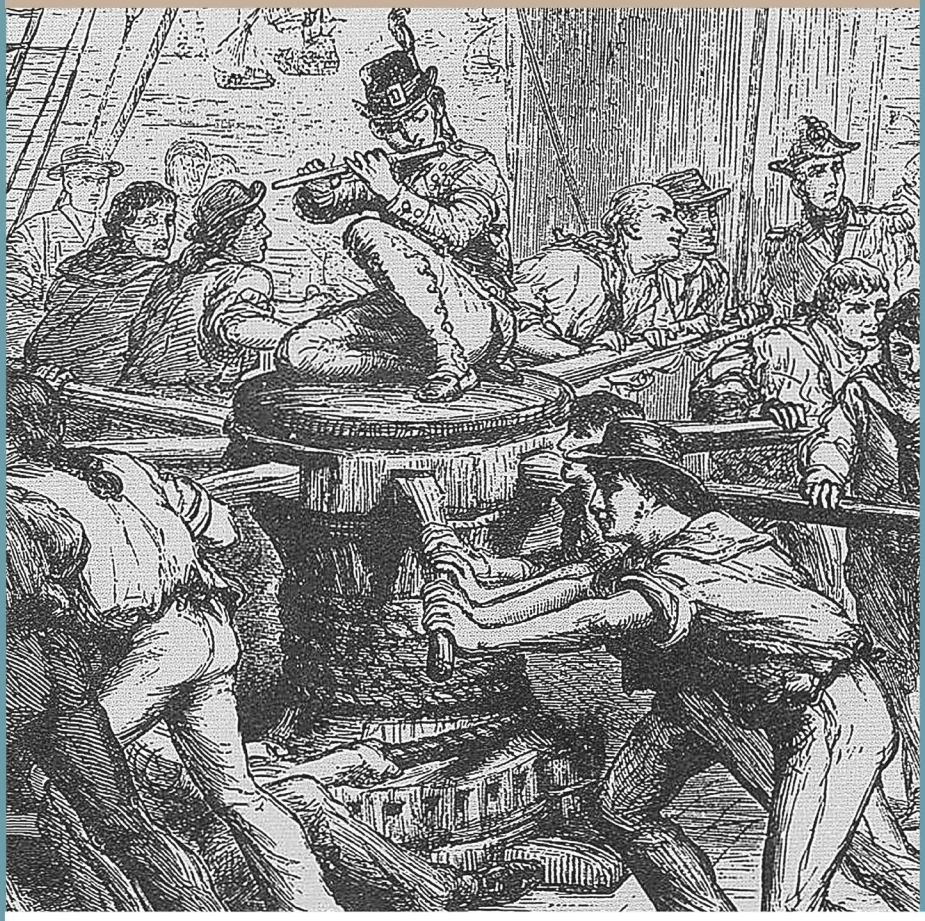
MARITIME HUMANITIES, 1400-1800



James Seth

Maritime Musicians and Performers on Early Modern English Voyages

The Lives of the Seafaring Middle Class

Amsterdam
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Maritime Musicians and Performers
on Early Modern English Voyages

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Maritime Humanities, 1400-1800: Cultures of the Sea

Early modern oceans not only provided temperate climates, resources, and opportunities for commercial exchange, they also played a central role in cultural life. Increased exploration, travel, and trade, marked this period of history, and early modern seascapes were cultural spaces and contact zones, where connections and circulations occurred outside established centres of control and the dictates of individual national histories. Likewise, coastlines, rivers, and ports were all key sites for commercial and cultural exchange. Interdisciplinary in its approach, *Maritime Humanities, 1400–1800: Cultures of the Sea* publishes books that conceptually engage with issues of globalization, post-colonialism, eco-criticism, environmentalism, and the histories of science and technology. The series puts maritime humanities at the centre of a transnational historiographical scholarship that seeks to transform traditional land-based histories of states and nations by focusing on the cultural meanings of the early modern ocean.

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Introduction: A Tale of Two Trumpeters

Abstract
Maritime musicians and performers on early modern English voyages had fascinating, complex lives, and yet the historical and critical conversations have obscured them. Opening with a pair of trumpeters, John Brewer and William Porter, the Introduction sets the stage by presenting the major players on English ships and the conditions of their performances. Despite significant gaps in the research about these players' lives, this book benefits from scholarly work on maritime labour, and I argue not only for the legitimacy of shipboard playing as labour, but also for the recognition of shipboard performers as multiskilled crew members occupying an important in-between space.

Keywords: John Brewer, William Porter, maritime music, shipboard performance, Ian Woodfield, English voyages

Trumpeters John Brewer and William Porter had extraordinary lives on land and sea. Brewer was the lead trumpeter on Sir Francis Drake's famous circumnavigation (1577–1580), and upon returning to England after the world-compassing voyage, he worked as a court musician for Queen Elizabeth from 1582 to 1589.[1] Brewer probably came from yeoman stock like Drake, but he was noted for his skilful musicianship at a young age.[2] One of his first known employers was Lord High Chancellor and Queen's favourite Christopher Hatton.[3] Hatton recommended Brewer to Drake, and so began the young trumpeter's adventure on the *Pelican*, renamed the *Golden Hind*

1 Henry Cart de LaFontaine, ed., *The King's Musick: A Transcript of Records Relating to Music and Musicians (1460–1700)* (London: Novello, 1909), 201.

2 Claire Jowitt, "Performing 'Water' Ralegh: The Cultural Politics of Sea Captains in Late Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama," in *The Maritime World of Early Modern Britain*, ed. Richard J. Blakemore and James Davey (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2020), 131.

3 Harry Kelsey, *Sir Francis Drake: The Queen's Pirate* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998), 83, 108.

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during the voyage.[4] Brewer's experience aboard ship was perilous. While stationed on the poop deck during a calm day at sea, he was struck by a stray rope stirred by a gust of wind and fell into the ocean.[5] Seamen on the *Hind* cast him ropes, but Brewer failed to catch or hold on to them. Just before drowning, he managed to cling to one and was safely recovered. Brewer also witnessed the wreck of the accompanying *Marigold* in the Straits of Magellan in 1578, and he was entangled in controversy as an accuser of gentleman-navigator Thomas Doughty, notoriously executed during the voyage for mutiny and insubordination towards Drake.[6] Brewer survived the nearly three-year circumnavigation, and several years after his return he attained the highest level of employment for an English musician as a trumpeter for the Elizabethan court and married into a musical family, as well.

Unlike Brewer, William Porter began as a court trumpeter before serving at sea. Porter's first official position was "Trumpeter in ordinary" for Charles I from 1641 to 1649.[7] Between Charles I's execution and the Restoration of Charles II, Porter's whereabouts are unknown. Given his close ties to the former king, he was likely in hiding with other Carolinian court musicians during the Interregnum (1649–1660). Shortly after Charles II was crowned, Porter and several other former court musicians were given pensions and official titles (Porter was named a "Pentioner Trumpeter"), and he received annual wages in return for his loyalty to Charles I.[8] In his later years, Porter decided to join the East India Company's voyage to Fort St. George (1675–1677), serving on the *Loyal Eagle* under the command of Captain James Bonnell.[9] Porter became terminally ill during the voyage and was left to recover at the island of St. Helena in June 1677.[10] His last pension payment was

4 Kelsey, *Queen's Pirate*, 108.

5 Francis Fletcher, *The World Encompassed by Sir Francis Drake*, ed. William Sandys Wright Vaux, Vol. 16 (London: Hakluyt Society, 1854), 81. This episode is also discussed in Ian Woodfield, *English Musicians in the Age of Exploration* (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1995), 53–54.

6 For Brewer's view of the wreck of the *Marigold*, see David Lasocki's discussion of the trumpeter in *A Biographical Dictionary of English Court Musicians, 1485–1714*, ed. Andrew Ashbee, David Lasocki, Peter Holman, and Fiona Kisby (New York: Taylor & Francis, 2008), 1: cxcii. For his accusations against Doughty, see Woodfield, *English Musicians*, 53.

7 LaFontaine, *King's Musick*, 109. At court, "Trumpeter in ordinary" is distinguished from the ranking of "extraordinary" and also from the highest office of Sergeant Trumpeter.

8 Ibid., 134.

9 Ibid., 296. Per LaFontaine's entry in *King's Musick*, the letter of Porter's assignment appears in the Lord Chamberlain's court records, Vol. 198, 118d (296).

10 This letter was transcribed by Richard Browne and is reproduced in *Indian Records Series: The Diaries of Streynsham Master, 1675–1680 And Other Contemporary Papers Relating Thereto*,

received that year, and it is not known whether Porter recovered and stayed at St. Helena, perished shortly after the *Loyal Eagle* departed, or recovered and relocated entirely. Regardless, Porter had his financial affairs in order before the voyage, appointing his daughter, Prudence, as lawful attorney.[11] If he did recover, he would have had the opportunity to live an entirely new life while his family lived off his remaining pension.

One hundred years separated the two trumpeters' voyages, but the connections between the two are striking. Porter and Brewer both had experience on land and sea, at court and on contracted voyages. Both were rewarded for their loyalty and service, yet they were never high-ranking officials. In an odd coincidence, they both played at court with a trumpeter named "John Smith," Brewer's comrade being perhaps an older relative of Porter's. Brewer and Porter were entangled in executions and public controversies on matters of authority and leadership. At sea both men were subject to danger due to occupational hazards. They would have also performed similar roles as trumpeters, using their instruments to alert, entertain, and communicate with crew members of different ranks and backgrounds. They played for captains, officers, court officials, sailors, foreign representatives, and for Brewer, Indigenous peoples of South America, South Africa, and the Pacific Islands. Their times at sea differed with their ages and levels of experience, but these two trumpeters had many stories to tell.

Yet these stories have been largely overlooked in historical and contemporary retellings of voyages. Early modern maritime musicians and performers are rarely named in ship logbooks, and if any were mentioned by diarists, it was often in the context of a gaudy ritual. For example, a voyager named John Fryer wrote about an elaborate banquet given by Gerald Aungier (1640–77), Bombay's second governor, during his travels to India. In his journal he lists Aungier's train to emphasize the grand pageantry: "He has Chaplains, Physician, Chyrurgeons, and Domesticks; his Linguist, and Mint-Master: At Meals he has Trumpets usher in his Courses, and Soft Musick at the Table."[12] While it is still a common practice to call musicians by their instrument ("Trumpets," as opposed to "Trumpeters"), this shorthand prioritizes the sound-making device and not the sound maker. Similarly, Fryer describes Aungier's disembodied string musicians by the "Soft Musick" gently playing

Vol. 2, *The First and Second "Memorialls," 1679–1680*, ed. Sir Richard Carnac Temple (London: John Murray, Albemarle Street, 1911), 120.

11 LaFontaine, *King's Musick*, 296.

12 John Fryer, *A New Account of East-India and Persia in Eight Letters Being Nine Years Travels, Begun 1672 and Finished 1681* (London: R.R. for Rt. Chiswell, 1698), 68.

during the meal. To Fryer, the trumpeters were food heralds, and the string players sounds without forms. This is the impression many early modern diarists give when describing musicians at sea. Like shipboard phantoms, musicians appear at meals, play for guests, and are never mentioned again. During Drake's circumnavigation, which Brewer attended, the Spanish gentleman and captive aboard the *Hind*, Don Francisco de Zárate, briefly sensed the presence of musicians while dining in the great cabin. He states in a letter lavishing praise on Drake that the commander "is served in silver place with a coat of arms engraved on the dishes; and music is played at his dinner and supper."[13] With the focus on Drake, the musicians are afterthoughts, the final touch of elegance following the silver and dishware.

This book aims to recover the lives and livelihoods of English shipboard musicians and performers in the early modern period. They are often reduced in voyaging accounts as having one function, and yet they served many communicative tasks. Shipboard performers' lives were not only complex, but often contradictory. They had ties to the English court as well as to the labouring class. They caroused with deck hands but also interfaced with higher ranking officers. Depending on their role, they may have been part of the captain's consort, following him about the ship, or they may have been stationed at the deck or the poop. At sea they adhered to strict rules and rituals, but they could also be subversive and shifty.

Shipboard musicians and performers have been absent from conversations about English navigation, maritime culture, and economic expansion. Early modern editors and artists portray the ship captains, merchants, and navigators as the true 'actors' on the global stage of early modern exploration and trade. The idea of the global stage appears as a visual metaphor in the frontispiece of *The Mariners Mirror* (1588), the English translation of Lucas Janszoon Waghenaer's (1533–1606) *Spieghel der Zeevaerdt* (1584). The image, produced by engraver Theodor de Bry, shows several cartographers at the top of an ornate mirror fixed to a stage-like sea, wherein a battle unfolds between a large ship and several whale-like creatures. On either side of the mirror stand two figures, likely Francis Drake and Anthony Ashley (as their quotes are featured on the frontispiece), angling their lead and line to determine the depth of the ocean. They are the central protagonists in what Oxford professor Walter Alexander Raleigh (not to be confused with the navigator) refers to as "'[t]he great prose epic of the modern English [nation],'" which

13 "Don Francisco de Zarate's Letter," in *The World Encompassed and Analogous Contemporary Documents Concerning Sir Francis Drake's Circumnavigation of the World*, ed. N.M. Penzer (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, 1969), 219.

is "itself but an incident or episode in a greater and wider world-drama."[14] This outmoded, congratulatory view of English imperialism also suggests the way early modern voyagers viewed themselves and the world.

But if the captains were the actors in this "wider world-drama," what were the shipboard actors themselves? What of the performers and musicians? Contemporary histories of oceanic activity similarly exclude shipboard music, though when it does surface, it feels tangential against the 'big picture' narrative.[15] Contrary to their portrayal in voyaging journals, histories, and scholarly studies, maritime performers were not merely part of the ships' décor, signs of wealth to impress guests, or stage props for their ambitious commanders. They were integral members of early modern English voyages and contributed to a broader oceanic history of navigation and cultural exchange.

Few contemporary scholars have engaged with the livelihoods of English maritime musicians and performers during this period. Scholarship on and popular interest in shipboard culture has mostly focused on its most prominent or notorious figures, or conversely, the deckhands and labourers shantying to their rhythmic tasks.[16] Seminal critics of maritime labour like Marcus Rediker refer to music and dance as "two of the seamen's most

14 Walter Raleigh, *The English Voyages of the Sixteenth Century* (Glasgow: James Maclehose and Sons, 1906), 1. Notably, the line Raleigh quotes comes from historian James A. Froude, though the line is unattributed. See Mary C. Fuller, *Voyages in Print: English Travel to America 1576–1624* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 158.

15 In multi-authored textbooks like *The Atlantic World: A History, 1400–1888*, ed. Douglas R. Egerton, et al. (Wheeling, IL: Harlan Davidson, 2007), music is mentioned three times: the first in an aside regarding Catholic focus on music during services (121), the second as mini-section separated from the chapter, titled, "Atlantic Drugs and Popular Music" (228), and the third on the influences of African music into European culture, leading to contemporary genres of jazz, tango, cumbia, and others (287). More recent edited collections, such as *The Maritime World of Early Modern Britain*, ed. Richard J. Blakemore and James Davey (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2020), address important topics historically sidelined (see Elaine Murphy's essay, "Women and the Navy in the British Civil Wars," 173–193), but there is no mention of music.

16 The work of Stan Hugill is invaluable to the study of shantying, and his book *Songs of the Sea: The Tales and Tunes of Sailors and Sailing Ships* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1977) is a trove of working-class shipboard music and insightful discussions about shanty culture. See also *The Oxford Book of Sea Songs*, ed. Roy Palmer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), and Robert Young Walser, "'Here We Come in a Leaky Ship!': The Shanty Collection of James Madison Carpenter" *Folk Music Journal* 7, no. 4 (1998): 471–495. For current discussions of the shanty, especially its resurgence on social media app TikTok, see Amanda Petrusich, "The Delights of Sea-Chantey TikTok," *The New Yorker*, 14 January 2021, https://www.newyorker.com/culture/cultural-comment/the-delights-of-sea-chantey-tiktok. Accessed 1 July 2021. A viral performance of the shanty, "The Scotsman," as performed by TikTok shantier Nathan Evans, is available here: https://www.tiktok.com/@nathanevanss/video/6909533746983079169. Accessed 1 July 2021.

fancied pastimes."[17] While music and dance may have been "pastimes" for deckhands and amateurs, they were also paid labour for hired professional musicians and performers aboard ship. Ship labourers sang and played for recreation, but ship performers played at times of work *and* leisure, making it easy for any onlooker to conflate the two. Rediker's modifier "fancied" means preferred, but the word also connotes playfulness and imagination. Rediker thus unintentionally distinguishes music and dance from 'real' labour—hauling, navigating, trading, plundering, and the like. In effect, part of this project is also legitimizing maritime music and performance by hired professionals as shipboard work.

More recent studies of maritime performance focus not on the performers but on issues of authorship and historiography as they pertain to playwrights like Shakespeare.[18] The mystery of whether Shakespeare was performed at Sierra Leone during the East India Company's third voyage (1607–1610) is one many early modern cultural historians, literary critics, and performance scholars have engaged. They include Frederick Samuel Boas, William Foster, Sydney Race, Gary Taylor, Ania Loomba, Richmond Barbour, Bernhard Klein, Bernice Kliman, Graham Holderness, and myself, among others.[19] I

17 Marcus Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea: Merchant Seamen, Pirates, and the Anglo-American Maritime World, 1700–1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 70.

18 An exciting account of the crew of the *Red Dragon* flagship performing *Hamlet* was published by one Ambrose Gunthio in *European Magazine* (1825) as a freestanding postscript to the newly rediscovered *Hamlet Q1* (1603). This account may also be written by John Payne Collier (1789–1883), a literary editor who began forging documents in the 1820s. See Ambrose Gunthio, "A Running Commentary on the Hamlet of 1603," *European Magazine* (December 1825): 347. Samuel Purchas also published a much-condensed version of the Keeling journal in *Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas His Pilgrimes* (London, 1625).

19 The earliest mention of the original source for this mystery (EIC Commander William Keeling's journal) appears in the "Catalog of Damaged Papers in Three Lists: Copied in part from the Old Catalogue" in the India Office Collections. The third list contains the entry: "108, First leaf of Capt Keeling's Journal (Much decayed and mutilated)." This source is reprinted in Frederick Samuel Boas's *Shakespeare and the Universities* (New York, D. Appleton, 1923). For other mentions and discussions of the East India Shakespeare mystery, its sources, possible forgeries, and afterlives, see William Foster, "Forged Shakespeariana," *Notes and Queries* 134 (1900): 41–42; Sydney Race, "J. P. Collier's Fabrications," *Notes and Queries* 195 (5 August 1950): 480; Gary Taylor's reprinting and commentary on the Keeling journal in *Travel Knowledge: European "Discoveries" in the Early Modern Period*, ed. Ivo Kamps and Jyotsna Singh (New York, Palgrave, 2001), 220; Ania Loomba, "Shakespearian Transformations," in *Shakespeare and National Culture*, ed. John J. Joughin (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997) 111, 113; Richmond Barbour and Bernhard Klein, "Drama at Sea: A New Look at Shakespeare on the *Dragon*, 1607–08," *Travel and Drama in Early Modern England: The Journeying Play*, ed. Claire Jowitt and David McInnis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 150–168; Graham

will also contribute a new reading to this inquiry in this book, though I am presently more concerned with the lives of shipboard performers.

One of the most valuable critical precedents for this project is Ian Woodfield's *English Musicians in the Age of Exploration* (1995). This is one of the few monograph-length studies on maritime musicians in early English voyaging history. Woodfield draws primarily on Richard Hakluyt's *The Principal Navigations, Voiages, and Discoveries of the English Nation* (1598) and Samuel Purchas's *Hakluytus Posthumus, or Purchas His Pilgrimes* (1625). His study considers the many complex occasions for performing maritime music, from public worship to private entertainments, and it also serves as a useful primer for understanding the culture of musicianship on voyages and the roles of shipboard consorts. However, even Woodfield's ground-breaking study is limited both in scope, focusing primarily on the Elizabethan age, and in its reliance on few primary sources. As Woodfield observes, "Archival material concerning the Elizabethan voyages is only occasionally of direct use in the study of musicians" and "[l]ack of detail is the usual problem."[20] Yet there are now many more digitized and readily available works since its publication. Additionally, Woodfield's work does not "attempt a systematic survey of the original sources," nor does it seek to understand the full lives of shipboard musicians and performers on both land and sea.[21]

Maritime Musicians and Performers on Early Modern English Voyages is, in a sense, a radical expansion of Woodfield's work. While my book also relies on Hakluyt, I look at primary materials beyond the *Principal Navigations*, examining documents from court livery accounts to voyage logbooks and diaries to fully assess the lives of shipboard performers. I am also interested in a broader range of performers, including instrumental musicians, dancers, singers, and dramatic performers aboard ship. Additionally, my temporal focus extends from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century. My investigation of shipboard theatre, for example, begins in the Jacobean era and ends in the Golden Age of Piracy, focusing on the roles, theatrical and practical, of amateur and outlaw shipboard actors. My book also benefits from critical

Holderness, *Tales from Shakespeare: Creative Collisions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 23–58; and James Seth, "Maritime Performance Culture and the Possible Staging of *Hamlet* in Sierra Leone," *Shakespeare en devenir – Les Cahiers de La Licorne* 12 (2017). Barbour has provided a crucial precedent or this project with *Before Orientalism: London's Theatre of the East, 1576–1626* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003) and especially *The Third Voyage Journals: Writing and Performance in the London East India Company, 1607–10* (New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), which helped form the initial inquiry from which this book was formed.

20 Woodfield, *English Musicians*, xv.

21 Ibid., xiv.

conversations about maritime culture in response to the Oceanic Turn and the emergent "blue humanities," developed by eco-literary scholars like Steve Mentz.[22] My research on the history of English shipboard musicians is shaped by scholarship on marginal figures in the age of early English colonialism, piracy, captivity, and intercultural encounter. This includes the work of Cheryl Fury, Paul Gilroy, Bernhard Klein, Claire Jowitt, and Jyotsna G. Singh.[23] Additionally, this project is indebted to scholars who have explored the English East India Company's formation and expansion, including Alison Games, John McAleer, Philip Stern, and Bernard Cohn.[24]

22 My methodology is partially shaped by the "New Thalassology," an interdisciplinary approach to maritime research. Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell describe the New Thalassology as an area of study engaging oceanic geopolitics, as their scholarship on the historical Mediterranean demonstrates. However, my research on maritime cross-cultural performance aligns more closely with the broader objectives of the New Thalassology: mapping "the physical and cultural shapes of the oceans in world history," as Steve Mentz explains in *At the Bottom of Shakespeare's Ocean* (London: Continuum, 2009), xi. My research also contributes to an oceanic movement in the humanities that Mentz dubs "blue cultural studies" or "blue humanities," which pursues the complex relationship between art, culture, and the global ocean. More recently, Mentz has restated his definition of "blue humanities" in "Shakespeare and the Blue Humanities," *SEL Studies in English Literature 1500–1900* 59, no. 2 (Spring 2019): 384. In the introduction to *Sea Changes: Historicizing the Ocean*, Bernhard Klein and Gesa Mackenthun begin with the premise that "the ocean itself needs to be analyzed as a deeply historical location whose transformative power is not merely psychological or metaphorical … but material and very real." See Klein and Mackenthum, eds, *Sea Changes: Historicizing the Ocean* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 2. There is a growing cross-section of critical scholarship exploring this "transformative power" and engaging the complex relationship between the sea and culture. This movement, which has evolved from Horden and Purcell's conception of New Thalassology, has been referred to more generally as "The Oceanic Turn." Scholarship engaging the cross-section of oceanic ecology and the humanities includes Mentz, *Shipwreck Modernity: Ecologies of Globalization, 1550–1719* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015); Dan Brayton, *Shakespeare's Ocean* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2012); *Ecocritical Shakespeare*, ed. Dan Brayton and Lynne Bruckner (New York: Ashgate, 2011); and Elizabeth DeLoughrey, "Submarine Futures of the Anthropocene," *Comparative Literature* 69, no. 1 (2017): 32.

23 See Cheryl A. Fury, *Tides in the Affairs of Men: The Social History of Elizabethan Seamen, 1580–1603* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002); Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993); Bernhard Klein, ed. *Fictions of the Sea: Critical Perspectives on the Ocean in British Literature and Culture* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2002); Claire Jowitt, *Voyage Drama and Gender Politics 1589–1642: Real and Imagined Worlds* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003); Jowitt, *Pirates? The Politics of Plunder, 1550–1650* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2006); Jowitt, *The Culture of Piracy 1580–1630: English Literature and Seaborne Crime* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010); *Richard Hakluyt and Travel Writing in Early Modern Europe*, ed. C. Jowitt and D. Carey (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012); and Jyotsna G. Singh, *Colonial Narratives/Cultural Dialogues: "Discoveries" of India in the Language of Colonialism* (London: Routledge, 1996).

24 See John McAleer, *Britain's Maritime Empire: Southern Africa, the South Atlantic and the Indian Ocean, 1763–1820* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016); *The Royal Navy and the British Atlantic World*, ed. John McAleer and Christer Petley (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan,

More recently, scholars like Céline Carayon have made significant contributions to understanding the power of nonverbal communication—including music and dance—between European and Indigenous peoples.[25] Carayon "recasts" assumptions in this wider-world drama, not only by rejecting the idea of colonial America as a "Babel of tongues" without "mutualistic linguistic fluency" but also treating forms of 'play' and 'recreation' as powerful nonverbal gestures.[26] My book also interprets music, dance, and theatre as communicative signs in addition to recreational activities, especially when the English interacted with Indigenous peoples without interpreters or familiarity with languages or cultural practices.

I argue that musicians and performers on early English voyages were multiskilled crew members occupying an in-between space. Though not high-ranking officers, neither were they lower ranking mariners or sailors. They were influenced by a range of competing cultural practices, having spent time playing on both land and sea, and their roles required them to mediate parties using music, dance, and theatre as powerful forms of nonverbal communication. Their performances breached boundaries of language, rank, race, religion, and nationality, thereby upsetting conventional practices, improving shipboard and international relations, and ensuring the efficacy of their voyages.

In my book I identify two major subsets of shipboard musicians and performers: naval musicians and civilian performers. Naval musicians (trumpeters, drummers, and fifes) were ranked more highly, as they had military titles with appointed duties and were paid higher wages. Civilian musicians and performers, both amateur and professionally trained, made up the rest of the seafaring middle class. They included string musicians, woodwinds, pipe players, as well as singers, dancers, and even actors. This subcategory of shipboard performers

2016); McAleer, *Picturing India: People, Places and the World of the East India Company* (London: British Library, 2017); Philip J. Stern, *The Company-State: Corporate Sovereignty and the Early Modern Foundations of the British Empire in India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Bernard S. Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996); Alison Games, *The Web of Empire: English Cosmopolitans in an Age of Expansion, 1560–1660* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); and Games, *Migration and the Origins of the English Atlantic World* (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1999).

25 Céline Carayon, *Eloquence Embodied: Nonverbal Communication among French and Indigenous Peoples in the Americas* (Williamsburg, VA and Chapel Hill, NC: The Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture and the University of North Carolina Press, 2019). Carayon's work "recasts … prevailing assumptions about the early history of the American continents by arguing that, rather than being defined by incommunicability and incapacitating linguistic barriers … colonial America was the site of rich intersections between effective traditions of embodied expressiveness." (7)

26 Ibid., 7.

was also the wider and more diverse of the two. Some civilian performers were hired to entertain, and many others performed at leisure, both for their amusement and for the crew's. This book also identifies enslaved and captive performers on early English voyages but distinguishes these individuals from the first two categories, as they were the lowest ranking members of voyages and deprived of freedoms, communicative and otherwise. Slave and captive performers performed to cope with their inhumane conditions, to survive at sea, and to communicate with fellow captives.

Free musicians and performers often aspired to become court performers (as Brewer had), and some served the court before voyaging (like Porter). As a result, shipboard performers engaged in courtly ritual and projected manners and customs above those of rugged seafarers. What made maritime musicians and performers truly middle class was, I believe, not their proximity to the court but their aspirations towards it and struggles against it. These individuals were not only between ranks but opposing cultures. From the mid-sixteenth to the early eighteenth century, English shipboard culture increasingly rebelled against the English court and the land community, which Fury also notes in her study of shipboard cultural practices.[27] This same tension between sea and land communities affected the conditions and roles of shipboard performers.

Seafaring musicians and performers were also intermediaries between foreign cultures, languages, and geographical boundaries. They were needed to communicate between English and foreign contacts, using their instruments or voices to signal their location, negotiate friendly terms, display power or authority, assist in diplomatic introductions, and perform during times of commercial bargaining and trading.

This book is structured in two parts, "The Players" and "The Performances." Part One focuses mainly on the lives and roles of shipboard performers. Each chapter in Part One begins with a breakdown of tasks for each subsection, naval and civilian, respectively. Following this, I include supplemental information including payments and other relevant details. Lastly, I provide

27 While this is evident with the increase of piratical voyages in the seventeenth century, the idea that sea culture was "other" to land culture is well explained in Fury's *Tides in the Affairs of Men* as she describes "seamen's subculture." This "subculture" was still linked to the landed world while "unusual in the sense that it was nurtured in isolation," and thus it became something "rich and pervasive" (93). Fury distinguishes the culture of the seafaring "other" by emphasizing aspects like space and other limitations and conditions: "Seamen's dances were designed for confined areas. Both forms were tailored to shipboard life. Thus, their working environment and the rhythm of their labor had a direct influence upon the character of their popular culture, and that culture reinforced their 'otherness'" (87).

biographies of select musicians, singers, actors, and other important figures contributing to this history. The biographies vary by the amount of information available and are incomplete. However, they collectively illustrate a diversity of voyaging practices and experiences based on social connections, household wealth, experience at sea, and relation to the English court.

Chapter One discusses naval musicians, paying special attention to the way they brought courtly manners and practices to voyages. This transfer of court culture influenced the climate and activity aboard ship, from dinners to psalm services. Trumpeters, drummers, and fifes also had military ranks and played their instruments to signal and communicate between ships, as well as between themselves and people ashore. They sounded during celebratory and sombre rituals, as well as proper introductions with foreign guests. Naval musicians were the tethers between the higher and lower classes, shifting between worlds to inform and connect people. Chapter Two focuses on civilian performers, both amateur and professional. Civilian performers had to adapt to various audiences, playing spaces, and performance conditions, and they were envoys of English culture when presented to dignitaries and esteemed guests. Chapter Two discusses formal and professional players, as well as crew members who engaged in more leisurely shipboard recreation, including instrumental performance, singing, and play-acting.

The second part of this book focuses on the types of performances for shipboard players. The title of Chapter Three, "Signalling and Communicating," seems self-explanatory, but it covers a range of communicative modes. Signalling, primarily the work of naval musicians, helped the English access coastlines, navigate treacherous waters, and keep the crew together during onshore explorations. However, signalling also made these musicians vulnerable, as trumpeters and drummers became easy targets in Spanish and Portuguese colonies. This chapter also focuses on methods of aural and nonverbal communication between the English and Indigenous people of Africa and the Americas, drawing from first-hand accounts of Drake's circumnavigation (1577–1580), Martin Frobisher's second and third Northwest Passage voyages (1577–1578), and John Davis's first Passage voyage (1585), among others. The "Communication" part of this chapter begins to define "kind entertainment" as courteous or casual diversion between the English and foreign contacts. Early unsuccessful encounters with Indigenous communities encouraged the English to use nonverbal communication such as singing, dancing, making signs, playing music, and giving elaborate performances to make friendly relations. These methods of intercultural engagement would later define strategies of diplomacy during the formative voyages of the East India Company, covered at greater length in Chapter Five.

Chapter Four, "Courtly Rituals and Casual Entertainments," distinguishes playing for play and playing for work. Shipboard performances could be duteous or subversive, depending on the audience and occasion for playing. This chapter first presents analytical readings of courtly functions for which hired shipboard musicians were paid to perform (dinners, psalm services, funerals, and other formal ceremonies), and I focus on the way captains like Drake instilled courtly regiment and customs to assert themselves as sole master of the voyage. This mastery not only included the ship schedule but the social, moral, and religious lives of the crew. Given this dynamic, hired shipboard musicians attended to the captain as they would a court official. Conversely, there were also times of recreational play and diversion, which are documented more frequently by voyage diarists in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Amateur musicians like Samuel Pepys experimented with songs and melodies, while piratical actors engaged in experimental theatre, reimagining pirate trials in a mock court setting. Music and drama allowed shipboard performers an opportunity to escape their pedestrian or piratical reality and put on the roles of judges, attorneys, or pirate defendants, defying the law of the land they had escaped.

Chapter Five, finally, focuses on diplomatic encounters between the English and the kings, dignitaries, and merchants in Asian and African port cities. From the late-sixteenth century circumnavigations to the early voyages of the East India Company, instrumental music and other types of performances helped establish friendly relations. Naval musicians, professional players, and amateur sailors gave kind entertainment to potential trade partners in both formal and causal settings, boosting the success of their respective voyages and projects in the process. Whether presenting music for Javanese kings or putting together an impromptu orchestral arrangement for Japanese royalty, English musicians and performers did the most to impress their hosts and guests. Along with accompanying interpreters, they helped both parties gain cultural fluency in uniquely effective ways.

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