

= Garrick 's Temple to Shakespeare =

Garrick 's Temple to Shakespeare is a small garden folly erected in 1756 on the north bank of the River Thames at Hampton in the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames . Grade I listed , it was built by the actor David Garrick to honour the playwright William Shakespeare , whose plays Garrick performed to great acclaim throughout his career . During his lifetime Garrick used it to house his extensive collection of Shakespearean relics and for entertaining his family and guests . It passed through a succession of owners until coming into public ownership in the 20th century , but fell into serious disrepair by the end of the century . After a campaign supported by distinguished actors and donations from the National Lottery 's " good causes " fund , it was restored in the late 1990s and reopened to the public as a museum and memorial to the life and career of Garrick . It is reputedly the world 's only shrine to Shakespeare .

= = Description = =

The temple is an octagonal domed building with a nod to the Pantheon , Rome , constructed in undecorated brick with a single east @-@ facing entrance . It was built in the Classical style popularised by the Italian architect Palladio with an Ionic portico , four columns wide by three deep , flanking the entrance . Several steps lead up to the portico . Inside , glazed arched windows reaching to the ground face the river . A deep curved recess in the west wall provides room for a statue . Outside , a lawn and garden provide views over the Thames to the south .

= = History = =

= = = Construction = = =

Garrick built the temple on land adjoining a villa that he had bought in October 1754 to serve as a country retreat . The villa 's riverside garden , a plot now known as Garrick 's Lawn , was separated from the main property by the road from Kingston upon Thames to Staines . Garrick commissioned the building of an elaborate grotto @-@ tunnel under the road , illuminated by 500 lanterns , to facilitate private access to the lawn from the house .

At some point in 1755 he decided to build a summer @-@ house by the riverside which he intended to dedicate to his muse Shakespeare as a " temple " to the playwright . The temple 's architect is unknown as his decision to build it is not recorded in his own papers . Robert Adam and Lancelot " Capability " Brown have both been suggested as possibilities . An " Ionic Temple " of similar design stands in the gardens of Chiswick House a few miles away . This may well have been the inspiration for Garrick 's Temple , as Garrick had spent his honeymoon at Chiswick House a few years earlier in the company of his wife 's guardians the Burlingtons .

On 4 August 1755 , his neighbour and friend Horace Walpole wrote to a correspondent : " I have contracted a sort of intimacy with Garrick , who is my neighbour . He affects to study my taste ; I lay it all upon you ? he admires you . He is building a graceful temple to Shakespeare : I offered him this motto : Quod spiro et placeo , si placeo tuum est [If I inspire and give pleasure , it is because of you] . " A year later , Walpole wrote in another letter :

He has built a temple to his master Shakespear [sic] , and I am going to adorn the outside , since his modesty would not let me decorate it within , as I proposed , with these mottos :

The garden in front of the temple was laid out in accordance with Garrick 's friend William Hogarth 's theory of the Line of Beauty . An S @-@ shaped path ran between flowering shrubs in accordance with the theory 's preference for serpentine shapes . Walpole donated a grove of Italian cypresses to plant in the garden . It was widely admired in its time and its idyllic prospect so moved Samuel Johnson that he told Garrick : " Ah , David , it is the leaving of such places that makes a deathbed so terrible . "

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The temple 's interior was furnished as a shrine to Shakespeare . It was dominated by a statue of the playwright commissioned by Garrick from the French Huguenot sculptor Louis @-@ François Roubiliac at a cost of 300 guineas (£ 315 , equivalent to approximately £ 32 @,@ 000 now) . Roubiliac chose to model the statue on the Chandos portrait of Shakespeare while Garrick himself is said to have posed for the sculpture . Its appearance is rather more reminiscent of Garrick than Shakespeare ; it is said that the actor struck a pose and exclaimed , " Lo , the Bard of Avon ! " to illustrate how he wanted Shakespeare to be portrayed . The statue 's head was not to Garrick 's satisfaction , and Roubiliac had to replace it with another , carved from a different type of marble . During Garrick 's lifetime the statue was displayed in the temple . On his death it was willed to the British Museum , where it is still on display in the King 's Library . A copy of the statue , donated by the museum , is currently displayed in the temple .

Garrick exhibited his collection of Shakespeare relics in the temple , including a chair made from a mulberry tree which had supposedly been planted by Shakespeare in the grounds of New Place , his house at Stratford upon Avon . The chair was designed by Hogarth , according to Walpole , and had a medal of Shakespeare carved into its backrest . The chair survives and is today owned by the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington , D.C . . Other items on display included various personal effects of Shakespeare such as " an old leather glove , with pointed fingers and blackened metal embroidery " , a dagger and " a signet ring with W.S. on it . " The collection was sold and dispersed on the death of Garrick 's widow ; he had collected so much Shakespearean memorabilia that it took ten days to auction it all .

=== Usage ===

Garrick employed the temple not just as a museum but as a working building . As well as using it as a quiet place to learn his lines and write letters , the actor used it to entertain his wife and guests for afternoon tea and dinner . The painter Johann Zoffany , a protégé of Garrick , painted a number of scenes of the actor , his wife and their friends on the lawn and in front of the temple . One of his guests , the letter @-@ writer Mrs Delany , described the scene at one such entertainment in a letter of 1770 :

We had an excellent dinner nicely served , and then went over directly into the garden ? a piece of irregular ground sloping down to the Thames , very well laid out , and planted for shade and shelter ; and an opening to the river which appears beautiful from that spot , and from Shakespeare 's Temple at the end of the Improvement , where we drank tea , and where there is a very fine statue of Shakespeare in white marble , and a great chair with a large carved frame , that was Shakespeare 's own chair , made for him on some particular occasion , with a medallion fixed in the back . Many were the relics we saw of the favourite poet . At six o 'clock Lady Weymouth 's fine group of children walked into the garden , which added to the agreeableness of the scene .

His visitors were encouraged to pay homage to the Bard by writing verses in Shakespeare 's honour and placing them at the foot of the statue . Garrick had the best of them published anonymously in the London journals . Some found this practice cloying ; Samuel Foote commented sarcastically that Garrick had " dedicated a temple to a certain divinity ... before whose shrine frequent libations are made , and on whose alter the fat of venison , a viand grateful to this deity , is seen often to smoke . "

In August 1774 , the temple and gardens were the centrepiece of Garrick 's elaborate silver jubilee celebrations to celebrate 25 years of marriage . The London Chronicle reported :

Last night Mr Garrick gave a splendid entertainment or Fete Champetre at his gardens at Hampton . Signior Torre conducted a most brilliant fire @-@ work ; an elegant concert of music was performed ; and the company , which consisted of a great number of Nobility and Gentry , expressed the utmost satisfaction on the occasion . The temple of Shakespeare , and gardens , were illuminated with 6000 lamps , and the forge of Vulcan made a splendid appearance .

Garrick also opened the temple and garden to the public on special occasions . Each May Day ,

seated on the chair noted by Mrs Delany and accompanied by his wife , he would give the poor children of Hampton money and cakes . A woman who attended one such May Day event later recalled : " When I was called up , I took my six [children] into the Temple , where Mr Garrick was sitting by the fine bust with great cakes before him ; he took down all their names , and then gave a shilling and a piece of plum @-@ cake to every individual one ; not even leaving out poor babes in their mothers ' arms . "

= = = Preservation and restoration = = =

The temple and villa remained in the hands of Garrick 's wife until her death in 1822 at the age of 98 . It was subsequently bought by her solicitor , Thomas Carr , who preserved it as a monument to Garrick and even erected a statue of him in the temple to replace the Roubiliac Shakespeare . It changed hands several more times until , in 1923 , the villa was converted into apartments . The riverside lawn was sold separately along with the temple and was bought by a Paul Glaize , who built a three @-@ storey house alongside the temple . This caused such controversy and public outcry that in 1932 the site was bought by Hampton Urban District Council so that Glaize 's Temple House could be demolished . The lawn and temple were subsequently opened to the public . They have remained in public ownership ever since .

During the Second World War the temple was used as a post for Air Raid Precautions wardens . It was given Grade I listed status in September 1952 and became part of a conservation area in the 1960s , when it was used for poetry readings . However , it had become neglected and vandalised by the 1970s . It suffered from wet and dry rot , vibrations from traffic on the busy nearby road had damaged the fabric of the building and thieves had stolen the lead off the roof . Donald Insall Associates , a specialist conservation architectural firm , was commissioned by Richmond upon Thames Council to restore the building at a cost of £ 37 @,@ 000 . The work was carried out by the building firm Gostling and the architect James Lindus Forge . Patrick Baty advised on the paint colours .

By the 1990s the temple 's condition had deteriorated again and it had suffered heavy vandalism . The Richmond and Twickenham Times reported in 1994 that it was in a state of " dangerous disrepair " and had suffered from " the theft of lead from the roof and graffiti spray @-@ painted on the walls of the Georgian folly . " Vandals had also hacked away one of the wooden columns supporting the portico . In 1995 a campaign was launched to restore the temple and the garden and put them back into use for cultural purposes . The Heritage Lottery Fund provided £ 70 @,@ 000 in 1998 ? 99 . Other local groups and a campaign led by the actor Sir John Gielgud provided additional funding to carry out restoration work . The restoration fund was also supported by the actors Sir Peter Hall , Sir Donald Sinden and Richard Briers , and Dame Judi Dench , Jeremy Irons and others have subsequently made donations .

The restoration work was undertaken by Donald Insall Associates . The temple was reopened to the public in late 1998 , and in early 1999 the garden was replanted to replicate its original Georgian appearance . The British Museum provided a copy of Roubiliac 's statue of Shakespeare to occupy the vacant niche where the original had once stood . The temple was populated with an exhibition on Garrick 's life and career , including copies of portraits by Gainsborough , Reynolds and Zoffany . The project was completed by April 1999 .

Today the temple is managed by Garrick 's Temple Partnership , which brings together the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames , the Garrick 's Temple to Shakespeare Trust , the Temple Trust , the Thames Landscape Strategy and Hampton Riverside Trust . The Garrick 's Temple to Shakespeare Trust is chaired by the actor Clive Francis , and Liz Crowther is a member of the Temple Management Committee . The temple is open to the public on Sunday afternoons between April and September . It is used for concerts , annual general meetings and private events , and runs an educational programme for local schoolchildren in conjunction with the nearby Orleans House .

= = See Also = =

Astoria (recording studio) (neighbor)