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Of all the religious and artistic treasures which a visitor may see at Westminster Abbey, the collection of eighteen funeral effigies in the Museum is perhaps the most intriguing. Carved in wood or in wax, these full-sized representations of kings, queens and distinguished public figures, many of them in their own clothes and with their own accoutrements, constitute a gallery of astonishingly life-like portraits stretching over more than four centuries of British history.

—H. R. H. the Prince of Wales[1]

Can only the dead astonish us by seeming "life-like"? Perhaps even the living can induce this uncanny effect from time to time. Of the eighteen royal funeral effigies in the Norman Undercroft at Westminster Abbey, the one to which the Prince of Wales's description most appositely refers belongs to his predecessor and namesake Charles II. The last of its kind, it was constructed at the time of his death in February of 1685. Yet King Charles's life-like (and at an imposing six feet two inches, fully life-sized) effigy played no part in his funeral obsequies, the austerity of which departed from traditional royal mortuary practice, which required the display of a wooden or wax effigy of the monarch along with the corpse, perhaps because rumors of the King's death-bed conversion to Catholicism inhibited the mourners. Whatever economies or sectarian scruple curtailed the ritual, however, none stinted the materials and craftsmanship lavished on the object itself, which crowned a collection of venerable forebears, going back to the stiff wooden manikin carved for the burial of Edward III in 1377. To represent Charles as close to life as possible, expert artisans molded the pale skin of his hands and face in wax, probably working from a life-mask made in anticipation of the occasion. They fashioned the large, brown eyes from glass and the pencil-thin moustache and eyelashes from human hair. They fabricated a skeleton from wood and iron wire, fleshing it out with straw sewn into a canvas skin. Then they dressed the body in the King's own clothes, from foundation garments to Garter robes—silk drawers, breeches, stockings, shirt, embroidered doublet, hood, surcoat, scarlet mantle, cravat—

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Figure 1. Effigy of Charles II, 1685. Westminster Abbey Museum. Photo: Malcolm Crowthers.

topped off with accessories: high-heeled shoes, wig, sword, jewelry, and plumed hat (see Figure 1). He stands on view today as he has since then, opened out in fourth position, turned ever so slightly *contraposto* to make an interesting line of the body; chin up, head back, as if preparing without any special urgency to step forward and to speak, languidly animated by the bubble of impudence—"astonishingly life-like" indeed.[2]

Some objects do seem to want to speak for themselves. The English royal effigies, even those constructed with far less verisimilitude than Charles II's, belong to this class of lively artifacts, which trouble the finality they serve to commemorate. Along similarly paradoxical lines, the word *effigy* itself, which in ordinary usage refers to one version or another of a straw man, shares a meaning with a number of cognates that describe various kinds of vital activity: *effectiveness*, *efficiency*, *efficacy*, *effervescence*, and *effeminacy*—all ring changes on the theme of movement outward from an animating source. *Effigy* can also be used as a verb, meaning to evoke an absence, to body something forth, especially something from the distant past.[3] In that sense, it is very close to the meaning that many users intend when they say the word *performance*, which, among other capacities, communicates personas as well as practices over time and space.

What follows is a meditation on the last of the English royal effigies as an historic prefiguration of modern celebrity and the special performances by which it is most efficaciously established and maintained. As a sacred relic, a medieval hold-over that symbolized the immortal "body politic" of the superannuated, double-bodied monarch, the effigy performed a function that continues to occupy the vast technical capacities of various media today: it attempted to preserve and publicize the image of an individual in the absence of his or her person. Such a process defines celebrity. Seventeenth-century usage of the word *celebrity* captures its historic relationship to performance—a solemn funeral could be performed with "great celebrity," for instance, or a ritual could be denominated as "the first Celebrity of Divine Service with organ and Choristers."[4] At the same time, the royal effigy gave a performance that could best be described by the present meaning of the word *celebrity*—an idolized person or the exalted state of being one, a kind of apotheosis marked by a persona that circulates even when the person does not.

The funeral effigy did its work in part by materializing in death a well-known likeness, symbolizing, at a moment of high ritual expectancy, the general image that all the subjects of a monarchy might reasonably be expected to hold in their minds' eyes. The use of royal effigies died out with Stuarts. Wax figures eventually commemorated William and Mary, and Queen Anne, the last of her dynasty, but their construction followed the deaths of the honorees by decades. Other

notables in the eighteenth century commissioned their own effigies, but the last public figure to be honored in this way was Nelson in 1806. At the moment of the funeral effigy's disappearance from history, however, derivative specters multiplied in public memory and imagination, anticipating the burgeoning phenomenon described by the word *image* today: the mediatized conception of a person or institution (as in "corporate image"), not reducible to any one of the many icons that publicize it, but rather disseminated pervasively as a ghostly semblance, specific yet intangible, seen by no two people in exactly the same way, yet intelligible to nearly everyone. This essay examines the development of that kind of mental image, one that oscillates back and forth at the speed of gossip between public and private fantasies, lending itself more readily to description than to illustration.

Once, when objects such as coins and popular religious icons alone mediated between relative obscurity and visibility, circulation of personal imagery was restricted to an elite of emperors and saints. In seventeenth-century England, however, as elsewhere in early modern Europe, the production and distribution of personal images underwent an expansion, minor in comparison to what was to come, yet significant as a harbinger of long-term trends in the history and culture of celebrity. By the terms of this expansion, ordinary mortals could reach for the publicity once reserved for sovereigns or divines. Even as the use of funeral effigies dwindled, successor forms of image-making grew in popularity: full-size portraits, miniatures, engravings, busts, and statuary, including many of the monuments that have clogged the aisles of Westminster Abbey and other English places of worship. In Book III of *The Stones of Venice*, John Ruskin traced the path of this "semi-animate type" from Italy to England. He notes how the corpse-like, piously recumbent effigies on medieval tombs first "raised themselves up on their elbows, and began to look round them." What they saw must have pleased them, for Ruskin continues:

> The statue, however, did not long remain in this partially recumbent attitude. Even the expression of peace became painful to the frivolous and thoughtless Italians, and they required the portraiture to be rendered in a manner that should induce no memory of death. The statue rose up, and presented itself in front of the tomb, like an actor upon a stage, surrounded not merely, or not at all, by the Virtues, but by allegorical figures of Fame and Victory, by genii and muses, by personifications of humbled kingdoms and adoring nations, and by every circumstance of pomp, and symbol of adulation, that flattery could suggest, or insolence could claim.[5]

Many of these new effigies emerged from representations of aristocratic celebrities and the growing ranks of their social emulators, but they no longer required the death and beatification of their subjects to provide occasion for their production. Most tangibly, they came from images of the kind produced in the studios of portraitists, led in

the mid-seventeenth century by Sir Peter Lely; more intangibly but no less consequentially, they were circulated as performed "images" in the modern sense, materially assisted by the availability of inexpensive prints, generalized by the appropriable "looks" they promulgated to an increasingly fashion-conscious consumer society, and augmented by both theatrical performances and the gossip-inducing displays of conspicuous consumption that resembled them—socially staged promenades "in their own clothes and with their own accoutrements." Yet along with such premeditated appearances came a concomitant desire to appear spontaneous. This required readiness on the part of the performers to adopt an air of "life-like" informality, which actors call public intimacy and portraitists, dishabille. The kind of life that it is most like—more or less glamorous icons humanized by provocative glimpses of their vulnerabilities—is erotic life.

That at least was one of the compelling messages communicated by the recent exhibit titled *Painted Ladies: Women at the Court of Charles II*, which ran at the National Portrait Gallery, London, in late 2001 and at the Yale Center for British Art in early 2002. It recovered the best physical evidence of a significant moment in the history of image-making, poised on the cusp of sacred and secular celebrity. The exhibit featured Lely's famous "Windsor Beauties," a group of portraits painted in the early to mid-1660s, and other securely identifiable images of women who were known to have been at the court of Charles II. Significantly, the curators included in the exhibit popular prints as well as paintings. As the didactic panels and catalogue copy of *Painted Ladies* demonstrated by frequent citation, the most extraordinarily revealing view of this moment in the history of image-making was recorded by Samuel Pepys (1633–1703), admiralty clerk and famously candid diarist. At the twilight of sacral monarchy and in the moral shadow of its most concupiscent court, what Pepys witnessed was the appropriation of the religious aura of celebrity by an erotic one. His *Diary* shows why such transformative image-making required performance: never entirely separable as objects of desire, sacred and sexual celebrities mingled willy-nilly in the secular portraiture, public behavior, and actor-centered dramatic characterization of the English Restoration. Charles II, the "Merry Monarch," God's anointed Vicar on earth and titular head of the theater in the bargain, created an image of sexual celebrity that fascinated and troubled his subjects. Nowhere was he more disturbingly yet tellingly effigied than by his obscene proxy, Bollixinion, in the demented mock-heroic play *Sodom; or, the Quintessence of Debauchery* (1674),[6] but an equally critical portrait emerges from the far less scurrilous expressions of apprehension and disgust recorded by Pepys and his fellow diarist John Evelyn. Pepys thought that the King "hath taken ten times more care and pains" to reconcile his feuding mistresses "than ever he did to save his

kingdom."[7] Evelyn confided an epitaph to his diary at the time of the King's death that illuminates the airy insouciance of the King's effigy: "An excellent prince doubtlesse had he ben lesse addicted to Women, which made him uneasy & allways in Want to supply their unmeasurable profusion."[8] Yet in the manipulative negligence of his royal image, which became inseparable from those of the women whose profusion Evelyn could not measure, Charles beguiled Pepys, warming his subject with images of public intimacy and exciting him to remarkable feats of vicarious emulation.

Public intimacy is the sexy version of the worthy but stolid bourgeois public sphere described by Jürgen Habermas. It consists of libidinous mental imagery socially expanded beyond the formal institutions of state or church and broadcast through the collective media of mimetic desire such as the arts (especially theater), advertising, and pornography. Mimetic desire summons together a community of daydreamers, motivating them with the chimera of something that they think they want because others they see seem to want it too, or, more urgently, seem to have exclusively to themselves. Like the theater, mimetic desire generates a parade of substitutes, surrogates, stand-ins, body doubles, and knock-offs, especially when the sexual icon assumes the trappings of the sacred one—a process that is the generative pattern for early modern celebrity erotics.

The massed hanging of Restoration portraiture in *Painted Ladies* restaged the impious relationship of public intimacy and mimetic desire in room after room, paramour after paramour. There the beholder learned, for instance, that Barbara Villiers, Countess of Castlemaine, long-time mistress of King Charles II, posed along with their bastard son as Madonna and Child. This blasphemously flattering portrait by Lely later turned up in the chapel of a French convent, where it hung unsuspected above the altar until the nuns finally learned of its objectionable provenance and sent it back. The penitent Mary Magdalen offered a more plausible model for "role portraits" of Castlemaine and one of two other royal mistresses, actresses Eleanor "Nell" Gwyn or Mary "Moll" Davis. Which player sat for the Magdalen is not certain—a confusion exacerbated by the tendency of later authorities to identify almost any unknown female sitter in Restoration portraits as "Nell Gwyn." With the advent of Catherine of Braganza as Queen, portrait images of fashionable women as the martyred St. Catherine, including several of the inexhaustible Castlemaine, accumulated.[9] Their power to titillate derived in no small measure from the notorious proximity of the sitters to the King's person, and his royal playhouse publicized the trend: speaking the epilogue to John Dryden's *Tyrannick Love* (1669), Nell Gwyn was made to rhyme "St. Cathar'n," in whose tragic story she had just played a role, with "Slater'n," the popularly known role that she was then playing in the royal service.[10]

Figure 2. Sir Peter Lely, *Frances Teresa Stuart, later Duchess of Richmond and Lennox*, c.1662. The Royal Collection, copyright 2003 Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Frances Teresa Stuart, the Countess of Richmond and Lennox, "La Belle Stuart," the most famously pulchritudinous of all the "Windsor Beauties," seems to have successfully resisted the advances of the besotted King. Intriguingly, she appears in Lely's celebrated Windsor portrait with a bow in hand, evoking the chaste pagan deity Diana (see Figure 2). In the same vein, she graces a role-portrait by another artist as a spear-toting Minerva, and her image was cast in a bronze medal as the similarly armed Britannia. But she does not appear as a Christian icon, vulnerable in her negligence. Frances Stuart, who will return shortly below in connection with Pepys's active fantasy life, was

the exception that proves the rule of sacred and prophane love at the court of Charles II.[11]

Socially emulating the glamorous women of the court (and the actresses who were their working-class surrogates or stunt-doubles), privileged individuals of lesser rank could aspire to their own performances of mimetic identification and desire—the trickle-down effect of erotic celebrity. As it does with almost every important trend of the period 1660–69, Pepys's *Diary* records the secularization of the sacred effigy in the fashionable female portrait first-hand. After having long admired the John Hayls portrait of Queen Catherine as St. Catherine, Pepys is at last able to note his satisfaction at the sight of his wife Elizabeth posing bare-shouldered in the artist's studio for her role-portrait as the Sacred Bride of Christ (see Figure 3). Sitting for such a portrait was a performance in itself. It required mimetically mastering an iconography that had been recycled through the Queen and the other painted ladies of the Carolinean court: "Here Mr. Hales begun my wife in the posture we saw one of my Lady Peters, like a St. Katherine. . . . it did me good to see it, and pleases me mightily—and I believe it will be a noble picture" (7:44). When Pepys says that his wife's portrait will be "like a St. Katherine," which is like Lady Peters, which is like the Queen, he effigies her as the latest candidate to claim possession of a venerable role, newly reanimating it by a certain eroticized "look." That look is very distinctive. The heavily lidded, "sleepy" eyes, the oval face framed by corkscrew curls, the rouged lips parted slightly, the flushed cheeks, and the emphatic *décolleté* that characterize the celebrated "Windsor Beauties" also mark the sitters for the religious role-portraits, including the virtuous and long-suffering Elizabeth Pepys. She embodies St. Catherine in the negligent act of losing track of her satin gown at the extremity of her shoulders, even as she artfully displays her pearl-drop earrings and tiara in languorous equipoise. At Elizabeth's side, the menacing rim of the spiked wheel on which St. Catherine was cruelly martyred appears iconically and suggestively. Among other things, it insinuates the sitter's readiness to endure pain, which her guilty husband confessed to having inflicted on her more often than his devoted Christian's conscience could easily bear.[12]

The casual construction of such an effigy in the daily life of his marriage illuminates two other scenes from Pepys's *Diary* that shock the reader with their matter-of-fact infusion of the sacred with the sexual. The first consists of the several occasions when he confesses his habit of masturbating in church. The second is when he recounts with self-satisfied jollity how he violated the corpse of Katherine of Valois, Henry V's Queen, which was then on display by special arrangement in Westminster Abbey. Both narratives bear on the historic transmission of the effigy from the medieval to the modern practice of erotic celebrity.

Figure 3. James Thomson after John Hayls, *Elizabeth Pepys as St. Catherine*, 1825. By courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery, London.

Judging from the doubly coded language of the diary entries recording his intimate practices, masturbating during religious services made Pepys feel more guilty but also more excited. His diary descriptions of his onanism, like those of his adulteries, employ not only shorthand but also a polyglot lexicon combining French and Spanish. Pepys's keyword is "mi cosa" ("my thing"). Thus, the entry for November 11, 1666 reads: "Here at church (God forgive me), my mind did courir upon Betty Michell, so that I do hazer con mi cosa in la eglisa meme" (7:365). Betty Michell was the teenaged daughter of

one of Pepys's friends and later the wife of another. Next Christmas Eve, December 24, 1667, he pleasured himself during High Mass in the Queen's Chapel, Whitehall. Though he would not wish to be thought a Papist, the elaborated liturgy and the presence of her most Catholic majesty with her attendants seem to have inspired him to virtuosic efforts: "The Queen was there and some ladies. . . . But here I did make myself to do la cosa by mere imagination, mirando a jolie mosa and with my eyes open, which I never did before—and God forgive me for it, it being in the chapel" (8:588). On May 3 of the next year, he tried it with eyes wide shut, so to speak: "After dinner to church again where I did please myself con mes ojos shut in futar in conceit the hook-nosed young lady, a merchant's daughter, in the upper pew in the church under the pulpit" (9:184). Like the artisans who crafted the royal effigies, Pepys had techniques to make his dreams astonishingly life-like. The obligatory element, in expectation and execution, was the mental image of a woman, sometimes one who was physically present (as with the Queen in her chapel and the hook-nosed merchant's daughter); but also one who was absent (as with Betty Michell in the first church episode). That the real power resided in the summoned mental image—hence in memory, in performance, in effigy—is suggested by the fact that Pepys closed his eyes to fantasize about the merchant's daughter, even though she was then present to his sight in her pew beneath the pulpit. To complete his performance, he turned her into what he called a "conceit."

Pepys's diurnal encounters in and around London and Westminster provided him with a panoply of potential "conceits" for later use. Their staging can be highly theatrical, replete with dramatic conflict, sets, costumes, and props. Celebrity intensifies their effects, but it also reveals the inner process of making the images whereby celebrity is constructed. On July 13, 1663, for instance, Pepys sees the King, the Queen, and Lady Castlemaine taking the air. The King is paying attention to his wife. Castlemaine is in a royal pout. Pepys is captivated not only by the glamour of the Queen, but also by the flirtatious play of the court ladies, especially Frances Stuart, who staged an impromptu fashion show, featuring feathered hats. He records: "All the ladies walked, talking and fiddling with their hats and feathers, and changing and trying one another's, but on another's head, and laughing. But it was the finest sight to me, considering their great beautys and dress, that ever I did see in all my life. But above all, Mrs Steward in this dresse, with her hat, cocked and a red plume, with her sweet eye, little Roman nose and excellent *Taille*, is now the greatest beauty I ever saw I think in my life" (4:230). The vaudeville of the hat exchange suggests the fungibility of the painted ladies in the erotic economy of the court, but Pepys puts to work the remembered image of "Mrs Steward," then the chief yet ever elusive object of the

King's sexual designs, and secondarily that of the Queen herself to effect the private climax of his mimetic desire, celebrity fantasy, and subsequent auto-performance: "to bed—before I sleep, fancying myself to sport with Mrs Steward with great pleasure" (4:230). Then, two nights later: "to bed, sporting in my fancy with the Queen" (4:232).

Pepys's nocturnal juxtaposition of the images of Queen Catherine and Frances Stuart gives the reader a glimpse into a private nodal point in the larger network of erotic celebrity. In this network, the bearers of a certain look and a certain reputation could substitute for one another in the minds of fantasists with even greater celerity than they did in the King's bed. Quite apart from the testimony of Pepys, the strength of that network appears to be confirmed by the physical evidence of the effigies in Westminster Abbey. The wax figure of Charles II is not paired with one in the same style that depicts Catherine of Braganza, his Queen, but rather one of Frances Stuart, Duchess of Richmond and Lennox, his unrequited love (see Figure 4). In a codicil to her will, dated shortly before her death in 1702, she provided for an "Effigie as well done in wax as can be," dressed in the gown she had recently worn at the coronation of Queen Anne. Even then, forty years and a bout with smallpox later, the *Daily Courant* remembered her as "that celebrated Beauty," and skilled artisans fixed her comely image for posterity wearing her own clothes and accessories, including her stuffed parrot, a West African grey, the oldest known object of its kind, which became a tourist attraction in its own right later in the eighteenth century.[13] By then the painted ladies had long been collectibles, with a number of sets, called "Beauties Series," turned out by Lely and his staff of copyists, featuring not only celebrated women but also notorious ones, those whose liaisons with Charles II had marked them in public memory and imagination. Pepys narrates the spectacle of their circulation and implicates himself in it by his ornate fantasies. By 1663, when he swooned at her in her *Taille*, "La Belle Stuart" had at least momentarily supplanted Castlemaine as the primary object of the King's extramarital attentions; but Castlemaine quickly returned to the King's favor and perforce to pride of place among Pepys's repertoire of mental images and those of the portraitists. Just as Elizabeth Pepys excited her husband by emulating Lady Peters emulating the Queen as St. Catherine, Castlemaine's return re-activated another erotic trio, wherein, as if at the Judgment of Paris, Pepys could imaginatively stand in for the King.

The theater offered both the metaphor and the materials for such dream-state expressions of mimetic desire, and Shakespeare, more than any other playwright, insinuated his imagery into Pepys's consciousness of his own sensations. He did so, for instance, in a key passage in which the diarist's imagination fixes again on Lady Castlemaine, who came to him in a mid-August night's wet dream in the plague year of

Figure 4. Effigy of Frances Teresa Stuart, Duchess of Richmond and Lennox, 1702. Westminster Abbey Museum. Photo: Malcolm Crowthers.

1665. Hamlet's "To be or not to be" soliloquy, which Pepys had already heard the great actor Thomas Betterton deliver a number of times, frames the recovery of his erotic dream as a waking fantasy:

> Up by 4 a-clock, and walked to Greenwich, where called at Captain Cockes and to his chamber, he being in bed—where something put my last night's dream into my head, which I think is the best that ever was dreamed—which was, that I had my Lady Castlemayne in my armes and was admitted to use all the dalliance I desired with her, and then dreamed that this could not be awake but that it was only a dream. But that since it was a dream and that I took so much real pleasure in it, what a happy thing it would be, if when we are in our graves (as Shakespeere resembles it), we could dream, and dream but such dreams as this—that then we should not need to be so fearful of death as we are in this plague-time. (6:191)

In a way that recalls the controlling metaphor of Calderon's *La vida es sueno*—that even dreams themselves are dreams, nesting dolls of consciousness—Pepys enjoys even his own experiences vicariously. Castlemaine, standing in for an actress, exists for him as a voyeuristic image to be acquired, savored, and refleshed at intervals, most often at the theater, where he noted her presence in the company of the King, and at Court, where a glimpse of her lacy hem sent him into an ecstasy. A celebrity before the age of mass culture, Castlemaine's image circulated in the absence of her person. Pepys vowed to obtain a copy of her famous portrait by Lely, and he did so as soon as it was engraved in 1666. In fact, he bought three prints, one to be varnished and framed for display, two to be set aside for private use (7:359, 393; 8:206). He longed not only to possess her image, but also to take his idea of her with him to the grave. This is the modern effigy, a mesmerizing image of unobtainable yet wholly portable celebrity.

On the afternoon of Shrove Tuesday, February 23, 1669, Pepys encountered another kind of effigy, a very old-fashioned one. His performance at this macabre event encapsulates the moment of historic rupture in the splitting away of early modern image-making from the medieval.[14] He records in his *Diary* entry for that day, his birthday, how he came to be touring Westminster Abbey with members of his family. He and Mrs. Pepys were entertaining out-of-town cousins, to whom the shows of London beckoned on the last day before Lent. Having been disappointed by the postponement of the opening of Thomas Shadwell's *Royal Shepherdess* at the Duke's Playhouse, the party settled on an alternative entertainment. Coming upon a secular relic and minor tourist attraction in the Confessor's Chapel, the partially mummified remains of Katherine of Valois, he picked up and fondled the torso and kissed on the lips the body of the woman whose life inspired Shakespeare to write the character of "Queen of all, Katherine" in *Henry V*:

> Therefore I now took them to Westminster Abbey and there did show them all the tombs, very finely, having one with us alone (there being other company this day to

see the tombs, it being Shrove Tuesday); and there did we see, by particular favour, the body of Queen Katherine of Valois, and had her upper part of her body in my hands. And I did kiss her mouth, reflecting upon it that I did kiss a Queen, and that this was my birthday, 36 year old, that I did first kiss a Queen. (9:456–7)

Cutting up for his tour group, which included his teenaged nieces as well as his wife, and performing a makeshift love scene as if he were an actor on a stage or a carnival masquerader (it was, after all, Mardi Gras day), Pepys found quite a leading lady, celebrated in her own time and thereafter. As the daughter of Charles VI of France, Katherine had served as a bargaining chip in the dynastic showdown wherein Henry V of England insisted on a suitable trophy in marriage as part of the price of peace after Agincourt. As Shakespeare has the war-like Harry say, wooing the demure princess with broken French but unremitting purpose:

You have witchcraft in your lips, Kate; there is more eloquence in the sugar touch of them than in the tongues of the French council; and they should sooner persuade Harry of England than a general petition of monarchs. (V.ii.288–93)

Persuaded he was, and their son became Henry VI. Widowed early, Katherine married Owen Tudor. Their grandson became Henry VII. She died in 1437 at the age of 36, precisely the age of Samuel Pepys on the day of his assignation with her remains 232 years later, on a holiday from his job at the admiralty, where he helped to build up the professional bureaucracy of the modern nation-state in the unsettled and unsettling twilight of sacral monarchy.

The turbulence of the intervening history—from medieval to early modern—is uncannily enacted by the restless perambulations of Queen Katherine's corpse. When her sepulchre in the Lady Chapel was disturbed by renovations ordered by Henry VII, her body was placed in a coffin at the east end of the Confessor's Chapel at the side of the tomb of Henry V. There she rested (but not undisturbed) on view by "especiall favor" until at least the mid-eighteenth century, her most recent reburial dating from 1878 (Pepys 9:457 n. 1). By the time Pepys handled the fragile segments of this ghastly heirloom, the torso had become detached from the pelvis and legs. Pepys, whose stolen backstage kisses from pretty actresses made his diary so quotable to theater historians (Pepys 8:27–28), dreamed of planting them on most of the player-queens. He, vicariously playing King Henry or Owen Tudor's part, intimately but publicly osculated with the ghostly celebrity, recruiting little Babs, Betty, and Elizabeth Pepys as his captive audience, cast as "Ladies of the Court" over which the spectral queen presides; she, the aging diva (remarkable for her years, having passed through so many hands) shows that two and half centuries later there's still witchcraft in her lips.

Shakespeare's *Henry V* was not the stage version of the betrothal of

Katherine of France performed during Pepys's lifetime, but the diarist's delight that he "did kiss a Queen" resonates equally in the one that he did see enacted, *Henry the Fifth* (1664), the version in rhymed couplets by Roger Boyle, Earl of Orrery. In it Mary Betterton ("Ianthe") played Katherine, for whose hand King Henry V, played by Henry Harris, and Owen Tudor, played by the great Betterton, are rivals. Pepys records his enthusiasm for the play and the production, with but one significant reservation:

> And to the new play at the Duke's house, of *Henery the 5th*—a most notable play, writ by my Lord Orery; wherein Batterton, Harris, and Ianthes parts are most incomparably wrote and done, and the whole play the most full of heighth and raptures of wit and sense that ever I heard; having but one incongruity or what did not please me in it—that is, that King Harry promises to plead for Tudor to their mistress, Princess Katherine of France, more then when it comes to it he seems to do; and Tudor refused by her with some kind of indignity, not with the difficulty and honour that it ought to have been done in to him. (5:240–1)

Here Pepys sides with the self-fashioning new man in his wooing of Katherine in competition with King Henry. The intense appeal of this particular action to the diarist's fantasy life, demonstrated by his rave review, dominates his understanding of the characters. That he could not be satisfied with the King's efforts on behalf of Owen Tudor only goes to show the depth of his identification. What King Henry actually says seems pretty generous to the impartial listener:

> Madam, I have injurious been to him
> As far as ignorance could make a crime:
> I did employ him in my suit to you
> But I declare (which some amends may be)
> That he, at least, in all things equals me
> Unless in title, but it's greater far
> A crown to merit than a crown to wear.
> Can title in that balance e'er prevail
> Where love is merit and you hold the scale?
> (*Henry the Fifth*, V.iv.1–10)

Music to the ears of mimetic desire this speech ought to have been, particularly in view of the subsequent history of Owen and Katherine, but the theater, while it appeals to private fancies, remains in the control of those accountable to the public at large. Not that the producers stinted on staging the parallels beteen the Plantagenet monarch and the Stuart. First, they cast the sympathetic Betterton as Owen Tudor, the dynastic founder. Second, they somehow persuaded King Charles II, the Duke of York, and Earl of Oxford to loan their coronation robes to the theater for this production, clothing the stage effigies in a remarkably authentic, if anachronistic way. The old prompter John Downes records that while Harris as Henry V wore

the Duke of York's suit and William Smith as Burgundy wore Oxford's, King Charles's own robes were assigned to Betterton, an unrealistic but powerful anticipation of the eventual ascent of the Tudor (and perforce the Stuart) line.[15]

Enter the actress. In his naming of the cast of Orrery's *Henry the Fifth*, Pepys rigorously genders the erotics of celebrity: the men, Betterton and Harris, appear under their own names, while he identifies the woman by and with her role. "Ianthe," the familiar name for Mary Betterton, née Saunderson, one of the very first women to have acted on the English stage, comes from the name of a leading character in Davenant's *The Siege of Rhodes* (1661), with whom she was thereafter identified.[16] Recruited principally from the lower classes to stand in for the *beau monde* on the stage, the first actresses replaced the boy actors who had taken all the female parts before the theaters were closed in 1642, and they generally excelled them in their ability to cast a spell of public intimacy over the audience. Among the painted ladies, the actresses Moll Davis, Nell Gwyn, and Margaret "Peg" Hughes all had very public affairs with prominent men. Moll Davis joined the Duke's Company in 1662 and the ranks of the King's mistresses five years later. The lovely Lely portrait of her playing the guitar seems to be telling this story. Downes reports that her poignant singing of the ballad "My Lodging it is on the Cold Ground" in Davenant's *The Rivals* greatly moved the King: "She perform'd that so Charmingly, that not long after, it Rais'd her from her Bed on the Cold Ground, to a Bed Royal."[17] Nell was kept first by the actor Charles Hart, then briefly by Charles, Lord Buckhurst, and thereafter by the King, to whom she saucily referred as "Charles III." Peg Hughes was the mistress of the King's cousin, Prince Rupert. Prologues and epilogues, Pepys's *Diary*, and scandal sheets reveal a great deal of contemporary interest in the intimate details of these affairs, especially when they complicated Charles's liaisons with his aristocratic mistresses and led to open rows, as they did even in so public a place as the auditorium of the playhouse itself.

Theater historians have rehashed these anecdotes with relish, but they have not fully acknowledged the role of such offstage performances as theatrical labor, providing commercial versions of the "lifelike" illusions that upper-class women negotiated privately. Producing public intimacy is, like all sex work, hard work. Actresses could expect to be groped and partially disrobed as part of the stage business, and they were routinely visited backstage by gentlemen, Pepys among them, who were permitted to watch them change. Here the desire for public intimacy, unsatiated by the stage itself, invaded the privacy of the dressing room, recalling how many of the Restoration portraits present the upper-class sitter in a negligent state of dress. The concept of the celebrity-effigy might help to account for the uncanny same-

ness of the portraits in *Painted Ladies*, actresses and aristocrats alike, so many of which (though not all) seem to have the same features, the same skin, and certainly the same bedroom eyes—the face of public intimacy. Contemporaries found this look (and it is "a look," in the fashion-model sense) epitomized in Nellie's countenance during scenes of amorous encounter—lips parted and the languishing eyes half asleep. When both theater and art historians note that unidentified female portraits of the period are more often as not claimed as representing "Nell Gwyn," they wonder that only one woman's physiognomy survived the Glorious Revolution intact, but sexual celebrity endures by turning an image into an idea. Like the mortal husk of Queen Katherine, Nell Gwyn's image keeps turning up hundreds of years later, in perennial biographies and re-runs of *Forever Amber*, but behind that transhistorical celebrity is the ghostly effigy of an erotically compelling type.

In this expansion of celebrity erotics, effigies continued to exert their considerable charm, as they still do today in the guise of tradition-bearing (and tradition-inventing) monarchs of many titles: beauty queens, queens of the silver screen, queens for a day, drag queens, welfare queens, and, most poignantly of late, queens of hearts. As is the case of the painted ladies, the image today often consists of the name, the face, and the scandal. But the true modern effigy is larger than that. Of the supposed Benjaminian "aura" surrounding the inescapably pervasive images of Princess Diana, Adrian Kear has written: "The 'auratic' quality of these portraits was accentuated by the media's ceaseless circulation of them at the time of her death as 'effigies' directly designed to stand in for the dead Diana."[18] Such effigies have burned themselves into the mind's eye of a global public. As H. R. H. the Prince of Wales aptly said of Charles II and the other wax figures in the Abbey, her image, which is the idea of her, continues to appear to the hallucinating public as "astonishingly life-like," at least as much if not more than his own.

In drawing attention to this quality, the Prince of Wales probably did not mean to refer to the more ancient but less prepossessingly life-like effigies in the Abbey Museum, the medieval figures carved from single blocks of wood and painted in polychrome, which has flaked and faded through the centuries. Among them is the funeral effigy of Katherine of Valois, carved from one piece of oak for her funeral in February of 1437 (see Figure 5). She has remained on display in Westminster Abbey ever since, eerily doubling the corpse with which Samuel Pepys staged his assignation. Her right arm and left hand are missing. Her face is plainly carved, probably from her death mask, with compressed features and drooping eye-lids; yet for all that, across the vicissitudes of time, "the dead face has beauty as well as pathos."[19]

Her image painted on wood is no doubt as close as vision can come

Figure 5. Effigy of Katherine de Valois, 1437. Westminster Abbey Museum. Photo: Malcolm Crowthers.

to realizing her presence. Imagination can do more. Onstage in effigy, Katherine becomes the ventriloquized object of mimetic desire, refleshed at intervals by actresses from Mary Betterton to Emma Thompson, as in life her body, like Diana's, became the reusable vehicle of dynastic succession. It is Shakespeare's Henry V, not Orrery's, who captures in one summary speech the sense of the royal effigy's power to communicate itself vicariously to contemporaries and to generations yet unborn. Like Pepys, he seals the one-way bargain with a stolen kiss:

> O Kate, nice customs cur'sy to great kings. Dear Kate, you and I cannot be confin'd within the weak list of a country's fashion. We are the makers of manners, Kate; and the liberty that follows our places stops the mouths of all find-faults, as I will do yours, for upholding the nice fashion of your country and denying me a kiss; therefore patiently and yielding. [*Kisses her*] (V.ii.281–86)

King Henry might just as well have been speaking of the power of modern celebrities, which skilled artisans now model out of electrons as they once made effigies of wood and wax. Like the figures of Westminster Abbey, from medieval to early modern, his words are relics of an idea whose time has come.

Notes

1 Anthony Harvey and Richard Mortimer, eds. *The Funeral Effigies of Westminster Abbey* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 1994); Foreword by H. R. H. The Prince of Wales.
2 Harvey and Mortimer, 79–94.
3 J.A. Simpson and E.S.C. Weiner, eds., *The Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989).
4 Ibid.
5 *The Complete Works of John Ruskin*, ed. E. T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn (London: George Allen, 1904), 11:110–11.
6 Harold Weber, "Carolinean Sexuality and the Restoration Stage: Reconstructing the Royal Phallus in *Sodom*," in *Cultural Readings of Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Theater*, ed. J. Douglas Canfield and Deborah C. Payne (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1995), 67–88. See also James Grantham Turner, "Pepys and the Private Parts of Monarchy," in *Culture and Society in the Stuart Restoration: Literature, Drama, History*, ed. Gerald MacLean (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 95–110.
7 *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, ed. Robert Latham and William Matthews, 11 vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970–83), 8:288. Subsequent references parenthetical.
8 *The Diary of John Evelyn*, ed. E. S. DeBeer (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), 789.
9 Catherine MacLeod and Julia Marciari Alexander, eds. *Painted Ladies: Women at the Court of Charles II*, (London: National Portrait Gallery, 2001), 124–25, 123, 129, 157.
10 Philip H. Highfill, Jr., Kalman A. Burnim, Edward A. Langhans, eds. *A Biographical Dictionary of Actors, Actresses, Musicians, Dancers, Managers, and Other Stage Personnel in London, 1600–1800*, 16 vols. (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1973–93), s.v. "Eleanor Gwyn."
11 MacLeod and Alexander, 171.
12 For the most recent account, see Claire Tomalin, *Samuel Pepys: The Unequaled Self* (New York: Knopf, 2002), 191–210.
13 Qtd. in Harvey and Mortimer, 95, 97.

14 For a treatment of this episode in different context, see my "History, Memory, Necrophilia," in *The Ends of Performance*, ed. Peggy Phelan and Jill Lane (New York: New York University Press, 1998), 23–30.
15 John Downes, *Roscius Anglicanus; or, An Historical Review of the Stage*, ed. Judith Milhous and Robert D. Hume (1706; London: Society for Theatre Research, 1987), 52, 61.
16 John Harold Wilson, *All the King's Ladies: Actresses of the Restoration* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), 117.
17 Downes, 55.
18 Adrian Kear, "Diana Between Two Deaths: Spectral Ethics and the Time of Mourning," in *Mourning Diana: Nation, Culture and the Performance of Grief*, ed. Adrian Kear and Deborah Lynn Steinberg (London: Routledge, 1999), 170.
19 Harvey and Mortimer, 41.