

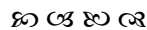


DOCTOR IN LITTERIS



Maximo meo gaudio, Academici, vobis nunc praesento mimam illustrissimam, **FIONA MARY SHAW**, Imperii Britannici Commendatricem, theatri Hibernici sidus praelucidum, nec non delicias spectatorum in insula vicina degentium. Ripis in amoenis Lee nostratis et nata et nutrita, Universitatis in Collegium Corcagiense discipula processit ubi artes feliciter excoluit. Platon, sic fama, ad fabulas scaenicas componendas primo se erigebat, postea tantum philosophiae se omnino dedit. Hospes nostra, illius cursui retro relata, tirocinium in studiis philosophicis prospere explevit, et tum demum ad scaenam expugnandam progressa est. Londinii in Academia Regia Artis Scaenicae erudita, apud Britannos elucere incepit dum Heddam illam Ibseniensem et Beatricem Shakespearianam summo lepore, summa intentione agit. Nunc iudicum bonorum consensu, inter omnes qui aetate nostra Thalam personati colunt, illa, si quae alia, primaria eminet. Quod artis

columen vel quod affectus fastigium superare non audebit quae Electram ad matricidam fratrem incitantem, vel Medeam liberos animo saevo trucidantem, auctoritate tam feroci repraesentaverit? Regem Ricardum Secundum cum aliquot ante annis egit, monstrum simul ex arrogancia et mansuetudine conflatum, misericordiae et terroris purgationem tragicam spectatoribus re vera effecit. Cur taceam de comoediae vena effossa cum domina Nugent contra macellarii famulum pugnabat? Omnia novit mimia nostra audacissima! Socratim ut opinor, haud dissimilis sui ipsius scientiam persequitur, sed in scaena potius quam in foro. Nimirum in futuro nos etiam maius delectabit et in admirationem movebit. Optimo igitur iure hancce histrionem Hibernicam, cui palmam Corcagienses antea dederunt, nos quoque Dublinienses laureis academicis hodie coronamus. Dum in pulpito nostro adstat, plausus vestri, Academici, libentissime et hilarissime illi tribuantur.



DOCTOR IN LETTERS

I now have much pleasure in presenting a very well-known actress, **FIONA MARY SHAW**, C.B.E., bright star of the Irish theatre and the darling of audiences on the neighbouring island. She was born and schooled 'on the banks of our lovely Lee', and went on to enter University College Cork, where she graduated with distinction in the Arts Faculty. Plato, so the story goes, was first intent on composing plays, and only later turned wholly to philosophy. Ms. Shaw did the opposite: she completed her apprenticeship in philosophical studies, and only then proceeded to take the theatre by storm. Her formal training was in London at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, and she soon achieved stardom in Britain with performances of great charm and intense commitment, including the title role in Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler*, and Beatrice in *Much Ado about Nothing*. Now, in the opinion of good judges, she holds a pre-eminent position among all who woo the tragic Muse. What summit of art or peak of emotion will she not dare to scale, she who has portrayed with such fierce authority the grief-stricken Electra inciting her brother to matricide, or savage-hearted Medea slaughtering her own children? When, some years ago, she played Richard the Second, that strange prodigy of arrogance and sensitivity, she indeed effected the tragic catharsis of pity and terror in her viewers. And I must also mention the vein of comedy that she has tapped in, for example, Mrs Nugent's battle against the *Butcher Boy*. Our daring actress is nothing if not versatile! She bears, I think, some resemblance to Socrates in her quest for self-knowledge, though this is conducted on the stage rather than in the market-place. It is very right and proper that she who has already won an honorary accolade from Cork should today be crowned with Dublin's academic laurels. As she stands on our stage, I urge you to bestow on her the tribute of your readiest and most cheerful applause.

