**Elaine Hobby, Performing Identity: Aphra Behn**

**English Theatre Culture 1660-1720 Online Symposium #2, 19–21 April 2021**

**1.** at least 17 plays (dates are of first known performance): *The Forc’d Marriage* (1670), *The Amorous Prince* (1671), *The Dutch Lover* (1673), *Abdelazer* (1675), *The Town-Fopp* (1676), *The Rover* (1677), *Sir Patient Fancy* (1678), *The Feign’d Curtizans* (1679), *The Young King* (1680?), *The Second Part of the Rover* (1681), *The False Count* (1681), *The Roundheads* (1681), *The City-Heiress* (1682), *The Luckey Chance* (1686), *The Emperor of the Moon* (1687), *The Widdow Ranter* (1689?), *The Younger Brother* (1696); and probably *The Revenge* (1680), *Like Father, Like Son* (1682)

**2.** *This Play had been sooner in Print, but for a Report about the Town (made by some either very Malitious or very Ignorant) that ʼtwas* Thomaso *alter’d; which made the Book-sellers fear some trouble from the Proprietor* *of that Admirable Play, which indeed has Wit enough to stock a Poet, and is not to be peec’t or mended by any but the Excellent Author himself; That I have stoln some hints from it, may be a proof that I valu’d it more than to pretend to alter it; had I had the Dexterity of some Poets, who are not more Expert in stealing than in the Art of Concealing, and who even that way out-do the* Spartan*-Boyes,**I might have appropriated all to my self; but I, vainly proud of my Judgment, hang out the Sign of* Angellica*, (the only stoln Object) to give Notice where a great part of the Wit dwelt; tho if the Play of* TheNovella *were as well worth remembring as* Thomaso*, they might (bating the Name) have as well said, I took it from thence: I will only say the Plot and Bus’ness (not to boast on’t) is my own: as for the Words and Characters, I leave the Reader to judge and compare ʼem with* Thomaso*, to whom I recommend the great Entertainment of reading it;**tho had this succeeded ill, I shou’d have had no need of imploring that Justice from the Criticks, who are naturally so kind to any that pretend to usurp their Dominion — especially of our Sex — they wou’d doubtless have given me the whole Honour on’t. Therefore I will only say in* English *what the famous* Virgil *does in* Latin*;* I make Verses, and others have the Fame*.* (*The Rover*, Post-script)

**3.** Angellica Bianca vs Angellica Bianca

*The Rover*

willmore Yes, I am poor — but I’m a Gentleman,  
 And one that Scornes this baseness which you

practice;  
Poor as I am, I wou’d not sell my self,  
No, not to gain your Charming high priz’d Person.  
Tho’ I admire you strangely for your Beauty,  
Yet I contemn your mind. —   
 — And yet I wou’d at any rate enjoy you...

moretta *[Aside.]* Sure she’s bewitched, that she can stand thus tamely and hear his sawcy railing — *[To* Willmore*.]* Sirrah, will you be gon?

angellica *(To* Moretta.*)* How dare you take this Liberty? — withdraw. — *[To* Willmore.*]* Pray tell me, Sir, are not you guilty of the same Mercenary Crime? When a Lady is propos’d to you for a Wife, you never ask, how fair — discreet — or virtuous she is; but what’s her Fortune? — which if but small, you cry — she will not do my business — and basely leave her, though she languish for you — say, is not this as poor?

*Thomaso* (pp. 337-42)

thomaso I saw and lov'd you, fair one, as who do's not; I wish'd for you too, as who would not? But when I read your paper, I found the price of this Jewel too great, not for my value but my Fortune; had that been equal to my Love, you should have found at what rate I priz'd the Beauty and the Friendship of the famous and fair *Angellica,* that Star of *Italy*...

*Angellica is serious and attentive to all he sayes.*

anna How silent she stands and hears his railing? *[To* Thomaso.*]* Good Corporall, will you trot and leave your preaching? ...

angellica *[To* Anna.*]* How now, who gave you this liberty of railing? Get you gone, or lie down behind yon door quickly, or I will kick thy carrion carcass out at window.

angellica After all this severe truth, what are we guilty of that you have not confess'd? What crime staines us that you would not now act? You men are strangely partial to your selves, you would not despise us else; Is the fault single in us? If not, why should we lose our Honours in the Act, when you think it an Honour to be the Actors? Who made the Law against Love? Or where will you find it obligeth women onely? If the Law be general, must not the crime be so too?

**4.** consummation anticipated

angellica And will you pay me then the price I ask?

willmore Oh why dost thou draw me from an awful Worship,

By shewing thou art no Divinity?  
Conceal the Fiend, and shew me all the Angel!   
Keep me but ignorant, and I’ll be devout  
And pay my Vows for ever at this shrine. *(Kneels and kisses her hand.*

angellica The pay I mean, is but thy Love for mine.  
 — Can you give that?

willmore Intirely — come, let’s withdraw! where I’ll renew my Vows — and breathe ʼem with such Ardour thou shalt not doubt my zeal.

angellica Thou hast a Pow’r too strong to be resisted. *(Ex.* Willmore *and* Angellica*.*

*Thomaso*’s Angellica (p. 342): Let's retire, and not only learn but practise this new Doctrine, whose Rules are easie, and Laws so sweet, 'twill give the blind Lover his eyes, and the Law his feet, but they will meet.

**5.** learning of betrayal

*Whilst he is seemingly Courting* Hellena*,* *Enter* Angellica*,* Moretta*,* Biskey *and* Sebastian *all in Masquerade.* Angellica *sees* Willmore *and stares.*

angellica Heavens ʼtis he! and passionately fond to see another Woman.

moretta What cou’d you less expect from such a swaggerer?

angellica Expect! as much as I paid him, a Heart intire;  
 Which I had Pride enough to think, when ʼere I gave,  
 It would have rais’d the Man above the Vulgar,  
 Made him all Soul! and that all soft and constant.

*Thomaso*’s Angellica (p. 396), speaking to Pedro:

So he doth not marry and impale the Tree, let him give the friut to any she; Me he will not marry, nor shall not if he would; because I love him he shall not for my sake be guilty of any action he may blush for; nor will I stand the curse of a chaste bed, whose robb'd sheets, when holy vows have ty'd him, wound as sure and fatal as lightning.

pedro Why thus severe to your self? I warrant he may marry you, and with honour and profit enough forget pass'd faults.

angellica No, Sir; though honour be that I think not of, because the custom of the world has plac'd it beyond our power; yet I can prize it in others, and despise that man that wants it. Kindness and faith to my Lover, good nature and charity are the height of our ambition...

**6.** angellica Oh, name not such mean trifles; — had I given him all  
My Youth has earn’d from Sin,  
I had not lost a thought, nor sigh upon’t.  
But I have given him my Eternal rest,  
My whole repose, my future joys, my Heart!  
My Virgin heart *Moretta*! Oh ʼtis gone!

moretta *[Aside.]* Curse on him, here he comes;  
How fine she has made him too.

**7.** angellica Stand off, base Villain — *(She draws a Pistol, and holds it to his Brest.*

willmore *[Aside.]* Hah, ʼtis not she; *[Aloud.]* who art thou? and what’s thy business?

angellica One thou hast injur’d, and who comes to kill thee for’t.

willmore What the Devil canst thou mean?

angellica By all my hopes to kill thee — *(Holds still the Pistol to his Brest, he*

*going back, she following still.*

**8.** Lady Galliard in *The City-Heiress* (1682):

wilding Then keep your word, Madam.

lady galliard My word! And have I promis’d then to be

A Whore? A Whore! Oh let me think of that!   
A man’s Convenience, his leisure hours, his Bed of Ease,   
To loll and tumble on at idle times;   
The Slave, the Hackney of his lawless Lust!   
A loath’d Extinguisher of filthy flames,   
Made use of, and thrown by. --- Oh infamous!

wilding Come, come, you love me not, I see it plain;   
That makes your scruples: that, that’s the reason   
You start at words, and run away from shadows.

**9.** Julia, Lady Fulbank in *The Luckey Chance*:

sir cautious But being so, if I shou’d be good-natur’d and give thee leave to love discreetly?—

lady fulbank I’d do’t without your leave Sir.

sir cautious Do’t — what — cuckold me?

lady fulbank No, love discreetly Sir, love as I ought, love Honestly.

sir cautious What, in Love with any Body but your own Husband?

lady fulbank Yes.

sir cautious Yes quoth a — is that your loving as you ought? —

lady fulbank We can not help our Inclinations Sir,

No more than Time, or Light from coming on —   
But I can keep my Vertue, Sir, intire.

sir cautious What? I’ll warrant this is your first Love *Gayman*?

lady fulbank I’ll not deny that Truth, tho even to you.

sir cautious Why, in Consideration of my Age and your Youth, I’d bear a Conscience — provided you do things wisely.

lady fulbank Do what thing Sir?

sir cautious You know what I mean —

lady fulbank Hah — I hope you wou’d not be a Cuckold Sir?

sir cautious Why — truly in a civil Way — or so. —

lady fulbank There is but one Way Sir to make me hate you;

And that wou’d be tame Suffering.

sir cautious *[Aside.]* Nay and she be thereabouts, there’s no discovering —

lady fulbank But leave this fond Discourse — and if you must — Let us to Bed —

**10.** murdering Erminia in *The Forc’d Marriage*

(*He strangles her with a Garter, which he snatches from his Leg, or* *smothers her with a Pillow.*

erminia Hold, hold, and hear my vows of innocence.

alcippus Let me be damn’d as thou art if I do. *(throws her on a bed, he sits down in a Chair.*

**11.** Haunce the Dutchman meets his double in *The Dutch Lover*:

Haunce *sees* Alonzo *drest like him, goes gazing about him, and on himself, calling*

Gload *to do the same.* *…*

carlo I mean, Sir, what’s your name, and which of you is Haunce van Ezel?

haunce Aye, which of us is Haunce van Ezel, tell us that, Sir; we shall handle ye, i’faith, now ---

alonzo He, Sir, can best inform you. *(Pointing to* Haunce.

haunce Who, I! I know no more than the great Turk, not I, which of us is me; my hat, my feather; my sute, and my Garniture all over faith now; and I believe this is me, for I’l trust my eyes before any other sense about me. What sayst thou now Gload? guess which of us is thy own natural Master now if thou canst.

gload Which, Sir? — why — let me see — let me see  *(Turns them both about.*

**12.** *The Widdow Ranter* and blank verse

king .... Yet tho’

I’m young I’m sensible of Injuries;

And oft have heard my Grandsire say — That we

Were Monarchs once of all this spacious World;

Till you, an unknown People landing here,

Distress’d and ruin’d by destructive storms,

Abusing all our Charitable Hospitality,

Usurp’d our Right, and made your friends your slaves.

**13.** *The Widdow Ranter*’s widow

surelove You have reason to praise an old man, who dy’d and left you worth fifty thousand Pound.

ranter Ay Gad — and what’s better Sweet-heart, dy’d in good time too, and left me young enough to spend this fifty thousand pound in better Company — rest his Soul for that too.

chrisante I doubt ’twill be all laid out in *Bacons* Mad Lieutenant Generall *Dareing*.

ranter Faith I think I could lend it the Rogue on good Security.

chrisante What’s that, to be bound Body for Body?

ranter Rather that he should love no bodies Body besides my own, but my Fortune is too good to trust the Rogue, my money makes me an *Infidell*.

chrisante You think they all love you for that?

ranter For that, Ay what else? if it were not for that, I might sit still and sigh, and cry out, a Miracle! a Miracle! at sight of a Man within my doors. ... *[To* Hazard*.]* we rich Widdows are the best Commodity this Country affords, I’le tell you that.

**14.** *The Widdow Ranter*’s widow again

ranter ... — my damn’d mad Fellow *Dareing* who has my heart and soul — Loves *Chrisante*, has stolen her, and carryed her away to his Tents; she hates him, while I am dying for him.

jenny Dying Madam! I never saw you melancholy.

ranter Pox on’t no, why should I sigh and whine, and make my self an Ass, and him conceited? No, instead of snevelling I’m resolv’d —

jenny What Madam?

ranter Gad to beat the Rascal, and bring off *Crisante*.

jenny Beat him Madam? What, a woman beat a Lieutenant General?

ranter Hang ’em, they get a name in War, from command, not courage....

jenny But if he should kill you Madam?

ranter I’le take care to make it as Comical a Duel as the best of ’em. As much in Love as I am, I do not intend to dy it’s Martyr.

**15.** *The Younger Brother*’s Mirtilla

george Oh, that false Tongue can now no more deceive — Art thou not Marry’d? Tell me that false Charmer.

mirtilla Yes. — *(holding him.*

george Curse on that word; wou’d thou had’st never learnt it —   
 It gave thy Heart, and my Repose away.

mirtilla Dost think I Marry’d with that dull design?   
 Canst thou believe I gave my Heart away,   
 Because I gave my Hand? — Fond Ceremony that —   
 A necessary trick, devis’d by wary Age,   
 To Traffic ʼtwixt a Portion, and a Jointure;   
 Him whom I Lov’d is Marry’d to my Soul.

george Art thou then mine? And wilt thou make Attonement, by such a Charming way? — Come to my Clasping Arms.

all Behn quotations are from The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Aphra Behn (published and in progress)