

Charlotte and Susan Cushman as Romeo and Juliet. Burselm, Staffordshire, ca. 1852. Folger ART Inv. 1095 (realia)

Charlotte Cushman, active in the mid-nineteenth century, was one of the first American actresses to gain international fame. Though known for her female roles, including Lady Macbeth and Nancy Sykes in Oliver Twist, her career was also full of male roles, including Hamlet, Cardinal Wolsey -- a first for a woman -- and Romeo. Charlotte's Romeo, paired with her sister Susan as Juliet, was a popular image in print and porcelain.