

THE VAMPIRE;
OR, THE BRIDE OF THE ISLES:

A ROMANTIC MELO-DRAMA,

In Two Acts,

BY J. R. PLANCHÉ,

*Author of Charles the XII. The Merchants' Wedding, A Woman Never Vext,
The Mason of Buda, The Brigand, A Daughter to Marry, &c.*

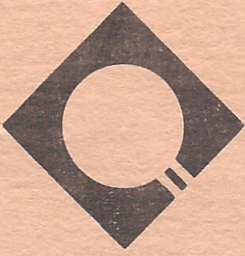


R. Cruikshank, Del.

G. W. Bonner, Sc.

The Vampire.

Lady Margaret. Hold! hold! I am thine;—the moon has set.



THE QUESTORS THEATRE COMPANY

First performance: December 29th 1979

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

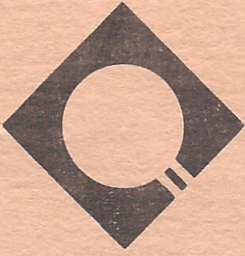
Our production of *The Vampire* has taken the Gothic melodrama and romance as its keynote and injected into it some of the low comedy spirit that delighted audiences at The Surrey and The Coburg in the heyday of the 1820s spectacular.

Despite Planché's concern over copyright he adapted this play from a French source and we have therefore had no compunction in raiding other plays of the genre to develop some of the characters. There are heavily disguised extracts from *The Drunkard*, *The Silver King*, *The Castle Spectre*, *My Poll* and *My Partner Joe* and even Da Ponte's libretto from *The Marriage of Figaro*. No prizes are offered for identifying the pieces as by the time the cast had finished improvising them into a spurious Scots, even the director had forgotten what was what, and resisted a suggestion that the piece should be titled as by J. R. Planché *et al*.

As that joke is at about the level of most of those in the play, you now know what to expect and can settle down to an evening of hiss and boo, known in academic circles as 'audience participation'. To help you do this, the music adapted by our maestro, (now in his umpteenth melodrama) from 'the Scottish Melodies' as the title page has it, includes lyrics from the original piece and some even more original. Our designer also assures us that the now traditional Christmas hexagons are accurate representations of Fingal's Cave and a Scotsman's jaundiced view of Highland architecture the day after Hogmanay.

We can only hope that Planché would not have disowned it. At least we will never know that, and as long as you, our audience, accept it;

'Love Conquers All'!



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THE VAMPIRE

by J.R. Planché

Cast in order of appearance

Unda, <i>Spirit of the Flood</i>	Carol Metcalfe
Ariel, <i>Spirit of the Air</i>	Judy Rose
Lady Margaret, <i>daughter of Lord Ronald</i>	Oenone Grant
Ruthven, Earl of Marsden, <i>The Vampire</i>	Alan Drake
Bridget, <i>Lord Ronald's housekeeper</i>	Jennifer Tudor
Robert, <i>an English attendant on Lord Ronald</i>	Robert Jones
McSwill, <i>Lord Ronald's henchman</i>	Ted Scrivener
Ronald, Baron of the Isles	Ken Ratcliffe
Effie, <i>daughter to Andrew</i>	Alison Pollard
Andrew, <i>steward to Ruthven</i>	Richard Cowne
Spirit of the Night	Joan McQueen
Father Francis	Graham Williams
Retainers, Peasants, Bargemen, Bandits <i>et cetera</i>	Roger Kelly Joan McQueen Anna Piet Martin Rutherford John Stacey Martin Stoner Bill Wall

Directed by Alan Chambers

Sets designed by Norman Barwick

Costumes designed by Ray Childe

Musical Director: Eric Kirby

Synopsis of Scenes

Introductory Vision

Act I

Scene i — A Hall in the Castle of Lord Ronald

Scene ii — An Apartment in the Castle

Scene iii — Garden of Lord Ruthven's Castle

INTERVAL

Act II

Scene i — The Tomb of Fingal in the Cavern of Staffa

Scene ii — An Apartment in Lord Ronald's Castle

Scene iii — View of Lord Ronald's Castle by Moonlight

Scene iv — The Chapel.

The Author— 'renaissance man'

James Robertson Planché (1796-1880) is best known as a prolific writer of burlesques, extravaganzas and pantomimes, though he also wrote melodramas and comedies. His first play, a burlesque, was given at Drury Lane in 1818, and *The Vampire* or *The Bride of the Isles* was adapted from a French play and given in 1820. It first introduced to the English stage the 'Vampire trap', a device which our production has attempted to reproduce. Planché was a serious student of art and designed costumes for Kemble's production of *King John* in 1824. He is reputed to be the first to approximate to historical accuracy. In 1834 he published *A History of British Costume*, for long a standard work. We found that the problems he set us in estimating the period of *The Vampire* were beyond the bounds of history and we have settled on a romantic gothic with a judicious sprinkling of doubtful tartan. He was also a good musician, being musical director of the Vauxhall Gardens from 1826 to 1827, writing libretti for opera including Weber's *Oberon* and English versions of *William Tell* and *The Magic Flute*. He helped to lead the agitation for reform in the laws concerning copyright which resulted in the 1833 Act.

Not content with this, our 'renaissance man' included the study of heraldry among his activities and was appointed Rouge Croix Pursuivant of Arms at the Heralds' College, and several times went abroad to confer the Order of the Garter on foreign royalty.

Hartnoll comments that 'his work appears to have no literary merit whatever..... it depended largely on its music and staging'. It was, however, 'enormously successful'!

news of a group who
set up in an abandoned
lighthouse -



FUTURE ATTRACTIONS!

In the Theatre

THE MISANTHROPE

by Molière

January 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31.

February 1, 2 at 7.45p.m.

In the Studio

THE CONSTANT COUPLE

by George Farquhar

January 17, 18, 19, 20 at 7.45p.m.

At the Film Society

THE SAILOR WHO FELL FROM GRACE WITH THE SEA

January 11 at 11.00p.m.

and

RIVER OF NO RETURN

February 1 at 11.00p.m.



and don't forget, during the run of *The Vampire*

COUNT CORNETTO'S CREEPY CHRISTMAS

January 5, 6, 12 at 3.00p.m.

