

### ***Sources and Interpretations***

Pantomime Indian: Performing the Encounter in Robert Sayer's *Harlequin Cherokee*

By *Monica Anke Hahn*

In the late eighteenth century, publisher and print seller Robert Sayer popularized the “turn-up book,” an interactive narrative form that created changing views when a book’s flaps were folded up and down. The pictures that illustrate *Harlequin Cherokee*, a turn-up book that Sayer published after the 1762 Cherokee delegation to London, have not been examined in previous scholarship on this visit. Theatrical gestures and poses were critical semiotic devices deployed in order to translate the Native body for the Georgian audience that consumed this novel type of print culture. Furthermore, both the performative nature of the visual descriptions of the Cherokees and the manipulable materiality of the book itself embodied the complexity of the colonial gaze and the multidimensionality of British and Native identities. This article reassesses the relationships among artists, Indigenous people, and the consuming public by examining the embodied performances within Sayer’s *Harlequin Cherokee*. A consideration of performative gesture and movement offers a new way of understanding the mutability of identity and the representational instability of the colonial encounter.