

Macbeth. Adapted from William Shakespeare by Sir William Davenant. Reprinted in 1697, it may have been revived at this time.

The Old Batchelor. By William Congreve. Reprinted in 1697, this play may have been revived in 1696–97.

Physick Lies a Bleeding; or, The Apothecary Turned Doctor. This work, whose author is possibly Thomas Brown, was published in 1697, but probably was not intended for production on the stage.

The Princess of Cleve. By Nathaniel Lee. Reprinted in 1697, this play was possibly revived in 1696–97.

The Rover. By Mrs Aphra Behn. Reprinted in 1697, this play was possibly revived in 1696–97.

The Scowrers. By Thomas Shadwell. This play may have been revived at this time, for when it was presented at Drury Lane on 22 Aug. 1717, the bill bore the heading: Not Acted these Twenty Years.

Sopbonisha. By Nathaniel Lee. Reprinted in 1697, this play may have been revived in 1696–97.

Theodosius. By Nathaniel Lee. Reprinted in 1697, this play may have been revived at this time.

September 1696

THE FEMALE WITS; or, The Triumvirate of Poets at Rehearsal. [The author is not known, but the title page states that it was written by W. M.] Edition of 1704: DL
 Prologue. Epilogue. Mr Aw'dwell – Mills; Praiseall – Cibber; Fastin – Powell; Amorous – Pinkethman; Lord Whiffle – Thomas; Lord Whimsical – Verbruggen; Marsillia – Mrs Verbruggen; Patience – Mrs Essex; Mrs Wellfed – Mrs Powell; Calista – Mrs Temple; Isabella – Mrs Cross; Lady Loveall – Mrs Knight; Betty Useful – Mrs Kent; Players – Johnson, Pinkethman, Mrs Lucas, Miss Cross; Singers – Mrs Cross, Pate; Dancers – Mrs Cross, Mrs Lucas.

COMMENT. Rich's Company. The date of the first performance is not known, for the play was apparently not printed until 1704. Nevertheless, some details indicate a performance early in the season of 1696–97. In the first place, the presence of Verbruggen in the cast indicates that it must have been acted before 1 Jan. 1696/7, when Verbruggen was permitted to act at Lincoln's Inn Fields. The play also parodies the works of Mrs Manley, whose *The Royal Mischief* had been staged (probably) in April 1696, and it is likely that the company would emphasize the pertinence of the parody by presenting it soon after the appearance of the original. Although *The Female Wits* may not have been acted until later in the autumn, it seems likely that it was acted first in the late summer or early autumn.

Preface, Edition of 1704: [The] Success of this Play has been such . . . having been Acted six Days running without intermission. . . . Among the rest, Mr Powel and his Wife excell'd in the Characters they represented, as did Mrs Verbruggen, who play'd the Chief Character. . . . The Lady whose Play is rehears'd, personated one Mrs M——ly [Manley].