “When a little farm we keep,” (with Mr. W. H. Williams) and “We come to thee, Savoy” (with Don). It was during Anna Bishop’s second visit to Australia, in 1868, that Docy appeared as Adalgisa in the benefit performance of *Norma* in Melbourne. Of her repertoire of original works there was the duet “Beautiful Swells,” a piece Docy sang with Marion Dunn in the burlesque extravaganza written by William Akhurst (1822–1878) entitled *King Arthur, or, Launcelot the Loose* at Melbourne’s Theatre Royal (1868–1871).⁴² Another of Akhurst’s vehicles for the Stewart family was the extravaganza *The Siege of Troy*, in which Docy again successfully blended harmonies with Marion Dunn in a “duo piquant” called “My dear girls she’s a pal of mine.”⁴³ And in the year following her appearance opposite Bishop, Docy performed the role of Martha opposite sister Maggie’s “a Boy with Oyster Parties”⁴⁴ in what the *Age* reported was the Australian

premiere of Maddison Morton's farce *Master Jones's Birthday* at Melbourne's Theatre Royal, on 18 September 1869.



Docy Stewart (left[?]) and Marion Dunn as they appeared on the front page of the music score of "Beautiful Swells," from the burlesque *King Arthur* by W. M. Akhurst (c. 1870s).

One of the curious things about Docy's appearance in Tasmania in 1878 was the fact that she supposedly "retired" from the stage two years after her appearance with Bishop, in 1870.⁴⁵ The *Age* reported that Docy appeared on the evening of 25 April 1870 in the farce called *A Model of a Wife* and in the ballet of *Magic Toys* as her farewell. Testimonials were offered to her on that occasion and the speech delivered to her claiming that: "We feel that your retirement from the stage will cause a difficult gap to fill"⁴⁶ was somewhat ironic given that she later returned to the stage after all.

Maggie played Cupid, and Nellie the part of Mercury in the Princess's Theatre⁴⁷ production of *Orpheus in the Underworld* in March 1872: the same year that fire razed the Theatre Royal to the ground. Docy, Maggie and the then thirteen-year-old Nellie also appeared with their father for the opening night performance of Coppin's Royal Opera House Melbourne, in August 1872. They later joined Lyster's company in 1874 and appeared in his much-admired *opéra-bouffes*.⁴⁸ The family performed together almost exclusively, often in specialised pieces written for them by the Broadmarsh-born Tasmanian writer-dramatist Garnet Walch, including *Rainbow Revels* and *If*.⁴⁹ In fact, when Richard Stewart's company appeared in Tasmania in 1878, the *Mercury* emphasised that *Rainbow Revels* was "Written by the well known Tasmanian author Garnet Walch."⁵⁰

The Stewarts arrived in Hobart from Melbourne on 16 April 1878 aboard the S.S. *Tamar*: the same vessel carrying Signors Pompei and Rosnati of the Royal Italian Opera Company. The Stewart family appeared "for the first time before a Hobart Town audience"⁵¹ on 22 April and were very, very popular. The *Mercury* claimed there were "800 or 900 persons present"⁵² for their début performance of *Rainbow Revels* and that "hundreds had to be refused admission."⁵³ Audiences seemed as equally charmed by the medlies of "mirth, music and mimicry" the production promised as by Richard Stewart's

impersonations of G. V. Brooke, William Cresswick, John Drew and Joseph Jefferson.

The interesting aspect of the Stewarts' tour is how their repertoire functioned as a source promoting Tasmanian state of origin. Even though the Stewarts did not advertise their "native" connections explicitly, in many ways their material work did it for them. As was the case with *Rainbow Revels*, the play *If—an Old Gem Reset* was similarly promoted as written by "the Tasmanian author, Garnet Walch, Esq."⁵⁴ It was through Walch that localising the Stewart Family as "local" was possible. "Walch" was the signifier that facilitated the direct connection between the Stewarts and state of origin because of the author's own "Tasmanian-ness." So even though the Stewart Family did not openly advertise a direct Tasmanian association, their press—as it was specifically orchestrated by media culture—exploited an indirect Tasmanian connection nonetheless.

Such distinctive markers of state of origin captured the imagination of many "Hobartians." In fact, the publicity the *Mercury* generated by reporting who was "seen" at the Stewart performances functioned in much the same way as "Walch" did as a mini-narrative.⁵⁵ Many times the *Mercury* noted the presence of "leading residents."⁵⁶ Culture-watchers noted that "The Mayor and many members of the most respectable families"⁵⁷ attended the Stewarts' debut performance, as did the "leading residents" of the city, Sir Francis Smith, Sir J. M. Wilson and Dr. Bright, join the throng of play-goers five days later. The list goes on. The Hon. N. J. Brown, Mr. R. B. Miller and Mr. Russell Young were all reported in the *Mercury* on 1 May 1878 as having attended a performance, as were the Solicitor-General, Mr. R. P. Adams, his Worship the Mayor, W. P. Green, and "the Alderman and the Town Clerk"⁵⁸ all present for the family's benefit on 3 May. The somewhat rampant name-dropping was unique to the Stewart's publicity and not, for instance, evident in that generated by Amy

Sherwin's debut performances at precisely the same time. Perhaps Sherwin's "native-ness," and in particular her reception as the "Tasmanian Nightingale" was ample ideology in driving home the coincidental agendas of cultural validation and relative localisation.

Chapter Eleven:

Madame Amy Sherwin: The Nineteenth Century's Last "Tasmanian Nightingale"

She "who has given her State a fame to last."

Hobart Mercury, 1934¹

When the Tasmanian-born poet, playwright and wordsmith Garnet Walch wrote in 1881: "Who says we have no birds of song / Save those from other lands imported / Does us, pardi, a grievous wrong / The statement of a mind distorted"² he celebrated Amy Sherwin—the woman he regarded as the inspiration behind "*Brava, Tasmania*"—as "a sweet bird" of "native tones." In so doing, Walch immortalised Sherwin as "our new-found prima donna" and in the process defined the Australian-born "home grown" star.

Amy is perhaps Australia's most well known Tasmanian opera star of the nineteenth century. She rose to significant heights during the late 1880s and performed in many of the world's greatest operas and operatic auditoriums. Judith Bowler's *Amy Sherwin; The Tasmanian Nightingale* documents Amy's career and fame as an opera star in detail, and rather than recounting those aspects of Sherwin's life already raised by Bowler, I would like to concentrate my attention on her Australian reception as a star. In particular, I am interested in pursuing what I believe to be one of the most interesting aspects of Amy's story: its power to draw all the themes of homeland and nationality interwoven in the stories of the other women considered thus far into the early twentieth century.

Sherwin's rise to fame tracks the development of state of origin from a budding enterprise of promotion rooted in early frontier ideology, into a quite sophisticated industry of identification well into the new century. As Amy

appeared much later than the other “Tasmanian” stars I have discussed so far, and she has been the subject of relatively more attention, she is one of the few women studied within the course of this thesis who is still reasonably well remembered in the cultural consciousness.

Amy was born in Tasmania’s Huon Valley on 23 March 1855³ to George Green Sherwin and his wife Elizabeth (*nee* “Dean”). George and Elizabeth were both expatriate English settlers and the couple were married at St. Matthews Church, New Norfolk, on 8 April 1843.⁴ Amy’s parents, particularly her mother, raised their daughter and her siblings (three sisters and one brother) in a household encouraging of musical arts as a drawing-room activity. It was very much a pastime for women in the era but Amy’s parents, who had arrived in Tasmania from England in the early 1820s, took steps to nurture what Judith Bowler claims was Amy’s “unusual promise.”⁵

So not unlike the Carandini and Howson sisters, Amy was also born of immigrant parents, with the difference being that her family was not “theatrical” in the truest sense of the word. Yet what Amy’s family apparently lacked as a background in the theatre arts was more than made up for by the dramatic fashion in which Amy envisioned her career aspirations. Bowler claims that when the seven-year-old Amy heard that a bystander had accidentally discovered the “Swedish Nightingale” Jenny Lind, she “used to stand in a field . . . and sing as loudly as she could in the hope that someone would hear her.”⁶

Amy was claimed a “debutante” in Hobart in 1878, but she had already reportedly performed at a benefit for Armes Beaumont in the mid 1860s, and on the same bill were Rosina and Marie Carandini (apparently Rosina’s Melbourne debut).⁷ Similarly, Amy had also performed at the Intercolonial Exhibition in Melbourne in January 1873 with an ensemble billed as “OUR MUSICAL VISITORS FROM TASMANIA.” The “visitors” included Frederick Augustus Packer, W. J. Reynolds, C. H. Pringle, the Misses Beaumont⁸ and Sherwin (Elsa

Sherwin, who was also in the company, was not Amy's sister, but both girls were falsely billed as the "Sisters Sherwin").⁹ Packer's organ solos, including Bellini's "Casta diva" and "Mira Norma" were of a "graceful and finished style" while his pianoforte accompaniment of the singers earned further commendations from the *Argus* for their "elegant lightness of touch."¹⁰

But Amy's unearthing as a real "star," if true, did evoke shades of Jenny Lind's discovery. In 1878, members of a visiting opera company reportedly heard Amy singing in a field as they picnicked nearby.¹¹ They invited the young soprano to sing with their troupe and Amy's career gathered momentum soon after. Her performance as Norina in Donizetti's *Don Pasquale* in Hobart on 1 May not only saw the return of opera in Hobart "after its absence from our stage for so many years,"¹² but also immediately earned for Amy the title of "Prima Donna."

The Royal Italian Opera Company performances featured: "the charming, accomplished, and celebrated Prima Donna Dramatica Assolute, Signora Augusta Guadagnini,"¹³ the contralto mezzo-soprano Signora Leonora Parodi Fabbris; a soprano called Bessie Pitts; and the tenor Signor Ferrante Rosnati; a baritone called Giovanni Gambetti, and the basso Signor Gaetano Cesari. Add to this what bills advertised as "thirty other Artistes comprising the Royal Italian Opera Company" and Hobart theatre-goers were to be treated with what the *Mercury* heralded as "THE MUSIC OF THE FUTURE."¹⁴

The company specialised in "the Works of the Great Masters of the Lyric Stage"¹⁵ and their program resembled that presented by Lucy Chambers in 1871: not complete operas but rather an assortment of "lyric dramas" from the masterworks of accomplished composers. Selections of Verdi's *Aida* and *Il Trovatore* were presented together with Bellini's *Norma* (1831), Donizetti's *Lucrezia Borgia* (1834), *Lucia di Lammermoor* (1835) and *Don Pasquale* (1843) and a version of Gounod's *Faust*. The company's presentation of *Aida* was billed as

having been “produced for the first time in Hobart Town”¹⁶ and their presentation of Wagner’s *Lohengrin* included such an impressive display of mechanical effects that the *Mercury* critic claimed “to do it at all necessitates a liberality of expenditure never before dreamt of in this country.”¹⁷

True of the other Tasmanian-born women so far considered, particularly those specialising as “lyric artists,” Amy too represented versions of femininity popularised within the narrative dramas of opera. Amy’s part in *Faust*, the five-act opera written by Charles-François Gounod (1818-1893) in 1858, offers another picture of womanhood that is important to situate because of its pseudo-demonic themes. It begins with Faust, old and suicidal, calling on Satan to assist him in recapturing his youth. Méphistophélès greets him with “Me voici” (“Here I am”) and swiftly engages Faust into a contract by showing him a vision of a nubile Marguerite. After various plots to inflame love between the youthful Faust and Marguerite, the union results in Marguerite’s pregnancy. Her brother, Valentin, is slain avenging her honour and renounces her in his last breath. Later, Faust engages in an orgy with the courtesans of the Ancients and envisions Marguerite with a thin red line around her throat. Méphistophélès and Faust discover Marguerite in prison for aborting her child. The opera ends with a grand trio in which Faust (tenor), Méphistophélès (bass) and Marguerite (soprano) all sing in a piece that climaxes in Marguerite’s redemption. Clearly, the woman’s role in the dramatic cumulative highlight of many operas was important and perhaps remained as the lasting image foremost in the minds of most journalists as they penned their reviews for publication.

Having had over the years “the advantage of seeing” so many of the characters presented “by artists of world-wide fame,” the *Mercury* critic was confident enough to claim: “We have learnt how almost every note should be sung; [and] how every sentiment should be represented.”¹⁸ After four decades of “high” material works such as opera appearing in Tasmania, and indeed the

position enjoyed by the State as the birth-place of a number of Australia's most prominent singers, the implication was that its cultural literacy was a given. Unfortunately, however, the *Mercury* noted "the dispiriting influence of empty benches" on 30 April 1878, despite the fact that "Signor Ferrante Rosnati created the character of Poliuto [from Donizetti's opera of the same name] in Tasmania" on the occasion.¹⁹ As a result, when the *Mercury* claimed those that had not attended "were losers," it was probably intended as much as a personal observation as a social critique.

The story of Amy optimistically singing loudly in the out-of-doors might well have been true considering her name did not appear in any of the initial bills advertising the performances of the Royal Italian Opera Company. The *Mercury* critic seemed surprised to hear how accomplished Amy was after sitting in on the rehearsals for her debut appearance as Norina in Donizetti's *Don Pasquale* on 30 April 1878. His appraisal created much anticipation in predicting that Amy's future performances promised something singular and unique with the claim: "Her conception of the character, gained after only a week's study, during which the whole opera has been learnt, is considered faultless."²⁰

Amy's "debut" followed that of another new female singer, Bessie Pitts, who hailed from Melbourne and reportedly studied under Lucy Chambers. And it is interesting, speaking of Chambers, to speculate if perhaps her visit to Tasmania some seven years earlier had even attracted the sixteen-year-old Sherwin to one of her concerts. It is clear in the stories of the Carandini and Howson sisters that the appearance of well-known women such as Chambers undoubtedly influenced the ideals of young women cultivating similar ambitions.

Amy's training under Frederick Augustus Packer (1839-1902) paid dividends judging from her reception because she received much encouragement from hometown audiences and critics. Packer was well-known for his musical

pedigree in Tasmania and had performed alongside some of the most talented celebrities to visit the island throughout the era. In fact, he supported Marie Carandini in May 1849, while Rosina later performed one of his compositions in Hobart when she appeared in 1872, and the *Mercury* critic had also lauded the sounds he produced on “his new grand piano”²¹ at the farewell concerts of Lucy Chambers in 1871. It was Packer’s ode, *The land of beauty*, which was the thematic inspiration behind the International Exhibition, held in Hobart in 1894, under the direction of Otto Linden.²² Linden took up permanent residence in Tasmania that same year and the *Mercury* claimed that a man of such “high reputation as a master in Melbourne . . . should therefore be a great acquisition to the musical world of Hobart.”²³

One expects that the debut of a local girl would cause an upsurge in provincialism, but the reviews appearing after her debut reveal that in Sherwin’s case, it was more than just “puff”:

The present season of Opera wili [sic] always be a marked one in the memories of the musical world of Hobart Town, as having witnessed the *débuts* of two colonial ladies upon the operatic stage. Of the appearance of Miss Bessie Pitts as “Rosina” we have already written, and we have now to record the unqualified success of Miss Amy Sherwin . . . The introductory movement commencing with “Quel Guard oil cavaliere” was given with precision, and in the allegretto which followed, “So anchio la Virtu magica” the greatest flexibility of the voice was shown, the runs extending to C in alto being executed with much finish . . . The *florituri* so often shunned, or worst still, spoilt by other Norinas, were given with correctness and facility . . . both Miss Sherwin and Signor Pompei [as Don Pasquale sang] with

exquisite feeling and refinement, and the lady terminating with much power upon the high C, gaining another vociferous recall.²⁴

If Lucy represented proof that Australia was “by no means destitute of musical talent”²⁵ in 1870, then Sherwin was evidence that Tasmania was “by no means destitute” of “local” talent in 1878. Having successfully “marked” the “memories of the musical world in Hobart Town,” Amy appeared in Victoria soon after and for a time also reportedly studied with Lucy Chambers (although they never appeared to perform together publicly). Amy’s appearance at Melbourne’s Opera House in *Lucia di Lammermoor* on 3 June was so successful that, according to the Melbourne *Argus*, her performance motivated cries of “*Bravo Tasmania*” from around the house,²⁶ with the reporter further noting that, “‘There was never a more hearty scene in any theatre’.”²⁷ In fact, the zeal of provincialism was such that another reporter claimed:

If there be any Tasmanian who will read this paper it will quicken his pulse to know that when Miss Sherwin was summoned for the last time before the curtain a spontaneous cry was taken up, and amidst much hand clapping and cheering was heard “*Bravo Tasmania*”!²⁸

The particular ambiguity of the cry is interesting when attempting to identify what, exactly, was being hailed in the articulation of “*Bravo Tasmania*.” Garnet Walch’s “*Brava, Tasmania*” presumably eulogised Sherwin’s talents in a declaration to, and congratulation of, state of origin, but there were subtle distinctions of ownership at play in “*Bravo Tasmania*,” particularly considering the circumstances of its exclamation and its vocalisers, that render the gesture as one symbolising identity rather indistinct: “*Bravo Tasmania*” clearly expressed

approval, but approval of what? Was it a cry that specifically congratulated the colony on producing such a talent as Sherwin? Or, was the gesture one that expressed general approval of "Tasmania" (by Victorians)? It was not "*Bravo Tasmania[n]*" that the crowd had acclaimed, so the expression is rather ambiguous if acknowledging Sherwin's state of origin, or indeed, if approving of Sherwin's specific talents as a Tasmanian opera singer. Clearly, "*Bravo Tasmania*" localised something specific, but was it Sherwin, was it her state of origin, or, was it both?

If we shift the attention to the episode, yet another set of symbolic possibilities emerge. Amy's "relativity" as a "Tasmanian" implies that the gesture acknowledges both persona and place as twin sides of the same cultural coin. The instance therefore illustrates a moment of equilibrium between geographically distinct contexts: one ultimately sharing a performative act that celebrates cultural distinction. Some compatibility between press cultures in the narration of "Tasmanian-ness" had obviously occurred over time to enable such an expression of identity that everyone present seemingly understood. It illustrates that articulating a star's "symbolic visibility" (in this case Sherwin as a "Tasmanian") was possible once "shared cultural paradigms established, developed and manifested,"²⁹ but also that the "performance" of meaning could be shared in the collective and simultaneous vocalisation of "meaning" *as a performance by an audience*.

Even at this early stage of her career in 1878, however, Amy Sherwin's power as a prototype was often an unstable balance between her state of origin as "Tasmanian" and the eagerness amongst mainland print cultures to re-claim her with another "symbolic visibility" as an "Australian Prima Donna." Amy's publicity illustrates that "localisation" was clearly a behaviour driven by a geographic relativity to "place" because in seeking opportunities to "localise" Amy's relativity to Melbourne, its critics often had to grapple for ownership

over her. In other words, print media produced expressions of a differentiated, culturally specific, experience of Sherwin based on where she was geographically. The *Melbourne Age*, for instance, chose to downplay Amy's state provenance as a Tasmania while she appeared in Victoria, instead claiming: "Miss Sherwin is a decided acquisition to the lyric drama, and may justly claim the name of the *Australian* prima donna [my italics]." ³⁰

Local publications such as the Launceston *Examiner* took a genuine interest in publicising Amy's successes on the mainland, but often found it difficult to maintain a provincial flair. After her appearance as Lucia (in *Lucia di Lammermoor*) at Ballarat's Academy of Music, the *Examiner* reprinted a review via the *Ballarat Courier* that claimed Amy was "a new star in the theatrical world." ³¹ The *Courier* reported that Amy "brought down the house" with her performance, and that "the audience and orchestra rose *en masse*, cheering and applauding most enthusiastically." That "the audience" and the orchestra both "rose *en masse*" also evinces yet another occasion in which "meaning" was *performed* by the audience itself. "Standing up for Sherwin" was a performance of meaning without locution: the gesture of a united audience arising *en masse* "said it all." Yet "meaning" in relation to Sherwin, like that of her other Tasmanian contemporaries in the theatre world was consistently "performed" by theatre writers too. The *Examiner* could only reprint the *Melbourne Age*'s assessment of her considering she appeared there almost immediately after her Hobart debut. The *Age* heralded "a soprano voice, rich in the freshness of youth, musical, flexible, and singularly sympathetic," and what the critic considered was her futurity: as "these qualities combined undoubtedly place her in the foremost rank of Australian songstresses who have appeared as exponents of the lyric drama." ³²



Amy Sherwin as she appeared in the *Illustrated Australian News* on 8 July 1878.

The fact that Tasmanian papers reprinted news stories about Sherwin already appearing in offshore publications such as the *Ballarat Courier* and Melbourne's *Age* and *Argus*, to name only a few, is highly significant in the context of "social and discursive abjection." That local media producers respected mainland validation and actively continued the tradition of seeking opportunities to popularise mainland opinion approving "local" success stories could imply that the driving agenda of many Tasmanian journalists was a "lack" of some kind (for instance credibility or identity).

Alternatively, the *Examiner* or the *Mercury's* move to reprint mainland assessment of Amy's skills is especially interesting because one could also argue that this illustrates that local journalists deployed such products in specific acts of counter-performativity. Tasmanian journalists could "turn the tables" so to speak, on the legacy of mainland bias by using the very testimonies of acknowledgment that mainland journalists had been so unwilling to offer in the past. If this is an accurate reading, and given the past relationship between local and mainland print cultures it seems a valid position to take, then the situation is significant in that it suggests that relationships of power had obviously shifted. If local journalists found themselves in a position to exploit the cultural artefacts that evidenced a patent social turn-around, then this was, quite naturally enough, one that they eagerly seized upon.

Perhaps the ideological driving force behind "*Bravo Tasmania*" was its potential as an ideological counter-response to social narratives about collective cultural and political pasts. If the expression countered the belief that Tasmania lagged behind the social and economic development of other states, then the utterance also congratulated and to some degree even redeemed, the national *self*. And from this perspective, Amy's identification in 1878 as an "Australian songstress" in the same month Victoria cried "*Bravo Tasmania*" makes perfect sense as a symbolically revitalised construction of what "Australian-ness" *was* and *did*.

This was an important discourse to formalise in Amy's case, not only considering she left Australia in the four months immediately after her debut, but especially because she did not reappear in the country again for almost a decade. After Australia, she toured New Zealand, in November 1878 (returning in March 1888); America, in 1879–81 (and in 1883–84, 1887) and then England, in 1883 (and again in 1884–86). In between her international travels and her first

return visit to Australia was her romance with a German merchant, Hugo Görlitz, whom she married in Dunedin, New Zealand, on 14 December 1878.

While at the time of Amy's Australian reappearance in 1887, the mainland press regularly claimed her "The Australian Nightingale," the State's press usually referred to Amy in Tasmania as the "Tasmanian Nightingale." By this time, Walch had of course published "Brava, Tasmania!" and the poem had taken on popularity as a kind of anthem of identity. The overall enthusiasm Amy's visits invariably motivated in the State, particularly considering she had since appeared at Covent Garden, Crystal Palace, and London's Her Majesty's and Princess's theatres, was the likely reason for the trend to promote her as the State's most celebrated "Nightingale."

A crush of fans and a concert band met Amy at the train station when she arrived in Hobart in July 1887. The *Mercury* reported that, "Before 8 o'clock, crowds of people flocked towards the Town Hall and the Railway Station, and though the express train [from Launceston] was nearly half an hour late, . . . those who went to the railway first, and others who went down with the band, held out with great patience and good order for the lady's arrival."³³ Not only was the crowd patient and orderly, those that actually got to stand on the platform had to pay for a ticket to do so!

Alongside the fans and civic receptions was the revitalised spirit of provincialism that Amy's visits seemed to guarantee in Tasmania. Amy's international fame was perhaps one reason why—even amid the reoccurring nomenclature of "the Tasmanian Nightingale" in Amy's publicity—the familiar rivalries between how opposing print cultures experienced Sherwin did not ease. Idiosyncratic differences in an experience of Sherwin were as commonplace in her publicity in Tasmania as on the mainland. For instance, the address presented at her civic reception in Hobart on 11 July 1887 was very clear in staking a claim of provenance and ownership over Amy for expressly

ideological reasons. After organisers had fired the rockets, and the crowd of some 4000 people somehow managed to crush into the Town Hall, the Mayor of Hobart, Mr. C. Harbottle, read aloud the following:

Miss Amy Sherwin. I have been asked by the committee to present you with an address, which I will do with very great pleasure; because many here recollect you in old times when you delighted them—myself amongst the number—in this hall with your sweet voice. We have watched with great pleasure first of all your career in the Australian colonies, which was gratifying to us, but upon your arrival in the Old Country [England] we became proud of your great success, and of you as the Tasmanian Nightingale. Other Australian colonies have claimed you as theirs, but we protest against this—(cheers and laughter)—and claim you as “our own.”³⁴

This speech is another important text to consider as a study of relationships between culture, geography, and the practices of textual production that differentiate cultural experience from one place to another. Claiming Amy as “our own” was a vital civic act. Here, what is unique about the “performance” of the Mayor’s speech act was not its form (which was quite conventional as testimonials go), but rather the content that intonated “local” relevancies using specific locution and symbolic terms of meaning-making. The “force” with which the Mayor claims to “know” Sherwin also claims a very different cultural experience of her than the “Other Australian colonies” that had “claimed” Sherwin as “*theirs* [my italics].”

There are personal experiences here that affected the locutionary “force” of the Mayor’s performative speech act. Occasions of intimacy, encounters as a

witness to Sherwin's talents as a star, and a personal validation of her relationship to the community as a "local," renders the desire to "claim" (as a locutionary objective) more compelling in Hobart than elsewhere. That the Mayor can declare to have witnessed ("recollect you in old times") and observed ("watched with great pleasure") Amy's engagements with various cultures, both here and abroad, gives greater weight to his argument that he can "say" his experience of her is uniquely relative to home State, and by extension more credible as a gesture of "knowing."

An important outcome of the Mayor's speech act was his articulating that Tasmania experienced "the Australian context" differently, and that the localised "Tasmanian" experience of Sherwin had survived long after her involvement with "other Australian colonies" or her "arrival in the Old Country." The Mayor's was a performative speech act that mapped this differentiated experience of "Australian-ness" by reproducing a practice that codified content with "localised" meaning. This was important for a community concerned with creating longevity for a special kind of cultural memory that assured some kind of epistemological futurity of place. As the *Mercury* claimed: "Tasmanians will now have the satisfaction of knowing that among the few great singers who have appeared here, and whose names fix themselves in their memories, that of a native will stand at the head of the list."³⁵ Recollection, relating meaning back to homeland, and indeed personal "knowing" as a marker of differentiated experience were all aspects of identification that found symbolic expression through Amy's personification: both in Tasmania as a woman claimed "our own" and on the mainland as an Australian-born opera star.

The "high culture" Amy was said to have displayed by the *Ballarat Courier* in her performance of *Lucia di Lammermoor* offers important insights into the artistic value of opera as a measure of intellectual and social civility among

colonials, and is also indicative of the importance of women to opera's cultural utility as intellectually significant. Critics were much kinder to performers who possessed the facility to act well because they considered it essential to the unity of operatic material works. It also helped if performers looked the part. Amy's figure, as well as her voice, usually caught the attention of journalists throughout her career. The *Ballarat Courier* noted early on that she was "a young lady of about medium height, possessed of a good figure, a most attractive face, and excellent stage presence."³⁶ Much later, when she appeared at the Sydney Town Hall, the *Mercury* reported that "Mme. Sherwin looked like a mediaeval princess in a clinging robe of brown net superbly weighted with old-gold beads over silk."³⁷ The dual abilities of vocal and dramatic talent were particularly vital to the performance of opera primarily because colonials believed that it was through opera that cultural sensibilities and tastes were elevated. No other genre seemed to have held the currency for "civilising" cultural tastes among colonials as did the vocal and dramatic aspects of opera. Amy's "high position"³⁸ as a "lyric *artiste*"³⁹ was a reputation she achieved through the twin gifts of her vocal and dramatic force.

It is difficult to understand why then, the *Currency Companion to Theatre in Australia* not only omits the contributions of the Carandini (and for the most part the Howson) sisters from its historiography of the Australian stage, but also excludes those of Amy Sherwin. The fact that Amy achieved such critical acclaim for her representation of Lucia in the "mad scene" of Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* should have assured her of a place in theatre history:

The length of this scene in which Lucia features alone, and the sustained emotion alone make it a trial to most lyric actors, and the realistic acting and exquisite singing of Miss Sherwin made it

the piece of the evening, and caused everyone to desire to see the complete opera with that lady in the title *rôle*.⁴⁰

Donizetti based his opera on a novel by Sir Walter Scott; the most popular novelist of the nineteenth century. Like the novel, the opera offered a compelling tale of treachery, plotting and rivalry set in Scotland, and revolving around two duelling families, the Ravenswoods (with its patriarch of Edgar of Ravenswood) and the Lammermoors (Enrico, Lord Henry Aston of Lammermoor). Amy's part was that of Lucia Ashton, whose father schemes to marry her off to Arturo in the hope that it will secure the family's coffers and unity. The plan, unsurprisingly, ends in disaster and owes much to the Shakespearean narrative of doomed lovers from warring families in *Romeo and Juliet*. Amy's "exquisite" performance of the marathon aria "Alfin son tua" in the third Act comes after Edgardo (Ravenswood) shuns her, somewhat gullibly believing that she has betrayed him and pledged to marry Arturo. Destined to the bridal chamber with Arturo as her husband, Lucia, demented and on the brink of death, sings "At last I am yours," which is of course both tragic and ironic because she never really belongs to Edgardo at all.

From August 1887 to May 1888, and following the death of her father in January, "Amy Sherwin's Grand English Opera Company" (managed by her husband of almost ten years, Hugo Görlitz) presented a variety of works by Balfe, Bellini, Donizetti, and Wallace at Melbourne's Prince of Wales Opera House. Görlitz appears astute enough to know that to rob the "Tasmanian Nightingale" of her "Tasmanian-ness" was a gross error in judgement. "Amy Görlitz" would not have had quite the same ring to it, and would almost certainly have sounded the symbolic death knell for the "Tasmanian Nightingale"; a death Hugo Görlitz apparently understood was not in anyone's best interests. Therefore, it was Amy Sherwin's "Grand English Opera

Company"—and not "Amy Görlitz's"—that toured Australia as an operatic enterprise and included Armes Beaumont and others in its ranks.

Amy's international experience by 1888 was impressive. She had toured New Zealand with the Italian Opera Company; debuted at San Francisco's Grand Opera House in the part of Violetta in Verdi's *La Traviata* (1853) in May 1879; played the part of Josephine (by that time made famous by fellow Tasmanian Emma Howson) in *HMS Pinafore* again at San Francisco's Grand Opera House; and had given a concert at New York's Steinway Hall with Adolphe Fischer in March 1880. But in Melbourne, even despite her global success, Amy's orchestra of 30 was not enough to match the ensemble of 40 supporting Nellie Stewart, and her chorus of 60 was again upstaged by the 90-strong voices that aided Stewart. The disgruntled, and apparently unpaid, orchestra further frustrated Amy's production of Gounod's *Faust* during the 1888 season in Melbourne. Amy did, however, give two successful farewell concerts before touring Asia (1889), Africa (1894) and London. She appeared in Hobart again almost a decade later, in 1898 (and once more in 1906), and just as before the publicity of her Tasmanian tour that year similarly concentrated on her state of origin as "Tasmanian." By this time, the epithet "The Tasmanian Nightingale" had become as much a point of orientation as a statement of provenance.

If it is conceivable that epithets specified characteristics of cultural importance, then exploring their semantic limits is essential in understanding the ideological stance colonials imagined women such as Sherwin gestured. Epithets such as "the gifted prima donna of Tasmania,"⁴¹ and others, were powerful, albeit ambiguous, cultural markers. Terms promoting Amy as the "Tasmanian Nightingale" or "the gifted prima donna of Tasmania" were no more original than the cultural function they acquired. Other such "nightingales" and "prima donnas" had come and gone and the cultural function had remained the same.

This is not to suggest that Sherwin's connotative power as the "Tasmanian Nightingale" was not influential, it clearly was. Rather, it implies that Sherwin's popularisation as a personality "fit" the imaginary precepts of epithets evoking exceptional individuals, and that it was a particular set of qualities that constituted the ideological power of such nomenclatures, often beyond the "reality" of "who" individuals such as Amy "really" were.

By the early 1890s, hundreds of people had patronised Amy's concerts and the *Mercury* proclaimed "The noted artiste is undoubtedly a great credit to the colony, well deserving of the appellation of 'The Tasmanian Nightingale'."⁴² By this time, it was in fact difficult to divorce Amy's name from such soubriquets because her subjectivity as a performer was so synonymous with their social currency. Even international journalists took to using the "Tasmanian Nightingale" in Amy's publicity, although Tasmanian usage of the term maintained a distinctly provincial flamboyance as a gesture of "Tasmanian-ness." In many ways, the term bridged the distance between the relative remoteness of Tasmania and offshore geographies. The gap between the colony and the "outside world" perhaps became just a little less significant when geographically disparate journalists reported that "the Tasmanian Nightingale" "is on a visit to her native land."⁴³

Awareness of homeland and heightened community spirit seemed to go hand-in-hand when Sherwin appeared in Tasmania. Amy performed in many venues in Tasmania and the small towns that dotted the island, together with the "closer sense of community feeling" noted by Alec Bagot in his description of Hobart Town during the 1840s⁴⁴ typified the communities that received Sherwin with such enthusiasm in the 1890s. In fact, whenever Amy appeared in Tasmania, she—like many of the other Tasmanian stars appearing before her—always made a point of visiting the smaller townships. She performed in

Zeelan, Queenstown, Campbell Town, Devonport, Burnie, and Latrobe during the 1898 tour.⁴⁵

A correspondent for the *Mercury* in Burnie even claimed Amy as a “Diva.” “The Tasmanian Nightingale was received with deafening cheers on making her first appearance,” reported the journalist, further noting that the “Coast people evidently felt flattered by the Diva’s visit to them, and they came to the concert from all directions in great numbers.”⁴⁶ The appellation was a relatively “new” means of articulating a member of the “operastocracy” in Tasmania at this time, but the fact that “Diva” as a term was only used in a specific part of Tasmania indicates that not only were there at least two opposing cultures experiencing the “Tasmanian context” differently, but that both cultures had by this stage normalised the means of communicating how their experiences of Sherwin differed from one context to the next. This implies that media used geographical markers (“Coast people”) with some degree of specificity in order to differentiate cultural contexts, therefore providing the press with valuable opportunities to articulate cultural relativity.

Hobart’s press did not refer to Sherwin as a “Diva” in 1907, preferring instead to emphasise her close proximity to the community as “the gifted cantatrice” and “the first and only Tasmanian Nightingale.”⁴⁷ This is significant because Hobart’s press did utilise the “Diva” term, but only in reference to the expected arrival into the State of another prima donna by the name of Madame Blanche Arral in 1907.⁴⁸ Arral was a Belgian soprano of reportedly extensive world acclaim. Having earlier debuted in Paris, Arral arrived in Australia in 1906 toting expensive jewels she had received as gifts from the various sovereigns of the countries in which she had performed, such as those given to her by the Tsar of Russia, an Egyptian Khedive, and a Turkish Sultan. Arral immediately “created an absolute furore” in Melbourne with her concerts and lush costumes. Crowds of fans regularly mobbed Blanche upon her arrival

outside the Princess Theatre and by all accounts her reputation as a “Diva” (meaning, in this period, a woman of “phenomenal” operatic skill) was well deserved.

Sherwin’s publicity during her Tasmanian tour of 1907 of course claimed her as the “Tasmanian Nightingale”⁴⁹ and a “gifted cantatrice,” therefore implying that the old epithets retained their cultural import in Hobart, and had not been superseded by terms such as “Diva.” But curiously in this—the final visit of her career—the “Tasmanian Nightingale” appellation was conspicuously underplayed. Perhaps Australians had no reason to label their success stories as blatantly as before since the country had adopted a new political identity in 1901.

Yet even after six years of Federation, “Australia” as a “Nation” was still a relatively embryonic concept. In fact, it is worth noting that the oft-coined term “the Tasmanian Nightingale” only gains stronger currency as a source of meaning in relation to Sherwin once it was announced that she was launching a project to nurture “Rising Tasmanian Nightingales.” The “novel experience” promised by the *Mercury* on 8 January 1907 involved a series of concerts intended to create opportunities for “budding singers” to perform together with Sherwin and her company.⁵⁰ Gold and silver medals were awarded to the most promising young female and male singers, and it was decided that Miss Lucie Atkin, a local Launceston girl, was to be crowned the winner with 162 votes. So although Sherwin was, at least in this phase of her symbolic visibility, fading as “the Tasmanian Nightingale,” the project to nurture “Rising Tasmanian Nightingales” ensured the epithet retained an important measure of cultural utility (and relativity to Sherwin) throughout the early twentieth century.



Amy Sherwin as she appeared in the *Tasmanian Mail*, 2 October 1897.

Amy Sherwin retired from the stage only a year later and settled in England to teach singing. She survived World War I, but experienced crippling financial hardships during the depression. In 1934, the Lord Mayor of Hobart, J. J. Wignall informed Tasmanians of Sherwin's "straitened circumstances"⁵¹ and urged the community to mobilise in support. The news had come from reasonably high in the political infrastructure; "I have been notified through the Premier's Office," wrote Wignall to the *Mercury*, "that the acting High Commissioner for Australia cables that Madame Amy Sherwin is in extremely straitened circumstances in London."⁵²

Resurrecting "the Tasmanian Nightingale" honourific achieved the desired effect of mustering up interest in rallying to her aid. If there was one time that the woman the Launceston *Examiner* once claimed as "our Tasmanian Queen of Song"⁵³ was in dire need of "re-claiming," it was in the early months of 1934. Yet, the organised efforts to raise money achieved only modest results. Perhaps it was Tasmania's distance from Sherwin—who had for the better part of the last thirty years lived in England—or simply that "locals" no longer knew who she was that laboured the process of raising funds. A span of some three decades and a distance of many hundreds of miles had perhaps made the task of relating to Sherwin as "local" almost impossible.

Even though Amy was so successful that she earned worldwide acclaim as "the greatest soprano of the age,"⁵⁴ the fact that the end of her career was characterised by virtual poverty and isolation seems a sad conclusion. She died poor and alone in a London nursing home on 20 September 1935 at the age of 80. Despite the effort to raise funds for her, it was probably too little too late. Amy's ineligibility to receive a pension probably accounted for the overdue rent and taxes media reports claimed threatened her, and in addition, Judith Bowler reports that Amy was further burdened financially because she was then supporting her invalid daughter, Jeanette (born in 1894).⁵⁵

In the summary of Amy's career published a year before she died, the Mayor of Hobart stated: "This lady, a native of the State, was for many years a famous prima donna known as 'The Tasmanian Nightingale'. Nearly half a century ago she probably did more to make the name of Tasmania known to the world at large than any other single individual or organization."⁵⁶ Even then, the State's press was loyal to the practice of producing a text that differentiated "the Tasmanian" cultural experience of Amy Sherwin from that of the rest of the world.

Nowadays, Tasmanians are again erecting visible signs recognising Amy Sherwin's state of origin as a home grown star. She was recently included in an honour roll of notable Tasmanian women and those participating in Hobart's history walk will now see her name mentioned. More public, however, was the unveiling of a plaque on the façade of the building formally known as Del Sarte's Concert rooms, located at the corner of Harrington and Davey streets, on 8 August 2005. The Minister for Women Tasmania, the Hon. Paula Wriedt M.H.A., officiated at the highly orchestrated tribute replicating many of the same ceremonial gestures offered on the original occasion, when, in 1974, the Hon. B. K. Miller M. L. C. revealed a similar commemorative inscription honouring Sherwin's fame.

One wonders, however, whether in another thirty years or so, the current gesture might fall victim to a similar fate as that of its predecessor. The first testimonial had lost all currency over time and eventually disappeared as the building, now occupied by a law firm, itself lost all significance as the venue in which Sherwin had once made her amateur debut. The desire to erect a substitute for the original plaque was probably also inspired in part by the launch, in November 2004, of a book called *Heroes of the Huon* in which Sherwin, alongside twenty other personalities from the area, was featured.

True to tradition, the *Mercury* was there to record the plaque's unveiling, just as it had thirty years earlier, in 1974.⁵⁷ How fitting that present on the second occasion was Noreen La Motte, the actress who featured in an early A.B.C television production of Amy Sherwin's life, as well as two of Amy's great-great nieces, Sue McDougall and Judith Bowler, the latter of course being the author of *Amy Sherwin; the Tasmanian Nightingale*. The image that accompanied the *Mercury's* article of these smiling silver-haired women suggests that although cultural symbols like the plaque to Amy Sherwin invariably fall in and out of favour, they are perpetually resurrected as the cultural memories of other generations recall the stars of long ago. Judith Bowler's claim at the event that "It is lovely to see her being remembered," was apt, if not ironic, considering that Sherwin was in fact being re-remembered.

"The Tasmanian Nightingale" and other such nomenclatures were (and perhaps still are) illocutionary acts that attempted to "call into being"⁵⁸ something unique to Tasmania. The social utility of such terms were ideologically valuable as a means of linking extraordinary individuals to cultural memory and the everyday lives of ordinary people. Similarly, they attempted to inspire the futurity of a discursive agenda formalised in earlier decades. The "Tasmanian Nightingale" claim of the early twentieth century was a much more sophisticated version of the claim in 1854 that Marie Carandini was "Tasmania's Nightingale." We can see how over time such locutions characterised a consistent trend in ideologies of identity that maintained a continuity of form, and one can track this evolving sophistication to changing attitudes to "the force such utterances seek to apply to their discursive situation."⁵⁹ Part of Sherwin's appeal as the "Tasmanian Nightingale" was perhaps the fact that the epithet was more "forceful" as a statement of state of origin considering she was, unlike Marie Carandini, Tasmanian-born.

Historically, we have seen that while the island's journalists hailed Carandini as as "Tasmania's Nightingale" in the 1850s, Amy Sherwin was probably the last "Tasmanian Nightingale" of the nineteenth century. But one of the most important aspects of such epithets, aside from their function to call into being particular versions of *self* and *selfhood*, was the fact that these utterances relied on women to bring to mind specific constructions of identity and place. Exemplified in the gendered characteristic of such epithets is the fact that without the ideological belief that the "feminine" bird song is somehow sweeter, the "Tasmanian Nightingale" loses all currency as an externalised yet specific and idiosyncratic gesture of *self*: of state of origin, of "Tasmanian-ness."

Amy was an important figure of "localisation," even at the time of her death in the 1930s. By then, the meaning of "Tasmanian-ness" and indeed "Australian-ness" was being "said" with other words used by other people in other parts of the world in many different ways. It is perhaps worth remembering that claims to emphasise Amy's relativity to Tasmania based on her localised meaning came at a time when the world was "calling into being" other versions of "Australian" identity and other narratives of "place." For instance, the propaganda of "Tasmanian-ness" promoted by Merle Oberon's publicists in Hollywood "called into being" a version of "Tasmanian-ness" imagined as a removed and faraway island that had introduced into contemporary imagery an icon of an exotic and altogether distant "place."

Conclusion:

Women, Identity and Actresses' Social Power

*"Tasmania had done much for music.
The climate had produced very many beautiful voices."*

Amy Sherwin, 1907¹

How have the stories narrated (or perhaps "performed") throughout this thesis informed an understanding of "Tasmanian-ness" and theatre actresses' social power? Setting out, as I did, with the objective to research, as accurately as possible, the "real" events of a number of theatre women's lives in an effort to explore how these were made meaningful within the Tasmanian and Australian "contexts" was, in hindsight, a rather ambitious endeavour. In the course of this enquiry I have needed to critique my own performative acts—the telling of stories, the construction of "meaning," and the "doing things with words"—while simultaneously negotiating the desire to "claim" these women as "Tasmanian" as eagerly as the State's print culture has traditionally done. What I have "read" into the publicity of these women was, to borrow from Graeme Turner, an act of "cultural specificity": not simply of "Australian-ness," but also of "Tasmanian-ness."

Reviews such as those I have considered throughout the thesis do indicate that the Australian-ness "of Australian texts lives in the recurring principles of organisation and selection as applied to the universal narrative structures."² This idea appealed to me because I could take it a step further. What interested me was, in essence, the notion that just as Australians communicate specific aspects of culture, of "Australian-ness," through narrative conventions and story-telling, so too do Tasmanians communicate "Tasmanian-ness" in a similar way. But of course, the simplicity of this idea

belied a more complex problem. Even during the course of the research it was obvious to me that I was treading a fine line between constructing a narrative of my own “cultural inventory of myths”³ as well as creating the “associations and . . . the meanings which they support.”⁴ And if this was true, then was I in fact recreating the very “struggle” with “social and discursive abjection” that Veronica Kelly has noted of the colonials?

Perhaps the most salient point to consider when addressing this question is the fact that cultures do typically recruit “personalities,” in particular women, in the construction of meaning and identity. Historically, it is clear that the “sources of belonging,” as noted by Miriam Dixson, retain significance as crucibles in which to construct and popularise highly visible markers of identity. The publicity of the women discussed in the course of this thesis evidence that they were crucial “sources of belonging” to colonial society. Of course, their visibility relied on notions of women’s “otherness,” but the fact that they were idealised, promoted as prototypes, and obviously promoted as archetypes reflecting notions of community value, suggests that some women, specifically some theatre women, retained a far greater social power than at first thought.

With this recognition has come a certain freedom, the knowledge that yes, performing identity is continual and cultural, and by extension, clearly necessary. The fact that modern-day Tasmanian celebrities experience a similar emphasis on homeland as the nineteenth century women I have examined here, lends some truth to the assertion that this “performance” is somehow central to articulating “Tasmanian-ness,” just as it is necessary to calling into being other versions of collective and individual *self*-hood. One need only consider Amali Ward’s *Australian Idol* claim that she aimed “To prove to mainlanders that Tasmania is not just about incest”⁵ to realise that, not only do Tasmanians experience “the Australian context” differently, but that a rising generation of

young Tasmanians experience this “otherness” of place and subjectivity as a real, and somewhat troubling, cultural phenomenon.

Cultural boundaries exist here that are based on geography but not unaffected by history. The State’s relationship with mainland press culture as one traditionally of tension and negation has clearly influenced the “shared cultural paradigms” that have been “established, developed and manifested.”⁶ From the very beginnings of professional theatre in Tasmania in 1833, to the generation of publicity about modern-day actresses such as Essie Davis, it is clear that native actresses have been fundamental to a lexis that communicated culturally specific meaning. Sometimes competing press cultures normalised ways of communicating uniformity. The shared references to Emma Howson as “the Australian prima donna,” or Lucy Chambers, Hattie Shepparde, Rosina and Lizzie Carandini, and Amy Sherwin as “natives,” for instance, does suggest that conventions in narratives existed, but also that these promoted a unique experience of such stars as a measure of cultural difference.

Yet, coming as I must to a conventional point in this narrative called a “conclusion” is a thorny business. Emerging time and again within my analysis is the fact that cultural narratives are, by definition, forever revised, modified, updated, and re-created. In essence, there is no finale, no tight ending, and no definitive termination. More narratives of meaning will inevitably appear to continue to recalibrate and challenge theoretical approaches to deciphering what is culturally logical, and this resistance to conclusion is part of the appeal of academic scholarship. Being liberated from ending this thesis in a conventional sense means that finality is somehow foreclosed upon. Someone elsewhere will do as I have done; look to find meaning. And perhaps they might, as I have, realise that historical artefacts of narrativity attract reconsideration long after they are first propagated, and that they are therefore valuable as a means of taking up the questions of performing meaning and identity that scholars like

Veronica Kelly, Graeme Turner, Miriam Dixon, Erin Striff, Marvin Carlson, and others have proposed. What was the *Mercury's* claim in 1934 that "Nearly half a century ago," Amy Sherwin "probably did more to make the name of Tasmania known to the world at large than any other single individual or organization"⁷ if not the invitation to reconsider her cultural meaning long after the statement was first printed? Such declarations have no specific shelf life, rather their enduring appeal is sustained by their ability to entice and invite review.

It is this invitation to take another look that makes possible the suggestion that the "very many beautiful voices"⁸ that Amy Sherwin credited as being produced in Tasmania was as much as statement of the cultural value of "Tasmanian-ness" as it was "saying" that the State experienced the Australian context differently. It was the specificity of the Tasmanian place that had "done much for music," because for Sherwin, it was precisely because the island's "climate" was not the same as that on the mainland that the production of something idiosyncratic and beautiful was entirely possible.

The women under analysis during the course of this thesis did live outside of their media constructions, but only these artefacts remain as textual traces of their influence. Simply, all that is available to me is the taking up of this "otherness" in the telling of their stories. Yet I want to set aside for a moment the questions of why, and for whom, these women were objectified as "the other" to instead recount their respective achievements as influential and "serious historical subjects."⁹ All too often, the many analytical questions that must accompany an engagement of this kind can overshadow their significance as women.

An impressive catalogue of important domestic and international "firsts" reflects the absolute cultural influence of this vibrant collection of actresses. Internationally, Lucy Chambers was the first Australian trained singer to appear at the Pergola Opera House in Florence in 1864 (as Azucena in *Il*

Trovatore), and was probably the first Australian trained singer to appear at La Scala in 1865.¹⁰ In fact, she was also arguably the first Australian opera singer to be offered engagements to appear at opera houses in Barcelona and Vienna.¹¹ Emma Howson created the role of Josephine in Gilbert and Sullivan's *HMS Pinafore* in London in 1878, and the *Launceston Examiner* claimed her as "the first prima donna born in Australia that has appeared on the London stage."¹² Not only that, Emma also achieved significant acclaim as "the original Bettina in 'The Mascot'" in New York¹³ and is likely to be one of the first Australian trained singers to perform at London's Alexandra Palace in the three years after the original theatre was devastated by fire and rebuilt in 1873.¹⁴ And only two years after Emma's creation of Josephine in London, Amy Sherwin created the part of Marguerite in Berlioz's *Faust* in New York in 1880,¹⁵ although she was most likely the first Australian trained singer to appear as Josephine (in *HMS Pinafore*) in America when she made her debut at San Francisco's Grand Opera House in July 1879.

Many of the women discussed in this thesis were also responsible for Australian "firsts" domestically. Some of the stage actresses examined introduced many never before seen plays and songs to theatre-goers. These works included Tasmanian premieres courtesy of Anne Clarke, such as Weber's *Die Freischütz*¹⁶, Morton's *A Roland for an Oliver*, adaptations of Ainsworth's *The Bell Ringer of St. Paul's*, and Hugo's *Esmeralda*, as well as Australian premieres including Gay's *The Beggar's Opera*, Auber's *Gustavus III*, and a version of *The Marriage of Figaro*. Marie Carandini appeared in scores of premier operatic performances in Australia such as Loder's *The Night Dancers*, Wallace's *Mathilda of Hungary*, Donizetti's *The Daughter of the Regiment* and *Lucrezia Borgia*, Bellini's *Norma*, Verdi's *Ernani* and many more.

Of the plays, Eleanor Goddard appeared in the name part of Theodore Martin's *Adrienne Le Couvreur, the French Actress* (1852) "for the first time in Van

Diemen's Land"¹⁷ for her benefit, and on the same bill was a version of Dion Boucicault's *The Corsican Brothers*¹⁸ (1852) again for what the *Courier* claimed was "for the first time in this colony."¹⁹ James White's *Feudal Times* was also promoted by the *Mercury* as "being the first time it has been produced in this colony"²⁰ and Goddard appeared in two Shakespearean plays "not represented here before – amongst them Henry the VIII and the Winters Tale."²¹ It is also probable that she introduced Milman's tragedy called *Fazio*. What also makes Goddard a stand out, apart from the catalogue of theatrical debuts, is the fact that she always billed herself as "Miss Goddard" and took steps to ensure her public visibility was as only an actress and not her husband's wife.

One year later, Anna Maria Quinn appeared in *Oliver Twist* "for the first time in this colony . . . (dramatized from Charles Dickens' celebrated work)" in 1856,²² and it is important to note that the piece itself was adapted in Australia by Frank Fowler. Later, Emilia Don singled herself out as the only actress of the day to have her version of Mary Elizabeth Braddon's *Lady Audley's Secret* (1861) personally endorsed by Braddon herself.²³ She was probably one of the first women to appear in a play in Australia that was endorsed by the original author and of which the actress claiming such a right also retained copyright. In fact, Don appeared in a number of plays new to Tasmanians, such as Alfred Wigan's farce, *The First Night* (in February 1862)²⁴ and she presented H. J. Byron's burlesque of *The Colleen Bawn* in what the *Mercury* reported was "for the first time in the colony"²⁵ in 1865. Her influence was such that a local poet, Howard Anstead (from Oatlands) penned a poem in her honour called *The Mayflower*, and all present in the audience received a complimentary printed and illustrated copy of the poem at one of her performances. Later, in 1870, the *Mercury* reported after Marie Duret's presentation of *After Dark* that it was the first time the play had ever appeared at the Theatre Royal.²⁶

Docy and Maggie Stewart appeared in what the *Age* reported was the Australian premiere of Morton's farce *Master Jones's Birthday* in 1869, but Docy performed original musical compositions written by William Akhurst including "Beautiful Swells" (from *King Arthur, or, Launcelot the Loose*) and "My dear girls she's a pal of mine" (from *The Siege of Troy*) both with Marion Dunn. Other original works to be performed by Tasmanian-born stage women were Issac Nathan's *The Winged Fate* for Clelia Howson, in 1861, and Fanny Carandini's version of "The Murmur of the Shell,"²⁷ written for her by the respected poet and musician Caroline Norton (1808 - 1877), granddaughter of the famous playwright Richard Brinsley Sheridan. And, in the next decade, Lucy Chambers was part of a company whose production of *Aida* was billed as having been "produced for the first time in Hobart Town"²⁸ in 1878. Later still, when Rosina appeared at the 165th concert of the Royal Metropolitan Liedertafel at Melbourne's town hall on 4 September 1893, she performed a number of solos including Hope Temple's "Fond Heart" and "Farewell," and Ciro Pinsuti's "Sleep On, Dear Love," with what the *Age* decided was "all her customary success."²⁹ Hope Temple's compositions were interesting choices, not only for the fact that Temple was actually Dotie Davies (1859-1938), an Irish-born composer who had begun writing sentimental songs at the age of 14, but because Rosina's selection brought Australian audiences yet more examples of the musical works of women composers.

These were remarkable achievements on the part of both Tasmanian-born actresses and non-domestic women appearing in the State, and therefore deserve due recognition, not only in the catalogues of Tasmanian scholarship, but also in the greater picture of Australian and feminist cultural historiography. The fact that many of the actresses discussed in this thesis either performed material works written by women for women, or had entirely new material works written exclusively for them, must go some way towards

changing the perception that colonial women had little or no influence in theatre and aesthetics, or played only a minor role in influencing trends in Australian popular culture throughout the nineteenth century. The thesis has argued that this was not the case for many stage women, and that such generalisations only continue to marginalise colonial women generally and stage actresses specifically as proactive cultural influences and serious historical agents.

The fact that Helen Mackenzie was only nine years old should not exclude her from any discussion concerned with Australian feminism, as tenuous as that might sound. Granted, her career may not have matched the genius of her predecessor, the six-year-old American prodigy Anna Maria Quinn, and the fact that she was so young might on the surface marginalise her as a valuable contribution to colonial culture. But her regular promotion as “home grown,” and the fact that she attained public visibility in the cultural consciousness as “The Young Tasmanian Prodigy,”³⁰ the “Tasmanian prodigy,”³¹ and Tasmania’s “little countrywoman”³² alone implies that she was a very important prototype in affirming a credible picture of Tasmanian *place* and *identity* in colonial culture. In fact, one need only consider that one of the first references to celebrity in this country appeared in testimonials to Quinn’s presence in Tasmania to understand that the epithets attributed to Mackenzie were much more than simply “puff.” Not only can these be regarded as very specifically ideological markers of Tasmanian identity, they also attest to the social power of the female star, even those less than ten years old, in frontier narratives of cultural meaning-making.

To suggest that, as some scholars have, “women have only recently begun to influence the artistic and aesthetic values of theatre and become the central subjects of plays,”³³ seriously underestimates the power of many nineteenth century professional women to influence artefacts of popular culture. Women such as Rosina Carandini and Amy Sherwin, who each formed their

own touring ensembles, had a significant impact upon the “aesthetic and artistic values of theatre” by contributing their own creative visions to the material works they presented. And Hattie Shepparde shows that it was possible for many women to influence dramaturgical styles in a personal and idiosyncratic way. Her power in abnegation, like that of Clelia Howson, commonly caught the attention of critics because her interpretations were usually of “such perfect completeness,” that critics found it “difficult to believe” some parts were “not written for her.”³⁴

Generalisations concerning women’s artistic and aesthetic influence evidence that some modern-day historians fail to appreciate that, in the colonial era particularly, sometimes the unique gesture of a hand, the turn of a head, or a myriad of other individual performative gestures had the power to change conventional approaches to styles, and therefore influence trends in theatre. Based on the evidence of their reviews—such as Emma Howson’s “deep and lasting impression”³⁵ or the “dramatic feeling”³⁶ of Lucy Chambers—stage actresses exercised much more control over aspects of theatre and aesthetics than some historiographies would have us believe. This speaks to how contemporary scholars write contemporary historiographies about women and how the common tendency to homogenise women within overarching paradigms limits perceptions of their social authority. Changing damaging misconceptions about colonial theatre women’s influence is only possible if writers of women’s histories adopt a perspective that is more “peculiar,” to borrow nineteenth century parlance, so as to direct attention to individual actresses, because, as this thesis shows, it is likely that women of remarkable social power will continue to emerge.

Theatre actresses’ achievements and influence over cultural phenomena are invaluable in re-assessing the historiographies of Tasmanian theatre culture and Australian feminism. Despite the relative isolation of the island, its limited

play-going population, and periods of economic instability, it did thrive sufficiently to produce an important collection of “home grown” theatre women. And while there are good grounds for the traditional argument that Tasmania’s theatrical culture was largely volatile and vulnerable to cultural flux,³⁷ the idea that those aspects did in fact contribute to a rich and lively profession in which women excelled is worth considering. There was a reason why colonial media claimed the Carandini family generally as doing “such valuable work in educating Australia up to a high standard of musical appreciation.”³⁸ Their significance in “laying the foundation of a cult which has resulted in the myriad societies and circles which are to be found in every part of the colonies,”³⁹ was a legacy that began in Tasmania. That the State was the launching pad for many of the most successful players of the era suggests Marie Carandini understood something about Tasmanian theatre culture that modern-day historians may have overlooked. After all, at least two of Marie’s daughters debuted in Hobart.

Tasmanian theatre culture offered women a valuable means of experience and experimentation. This valuable context created reputations perhaps because *it was a context of “Australian-ness” but not “the Australian context.”* Because it is possible to argue, based on the evidence, that Tasmanians did not appear to experience “Australian contexts” as a uniform encounter, it is also possible to argue that women generally experienced Australian “cultures” in their own unique way. Anne Clarke is only one of many women discussed throughout this thesis representing a valuable case in point. Whether it was because she was a woman, or perhaps even despite the fact that she was a woman, her experience of Tasmanian culture during the mid 1830s to the late 1840s was such that it afforded her unique opportunities to affect cultural trends. She influenced the development of theatre and aesthetics, and even encouraged the direct access of many women in her community to a

professional career. In fact, I believe the entrepreneur George Coppin emulated on the mainland many of the innovative approaches to theatre and management Anne Clarke had established in Tasmania.

In the encounters of these figures both in Tasmania and on the mainland is evidence that many contexts of "Australian-ness" existed and thrived. Also evident is the fact that women not only appeared to experience cultural domains differently, but also that women were a crucial means for disparate communities to interpret cultural contexts. It is clear that stage women were integral to establishing textual practices that communicated difference, and part of my objective in exploring the impact of this collection of women in Tasmania has been to offer a case study of processes of "doing things with words" that is actually patent in "the Australia context" as a macro phenomenon. If it is valid to suggest, as I have throughout this thesis, that much of the "claiming" for ownership that was manifest in Tasmanian press culture in relation to these women was also observable in "mainland" press culture, then clearly there are larger issues here about "saying things with words" (at a national level) that deserve further attention.

Based on the evidence I have offered, it is valid to propose that women were significant to the "claiming" practices that are patent as a more global phenomenon characteristic of western civilisation. The fact that women were important to stabilising understandings of "Tasmanian-ness" and locutions of "Australian-ness" overseas illustrates that colonials treated seriously the agenda of hailing successful women in the promotion and representation of collective identity offshore. Yet the fact that European journalists appear to have been equally concerned with monitoring the utility of their exemplars as was the Australian press also suggests that not only were textual practices reciprocal, but that the role of women in the function of prototypes of identity were reasonably uniform. And while this does imply that women contributed

greatly to such articulations of place, homeland, and identity, it does not explain why women were important in such practices.

It is likely that women added greater currency to cultural exemplars, particularly if these were popularised as a way of reconciling the reality of Australia's violent history, precisely because they were women. Women's femininity obviously lent a "softer" edge to representations of "Australian-ness" when compared to the "convict taint" which generally attested to how the conquering practices of men had defined Australian's social development since the early days of settlement. The world of the actresses considered in this thesis was one in which men significantly out-numbered women, particularly in the 1850s. This is why colonial publications were happy to note an increased number of women in the audiences attending performances by Anna Maria Quinn (and others). Within such a world it is not surprising to find that women were allotted gendered cultural roles, particularly those ensuring a sense of morality, in a society dominated by men. What is perhaps surprising is the extent to which, as this thesis shows, the popularisation of identity prototypes was also gendered to favour women. It is true that stage actresses most likely blurred all sorts of social codes concerning women, particularly as theatres were typically regarded as sites of moral corruption (or at least to some represented the potential for ethical collapse). Women on public display at a time when many men were keen to find an available woman for a wife was, no doubt, the source of much consternation for both male audience members and actresses themselves. Combine the diversity of theatrical genres into the mix and the potential for social confusion was even greater. One need only look to "sensation" plays dealing with "racy" characters, naughty liaisons and sexual infidelity, or operas concentrating on themes of abortion or incest, to understand how high was the potential for such tropes to trigger social unease within the complex gender conditions of a frontier society.

Lady Emilia Don is a wonderful case in point. Don's publicity indicates that she was shrewd, pragmatic, and business-minded. Importantly, her theatrical reviews reveal that she understood her power as an attractive, and yes, somewhat privileged woman. Her characterisation of the Earl of Leicester in William Brough's one act comic burlesque called *Kenilworth* (1857) was perhaps her most popular and "racy" role. Singing as she always did "The Garter Song" was not only the highlight of the piece, but in it, she reportedly set the pulses of many of her male admirers racing. "Lady Don," claimed one review, "as the stately courtier in doublet and hose, shattered the hearts of the jeunesse doree, and her song, 'The Countess's Garter,' became the rage at musical parties."⁴⁰ It was a provocative role considering that Don wore a costume that showed off stocking-clad legs from mid thigh to ankle. The *Mercury* on 8 May 1865 reported that it was "the cleverest parody in the burlesque"⁴¹ while on 9 May, it observed that it had "produced thunders of applause" from the audience. The *Mercury* also wondered of one of her earlier appearances "if Lady Don was not a far more graceful and fascinating Leicester than the one known to Elizabeth's court."⁴²

It is important to bear in mind that not only did Emilia challenge gender stereotypes, but also that her cultural contributions were scientific in nature. On the evening of 24 May 1865, the magnesium light used throughout the performance to illuminate pictorial scenes from plays such as Dorothy's Farm in the drama *Kathleen Mavourneen* and the last scene of *Perseus and Andromeda* was described by the *Mercury* the following day as "the first time the new magnesium light had been exhibited in Tasmania, and it is certainly one of the greatest triumphs of modern science."⁴³ Audiences were familiar with gas lighting, but the magnesium light was a significant innovation.

That women played such a diverse repertoire of parts, often representing femininity in its most problematic light, makes the fact that no real backlash

occurred as remarkable as the cultural authority many theatre women sustained as public figures. The bud of ethical friction was certainly there, particularly when considering the potential of theatre women as social scapegoats for the morally sensitive. On the one hand, there were instances which suggest that, for some Victorians, there was an anxiety about stage women representing the playthings of a public eager for spectacle, and of course concerns about theatre's reputation as an unpleasant space breeding moral decline and "vulgarity." Yet on the other hand is the extent to which the stories of the women examined in this thesis give good grounds to question how widespread such beliefs really were, and indeed, whether the civic clout of those tenets was really so absolute as to pose dominant obstacles to women's cultural activity in the nineteenth century.

Coupling a consideration of these issues of place, gender and culture with the "respectable" social position of theatre women throughout the nineteenth century, does tell us something very important about how gender relationships were negotiated in the colonial era. This is particularly evident if we consider that it was out of these very conditions—a patriarchal, male-dominated colonial community—that theatre women achieved high visibility as social agents conceptualising and popularising notions of nationality and identity. Certainly, the potential for social marginalisation was there, but the fact that it was actually theatre women who achieved such significant visibility as cultural prototypes does go some way in de-popularising the conventional myth—specifically that of an oppressive backdrop—that typically situates women as passive figures in the early years of Australian cultural life.

It is of course logical that media played an integral role in mediating the visibility of stage women. Sometimes subtle differences in representation suggest that the social power of non-domestic, compared to domestic actresses was dissimilar. If we compare off-shore women such as Lola Montes, Mary

Provost, Avonia Jones, and others, with representations of “native” actresses, we see a very different kind of engagement with colonial play-going communities emerge, as well as the production of different receptive artefacts that trace the idiosyncratic culture of journalism. On the one hand, the often direct and sometimes punitive engagement with audiences of some women characterised shifting trends in audience behaviour and response. On the other, were their skills in “overawing” audiences with a kind of extraordinary, almost mesmerising, dramatic flair, particularly in so-called “unsettled localities.”

Further, creating a veneer between life and art was an ideological agenda not possible without non-domestic theatre actresses such as Montes, Provost, Jones, and even actresses such as Emilia Don and Marie Duret. These figures, and others, did in many respects fulfil an important discursive function in shifting ideological anxieties about problematic representations of womanhood elsewhere. Never were their reputations as respected actresses compromised in this process, but rather, their dramatic presentations in roles such as *La Sonnambula*, *Lucrezia Borgia*, *Medea*, *Bride of Lammermoor* (the work inspiring Donizetti’s opera) and many others were crucial in perhaps distracting concerns away from “real” life women to instead emphasise the dramatic parameters of the roles they played. This is why the Melbourne *Punch* could safely observe of a presentation at one of Don’s performances that “Women who ought to have shrieked, fainted, or feinted in some sort of way, were all fixed in attention,”⁴⁴ there was a division between life and art that made being “utterly lost in rapturous admiration” not only permissible, but entirely possible.

The understandings of identity that have enlightened this thesis rely on the outward behaviours of *performing* cultural identity as much as the interconnectedness of relationships between women, cultures and cultural products. There was much more to charges of “Vandemonian abuse,”⁴⁵ claims of “Yankee rowdyism”⁴⁶ in Tasmanian Parliament, quips that “Felony is

honorable in Tasmania,"⁴⁷ or social cautions that "Victorians who may visit Tasmania upon matrimonial excursions had better look out,"⁴⁸ than simply a conflict between "us" (mainland culture) and "them" (Tasmanian culture). It was also a conflict of *self*-hood. As John Frow writes: "the division between 'us' and 'them' operates as a mirror image — an inversion that tells us only what we want to know about ourselves."⁴⁹

Ironically, John Frow's observation recalls what colonials understood was the function of drama: "A mirror wherein all may see: What bad men are—What good men ought to be."⁵⁰ And this is precisely my point. There were reasons why so many "good women" were "claimed" in the discursive practices about place, culture, and identity throughout the nineteenth century. Because we know that colonials understood drama as a social gauge magnifying cultural realities (or the ruptures between reality and optimism), we know by extension that envisioning some kind of "otherness" (for instance, "bad men" and "good men") was necessary in finding "sources of belonging" that "performed" cultural ideals of identity. What better way to juxtapose what was "bad" than by constructing highly feminised versions of goodness; such as the "Tasmanian Nightingale," the "New Prima Donna" or "Australia's Queen of Song"?

But of course, there is much more to the textual logic of popularising versions of identity than simply the representation of opposites. Evident in this construction of "otherness" are multitudes of narrative processes, but the two I have been most concerned with are each historical. One is the narrative of a set of women whose movements within colonial culture had long-lasting effects. Another has been concerned with how colonial media both exchanged and responded to ideologies of identification based on the "otherness" of these women. Both of these narrative strains converge to come to the very heart of

how significant women were, and continue to be, in behavioural modes of cultural identity *as performance*.

This thesis has proposed that this constant posturing is a question of how colonials understood performative action, if by this we mean sustained by, as Don Edgar and others have proposed of Max Weber, “a making sense of reality—[where] we try and put ourselves in the place of others and to imagine their thoughts, reasons and intentions as they are reflected in their actions.”⁵¹ Colonial journalists, ironically overwhelmingly male, were concerned with this “putting of themselves” into other, “feminine” versions of identity as a way of contemplating the consequences of social action. This is of vital significance not only in revising an understanding of the role of theatre women in colonial culture, but also in revealing the influential role of these women in the textual practices of men.

That men imagined specifically feminine prototypes when considering social action and imagining archetypes of nationality tells us something very important about what I believe to be a colonial male perspective of the power of women previously overlooked by modern-day historians and feminists. That it was women figuring in the ways men represented visions of cultural success both domestically and offshore must surely speak to the underlying social limits felt by some men. Fashioning women as agents of nationality offered hegemonic culture visions of social action that, I believe, some men accepted was unavailable to them. And if this is accurate, and the evidence suggest that it is, then this practice of the “putting of *self*” into other, specifically feminine *selves* reveals that discursive practices of identity are not simply narratives of difference. These are, I believe, insights into how essentially the concept of femininity figures in narrativity, particularly masculine narrativity, and how men imagined that women retained a social power to move, even

metaphorically, within culture that indicates a conviction that the feminine *self* was, and still is, somehow more emancipated as an agent of social action.

I realise that this argument flies in the face of most historiographies, and most schools of feminist thought, which in fact argue that the opposite is true. My intention is not to question the evidence that suggests many women in the colonial era experienced political and social hardship. Rather, my aim has been to reveal that the power of many theatre women, their reception, their celebrity, their influence in how colonials recorded their own social history, exposes another perspective of gender relations in the period that opens up the debate about nineteenth century women's mobility as a question of ideology.

If I localise this line of reasoning to the Tasmanian "context" it is possible to reveal the underlying macro-phenomena as a broader issue of women's ideological power. If Tasmanian journalists were able to put themselves in the place of the "other" using "feminised" epithets such as; "Tasmania's Nightingale," "the fair and talented daughter of Hobart," "the first and only Tasmanian Nightingale,"⁵² "the gifted prima donna of Tasmania,"⁵³ or the "Tasmanian Nightingale"—and the outcome was an affirmation of social value—then we see in this process other precedents of social performance emerge.

Mainland journalists assumed identical practices in promoting Tasmanian women such as Emma Howson, Lucy Chambers, Amy Sherwin, and many others, as exemplars of nationhood and social action (a practice which is in fact still in existence today in the promotion of Essie Davis and other, "home grown" actresses). "Australia's Queen of Song," the "Australian Prima Donna," the "New Prima Donna," the "Australian cantatrice,"⁵⁴ "our Australian Nightingale,"⁵⁵ "a thoroughly Australian dramatic artist,"⁵⁶ "a lady—a native of Australia,"⁵⁷ "the foremost rank of Australian songstresses,"⁵⁸ and many other such epithets clearly evidence that colonial

media culture believed that self-concept *was* communicable both *in* and *through* theatre and emphasised the primacy of women as symbolic crucibles through which to articulate that ideology as a nation-wide concern.

When the *Age* reported that Lucy Chambers represented proof that Australia was “by no means destitute of musical talent,”⁵⁹ or claimed of Emma Howson that, “Yes, Australia may be proud of this treasure!”⁶⁰ we see evidence of two cultural patterns of textual production, and by extension, manifestations of a social ideology that historians and feminists scholars have so far overlooked. This thesis has consistently confirmed that the theatre women examined were fundamental to the narrative ends of masculine discursivity: to formulating a blueprint of cultural performance at a macro level of Australian narrative culture, and to endorse a sense of cultural certainty, or even epitomise a vision of cultural destiny.

It is important that feminist scholarship recognises that theatre women were integral to colonial culture, and the fact that what colonials chose to “say” about their culture, and the choices available to them in this “doing things with words,” were issues of narrativity traceable directly to stage actresses of the period. And in the here-and-now, evaluating the merits of this proposal is, in the end, always related to how valuable the proposition is as a means of understanding the significance of theatre women such as Marie Carandini, Anne Clarke, Emma Rogers, Jane Young, the Carandini Sisters, Emma and Clelia Howson, Hattie Shepparde, Lucy Chambers, Amy Sherwin and others. It is of course true that we can never really “know” who these women were; only speculate about their cultural utility based on the evidence their culture left behind. But their stories endure as powerful narratives that resist simply “ending” with the finality of a concluding sentence. The ways in which an overwhelmingly male-oriented culture articulated and envisioned its everyday realities does in fact still resonate today in the traditional practice of looking to

actresses as vital to processes of meaning-making. Not only do the actresses studied here make the case that this “crowned and selected band of women” merit greater visibility in chronicles of Australian history and in contemporary feminist scholarship, they serve as timely reminders that the past can often hold a key to understanding existing ways of making meaningful the realities of our present day.

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NOTES

Introduction
Women, Performance, Tasmania

¹ Graeme Turner's focus in *National Fictions* is "not only what an Australian narrative is, but also what it does." Graeme Turner, *National Fiction: Literature, film, and the construction of Australian narrative* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1991) 2.

² Moira Gatens, Emma Grahame, Jan Larbalestier, Sophie Watson and Elizabeth Webby, eds., *Australian Feminism; a companion* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1998) 503.

³ Philip Parsons, ed., *Companion to Australian Theatre* (Sydney: Currency Press, 1995) 146.

⁴ Patricia Clarke, *Pen Portraits; Women writers and journalists in nineteenth century Australia* (North Sydney: Pandora Press, 1988) 163.

⁵ Lynne Spender, ed., *Her Selection; Writings by Nineteenth-Century Australian Women* (Ringwood: Penguin Books Australia Ltd, 1988) 222.

⁶ A. C. F. Halford uses the term "divine Sarah" in a private letter written to a friend in South Africa in 1933. See Harold Love, ed., *The Australian Stage: a documentary history* (Kensington: New South Wales University Press, 1984) 114-115. Ian Bevan attributes the epithet to Oscar Wilde. See Ian Bevan, *The Story of the Theatre Royal* (Sydney: Currency Press, 1993) 80.

⁷ Miriam Dixson, *The Real Matilda; Women and Identity in Australia 1788 to the present*. 3rd ed. (Ringwood: Penguin Books Australia, 1994) 76.

⁸ Ruth Teale, ed., *Colonial Eve; Sources on Women in Australia 1788-1914* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1978) 229.

⁹ In Sydney on 4 June 1789, a company comprised of convict women and men, from "some of the more decent class of prisoners" performed George Farquar's comedy of *The Recruiting Officer* (1706) in honour of his Majesty's the King's birthday. See David

Collins, *An Account of the English Colony in New South Wales*. London: 1804. 319.

Virginia Kirby-Smith, "The Development of Australian Theatre and Drama: 1788-1964," diss., Duke University, 1969, 2a. It was only later, in the late 1820s when Barnett Levey sought permission from the Governor, Ralph Darling, for a license for theatrical performance that a more stringent system regarding convicts and theatre was adopted. Convicts were still involved in dramatic productions, for instance at the Emu Plains compound, although the Colonial Secretary, Alexander Macleay, banned these in November 1830. For Levey's first performance in Sydney on 20 August 1829, his license restricted him to concerts and balls only, with a complete ban on theatrical presentations. See Eric Irvin, *Theatre Comes to Australia* (St. Lucia: University of Queensland, 1971) 35-75. Elizabeth Webby reveals of Levey's license that: "When renewed in 1833 the licence additionally prohibited the employment of convicts in the theatre." See Webby, "Convicts and theatre" in Parsons 158.

¹⁰ *Mercury*, 9 May 1865.

¹¹ Marie Burgess, Lady Emilia Don, Clelia Howson, and Anna Maria Quinn are not mentioned in the Currency Press *Companion of Theatre in Australia*. It refers to Emma Howson by name only once, in a citation dedicated to her father on page 287-88, and overlooks the activities of her sibling, Clelia. Significant sketches are offered concerning Anne Clarke, Eliza Thomson (Mrs. Charles Young), and Hattie Shepparde, while only passing asides are offered of Emma Young (later Mrs. G. H. Rogers) and only in relation to her husband and brother on pages 506 & 653. It mentions neither Amy Sherwin nor Lucy Chambers.

¹² *Bell's Life in Sydney*, 14 January 1860.

¹³ *Mercury*, 1 May 1878.

¹⁴ *Mercury*, 8 February 1894.

¹⁵ Dixon 76.

¹⁶ Anne Summers, *Damned Whores and God's Police; the Colonization of Women in Australia* (Ringwood: Penguin Books Ltd, 1975) 267.

¹⁷ *Courier*, 1 November 1848.

¹⁸ *Port Phillip Patriot* via *Courier*, 2 February 1844.

¹⁹ *Melbourne Punch*, 3 July 1856.

²⁰ *Ballarat Times*, 22 April 1857.

²¹ *Age* via *Ballarat Times*, 30 October 1857.

²² *Illustrated Melbourne News*, 9 January 1858.

²³ *Australian Idol*. Contestant Biography (Amali Ward), Australian Idol produced by Grundy Television Pty Limited, a FremantleMedia Company, for Network Ten based on the format owned by FremantleMedia Operations BV and 19TV Limited. © 2004 Grundy Television Pty Limited, Australia and New Zealand. 11 October 2004
<http://au.australianidol.yahoo.com/contestants/amali_ward/index.html>

²⁴ For further reading on “meta-narratives” and “mini-narratives” see Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984).

Chapter One: Setting the Stage – Nineteenth Century Tasmanian Media Culture and Theatre

¹ Elizabeth Webby, “Shakespeare in Australia: The Early Years, c. 1830-50,” *O Brave New World; two centuries of Shakespeare on the Australian stage*, eds. John Golder and Richard Madelaine (Sydney: Currency Press, 2001) 43.

² See Helen Musa’s entry on Cordelia Cameron in Parsons 120.

³ Eric Irvin, *Theatre Comes to Australia* (St. Lucia: University of Queensland, 1971) 196.

⁴ Alec Bagot, *Coppin the Great; Father of Australian Theatre* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1965) 87.

⁵ John Reynolds, *Launceston; History of an Australian City* (South Melbourne: The Macmillan Company of Australia, 1969) 42-43.

⁶ Elizabeth Webby, “From First Settlement to the Gold Rush (1788-1853) Summary of Theatrical Events,” *The Australian Stage: a documentary history*, ed. Harold Love (Kensington: New South Wales University Press, 1984) 2.

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- ⁷ From Nellie Stewart, *Nellie, My Life's Story* (Sydney: John Sands Ltd, 1924). Michael Roe, *A History of the Theatre Royal, Hobart from 1834* (Hobart: Law Society of Tasmania, n.d) 18.
- ⁸ Irvin, *Theatre Comes to Australia* 229.
- ⁹ *True Colonist*, 7 October 1842. Love 33.
- ¹⁰ John Cargher, *Opera and Ballet in Australia* (Melbourne: Cassell Australia, 1977) 4.
- ¹¹ Cargher 10.
- ¹² Cargher 5.
- ¹³ Gustavus Arabin arrived in Hobart in November 1836, and debuted on 23 November the same year. Arabin appears to have married an actress named Frances Mackay, whom he met while in Hobart in 1836. Mackay was at that time with John Meredith's company. In 1842, Frances eloped with another actor, Thomas Spencer Boyd, much to the chagrin of Arabin who commented publicly on the union while in Launceston in September 1842. Boyd was later institutionalised in an asylum after stabbing an actor on stage sometime in July 1845. For further details, see Elizabeth Webby's entry on "Frances MacKay" in Parsons 335.
- ¹⁴ Irvin 196.
- ¹⁵ Launceston *Examiner* via *Age*, 10 September 1869.
- ¹⁶ Reynolds 79.
- ¹⁷ Reynolds 79.
- ¹⁸ Joan Goodrick, *Life in Old Van Diemens Land* (Melbourne: Rigby Limited, 1977) 187.
- ¹⁹ Ken Stewart, "Theatre, Critics and Society," in Love 60.
- ²⁰ *Courier*, 10 March 1837.
- ²¹ Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction; a Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984) 19.
- ²² James Edward Neild (c. 1860s), in Ken Stewart, "Theatre, Critics and Society," Love 58.
- ²³ *Courier*, 21 May 1856.
- ²⁴ Ernest Scott, *A Short History of Australia* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1964) 213.

²⁵ *Mercury*, 10 June 1856.

²⁶ *Mercury*, (Centenary Issue) 5 July 1954, 8.

²⁷ See Gillian Winters' entry on John Davies in Parsons 184.

²⁸ Davies apparently worked for a time with the *Manchester Guardian* in England and *The Englishman* in Calcutta according to the *Mercury*, (Centenary Issue) 5 July 1954, 8 (which also cites his birth date as 10 June 1814 and not 1813 as noted by Gillian Winter).

²⁹ *Mercury*, (Centenary Issue) 5 July 1954, 8.

³⁰ Lurline Stuart's entry on "James Smith" in Parsons 532.

³¹ See Harold Love's entry on "J. E. Neild" in Parsons 397.

³² The *Mercury's* definition of "a successful theatre," printed 4 March 1871

³³ *Mercury*, 4 March 1871.

³⁴ *Mercury*, 4 March 1871.

Chapter Two: Stage Actresses in Tasmania, c. 1835 – 1845

¹ Robert W. Connell, *Gender and Power; Society, the Person and Sexual Politics* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996) 159.

² *Courier*, 10 March 1837.

³ *True Colonist*, 10 March 1837. Love 27.

Anne Clarke

¹ *Courier*, 9 February 1844.

² Alison Gyger, *Civilising the Colonies; Pioneering Opera in Australia* (Sydney: Pellinor, 1999) 38.

³ The Parish of Trinity, county of Buckingham marriage register records that in Hobart on 25 October 1834, Michael Clarke (widower) married "Anne Theresa Remains."

⁴ The afterpiece was David Garrick's *Miss in her Teens* (1747).

⁵ See Parish of Trinity baptismal register, Hobart, in the month of October 1835.

⁶ The Parish of Trinity, County of Buckinghamshire baptismal register (Hobart Town) records that Anne Theresa and Michael Clarke gave birth to a baby daughter, Anne Theresa Clarke, on the 22 September 1835. She was baptised on 11 October 1835. However, the Archives Office of Tasmania "Digger" Tasmanian Pioneer Index 1803-1899 records the baptismal date as 22 September 1835. See registration: 6213/1835, reference: RGD 32.

⁷ See the record of Tasmanian Acts of Parliament (on microfiche) - (*Anno Sexto*), Act 18, *Victoriae Reginae*, Number 5, 663 - 669, State Library of Tasmania.

⁸ And later, yet still at the time of Clarke's tenure as Theatre Royal lessee, a music hall was also granted a license by the government in 1846 under the existing Act.

⁹ *Hobart Town Courier*, 26 January 1844.

¹⁰ *Hobart Town Courier*, 8 March 1844.

¹¹ Anne had earlier appeared as Agnes in the Australian premier of *Die Freischütz* at Sydney's Theatre Royal on 15 September 1838. See Gyger 245.

¹² For more on Tasmanian and/or Australian operatic premieres, see Alison Gyger.

¹³ Anne Clarke discharged Frances Nesbitt (c. 1809 - 1853) from her company in Hobart in 1844. The *Courier* on 9 February reported, "Mrs. Clarke has been compelled to discharge Mr. Nesbitt, he having refused to play on Friday last the character of Macbeth, in which he had been announced." A number of contemporary researchers claim that Nesbitt was an alcoholic with mental instability. These problems might have contributed to his dismissal.

¹⁴ *Mercury*, 19 May 1865.

¹⁵ Roe 13.

Jane Thomson

¹ *Age*, 26 January 1857.

² Katharine Brisbane, *Entertaining Australia: an Illustrated History* (Sydney: Currency Press, 1991) 55.

³ Humphrey Hall and Alfred J. Cripps *Romance of the Sydney Stage by Osric* (Sydney: Currency Press, 1996) 214.

⁴ Brisbane 39.

⁵ Hall and Cripps refer to Charles Young as "Charles Horace Frisbee Young." See Hall and Cripps 214.

⁶ See Roe, *A History of the Theatre Royal, Hobart from 1834* 13.

⁷ See Elizabeth Webby's entry "Mrs. Charles Young," Parsons 654.

⁸ Bagot 90.

⁹ Hall and Cripps 217.

¹⁰ Hal Porter, *Stars of Australian Stage and Screen* (Adelaide: Rigby, 1965) 39.

¹¹ Jane Thomson's marriage register records "Jane Thomson" (not "Elizabeth" or "Liza" or "Elizabeth Jane") as marrying "Charles Young" on 6 June 1845. See parish registry on microfilm for details.

¹² The Archives Office of Tasmania records that Jane Thomson gave birth to a daughter (no name recorded) on 18 November 1846, see The Archives Office of Tasmania "Digger" Tasmanian Pioneer Index 1803-1899, registration: 2080/1846, reference: RGD 33. Charles Young is listed as the child's father. There is no record of the birth of Jane's second daughter, implying that perhaps she was born in Sydney, or that the database does not cite the birth.

¹³ See Edward H. Pask's entry "Ballet," *Currency Companion to Music and Dance in Australia*, eds. John Whiteoak and Aline Scott-Maxwell (Sydney: Currency House, 2003) 70-73.

¹⁴ Hal Porter claims that Charles Young married one "Miss Jones" who later became Mrs Herman Vezin. See Porter 39.

¹⁵ For details, refer to the Trinity Church matrimonial register, Launceston on 6 June 1845. Charles Young's age is recorded as 24, while Jane's is given as 15. The other witness besides Jane's mother Martha was one "Anthony Brain."

¹⁶ *The Battle of Austerlitz* was also known as *The Soldier's Bride*.

¹⁷ The version of Bulwer's *Eugene Aram* staged by Charles and Jane Young in Hobart in March 1849 may have been the W. T. Moncrieff adaptation.

¹⁸ *Hobart Town Courier*, 21 March 1849.

¹⁹ *Age*, 26 January 1857.

²⁰ *Age*, 26 January 1857.

²¹ *Mercury*, 6 March 1857.

²² Brisbane claims Jane Thomson "left for London, without her husband." See Brisbane 55.

²³ Mrs. Young, Mr. J. C Young, Anna and Isabella Young arrived in Launceston aboard the *Queen* on 2 March 1857 (as noted in the *Cornwall Chronicle*, 2 March 1857). I am not sure which child was known as "Dolly."

²⁴ Hal Porter states that Jane played Emilia opposite Brooke at Coppin's Queen Theatre, Melbourne on 26 February 1854. See Porter 42.

²⁵ *Mercury*, 13 March 1857.

²⁶ *Bell's Life in Victoria*, 18 February 1860.

²⁷ Jane's mother, Martha, apparently joined her daughter and husband on their voyage to England. Prior to their departure, Martha can be found supporting actress Mademoiselle Marie Duret at Melbourne's Olympic Theatre on 13 January 1857.

²⁸ Porter 42.

²⁹ Parsons 653.

³⁰ The *Age* also published details of Jane Young's divorce petition. See *Age*, 14 July 1862.

³¹ Evidence is slim concerning Martha's theatre career after leaving Tasmania. She presumably followed Jane and Charles to the mainland (and to England), and appeared with Marie Duret at Melbourne's Olympic in January 1857. In fact, the Melbourne *Herald* (via the *Ballarat Times*, 26 March 1857) reported the following of the Young's departure: "We are quite unaware whether it is the intention of Mr. and Mrs. Young to make a professional appearance in the mother country, but should they contemplate doing so we have little fear of their complete success." Incidentally, the occasion reports that the child prodigy Anna Maria Quinn was their "cabin companion."

³² Porter 39.

³³ Peter L. Berger, *The Social Reality of Religion* (London: Faber & Faber, 1969) 73.

³⁴ Berger 73.

³⁵ *Bell's Life in Sydney*, 19 July 1862.

³⁶ *Age*, 14 July 1862.

³⁷ Graeme Turner, Frances Bonner and David Marshall, *Fame Games; The Production of Celebrity in Australia* (Oakleigh: Cambridge University Press, 2000) 9.

³⁸ *Punch*, 1 July 1858.

³⁹ Janette Gordon-Clark, "'The Progress of the Stars,' Actresses and their Repertoires in Australia from the 1850s to the 1890s," diss., Monash University, 2000, 32.

⁴⁰ *Bell's Life in Sydney*, 26 July 1862.

⁴¹ *Bell's Life in Sydney*, 26 July 1862.

Emma Young

¹ Bagot 90.

² Hall and Cripps 117.

³ One writer observes that a "Miss Young," most likely Emma, danced between the Royal Victoria Theatre Hobart performances of the *Beggar's Opera* and *Love's Livery* in 1842. See Goodrick 173. However, another suggests that Anne Clarke recruited Emma and her brother, Charles, for her company in 1843. See Parsons 653. The truth may lie between the two. Shipping news printed by the Hobart *Courier* on 28 January 1842 list passengers of the *Sydney* (from London) to include Anne and Michael Clarke (as well as a child), Frank, Emma and Frank Howson junior (as well as Frank's brothers Henry and John), "S. Macintosh and child" (most likely Theodosia Stirling and her baby daughter [?]), and Jerome Carandini. The final entry reads; "Emma Young."

⁴ Alison Gyger suggests the production of *Fra Diavolo* on 3 October was an Australian premiere. Gyger 247.

⁵ *Courier*, 10 October 1842.

⁶ Alison Gyger also suggests that the production of *La Sonnambula* on 10 October was another Australian premiere. Gyger 247.

⁷ *Mercury*, 19 February 1872.

⁸ *Mercury*, 19 February 1872.

⁹ *Mercury*, 19 February 1872.

¹⁰ See County of Buckingham marriage register dated 2 March 1844. Charles Young (Emma's brother) witnessed her marriage to George, as did the actress Theodosia Stirling (who was then also appearing with Anne Clarke's company).

¹¹ The Wesleyan Church register for Hobart Town records that little George Herbert Rogers (junior), son of Emma and G. H. Rogers, was baptised on 1 May 1846. Also see The Archives Office of Tasmania "Digger" Tasmanian Pioneer Index 1803-1899, Registration: 2653E/1845, Reference: RGD 32 that records George Herbert junior's birth date as 10 October 1845. The "Digger" Index also records the birth of Emma's second child, as son (no name given) on 26 June 1847. See Registration: 190/1847, Reference: RGD 33.

¹² *Mercury*, 19 February 1872.

¹³ *Theatrical Journal*. Vol. XVIII.—No. 928, Wednesday, 23 September 1857, 298.

¹⁴ A claim also implied by Hal Porter. See Porter 39.

¹⁵ Tracy C. Davis, *Actresses as Working Women: their social identity in Victorian culture* (London: Routledge, 1991) 3.

¹⁶ Irvin 188.

¹⁷ Irvin 188.

¹⁸ *Geelong Advertiser*, 24 June 1848. Love 46.

¹⁹ *Courier*, 7 April 1837.

²⁰ For more information on Henry Melville's *The Bushrangers* (1834) see Elizabeth Webby's entry in Parsons 118.

²¹ For more information on *South Polar Expedition* (1841) see Gillian Winters' entry in Parsons 537.

²² *Mercury*, 4 March 1871.

²³ *Courier*, 23 August 1844.

²⁴ *Courier*, 8 July 1842.

²⁵ *Courier*, 23 August 1844.

¹ Launceston *Examiner*, 21 April 1894.

² *Mercury*, 9 February 1855.

³ Hall and Cripps 101.

⁴ Hall and Cripps 101.

⁵ Michael Roe, "1830-50," *A New History of Australia*, ed. Frank Crowley (Melbourne: William Heinemann, 1974) 115.

⁶ John Kardoss, *A Brief History of the Australian Theatre* (Sydney: New Century Press, 1955) 25.

⁷ Taylor 12.

⁸ Marie is sometimes known as "Mary" and "Maria," but to save confusion I will use the name recorded on her marriage register: "Marie."

⁹ As stated in her obituary, see *Melbourne Age*, 19 April 1894.

¹⁰ There was a James Burgess recorded as passing away in Hobart during 1835. His age was recorded as 38 and the year of his birth 1797. See Anne M. Bartlett, ed., *Cornwall Chronicle, 1835-1850, Directory of Births Deaths and Marriages* (Launceston: Geneological Society of Tasmania, 1990). An index for assisted immigrant passenger lists (on microfiche) also records the arrival of a Mr. and Mrs. Burgess into Hobart in April 1833 aboard the *Henry Porcher* out of London. There were also four children by the name of Burgess who arrived aboard the same passage. However, while no names are listed, it is likely the children were Mary, (later known as "Marie"), her sisters Betsy (aged 5) and Fanny (aged 2), and her nine month old brother, James.

¹¹ H. G Taylor, "Born to Sing; the Countess Carandini of Hobart and Her Daughters," *Parade* March 1967: 12.

¹² Signor Jerome Carandini was also known as "Gerome," "Girohaino," and "Gerolamo" Carandini.

¹³ *Hobart Courier*, 25 February 1842.

¹⁴ Taylor 12.

¹⁵ See matrimonial register for the Trinity Church, Hobart, on 11 March 1843. The register records that "Maria Burgess" married "Jerome Carandini" on the date specified, and that Francis (Frank) Howson and his wife Elizabeth witnessed the ceremony.

¹⁶ *Hobarton Courier and Van Diemen's Land Gazette*, 25 February 1842.

¹⁷ Hall and Cripps 101.

¹⁸ *Courier*, 18 April 1849.

¹⁹ Patrick Fuery, ed., *Representation, Discourse & Desire: Contemporary Australian Culture & Critical Theory* (Melbourne: Longman Cheshire, 1994) 5.

²⁰ *Hobart Courier*, 18 April 1849.

²¹ *Hobart Courier*, 18 April 1849.

²² *Hobart Courier*, 1 November 1848.

²³ *Hobart Courier*, 1 November 1848.

²⁴ Incidentally, while the *Courier* predicted that prices for admission would most likely be increased in the event that Carandini would appear at the Victoria, it was not completely so. While single and double tickets were priced at 5 and 8 shillings respectively at the Mechanics' Institute, at the Victoria they sold at 4 and 7 shillings. The *Courier*, however, had been right about an increase; pit prices had been raised for the evening.

²⁵ *Courier*, 25 April 1849.

²⁶ *Hobart Courier*, 12 May 1849.

²⁷ Hall and Cripps 37.

²⁸ Goodrick 172.

²⁹ *Maritana* had as its inspiration the French drama of *Don Caesar de Bazan* by M. M. Dumanois and Dennery (c. 1844).

³⁰ *Age*, 14 November 1859.

³¹ Sara Elizabeth Flower was probably English born c. 1822, but most of her career was spent in Australia. She died in Sydney at the age of 43 in 1865. See Brisbane 46.

³² Brisbane 46.

³³ *Bell's Life in Sydney*, 25 August 1855.

³⁴ The “Five Great Stars now in the Australias” (in July 1854) included Marie Carandini, Mrs Broughman, Mr [Louis Henry] Lavenu, Kemble Mason and Sefton Parry. Marie apparently studied under Lavenu, and Brisbane claims she also received instruction from Eliza Bushelle and Sara Flower. See Brisbane 60. Another report states she studied with Issac Nathan (see *Daily Mirror*, 22 March 1871). Lavenu (and George Loader) conducted the orchestra supporting Catherine Hayes when she appeared at New York’s Metropolitan Hall on 25 December 1851. Also in town at the time were Jenny Lind (at the Metropolitan) and Lola Montes (who made her American debut, as a ballerina, at the Broadway on 29 December 1851). See *New York Times*, 25 December 1851.

³⁵ Hall and Cripps 169.

³⁶ Hall and Cripps 169.

³⁷ *Punch*, 10 April 1856.

³⁸ *Illustrated Sydney News*, 11 November 1854.

³⁹ *Hobart Courier*, 15 June 1854.

⁴⁰ *Hobart Courier*, 26 June 1854.

⁴¹ *Courier*, 1 July 1854.

⁴² *Courier*, 4 July 1854.

⁴³ *Courier*, 11 July 1854.

⁴⁴ *Courier*, 1 July 1854.

⁴⁵ *Hobart Courier*, 12 December 1854.

⁴⁶ *Mercury*, 12 January 1855.

⁴⁷ The “Five Great Stars now in the Australias” (in July 1854) included Marie Carandini, Mrs Broughman, Mr [Louis Henry] Lavenu, Kemble Mason and Sefton Parry. In fact, it has been claimed that Marie had not only studied under Lavenu, but also with Eliza Bushelle and Sara Flower. See Brisbane 60.

⁴⁸ Manning Clark, *A Short History of Australia* (Sydney: Tudor Distributors, 1969) 64-54.

⁴⁹ Ernest Scott, *A Short History of Australia* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1964) 97.

⁵⁰ See R. M Younger, *Australia and the Australians; a New Concise History* (Melbourne: Rigby Limited, 1974) 131-33.

⁵¹ Geoffrey Blainey, *The Tyranny of Distance; How Distance Shaped Australia's History* (Melbourne: Sun Books, 1974) 116-17.

⁵² *Age*, 28 September 1855.

⁵³ *Age*, 28 September 1855.

⁵⁴ For more of Marie's premiere performances in opera, see Gyger 247-250.

⁵⁵ By this time, Sara Flower had married Sam Howard (but was still billed as "Sara Flower"). See Hall and Cripps 144. Sara probably married Howard sometime around January 1852.

⁵⁶ Marie Carandini gave birth to five daughters (and two sons); Rosina, Fanny, Isabella, Elizabeth ("Lizzie"), Frederica and Emma (E Marie), possibly in that order. The Archives Office of Tasmania "Digger" Tasmanian Pioneer Index 1803-1899 records the death of Frederica (aged 3 years old) on 30 June 1859 (see Registration: 1583/1859, Reference: RGD 35). Taylor, however only mentioned four daughters. See Taylor 13. Marie gave birth to a son at Port Fairy, Victoria in 1861. See Victorian "Digger Index 1836 - 1888," Registration: 16031.

⁵⁷ Lizzie Carandini married John Adams Esq. and gave birth to a son in Bombay on 7 October 1876. After her first husband, Walter Sherwin, her older sister Fannie married one H. Morland (becoming Lady Morland) and gave birth to a son. Rosina Carandini (born Rosina Martha Hosannah Carandini in Hobart on 28 August 1844) married Edward Hodson Palmer at St. David's Cathedral in Hobart on 8 November 1860 (see microfilm of parish records or The Archives Office of Tasmania "Digger" Tasmanian Pioneer Index 1803-1899). On the parish register, Rosina's age was recorded as 16 and Palmer's as 24, while on the Archives Office database her father's surname is recorded as "Girohaino" (while her surname is recorded as "Carandini") See Registration: 439/1844, Reference: RGD 33. Taylor offers only vague details concerning the marriage of Isabella. I have however discovered that Isabella Sara Carandini was probably the daughter born in Sydney in January 1851 (see the *Sydney Morning Herald*, 28 January 1851). She married George James Cotterell in Sydney on 13 October 1874. Isabella had two daughters from what I have discovered (Moir Constance and Ida Cerise). Also, "Burke's Peerage" notes that Isabella was Marie's third daughter and that she was born

on 2 March 1846. See State Archives Office of Tasmania. This contradicts other claims. For instance, records of births in New South Wales (on microfiche) record that Isabella was born in Sydney in 1851. Further, Taylor's claim that Isabella was Marie's youngest daughter is incorrect given the claim by the *Hobart Courier* that Marie gave birth to a daughter on 12 December 1854 and the *Mercury's* notice that she had again given birth to a daughter (in New Zealand) on 11 March 1863 (see *Mercury*, 22 May 1863). Finally, Taylor makes no mention of Lizzie Carandini, and offers no information regarding Emma's ("E Marie") marriage.

⁵⁸ Walter Sherwin and Robert Farquharson reportedly arrived in Sydney in 1856 "from the London theatres." Hall and Cripps 222.

⁵⁹ *Launceston Examiner*, 25 April 1865.

⁶⁰ "Marie Carandini, The Queen of Song. Miss Marie Chalker The Admired Vocalist. Mr. Walter Sherwin, Principal Tenor from the Melbourne Opera Company; and Mr. Farquharson, The Renowned Basso and Descriptive Vocalist." *Mercury*, 11 April 1865.

⁶¹ *Age*, 18 March 1861.

⁶² *Age*, 18 March 1861.

⁶³ Taylor 13.

⁶⁴ Peter Downes, *Shadows of the Stage, Theatre in New Zealand – the first 70 years* (Dunedin: John McIndoe, 1975) 50-51.

⁶⁵ Downes 50-51.

⁶⁶ *Bell's Life in Victoria*, 2 November 1867.

⁶⁷ Jerome had reportedly retired from the stage in 1857 "to concentrate on teaching and managing his wife's singing career." See Brisbane 59. I am not sure how accurate is the claim that Jerome "managed" Marie's career given that she usually arrived alone in Tasmania (and elsewhere) for tours. It was much more common to find managers and/or agents accompanying the players they managed when on tours. Brisbane further claims Jerome was "the ballet pioneer" and that since he first arrived in Hobart he had appeared with "the leading *danseuses* in Australia, including Mme Louise, Thérèse Strebing, Louise Thorning and Mme Veilburn." See Brisbane 59.

⁶⁸ *Mercury*, 14 February 1872.

⁶⁹ *Mercury*, 12 February 1872.

⁷⁰ Poor attendance marred Marie's reappearance in Launceston in April 1859.

Traditional favourites including songs such as "Annie Laurie" and Molly "Asthere," selections from *La Sonnambula* and *Lucia di Lammermoor*, and even a "comic duet" with Louis Lavenue, failed to draw good houses. See *Bell's Life in Victoria*, 23 April 1859.

⁷¹ *Courier*, 5 May 1859.

⁷² *Mercury*, 12 February 1872.

⁷³ *Mercury*, 12 February 1872.

⁷⁴ Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Talcott Parsons (London: Unwin University Books, 1965) 64.

⁷⁵ *Mercury*, 23 February 1872.

⁷⁶ Weber 64.

⁷⁷ *Mercury*, 24 February 1872.

⁷⁸ *Mercury*, 13 February 1872.

⁷⁹ *Mercury*, 13 February 1872

⁸⁰ Peter L. Berger, *The Social Reality of Religion* (London: Faber & Faber, 1969) 73.

⁸¹ Berger 30.

⁸² Andrew Ferrington, "This was Australia," *The Sun* (Sydney) 24 February 1983.

⁸³ *Daily Mirror*, 22 March 1971.

⁸⁴ Roe, "1830-50" 115.

⁸⁵ Kardoss 25.

⁸⁶ The term "folkloric text" comes from Kenneth Burke's work on the "rhetorical" studies of performative texts. See Kenneth Burke, *The Philosophy of Literary Form* (New York: Vintage Books, 1957).

⁸⁷ Burke 3 & 93. In Marvin Carlson, *Performance: A Critical Introduction*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2004) 14.

⁸⁸ *Hobart Town Courier*, 21 March 1849.

⁸⁹ *Courier*, 16 December 1858.

⁹⁰ *Daily Mirror*, 22 March 1971.

⁹¹ *Daily Mirror*, 22 March 1971.

⁹² *Courier*, 23 August 1844.

⁹³ *Launceston Examiner*, 6 January 1883.

PART TWO: International Players and Tasmanian Cultural Identity

Chapter Four: Celebrity Touring Stars of the 1850s

¹ *Courier*, 7 May 1851.

² *Courier*, 25 June 1854.

³ *Melbourne Age*, 22 September 1855.

⁴ *Ballarat Times*, 15 March 1856.

⁵ *Melbourne Punch*, 6 March 1856.

⁶ *Lola Montes: the Tragic Story of a "Liberated Woman"* (Melbourne: Heritage, 1973) 72.

⁷ Montes' injuries prevented her from appearing in Ballarat as advertised on the evening of Saturday 1 March 1856, although she recovered sufficiently enough to appear in the gold-mining towns of Bendigo and Castlemaine a short time later.

⁸ *Melbourne Punch*, 6 March 1856.

⁹ *Manchester Courier* via the *London Era*, 9 July 1854.

¹⁰ *Mercury*, 11 June 1856.

¹¹ *Courier*, 25 June 1856.

¹² *Courier*, 25 June 1856.

¹³ *Courier*, 25 June 1856.

¹⁴ *Courier*, 25 June 1856.

¹⁵ *Mercury*, 11 June 1856.

¹⁶ *Courier*, 11 June 1856.

¹⁷ *Courier*, 12 June 1856.

¹⁸ *Courier*, 18 June 1856.

¹⁹ *Courier*, 12 June 1856.

²⁰ *Courier*, 11 June 1856.

²¹ *Bell's Life in Sydney*, 19 June 1858.

²² *Courier*, 25 June 1856.

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- ²³ *Mercury*, 10 January 1855.
- ²⁴ *Mercury*, 1 January 1855.
- ²⁵ *Mercury*, 3 January 1855.
- ²⁶ *Courier*, 17 January 1855.
- ²⁷ *Mercury*, 19 January 1855.
- ²⁸ *Melbourne Punch*, 10 September 1857.
- ²⁹ *Ballarat Times*, 16 July 1857.
- ³⁰ *Ballarat Times*, 6 July 1857.
- ³¹ *Ballarat Times*, 6 July 1857.
- ³² *Bell's Life in Sydney*, 14 October 1854.
- ³³ *Illustrated Sydney News*, 21 October 1854.
- ³⁴ *Bell's Life in Sydney*, 14 October 1854.
- ³⁵ *Bell's Life in Sydney*, 14 October 1854.
- ³⁶ *Melbourne Argus*, 17 July 1855.
- ³⁷ *Melbourne Argus*, 17 July 1855.
- ³⁸ *Courier*, 25 June 1856.
- ³⁹ *Illustrated Sydney News*, 21 October 1854.
- ⁴⁰ *Bell's Life in Sydney*, 5 April 1856.
- ⁴¹ *Mercury*, 4 February 1857.
- ⁴² See *Mercury*, 11 February 1857.
- ⁴³ *Courier*, 25 June 1856.
- ⁴⁴ Hall and Cripps 246.
- ⁴⁵ Anna Bishop appeared in Australia for the first time in 1856. She returned 1868 and again in 1875 at the age of 65.
- ⁴⁶ *Courier*, 12 February 1857.
- ⁴⁷ *Mercury*, 9 March 1857.
- ⁴⁸ *Courier*, 7 February 1857.
- ⁴⁹ *Courier*, 7 February 1857.
- ⁵⁰ *Courier*, 7 February 1857.
- ⁵¹ *Courier*, 12 February 1857.

⁵² Eric Irvin writes that Mrs. Nisbet was, for a time, James Anderson's leading lady while Drury Lane was under his management during the 1849/50 season. Irvin 179.

⁵³ The Gougenheim's production of Charles Dickens' *The Cricket on the Hearth* was most likely an adaptation of a "domestic drama" of the same name, attributed to Dionysius Lardner Boucicault, otherwise known as "Dion" Boucicault, (c. 1845).

⁵⁴ Roe, *A History of the Theatre Royal, Hobart from 1834* 14.

⁵⁵ *Mercury*, 13 March 1857.

⁵⁶ *Melbourne Punch*, 20 December 1856.

⁵⁷ Roe 14.

⁵⁸ See *Mercury*, 6, 9 & 13 March 1857.

⁵⁹ *Courier*, 12 February 1857.

⁶⁰ *Age*, 17 September 1857.

⁶¹ *Courier*, 11 February 1857.

⁶² *Illustrated Melbourne Post*, 6 September 1862.

⁶³ *Illustrated Melbourne News*, March 1862.

⁶⁴ Janette A. Gordon-Clark, "From Leading Lady to Female Star: Women and Shakespeare, 1855-88" Golder and Madelaine 73.

⁶⁵ *Mercury*, 27 December 1854.

⁶⁶ *Courier*, 12 February 1856.

⁶⁷ *Courier*, 11 June 1856.

⁶⁸ James Edward Neild[?], *My Note Book*, 31 October 1857.

⁶⁹ *Illustrated Sydney News*, 28 October 1854.

⁷⁰ *Courier*, 11 December 1854.

⁷¹ *Courier*, 11 December 1854.

⁷² *Ballarat Times* via *Melbourne Age*, 25 October 1856.

⁷³ *Hobart Mercury*, 20 April 1859 via *Bell's Life in Sydney*, 30 April 1859.

⁷⁴ *Courier*, 10 April 1855.

⁷⁵ *Courier*, 17 April 1855.

Chapter Five: Case Study - The Child Star Anna Maria Quinn in Tasmania, c. 1855

¹ *Courier*, 17 April 1855, 112-13.

² *Argus*, 17 July 1855.

³ *Courier*, 2 February 1855.

⁴ See Helen Musa's entry "John Lazar," in Parsons 323-24.

⁵ See Elizabeth Webby's entry "J. H. S. Lee," in Parsons 325.

⁶ The only references to Master Pole, Kate O'Reilly and Miss King I have come across are through print media reports of the day.

⁷ *Argus*, 6 July 1855.

⁸ *Bell's Life in Sydney*, 26 August 1854. Julia debuted in Melbourne on 30 July 1855 at Coppin's Olympic Theatre.

⁹ Victorian press clippings indicate that Anna Maria Quinn and Julia Matthews appeared together in productions in Melbourne city and provincial areas such as Ballarat. *Bell's Life in Victoria*, for instance, claimed; "Miss Julia Matthews has re-appeared at the Theatre Royal in the 'Daughter of the Regiment,' and as usual met with a very cordial reception. On Thursday evening the 'Rivals' was produced, with the following cast:-Lydia Languish, Miss Julia Matthews; Sir Anthony Absolute, Mr. J. C. Lambert; Bob Ares, Mr. Hill; Captain Absolute, Mr. Morrison; Mrs. Malaprop, Mrs. Phillips; Julia, Miss Quinn, etc." *Bell's Life in Victoria*, 5 January 1867. It was during her visit to New Zealand that Quinn was charged and found guilty of four counts of petty larceny.

¹⁰ "Old Times. From the Papers of Fifty Years Ago," *Evening News*, 3 Sept. 1904.

¹¹ "Mechanics Institutes" are generally regarded to have failed as facilities introducing the working classes to learning.

¹² *Courier*, 8 April 1855.

¹³ *Courier*, 10 April 1855.

¹⁴ *Courier*, 5 June 1855.

¹⁵ *Mercury*, 11 April 1855.

¹⁶ *Courier*, 10 April 1855.

¹⁷ *Mercury*, 11 April 1855.

¹⁸ *Courier*, 17 April 1855

¹⁹ *Courier*, 11 April 1855.

²⁰ *Courier*, 11 April 1855.

²¹ *Courier*, 18 April 1855.

²² *Mercury*, 11 April 1855.

²³ *Courier*, 21 April 1855.

²⁴ *Courier*, 28 April 1855.

²⁵ *Courier*, 5 May 1855.

²⁶ *Courier*, 9 May 1855.

²⁷ *Courier*, 9 May 1855.

²⁸ Carlson 219-220.

²⁹ *Courier*, 10 April 1855.

³⁰ *Courier*, 12 April 1855.

³¹ *Courier*, 11 April 1855.

³² *Courier*, 17 April 1855.

³³ *Courier*, 17 April 1855.

³⁴ Available space for theatrical productions in Launceston during the early 1830s and into the early 1840s was limited. Without a purpose-built theatre, performances were usually held in venues such as the British Hotel (c. 1834), the Steam Packet Tavern (c. 1839 – 1840s), and the Royal Victoria Theatre, which was housed in the Kangaroo Hotel and had been opened by Samson Cameron in 1842.

³⁵ *Courier*, 30 April 1855.

³⁶ *Cornwall Chronicle*, as published in the *Hobart Courier*, 30 April 1855.

³⁷ Much of the following quotes are taken from *Cornwall Chronicle*, 30 April 1855. The extract of the *Chronicle* referred to actually appeared in *Hobart Courier*, 30 April 1855.

³⁸ An Act to establish a Parliament in Van Diemen's Land and to grant a Civil List to Her Majesty. 18 Vic. N. 17. (1 November 1854.) [See *Tasmania: Acts of Council* Vol. 4] This Act came into force in October 1856. Note: 2. After passing this Act [to establish a parliament] the name Tasmania was used instead of "Van Diemen's Land." See C. M. H

Clark, ed. *Select Documents in the History of Australia 1851-1900* (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1955) 345.

³⁹ In J. J. Auchmuty, "1810-30," Crowley 61.

⁴⁰ *Hobart Courier*, 30 May 1855.

⁴¹ *Cornwall Chronicle*, 30 April 1855, via the *Hobart Courier*, 30 April 1855.

⁴² *Hobart Courier*, 12 May 1855.

⁴³ See George P. Murdock, *Social Structure* (New York: Macmillan, 1949) 2.

⁴⁴ Roe, "1830-50" 113.

⁴⁵ Bob Bessant, Wes Blackmore, Pamela Caven, Richard Cotter and Duncan Waterson, *Australian History; the Occupation of a Continent*, ed. Susan Mellor (Blackburn: Eureka, 1979) 203.

⁴⁶ Ken Buckley and Ted Wheelwright, *No Paradise for Workers: Capitalism and Common People in Australia 1788-1914* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1988) 112-13.

⁴⁷ See *Courier*, 7 May 1855.

⁴⁸ *Courier*, 9 May 1855.

⁴⁹ *Courier*, 19 May 1855.

⁵⁰ *Courier*, 19 May 1855.

⁵¹ *Melbourne Argus*, 26 July 1855. The *Melbourne Punch* on 7 October 1858 also referred to the Wizard Jacobs as "the great professor of hyperborean hanky-panky."

⁵² *Courier*, 5 June 1855.

⁵³ *Age*, 18 August 1855.

⁵⁴ *Courier*, 21 September 1855.

⁵⁵ *Mercury*, 18 September 1855.

⁵⁶ Master Drury's residential address was given as "Liverpool-street" Hobart and his promotion as "another infant debutante" (*Mercury*, 21 September 1855) alongside Helen Mackenzie implies that he was around the same age (about nine years old).

⁵⁷ *Mercury*, 18 September 1855.

⁵⁸ *Mercury*, 21 September 1855.

⁵⁹ *Courier*, 18 September 1855.

⁶⁰ *Mercury*, 11 April 1855.

⁶¹ *Courier*, 22 September 1855.

⁶² *Courier*, 18 September 1855.

⁶³ "Papers from the Portfolio of 'Melbourne Punch'; Punch's Popular Biographies No. 1, Miss Anna Maria Quinn." *Melbourne Punch*, 1856, 29.

⁶⁴ "Papers from the Portfolio of 'Melbourne Punch'," was also published in the *Age*, 24 Aug. 1855, and was republished in the *Hobart Courier* on 11 Sept. 1855, which is predictable given her incredible appeal and high popularity in Tasmania.

⁶⁵ *Cornwall Chronicle*, 31 January 1857.

⁶⁶ *Cornwall Chronicle*, 14 February 1857.

⁶⁷ Parsons 630.

⁶⁸ *Courier*, 11 February 1857.

⁶⁹ *Courier*, 10 April 1855.

⁷⁰ The *Melbourne Herald* via the *Ballarat Times*, 26 March 1857.

⁷¹ *Theatrical Journal*. Vol. XVIII.—No. 928, Wednesday, September 23, 1857, 302-303.

⁷² Quinn returned to Australia following her visit in 1857. She appeared in 1863 after performing at London's Haymarket Theatre (see *Empire*, 23 November 1863). She played in Melbourne throughout May in companies supporting the more notable touring stars of the day such as Joseph Jefferson and Charles and Ellen Kean. She might possibly have married in Australia because a year after she re-surfaced in 1866 she was known as Mrs. O'Neill. Reports suggest her new husband, Irish comedian William O'Neill, was an alcoholic. O'Neill died in 1868 at the age of only 31 from complications possibly connected to his alcoholism. The *Leader* on 26 September 1868 reported that he seemed to have been residing in Melbourne at the time. *Bell's Life in Victoria* on 16 November 1867, however, had reported the following: "DEPARTURE OF MRS. O'NEIL.-Mrs. O'Neil (Miss Anna Maria Quinn) sailed from Sydney a few days ago for San Francisco, *via* Callao. Mr. O'Neil is engaged to play for a short season at Sydney, at the conclusion of which he will follow his wife." This suggests that O'Neill died while his wife was still in America. Quinn married again in 1874 and settled for a time in relative obscurity as Mrs. Watson in Memphis Tennessee (see *Australasian*, 14 November 1874). She took to the stage again during the 1880s, appearing at the Liberty

(see *Bulletin*, 22 October 1880). According to a private letter from the New York Public Library addressed to Australian theatre historian Eric Irvin on 26 August 1982 (see Eric Irvin Collection, National Library of Australia), Quinn died on 26 April 1920 under another name; that of Mrs. Samuel Charles, implying that she must have married for a third time.

PART THREE: "First Wave" "Home Grown" Stars and Celebrity Culture in the 1860s

¹ *Mercury*, 4 March 1871.

² Joseph Jefferson, *The Autobiography of Joseph Jefferson* (London, 1889) 259.

³ *Mercury*, 4 March 1864.

⁴ *Mercury*, 8 March 1864.

⁵ *Mercury*, 2 March 1864.

⁶ *Mercury*, 17 March 1864.

⁷ Details of her birth are sketchy, but Lady Emilia Don was apparently born Emilia Eliza Saunders (c. 1830s). She came from a theatrical family and followed in her father's steps. She was the eldest daughter of London actor John Saunders. She assumed her title as a "Lady" after she married a minor baronet-cum-actor by the name of William Henry Don on 17 October 1857.

⁸ William Don was born 4 May 1825. He died in Hobart, Tasmania during the couple's tour in 1862.

⁹ *Bell's Life in Victoria*, 26 January 1861.

¹⁰ *Bell's Life in Victoria*, 26 January 1861.

¹¹ *Launceston Examiner*, 11 February 1862.

¹² *Launceston Examiner*, 20 February 1862.

¹³ *Launceston Examiner*, 20 February 1862.

¹⁴ *Mercury*, 22 March 1862.

¹⁵ *Melbourne Argus*, 12 May 1862.

¹⁶ Jefferson 136.

¹⁷ *Mercury*, 6 May 1865.

¹⁸ *Mercury*, 18 May 1865.

¹⁹ *Mercury*, 8 May 1865.

²⁰ *Mercury*, 20 April 1865.

²¹ *Mercury*, 12 May 1865.

²² *Mercury*, 11 May 1865.

²³ Hall and Cripps 180.

²⁴ *Ballarat Times*, 13 April 1857.

²⁵ Hall and Cripps 185.

²⁶ The quip from *Bell's Life in Sydney*, 16 August 1856 came after Duret's appearance as Miami in *Miami, the Huntress of Mississippi* at the Royal Victoria Theatre in August 1856.

²⁷ Duret's production of *Spectre Bridegroom* was most likely William Moncrieff's adaptation of Washington Irving's novel (1820).

²⁸ *The Omnibus* was also known as *A Convenient Distance* apparently written anonymously.

²⁹ *The Limerick Boy* was also known as *Paddy's Mischief* (c. 1860).

³⁰ *Mercury*, 12 November 1870.

³¹ *Mercury*, 6 November 1870.

Chapter Six: Tasmanian Nightingales and their Repertoires

¹ *Melbourne Punch*, 20 October 1859.

² Mary Provost was born in Brooklyn on 27 January 1833.

³ John St. Clair, *Dramatic Biography of Miss Mary Provost, the most versatile actress of any age! With authentic documents, opinions of the press of the United States of America, and the Colony of Victoria* (Sydney: James Fryer, Steam Engine and General Printer, 1859) 8.

⁴ St. Clair 8.

⁵ St. Clair 8.

⁶ In July 1859 in Sydney, for instance, *Camille* played at one theatre while a version of *La Traviata* appeared at another.

⁷ *Age*, 22 June 1858

⁸ *Age*, 29 September 1860.

⁹ *Age*, 5 July 1858.

¹⁰ *Ballarat Times*, 8 February 1858.

¹¹ *Ballarat Times*, 8 February 1858.

¹² *Melbourne Punch*, 28 July 1859.

¹³ Bevan 39.

¹⁴ *Ballarat Times*, 9 September 1856.

¹⁵ Bevan 39.

¹⁶ Avonia Jones was born "Joannes." Love 78.

¹⁷ George Jones toured America extensively as "Count Johannes."

¹⁸ *Age*, 27 October 1859.

¹⁹ Willson M. Disher, "The Adelphi in its Heyday," *London Times* 30 May 1939.

²⁰ *Age*, 7 March 1860.

²¹ Theatre Royal Melbourne, 13 March 1860. Jones later appeared as Juliet to the Romeo of Edwin Booth at the Winter Garden Theatre, New York, on 23 April 1864,

²² W. J. Lawrence, *The Life of Gustavus Vaughan Brooke, Tragedian* (Belfast, 1892) 221.

²³ *Maryborough and Dunolly Advertiser* (?) 11 January 1860 (?)

²⁴ *Argus*, 30 January 1860.

²⁵ La Trobe Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria.

²⁶ G. V. Brooke was born in Dublin on 25 April 1818.

²⁷ *Melbourne Punch*, 21 October 1861.

Chapter Seven: The Carandini Sisters

¹ *Mercury*, 8 February 1894.

² The religiosity of Tasmanian "lyric artists" of the nineteenth century could be useful in explaining trends. Opera's appeal among many of the women considered in this thesis may have been related to their particular faith and the kinds of spiritual needs operatic works satisfied among them. Most appeared to have been Catholic.

³ *Mercury*, 9 February 1855. Interestingly, Clelia Howson supported Octavia Hamilton in Sydney at the Prince of Wales theatre on 29 May 1860. Clelia played the part of Inez to the Azucena of Hamilton in a production of *Il Trovatore*.

⁴ Julia Harland arrived in Sydney, via Melbourne, with Walter Sherwin and Robert Farquharson from "the London theatres" in 1856. Her billing as "Miss Julia Harland" concealed the fact that she was married to the actor/manager William Hoskins (1816-1886), with whom she had immigrated to Australia in 1850. See Hall and Cripps 222 & 225.

⁵ *Mercury*, 15 December 1858.

⁶ *Courier*, 16 December 1858.

⁷ *Mercury*, 15 December 1858.

⁸ *Courier*, 14 December 1858.

⁹ *Courier*, 16 December 1858.

¹⁰ *Mercury*, 15 December 1858.

¹¹ *Courier*, 16 December 1858.

¹² *Courier*, 5 May 1859.

¹³ *Mercury*, 13 December 1858.

¹⁴ *Mercury*, 13 December 1858.

¹⁵ *Courier*, 16 December 1858.

¹⁶ *Mercury*, 1 March 1860.

¹⁷ *Mercury*, 13 February 1872.

¹⁸ *Launceston Examiner*, 25 April 1865.

¹⁹ *Tasmanian Times*, 29 April 1869 (quoting from the Melbourne Age).

²⁰ *Age*, 31 August 1869.

²¹ *Mercury*, 13 February 1872.

²² *Mercury*, 13 February 1872.

²³ *Mercury*, 12 February 1872.

²⁴ *Mercury*, 12 February 1872.

²⁵ *Mercury*, 13 February 1872.

²⁶ *Mercury*, 15 February 1872.

²⁷ *Mercury*, 28 February 1872.

²⁸ *Mercury*, 24 & 26 February 1872.

²⁹ *Mercury*, 16 February 1872.

³⁰ *Mercury*, 26 February 1872.

³¹ *Mercury*, 28 February 1872.

³² *Mercury*, 22 February 1872.

³³ *Mercury*, 16 February 1872.

³⁴ *Mercury*, 27 February 1872.

³⁵ *Mercury*, 13 February 1872.

³⁶ *Mercury*, 13 February 1872.

³⁷ *Mercury*, 13 February 1872.

³⁸ *Mercury*, 15 February 1872.

³⁹ *Mercury*, 13 February 1872.

⁴⁰ *Mercury*, 17 February 1872.

⁴¹ *Mercury*, 22 February 1872.

⁴² *Mercury*, 27 February 1872.

⁴³ *Mercury*, 2 January 1875.

⁴⁴ *Mercury*, 2 January 1875.

⁴⁵ *Mercury*, 19 June 1871.

⁴⁶ See *Mercury* dated 16, 18, 20, and 22 January 1875 respectively.

⁴⁷ *Mercury* 11 January 1875.

⁴⁸ *Mercury* 11 January 1875.

⁴⁹ *Mercury* 11 January 1875.

⁵⁰ *Mercury* 12 January 1875.

⁵¹ *Mercury* 12 January 1875.

⁵² *Mercury* 12 January 1875.

⁵³ *Mercury* 12 January 1875.

⁵⁴ *Mercury* 13 January 1875.

⁵⁵ *Mercury* 12 January 1875.

⁵⁶ *Mercury* 11 January 1875.

⁵⁷ *Mercury* 12 January 1875.

⁵⁸ *Mercury* 11 January 1875.

⁵⁹ Rosina gave birth to two children while she lived in Hobart during the 1860s. The *Mercury* announced the arrival of a daughter to "Mrs Edward Palmer [of Argyle Street]" on the 19 August 1861 (see *Mercury*, 20 August 1861), and another daughter on 5 September 1862 (see *Mercury*, 6 September 1862).

⁶⁰ Marie Carandini gave her farewell appearance at Melbourne's Town Hall on 3 February 1892.

⁶¹ *Mercury*, 14 January 1876.

⁶² Downes 51.

⁶³ Downes 51.

⁶⁴ The Carandini Ballad and Operatic Company arrived in Hobart on 5 October 1880.

⁶⁵ *Mercury*, 16 October 1880.

⁶⁶ "Miss Marie" was in fact Emma Maria Carandini.

⁶⁷ "From a private letter from Bombay, dated December 9th [1875]," presumably addressed to the *Mercury* office and reprinted as an extract in the *Mercury*, 14 January 1876.

⁶⁸ *Launceston Examiner*, 7 October 1880.

⁶⁹ *Mercury*, 16 October 1880.

⁷⁰ *Mercury*, 16 October 1880.

⁷¹ *Mercury*, 13 October 1880.

⁷² *Mercury*, 12 October 1880.

⁷³ *Mercury*, 12 October 1880.

⁷⁴ *Mercury*, 12 October 1880.

⁷⁵ *Mercury*, 15 October 1880.

⁷⁶ See *Mercury*, 12, 14, 16 and 18 October 1880.

⁷⁷ *Mercury*, 26 October 1880.

⁷⁸ Taylor 13.

⁷⁹ See Rosina's speech as printed by the *Mercury*, 8 February 1894. I have searched the year 1875 and found no evidence to suggest that Rosina appeared publicly. However,

she could have been implying that she was in Hobart at the time of Isabella's short season in January of that year.

⁸⁰ *Mercury*, 31 January 1894.

⁸¹ *Mercury*, 31 January 1894.

⁸² *Mercury*, 4 February 1894.

⁸³ *Mercury*, 5 February 1894, (as reported in the *Auckland Star*).

⁸⁴ *Mercury*, 10 February 1894.

⁸⁵ *Mercury*, 5 February 1894, (as reported in the *Auckland Star*).

⁸⁶ *Mercury*, 10 February 1894.

⁸⁷ *Mercury*, 31 January 1894.

⁸⁸ *Mercury*, 31 January 1894.

⁸⁹ *Mercury*, 31 January 1894.

⁹⁰ *Mercury*, 2 February 1894.

⁹¹ The "Stirling" name was a well-known one in Tasmania. Theodosia Stirling (b. 1815, d. 1904) began her Australian career in Hobart in 1842 and later married Richard Stewart (c. 1826, d. 1902). Theodosia had two children in Hobart while married to musician James Guerin (who Theodosia married in Hobart, sometime between 1842 and 1845), Docy and Maggie. But neither Docy nor Maggie ever eclipsed the fame of their half-sister, Nellie Stewart (b. 1853, d. 1931).

⁹² *Mercury*, 31 January 1894.

⁹³ *Mercury*, 8 February 1894.

⁹⁴ Maggie Stirling was reportedly a protégé of Ada Crossley. Crossley, a contralto who was associated at this time with the Australian Church Choir, was claimed a "Tasmanian" (Roe, *A History of the Theatre Royal* 16), but she was apparently a "native" of Melbourne (see Brisbane 112 and Skill 65). Crossley was associated with George Musgrove: Nellie Stewart's companion.

⁹⁵ Armes Beaumont went shooting with theatre entrepreneur William Saurin Lyster, whose gunfire caused the buck-shot that hit Beaumont in both eyes. Armes was probably about 24 years old at the time.

⁹⁶ Love, "Stock Companies, Travelling Stars and the Birth of the 'Firm,' (1854-1900)" 115.

⁹⁷ Taylor claims Rosina married Beaumont after the death of Palmer. See Taylor 13.

⁹⁸ *Mercury*, 16 February 1894.

⁹⁹ See *Age*, 19 April 1894, *Mercury*, 21 April 1894, and the *Launceston Examiner*, 21 April 1894.

¹⁰⁰ *Melbourne Age*, 19 April 1894.

¹⁰¹ *Mercury*, 21 April 1894.

¹⁰² *Launceston Examiner*, 21 April 1894.

¹⁰³ *Argus*, 8 October 1910.

¹⁰⁴ *Mercury*, 8 February 1894.

¹⁰⁵ *Argus*, 8 October 1910.

¹⁰⁶ *Mercury*, 8 February 1894.

¹⁰⁷ *Mercury*, 8 February 1894.

¹⁰⁸ *Mercury*, 31 January 1894.

¹⁰⁹ *Mercury*, 8 February 1894.

¹¹⁰ *Mercury*, 8 February 1894.

¹¹¹ *Mercury*, 14 November 1893.

¹¹² *Mercury*, 20 December 1893.

¹¹³ Rosina recalled just before her farewell that Marie had suffered severely from an asthma attack in America and doctors ordered her to return to Australia. She also recollected that as a result of Marie's "enforced rest," she sang better afterward than she had in twenty years. See *Argus*, 8 October 1910.

¹¹⁴ *Mercury*, 8 February 1894.

¹¹⁵ *Argus*, 8 October 1910. One of Rosina's daughters, called Irene Violet Palmer, died in 1959 at the age of 83. That she died still bearing her maiden name implies that Irene never married. See Victorian "Death Index 1921 - 1985," Registration: 1223.

¹¹⁶ Rosina Carandini died in South Yarra, Melbourne at the age of 88 on 18 June 1932. See "Digger" Pioneer Index, Victoria, registration number: 7601.

¹¹⁷ *Melbourne Age*, 20 October 1910. Also supporting Rosina at her farewell concerts was Maggie Stirling.

¹¹⁸ *Argus*, 11 October 1910.

¹¹⁹ *Argus*, 11 October 1910.

¹²⁰ *Army and Navy Gazette*, 17 April 1880, via *Hobart Mercury*, 9 June 1880. Frank died in 1924.

¹²¹ The *Mercury* also records the birth of a child to the Carandinis on 11 March 1863. See *Mercury*, 22 May 1863.

¹²² *Argus*, 8 October 1910.

¹²³ *Argus*, 8 October 1910.

¹²⁴ *Argus*, 8 October 1910.

¹²⁵ *Argus*, 8 October 1910.

Chapter Eight: Emma and Clelia Howson

¹ Some of the following has been taken and adapted from my article of the same name published in the "Backburning" Issue of the *Journal of Australian Studies*, 21C New Talents Edition, 2005.

² Veronica Kelly, "Hybridity and Performance in Colonial Australian Theatre: *The Currency Lass*," (Post)Colonial Stages; Critical & Creative Views on Drama, Theatre & Performance, ed. Helen Gilbert (West Yorkshire: Dangaroo Press, 1999) 40.

³ Lawrence Zion, "The Sound of 'Australian' Music," *Constructing a Culture: A People's History of Australia since 1788*, eds. Verity Burgmann and Jenny Lee (McPhee Gribble, Fitzroy, 1988) 211.

⁴ The Wizard Jacobs was probably the best-known illusionist of the 1850s. He performed in Hobart in April 1855. Ensembles such as the Gregory Troupe followed circuses in the 1860s. The Gregory Troupe appeared in Hobart in 1871 and included "Mdlle. Gertrude's troupe of dogs" and well-trained ponies (see *Mercury*, 29 May 1871). The "Japs," as they were affectionately known at the time, were a large company of

contortionists and acrobats who appeared at Hobart's Theatre Royal during February 1872.

⁵ Emma and (Sarah) Clelia were part of a larger theatrical family, which consisted of father Frank, older brothers Frank (Jr.), and John Jerome, and their uncles John (and Henry [?]) Howson.

⁶ *Illustrated Melbourne Post*, 25 February 1864.

⁷ *Mercury*, 27 June 1864.

⁸ *Mercury*, 27 June 1864.

⁹ Jefferson 259.

¹⁰ Jefferson 259.

¹¹ Jefferson 259.

¹² John Docker, "Popular Culture and Bourgeois Values," Burgmann and Lee 241.

¹³ Rose Gaby, "On the Edge of Empire: Hobart Town Shakespeare, 1864," *Theatre Notebook*, no 55 (2001): 85.

¹⁴ Emma Howson was born on 28 March 1844; John Jerome Howson on 17 November 1842 in Hobart; Sarah Clelia Howson was born 8 June 1845 at the family's 52 Argyle Street residence. See Parish of Trinity in the County of Buckingham, Hobart records. Frank Alfred Giralomo Howson junior was born in London in 1841. Frank senior was born 22 September 1817, London (d 16 September 1869). He married Emma Richardson in London on 9 October 1839 (b 9 October 1820, d 7 December 1869). Two younger brothers were born in Sydney; William Sydney Howson on 23 September 1846 (d 17 May 1900), and Charles Edwin Howson on 15 January 1848 (d 4 November 1907, London). With the exception of Charles, all family members died in and around the city of New York.

¹⁵ Other stage players who were very successful in burlesques and pantomimes were English-born touring stars Adelaide and Josephine Gougenheim (who appeared in Tasmania in 1857) and Lady Emilia Don. Don first appeared in Tasmania in 1862 together with her husband (Sir William Henry Don), and returned as a solo star in 1865.

¹⁶ *Bell's Life in Sydney*, 8 August 1863.

¹⁷ *Bell's Life in Sydney* on 14 January 1860.

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- ¹⁸ *Bell's Life in Sydney* on 14 January 1860.
- ¹⁹ *Bell's Life in Sydney*, 14 January 1854.
- ²⁰ *Bell's Life in Sydney*, 5 September 1857.
- ²¹ *Bell's Life in Sydney*, 5 September 1857.
- ²² *Mercury*, 27 June 1864.
- ²³ *Age* cited in *Ballarat Times*, 30 October 1857.
- ²⁴ *Melbourne Punch*, 20 October 1859.
- ²⁵ Reynolds, *Launceston: History of an Australian City* 80.
- ²⁶ Evan Willis, *Medical Dominance; the Division of Labour in Australian Health Care* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1990) 60.
- ²⁷ *Mercury*, 27 June 1864.
- ²⁸ *Bell's Life in Sydney*, 15 October 1859.
- ²⁹ *Bell's Life in Sydney*, 15 October 1859.
- ³⁰ *Mercury*, 27 June 1864.
- ³¹ Manning Clark, *A Short History of Australia* (Tudor: Sydney, 1969) 140.
- ³² *Mercury*, 31 May 1864.
- ³³ *Illustrated Melbourne Post*, 25 February 1864.
- ³⁴ *Illustrated Melbourne Post*, 25 February 1864.
- ³⁵ *Illustrated Melbourne Post*, 24 March 1864.
- ³⁶ *Mercury*, 17 April 1865.
- ³⁷ *Bell's Life in Sydney*, 31 December 1859.
- ³⁸ *Illustrated Melbourne Post*, 25 February 1864.
- ³⁹ *Melbourne Age*, 26 January 1864.
- ⁴⁰ *Age*, 17 December 1863.
- ⁴¹ *Age*, 29 December 1863.
- ⁴² *Age*, 4 January 1864.
- ⁴³ *Age*, 12 January 1864.
- ⁴⁴ *Age*, 12 January 1864.
- ⁴⁵ *Age*, 12 January 1864.
- ⁴⁶ *Age*, 12 January 1864.

⁴⁷ *Age*, 19 January 1864.

⁴⁸ *Age*, 26 January 1864.

⁴⁹ *Age*, 26 January 1864.

⁵⁰ *Age*, 2 February 1864.

⁵¹ *Maritana* was a traditional favourite in Australia primarily because many believed that part (if not all) of the opera was composed on Australian soil. Legend goes that Wallace (who emigrated to Tasmania in the 1835 and departed Australia from Sydney three years later) wrote much of the opera either in a bush Inn outside Hobart, or while lived in Sydney: apparently both erroneous beliefs.

⁵² *Age*, 8 February 1864.

⁵³ *Age*, 8 February 1864.

⁵⁴ *Age*, 16 February 1864.

⁵⁵ *Age*, 16 February 1864.

⁵⁶ *Bell's Life in Sydney*, 5 November 1859.

⁵⁷ *Age*, 23 February 1864.

⁵⁸ *Age*, 25 January 1864.

⁵⁹ *Age*, 25 January 1864.

⁶⁰ *Age*, 25 January 1864.

⁶¹ *Illustrated Melbourne Post*, 25 February 1864.

⁶² *Mercury*, 27 June 1864.

⁶³ Lucy Escott was born in 1828 and died in 1895.

⁶⁴ See a version of Mercadante's *The Lucy Escott Polka* at National Library of Australia, "Digital Collections Music" at <http://www.nla.gov.au/cdview/nla.mus-an5880950&mode=moreinfo>.

⁶⁵ See Brisbane 64.

⁶⁶ *Bell's Life in Victoria*, 11 February 1865.

⁶⁷ The play was perhaps an adaptation of Robert Barnabas Brough's 1852 production of the same name.

⁶⁸ *Bell's Life in Victoria*, 11 February 1865.

⁶⁹ *Illustrated Melbourne Post*, 25 February 1864.

⁷⁰ *Bell's Life in Victoria*, 6 January 1865.

⁷¹ *Age*, 4 January 1866.

⁷² "Popular" was a word generally used by critics to described entertainment which attracted large and frequent audiences. Typically, these included circuses, pantomimes, so-called "nigger" ensembles (such as the Ethiopian Serenaders and the New York Serenaders who each appeared in Tasmanian in the early 1850s) and illusionists. For more, see Richard Waterhouse's entry entitled "Popular Entertainments" in Parsons 461.

⁷³ *Mercury*, 15 June 1864.

⁷⁴ The version was possibly from Gioachino Rossini's overture, *William Tell* (1829).

⁷⁵ *Mercury*, 28 June 1864.

⁷⁶ *Mercury*, 27 June 1864.

⁷⁷ *Mercury*, 27 June 1864.

⁷⁸ *Mercury*, 11 July 1864.

⁷⁹ *Mercury*, 21 June 1864.

⁸⁰ Graeme Turner, *National Fictions: Literature, film and the construction of Australian narrative* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1991) 109.

⁸¹ The notables in Don's company were Emma, Clelia and Frank Howson, Hattie Shepparde, Mrs Crosby, and Mr G H Rogers, whom Frank would have remembered from the 1842-1845 seasons at the Royal Victoria Theatre, Hobart.

⁸² "Composed expressly for the admirable and talented Lady Don, and sung with classical effects at the Australian concerts, by Miss Amelia [sic] and Miss Clelia Howson, nieces of the accomplished Madame Albertazzi," is what is written on the actual arrangement of *Circumstance*. The words were by Alfred Tennyson and the music by Issac Nathan. The composition was published around 1864/5 by J. R. Clarke, George Street, Sydney.

⁸³ From the early 1850s, Winterbottom was a well-known conductor and musical arranger in Sydney theatres and occasionally also performed as a singer. He appeared in 1853 as an instrumentalist, and was reported to have been "a performer on the

bassoon, and who in London was one of [Louis Antoine] Jullien's celebrated band." In Hall and Cripps 147-148.

⁸⁴ When Don performed "Lady Don Valse" in Hobart, the *Mercury* on 21 April 1865 reported it had been "composed expressly by Mr. J. Hill." Hill was Don's musical director at the time, so the claim probably meant the piece was a version of Winterbottom's original composition.

⁸⁵ *Harlequin Valentine and Orson; or, The task of romance and the tricks of the spirit of fun aka Valentine and Orson* is attributed to William Mower Akhurst.

⁸⁶ Veronica Kelly, ed., *Annotated Calendar of Plays Premiered in Australia 1850-1869; an Interim Publication of the Australian Drama Project 1850-1900* 138.

⁸⁷ Alfred Tennyson (words) and Issac Nathan (music), *Circumstance*, J. R. Clarke, George Street, Sydney, c. 1864/5.

⁸⁸ Kelly 140.

⁸⁹ *Mercury*, 26 April 1865.

⁹⁰ *Age*, 24 January 1866.

⁹¹ Turner, *National Fictions* 109.

⁹² See Helen Musa's entry on Eliza Winstanley in Parsons 647.

⁹³ *Launceston Examiner*, 12 August 1878.

⁹⁴ W. Arundel Orchard, *Music in Australia; More than 150 Years of Development* (Melbourne: Georgian House, 1952) 150.

⁹⁵ *Bell's Life in Victoria*, 28 September 1867.

⁹⁶ H. D. Wilton appeared as the Don's manager both in 1862 and in 1864/5.

⁹⁷ *Bell's Life in Victoria*, 2 February 1867.

⁹⁸ *Bell's Life in Victoria*, 28 September 1867.

⁹⁹ *Illustrated Melbourne Post*, 25 February 1864.

¹⁰⁰ W. J. Lawrence, *Barry Sullivan; A Biographical Sketch* (London, 1893) 54.

¹⁰¹ *Mercury*, 27 June 1864.

¹⁰² J.W.F Rogers, ed., "The Social Development of Australasia" [1888] in Lurline Stuart, *James Smith, The Making of Colonial Culture* (Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 1989) 109.

¹⁰³ *Illustrated Melbourne Post*, 25 February 1864.

¹⁰⁴ Orchard 149.

¹⁰⁵ Orchard 150.

¹⁰⁶ Clelia and her husband, Hosmer Parsons, married on 9 June 1870, in New York.

They had one child, a daughter named Emma Arabella Parsons (b 14 July 1872, d 22 November 1961, New York).

¹⁰⁷ *Mercury*, 3 June 1865.

¹⁰⁸ Porter 54.

Chapter Nine: Hattie Shepparde

¹ *Australasian Sketcher*, 27 December 1873.

² *Mercury*, 4 March 1865. Don's company comprised of Emma, Clelia and Frank Howson, Mr. and Miss Stanley, Hattie Shepparde, Mrs. Crosby, and Messrs. J. J. Welsh, Seymour, Bartlett, and G. H. Rogers, whom Frank would have remembered from the 1842-1845 seasons at the Royal Victoria Theatre, Hobart.

³ Porter 54.

⁴ See Harold Love's entry on Hattie Shepparde in Parsons 528.

⁵ Parsons 528.

⁶ For Hattie Shepparde's birth details see the "Digger" Pioneer Index, Tasmania 1803-1899, the State Library of Tasmania. Reference number 1385/1846, registration number: 33. The name "Langmaid" is also given as Hattie's maiden name on the death notice of her daughter. See the State Library of Tasmania "Digger" Victorian Pioneer Index, registration number 3557. Further, Hattie's name is listed as "Harriet Langmede" on Cynisca's birth record. See Victorian "Digger Index 1836 - 1888," Registration: 17541.

⁷ Amos Langmaid was reportedly born on 19 October 1809 in Branscombe, County Devon, England and christened on 12 November 1809 in the Parish church. He died on 15 August 1894 in Wivenhoe, Tasmania, apparently as the result of senility and cardiovascular failure.

⁸ *Launceston Examiner*, 8 November 1851.

⁹ "TO HELP PRESERVE THE HISTORY OF WARATAH TASMANIA. Waratah: Birthplace of Tasmanian Mining." Prepared by: Val, WARATAH CONNECTIONS,

WARATAH. This web site produced 7 Jun 2005 by Personal Ancestral File, a product of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. 5 July 2005.

<<http://home.iprimus.com.au/waratah/waratah/pafg109.htm#3205>>

¹⁰ Harriet Hill was born in 1812 and reportedly immigrated to Launceston aboard the *Charles Kerr* on 20 November 1835. She died on 7 October 1874, less than a month after her daughter Hattie, also in Carlton, Victoria.

¹¹ Harriet Hill married Amos Langmaid on 8 June 1836 in Launceston. See "Marriages solemnized in the Parish of Launceston, County of Cornwall, 1836" records (page 120), Registration Number: 3402, Reference number: 401. Langmaid's children to Hill were Sally Beaton Langmaid (1837 - 1838) in Launceston, another (sex unknown) in 1841, Louisa Jane Langmaid (1843 - 1844), Hattie (born in 1846), another child (unnamed, in 1848), and Mary Langmaid (born in 1849 in Cumberland, New South Wales).

¹² Hannah Hall was born in Hobart on 19 November 1831. Parish records list that she was baptised on 30 December 1832. Parish records give her mother's name as Mary, and her father as Henry, citing his profession as a "brewer." See Parish Church of Hobart, County of Buckingham, 1832 records (page 78). Registration Number: 4388, Reference number: 1152. Langmaid's children to Hall were Richard Langmaid (1850 - 1905), Arthur William Langmaid (24 April 1853 - 5 August 1933), Alfred Tarleton Langmaid (31 March 1855 - 6 November 1941), Clara Langmaid (5 September 1856 - 18 February 1943), Amos Langmaid (born on 13 June 1857 in Tarlton, Tasmania and died on 2 May 1889 in Latrobe, Tasmania), Sarah Langmaid (born on 5 September 1859 in Port Sorell Tasmania), Annie Amelia Langmaid (b. 1862), and Louisa Langmaid (born on 4 May 1865 in Tarlton, Tasmania, and died on 2 June 1869).

¹³ See "Tasmanian Pioneer Digger Index 1803 - 1899" registration number: 3402/1836, RDG: 36.

¹⁴ Notice of Louise Jane Langmaid's birth can be found in the "Digger" Pioneer Index, Tasmania, reference number 1393/1843, registration number 33. Notice of her death was published in Launceston's *Cornwall Chronicle* on 24 February 1844.

¹⁵ See Victorian "Digger Index 1836 - 1888," Registration: 29590.

¹⁶ See Victorian "Digger Index 1836 - 1888," Registration: 27914.

¹⁷ Marriage records (to Harriet Hill) list that he was a convict (and Hill a free woman).

¹⁸ Love 528.

¹⁹ Love 397.

²⁰ Much of Hattie's background comes from the biographical sketch of her career printed by the *Australasian* on 27 December 1873.

²¹ *Age*, 1 April 1862.

²² *Age*, 4 April 1862.

²³ *Age*, 1 July 1862.

²⁴ *Age*, 7 August 1864.

²⁵ *Mercury*, 11 May 1865.

²⁶ *Cornwall Chronicle*, 7 June 1865.

²⁷ Porter 65.

²⁸ Downes 70.

²⁹ Marie Duret and John Le Roy first appeared in Australia in 1856. Le Roy was lessee of Melbourne's Royal Princess's from February 1863, and the couple appeared in Tasmania in 1870/1. Either this implies that the couple remained in Australia between 1856–70s, or that they reappeared in Australia at least twice.

³⁰ *Mercury*, 16 November 1870.

³¹ *Mercury*, 28 November 1870.

³² *The Stranger* was first adapted from Von Kotzebue's *Menschenhass und Reue* (1789), by Schink and Papendick in 1798.

³³ The *Sydney Morning Herald* via the *Mercury* on 12 December 1870 claimed that Duret had presented *Octoroon* "for the first time in the colony."

³⁴ The *Mercury* claimed on 12 January that it was the first time *After Dark* was presented at the Theatre Royal.

³⁵ A shipping intelligence report printed by the Hobart *Mercury* records Hattie's re-arrival in Hobart (direct from Sydney) aboard the *City of Hobart* on 15 April 1871.

³⁶ *Mercury*, 13 April 1871.

³⁷ *Mercury*, 21 April 1871.

³⁸ *Mercury*, 13 April 1871.

³⁹ *Mercury*, 22 April 1871.

⁴⁰ *Mercury*, 25 April 1871.

⁴¹ *Mercury*, 5 May 1871.

⁴² *Mercury*, 22 April 1871.

⁴³ *Mercury*, 24 April 1871.

⁴⁴ *Mercury*, 2 May 1871.

⁴⁵ *Mercury*, 2 May 1871.

⁴⁶ *Mercury*, 2 May 1871.

⁴⁷ *Mercury*, 9 May 1871.

⁴⁸ *Mercury*, 9 May 1871.

⁴⁹ *Mercury*, 2 June 1871.

⁵⁰ The production could have been a version of Adolphe Philippe Dennery's *The Sea of Ice; or, A Thirst for Gold, and the Wild Flower of Mexico* (c. 1850s), which was a romantic drama using tableaux scenes. Alternatively, it may have been an adaptation of Boucicault's version (c. 1860s), or that of Edward Stirling's *The Struggle for Gold and the Orphan of the Frozen Sea*.

⁵¹ *Mercury*, 31 May 1871.

⁵² Judith Butler, "Burning Acts: Injurious Speech," Parker and Sedgwick 197.

⁵³ Striff, *Performance Studies* 1.

⁵⁴ *Australasian Sketcher*, 6 September 1873.

⁵⁵ *Australasian Sketcher*, 6 September 1873.

⁵⁶ *Australasian Sketcher*, 14 June 1873.

⁵⁷ *Australasian Sketcher*, 14 June 1873.

⁵⁸ *Australasian Sketcher*, 19 April 1873.

⁵⁹ *Australasian Sketcher*, 9 August 1873.

⁶⁰ *Australasian Sketcher*, 9 August 1873.

⁶¹ *Australasian Sketcher*, 17 May 1873.

⁶² Parsons 528.

⁶³ *Australasian Sketcher*, 29 November 1873.

⁶⁴ Parsons 528.

⁶⁵ The *Australasian Sketcher* on 27 December 1873 reported that Hattie left Australia for New Zealand in 1865 and returned to Sydney in September 1870. During those years she appeared with Julia Matthews and Joey Gougenheim. Hattie probably performed with Matthews when Julia was on her way to England; she had bid Sydney a fond farewell in June 1867. She appeared at Covent Garden in Offenbach's *La Grande duchesse de Gérolstein* in September the same year. Her career was cut short after she fatally contracted yellow fever in the United States. She died in May 1876. Julia was famously known as the woman who had refused to accept Robert O'Hara Burke's proposal of marriage shortly before his ill-fated expedition. Joey Gougenheim settled in Australia after marrying Marmaduke Constable in July 1865. She appeared in New Zealand and later assembled her own company back in Australia. She also leased a theatre in Gulgong NSW between 1871 and 1872. She retired from the stage in 1873 and died in Sydney on 13 September 1900.

⁶⁶ Porter 65.

⁶⁷ The *Australasian*, 27 December 1873.

⁶⁸ *Mercury*, 6 April 1871.

⁶⁹ As reported by the *Melbourne Age*, 15 November 1873.

⁷⁰ *Melbourne Age*, 15 November 1873.

⁷¹ *Australasian Sketcher*, 14 June 1873.

⁷² Harold Love, *The Golden Age of Australian Opera; W. S. Lyster and his Companies 1861 – 1880* (Sydney: Currency Press, 1981) 217.

⁷³ *Age*, 23 September 1871.

⁷⁴ *Age*, 23 September 1871.

⁷⁵ *Argus*, 25 September 1874.

⁷⁶ *Argus*, 25 September 1874.

⁷⁷ *Melbourne Age*, 25 September 1874.

⁷⁸ For the death notice of little Hattie Cynisca Bella Hallam, see the State Library of Tasmania "Digger" Victorian Pioneer Index, registration number 3557.

⁷⁹ Amos Langmaid died in Launceston on 15 August 1894. See "Tasmanian Pioneer Digger Index 1803 – 1899" registration number: 436/1894, RDG: 35.

Chapter Ten: Homegrown Stars of the 1870s

¹ According to the *Illustrated Australian News*, Lucy Chambers was aged 53 years at the time of her death, given as 8 June 1894. This means she was probably born in 1841, and died the same year as Marie Carandini. See *Illustrated Australian News*, 2 July 1894.

² *Mercury*, 9 May 1871.

³ *Mercury*, 9 May 1871.

⁴ Orchard 53.

⁵ Brisbane 70 and Gyger 148.

⁶ Brisbane 137.

⁷ Brisbane 112 and Marjory Skill, *Sweet Nell of Old Sydney* (Urania: North Sydney, 1973) 65.

⁸ Roe, *A History of the Theatre Royal* 16.

⁹ *Sydney Morning Herald* via *Hobart Mercury*, 30 June 1864.

¹⁰ *Bell's Life in Victoria* via *Launceston Examiner*, 9 May 1865.

¹¹ *Illustrated Australian News*, 2 July 1894.

¹² *Mercury*, 30 June 1864.

¹³ *Illustrated Australian News*, 2 July 1894.

¹⁴ *Age*, 15 February 1870.

¹⁵ *Age*, 15 February 1870.

¹⁶ *Age*, 15 February 1870.

¹⁷ *Mercury*, 16 February 1871.

¹⁸ See *Mercury*, 16 March 1871.

¹⁹ See *Mercury*, 16 March 1871.

²⁰ *Mercury*, 15 February 1871.

²¹ *Age*, 18 March 1870.

²² See Brisbane 70 and Gyger 148.

²³ Gyger 275.

²⁴ *Melbourne Age*, 15 February 1870.

²⁵ *Mercury*, 15 February 1871.

²⁶ *Mercury*, 16 February 1871.

²⁷ *Mercury*, 15 February 1871.

²⁸ *Mercury*, 15 February 1871.

²⁹ *Mercury*, 15 February 1871.

³⁰ *Mercury*, 16 February 1871.

³¹ *Melbourne Age*, 15 February 1870.

³² Parsons 561.

³³ Skill 8.

³⁴ West 67.

³⁵ Very little has been written about Maggie, particularly her career. She died in Melbourne, probably sometime around September 1903.

³⁶ Alec Bagot claims that Docy married someone by the name of "Collins." See Bagot, *Coppin the Great* 335. *Table Talk* supports this by noting that Docy was later known as Mrs. H. R. Harwood, and that her first husband's name was Collins (she had a son by Collins called "Bertie"). See *Table Talk*, 12 April 1889. Docy was later known as "Docie Cambossier," implying that she married a third time. See Skill 143. Docy died sometime after 1931. Reports claim that Nellie Stewart died at 1:00am on the morning of 22 June 1931 in Sydney (see *Melbourne Age*, 22 June 1931 and *Hobart Mercury*, 22 June 1931). Nellie was survived by Docy (then "Mrs. Cambossier" and a brother, Richard Stewart). Both were among the "vast crowds" the *Mercury* reported as attending Nellie's funeral on the morning of 24 June 1931 at Sydney's St. James's Church. It was further reported that a special ferry carrying her "cortege" crossed Sydney Harbour from Nellie's home and that "thousands" were unable to gain admission into the church to hear the service. See *Mercury*, 24 June 1931.

³⁷ Skill 3.

³⁸ Downes 116.

³⁹ Nellie Stewart was born Eleanor Stewart Towzey in Woolloomooloo on 20 November 1858.

⁴⁰ Downes 116.

⁴¹ Harold Love, "Stock Companies, Travelling Stars and the Birth of the 'Firm,' (1854-1900)" 100.

⁴² For an electronic version of Akhurst's *King Arthur* see the National Library of Australia website at: <http://nla.gov.au/nla.mus-an7375550>.

⁴³ See "My dear girls she's a pal of mine," a duo piquant (words by W. M. Akhurst) at the National Library of Australia website: <http://nla.gov.au/nla.mus-an24683544>

⁴⁴ *Age*, 18 September 1869.

⁴⁵ Docy's "retirement" in 1870 came two months after Lucy Chambers made her Melbourne debut.

⁴⁶ *Age*, 26 April 1870.

⁴⁷ Richard Stewart was W. S. Lyster's business partner along with John Hennings. The trio managed Melbourne's Princess's Theatre during 1872.

⁴⁸ *Opéra-bouffes* were comic-style musical performances "in which farcical liberetti sent up classical mythology and other institutions." See Parsons 382.

⁴⁹ Garnet Walch was born in Tasmania on 10 October 1843. He excelled at localising the narrative content of material works (mostly pantomimes and satires) to reflect the nuances of Australian cultural life. For instance, his adaptation of Offenbach's *Geneviève de Brabant* included localised jokes as well as additional songs (including one for the tenor Armes Beaumont). As well as a dramatist, Walch was a journalist and quite prolific writer. He established the *Melbourne Mirror* in 1888 and was involved with producing a significant collection of books. He died in 1913. For more see Veronica Kelly's entry on Walch in Parsons 626-27.

⁵⁰ *Mercury*, 19 April 1878.

⁵¹ *Mercury*, 22 April 1878.

⁵² *Mercury*, 23 April 1878.

⁵³ *Mercury*, 23 April 1878.

⁵⁴ *Mercury*, 29 April 1878.

⁵⁵ The Stewart Family successfully toured New Zealand, India (Bombay and Calcutta), London and New York for two years beginning in 1878 and were back in Melbourne

just after the Carandini Ballad and Operatic Company completed their 1880 tour of Tasmania.

⁵⁶ *Mercury*, 27 April 1878.

⁵⁷ *Mercury*, 23 April 1878.

⁵⁸ *Mercury*, 4 May 1878.

Chapter Eleven: Amy Sherwin, the Nineteenth Century's Last "Tasmanian Nightingale"

¹ *Mercury*, 26 May 1934.

² "Brava, Tasmania" by Garnet Walch in *A Little Tin Plate and Other Verses*, cited in Judith Bowler, *Amy Sherwin; The Tasmanian Nightingale* (Hobart: Specialty Press, 1982) 7.

³ See the Archives Office of Tasmania "Digger" Tasmanian Pioneer Index 1803-1899; registration: 1928/1855, reference: RGD 33.

⁴ See parish details about the marriage recorded on microfilm; 548/1843.

⁵ Bowler 11.

⁶ Bowler 11.

⁷ *Argus*, 8 October 1910.

⁸ "Miss Beaumont" was presumably Armes Beaumont's daughter as he also performed on the occasion, thus giving the *Argus* an excuse to comment on the "abominable nuisance" and "unfair" "practice of always encoring Mr. Beaumont." See *Argus*, 6 January 1873.

⁹ *Argus*, 6 January 1873.

¹⁰ *Argus*, 6 January 1873.

¹¹ Judith Bowler names the company as "the Pompei and Cagli Italian Opera Company" (see Bowler 13), but the troupe was actually called the Royal Italian Opera Company, although the Pompei and Cagli Opera Company did form its nucleus. Giovanni Pompei and Augusto Cagli's company debuted at Melbourne's Princess's Theatre in May 1871. The troupe presented the Australian premiere of Giovanni Pacini's *Saffo* that year. Pompei left for Calcutta later that year while Cagli went to Sydney. The company

toured New Zealand (without Pompei) and returned to Australia in 1872. Pompei reappeared in Sydney in 1875 and unsuccessfully ran a season of opera (without Cagli). The collaboration between Pompei and Cagli was back on track by the time they showcased the talents of Amy Sherwin in 1878.

¹² *Mercury*, 2 May 1878.

¹³ *Mercury*, 19 April 1878.

¹⁴ *Mercury*, 19 April 1878.

¹⁵ *Mercury*, 19 April 1878.

¹⁶ *Mercury*, 30 April 1878.

¹⁷ *Mercury*, 10 May 1878.

¹⁸ *Mercury*, 22 April 1878.

¹⁹ *Mercury*, 1 May 1878.

²⁰ *Mercury*, 1 May 1878.

²¹ *Mercury*, 17 March 1871.

²² Whiteoak and Scott-Maxwell 113.

²³ *Mercury*, 12 February 1894.

²⁴ *Mercury*, 2 May 1878.

²⁵ *Melbourne Age*, 15 February 1870.

²⁶ *Melbourne Argus*, 4 June 1878.

²⁷ *Melbourne Argus* as published by the *Launceston Examiner*, 7 June 1878.

²⁸ *Ballarat Courier*, 29 June 1878. A similar claim was also made by the *Melbourne Argus* almost a month earlier, implying that the cheer "*Bravo Tasmania!*" was quite commonplace after Amy's early performances. See *Melbourne Argus* as published by the *Launceston Examiner*, 7 June 1878.

²⁹ Fuery 5.

³⁰ *Melbourne Age* as published by the *Launceston Examiner*, 7 June 1878.

³¹ *Ballarat Courier* as published by the *Launceston Examiner*, 5 July 1878.

³² *Melbourne Age* as published by the *Launceston Examiner*, 7 June 1878.

³³ *Mercury*, 12 July 1887.

³⁴ *Mercury*, 12 July 1887.

³⁵ *Mercury*, 15 July 1887.

³⁶ *Ballarat Courier* as published by the *Launceston Examiner*, 5 July 1878.

³⁷ *Mercury*, 27 November 1906.

³⁸ *Mercury*, 15 July 1887.

³⁹ *Mercury*, 15 July 1887.

⁴⁰ *Mercury*, 15 July 1887.

⁴¹ *Mercury*, 15 July 1887.

⁴² *Mercury*, 3 February 1898.

⁴³ *Tasmanian Mail*, 8 January 1898.

⁴⁴ Bagot 87.

⁴⁵ Amy also performed regularly in other smaller communities on her return visits.

These included; Huonville on 15 January 1907; the Oddfellows Hall, New Norfolk on 16 January; and Launceston's Albert Hall on 21 January. An hour-late train from Hobart into Launceston caused the postponement of the planned civic reception for Sherwin on 19 January 1907. The Mayor and Mayoress of Launceston, Mr. and Mrs. P Boland were reportedly happy to oblige. See *Mercury*, 21 January 1907.

⁴⁶ *Mercury*, 16 February 1898.

⁴⁷ *Mercury*, 7 January 1907.

⁴⁸ *Mercury*, 27 November 1906.

⁴⁹ *Mercury*, 7 January 1907.

⁵⁰ Amy's concerts nurturing "Rising Tasmanian Nightingales" in 1907 were probably a welcome diversion from the devastation wrought by the summer bushfires that ravaged the Hobart countryside in the early months of that year.

⁵¹ *Mercury*, 18 May 1934.

⁵² *Mercury*, 18 May 1934.

⁵³ *Launceston Examiner*, 18 February 1888.

⁵⁴ Bowler 62.

⁵⁵ Bowler 59.

⁵⁶ *Mercury*, 18 May 1934.

⁵⁷ See *Mercury*, 9 August 2005. Also see the *Cygnets & Channels Classifieds*, 11 August 2005.

⁵⁸ John Austin, *How to do Things with Words* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975) 109.

⁵⁹ Austin 109.

Women, Identity and Actresses' Social Power

¹ Part of Amy's speech at a Mayoral reception in Launceston, as reported by the *Mercury*, 23 January 1907.

² Turner, *National Fictions: Literature, film and the construction of Australian narrative* 19.

³ Turner 8.

⁴ Turner 8.

⁵ *Australian Idol*, Contestant Biography (Amali Ward), Australian Idol produced by Grundy Television Pty Limited, a FremantleMedia Company, for Network Ten based on the format owned by FremantleMedia Operations BV and 19TV Limited. © 2004 Grundy Television Pty Limited, Australia and New Zealand. 11 October 2004.

<http://au.australianidol.yahoo.com/contestants/amali_ward/index.html>

⁶ Fuery 5.

⁷ *Mercury*, 18 May 1934.

⁸ Part of Amy's speech at a Mayoral reception in Launceston, as reported by the *Mercury*, 23 January 1907.

⁹ Dixon, *The Real Matilda: Women and Identity in Australia 1788 to the Present* 76.

¹⁰ Gyger 148. Further, Brisbane claims Lucy Chambers debuted "as Azucena in Verdi's *Il trovatore* in Florence in 1864." See Brisbane 70.

¹¹ *Bell's Life in Victoria*, via *Launceston Examiner*, 9 May 1865.

¹² *Launceston Examiner*, 12 August 1878.

¹³ *New York Times*, 6 June 1928.

¹⁴ *Launceston Examiner*, 12 August 1878.

¹⁵ *Launceston Examiner*, 23 September 1935.

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- ¹⁶ Anne had earlier appeared as Agnes in the Australian premier of *Die Freischütz* at Sydney's Theatre Royal on 15 September 1838. Gyger 245.
- ¹⁷ *Courier*, 11 January 1855.
- ¹⁸ *Adrienne Le Couvrier* was also known as *The Reigning Favourite* and similarly *The Corsican Brothers* was sometimes billed as *The Fatal Duel*.
- ¹⁹ *Courier*, 11 January 1855.
- ²⁰ *Mercury*, 5 January 1855. *Feudal Times* was also known as *The Court of King James the III*.
- ²¹ *Mercury*, 20 December 1854.
- ²² *Bell's Life in Sydney*, 7 September 1856.
- ²³ *Mercury*, 1 May 1865.
- ²⁴ The *Mercury* claimed Alfred Wigan's *The First Night* was also known as *My Daughter's Debut* and "new to the Tasmanian stage." See *Mercury*, 1 March 1862.
- ²⁵ *Mercury*, 1 May 1865.
- ²⁶ The *Mercury* claimed on 12 January that it was the first time *After Dark* was presented at the Theatre Royal.
- ²⁷ Mrs. Norton, "The Murmur of the Shell." See Petherick Reading Room (Music Collection), Call Number: MUS N m 780 AA V. 151, or, National Library of Australia, Online Resources: <http://nla.gov.au/nla.mus-an24683544>.
- ²⁸ *Mercury*, 30 April 1878.
- ²⁹ *Age*, 5 Sept 1893
- ³⁰ *Courier*, 21 September 1855.
- ³¹ *Courier*, 18 September 1855.
- ³² *Courier*, 18 September 1855.
- ³³ Gatens et al., 503.
- ³⁴ *Australasian Sketcher*, 9 August 1873.
- ³⁵ *Mercury*, 5 July 1864.
- ³⁶ *Australasian*, 22 February 1870
- ³⁷ Gillian Winter has proposed that "After the Victorian gold rushes began in 1851, however, Van Diemen's Land became poorer and less important than other colonies

and this, coupled with its isolation, reduced professional theatre." Parsons 577. Elizabeth Webby has written that: "The gold discoveries which dealt the final blow to struggling theatres in Tasmania and South Australia were, of course, the salvation of those in Melbourne and Geelong." Love, *The Australian Stage* 6.

³⁸ *Mercury*, 8 February 1894.

³⁹ *Mercury*, 8 February 1894.

⁴⁰ "Melbourne in the Sixties." *Melbourne Argus*, 8 October 1904.

⁴¹ *Mercury*, 8 May 1865.

⁴² *Mercury*, 17 March 1862.

⁴³ *Mercury*, 25 May 1865.

⁴⁴ *Melbourne Punch* 8 December 1864.

⁴⁵ *Melbourne Punch*, 3 July 1856.

⁴⁶ *Melbourne Age* cited in the *Ballarat Times*, 30 October 1857.

⁴⁷ *Melbourne Punch*, 3 July 1856.

⁴⁸ *Melbourne Punch*, 20 October 1859.

⁴⁹ John Frow, *Cultural Studies and Cultural Value*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995) 3.

⁵⁰ *Courier*, 7 April 1837.

⁵¹ Edgar et al 65. See Weber's concept of "verstehen" (literally the German for "understand").

⁵² *Mercury*, 7 January 1907.

⁵³ *Mercury*, 15 July 1887.

⁵⁴ *Sydney Morning Herald* via the *Hobart Mercury*, 30 June 1864.

⁵⁵ *South Australian Advertiser* via *Launceston Examiner*, 12 August 1878.

⁵⁶ *The Australasian*, 27 December 1873.

⁵⁷ *Melbourne Age*, 15 February 1870.

⁵⁸ *Melbourne Age* as published by the *Launceston Examiner*, 7 June 1878.

⁵⁹ *Melbourne Age*, 15 February 1870.

⁶⁰ *Mercury*, 27 June 1864.