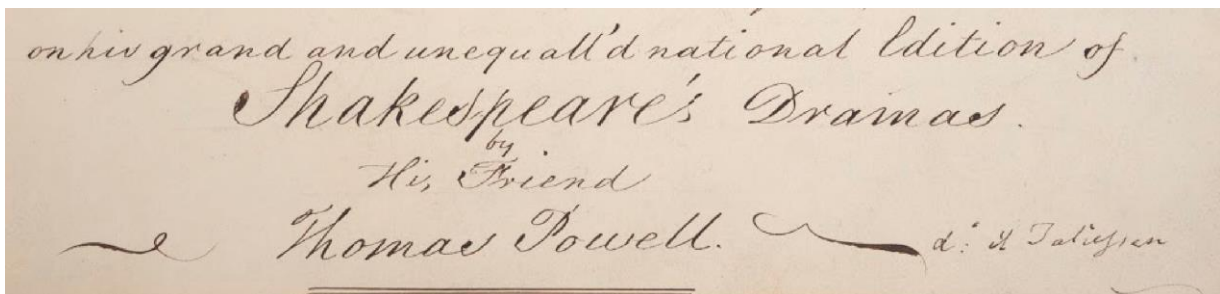


## ‘The living Arts appear’d’: Shakespearean Ekphrasis in New College, MS 367

New College, Oxford, MS 367 contains an apparently unique poem dating to the late eighteenth century, entitled ‘The Visions of William Collins’. With each of its 9 folios measuring 16½ x 12 inches, almost half of which are blank, and catchwords inscribed at the foot of each recto, this is a manuscript designed for presentation. It is one of the most recent manuscripts acquired by New College Library, arriving in the late twentieth century, but has received little critical attention. This Note will offer an edition of the poem in this manuscript, situating it within a historical and literary context.

The poem of MS 367 is attributed on its title-page to Thomas Powell (1735–1820), poet and playwright, whose published works appear both under his own name and under his long-standing pseudonym, ‘Il Taliessen de Monmouth’. Powell was the son of the merchant David Powell, and his wife, Susannah Thistlethwaite.<sup>1</sup> Although he was a partner in the family mercantile business, Thomas produced his several known literary works from his home in Tottenham, Middlesex. Under his own name, Powell published two dramas: *The Children in the Wood, founded on the beautiful old popular song of that name* (1805), and *Camillus and Columna; or, The Sleeping Beauty* (1806). Two further works appeared under his pseudonym, which plays on Powell’s self-styled continuation of the British bardic tradition; ‘Taliessen’ is the name of the sixth-century ‘Chief Bard’ of medieval Welsh poetry, while the Italianized ‘de Monmouth’ clearly recalls Geoffrey, twelfth-century chronicler of the history of Britain. ‘Il Taliessen de Monmouth’ authored the popular ‘Beauty; an ode’ (1794), and the play *Edgar and Elfrida* (c. 1790). The title-page of New College, MS 367 dates the contents of the manuscript to 1792, rendering this poem one of Powell’s earliest known works. Significantly, it also identifies Powell alongside his pseudonym; ‘Thomas Powell’ is named at the bottom of folio 1r, with ‘d: Il Taliessen’ in small lettering besides it. It is likely that the manuscript is written in Powell’s own hand; a note at the head of folio 2r, in the same fine, eighteenth-century italic which runs throughout the manuscript, is initialled ‘T.P’, for Thomas Powell. Of course it is conceivable that Powell specified the notes and additions to be added into a manuscript scribed by another hand, but this is a manuscript clearly designed for presentation, as a personal gift, so it is probable that Powell would wish to make his own presence felt throughout the folios, scribing the text himself. The marginal note on f. 2r, moreover, states that ‘This Poem was never printed—& shewn only to a few Friends’. If this is true, then New College may contain the only record of this poem, a poem which engages with a particular moment of literary and artistic history in England, and which speaks to the reception of Shakespearean drama among an eighteenth-century readership. MS 367 performs conversations between historical and fictional figures, as the manuscript becomes a stage on which to perform versified tableaux of Shakespeare’s dramas.



New College Library, Oxford, MS 367, f. 1r [detail]

<sup>1</sup> Susan Thistlethwaite was cousin to ‘a Mr Baden’, to whom Thomas Powell’s father, David, was apprenticed. This was the beginning of the Baden Powell family, now synonymous with the Scouting movement in England. See Richard Morris, *The Powells in Essex and their London Ancestors* (Loughton: Loughton and District Historical Society, 2002).

To begin with this manuscript's context: as the title-page confirms, Thomas Powell writes the poem of MS 367 in dedication to Sir John Boydell, celebrating 'his grand and unequal'd national Edition of Shakespeare's Dramas'. As well as holding Mayoral office in London between 1790 and 1791, Boydell was a printmaker and engraver at the forefront of his trade, with a particular personal interest in reviving (to his mind) the decline of British arts since a 'golden age' of Elizabethan painting, and the landscape paintings of Renaissance Europe.<sup>2</sup> Boydell's own writing proves him resolute in his mission to establish an 'English School of Historical Painting', in which personally chosen artists would take Shakespeare's plays as their subject matter, constructing detailed scenes which combined elements of figurative and landscape painting.<sup>3</sup> 'I believe it will be readily admitted', Boydell writes in 1789, 'that no subjects seem so proper to form an English School of Historical Painting, as the scenes of the immortal Shakespeare'.<sup>4</sup> At the heart of Boydell's vision of Historical Painting was his Shakespeare Gallery, which stood in Pall Mall between 1789 and 1805. The Gallery housed the paintings which Boydell commissioned, its collections increasing year on year; the Gallery opened with thirty-four paintings, and contained over one hundred and sixty by 1802. Boydell's Gallery, however, was only one element of his English School; his plans first began to take shape in 1786, in collaboration with his nephew, Josiah Boydell, and George Nicol, publisher and bookseller to George III. As outlined in Rosie Dias's study of the Shakespeare Gallery, Boydell's proposal had three main strands; the first of which was Boydell's 'commissioning of paintings depicting scenes from Shakespeare's plays, to be painted by leading contemporary artists'.<sup>5</sup> These paintings would form the core of a permanent exhibition in the Pall Mall Gallery. The project's funding would come chiefly from the sale of engravings made from the larger paintings in the Gallery's collection, bound into one volume. Finally, 'the smaller paintings would be reproduced as smaller, quarto-sized prints', to illustrate Boydell's own edition of Shakespeare's works. This edition would be overseen by George Steevens who, in collaboration with Samuel Johnson, had himself completed a ten-volume edition of Shakespeare's works in 1773. The text of this Steevens and Johnson edition also features in the catalogues which accompany Boydell's annual exhibitions, showing the lines and scenes from which the paintings had been drawn. Boydell's own Shakespearean edition appeared first in eight volumes (between 1791 and 1802), then in nine, and New College Library now holds two sets of this nine-volume edition: NB.188.1-9 and NB.166.12-19.

Text and image go hand-in-hand in Boydell's vision of his 'English School of Historical Painting', and New College, MS 367 engages with both literary and artistic endeavours. Boydell's Shakespearean edition was illustrated with engraved miniatures of the paintings which hung in the Pall Mall Gallery, and its catalogues set his curated paintings against relevant extracts from Shakespeare's dramas. Powell's is not the only contemporary poem to pay homage to Boydell's Shakespearean endeavours; Edward Jerningham (1737-1812) published *The Shakespeare [sic] Gallery, A Poem* in 1791, disclaiming in its Advertisement that 'The following Poem does not pass any judgment upon the Pictures that are now exhibited in the Gallery; but attempts to point out new subjects for future exhibitions'.<sup>6</sup> Powell's verse, by contrast, summarises scenes which are clearly drawn from Shakespeare's dramas, and which form the subject of paintings commissioned by Boydell to hang in his Gallery in, and beyond, 1792. Powell's manuscript responds to the union of text and image which is central to the Gallery, and to Boydell's illustrated edition, painting with words before the eyes of his reader.

<sup>2</sup> Rosie Dias, *Exhibiting Englishness: John Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery and the Formation of a National Aesthetic* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2013), p. 18.

<sup>3</sup> Dias, *Exhibiting Englishness*, p. 4.

<sup>4</sup> John Boydell, *A Catalogue of the Pictures in the Shakespeare Gallery, Pall-Mall* (London: sold at the place of exhibition, 1789), p. vi.

<sup>5</sup> Dias, *Exhibiting Englishness*, p. 7.

<sup>6</sup> Edward Jerningham, *The Shakespeare Gallery, A Poem. By Mr. Jerningham. The second edition* (London: printed for J. Robson, New Bond-Street, 1791), A2r.

I turn now to the text of Powell's 'Visions of William Collins: An Ode'. Powell's Ode takes the form of a dream vision, in which the figure of 'the tunefull Collins' rests beneath a sycamore tree, there visited in his sleep by '[t]he Gods of Poesy'.<sup>7</sup> As he dreams, a procession of 'reverend Bards' appears before his eyes, led by Shakespeare himself:

Of reverend Bards a long drawn Train,  
Pac'd slowly o'er the mossy Plain,  
Shakespeare appear'd supreme.

[f. 2r]<sup>8</sup>



New College Library, Oxford, MS 367, f. 1r [detail]

With Shakespeare as mediator, Collins's dream is filled with isolated scenes from the playwright's dramas; he observes, as a slumbering spectator, such familiar moments as King Lear in the storm, Macbeth's meeting with the three witches, Juliet's death, or Jacques's soliloquising in the Forest of Arden. These scenes are all conjured by 'the great Enchanter', whose portrait appears on folio 1r of the manuscript; 'Picture, the great Enchanter' is written in faint pencil beneath the miniature. The strangely-named 'Picture' stands before the sleeping Collins in a red cloak, as Shakespeare, characterised with both beard and ruff, presides over the scene. As Picture raises his brush and palette, shadowy characters can be seen in the middle distance, conjured into being. As in the poem itself, Shakespeare's narratives gain life through the medium of this artist-magician, before the inner eye of William Collins.

<sup>7</sup> New College Library, Oxford, MS 367, f. 2r.

<sup>8</sup> The same train/plain couplet had previously appeared in Jerningham's laudatory verse, with Shakespeare again as its focus. In Jerningham's poem, however, it is Shakespeare who views this 'train' as audience rather than participant:

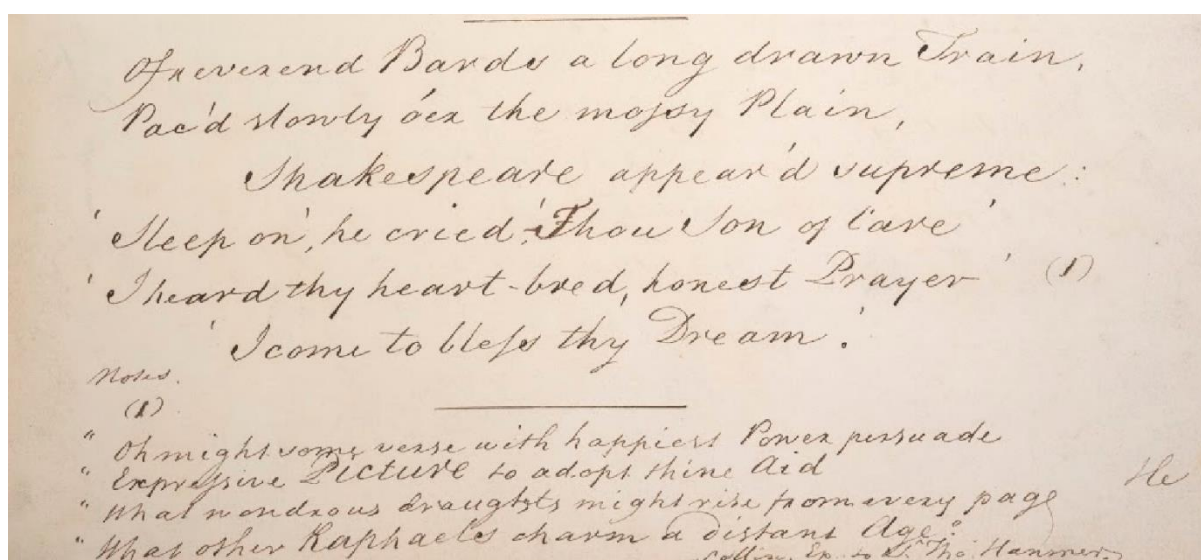
The Poet view'd, as on a spacious plain,  
Of human passions the long shadowy train:

[B2r]

The historical William Collins (1721–1759) provides this manuscript’s link to New College. A scholar of Winchester College, Collins was accepted as a student of New College in 1740. In this year, however, New College had already filled its quota for undergraduates, and Collins instead joined Queen’s College, leaving in 1741 to accept a scholarship at Magdalen. Samuel Johnson’s *Lives of the English Poets* (1779–81) chronicles these early years with a clear collegiate bias; he states that Collins’s missed acceptance to New College ‘was the original misfortune of his life’.<sup>9</sup> William Collins began work as a poet while at Oxford; his first collection, *Persian Eclogues*, was published in London in 1742, and his *Verses Humbly Address’d to Sir Thomas Hanmer* appeared in December 1743, anonymously attributed to ‘a Gentleman of Oxford’. Powell was evidently familiar with these 1743 *Verses*; four lines from Collins’s ‘Epistle to Sir Thomas Hanmer, On his Edition of Shakespeare’s Works’, are added as a marginal note on f. 2r, at the very point where Powell’s figure of Shakespeare first addresses the sleeping Collins:

‘Sleep on’, he cried, ‘Thou son of care’  
 ‘I heard thy heart-bred, honest Prayer’  
 ‘I come to bless thy Dream’.

[f. 2r]



New College Library, Oxford, MS 367, f. 2r [detail]

Thomas Hanmer had published his six-volume edition of Shakespeare in 1743–4, with Collins’s verse commemorating its appearance. The marginal annotations in MS 367, likely in Powell’s own hand, create a dialogue between the historical William Collins and Powell’s own fictional representation. Powell borrows a verse from Collins’s ‘Epistle to Thomas Hanmer’ in which the narrator (presumably Collins himself) speculates wistfully whether any ‘verse’ might do justice to the worlds and images which the reader encounters within Hanmer’s Shakespearean edition:

Oh might some verse with happiest Power persuade  
 Expressive Picture to adopt thine Aid  
 What wondrous draughts might rise from every page  
 What other Raphaels charm a distant age.

[f. 2r]

<sup>9</sup> Samuel Johnson, in *The Poetical Works of William Collins, enriched with Elegant Engravings. To which is prefixed A Life of the Author, by Dr. Johnson* (London: printed by T. Bensley, for E. Harding, No. 98, Pall-Mall, 1798), p. iv.

Setting this verse against his own, Powell presents Shakespeare's appearance in New College, MS 367 as an *answer* to the very 'heart-bred, honest Prayer' which Collins utters in his 'Epistle'. Collins's wish for 'Expressive Picture' is answered by Powell's verse, in which 'Picture' is the very name of the conjuror who is responsible for Collins's Shakespearean visions. Powell's 'Picture' visits Collins to inspire the same poetic visions, the 'wondrous draughts', about which Collins's verse only speculates. Powell and Collins both author verses on the occasion of new editions of Shakespeare's works, but New College, MS 367 facilitates a conversation, even competition, between the two, tacitly constructing its own superiority.

Each stanza in Powell's poem describes a scene from one of Shakespeare's plays, as edited by Boydell. I suggest, however, that Powell's descriptions are not primarily inspired by the *text* of Boydell's edition, but by its accompanying illustrations; each verse in MS 367 corresponds with one of the paintings which hung in the Shakespeare Gallery in, or close to, 1792. These paintings were in turn commissioned as engravings to be bound for sale, and were printed alongside Shakespeare's texts in Boydell's own edition. MS 367 sits at the centre of an artistic nexus which combines manuscript with print, and painting with engraving; it converses not only with William Collins's *Epistle* of 1743 (and by extension with Hanmer's 1743–44 edition of Shakespeare), but with printings of Boydell's bound engravings, and with the catalogues printed annually to accompany the paintings of the Shakespeare Gallery.<sup>10</sup> In what follows, I shall set several of Powell's verses against their painted or engraved counterparts, considering how Powell's manuscript curates a new version of Boydell's Gallery, guiding its reader through an ekphrastic exhibition within their own mind. Through Powell's versified description, the reader of MS 367 can experience the same Shakespearean visions as visit the sleeping figure of William Collins.

Many of the allusions in Powell's poem are self-explanatory; the first of Collins's dream-visions depicts the death of Cardinal Beaufort in *Henry VI, Part II*, III.iii:

He saw fierce Beaufort's direful death  
Gnashing his teeth as pants his breath:  
Convulsive grasp his hands:  
The meek-soul'd Monarch prays in vain,  
Demons too busy sharpen Pain,  
Horror on tip-toe stands

[f. 2v]

In Boydell's Gallery, this scene is illustrated by Sir Joshua Reynolds's *The Death of Cardinal Beaufort (1377–1447)*, which hung in the Gallery from its opening.<sup>11</sup> Looking at this painting, the parallels with Powell's description are clear; Reynolds depicts the Cardinal with eyes open and teeth bared, as Henry stands before him, arm raised in prayer. This painting dates to 1789, and its engraving was executed by Caroline Watson, published in 1792. It is clearly conceivable that Powell could have seen both painting and engraving, which would render his own verse ekphrastic, a verbal counterpart to these images.

<sup>10</sup> See, for example, *A Collection of Prints, from Pictures Painted [for the Shakespeare Gallery of John and Josiah Boydell] for the Purpose of Illustrating the Dramatic Works of Shakespeare, by the Artists of Great Britain* (London: London Shakespeare Gallery, 1803). Catalogue references will be to John Boydell, *A Catalogue of the Pictures, &c. in the Shakespeare Gallery, Pall-Mall* (London: printed for the proprietors, and sold at the place of exhibition, 1792).

<sup>11</sup> See Boydell, *A Catalogue* (1789), p. 62.



Sir Joshua Reynolds, *The Death of Cardinal Beaufort* (1377–1447), oil on canvas (1789)  
(from William Shakespeare’s *Henry VI, Part II*, Act III, Scene iii)  
Petworth House and Park, West Sussex © National Trust Images

Every subsequent verse in Powell’s poem describes a tableau from one of Shakespeare’s dramas, and each of these tableaux was at one stage chosen as the subject-matter for a painting in Boydell’s Gallery. Each verse except one, moreover, relates to one of the paintings included in the catalogue of 1792, to which Powell dates his manuscript. It may be, then, that Powell visited the Gallery during this year, and that his poem acts as a response to Boydell’s exhibition, as well as his Shakespearean edition. Consider, for example, the parallels between Powell’s description of *The Tempest*, Act I, Scene i and George Romney’s painting of c. 1790, of which only the engraving and fragments now survive:

A Sky in flames by magic Powers  
Bursts on the eye: the Tempest roars: —  
Th’ enchanted Isle appears: —  
Blest Ferdinand tho in Ocean tost —  
Miranda falls thy glorious boast: —  
Milan controuls his Peers.

[f. 3r]



‘Tempest’, Act I, Scene i, engraved by Benjamin Smith, after George Romney (1797)  
 Engraving and stipple-engraving on moderately thick, slightly textured, cream, wove paper  
 Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Fund, B1976.1.202<sup>12</sup>

Setting text and image alongside each other, Powell’s verse clearly speaks to the same power dynamics captured in Romney’s painting (and, by extension, in Smith’s engraving). As in Powell’s description, painting and image show Prospero standing upon his ‘enchanted Isle’, arms raised, invoking ‘magic Powers’ to raise a roaring “Tempest” which rises to envelop the shipwrecked crew, leaving ‘Blest Ferdinand’ ‘in Ocean tost’. Since the engraving of this painting, executed by Benjamin Smith, was not published until 1797, it may be that Powell encountered this image in person in the Shakespeare Gallery; Romney’s painting first appears in the 1790 catalogue.<sup>13</sup>

New College, MS 367 brings together manuscript, print and paint; it offers its own microcosmic, versified edition of many of Shakespeare’s dramas, while also engaging with multiple textual editions from the eighteenth century. The concordance between Powell’s verse and the contents of Boydell’s Shakespeare Gallery, during the year of the manuscript’s composition, allows us to read MS 367 as a textual companion to Boydell’s ‘English School of Historical Painting’, painting with words rather than brushstrokes. In the edition of the poem which follows, I suggest connections between the stanzas of Powell’s poem, and the paintings or engravings which best fit these Shakespearean descriptions. In doing so, text and image continue to converse, as the ‘ekphrastic gallery’ of MS 367 opens to the present-day reader.

<sup>12</sup> Also published in: *A Collection of Prints, Painted for the Purpose of Illustrating the Dramatic Works of Shakespeare, by the Artists of Great-Britain* (London: Shakespeare Gallery, 1803), Bodleian Library, Oxford, Sutherland 172.

<sup>13</sup> John Boydell, *A Catalogue of the Pictures, &c. in the Shakespeare Gallery, Pall-Mall* (London: printed by H. Baldwin; and sold at the place of exhibition, 1790), p. 73.

A NOTE ON THE TRANSCRIPTION

In editing New College, MS 367, I have transcribed the content of the manuscript, together with its notes and additions, maintaining the sense of dialogue between text and marginalia. My transcription preserves the layout of the manuscript, as far as possible, with original spellings, and only expands abbreviations where they do not affect the meter of the verse. Tall and short S are both transcribed in the same way, except where the tall S acts as an abbreviation for ‘ss’; in this case, the expansion is indicated with squared brackets. Capitalisation is maintained, and catchwords, notes and annotations are all indicated, in as close a form as possible to the original. Where possible, I have identified the scenes which Powell describes, and have included cross-references to relevant paintings in Boydell’s Shakespeare Gallery as footnotes, together with page numbers from the 1792 exhibition catalogue. I would greatly encourage interested readers to visit ‘What Jane Saw’, which contains a virtual reconstruction of Boydell’s Shakespeare Gallery, according to its 1796 catalogue listings.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> <[www.whatjanesaw.org](http://www.whatjanesaw.org)> (Accessed: 12 July 2021). I am grateful to Professor Janine Barchas (Department of English, University of Texas at Austin), for making this reconstruction digitally available.



1r

The Visions of William Collins

An Ode

To my valued and highly respected Friend,

The Right Hon[ourable] John Boydell.

Lord Mayor

of

London. 1792.

Himself, Artist, Lover of the Arts : and  
their most effective Friend and Patron: the warmest

that this or any Age can boast;

this Ode is address'd,

on his grand and unequal'd national Edition of  
Shakespeare's Dramas.

by

His Friend

Thomas Powell

2r

Minute. This Poem was never printed - & shewn only to a few Friends —

TP

Collins' Visions. an Ode.

Totus Mundus, agit Histrionem.

Tho. Powell. inv[?]nt see[?] detto Il Taliessen di Monmouth in lingua poetica

From Pain and Care and Passion Free,

Retir'd beneath his favourite Tree

+ (a Sycamore in New Forest)

The tunefull Collins lay:

Soft Sleep her pleasing Poppies shed,

And sleep'd in pease the Poet's head;

Deep Silence took the sway.

The Gods of Poesy drew nigh:

Apollo's Altar blas'd on high:

Rich Clouds of Incense roll:

Luterpé breath'd the plaintive Flute,

Urania touch'd her heavenly Lute,

And sooth'd his gentle Soul.

Of reverend Bards a long drawn Train,

Pac'd slowly o'er the mossy Plain,

Shakespeare appear'd supreme:

'Sleep on', he cried, 'Thou Son of Care'

'I heard thy heart-bred, honest Prayer' (1)

'I come to bless thy Dream'.

Notes

(1)

“Oh might some verse with happiest Power persuade  
“Expressive Picture to adopt thine Aid  
“What wondrous draughts might rise from every page  
“What other Raphaels charm a distant age.”

Collins. Ep. to Tho. Hanmer

2v

& He said: The living Arts appear'd,  
A Scenery worthy the Great Bard,  
Gren midst the spreading boughs  
'Picture', the great Enchanter stood,  
With Pallet, and his magic Rod,  
A new Creation rose.

He saw fierce Beaufort's direful death<sup>15</sup>  
Gnashing his teeth as pants his breath:  
Convulsive grasp his hands:  
The meek-soul'd Monarch prays in vain,  
Demons too busy sharpen Pain,  
Horror on tip-toe stands.

Lear comes on: great in the Storm,<sup>16</sup>  
Passion his high wrought Soul deform,  
Fierce see the Lightnings fly :  
His bare head braves the pelting Rain,  
No tears that reverend Face profane,  
Monarch in Misery!

A Night dead Scene forlorn appears,<sup>17</sup>  
Terrific Silence stills the Spheres,  
The Bell of 'One' appalls:  
Awfull glides by, the Danes pale Ghost,  
A Shriek! Chills all the dreary Coast  
Fear-struck the Sentry falls.

3r

Supernal Pow'ers great Glamis lead:<sup>18</sup>  
Inchantment forms the northern Creed,  
Behold the blasted Heath! —  
From the black Cloud the dire Witch cries —  
Strange Fears the Warriors' hearts surprise.  
Loud howls each Storm with Death.

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<sup>15</sup> *Henry VI, Part II*, III.iii. Painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds; see 1792 catalogue, p. 46.

<sup>16</sup> *King Lear*, III.iv. Painting by Benjamin West; see 1792 catalogue, p. 56.

<sup>17</sup> *Hamlet*, I.iv. Painting by Henry Fuseli; see 1792 catalogue, p. 68.

<sup>18</sup> *Macbeth*, I.iii. Painting by Henry Fuseli; see 1792 catalogue, p. 35.

A Sky in flames by magic Powers<sup>19</sup>  
Bursts on the eye: the Tempest roars: —  
The' enchanted Isle appears : —  
Blest Ferdinand tho<sup>in</sup> Ocean tost —  
Miranda falls thy glorious boast : —  
Milan controuls his Peers.

Tortur'd by doubts the brave despise,<sup>20</sup>  
Mark fierce Othello's rolling Eyes :  
Shall Tints the Soul describe? —  
Wild like the mad Judean see,  
The Pearl of Ind he casts away,  
Worth, doubly worth his Tribe.

Now lightly dancing on the Green,<sup>21</sup>  
By Moon-light see the Fairy Queen,  
And all the Elfin Host:  
The Air is filled with magic Notes,  
With friendly Phantoms Ether floats,  
Love sounds thro all the Coast

3v

Charming in Beauty's playfull Pride,<sup>22</sup>  
See Perdita — and at her side  
The Prince her amorous Guest :  
I see Leonte's jealous Pain :  
Now chang'd — adore, his Statue-Queen —  
Each anxious heart's at rest.

Ah shall the generous Eye behold<sup>23</sup>  
Thy Suffering, Catherine and be cold  
Nor curse the Tyrant's Crost? —  
Yet here are seen the ways of Heaven,  
By Beauty from our Land was driven  
Rome's all devouring Priest.

On Juliet's Bier Love's tear must fall<sup>24</sup>  
Nor less, on Romeo's fateful Pall,  
I the Tomb I see them low —  
The trembling Friar's glimmering Lamp  
Strikes on the heart a deadly Bamp,  
And fills the Cup of Woe.

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<sup>19</sup> *The Tempest*, I.i. Painting by George Romney; see 1792 catalogue, p. 73.

<sup>20</sup> *Othello*, V.ii. Painting by John Graham; see 1792 catalogue, p. 180.

<sup>21</sup> *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, IV.i. Painting by Henry Fuseli; see 1792 catalogue, p. 129.

<sup>22</sup> *A Winter's Tale*, V.iii. Painting by William Hamilton; see 1792 catalogue, p. 138.

<sup>23</sup> *The Taming of the Shrew*, likely to be III.ii. Painting by Francis Wheatley; see 1792 catalogue, p. 28.

<sup>24</sup> *Romeo and Juliet*, V.iii. Painting by James Northcote; see 1792 catalogue, p. 118.

The stony-bosom'd Jew draws near: —<sup>25</sup>  
Fierce Richard starts — and Ghosts appear  
There John — priest-ridden knave! —  
Antonious — king-like tow'rs above,  
Sublime amid all conquering Love  
Rome's Monarch — Egypt's slave.

4r

Sylvia's delightful Form was seen<sup>26</sup>  
With Ruffians in a woody Glen,  
Dread Scene for dreaded Love!  
But the just Gods are Virtue's guard,  
Young Valentine comes hereward:  
Love's joy shall Julia prove.

Yet hark the Trumpet sounds alarm  
Campania gleams with horrent arms,  
With rage the Apostate burns:  
Trembles high Rome's embattled wall,  
Prostrate the Wife — the Mother fall, —  
A Lamb that Tyger turns.

What Strife devours Britannia's Soil  
From York and Lancaster's dire broil?  
One 'Black' the realm puts on:  
Peace quits the else too happy Ground  
Unnatural Murders howl around,  
What thousands bleed for One?

Here heaved the Bard an heartfelt sigh  
His sympathising nerves wrought high,  
Then Britain bled again:  
Pity the Cherub of his Prayers  
On his wet cheek shed many a Tear:  
Mingled their Sorrows ran.

4v

Avert the Scene — blow festive Trumps<sup>27</sup>  
Falstaff comes putting on his stumps  
See Hal, see Poins unfold him:  
The parrying Wit — the humorous Leer,  
“By Instinct Hal” we plainly hear  
Tis more than mere behold him.

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<sup>25</sup> *The Merchant of Venice*, II.v. Painting by Robert Smirke; see 1792 catalogue, p. 131.

<sup>26</sup> *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, V.iii. Painting by Angelica Kauffman; see 1792 catalogue, p. 77.

<sup>27</sup> *Henry VI, Part I*, II.iv. Painting by Robert Smirke, not included in 1792 catalogue, but see *A Catalogue of the Pictures, &c. in the Shakspeare Gallery, Pall-Mall* (London: printed for the proprietors, and sold at the place of exhibition, 1793), p. 206.

Now in successive bright review<sup>28</sup>  
Another and another flew  
But chief the weeping Deer:  
A solemn Landscape — darkling Woods  
The antique Root, the brawling Floods  
And moralising Pier.

His mortal Powers appres'd — to soon  
The Poet woke : — the Scene was gone  
He sigh'd and shed a Tear  
“Ah me! — what's Life! — a Meteor's flame”  
“Ee'n this great Globe, and all its' Fame”  
“Like These shall melt in Air.”

5r

Boydell! By happy Genius blest  
Patron of liberal Arts, contest (1)  
Thou stands't Thyself an Host:  
A Work e'en Monarchs Pride might own,  
Thou dauntless Thou hast now begun  
To shine Brittannia's boast.

& With the same daring, princely Spirit  
Proceed upon thy voyage of Merit,  
Good Sense thy Polar Flame:  
Oh shun the Commentator's glare  
Shipwreck too often lurketh there  
Eternal be thy Name.

(1) *Ispe Agmen* .

Anna-Nadine Pike  
Graduate Trainee Library Assistant  
New College, Oxford

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<sup>28</sup> *As You Like It*, II.i. Painting by William Hodges; see 1792 catalogue, p. 25.