

Panel G Chair Report by Lorna Clark

In **Panel G, Susanna Burney / Bath and the Burneys**, the first speaker was **Nathan Richards-Velinou**, a PhD student at McGill University, and Research Coordinator at the Burney Centre. In his talk, **“Our Sweet Pacc:”: Pacchierotti and the Burneys’**, he first discussed the body of the eunuch in terms of the threat that Italian culture posed in London in the midst of anti-Catholic sentiment. He then looked at the close relationship between Susanna Burney and the castrato, Gasparo Pacchierotti, as recorded in Susanna's journals. In a journal entry which has not yet been published, Susanna records a scene in which Pacchierotti seems to be leading to a love declaration. Susanna puts ‘an end [...] to this open odd speech of Poor Pacchierotti’s’, and remarks that she is ‘afraid he wishes he could marry’. Charles Burney later expresses doubt about the treatment of the castrati, which seems to mirror the impulses of Susanna. After his return to Italy, Pacchierotti continued his relationship with the Burney family through correspondence; many of his letters survive (located in the Berg collection) and have yet to be published.

Our second speaker, **Marie Egan**, a PhD student at Dublin City University spoke about **‘Susanna Burney’s Irish Exile 1796–1799: The Lifeline of her Correspondence with Frances Burney’**. She described how Susanna deteriorated with her marriage to Molesworth Phillips, the natural son of a Viscount. He had inherited some land at Swords (which generated an income of £100 not £700 a year). Frances confessed her lingering doubts to Hester Thrale. There were signs in 1791 that things were not well; Phillips made the first of many visits to Ireland, staying for several months. Susanna wrote to Frances that if she refused to accompany her husband to Ireland, she would never see her children again. Charles Burney complained in October 1796 of Major Phillips’s ‘wrong-headed and tyrannical spirit’, and the sisters’ final parting (as it would prove to be) was full of pathos. Susanna’s first letter from Belcotton is melancholy; during her time there, she writes of hurricanes and dangers and of Jane Brabazon, a cousin with whom Phillips was enamoured. The Burney family urged him to let Susanna come back to England; eventually, the Phillipses family did travel back but Susanna died soon after reaching shore.

Dr Lucy-Anne Katgely, then of Oxford, currently of the Université Clermont Auvergne, addressed the topic, **‘A city of their own: Georgian Bath, the Burney sisters, and the anonymous novelist’**. In her paper, she explored the Georgian city’s connections to Jane Austen and other late eighteenth-century novels by women. Written in imitation of Frances Burney, these novels may not belong in the literary canon individually, but should be included collectively. Together, they bear witness to the invisible ‘memory-keepers’ of the feminine tradition in the English novel. Studying these women writers who share a signature, ‘by a Lady’, and constitute a sorority of anonymous writers, helps us understand the construction of the intellectual woman and gendered authoriality. Echoes of Christopher Anstey’s *New Bath Guide* can be found in their novels in which the heroines pass through places of pleasure in London, and stop over in Bath. Literary representations of Bath depict a social scene in which characters of both genders and different social classes can mingle.

Whereas Austen has its own literary tour, museum, and festival, the Burneys are not mentioned on the city official website dedicated to authors with a Bath connection. As a result, both Burney novelists remain rather unfamiliar to many locals. Thus, the Bath connections of Frances and Sarah Harriet Burney should be acknowledged; their ghosts might be said to haunt the city. Katgely suggested a way to put Sarah Harriet Burney and other anonymous writers into the spotlight, by creating a house museum (similar to those for Jane Austen and Mary Shelley) which would help to promote both Bath and the Burneys (whose memory otherwise has no fixity).