

King Alfonso XIII (centre) with the military directorate which ruled Spain from 1923 to 1930



LE CID

THE CID

BEFORE THE PLAY BEGINS

The play is set in Seville, the capital of Andalucia in Southern Spain. Don Fernando, the King, to deter attempts by the newly expelled Moors to regain their lost province, has moved his court south.

The King's right-hand man and commander of his armies is the Count, Don Gomez. The King is to choose a tutor for his son and the Count takes it for granted that this position of honour will be given to him.

Don Gomez's daughter, Chimena, is pursued by a number of young men but is in love with one, Don Rodrigo. Don Rodrigo's father, Don Diego, once occupied the same position as Chimena's father. He is proud of his past and expects much of his only son.

The King's daughter, the Infanta, has been encouraging the growing love between Chimena and Don Rodrigo for her own private reasons.

THE CID

by Pierre Corneille

The British premiere in a new stage version
specially commissioned from David Bryer

Cast in order of speaking

Elvira, confidante to Chimena.....	Mary Askham
Don Gomez, Count of Gormas.....	Keith Bartlett
Chimena, daughter of the Count.....	Patricia Kerrigan
The Infanta, daughter of the King.....	Anne White
Leonora, her confidante.....	Melinda McGraw
Don Diego, Rodrigo's father.....	Patrick Romer
Don Rodrigo, Chimena's fiance	Aden Gillett
Don Arias	Stephen Simms
Don Alonzo	David Morrissey
The King.....	Hugh Ross
Don Sancho, suitor to Chimena.....	Timothy Walker

Director.....	Declan Donnellan
Designer.....	Nick Ormerod
Composer and Musical Director.....	Joanna MacGregor
Company Stage Manager and Lighting Designer.....	Alex Starr (for Tech Run)
Costume Supervisor.....	Louise Page
Costumes made by.....	Keith Bish, Hilary Boulton
Set built by.....	Ken Marples (Scenery)
Set painted by.....	Sharon Seager
Wigs by.....	Charles
Guitar supplied by.....	London Guitar Centre

Graphic Designer.....	Iain Lanyon
Photographer.....	Peter Mares
Administrator.....	Barbara Matthews

The scene is Seville

There will be one interval of 15 minutes

Part One lasts approximately 70 minutes

Part Two : 50 minutes

CHEEK BY JOWL receives financial assistance
from the Arts Council of Great Britain
and West Midlands Arts

Arts Council Funded

THE LEGEND

Rodrigo Diaz Bivar, born in 1043 near Burgos, is one of the great figures of the Reconquest period. He first served the King of Castile and then his enemy brother, who gave him his cousin, Chimena, in marriage.

Fallen into disgrace, he roamed over all Spain, offering his services to both Christian and Muslim princes and winning dazzling victories which earned him besides his surname of Cid Compeador (Illustrious Warlord).

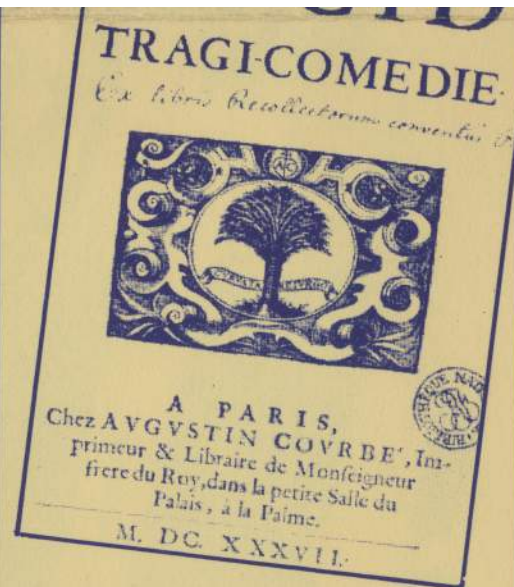
In 1094 he seized the moorish kingdom of Valencia and became its sovereign until his death AFTER which he won yet another battle, for when Valencia was once more attacked, his embalmed corpse was placed on his horse, held up by iron and this spectre was launched into the midst of battle.

"That which I call here 'gloire' is a kind of joy based in the love that one has for oneself and which proceeds from the opinion or hope that one is praised by others".

DESCARTES
in his *Treatise on the Passions of the Soul*

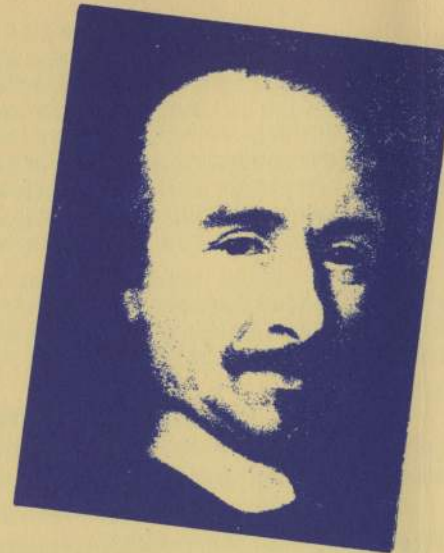
TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

Finding a suitable style for a 20th century setting of a 17th century French tragi-comedy is not easy. The 'heroic' in literature finally met its bloody end in the mud of Flanders and more quietly on a couch in Vienna. Since then Prufrock rules — OK? The hankering for it, however, lingers on, as Hollywood's *El Cid* loudly demonstrates. The modern verse medium chosen is predominantly decasyllabic but, more importantly, has mostly four stresses which gives a faint echo of the original French in practice. Rhyme is employed in parts, but rather to hint at a character's *desire* for 'style' than as an imitation. Regular rhythms are established only to disintegrate into broken prose. Thus the whole ironically echoes rather than faithfully reflects, with form arising from within rather than imposed from without.



LE CID (1636)

Sometimes between the end of 1636 and the early part of 1637 a masterpiece hit the Paris stage and caused an immediate sensation. It was to mark the birth of a golden age of French classical theatre. Borrowing its theme from Spanish history, it united the baroque excesses of an earlier age with the rigours of the new classicism which would now constitute the rule. Character was to determine plot and conflict to become increasingly inward. But, above all, Pierre Corneille's *The Cid* was the story of a love under siege, the creation of a 30 year old who confessed to love being the source of all his inspiration.



PIERRE CORNEILLE (1606-1684)

Born in Rouen into a well-to-do family, the eldest of seven, Pierre Corneille was educated at the Jesuit College where he excelled, showing a great love of poetry and the classical theatre. He studied law and, once qualified in 1624, never relinquished this career. He wrote his first play in 1629 at the age of 23, showing it to a travelling theatre troupe who then took it to Paris, where the young playwright entered fully into salon life. He continued to enjoy critical success with the plays that followed, so much so that Scudéry, the harshest critic of *The Cid*, wrote of him: "The sun has risen — let the stars withdraw".

With the comedy 'The Theatrical Illusion' Corneille turned to Spain for his inspiration. It was said that the Queen was not pleased by this representation of her native land and that it was to make his peace with her that Corneille made a further attempt and wrote of Spain's heroic past — *The Cid*.

THE QUARREL AND THE CID

Success and honour. Corneille received a title and a pension at the Queen's request — but won enemies as well, though some say Corneille's own boasting invited the attacks that, in 1637, grew in intensity. Gradually two major critics of *The Cid*, Scudéry and Mairet, appeared glowering through the gun smoke. The matter was finally taken to the newly-founded Académie Française who were called upon to adjudicate on the merits or otherwise of this hugely popular play. In an age that was still wrestling in the coils of medievalism, this Academy felt itself infused with a near missionary zeal. The play was found to be guilty of certain improprieties and not to have adhered strictly enough to the unities of place and action. This judgement was a bitter blow to Corneille who retired to Rouen.

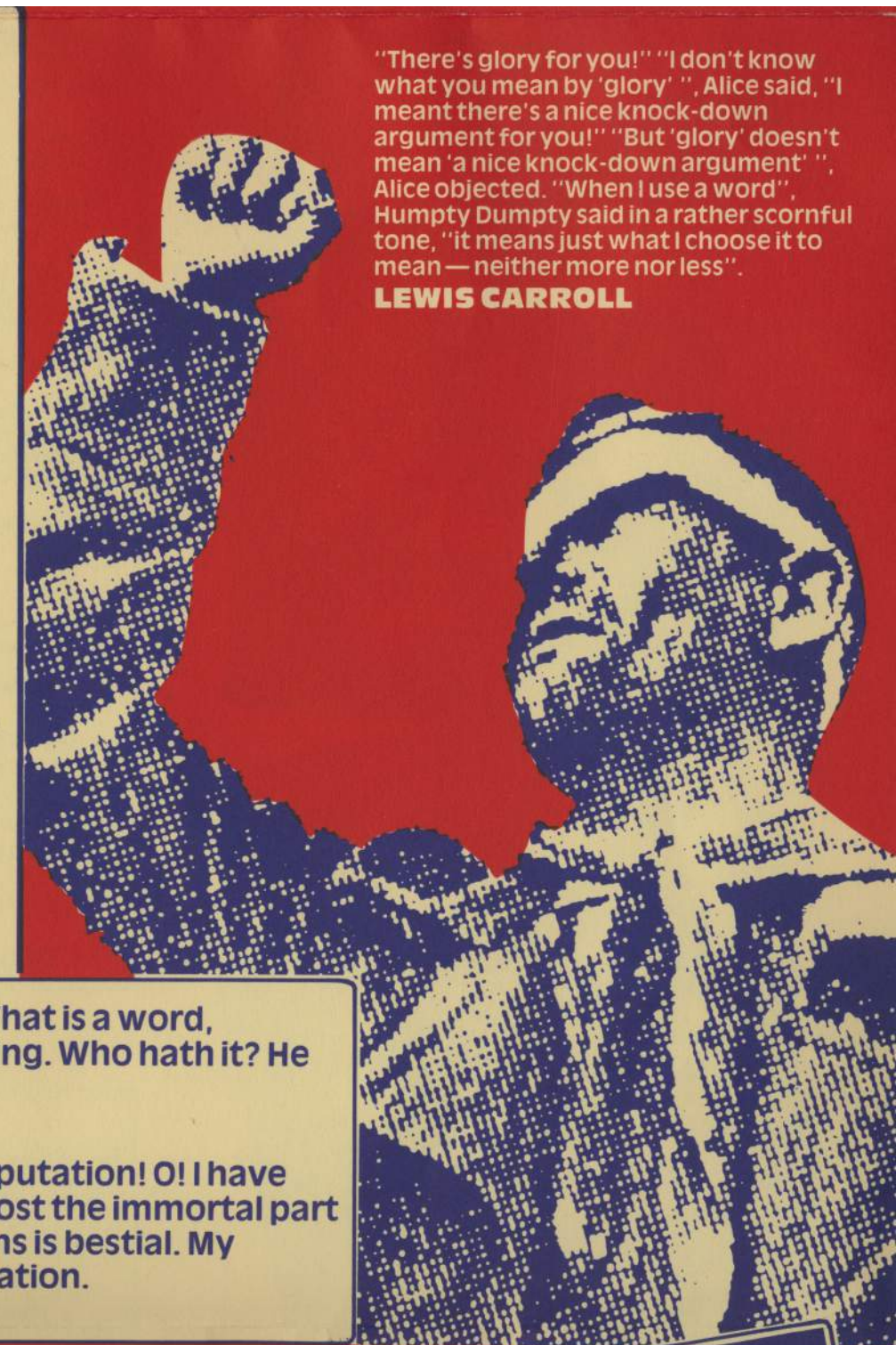
It was the view of the Romantics that when he finally resumed writing for the stage, the result showed that bowing to the rules did not suit Corneille's genius which never again achieved the passion and sweep of *The Cid*.

What is honour? A word. What is a word, honour? Air, A trim reckoning. Who hath it? He that died o'Wednesday.

Henry IV Part I

Reputation, reputation, reputation! O! I have lost my reputation. I have lost the immortal part of myself, and what remains is bestial. My reputation, Iago, my reputation.

Othello II



"There's glory for you!" "I don't know what you mean by 'glory' ", Alice said, "I meant there's a nice knock-down argument for you!" "But 'glory' doesn't mean 'a nice knock-down argument' ", Alice objected. "When I use a word", Humpty Dumpty said in a rather scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean — neither more nor less".

LEWIS CARROLL



TWELFTH NIGHT

Declan Donnellan's staging is elegantly spare using intense vivid performances like a laser of light to set the dusty text ablaze.

THE GUARDIAN

Astonishing. A breathtaking vitality of performance.

GAZZETTO DEL SUD (ITALY)

Cheek by Jowl was formed in 1981 by Declan Donnellan and Nick Ormerod to tour ensemble theatre.

Since then, the company has played in hundreds of different theatres throughout Great Britain and Northern Ireland, won two awards at the Edinburgh Festival, and the 1985 Laurence Olivier Award for the Most Promising Newcomer to the West End.

In addition, the company has toured to Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Egypt, France, Germany, Holland, India, Israel, Nepal, Pakistan, Sicily, Spain, Sri Lanka and Uruguay.

Plans include performances in Rome, Florence, Copenhagen and Warsaw.

THE COUNTRY WIFE

(1981)

by William Wycherley.

"For sheer excellence of acting it is difficult to envisage anything surpassing this superbly compact production."

The Scotsman

GOTCHA

(1982)

by Barrie Keefe.

and

RACK ABBEY

a new musical by Colin Sell and Declan Donnellan.

"A wonderful evening"

Nieuw Apeleoordnsd Courant

OTHELLO

(1982/83)

by William Shakespeare.

"For sheer pace, verve and above all clarity, this production deserves an award."

The Guardian

"One of the most harrowing Othellos I have ever seen"

The Times

VANITY FAIR

(1983/4/5)

by William Makepeace Thackeray.

Fringe First and Scottish Arts Club Awards.

"Above any praise . . . a fluid, bubbling and dazzling show . . . one of the central theatrical experiences of the Israel Festival."

Yediot Achronot

"An exhilarating sense of Theatre"

The Sunday Times



A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM
photo: Peter Mares

PERICLES

(1984/5)

by William Shakespeare.

"At the end, with a great shout of jubilation, the actors call the public to celebrate new joy for indeed the entire performance has been a joint and joyous act — the sheer essence of theatre."

Ya (Spain)

ANDROMACHE

(1984/85)

British professional premiere of Racine's tragedy.

Translated by David Bryer.

"Racine in modern dress we have seen before. Racine stripped of heroic gesture, heightened delivery and played in idiomatic prose is a startling novelty, and Declan Donnellan's production justifies it up to the hilt."

The Times



THE MAN OF MODE
photo: Peter Mares

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

by William Shakespeare

"The audience was almost hysterical, choking, gasping and crying with laughter."

The Observer

"A dream of a Dream . . . an exploration of theatrical skills, an analysis of the theatrical qualities of live drama, an essay in spell binding."

The Guardian

THE MAN OF MODE

by George Etherege

"Great style, integrity and moral purpose . . . which is how restoration comedy should be played."

Financial Times

"A first class ensemble production from this country's leading touring company"

The Spectator