

Editor's Note

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MARILYN FRANCUS

Volume 16 of *The Burney Journal* features the Burney family and issues of place. As the Burneys attempt to find and advance their place, their experiences and works comment on social, intellectual, and cultural spaces and power.

Linda Zionkowski's article, "Putting Burney in Her Place," analyzes Frances Burney's "deep relationships with people and places that fostered Burney's sense of who she was, what she was, and where she belonged." For Zionkowski, Burney's sense of place was defined by physical space, social position, and psychological stance, and shaped by a life of relocation, transition, and displacement. By focusing on three moments in Burney's life—Burney's rise to fame in the wake of the publication of *Evelina*; her place at court; and her years in France (1802–1812)—Zionkowski argues that Burney's identity was often destabilized by her sense of place, and she "experienced home as provisional and exile." In viewing Burney in this light, Zionkowski puts Burney in a different place: by claiming that Burney's experience is relevant to contemporary discussions of inclusion, exclusion, immigration, refugees, and exile.

Bethany Wong develops the notion of "virtuous theatricality" in "The Cloaked Actress in *Evelina* and *The Wanderer*." Wong argues that Burney's allusions to Frances Abington in *Evelina* and Elizabeth Farren in *The Wanderer*, and the theatrical scenes in these novels, serve to navigate identity, authority, and social space. In doing so, Burney not only enables readers to recognize that "women ... can act rather than only be acted upon by others" but she also reconfigures authorial identity as a form of acting, in which "authors and heroines imitate the actress, donning the right mask for the right audience." For Wong, Burney's alignment of the novel with the theater is a primary characteristic of her fiction, both as content and process, for Burney's readers are invited "not only to the literal performances in playhouses and fine houses but also to the imaginative acts of empathizing with

her characters, who function as masks and cloaks for the reader.”

In “‘A drudge amid the smiles of Wealth and Power’: the Burneys and their Montagu Patrons,” Joy Hudson provides insight into issues of social place, as she excavates the relationships between the Burneys and their Montagu patrons. Hudson produces evidence that the careers of Charles Burney and James Burney were advanced significantly by Montagu connections, especially by John Montagu, the fourth Earl of Sandwich. But there were disappointments in their Montagu patrons as well, as Hudson demonstrates, and pointed commentary in Frances’s journals about the Earl. Hudson also reflects on Frances Burney’s interactions with Elizabeth Montagu, whose comments on *Evelina* and *Cecilia* had the power to shape the reception of Burney’s novels—and Hudson reminds us how the perceived criticism of Montagu famously prevented the production of *The Witlings*. While Elizabeth Montagu was not a formal patron of Frances Burney, the Burneys were all too aware of her power, and the power of all the Montagus. Hudson argues that Frances ultimately escaped patronage (ironically, through its benefits), and provides a critique of its power.

Devon Nelson’s “The Antiquarian Reception of Charles Burney’s *A General History of Music*” is the Hemlow Prize-winning essay for 2019. Nelson’s article locates Charles Burney’s groundbreaking work in the cultural milieu of antiquarians and literati of the period, as Burney creates an intellectual and cultural place for himself as a music historian. Burney acknowledged the scholarly methodology of antiquarians, as he made his research process transparent to his readers. Nelson also demonstrates Burney’s use of social and professional connections to gain access to privately held resources, which added significant value to his history that other music historians and antiquarians could not compete with. Nelson traces the ways that Burney achieved status in the antiquarian community, the ways that antiquarians used his work—and the ways that Burney sought and won over the larger intellectual audience. In so doing, Charles Burney created a place for himself on the cultural and intellectual landscape.

The challenge of place—of finding, creating, and advancing

their place—remained a lifelong preoccupation of the Burneys. Their experience of place speaks to modern concerns with status, inclusion, and exclusion—and modern anxieties regarding professional success and failure, alienation and acceptance.