



A Dressing Room (1767) in the Court Theatre, Copenhagen.

and indeed, due to Bournonville, Danish ballet is very important in world theatre history. Consequently there is considerable space devoted to prints and photographs of the dance as well as items such as shoes worn by Taglioni and a costume worn by August Bournonville himself.

Opera has its section and drama has such items as Nora's costume from the Copenhagen premiere of *A Doll's House* in 1879. Then there is a space for Revue where the printed documentation is helped to life with items like a comic pipe and a bulbous nose with spectacles attached. And provincial theatre has a stairway with material on Odense, Aarhus, etc.

English links are not forgotten—after all English companies first visited Denmark in 1579, and in 1586 there was a visit from the Shakespearean actors William Kemp, Thomas Pope and George Bryan. Although French influence later became much stronger, our own time has brought a series of *Hamlets* to Kronberg Castle and there are photographs of Olivier, Gielgud, Burton and Redgrave playing the troubled prince on location. And there is a dagger belonging to Edmund Kean.

A success of this museum is the build-up of detail—the way in which the production pictures, the performers, and their props all somehow integrate. It is not a selective display. The visitor is allowed to build up his own picture from the wealth of juxtaposed ephemera. And that is the way I like it.

I like suddenly coming across marvellous items like an ornate varnished mahogany seat price and availability board from the Dagmarteatret. Or a model of the same theatre showing not just the proscenium area and stage but with all the traps and sliders marked on the stage. Then there is a stone sculpture group from the front of the Kongelige Teater of 1774-1874; and that Royal Theatre leaps to life when we look at an 1874 photograph of the new (ie today's) Royal Theatre when it was being constructed alongside the old theatre. Or a super drawing of an 1842 performance with



A box in the Court Theatre during an opera performance in the 1840s.

the auditorium seen from behind the actors.

There is a lovely painting of backstage at the Casino Theatre in 1885—all grooves and gas lengths. But I think that my favourite must be two prompter's box close-up photographs of the same theatre. One in gas floats, the other in very early electric.

But the major theatric pleasure of the *Teatermuseet* in the *Hofteatret* must just simply be experiencing the auditorium. Long, thin and operatic. A dull but rich red (a more convincing period red, I believe, than the Theatre Royal in Bury St. Edmunds) set off by the flat painted gilding. An opportunity to experience benches in boxes with hinged sections for both front and back rows of seats. Imagine a modern fire officer finding hinged seats across the box doors. (These boxes incidentally, have sliding doors.) All this experienced under atmospheric lighting and period music.

To locate a theatre museum in a historic theatre certainly gives it a head start!

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