

How the Teatro Olimpico and the Drottningholm Slottsteater ‘Perform’ Their Pasts¹

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Is it possible for audiences to be transported to the theatrical past? Though the landmark theatres Teatro Olimpico and Drottningholm Slottsteater appear to differ completely, the meanings of their pasts are interpreted through the concepts of historicity versus historicism. After briefly examining the theatres’ histories and the historiography of their place in theatre history, we then analyse the details of the Olimpico’s and Slottsteater’s ‘performances’ in the following characteristics: how their distinctive features employ motion and space, the presence of their silent ghost audiences, their similarities as one-room theatres and in the ‘democratic nature’ of their auditoriums, and their use of trompe l’oeil in their construction. Through these elements, the Teatro Olimpico and Drottningholm Slottsteater perform their pasts, achieving their status as iconic playhouses that still make an impact on audiences and visitors. Does that impact effectively ‘take us back in time’?

Introduction: the time machine

Is it possible for audiences to be transported to the theatrical past? Two well-known and well-preserved theatres stake their claim to do just that. The Teatro Olimpico (1580–4) in Vicenza is the oldest remaining Italian Renaissance theatre. In the 2003 series *The Magic of Illusion*, television journalist Al Roker observes, ‘This extraordinary theater is designed in the style of a Roman amphitheater with phenomenal effect. Palladio takes us back in time.’² Drottningholm’s Slottsteater (1766) – literally ‘Castle Theatre’ – in Stockholm, a late baroque/rococo theatre, professes to re-create the performance conditions of the eighteenth century. The theatre’s brochure calls it ‘the preeminent time machine of our day’.³ In summer 2017, after decades of showing their slides in my theatre history courses, I finally visited both theatres, thanks to the Kalamazoo College James A. B. Stone Endowed Professorship.⁴

I interpret the meaning of the theatrical past on display at the Olimpico and Slottsteater through the concepts of historicity (historical actuality) versus historicism (a historical theory or doctrine). Willmar Sauter analyses the difference between the two terms’ application to theatre history in ‘The Drottningholm Theatre and the Historicity of Performance’:

Historicity is thought of as a relation to the past, not a thing or material object ... a link between historical aesthetics and the appreciation that it provokes in present day observers and readers ... The *historicity* of an aesthetic of the past is not to be confused with ... *historicism* ... According to Alun Munslow, *historicism* ‘for most historians

... is the primary historical act of perceiving historical periods in their own terms rather than any imposed by the historian.' In the field of theatre studies ... *Historicism* would mean that practices and ideas of the late eighteenth century could be copied in today's productions.⁵

Sauter cites Drottningholm's famous wave machine – a horizontal, rolling cylinder that simulates the sea's motion – to illustrate the concept of historicity as 'the confrontation between aesthetic demands of the present and historical aesthetic'.⁶ Weaned on cinematic special effects, today's audience experiences a quaint aesthetic relationship with the rolling cylindrical simulation of the ocean, exemplifying this 'confrontation'. Drottningholm's wave machine certainly is an authentic eighteenth-century object, but it developed more than two hundred years earlier, during the Italian Renaissance. (Though the Teatro Olimpico does not possess such a machine. This will not be the sole example of the Slottsteater having more in common with Italian Renaissance theatre characteristics than the Olimpico.)

How ever one might interpret their pasts, the Olimpico and Slottsteater appear to differ completely: one was built in the late Italian Renaissance while the other emerged almost two centuries later; one lacks a proscenium stage while the other possesses one; and one features an everlastingly static original scene design while the other is famous for the magic of its moving parts. Yet both the Teatro Olimpico and Drottningholm Slottsteater 'perform their pasts' through similarities in their historiographical narratives, and through shared physical characteristics. In 'The Performing Venue: The Visual Play of Italian Courtly Theatres in the Sixteenth Century', Lex Hermans argues that the 'protagonists' of his article 'have to be considered as performers ... but they are not living beings'.⁷ In the performance of their pasts, theatre buildings themselves animate their histories and legacies through their architecture, design, lobbies and other components.

After examining the theatres' histories and the historiography of their place in theatre history, we will analyse the details of the Olimpico's and Slottsteater's 'performances' in the following characteristics: how their distinctive features employ motion and space, the presence of their silent ghost audiences, their similarities as one-room theatres and the 'democratic nature' of their auditoriums, and their use of *trompe l'oeil* in their construction. Through these elements, the Teatro Olimpico and Drottningholm Slottsteater perform their pasts, achieving their status as iconic playhouses that still make an impact on audiences and visitors. Does that impact effectively 'take us back in time'?

Precarious beginnings and grand openings

Both theatres constitute part of the 'standard' pedagogical narrative of Western theatre history. Oscar Brockett's *History of the Theatre*, for decades the pre-eminent textbook in theatre history curricula, cites the Teatro Olimpico as 'the oldest surviving Renaissance theatre' while identifying Drottningholm as 'one of the few truly authentic eighteenth-century theatres still in existence'.⁸

Both theatres overcame precarious construction processes, but contrast in their opening-night stories. Almost five years passed between the beginning of construction of the Teatro Olimpico in 1580 and its 1585 opening. Designed by Andrea Palladio, who died shortly after construction began, it was converted from an old prison site. Numerous delays in financing by the commissioning Olympic Academy caused adjustments in execution by Palladio's son, Silla, who supervised the construction, and Vincenzo Scamozzi, who built the famous five perspective vistas for the scenery of the inaugural production of *Edipo tiranno*, Giustiniani's translation of *Oedipus the King*. Though he would lack Palladio's world influence, Carl Fredrik Adelcrantz was a leading figure in eighteenth-century Swedish architecture. Queen Lovisa Ulrika ordered the construction of the original Drottningholm theatre in 1754; however, it burned down eight years later. Adelcrantz's replacement design was initiated in 1764, but was not completed until 1766. French playwright de Crébillon's tragedy *Rhadamiste et Zénobie* inaugurated the theatre.

Edipo tiranno remains one of the most memorable opening-night performances in theatre history. Carefully staged by one of the earliest directors, Angelo Ingegneri, the production also featured lavish costumes, a new musical score, over a hundred extras and the sweet smell of incense wafting through the theatre.⁹ At 7:30 p.m., a curtain dropped to reveal the stage, invoking a sensational audience reaction (some of whom had been in the theatre since 10:00 a.m. and would remain until the play ended after 11:00 p.m.).¹⁰ Filippo Pigafetta's letter the next day gushed, 'one can hardly express in words, or even imagine, the great delight and boundless pleasure that overtook the spectators'.¹¹

But the star of the performance – as it would be for evermore at the Teatro Olimpico – was Palladio's theatre, with its sumptuously three-tiered facade or frons-scenae decorated with statues of academy members, and Scamozzi's five superb perspective vistas (Fig. 1). The auditorium, or cavea, engulfed its audience in splendour: paintings and frescoes of Roman mythic figures surrounded them, as did imposing Corinthian columns with statues in niches on the side and back walls, and an elevated gallery or loggia topped with an ornate balustrade. (These statues partially comprise the Olimpico's silent ghost audience, a concept we will explore later.)

Reaction to *Rhadamiste et Zénobie* has not been as thoroughly recorded, although Lovisa Ulrika, King Adolph Fredrik and young Crown Prince Gustav were 'amazed' upon their first visit to the theatre.¹² Like the Olimpico, the main attraction would always be the theatre itself; the distinctive Slottsteater amazed then and now. Features include a perfectly proportioned theatre, i.e. the proscenium is in the exact geometric centre of the building, between an intimate auditorium and a small but deep stage. Elisabeth Soderström, 1990s Drottningholm artistic director, calls it 'where stage and auditorium meet in complete harmony [preparing the] ... eyes and soul for an equally agreeable experience' (Fig. 2).¹³ Yet the theatre's characteristic that would resonate loudest in theatre history was the stage machinery that engineered the quick, noiseless scene changes of the scenic wings in the stage floor grooves. The installation of the machinery is credited not to Adelcrantz, but to Italian machinist Donato Stopani. Frank Moehler reports that Per Erdström of the Swedish Arena Theatre



FIG. 1 The Teatro Olimpico. Photograph by Regione Veneto (Creative Commons License CC BYNC), <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/deed.en>.



FIG. 2 The stage and auditorium of the Drottningholm Slottsteater. Photograph by Tove Falk Olsson.

Institute suggests that eighteenth-century Swedish court master builder George Fröman created the machinery.¹⁴ Nonetheless, like Palladio, architect Adelcrantz was highly praised for his theatre. 'Adelcrantz has created a masterpiece', declared royal courtier Claes Ekelbad.¹⁵

The theatre became a major social and political tool during the reign of Gustav III (1771–92), the 'Theatre King'. In 1778, Queen Lovisa ceded control of the theatre to her son, who quickly discontinued the French theatre company his mother favoured. Acting sometimes as a dramaturg, as an occasional performer, as a *de facto* producer and artistic director, and mostly as a writer of plays and libretti, Gustav III began to build a tradition of Swedish-language plays, including Swedish history verse dramas. He also encouraged Swedish production of opera (primarily Christoph Gluck, as well as French and Italian composers). Until the Theatre King's death in 1792, the summer company at Drottningholm thrived, with 'a peak in the year 1786, when no fewer than 82 plays, operas and ballets were performed'.¹⁶ Gustav's 'performance' went beyond actual theatre production. From how he oversaw the court to his wooing of the common folk to his assassination at a masked ball, he ran 'his country like a well-functioning *Gesamkunstwerk* with himself in the role of the prime mover – a theatre country in which the sun never set, but was illuminated permanently from the midsummer-night light, radiating from his royal benignity'.¹⁷

After 1792, theatrical activity at Drottningholm slowed considerably and the 'Sleeping Beauty' narrative of the theatre's history would have us believe that the theatre lay in abandoned, dusty neglect until it was rediscovered by Swedish library assistant Agne Beijer in 1921. Actually, the theatre was not closed until twenty years after Gustav III's death, though it continued to be used periodically for performances of various types throughout the nineteenth century. Additionally, 'since 1898, parts of the theatre had been cleared to facilitate prayer meetings and concerts'.¹⁸ The theatre was also used for storage and served as a shop for wide-ranging goods from stonemasonry to seeds.¹⁹ Although Beijer was part of a team, individually, he came to personify the Slottsteater's rebirth and its continued growth throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries as both a producing theatre and, like the Teatro Olimpico, a tremendous world tourist attraction and cultural institution. Beijer eventually became the first professor of theatre history in Sweden, an important link to Western theatre historiography.

Historiography of the theatres: performing an imagined past

The theatres' histories lead to a similar place in that historiography: both the Teatro Olimpico and Drottningholm Slottsteater seemingly transport audiences to the past periods they preserve; however, the notion of periods they represent is complex, as each theatre was conceived as an anachronism. In a sense, both exemplify 'pretend' period theatres.

The Teatro Olimpico achieves the effect of a small Roman theatre moved indoors.²⁰ Palladio's Roman travels, his examination of ancient theatres, and his illustrations in Barbaro's 1556 edition of Vitruvius' *De architectura* clearly influenced the theatre's

design.²¹ Moreover, Palladio's scenic designs at his temporary theatre in Vicenza's Basilica for his 1561 production of Piccolomini's *L'Amor Costante* and Trissino's *Sofonisba* (1562) clearly anticipate the Olimpico in such key elements as the multi-levelled and ornately decorated frons-scenae, intercolumniation and central vistas. In his research on Palladio's temporary theatres, Massimiliano Ciammaichella posits that the two Vicenza productions are 'testing models for Palladio's ... design and construction of the Teatro Olimpico'.²²

By 1580, when construction began, the proscenium arch and its use of changeable-perspective scenery had clearly been established earlier in the sixteenth century, at such theatres as Serlio's in Lyon (1548) and Vasari's Salone dei Cinquecento in Palazzo Vecchio in Florence (1565).²³ In 1589, at the Medici court proscenium theatre, Bargagli's *La Pellegrina* was performed at the wedding celebration of Grand Duke Ferdinando I to Christine of Lorraine; designed by Bernardo Buontalenti, it exhibited astonishing spectacle in its musical interludes. Featuring disappearing mountains and flying gods, Buontalenti's design represents the complete establishment of the 'building blocks' of Italian Renaissance theatre architecture and scene design: the proscenium arch, spectacular perspective scenery (best viewed from the 'Duke's Seat' in the centre of the house), and the use of instantaneous scene changes through sliding flats in stage floor grooves, as well as flying machinery and traps.²⁴ All of these components would be developed, refined and steadily relied on for the next two hundred years. None of these elements – save the use of perspective in Scamozzi's vistas – exist at the Teatro Olimpico. In his 1994 Palladio biography, Bruce Boucher identifies the Roman triumphal arch as the 'basic metaphor' of the Olimpico stage and cited its source as the Arch of Constantine.²⁵ Indeed, Scamozzi's addition of a Renaissance aesthetic creates a fundamental tension with Palladio's original concept.²⁶ Just three years after the Olimpico opened, Scamozzi would design the Teatro Sabbioneta (also known as the Teatro Gonzaga), the oldest surviving building designed specifically as a theatre, and the next descendant of the Olimpico's convoluted legacy as an Italian Renaissance theatre. Licisco Magagnato describes it as 'an auditorium based on reminiscences of Palladio's', and 'a Serlian theatre without proscenium arch'.²⁷

The Western theatre-history narrative of the early to mid-twentieth century initially tried to include the Olimpico in the proscenium's development, though it clearly stands outside that tradition. Allardyce Nicoll's *The Development of the Theatre* (1927) claims that the openings in Palladio's frons-scenae led to different styles of the proscenium: 'the formal proscenium arch in the Teatro Farnese and in later theatres reveals only a simplification of the triple doorways of the Vicenza playhouse'.²⁸ Just seventeen years later in *From Art to Theatre* (1944), George Kernodle concludes that the Teatro Olimpico exemplifies the 'crowning glory of the tradition of the arcade screen' of the Terence stage, derived from a mixture of medieval art and Vitruvius, even contending, 'The Teatro Olimpico might have been exactly the same if neither Vitruvius nor the ancient theatre had ever been discovered'.²⁹ In 1973, in *Theatres: An Illustrated History*, Simon Tidworth stated, 'It is ironic that this theatre ... often cited as marking the beginning of a new age, in fact marks only a dead end'.³⁰ Indeed, no major theatres built in Europe after the Olimpico truly resemble it (although another

Swedish theatre is a partial exception, as we shall see below). Some historians believe that seventeenth-century scene designer Giacomo Torelli – famed for his use of the chariot and pole system of scenery – used multiple views in his designs as reminiscent of the Olimpico's five perspective alleys.³¹ However, as early as 1951, Magagnato argues that, by incorporating the tradition of the Roman triumphal arch, 'not as a façade ... but an architectural curtain', Palladio created a new form: 'an organic spatial structure ... a strictly architectural composition of formal values which can embrace illusionistic elements from stage design'.³² By 1980, though, in *Andrea Palladio's Teatro Olimpico*, Thomas Oosting had already concluded, 'The Teatro Olimpico is a theatrical curiosity ... ingeniously Vitruvian and uniquely Palladian'.³³ In over four hundred years of historians' analysis, the Teatro Olimpico has stood as a unique outlier, 'frozen in time', certainly not typifying the theatre traditions of its era.

Strictly speaking, the Drottningholm Slottsteater was not frozen in time. Contrary to the Sleeping Beauty narrative, the theatre continued to be used, even if sporadically. Today, while it certainly represents an antiquated scenery aesthetic, it also does not exemplify a contemporary late eighteenth-century European theatre, although its 'rediscovery' certainly contributed to early twentieth-century knowledge of theatre history. George Haven's 1929 *MLA* article, one of the earliest on the Slottsteater in English, states, 'Here the tragedies of Corneille, Racine, and Voltaire ... were performed, evidently with much care for scenic effect'.³⁴ The Slottsteater's machinery, including its thirty original settings on six banks of changeable wings on either side of the stage, relies on one vanishing point of a single-point perspective, like most Italian Renaissance theatres (the Teatro Olimpico notwithstanding). But, by 1766, when the Slottsteater opened, single-point perspective had been replaced by *scena par angolo*, i.e. the vanishing point at the sides, or even double-point perspective, in the major opera houses of Italy and France. First developed by Ferdinando Bibiena in the early eighteenth century, this angled perspective, along with an increasing use of curvilinear shape and vast scale, created a distinctly baroque design aesthetic that was lavish and asymmetrical. None of these qualities could be ascribed to the Slottsteater. While trends in opera scenery became more extravagant, the opposite occurred in design for spoken drama, due to the triumph of the French neoclassical ideal in the seventeenth century. Since neoclassicism adhered to the (misinterpreted) Aristotelian unity of place, the *palais à volonté* for tragedy and the *chambre à quatre portes* for comedy displayed simpler and stationary settings. In eighteenth-century play production, there was less need for moveable scenery at all. Conversely, the accoutrements of the Slottsteater auditorium itself displayed more baroque characteristics of architecture and painting than the more ornamented and often lighter and airier rococo trend of the late eighteenth century. David Wiles analyses the Slottsteater's house:

The stucco motifs are all rather traditional ... bold cartouches and the consoles supporting the boxes eliminate rectilinearity, subordinating detail to an overall formal coherence in a way that is characteristically baroque ... The theatre was already, when first built, a statement about history – in today's jargon, its decorative detail was distinctively 'retro'.³⁵

Drottningholm's Slottsteater, in its use of the proscenium arch, changeable scenery and machinery; in its singular reliance on one-point perspective; and in its inclusion of the Duke's Seat, is far more of a prototypical Italian Renaissance theatre than the Teatro Olimpico. Ironically, a Swedish theatre that more resembles the Olimpico does exist: the Court Theatre at Gripsholm Castle (1777). Designed by Erik Palmstedt to fit 'in the top of a tower which had a diameter of about 45 feet',³⁶ Gripsholm Castle houses a truly tiny theatre, which, like the Olimpico, possesses curved bench seating in a semi-circular cavea, and a rear colonnade with a loggia, supported by Ionic columns (as opposed to the Olimpico's Corinthian) (Figs. 3,4). Barbro Stribolt notes, 'The profound impression made on [Palmstedt] by Andrea Palladio's Teatro Olimpico in Vicenza is well known.'³⁷ Possibly like the original Olimpico, the Gripsholm theatre has a coffered ceiling.³⁸ Unlike Palladio's theatre, it does contain a proscenium stage, designed for changeable scenery. Nevertheless, Gripsholm bridges the gap of over two hundred years of theatre architecture from the Olimpico to Drottningholm. Gripsholm's auditorium resembles the Olimpico more than it does Drottningholm, which in turn reflects more characteristics of an Italian Renaissance theatre than does the Olimpico.³⁹

So both the Teatro Olimpico and the Drottningholm Slottsteater perform an imagined past they do not represent. Palladio's theatre does not feature the elements



FIG. 3 Gripsholm Theatre. Archives of the Swedish Museum of the Performing Arts.



FIG. 4 The exedra of the Teatro Olimpico. Photograph by Tina Menta.

of what has come to characterize Italian Renaissance theatre; instead, it looks back to the Roman classical theatre (Boucher calls it ‘the illusion of an antique theater’⁴⁰), while Drottningholm was, as Wiles puts it, ‘distinctively retro’. Both theatres were anachronisms when they opened. However, some characteristics of the theatres parallel and perform their seeming embodiment of the past.

How both theatres perform the past

Motion and space

The Teatro Olimpico’s unmoving grand stillness contrasts with the Slottsteater’s lightning visual transformations. Both theatres perform the legacy of their pasts using their most distinctive characteristics: the monumental frons-scenae and perspectives of the Olimpico, and the machinery of Drottningholm. Over seventy-two feet wide, the frons-scenae towers over forty feet in two storeys plus an attic entablature, dwarfing performers with its size and majesty. The academy’s presence in the frons-scenae literally oversees Scamozzi’s vistas, which never move.

The Slottsteater can have an opposite effect on actor size, enlarging performers if they near an extreme upstage wing painted in perspective (Sauter notes the eighteenth-century practice of using child actors for entrances upstage, then replaced by adults when moving downstage).⁴¹ But the Slottsteater’s moving parts of its

original stage machinery dominate the theatre's narrative. Including the wave and cloud machines, Drottningholm presents an ultimate theatre of physical action when it comes to changing scenery (another example of behaving more like an Italian Renaissance theatre than does the Olimpico.) Stribolt notes, 'it takes a mere five seconds ... to switch from a pilloried hall to a cavern ... or Hades to the Elysian Fields'.⁴²

The Teatro Olimpico offers no such movement. It remains frozen in the setting of its inaugural production: 'The design of the theatre suggests a drama of rhetoric rather than of physical action.'⁴³ Indeed, the permanent set remains eternally, signifying both Thebes and Vicenza, as well as a generalized view of both the classical and Renaissance past. Thanks to the wizardry of the machinery, the scenery at the Slottsteater changes constantly. Many of the original settings are of interior scenes, such as the Blue Pillared Hall and the White Chamber.

Adapted from a Roman amphitheatre, and one of the first permanent indoor theatres, the Olimpico represents an outdoor environment. Palladio's theatre simulates an exterior use of space in Scamozzi's perspective vistas of Thebes, a version of Vicenza itself as a Renaissance 'ideal city' (like Thebes, Vicenza was recovering from a plague, in 1577–8).⁴⁴ The Great Theban Way and accompanying vistas represent an imagined Vicenza, in all its Renaissance glory, channelling the legacy of Rome and especially rivalling Venice, its legal overseer.

Drottningholm idealizes the depiction of inside and outside spaces, rather than imitating illusionistic reality. Eighteenth-century theatres like the Slottsteater used stock settings according to genre, rather than scenery designed for individual performances. Although the Slottsteater's wings and drops changed, most of the time they actually presented a prototypical picture of reality that, at least when it came to street scenes, was not all that different from the visual effect of the impression of Scamozzi's unmoving vistas at the Olimpico. Spectators in both theatres saw generalized contemporary, urban landscapes.

The silent ghost audience

The academy built the Olimpico as a public theatre, but from its beginning it has 'performed' practically as a private court theatre, with few productions until the twentieth century. Italian Renaissance theatres were not routinely used following construction and simply waited for their next event.⁴⁵ Also, opera was so expensive that the Olimpico rarely performed it. Opera required theatre architecture that included 'stacked-up' audiences in boxes and galleries, to sell as many tickets as possible. The Olimpico greatly differed in its audience seating. Conversely, the Slottsteater was built as a private court theatre but has often behaved as a Swedish national public theatre, a forum for developing Swedish culture like the place in public imagination that Shakespeare's Globe has come to represent: a golden age and chapter in a historical narrative of national character.⁴⁶

Public or private, the Olimpico and Slottsteater share a constant component: the silent ghost audience. Marvin Carlson observes that 'the theatre building has often been viewed as a domain of ghosts',⁴⁷ while with specific regard to Italian Renaissance theatres, Olivia Dawson writes that the Teatro Olimpico (along with the Teatro

Sabbioneta and Renaissance scholar Giulio Camillo's metaphorical Theatre of Memory) is a 'speaking theatre':

the theatres are ... inhabited. The paintings and sculptures by which different parts of the theatres are defined, represent people ... they most immediately and powerfully appear like a silent, hovering audience ... what is represented through these figures are the acts of being present, of watching and being watched.⁴⁸

In an earlier article, I argued that this silent ghost audience manifests itself in the *Olimpico* through the painted figures on the transverse walls, and the ninety-five statues adorning the *frons-scenae*;⁴⁹ this number does not include the smaller statues contained in Scamozzi's *vistas*, the high-relief panels above, and those in the semicircular open columned area at the back of the *cavea* – the *exedra* or *peristyle* – and the *cavea* walls. These paintings, statues and panels embody the concept of Dawson's 'silent, hovering audience'. Sitting in the *Olimpico* even today, one feels the presence of the silent ghost audience and its gaze, making it 'impossible not to feel that gaze originating in 16th century Vicenza ... consequently representing the Italian Renaissance itself'⁵⁰ (Fig. 5). The silent ghost audience features academy members, including Palladio, whose statue was finally placed in the *exedra* in 1751.

While Gustav III's statue does not reside in the *Slottsteater*'s auditorium, his presence surely does as part of that theatre's silent ghost audience. The Royal Chairs serve as an omnipresent stand-in for the Theatre King. The monarchical couple's immediacy was more enhanced in 1765, because, according to Adelcrantz's original ground plan, the Royal Chairs were closer to the stage rather than centred in the first row of benches, their location today (Fig. 6). Their earlier position was 'effectively part of the performance space'.⁵¹ The royal boxes of Gustav III (house left) and Queen Sophie Magdalena (house right) also form part of *Drottningholm*'s silent ghost audience. On the stage curtain, Gustav III's mother, Queen Lovisa Ulrika, embodies the goddess *Minerva* as she clutches the queen's 'festooned monogram', adding to the royal family's representation.⁵²

Both theatres perform their pasts with a silent ghost audience that observes the present. Despite their privileged silent ghost audiences, they now flourish as public theatre museums, drawing thousands of visitors annually from all over the world. As commercial enterprises, the *Teatro Olimpico* and *Drottningholm*'s *Slottsteater* earn much of their artistic and educational budgets through museum ticket sales, as well as their souvenir gift shops. The audiences at these museums are neither silent nor ghostlike, a current similarity shared by both theatres. (We will return to this notion of 'museum theatres' in our conclusion.)

One-room theatres

The silent ghost audiences of both theatres dwell alongside the performers and current audiences and visitors in the same one room.

Not only is what we now consider traditional *proscenium* staging a major legacy of Italian Renaissance theatre, but also the evolution of the *proscenium* theatre has long been considered the *de facto* 'normal staging' of contemporary Western theatre.⁵³ The



FIG. 5 Surrounded by the silent ghost audience at the Teatro Olimpico. Photograph by Tina Menta.

cinema has helped entrench many of the aesthetic concepts of proscenium theatre: the performers stay on one side of the room and the audience watches from the other. The audience sits in neatly ordered horizontal rows and the 'good seats' are at the centre and not the sides (again, the legacy of the 'Duke's Seat'). The performers are lighted and the

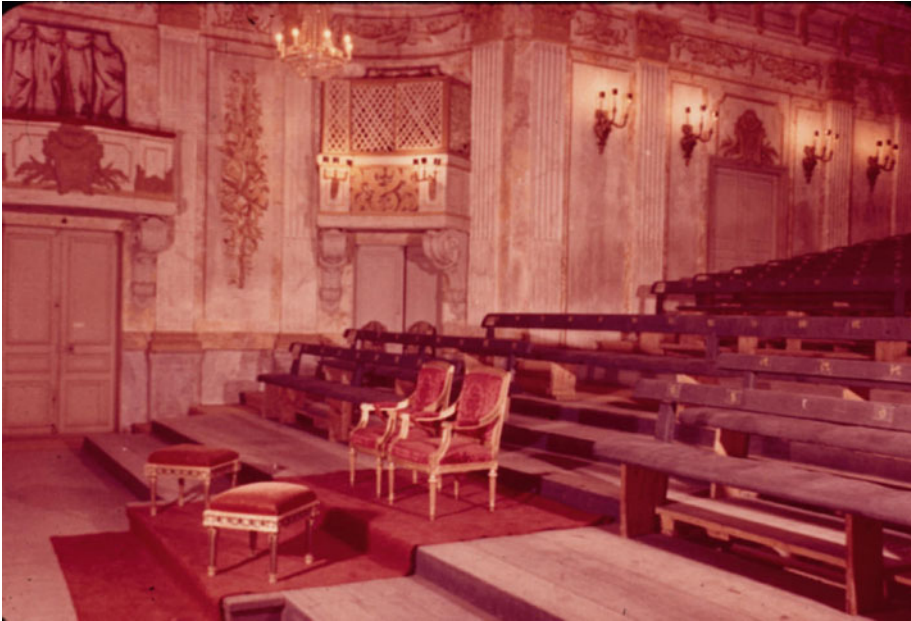


FIG. 6 The Royal Chairs at the Drottningholm Slottsteater. From the Kai Dib Films accompanying slide collection to Richard Leacroft and Helen Leacroft, *Theatre and Playhouse: An Illustrated Survey of Theatre Building from Ancient Greeks to the Present Day* (London: Methuen, 1984). Every effort has been made to locate the rights holder to this photograph through the Methuen Copyright office and the Hekman Digital Archives.

audience sits in the dark. Such aspects of proscenium staging constitute the ‘two-room’ concept’, i.e. the actors and audience stay in their respective rooms. Much of the ‘avant-garde’ theatre of the last sixty-five years has been an effort to unite the two rooms: Jerzy Grotowski’s and Richard Schechner’s environmental theatre, Peter Brook and Andrei Serban’s ritual stagings of *Orghast* and *Fragments of a Greek Trilogy*, even today’s site-specific theatre. (There were more traditional ways to modify the two rooms. Before the experimental theatre of the 1960s and 1970s, Theatre 47 in Dallas and Arena Stage in Washington, DC popularized theatre in the round in the first wave of American regional theatres.)

Unlike the prototypical Italian Renaissance and eighteenth-century baroque theatres, the Teatro Olimpico and the Drottningholm Slottsteater unite their audiences and performers into one room, an apparent smooth blending of house and stage.⁵⁴ In Palladio’s theatre, because of the semi-elliptical shape of the cavea, most members of the audience are visible to each other. Unlike a proscenium theatre, ‘no one can get up and leave during a performance without throwing the whole “happening” into jeopardy, for here everyone is an actor’.⁵⁵ The performers on the Olimpico stage occupy a space between the silent ghost audience of the frons-scenae, and the real audience in the thirteen tiers of seating in the cavea, with more spectral figures behind them, i.e. the exedra statues (Fig. 1). Rigon argues that the Olimpico’s

physical and psychological relationship of actors, audience and silent ghost audience causes 'a reversal of the telescope of vision: while from tiers, proscenium and sets appear far away, for they belong to the world of imagination and dream, from the proscenium, tiers and exedra seem very close'.⁵⁶ The lack of a proscenium arch also helps to unite audience and performers, producing 'a single space of discourse' where 'actor and audience participate in a re-created world of classical dignity'.⁵⁷ Daniela Sirbu characterizes Palladio's arrangement of space as 'an early exploration of the concept of immersive space' due to his 'concept of the proscenium as an inversed triumphal arch unifying the auditorium and the proscenium space and thus bringing the spectators into the imaginary world of the play – one of the early attempts at immersive virtual spaces'.⁵⁸ The Teatro Olimpico's one room for both audience and performers 'create(s) a marvelous unity of space for performance and audience'.⁵⁹

The Slottsteater creates a unity of space for performers and audience through the use of mirroring symmetry: 'the depth of the tiny stage creates a mirror image of the auditorium proper and a striking physical connection between player and playgoer'.⁶⁰ In addition to the centred proscenium, the rakes of the stage and auditorium duplicate each other.⁶¹ Not only is there an exact amount of space on either side of the proscenium arch, but the angle is the same for actors and spectators. Hilleström elaborates, 'Adelcrantz has been able to blend stage with auditorium. Each mirrors the other ... The proscenium does not divide two worlds.'⁶² Instead, the Corinthian pilasters of the proscenium repeat the pattern of those engaged in the side walls of the auditorium. Furthermore, a second 'proscenium' towards the back of the house mirrors the one onstage. This curtain was used to section off the last rows of seating. Additionally, three large windows in the rear of the theatre recall the three large doorways of a Roman stage (Fig. 7).⁶³ In effect, Adelcrantz has designed two halves of a whole that reflect each other. Such reflection of near-identical spaces contributes to a blurring of audience and performers, like the Olimpico. Again, the Royal Chairs were originally closer to the stage, further expanding the liminal space between spectators and actors. At Drottningholm, however, the ghost audience was not always silent. During Gustav's busy overseeing of Drottningholm, he could view the stage mirroring life in one of his own plays or opera librettos; if he and Queen Sophia Magdalena were to turn around in their honoured places and look at the members of the court assembled behind, they would see them 'performing their roles as subjects, ranked according to social status, and perhaps wearing the traditional Swedish costume that Gustav prescribed for his courtiers. The courtly behaviour of the audience was designed to replicate the theatrical performance on stage in an architectural conception that seems to be without parallel.'⁶⁴

Sometimes it is difficult to remind ourselves that for hundreds of years, audiences did not sit passively in a dark room, staring at a brightly lit proscenium stage (or movie screen). In both the Olimpico and the Slottsteater, the audience and performers saw each other in the same space in a shared context of light, uniting the audience and performers in one room, and illuminating how each theatre performs its past.

Unlike Drottningholm, the Teatro Olimpico makes great use of natural light. Rigon writes of the visitor's experience as 'emergence into the light: in fact, no other theater is



FIG. 7 The windows of the Drottningholm Slottsteater auditorium. Photograph by Tina Menta.

as intensely illuminated as this one ... The great world of nature and city with its light and noise floods in at every hour of the day and night',⁶⁵ as supplied by the row of large windows in the rear wall of the cavea. For *Edipo*, director Ingegneri made full use of recent lighting design innovations. On the frons-scenae, oil lamps were added that 'created a glittering effect that would be arranged in such a way that they would project their flickering light upon the actors'.⁶⁶

The famous flickering light in the chandeliers and sconces at Drottningholm also helped place the audience and actors in one room. The original four chandeliers over the auditorium were eventually reduced to two.⁶⁷ In 1922, when the theatre officially reopened, electrical lights replaced the stearin candles and paraffin lamps. The light bulbs installed in the chandeliers and sconces, and on the backs of the scenic flats, have become known as 'Drottningholm candles'.⁶⁸ With continual electrical refinements and safety renovations – including the flickering effect that was added in the 1970s, and is now controlled by digitized lighting systems – Drottningholm candles have been used in performance facilities all over the world.

Ann Charlotte Hanes Harvey observed the following regarding the Slottsteater, but it applies to the Olimpico as well: 'Nowhere is the unity of stage and salon more consciously noted by a modern audience than in the shared ambient light'.⁶⁹

The modern audience may also note the seemingly good acoustics in uniting audience and performers in both of these one-room theatres. Although Schiavo notes

that the 1950 renovation of the Olimpico cavea, when its foundation was reinforced with concrete, unfortunately ruined the 'extraordinary resonant qualities' of the theatre's previous all-wooden structure;⁷⁰ luckily, Drottningholm's 'acoustical eco-system' has not been damaged by attempted improvement projects. In fact, because of its intimacy and design, the Slottsteater has often been an outlet for opera productions of the early-music movement with regard to instrumentation and interpretation of scores.⁷¹ Former artistic director Soderstrom proudly states, 'we obtain knowledge of the light and sound of the 18th century that no other theatre in the world can give us'.⁷²

The democracy of the house

Despite the unification of audience and performers in one room, both theatres adhered to Serlio's philosophy of audience arrangement: proximity to the stage corresponded to social rank.⁷³ Within this hierarchy, each theatre achieves an egalitarianism in seating. Kernodle called the Olimpico a 'club of equals', observing that every seat, including the thirteen rows of tiered benches, had a view of at least one of the vistas.⁷⁴ The Slottsteater democratizes its audience through its intimate size. Using the house's false proscenium partition, the distance between stage and last row is approximately 20.5 metres (or less than seventy feet). The lack of a gallery also contributes to an egalitarian effect.⁷⁵

The democratization of seating stems greatly from the buildings' use of an oval shape, unusual for theatres in either time period. Palladio's design 'collapsed the ideal Vitruvian Roman semicircular orchestra so that it would fit into the allotted space', resulting in a semi-ovoid orchestra and cavea.⁷⁶ Using the oval shape in an originally almost rectangular building (and an octave ratio of 1:2 of orchestra to cavea diameter) allowed for the distinctive, reciprocal relationship of audience to stage that one senses immediately entering the Teatro Olimpico.⁷⁷ At Drottningholm, the walls of the auditorium from the back of the house (south) repeat the straight angles of the inner edges of the stage proscenium; however, moving north towards the stage (at the first six rows of benches), the walls swell to the outer edges of the proscenium arch, forming an ovoid of space in the house that culminates in three sets of boxes. Wiles suggests that

Adelcrantz's rectilinear auditorium was both an egalitarian and a disciplined space where everyone shared the same point frontal of view, but in its central baroque oval which broke up the rectangle the monarch continued to enjoy a privileged position at the centre of a symbolic universe. Whilst the rectangle defined a demarcation line between stage and auditorium, the oval conjoined subject and object of the spectatorial gaze.⁷⁸

Like Palladio, in using the ovoid, 'Adelcrantz found a unique architectural solution to the contradictions of his age'.⁷⁹

The oval within the rectangular space creates not only an intimacy between theatre-goers and performers, but also a sense of egalitarianism in the arrangement of the spectators. Both theatres contain an intimate democracy of the house that performs the past in an unexpected way.

Trompe l'oeil

The one-room theatres of the Teatro Olimpico and the Drottningholm Slottsteater share a great physical similarity: the use of *trompe l'oeil* techniques in their construction. 'Deception of the eye' was a major component of Italian Renaissance theatre design, especially in the use of perspective scenery. But the *trompe l'oeil* used by Palladio and Adelcrantz in their respective theatres exceeds the three-dimensional magic illusion of painted scenery. Both theatres display an 'elegance cheaply made', i.e. the stages and auditoriums appear to be made of expensive material. The shiny white stucco of the walls, statues and ornate frons-scenae of the Olimpico often initially impresses visitors as marble. Beijer used the term 'Swedish poverty' to describe the conditions resulting in the splendid but eminently practical visual aesthetic of the Slottsteater: 'its simplicity and austerity was not necessarily desired or admired, rather a by-product of the limited Swedish treasury ... The result was plaster masquerading as marble, wood masquerading as gold.'⁸⁰ Adelcrantz chose materials that saved money for his employer.⁸¹ The walls may look like stone, but they are really supported by timber covered with yellow paint. The balustrades of the boxes in the auditorium consist of papier mâché (Fig. 8). On the side panels of the upper boxes, Adelcrantz painted draperies to look like real ones.⁸² Like Adelcrantz, Palladio also added to his illusion of visual splendour with paint. The line of real statues on the highest level of the frons-scenae is repeated by painted statues on the transverse walls of the cavea overlooking painted balustrades, which leads to the real balustrade and statues atop the exedra. Painted image and three-dimensionality combine seamlessly to create the illusion of extravagance.

Palladio manipulates a combination of space and light in the exedra to achieve another *trompe l'oeil* effect that contributes to the Olimpico's overall aesthetic unity. Since the former prison was smaller than the original design, the uppermost row of seating abuts the centre section of the northern wall of the building.⁸³ However, light from the windows above the balustrade, as well as the placement of statues in the niches of the back wall, makes the exedra appear more than capacious (Fig. 4), just as the colonnade on the frons-scenae also 'is especially effective in giving a greater sense of spaciousness to the cramped quarters of the building'.⁸⁴

Adelcrantz also achieves a *trompe l'oeil* effect using space and light. Since the proscenium is situated in the exact centre of the building, the fly loft and the house are 'thus as long or as deep as each other when seen from the auditorium. With an appropriate set ... the stage could mirror the auditorium, making two identical parts of the same space.'⁸⁵ From the audience's point of view, the use of shadow on the painted scenery indicates illumination that comes from the house left (or stage right) side, which 'coincides with the west side of the building, facing the evening sun. The painted illusion of light, and the real light coming from the reflectors of the light poles, interact in a wonderful way and constitute an important aspect of the baroque illusion.'⁸⁶ According to John Edward Young, the 'whole effect is one of *trompe l'oeil* with touches of whimsy'.⁸⁷



FIG. 8 The side boxes of the Drottningholm Slottsteater. Photograph by Mihaela Safta.

Closely related to the *trompe l'oeil* effect and providing an aesthetic foundation for that 'whimsy' is what Harvey calls the concept of 'vacker som faux', a combined Swedish and French term that translates loosely as 'beautiful as fake'. Harvey asserts that the magic of the Slottsteater's visual aesthetic, both in the eighteenth century and now, depends on the audience's delight in recognizing and appreciating the artificiality of the theatre's physical components, whether it be the perspective scenery sliding in and out, the papier mâché consoles of the balconies, or the current electric lights that flicker like candles – 'an accepted Baroque theatre aesthetic of interplay between appearance and reality, of transformation and magic, enchantment and transport to an idealized world of fiction ... And it does so by a liberal use of *faux*, of *trompe l'oeil*', Harvey explains.⁸⁸ Beijer was apparently the first to identify the audience's awareness of artifice as part of the appeal of the Slottsteater: 'The auditorium with its original and elegantly inserted balconies – resting on consoles of papier-maché! – becomes in itself a stage set, executed in the same painting technique as the wings on stage and, like them, appealing to our imagination as much.'⁸⁹ Harvey also specifies the *trompe l'oeil* use of painting detailed above: 'The "painting technique" referred to – *faux* – transforms two dimensions into three, shallow into deep, pine and muslin into gold and marble.'⁹⁰ She suggests that this 'deliberate choice of the time-honored tricking of the eye ... relies on a sophisticated way of seeing, which [was] once the rule in elite Renaissance/Baroque circles (including their theatres)'.⁹¹

The Teatro Olimpico precedes Drottningholm in tricking the eye by almost two hundred years, in the illusion of greater depth in the exedra and Scamozzi's vistas of

Thebes. Harvey summarizes this connection of the appreciation of artifice, an essential foundational component of the theatres in Drottningholm and Vicenza:

The DT [Slottsteater] is fundamentally Renaissance in nature. There is delight in the success of the artifice as precisely that, artifice – never for a moment does the viewer believe the object to be what it imitates/mimics/impersonates. The educated Renaissance mind derives more delight from the artfully crafted object than from its natural counterpart.⁹²

Conclusion: looking through windows of historicity

The Teatro Olimpico and the Slottsteater perform their complex pasts in surprising yet similar fashion. The distinctive features of each theatre bring to bear motion and space in their performances: the unchanging scenic nature of the overwhelming frons-scenae at the Olimpico versus the constant movement of the machinery at Drottningholm encompasses the representation of exterior space in the former and of (mostly) interior space in the latter. Though the theatres differ greatly in size and shape, the performances of their pasts similarly incorporate the presence of their silent ghost audiences, and the unification of their audiences and performers into one-room theatres, due to their use of the ovoid in their planning and construction, and their democracies of the house. Finally, both theatres utilize *trompe l'oeil* to great effect in their manipulation of paint and space.

The Teatro Olimpico and the Slottsteater now function largely as theatre museum tourist attractions.⁹³ From 2005 to the 2020 pandemic, the Olimpico averaged sponsoring a dozen musical and theatrical performances annually, as well as conference and festival presentations.⁹⁴ The website recently listed six events in the music category and three in theatre/film/dance.⁹⁵ Drottningholm's record for productions far exceeds the Olimpico's. The Friends of Drottningholm Slottsteater non-profit organization formed in 1935, and with its support the summer months have seen as many as seventy performances of sixteen different productions. (The latter figure was in 1966 for the two-hundredth anniversary celebrating the theatre's founding. More recent seasons have numbered two or three productions per year, with performances in rotating repertory plus special programmes.)⁹⁶

In 1992, UNESCO designated Drottningholm Palace a World Heritage Site.⁹⁷ (In 1994, UNESCO similarly designated the city of Vicenza and Palladio's villas.)⁹⁸ The World Heritage Site conditions at Drottningholm mandated reducing the number of productions and guided tours, as well as extending safeguards, both in order to protect the theatre's physical condition.⁹⁹ How the theatres will function in the long term in a post-pandemic world is unclear, but it seems likely that both the Olimpico and Slottsteater will continue to receive many more touring visitors than audiences at performances.

Sauter and Wiles conclude their book by declaring their love for museums, observing that the Slottsteater 'is a special kind of museum ... In a world of cyber realities and insulated, air-conditioned travel, it is the contact with material objects

that gives museums their appeal. Museums do not just contain physical bits of the past, they give objects meaning through their mode of display.¹⁰⁰

In theatre, simply the act of reviving a period play displays meaning through the mode of production. Yet most theatre artists and scholars would agree that, despite attempts at 'authenticity' in costumes, settings, acting style, or music, or even rearranging the spatial relationship of the audience and performers, the exact theatrical meaning and conditions of the past can never truly be duplicated. In producing works such as Shakespeare, Greek tragedy or a Sanskrit drama, production elements and performance conditions might be *simulated* through inventive direction and design, but these production elements will not have the same meaning. The audience, actors and designers are not the same of those of the past and those relationships cannot be re-created. We live in a different world than Shakespeare's audience or the spectators in the Theatre of Dionysus in fifth-century BCE Athens, just as our attitude towards performance greatly differs from a that of court audience in tenth-century Delhi.¹⁰¹

So what exactly is it that we see when visiting the museum theatres of Olimpico and Drottningholm? Can we indeed be transported to the theatrical past?

Historian Alun Munslow writes, 'the truth of the past ... can only ever be historical, that is, situated in the present and with an eye to the future'.¹⁰² At the beginning of this article, we referenced Sauter's analysis of the difference between the concepts of historicity and historicism as applied to theatre history. The former implies negotiating a relationship with the past, especially as it relates to the present. The latter perceives the past 'on its own terms'.

Upon entering the Olimpico and Slottsteater in July of 2017, while I might have initially imagined entering a time machine of historicism, I was really looking through a window of historicity. No matter how much we might be dazzled by Palladio's frons-scenae or Scamozzi's perspective vistas, or the Slottsteater's scene-changing machinery, and marvel at their authentic splendour of the past, we can only experience it through our lens of the present, i.e. in all of its historicity. To encounter these two theatres today is to observe them performing their pasts in all of their contradictions. Both the Olimpico and Slottsteater embody 'theatres of anachronism' rather than typifying playhouses of the Italian Renaissance or late baroque/rococo Europe. Again, the form and architecture of Palladio's Italian Renaissance version of an ancient Roman theatre had already long been bypassed by proscenium theatres with changeable scenery, which, ironically, itself, as incorporated in the Slottsteater, had been left behind by the large baroque theatres with stacked-up galleries of seating. For Wiles, Drottningholm is not a 'fossilized and virginal fragment of the past but ... its architecture points us so vividly to a past that was in rapid transition'.¹⁰³ For Rigon, the Teatro Olimpico's 'rapid transition' lies within a conflicting energy within the theatre itself. Contrasting with Palladio's frons-scenae based on the Roman triumphal arch, Scamozzi's perspective vistas represent 'a change in direction that is both a turning back and a leap forward into a far-off future, a collision and split between two irremediably divided worlds'.¹⁰⁴

Both frozen in time, but also curiously dynamic. Time machines into the past, but not representative of their eras. 'Pretend' period theatres. Theatre museums, but still the site of live performances (combining live and silent ghost audiences). In their performance of their complex pasts, the Teatro Olimpico and the Slottsteater at Drottningholm embody our current process of the study of theatre history, in all of its dualistic meanings and contradictions.

NOTES

- 1 Thanks to the reviewers and editorial staff of *Theatre Research International* and Ms Eva Lundgren of Drottningholm's Slottsteater for their kind assistance.
- 2 *Empire of the Eye: The Magic of Illusion*, introduction, Part One, hosted by Al Roker, National Gallery of Art (2014), at www.youtube.com/watch?v=tGRrMJ9r3iQ.
- 3 Herman Lindqvist, *Drottningholm Slottsteater* (Stockholm: Reijs and Company, 2014), p. 20.
- 4 Unfortunately, I did not see a performance in either theatre.
- 5 Wilmar Sauter, 'Drottningholm Court Theatre and the Historicity of Performance', *Nordic Theatre Studies*, 23 (2011), pp. 8–18, here pp. 11–12, italics mine.
- 6 *Ibid.*, p. 12.
- 7 Lex Hermans, 'The Performing Venue: The Visual Play of the Italian Court Theatres in the Sixteenth Century', *Art History*, 33, 2 (April 2010), pp. 292–303, here p. 293.
- 8 Oscar Brockett, *A History of the Theatre*, 5th edn (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1987), pp. 292–303, here pp. 173, 420.
- 9 Anna Migliarisi details Ingegneri's achievements as among those of the very first professional directors in *Renaissance and Baroque Directors: Theory and Practice of Play Production in Italy* (New York: Legas Press, 2003). See also Remo Schiavo, *A Guide to the Teatro Olimpico* (Vicenza: Accademia Olimpico, 2008), p. 152, on details of *Edipo's* opening.
- 10 D. J. Gordon, 'Academicians Build a Theatre and Give a Play: The Accademia Olimpica, 1579–1585', in Vittorio Gabrieli, ed., *Friendship's Garland: Essays Presented to Mario Praz on His Seventieth Birthday*, Vol. I (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1966), pp. 105–38, here pp. 136–7.
- 11 Fernando Rigon, *The Teatro Olimpico in Vicenza* (Milano: Electa, 1989), p. 75.
- 12 Gustaf Hilleström, *The Drottningholm Theatre: Past and Present*, photographs by Lennart F. Petersens (Stockholm: Bokförlaget Natur och Kultur, 1956), p. 10.
- 13 Ove Hidemark, Per Edstrom and Birgitta Schyberg, *Drottningholm Court Theatre: Its Advent, Fate, and Preservation* (Stockholm: Byggfloraaget, 1993), p. 13.
- 14 Frank Moehler, 'Survival of the Mechanized Flat Wing Scene Change: Court Theatres of Gripsholm, Cesky, Krumlov and Drottningholm. Mechanization Techniques That Have Endured for Over 200 Years', *Theatre Design & Technology*, 35, 1 (Winter 1999), pp. 46–51, 53–6, here p. 53.
- 15 Hilleström, *The Drottningholm Theatre*, p. 10.
- 16 Wilmar Sauter and David Wiles, *The Theatre of Drottningholm – Then and Now: Performance between the 18th and 21st Centuries* (Stockholm: Stockholm University, Taberg Media Group, 2014), p. 6.
- 17 Horst Koegler, 'The Swedes and Their Theatre King: The Stockholm Symposium on Opera and Dance in the Gustavian Era, 1771–1809', *Dance Chronicle*, 10, 2 (1987), pp. 223–9, here p. 224. In fact, Gustav lived on as a protagonist in opera libretti: Eugene Scribe's *Gustave III, ou Le Bal Masqué* (1833) and Antonio Somma's *Ballo in Maschera* (1859).
- 18 Sauter and Wiles, *The Theatre of Drottningholm*, p. 3.
- 19 Paul Driscoll, 'A Visit to Sweden's Eighteenth-Century Jewel: Drottningholm', *Opera News*, 73, 11 (May 2009), pp. 18–21, here p. 19.
- 20 Brockett, *History of the Theatre*, p. 173.

- 21 See chaps. 1 and 2 of Tom Oosting, *Andrea Palladio's Teatro Olimpico* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1981; first published 1970), for detailed analysis of these influences.
- 22 Massimiliano Ciammaichella, 'Temporary Theatres and Andrea Palladio as a Set Designer', *Nexus Network Journal*, 21 (2019), pp. 209–25, here p. 223. Ciammaichella analyses the productions depicted in frescoes in the Olimpico's Odeon in order to generate computer model drawings of Palladio's designs.
- 23 Eugene Johnson traces the development of early proscenium theatres in chap. 4 of *Inventing the Opera House: Theatre Architecture in Renaissance and Baroque Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).
- 24 See chap. 6 of A. M. Nagler, *Theatre Festivals of the Medici 1539–1637* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1964).
- 25 Bruce Boucher, *Andrea Palladio: The Architect in His Time* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1994), p. 282.
- 26 Palladio scholar Lionel Puppi believes Scamozzi's vistas 'tend to unsettle the building rather than unify it'. See Oosting, *Andrea Palladio's Teatro Olimpico*, p. 19.
- 27 Licisco Magagnato, 'The Genesis of the Teatro Olimpico', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 14, 3–4 (1951), pp. 209–20, here p. 219.
- 28 Allardyce Nicoll, *The Development of the Theatre: A Study of Theatrical Art from the Beginnings to the Present Day* (London: George Harrap and Company Limited, 1927), p. 45.
- 29 George Kernodle, *From Art to Theatre: Form and Convention in the Renaissance* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1944), pp. 160, 171.
- 30 Simon Tidworth, *Theatres: An Illustrated History* (London: Pall Mall Press, 1973), p. 51.
- 31 Oscar Brockett, Margaret Mitchell and Linda Hardberger, *Making the Scene: A History of Stage Design & Technology in Europe and the United States* (San Antonio: Tobin Theatre Arts Fund, 2010), p. 14. Additionally, Magagnato identifies Scamozzi's Teatro Sabbioneta and Aleotti's Teatro Farnese as 'descendants' of the Teatro Olimpico in the use of a U-shaped auditorium and the 'juxtaposition of contradictory elements: proscenio with proscenium-arch or proscenium-arch with auditorium'. Magagnato, 'The Genesis of the Teatro Olimpico', p. 219.
- 32 Magagnato, 'The Genesis of the Teatro Olimpico', pp. 216, 218.
- 33 Oosting, *Andrea Palladio's Teatro Olimpico*, p. 148.
- 34 George R. Havens, 'An Eighteenth-Century Royal Theater in Sweden', *Modern Language Notes*, 44, 1 (1929), pp. 22–3. Havens presciently concludes 'that it may soon be possible to witness at Drottningholm an occasional revival of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century plays with their original settings, costumes, and scenic effects'.
- 35 Sauter and Wiles, *The Theatre of Drottningholm*, p. 119.
- 36 Moehler, 'Survival of the Mechanized Flat Wing Scene Change', p. 49.
- 37 Göran Alm, Walter Bauer, Stig Fogelmarck and Barbro Stribolt, *Pictures from Drottningholm*, ed. Göran Alm, trans. Roger G. Tanner (Katrineholm: Kurir-tryck, 1987), p. 19.
- 38 Daniel McReynolds superbly details the intricate and convoluted history of the Teatro Olimpico's ceiling in 'Restoring the Teatro Olimpico: Palladio's Contested Legacy', *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome*, 54 (2008), pp. 153–212.
- 39 What is truly remarkable about the Gripsholm Theatre is how the theatre was engineered in the small circular space of a tower. See Marian Donnelly, 'Theaters in the Courts of Denmark and Sweden from Frederik II to Gustav III', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 43, 4 (December 1984), pp. 328–40.
- 40 Boucher, *Andrea Palladio*, p. 282.
- 41 Sauter, 'Drottningholm Court Theatre and the Historicity of Performance', p. 12.
- 42 Alm et al., *Pictures from Drottningholm*, p. 17.
- 43 Denis Cosgrove, *The Palladian Landscape: Geographic Change and Its Cultural Representations in Sixteenth-Century Italy* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993), p. 87.
- 44 Rigon, *The Teatro Olimpico in Vicenza*, p. 81.

- 45 Michael Anderson, 'The Changing Scene: Plays and Playhouses in the Italian Renaissance', in J. R. Mulryne and Margaret Shewing, eds., *Theatre of the English and Italian Renaissance* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1991), pp. 3–20, here p. 15.
- 46 Wiles insightfully compares Drottningholm and Shakespeare's Globe in Sauter and Wiles, *The Theatre of Drottningholm*, pp. 202–13.
- 47 Marvin Carlson, *The Haunted Stage: The Theatre as Memory Machine* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003), pp. 141–2.
- 48 Olivia Dawson, 'Speaking Theatres: the "Olimpico" theatre of Vicenza and Sabbioneta, and Camillo's Theatre of Memory', in Christopher Cairns, ed., *The Renaissance Theatre: Texts, Performance, Design*, Vol. II, *Design, Image and Acting* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), pp. 85–92, here p. 90.
- 49 Marvin Carlson, *Places of Performance: The Semiotics of Theatre Architecture* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989), p. 164.
- 50 Ed Menta, 'I Finally Saw the Italian Renaissance Theatres and their Silent Ghost Audiences', *New England Theatre Journal*, 31 (2020), pp. 121–39, here p. 134. It is possible that the presence of the silent ghost audience may not feel quite as strong with an audience in the seats at a contemporary Olimpico performance.
- 51 Sauter and Wiles, *The Theatre of Drottningholm*, p. 120.
- 52 Hilleström, *The Drottningholm Theatre*, p. 36.
- 53 This section is adapted from my essay 'The Two-Room Concept vs. the One-Room Concept' in Anjalee Deshpande Hutchinson's *Acting Exercises for Non-traditional Staging* (New York: Routledge, 2018), pp. 83–6. I am indebted to Professor John Herr for introducing me to the two-room concept in his graduate directing seminar at the University of Connecticut.
- 54 I use the term 'apparent' for the Olimpico because the actual physical intersection of the side or transverse walls of the cavea and the outer edges of the stage and frons-scenae are often considered to be the theatre's weakest design aspect. Rigon, *The Teatro Olimpico in Vicenza*, p. 49, calls it a 'stylistic lapse', while Oosting, *Andrea Palladio's Teatro Olimpico*, p. 136, points to the poor sightlines it creates.
- 55 Rigon, *The Teatro Olimpico in Vicenza*, p. 70.
- 56 *Ibid.*, p. 70.
- 57 Cosgrove, *The Palladian Landscape*, p. 87.
- 58 Daniela Sirbu, 'Virtual Exploration of the Teatro Olimpico', University of Lethbridge, Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada (2005), at www.uleth.ca/ffa, pp. 23–4.
- 59 Johnson, *Inventing the Opera House*, p. 145.
- 60 Driscoll, 'A Visit to Sweden's Eighteenth-Century Jewel', p. 19.
- 61 Sauter and Wiles, *The Theatre of Drottningholm*, p. 121.
- 62 Hilleström, *The Drottningholm Theatre*, p. 9.
- 63 Sauter and Wiles, *The Theatre of Drottningholm*, p. 121.
- 64 *Ibid.*, p. 121.
- 65 Rigon, *The Teatro Olimpico in Vicenza*, pp. 76–7.
- 66 Schiavo, *A Guide to the Teatro Olimpico*, p. 151.
- 67 Hidemark et al., *Drottningholm Court Theatre*, p. 13.
- 68 *Ibid.*, p. 116.
- 69 Anne-Charlotte Hanes Harvey, "'Vacker som faux": The Drottningholm Theatre Aesthetic', *Tijdschrift voor Skandinavistiek*, 27, 2 (2006), pp. 27–53, here p. 32.
- 70 Schiavo, *A Guide to the Teatro Olimpico*, p. 137.
- 71 See Sauter and Wiles, *The Theatre of Drottningholm*, chaps. 6, 7.
- 72 Quoted in Hidemark et al., *Drottningholm Court Theatre*, p. 6.
- 73 Barnard Hewitt, ed., *The Renaissance Stage: Documents of Serlio, Sabbatini and Furtenbach* (Coral Gables: University of Miami Press, 1958), pp. 23–4.
- 74 Kernodle, *From Art to Theater*, p. 170.

- 75 Sauter states, 'Through creating direct sightlines upon the stage, the theatre anticipated the ideals of modernists like Wagner and Antoine, and cinematic mode of viewing, while inhibiting social encounter'. Sauter and Wiles, *The Theatre of Drottningholm*, p. 122. (In other words, in this aspect, Drottningholm anticipates the two-room concept!)
- 76 Oosting, *Andrea Palladio's Teatro Olimpico*, pp. 132–3.
- 77 I sat in the one-room Olimpico for two hours, surrounded by the statues of its silent ghost audience: 'I felt the theatre was watching me.' Menta, 'I Finally Saw the Italian Renaissance Theatres', p. 135.
- 78 Sauter and Wiles, *The Theatre of Drottningholm*, p. 123.
- 79 *Ibid.*, p. 123.
- 80 Harvey, 'Vacker som faux', p. 31.
- 81 In addition to Adelcrantz's thrift in building materials, he incurred some of the costs himself. *Ibid.*, p. 31.
- 82 Hidemark et al., *Drottningholm Court Theatre*, p. 37.
- 83 Oosting, *Andrea Palladio's Teatro Olimpico*, p. 134. Oosting provides great detail regarding the construction of the Olimpico and how Palladio adapted his original plans to fit a more cramped space. See chap. 4 also for how Palladio creates the impression of greater space in the peristyle, which Oosting calls the 'portico'.
- 84 Boucher, *Andrea Palladio*, p. 282.
- 85 Hidemark et al., *Drottningholm Court Theatre*, p. 30.
- 86 Sauter and Wiles, *The Theatre of Drottningholm*, p. 38.
- 87 John Edward Young, 'A Tiny Stage Fit for a King', *Christian Science Monitor*, 13 May 1988, p. 18.
- 88 Harvey, 'Vacker som faux', p. 36.
- 89 *Ibid.*, p. 36.
- 90 *Ibid.*
- 91 *Ibid.*, p. 38.
- 92 *Ibid.*, p. 44.
- 93 The official theatre museum at Drottningholm was relocated to Duke Karl's pavilion in the early 1980s. Hidemark et al., *Drottningholm Court Theatre*, p. 20.
- 94 Schiavo, *A Guide to the Teatro Olimpico*, p. 73.
- 95 The Teatro Olimpico reopened to the public on 27 April 2021. See www.teatroolimpicovicenza.it/en.
- 96 Sauter and Wiles, *The Theatre of Drottningholm*, pp. 222, 279–80; and *Drottningholm Slottsteater 2017 Brochure*. As of this writing, operating under new COVID guidelines, the Slottsteater presented Handel's opera *Agrippina* for a number of performances in 2021, and public tours have been resumed.
- 97 Sauter and Wiles, *The Theatre of Drottningholm*, p. 223.
- 98 See <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/712>.
- 99 According to a 1980 survey and a 1991 follow-up of the wear and tear in the theatre conducted by the National Board of Public Buildings, the tours were much more responsible for the physical deterioration of the theatre than productions. New tour restrictions included limiting the number of participants in a tour group to twenty-five, discontinuing access to backstage and the machinery, and standardizing a one-way, counterclockwise tour route (previously tour groups had been running into each other because of opposing directions in simultaneous tours). See Hidemark et al., *Drottningholm Court Theatre*, 'Survey of the Wear and Tear', pp. 127–35.
- 100 Sauter and Wiles, *The Theatre of Drottningholm*, p. 226.
- 101 Brook observed that 'it is accepted that scenery, costumes, music are fair game for directors and designers ... When it comes to attitudes and behavior we are much more confused.' Peter Brook, *The Empty Space* (New York: Atheneum, 1987, 1968), p. 16.
- 102 Alun Munslow, *The Routledge Companion to Historical Studies*, 2nd edn (New York: Routledge, 2006), p. ix.
- 103 Sauter and Wiles, *The Theatre of Drottningholm*, p. 139.
- 104 Rigon, *The Teatro Olimpico in Vicenza*, p. 82.

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