MUSIC, MAGIC, AND MECHANICS:

THE LIVING STATUE IN *ANCIEN-RÉGIME* SPECTACLE

by

DEVIN MICHAEL PAUL BURKE

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CASE WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

We hereby approve the dissertation of

Devin Michael Paul Burke

candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Musicology*

Committee Co-Chair

Georgia Cowart

Committee Co-Chair

Francesca Brittan

Committee Member

Susan McClary

Committee Member

Elina Gertsman

Date of Defense

6 November, 2015

*We also certify that written approval has been obtained

for any proprietary material contained therein.

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Abstract

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DEVIN MICHAEL PAUL BURKE

The animated statue represented one of the central magical figures in French musical theater of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. During the period covered by this dissertation, 1661-1748, animated statues appeared in more than sixty works of musical theater of almost every available genre. This number does not include the many works containing statues that demonstrated magical or otherworldly properties through means other than movement or song. Some of the works of this period that feature living statues are well-known to musicologists—e.g. Molière/Jean-Baptiste Lully's comedy-ballet *Les Fâcheux* (1661), Lully's opera *Cadmus et Hermione* (1673), and Jean-Philippe Rameau's one-act ballet *Pigmalion* (1748)—while others have received little recognition. This dissertation is the first study to consider the history of animated statues on the French stage during this period, and the first to reveal music as a defining feature of these statues. Over the course of nearly ninety years, music assumed an increasingly important role in the theatrical treatments of magical stone figures. At the beginning of Louis XIV's reign, animated statues appeared with some frequency in both public and court spectacles. These appearances typically were of an incidental nature, though I show that

in some cases the music contained more substance than has been recognized. By the mid-eighteenth century, the animated statue had become the central focus of many works and had transformed into a potent symbol of, among other ideas, the power of music and dance, as most dramatically realized in Rameau's *Pigmalion*. This dissertation traces the history of this transformation.

INTRODUCTION

In his study of the history of the animated statue, Kenneth Gross suggests that "the fantasy of a statue that comes to life is as central a fable as we have."[1] Without a doubt, the animated statue was one of the central magical figures in French musical theater during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. During the period covered by this dissertation, 1661-1748, animated statues appeared in more than sixty works of musical theater of almost every available genre. This number does not include the many works containing statues that demonstrated magical or otherworldly properties through means other than movement or song. Some of the works of this period that feature living statues are well-known to musicologists—e.g. Molière/Jean-Baptiste Lully's comedy-ballet *Les Fâcheux* (1661), Lully's opera *Cadmus et Hermione* (1673), and Jean-Philippe Rameau's one-act ballet *Pygmalion* (1748)—while others have received little recognition.

This dissertation is the first study to consider the history of animated statues on the French stage during this period, and the first to reveal music as a defining feature of these statues. Over the course of nearly ninety years, music assumed an increasingly important role in the theatrical treatments of magical stone figures. At the beginning of Louis XIV's reign, animated statues appeared with some frequency in both public and court spectacles. These appearances typically were of an incidental nature, though I show that in some cases the music contained more substance than has been recognized. By the mid-eighteenth century, the animated statue had become the central focus of many works and had transformed into a potent symbol of, among other ideas, the power of music and

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[1] Kenneth Gross, *The Dream of the Moving Statue* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), xi.

dance, as most dramatically realized in Rameau's *Pygmalion*. This dissertation in part aims to trace the history of this transformation.

Until now, the subject of this study has fallen into the disciplinary cracks between musicology, theater studies, French literary studies, art history, and the histories of automata, early modern concepts of the body, and political and religious iconography. Though the history of the animated statue has generated increasing interest among musicologists in recent years,[2] musicological consideration of animated statues in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century theater predominantly has been limited to individual or select groups of works. Mapping out this history poses unique challenges, one of which is the often ambiguous meaning of animated statues. Typically, such statues represent the power of the being or force that animates them, but each work can and frequently does infuse the animation process with elements that add mystery or subtext. These elements can transform the statues into complex, multivalent symbols. Often, the identity and character of that which animates the statues can only be clarified by music, dance, setting, text, or some combination of these. Until 1700 almost all of the animated statues on stage were mute, and their silence meant that they communicated only through music and dance; thus, these important settings have remained essentially illegible to scholars without training in music.

The characteristic ambiguity of animated statues in French spectacle has often led musicologists to perceive them as empty and conventional *divertissements* rather than as

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[2] See especially Wendy Heller, "Dancing Statues and the Myth of Venice: Ancient Sculpture on the Opera Stage," *Art History* 33, no. 2 (2010), 304–319; and Ellen S. Lockhart's work, including "Moving Statues: The Rise and Fall of Pygmalion in Italy, 1770-1815" (PhD Diss, Cornell University, 2011), and "*Pimmalione*: Rousseau and the Melodramatisation of Italian Opera," *Cambridge Opera Journal* 26, no.1 (2014), 1-39.

potentially rich in meaning. My study reinterprets this ambiguity as significant because it allows the living statue to become an infinitely malleable symbol and explains its ability to represent ideas as diverse as the power of the king (as in *Bellérophon*, 1679); the power of love (*Daphne*, 1674); the power of demons (*Ercole amante*, 1662); and the utopian power of the arts ("Pygmalion" in *Le triomphe des arts*, 1700). This symbolic flexibility set a precedent for eighteenth-century artists and philosophers to further expand the animated statue's representational potential, and to use it to signify the power of dance (Marie Sallé's *Pygmalion,* 1734), the power of harmony (Rameau's *Pygmalion*, 1748), the power of the proto-Romantic artist (Rousseau's *Pygmalion*, 1762/1770), the power of the senses (Étienne Bonnot de Condillac's *Treatise on Sensations*, 1754), and the power of touch (Johann Gottfried Herder's *Sculpture: Some Observations on Shape and Form from Pygmalion's Creative Dream*, 1768-1770). Although this dissertation's center of gravity lies in the seventeenth century, the final two chapters lay the groundwork for future study of music and animated statues in the eighteenth century and beyond.

The limited musicological scholarship on the animated statue to date has centered primarily on the treatments of the myth of Pygmalion by Rameau and Rousseau. Of these two works, Rameau's *acte de ballet* has drawn more scholarly attention for its music, in part due to the quality of the score—one of Rameau's most popular during his lifetime. The highlight of the work is Rameau's dramatic use of music at the moment of the statue's awakening, and scholars have recognized Rameau's orchestration of the scene as

a statement about the natural science and power of music.[3] Pantomime is also an important aspect of the work, and some scholars have discussed Rameau's use of music to give character to the animated statue in the pantomime scenes.[4] Scholarship on Rousseau's *Pygmalion*, by comparison, has generally focused on the melodrama's text to the exclusion of its music, though studies by scholars including Jacqueline Waeber and Ellen Lockhart represent notable exceptions to this trend.[5] Rousseau's work lies beyond the scope of this study.

The precedents for these statues on the seventeenth-century stage, however, have been generally overlooked or misunderstood. One exception is Wendy Heller, who has drawn attention to the phenomenon in seventeenth-century Venetian opera as well as in Handel's opera *Admeto* (1727).[6] Georgia Cowart has discussed the political significance

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[3] Christian Berger, "Ein Tableau des *Principes de l'Harmonie*: *Pygmalion* von Jean-Philippe Rameau," in *Jean-Philippe Rameau: Colloque international organisé par la Société Rameau*, ed. Jérôme de La Gorce (Paris: Champion, 1987), 371-384; Thomas Christensen, *Rameau and Musical Thought in the Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Brian Hyer, " 'Sighing Branches': Prosopopoeia in Rameau's 'Pigmalion'," *Music Analysis* 13, no. 1 (March, 1994), 7-50; Leanne Eleanore Dodge, "The Sensible Listener on Stage: Hearing the Operas of Jean-Phillippe Rameau through Enlightenment Aesthetics" (PhD diss., Yale University, 2011); Geoffrey Burgess, "Enlightening Harmonies: Rameau's corps sonore and the Representation of the Divine in the tragédie en musique," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 65, no. 2 (Summer 2012), 383-462.

[4] Dodge, "The Sensible Listener"; Hedy Law, "'Tout, dans ses charmes, est dangereux': Music, Gesture and the Dangers of French Pantomime, 1748-1775," *Cambridge Opera Journal* 20, no. 3 (Nov., 2008), 241-268.

[5] The first edition of Rousseau's *Pygmalion* to print the music alongside the text did not appear until 1997; see Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Horace Coignet, *Pygmalion: Scène lyrique*, ed. Jacqueline Waeber (Geneva: Éditions Université-Conservatoire de musique, 1997). Significant discussions of the music of Rousseau's *Pygmalion* appear in Emilio Sala, *L'opera senza canto: Il mélo romantico e l'invenzione della colonna sonora* (Venice: Marsilio, 1995); Waeber, *En Musique dans le text: Le Mélodrame, de Rousseau à Schoenberg* (Paris: Van Dieren, 2005); and Lockhart, "Moving Statues: The Rise and Fall of Pygmalion in Italy, 1770-1815."

[6] Wendy Heller, "The Beloved's Image: Handel's Admeto and the Statue of Alcestis," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 58, no. 3 (Fall 2005), 559-637; and "Dancing Statues and the Myth of Venice."

of the treatment of Pygmalion in the opera-ballet *Le Triomphe des arts* (1700).[7] As yet,

there is no published reference or catalogue of animated statues in the musical theater.[8]

To address this issue, at least in terms of the music in France, this dissertation includes a

catalogue of animated statues in French spectacle from 1581 to 1800.

Outside of musicology, the history of the animated statue in the arts has generated

a rich scholarly literature. In general, scholars have not limited their studies to one or a

few iterations of animated statues, but rather have considered how approaches to the

statues have transformed across many works and reflect different modes of thought,

media, and times and places. Much of this literature has focused on the eighteenth

century; one frequently cited early study is by J. L. Carr, who in 1960 examined why the

animated statue became a common trope in French philosophical and scientific writing as

well as in the arts.[9] Ten years later, Hans Sckommodau investigated the animated statue

in German and French culture during the eighteenth century.[10] In the last fifteen years, the

publications on eighteenth-century animated statues have significantly increased; notable

studies include those by Inka Bach-Mülder, Henri Coulet, Birgitt Werner, Mary Sheriff,

and Alexandra Wettlaufer.[11]

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[7] Georgia Cowart, *The Triumph of Pleasure: Louis XIV and the Politics of Spectacle* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).

[8] The closest thing to such a catalogue that currently exists is the catalogue of musical treatments of the myth of Pygmalion compiled by Bettina Brandl-Risi. See "Der Pygmalion-Mythos im Musiktheater — Verzeichnis der Werke," in *Pygmalion: Die Geschichte des Mythos in der abendländischen Kultur*, 665-733. Eds. Mathias Mayer, Gerhard Neumann (Freiburg im Breisgau: Rombach, 1997).

[9] J. L. Carr, "Pygmalion and the Philosophes: The Animated Statue in Eighteenth-Century France." *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 23, no. 3/4 (Jul.-Dec., 1960): 239-255.

[10] Hans Sckommodau, *Pygmalion bei Franzosen und Deutschen im 18. Jahrhundert* (Wiesbaden: F. Steiner, 1970).

[11] Inka Bach-Mülder, *Im zeichen Pygmalions: das Modell der Statue und die Entdeckung der "Darstellung": im 18. Jahrhundert* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1998); Henri Coulet, *Pygmalions des Lumières* (Paris: Les Éditions Desjonquères, 1998); Birgitt Werner, "Das Pygmalion-Motiv in der

A number of scholars have looked both earlier and later than the eighteenth century as well. Important studies include those written or edited by Heinrich Dörrie, Kenneth Gross, George Hersey, Victor Stoichita, and Mathias Mayer, and each traces the animated statue across the arts, beginning with its origins in ancient mythology and ending with its manifestations in twentieth-century cinema.[12] Annegret Dinter, Essaka Joshua, and Geoffrey Miles take a similarly expansive historical approach while emphasizing iterations of the trope in literature.[13] Andrea Blühm tracks European animated statues from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries; Aurélia Gaillard concentrates on French animated statues of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; and Claudia Weiser covers animated statues in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[14] Each of these studies touches on the period covered in my dissertation. None of these studies, however, engages with music.

Aufklärung," in *Bildung und Gesellschaft im Wandel. Bilanz und Perspektiven der Erziehungswissenschaft. Friedrich W. Busch & Jost von Maydell zum 69. Geburtsdag*. 155-170. Eds. Wolf Dieter Scholz and Herbert Schwab (Oldenburg: BIS, 1999); Mary D. Sheriff, *Moved by Love: Inspired Artists and Deviant Women in Eighteenth-Century France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004); Alexandra K. Wettlaufer, *Pen Vs. Paintbrush: Girodet, Balzac, and the Myth of Pygmalion in Post-Revolutionary France* (New York: Palgrave, 2001).

[12] Heinrich Dörrie, *Die schöne Galatea: Eine Gestalt Rande des griechischen Mythos in antiker und neuzeitlicher Sicht* (Munich: Heimeran, 1968); Gross, *The Dream of the Moving Statue*; Victor I. Stoichita, *The Pygmalion Effect: From Ovid to Hitchcock*, trans. Alison Anderson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008); George L. Hersey, *Falling in Love with Statues: Artificial Humans from Pygmalion to the Present* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008); Mathias Mayer, ed., *Pygmalion: Die Geschichte des Mythos in der abenländischen Kultur* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Rombach, 1997).

[13] Annegret Dinter, *Der Pygmalion-Stoff in der europaischen Literatur: Rezeptionsgeschichte e. Ovid-Fabel* (Heidelburg: Winter, 1979); Geoffrey Miles, ed., *Classical Mythology in English Literature: A Critical Anthology* (London, New York: Routledge, 1999), 332-345; Essaka Joshua, *Pygmalion and Galatea: The History of a Narrative in English Literature* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2001).

[14] Andrea Blühm, *Pygmalion: die Ikonographie eines Künstlermythos zwischen 1500 und 1900* (Frankfurt am Main, New York: P. Lang, 1988); Aurélia Gaillard, *Le corps des statues: le vivant et son simulacre à l'âge classique (de Descartes à Diderot)* (Paris: Champion, 2003); Claudia Weiser, *Pygmalion: Vom Künstler und Erzieher zum pathologischen Fall* (Frankfurt am Main, New York: P. Lang, 1998).

This dissertation will apply the type of broad historical methodology that has been predominant in these non-musicological studies to the history of the animated statue in musical theater. This methodology reveals previously undiscovered intertextual relationships and musical connections between well-known and less well-known French works. It also makes it possible to better understand the animated statue as a persistent and evolving trope in French spectacle in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In addition, this dissertation uncovers new information about the importance of music to the intellectual history of the period. Many writers during this period addressed the idea of the living statue in their philosophical writings on the body and mind, including René Descartes, Pierre Gassendi, François Bernier, Pierre Bayle, and later Diderot, Condillac, Herder, and others. Animated statues also permeated debates about religious idolatry and the monumental consecrations of political power. This study demonstrates how music and dance shaped the image of the animated statue and thus operated within these ongoing, overlapping discourses about boundaries between animate and inanimate material.

CHAPTER 1

Grounding the Magical in the Real:
Statues in the Spectacles of Vaux and Versailles, 1661–1670

Beginning in the 1650s, Nicolas Fouquet, the wealthy and urbane finance minister to the king, spared no expense to build up the lavish château and gardens he called Vaux-le-Vicomte.[15] His project was the image of ambition: he sought nothing less than to build Vaux-le-Vicomte into the artistic capital of France.[16] Louis XIV could be the political ruler, but in Fouquet's vision, he would be its tastemaker and cultural sovereign.[17] To further his vision, he patronized or commissioned many of the individuals who already were or soon would be recognized as France's artistic elites, including the painter and designer Charles Le Brun[18]; the garden designer André Le Nôtre; the architect Louis Le

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[15] Fouquet likely began planning and building his gardens sometime before 1652. In that year, the publisher Charles de Sercy included a dedication to Fouquet and praised the "superb gardens of Vaux-le-Vicomte" in a volume of Claude Mollet's *Théatre des plans et jardinages*. André Le Nôtre would not begin directing the design of Fouquet's gardens until 1657. This chronology means that Fouquet's vision of his palace gardens began to take shape very early in Louis XIV's kingship, when the king was a boy and the outcome of the Fronde rebellion that threatened the royal family and government was still uncertain. This chronology also means that construction on Fouquet's gardens anteceded construction on the Versailles gardens by a full decade. This dedication is mentioned in William Howard Adams, *The French Garden, 1500-1800* (New York: George Braziller, 1979), 80.

[16] Claire Goldstein, *Vaux and Versailles: The Appropriations, Erasures, and Accidents that Made Modern France* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 3.

[17] Fouquet was in the eyes of many a legitimate candidate to be the de facto ruler in France after Mazarin's death. For a thorough explanation of the dynamics between Louis XIV and Fouquet, see Goldstein, *Vaux and Versailles*, 1-19.

[18] Many scholars, when listing Le Brun as one of the illustrious people patronized by Fouquet, indicate only that he was a painter. This label glosses over the fact that he designed much of the garden statuary for both Vaux-le-Vicomte and Versailles, though the actual sculpting was done by Le Brun's sculptors working from his designs (the physical craft was not foreign to him however, as his father was a master sculptor). In addition, as the long-time director of the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture, he influenced both the painted and the sculpted arts in France.

Vau; many writers including Pierre Corneille, Jean de la Fontaine, Molière, and Charles Perrault; and the king's choreographer, Pierre Beauchamps.[19]

In 1661, Fouquet was infamously incarcerated for his hubris by the king, but only after hosting Louis and his court at Vaux-le-Vicomte for one legendary night.[20] On August 17, the king and numerous guests were treated to feasting and entertainments; a promenade through the gardens and estate; and, around 10 p.m., the premiere performance of *Les Fâcheux*. This work was the beginning of many things. It represented the first performance of comedy-ballet, a wholly new genre invented by Molière in which a spoken comedy was punctuated by ballet entries. It was the first time that Louis was introduced to Molière's work, and it launched a new era of Molière's career.[21] And it was the first time that all of Fouquet's artistic resources were brought together into one theatrical production.

Les Fâcheux was also an important first in the history of theatrical animated statues. In the past, animated statues in the court theater had operated as abstract signifiers of power in a neo-Platonic context as in *Le Balet comique de la Reine* (1581), where the king's animation of statues was not only a demonstration of his magical power

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[19] Beauchamps's official title was Intendant des Ballets du Roy, and although it is not known exactly when the title was granted it was likely sometime in 1661, before the premiere of *Les Fâcheux*. See John S. Powell, "Pierre Beauchamps, Choreographer to Molière's Troupe du Roy," *Music & Letters* 76, no. 2 (May 1, 1995), 171.

[20] It is unknown exactly when Louis XIV decided to arrest Fouquet, but it was without a doubt before the night of Fouquet's famous fête. This begs the question: why did the King allow Fouquet to have his party? Perhaps he wanted to make an example of Fouquet, and perhaps he wanted to witness Fouquet's Vaux-le-Vicomte in full working order before he began pillaging its resources and innovations. See Orest A. Ranum, *Artisans of Glory: Writers and Historical Thought In Seventeenth-Century France* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980), 246-53.

[21] Molière's involvement in Fouquet's fête apparently was kept secret from the King until the premiere. See John S. Powell, *Music and Theatre in France, 1600-1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 33, n29.

but also a demonstration of his ability to restore harmony to the universe in the face of evil magic. At times, animated statues had also appeared as symbols of royal power threatened, as in *Le Ballet du dérèglement des passions* (1648), in which Prometheus usurps the king's powers to create human beings from statues. But in *Les Fâcheux*, for the first time animated statues were staged as theatrical avatars of real-life statues, namely the statues in Fouquet's Grotto of Neptune, the centerpiece of his gardens. Such a relationship between theatrical and physical statues was made possible by Fouquet's reinvention of Vaux-le-Vicomte as a grand theater in the form of an estate. The statues on its grounds were already part of Fouquet's staging of power, and the theater stage, upon which the animated statues opened *Les Fâcheux*, was now merely its extension.

The program for the evening made the relationship between theater and Vaux-le-Vicomte crystal clear, and the statues of the comedy-ballet and the Grotto of Neptune acted as the equals sign in the equation. In the hours before *Les Fâcheux* began, the visitors were shown around the grounds. The tour itinerary culminated in the Grotto, a feature with shooting fountains and spectacular statuary that combined Vaux-le-Vicomte's engineering, technological, and land-management innovations into a synesthetic display of magical, i.e., mechanical, motion.

The Grotto, by 1661, was already famous enough to attract visitors from all over Europe.[22] It was located at the end of the garden's central axis, a site that not only emphasized its importance but also facilitated the substantial water flow needed to operate it through the garden's vast network of pipes. Though the Grotto, like much of Vaux-le-Vicomte, was ransacked by the king after Fouquet's arrest, literary descriptions

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[22] Goldstein, *Vaux and Versailles*, 178.

attest that the Grotto of Neptune contained a lively soundscape. La Fontaine describes some of the sounds in his collection of poem fragments, *Le Songe de Vaux* [The Dream of Vaux], where he writes that everything in the grotto "without moving, whistles, groans, murmurs."[23] The sonic effects, along with the choreographed movements and the rushing sounds of the fountains, framed the statues in a multi-sensory theatrical performance in which the distinctions between stage and garden were blurred.

These sounds and sights carried the audience directly into the Prologue of *Les Fâcheux*. The scenery for the prologue is described as a garden adorned with terms and various fountains.[24] To begin the show, onto the stage steps a Naiad, one of the nymphs of the fountain.[25] Her monologue begins: "Mortals: in order to see in this beautiful place the greatest king on the Earth, I have come to you from my grotto depths."[26] The Naiad continues:

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[23] Ibid., 178-86; "Chacun, sans s'émouvoir, siffle, gronde, murmure." The fragment in which the sounds and other features of the Grotto are described is fragment 8, which was written in the voice of Neptune himself. Though Goldstein suggests that this line alludes to the sounds of a hydraulic organ (an exceptionally expensive machine found in only the most spectacular grottos dating back to the sixteenth century), Fouquet's grotto had no hydraulic organ. This fragment was not published until after the death of Louis XIV, possibly because a poem giving voice to the centerpiece of Fouquet's gardens was too subversive. Other, safer fragments were published earlier, some in 1671. The Neptune fragment makes it clear that the Grotto of Neptune was a symbol, not only of Fouquet's artistic ambitions, but also of the finance minister's desire to control maritime trading in the mold of Cardinal Richelieu before him.

[24] Terms are figures that are sculpted only as far as the middle of the body, leaving the rest down to the ground as a simple sheath. Jean-François Carric, *Versailles: Garden of Statues*, translated by Graham Bushnell (Paris: Herscher, 2001), 255, n1.

[25] The Naiad was performed by Madeleine Béjart, one of the most famous French actresses of the century. Her relationship with Molière is as full of questions as it is famous, but she was a powerful and important figure whose presence as the Naiad would have given gravity of the role. See Virginia Scott, *Molière: A Theatrical Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 32-47.

[26] "Pour voir en ces beaux lieux le plus grand Roi du monde, / Mortels, je viens à vous de ma grotte profonde." Molière, *Les Fâcheux, comédie de J. B. P. de Molière* (Amsterdam: Henri Wetstein, 1693), 13.

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> Whatever he speaks, whatever he wishes, nothing is impossible.
> Is he himself not a visible miracle?
>
> …
>
> The statues will march, and, if Louis commands,
> The trees will speak better than those of Dodona.[27]

This scenario recalls the *Balet comique de la reine* of 1581, in which the king demonstrated his power by reanimating frozen men who have been enchanted into statues in the sorceress Circé's garden. A number of such immobilization and rescue scenarios appeared in the *ballets de cour* of the early seventeenth century, and this type of political theater represents what historian Stuart Clark calls a "spectacle of disenchantment." Such works demonstrate the magical power of a divine monarch by pitting them against an evil magical rival—typically a sorcerer, magician, or demons—and making a show of the monarch breaking the enchantments of the evil rival. The significance of these spectacles, according to Clark, is that they both elevated the monarchs above their mortal human subjects and symbolically elevated a demonic magical figure as the monarch's most worthy opponent. The logic of these spectacles, of positioning a sacred ruler against an enemy with comparable magical powers, constituted a "chivalry of the supernatural," where "miracle and magic enjoy a kind of symmetry in opposition."[28] *Les Fâcheux* represents a variation on the spectacle of disenchantment. It shares with the *Balet comique* a demonstration of the king's magical powers in a magical garden setting presided over by a feminine deity. Yet, *Les Fâcheux* omits the framing narrative in which the king has to rescue his subjects from immobilization.

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[27] Dodona was, according to Herodotus, the oldest Greek oracle. It was associated with Zeus and known for its oracular oak, which was visited by Odysseus in Homer's *Odyssey*. Frederick J. Simoons, *Plants of Life, Plants of Death* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998), 275-77.

[28] Stuart Clark, *Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 636.

The prologue to *Les Fâcheux* represents a variation on this earlier form of

spectacle. [29] Here, there is no magical opponent, only the demonstration of the king's

power to animate the inanimate. Even more importantly, the eighty years that separated

the *Balet comique* and *Les Fâcheux* produced an advance in theater technology. Whereas

the animated statues in the *Balet comique* had been represented by dancers, in the

prologue to *Les Fâcheux* the animated statues were literally that: fabricated statues made

to move by the mechanical wizardry of Giacomo Torelli.[30]

On the Naiad's command, Torelli's mechanical statues spun on their pedestals and

released dancing fauns and bacchantes from their stone bases. The spectacle stunned the

assembled company. Jean Loret described it in a letter written three days later: "one

witnessed in admiration the figures and terms move (though they appeared immovable)

and twelve fountains spout water ten feet into the air."[31] La Fontaine also famously

documented his impressions in a letter written five days after the fête:

> In the Prologue, [Madeleine] Béjart, who plays the nymph of the fountain
> where the action takes place, commands the divinities to leave the marble
> [statues] that enclosed them and to offer all of their power towards the
> entertainment of his Majesty; straight away, the terms and statues that are part

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[29] While the comedy of *Les Fâcheux* was written by Molière, the authorship of the prologue was given to Paul Pelisson, then-secretary to Fouquet. This prologue is frequently omitted in publications that print only Molière's contribution, but as I am arguing the prologue was essential as a direct link with the significance of the time and place of the work's premiere.

[30] Torelli would soon be labeled a "persona non grata" in France and was banished by the king, in part for his role in *Les Fâcheux*. According to curious documents discovered by Henry Prunières, Torelli tried to excuse himself from exile with a doctor's note. In two documents dated September 26th and 28th, an apothecary Rassico and a doctor Le Vasseur attested that Torelli had a severe fever that would endanger his life if he was forced to travel. These documents represent an undoubtedly desperate attempt by Torelli to remain in France where both he and his family had put down strong roots. See Per Bjurström, *Giacomo Torelli and Baroque Stage Design* (Stockholm: Nationalmuseum, 1961), 133; and Henry Prunières, *L'Opéra italien en France avant Lulli* (London: Johnson Reprint Corp., 1971), 270-71.

[31] "On vit par admiration (Quoy qu'en aparence, bien fermes) mouvoir des Figures, des Termes, et douze Fontaines couler s'élevans de dix pieds en l'air." "Lettre Trente-Trois, du [samedi] vingt Aoust," in *La Muze historique; ou, Recueil des lettres en vers contenant les nouvelles du temps,* vol. 3 (Paris: P. Jannet, 1857-1878), 392.

of the decoration of the theater, move, and then out comes (I do not know how) Fauns and Bacchantes which perform one of the ballet *entrées*. It is a pleasant thing to see a statue give birth and a dancing child come into the world.[32]

Another masterful aspect of this prologue was its functionality as segue between different parts of the evening's entertainment. Like the intricate network of pipes that controlled the water flowing underneath the gardens, the entertainments of the fête channeled the attentions of the audience according to well-ordered design. At the outset, Fouquet fed and entertained his guests, then focused their attentions on his gardens, and especially his grotto. The prologue then recreated the grotto in a theatrical space, replacing the statues of the grotto with mechanical statues and adding the ballet. This was followed by the musical overture, composed by Pierre Beauchamps, representing the final stage before the audience would finally enter the world of the comedy-ballet. In this series of spectacles, both Torelli's animated statues and Beauchamps's overture shared the same function: to carry the audience from one form of theater to another. With such a strong theatrical logic, the audience could not help but experience Vaux-le-Vicomte as one unified, total artwork, and as a striking projection of Fouquet himself.

Following Fouquet's arrest and eventual banishment Louis XIV began building his hunting lodge at Versailles into France's political and artistic capital.[33] From 1661 to

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[32] "Dans ce Prologue, la Béjart qui représente la Nymphe de la fontaine où se passe cette action, commande aux Divinités qui lui sont soumises, de sortir des marbres qui les enferment, et de contribuer de tout leur pouvoir au divertissement de Sa Majesté: aussitôt les Thermes et les Statues qui font partie de l'ornement du Théâtre, se meuvent, et il en sort je ne sais comment, des Faunes et des Bacchantes qui font l'une des *entrées* du Ballet. C'est une fort plaisante chose que de voir accoucher un Therme, et danser l'enfant en venant au monde." La Fontaine, "Lettre à Maucroix," in *Œuvres diverses de La Fontaine*, vol. III (Paris: Librairie Ch. Delagrave, 1894), 175-76.

[33] Louis XIV sought initially to put Fouquet to death and convened a rigged trial to try to ensure the minister's execution, yet even on such a panel of judges Fouquet had enough supporters that the verdict defied the King's wishes. The King therefore intervened to banish Fouquet. Goldstein, *Vaux and Versailles*, 21.

1663, the king was focused mainly on the construction of his château, but much groundwork was also laid for the gardens. Many of the resources of Vaux-le-Vicomte were confiscated for use at Versailles during this early phase; for example, as many as 1200 trees were uprooted from the Vaux-le-Vicomte gardens and replanted at Versailles in 1661-62.[34] Much of the underground piping at Vaux-le-Vicomte was also dug up and repurposed for Versailles's gardens. One of the many artists that the King poached from Fouquet's employ was Le Nôtre, who designed the gardens at both Vaux-le-Vicomte and Versailles. This was undoubtedly a boon for the king, since no one would know better than Le Nôtre what materials to confiscate from his own garden design and how to reuse them at Versailles.

William Howard Adams, the French garden historian, explains that "the creation of a great garden in the seventeenth century was rather like the organization of contemporary productions of the new Italian opera or the French *Ballet de Cour*; a group of artists drawing together ideas that had been around, or in the air, for a hundred years."[35] This was certainly the case at Versailles, although many of the ideas stolen from Fouquet's gardens had only "been in the air" for less than a decade. Yet even Fouquet's gardens were building upon years of tradition and, significantly, upon more than a century of Italian innovations in garden design. Among the most Italianate features of both the Vaux and Versailles gardens were the grottos, modeled after the grottos common in Italian Renaissance gardens, where they were meant to create an exotic, peaceful space of magic that evoked antiquity. According to Ian H. Thompson, "like the labyrinth, the

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[34] Allen S. Weiss, *Mirrors of Infinity: The French Formal Garden and 17th-Century Metaphysics* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1995), 55.

[35] Adams, *The French Garden*, 80.

grotto, as an amalgam of the natural cave and the Roman bath, occupied that tantalizing

zone where nature mingled with the artificial."[36] This aspect of the grotto, the ambiguity

of the line between the magical and the real, made the garden a natural focal point for the

construction of the Versailles mythology of the king as a divine and magical ruler.

The development of the gardens at Versailles happened in stages, and each stage

coincided roughly with each new decade.[37] In the 1660s, the emphasis was on forming

the grounds into a pleasure garden. The decade included the first building campaign of

1664-1668, which began and concluded with the *grandes fêtes* of those years. Given that

the king's primary focus was on the château, adding statues to the gardens was not a

priority until the 1670s. In fact, the idea of treating sculpture as an integral part of garden

design was novel for a French palace at that time, although Le Nôtre had already made

use of it in Fouquet's gardens.[38]

The earliest major feature that was added to the gardens was the *Grotte de Téthis*

(or as it also came to be known, the Grotto of Versailles), a small palace containing a

statuary display (see fig. 1.1).[39] In 1664, when the King commissioned the grotto, the

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[36] Ian H. Thompson, *The Sun King's Garden: Louis XIV, André Le Nôtre and the creation of the gardens of Versailles* (London: Bloomsbury, 2006), 141.

[37] Carric, *Versailles: Garden of Statues*, 10.

[38] Ibid., 16.

[39] The grotto is commonly misidentified as the Grotto of Thetis rather than Téthis, and this misconception has been widely perpetuated from the seventeenth century until the present day. One reason why the misconception has become so ubiquitous is the fact that the two names are pronounced identically in French; yet even when writers have noted discrepancies in the spelling of Thetis and Téthis (or sometimes Téthys), they have not always recognized that these are two different mythological characters. Thetis is the more famous figure thanks to her role in the *Iliad* as the nymph-mother of Achilles who dipped her infant son by his heel into the River Styx to make him invulnerable. Téthis is the goddess-queen of the ocean and mythological embodiment of the waters of the world. She is the wife (and sister) of Oceanus with whom she had 3,000 sons (representing all the world's rivers) and 3,000 daughters (the Oceanids). As Joanne Morgan Zarucchi points out in her translation of Charles Perrault's memoirs, even the designer of the grotto, like many of his contemporaries, confused the two

gardens only hinted at the grandeur they would become but already they dramatically illustrated the theme of the Sun King as the cultivated, artistic Apollo. By 1666, the Grotte de Thétis had been built adjacent to the northeastern side of the château, and the statuary inside it depicted Apollo coming to rest at day's end, tended by nymphs and settling into the arms of the world's waters like the sun falling below the ocean horizon. The dark, shadowy space inside the building represented a nocturnal, undersea world that fit in with the general conception of Versailles in the 1660s as a place of pleasure, peace, and leisure. Two years later, at what was then the west end of the gardens, construction began on a new feature in which the statues of Apollo in his chariot and his team of horses emerge out of a grand reflecting pool. This feature would become the *Bassin d'Apollon* and it represented Apollo as rising sun, greeting the dawn of a new day.[40] In their locations at the east and west ends of the garden, the Grotto of Versailles and the *Bassin d'Apollon* were mapped onto the sun's east-west path, and they illustrated the sun's journey from dawn to dusk.[41]

Like the grotto at Vaux-le-Vicomte, Perrault's grotto was meant to command astonishment through multiple senses. One of the most visceral descriptions of the experience of the grotto was written by Madeleine de Scudéry in *La Promenade de Versailles*, her 1669 literary tour of the grounds:

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names. See Charles Perrault, *Memoirs of My Life*, ed., trans. by Jeanne Morgan Zarucchi (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1989), 95.

[40] Perrault, in his memoirs, wrote that he conceived the design for the Grotto of Versailles in response to the *Bassin d'Apollon*, but this is erroneous, as the grotto was built before the *Bassin d'Apollon*. Ibid., 95.

[41] As Carric points out, the sun's path in the gardens, from the dawn of the *Bassin* in the west to the dusk of the Grotto in the east, is the opposite path followed by the sun in the heavens. This reversal allowed the *Bassin* to be illuminated by the rising sun and the grotto to be illuminated by the setting sun. Carric, *Versailles: Garden of Statues*, 23.

Everyone perceived the marvelous beauty of this grotto . . . in effect, it is impossible, the first time that one sees such a beautiful thing, not to doubt what one sees, and not to imagine that it is an enchantment. . . . [A] thousand birds in relief, perfectly imitated, trick the eyes, while the ears are agreeably tricked: for through a completely new invention, there are hidden organs placed so that an echo in the grotto broadcasts them from one side to the other; this bucolic music, combined with the murmur of the waters, produces an effect that cannot be described.[42]

Vaie du fonds de la Grotte de Versailles, orné de trois Groupes de marbre blanc, qui representent le Soleil au milieu des Nymphes de Thetis, et ses chevaux pensez par des Tritons.

Prospectus Cryptæ Interioris Versaliarum, ubi sol inter Nymphas Thetidis, et gius equi cum Tritonibus, statuis marmoreis exhibentur.

Fig. 1.1   Interior of the Grotto of Versailles, from André Félibien, *Description de la Grotte de Versailles* (1679)

The focal point of this multi-sensory experience was a trio of niches in the central foyer, each framing an impressive statuary display. The large center niche contained a statue of Apollo being washed by Téthis's nymphs, and in the two outer niches stood the four horses of the Sun, two horses in each niche, being groomed by Tritons.[43] Additional

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[42]   Madeleine de Scudéry, *La Promenade de Versailles* (Paris: Claude Barbin, 1669), 72-77. Quoted and translated in Goldstein, *Vaux and Versailles*, 189-90.

[43]   Perrault, *Memoirs*, 96.

statues and other features, such as grotesque masks crafted from shells, adorned the

grotto; these copious ornaments were designed by Charles Perrault's brother, Claude,

who also designed the magnificent façade gate that created the illusion of the sun's rays

lighting the grotto.[44] The salient details of all the statues were gilded in gold, with other

elements painted in natural colors.[45]

In addition to these visual features, an underground water-powered organ piped

melodies and imitations of bird sounds into the grotto's echoic space. These sounds

joined with the sounds of the fountains, creating a soundscape that brought together the

sonic realms of the mechanical and the natural. The organ was an extravagant expense,

both to build and to maintain, as it had to be built below the grotto and required a

substantial amount of water to function. Most grottos were not built with hydraulic

organs, and the Grotto of Téthis was one of the most spectacular grottos ever built.[46]

Athanasius Kircher included several illustrations of water organs (see fig. 1.2) in his

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[44] The grotto's construction required the collaboration of many people. Charles le Brun designed the statues, and the central scene of *Apollo tended by the Nymphs* was realized in stone by François Girardon and Thomas Regnaudin. The two groups of Horses of the Sun were done by different sculptors; one group was sculpted by Gaspard and Balthazar Marsy, and the other by Gilles Guérin, a sculptor of the *Maîtrise*. The grotto also contained a statue set of Acis and Galatea which was done by Jean-Baptiste Tubi. Additional sculptures and bas-reliefs were produced by other sculptors from the *Maîtrise*. See Carric, *Versailles: Garden of Statues*, 20. Another key artist in the grotto was Jean de Launay, a *rocailleur* who received 20,000 livres for two years spent embedding pebble and seashell formations (a form of art known as *rocaillage*) into the grotto walls. See Thompson, *The Sun King's Garden*, 142; and Goldstein, *Vaux and Versailles*, 190.

[45] Carric, *Versailles: Garden of Statues*, 22.

[46] Besides the Grotto of Téthis, other gardens that featured hydraulic organs included the Villa d'Este at Tivoli (organ constructed in 1595), Schloss Hellbrunn near Salzburg (1612-1619), Saint-Germain-en-Laye (pre-1614), Villa Aldobrandini (1615-1621), and the Hortus Palatinus at Heidelberg. See Joscelyn Godwin, *The Pagan Dream of the Renaissance* (Boston: Weiser Books, 2005), 178.
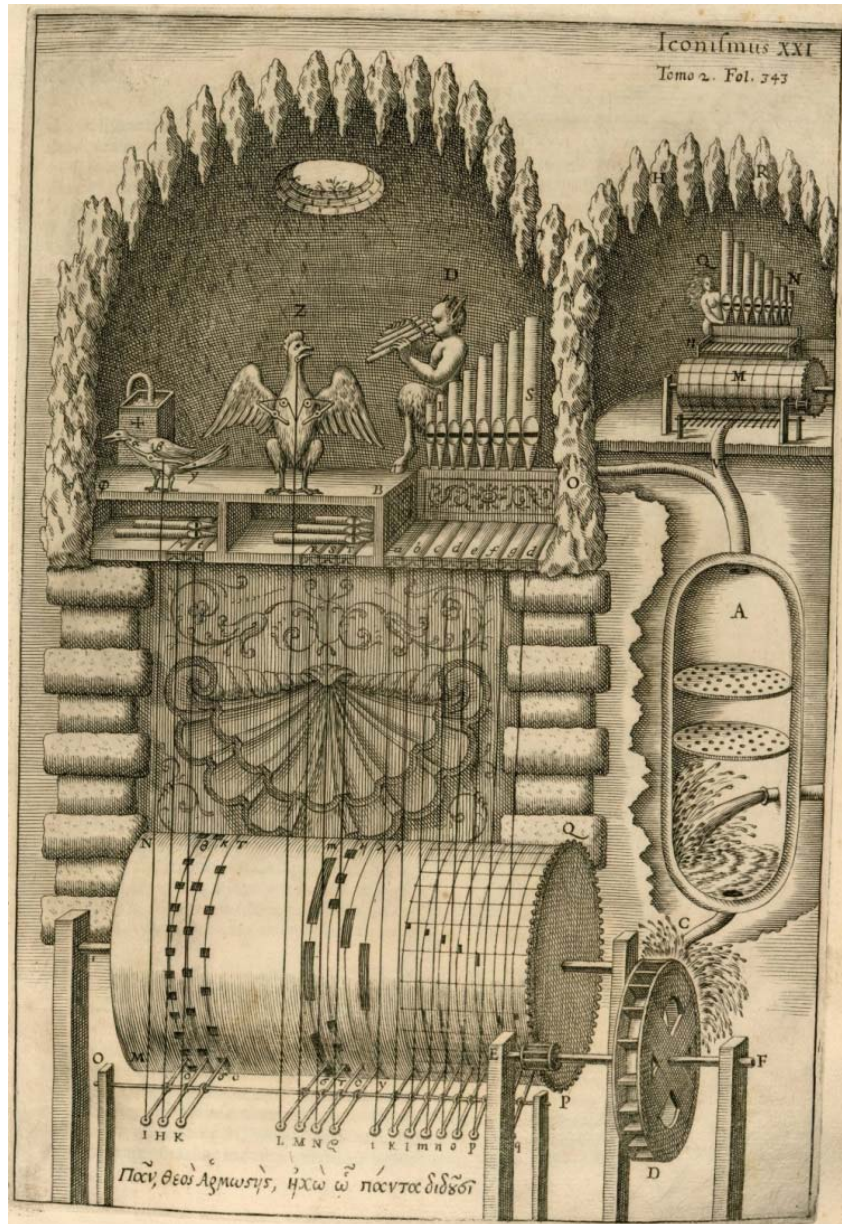
Fig. 1.2 Hydraulic organ with automata, from Athanasius Kircher, *Musurgia universalis* (1650)

Musurgia universalis (1650); as shown, water organs were sometimes connected to automata that moved in harmony with the music. This was not the case at Versailles; the grotto did not house any automata, perhaps because of the added expense, but more likely because the constant motion of the automata would have been an ill fit with the scene of repose and relaxation captured by the motionless statues of the famous set *Apollo Tended by the Nymphs*.[47]

The importance of the Grotto of Téthis cannot be overstated. Its conception and construction occurred early in the development of Versailles in part because of the fame and spectacular quality of Fouquet's grotto at Vaux. If Louis XIV was to replace Fouquet's artistic vision with his own, outdoing Fouquet's grotto was a pressing matter, and without a doubt the king's grotto enhanced the image of Versailles. The statues of the grotto were immediately hailed as masterpieces and they became a kind of manifesto for the new aesthetic of Le Brun's Academy, in which Classical influences dominated scenes characterized by serene elegance.[48] Louis's installment of the hydraulic organ also took the sounds of his grotto to a level of aural spectacle beyond Fouquet's grotto. In addition, the emphasis on water, hydraulics, and symbolic statuary served, according to Goldstein, as "a kind of blueprint to Louis XIV's earliest reconception of Versailles."[49] Not surprisingly, the king's grotto figured prominently in writings about Versailles at the time, including La Fontaine's *Les Amours de Psyché et Cupidon* (1699), which was one of the

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[47] Adams notes that during this early stage of the gardens' development, Le Nôtre was cultivating a more refined, simpler approach to design that reflected the theme of the cultivated Apollo and a space of relaxation and repose. The installation of automata reflected a more flamboyant design that was characteristic of gardens earlier in the century, notably those at Saint-Germain-en-Laye (*The French Garden*, 93).

[48] Carric, *Versailles: Garden of Statues*, 23-24.

[49] Goldstein, *Vaux and Versailles*, 186.

main sources for another work that contained a grotto, the *Psyché* (1671) of Lully,

Molière, and Philippe Quinault.[50]

The high profile of the grotto statues of Vaux and Versailles may explain why

most of the animated statues in French theater of the 1660s appear in grotto or garden

settings. This possibility is supported by the fact that the Grotto of Téthis was the highest

artistic success in terms of Versailles's statuary during the decade. Indeed, many of the

pre-1670 sculptural projects ended as artistic failures. In 1661, the king's first sculptural

commission was for a set of forty-seven terms and eight statues. The commission was

given to the sculptors' guild known as the *Maîtrise*, and the project took several years to

complete, but it ended in failure when the work did not impress Louis, who felt the

sculptures were uninspired and uninspiring. As a result, the *Maîtrise* lost the commission,

and by the beginning of the 1670s all of their sculptures had been replaced.[51]

Even the work that is now considered perhaps Louis's greatest sculptural

commission of the 1660s, Bernini's bust of the king, was not an unqualified success (see

fig. 1.3a). While the bust was publically celebrated as a masterwork and a triumph of

Louis's artistic commissioning, both the work and the artist inspired controversy at the

court. Art historians typically view Bernini's time at the French court as a failure by

virtue of the rejection of his Italian, "baroque" style;[52] Irving Lavin summarizes this

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50 On the influence of La Fontaine's novella on the *tragi-comedie et ballet Psyché*, see John S. Powell, "*Psyché*: Stakes of a Collaboration," in *Reverberations: Staging Relations in French since 1500*, ed. Phyllis Gaffney (Dublin, University College Dublin Press, 2007), 3-31.

51 Taking advantage of the failure of the *Maîtrise*, in 1664 Charles Le Brun secured a ruling from the Council of State that ordered any artist approved by the King, including all of those working at Versailles, to become part of the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture. This created a close association between the Académie and Versailles. Carric, *Versailles: Garden of Statues*, 14-16.

52 See for example Maarten Delbeke, "Elevated Twins and the Vicious Sublime, Gianlorenzo Bernini and Louis XIV," in *Translations of the Sublime: the early modern reception and dissemination of Longinus'*

prevailing view, and adds that "[t]he failure of Bernini's visit to Paris is normally taken as a turning point in French attitudes toward Italian culture."[53] One indication that the magnificent bust had a complicated reception was the fact that it was left unfinished after Bernini left. A pedestal designed by Bernini was never executed, and in fact both the bust and the unrealized pedestal came in for criticism as examples of Italian excessiveness and hyperbole.[54] Bernini's bust also provoked a rival French bust sculpted by Jean Warin, who began working on his version almost immediately upon Bernini's departure from France (see fig. 1.3b). Over the next two decades, the two busts were always displayed together as examples of Italian and French artistry.[55]

It is likely that the mixed reception of the king's sculptural projects during the 1660s contributed to a lesser role for sculpture (relative to the arts of tapestry and painting) in the royal propaganda machine during the decade. Sculpture was already at a disadvantage because the king's chief minister, Jean-Baptiste Colbert, favored tapestries, prints, and frescoes over statues as media for distributing images of the king.[56] In addition, the training at the Académie de Peinture et de Sculpture helped to propagate the

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Peri hupsous in rhetoric, the visual arts, architecture and the theatre, ed. by Caroline van Eck, Stijn Bussels, Maarten Delbeke, Jürgen Pieters (Boston: Brill, 2012), 117-37.

[53] Lavin notes that this view is correct in general terms, though he locates reasons to qualify the general view. See *Past-Present: Essays on Historicism in Art from Donatello to Picasso* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 189-91.

[54] Delbeke, "Elevated Twins," 120.

[55] Lavin, *Past-Present*, 191.

[56] Colbert institutionalized the production of tapestries at the Gobelins factory early in the 1660s and raised the level of quality of the medium to an astonishing height in a short period of time. Statues were less useful than painting in the service of tapestry production, because tapestries were based on paintings. This is another reason why sculpture was a lower priority in the 1660s. See Pascal-François Bertrand, "Tapestry Production at the Gobelins during the Reign of Louis XIV, 1661-1715," in *Tapestry in the Baroque: Threads of Splendor*, edited by Thomas Campbell (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2007), 341-406.

Fig. 1.3a *Bust of Louis XIV*, Gianlorenzo Bernini (1665)

Fig. 1.3b *Bust of Louis XIV*, Jean Warin (1665-1666)

view of sculpture as a restricted medium compared to painting and tapestry.[57] The

statuary of the Grotto of Téthis stood as a powerful symbol of the king, but it was

something of an exception during the first decade of construction at Versailles.

The complicated relationship between sculpture and the king's image is

significant because it played a role in what types of animated statues appeared in the

theater. For the 1660s in particular, the phases of development in the Versailles gardens

provide an important key to understanding animated statues in the theater. Many of these

animated statues appear either in gardens or in association with nymphs, naiads, and

other peaceful, loving figures including L'Amour and Venus. These associations are

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[57] The view of sculpture as an inferior art was embedded in the curriculum at the Académie de Peinture et de Sculpture. Founded in 1648, the Académie instructed students using core writings on art from the Italian Renaissance. Many discussions of the *paragone*, including those by Leonardo da Vinci, argued for the superiority of painting over sculpture.

consistent with the symbolism of the pleasure gardens of Versailles, which were meant to manifest the king's qualities of seduction, love, and peace, as well as serve as a place of respite from the violence and struggles of war and politics.

Not all animated statues that appeared in theater gardens and grottos during the 1660s were peaceful and loving, however (see Table 1 and the discussion below). A number of these statues were animated by demons or were in other ways symbolically ambiguous. Such deviations from more obviously monarchical types of animated statues (such as those in *Les Fâcheux*) may have been permissible in part because sculpture had not yet become fully integrated into the royal propaganda machine. After the 1660s, there was a distinct shift in the types of animated statues that populated the stage. In the 1670s, statues became more fully integrated into the network of royal image-making and, as will be discussed in chapter three, this shift coincided with a turn in the theater towards animated statues that were more strongly associated with the glory of the monarchy. The full realization of the animated statue as a manifestation of the king's heroic power would not be achieved until the *tragédie en musique Amadis de Grêce* (1699), though this example contained complex undertones (as discussed in chapter four). The greatest emphasis on statues as royal propaganda occurred during the early years of the Dutch war (1672-4), and during the government's launching of the so-called statue campaign of 1685-1686, an ambitious project involving the commission and installation of twenty royal statues in cities throughout France. By contrast, in the first decade of Louis's reign, statues remained in essence floating signifiers within the king's theater and propaganda machine, making the 1660s a pivotal moment for the animated statue in French spectacle.

Table 1.1 Animated Statues in French Theater, 1660-1670

Year	Work	Composer	Librettist/ Playwright	Genre	Character and Actions of the Animated Statues
1660	*Le Festin de pierre ou le Fils criminal*[58]	-----	Villiers	Tragicomedy	Statue of murdered Dom Pierre is invited to dinner, ghost of Dom Pierre later meets Dom Juan in an underground cave and causes cave to collapse on them both
1661	*Les Fâcheux*	Beauchamps	Molière	Comedy-ballet	Mechanical statues animated by the power of the king and perform a dance (no music)
1661	*Le Festin de pierre ou le Fils criminal*[59]	-----	Dorimon	Tragicomedy	Statue of murdered Dom Pierre threatens Dom Juan with a hellish end; the unrepentant libertine is struck dead by lightning
1662	*Ercole Amante* (Cavalli opera)	Lully	Benserade	5th ballet *intermède* to Cavalli's opera	Garden statues, animated by demons, perform Lully's three dances
1664	*Ballet des Amours déguisés*	Lully	Benserade, Perigny	Ballet de cour	Cupids disguised as Armide's statues escape following the destruction of Armide's palace
1665	*La Naissance de Vénus*	Lully	Benserade	Ballet de cour	Statue of Venus magically opens the doors to her temple
1665	*Dom Juan, ou le festin de pierre*	-----	Molière	Comedy	Double-invitation; statue of murdered Dom Pierre takes Dom Juan down to hell
1668	*La Grotte de Versailles*	Lully	Quinault	*Églogue en musique*	Though not literally animated statues, characters inhabit the grotto and give life to the ideals embodied by the grotto statues
1669	*Festin de pierre, ou l'athée foudroyé*	-----	Rosimon	Tragicomedy	Statue of murdered Dom Pierre threatens Dom Juan with a hellish end and strikes the unrepentant libertine
1670	*Les Amants magnifiques*	Lully	Molière	Comedy-ballet	Eight statues of ambiguous origin dance in a grotto with torches for princesses

58 This play was first performed at the Hôtel de Bourgogne in 1659, and first published in 1660.

59 This play was performed first in Lyon in 1658, but it was first published in 1660 before it premiered in Paris in 1661.

After *Les Fâcheux*, the next musical staging of animated statues occurred in Lully's ballet *entrées* for Francesco Cavalli's *Ercole amante*, which will be discussed in the following chapter. Animated statues soon appeared again in two ballets de cour, the *Ballet des Amours déguises* and *La Naissance de Vénus*. Both of the ballets feature statues with associations to love and the ideologies of the Versailles gardens. In the *Ballet des Amours déguises* (1664), some Cupids disguise themselves as the statues of Armide's palace, then escape in that form as the palace collapses. The scene is not focused on the Cupid-statues, as statues are only one of the Cupids' disguises. In *La Naissance de Vénus* (1665), a magical statue of Venus opens the doors to her temple.

Whether or not the statues in either of these works were suggested by the construction of the gardens or the Grotto of Versailles, the 1668 *églogue* entitled *La Grotte de Versailles* officially translated the grotto into theater. No animated statues appear in the work, but Lully and Quinault created characters that celebrated and commented on the ideas embodied by the statues in the grotto. In the opening récit, two shepherds, Silvandre and Coridon, sing to each other about the meaning of the grotto:

Silvandre:
Allons, Bergers, entrons dans cet heureux sejour
Tout y paroît charmant, LOUIS est de retour;
Il sort des bras de la Victoire,
Et vient rassembler à leur tour
Les plaisirs égarez dans ces bois d'alentour.
Coridon:
Il se plaist en ces lieux à perdre la memoire,
De la grandeur qui brille dans sa Cour:
Cessons de parler de sa gloire,
Il n'est permis ici de parler que d'amour.

Silvandre:
Come, Shepherds, come into this happy place,
Everything there appears charming, LOUIS has returned;
He leaves the arms of Victory
And comes to gather, in their turn,
The pleasures scattered in these surrounding woods.
Coridon:
It pleases him in these places to lose the memory
Of the grandeur which shines in his court,
Let us cease to speak of his glory,
Here we are allowed only to speak of love.

Throughout the work, a series of loosely related scenes invokes the sights and sounds of the grotto—including the mechanical bird sounds and nightingale song, the fountains and burbling waters, the statues of the nymphs, and the torches that light the grotto—while underlining the grotto's association with love and pleasure. The *livret* was the earliest work that Philippe Quinault completed for the king, according to his own account, and it was also his first official collaboration with Lully.[60]

Less than two years later, the king commissioned a comedy-ballet that, like *La Grotte de Versailles* but on a more ambitious and wide-ranging scale, would celebrate the treasures of the royal entertainments. For this new work, the king composed the scenario himself, and it was a simple one: two princes compete for the hand of a princess by presenting a series of varied spectacles. According to Molière, who was tasked with turning the scenario into a full work, the Louis wanted a *divertissement* that would display "all that the theatre could provide," and such a directive demanded an open-ended plot that allowed for a kind of variety show within the context of a comedy-ballet.

Les Amants magnifiques [The Magnificent Lovers] premiered on February 4, 1670, at the king's palace at St. Germain-en-Laye. As in *La Grotte de Versailles*, love was the main theme and organizing principle, however loosely, behind the work's disparate spectacles. The work is particularly significant because it represents an endpoint in the king's career as a theater performer. There has been considerable debate whether or not the premiere represented the last time that Louis XIV danced in public, but it is certain

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[60] Etienne Gros dates that relationship back to 1664, but there is some evidence that Lully and Quinault might have known each other earlier, through Michael Lambert. See Gros, *Philippe Quinault, sa vie et son œuvre* (Paris: E. Champion, 1926), 84-85; and Catherine Massip, "Michael Lambert and Jean-Baptiste Lully: the stakes of a collaboration," in *Jean-Baptiste Lully and the Music of the French Baroque: Essays in Honor of James R. Anthony*, ed. John Hajdu Heyer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 25-28.

that the king was personally engaged with and enthusiastic about the production.[61] After *Les Amants magnifiques*, he withdrew from personal participation in the court's theatrical productions.

Most importantly for the subject of this chapter, *Les Amants magnifiques* includes among its spectacles a dance of animated statues in a magical grotto. This dance is characterized by two primary ambiguities. In Molière's spoken text, the ownership of the grotto is left ambiguous. Molière also does not clearly indicate who or what is the force behind the animation of the statues. The clarification of both of these ambiguities is suggested by a study of Lully's music, which reveals that the composer, likely with the knowledge of Molière, inserted subtle allusions into the score.

Before considering the music, a summary of the plot will contextualize the place of the grotto statues in the work. Molière transformed the king's scenario into a work that simultaneously retained the scenario's original simplicity and was also one of the most layered plot structures of Molière's œuvre. Seen from one angle, *Les Amants magnifiques* is a formulaic romantic comedy about two people who secretly love each other and find a way to be together despite belonging to different classes. Molière complicates this plot, however, by weaving the narrative around six *intermèdes*, one of which (the third) is essentially a pastorale-within-a-play.

The work opens with an elaborate prologue that centers on Neptune and includes a solo air, vocal ensembles, and a ballet. Following the prologue, the spoken comedy begins, and it is quickly revealed to the audience that the prologue was an artificial,

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[61] It is certain that the King, at least initially, had intended to dance as Neptune in the opening of the work and as Apollo in the final spectacle. Whether he did or, if he did not why he might back out, has been the subject of many theories. See Gretchen Elizabeth Smith, *The Performance of Male Nobility in Molière's Comédies-Ballets* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005), 191-203.

diegetic spectacle, financed and produced by one of the two princes who are competing

for the princess Eriphile's affections. The comedy's first act introduces Sostrate, a good-

hearted general and military hero who is in love with Eriphile but cannot act on his love

or reveal it to anyone, given that he is not a member of the nobility. But Sostrate's secret

is coaxed out by the court jester Clitidas, who was played in the premiere by Molière. At

the end of Act I, a melancholy Eriphile is walking in the gardens with one of her

attendants, who suggests that Eriphile allow a group of pantomimes to cheer her. Eriphile

agrees, and the pantomimes perform the second *intermède*.

In Act II, Clitidas reveals to Eriphile that Sostrate is secretly in love with her, and

Eriphile tests Sostrate by asking him to help her decide on one of the two prince suitors.

The act is followed by the third *intermède*, a famous pastorale in six scenes that, as John

Powell has shown, mirrors the action of the comédie-ballet.[62] This pastorale, as it is

explained before it begins, is the second prince's offering to the princess. As Act III

begins, Eriphile expresses boredom with the spectacles that have been performed for her.

An astrologer, Anaxarque, arrives and promises to use his magical powers to determine

the right suitor. The act ends with Eriphile's mother, Aristione, inviting Eriphile to

accompany her to a grotto. This grotto is the setting for the fourth *intermède*, the entry for

eight animated statues carrying torches.

Act IV commences with Aristione commenting on the statues' dance, saying

"nothing can be more *galant* or better understood."[63] Almost immediately thereafter,

Venus, accompanied by four Cupids, appears and tells Eriphile that the right suitor will be

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[62]   Powell, *Music and Theater in France*, 200-13.

[63]   "De qui que cela soit, on ne peut rien de plus galant et de mieux entendu."

revealed when he saves her mother's life. Two scenes later, Anaxarque discloses to the audience and to Eriphile's attendant that the Venus was actually a mechanical illusion, built and operated by himself to trick the princess. Anarxarque reveals further that he has struck deals with both of the princes, promising each that he will manufacture an opportunity to save Aristione's life and thus fulfill the fake prophecy. At the end of the act, Eriphile's attendant invites the pantomimes back to once again cheer Eriphile with the fifth *intermède*.

In the final act, it is reported that while walking in the woods, Aristione was saved from a wild boar by Sostrate. According to Anaxarque's fake prophecy, this incident identifies Sostrate as the right man for Eriphile. Eriphile's attendant then reveals the astrologer's conspiracy with the princes, and that the princes have attacked the astrologer in retaliation for his failure and dishonesty. Eriphile accepts Sostrate's love, fake prophecy or not. The princes appear before Aristione and threaten revenge, but Aristione offers them forgiveness. The work concludes with a third elaborate spectacle, this one produced by Aristione and centered on a depiction of the Pythian Games, a celebration of artistic and athletic competition presided over by Apollo.

The king's original scenario specified the theme of Apollo and the Pythian Games for the culminating spectacle as well as the idea of each prince's presenting his own spectacle, though the content of the princes' spectacles was provided by Molière. The other *intermèdes*—the two dances of the pantomimes and the dance of the statues in the grotto—were wholly of Molière's own invention. Also of Molière's invention was the character of Sostrate, who provided a foil to the scheming, vengeful princes. The fact that he was a commoner, more noble than the nobility, and the winner of the princess's hand,

could be seen as a typical form of Molière's social commentary, inserted into the king's scenario.

The dance of the statues in the grotto occurs at a central point in the plot, yet it occupies an ambiguous place in the work as a whole. It is virtually buried by the scale of the spectacles surrounding it, and compared to the opening, third, and final spectacles, it is unassuming and perhaps easily forgotten. As will be discussed in the final section, many scholars have perceived it as superfluous because it seems to happen without any cause or consequence. Molière gives nothing away about the grotto or the statues either; Eriphile and Aristione simply take a walk, end up in a grotto, and when they enter the grotto they witness eight statues, "each bearing two torches, enter and execute a varied dance of different figures and several fine attitudes in which they pose at intervals."[64] This is virtually all the information about the statues and the grotto that is explicitly provided in the libretto.

The question, then, of "whose grotto?" is a bit of riddle. If one only considers the text of *Les Amants magnifiques*, the grotto is simply a generic magical grotto, unattached to any specific aspect of the king or court. Indeed, this is how scholars have treated the grotto, when they have considered this mysterious moment in the work. Yet given the date of the premiere, and given that it was designed to display all that the king's theater could provide, it is logical to suspect that the grotto in *Les Amants magnifiques* alluded to the Grotto of Versailles. The Grotto of Versailles was after all the pride of the king's

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[64] "Le Theatre represente une Grote ou les Princesses vont se promener, & dans le temps qu'elles y entrent huit Statuës portant chacune un flambeau à la main, font une dançe variée de plusieurs belles attitudes, ou elles demeurent par intervales." See *Le Divertissement Royal, meslé de Comedie, de Musique, & d'Entrée de Ballet* (Paris: Robert Ballard, 1670), 23. *Le Divertissement Royal* was an alternate name for *Les Amants magnifiques* that indicated the role of the king's scenario in the genesis of the libretto.

gardens, which were considered an extension of his theater in *La Grotte de Versailles*. This close relationship between gardens and theater was modeled upon the vision of Fouquet, who had conceived of his grotto at Vaux as connected to the theater of his palace and of *Les Fâcheux*.

What the text hides, in this case the music reveals. Lully and Molière without a doubt did have the Grotto of Versailles in mind as a reference for the *intermède* in the grotto in *Les Amants magnifiques*. This is supported by the fact that Lully quoted his own music from *La Grotte de Versailles* in the music for the *intermède*. Specifically, the music of the shepherds' duet in *La Grotte de Versailles* (Ex. 1.1) became the source material for the "Symphonie des Plaisirs," which is the first of the two musical numbers of the *intermède* (Ex. 1.2). In addition, the same duet may have provided the opening gesture for the second number of the grotto statues, the "Air des Statues." (This second quotation will be discussed in the following chapter.)

The "Symphonie des Plaisirs" is a dance in 3/4 time with weight on the second beats; i.e., an unmarked sarabande. With its strong associations with pleasure, the sarabande was an apt style choice for the piece. In 1671, the sarabande was identified as "a passionate dance" by the author of the *Dictionnaire royale*, who further noted that it had been "deemed capable of arousing tender passions, captivating the heart with the eyes, and disturbing the tranquility of the mind."[65] This description suggests one possible dramatic function of the "Symphonie des Plaisirs": the music of the sarabande invoked the disturbance of the statues' tranquil, inanimate slumber and the awakening of their sensual bodies. The piece is musically restless, never repeating or settling into any kind

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[65] Patricia Ranum, "Audible Rhetoric and Mute Rhetoric: The 17th-Century French Sarabande," *Early Music* 14, no. 1 (Feb., 1986), 24.

of prolonged melodic or harmonic pattern. Not until the end does Lully's score so much as linger in a key following a cadence, and the constantly changing phrase lengths add to the sense of imbalance. It is unclear what kind of choreography would have accompanied the performance of the "Symphonie," but the music suggests some element of constant motion. The stage directions also indicate that the statues enter carrying torches, which would be consistent with a dance of an unsettling character.[66]

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[66] As noted in Chapter Two, torches typically appeared in dances for Furies, demonic characters. Figures associated with love also sometimes danced with torches, which in that context symbolized Cupid's burning passion.

Ex. 1.1   Jean-Baptiste Lully, *La Grotte de Versailles* (1668), Shepherds' duet.
mm. 211-34.

Regarding Lully's musical self-reference, one finds telling parallels between the shepherds' duet of *La Grotte de Versailles* and the "Symphonie des Plaisirs." Rhythmically and melodically, the second phrase of the shepherd's duet (mm. 222-234) resembles the "Symphonie" in miniature. Lully sets the voices of the shepherds' duet in sarabande homorhythm for the entire phrase to reflect the amorous subject of the text: "We do not fear the torment / that must await a heart in love; / it is an illness too charming / against which to defend one self."[67] In addition, the vocal lines of the second phrase emphasize repeated notes and stepwise motion, the characteristic melodic profile of a sarabande that permeates the "Symphonie."

One also finds evidence of Lully's self-allusion in the openings and endings of each piece, which feature almost identical bass lines. Measures 211-216 of the bass line in the shepherds' duet is varied slightly and extended in the first eight measures of the "Symphonie." The bass lines diverge because the shepherds' duet moves towards the cadence of an 11-measure section that concludes with a repeat while the music of the "Symphonie" proceeds toward the continual avoidance of repetitions and restful cadences. At the ends of each piece, Lully uses nearly identical chromatically rising bass lines. The last five measures of the shepherds' duet correspond to the last eight measures of the "Symphonie"; once again, Lully takes the source bass line and varies and extends it. In addition, both pieces harmonically center on G.

One also finds evidence of Lully's allusion to the shepherds' duet in the upper voices of the "Symphonie." For example, the first three measures of the top voice of the duet correspond to the first three measures of the tenor voice in the "Symphonie." Similar

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[67] Ne craignons point le tourment / Qu'un coeur amoureux doit attendre, / C'est un mal trop charmant, / Pour s'en deffendre.

figures, a falling fifth or fourth followed by ascending motion, recur in the "Symphonie" at the beginnings of phrases, e.g. in mm. 6-7 (alto voice) and in mm. 25-27 (soprano and alto), where they appear in imitation.

Ex. 1.2   Jean-Baptiste Lully, *Les Amants magnifiques* (1670), Intermède 4 ("Symphonie des Plaisirs"). New York: Broude, 1938, 205, mm. 1-44.

Ex. 1.2   (continued)

Ex. 1.2   (continued)

Lully's musical self-reference indicates that *Les Amants magnifiques*, like *Les Fâcheux* nine years earlier, weaves the representation of a very real grotto into the world of the theater. Yet, there is a key difference between the two works; whereas *Les Fâcheux* makes the connection between grotto and theater stage explicit, the connection remains unspoken in *Les Amants magnifiques*. This is remarkable, considering that by 1670 the Grotto of Versailles was well-established as a symbol of Louis XIV in writings about the king and his gardens, and one would not be surprised to find a more obvious reference to it in a work that celebrated his artistic treasures. *Les Fâcheux* shines a bright light on its

allusion to Fouquet's grotto, and perhaps not coincidentally the mechanical statues and

Naiad of the Prologue perform in the light after emerging from the grotto depths. In *Les*

Amants magnifiques, by contrast, the dancing statues perform inside the darkness of the

grotto, illuminated only by the light of their torches. In a poetically analogous way,

Lully's allusion to *La Grotte de Versailles* remains all but obscured within the music.

CHAPTER 2

Infernality and Ambiguity:
The Animated Statues of Molière and Lully

In the year prior to the premiere of *Les Fâcheux*, the spectacularly expensive

Ercole amante was commissioned by Cardinal Mazarin to commemorate two important

events, the signing of the Treaties of Paris and the Peace of the Pyrenees in 1659 and the

wedding of the king and Marie Thérèse in 1660. Due to a series of setbacks, however, the

opera did not come together until February of 1662, nearly two full years after the king's

wedding. The delays added considerably to the cost, and the project was perhaps destined

to fail, given that in the time that it took to mount the production Mazarin had died, Louis

had taken personal control of the government, Fouquet had been arrested, and a new bar

for courtly entertainment had been set by Fouquet's fête at Vaux-le-Vicomte. The death of

Mazarin had also touched off a wave of anti-Italianism in Paris reminiscent of the vitriol

aimed at Mazarin during the days of the Fronde.[68] In sum, the libretto for *Ercole amante*,

which had been written by Francesco Buti (with help from Mazarin) in 1660, had been

intended for a very different court.

The plot of *Ercole amante* is quite complicated, as befitting an Italian opera

designed to maximize the spectacular element. For the audience at the premiere, the plot

was rendered even more obscure by the language barrier and poor acoustics in the hall of

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[68] Georgia Cowart, *The Origins of Modern Musical Criticism: French and Italian Music, 1600-1750* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1981), 35-39.

the Tuileries Palace.[69] The opera centers on the lecherous Hercules who lusts after the

Princess Iole, the daughter of Hercules's recent murder victim, King Euryto. Iole does not

return Hercules's love, but she and Hercules' son Hyllo are in love. This father-son love

triangle drives the opera, which ultimately leads to Hercules's damnation to Hell and

eventual redemption.

A significant feature of the opera's spectacle is its variety of settings. Act I begins

in a countryside, where Hercules sings about his infatuation with Iole, and Venus

promises to satisfy his desires. Act II takes place in a courtyard of a royal palace, where

Hyllo and Iole sing of their love. After they hear of Hercules's intentions, the scene

abruptly shifts (unusually for mid-act) to a magical "Grotte du Sommeil." The grotto is

home to Sonno, god of sleep, and soon Juno comes to fetch him, so he can put Hercules

to sleep and prevent the hero from acting on his lust.

Act III, the central and longest act in the opera at ten scenes, takes place in a

magical garden surrounded by enchanted statues. Venus conjures an enchanted chair of

grass and flowers with the intention that she and Hercules will lure Iole to sit in it and fall

in love with Hercules. They then sing a duet about the pleasures of love being beyond the

control of reason. Soon after, Sonno immobilizes Hercules to save Iole, who has been

enchanted by the magic seat. Mercury then enters and revives Hercules, who goes into a

blind rage, and Iole must promise to marry him in order to prevent him from killing his

own wife and son in a murderous frenzy. The act ends, then, with matters worse than

before; this sets up Lully's dances for demonic statues.

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69 James R. Anthony, *French Baroque Music* (Portland, OR: Amadeus Press, 1997), 70.

The fourth and fifth acts bear a striking resemblance to the final two acts of

Molière's *Dom Juan*. The ending of Act IV takes place in a cemetery where Iole is visiting

her father's tomb, which notably is surrounded by statues. Hercules's wife accompanies

Iole and laments her husband's infidelities. After Iole prays to her dead father for

forgiveness for marrying his murderer the angry ghost of King Euryto comes forth and

vows to protect his daughter and her beloved. The final act begins in Hades, where the

ghosts of Hercules's victims cry out for revenge. The scene then changes to Juno's temple,

where Iole and Hercules are about to be married. Iole gives Hercules an enchanted shirt

which causes Hercules unbearable pain, the only remedy for which is to leap into the

flames of Hell. The key difference between the conclusions of *Ercole amante* and *Dom

Juan*, in terms of the fate of the protagonist, is that it is revealed at the very end of the

opera that Hercules has been given an honored place in heaven. It would have been

unacceptable, of course, for the character representing the King to end up in Hell.[70]

Although *Ercole amante* preceded *Les Amants magnifiques* by eight years, the

two works share some similar ingredients in terms of their treatment of animated statues.

Both works feature magical gardens as the setting for the statues, and neither plot

provides much justification for their appearance. In both works, the dance of the

animated statues forms the interlude between Acts III and IV. Most importantly, Lully

composed the music for both interludes. The main elements distinguishing the two

interludes are the explanations given for the statues' enlivening. In *Ercole amante*,

demons set the statues in motion, but in *Les Amants magnifiques*, Molière gives no

explanation as to who or what animates the statues.

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[70] For a more detailed discussion of the work, see Kristiaan P. Aercke, *Gods of Play: Baroque Festive Performances as Rhetorical Discourse* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994), Chapter 5.

For *Ercole amante*, Lully and Benserade were tasked by Cardinal Mazarin with composing ballet entries that would be performed between acts of the opera. The main purpose of the ballet was to increase the French component of the production and appeal to the French tastes of the king and public. The king seems to have had a particular taste for theatrical depictions of hell, demons, and the supernatural, perhaps because the demonic lent itself to virtuosic dance. In the 1650s, the king danced the roles of a fire spirit in the *Ballet de la Nuit* (1653), a Fury in *Les Noces de Pélée et de Thétis* (1654), and a demon in the *Ballet d'Alcidiane* (1658). In the *Ballet de Psyché* (1656), Louis XIV was cast as Pluto, ruler of the underworld, and in *Ercole amante*, he reprised this role in the final act. In addition, the king so admired the set design for Hades from *Ercole amante* that in 1670 he commissioned a new theatrical work specifically, *Psyché* (1671), in order to reuse the set.

The animated statues in *Ercole amante* are identified as demonic in the stage directions of the libretto, which state that "the enchanted chair disappears and the Demons that were locked away enter in the form of garden statues and perform the fourth ballet *entrée*, which concludes the third act."[71] It is not explained why they were locked away; nor is it clear to what extent the choreography or costuming played up the demonic power behind the statues for the audience. In context of the opera as a whole, dancing demons would not have seemed out of place with the morbid themes and settings of the final three acts. Yet the stage directions suggest the possibility that the demons were portrayed as concealing their presence "in the form of garden statues."

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[71] "Le Siege enchanté disparoist, & les Demons qui y estoient enfermez entrent dans les Statuës du Iardin, & font la quatriesme *Entrée* de Ballet qui finit le troisiesme Acte." *Hercule amoureux* (Paris: Robert Ballard, 1662), 99.

The music and verse seem to represent the statues as more human than demonic, and it is possible to read the animated statues as multivalent, as a symbolic conflation of demon, human, and statue. This symbolism is couched in representations of the French court, especially through Benserade's verse, which links the dance to the courtly social world. His four lines compare statues to humans, and implicitly to courtiers:

Les choses de ce monde estant bien debatuës	The things of this world being thoroughly debated,
Cecy tesmoigne assez, que chacune a son tems,	This is rather evident, that each has its time,
Les Gens sont quelquefois ainsi que des Statuës,	People are sometimes like statues,
Les Statuës par fois sont ainsi que des Gens.	Statues are on occasion like people.

In this enigmatic verse, Benserade may be offering a witty critique of specific courtiers who carried themselves too stiffly. In fact, the comparison of people and statues anticipates a similar idea that appeared in later seventeenth-century French etiquette manuals. These manuals defined proper behavior for the *honnête homme*, a term that roughly means a man of good education and taste, and the passages that contained the comparison often explained how a courtier should differentiate himself from a statue.[72] More recently, Jean-Marie Apostolidès has called attention to the statue-like aspects of the courtier ideal, noting that "[t]he courtier constructs himself like a *château*, everything is façade … half-way between the actor and the statue, he seems to possess a distinct nature."[73] The statue-courtier comparison often appeared in etiquette treatises of the

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[72] A greater number of the etiquette treatises with statue-courtier comparisons appeared in the 1680s and later, possibly because statues had assumed a greater role in the iconography of the court by that time.

[73] "Le courtesan se construit comme un château, tout en façade …à mi-chemin entre le comédien et la statue, il parâit posséder une nature différente." Jean-Marie Apostolidès, *Le Roi-Machine: Spectacle et politique au temps de Louis XIV* (Paris: Les Editions de Minuit, 1981), 53.

period; such treatises included *L'Homme de cour* (Baltasar Gracian, trans. Amelot de la Houssaie), *Les Devoirs de la vie civile* (Jean Pic), and *Les Devoirs de l'honnête homme et du chrétien* (Jean-Baptiste Morvan de Bellegarde).To the extent that the courtiers affected controlled, statuesque postures and viewed Classical statuary as a bodily ideal, they may well have at times appeared like living statues adorning Louis XIV's court.

The comparison of statues and people also inspired Descartes, whose *Traité de l'Homme* (originally published in 1648) begins with the famous proposition "I suppose that the body is nothing other than a statue or machine made of earth."[74] In fact, Descartes was fascinated with the water-powered statues of the grottos of Louis XII's palace at Saint-Germain-en-Laye, and these statues likely inspired his new mechanistic conception of the nervous system of the body.[75] The grotto statues at Saint-Germain-en-Laye were internationally famous and represented the height of hydraulic garden technology in the first half of the seventeenth century. Water-driven automata were built in four different grottos; the largest of these was the grotto of Perseus and Andromeda. When the elaborate machinery and torrents of water flow were in operation, a dragon emerged from the large water basin on the floor of the grotto while a fully armed Perseus descended from the ceiling and slew the dragon with a sword. At the same time, on one

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[74] "Je suppose que le Corps n'est autre chose qu'une statuë ou la machine de Terre." René Descartes, *Traité de l'Homme* (Paris: Charles Angot, 1664), 1.

[75] Descartes likely had studied the grottos of the palace at St. Germain-en-Laye first-hand, for he lived in the area for a time before he wrote the *Traité de l'Homme*. It is certain, at least, that he would have known them from their engravings in Salomon de Caus, *Les raisons des forces mouvantes avec diverses machines tant utiles que plaisantes ausquelles sont adjoints plusioeurs desseigns de grotes et fontaines* (Frankfurt, 1615). See Stephen Graukroger, "The resources of a mechanist physiology and the problem of goal-directed processes," in *Descartes' Natural Philosophy*, ed. Stephen Graukroger, John Schuster, and John Sutton (London, New York: Routledge, 2000), 386.

side of the grotto a hydraulic statue of Andromeda was chained to a rock while on the other side a hydraulic statue depicted Bacchus sitting on a barrel and drinking wine.[76]

 As one can imagine, the grottos were extremely expensive to maintain, and by the mid-1620s upkeep on them had been discontinued. Even so, their legacy lasted long beyond their ruin. In his treatise, Descartes described mechanical statues exactly like those at Saint-Germain-en-Laye and presented them as analogous to the human body. The fact that the statues of the royal grotto had such a profound influence on Descartes's paradigmatic theories of the body demonstrates the broad impact of these grottos.

Benserade's verse and Descartes's treatise, in different ways, both point to the dramatic shifts in the understanding of the human body and politics that were taking place in this period. The fascination with comparisons between person and statue reflected these shifts, and the fascination only grew stronger in the eighteenth century. Undoubtedly, the increasing attention to the instability of these two categories, inanimate and animate human beings, contributed to the ambiguity of the statue as a political symbol. In *Discipline and Punish*, Michel Foucault illustrates this instability with an arresting image of Louis XIV's first military review, a spectacular display of military power that brought 18,000 men together for the King's inspection on March 15, 1666. Foucault's analysis pertains to a medal that was struck several years later to commemorate the event:

> [A]bove the balustrade that crowns the building are statues representing dancing figures: sinuous lines, rounded gestures, draperies. The marble is covered with movements whose principle of unity is harmonic. The men, on the other hand, are frozen into a uniformly repeated attitude of ranks and

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[76] These grottos were designed by the Francini brothers, who would later design fountains and waterworks for both Fountainbleau and Versailles. Silvio A Bedini, "The Role of Automata in the History of Technology," *Technology and Culture* 5, no. 1 (Winter, 1964), 28.

lines: a tactical unity. The order of the architecture, which frees at its summit the figures of the dance, imposes its rules and its geometry on the disciplined men on the ground. The columns of power. "Very good," Grand Duke Mikhail once remarked of a regiment, after having kept it for one hour presenting arms, "only *they breathe*."[77]

For Foucault, this scene offers a window into the new methods of control and punishment that emerged under the rule of Louis XIV. As he famously observes, the Sun King's reign was a transition period when the soul became the prison of the body, rather than the body the prison of the soul.[78] In other words, technologies (broadly defined) of social control became internalized and discipline was increasingly enforced through the mind rather than on the body. Foucault's view aligns with the Cartesian paradigm, in which the body becomes the object subjugated to the mind, a piece of machinery not so different from a statue.

In the statues' dances of *Ercole amante*, the "bodies" of the statues are identified in the livret as possessed by, i.e., as prisoners of, the demonic spirits. This relationship between demon and statue would have been familiar because it was deeply rooted in early modern writings on magic and theology. Animated statues in these writings were often seen as receptacles for the spirits of demons or the Devil himself; this was the view propounded by Marsilio Ficino, the most influential authority on magic of the early modern era, in his *De vita libri tres* of 1489.[79] Ficino's characterization of animated statues had a great impact on early modern understandings of idolatry; for example, his

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[77] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Translated by Alan Sheridan. (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 188.

[78] Ibid., 30.

[79] On Ficino's discussions of demonic animated statues, see Brian P. Copenhaver, "How to do magic, and why: philosophical prescriptions," in *The Cambridge Companion to Renaissance Philosophy*, edited by James Hankins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 146-165.

ideas filtered into the writings of the influential demonologist Otto Casmann (1562-1607), who named animated statues as one of the eight primary areas in which demons acted directly on the world.[80] The association of animated statues with devilry and heresy was also linked to the fierce debates about iconoclasm and idolatry and the political-theological struggles between Catholics and Protestants.[81] Indeed, it might be fair to say that in the mid-seventeenth century, animated statues were demonic until proven otherwise.

What is most interesting about the statues' dances of *Ercole amante* is the way in which Lully's music both engages with and resists the tropes of demonic music of the time. Typically, the demonic supernatural was represented through melodic and metrical irregularities. According to Rebecca Harris-Warrick, in Lully's music "demons, furies, and other threatening creatures move to irregular, long-winded phrases."[82] Harris-Warrick also identifies "uneven numbers of measures in each strain [and] avoidance of internal cadences or a lessening of their effect through continuous forward motion" as metrical features that would be expected for a dance of demons or furies.[83] By contrast, the phrase structures of the first two of the three dances in the *entrée* "des Statuës" are metrically

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80 Clark, *Thinking with demons*, 163.

81 On iconoclasm in France, see Olivier Christin, *Une Révolution symbolique: l'iconoclasme Huguenot et la re-construction catholique* (Paris: Éd. De Minuit, 1991); on iconoclasm and animated statues in early modern theater, see Michael O'Connell, *The Idolatrous Eye: Iconoclasm and Theater in Early-Modern England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); on iconoclasm and early modern art, see Michael Wayne Cole and Rebecca Zorach, eds., *The Idol in the Age of Art: Objects, Devotions and the Early Modern World* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009).

82 Rebecca Harris-Warrick,"The phrase structures of Lully's dance music," in *Lully Studies*, ed. John Hajdu Heyer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 54.

83 Ibid., 51.

regular and melodically interconnected. In addition, none of the dances alternate among different time signatures, which would be typical of demonic dances.

Ex. 2.1   Jean-Baptiste Lully, *Hercule amoureux* (LWV 17, 1662), First dance, Entrée 5 ("Les Statuës"). In *Troisième tome des vieux ballets du roi* (Berkeley, MS 454)

The first dance (ex. 2.1) contains two strains; the first strain of the binary begins with a four-measure phrase that ends with a cadence on the tonic. Two transitional measures of descending parallel thirds immediately launch from the cadence, leading into another four-measure phrase that begins melodically like the first phrase before

cadencing on the dominant. The second strain, in terms of phrase structure, is an expanded variation of the first strain. Instead of two four-measure phrases connected by a two-measure transition, Lully composes two five-measure phrases connected by an almost identical two measures of descending parallel thirds. The first five-measure phrase begins in the dominant, but melodically it is patterned on the opening phrase of the first strain. The phrase extension occurs in m. 13, and mm. 14-15 recalls mm. 3-4 but transposed down in order to cadence on the subdominant. After the cadence, the transitional measures pass through the dominant to return to the tonic at the beginning of the fourth phrase. This last phrase of the dance in mm. 18-22 represents a new variation on the opening phrase. Like the first phrase of the second strain, the last phrase is extended to five measures by an extension in its third measure.

Considering that this is meant to be demonic music, the dance is remarkably balanced and logical in its phrase structure. Although Harris-Warrick's observations about demonic dances are based on her study of Lully's music for the *tragédies en musique*, a look at one of Lully's demonic dances from a work that preceded *Ercole amante* shows that her observations are still relevant to Lully's earlier demonic idiom. In 1657, Lully composed a dance for four demons for the ballet *L'Amour malade* (ex. 2.2). This dance offers a good comparison, because the ballet was produced by three of the same collaborators who put together *Ercole amante* (Buti, Benserade, and Lully). In this dance, the irregular musical demonisms are conspicuous. The first and second strains are different lengths (10 measures and 15 measures) with one strain containing an even number of measures and the other an odd number. The second strain features a series of meter changes as well, abruptly shifting from 3/2 time to duple time to common time and

back. The harmony wanders, and there are cadences on the relative major at measure four and the dominant at the end of the first strain. In the second strain, there are weak internal cadences on the tonic (g minor) in the fifth measure, on B^b major in m. 19, and on the tonic in m. 22. There is also very little sense of melodic coherence.

Ex. 2.2   Dance for four demons, *Ballet de L'Amour malade* (1657)

By contrast, in the first statues' dance of *Ercole amante*, the phrases are not long, and although they do vary in length, they are varied in a consistent and balanced way. Harmonically, the dance is built with discrete and repeating units with clear internal cadences. It is true that there is a sense of continuous forward motion, which may lessen the effect of the cadences somewhat, but the form is so well ordered that this does not disrupt the sense of internal coherence. The dance is essentially in a continuous rounded binary form, with a contrasting phrase at the beginning of the second strain that is closely related to the opening phrase. The form could be also considered a balanced binary, given the melodic "rhyme" of an eight-note flourish in the bass voice at the end of each strain.

The metrical and harmonic structures of the second statues' dance (ex. 2.3) are even less "demonic" than those of the first dance. The second dance is in triple meter, and shorter than the first. The first strain contains two five-measure phrases, the second two four-measure phrases, and with no transition measures between phrases, the dance contains a total of 18 measures. Perhaps Lully intended the dance to be a kind of mirror image of the first dance in terms of phrase lengths; instead of the 4-2-4 and 5-2-5 strains of the first dance, the second dance is built with 5-5 and 4-4 strains. If Lully had included two-measure transitions between the phrases in the second dance as he had in the first, the two dances would have contained the same number of measures. Harmonically, each phrase ends with a clear cadence and there is no continuous forward motion to lessen the sense of the cadences as in the first dance. Like the first dance, the second dance is in continuous and balanced binary form.

Ex. 2.3   Jean-Baptiste Lully, *Hercule amoureux* (LWV 17, 1662), First dance, Entrée 5 ("Les Statuës"). In *Troisième tome des vieux ballets du roi* (Berkeley, MS 454)

Without a doubt, these two dances follow each other musically, thus projecting a sense of logical order. In addition to the metrical and harmonic parallels, Lully opens each with the same melodic gesture, a descending fourth that occurs in both voices in parallel thirds and contains the clashing dissonance of C# in the top voice against the G natural in the lower voice. In the first dance, the gesture happens quickly, lasting just one measure, with the top voice breaking from the lower voice in the second measure. In the second dance, the gesture is expanded to five measures, with melodic embellishment in both voices, but the descending fourth in parallel thirds still is clearly audible when it is heard on the downbeats of the opening phrase.

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Unlike the first two dances, the third statues' dance appears to be more consistent with typical characteristics of demonic music (ex. 2.4). The only music of this dance that survives is the violin part, but the phrase structure is still clear in the single voice. The first strain consists of one long eleven-measure phrase that begins with a striking opening gesture and meanders harmonically with an internal cadence in m. 5 on either the tonic or the relative major. In m. 11, the strain concludes with a cadence in the relative major. The second strain is also eleven measures long, making the dance the same number of total measures (22) as the first; this length, however, constitutes one of the few parallels between the third dance and the previous two. The second strain of the third dance appears to contain several internal cadences: a cadence in B^b major in m. 13, a cadence in F major in m. 15, a cadence in the tonic G minor in m. 18, and another cadence in G minor in the penultimate measure.

Ex. 2.4   Jean-Baptiste Lully, *Hercule amoureux* (LWV 17, 1662), Third dance, Entrée 5 ("Les Statuës"). In *Airs de ballet et d'opéra* (Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS Vm^6 5)

The possible demonic characteristics of this dance include not only the metrical and harmonic irregularities, but also the melodic use of the tritone. In m. 2, the melody outlines the tritone between B^b and E natural. Two measures later, the melody outlines the tritone between E^b and A natural. Whether or not Lully included any tritone clashes between the two voices is uncertain, but the featuring of tritone dissonances may be a connecting thread between the three dances. In the first two dances, the tritone dissonances happen fleetingly, and perhaps merely hint at a demonic presence, but in the third dance, the tritone becomes a more conspicuous element.

The controlled regularities of the first two statues' dances may have represented a kind of musical masking. As Harris-Warrick notes, demonic dances become regular "only if. . . [the demons] are disguised as something benign," and as an example she cites the metrically regular dance of the demons who are disguised as shepherds and nymphs in the second act of *Amadis*.[84] Here, the three dances likely comprised a sequence of choreographic events in which the demons first appear concealed as garden statues and dance two well-mannered dances then reveal themselves in the third dance. Perhaps some kind of mask was part of the costuming, or perhaps the demons revealed themselves purely through movement. Although nothing in the text of the *livret* or Benserade's verse offers any direct choreographic information, Lully's music suggests a scenario of concealment and unmasking.

Obliquely, Benserade's verse seems to call attention to an additional layer of concealment. By comparing statues to people, Benserade reminds the audience to look behind the fourth wall and to recognize the simulacrum of nobles portraying demons

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[84]   Ibid., 54.

concealing themselves as statues. No fewer than sixteen nobles performed as demons/statues in this *intermède*, which must have been quite a spectacle.[85] Beyond providing an entr'acte diversion, these dances suggest that demons, statues, and people can assume the identity of each other, and that the categorical distinctions can be blurred, at least in the theater. This idea extended outside the theater as well, as seen in the writings of Descartes, or Ficino, or in the iconoclasm that proliferated in the wake of the Reformation.

As demonstrated by the list in Table 1.1, Parisian audiences and artists shared an interest in seeing animated statues on stage during the 1660s. During this period, animated statues were frequently viewed as demonic and deceptive. Within a few years of the premiere of *Ercole amante*, the premieres of *Les Amours déguisés* and Molière's *Dom Juan* took place. Each of these works contains animated statues that conceal their identities and are linked to the demonic. In *Les Amours déguisés*, the animated statues are Cupids, but they are disguised as the statues of Armide's palace, and thus are associated with a malevolent archetype. In *Dom Juan*, the hellish ghost of the commander is concealed inside his statue in the cemetery and revealed only through Dom Juan's daring invitation. Five years after *Dom Juan*, Molière would again revisit the animated statue in *Les Amants magnifiques*.

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[85] The libretto calls for a large ensemble of sixteen nobles to dance the parts of the statues: "Le Marquis de Rassan. Monsieur Coquet. Messieurs Bruneau, Langlois, Tartas, & Lambert. Les Sieurs L'Amy, les deux Des-Airs, Jolly, le Noble, Noblet, Prouaire, Des Rideaux, Des-Airs le petit, & le Grais."

2.1   The "Demonic" Animated Statues of *Les Amants magnifiques*

What is most intriguing about Molière/Lully's animated statues in *Les Amants magnifiques* is the mystery of who or what animates them. In French theater from the *Balet comique* of 1581 all the way through the 1660s, when animated statues appear the power that awakens them is always identified. In the 1660s, statues are animated by demons or the powers of hell in the dances of *Ercole amante* and in the *Dom Juan* plays; by Cupids in *Les Amours déguisés*; by Venus in *La Naissance de Vénus*; and by the king in *Les Fâcheux*. The fact that the identity of the animator is concealed in *Les Amants magnifiques* makes this work a completely new treatment of the animated statue, and yet concealment is a facet of all of these treatments. The one possible exception is the mechanical statues of *Les Fâcheux*, yet one could argue that these also conceal the true identity of their animator, i.e., Nicolas Fouquet, behind disingenuous rhetoric about the magical powers of the king. Given Fouquet's arrest and Torelli's banishment, this would certainly seem to have been the king's interpretation.

The unusual balance of elements in *Les Amants magnifiques* has both fascinated and frustrated scholars. Since the nineteenth century, the general scholarly consensus has been that the scenario dictated by the king resulted in an incoherent hodgepodge. One perceived problem with the work, particularly for Molière scholars, is that the musical *divertissements* outweigh the spoken comedy more than in any other comedy-ballet. Consequently, both musicologists and literary scholars have long trod lightly around *Les Amants magnifiques*. Indeed Philippe Beaussant argues that the piece "is without a doubt the most misunderstood and most neglected of all of Molière's works."[86]

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[86]   *Lully ou le Musicien de la soleil* (Paris: Gallimard, 1992), 367.

One can also say that the dance of the animated statues is the most misunderstood and most neglected element of the entire work. Even as scholars have increasingly found new reasons for fresh looks at *Les Amants magnifiques*, the statues' entry has continued to defy interpretation. In fact, notable scholars who have written on the work at some length have simply ignored this entry.[87] Other scholars have acknowledged that the statues' entry appears in the work but have found little else to say about it; this is perhaps unsurprising, given how little explanation Molière offers in the *livret*.[88]

Beaussant views the animated statues as marginal as well, but in a slightly different way. Despite the high esteem in which he holds *Les Amants magnifiques*, Beaussant acknowledges the statues' entry but considers it irrelevant to the rest of the structure. As shown in fig. 2.1, he erases it from the play in his reductive analysis of the work. The first diagram illustrates Beaussant's analytical argument that the more elaborate spectacles (the Prologue, the Pastorale, and the Grand Ballet) form one axis of the work while the simpler spectacles, the two Pantomime *intermèdes* and the statues' entry, form the other axis. The second diagram illustrates Beaussant's argument that the Pastorale, and not the statues' entry, is the true center of the entire work.

Still other scholars have singled out the statues' entry for critique. Jérôme de La Gorce criticizes the *intermèdes* for lacking any connection to the action of the comedy,

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87 Examples where scholars do not acknowledge the animated statues' dance's existence include Claude Abraham, *On the Structure of Molière's Comédies-Ballets* (Paris, Seattle: Papers on French Seventeenth Century Literature, 1984); Nicholas Cronk, "The celebration of carnival in Molière-Lully's *Les Amants magnifiques,*" in *The Seventeenth Century: Directions Old and New* edited by Elizabeth Moles and Noël Peacock (Glasgow: University of Glasgow French & German Publications, 1992), 74-87; Stephen H. Fleck, *Music, Dance, and Laughter: Comic Creation in Molière's Comedy-Ballets* (Paris, Seattle: Papers on French Seventeenth Century Literature, 1995).

88 See for example Gretchen Elizabeth Smith, *The Performance of Male Nobility in Molière's Comédies-ballets: Staging the Courtier* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2005). The book contains the most extended analysis of the work currently in print, and Smith discusses every aspect of the work in detail except for the statues' dance, which she mentions only in passing.

and he finds that the ballet "where we see statues move" lacks any kind of true surprise or novelty.[89] Louis Auld takes a similarly dismissive view of the entry, and suggests it exists only to prepare the scene for the next act: "Following the third act there is a scene change, but the interlude consists only of eight statues dancing in the obscurity of the grotto, each with a torch, and assuming 'plusiers belles attitudes.' If the scene changes here, it is because the grotto is needed for the following act."[90]
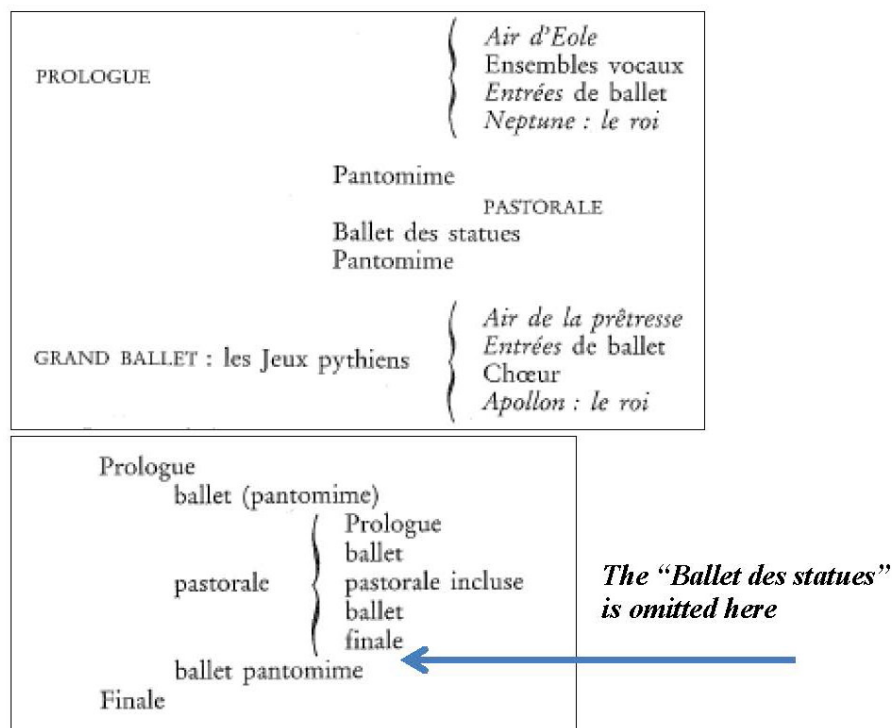
Fig. 2.1   Philippe Beausant's formal analysis of *Les Amants magnifiques*, from *Lully, ou, Le musician du soleil* (Paris: Théâtre des Champs-Elysées, 1992), 372-375. [Annotation mine]

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[89]   La Gorce also criticizes the pantomime *entrées* for the same reason. Jérôme de La Gorce, *Jean-Baptiste Lully* (Paris: Fayard, 2002), 484.

[90] Louis E. Auld, "Theatrical Illusion as Theme in *Les Amants magnifiques*," *Romance Notes* 16, no. 1 (Autumn, 1974): 148-149.

The scholar who is least pleased with the statues' dance, however, is Ada Coe, who writes

that "the beautiful statues, freezing into attractive poses, appear one of the less satisfying

ballets Molière offers."[91] Given the long history of underestimating this comedy-ballet,

scholars have tended to view the lack of explanation for the statues in a negative light.

Coe, Beaussant, and many others have interpreted the ambiguous identity of the statues

as indicative of their meaninglessness and have assumed that they serve little purpose or

were merely inserted into the work for practical or purely entertainment reasons.

However, in light of the consistent characterization in the 1660s of animated statues as

deceptive, demonic, and disguised, there is strong evidence to suggest that Molière's

treatment was more intentional.

As in all of Molière's plays, a driving theme of *Les Amants magnifiques* is artifice

and illusion. Molière manipulates this theme primarily by controlling how the audience

and the characters in the comedy discover who is pulling the strings for each spectacle.

The game begins with the prologue, which throws the audience into a supernatural world

far removed from the typical comedy setting. As explained in the first section of this

chapter, only after the prologue does the audience learn that what they have just seen was

a diegetic performance created by one of the princes. In Act IV, the appearance of Venus

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91   Ada Coe, " 'Ballet en comédie' or 'comédie en ballet'? *La Princesse d'Elide* and *Les Amants magnifiques*." *Cahiers du Dix-septième* 2, no. 1 (Spring 1988): 119. Earlier in the article, on page 116, Coe offers a more extended critique: "The play and the *intermèdes* are linked together by the fact that the *intermèdes* are amusements offered to Eriphile and to the Princess her mother. Some of the *intermèdes*, we have already argued, have a more profound significance in the work as a whole, but the fourth Intermède has only the slightest of connections. Aristione, Eriphile's mother, simply announces that she and her daughter will walk in the grotto. In the *intermède* there is neither development of plot nor of characters. The ballet itself has no relevance to the play, since it presents eight statues, each with a torch, 'qui font une danse variée de plusiers belles attitudes où ells demeurent par intervalles.' In 1670, Molière reaches the apex of that hybrid genre, the *comèdie-ballet*, but here, briefly, he goes back to the purely balletic element, that is to the 'suite de danses' without a story or a theme, and without characterization."

similarly sets up the revelation of an illusion; while the audience knows that the Venus is a mechanical hoax soon after her appearance, most of the characters fall prey to the illusion until the hoax is exposed in the final act.[92]

Molière is careful to attribute all of the spectacles in *Les Amants magnifiques*, save one— the dance of the statues. The second and fifth *intermèdes* for pantomimes are clearly explained as performers summoned to entertain the princess, the prologue and third pastorale *intermède* are attributed to the princes, and the sixth spectacle for Apollo that concludes the work is explained as a celebration produced by Aristione. A few scholars have suggested that the statues are hoaxes (i.e. mechanical simulations of divinely animated figures) operated by the astrologer Anaxarque and this, I propose, is the most convincing interpretation. Abby Zanger writes that "with some hindsight we realize that this spectacle is Anaxarque's creation, the first step in his plan, the appropriation of court entertainment, the dominant specie as bait to attract the princesses to the spot where he has staged another performance."[93] Aurélia Gailliard comes to a similar conclusion as Zanger, although from a more theoretical angle. She suggests that the reading of the statues as mechanical fakes is consistent not only with Anaxarque's plottings, but also with the comic theatrical mode, which tends to flaunt and expose theatrical artifices.[94] Perhaps the best evidence for this reading of the statues as false is

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[92] In one version of the play that appeared after the premiere, the Venus is labled as a "false Venus," which meant that an audience member following along with that version of the text would know the truth before it was revealed in the dialogue two scenes later.

[93] Abby E. Zanger, "The Spectacular Gift: Rewriting the Royal Scenario in Molière's *Les Amants magnifiques*," *Romanic Review* 81 (1990), 181, n15.

[94] As Gaillard notes, "Ces Statues-ci étaient-elles aussi des « machines» ? Sinon, en quoi se distinguent-elles de la « machine» volante de Vénus ? Dans l'ordre théâtral, la question du simulacre est ainsi souvent caduque : tout est simulacre et à partir de là, nos « statues» n'ont plus de spécifité. La différence entre les deux modes, tragique ou comique, réside alors surtout dans la reconnaissance affichée ou non

the fact that the statues perform their dance in the same grotto in which, just two scenes

later, the princess and her mother encounter the astrologer's mechanical Venus. It is

perhaps notable that these readings have been put forward following the re-evaluation of

the work as a whole that began in 1990, after a celebrated performance that resurrected

Lully and Molière's original version.[95]

Reading the statues as mechanical hoaxes throws the political symbolism of the

statues into question. *Les Amants magnifiques* (or as it was alternately titled, *Le*

Divertissement Royal) was strongly associated with the king, and represented not only a

realization of his scenario but also a demonstration of all that his theater could provide.

Therefore, it becomes problematic for any of the *divertissements* to represent falseness or

deception. The first, third, and sixth spectacles all project an image of theatrical brilliance

that reflects back on the king, and celebrates him as presiding over these entertainments.

In addition, some aspects of the work allude to places and things associated with Louis;

for example, as shown in the previous chapter, the music of the "Symphonie des Plaisirs"

in *Les Amants magnifiques* associates the dancing statues with the king's Grotto of

Versailles.

Yet, as Jean Luc Robin points out, a number of details in *Les Amants magnifiques*

lend support to the idea that Molière wove a veiled critique of the king and court into the

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des codes théâtraux : là où le genre de la tragédie atténue (dans son discours et non dans ses moyens), voire nie, les artifices théâtraux; le genre de la comédie a tendance à les exhiber, à dévoiler et démonter les « simulacres»." Aurélia Gaillard, *Le corps des statues: le vivant et son simulacre à l'âge classique (de Descartes à Diderot)* (Paris: Champion, 2003), 173.

[95] The influential revival of *Les Amants magnifiques* was a 1988-89 production by Jean-Luc Paliès. Cronk, "Carnival," 74-75.

work.[96] The deceiving astrologer embodies Molière's critique of astrology itself, a theme that the author visited in other works including *Dom Juan*. This theme, according to Robin, may have represented a critique of Louis's use of astrological symbolism to construct his image as Sun King. The noble princes, who are the two main characters specifically suggested by the king in his scenario, are portrayed by Molière as deceptive and disingenuous. Sostrate, the general and a commoner, is the noblest character in the work in terms of modeling integrity, and ultimately he wins the hand of the princess Eriphile. Perhaps significantly, the royal spectacles have no impact on the union between Sostrate and Eriphile; rather, it is the machinations of the astrologer and his false prophecy that finally brings the two "star-crossed" lovers together.

Robin argues that this apparently "most innocent" of Molière's works is in fact Molière's most radical political critique of the king, and the astrologer represents the key to this critique. By the end of the comedy, the astrologer has been physically beaten and his claims of power proven to be lies. According to Robin, "In [*Les Amants magnifiques*], the demolition of astrology is merely the preamble to a questioning which is aimed at undermining a certain absolutist dogma of sovereignty, a questioning which consists in denying the transcendence of power."[97] The apparent simplicity and innocence of *Les Amants magnifiques* conceals and distracts from the ambiguity of the astrologer, whose pseudoscience and success at deception points to something wrong in the idyllic, *galant* world of pleasure and love. This world is literally created for and metaphorically ruled by the king, represented by both Apollo and Neptune. The importance of the astrologer's

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[96] Jean Luc Robin, "Innocence ou dissidence des *Amants magnifiques* de Molière?," *Seventeenth-Century French Studies* 31, no. 2 (2009), 151-161.

[97] Ibid., 152.

deception to the comedy illustrates the power of deception in this imagined domain of the king.[98]

If the astrologer's deception constitutes a dissident element in the work, then it would follow that the statues, as embodiments of the astrologer's deceptiveness, contribute to the dissident critique of the king. Yet this argument is not so easily made. Although the statues and the false mechanical Venus appear in the same grotto and in close proximity to each other within the *livret*, Molière makes no connection between them. Only minutes after the Princess and her mother have encountered Anaxarque's false Venus, we arrive at the scene where Anaxarque claims ownership of the machine, and he does so in great detail with obvious pride at his cleverness and deviousness. If the statues were indeed one of his illusions, one would expect the boastful astrologer to laud that hoax as well, especially because producing eight mechanical statues that dance with torches would seem a more impressive accomplishment than a single mechanical Venus. Yet he never mentions the statues in this scene, nor at any point in the work. The only acknowledgement of the dance of the "magical" statues by anyone in the work is a single line of generic reaction, delivered by Aristione immediately after the dance has concluded: "Nothing can be more *galant* or better understood."

The music contains a clue that seems to confirm Zanger's and Robin's readings. Concealed in plain sight in the first two bars of the "Air des Statues" (ex. 2.5) is a bass line gesture which seems to have been for Lully a musical emblem signifying the mockery or rejection of love. This inelegant gesture—a minor descending tetrachord

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[98] Georgia Cowart has argued the *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme*, produced by Lully and Molière a year after *Les Amants magnifiques*, contains strong elements of monarchical satire. This would suggest further evidence for dissident reading of *Les Amants magnifiques*. See Cowart, *The Triumph of Pleasure: Louis XIV and the Politics of Spectacle* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), Chapter 3.

followed by a leap of a sixth downward to the leading tone—stands outside the idiom of Lully's bass line writing. In a study of the scores of all of Lully/Molière's comedy-ballets as well as nearly all of Lully's theatrical music before *Les Amants magnifiques*, this two-measure figure appears only five times, including in the "Air des Statues." Moreover, it does not appear in Lully's music at all until 1664, the year of the first fête at Versailles, when it appears in three separate works (*Le Mariage forcé*, *Les Amours déguisés*, and *La Princesse d'Elide*). It next appears in 1668, the year of the second fête at Versailles (not coincidentally in *La Grotte de Versailles*). Most importantly, in each case the figure accompanies a vocal line about the rejection, or mockery, or pain of love. Taken together, the citations of this musical "counter-love" figure clarify what Lully meant when he used it as the opening musical gesture for the statues in *Les Amants magnifiques*.

Ex. 2.5   "Counter-Love" figure: opening gesture in "Air des Statues," *Les Amants magnifiques*

The counter-love figure first appeared in Lully/Molière's comedy-ballet *Le Mariage force*, LWV 20 [The Forced Marriage], which premiered at the Louvre on January 29, 1664. The plot centers on Sgnarelle and Dorimene, two characters who are marrying for selfish reasons and without love. The *entrée* in which the counter-love figure appears is the third *entrée* of the comedy-ballet. It begins with the main character Sgnarelle asking two gypsy women (one of whom was danced by the king at the

premiere) if they can foretell whether he will be happy in marriage.[99] Sgnarelle especially

wants to know if his worst fear will come true, that he will be cuckolded by the much-

younger Dorimène who is marrying him for his money. The gypsy-women begin

mocking Sgnarelle in dance, and he responds by seeking out a magician who then sings a

récit about love and conjures two figures, Marriage and Destiny. Sgnarelle speaks to each

one about love and marriage, and they respond in song. When Destiny sings, it brings

forth four demons as twisted manifestations of love's charms. These demons and the

magician then dance the interlude in which the counter-love figure appears at the

beginning of the second strain (ex. 2.6). The appearance of the counter-love figure at this

moment makes sense, given that it initiates the part of the dance in which the demons

make gestures imitating cuckold horns to mock Sgnarelle and the idea of love. It is worth

noting as well that this *entrée* is important within Lully's theatrical œuvre, because it

mixes spoken and sung dialogue. Prunières considers it the beginning of Lully's *style*

bouffe, in part for this reason.[100]

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[99] Fleck, *Molière's Comedy-Ballets*, 62.

[100] Henry Prunières, Preface to *Comédies-ballets* vol. 1 (Paris: Ed. de la Revue Musicale, 1931-1938), xvii, xx.

Ex. 2.6   "Counter-Love" figure: opening gesture to second strain of dance of a
            magician and demons, *Le Mariage forcé*

The next work to feature the counter-love figure premiered less than a month

later, on February 13, at the Palais Royal. Lully composed the 14-*entrée* score for *Les*

amours déguisés to a *livret* by Octave de Perigny. The counter-love figure underscores

the Italian *récit* of the sorceress Armide (ex. 2.7), whose faith in love has been broken by

Rinaldo's escape from her love enchantments. The figure appears at the beginning of the

second and third stanzas of Armide's *récit*, which are explicitly about loss of faith in

love. The first appearance of the counter-love figure accompanies the line "Ahi che se

vola Lunge dà mè" [Oh, he has flown far from me] and the second figure underscores the

opening line of the following stanza:

Dunque il bel foco	Thus, the beautiful fire [of love]
Che t'arse già,	With which you once burned
Ceduto hà'l loco	Has been replaced by
A' duro ghiaccio di ferità.	The hard ice of cruelty.

Here, the counter-love figure accompanies another variation on the negation of love. Instead of the mockery of love by demonic dancers, a sorceress's faith in love has been destroyed.

Ex. 2.7   "Counter-Love" figure: opening gesture in two stanzas of Armide's air in which she rages against love, *Les Amours déguisés*

Three months after the premiere of *Les amours déguisés*, Louis XIV hosted the first *grande fête royale*. On May 8, Lully/Molière's comedy-ballet *La Princesse d'Elide* premiered at Versailles with Molière playing two comic roles, one being Lyciscas, a character who appears only in the second scene of the prologue. The prologue opens with the *récit* of Aurora, goddess of the dawn, who sings the praises of love "When Love offers your eyes an agreeable choice, let their beauties enflame you. . . nothing is more beautiful than to love."[101] In the next scene of the prologue, the *récit burlesque*, three *valets de chien* sing the praises of Aurora and the dawn spreading in the world, a dawn

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[101] "Quand l'Amour à vos yeux offre un choix agreeable/Ieunes beautez laissez-vous enflamer … Rien n'est si beau que d'aymer."

which symbolizes love. Unlike the three valets, Lysiscas remains asleep because he is

unmoved by the dawn, i.e., by love, and he spends the *récit burlesque* trying to resist the

valets' efforts to wake him. The counter-love figure in *La Princesse d'Elide* (ex. 2.8)

accompanies the last line sung by the musicians before Lyciscas speaks for the first time:

"Do you not see the day that spreads everywhere? Come arise, Lyciscas arise."[102] He

answers that he does not see nor does he care about this metaphorical spreading of love.[103]

In this case, Lully inserts the counter-love figure as a musical anticipation of Lysiscas's

answer.

Ex. 2.8   "Counter-Love" figure: entrance of comic character
Lyciscas in first interlude, *La Princesse d'Elide*

The fourth appearance of the counter-love figure occurs in *La Grotte de Versailles*,

which premiered at Versailles in 1668. The same dialogue of shepherds that contains the

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[102] "Ne vois-tu pas le jour qui se respand par tout ?/Allons debout, Lysiscas debout."

[103] It is noteworthy that this scene has something in common with the example from *Les Amours déguisés* besides the counter-love figure; both scenes represent early experiments by Lully with the mixture of spoken and sung text to create a burlesque comic style.

ritournelle from which the statues' "Symphonie des Plaisirs" in *Les Amants magnifiques* was drawn also features a counter-love figure. In fact, the counter-love figure appears immediately before the ritournelle (ex. 2.9). As discussed in the previous chapter, the

Ex. 2.9   "Counter-Love" figure: *La Grotte de Versailles*

opening dialogue of *La Grotte de Versailles* characterizes the Grotto as a space devoted exclusively to love, and it represents the side of the king associated with love, pleasure, and the *galant*. The counter-love figure underscores a line in which the shepherds discuss escaping that space: "Where can we go where love has not been?"[104] The rest of the dialogue elaborates on the theme of the grotto as "this place full of charms," and it ends with the image of love as too charming to defend one's self against.[105]

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[104] "Où pourrions-nous aller où l'Amour ne fût pas?"

[105] Ne craignons point le tourment/Qu'un coeur amoureux doit attendre,/C'est un mal trop charmant,/Pour s'en deffendre.

This brings us to the question of how the statues in *Les Amants magnifiques*

represent the idea of the negation or mockery of love. Lully's use of the counter-love

figure at the opening of the air supports the interpretation that the statues must be an

illusion of the astrologer. In the comedy-ballet, Anaxarque's scheming is calculated to

manipulate the princess into a match with a prince that she does not love. The musical

figure links obliquely links the statues to Anaxarque's deceptive designs, casting them as

false machines and extensions of his efforts to trick the princess out of finding true love

in Sostrate. Anaxarque is Sostrate's opposite: he represents deception, mysticism, and

the noble princes, while Sostrate represents true love, "cold rationalism and independence

of spirit," as Robin notes, and the commoner. In sum, the presence of the counter-love

figure as the opening gesture of the "Air des Statues" seems to support both Zanger's and

Robin's readings.

The musical rhetoric of the counter-love figure merits a closer look, in particular

its rhetorical relation to the descending minor tetrachord. Most scholarly discussion of the

descending tetrachord has focused on pieces that repeat the figure as a ground bass

ostinato, and the descending tetrachord ostinato has been recognized as an emblem

frequently associated with laments, love, ungratified erotic longing, or the idea of being

trapped in a state of some kind.[106] Currently, little consensus exists on the meaning of the

descending tetrachord when it appears as a non-repeating *gesture*, even though

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[106] Ellen Rosand, "The Descending Tetrachord: an Emblem of Lament," *The Musical Quarterly* 65 (1979): 346-359; Tim Carter, "Resemblance and Representation: Towards a New Aesthetic in the Music of Monteverdi," in *Con che soavità: Studies in Italian Opera, Song, and Dance, 1580-*1740, edited by Iain Fenlon and Tim Carter (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 118-134; Wendy Heller, "Tacitus Incognito: Opera as History in *L'incoronazione di Poppea*," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 52, no. 1 (Spring, 1999), 39-96; Geoffrey Burgess, Chaconnes, *Ritual in the Tragédie En Musique: From Lully's "Cadmus Et Hermione" (1673) to Rameau's "Zoroastre" (1749)* (PhD Diss., Cornell University, 1998), Chapter 8.

Charpentier used the descending minor tetrachord more frequently as a gesture than as an ostinato, and Lully frequently used the descending tetrachord as an isolated gesture as well.[107] At the very least, as Lois Rosow has noted, the frequent appearances of the descending minor tetrachord as a solitary gesture "demonstrate its powerful role as a *topos* in late seventeenth-century Europe."[108]

The counter-love figure represents a variation on the descending tetrachord gesture, one that is meaningful and rare in Lully's musical language. When he uses descending tetrachords, Lully typically avoids an immediate cadence in the home key. Exs. 2.10a and 2.10c are representative of the way Lully likes to spin out harmonically from the tetrachord. Lully comes closest to the counter-love figure with the figure in ex. 2.10b, in which an altered tetrachord harmonically supports a weak secondary dominant of the dominant. What makes the counter-love figure unique is that it abruptly leaps down to the cadential leading tone, thus disrupting the expectation of a longer phrase. The sequence of a minor tetrachord followed immediately by the leading tone also entails a dissonant clash between the lowered and raised leading tones, adding to the jarring quality of this figure.

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[107] Rosow, "The Descending Minor Tetrachord in France: An Emblem Expanded," in *New Perspectives on Marc-Antoine Charpentier*, edited by Shirley Thomson (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010), 69.

[108] Ibid., 86.

Ex. 2.10 Typical examples of Lully's varied use of the descending tetrachord gesture: from (a) *Ballet d'Alcidiane*; (b) *Les Plaisirs d'Isle Enchantée*; (c) *L'Amour médecin*

The descending tetrachord emblem has been associated with the lament by Ellen Rosand, though according to Tim Carter, the descending tetrachord "seems to be less an 'emblem of lament' than of that which so often gives rise to lament," namely, love.[109] Rosow has written about the figure in the context of French music, and finds that the variety of available interpretations of this figure makes it impossible to assign any conventional semantic meaning with any degree of certainty. She concludes that for any interpretation of the figure, "only poetry and context can clarify its particular meaning."[110] In the case of the counter-love figure, its connection to five thematically related texts suggests the possibility of a general interpretation. Perhaps, if for Lully the descending minor tetrachord served as a musical signifier of love, then the abrupt harmonic closure following the tetrachord rhetorically represented a musical disruption, or negation, of love.

As I have proposed, the music of the statues in *Les Amants magnifiques* supports a reading of the statues as the mechanical illusions of the astrologer. During the Sun

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[109] Tim Carter, "Resemblance and Representation," 129.

[110] Rosow, "Descending Minor Tetrachord," 87.

King's first decade, nearly all animated statues of the theater bore some associations with deceptive or demonic elements, and this reading finds the treatment of animated statues in *Les Amants magnifiques* to be conventional for the 1660s. At the same time, the statues of *Les Amants magnifiques* represent something new, because their animation does not come from spirits, Cupids, or the king but a human of lower status, Anaxarque, whose power is mechanical invention. In a way, Anaxarque is not unlike Fouquet, who aspired to improve his social status by presenting Torelli's mechanical statues and attempting to manipulate the structures of power through artful ingenuity and enterprise.

Anaxarque's power to animate statues, albeit false ones, suggests an additional comparison to Dom Juan. Like Anaxarque, Dom Juan creates and animates his statue. Unlike Anaxarque, who builds and operates his statues, Dom Juan creates what becomes the statue of the commander through a murderous act. He then initiates the animation of the statue by inviting it to dinner. Dom Juan, like Anaxarque, is a scheming manipulator, and ultimately they are both doomed (Dom Juan to hell, Anaxarque to a physical beating and social banishment). Unlike Anaxarque, Dom Juan shares with Sostrate a deep sense of skepticism towards pseudoscience.[111] Though it is beyond the scope of this study, further consideration of these two works by Molière and their treatments of animated statues promises to reveals deeper connections and shared ambiguities.

An additional connecting thread among the animated statues of the 1660s is the element of the demonic, which often appears either explicitly or in the shadows of scenes that do not contain literal demons. For example, the fact that an astrologer animates the statues in *Les Amants magnifiques* represents a hint of the demonic, since astrologers and

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[111] Robin, "Innocence ou dissidence," 151-161.

demons often were linked related in French theater. Also noteworthy are the flaming

torches of the statues in *Les Amants magnifiques*. Torches typically served as props for

both demons and Furies; significantly, almost all Furies were depicted with torches.[112]

The torch also was linked to Cupid as a symbol of his burning passion, though torches

appeared more frequently in connection to more sinister characters. Notably, Molière had

called for the same number of dancers with torches once before, in 1664 for the *Ballet du*

Palais d'Alcine. In that ballet, eight dancing Moors with torches guard the evil sorceress

Alcina's palace. A year after *Les Amants magnifiques*, eight dancers with torches

appeared once again in a work attached to Molière and Lully, at the end of the *plainte*

italienne in *Psyché*.[113] Although different versions of the *plainte italienne* describe

different character types performing the dance, all versions were variations on the theme

of threatening Others (included dances of Furies and afflicted men). And it bears

mentioning as well that the *plainte italienne*, like the dance of the statues in *Les Amants*

magnifiques, takes place in a grotto and contains repeated iterations of the descending

tetrachord.

2.2   Conclusion

The animated statues of French theater in the 1660s were not exclusively dancing

monuments to the king's glory. They could be many things: demonic, divine, mechanical,

virtually human. They also began to proliferate in French theater at a time of great social

change. Politically, France was entering its golden age while still recovering from the

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[112] Jan Clarke, "A Symbiosis of Special Effects: from the Machine Play to the *tragédie lyrique* and Back
Again," in *Formes et formations au dix-septième siècle*, ed. Buford Norman (Tübingen: Narr Francke
Attempto Verlag, 2006), 127.

[113] The *plainte italienne* was likely written by Quinault or Lully.

violent memories of the Fronde. The 1660s began with the death of Cardinal Mazarin, the incarceration of Fouquet, Louis XIV's assumption of personal control over the state, and the reshaping of the image of France. The pressures on the courtiers, whose social status was in flux, were significant. Descartes's radical new theories of the mind and body were driving fundamental changes in perceptions of self, medicine, and philosophy. Emergent scientific thinking was simultaneously merging with and diverging from magic, mysticism, and theology. The decade saw military battles and victories along with a general prosperity following the epidemics and high mortality rates of the preceding decades.[114] All these factors combined to make the 1660s a transitional decade.

By the end of the 1660s, the animated statue had become a political symbol in the making. Given the common perception that animated statues were associated with the demonic, they had to be redefined in the public consciousness in order for them to function as clear images of the king's power. In some works of the decade, the animated statue begins to become that political symbol. *Les Amants magnifiques* represents a pivotal work in which animated statues join the parade of the king's spectacles as "the most *galant* and best understood," even Molière and Lully wove dissident elements into the statues' *intermède*. In the 1670s, as the king became more invested in statues as a political medium, the animated statue became more strongly identified with the king.[115] Yet even then, the animated statue would inherently retain some of the mystery and ambiguity that allowed it to permeate so many facets of French culture.

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[114] Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, *The French peasantry, 1450-1660* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 278.

[115] Carric, *Versailles: Garden of Statues*, 10.

CHAPTER 3

The Magical Monuments of War in French Spectacle, 1672-74

From 1661 to 1667, statues occupied a relatively minor role in both the king's consciousness and his propaganda network, as I discussed in Chapter One. During this period the king had minimal personal investment in his collections of statues; as Peter Burke observes, to Louis "these forms of magnificence were simply part of his official personality."[116] Artistically, the king devoted more of his attention to the *ballets de cour*, which allowed him a more direct role in shaping the presentation of his image. Perhaps Louis's desire to assert his physical presence and persona (as exemplified by his performances on stage) competed with his interest in propagating statuary extensions of himself, especially given that his inattention to statues extended through the 1650s and 1660s for his entire dancing career at court. Dance was not the only art form competing for the king's investment, however. During the 1660s, sculpture in general (with exceptions including the Grotto of Versailles) failed to engage him to the level of other visual art form including tapestries, medals, and paintings.

The marginalization of statues also followed from the king's advisors and their views regarding the relative usefulness of different media for propagating the king's image. In a letter to Jean-Baptiste Colbert in 1662, Jean Chapelain discussed the superiority of poetry over monuments, paintings, and statues for the purpose of preserving Louis XIV's memory for posterity. In speaking of time and memory, he states,

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[116] *The Fabrication of Louis XIV* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1992), 69.

"all tombs, all portraits, all the most renowned statues have run aground on its shores …

only poetic works, beginning with Homer—the excellent ones at least—have passed

down to us."[117] In 1663, Colbert and Chapelain became founding members of the Petite

Académie, a select group of artists that oversaw and cultivated the dissemination of

Louis's image. The following year, the king named Colbert the *surintendant des*

bâtiments et manufactures, and shortly thereafter Colbert laid out a plan to erect a series

of monuments to glorify the king.[118] Colbert's plan focused on abstracted images of

glory—triumphal arches, obelisks, pyramids, and tombs— while minimizing the role of

statues. The emphasis on abstracted monuments reflected in part the king's lack of

achievements early in his reign, which rendered his glory itself a more abstract concept.

The king's first military campaigns—the War of Devolution in 1667–1668, and

the Dutch War of 1672-8—initiated important changes to the Petite Académie's

fabrication of the king's image. These changes included the increasing importance of

statuary as a representation of Louis XIV's power. The war provided real-world military

achievements that required more realistic media, including statues, to commemorate

them. After the crossing of the Rhine in June, 1672, Louis's propaganda frequently

referenced his superiority to the great leaders of antiquity, particularly Augustus Caesar.

Given their inherent association with antiquity, statues were well-suited for use in

spectacles and monumental displays that invited comparisons between Louis XIV and the

heroes and rulers of old. In addition, statues provided the Petite Académie a powerful

way to represent embodied images of monarchical power. This facet of statues became

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[117] Quoted in Downing Thomas, *Aesthetics of Opera in the Ancien Régime, 1647-1785* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 66-7.

[118] Charles Perrault, *Memoirs of My Life*, ed., trans. by Jeanne Morgan Zarucchi (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1989), 41.

especially significant during the war years, when Louis made his body central to the image of his bravery by placing himself in harm's way.

The new status of royal statues, which reached an initial peak during the first two years of the Dutch War, explains the growing presence of magical statues in courtly spectacle. These theatrical statues functioned as propagandistic emblems that referenced royal monuments, either in general or in some cases in particular, and their magical properties operated within the mode of the *merveilleux*. Between 1673 and 1674, magical statues were incorporated into five dramatic works composed for courtly entertainment: *Cadmus et Hermione*, the *Intermèdes pour un comédie* (1672, never performed), *Alceste*, the *Grande fête de Versailles* of 1674, and the ceremony of the king's statue in the Place des Victoires. La Fontaine's *Daphne*, written for the Opéra but rejected by Lully, also featured animated statues prominently in its prologue. By comparison, magical statues appeared in court theater only once in the 1640s and once in the 1650s. One finds an increase in the 1660s to four such appearances, then that number spikes to five in two years between 1672 and 1674. Moreover, in court theater of the 1660s, magical statues were almost always associated with the king's Other, e.g. demons or an evil sorceress. Only one work, *Les Amants magnifiques*, complicated this pattern, as discussed in Chapter 2.

The pattern and significance of the expanded role of magical statues in wartime spectacles has been overlooked until now. In this chapter, I will trace the appearances of magical statues in French spectacle of the 1670s, with particular focus on the years 1672-1674. Through these works, the growing political value of magical statues served as the impetus for the development of new and more elaborate musical settings. Though music

was never realized for the *Intermèdes pour un comédie* and *Daphne*, the *livrets* show clearly that the spectacles involving magical statues were conceived for expanded musical treatments. In all five of the works composed for the court, the theme of military glory links the visual and musical presentation of statues. This theme is also germane to *Daphne*, though as a target for subversive treatment. In the anti-war prologue, La Fontaine controverts the connection between statues and war by using living statues to demonstrate the power of love. Music plays an important role in establishing the symbolic meaning of the statues, because in each of these works (with the exception of *Daphne*) the statues remain mute. In essence, the militaristic or ceremonial music becomes their voice and connects their magical power to the king.

In this chapter, I argue that the increased presence of magical statues in French spectacle reflects a shift toward a closer relationship between the sculptural and musical arts during the 1670s. The Petite Académie oversaw both court spectacles and the construction of statues, and its members were well situated to build connections between the two media. Scholars have suggested that intentional correspondences existed between certain characters in *tragédies en musique* and contemporary sculptures of those same characters; for example, Jean-Pierre Néraudau and Philippe Beaussant suggest a link between the character of Hercules in *Alceste* and the representation of the king as Hercules in sculptural relief on the arch at the Porte Saint-Martin.[119] I suggest that the connections between sculpture and opera worked in the opposite direction as well, and that one finds, especially during the first several years of the war, a concerted effort to

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[119] Jean-Pierre Néraudau, "Du Christ à Apollon: les Chemins d'une mythologie de la cour," in *La Tragédie lyrique*, ed. Patrick F. Van Dieren and Alain Durel (Paris: Cicero Éditeurs, 1991), 19; Philippe Beaussant, *Lully, ou le Musicien du Soleil* (Paris: Gallimard, 1992), 527.

incorporate monumental sculpture into court spectacle. This relationship resembles that

which Manuel Couvreur has proposed between the *tragédie en musique* and medals and

emblems during the same period. Medals and emblems typically featured double

representations of the king, with a realistic portrait on one side and an allegorical image

on the other. According to Couvreur, the *tragédie en musique* was designed to present a

parallel double representation of the king by portraying the king more overtly in the

prologues and in a more diffused manner in the body of the opera.[120] Similarly, the

statues and monuments on stage functioned primarily to emphasize the spectacle's

parallel purpose as a theatrical monument to the crown.

It may be no coincidence that magical statues began to appear more frequently in

court spectacle concurrently with a profound shift in the king's image. Scholars including

Louis Marin and Jean-Marie Apostolidès have argued that the 1670s marked a

petrification of the king's image and narrative as presented in art, literature, and court

spectacle.[121] Apostolidès claims that the birth of French opera and the Grande Fête of

1674 signal the end of the period in which the king actively shaped the representations of

his power. Louis's withdrawal from the stage and the strengthening of the idea of his

absolutist power following the early victories of the Dutch War contributed to a change

from, in Apostolidès's terms, the king as *roi-machiniste* to *roi-machine*. By the mid-

1670s, according to this view, Louis XIV had transitioned to functioning more as a

symbol of monarchical power than a creator and enforcer of that power. The increased

status of statuary during this period seems to follow logically from this shift, and to

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[120] Manuel Couvreur, *Jean-Baptiste Lully, Musique et Dramaturgie au Service du Prince* (Brussels: Marc Volker, 1992), 332-33.

[121] Louis Marin, *Le Portrait du Roi* (Paris: Minuit, 1981); Jean-Marie Apostolidès, *Le roi-machine: spectacle et politique au temps de Louis XIV* (Paris: Minuit, 1981).

represent a literal manifestation of it. Immobile statues mirrored the static nature of the

king's new symbolic role, and acted as empty substitutes for his physical presence. Their

magical properties in court spectacles represented the application of the king's divine

power to otherwise inert or ambiguous figures of stone. Arguably, no type of magical

statue embodied the *roi-machine* more perfectly than the animated statue, the symbol

brought to life.

Scholars including Downing Thomas and Geoffrey Burgess have challenged

Apostolidès's claim that the *tragédie en musique* encapsulated and perpetuated an

essentially frozen image of the king.[122] As Thomas argues, the function of French opera

was not to fix a dead image by "endlessly troping on mythological fictions"; rather, opera

"simultaneously elaborated, complicated, and problematized the representation of the

king."[123] I concur that the *tragédie en musique* was a more complex and multi-faceted

genre than Apostolidès allows, and argue that the increased presence of magical statues in

court spectacle reflected the complex and fluctuating relationship between two of the

media that came together in opera: monuments and music. Each of these art forms served

different functions and offered different means of representing the king's power.

3.1   The Grande fête of Versailles, 1674

No event more dramatically demonstrates the turn toward statues as a politically

vital tool for the militaristic king than the *grande fête* at Versailles in 1674. Statuary

figured prominently in the spectacles, which showed off the extravagances of the king's

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[122] Geoffrey Burgess, "Ritual in the *Tragédie en musique*: From Lully's *Cadmus et Hermione* (1673) to Rameau's *Zoroastre* (1749)" (PhD Diss, Cornell University, 1998), xxix-xxx; Thomas, *Opera in the Ancien Régime*, 97-9.

[123] Thomas, *Opera in the Ancien Régime*, 98.

edifices and gardens. The military annexation of Franche-Comté provided the official cause for the celebrations.[124] Over the course of the fête's six days and nights, one discerns an increasing prominence given to spectacles centered on monuments. On the first day, the performance of *Alceste* served as the main event. The plot of the opera turns on a scene in which Alceste volunteers her life to save her beloved Admetus, and her decision is communicated to the audience through a divinely erected statue of her; I will discuss *Alceste* in greater detail below. On the second and third days, the Grotto of Versailles, which represented the pinnacle of Louis's statuary in the 1660s, provided a focal point. For the second night, guests were treated to a pastoral performance of *La Grotte de Versailles* in the Trianon gardens, and for the third day's main entertainment, a performance of Molière's *Le Malade imaginaire* took place on a stage constructed in front of the actual Grotto of Versailles.

On the fourth day, the festivities included an initial feast followed by a performance of *Les Fêtes de l'Amour et de Bacchus*. After the subsequent fireworks display, the guests ended the night in the *cour de marbre* with a presentation that combined culinary delights and monumental grandeur. Jean Le Pautre, the prolific artist whose engravings disseminated Louis XIV's style throughout Europe, selected this display for engraving (fig. 3.1), and his rendering shows the octagonal table surrounding a towering Tuscan column. Around the table stands stacks of food and flowers (orange blossom, tuberoses, and carnations), visually echoing the vertical rise of the column at the center of the court. The column itself gave off the light of six hundred candles and

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[124] Ian Thompson suggests that the king also wanted to use the festivities to impress his mistress, Madame de Montespan; see *The Sun King's Garden: Louis XIV, André Le Nôtre and the Creation of the Gardens at Versailles* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2006), 165-7.

illuminated the court; in the words of André Félibien, the king's historian, the fireworks

from the air had rearranged themselves in the courtyard. The king and honored guests

dined around this column until around two o'clock, while violins and oboes "filled the

place with a pleasant harmony."[125]
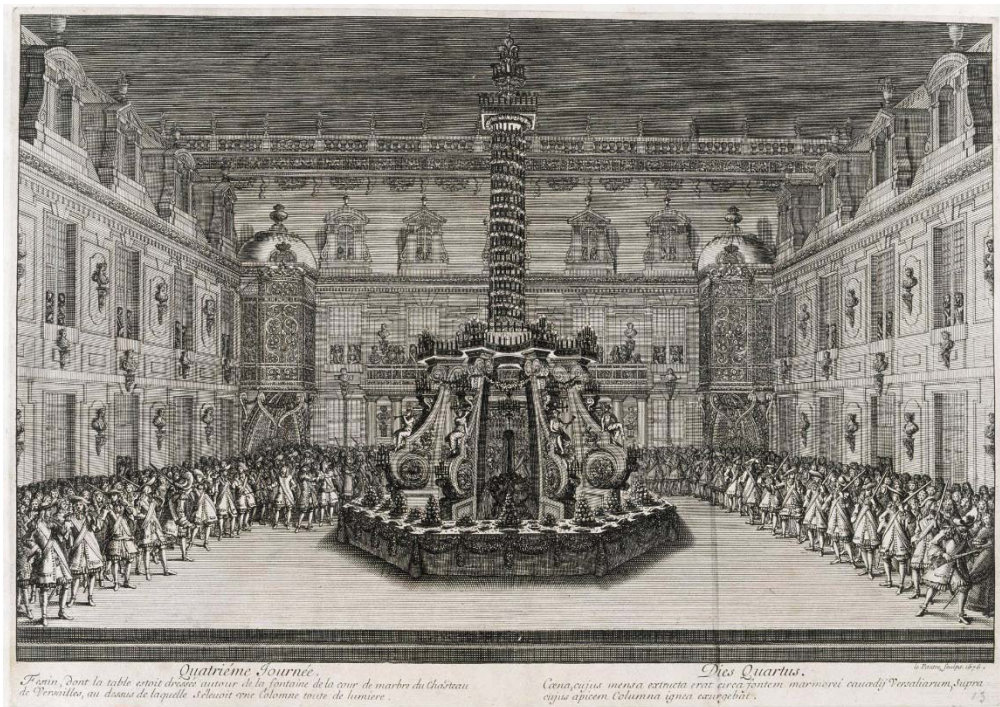
Fig. 3.1   Feast in the Cour de Marbre on 28 July 1674. Engraving by Jean Le
Pautre, in André Félibien, *Les Divertissemens de Versailles, donnez par le
Roi au retour de la conquest de la Franch-Comté, en année 1674* (Paris:
l'Imprimerie royale, 1676).

The fifth day featured an even greater monumental presentation, paired with a

fiery display over the Grand Canal that, according to Félibien, used thousands of

fireworks (fig. 3.2). Cannon shot and the thunder of fire-bombs added to the aural

cacophony of the experience, and in the middle of the canal, a writhing theatrical dragon,

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[125] André Félibien, *Les Divertissemens de Versailles donnez par le Roi a toute sa cour au retour de la
conqueste de la Franche-Comté en l'année M.DC.L.XXIV* (Paris: L'Imprimerie Royale, 1674), 55.

big enough to require seven boats to carry it across the water, shot fire from its mouth and nostrils. On the bank of the canal, rising above the din, stood a fantastic set of monuments. In the center, a tall obelisk crowned by a sun loomed over a base of insignia and statues. Of these statues, the largest were two angels on either side, traditional bearers of the Bourbon arms, who each carried trumpets in both hands to symbolize the proclamation of the king's glory. On either side of the obelisk stood two stone pyramids. The statues of angels added Christian imagery to these monuments of the ancient world. As the fireworks exploded in the night sky, the light danced on the surfaces, giving the illusion of movement and life.

Fig. 3.2   Fireworks on the Grand Canal on 18 August 1674. Le Pautre, in André Félibien, *Les Divertissemens de Versailles*.

For the sixth and final day, the king and his chief designers Charles Le Brun and Carlo Vigarani had placed themselves in the difficult position of creating a spectacle to exceed the riches of what had preceded it. As Félibien wrote, "After the magnificence of

the previous festivities, it would seem that we ought not to expect anything

extraordinary."[126] The *grande fête* had already delivered "the pleasures that one can

receive from the most beautiful pieces of Theatre, the most charming music, the most

sumptuous feasts, and the most terrible fireworks," but the king wanted to see "beauties

that had never before been seen."[127] For the centerpiece of the evening, Louis turned to a

remarkable multi-media exhibition of statues and pavilions, the likes of which far

exceeded anything that had graced the palace gardens before. At the end of the night, the

royal entourage boarded decorated gondolas and slipped out into the still water of the

Canal. Around the banks, 650 illuminated statues lit up the darkness, along with stone

sculptures of fish lit with different colors. Matching the magical effect of the lighting,

music carried across the water from a floating barge of musicians and enhanced the

otherworldly quality of the scene. As André Félibien recounts,

> The King followed by all his Court embarked on the great expanse of water
> where, in the deep of night, one heard the violins that followed the Vessel of
> His Majesty. The sound of these instruments seemed to give life to all the
> statues whose dim lighting also lent a certain grace to the symphonie, which it
> would in no way have had in total darkness. . . . These great expanses of
> water, lit only here and there by so many luminous statues, resembled long
> galleries and large salons enriched & adorned with Architecture & statues of
> an artifice & beauty unknown until now. . ,[128]

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[126] Ibid., 85; "Aprés les magnificences des Fêtes precedents, il sembloit qu'on ne devoit plus rien attendre d'extraordinaire."

[127] Ibid., 86; "L'on avoit ressenti dans les autres Divertissemens les plaisirs que peuvent donner les plus belles pieces de Theatre, les musiques les plus charmantes, les festins les plus sompteux, & les feux d'artifice les plus terribles, & tout ensemble les plus agreables qui ayent jamais esté; Mais le Roy voulant faire voir des beautez que l'on n'avoit point encore veües. . ."

[128] Ibid., 109-11; ". . .le Roy suivi de toute sa Cour se promena sur cette grande piece d'eau, ou dans le profound silence de la nuit l'on entendoit les violons qui suivoient le Vaisseau de sa Majesté. Le son de ces Instrumens sembloit donner de la vie à toutes les Figures, dont la lumiere moderée donnoit aussi à la symphonie un certain agrément qu'elle n'auroit point eu dans une entire obscurité. . . L'on n'appercevoit alors que de l'eau renfermée par l'obscurité de la nuit, & ces grandes pieces d'eau éclairées seulement de part & d'autre par tant de Figures lumineuses, ressembloient à de longues

This soundscape and statuary array combined to create the spectacle of a supernatural kingdom-within-a-kingdom, one with dominion over the gods and creatures of the waters. It achieved a lasting impression in the imaginations of both those present and of the readership of Félibien's widely circulated account; in 1697, Charles Perrault singled out the spectacle, with its "infinity of grand statues of different colors," as the most striking memory of the 1674 *grande fête*.[129]

Unfortunately, no description of the music that accompanied the nocturnal statues on the Canal survives. The musicians undoubtedly were the king's *Vingt-quatre violons*, and though Lully may have been on the barge directing them, most likely the ensemble performed autonomously.[130] What repertoire they performed remains lost to history. Félibien describes the *symphonie* as having "a certain grace," bestowed in part by the venue, and this is as close as we come to any notion of the musical soundscape. Yet it is clear that music played an integral part in the spectacle. As magical statues became increasingly important ingredients of French spectacles over the next two decades, they assumed an increasing musical importance as well.

galleries & à de grands salons enrichis & parez d'une Architecture & de Statues d'une artifice & d'une beauté jusqu'à lors inconnue. . .."

[129] Perrault, *Parallèle des Anciens et des Modernes en ce qui Regarde les Arts et les Sciences*, v. 4 (Paris: Jean-Baptiste Coignard, 1693), 288.

[130] Lully would direct the ensemble for important occasions, and this event certainly qualified as important. However, there is no mention of Lully as directing in any of the accounts of the event, and the ensemble performed autonomously most of the time, so it seems probable that Lully did not lead the musicians. See John Spitzer, Neal Zaslaw, *The Birth of the Orchestra: History of an Institution, 1650-1815* Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 74.
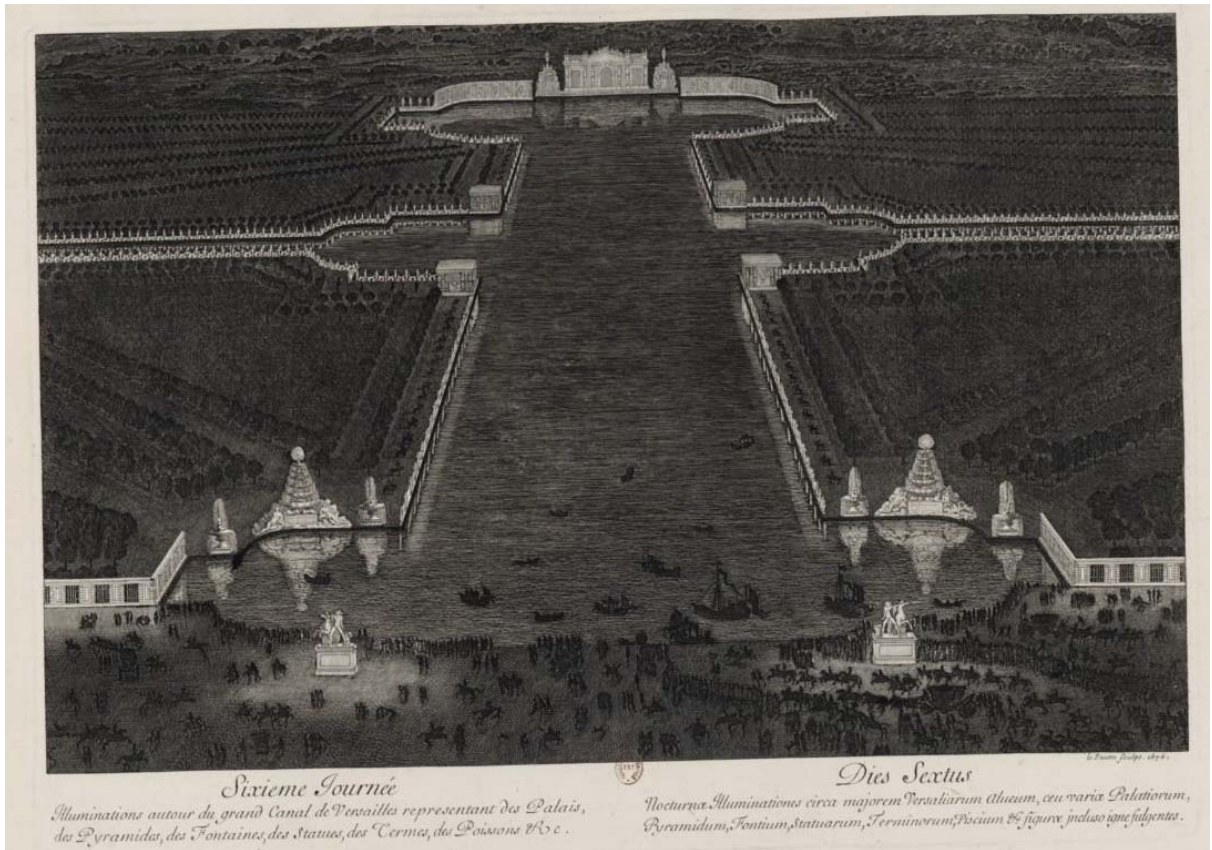
Fig. 3.3   Illumination of statues and monuments on the Grand Canal on 31 August 1674.
Le Pautre, in André Félibien, *Les Divertissemens de Versailles*.
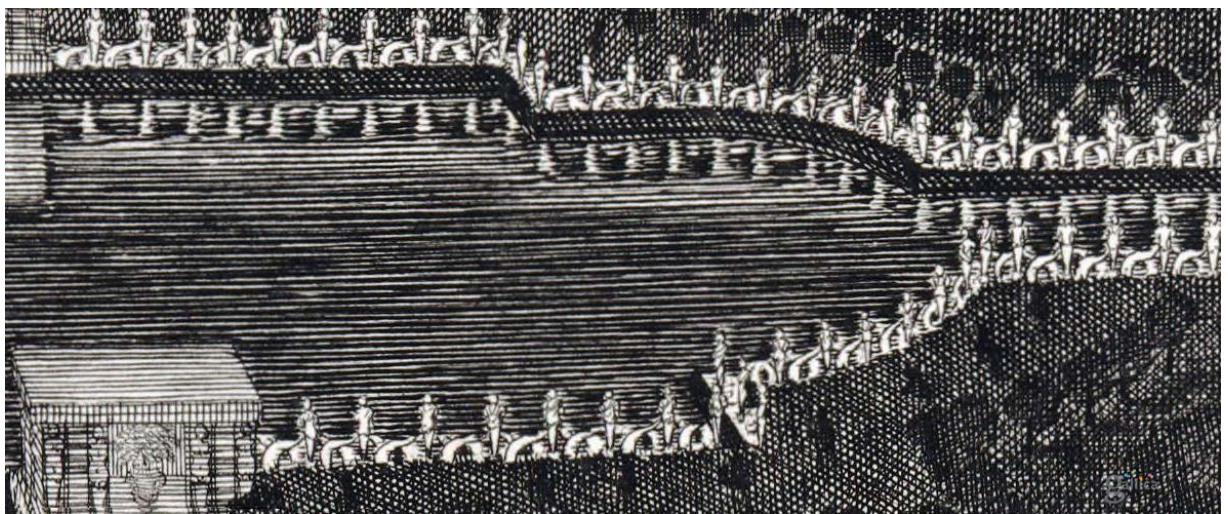
Fig. 3.3a Detail of statues lining the canal

3.2   Cadmus et Hermione

Since the music performed on the Canal does not survive, there is no way to compare it to other music associated with statues in contemporary works such as *Cadmus et Hermione*. Yet other connections between the statues of the fête and of the stage are notable. Carlo Vigarani designed the sets and machinery for *Cadmus*, and the set design for act II (fig. 3.4), with rows of statues on each side of the stage and a grand palatial building at the center, bears some resemblance to his design for the fête on the canal. In addition, the statues' dance featured music scored for the same forces that performed on the barge, an orchestra of strings in five parts. These circumstantial similarities may be coincidences of convention, but regardless of whether the music for the statues on the Canal differed substantially from that of the divertissement in *Cadmus*, both examples demonstrate the growing use of magical statues for wartime royal propaganda.
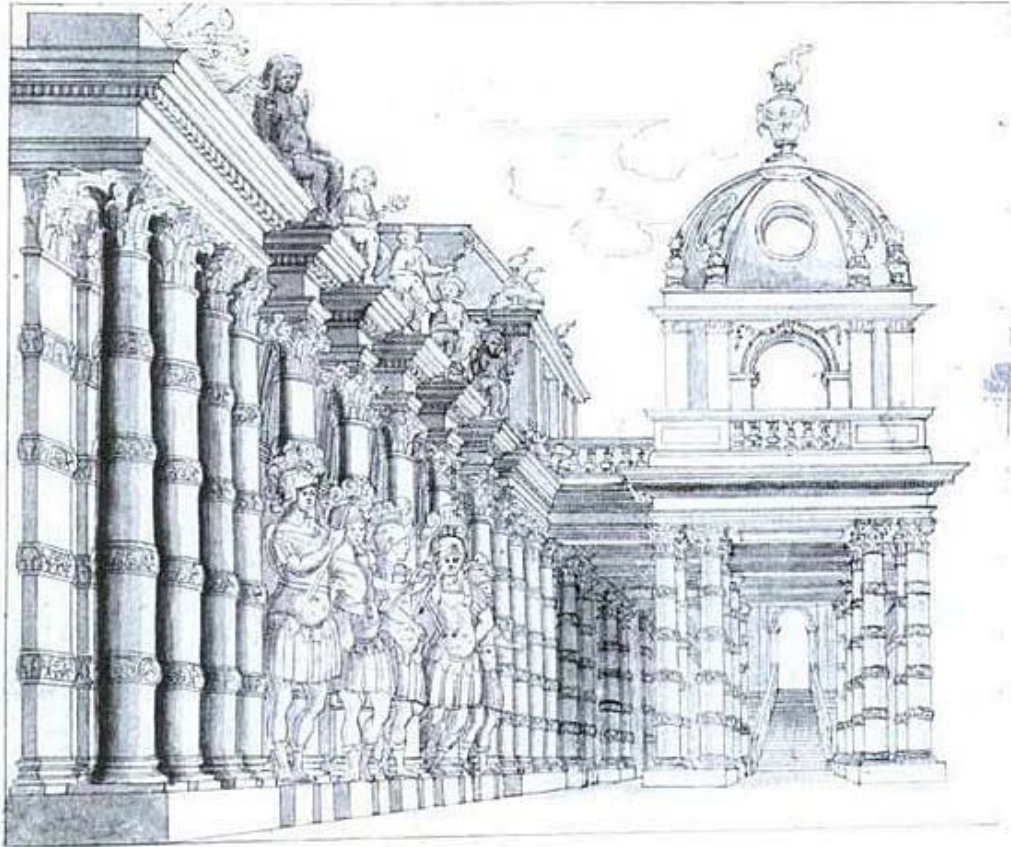
Fig. 3.4   Atelier of Carlo Vigarani, décor for *Cadmus et Hermione*, Act II.

Viewing the animated statues in *Cadmus* as part of an interconnected network of monumental imagery offers a new way to understand and contextualize them. Scholars have tended to interpret the statues' divertissement in three different ways, depending largely on each scholar's understanding of the opera's design. Some scholars paint the divertissement as arbitrary and ornamental, designed only to please the audience and provide tonal variety in the work. Others have argued that the divertissement, integral to the drama, balances other events in the plot. Finally, many interpreters have viewed the divertissement as a pastiche of elements from earlier works that reflects some continuity between the *tragédie en musique* and the genres that preceded it. These interpretations are not mutually exclusive, and scholars often propose more than one of them as possibilities.

Frequently, scholars have agreed on the arbitrary nature of the divertissement. For example, Robert Isherwood, drawing no distinction between the different *divertissements* Quinault includes in *Cadmus*, explains the appearance of the animated statues as indicative of Quinault's use of every opportunity to insert spectacular scenes in the opera.[131] Caroline Wood holds a similar view, and deems the statues' dances "gratuitous."[132] Rebecca Harris-Warrick compares the entry to the *balli* in Venetian operas, noting that like them the entry "arrives without much preparation, introduces the accessory personnel, and makes the public smile with character dances."[133] Buford Norman interprets the entry as somewhat arbitrary as well, though he interprets this arbitrariness as having a dramatic function. He calls attention to the fact that Hermione herself does not find the entry interesting and deems it unnecessary.[134] Norman also suggests that the entry fits in with Quinault's plan for introducing spectacle over the course of the opera. In the first two acts, Quinault limits the amount of spectacle in order to save the more impressive scenes and uses of machinery for later in the opera. The statues' dance requires little machinery and so, according to Norman, it was a natural fit for an early act.

Manuel Couvreur argues that the statues' divertissement has a distinct function within the opera's dramatic arc. In his view, it anticipates the fifth scene of Act IV in

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[131] Robert Isherwood, *Music in the Service of the King: France in the Seventeenth Century* (Ithaca, London: Cornell University Press, 1973), 189.

[132] Caroline Wood, *Music and Drama in the* Tragédie en musique*, 1673-1715: Jean-Baptiste Lully and his Successors* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1996), 251.

[133] Rebecca Harris-Warrick, "La Danse dans *Cadmus et Hermione*," in *Cadmus et Hermione (1673)*, ed. Jean Duron (Wavre: Mardaga, 2008), 231.

[134] Buford Norman, *Touched by the Graces: The Libretti of Philippe Quinault in the Context of French Classicism* (Birmingham, AL: Summa Publications, 2001), 86.

which Athena turns Giants into statues.[135] The pairing of these two divertissements, which constitute mirror images of one another, helps to create the classical balance that Quinault sought to build into the work as a whole. Couvreur locates many of these pairings and overlapping balanced structures in the opera. Laura Naudiex holds a similar view, and argues that in order to understand the elements in *Cadmus*, "one in effect must always look beyond the simple 'utility' narrative." She notes that the pantomime of the warriors rising out of the earth has more of a dramatic function than the dance of the statues. On a more poetic level, however, Naudiex argues that these two spectacles implicitly relate. The petrification of Cadmus's enemies "rhymes" with the peaceful petrified statues to show that "Love gives life or death to all things in this world."[136]

Other scholars view the appearance of the dancing statues as a holdover from previous works. James Anthony characterizes the entry as a "borrowing" from *Ercole amante*, but notes Quinault's efforts to reconceive it and *divertissements* in general as possible dramatic elements.[137] Jêrome de La Gorce locates the musical model for the statues' dance in *Les Amants magnifiques*. He suggests that dotted values and small groups of sixteenth notes of the earlier dance was intended to evoke the rigid attitudes of the statues, and that Lully incorporated this same musical material (and similar

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135 Couvreur, *Jean-Baptiste Lully*, 340.

136 Laura Naudiex, "Cadmus et Hermione: œuvre modèle ou experience concluante?" in *Cadmus et Hermione (1673)*, ed. Jean Duron (Wavre: Mardaga, 2008). 196; "Il faut en effect toujours chercher plus loin que la simple "utilité" narrative, événementielle: la pantomime des combattants nés de la terre est certes plus immédiatement fonctionnelle que celle des statues, mais implicitement elles se répondent, montrant comment l'Amour donne vie ou mort à toute chose en ce monde, et la pétrification des ennemis de Cadmus rime avec celle, pacifique, des statues."

137 James R. Anthony, *French Baroque Music: From Beaujoyeulx to Rameau* (Portland, OR: Amadeus Press, 1997), 98.

choreography) in *Cadmus*.[138] Naudiex also suggests that the dance in *Cadmus* constitutes

a borrowing from *Ercole amante* and *Les Amants magnifiques*.[139]

While all of these interpretations contain elements of truth, evidence suggests that

the appearance of magical statues in *Cadmus* also corresponded to a wave of similar

appearances in various media during the early years of the Dutch War. These appearances

were not simply arbitrary, nor tied exclusively to internal events in the work, nor merely

artifacts from earlier entertainments. Rather, they represent the incorporation of the

imagery of Louis XIV's power, new at the time, into court spectacle. Regarding the

statues in *Cadmus*, this view is supported by the divertissement itself. Notably, several

elements distinguish the statues' dance as different from its predecessors in *Ercole*

amante and *Les Amants magnifiques*. As Georgia Cowart has observed, Quinault and

Lully created the early *tragédie en musique* in part by taking materials from the court

ballets and grafting new elements of royal propaganda on to them.[140] We see this process

at work in the statues' dance, in a manner that has gone unacknowledged.

The militaristic connotations of the animated statues in *Cadmus* begin with

Vigarani's design for the set, which includes statues of warriors dressed to evoke

antiquity (fig. 3.4). Whether these stage statues shed any light on the costuming of the

dancing statues, they would have surrounded the divertissement with the visual imagery

of monuments to military power. In addition, the livret indicates that the dancing statues

are golden. This is a clear reference to the king, who ordered golden statues to decorate

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[138] Jérôme de La Gorce, *Jean-Baptiste Lully* (Paris: Fayard, 1999), 591.

[139] Naudiex, "Cadmus et Hermione," 193.

[140] Georgia Cowart, *The Triumph of Pleasure: Louis XIV and the Politics of Spectacle* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 125.

the grounds of Versailles for the *grande fête* of the following year. The setting, a grand

palace, further distinguishes these statues from those in *Ercole amante* and *Les Amants*

magnifiques. In each of the earlier works, the animation of the statues took place in a

garden setting. In *Cadmus*, the animation occurs closer to the symbolic seat of power.

This change of setting mirrors the earlier alteration that Quinault and Lully made for *Les*

Fêtes de l'Amour et de Bacchus. For the prologue of that work, they used a scene from *Le*

Bourgeois gentilhomme and changed its setting from a public theater to a "superb

palace."[141]

Musically, the divertissement (Ex. 3.1) constitutes a significant sonic expansion

compared to the statues' music in *Ercole amante* and *Les Amants magnifiques*, both in

terms of duration and musical rhetoric. In *Les Amants magnifiques*, the statues dance to a

single air in two parts, the first part in common meter and the second in 6/4 meter. In

Cadmus, the music for the statues is essentially doubled, with one entire air in duple

meter and a second air in 6/4. The second air is performed at least twice, and possibly

three times.[142] For one of the performances of the second air, the *livret* designates that

L'Amour should animate a second set of statues, ten golden flying Cupids that throw

flowers around Hermione while the warrior statues step back onto their pedestals. The

divertissement is further elaborated with the alternation of the statues' airs with the song

of L'Amour. In two couplets in triple meter, L'Amour explains that he animates the

statues to please Hermione and to reassure her that her beloved Cadmus, who has

departed to fight the dragon and free her from the giant, will return.

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[141] Ibid., 122.

[142] Harris-Warrick, "La Danse dans *Cadmus et Hermione*," 242.

The first statues' air projects a sense of grandeur, beginning with the tempo *grave*. The character of this opening differs from the "Symphonie des Plaisirs" that introduces the statues' *intermède* in *Les Amants magnifiques*, which uses the rhythm of the sarabande throughout to evoke sensual pleasure. In the first air of *Cadmus*, the dotted rhythms, duple meter, and phrasing communicate a sense of gendered power; as Harris-Warrick notes, the air is consistent with some of Lully's dances of a masculine character.[143] The two irregular phrases (5 + 6 measures) of the air's first half are followed by a second half with increased rhythmic motion and chromatic bass line movement. One can imagine that this musical progression matched choreography in which the statues became increasingly more mobile. The opening of the air begins with a melodic descent of an octave (A to A) over the first four measures, likely reflecting the statues' descent from their pedestals. In the first two measures, the melody outlines a descending triad. This gesture may carry additional meaning; as Wood has observed in regards to Lully's vocal music, such gestures often appear in connection to monarchical or divine power.[144]

The statues' divertissement differs from its predecessors in another important respect: there is no ambiguity about the purpose of the dance or the power behind the animation. In *Ercole amante*, the statues of act III are animated by demons or spirits (the sources differ) that had been trapped in an enchanted chair. At the end of the act, they escape and take possession of (or enter into) the statues to perform the dance. The livret does not explain the presence of the demons, and does not link the dance to any particular character or event. The dance functions like a *ballo*, providing entertainment that is

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[143] Ibid., 241.

[144] Wood, *Music and Drama in the* Tragédie en musique, 21.

unconnected to the rest of the work. In *Les Amants magnifiques*, as I have discussed in Chapter 2, the power behind the animated statues is even more ambiguous. Once again, the statues' appearance occurs without explanation.

In *Cadmus*, Quinault works to incorporate the divertissement into the opera by generating a dramatic context. Like the statues' dances in *Ercole amante* and *Les Amants magnifiques*, the divertissement ultimately does not move the plot forward in any meaningful way; however, both its purpose (however unnecessary) and the force behind it are clear. L'Amour is the animating figure, and the divertissement is structured around his presence. Lully musically emphasizes the relationship between L'Amour's song and the statues' dances through the shared key of D minor and the air's triple meter, which relates it to the 6/4 meter of the second dance. Both dances and L'Amour's song also feature chromatic bass lines; notably, the first dance and the song have similar opening bass lines. Both begin with octave upward leaps up on d followed by a descent to a tonicization of IV on F#.

Arguably, the divertissement's overt association with L'Amour excludes any associations with military glory. Musically, the 6/4 pastoral style of the second dance contains little hint of a masculine or martial connotation, and in terms of the choreography, the dance of the cupids throwing flowers further underlines the pastoral content of the divertissement. At the same time, the pompous music of the first dance, combined with the statues' golden appearance and Vigarani's set design, join militaristic elements to what would otherwise be a straight-forward pastoral divertissement. Quinault's approach to monarchical symbolism allowed for this kind of mixture; as Manuel Couvreur has argued, Quinault suffused his livrets with elements, both subtle and

overt, that could be identified with the king.[145] In addition, as Georgia Cowart has shown,

royal propaganda promoted the king's dual identities as a warrior and a lover, though the

first was always privileged.[146] Similarly, Geoffrey Burgess defines the complex duality as

central to the genre of the *tragédie en musique*, which "constructed Gloire as being

grafted onto, and dependent upon, Amour, but in its dependence on Amour, masculine

Gloire also incorporated and consumed feminine Amour."[147] Unlike the prologue to

Cadmus, which Quinault identifies as a clear allegory that needs no explanation, the

opera contains a mixture of the galant and the heroic throughout that challenges

simplistic interpretation.

3.3   Intermèdes pour un Comédie

Approximately a year before the premiere of *Cadmus*, an anonymous author

composed a set of theatrical *intermèdes* intended to entertain the king and his entourage

at the Dutch front. The *Intermèdes pour une Comédie,* the name given when Claude

Barbin published it in 1673, dates to the early days of the Dutch War. As explained in the

Avant-Propos, the *Intermèdes* were composed when the king arrived in Holland, though

they never received a performance. As such, they formed one of the first theatrical

entertainments composed for the wartime court. The fourth and final intermède celebrates

a magical statue of the king.

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[145] Couvreur, *Jean-Baptiste Lully*, 325.

[146] The image of the king as the embodiment of the conflicting ideals of love and glory goes back to the *Ballet de la nuit* (1653). See Cowart, *The Triumph of Pleasure*, 39.

[147] "Ritual in the *Tragédie en musique* from Lully's *Cadmus et Hermione* (1673) to Rameau's *Zoroastre* (1749)" (PhD diss, Cornell University, 1998), 79.

Each of the intermèdes contains explicit political imagery, and they are designed for insertion between acts of any given work in order to increase the political content of the production. During the latter half of the seventeenth century, the practice of adding political interludes to theatrical productions became more common.[148] The collection consists of a prologue, four intermèdes, and an epilogue. Like the *grande fête* of 1674,

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[148] Luke Arnason, "L'Intermédialité au Grand Siècle (?) ou la pratique des intermèdes sous le règne de Louis XIV," *Synergies Canada* 4 (2012), 7.

Les Statües

Les Statües sont animées par l'Amour et sautent de leurs pieds d'estaux pour danser. L'Amour descend et vient chanter au milieu des Statües animées.

Ex. 3.1   Jean-Baptiste Lully, *Cadmus et Hermione*, Act II Divertissement "Les Statuës"

Ex. 3.1 (continued)

Ex. 3.1 (continued)

Deuxième air pour les Statues animées, jetant des fleurs et volant autour d'Hermione.

Ex. 3.1 (continued)

Ex. 3.1 (continued)

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the set progresses from an emphasis on the pastoral towards a celebration and elevation of monuments to the king. The prologue begins in an enchanted flower garden where the Graces and allegorical Games and Laughter invite the king to relax from his labors. They put on entertainments, one of which includes the animation of marble statues into Nayades who then join in the dancing and singing with the other spirits. The Nayades quickly transform back into statues after their dance, but their appearance hints at the magical statues of the fourth intermède. The first intermède takes place on a set that depicts towns, forests, and the military campaign. Le Soleil, the Muses, Apollo, and group of poets praise the king and sing about how to best express his glory. The second intermède centers on sea imagery, and Neptune and his entourage praise the king. The third scene returns to the pastoral, with typical tropes and praise for the king from Pan and other characters.

The fourth and final intermède takes place, like the prologue for *Les Fêtes de l'Amour et de Bacchus*, in a "superbe Palais." Athena, Mercury, and singers representing the Arts and Sciences praise the king's establishment of a glorious golden age. Then follows a scene in the Temple of Memory, which appears at the back of the stage. Inside the Temple, the audience sees the statues of the greatest heroes in antiquity. A Chorus of the Arts sings "Engrave his name in the Temple of Memory /and render him immortal honors; /with less virtue, charms, and glory /Augustus acquired altars."[149] The Arts engrave Louis's name in the Temple, and call on the most skillful sculptors to work on his statue. They raise the statue on to a triumphal arch, which painters and architects adorn with bas reliefs that represent the king's actions and victories. A chorus of the Sciences

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[149] Gravons son nom au Temple de memoire, /Et rendons-luy des honneurs immortels, /Avec moins de vertu, de charmes, & de gloire, /Auguste s'acquit des Autels.

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accompanies this scene by repeating the lines sung by the Chorus of the Arts. As soon as the Statue of the king is raised, the statues of all the other heroes disappear, demonstrating that Louis's glory surpasses that of all previous kings and conquerors. The intermède ends with the voice of an oracle sounding from inside the temple. It predicts that the king, after one hundred battles, will inspire fear throughout the world and will preside over a lasting peace that only he can maintain.

The focus on monumental representation of Louis XIV continues in the epilogue, which ends the work with an emphasis on military might. Mars enters to the sound of trumpets and drums, accompanied by a troupe of warriors. This group is followed by a group of defeated Nations that is "eager to submit to the domination of such a worthy vanquisher."[150] The centerpiece of the epilogue is Jupiter's palace and a great trophy made of the arms of the vanquished, which is erected in the palace. Once the palace magically appears in all its glory, a celestial chorus sings "This is the masterpiece made by our hands, / It is our most perfect image; / We crown our work, / And so it brings our laws to the rest of humanity."[151] The chorus sings these lines again at the end of the epilogue.

3.4   Alceste

One finds striking resemblances between the fourth intermède and the famous scene of Alceste's statue in *Alceste*. The opera premiered in January of 1674, but the most

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[150] De Superbes Trophées d'Armes sont la decoration de ce dernier spectacle; Le Dieu *Mars* avance au son des Trompettes; & au bruit des Timbales, il est accompagné d'une troupe de combatans, & suivy des Nations qui s'empressent pour se ranger sous la domination d'un si digne Vainqueur.

[151] C'est le Chef-d'œuvre de nos mains, /C'est nostre plus parfaite Image; /Courronnons nostre Ouvrage, /Et qu'il porte nos Loix au reste des humains.

renowned production took place on the first night of the Grande Fête. In the final scene of

the second act, Apollo and the Arts enter to announce that the mortally wounded

Adméte's life can be spared if someone agrees to give their life in his place. Such a

sacrifice, Apollo declares, would constitute a perfect love, and in recognition the Arts will

erect a magnificent statue to preserve the memory of the sacrifice for "une immortelle

gloire." In the opening scene of the next act, we see the grand monument to Alceste and

immediately realize that she has given her life. In these two scenes Quinault combines

two key moments from Euripides's tragedy *Alcestis* with an important alteration of his

own invention. Apollo's discussion of death and memory recalls Apollo's dialogue with

Death in the opening of the original play, and the statue of Alceste derives from

Admetus's promise to replace his wife with her carved image. As she is dying,

Euripides's Admetus makes this promise:

> I shall have sculptors fashion with cunning hands a statue in your image, and
> on our bed it shall lie outstretched. This I will clasp and fold in my arms; I
> will call your name and imagine it is my darling wife I hold in my embrace,
> when it is not—cold, comfort, it is true, but yet I would be easing the burden
> on my heart." (Euripides, *Alcestis*, 348-54)[152]

For Admetus, the statue of Alceste exists only for the privacy of his chamber.

Euripides makes the private nature of Admetus's grief an important quality of his

character, as it is this private nature that inspires Hercules's admiration, and motivates

him to retrieve Alceste for Admetus from the underworld.

In the opera, Quinault transforms the private statue into a public monument. This

is no trivial change, and it generated controversy among the partisans of ancient writers

who protested Quinault's treatment of Euripides's play. Charles Perrault defended the

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[152] Euripides, *Medea and Other Plays*, trans. John Davie (London, New York: Penguin, 2003).

change in his *Critique d'Alceste*, finding the monument to be a beautiful and surprising

visual spectacle. He also argued that the monument communicates in an instant that

Alceste has sacrificed herself, thus avoiding a long and unnecessary explanation in

recitative.[153] The switch from private to public was important in another way, not

mentioned by Perrault, in that it allowed Quinault and Lully to employ conventional

tropes associated with monarchical monuments. Quinault's designation of the Arts as the

creators of the statue, a scenario that deviates from Euripides, echoes the fourth

intermède of the *Intermèdes pour un Comédie*. Apollo's discussion of memory and

immortal glory serves both as a variation on Euripides's play and as an invocation of the

rhetoric associated with monuments of the king, as seen in the *Intermèdes*. The music of

the scene, and of the entr'acte that follows it, further grafts the symbolism of Louis's

military glory on to what had been a quiet and desperate promise from one lover to

another. The scene begins with a march-like ritournelle in C major that sets a serious tone

for the scene. Apollo's recitative confirms this solemnity through a rhetorical style and

rhythmic regularity that Quinault employs for passages with heroic connotation.[154] For

the entr'acte, the March of the Combatants from the third scene of the act is performed

(ex. 3.2). More than any other element, music establishes the theme of military glory as a

context for the statue. Importantly, the martial entr'acte provides the sonic connection

between Apollo's speech and the appearance of the monument.

     The military symbolism of the statue surely was not lost on the audiences,

especially those in attendance at the first night of the Grande Fête. The scene would have

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[153] Charles Perrault, *Critique de l'Opéra, ou Examen de la Tragédie Intitulée Alceste, ou le Triomphe d'Alcide* (Paris: Claude Barbin, 1674), 95.

[154] Norman, *Touched by the Graces*, 113.

resonated most immediately with a ceremonial *divertissement* for a statue of Louis that

had been performed in the Place du Palais-Royal just one or two days earlier. As Robert

Isherwood describes it:

> A triumphal arch was erected in the Place du Palais-Royal and an equestrian
> figure of the king, being crowned by Victory, was constructed on a pedestal
> beside it. The figures of force, justice, prudence, and magnanimity adorned
> the four sides of the pedestal and an inscription read: *Pugnanti, Vincenti,
> Triumphzanti.* Military trophies were placed in the shrubbery surrounding the
> arch. At the sides of the arch, columns in the shape of a half-moon supported
> an artificial mountain. In this setting, a small-scale music drama was
> performed. Representing nations who volunteered to submit to Louis'
> authority, dancers entered in the company of Felicity, Abundance, and the
> Pleasures, and turned on fountains of wine. Victory delivered laudatory
> verses to the king, and choruses proclaimed his military accomplishments. A
> series of dances, concerts, and songs led to a spectacular fireworks display
> that concluded the celebration.[155]

The structure of the ceremony replicates much of the structure of the raising of the statue

in *Alceste*. A central figure (Victory) presides over the ceremony, while subordinate

symbolic characters collaborate on the production of the statue. The spectacle includes

characters (representing nations) who volunteered to sacrifice their self-rule in order to

submit to the new order; one finds a parallel here with Alceste's sacrifice. Perhaps most

importantly, the militaristic music and ceremonial pomp of the operatic scene underlines

the relationship between theatrical and public ceremonial ritual.

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[155] Isherwood, *Music in the Service of the King*, 287.

Ex. 3.2   Jean-Baptiste Lully, *Alceste*, Act III, March of the Combatants.

Philippe Beaussant finds a different parallel between these scenes and public funeral ceremonies. He notes similarities to a particular ceremonial funeral given on the fifth of May, 1672, for Pierre Séguier, Chancellor of France, who passed away in January of that year.[156] The ceremony was an extremely ornate affair that featured a mausoleum designed by Le Brun, a funeral oration by Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet, and a performance of Lully's *Miserere*. On the day of the ceremony, wrote Madame de Sévigné in a letter to Madame de Grignan, the four liberal arts were represented by the many painters,

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[156] Beaussant, *Lully: ou le musician du soleil*, 526-27, 538-40.

sculptors, musicians, and orators in attendance.[157] According to Beaussant, many of the elements of the funeral prefigure *Alceste*. The celebration of the arts mirrors the presence of the Arts as the builders of the statue in the opera; the mausoleum with its numerous stone figures corresponds to the statue itself; and Bossuet's funeral oration and Quinault's livret contain similar rhetoric.

These same elements appear in different guises in the *Intermèdes pour un comédie*, the ceremony for the king's statue on the Place des Victoires, and other ceremonies. The shared characteristics among these works serve to demonstrate the difficulty of linking scenes and characters in the *tragédies en musique* to specific events, objects, and people. It is interesting, however, to observe the connections between funeral ceremonies and ceremonies to commemorate statues. The associations between statues and death were strong in the seventeenth century, as they are now. Every statue has the potential to become a memorial, and even if the person represented still lives, the inanimate aspect of the stone likeness calls attention to the themes of memory and mortality.

3.5   Daphne

The most extended treatment of magical statues in spectacles between 1672 and 1674 occurs in La Fontaine's *Daphne*. In the anti-militaristic prologue to the work, La Fontaine subverts the connection between magical statues and the king's military glory that had been established during that period in the works discussed in this chapter. As Marc Fumaroli observes, Lully may have rejected the *livret* because the work, including the

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[157] Marie de Rabutin-Chantal Sévigné, marquise de, *Recueil des Lettres de Madame la Marquise de Sévigné, a Madame la Comtesse de Grignan, sa fille*, vol. 2 (Leide: Les Freres Verbeek, 1736), 103-04.

prologue, "went against the grain of the king's war policy."[158] The central event of the

prologue is the animation of statues into new human beings by Prometheus. This event

takes place on a stage depicting the aftermath of a great flood that has destroyed

humanity. Jupiter, accompanied by Momus, Venus, L'Amour, and Minerva descend to

survey the devastation. Conventional rivals Minerva, the goddess of war, and Venus, the

goddess of love, argue about the new world. For the former, the peace induces only

boredom, but Venus professes the virtue of leisurely pleasure: "Not to suffer, / Not to die,

/ And to do nothing, / What better could one wish for?"[159] As Yves Giraud notes, these

lines stand for La Fontaine's own utopian philosophy.[160] Jupiter summons Prometheus to

create new humans, and on command the Titan opens his workshop to reveal the statues

of men and women standing on blocks of stone.

After Momus mocks the statues, Prometheus commands them to descend and

dance. The statues move "lents et graves," dancing almost without movement, in a

composed fashion "in the manner of sages and philosophers."[161] Momus again mocks

them and calls them mere machines, a likely allusion to Descartes. Prometheus explains

that each statue represents one of the passions, and commands the statues to dance a

second dance. La Fontaine describes the second dance, which contrasts with the first:

> The new men, who seemed to be genuine statues, take off some of the
> garments that enveloped them and are seen inside the workshop, one
> representing ambition, the other, fear, despair, excessive joy, etc. In this state

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[158] Marc Fumaroli, *The Poet and the King*, trans. Jane Marie Todd (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2002), 416-17.

[159] Ne point souffrir, / Ne point mourir, / Et ne rien faire, / Que peut-on souhaiter de mieux?

[160] Yves, Giraud, *La Fable de Daphné* (Genève: Droz, 1968), 471.

[161] Les statues descendent, et viennent à pas lents et graves faire une entrée, dansant presque sans mouvement, et d'une façon composée, comme feraient des sages et des philosophes.

they dance confusedly and in a manner as impetuous and lively as the first dance was serious and minimally animated.[162]

Minerva and Venus then argue about how to apply order to the statue-humans' dancing. Minerva asserts that reason is needed, and addresses the statue-humans by telling them to "rule over your own desires," but her words have no effect. Venus then utters the single word "Love," and the statue-humans fall into dancing in orderly pairs, in the manner of loving couples. In this contest, love and leisure win out over reason and war. Jupiter commences the final section by proclaiming a prince will come, to whom he wishes to give "the art of knowing how to command." Jupiter promises that Mars (who is notably absent) will bestow on to the prince magnanimity and courage, and Minerva, Venus, and L'Amour pledge their gifts of virtue, *agrément*, and love.

In sum, the prologue reflects La Fontaine's deeply anti-militaristic views. These views shaped the poet's works of this period, including the pastorals *Les amours de Psyché et de Cupidon* (1669) and *Le Songe de Vaux* (1671), in which La Fontaine celebrated the utopian sensibility of Fouquet and Vaux-le-Vicomte. In the prologue to *Daphne*, the goddess of war is defeated by the goddess of love, and the power of love is demonstrated through its effect on the statue-humans. The prologue most closely resembles the final scene in Act II of *Cadmus et Hermione*, though key differences set the two scenes apart. In both works, animated statues are associated with love, but in *Cadmus* Hermione rejects them while in *Daphne* the gods celebrate them. Furthermore, in

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[162] Les nouveaux hommes, qui paraissaient de véritables statues, quittent une partie de l'habit qui les enveloppe, et se font voir tels qu'ils sont dans l'intérieur, l'un représentant l'ambition, l'autre, la colère, la crainte, le désespoir, la joie excessive, etc. En cet état ils dansent en confusion et d'une manière aussi impétueuse et aussi vive que l'autre était grave et peu animée.

Cadmus, the statues' dances contain allusions to war while no such allusions appear in *Daphne*.

La Fontaine's opinion of Lully at the time he wrote *Daphne*, or whether he pursued collaboration with the composer under his own initiative, remains uncertain. The arrangement to write *Daphne* was part of a complicated series of events in which Mme de Montespan, her sister Mme de Thiange, and others worked to replace Quinault as Lully's collaborator, and La Fontaine's involvement may have been driven as much by opportunistic motives as artistic ones. The prospect of working with Lully simply was too lucrative to ignore; even Racine and Boileau sought the chance despite their condemnations of opera.[163] The fact that La Fontaine agreed to collaborate with Lully does not negate the possibility that, like others who sought the same opportunity, he may have held a generally antagonistic view of the composer. Given La Fontaine's criticism of Quinault, there is reason to suspect that *Daphne* constitutes not just the poet's critique of war but also his critique of French opera, particularly in terms of its function as a platform for Louis's militarism. La Fontaine expressed this critique three years later in a letter to his friend Pierre Niert. The letter contains daring passages that blisteringly condemn the militaristic qualities of Lully's choruses and ballets: "War constitutes his [Lully's] joy and his greatest passion; / His divertissements all resemble war. / His concerts of instruments are characterized by the noise of thunder, / and his vocal concerts resemble the outbursts / Made by the shouts of soldiers in a day of combat."[164] Though

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[163] Norman, *Touched by the Graces*, 127-31.

[164] "La guerre fait sa joie et sa plus forte ardeur/ / Ses divertissements ressentent tous ls guerre: / Ses concerts d'instruments ont le bruit du tonnerre, / Et ses concerts de voix ressemblent aux éclats / Qu'en un jour de combat font les cris des soldats." See translation and discussion in Cowart, *The Triumph of Pleasure*, 135-38.

La Fontaine wrote these lines in 1677, the radical nature of their criticism caused their suppression from publication amongst the poet's writings, and they did not ultimately appear in print until 1765. It is possible that the sentiment of these lines informed La Fontaine's conception of *Daphne*. If so, we should view the pastoral opera more as an attempt to create an anti-*tragédie en musique* and less as an aesthetic misfire, as it has more commonly been viewed.

One notable element in La Fontaine's prologue is the prominence and depiction of Prometheus. With only rare exceptions in seventeenth-century theatre, literature, and art, the Titan did not appear as an inventor and animator of life.[165] Throughout the 1600s, the theme of Prometheus bound and punished represented the dominant characterization of this figure. The portrayal of Prometheus as a "Titan-creator" represented a key allegory during the Renaissance, and during the mid-eighteenth century it began to become increasingly important once again, but during the seventeenth century it did not have such cultural resonance. In the court spectacles of Louis XIV's reign, only one precedent exists, and it is a Fronde-era work: the second entrée of the 1648 *Ballet du dérèglement des passions* features Prometheus animating two statues (one of which was danced by a young Pierre Beauchamps in his official debut) with a wand of stolen celestial fire. Interestingly, La Fontaine alludes to Prometheus's power to animate statues twice in his works, in the *Fables* and in *Daphne*.

During the seventeenth century, Prometheus was viewed as a problematic character associated with both good and evil, particularly in his guise as the first sculptor. His fashioning of the first statues linked him to both the power of the arts and the

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[165] Raymond Trousson, *Le Thème de Prométhée dans la littérature européenne* (Geneva: Libraire Droz, 1964), 145-78.

dangerous power of idolatry. He brought fire and life to the human beings he created, yet

he also created Pandora, who wrought ill upon the world. His usurpation of the celestial

fire to create humans and bestow them with knowledge made him a subversive figure in

the mythological hierarchy. In the prologue to *Daphne*, Prometheus demonstrates more

power than Jupiter, who functions as a rather inert character. He does little more than

summon Prometheus and predict the coming of a prince, and the inverted balance of

power makes La Fontaine's prologue singularly unusual among seventeenth-century

livrets. Perhaps La Fontaine's prologue recalls another Fronde-era work, *Les Noces de*

Pélée et de Thétis (1654), in which Jupiter summons Prometheus to create the Liberal and

Mechanical Arts, who then dance the ballet that concludes the work. Between this work

and *Daphne*, no other seventeenth-century livrets featured Prometheus so prominently.

The prologue appears to be modeled after Quinault's prologue to *Alceste*, with

key differences. In Quinault's prologue, a nymph laments that the world has fallen into

ruin in the absence of the Hero, the character identified with the king who never actually

appears on stage. The entire prologue is focused on the Hero, his power and what his

return promises to bring. La Fontaine's prologue also takes place amidst a ruined world,

but the destruction is wrought by a deluge unleashed by the gods, not by the absence of a

hero or prince. Jupiter hails the coming of the prince only at the end of the prologue, and

the passage has no connection to the preceding action. La Fontaine obscures the clarity of

his panegyric, and given his political ideology, this suggests a possible subtext. As Renée

Kohn notes, the animated statues of the prologue may evoke the animated statues of *Les*

Fâcheux and La Fontaine's literary re-imaginings of Vaux-le-Vicomte.[166] Given

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[166] Renée Kohn, *Le Goût de La Fontaine* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1962), 332.

Fontaine's idealization of Fouquet and the sensibility and artistic community he cultivated, we might read the post-deluge world of the prologue as an allegory for the pillaged Vaux.

The contest between Minerva and Venus over control of the statues recalls a line from *Le Songe de Vaux*, which La Fontaine had published in 1671. In that work, La Fontaine references the militaristic associations of royal monuments. At the beginning of the penultimate section, Neptune says "Without jealousy, I think of all the statues Minerva has given [our monarch]." La Fontaine composed *Le Songe* before Louis began his Dutch campaign, but in this line he anticipates the many statues of and for Louis XIV that were created in the wake of the war. On the eve of war, the building of more monuments was to be expected, as monuments and military campaigns go hand in hand. In the prologue to *Daphne*, Venus demonstrates that the statues answer to her. Her victory is an allegory about monuments themselves and what they should memorialize. It can be read as a critique of the use of statues, and art in general, to valorize war.

Table 3.1   Militaristic symbolism and magical statues in court spectacle, 1673–1674

Year	Work	Appearance of magical statues	Symbolic character
1673	*Cadmus et Hermione*	End of Act II, "Les Statuës"	Mixes sonic/visual signifiers of militarism and love
1673	*Intermèdes pour une comédie*	Final *intermède*	Militaristic celebration of king's magical statue
1674	*Alceste*	End of Act II, "Marche"	Militaristic music follows Alceste's sacrifice, akin to statue dedication ceremonies
1674	*Grande Fête de Versailles*	Final day, "Animated" statues on Grand Canal	Spectacular statues culminate celebration of Louis XIV's military victories

| 1674 | *Daphné* | Prologue | Venus controls animated statues: Pro-love, anti-militaristic message |

3.6   Conclusion

During the early 1670s, the associations between military imagery and monuments became a recurring theme in French spectacles (see Table 3.1). This development marked a departure from earlier uses of statues in the *ballets de cour*. In the 1660s, magical statues typically appeared in pastoral settings and embodied notions of leisure and pleasure or more sinister forces such as demons and the like, but rarely did they evoke any notion of monarchical military power or glory. The Other status of magical statues may have reflected in part the generally marginal status of statuary within the program of monarchical image-making during the 1660s, as determined by the members of the Petite Académie. The growing importance of monuments in the 1670s fomented an increasingly dynamic relationship between music and monuments in French spectacles, and initiated a push for new and more elaborate musical treatments of statues, magical or otherwise.

CHAPTER 4

The Problem of Idolatry in French Spectacle, 1679–1699

In the 1670s, Louis XIV ruled as the golden idol of France but was, in the eyes of many, transforming into its golden calf.[167] It became increasingly routine for Louis's enemies, particularly the oppressed Protestants, to accuse the king of cultivating an idolatrous government and image of himself. The king's supporters typically refuted the charge by characterizing the Protestants as the idolaters worshipping false gods. Given the ample evidence to support the accusation and Louis's increasingly fraught relations with Rome, concerns about the king's possible idolatrous behavior grew. These concerns had an impact on the arts and culture of the period.[168]

By the mid-1670s, the rituals of monarchical deification of had become well-established at court, which resembled a circle dance of worshippers caught up in an unceasing song of praise. Louis had substantially contributed to his idol status by filling

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[167] The tale of the golden calf appears in the Bible (Exodus 32:4) as well as in the Qur'an in a slightly different version. When Moses leaves for Mount Sinai to receive the Ten Commandments, the Israelites demanded that a new god should be made to guide them. Aaron collected and melted the Israelites gold jewelry in order to fashion a golden calf. The following day Aaron built an altar and the Israelites held a feast celebrating the idol, made offerings to it, and danced around it. When Moses returned, he condemned the Israelites for their idolatry. This story was represented in several famous French artworks during the seventeenth century, including Nicolas Poussin's *The Adoration of the Golden Calf* (c. 1635)

[168] The tensions triggered by monarchical idols continued to mount into the eighteenth century and reached a breaking point with the iconoclasm of the French Revolution. On the history of iconoclasm in France during the *Ancien Régime*, see Alain Besançon, *The Forbidden Image: An Intellectual History of Iconoclasm* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000); Caroline van Eck, *Art, Agency and Living Presence: From the Animated Image to the Excessive Object* (Boston: De Gruyter; Leiden: Leiden University Press 2015); and James Noyes, *The Politics of Iconoclasm: Religion, Violence, and the Culture of Image-Breaking in Christianity and Islam* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2013).

the country with material representations of his likeness and by going further than any

monarch before him to equate his physical body with the body of the state.[169] This

approach to royal idolization did not originate with the Sun King; since at least the

sixteenth century, religious idolatry had been increasingly blurred with or re-directed into

political idolatry.[170] Louis XIV's unprecedented success at infusing an idolatrous

mentality into French government, however, represented a new perfection in the merging

of sacred and secular rule.

      This model of monarchical power inherently contained a nested notion of idolatry

that posed an ever-present threat to the stability of the power structure. As historian Ellen

M. McClure writes, "no idea concerning monarchy was more widespread during this time

[the seventeenth century] than the view that good monarchy was rooted in the divine and

that tyranny was a form of idolatry where this divine source has become obscured."[171]

For Louis XIV, the balance between this binary opposition grew strained during the last

quarter of the seventeenth century, with several factors contributing to this turn. Louis's

governance resulted in financial hardships, religious oppression, political turmoil,

starvations and epidemics, and these burdens destabilized the public's confidence in their

king. The scandalous Affair of the Poisons (1677-1682) also damaged the king's image as

the *roi très chrétien*. Public investigations found members of his inner circle guilty of

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[169] As Gérard Sabatier writes, "Tout gémellité des deux corps a disparu. Tout l'État, toute la monarchie, tous les principes d'autorité, d'ordre, de souveraineté, d'unicité, sont contenus dans ce corps de ce roi." *Versailles, ou la figure du roi* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1999), 565.

[170] Michael Wayne Cole, Rebecca Zorach, *The Idol in the Age of Art: Objects, Devotions and the Early Modern World* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009), 9.

[171] Ellen M. McClure, *Sunspots and the Sun King: Sovereignty and Mediation in Seventeenth-Century France* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006), 37.

Magie, defined at the time as a combination of idolatry and necromancy that was punishable by death.[172]

The most important factor that fueled anxieties about Louis's idolatry was the frictive relationship between France and the papacy. This relationship had only remained peaceful with great strain during the 1660s, but in the 1670s it began to rapidly deteriorate. In 1673, the conflict over the *régale* heightened tensions between the Vatican and Versailles and made enemies of the king amongst the French clergy.[173] Between March, 1678, and December, 1679, Pope Innocent XI issued three Briefs to condemn Louis and threaten that his actions would be judged before God's tribunal. Rumors that the Church would excommunicate the king began to circulate. Louis's struggles with Rome impelled him to seek ways to strengthen his Catholic image and consolidate his power over the church in France. He increasingly looked to the most pious in his circle, and his reign began to take a new direction under the powerful influence of Bishop Bossuet, the Archbishop of Paris Harlay de Champvallon, the ultra-Catholic *dévots*, and Madame de Maintenon.[174] Taking their advisement, the king worked to ward off the charge of idolatry, to maintain that he looked to God and not himself as the ultimate authority in France.

In political systems in which religious and political idolatry closely co-existed, spectacle played a significant role in linking representations of supernatural and natural

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[172] Lynn Wood Mollenauer, *Strange Revelations: Magic, Poison, and Sacrilege in Louis XIV's France* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007), 24.

[173] The concept of the *droit de régale* had roots in the Middle Ages, and it meant that when a bishop died or left a bishopric for any reason the king would appoint lower clergy and draw the revenues of the see until a new bishop could be appointed. In 1673, Louis XIV claimed the right of *régale* for all the bishoprics in his kingdom.

[174] H. G. Judge, "Louis XIV and the Church," in John C. Rule, ed., *Louis XIV and the Craft of Kingship* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1969), 240-65.

power. Not surprisingly, animated statues were among the types of spectacles that

frequently performed this function.[175] As I discuss in chapter three, French spectacles of

the early 1670s strongly established the association between magical statues and the

king's absolutist military glory. In the last quarter of the seventeenth century, one finds

more of these monumental *merveilleux* imbued with stronger religious overtones and

ritualistic elements.[176] The artists working for Louis crafted these depictions of magical

statues to enhance the king's image as divinely powerful and qualified to hold dual

authority over both church and state.

Over time, the religious overtones of the king's statues grew stronger as pressure

mounted to reinforce the king's Christian image. This trend was particularly evident in

the statue campaign of the mid-1680s, in which the Secretary of State for War Louvois

commissioned statues of the king to be built in town squares throughout France. The

campaign constituted a secondary phase of Louvois's brutal efforts to drive Protestants

out of France.[177] As power vacuums were created by fleeing Protestant communities, the

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[175] According to Cole and Zorach, where ever the blurred line between political and religious idolatries was exploited during the early modern period, "animated statues, triumphal chariots and other wonders brought the magnificence of monarchs, emperors, and popes to the view of ordinary subjects." (*The Idol in the Age of Art*), 9.

[176] In this chapter, I emphasize the word "idol" instead of statues to reflect this shift. One can argue the demonic statues of the 1660s carried strong religious overtones as well, though I would characterize the statues' demonic aspects as more political and/or entertaining in nature, depending on the work. In the 1670s and 1680s, one begins to see more magical statues depicted as symbols of the power of the king and the Catholic church.

[177] Louvois's strategy to purge the Protestant element from France involved troops billeting, or taking up lodging without permission in Protestant homes and exerting financial and abusive pressure on the residents to convert. The *dragonnades* (as this practice was called after the *dragoons* or soldiers who carried it out) began slowly in 1680 and were implemented on a large scale the following year. There is some debate in regards to whether the *dragonnades* were carried out based orders from the central government or orders from the *intendants* who acted independently of the central government and used harsh tactics in order to produce more conversions and further their careers; see Jacqueline Gratton, "The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes and the Role of the *Intendants*," *French History* 25/2 (2011), 164-87. Even if the *intendants* acted on their own, the results of the *dragonnades* won approval from members of the central government. Furthermore, the oppression of the *dragonnades* was consistent, if

statues were designed to function as emblems of the king that reminded the public of his

divinity. Nicolas-Joseph Foucault, the *intendant* who directed the *grandes dragonnades*

(the second and harsher campaign of Protestant oppression), also presided over some of

the ceremonies to commemorate the new statues. About the statue erected in Poitiers in

August, 1687, he wrote in his *Mémoires*, "the statue which was the occasion for this

ceremony should not only be an ornament for the city but . . .the inhabitants in addition

should look upon it as their protecting god, since it places them in a more personal way

under the prince's protection."[178] In order to emphasize the idea of the statue as

protecting god, the statue was surrounded by additional monuments and a fountain with

inscribed mottos to this effect. Statues like this linked Louis to the contradictory

characteristics of pagan Roman emperors and Christian divinity.

This conflation of political and religious ideology in monumental form fueled

controversy. In 1686, this controversy was brought to a head by the most egregious (or

magnificent, depending on one's perspective) example, the statue of Louis XIV erected in

the Place des Victoires. For years prior to the commemoration of the statue, the sculpture-

idolatry linkage had been a theme in the anti-Louis writings of the Huguenots, Jansenists,

and other oppositional groups both foreign and domestic. Two overlapping topics, the

nature of oracles and the nature of idols, had generated published debates going back

decades, but these debates gained momentum in the mid-1670s through the 1690s. Two

landmark texts emerged from these debates: Bernard Le Bovier de Fontenelle's *Histoire*

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not in terms of degree at least in spirit, with the types of pressure Louis XIV and his advisers placed on
the Protestants in the decades preceding the Revocation.

[178] ". . . la statue qui donnoit lieu à cette solemnité ne doit pas faire seulement l'ornement de la ville, mais. .
. les habitans la regardent encore comme leur dieu tutelaire, puisqu'elle les met par là d'une maniere
plus particuliere sous la protection du prince. . ." Nicolas-Joseph Foucault, *Mémoires de Nicolas-Joseph
Foucault* (Paris: Impr. Imperiale, 1862), 189.

des Oracles (1687) and François de Lemée's *Traité des Statues* (1688). The former text

redefined the accepted view of oracles and became the authority on the subject, while the

latter accomplished a similar shift for the accepted view of idols.[179]

The far-reaching discourses about idolatry during this period had an impact on

French theatre and especially on the *tragédie en musique*, arguably Louis XIV's most

important idol-making medium. This impact can be traced in many ways, both obvious

and subtle, and in this chapter I will focus on the treatment of literal idols in French

lyrical theatre linked to the court during the last quarter of the seventeenth century. In

these works, scenes that feature idols used music and other means to normalize idol

worship and to cast it as an acceptable model for France's relationship to the king.

The representation of idols in French theatre is particularly interesting during this

period because not only the king but also theatre itself was frequently accused of

promoting idolatry. The strongest criticism of theatre tended to come in waves in France,

and the 1660s and 1690s saw intensifications of the number of published letters and

pamphlets condemning theatre on moral and religious grounds.[180] For many of these

writers, lyrical theatre was the worst form of theatre, given the power of music to

manipulate the passions, engender inappropriate thoughts and feelings, and normalize

sinful and pagan acts. Typically, the critics relied heavily on the anti-theatre writings of

the ancient fathers of the Church, which generally viewed all theatre as directly

descended from pagan idol worship. Some seventeenth-century critics tried to bring

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[179] On the profound influence of Lemée's treatise, see Caroline van Eck, *François de Lemée et la statue de Louis XIV: Les Origines des Théories Ethnologiques du Fétichisme* (Paris: Éditions de la Maison des Sciences de l'homme, 2013).

[180] Henry Phillips, *The Theatre and its Critics in Seventeenth-Century France* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980).

nuance into the discussion; for example, Père Thomas Caffaro argued that St. Cyprian would not condemn all dances, songs, operas, and theatre absolutely. Yet even for writers like Caffaro, theatre was still dangerous when it represented the immorality of the Greeks and Romans and, worst of all, when it represented idol worship.[181]

Scholarly investigation of the representation of idolatry in French lyrical theatre has focused to date primarily on a particular type of idol, the oracle.[182] Across a number of disciplines, academic interest in the artistic representations of idols and idolatry in France during this period has emerged in the past decade. Art historian Anne Betty Weinshenker has helped bring attention to this subject, and ten years ago she noted "the concern with veneration of idols that developed in France during the last few decades of the seventeenth century and lasted through the middle of the eighteenth has been less observed [in academia]. . . As yet, there is no account of this phenomenon, although it was unquestionably significant from both art-historical and cultural perspectives." [183] The corresponding dearth of scholarship on this phenomenon as it played out in French spectacle reflects in part the silence on the part of artists who created spectacle, who had good reasons to avoid drawing connections between the concerns about idolatry and

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[181] Le Père Thomas Caffaro, *Lettre d'un théologien illustre par sa qualité et par son mérite, consulté par l'auteur pour savoir si la comédie peut être premise, ou doit être absolument défendue* [1694], in Charles Urbain and Eugène Levesque, *L'Église et le théâtre Bossuet* (Paris: Fraet, 1930), 85; "[St. Cyprian] ne condamne pas absolument les Danses, les Chants, les Opéras et les Comédies, mais seulement les Spectacles qui représentoient les fables en la maniere lascive des Grecs et des Romains, et qui se celebroient en l'honneur des Idoles."

[182] This subject has been explored in some depth by Geoffrey Burgess; see his "Envoicing the Divine: Oracles in lyric and spoken drama in seventeenth-century France," in *(Dis)embodying Myths in Ancien Régime Opera*, ed. Bruno Forment (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2012), 63-96; and "Enlightening Harmonies: Rameau's *corps sonore* and the Representation of the Divine in the *tragédie en musique*," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 65/2 (Summer 2012), 383-462.

[183] "Idolatry and Sculpture in *Ancien Régime* France," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 38, no. 3 (Spring, 2005), 485.

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theatre. These artists did engage with idolatry but on their own terms, by importing

depictions of idolatry into spectacle where they could be carefully framed through

narrative, music, and staging.

4.1   Idolatry and Sacrificial Murder: *Bellérophon*

Bellérophon premiered on January 31, 1679, and played for nine months. It

featured one of the most elaborate presentations of an oracle ritual ever to appear in a

tragédie en musique, and the most expansive example up to that point. What is most

extraordinary about the scene is the violence of the sacrifice, described in the livret, as

well as the fact that the sacrifice is actually carried out rather than being disrupted at the

last minute by a character or *deus-ex-machina*. In addition, the sacrifice is unusual in that

it summons Apollo in the form of a golden idol. The sacrificial violence in particular sets

the scene apart from scenes of its type in French spectacle of the seventeenth and

eighteenth centuries. It also invites us to question why, given the concerns over the

idolatry of Louis XIV and the theatre, the artists chose to include a long presentation of

pagan idolatry at all, and a graphically violent one at that.

As Geoffrey Burgess has pointed out, the scene represents the earliest example in

opera of an oracular invocation based on the ethno-historic study of ancient Greek

sources.[184]Thomas Corneille and Bernard Le Bovier de Fontenelle collaborated on the

livret, but the oracle scene most likely came from the pen of Fontenelle.[185] It would

constitute Fontenelle's initial entry into the debate over oracles, seven years before he

published his influential and controversial *Histoire des oracles*. With the appearance of

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[184] Burgess, "Envoicing the Divine," 80.

[185] Ibid., 80.

Apollo as a golden statue to deliver the oracle, the scene also engages with the debate over idols, a debate which had begun to intensify around the time the *livret* was being written.

By the late 1670s, the dominant intellectual view of mythology was euhemerist, i.e. the theory that all mythological stories originated from historical individuals and events. During this time, the euhemerist argument that ancient pagan beliefs in gods originated in the worship of statues became commonplace in French literary circles.[186] Charles Perrault expressed this belief in several publications, including the *Parallèle des anciens et des modernes* and the *Cabinet des beaux-arts*, in which he wrote

> There is no art that men have abused so much, and in a more criminal manner
> than the Art of Sculpture. It was given to them by Heaven so that they could
> preserve the memory of great men and their actions. [...] However they have
> unfortunately used it to make gods, and to give honor and worship that are
> only owed to the Creator to wood, to stone, and to metal.[187]

One of the questions debated by the euhemerists was whether statues (and the sculptors who created them) were to blame for encouraging idolatry, or whether the fault lay with those who misused the statues by worshipping them idolatrously. Frequently in France at this time, a writer's opinion on this matter reflected the degree to which that writer identified with the king or was invested in the propaganda industry of royal statuary. Perrault, for example, who spent decades in the Petite Académie (later known as the

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[186] Anne Betty Weinshenker, *A God or a Bench: Sculpture as a Problematic Art During the* Ancien Régime (Oxford, Bern: Peter Lang, 2008), 124.

[187] Charles Perrault, *Cabinet des beaux-arts, ou Recueil d'estampes gravées d'apres les tableaux d'un plafond ou les beaux arts sont representés: avec l'explication de ces mêmes tableaux* (Paris: G. Edelinck, 1690), 31; "Il n'y a point d'Art dont les hommes ayent tant abuse, et d'une maniére plus criminelle que de l'Art de la Sculpture. Il leur a été donné du Ciel, pour conserver la memoire des grands hommes, et de leurs actions, afin qu'en les regardant comme des modeles, ils se portent plus vivement à l'heureuse imitation de leurs vertus. Cependant ils s'en sont malheureusement servis pour s'en faire des Dieux, et pour transporter à du bois, à de la pierre, et à du métail un honneur et un culte qui ne sont deus qu'au Createur."

Académie Royale des Inscriptions et Médailles) overseeing monument building and devising inscriptions for medals and monuments, took care to define sculpture as a neutral medium: "But this horrible disorder [idolatry] that made men so sinful must in no way be imputed to the Art [of sculpture] itself since it was only an innocent contributor."[188]

The same year that *Bellérophon* premiered, the staunchly anti-Louis XIV La Fontaine weighed in on the debate with the fable "The Sculptor and the Statue of Jupiter" (Book IX, 6). The fable describes a sculptor who finds a block of marble and decides to sculpt the figure of Jupiter (who of course represents Louis XIV). When the sculptor finished, his creation was so lifelike ("the idol was so handsome wrought / that Jove himself it seemed"[189]) that he became afraid and awed by it. La Fontaine concurs with the euhemerists, and suggests that both writers and sculptors invented gods. He goes on to attribute the folly of statue worship to humanity's failure in using reason to discern truth from falsehood: "The heart will follow where the head / May lead, and does so willingly. / Whence stemmed the pagan error, spread / Over a vast humanity. . . Man looks on truth with icy chill, / And looks on lies with passion's fire."[190] La Fontaine's historical argument implies that the worship of Louis XIV's statues is symptomatic of an idolatry born out of ignorance and irrationality.

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[188] Ibid., 31-32; "Mais ce de desordre horrible qui a rendu les hommes si coupables, ne doit point etre impute a l'Art consideré en lui meme puis qu'il n'y a contribué qu'innocemment. . .".

[189] "L'artisan exprima si bien / Le caractère de l'Idole, / Qu'on trouva qu'il ne manquait rien / A Jupiter que la parole." Translations in Jean de La Fontaine, *The Complete Fables of Jean de La Fontaine*, trans. Norman R. Shapiro (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2007), 240-41.

[190] Le cœur suit aisément l'esprit: / De cette source est descendue / L'erreur païenne, qui se vit / Chez tant de peuples répandue. [. . .] / L'homme est de glace aux vérités; / Il est de feu pour les mensonges."

Also a commonplace at the time *Bellérophon* was written was the view that magical statues and oracles were controlled by demons. Both the euhemerist argument and belief in the demon-statue-oracle linkage had roots dating back to antiquity. In the mid-seventeenth century, an argument began between Catholic and Protestant writers over the nature of the early Christian sybilline oracles. Catholic writers argued to uphold the church's account of them as true, while Protestant writers sought to discredit them. One wave of this debate that began in the 1670s coincided with *Bellérophon*. In 1678, the Jesuit Jean Crasset published the *Dissertation sur les oracles des Sibylles* to argue for the validity of the oracles, and in the following year Bossuet wrote his *Discours sur l'histoire universelle* in which he made the general argument that all oracles ceased to be demonic after the birth of Christ.[191]

The debate would continue into the eighteenth century, but the most influential statement on the matter belonged to Fontenelle. His *L'Histoire des oracles* constituted an adapted translation of the treatise *De oraculis ethnicorum* (1684) by the Dutch scholar Antoine van Dale. Van Dale applied a euhemerist view of historical oracles, arguing that oracles had no divine agency but rather were the work of pretending priests. Fontenelle adopted the same rationalist argument, and his denial of the supernatural nature of oracles was both widely popular and seen by critics as dangerously anti-Catholic.

The view of oracles as presented in *Bellérophon* significantly differs from the euhemerist view Fontenelle that later presented in *L'Histoire des oracles*. The operatic oracle seems to be clearly aligned with the Catholic perspective and underlines the kinship between divinity and royalty. I interpret the stark divergence between

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[191] For an overview of this debate, see Marcel Bouchard, *L'Histoire des Oracles de Fontenelle* (Paris: SFELT, 1947).

Fontenelle's depiction of oracles in the opera and in *L'Histoire* as a sign that the intended function of the sacrificial oracle scene was to combat challenges to the king's divinity. During the years surrounding the premiere of *Bellérophon*, the king's divinity was being strongly and repeatedly asserted by members of his inner circle. Notably, Bishop Bossuet forcefully argued for this belief in his *Politique tirée des propres paroles de l'Ecriture Sainte* (1677-1679).

One of the most important moments in the scene is the appearance of Apollo in the form of a golden statue. Apollo's appearance is unusual in the context of French opera, given that oracles were more frequently intoned by mediating characters such as priestesses and *sacrificateurs*, or by a disembodied voice, rather than by a god in the (in this case, golden) flesh. According to Burgess, the unmediated, embodied appearance of the living idol of Apollo lends authoritative weight to the oracular voice and identifies it beyond any doubt with Louis XIV, noting that "[t]his oracle represents a degree of confidence in the notion of absolute authority and divine presence that would become increasingly untenable over the course of the next decades."[192] I suggest that the confidence Burgess perceives is manufactured, and that the spectacularly obvious allusion to the king reflects a degree of overcompensation stemming from insecurity about the public's view of the king's divinity.

Apollo's utterance (ex. 4.1) is brief and enigmatic, two qualities that Burgess convincingly links to the model for oracles that La Fontaine lays out in the preface to *Les Amours de Psyché*.[193] Musically, Apollo's utterance is remarkably understated, to the

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[192] Burgess, "Envoicing the Divine," 81.

[193] Ibid., 66-81.

point that it almost becomes non-threatening. Only a few musical elements give any

indication of Apollo's divinity. His oracle is introduced by a three-measure instrumental

passage and key change from G minor to G major. The vocal line begins with a

descending triad, a gesture that typically appeared in the music of gods and monarchs.[194]

The bass voice stays in its high register, restricted to a fifth with the sole exception of a

leap up to the sixth scale degree on the word "Celeste."[195] The scene conveys the idea

that the message of the oracle is pure and untainted by intervention of any kind. Indeed,

Burgess interprets this as one of the primary reasons that the oracle is delivered by the

statue of Apollo and not his representative, The Pythia (the Oracle of Delphi).[196] This

idea is represented musically as well, with Apollo being sonically quarantined from

human utterances by instrumental music at the beginning and ending of his prophecy.[197]

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[194] Caroline Wood, *Music and drama in the Tragédie en musique, 1673-1715* (New York: Garland, 1996), 21.

[195] Burgess demonstrates that bass voices in high registers became typical of divinities; "Ritual in the Tragédie en Musique from Lully's *Cadmus et Hermione* (1673) to Rameau's *Zoroastre* (1749)" (PhD Diss, Cornell University, 1998), Chapter Six.

[196] Ibid., 453-55.

[197] Typically, the utterance of an oracle is followed immediately by a response or reaction from one of the characters in récit.

Ex. 4.1   Jean-Baptiste Lully, *Bellérophon*, Act III, Sc. 5, Oracle of Apollo

For the audience, the divine power of the idol/oracle would have been most evident from the visual impression of the golden statue. Yet even this visual spectacle is minimized, as the livret indicates that Apollo appears only immediately before delivering the oracle and disappears immediately after. The limited musical and visual spectacle for Apollo's statue stands in contrast to the Pythia, who would have inspired greater fear and trembling with her entrance and wild appearance (she emerges from a cavern, hair in disarray). The Pythia is even more significantly distinguished from Apollo by her *récitatif* (ex. 4.2), which spans the range of a tenth and is punctuated by orchestral passages imitating ominous elements (an earthquake, rush of wind, thunder, and lightning). On one

level, the different portrayals of Apollo and the Pythia conjure gender stereotypes of rational, controlled masculinity and wild, nature-born femininity.[198] At the same time, the scene can also be read as portraying the golden Apollo as a true oracle and idol by downplaying the spectacular elements associated with him. In this instance, veracity and divine monarchical power are communicated through restraint. Apollo embodies vocal restraint, a sonic control that mirrors the brevity of his appearance on stage and, presumably, restraint in his movements. Through these details of characterization, the idol becomes heavily politicized and masculinized. In my view, this characterization through restricted expression is designed to distinguish the power of the idol from the pagan violence of the ritual that summons it.

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[198] The gender identity of the Pythia is complicated somewhat by the fact that the role was sung by a *haute-contre* and thus occupied a somewhat androgynous space. Burgess notes that the role of a woman who served as a medium for an oracle typically was portrayed as a young, virginal woman and consequently sung by a higher voice. For this reason, he suggests that the *haute-contre* Pythia in *Bellérophon* may have assumed been represented as an old and ugly witch with sinister mien. ("Ritual in the *Tragédie en musique*," 457). Even if this is the case, it does not substantially alter the gendered contrast between Apollo and the Pythia.

Ex. 4.2   Jean-Baptiste Lully, *Bellérophon*, Act III, Sc. 5, the Pythia's *récitatif*

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In fact, the sacrifice is arguably more interesting than the oracle itself. As stated, the graphic nature of the ritual sets it apart from the typical sacrifice scene, of which there were many in *tragédies en musique* during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The scene opens with a duple-meter "Marche du Sacrifice" in G major (ex. 4.3) that reflects little of the violence or wonder of the pagan ritual about to happen. The march has a rhythmic vitality and short phrases that give it an airy lightness. The "Chœur de Peuple" (ex. 4.4) in G major that follows it similarly has a lyrical sweetness that contrasts with the text about "overwhelming misfortune." After the chorus sings a call to Apollo, both the march and chorus are played again. In these opening numbers, I argue that we see the use of music to downplay or normalize the disturbing and problematic aspects of the ritual.

Ex. 4.3   Jean-Baptiste Lully, *Bellérophon*, Act III, Sc. 5, "La Marche du Sacrifice"

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Ex. 4.4   Jean-Baptiste Lully, *Bellérophon*, Act III, Sc. 5, "Chœur de Peuple"

The Sacrificateur then sings a short récit asking Apollo to receive the sacrifice, and the choir responds with a short interjection to Apollo. The violence of the ritual begins when, as indicated in the livret, the Sacrificateur pours wine over the head of the sacrificial animal then sings the récit "By this wine" (ex. 4.5). Upon the end of the récit, the Ministers of the Temple walk behind the Sacrificateur, and they proceed to announce their imminent slaughter of the victim. Lully sets the sacrifice to the sounds of another instrumental march in G major, this one more brief and lighter than the "Marche du Sacrifice." The music could not be simpler, featuring a descending bass line of repeated quarter notes and static harmonic rhythm. Gone are the hints of dotted rhythms and light grandeur of the first march, replaced by the type of repetitive, fleeting music typically used for drowning out the sounds of stage machinery.

After the slaughter, the choir interjects another call to Apollo, then in an act more reminiscent of *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* than seventeenth-century French opera, the Sacrificateur holds up the removed heart for all to see. After singing another short récit, he throws the animal's heart and entrails into a fire.[199] A good omen initiates another choral number, "Aprés un augure si doux," then the people sing two extended celebratory choruses that alternate with dances around the fire. A ritournelle in the new key of G minor changes the mood in anticipation of the Pythia's arrival. Upon the Sacrificateur's call to the Pythia, an altar moves, and she emerges from her cavern with her disheveled hair to sing of the oracle. Apollo then appears as the golden statue to deliver the prophecy in (a return of) G major. The Pythia sinks back into her cavern, Apollo disappears, and the scene ends.

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[199] "Sacrificateur monstrant le cœur de la Victime. . . Il jette le cœur & les entrailles dans le feu."

Ex. 4.5   Jean-Baptiste Lully, *Bellérophon*, Act III, Sc. 5, Sacrificateur's récit and instrumental music for sacrificial murder

Ex. 4.5 (continued)

In French opera, though sacrifice scenes were common, they almost never depicted actual sacrifices.[200] In general, what was considered barbaric about pagan rituals was considered unfit for *tragédies en musique*.[201] Consider the sacrifice scenes in the *tragédies en musique* before *Bellérophon*; for example, in *Cadmus et Hermione*, the sacrifice scene (III, vii) is dramatically halted by Mars and his Furies, who break the sacrificial altar and disperse the Sacrificateurs. The sacrifice of Alceste (III, i) is represented after the fact by a monument, and Psyché is carried away by Zephyrs when she offers herself for sacrifice (I, iv). Atys does not honor his role as Grand Sacrificateur. In *Thésée*, the sacrifice scene (I, ix-x) consists only of appeals to the gods. The aversion to sacrificial rituals continued in later operas as well. Sometimes the sacrifices become sidetracked, as in *Théagène et Chariclée* (discussed below) or Phaéton's intended sacrifice to Isis (*Phaéton*, III, ii-iii). If the sacrifice actually happens, it often results in an unhappy fate, e.g. in *Idomenée* and *Jephté*, where the sacrificers go insane.[202]

Even in the Italian comedies of the 1670s, sacrifices were disrupted, typically through a character's cunning. In Romagnesi's *Arlequin berger de Lemnos* (1674), Arlequin avoids being sacrificed while he is disguised as a bull by attacking the priest with his horns. In *Arlequin et Scaramouche juifs errans de Babilonne* (1677), the hero diverts his own sacrifice by telling a long story which was in fact a parody of a French

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[200] As Burgess broadly states, "All acts of violence perpetrated against innocent victims [in *tragédies en musique*] are either circumvented–none of the innocent victims who are sentenced by an oracle to die are sacrificed, either on- or off-stage–or consummated out of sight. The effect of these deeds is too horrifying to be revealed. As a general principle in a *tragédie en musique,* murder does not take place on stage." ("Ritual in the *Tragédie en musique*," 487).

[201] Ibid., 448.

[202] Jan Clarke, "A Symbiosis of Special Effects: from the Machine Play to the *tragédie lyrique* and back again," in *Formes et formations au dix-septième siècle*, ed. Buford Norman (Tübingen: Narr Francke Attempto Verlag, 2006), 122.

play.[203] By contrast, the bloody sacrificial ritual in *Bellérophon* proceeds without incident and inspires the people to dance and sing in celebration. Indeed, it is so successful that Apollo himself appears.

In 1694, Dufresny parodied the sacrifice scene from *Bellérophon* in *Le Départ des Comédiens*. At the end of the comedy, Pasquariel and Mezzetin invite Arlequin to tour the countryside performing opera productions as a way to make money when the theaters are closed. They choose *Bellérophon*, and Dufresny's selection of the sacrifice scene as a target for parody marks it as a representative part of the opera.[204] Even in the parody, ritual violence is omitted, and the livret makes no mention of a slaughter. The actors mock the seriousness of the ritual; Mezzetin in costume as the sacrificateur asks that Apollo receive their sacrifice, and Arlequin interrupts him to say he wants to sacrifice an animal:

> Arlequin: We must pour wine on an animal.
> Mezzetin: What beast is it?
> Arlequin: A bull.
> Mezzetin: Bull or ass, it doesn't matter.[205]

Pasquariel plays the Pythia and sings nonsense syllables based on the French word for thunder. Arlequin passes his head through a hole in a screen and recites more nonsense as Apollo, then puts on a crown to play the king for the end of the scene.

Mezzetin's statement that the victim is arbitrary represents a pointed mocking of the sacrifice in *Bellérophon*. The violent act on a faceless animal marks the scene as

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[203] Virginia Scott, *The Commedia dell'Arte in Paris, 1644-1697* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1990), 201.

[204] Susan Louise Harvey, "Opera Parody in Eighteenth-Century France: Genesis, Genre, Critical Function" (PhD Diss, Stanford University, 2002), 72.

[205] Arlequin: Il faut verser le vin sur l'animal. / Mezzetin: Quelle bête étoit-ce? / Arlequin: Un boeuf. / Mezzetin: Boeuf ou âne, n'importe.

unusual among operatic sacrifices, in part because the scene does not allow the audience

to relate to the victim or critically evaluate the nature of the sacrifice. Burgess notes that

in sacrifice scenes in *tragédies en musique*, "the constant element . . . is the seeming

injustice of the ordained sacrifice."[206] He goes on to suggest that the opportunity for the

audience to relate to the victim was key, and that "each opera endeavored to move the

spectator to identify empathetically with the victim," because "this identification

provoked the spectator to reflect on, and call into question, the justice of the authority

under which s/he was subject-the French monarchy."[207] According to Burgess, sacrifices

were inevitably avoided in *tragédies en musique* because the spectacles were designed to

make audiences feel confidence in the justice of the system.[208]

Burgess also argues that violence in *tragédies en musique* tended to be mediated

in a number of ways, including by depicting the perpetrator as possessed by insanity or

some kind of spirit, or by showing him or her to express hesitation to commit or

powerlessness to avoid the violent act.[209] The sacrifice in *Bellérophon* is mediated in part

by the use of an animal rather than a human victim, and in part by the music. Ostensibly,

the sacrifice is born out of the desperation caused by the threat of the monster Chimère,

yet this desperation hardly manifests musically. In the music preceding the actual

sacrifice, only one note seems to betray any emotional disturbance about the ritual. In the

Sacrificateur's opening récit (ex. 4.6), Lully pairs a flat seven passing tone to the text

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[206] Burgess, "Ritual in the *Tragédie en musique*," 506.

[207] Ibid., 506.

[208] Ibid., 506; "As explained in Louis XIV's *Mémoires,* the goal of *spectacles* was not to represent the monarchy' s power through the explicit use of force, but through its restraint and through clemency."

[209] Ibid., 487-505.

"receive this sacrifice" (m. 2, "reçois se Sacrifice").[210] The chromaticism is fleeting, however, and the music quickly returns to a lighter affect. Throughout the scene, Lully's music functions as a normalizing agent for the violence that frames the ritual with the sonic clichés of monarchical power and theatrical entertainment.

Ex. 4.6   Jean-Baptiste Lully, *Bellérophon*, Act III, Sc. 5, Sacrificateur's opening récit

A similar approach to the musical treatment of oracles and idols can be found in Fontenelle's two later operas, both with the composer Pascale Collasse: *Thétis et Pélée* (1689) and *Énée et Lavinie* (1690). In *Thétis et Pélée*, the oracle is similarly minimized in comparison to the rest of the scene, in terms of brevity, presence (unlike in *Bellérophon*, the divining god never appears on stage), and musical material. In *Énée et Lavinie*, the music for the oracle (a singing idol of Janus) is once again given less weight than that of the human character, Dido. Janus's music consists of a pastoral style bass-trio air with oboe accompaniment and a vocal line that covers a range of a ninth. With the exception of the wider vocal range, Janus's statue replicates the brevity and understated vocal expression of Apollo's idol in *Bellérophon*.

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[210] An additional unexpected chord occurs in the sacrificateur's next récit (m. 5, where the bass line leaps down a diminished fifth from D to G# to harmonize the dominant of A minor), but the text makes it clear that the emotion of the music represents the sadness of the people ("Tu vois quel triste sort accable aujourd'huy") and not the victim.

As Caroline Wood notes, the oracle scene in *Bellérophon* became the structural model for many of the oracle scenes into the eighteenth century.[211] The opera *Théagène et Chariclée* (1695) illustrates this influence. For the sacrifice scene in the final act, the composer and librettist, Henri Desmarets and Jean-François Duché de Vancy, borrowed key elements from *Bellérophon* including the appearance of an oracular divinity as a statue, the combination of a sacrifice and an oracle, and an on-stage sacrificial killing that actually happens (though in this case the death is a suicide that follows a disrupted sacrifice).

The opera takes place in Ethiopia, where Chariclée's father Hidaspes is king. Théagène is a Greek prince, and the antagonist Arsace is sister to the king of Persia. The opera revolves around a love triangle between the two innocent titular characters and Arsace, whose love for Théagène turns to jealousy and when he does not share her feelings. Arsace is also a sorceress, and travels to the River Styx to summon demons for her vengeful plans against Théagène. In the last act, Chariclée is about to be sacrificed to the gods, but the idol of Osiris delivers an oracle that prevents the sacrifice by revealing Chariclée was noble-born and should marry Théagène.

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[211] Wood, *Music and drama in the Tragédie en musique*, 318-9.

Ex. 4.7   Henri Desmarets, *Théagène et Chariclée*, Act V, Sc. 3, Statue of Osiris

Desmarets modelled the music of Osiris's statue on Lully's for Apollo's statue. In fact, the oracle in *Théagène* (ex. 4.7) is more closely imitative of its model than most examples of its kind. As in *Bellérophon*, the music of the ritual immediately preceding the oracle is in G minor, and the oracle is marked by a change to G major (a somewhat unusual key for oracles). Like Lully, Desmarets uses three measures of instrumental music to introduce the oracle. In terms of register, Osiris's vocal line keeps the same high tessitura that Lully employs, the fifth between G and D (with some leading tones) for the first eleven measures. The high register corresponds to a more lyrical *récitatif mesuré* style than Lully's vocal line, which is brisker, briefer, and a *récitatif simple*. In m. 12, the vocal line descends down into a more normal "human" range on the word "amour." From that point on, the vocal line becomes more expressive, and covers the range of a ninth. Desmarets also does not separate it sonically from the other characters, as in *Bellérophon*, with an instrumental symphonie after the oracle. Arsace and the king respond immediately. Another notable difference is in terms of duration; whereas Lully's oracle only lasts for eight measures, Desmarets's lasts for twenty-one measures.

The longer and more lyrical music for the idol of Osiris reflects its benevolent nature. Instead of being summoned by a sacrifice like Apollo in *Bellérophon*, the idol halts a sacrifice. In addition, Osiris's message differs from Apollo's in its directness. Desmarets and Vancy do not introduce the idol with such an elaborate ritual, and Osiris delivers an oracle that has little of the enigmatic quality of Fontenelle's Apollo. Here we see a relaxation in the depiction of idolatry, in the sense that this idol is rendered more human and less of an austere figure. Furthermore, there is little in the scene that would strongly identify Osiris with Louis XIV. The shift away from the association between idol

and Louis may be symptomatic of the public's ebbing confidence in the king's divine power during this time. At the same time, his increasing piety and withdrawal from court life may have meant that the association between idol and king had become less representative of him and his image.

4.2   Idolatry on the Jesuit Theater Stage

During this period, the Jesuit College de Clermont (later the College Louis le Grand) repeatedly used theater to distance Catholicism and Louis XIV from the notion of idolatry. The Jesuits regularly took up the theme of idolatry in their productions, which were designed to provide moral instruction to students and the public. In 1681, for example, the college produced the ballet *Le Triomphe de la Religion, ou l'Idolatrie ruinée*. The program for the ballet depicts the history and struggle between Christianity and the demons who manifest in the world as pagan divinities that prey on human Passion, Ignorance, Cunning, and Cruelty. The four entrées of the ballet illustrate the dangers of idolatry in the context of these four human qualities.

As explained in the *livret*, idolatry is a thing of the pre-Christian past: "When Idolatry ruled the world, she was destroyed at one blow by Constantine's victory of Maxentius, and by his conversion to Christianity." In other words, idolatry is foreign to Christian France both in terms of history and geography. The ballet emphasizes the foreign nature of idolatry in the first entrée, which begins with a dance where Nebuchednezzar forces his subjects to worship his statue. According to Judith Rock,

Nebuchednezzar and his kingdom allegorically represented the Huguenots, in their treasonous attempts to establish a theology created in their own false image.[212]

The Jesuits' representation of idolatry in the theatre had manifested in moralistic ballets dating back to the 1660s, including the *Ballet des Idoles, ou le Désespoir de l'idolatrie*, a work produced at Chalons-sur-Marne in 1667, and the *Ballet d'Idolatrie*, produced at the Collège de Clermont in 1674. The Collège de Clermont also included an *entrée* in the 1672 *Ballet de l'Illusion* in which sculptors made the idolatrous and Pygmalionesque mistake of falling in love with their own statues.[213] In the 1680s, Jesuit ballets began including scenes featuring the on-stage creation of idols of Louis XIV. These scenes emphasized that the king's idols should be built and celebrated, unlike pagan idols. Two of the works that featured these types of scenes were scored by Pierre Beauchamps: the *Ballet des arts* (1685) and *La France Victorieuse sous Louis le Grand* (produced in 1680 and 1687). Little of the music of the Jesuit ballets survives, but due to the status of Beauchamps, we have short scores for both of these works.

La France Victorieuse consists of four parts with five *entrées* each and a *ballet general*. Each part was danced in between acts of a tragedy, and each dramatized a theme: Law, The Arts, Arms, and Peace. The second part devoted to The Arts begins with Apollo and the Muses who leave Parnassus to bring the *beaux arts* of antiquity to France. In the second and third *entrées*, Mercury gathers together the most illustrious painters and sculptors of antiquity, and the painters work on a portrait of the King while the sculptors create his statue. Beauchamps's score (ex. 4.8) begins with an expectedly regal *entrée* for

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[212] Judith Rock, *Terpsichore at Louis-le-Grand: Baroque Dance on the Jesuit Stage in Paris* (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1996), 146.

[213] The *entrée* is characterized as one of the illusions of the heart: "Des Sculpteurs charmez de la beauté de leurs Statuës font voir l'Illusion de l'Amour, qui s'attache à des objets nullement aimables."

Apollo and the Muses *entrée* in duple meter with dotted rhythms. Choreographically, a grand procession likely entered to a somewhat slower tempo, given the long phrase of eight measures and conjunct continuity of the melodic line. The *entrée* for Mercury is similarly in duple meter with dotted rhythms, while greater melodic fragmentation and a less belabored rhythmic profile suggests a livelier tempo. For the dance of the painters and sculptures, the music turns to a triple-meter dance suggesting a minuet. This lighter dance is shorter than the two previous *entrées* with only the first section repeated. All three *entrées* are in G minor.

Ex. 4.8   Pierre Beauchamps, *La France Victorieuse sous Louis le Grand*, Entrées for Apollo, Mercury, and a group of dancing painters and sculptors

Ex. 4.8 (continued)

In addition to the four parts, the ballet may have included a dance for animated statues that does not appear in the livret. The surviving music appears in a collection entitled *Ballets des Jésuites, composes par Messieurs Beauchant, Desmantins, et Collasse* that Philidor compiled in 1690. The collection lacks organization and does not clearly identify the source work of the dances. Most of the dances that correspond to the

entrées of *La France victorieuse* have been identified, and they appear in the collection roughly together, though not in the same order that they appear in the livret. Preceding the music for the first part, the collection includes music for an overture, prologue, sarabande, and a dance for "Les Statuës." The dance "Les Statuës" (ex. 4.9) shares a key with the dances for Apollo and the Muses, Mercury, and the painters and sculptors, and it is in duple meter like the first two dances. As yet, it remains unclear to which work this dance belongs.[214] In any case, the dance is likely a loure, [215] and one notes some of the typical characteristics of dances for animated statues, including the falling melodic gesture at the outset (likely mirroring the statues' descent from pedestals), dotted rhythms, and minor key.
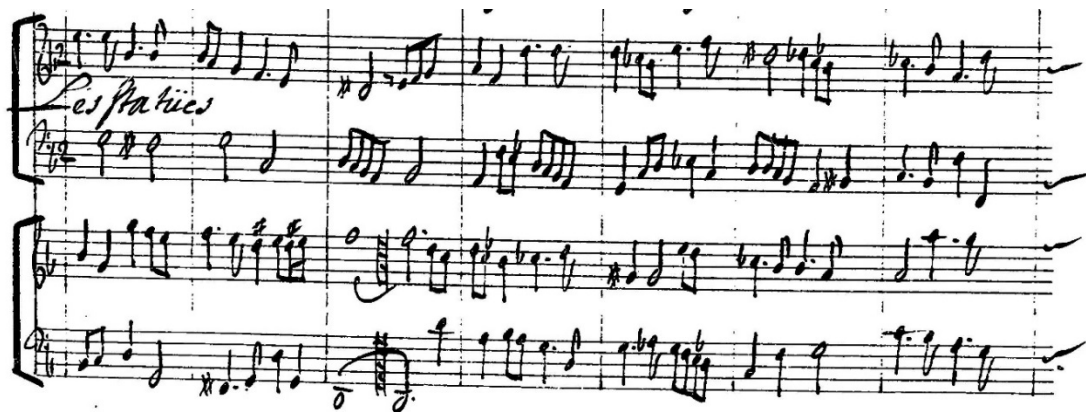
Ex. 4.9   Pierre Beauchamps, Source ballet uncertain, Entrée "Les Statuës"

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[214] Judith Rock and Régine Astier/Dorothy Pearce in separate publications have grouped "Les Statuës" together with the other dances of *La France Victorieuse*, though no one has accounted for its absence from the livret or the viability of its inclusion in a hypothetical overture-prologue. See Rock, *Terpsichore at Louis-le-Grand*, 76-77; and Astier and Pearce, "Pierre Beauchamps and the Ballets de Collège," *Dance Chronicle* 6/2 (1983), 159.

[215] Rock, *Terpsichore at Louis-le-Grand*, 76. Rock also suggests that the dance may be a gigue or forlane, though these may be too light-hearted, given that dances for statues are typically characterized by a somber, stately character during this period.
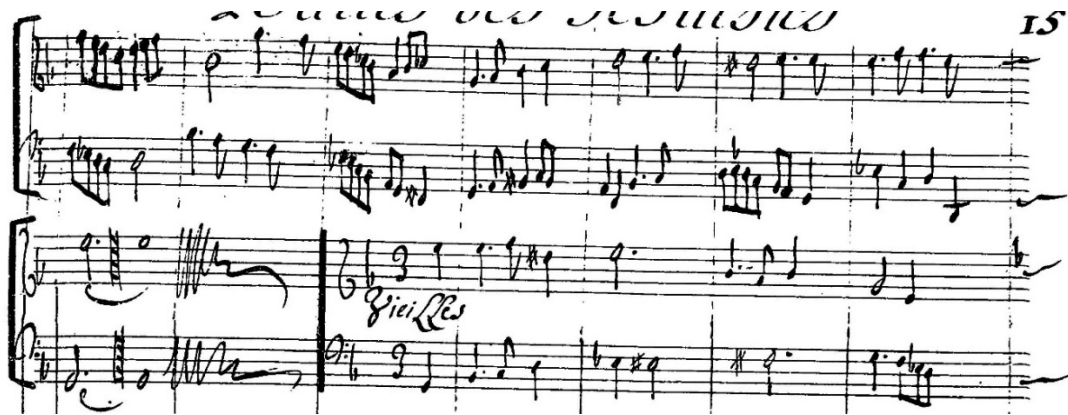
Ex. 4.9 (continued)

In the *Ballet des arts*, the final part devoted to the "Arts pour la Gloire et pour la Magnificence" includes an *entrée* celebrating the art of commemorative sculpture. The subject is treated with a thin veneer of allegory, in that the sculptors produce a statue of Jupiter rather than of the King himself: "Phidias & Praxitele wish to create the statue of the Olympian Jupiter, Momus brings them a troupe of pantomimes in order for them to learn the different attitudes of the body, and they then create other statues that immortalize the memory of great men." [216] Beauchamps's music for Phidias and the pantomimes and for Praxitele warrants few remarks. Both dances are in double time and in G minor, with dotted rhythms throughout. One passage in the first dance (mm. 15-19) features a sequence with suspensions and a rhythmic dialogue between the voices, followed by two measures of contrary motion, that suggests the possibility of dancers mirroring each other.

The presence of Momus and pantomimes shows the influence of Italian comedy. In fact, Momus (the Greek god of satire and jester of Parnassus) appeared frequently in

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[216] Phidias & Praxitele voulant faire la statuë de Jupiter Olympien, Momus leur amene uen troupe de Pantomimes pour leur apprendre à exprimer les differentes attitudes des corps, & faire ensuite d'autres statuës qui immortalisent la memoire des grands-Hommes.

Jesuit ballets of the 1680s and 90s, acting alternately as representative of satire, theater, and dance. The meaning of Momus's appearance in the *entrée* representing sculpture is unclear. It may indicate a hint of satirical skepticism about the nature of idols, or it may represent the connection between divertissements and statues, which were typically commemorated with divertissements. The role of Momus in Jesuit ballets of this period is a subject that deserves further study. In the 1690s, the growing presence of Momus in works performed at the Opéra coincided with the politically charged shift towards the carnivalesque.[217]

4.3   Prologue, *La Toison d'or* (1683)

In 1683, the Comédie-Française revived Pierre Corneille's *La Toison d'or* (1661) with a new prologue that took theatrical presentation of a statue of the king to a new level. La Chapelle wrote the prologue and explained in the *Argument* that it comemmorated the birth of Louis XIV's grandson, the Duc de Bourgogne, the previous year. A host of characters crowd the prologue, including France, Fortune, Fame, the gods Jupiter, Mars, Apollo, Venus, Minerva, eight flying divinities, and the seven Liberal Arts. In spite of the number of characters, the prologue features only one main plot event, the unveiling and worship of a statue of Louis. After two scenes of encomiastic dialogue, Mercury briskly descends while a grotto at the back of the theater opens to reveal a workshop, and the Liberal Arts rise up out of the stage with a statue of the king of "grandeur naturelle." Jupiter offers praise and speaks of the statue in a way that blurs the boundary between king and monument. All the gods walk forward to the edge of the

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[217] Georgia Cowart, *The Triumph of Pleasure*, *Louis XIV and the Politics of Spectacle* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 191-98.

stage and salute the statue. After more praise, four of the flying divinities raise the statue into the air. The gods leave the stage and the Liberal Arts disappear. In the *Argument*, La Chapelle explains that the statue represents a figure that will look over the young Duc de Bourgogne forever.

The 1661 prologue expanded upon the sun allegory, at that time an abstract concept that had yet to be defined by the young king's actions. The 1683 prologue constitutes the replacement of abstract symbolism by literal representation, a shift that, in the interpretation of Marie-France Wagner, symptomatizes the petrification of the king's image.[218] Such an exaggerated dramatization of idolatry could not help but invite critique, especially in 1683 when the debates about idolatry were approaching their most intense. Within the year, the prologue became the basis for pointed mockery by the Italian *comédiens*, who targeted it in the first scene of *Arlequin Jason, ou la Toison d'or comique*. The scene begins with a statue of Jason on stage. Médée becomes the replacement for all La Chapelle's deities who fall over themselves to praise the king's statue, and like them she talks about the statue as if it were the living Jason. Unlike them, however, she rages about her own power rather than going on about the power of another, and she decides to inflict that power on the statue/Jason by desecrating it as a means of controlling him/it and preventing her rival, Ipsiphile, from stealing him/it.

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[218] Marie-France Wagner, "Les Conquêtes de *La Toison d'or* of 1661 and 1683: The Breakdown of the Sun Allegory," in *Allegory Old and New: in Literature, Fine Art, Music and Theatre and its Continuity in Culture*, ed. Marlies Kronegger and Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1994), 95-112.

> Médée: Let us render, for a little while, a Jason so unrecognizable,
>   With a spirit so dull, a body so badly formed,
>   That my rival will hate him.

Like Jupiter commanding a host of deities, she summons her own "Démons, Lares, Follets, Lemures, & Lutins… Diables nouveaux, Sergns, Clercs, Procureurs, Commissaires, Gressiers; altérez Picoreurs" under her command and instructs them to serve her fury and transform Jason in return for the Golden Fleece. At that moment, "the heroic statue of Jason, which is in the middle of the stage, changes into Arlequin, in which form Jason remains for the rest of the play.'

After La Chapelle's prologue, one does not find another similarly elaborate presentation of a statue of the king in French theater, excepting perhaps in some of the Jesuit ballets. In 1686, at the height of Louvois's statue campaign, there would have been no better time to stage of celebration of a royal statue. Indeed, Quinault and Lully apparently composed the prologue to *Armide* with the statue campaign in mind, and used the prologue to reinforce the campaign. According to Rebekah Ahrendt, the prologue constituted a "spectacular representation of the monument to Louis XIV on the Place des Victoires."[219] Yet, no statues appear in the prologue, or indeed in the entire opera. Quinault and Lully celebrated the message conveyed by the physical king's statue and the Place des Victoires without making direct references to the statue. This represents the opposite approach to that used by La Chapelle. Undoubtedly many factors, including considerations of dramatic unity between the prologue and the opera, and Quinault's characteristic use of veiled and diffuse allusions to contemporary events, factored into the decision to omit statues from the prologue. I would further argue that the debates about

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[219] Rebekah Ahrendt, "*Armide* the Huguenots, and the Hague," *The Opera Quarterly* 28/3-4 (2013), 131-41.

idolatry may have played a role as well. It would be another thirteen years before a new, spectacular presentation of the king's magical monuments appeared in a prologue at the Opéra.

4.4   Prologue, *Amadis de Grêce* (1699)

In many ways, the prologue to *Amadis de Grêce* by Houdar de La Motte represents the most sophisticated and multi-layered presentation of idols in French spectacle during this period. On the surface, however, the prologue's design is exceedingly simple. The stage contains a magnificent monument "raised to the glory of Amadis of Greece." At the beginning of the prologue, the enchantress Zirphée transforms the monument into the figure of Louis XIV, then animates a group of statues that become musical monuments, singing an extended choral praise of the king. The rest of the prologue consists of references to Louis's achievements. As in La Chapelle's prologue to *La Toison d'or*, the king's monument constitutes the primary focus of the prologue to *Amadis de Grêce*. La Motte amplifies this focus with the statues' chorus, an extraordinary spectacle of idols worshipping an idol.

To date, the few scholars who have discussed the prologue have generally dismissed it as an empty piece of encomium with no ulterior motive or meaning beyond the praise of the king. David Kimbell's opinion of the prologue is characteristic: "La Motte's Prologue need not detain us. For a non-French public it was neither of interest nor of relevance . . . Even among examples of its type it is a poor specimen."[220] For Kimbell, the prologue's main problem is its artless obviousness, and the manner in which

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[220] David R. B. Kimbell, "The 'Amadis' Operas of Destouches and Handel," *Music and Letters* 49/4 (1968), 330.

the king appears. He compares La Motte's prologues for *Issé* and *Amadis de Grêce*, and notes that the former veils its compliments to Louis XIV in allegory, while in the latter, the king is "palpable." Kimbell avers that the prologue to *Amadis de Grêce* fails by disposing of subtlety and centering on a concrete representation of the king. Laura Naudiex finds the prologue lacking as well, and criticizes its blatant listing of the king's achievements as a meaningless gesture that renders the prologue alien to the drama of the ensuing opera. In her view, the prologue illustrates the trend of prologues of the period towards becoming "nothing more than exercises in pure rhetoric, empty of meaning."[221]

Francis Assaf proposes alternatively that the prologue is not meaningless but rather is the key to the opera.[222] He argues that it establishes an inseparable link between Amadis and Louis XIV and prepares the audience to make associations between the action of the opera and contemporary events. In particular, he claims the opera builds a tapestry of allusions to the War of the League of Augsburg and the Compiègne camp. In reality, the War constituted a devastating defeat for France, and the Compiègne camp was a grand and superfluous military exercise designed to save face in the wake of military failure, but in Assaf's view, La Motte's opera created a fictional world in which the king's reality merged with that of Amadis, and in which both heroes emerged victorious. La Motte's intention, according to this interpretation, was to create an opera and integral prologue that dramatizes a strong portrayal of Louis XIV's power.

The structure of the prologue's encomium shares some characteristics with the ritual sacrifice scene in *Bellérophon*. It features the animation of monarchical statues by

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[221] Laura Naudiex, *Dramaturgie de la tragédie en musique (1673-1764)* (Paris: Champion, 2004), 214.

[222] Francis Assaf, "*Amadis de Grèce* ou la mise en fiction du pouvoir royal," *Seventeenth-Century French Studies* 31/1 (2009), 14-24.

an enchantress whose wild vocal part (ex. 4.10) contrasts with the rigid vocal music of the statues (ex. 4.11). Yet, unlike the scene in the earlier work, La Motte's prologue contains no sense of mystery or awe. The animation of the idols holds no surprise, and there is virtually no build-up to the moment of their awakening. By 1699, living statues had become less remarkable at the Opéra, and the association between the king and singing idols less of an issue, perhaps because at that point the association had become cliché and emptied of meaning.

Ex. 4.10 André Cardinal Destouches, *Amadis de Grêce*, Prologue, vocal roulades of the enchatress Zirphée

Ex. 4.11 Detouches, *Amadis de Grêce*, Chœur des Statues Animées

One of the reasons that this idolatrous celebration of the king's monuments has defied interpretation is a general confusion over the source material for the opera. Kimbell is not alone in his puzzlement when he writes "It was a curious notion of La Motte's to call his hero 'Amadis de Grèce.'"[223] Like many he believes the opera shares the same source with Quinault's *Amadis*, but La Motte draws from a completely separate book, entitled *Amadis de Grecia*. The earlier opera synthesizes events and characters from Garci Rodriguez de Montalvo's *Amadis*, a set of four books published in 1508. The set spawned numerous sequels, including Feliciano de Silva's *Amadis de Grecia*, published in 1530. The French translation by Nicolas de Herberay des Essarts appeared in 1546-8 as the eighth book of the ongoing saga.[224] Amadis of Greece is in fact the grandson of the Amadis in Quinault's opera.

The clarification of La Motte's source material allows us to locate the chapter in de Silva's novel that became the basis for the opera prologue. In the twenty-fourth chapter, the enchantress Zirphée acts to protect her niece, the princess Niquée, from the incestuous advances of the princess's brother. She conjures a spectacle that keeps Niquée trapped in a state of pleasure until such time as a hero can come along to break the spell with true love. This state was referred to in the novel as the "glory of Niquée," and the phrase became a commonplace among seventeenth-century literati.[225] In the opera, when

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[223] Kimbell, "The 'Amadis' Operas of Destouches and Handel," 330.

[224] *Amadis de Grecia* was actually the ninth book in the series, but Essart did not translate the eighth book and so the French translations are numbered differently than the original Spanish novels, beginning with *Amadis de Grecia*.

[225] For example, in a 1693 letter to Saint-Evremond, Ninon de l'Enclos wrote "I was all alone in my chamber and very weary with reading, when one came and told me, 'There is a gentleman who comes from M. De St. Evremond.' . . . I could have wished the friend who brought your letters could have found in me the glory of Niquée, where people never suffer any change: I believe you think me one of the persons enchanted in it." Ninon de l'Enclos, *Lettres sur la vieillesse* (Toulouse: Ombres, 2001), 60.

we first meet Niquée in Act II, she is protected by this enchantment, as described in the livret: "The theatre represents the flaming steps that protect the glory of Niquée." The appearance of Amadis of Greece causes the enchantment to break: "The flaming steps break to the sound of thunder, and reveal the Glory of Niquée, where she appears under a magnificent pavilion in the middle of knights and princesses who are enchanted with her."[226] The prologue thus derives from a key scene in the novel in which Zirphée enchants the princess. La Motte omits the original motive for the enchantment (protecting Niquée from her incestuous brother) and transforms the enchantment scene into a magical celebration of Louis XIV.

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[226] Le Perron enflame se brise au bruit du tonnerre, & laisse voir la Gloire de Niquée, où elle parcît sous un Pavillon magnifiques, au milieu de Chevaliers & de Princesses enchantées avec elle.

Fig. 4.1   Anonymous engraving from Feliciano de Silva, *Amadis de Grecia*, Chapter
XXIV (1530).

Zirphée also fills her enchanted hall with music provided by a quartet of animated

female statues. The statues play string instruments, a harp, lyre, lute, and viol, as shown

in the engraving from Essart's translation (fig. 4.1). De Silva describes the music: "[the

statues] sound their instruments with such harmony that Orpheus and Amphion would have been taken as coarse and rude if they had wanted to join in order to equal or aspire to them."[227] These statues likely served as the inspiration for La Motte's musical monuments, especially given that an ensemble of musical statues was an unusual spectacle for the Opéra at that time. Dancing animated statues appeared more commonly in Italian comedies of the 1680s and 1690s, but animated statues that sang or played instruments were quite a rare spectacle. Before *Amadis de Grêce*, a choir of singing animated statues had last been heard in 1676, in the marionette play *Les Amours de Microton, ou Les Charmes d'Orcan*.[228]

In sum, La Motte seems to have designed the prologue by inscribing the conventions of royal encomium on to the spectacle of de Silva's *gloire de Niquée*. In terms of the music of the prologue, the most notable element is the chorus of the statues. Whereas the female statues that Zirphée animates for Niquée play instrumental string music, the sounds symbolic of peace, pleasure, and universal harmony, the statues of Louis XIV sing a chorus punctuated by militaristic fanfares for trumpets and drums (ex. 4.7). A ten-measure fanfare in C major introduces the chorus, which extends for 92 measures. The text is a single quatrain:

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[227] Et quant & quant les statues, dont nous vous parlions n'agueres, se prindrent à sonner leurs instruments, avec telle harmonie, qu'Orpheus & Amphion eussent esté tenus pour rudes & grossiers, s'ils s'en eussent voula mesler, pour les esgaler, ou ataindre.

[228] In Act II, Microton conjures Orcan, who summons a demon that conjures trees then turns them into statues then renders them into people, who then dance and sing a quatrain about love.

> To sing for this Victor we raise our concerts,
> His Name fills the Earth and the Sea
>   He is the honor of the Universe,
> His Eloge is printed in all the hearts of the world.[229]

André Cardinal Destouches's music for the chorus is almost mechanically conventional, and the unrelentingly syllabic text setting imitates the style of Lully's monolithically homophonic *grand chœurs*. Over the course of the prologue, the chorus's musical texture gradually incorporates more melismatic and imitative writing. The rigidity of Destouches's musical language compared to a composer like André Campra means that these elements do not materially deviate from formal or stylistic conventions, but there is a notable progression from the first statues' chorus to the last. It is as if the music loosens and comes to life in parallel to the animation of the statues.

Since few examples of singing statues exist during this period, it is interesting to note the musical similarities between Destouches's statues' chorus and the most influential example, the statue of Apollo in *Bellérophon*. Neither Lully and Destouches do much to musically distinguish the voices of animated statues and humans. This may be explained as a blurring of ontological boundaries between animate and inanimate, as a choice to emphasize the visual over the musical spectacle of statues coming to life, or perhaps both. The quatrain of the statues' chorus follows the criterion of brevity exemplified by Apollo's utterance, but the repetitions of the quatrain break that mold. The chorus contains four reprises of the quatrain; a recall of the trumpet fanfare interrupts the second reprise, and the fourth reprise is extended by repetition of fragments from the last three lines. Harmonically, the chorus follows a standard pattern. The first and third

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[229] Pour chanter ce Vainqueur élevons nos Concerts, / Son Nom remplit la Terre & l'Onde, / Il est l'honneur de l'Univers, / Son Eloge est grave dans tous les cœurs du Monde.

reprises conclude with cadences in the relative minor and the dominant, respectively, while the second and final reprise cadence in the tonic.

The conventionality of the music and text of the prologue seems in conflict with the dedicatory epistle to the king that La Motte wrote for the *livret*. The argument La Motte adopts is a characteristic stance for a Modern, and particularly characteristic for him. He asserts that the literary heritage of antiquity has become exhausted and rendered cliché. "If LOUIS did everything," he writes, "Apollo said it all." The way forward is to renew the ancient with elements of the modern, and he proposes that a marriage of the tales of antiquity with the persona and glory of the king will revitalize "old ornaments."[230] Though the subject of *Amadis* avoids Apollo and classical antiquity entirely, the dedicatory epistle describes the prologue's insertion of Louis XIV's literal image (the king's statue). Similarly, the militaristic statues' chorus harkens back to the militaristic treatment of idols in French spectacles of the early 1670s. Perhaps this look back represents La Motte's attempt to recapture the symbolic potency and spectacle of magical idols from a time when they had more meaning.

4.5   Conclusion

In the last quarter of the seventeenth century, the question of idolatry constituted one facet of the general shift in Louis XIV's image. It is no accident that the debates about idolatry coincided with what Peter Burke calls the "crisis of representations," the breakdown of absolutist allegories and mystical associations that had served as the basic

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[230] The Italian comedians mocked La Motte's epistle with this verse: "L'auteur avant tout veut ecrire / Et faire au Roi voir son esprit / Mais il ne scait plus que lui dire / Car par malheur on a tout dit."

materials of expressions of the king's glory.[231] The petrification, construction, and deconstruction of the king's image in this period has been the subject of a growing number of important studies.[232] To date, the contemporary anxiety about idolatry has garnered little attention in these studies, and I propose that it an unexplored and important lens through which to understand the crisis of absolutism.

In the eighteenth century, the frequency with which animated statues appeared prominently in French spectacle increased dramatically. La Motte played an important role in this trend, as will be discussed in the following chapter. At the same time, the growing awareness of idolatry as a contested idea, and one that was germane to the political structure of French society itself, generated widespread interest in idols. The literati and artists at the end of the seventeenth century begin to test the notion of idols in new ways, and they set the stage for the Pygmalions and Pandoras of eighteenth-century spectacle.

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[231] *The Fabrication of Louis XIV* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1992), 125-203.

[232] These studies include Jean-Marie Apostolidès, *Le Roi-Machine: Spectacle et politique au temps de Louis XIV* (Paris: Les Editions de Minuit, 1981); Louis Marin, *The Portrait of the King*, trans. Martha Houle (1981; Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988); Nicholas Henshall, *The Myth of Absolutism: Change and Continuity in Early Modern European Monarchy* (London: Longman, 1992); and Cowart, *The Triumph of Pleasure*.

CHAPTER 5

Le Triomphe des Arts and the Debut of Pygmalion

In 1700, *Le Triomphe des arts* introduced the myth of Pygmalion[233] to the French

stage.[234] The livret was penned by Antoine Houdar de La Motte less than a year after he

had included a chorus of animated statues in the prologue to *Amadis de Grêce*, discussed

in Chapter Four. La Motte was a leading intellectual who would go on to become the

controversial leader of the Moderns in their debate with the Ancients in Paris. In 1697, he

had invented the genre of the opera-ballet, a collection of independent acts or entries

(*entrées*) loosely united by a common theme and the first genre that had the potential to

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[233] The myth of Pygmalion was known in *ancien régime* France from Book 10 of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Ovid created the myth from various sources, and since the *Metamorphoses* first appeared sometime around the year 8 C.E., his account has remained the primary source for all other versions. The myth takes place on Venus's island of Cyprus, where the sins of the inhabitants provoke Venus's ire. Men known as the Cerastae sacrifice travelers on altars to Jupiter and women known as the Propoetides deny Venus and love itself and prostitute themselves. As punishment, Venus transforms the Cerastae into bulls and turns the Propoetides into stone, matching the coldness of their hearts. Pygmalion is a sculptor who, like Venus, is disgusted with the Propoetides, so he rejects all women and lives alone. In time, he falls in love with the statue of a woman that he has created, and he begins to treat it as a real woman. He kisses it, speaks to it, dresses and adorns it, and takes it into his bed. At a festival honoring Venus, he makes a sacrifice to the goddess and prays for the statue to become his wife. In the middle of the prayer, however, he stops himself out of shame for his unnatural love, and asks instead for a woman like the statue. Venus hears his prayer and understands his true wish, and as a reward for his love and for his loyalty to her, she animates the statue. Pygmalion then marries the Statue (who Ovid leaves unnamed) and they produce a son named Paphos.

[234] Georgia Cowart has established a politically driven program in *Le Triomphe des arts* and has shown how each act of the opera-ballet contains ideological reversals of Louis XIV's earlier *Ballet des arts* (1663). The last act setting of the myth of Pygmalion represents, in this framework, an apotheosis of the power of the arts and love and a utopian counter ideology to the king's propaganda of glory, piety, and military might. See *The Triumph of Pleasure: Louis XIV and the Politics of Spectacle* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 172-81. By 1700, the myth of Pygmalion had acquired politically subversive connotations within an inner circle of literary elites that included La Fontaine, Fontenelle, Fénelon, and La Motte. Though a discussion of these political connotations is beyond the scope of the present argument, they may have contributed to La Motte's unprecedented choice of staging the myth of Pygmalion and using the myth as the final act of the opera-ballet.

compete with the *tragédie en musique* for audience appeal.[235] La Barre was a respected

composer and a flute virtuoso who was widely considered the greatest performer of his

generation.[236] In 1700, at the age of around twenty-five years old, La Barre already had a

busy career. The title page of *Le Triomphe des arts* identifies him as a musician for the

Académie Royale de Musique, and financial records list him as one of the highest-paid

musicians there.[237] He also travelled professionally, and in the same year that *Le

Triomphe des arts* premiered, he performed throughout France and in Spain as part of a

five-month tour organized in honor of the dukes of Burgundy and Berry. Flute players

today are more familiar with his name because in 1702, he published his first book of

solo suites for transverse flute and bass, the first collection of solo pieces for flute ever

published.[238] La Barre modeled his solo suites after Marin Marais, and in the

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[235] I use the term "act" when referring to the separate dramatic units of the opera-ballet, though the terms "act" and "entrée" were used interchangeably in the eighteenth century. On the complexities of terminology for the opera-ballet, see James R. Anthony, "The French Opera-Ballet in the Early 18th Century: Problems of Definition and Classification,." *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 18/2 (1965), 197-206.

[236] *Le Triomphe des arts* was an early work for La Barre, and his first score composed for the theater. The fact that La Motte chose the young La Barre after La Motte's collaborations with André Campra on the immensely popular *L'Europe galante* and with André Cardinal Destouches on *Issé* and *Amadis de Grêce* suggests that La Barre's reputation as a composer was already becoming established by 1700. Circumstances may have guided La Motte's choice as well, because friction between his first two composer collaborators could have forced him to work with a new composer. La Barre's reputation continued to grow, and La Motte teamed up with him again in 1705 on the *comédie-ballet La Vénitienne*. On the tensions between Campra and his student Destouches, see Geoffrey Burgess, "Campra et le goût de son temps, ou: Comment (r)écrire une tragédie en musique en 1704," in *Itinéraires d'André Campra: D'Aix à Versailles, de l'église à l'Opéra* ed. Catherine Cessac (Paris: Margaga, Centre de Musique Baroque de Versailles, 2012), 278–80.

[237] La Barre received an annual salary of 600 livres as flutist in the orchestra. For composing *Le Triomphe des arts*, he received an additional 1000 livres. Jérôme de La Gorce, "L'Académie Royale de Musique en 1704, d'après des documents inédits conserves dans les archives notariales," *Revue de Musicologie* 65/2 (1979), 168-78.

[238] His image also will be familiar to some because it appears on the cover of Sadie, *Companion to Baroque Music*. In the painting reproduced on the cover, he is accorded a place of respect as the central figure in an illustrious group of musicians that includes a gamba player who is most likely Marin Marais. La Barre is pictured standing in the middle of the gathering while holding open a musical score. On the history of this painting, see John Huskinson, "'Les Ordinaires de la Musique du Roi': Michel de

Avertissement he explicitly stated his intention to establish the flute as a solo instrument in the same way that Marais had done for the viol.[239]

Despite the credentials of the work's collaborators, the production had a short run.[240] It remains uncertain what exactly caused the work's lack of success, though one factor might have been a public whose tastes were deeply divided between the opera-ballet and the Lullian *tragédie en musique*. The work also provoked virulent published critiques.[241] Later critics, whose reviews were colored by the popularity of Rameau's *Pygmalion*, asserted that La Barre's music, La Motte's livret, or both, did not merit more performances.[242] Yet, even though *Le Triomphe des arts* was only staged for a brief time, it continued to generate debate well into the latter half of the eighteenth century, and the livret continued to appear in printed anthologies as late as the 1830s. Most significantly for the subject of this dissertation, the work played an instrumental role in establishing the animated statue as an important trope of French spectacle in the eighteenth century.

La Barre, Marin Marais et les Hotteterre d'après un tableau du début di XVIIIᵉ siècle," *Recherches sur la Musique française classique* 17 (1977), 15-30.

[239] La Barre, *Pièces pour la Flute traversière, avec la basse-continue*. For the definitive study of La Barre, see Marie-Hélène Sillanoli, "La vie et l'œuvre de Michel de la Barre (1675-15 mars 1745): flûtiste de la chamber en compositeur français" (PhD Diss., University of Paris, 1985).

[240] The work was performed a total of 24 times between May 16 and July 9, 1700. After that no further performances were given. *Journal de l'Opéra*, 1700.

[241] Jérôme de La Gorce, *L'Opéra à Paris au temps de Louis XIV: Histoire d'un théâtre* (Paris: Éditions Desjonquères, 1992), 110-14.

[242] This assertion appeared numerous times in the *Mercure de France* between 1748 and 1753.

Fig. 5.1   Franz Ertinger, frontispiece, *Le Triomphe des arts*. Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

The act that attracted by far the most attention was the final one, the setting of the tale of Pygmalion. When the livret was reprinted in 1703, an illustration of the myth appeared as the frontispiece, replacing the original (fig. 1). It is difficult to know how widely the score circulated, though it is telling that no critic ever identified Rameau's musical borrowings.[243] Certainly the score was undervalued by French critics; in the

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[243] The score was printed by Ballard in 1700. The Bibliothèque Nationale de France houses an undated manuscript of pieces for clavecin titled "Recueil des plus belle simphonies du Triomphe des arts, ballet mis in musique par monsieur de La Barre"; the collection contains fourteen pieces, five of which were

Mercure de France, reviewers most often either ignored La Barre's music entirely or dismissed it with words such as "feeble."[244] La Motte's livret was more well-known, and though it sometimes garnered favorable assessments, many French critics found it lacking as well. One author described La Motte's treatment of the Pygmalion myth as "more mutilated than Pasquino."[245] Voltaire, La Motte's chief antagonist for decades in *querelles* over the nature of drama, singled out the work for criticism in 1744 in his "Lettre sur l'Esprit," appended to the livret of *La Mérope*. He first asserts that wit has no place in opera or any work that is designed to instruct or move the passions, then continues:

> Of all our operas, that which is the most ornamented, or rather the most overloaded, with this epigrammatic wit, is the ballet of *The Triumph of the Arts*, composed by an amiable man who always thought ingeniously and who expressed himself similarly; but who, by the abuse of that talent, contributed a bit to the decadence of letters, after the *beaux jours* of Louis XIV.[246]

Voltaire then points to the treatment of Pygmalion in the last act as exemplary of the work's flaws. He singles out a line from "La Sculpture" for special criticism, a line delivered by Pygmalion to the Statue after her animation: "Vos premiers mouvemens ont été de m'aimer." [Your first movements were to love me.] After admitting that he "remember[s] hearing some admire this line in my youth," Voltaire ridicules La Motte's

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from "La Sculpture." Another collection published in Paris in 1745 with the title "Recueils de Symphonies de plusieurs Opéras Modernes, & Fanfares & Prelude & plusieurs Airs, Menuets, & chasses, & Carillons, & Sonates de plusieurs Auteurs" contained twenty-three numbers from *Le Triomphe des arts*. A handful of these were instrumental pieces from "La Sculpture." Finally, in 1755 another edition of the "Recueils de Symphonies…" was published in Paris with "31 Morceaux à 1 instr. tirés du *Triomphe des arts*."

[244] See, for example, *Mercure de France* (April 1751), 166-67.

[245] The name Pasquino refers to a famous disfigured ancient statue in Rome. *Mercure de France* (Sept. 1748), 222.

[246] "De tous nos opéras, ceui qui est le plus orné, ou plutôt aceablé de cet esprit épigrammatique, est le ballet du *Triomphe des arts*, composé par un home amiable, qui pensa toujours finement, et qui s'exprima de même; mais qui, par l'abus de ce talent, contribua un peu à la decadence des lettres, après les beaux jours de Louis XIV." Voltaire, *La Mérope française, avec quelques petites pieces de litterature* (Paris: Prault, 1744), 75.

conflation of the movements of the Statue's body with the movements of the heart. His

distaste primarily targets La Motte's sentimentality, as expressed through what Voltaire

considers a pun unworthy of the dignity of drama. Undoubtedly, Voltaire's views

influenced many of the critics who viewed La Motte's livret in unfavorable terms.[247]

Negative critiques such as these have contributed to a tradition of underestimating

the work that has continued into the present day. No scholar has ever discussed the music

of *Le Triomphe de arts* as an influence on Rameau's music for *Pygmalion*. Even recent

scholarship that compares the two works in admirable detail deals only with the livrets

and Rameau's music while ignoring La Barre's score.[248] James Anthony, in his

monumental study of the opera-ballet, had little more than this to say: "*Le triomphe des*

arts…was a total failure. Its music has little to recommend it. It is dull and repetitive."[249]

Though few French critics praised it, the ballet fared significantly better with

German critics. Notably, Johann Mattheson judged *Le Triomphe des arts* to be one of ten

French masterpieces composed between 1681 and 1736. He praised the work for the

naturalness of its melodies and dances and listed it as the equal to compositions by Lully

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[247] On the *querelles* between La Motte and Voltaire that dealt with opera, see for example Voltaire, *L'Oedipe de Monsieur de Voltaire, avec une Préface dans laquelle on combat les sentimens de M. de la Motte sur la Poësie* (Amsterdam: E. J. Ledet & Compagnie, 1731); Stefano Castelvecchi, *Sentimental Opera" Questions of Genre in the Age of Bourgeois Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 44-48; and Ruth Katz, *The Powers of Music: Aesthetic Theory and the Invention of Opera* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1994), 21-25.

[248] Leanne Eleanore Dodge, "The Sensible Listener on Stage: Hearing the Operas of Jean-Philippe Rameau through Enlightenment Aesthetics" (PhD Diss., Yale University, 2011).

[249] James R. Anthony, "The Opera-ballets of André Campra: A Study of the First Period French Opera-Ballet" (PhD Diss., University of Southern California, 1964), 531-32.

and Campra.[250] One measure of the work's success in Germany is the inclusion of its

melodies in many eighteenth-century German collections.[251]

5.1   The Influence of *Le Triomphe des arts* in France

The remarkable influence of this opéra-ballet is most evident in a list of works

that were directly inspired or indebted to it.[252] These include the many theatrical

adaptations of Pygmalion that appeared after *Le Triomphe des arts* introduced the myth to

the French stage[253]; those written before 1800 are listed in Table 5.1.[254] The end date of

Table 5.1 reflects the fact that the greatest concentration of staged adaptations appeared

during the eighteenth century, but it should be noted that new adaptations continued to

appear in France throughout the nineteenth century. The most notable of these works

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[250] Johann Mattheson, *Der vollkommene Kapellmeister* (Hamburg: Christian Herold, 1739), 218.

[251] Mattheson mentions that music from *Le Triomphe des arts* appeared in printed collections throughout Germany; see Jean Gaudefroy-Demombynes, *Les Jugements Allemands sur la musique française au XVIIIᵉ siècle* (New York: AMS Press, 1978), 54-55. These collections most likely used dances from La Barre's score. The University of Uppsala has digitized the parts from one manuscript collection of dances copied from *Le Triomphe des arts*. These can be viewed at < http://www2.musik.uu.se/duben/presentationSource1.php?Select_Dnr=2450>

[252] The first works that appeared in response to *Le Triomphe des arts* were parodies. These premiered during a time of intense competition between the theaters, and parodies and borrowings happened frequently. Georgia Cowart identifies one of the parodies of *Le Triomphe des arts* as Florent Dancourt's play *Les trois cousines*, and notes that a number of parodies at the *théâtre de la foire* alluded to this opéra-ballet; see Cowart, *Triumph of Pleasure*, 173.

[253] The first time Pygmalion became the subject of a theater work was in 1689 in Vienna, with *Pigmaleone in Cipro*, a *festa musicale* by composer Antonio Draghi and librettist Nicolò Minato. In 1694 in Hamburg, composer Johann Georg Conradi and librettists Christian Heinrich Postel produced a *Singspiel* entitled *Der wunderbar vergnügte Pygmalion*. These are the only known theatrical treatments of the myth of Pygmalion before *Le Triomphe des arts*. A study of the libretti indicates that these works had little or no influence on *Le Triomphe des arts* or any of the French productions of the myth during eighteenth century. Certainly their influence on French theater is negligible compared to the influence of *Le Triomphe des arts*.

[254] This table provides the most comprehensive list of adaptations of the myth of Pygmalion in France between 1700 and 1800 that is currently available. It improves on the list of works currently catalogued in the CESAR database. For a list of musical settings of the myth that includes French and non-French works from 1689 to 1992, see Bettina Brandl-Risi, "Der Pygmalion-Mythos im Musiktheater— Verzeichnis der Werke," in *Pygmalion: Die Geschichte des Mythos in der abendländischen Kultur*, ed. Mathias Mayer and Gerhard Neumann (Freiburg in Breisgau: Rombach, 1997), 665-733.

include *Pigmalione*, a one-act opera commissioned in 1809 by Napoleon with music by

Luigi Cherubini and a libretto by Antonio Sografi; *La Fille de marbre*, a ballet-

pantomime premiered in 1847 with music by Cesare Pugni and livret by Arthur Saint-

Léon; and *Galathée*, a comic opera first performed in 1852 with music by Victor Massé

set to a livret by Jules Barbier and Michel Carré.[255]

Table 5.1   The myth of Pygmalion in French performance, 1700–1800

Year	Title	Music	Libretto/Text	Venue	Genre
1700	*Le Triomphe des arts*	La Barre	La Motte	Académie Royale de Musique	Opéra-ballet
1713	*Pigmalion*	Clérambault	Marie de Louvencourt	[Premiered for the King][256]	Cantata
Ca. 1729	*Pigmalion*	---------------	François Joseph Lagrange-Chancel	[Rejected by Comedie-Française[257]]	Comedy
1733	*Le Triomphe des arts*	Bernard-Aymable Dupuy	La Motte	Toulouse	Opéra-ballet
1734	*Pigmalion*	Mouret?	Marie Sallé (choreographer)[258]	London[259]	Ballet-pantomime

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[255] On Cherubini's opera, see Chapter Three of Ellen Lockhart, "Moving Statues: The Rise and Fall of Pygmalion, 1770-1815," (PhD Diss., Cornell University, 2011).

[256] Likely at one of Madame de Maintenon's private concerts.

[257] After the rejection of *Pigmalion* by the Comédie Française, Lagrange-Chancel renounced the theater. The work remains unpublished, though he quotes from it in the introduction to Vol. 4 of his collected works, reminiscing on what was still a bitter experience for him thirty years after the fact. Chancel, *Œuvres*, 65-69.

[258] Jean-Baptiste de Hesse danced the role of Pygmalion.

[259] Though Sallé's *Pigmalion* premiered in London, the influential work is included on this list because Parisians knew of it through a letter describing the production that appeared in the *Mercure de France* in 1734. The public's interest in Sallé's innovative and scandalous choreography and realistic costuming choices prompted the letter to be reprinted in newspapers across Europe. Foster, *Choreography and Narrative*, 1.

1734	*Pigmalion*	Mouret	Luigi Riccoboni (choreographer)[260]	Paris	Ballet-pantomime
1735	*Pigmalion*	Panard	L'Affichard	Foire Saint-Germain	Opéra-comique (one act)
1740	*Pandore*[261]	(Rejected by Rameau)	Voltaire	------------	Tragédie lyrique (five acts)
1741	*Pigmalion, ou la Statue animée*	------------	André François Boureau-Deslandes	Public readings in London, France	Philosophical manifesto
1741	*Pigmalion*	Baurand (divert.)	A. Romagnesi, P. Couteaux	Théâtre Italien	Comedy w/ divertissement (three acts)
1741 ?	*La Veuve de Pigmalion*[262]	Unknown	Le comte Anne-Claude de Caylus	------------	Comedy w/ ballet-pantomime (one act)
1746	*Scylla et Glaucus*[263]	Jean-Marie Leclair *l'aîné*	D'Albaret	Académie Royale de Musique	Tragédie en musique
1748	*Pigmalion*	Rameau (after La Barre)	Ballot de Sovot (after La Motte)	Académie Royale de Musique	Ballet (one act)
1752	*Pygmalion, ou Les petits sculpteurs*	Unknown	"Le Sieur Dourdé"	Théâtre de l'Opéra Comique	Ballet-pantomime
1753	*Brioché; ou l'Origine des Marionettes*	------------	M. Gaubier	Théâtre Italien	Parody of Rameau's *Pygmalion*
1755	*Pigmalion*	Pannard	L'Affichard	Foire Saint-Germain	Opéra-comique (one act)
1760	*Pigmalion*	Unknown	Poinsinet de Sivry	Théâtre Français	Comedy (one act)
1760	*Pygmalion*	Unknown	Michel Billion *dit Billioni*	Théâtre de l'Hôtel de Bourgogne	Ballet (one act)
1761	*La Statue de Pygmalion*	Unknown	M. Allard (choreo.)	Grand Théâtre de la Monnaie Bruxelles	Ballet
1762 / 1770	*Pygmalion: scène lyrique*	Horace Coignet/ J-J. Rousseau	J.-J. Rousseau	Hôtel-de-Ville, Lyon	Melodrama
1763	*Émilie, ou Le triomphe des arts*	------------	M. Claudet	Unknown	Comedy (five acts)
1764	*L'Amateur*	------------	Nicolas-Thomas Barthe	Comédiens François Ordinaires du Roi	One-act comedy (parody of Pygmalion)

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[260] Catherine Roland, a protégé of Marie Sallé, danced the part of the Statue.

[261] As discussed in this essay, Voltaire used La Motte's treatment of the animation of Pygmalion's statue in *Le Triomphe des arts* as a model for the scene of Pandora's animation.

[262] A sequel of sorts to Romagnesi and Couteaux's *Pigmalion*, that likely appeared in 1741 or 1742. It survives in *Amusemens des Fées* (Neufchatel,1748), which provides no information regarding performance.

[263] The prologue features the Propoetides from the first half of the myth of Pygmalion.

1767	*Pigmalion ou La statue animée*	Florian Johann Deller	Etienne Lauchery	Unknown	Ballet-héroïque
1770	*Pigmalion*	Antoine Bailleux	Marie de Louvencourt	Paris	Cantatille
1774	*L'Amant statue ou le nouveau Pygmalion*	M. Reinigg	M. De B… Desgagniers	Théâtre de Soufflot, Lyon	Comédie mélée d'ariettes
1775	*Le Repentir de Pygmalion*	------------	Three authors[264]	Comédie Italienne (never performed)	Comédie mélée d'ariettes
1775	*Zélis ou le nouveau Pygmalion*	Papavoine	M. Landrin	Théâtre de l'Ambigu-Comique	Comedy w/ dances (one act)
1776	*Pygmalion*	André Grétry	Barnabé Farmian Durosoy	------------	Never performed; Grétry abandoned score
1777	*Galathée ou suite de la scène lyrique de Pygmalion*	------------	Le chevalier Cubières	Versailles (1777); Théâtre des Beaujolais (1785)	Comedy (one act)
1778	*Le Sculpteur d'Athènes, ou le nouveau Pygmalion*	------------	André-Charles Cailleau	Unknown	Comedy with vaudevilles (two acts)
1779	*Arlequin marchand de poupées, ou le Pygmalion moderne*	Unknown	Charles-Jacob Guillemain	*Théâtre des Variétés-Amusantes*	Comedy with music (Parody of Rousseau's *Pygmalion*)
1780	*L'Anti-Pygmalion ou l'amour Prométhée*	Jean-Baptiste Rochefort	François-Martin Poultier d'Elmotte	Théâtre des Elèves pour la danse de l'Opéra Paris	Scène lyrique
1780	*Pygmalion*	Barnaba Bonesi	Barnabé Farmian Durosoy[265]	Théâtre de l'Hôtel de Bourgogne	Drame lyrique (one act)
1783	*Pygmalion*	Unknown	Etienne l'Auchery	Théâtre de Cassel	Ballet
1783	*Pygmalion*	Unknown	M. Schakelberg	Grand Théâtre de la Monnai, Brussels	Ballet
1780s/ 90s	*Pygmalion amoureux de son modèle[266]*	Unknown	Unknown	Paris?	Comedy with vaudevilles
1789	*Arlequin Pygmalion*	------------	François-Guillaume Ducray-Duminil	Théâtre des Bluettes comiques et lyriques	Comedy (one act)
1794	*Arlequin Pygmalion*	Wicht	Auguste Dossion	Théâtre du Vaudeville	Parade, vaudevilles (one act)

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[264] Jean-Baptiste Denis Després, Charles-Georges Thomas Garnier, Pierre-Antoine Augustin de Piis.

[265] The one-act text by Durosoy was first set then abandoned by André Grétry in 1776.

[266] B. N. Mss fr. 9252 and 9262

1795	*Galathée*	Antonio Bruni Bartolomeo	François Martin Poultier d'Elmotte	Théâtre Français	Scène lyrique (Melodrama)
1795	*Pygmalion*[267]	Unknown	Unknown	Théâtre du Lycée des Arts	Ballet
1799	*Pygmalion*	Christian Kalkbrenner	Rousseau	Société Philotechnique	Scène
1799	*Pygmalion*	Unknown	Unknown	Théâtre des amis de la patrie	Ballet
1800	*Pigmalion à St. Maur*	------------	Etienne Cosse/Charle Guillaume Étienne	Théâtre des Troubadours	Farce anecdotique (en vaudevilles)
1800	*Pygmalion*	F. C. Lefebvre (arranger)	Louis-Jacques Milon (choreographer)	Théâtre de l'Ambigu-Comique	Ballet-pantomime

Of special note in Table 5.1 is the resetting of La Motte's entire livret for *Le Triomphe des arts* by the Toulousian composer Bernard-Aymable Dupuy in 1733. Dupuy was one of the most well established composers in Toulouse, though his output consisted almost exclusively of sacred music. His re-composition of *Le Triomphe des arts* represents the most substantial secular work that he ever composed, and his reasons for choosing La Motte's livret for such an ambitious and unusual undertaking remain unclear. Dupuy's score survives, and though it appears that he knew the original score, Dupuy borrowed little from it for his setting of "La Sculpture."[268] According to Jean-Christophe Maillard, who is currently reconstructing the score, Dupuy may have been interested in updating the musical realization of La Motte's livret. "Without a doubt," he notes, "it is pointless to compare the two scores [of La Barre and Dupuy]: the music of La Barre is of a different era."[269] While Dupuy uses similar orchestral forces to La Barre, the later score shows some orchestration alterations including the addition of bassoons and the removal

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[267] B.N. Ms, f.f. 9288

[268] My thanks to Viviane Niaux at the Centre de Musique Baroque de Versailles for her help with facilitating access to the score. Jean-Christophe Maillard has undertaken a reconstruction of the score; see his "Un opéra toulousain du XVIIIème siècle," *Midi-Pyrénées patrimonie* 26 (2011), 42-47. L'Ensemble Baroque de Toulouse has performed individual acts of the work.

[269] Maillard, "Un opéra toulousain," 46.

of the lute. In general, Maillard observes, whereas La Barre's music is unadorned and dramatically direct with melodies that are often "tender and pliable," Dupuy's score reflects a new aesthetic in its more liberal approach to musical effects, ornamentation, and rhythmic variety for dramatic purpose.

Dupuy's treatment of La Motte's livret seems respectful, in that he leaves the text virtually unaltered. Maillard suggests that Dupuy may have conceived of his resetting in part as an opportunity to introduce La Motte's livret, which enjoyed some renown in France, to Toulouse. The score gives the impression that Dupuy composed it for an audience with knowledge of French opera. In the late 1680s and 1690s, the Académie Royale de Musique granted privileges to directors for the performance of operas in cities including Toulouse, Marseille, and Lyon. Opera companies did not visit Toulouse often, however, and not until the Salle de l'Hôtel de Ville opened its doors in 1738 with a production of *Les Fêtes vénitiennes* did Toulouse have a hall built for the performances of spectacle. The musical culture in Toulouse was conservative but rich; both Jean Gilles and André Campra worked at Saint-Étienne a generation before Dupuy studied music there. The preferences of the pious audiences of Toulouse tended towards sacred music,[270] and Dupuy's new score for *Le Triomphe des arts* represented something of an anomaly in 1733. The performance did not include staging, and Dupuy never again composed anything comparable.

Dupuy's little-known score may be additionally significant because it adds a new layer to the understanding of Jean-Philippe Rameau's *Pygmalion*, which I discuss in Chapter Six. Fifteen years after Dupuy reset *Le Triomphe des arts*, Rameau reset "La

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[270] On the anti-theater culture in Toulouse, see William Howarth, ed., *French Theatre in the Neo-Classical Era, 1550-1791* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 396.

Sculpture," and it is possible that Dupuy had some bearing on his choice of source material. Rameau could have known of Dupuy's score through one of his primary collaborators. His star *haute-contre*, Pierre de Jélyotte, created many of Rameau's roles including Pygmalion in 1748, but before he came to Paris in 1733 he had studied music in Toulouse where he had known Dupuy.[271] Though Jélyotte left Toulouse for Paris months before the performance of Dupuy's *Le Triomphe des arts*, he could have known of the work before leaving or heard about it sometime in the intervening years before Rameau decided to create *Pygmalion*. Louis de Cahusac, Rameau's frequent collaborator during the fertile period of the 1740s, also may have known of Dupuy's score. Cahusac grew up near Toulouse in Montauban, and he completed his studies in Toulouse before taking up a position with the Court of Aids in Montauban. He remained there until 1736, when he moved to Paris. Given his literary activities before he left for Paris (including his membership in the Montauban Literary Society), he would have been attentive to new literary and theatrical events in the region.

Dupuy also deserves recognition for being the first French composer, as far as is currently known, to adopt the Italian practice of composing new music to a previously set livret. Formerly, that distinction was credited to Rameau for *Pygmalion*.[272] Though the reasons behind Dupuy's choice of source material are uncertain, Rameau's adaptation of the same source material was undoubtedly influenced by the growing interest in *Le*

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[271] Jélyotte and Dupuy studied music together at the Cathédrale Saint-Étienne de Toulouse. On Jélyotte's early education, see Arthur Pougin, *Pierre Jélyotte et les chanteurs de son temps* (Paris: Librairie Fischbacher, 1905), 14-17.

[272] This assertion was first made in Graham Sadler and Neal Zaslaw, "Notes on Leclair's Theatre Music," *Music and Letters* 61/2 (1980), 155. It has been reasserted most recently in Graham Sadler, ed. *The Rameau Compendium* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2014), 160. A forthcoming second edition of *The Rameau Compendium* will acknowledge Dupuy's resetting of *Le Triomphe des arts*.

Triomphe des arts and the myth of Pygmalion during the 1730s and 40s. In addition to
Dupuy's *Le Triomphe des arts*, a series of notable works on the myth of Pygmalion
appeared in the 1730s. In 1734, Marie Sallé's *Pygmalion* premiered in London to scandal
and acclaim. An account of the work appeared in periodicals across Europe, and a
number of imitation ballet-pantomimes appeared soon after, including Catherine Roland's
Pigmalion, which premiered the same year in Paris with music by Mouret.[273] In 1735,
Panard and L'Affichard debuted their one-act opera-comique *Pigmalion* at the Foire
Saint-Germain, and it became one of the most popular and revived operas-comique of its
time. Also in 1735, Nicolas Lenglet Dufresnoy published a modernized verse edition of
the *Roman de la rose* that became one of the most influential medieval texts of the
eighteenth century.[274].The popularity of the text, which contains an extensive and famous
retelling of the myth of Pygmalion, generated further interest in the myth.

By 1740, two further works directly inspired by *Le Triomphe des arts* had
appeared, and Rameau was involved with both of them. In 1739, La Motte's livret served
as the model for Rameau's second opera-ballet, *Les Fêtes d'Hébé, ou Les talents
lyriques*.[275] The livret by Antoine Gautier de Montdorge borrowed La Motte's use of the
arts as the theme for each act, as well as an act entitled "La Poésie" with Sappho as its
central character. In 1740, Voltaire completed *Pandore*, his final livret for Rameau. The
opera closely parallels the myth of Pygmalion: Prometheus is enamored of Pandora, the
statue he has created, and he brings her to life. A close look at the livret reveals

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[273] On Sallé's *Pygmalion* and its reception, see Susan Leigh Foster, *Choreography & Narrative: Ballet's Staging of Story and Desire* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 1-12.

[274] Alicia C. Montoya, *Medievalist Enlightenment: From Charles Perrault to Jean-Jacques Rousseau* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2013), 10-11.

[275] Sylvie Bouissou, *Jean-Philippe Rameau: musicien des Lumières* (Paris: Fayard, 2014), 733.

something that has gone unrecognized: Voltaire used La Motte's "La Sculpture" as a model for the scene depicting the animation of Pandora. A comparison of the first words uttered by the animated statues in each work demonstrates Voltaire's debt to La Motte:

La Motte, *Le Triomphe des arts*, V, 4 **Voltaire, *Pandore*, II**

LA STATUE:
Que vois-je? où suis-je? et qu'est-ce que je pense?

D'où me viennent ces mouvements?
Que dois-je croire? et par quelle puissance
Puis-je exprimer mes sentiments?

Mais quel est cet objet? Mon âme en est ravie,
Je goûte en le voyant le plaisir le plus doux.
Ah ! je sens que les Dieux qui me donnent la vie,
Ne me la donnent que pour vous.

PANDORE:
Où suis-je? et qu'est-ce que je voi?
 […]
Ah ! d'où vient qu'il ne paraît pas? De moment en moment je pense et je m'éclaire.
Terre qui me portez, vous n'êtes point ma mère;
Un dieu sans doute est mon auteur:
Je le sens, il me parle, il respire en mon coeur.
[…]
Quel objet attire mes yeux!
De tout ce que je vois en ces aimables lieux,
C'est vous, c'est vous, sans doute, à qui je dois la vie.
Du feu de vos regards, mon âme est remplie!
Vous semblez encore m'animer.

Voltaire's treatment of La Motte's text deserves a detailed discussion that lies beyond the scope of this study. Generally speaking, however, Voltaire changes the text in part because Prometheus's relationship to Pandora differs from Pygmalion's relationship to the Statue. Whereas Pygmalion is only the object of the Statue's affection (in a literal sense), Prometheus is both the object of Pandora's affection and the god who animated her. Voltaire also gives Pandora more detailed and less sentimental language to describe her awakening thoughts.

It may seem ironic that Voltaire would look to *Le Triomphe des arts* as a model, given his critique of the work as he expressed in the "Lettre sur l'Esprit." Yet the choice is consistent with his view of himself as an author who knew how to update and rectify La Motte's text. In this regard, his approach as an adapter matches that of Dupuy and

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Rameau. Despite his limited understanding of music and opera, and his insecurity about his ability to author a livret, Voltaire sought a collaboration with Rameau in order to produce new and innovative works.[276] When Voltaire singled out "La Sculpture" for criticism in 1744, he did so having thought about the text not just as a critic but also as an author and adapter. Rameau rejected Voltaire's livret, but he certainly would have perceived its similarities to "La Sculpture."

New treatments of the myth of Pygmalion continued to appear throughout the 1740s, each one bringing a new perspective to the tale. A popular comic treatment, the *Pygmalion* of Romagnesi and Couteaux (with a divertissement composed by Baurand), premiered in 1741 at the Théâtre Italien. A comic sequel of sorts, *La Veuve de Pygmalion*, was most likely written in the same year, though little information about it beyond its text survives. The debate among the philosophes about the nature of matter and sensation, a debate to which Rameau paid close attention, inspired two philosophical manifestos written in the form of novelistic retellings of the myth of Pygmalion. In 1741, André Francois Boureau-Deslandes wrote *Pygmalion ou la statue animée* and published it secretly and anonymously in London.[277] The dedication explicitly frames the text as a literary manifesto on philosophical materialism,[278] and through his myth-allegory,

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[276] On the correspondence and relationship between the two artists, see Madeleine Fields, "Voltaire and Rameau," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 21/4 (1963), 457-65; Sadler, "Patrons and Pasquinades"; Catherine Kintzler, "Rameau et Voltaire: les enjeux théoretiques d'une collaboration orageuse," *Revue de Musicologie* 67/2 (1981), 139-68; and Charles Dill, "Pellegrin, Opera and Tragedy," *Cambridge Opera Journal* 10/3 (1998), 247-57.

[277] Jonathan Israel believes that the text actually was clandestinely published in Paris, and that it was marked as having been printed in London due to its controversial ideas. See his *Enlightenment Contested: Philosophy, Modernity, and the Emancipation of Man, 1670-1752* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 739.

[278] Victor I. Stoichita, *The Pygmalion Effect: From Ovid to Hitchcock*, trans. Alison Anderson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 114.

Deslandes questions whether sensations derive from movements in matter, and whether there is any divine power in control in some way of all matter (as Newton, Locke, Voltaire, and many philosophes believed).[279] Deslandes's text generated widespread controversy; a 1742 notice in the *Mercure de France* announces that the "Brochure" has appeared in Dijon, and that the court has ordered the book to be publically ripped apart and burned in front of the palace for its dangerous views on religion.[280] In spite of, and also because of, its controversial ideas, reprints of *Pygmalion ou la statue animée* appeared in 1742, 1743, 1744, and 1753.[281] The importance of the text in the history of French philosophical materialism is now widely recognized by modern scholars.[282] In Deslandes's treatment of the awakening of the Statue, once again one finds the Statue expressing her thoughts in language similar to that used by La Motte in *Le Triomphe des arts*. Though Deslandes's debt to La Motte is not as clear as Voltaire's, one can still reasonably assume that Deslandes looked to La Motte as a model. At that time, there were no other models with similar treatments of the Statue's first words. In fact, given that the Statue never talks in Ovid, one can argue that La Motte contributed to eighteenth-century France the very idea of the Statue's awakening through language.

The second philosophical treatment of the myth appeared around the same time, possibly in response to Deslandes's text. Entitled *Pygmalion, ou la statue pensante*, it was

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[279] Israel, *Enlightenment Contested*, 360.

[280] *Mercure de France* (Aug. 1742), 1789-93.

[281] The popularity of the text was such that a series of engravings by Emmanuel-Jean Nepomucene de Ghendt (after drawings by Charles Eisen) was created for later editions.

[282] See, for example, Anne Deneys-Tunney, "Le roman de la matière dans *Pigmalion, ou la Statue animée* (1741) d'A. F. Boureau-Deslandes" *Écriture* (1999), 93-108; and Sébastien Drouin, "Allégorisme et matérialisme dans *Pigmalion, ou la Statue animée* d'André François Deslandes," *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century* 7 (2003), 383-93.

penned by the prominent philosophe (and mortal enemy of Voltaire) Thémiseul de Saint-Hyacinthe. Like Deslandes, Saint-Hyacinthe used the myth of Pygmalion to interrogate the existence of a divine power behind matter as well as the nature of sensation. His novelistic treatment similarly mixed philosophical ideas with literary techniques, and like Deslandes's text, it achieved wide recognition.[283] It is possible that the success of these two literary-philosophical treatments of the myth encouraged Rameau to contribute a musical-philosophical treatment that similarly engaged with contemporary debates on sensation.[284] Though these publications brought a new overtly philosophical angle to the myth that departs somewhat from La Motte's treatment, the language used by the philosophes in these texts, particularly the Statue's language, shows the still-strong influence of *Le Triomphe des arts*.

In 1748, the premiere of Rameau's *Pygmalion* amplified this influence. The Duke of Gramont was so impressed with *Pygmalion* that he asked Jean-Marie Leclair (*l'aîné*) to compose new music for the four remaining acts of the opera-ballet.[285] In the following

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[283] For example, Christoph Martin Wieland, author of the epic poem *Oberon*, related in a letter that in 1748, as a fifteen-year-old student in Magdeburg, he was inspired by Saint-Hyacinthe's *Pygmalion* to write a philosophical essay in which he tried to demonstrate that Venus's emergence from the foam of the sea did not require divine intervention and could be explained by the laws governing the movement of matter. He also reports that when his essay fell into the hands of his teachers, their responses "drew him into many arguments." C. M. Wieland, *Sämmtliche Werke*, vol 49, ed. Johann Gottfried Gruber (Leipzig: Georg Joachim Göschen, 1823)*,* 23-4.

[284] On Rameau's personal engagement with debates about sensation, and Diderot's role in guiding Rameau's thinking on these issues during the 1740s, see Thomas Christensen, *Rameau and Musical Thought in the Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 212-31. On the fascination of the sensationalist *philosophes* with the myth of Pygmalion, see George L. Hersey, *Falling in Love with Statues: Artificial Humans from Pygmalion to the Present* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 99-106; Henri Coulet, *Pygmalions des Lumières* (Paris: Les Éditions Desjonquères, 1998); Annegret Dinter, *Der Pygmalion-Stoff in der europäischen Literatur: Rezeptionsgeschichte einer Ovid-Fabel* (Heidelberg: Winter, 1979), 65-101; J. L. Carr, "Pygmalion and the Philosophes: The Animated Statue in Eighteenth-Century France," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 23, no. 3/4 (1960), 239-55.

[285] Leclair composed the score in collaboration with the singer and composer Jacques Naudé, though unfortunately it does not survive, but some commentary about how the new score compares to La

three years, references to *Le Triomphe des arts* appeared frequently in the *Mercure de France*. The period also saw new works likely inspired by *Le Triomphe des arts*, including a cantata from 1749 entitled *Apollon, ou le Triomphe des arts* and an ode, *Le Triomphe des arts*, written by the poet Ponce Denis Écouchard Lebrun in 1751.[286] As late as 1763, a five-act comedy appeared with the title *Émilie, ou le triomphe des arts*. The last act contains a comic reworking of the myth of Pygmalion, an overt reference to La Motte's livret.

In addition to these theatrical and literary works, *Le Triomphe des arts* inspired major works of art. As Georgia Cowart has shown, *Le Triomphe des arts* served as the model for Antoine Watteau's *Pilgrimage to Cythera* (1717).[287] In addition, Mary Sheriff has suggested that the use of Apelles and Pygmalion to represent painting and sculpture in *Le Triomphe des arts* may have been an inspiration for eighteenth-century artists. For the Salon of 1743, the sculptor Lambert-Sigisbert Adam produced a terracotta sculpture of Pygmalion and the statue, then produced a similar piece showing Apelles painting Campaspe for the Salon of 1745. In the description of the second work, he indicated that the two pieces were companion works. Similarly, the *Pygmalion et Galathée* of Étienne Falconet, which Diderot famously praised at the Salon of 1763, was billed by Falconet as

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Barre's score does survive. See Sadler and Zaslaw, "Notes on Leclair's Theatre Music," 154-55. It is interesting to note that two years earlier, Leclair had used the tale of the Propoetides, which is the first half of Ovid's account of Pygmalion, as the basis for his prologue to *Scylla et Glaucus*.

[286] "Nouvelle Cantate, intitulée *Apollon, ou le Triomphe des Arts*, composée par M. L. B. & notée par M. D. L. G. tous deux amis de l'Auteur." Mentioned in the *Mercure de France* (Nov., 1749), 105.

[287] Cowart, "Watteau's *Pilgrimage to Cythera* and the Subversive Utopia of the Opera-Ballet," *The Art Bulletin* 83 (2001), 461-76; and Cowart, *The Triumph of Pleasure*, 226-46.

a companion piece to a sculpture of Apelles that was shown at the Salon two years later.[288]

All this is to say that *Le Triomphe des arts* did not fade away after its failed production. Rather, it remained an influence on French arts and letters that cannot be measured in performances and revivals alone. Most importantly, it cleared the way for the wave of theatrical treatments of Pygmalion. While it is well known that Pygmalion achieved a wide popularity during the eighteenth century, scholars have not reflected on why the myth did not appear in French theater until 1700, a surprisingly late date considering the ubiquity of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in seventeenth-century France.[289] A consideration of this question helps to illustrate the innovation of La Motte and La Barre's take on the tale, and to show *Le Triomphe des arts* to be a pivotal work of the *fin-de-siècle*.

5.2   The Modernity of La Motte and La Barre's "La Sculpture"

During the seventeenth century, the striking absence of Pygmalion on the French stage reflects several circumstances.[290] At that time, the myth was widely viewed as a

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[288] Mary D. Sheriff, *Moved by Love: Inspired Artists and Deviant Women in Eighteenth-Century France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 143-44.

[289] Ovid was considered a basic part of a humanist education. Latin was frequently taught using the *Metamorphoses*, and those schooled children had many of Ovid's tales drilled into them by the time they completed their studies. The parts of the *Metamorphoses* considered too risqué for school were also popular among students who read them under classroom desks and at home. Book 10, which included Pygmalion, was especially popular as this kind of illicit text for its erotic content; see Burrow, "Re-embodying Ovid," 301-06. Louis XIV may have learned about the myth of Pygmalion in a very different context, through a set of mythological-themed playing cards designed by Stefano della Bella and commissioned by Cardinal Mazarin when the king was six years old. The cards were intended to familiarize Louis with standard myths. Each card shows a particular myth with a caption and illustration, and the set included a card for the myth of Pygmalion. Stefano della Bella, Pygmalion, from *Jeu de la Mythologie*, 1644, Etching, 8.7 x 5.7 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

[290] To my knowledge, only one seventeenth-century French theatrical work ever treated a Pygmalionesque scenario: the *Ballet de l'Illusion*, which premiered at the Jesuit Collège de Claremont in Paris in 1672. It

cautionary tale about the dangers of becoming infatuated with artifice. This interpretation

made it antithetical to theatrical spectacle and its celebration of the artificial.[291] The story

also created practical challenges to adaptation because it required no more than three

characters, centered on a reclusive main character, and featured only one spectacular

event: the animation scene with Venus's descent.[292] These narrative parameters made the

myth too limited to support a self-contained work. At the same time, it was too self-

contained itself to be mined for secondary characters or a divertissement within a more

complex narrative. La Motte's invention, the opera-ballet, created for the first time a

genre that suited the myth perfectly. In *Le Triomphe des arts*, La Motte presented it as a

self-contained act within a larger work.

Pygmalion posed an additional challenge to adapters because he represented an

anti-hero, a deviant who succumbed to the deceptions of lust. Characters who fit this

description did appear in French spectacle–one thinks of the Hercules of *Ercole amante*,

for example–though the love-sickness or lustfulness of these characters is always

mitigated in some way, usually by their status as a hero or as a god. Pygmalion is neither,

and his socially unacceptable desire for his Statue is the only character trait that defines

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treats the scenario as a cautionary tale regarding the artificial illusions of the heart, and though the entrée does not refer to Pygmalion by name, it featured sculptors who fell in love with their statues: "Des Sculpteurs charmez de la beauté de leurs Statuës font voir l'Illusion de l'Amour, qui s'attache à des objets nullement aimables." This treatment of the myth is consistent with the common seventeenth-century view of it as a tale about illusion, artifice, lust, and the deception of love.

[291] The literature on the centrality of artifice and illusion in the early modern era is vast. Sarah R. Cohen writes eloquently about the centrality of artifice in French court theater: "what the king achieved in his own performance… was to make an artful body—to convince the spectator that the material facts of flesh, muscles, and bones comprised also the wonders of artifice." Cohen, *Art, Dance, and the Body in French Culture of the Ancien Régime* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 3.

[292] La Motte's solution for the problem of the minimal cast was to add a third character, La Propetide, as another unrequited lover of Pygmalion. The final scene also features a choir and a parade of characters not found in Ovid, including a *paysanne* and a soprano representing La Musique who sings a da capo aria in Italian. Much of the criticism of La Motte's treatment focused on these deviations from Ovid.

him. The idea of Pygmalion as a deviant was represented in literature and in the arts; in

fig. 3 it is graphically represented in a seventeenth-century painting by an anonymous

Flemish school painter. Pygmalion's blatant eroticism is evident in his posture and in the

Statue's aroused expression. The swans, conventional references to the myth of Leda and

the swan, are an additional symbol of immoral eroticism.[293] Such depictions illustrate the

extent to which eighteenth-century depictions of Pygmalion as a kind of hero for love, the

arts, and human ingenuity marked a profound departure from his image in the

seventeenth century.

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[293] In the Greek myth of Leda and the swan, Zeus assumes the form of a swan and rapes or seduces the Greek queen Leda. Many variations of the myth exist; in some, Leda's and the swan-Zeus's consummation produces two children, Helen of Troy and her brother Polydeuces.

Fig. 5.2 *Pygmalion*, anonymous seventeenth-century Flemish school. Oil on canvas. New York, anonymous owner.

Many of the foremost authors of the long seventeenth century wrote about Pygmalion in similar terms. Michel de Montaigne analogized Pygmalion's act to incest with one's artistic creation,[294] while Cyrano de Bergerac equated the myth with other tales involving both incest and bestiality.[295] La Fontaine used Pygmalion in a fable about falling in love with deception,[296] and in a comedy prologue by Fontenelle entitled "Pygmalion, Prince de Tyr," Pygmalion is seduced by the god of Folly.[297] In 1676, Isaac de Benserade, Lully's former collaborator in the *ballet de cour*, published a widely circulating collection of *rondeaux* and engravings on Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.[298] His *rondeau* on the myth of Pygmalion offered an interpretation that departed from Ovid and was summarized concisely in the caption under the engraving for the *rondeau*: "Pygmalion had always despised women, and as punishment Venus made him fall in love with one of his statues, for he was a sculptor: she came to life, and he married her."[299] By

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[294] Montaigne's interpretation of the myth of Pygmalion in his *Essais* was widely read and influenced the reception of Pygmalion in France throughout the seventeenth century. It has also provoked an ongoing stream of modern scholarship; see for example Constance Jordan, "Montaigne's Pygmalion: The Living Work of Art in 'De l'affection des pères aux enfans'," *The Sixteenth-Century Journal* 9/4 (1978); and Patrick Henry, "Pygmalion in the *Essais*: 'De l'affection des pères aux enfans'," *The French Review* 68/2 (1994), 229-38.

[295] Cyrano de Bergerac, *Histoire comique des États et Empires de la Lune et du Soleil*, ed. Paul Lacroix (Paris: A. Delahays, 1858), 239-40.

[296] Jean de La Fontaine, "Le Statuaire et la statue de Jupiter," in *Fables choisis mises en vers par M. de La Fontaine* (Paris: Claude Barbin, 1679), 29-32.

[297] Fontenelle, *Œuvres de Fontenelle*, vol. 4 (Paris: Bastien, Servieres, 1790), 453-72. The prologue is undated but was most likely written between 1690 and 1695.

[298] Isaac Benserade, *Métamorphoses en rondeaux* (Paris: l'Imprimerie Royale, 1676), 104-05. The collection was reengraved and printed the following year with a dedication to the Dauphin in Amsterdam.

[299] "Pygmalion avoit toûjours méprisé les femmes, & par punition Vénus le fit devenir amoureux d'une de ses Statuës, car il estoit Sculpteur: elle l'anima, & il l'éspousa." This engraving and interpretation of the myth circulated widely in France and in Europe in translation. It appeared in numerous reprints until as

characterizing Pygmalion in these terms, Benserade framed the myth with a moral that was consistent with seventeenth-century views of Pygmalion as a deviant.[300]

Given this image of Pygmalion, it is not surprising that the most vitriolic critiques of the staging of the myth in *Le Triomphe des arts* emphasized its immorality.[301] In fact, La Motte may have chosen the myth precisely for this reason. To understand this choice, we must situate La Motte's work within the Quarrel of the Ancients and the Moderns. In one of the early salvos of the quarrel, Charles Perrault had defended Lully and Quinault's opera *Alceste* against its detractors. He famously argued that the opera brought a modern refinement and *galanterie* to Euripides's *Alcestis*, which he described as barbarous, contemptible, and representative of the brutality and ignorance of its epoch. Perrault's critique became a central argument of the Moderns, who characterized the works of many ancient authors as rife with immorality, violence, and a generally uncivilized view of the world.

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late as 1801. In fact, the 1703 frontispiece to *Le Triomphe des arts* contains overt visual references to this engraving.

[300] In 1741, Michel Procope Couteaux and Jean-Antoine Romagnesi wrote the three-act comedy *Pigmalion* based on the idea that the animation of the statue was a punishment for Pygmalion rather than a blessing. The comedy premiered at the Théatre Italien on 12 January, 1741, with a concluding *divertissement* by Baurans that ended in a vaudeville. The seventeenth-century view of Pygmalion as a deviant who deserved to be punished remained in circulation in the eighteenth century primarily in such comedies and parodies. In the nineteenth century, it returned with a vengeance, most graphically in Arthur Saint-Léon's two-act ballet *La Fille de Marbre* of 1847. In that ballet, it is Satan rather than Venus who brings the statue to life, and he does it in exchange for Pygmalion's soul. The ballet concludes with Pygmalion dead on the ground while Satan stands with his foot on the doomed sculptor's corpse. For a discussion of this ballet, see Foster, *Choreography & Narrative*, 1-12.

[301] The most extensive critique was published by Henry Guichard, a 26-page lambasting that was published in Paris under the title "Lettre d'un Lanterniste de Thoulouze, à l'Autheur du Ballet des Arts, représenté sur le Theatre de l'Opéra." Guichard finds the fifth act's setting of the myth of Pygmalion especially immoral, and one of his grievances is the insertion of a prostitute (the Propetide) into a work for the stage. His critique of this inserted character, and the staging of the myth of Pygmalion in general, can be read in part as a critique of the Opéra itself, given the common view at the time of the Opéra as an immoral hotbed of prostitution. On contemporary views of the immorality of the Opéra, see Cowart, "Of Women, Sex and Folly."

La Motte's main contribution to the quarrel occurred in its second wave, when he became a leading voice for the Moderns during the Battle over Homer in 1714-15. La Motte instigated the print war by publishing an adaptation of Homer's *Iliad*, substantially changed in the name of improving and modernizing the original. In his preface, the *Discours sur Homère*, La Motte reiterates the arguments of the Moderns from the last decades of the seventeenth century: "That [Homeric] age described as 'heroic' will be seen to be the reign of the most base and unjust passions, and above all as the triumph of avarice."[302] The role of the modern author, La Motte asserted, is to adjust the morality of the ancient text to suit the *galant* sensibilities of the modern age.

The same conception of modern adaptation is at work in *Le Triomphe des arts*, and especially in the final act. La Motte transformed the myth of Pygmalion to suit modern morals, and the lyric theater, the most *galant* of art forms in *ancien-régime* France, constituted the most suitable medium for the task. Through the power of spectacle, La Motte and La Barre redefined a myth that for a more than a century had stood for the dangers of artifice and lust into a tale that celebrated the power of the arts and love. In fact, by shedding the moralistic seventeenth-century interpretations of the myth, "La Sculpture" restored Ovid's emphasis on passionate love as a positive and powerful force. Significantly, La Motte and La Barre's "La Sculpture" presented for the first time since Molière's *Dom Juan* an animated statue with a substantial solo vocal

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[302] "[C]es temps qualifies d'héroïques paraîtront le règne des passions les plus injustes et les plus basses, et surtout le triomphe de l'avarice." Houdar de La Motte, *Discourse sur Homère*, 42, quoted in Larry F. Norman, *The Shock of the Ancient: Literature and History in Early Modern France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 115.

role.[303] Most animated statues in the seventeenth century were either mute dancers or vocally anonymous members of a chorus.[304] By giving Pygmalion's Statue both song and dance, La Motte and La Barre created an animated statue with more range of expression than any seen on stage before. What *Le Triomphe des arts* dared to present was the veneration and humanization of a formerly feminine-gendered emblem of temptation and the artificial.[305]

Such a bold artistic statement was only possible because it had been prepared by three profound and interconnected developments during the seventeenth-century: the advent of mechanistic philosophy, new understandings of the emotions, and the new emphasis on emotional *vraisemblance* and the *vraisemblance* of the *merveilleux* in lyric theater. Descartes was the primary instigator of the first of these developments, and most importantly for the reception of our myth, he introduced the living statue as an analogy for the mechanistic conception of the human body. As he wrote in the opening lines of his *Traité de l'Homme* (originally published in 1648),

> "I suppose that the body is nothing other than a statue or earthly machine, which God has created on purpose….We see clocks, artificial fountains, mills, and other such mechanisms which, having all been made solely by man, never fail to have the strength to move on their own and in a variety of ways: and it seems to me that I could not imagine so many types of

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[303] It likewise represented a number of additional firsts for French theater. Virtually every previous theater work that featured animated statues in the seventeenth-century depicted the statues as being animated by the king or by a god. Thus, the animation of statues had been exclusively a monarchical or supernatural act. In La Motte's treatment, for the first time, a mortal civilian shared in this power. La Motte also staged for the first time the animation of a statue into a mortal woman; this first resonated with the celebration of women in the gender politics of La Motte's Moderns.

[304] See, for example, the animated statues in *Cadmus et Hermione*, *Ercole amante*, *Les Amants magnifiques*, and *Amadis*.

[305] The commandant's transformation is death-to-statue, and his transgressive nature is marked by his return to hell at the end of the play. Pygmalion's Statue in *Le Triomphe des arts* is quite different, something of a mirror image, not just in terms of gender but also because her transformation is statue-to-life and her animation is celebrated.

movement in this statue, which I suppose has been made by the hands of God, nor attribute to it any artifice that you have not already thought of, insofar as it can have even more."[306]

Descartes's metaphor of the body as statue created a new interpretation of the myth as a philosophical allegory.[307] The metaphor undermines the ontological binary—a human being attracted to an artificial object— that made Pygmalion an objectionable character. Under Cartesian philosophy, the ontological boundary between the sculptor and his Statue, and the moral implications of that boundary, are not so clear. According to Descartes's view of the body, both Pygmalion and the Statue exist as statue-bodies, and both are animated by an immaterial force that is separate from their bodies. In Cartesian dualist terms, the immaterial mind of Pygmalion interacts with and animates his material body. Descartes believed that the immaterial mind is created by God, a scenario that mirrors the Statue's divinely bestowed soul. Because Descartes mistrusts the body and any knowledge derived from the senses, he ascribes to the human body an artificiality similar to that which Pygmalion's Statue symbolized. Though there is no documentary indication that Descartes's mechanistic metaphor informed La Motte's treatment of the myth of Pygmalion directly, the audience for *Le Triomphe des arts* would have been

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[306] "Je suppose que le Corps n'est autre chose qu'une statuë ou la machine de Terre, que Dieu forme tout exprés... Nous voyons des horloges, des fontaines artificielles, des moulins, & autres semblables machines, qui n'étant faites que par des homes ne laissent pas d'avoir la force de mouvoir d'elles-mesmes en plusieurs diverses façons; Et il me semble que je ne sçaurois imaginer tant de sortes de mouvemens en celle-cy, que je suppose estre faite des mains de Dieu, ny luy attribuer tant d'artifice, que vous n'ayez sujet de penser qu'il y en peut avoir encore davanage." René Descartes, *L'Homme de René Descartes* (Paris: Charles Angot, 1664), 1-2.

[307] Descartes's metaphor goes back to 1632, when he wrote *L'Homme*, though he withheld the treatise out of fear of suffering a punishment to that given to Galileo. The treatise was only published posthumously in 1664. The metaphor began to appear in scientific and philosophical writings during the eighteenth century, when authors including Diderot, Pierre Bayle, and the Abbé Condillac took it up; see Hersey, *Falling in Love with Statues*, 99-102.

familiar with the metaphor, especially given that Cartesian materialism was widely debated in the salons.[308]

The second development comprises what Joan DeJean has called a sentimental revolution, i.e. a cultural revolution in the understanding of the emotions.[309] This revolution became the basis of new understandings of sentiment and love, and opera and the novel became the artistic expressions of these new understandings. In the second half of the seventeenth century, a series of developments in philosophy, medicine, and literature helped bring about new conceptions of the interior spaces of the body and the mind as well as an entirely new understanding and language of emotion. William Harvey's discovery in 1628 of the circulatory system revolutionized the medical conception of the body's inner workings and permanently resituated the heart as the central organ of the body (rather than the liver, as had been believed for centuries). Twenty-one years later, in his treatise *Les Passions de l'âme*, Descartes initiated a revolution in the scientific conception of the passions and the emotions. At the time, passions were conceived as the result of external stimuli affecting the body and soul. Descartes argued for the use of a new term, and redefined *émotions* as movements or agitations of the soul that were not necessarily created in response to external stimuli. In other words, in Descartes's new framework, emotions were perceptions that could originate inside the mind and body. Descartes also viewed emotions as disturbances, both

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[308] On debates about Cartesianism in seventeenth-century salons, see for example Erica Harth, "Cartesian Women," in *Feminist Interpretations of René Descartes*, ed. Susan Bordo (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999), 213-31.

[309] Joan DeJean, *Ancients against Moderns: Culture Wars and the Making of a Fin de Siècle* (Chicago, London: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 104.

unpleasant and potentially dangerous.[310] These ideas served as both a catalyst and a point of contention for debates about emotion in the latter half of the seventeenth century.

By the 1670s, new conceptions and rhetorics of emotion had begun to further map out the inner spaces of the mind, body, and soul. The year 1678 saw the publication of two landmark texts for the history of emotion, one in medicine and one in literature. The first was a medical treatise by Guillaume Lamy, the *Explication mécanique et physique des forces de l'âme sensitive, des sens, des passions, et du movement volontaire.* Lamy describes emotions as situated in perception rather than in the real world, and in this way he agrees to some extent with Descartes. Yet he differs from Descartes's characterization of emotions as disturbances to the perceiver, and argues that the perceiver can take an active role in shaping emotions, and in allowing the body to be guided by them. For Lamy, emotions are not entirely isolated within an individual's perception, but rather constitute a force that can shape both one's inner world and one's perception of (and relationship to) the objects that inspire emotions.[311]

The second landmark publication to appear in 1678 is widely considered the first modern French novel, Madame de Lafayette's *La Princesse de Clèves*. Lafayette pioneered a new psychological exploration of character, in part through a new literary technique, the interior monologue. This technique gave the reader access to a character's inner emotional life as it developed. More than any other feature of the novel, the new emphasis on emotion, interiority, and love set *La Princesse de Clèves* and the novels that

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[310] Ibid., 79-83.

[311] Ibid., 87-89.

followed in its wake apart as a genre. The focus on emotion and subjectivity gave the

novel a popularity and status that put it into competition with the tragedy and epic.

The innovations of the novel demonstrate a kinship with La Motte and La Barre's

innovations in their reinterpretation of the myth of Pygmalion. According to DeJean, the

reader of *La Princesse de Clèves* is given for the first time a window into the main

character's development, and in certain moments, the reader is allowed to "witness the

princess quite literally discovering the existence of basic emotions and, in the process,

implicitly acknowledging her prior affective emptiness, a crucial original absence of

feeling."[312] This explanation of Lafayette's princess illustrates her parallels with La

Motte's Statue. In "La Sculpture," the Statue is no longer an empty and artificial object,

but rather a woman who, like Lafayette's princess, is awakened (quite literally) to the

existence of basic emotions and an inner world that previously had not existed for her in

her prior affective emptiness. It is no coincidence that "La Sculpture" opens with the

récitatif "Fatal amour," the famous monologue scene in which Pygmalion laments and

tries to understand the emotional turmoil caused by his love for his Statue. In this

récitatif, we find the lyrical equivalent of Lafayette's interior monologue.[313]

By the last quarter of the century, the investigation of emotions, and above all of

love, had become a central tenet of the Moderns. Perrault, the first leader of the Moderns,

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[312] Ibid., 112.

[313] One finds a striking parallel between the increasing interest in interiority and subjectivity in literature, medicine, and philosophy, on the one hand, and the increasing popularity of the monologue in the *tragédie en musique*. As Caroline Wood has determined, there was a steady increase in monologues (or as she refers to them, soliloquies) in French opera from the time of Lully to the second decade of the eighteenth century. In Lully's operas, a quarter of all the acts open with a monologue. In operas composed in 1707-1715, that ratio more than doubles. See Wood, *Music and Drama in the* Tragédie en musique*, 1673-1715: Jean-Baptiste Lully and his Successors* (New York, London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1996), 211.

argued that a superior understanding of the emotions was an advantage that modern

society possessed over ancient authority. He further argued that the science of the

emotions was an area of moral philosophy equivalent in importance to scientific

discoveries in astronomy and medicine. Perrault spelled out this argument in the text that

codified the arguments of the Moderns, *Le Parallèle des Anciens et des Modernes, en ce*

qui regarde les arts et les sciences (published 1688-1696):

> Just as the ancients knew in general about the seven planets and the most
> visible stars, but not about the satellites of the planets and a great number of
> little stars that we have since discovered, so too they knew as we do in
> general about human passions, but they did not understand the little affections
> and little circumstances that accompany them, and which are like their
> satellites. It has only been in the most recent times that new and interesting
> discoveries have been made both in astronomy and in moral philosophy, as in
> a thousand other things. Just as the science of anatomy has found inside the
> heart certain valves, fibers, movements and symptoms that escaped the
> knowledge of the ancients, so has moral philosophy also uncovered in the
> heart certain inclinations, aversions, desires, and antipathies about which
> these same ancients knew nothing.[314]

Perrault's positioning of love as a crucial subject of human study is central to his

argument that novels and operas such as Quinault's *Alceste* have the power to modernize

and civilize ancient tales. These genres can, and should, do this because at their core they

treat the exploration of love. As DeJean observes, the novel as a genre, beginning with *La*

Princesse de Clèves, "proclaims that love is the center of our affective life and that it is

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[314] "Comme les anciens connaissaient en gros aussi bien que nous les sept planets, et les étoiles les plus
remarquables, mais non pas les satellites des planets, et un grand nombre de petits astres que nous avons
découverts, de même ils connaissaient en gros aussi bien que nous les passions de l'âme, mais non pas
une infinite de petites affections et de petites circonstances qui les accompagnent, et qui en sont comme
les satellites, ce n'a été que dans ces derniers temps que l'on a fait et dans l'astronomie et dans la
morale, ainsi qu'en mille autres choses, ces belles et curieuses découvertes: En un mot, comme
l'anatomie a trouvé dans le cœur des conduits, des valvules, des fibres, des mouvements et des
symptômes qui ont échappé à la connaissance des anciens, la morale y a aussi trouvé des inclinations,
des aversions, des désirs, et des dégoûts, que les mêmes anciens n'ont jamais connus." Quoted with
translation in Norman, *The Shock of the Ancient*, 123-124.

by the ability to love, and to attract love, that an individual's worth can be evaluated."[315] This elevation of love by the Moderns helps to explain why Pygmalion finally appeared on the French stage in 1700.

The myth of Pygmalion in many ways offered an ideal story for a dramatic exploration of love. It is a simple story that focuses on only one relationship between two characters, and it contains no epic deeds or scene changes to distract from this relationship. The narrative sparseness highlights the characters' interior emotions, and above all their love. "La Sculpture" plays like a domestic novel, and La Motte and La Barre begin as simply as possible, with Pygmalion alone on stage singing his monologue about love. Even in this barebones plot, there are numerous nuances of the heart: Pygmalion's love for an object that cannot love him back; Pygmalion's love of himself (as channeled into a work of his own hand); Pygmalion's love of a woman (brought to life); the Statue's reciprocal love of Pygmalion; the Propoetide's unrequited and jealous love of Pygmalion.

The narrative of "La Sculpture" also effectively dramatizes the cultural shift in understandings of emotion during the latter half of the seventeenth century, beginning with Descartes. In the opening "Fatal amour," Pygmalion is a prisoner to his emotions. Just as described in the Cartesian model, his emotions are a disturbance to him, an inner turmoil that threatens his well-being. The emotional turning point for Pygmalion takes place in the second scene when he grapples with his feelings toward the statue. Though he continues to decry the power that love has over him, he also begins to accept his agalmatophilic love and fleetingly imagines the realization of this love if the statue

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[315] DeJean, *Ancients against Moderns*, 115.

becomes mortal. At this moment, he starts to assume more emotional agency, and in so doing he embodies Lamy's understanding of an individual's active relationship with emotion. The animation of the Statue represents a third perspective on emotions, one that parallels a theory published in 1704 by Étienne-Simon de Gamaches. In his treatise *Système du cœur, ou la connoissance du cœur humain*, Gamaches invents what he calls "the law of reciprocal commerce," which is essentially a theory of emotional relationships with external objects. In his words, "if external objects seem to us to be adorned with affective qualities [*qualities sensibles*], this is the case because…we attribute to them the different impressions that they make on us, or the different feelings [*sentiments*] that they awaken in us by their presence."[316] In a sense, the animation of the statue dramatically gives life to the qualities that Pygmalion projects on to his artistic creation.

All three of these theorists, as well as sentimental revolutionaries as a group, redefined emotions as inherently part of the perceived world rather than the real. What the sentimental revolution did for the myth of Pygmalion was to rescue it from a century of literature and art that portrayed it as a tale about a man deceived by his desire and love for something unreal. After Descartes, all emotions, including love, are considered outside of the realm of the real; thus, according to the new theories of emotions, Pygmalion's desires cannot be false because they are his perceptions, which cannot be measured against the real. The theories of the abbé Dubos and contemporary British philosophers, especially John Locke and later David Hume, contributed to this revolution as well. Their empirical interrogation of psychological experience and conception of

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[316] Quoted in DeJean, *Ancients against Moderns*, 89-90.

sentiment as rooted in individual taste and experience significantly shaped Enlightenment

debates on the notions of interiority and subjectivity.[317] The profound shift in theories of

emotions, as surveyed here, both rehabilitated Pygmalion and prepared the way for the

myth to become a quintessential fable for a new theory of emotion and consciousness.

The third important development, the new emphasis on emotional *vraisemblance*

and the *vraisemblance* of the *merveilleux* in seventeenth-century lyric theater, was shaped

by the sentimental revolution. As Buford Norman has argued, emotional *vraisemblance*,

or plausibility, became more important than plot or idea content in the seventeenth-

century *tragédie lyrique*.[318] What came to matter most was whether a character's action

or reaction was believable in terms of the emotion behind it, rather than whether the

action or reaction was logically plausible or moral. This development helped to create

conditions more favorable to a staging of the myth of Pygmalion, because it encouraged

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[317] On the influence of Hume and Locke on conceptions of sentiment and subjectivity, see Cowart, "Sense and Sensibility in Eighteenth-Century Musical Thought," *Acta Musicologica* 56/2 (2984), 256-58.

[318] Norman notes that the importance of emotion in lyric theater during the latter half of the seventeenth century has been obscured by the fact that literary critics tended to avoid any discussion of emotion out of a desire to portray theatrical works as abiding by conservative classical rules governed by reason. Explicit discussions of emotional *vraisemblance* in French theater only began to appear in the eighteenth century. See Buford Norman, *Touched by the Graces: The Libretti of Phillipe Quinault in the Context of French Classicism* (Birminghan, AL: Summa Publications, Inc., 2001), 36-38; and Ibid., "Actions and Reactions: Emotional *Vraisemblance* in the *Tragédie-lyrique*," *Cahiers du Dix-septième* 3/1 (1990), 149-51. The importance of emotion in the *tragédie en musique* also was tempered to some degree by the political exigencies of the genre, which was designed in part as propaganda for Louis XIV through the celebration of glory and heroism. The importance of emotion in the *tragédie en musique* was tempered to some degree by the political exigencies of the genre, which was designed in part as propaganda for Louis XIV through the celebration of glory and heroism. In the eighteenth century, love came to occupy an even more central role in the *tragédie en musique* as the themes of glory and heroism became increasingly secondary concerns. Beginning around the middle of the eighteenth century, revisionary new productions of Lully's operas made cuts and additions that increased the erotic and playful elements in proportion to the dramatic elements; see Rosow, "How eighteenth-century Parisians heard Lully's operas: the case of *Armide*'s fourth act," in *Jean-Baptiste Lully and the Music of the French Baroque: Essays in Honor of James R. Anthony*, ed. John Hajdu Heyer (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 220-26.

the artistic assessment of a character like Pygmalion based not on the morality of his actions but on the plausibility of his emotions.

The most vocal detractors of opera decried the genre's focus on emotion and the illusory emotional effect that opera had on spectators. As Catherine Kintzler has shown, two of the most prominent critics, Pierre Nicole and Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet, based their arguments against theatrical entertainment on Descartes's theories of emotion.[319] Though they wrote their critiques of opera nearly thirty years apart, Nicole and Bossuet's arguments shared the belief that opera was immoral because it inspired audiences to engage in passionate feelings towards an illusion.[320] Like Descartes, they believed that an individual feels pleasure and a liberating effect when experiencing a passion that is not bound to a real situation with real consequences. Unlike Descartes, for whom emotions are not inherently good or bad though they often threaten the calm or well-being of a person, Nicole and Bossuet viewed emotions as inherently dangerous and symptomatic of human corruption. They condemned poets of the theater for creating fictitious abstractions whose appeal for audiences rendered the theater an object of idolatrous attention. For them, the theater could make vices appear attractive while obscuring a spectator's concerns for the real world.

Nicole and Bossuet's views on the immorality of theater closely parallel the typical seventeenth-century views on the immorality of Pygmalion. In each case, the objectionable danger was the same: false passion inspired by artistic artifice. The myth could easily serve as an allegory for Bossuet's and Nicole's critiques, if Pygmalion

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[319] Catherine Kintzler, *Poétique de l'Opéra Français de Corneille à Rousseau* (Paris: Minerve, 1991), 106-21.

[320] Nicole's *Traité de la comédie* was published in 1667, while the first edition of Bossuet's *Maximes et réflexions sur la comédie* appeared in 1694.

represents the theatergoer who has been charmed by artifice, while the Statue represents illusory theater itself. Indeed, one is led to wonder if "La Sculpture" was intended in part as a theatrical response to Bossuet. Since 1697, La Motte had been a favorite of the "cabale du Dauphin," a group of courtiers united around Louis XIV's son, the Grand Dauphin.[321] The *cabale* celebrated everything to which Bossuet was opposed, including libertine behavior and especially theatrical entertainment. La Motte dedicated *Le Triomphe des arts* to the Grand Dauphin's son, the duc de Bourgogne, and prefaced the libretto with a dedicatory poem to him. After Bossuet published his *Maximes et réflexions*, he became the primary representative of anti-theatrical conservative ideology. La Motte's transformation of the myth in "La Sculpture" into a celebration of art and theater may have implied an allegorical refutation of Bossuet's critique.

These developments help to contextualize *Le Triomphe des arts* and its final act within the discourses of its time. James Anthony, as previously noted, writes little about the work, and points out that of the first nine operas-ballets composed between 1697 and 1719, *Le Triomphe des arts* is the only one that does not substitute "at least some believable characters for the mythological deities, allegorical figures, and heroes of the *tragédie lyrique*."[322] For Anthony, the mythological content of *Le Triomphe des arts* marks it as a regressive work that does not further explore the innovations in contemporary realism seen in other contemporary opera-ballets. On the contrary, I argue that *Le Triomphe des arts* explores the latest innovations in theories of love and the body as well as contemporary debates about the nature of art and theater. The radicalism of "La

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[321] Don Fader, "The 'Cabale du Dauphin,' Campra, and Italian Comedy: The Courtly Politics of French Musical Patronage Around 1700," *Music and Letters* 86/3 (2005), 410.

[322] James R. Anthony, *French Baroque Music from Beaujoueulx to Rameau* (Portland, OR: Amadeus Press, 1997), 169.

Sculpture" is found in its modern treatment of a previously taboo myth that had never been staged in France. According to DeJean, "under Houdar de La Motte's guidance and by foregrounding the emotions as he did, [the Moderns] sought to show that all literature, even the classics of antiquity, can be related to the lives of modern readers."[323] Without a doubt, La Motte and La Barre had similar intentions for *Le Triomphe des arts*

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[323] DeJean, *Ancients against Moderns*, 108.

CHAPTER 6

The Triumph of Pygmalion

In a reported eight days in 1748, Jean-Philippe Rameau composed *Pygmalion*,[324] an *acte de ballet* that became one of the most frequently staged French works of the eighteenth century. Between its premiere and its final eighteenth-century revival in 1781, *Pygmalion* received more than two hundred performances,[325] and its success surprised Rameau, who was unaccustomed to such popular acclaim.[326] Contemporary sources attest to the warm regard audiences had for *Pygmalion*, and to the effect this reception had on the composer.[327] One account of a performance in 1751 tells us that when members of the audience noticed that Rameau was in attendance, "His presence aroused a murmur that began in the stalls and spread rapidly throughout the whole audience. Then suddenly

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[324] The published title of Rameau's score appeared with the spelling *Pigmalion* rather than *Pygmalion*. Though the former was more common in eighteenth-century France, the two spellings were essentially interchangeable, and for the sake of simplicity I will use only the more familiar "Pygmalion" in the body of this essay.

[325] Graham Sadler, ed., *The Rameau Compendium* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2014), 160. Only *Le Devin du Village* received more performances in France during the same period; see David Charlton, *Opera in the Age of Rousseau: Music, Confrontation, Realism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 124.

[326] *Pygmalion* was initially popular, relative to Rameau's works in general, but it achieved a new height of popularity with its performances in the 1750s. As Charles Collé wrote in his journal in March, 1751, "*Pygmalion* n'a point été autant applaudi, dans sa nouveauté, qu'il l'a été à cette reprise; c'est, à mon avis, un signe assez certain de la bonté d'un ouvrage." [Pygmalion has not been as applauded in its novelty, as it was in this recovery; this is, in my opinion, a rather sure sign of the goodness of a structure.] Paul-Marie Masson calls the success of *Pygmalion*'s revival "an apotheosis" that helped end the *lulliste-ramiste* quarrels and initiated the brief period of Rameau's undisputed popularity that preceded the *Querelle des Bouffons*; see his "Lullistes et Ramistes, 173-52" *L'année musicale* 1 (1911), 199-200.

[327] The audience's rapturous response to Rameau and to *Pygmalion* also reflects the dominance of Rameau's works in Paris at the time. Between 1745 and 1749, Rameau premiered nine new works, including *Zoroastre* and *Platée*, and by the early 1750s, his reputation at court, with intellectuals, and with the public had reached new heights.

there broke out a general applause and—something that had never been seen before—the assembled orchestra added their rapturous cheers to those of the *parterre*."[328] According to Charles Collé, a friend and collaborator of Rameau,[329] such display of admiration for *Pygmalion* deeply moved the composer to the extent that he wept for joy and became "inebriated" with the public's welcome.[330]

Much has been written on this ballet about the famous sculptor and his beloved animated Statue,[331] but despite the attention it has received, one of its most salient aspects has been overlooked. As I will show, Rameau adapted some of the most famous passages in *Pygmalion* from La Barre's score for *Le Triomphe des arts*.[332] Rameau's librettist Ballot de Sovot famously reused much of the text from "La Sculpture" for *Pygmalion*,

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[328] "Sa presence excita d'abord dans l'Amphitéatre un murmure qui se répandit rapidement dans toute l'assemblée. Il partit alors tout à coup un applaudissement universel, & ce qu'on n'avoit point vû encore, l'Orchestre, qui étoit rassemblé, mêla avec transport ses acclamations à celles du Parterre." *Mercure de France* (May 1751), 186. Quoted in Sadler, *The Rameau Compendium*, 7.

[329] Collé's friendship with Rameau led to their collaboration on the one-act ballet *Daphnis et Églé*, which premiered in 1753 at Fontainebleau. Rameau's demands on Collé destroyed their friendship, and thereafter Collé became a sharp critic of the composer.

[330] Quoted in Cuthbert Girdlestone, *Jean-Philippe Rameau: His Life and Work* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2014), 467.

[331] It is a commonplace in scholarship on Pygmalion to refer to Pygmalion's statue as Galatea, regardless of the name, or lack of name, given to the statue in a given work. This means that the name Galatea is often used anachronistically, because Galatea did not appear as the Statue's name until the 1740s, and did not begin to become the standard name until Rousseau used it in his *Pygmalion* (1770). Although using Galatea anachronistically makes sense for practical purposes, it also obscures the history of how and why the Statue went from unnamed object to named character. Because this history reflects the evolution of the way the myth was treated in France as an allegory for gender, subjectivity, the relationship of human beings to material objects, and other issues, I have chosen to stay true to the name given in the work under discussion. In the two primary works under consideration in Chapters Five and Six, *Le Triomphe des arts* and *Pygmalion*, the statue is given no name other than "La Statue." In these works, even a capital letter holds existential meaning, as it separates the noun "statue," an inanimate thing, from the proper noun "Statue," a character in the livret.

[332] There are five acts in *Le Triomphe des arts*, each based on one of the arts: Architecture, Poetry, Music, Painting, and Sculpture. The central characters in each act are figures from classical mythology who are associated in some way with each art. In "L'Architecture," Venus dedicates a temple to her son l'Amour. The act also anticipates the final act with a spectacle in which Venus causes the statues of the temple to come to life. In "La Poësie," the poet Sappho is featured; in "La Musique," Amphion the divine musician; in "La Peinture," Apelles the Greek painter, and in "La Sculpture," Pygmalion.

making the work an unusual experiment in adaptation for mid-eighteenth century France. While Sovot reworked the *livret*, Rameau adapted significant passages of the music; yet, because La Barre's music has been thoroughly undervalued since the eighteenth century, Rameau's borrowings from La Barre have gone unnoticed.

In this chapter, I will show that Rameau adapted La Barre's music into what became some of the most popular and critically acclaimed music of his career. Rameau's musical debt to La Barre holds additional significance because *Pygmalion* represents what may be the most elaborate act of borrowing from another composer in Rameau's œuvre. As Graham Sadler has shown, Rameau seems to have borrowed "remarkably little" from other composers, especially compared to Bach, Handel, and other composers of his time.[333] To date, scholars have identified borrowings from Charpentier, Campra, Handel, Lalande, and Vivaldi.[334] Rameau's borrowings from La Barre's score stand apart from these examples because they constitute something unprecedented in France in the first half of the eighteenth century: an extensive musical adaptation of a single score. Although Rameau's motivations to reset La Barre's music remain undetermined, this chapter sheds some light on this question. We know for certain that Rameau chose *Le Triomphe des arts* as his source material, and Sovot as his librettist-adapter.[335] The

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[333] Graham Sadler, "A re-examination of Rameau's self-borrowings," in *Jean-Baptiste Lully and the Music of the French Baroque: Essay in Honor of James R. Anthony*, ed. John Hajdu Heyer (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 260-61. Rameau may borrowed more extensively from other authors in his theoretical writings; for example, Book IV, Chapters 1 and 2 of the *Traité de l'harmonie* (1722) are only minimally modified reproductions of Chapters 1 and 2 of Michel de Saint-Lambert's *Nouveau traité de l'accompagnement du clavecin* (1707). It is also likely that the scores that Rameau composed for Alexis Piron for Théâtre de la Foire in the years 1723-1726 incorporated borrowed music, though few traces of that music survives. On Rameau's borrowings in the *Traité*, see Gossett, xii-xv.

[334] Sadler, *The Rameau Compendium*, 193.

[335] Thomas R. Green, "Early Rameau Sources: Studies in the Origins and Dating of the Operas and Other Musical Works," (PhD diss., Brandeis University, 1992), 663-64.

borrowings likely served in part as a time-saving strategy; according to the *Mercure de France*, Rameau composed the score in less than eight days in order to help generate revenue for the insolvent Académie Royale de Musique.[336] The plausibility of this story has remained a lingering question about *Pygmalion*, and scholars now generally accept its veracity on the basis of several pieces of evidence, including the production score, which appears to have been made in haste.[337] Paul-Marie Masson did not believe that Rameau could have composed the score so quickly, however, and he was more insightful than he knew when he argued that the score must have been based on highly developed sketches.[338] Though Rameau may have used sketches as well, he based a significant proportion of *Pygmalion* on "La Sculpture," and his debt to La Barre helps to explain how he put the score together in such short order.

It would be inaccurate, however, to say that Rameau's borrowings from La Barre merely constitute an expediting device. The creative treatment of La Barre's music suggests another motivation, and I will argue that Rameau conceived of *Pygmalion* as an artful adaptation. Throughout the score, Rameau reworks La Barre's themes, bass lines, and motives; he joins La Barre's material with borrowings from his own music; he adopts some of La Barre's motivic strategies; he reinvents La Barre's tonal scheme for the whole work; and he assimilates this material in a way that seems to reflect both a respect for La Barre's score as well as an intention to improve upon it. In a sense, Rameau re-animates La Barre's music, and gives it new artistic life. Ultimately, he transformed it from a

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[336] "Cet Acte, representé pour la premiere fois le 27 Août 1748, fut demandé par la Direction dans une circonstance pressante, & il fut mis en Musique dans moins de huit jours par M. Rameau…" *Mercure de France* (April, 1751), 166.

[337] Sadler, *The Rameau Compendium*, 160.

[338] Paul-Marie Masson, *L'Opéra de Rameau* (Paris: H. Laurens, 1930), 79.

neglected score into a phenomenally popular piece. Rameau likely appreciated the parallel between his creative process and Pygmalion's animation of the statue, and may even have adapted "La Sculpture" with that parallel in mind. In sum, I will assess the score to *Pygmalion* as extraordinary in its joining of old and original music, both within Rameau's output and within the compositional practices of French composers in the first half of the eighteenth century.[339]

The composition of *Pygmalion* coincided with an emergent interest in Paris in composing new music to old opera livrets. As discussed in Chapter Five, Rameau's *Pygmalion* was previously thought to be the first realization of this new idea in France, though we now know that Bernard-Aymable Dupuy reset the entire livret for *Le Triomphe des arts* in 1733. David Charlton notes that the interest in resetting old livrets was stoked in Paris beginning in the late 1730s by Charles de Brosses, who discussed the idea numerous times with Rameau. De Brosses's arguments likely encouraged Rameau's decision to compose *Pygmalion*. Regarding the question of suitable source material, De Brosses advocated for the libretti of either Quinault or La Motte:

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[339] Though the practice of resetting livrets never became as widespread in France as it was in Italy, it achieved a limited vogue in the late 1770s and 1780s with Gluck's and Piccinni's resettings of Quinault. During the period between Rameau's *Pigmalion* and Gluck's *Alceste* (1776), Jean-Joseph de Mondonville produced an isolated resetting of Quinault's *Thésée* (1765) that failed to inspire imitators.

I wish that Rameau would quite simply take up Quinault's or La Motte's livrets; he would make operas different from Lully's or Campra's, his genius is different to theirs . . . I have advised him more than once; he told me he had thought of the same thing, but that he had always been held back through fear of being accused of vanity, wanting to surpass the old masters. But I think a greater reason was fear of adverse cabals, and of comparisons. There is less of that fear here [in Italy] where works are not revived and music is not printed or engraved.[340]

Rameau tells De Brosses that he has already thought of resetting old libretti, and one can only speculate as to when he began to view the last act of *Le Triomphe des arts* as a suitable choice. Perhaps he was already aware of Dupuy's resetting, though if so no documentary evidence supports this possibility. We are also limited to speculation regarding when Rameau became interested in adapting not only the libretto but the music as well. Undoubtedly, the fact that the score was relatively unknown made it more appealing, given Rameau's pattern of self-borrowings at the time. Between 1745 and 1760, as Sadler has shown, Rameau culled his self-borrowings from theatrical pieces that received limited performances, were not highly regarded and unlikely to be revived, or had not circulated in contemporary editions. He also drew from discarded passages of earlier versions of his works.[341]

Brosses was probably right that Rameau's greatest concern was the response of his detractors. The *lulliste-ramiste* dispute reached the peak of its furor in the late 1730s, and Rameau's originality was one of the primary points of contention. To undermine his image as the most original composer in France, the *lullistes* eagerly seized on any example they could find of his appropriation of old musical material. Luckily for Rameau, most of his borrowings escaped notice, but the limited borrowings that were

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[340] Brosses, *Lettres familières écrites d'Italie à quelques amis en 1739 et 1740*, II, 261-2. Quoted in Charlton, *Opera in the Age of Rousseau*, 178.

[341] Sadler, "A re-examination of Rameau's self-borrowings," 267.

known became fodder for his critics. We see this criticism graphically illustrated by an

elaborate and lewd anti-Rameau engraving (fig. 6.1) that appeared in 1739 and garnered

much attention in Paris. The engraving shows a composer seated at a desk who represents

Rameau, identified by the score hanging off the desk, which shows two measures from

the overture to *Dardanus* (mm. 46-7). A demon wears a rudely positioned piece of paper

on which appears a sixteenth-note passage, and he shoots musical accidentals from a

phallic instrument at the head of Rameau, who takes dictation. The image conveys that

Rameau's musical inspiration is not his own and derives from a lower source. The coins

on the table and falling out of the demon's posterior imply that Rameau is motivated by

monetary rather than artistic pursuits. At the top of the paper on which Rameau is writing,

we see the mathematical formula "a – b = c"; this algebraic formula may allude to

Rameau's theoretical work, but given the theme of the engraving, it may signify

Rameau's compositional method as taking material (a) from material (b) to get new

material (c). Rameau's musical borrowing is further referenced by the words written in

the open book on the floor: "Vieilles Pieces de Clavecin pour faire des opera nouveaux."

The people falling out of the chimney are *ramoneurs* (chimney sweeps), an allusion to

the pejorative term for the *ramistes*.[342] As this engraving indicates, any borrowing

Rameau made came at a risk, and well-known source material such as a score by Lully

carried greater risk. Under the circumstances, La Barre's little known score offered

Rameau a way to do exactly what the *lullistes* criticized him for without being

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[342] Much of the description of this engraving is indebted to Sadler's discussion of it in "A re-examination of Rameau's self-borrowings," 262-4. For further discussion of these satirical engravings, see Emile Dacier, "L'Opéra au XVIIIᵉ siècle," 163-73; Masson, "Lullistes et Ramistes," 187-211; and Sadler, "Patrons and Pasquinades," 324-31.

discovered. Ironically, the success of *Pygmalion* in its 1751 revival effectively marked the end of the *lulliste-ramiste* debates.

Fig. 6.1   F-Pn Estampes, Hennin 8344. Anonymous engraving (1739)

6.1   Animating La Barre: "Fatal amour"

The growing interest in *Le Triomphe des arts* and the myth of Pygmalion during the 1730s and 40s, discussed in Chapter Five, constitutes an important cultural context for Rameau's *Pygmalion*. The musical significance of *Le Triomphe des arts* becomes further apparent with a comparison of key passages in the score to parallel passages in Rameau's *Pygmalion*. The manner in which Rameau borrows and reimagines La Barre's music suggests that the later master wanted to apply his musical ideas to the earlier composer's source material. By doing so, he would contribute to the pool of works that applied literary adaptations to the same source material. Whether or not he considered his adaptation of La Barre's score in any way analogous to or in comparison with other adaptations of *Le Triomphe des arts* is impossible to say. It is likely, however, that the vogue among the literati for adapting "La Sculpture" in the 1740s played a role in his choice. Rameau also likely knew of La Barre's death in 1745, which may have further encouraged him to adapt with "La Sculpture," given that the one person most capable of recognizing his musical borrowings no longer had the ability to comment.

The last act of *Le Triomphe des arts* begins with Pygmalion alone, singing the recitative "Fatal amour." In Rameau's *Pygmalion*, the same scene follows the overture. In both works, Pygmalion' lament that he has fallen into an immoral love with the artificial, unfeeling statue forms the emotional core of the monologue. Sovot reuses most of La Motte's original text for the scene; indeed, he rewrites only four lines out of fourteen, and omits a final line that is sung in "La Sculpture" after the final restatement of the opening lines. A textual comparison with accompanying translation is provided in Table 6.1.

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Table 6.1   Textual comparison of opening monologues in *Le Triomphe des arts* and *Pygmalion*

"Fatal amour," *Le Triomphe des arts*	
La Motte's text	**Translation**
Le Théâtre représente l'Atelier de Pygmalion, au milieu duquel paraît la Statue dont il est charmé.	The scene represents Pygmalion's studio, in the center of which stands the Statue, with which he is charmed.
Scène première - Pygmalion *seul*	Scene I. Pygmalion alone
Fatal Amour! cruel vainqueur!	*Fatal Love! Cruel conqueror!*
Quels traits as-tu choisi pour me percer le coeur?	*What darts have you chosen to pierce my heart?*
Je goûtais une paix profonde;	I enjoyed a profound peace;
L'estime des mortels avait comblé mes voeux.	The respect of mortals had fulfilled my wishes.
Pourquoi viens-tu par de bizarres feux,	Why do you come with bizarre fires of love
Me rendre la fable du monde?	to make me the world's laughing-stock?
Fatal Amour! cruel vainqueur !	*Fatal Love! Cruel conqueror!*
Quels traits as-tu choisi pour me percer le coeur?	*What darts have you chosen to pierce my heart?*
Je tremblais de t'avoir pour maître,	I trembled to have you as master.
J'ai craint d'être sensible; il fallait m'en punir :	I feared being sensitive, and deserved punishment,
Mais devais-je le devenir	But did I have to fall in love
Pour un objet qui ne peut l'être?	With an object incapable of feeling?
Fatal Amour! cruel vainqueur!	*Fatal Love! Cruel conqueror!*
Quels traits as-tu choisi pour me percer le coeur?	*What darts have you chosen to pierce my heart?*
Cette beauté que rien n'égale...	Nothing is the equal of this beauty…

"Fatal amour," *Pygmalion*	
Sovot's adapted text	**Translation**
Le Théâtre représente l'Atelier de Pygmalion, au milieu duquel paraît la Statue.	The scene represents Pygmalion's studio, in the center of which stands the Statue
Scène première - Pygmalion *seul*	Scene I. Pygmalion alone
Fatal Amour, cruel vainqueur,	*Fatal Love! Cruel conqueror!*
Quels traits as-tu choisis pour me percer le coeur?	*What darts have you chosen to pierce my heart?*
Fatal Amour, cruel vainqueur,	*Fatal Love! Cruel conqueror!*
Quels traits as-tu choisis pour me percer le coeur?	*What darts have you chosen to pierce my heart?*

Je tremblais de t'avoir pour maître;	I trembled to have you as master.
J'ai craint d'être sensible, il falloit m'en punir;	I feared being sensitive, and deserved punishment,
Mais devais-je le devenir	But did I have to fall in love
Pour un objet qui ne peut l'être ?	With an object incapable of feeling?
	Fatal Love! Cruel conqueror!
Fatal Amour, cruel vainqueur,	*What darts have you chosen to pierce my*
Quels traits as-tu choisis pour me percer le	*heart?*
coeur!	Unfeeling witness of the pain that afflicts
Insensible témoin du trouble qui m'accable,	me,
Se peut-il que tu sois l'ouvrage de ma main?	Can you really be the work of my own
Est-ce donc pour gémir et soupirer en vain	hand?
Que mon art a produit ton image adorable ?	Is it only to moan and sigh in vain
Fatal Amour, cruel vainqueur,	That my art has created your lovely face?
Quels traits as-tu choisis pour me percer le	
coeur?	*Fatal Love! Cruel conqueror!*
	What darts have you chosen to pierce my
	heart?

La Barre's and Rameau's settings of the opening lines are given in Examples 6.1a

and 6.1b.[343] To make comparison easier, La Barre's music is transposed from C minor to

G minor, and the vocal line is moved into the *haute-contre* range by transposing it up an

octave. In example 6.1b, Rameau's inner voices are also omitted. Except for these, no

other details are altered in either example. As the comparison shows, Rameau takes La

Barre's melody almost as is, apart from embellishments to the melody and bass line.[344]

He retains La Barre's harmony and intensifies it with added dissonances and an

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[343] Thomas Leconte has completed a critical reconstruction of La Barre's score to *Le Triomphe des arts*; see his "*Le Triomphe des arts* de Michel de La Barre: Essai de reconstitution critique d'une partition génerale," (Mémoire de maîtrise, Université François Rabelais, 1995). In this study, I have limited my observations about La Barre's score to the version that Rameau undoubtedly used, the 1700 short score published by Ballard.

[344] Rameau notably takes the opening ascending sixth and compresses it to an ascending fourth. The ascending fourth is noteworthy; see Brian Hyer's argument that it becomes a recurring musical idea in Rameau's score,"'Sighing Branches': Prosopopoeia in Rameau's *Pigmalion*," *Music Analysis* 13/1 (1994), 11-13.

appoggiatura in m. 14. He also prolongs the phrase by replacing the full cadence with a half cadence that leads to a varied restatement of the same two lines of text.

Ex. 6.1a Michel de La Barre, *Le Triomphe des arts* (reduced score; Paris: Ballard, 1700) opening melody of Entrée V "La Sculpture," 186-87, mm. 1-6.

Ex. 6.1b Jean-Philippe Rameau, *Pygmalion*, (Paris: L'Auteur, Boivin, Leclair, 1748), opening melody of Sc. 1, 3-4, mm. 10-16.

In addition, Rameau likely alludes to his own work. There are striking similarities between "Fatal amour" and Iphise's monologue aria in Act I, Scene 1 of *Dardanus* (the 1739 version, ex. 6.2).[345] The first two lines of text of Iphise's aria are akin: "Cesse, cruel amour, de régner sur mon âme; /Ou choisis d'autres traits pour te rendre vainqueur." [Cease, cruel Love, to reign over my soul; /Or choose some other arrows to become conqueror.] As in "Fatal amour," these two lines are sung twice, and Rameau returns to the opening lines once more with a slightly varied da capo. The two monologues also share the key of G minor. Additionally, the opening lines in each setting begin with a

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[345] For a discussion of this monologue within the context of Rameau's scenes of forbidden love in *tragedie en musique*, see Verba, *Dramatic Expression in Rameau's* Tragédie en musique: *Between Tradition and Enlightenment* (Cambridge, UK, and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 200-03.

pained melodic ascent. Most interestingly, mm. 10-12 of the bass line in Rameau's "Fatal amour" replicate the first three measures of the bass line to "Cesse, cruel amour." If Rameau deliberately made this self-borrowing, it could represent a personal nod to the similarities between these two monologues.

Ex. 6.2   Rameau, *Dardanus* (Paris: L'Auteur, Boivin, Leclair, Monet, 1739), Act I, Sc. 1, monologue "Cesse, cruel amour," 1, mm. 20-23.

Rameau may have used La Barre's melody for "Fatal amour" in part for the directness of the vocal line and the quality of its harmonic underpinning. La Barre's melody opens with the fundamental progression, tonic — subdominant — dominant, and the bass line quickly builds harmonic momentum through melodic motion and by presenting the chords in root position. Suddenly, the resolution to the tonic is disrupted by a striking secondary dominant of IV. Notably, La Barre harmonizes the word *traits* [darts, arrows] with this secondary dominant disruption, which occurs at the midpoint of the melody and the highest note of the vocal line. The symmetry of the melody's ascent and descent combined with the momentum of the harmony creates a sense of an inevitable drive towards the tonic resolution that is broken then regained. The text provides additional momentum through long verbal units, which are characteristic of airs with an

affect of agitation.[346] The ascending melody unites the first eight-syllable line as one verbal unit, and the next twelve-syllable line divides into two verbal units of six syllables. La Barre aligns the resolution to the tonic with the word *cœur* [heart], and in doing so he creates a simple musico-rhetorical message: "The *arrows* (of love) have pierced (or disrupted) my *heart*."

In context of the musical rhetoric of La Barre's day, the melody constitutes a concise and exemplary combination of the common signifiers of *le désespoir* [despair]. In French airs dating back to the mid-seventeenth century, according to Catherine Gordon-Seifert, no passion was more represented than desire, and despair was considered one its manifestations.[347] Despair was also regarded as one of the most intense passions among those represented in French airs, and consequently, composers saved their musical evocations of it for serious airs.[348] La Barre's melody contains nearly all of the characteristic musical devices for despair, as described by Gordon-Seifert:

> [*Le désespoir*] is represented by a melody that ascends by step to the highest register of the piece, by decisive and accented rhythmic movement organized into large verbal units, and by an emphasis upon strong tonic-dominant harmonic relationships (first and fifth notes of the mode), often in root position."[349]

In addition to these devices, La Barre's melody has a bass line that prominently features disjunct motion (the octave leap in m. 1) as well as contrary motion with the melody (mm. 2-4). Both devices are typical in musical representations of despair.[350] The presence of these musical signifiers demonstrates that La Barre, despite his lack

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[346] Catherine Gordon-Seifert, *Music and the Language of Love: Seventeenth-Century French Airs* (Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2011)*,* 66.

[347] It was Descartes who, in *Les Passions de l'âme*, theorized desire as the most primitive of passions, and who classified burning love, tender love, despair, and power/courage as variants of desire. His theories of the passions had a remarkably strong influence on the composers of French airs and the musical rhetoric they used, as Gordon-Seifert has shown; Ibid., 58-95.

[348] Ibid., 65.

of experience with composing vocal music at the time he composed *Le Triomphe des arts*, drew on a thorough knowledge of and sensitivity to the musical rhetoric of his time.[351]

Rameau must have found value in La Barre's use of these musical devices, in part because he could relate them to his musical language. He likely regarded the strong presentation of the tonic-dominant-tonic progression, and its interruption by the V of IV, as an expressive use of the attraction of the tonic. Rameau's conception of harmony in 1748 was defined by the notion of gravitational pull towards the tonic. As he wrote in the *Génération harmonique* in 1737, the tonic "must be seen as the center of the mode, towards which is drawn all our desires." This concept marked a shift away from his earlier conception of tonal motion, which can be reductively stated as a series of dominant chords over the *basse fondamentale*.[352] For the public in the 1740s, Rameau's new conception of harmony was still unfamiliar, and he went to great lengths to persuade audiences to hear it.[353] Though we can only speculate, he may have believed that La Barre's setting offered a concise and clear example of the rhetorical power of his harmonic conception.

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[349] Ibid., 65.

[350] Ibid., 90.

[351] The conventions of the musical rhetoric of despair in late seventeenth-century French vocal writing emerged primarily from the compositions of Michel Lambert, Bénigne de Bacilly, Joseph Chabanceau de La Barre (no relation to Michel de La Barre), and Sébastien La Camus, and from treatises on rhetoric and the passions by Descartes, Le Faucheur (*Traité de l'action de l'orateur*), Bary (*La Rhétorique Françoise…*), and Bretteville (*L'Éloquence de la chaire et du barreau*). Ibid., 61-65.

[352] Thomas Christensen, *Rameau and Musical Thought in the Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 189-90.

[353] Verba, *Dramatic Expression in Rameau's* Tragédie en musique*, 6.

Most likely, Rameau admired La Barre's setting, and we can assert this as a strong possibility for four reasons. First, Rameau's meticulous attention to detail would likely have resulted in more changes to the original if he felt the music demanded it. Second, his reluctance to borrow from other composers (relative to other composers of his time) suggests he did not borrow lightly. Third, he would have given La Barre credit for the setting because he viewed the task of finding appropriate melodies and harmonic progressions for a given text an arduous one. As Rameau wrote in the *Nouveau système de musique theorique* of 1726, "If it is not absolutely impossible to determine the melodies, and consequently the harmonic progressions, that best agree with the most marked expression [of discourse, then] it is, in other respects, an enterprise that demands more than the lifetime of a single individual."[354] Even if the compulsory rush to finish the score in a week factored significantly into his musical choices, Rameau would have appreciated how well La Barre's music suited the text. Fourth, at least after the opening monologue of *Pygmalion* became famous for its emotionally direct and expressive text setting (as I discuss below), Rameau would have had to give La Barre some credit for the melody.

While Rameau may have admired La Barre's setting, the manner in which he develops the material over the course of the recitative suggests that admiration may not have been the only, or even the primary, reason for the borrowing. In fact, Rameau may have adapted La Barre's music not because it aligned with his conception of harmony but because he wished to align it with his approach to text setting. In his theoretical writings, Rameau frequently returns to the argument that expressiveness is grounded in

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[354] Quoted in Charles Dill, *Monstrous Opera: Rameau and the Tragic Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 49.

modulation, in the flow and appropriateness of harmonic progressions. Though his music

is certainly full of musical gestures that draw attention to isolated words and ideas—

gestures much like the surprising secondary dominant in La Barre's melody that calls

attention to the word *traits*—Rameau emphasizes that these gestures are secondary to a

more connotative approach in which modulations express the underlying emotional

dynamics of a given text. Kintzler has explained Rameau's approach to text setting in

terms of the *parallelism* of music and language, where music does not become

subordinated to the text but rather retains autonomy. Consequently, the harmony and

structure of a given setting takes on greater importance than melody, which is inherently

more bound to the text.[355] Rameau's belief that harmony, and especially modulation,

should be the basis for expressive text setting set him apart from other composers. As

Charles Dill has discussed, this approach confounded audiences' expectations and

contributed to Rameau's reputation as a composer who could not compose recitative.[356]

In "Fatal amour," Rameau begins by presenting La Barre's setting in its least

altered form (ex. 6.3a, mm. 10-16). Each restatement thereafter progressively remakes La

Barre's material in the image of Rameau's vision of harmonically dynamic text setting.

The bass lines in each restatement become progressively more chromatic, the harmonies

more fluid and dissonant. In the first restatement of La Barre's material (ex. 6.3a, mm.

17-23), Rameau first simplifies the bass line by introducing more root position chords,

and in effect breaks down the original to lay out more clearly the harmonic basis of the

setting. In the next restatement (ex. 6.3b), Rameau creates a harmonic fluidity that does

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[355] Catherine Kintzler, *Jean-Philippe Rameau: Splendeur et naufrage de l'esthétique du Plaisir à l'âge classique* (Paris: Le Sycomore, 1983), 99-133.

[356] Dill, *Monstrous Opera*, 72-73.

not appear in La Barre's original. Rameau makes an astute move here: in the first measure of the restatement, he replicates the secondary dominant of C minor that had surprised the ear in the middle of the original phrase (m. 13). This chord brings a sense of instability, and with this secondary dominant Rameau initiates a chromatic ascending bass line that leads to the dominant in m. 36, at which point the key of G minor is re-established. In the final restatement (ex. 6.3c), Rameau chromatically slides into the key from B♭ Major. The chromatic ascending bass line from the previous restatement returns, while Rameau adds an increased agitation in the inner voices and a new turn to an augmented chord over the mediant in m. 59. In sum, all of Rameau's changes appear to be in service of using La Barre's material as the basis for an expanded treatment of his harmonic expression. This reworking fulfills two purposes: it musically expresses the growing anguish of Pygmalion, and it represents a musical commentary on the merits and limitations of La Barre's setting.

Ex. 6.3a Rameau, *Pygmalion*, Sc. 1: monologue "Fatal amour," mm. 10-23.

Ex. 6.3b Rameau, *Pygmalion*, Sc. 1: monologue "Fatal amour," mm. 34-40.

Ex. 6.3c   Rameau, *Pygmalion*, Sc. 1: monologue "Fatal amour," mm. 53-61.

Rameau does not limit his borrowing in "Fatal amour" to La Barre's opening

melody. He also reworks the first eight measures of the bass line that follows the opening

melody, as shown in ex. 6.4 (for comparison, La Barre's bass line is transposed to G

minor and the inner voices of Rameau's score are omitted, but no other alterations are

made). The two bass lines are nearly identical, and both pass through the mediant and

subtonic. Rameau's only significant change is to continue the modulation. La Barre

concludes his eight measures with a half cadence in the original key that leads into the

first restatement of the opening melody. In contrast, Rameau extends the harmonic

fluctuation for another three measures and ends on a cadence in D minor that leads into

an unexpected entrance of the first restatement of the opening melody. Notably, Rameau

adapts La Barre's bass line even though Sovot's text in this passage differs from La

Motte's text. This disjunction between the source text and source music may indicate that

Rameau's focus is on expanding the harmonic expressiveness of La Barre's music rather

than correcting or enhancing La Barre's settings of specific words or phrases.

La Barre, "Fatal amour," mm. 6-13 (transposed to G minor for comparison)
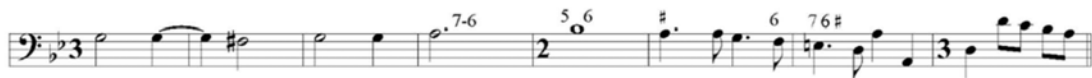
Rameau, "Fatal amour," mm. 23-30

Ex. 6.4   Comparison of the first eight measures of the bass lines following the initial statements of the opening melody in *Le Triomphe des arts* (Entée V, Sc. 1) and *Pygmalion* (Sc. 1)

As these examples show, "Fatal amour" is in a sense a collaborative work. La

Barre furnished the theme while Rameau expanded upon it, bringing new colors to it

through harmony and orchestration. The fact that "Fatal amour" has mixed compositional

DNA explains why scholars have confessed difficulty in placing it within Rameau's

output. For example, as Girdlestone comments, "the scene ["Fatal amour"] is a superb

récitatif accompagné, with recalls of the opening bars, worthy of *Dardanus*, but not

closely paralleled in any of the *tragédies*."[357] The blend of La Barre's and Rameau's

music succeeds in part because Rameau uses the same musical vocabulary of signifiers

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[357] Girdlestone, *Jean-Philippe Rameau*, 463. The suggestion of *Dardanus* as a comparison for "Fatal amour" is perceptive, especially given that, as I have shown, the beginning of "Fatal amour" may recall the opening measures of Iphise's Act I, Scene 1 monologue.

for his settings that evoke despair. If we look at La Barre's "Fatal amour" alongside Rameau's settings of texts with similar subjects and affects, we find compelling affinities. These affinities appear most clearly in a comparison of La Barre's "Fatal amour" to two of Rameau's mature early works, both of which have drawn comparisons to Rameau's "Fatal amour": the opening *récitatifs* of the cantata *Le Berger fidèle* and the motet *In Convertendo. Le Berger fidèle* premiered in 1728, and the date of composition for *In Convertendo*, though uncertain, was likely sometime between 1713 and 1715.[358] Both in terms of musical and lyrical content, the similarities of these *récitatifs* to La Barre's "Fatal amour" are striking.

 Le Berger fidèle begins with the *récitatif* "Prêt à voir," (ex. 6.5). The text introduces the story derived from *Il pastor fido* of the shepherd Mirtil and his beloved Amarillis, and a narrative voice describes Myrtil's state of mind as Amarillis is doomed to be sacrificed: "Ready to see the object of his tenderness sacrificed, the pastor Mirtil deplores his misfortune; he sighs, he groans incessantly, and his voice echoes out his pain."[359] Like "Fatal amour," the *récitatif* is focused on the emotional turmoil of a solitary character who believes that he can never be with the woman he loves.[360] Rameau employs many of the same musical signifiers of despair that La Barre uses. The melody

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[358]   James R. Anthony, *French Baroque Music from Beaujoyeulx to Rameau* (Portland, OR: Amadeus Press, 1997), 264.

[359]   "Prêt à voir immoler l'object de sa tendresse, le fidele Mirtil deplore ses malheurs, Il soupire, il gémit sans cesse, et sa voix aux echos dit ainsi ses douleurs."

[360]   It is possible that La Motte was the author of *Le Berger fidèle*, and that he sent it to Rameau after receiving the composer's letter. Graham Sadler, ed., *The Rameau Compendium* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2014), 113. We may never know whether or not La Motte wrote the text, but the possibility raises questions. If La Motte authored both the text for La Barre's "Fatal amour" and *Le Berger fidèle*, perhaps the musical similarities reflect the additional connection of the shared author.

opens with an ascent to the highest pitch of the phrase.[361] The bass and vocal lines move in contrary motion through the first three measures, and the octave ascents and descents in the vocal and bass lines present a strong presentation of the tonic key. Rameau concludes the *récitatif* with a parallel two-measure gesture, a dramatic cadence on the dominant with voices in contrary motion. The text also divides into long verbal units; the first two lines divide into four verbal units of six, seven, six, and six syllables.

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[361] Such sweeping musical gestures of despair represent a building of passionate tension, and correlate to Descartes's argument that high pitches demand more energy. Gordon-Seifert, *Music and the Language of Love*, 65.

Ex. 6.5   Rameau, *Le Berger fidèle* (Paris: L'Auteur, Boivin, Leclerc, [1728]), opening
récitatif, 1, mm. 1-9.

We find similar devices in the opening *récitatif* to *In convertendo* (ex. 6.6).[362] The

text comes from the first line of Psalm 126: "When the Lord gave back Zion her banished

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[362] It should be noted that, though Rameau composed the motet decades before *Pygmalion*, it survives only
in a heavily revised version prepared for a concert performance in 1751. The manuscript for this version
shows evidence of significant revisions to the opening *récitatif*, including a change of meter from triple
to 2/4 time. It is possible that Rameau modified the vocal line in his revisions, incorporating some of
the elements that had made his "Fatal amour" so successful three years earlier. On the other hand, the
vocal line as it exists today may survive in a form close to its original version. There is no way of
knowing for sure whether the details that the setting shares with La Barre's "Fatal amour" pre-date or
post-date *Pygmalion*.

sons, we walked like men in a dream." Though the lines describe a joyous reunion, Rameau sets the opening lines with the musical elements of despair in order to set up the *gaîment* chorus that follows. This affect reflects the despair of Zion before the captives from Zion were freed. As in "Fatal amour," the vocal line presses upward to its highest pitch quickly and arrives on the dominant. In mm. 14-17, the bass and vocal lines move in contrary motion. The melodic contour, a symmetrical rise and fall, matches the melody of "Fatal amour." In addition, the tonic and dominant harmonies are presented strongly in root position and a half cadence in m. 17 sets up a second statement of the melody, just as in "Fatal amour." The motet's sacred text renders inappropriate the brand of personal anguish so famously encapsulated in "Fatal amour," and some of the minor differences between the two melodies reflect the sacred context. Rameau uses a less dissonant and drawn-out chord progression, while the melody begins with a supplicant descent that softens it as compared to the tortured ascending opening of "Fatal amour." Still, the musical language of despair in this *récitatif* clearly draws from the same collection of seventeenth-century musico-rhetorical devices that informed La Barre's "Fatal amour."

Ex. 6.6   Rameau, *In Convertendo* (F-Pn Vm^1.507, pp. 1-2), opening *récit*

These two *récitatifs* have drawn comparisons with each other and to Rameau's
"Fatal amour."[363] In addition to pointing out the resemblance, Girdlestone suggests that
these *récitatifs* contain a different quality of music than is found in most of Rameau's
early work. Of the early cantatas, Girdlestone writes, "*Le Berger fidèle* is not only the
most interesting and the most French but also the only one in which we perceive an
unmistakably Ramellian note . . . A completely personal Rameau is present in the opening
récitatif and air of *Le Berger fidèle*."[364] Similarly, in his discussion of the opening of *In*

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[363] Sylvie Bouissou, *Jean-Philippe Rameau: musicien des Lumières* (Paris: Fayard, 2014), 124, 147-48.

[364] Girdlestone, *Jean-Philippe Rameau*, 65-66.

Convertendo, Girdlestone writes "With the opening solo for counter-tenor we are in the presence of the authentic Rameau . . . which reminds one of 'Coulez, mes pleurs' in *Zaïs* or of 'Fatal amour' in *Pygmalion*."[365] For Girdlestone, these works share something essential about Rameau's compositional voice, and stand out as examples of his mastery of dramatic *récitatif*. Given the resemblances of these *récitatifs* to La Barre's "Fatal amour," one could say that La Barre's music demonstrates a kinship to qualities that Girdlestone considers most "authentically" Ramellian. There is also some irony in the fact that one of the *récitatifs* named by Girdlestone as most authentically Ramellian is based on the music of La Barre.

Despite the notoriety of *Pygmalion* within Rameau's works and the corresponding degree of critical attention, scholars have failed to recognize the similarities of its opening *récitatif* to La Barre's "Fatal amour." In fact, numerous passages by Rameau have been suggested as in some way expressively reminiscent of his "Fatal amour." In addition to *Le Berger fidèle* and *In Convertendo*, critics have suggested musical and textual parallels between "Fatal amour" and passages in *Hippolyte et Aricie*, *Zoroastre*, *Castor et Pollux*, *Fêtes de l'Hymen et de l'Amour*, and even Beethoven's piano sonatas op. 31 and 81a, among others.[366] The number of attempts to locate musical likenesses to "Fatal amour" speaks to the singular nature of the *récitatif* as well as the availability of somewhat plausible models in Rameau's other works. The similarities among these models derive from a musico-rhetorical vocabulary, grounded in seventeenth-century French airs, that Rameau shares with La Barre. At the same time, the

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[365] Ibid., 95.

[366] Ibid., 463; and Bouissou, *Jean-Philippe Rameau*, 124, 147.

consistent failure to consider the music of La Barre speaks to a long-standing musicological oversight.

Rameau knew and perhaps respected La Barre's music as a younger man, as evidenced by several events early in his career. In the *Premier livre de pièces de clavecin*, published in 1706, Rameau assigned a descriptive title to only one piece, *Vénitiénne* [sic]. The title may refer to La Barre and La Motte's *comédie-ballet La Vénitienne,* which premiered in Paris the previous year, though Rameau would likely not have been in Paris to attend a performance.[367] *La Vénitienne* was the second and final collaboration between La Barre and La Motte, and for his *Vénitiénne*, Rameau may have borrowed a tune from La Barre's score.[368] In 1726, Rameau encountered this work again at revival performances of one of its acts. This revival likely provided inspiration to Rameau, as Sylvie Bouissou suggests.[369] The chance to hear a revival of La Motte's work may have encouraged Rameau to write his famous letter to La Motte the following year in which he asked the poet to collaborate with him on a new work.

Without a doubt, Rameau considered La Motte an artistic idol, and his letter indicates that he approached La Motte more than once with his request. The letter, often reprinted, begins

> Whatever reasons you may have, Sir, not to expect from my dramatic music
> as favorable a success as from that of a composer apparently more
> experienced in this kind of music, allow me to counter them, and at the same

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[367] Sadler, *The Rameau Compendium*, 217.

[368] Girdlestone, *Jean-Philippe Rameau*, 596. Girdlestone suggests that the tune of Rameau's piece could be either an adaptation of an *air de barcarolle* that appears in the printed score of *La Vénitienne* or a tune that was not published in the score, as Michel Brenet believed.

[369] The third act of *La Vénitienne* was performed as part of a pastiche production titled *La Ballet sans titre*. According to Bouissou it was an important inspiration for Rameau, as he attended the offerings of the Académie Royale de Musique in the years leading up to the composition of *Hippolyte et Aricie* in 1733. Bouissou, *Jean-Philippe Rameau*, 313.

time to justify my bias in my own favor, without claiming to draw from my learning any other advantages than those which you will agree with me in feeling to be legitimate.[370]

The tenor and content of this letter suggest another possible motive for Rameau's use of La Barre's music. We find in the letter a hint of jealousy and competition towards other "apparently more experienced" composers in the letter, a hint that becomes more blatant several paragraphs later:

> I cannot deny that I am a musician; but at least I have more than others the knowledge of colors and shades of which they have but a confused feeling and which they use in due proportion only by chance. They have taste and imagination, but confined in the store of their sensations where the different things cluster in a little patch of colors beyond which they perceive nothing.[371]

Rameau does not provide names for these others composers he describes, nor are his remarks specific enough to pinpoint their identities. We are left to speculate whether Rameau placed La Barre in this category of confused composers. As I have noted, Rameau's musical borrowings in *Pygmalion* as well as the similarities between La Barre's "Fatal amour" and other works by Rameau would seem to suggest that Rameau felt a kinship with or held La Barre's music in some esteem. Even if this were the case, it would not exclude the possibility that Rameau's choice to rework La Barre's music in *Pygmalion* was in part motivated by the desire to prove himself the superior handler of the musical material.

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[370] "Quelques raisons que vous ayez, Monsieur, pour ne pas attendre de ma musique théâtrale un succès aussi favorable que de celle d'un auteur plus expérimenté en apparence dans ce genre de musique, permettez-moi de les combattre et de justifier en même temps la prétention où je suis en ma faveur, sans prétendre tirer de ma science d'autres avantages que ceux que vous sentirez aussi bien que moi devoir être légitimes." The letter was found in La Motte's private papers and published after Rameau's death in the *Mercure de France* (March, 1765). Quoted in Girdlestone, *Jean-Philippe Rameau*, 9.

[371] "Je suis bien obligé de croire que je suis musicien; mais, du moins, j'ai au-dessus des autres la connaissance des couleurs et des nuances dont ils n'ont qu'un sentiment confus, et dont ils n'usent à proportion que par hasard. Ils ont du goût et de l'imagination, mais le tout borné dans le réservoir de leurs sensations où les différents objets se réunissent dans petite portion de couleurs au-delà desquelles ils n'aperçoivent plus rien."

Rameau's musical appropriations in "Fatal amour" take on added significance because this monologue was, and remains, one of the most celebrated musical passages of Rameau's career. Girdlestone calls it "one of Rameau's most searching expressions of grief."[372] Madame de Genlis praised Rameau's marriage of music of text in her *Mémoires*, published in 1825: "The celebrated Rameau ha[s]…given examples of so desirable an agreement [between music and text], notably in *Pygmalion* [with] 'Fatal amour, cruel vainqueur.' The most perfect declamation could not express better the words of this *ariette*."[373] In 1765, the year after Rameau's death, the *Mercure de France* published a letter of compositional advice that Rameau had written to a young man twenty-one years earlier. The addressee of the letter was the Abbé Mongeot, who had since become music master to the children of the Princesse de Guéménée at Versailles. Mongeot wrote an introduction to the letter, in which he refers to Rameau's letter to La Motte: "With what transport of admiration M. *de la Motte* would have repaired his error, if he had been able to hear only the first monologue of his act of *Pigmalion*, as it was set to music by he to whom he had refused words! Would the poet not have been at the feet of the musician?"[374] Even in 1765, after the added attention to *Le Triomphe des arts*, Rameau's use of La Barre's music was still not recognized.

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[372] Girdlestone, *Jean-Philippe Rameau*, 463

[373] "Le célèbre Rameau avoit déjà donné l'exemple de cet accord si desirable, surtout, dans *Pygmalion*, l'air: *Fatal amour, cruel vainqueur,* etc etc. La déclamation la plus parfaite ne pourroit exprimer mieux toutes les paroles de cette ariette…" Stéphanie Félicité Ducrest de Saint-Aubin de Genlis, *Mémoires inédits de Madame la comtesse de Genlis*, Vol. 2 (Paris: Ladvocat, 1825), 1-2.

[374] "Avec quel transport d'admiration M. *de la Motte* n'eût-il pas réparé sa faute, s'il avoit pu alors entendre seulement le premier monologue de son acte de *Pigmalion*, comme il a été mis en musique par celui à qui il refusoit des paroles! Le Poëte n'eût-il pas été aux genoux du Musicien?" *Mercure de France* (June, 1765), 52. Hugues Maret echoed Mongeot in his eulogy of the composer, presented to the Académie des Sciences, Arts & Belles-Lettres of Dijon: "Pigmalion, comédie en 1747. Le poëme étoit de M. De Lamotte. Rameau, dans la composition de la musique, se montra plus Poëte que Lamotte; & si celui-ci eût vécu dans le temps où sa piéce fit donnée, quels reproches ne se feroit-il pas fait d'avoir

The most effusive and specific praise came from Melchior Grimm, in his famous

Lettre [de M. Grimm] sur Omphale of 1752:

> [T]he Author of the monologues must have been warmed by that divine fire
> we call genius…I admit that I find new objects for admiration in these
> monologues at each performance. What regularity in the design, what
> harmony in the instrumental part, what simplicity, what learning in the
> thoroughbass, what nobility in its progression, what expression in the *chant*,
> how touching and true it always is, as all this comes together to seize me, to
> transport me outside of myself! *Pygmalion* made me weep like Orosmane.[375]
> With what art he always takes up these words again: *Fatal amour, cruel*
> *vainqueur, Quels traits as-tu choisi pour me percer le cœur!* How he renders
> them by more touching gradations at each reprise, especially by the bass that
> leads them.[376]

Grimm's remarks further attest to the impact of the opening monologue, and especially to

the musical treatment of the first two lines. They also describe Rameau's most important

contribution to the material he borrowed from La Barre: the harmonic modulation and

fluid bass line that enhances what Grimm refers to as a "great portrait" of Pygmalion. In

his letter, Grimm assesses "Fatal amour" as an exceptional example of French recitative,

a genre that he characterizes as "sad, slow, and monotonous."[377] He asserts that the

monologue is the only type of scene in French opera that captures "the language of

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refusé de courir la carriere lyrique avec un tel Compositeur." Hugues Maret, *Éloge historique de M^r.*
Rameau, compositeur de la musique du cabinet du Roi associé de l'Académie des Sciences, Arts &
Belles-Lettres de Dijon (Dijon: Causse, 1766), 66.

[375] Orosmane is the Sultan of Jerusalem in Voltaire's *Zaïre*. Orosmane weeps when he comes to believe,
inaccurately, that his beloved Zaïre is unfaithful, and grieves further when he kills her before realizing
his error and killing himself.

[376] "L'Auteur des monologues doit avoir été échauffé par ce feu divin que nous appellons genie…. J'avoue
que je trouve à chaque représntation de nouveaux objets d'admiration dans ces monologues. Quelle
régularité dans le dessein, quelle harmonie dans la symphonie, quelle simplicité, quell sçavoir dans la
basse continue, quelle noblesse dans sa marche, quelle expression dans le chant, comme il est touchant
& vrai, comme tout cela concourt pour me saisir, pour me transporter hors de moi-même. Pigmalion me
fait pleurer comme Orosmane. Avec quell art il reprend toujours ces paroles: *Fatal amour, cruel*
vainqueur, Quels traits as-tu choisi pour me percer le cœur! Comme il les rand par gradation plus
touchantes à chaque reprise, sur-tout par la basse qui les conduit." In Jean-Jacques Rousseau and John
T. Scott, *Essay on the Origin of Languages and Writings Related to Music* (Hanover, NH: University
Press of New England, 1998), 111.

[377] Ibid., 108.

feeling and of the passions," though he finds that even it can be "an embroidered, ornate, and sometimes overburdened Recitative."[378] For Grimm, "Fatal amour" is exceptional not only because it exemplifies the potential of French recitative but also because it exceeds the limitations of its genre.

Grimm's detailed commentary sheds light on what sets the monologue apart from other recitatives. It also helps to explain one of the singular facets of its reception, its transcendence of the aesthetic divide of the *Querelle des Bouffons*. In his assessment, the monologue's expressive power comes in part through its instrumental harmony, "learned" thoroughbass, and noble progressions. At the same time, Grimm praises the monologue's structural regularity, simplicity, expression in the vocal melody, and repetition (of the first two lines). Taken together, these musical qualities represent the aesthetics claimed by partisans on both sides of the *querelle*. Advocates of Rameau lauded his rich harmonies and orchestration, while his critics, led by Jean-Jacques Rousseau, argued that Rameau favored harmony and orchestration to the exclusion of expressive and direct melodies.[379] Rousseau elevated the values of simplicity, regularity, melodic expression, and repetition in his theoretical writings on music, and unified these values in his notion of the *unité de mélodie*. As Jacqueline Waeber has observed, the definition of the *unité de mélodie* first emerged in Rousseau's response to Grimm's letter, the *Lettre à Grimm* (published anonymously in 1752).[380]

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[378] Ibid., 111.

[379] These criticisms had a number of precursors, including the Querelle des Lullistes et des Ramistes of the 1730s and 40s, when the *lullistes* charged Rameau with lacking the clarity and simplicity of Lully. Jacqueline Waeber, "Jean-Jacques Rousseau's 'unité de mélodie'," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 62/2 (2009), 89.

[380] Ibid., 84.

For Grimm, the balance of complexity and simplicity in "Fatal amour" is remarkable, and other critics noted that "Fatal amour" did not fit into the duality established during the *Querelle des Bouffons*. For example, in his *Examen de la 'Lettre de M. Rousseau, sur la musique françois* of 1753, Charles Bâton points out that Rousseau had never discussed "Fatal amour," a work "where the melody renders the sentiment that the poet expressed." He argued that if Rousseau acknowledged the merits of the monologue, it would "destroy his system."[381] Similarly, in her *Mémoire*, Madame de Genlis praises "Fatal amour" in a footnote to her discussion of Rousseau's *Le Devin du Village*, which she describes as a "delightful work, which will ever please those who admire simplicity of style and manner, [that] is distinguished by a musical expression perfectly suited to the words." In the footnote, as cited above, she acknowledges that "the celebrated Rameau had already given the example of that accord so desirable…in the air, *Fatal amour*."[382] For his part, Rousseau admits in his reply to Grimm that Rameau's recitative is "admirable in a small number of scenes," and perhaps this phrase includes Rousseau's implicit acknowledgement of the merits of "Fatal amour."[383]

To the extent that the qualities of simplicity and directness of expression appear in "Fatal amour," they result from La Barre's melody and Rameau's treatment of it. In a number of ways, the monologue focuses the listener on the melody in a manner that is

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[381] M. Rousseau a grand soin de ne point faire mention de ce que nous possedons de bon, parce que cette restriction anroit donné lieu d'inferer que nous pourrons avoir dans la suite un bien plus grand nombre d'excellens ouvrages, et acquérir même les parties qui nous manquent, ce qui détruitoit son système. C'est pourquoi il aime mieux paroîte ignorer que nous avons des morceaux, où la mélodie rend le sentiment que le Poëte a exprimé dans ses vers (*Fatal amour*, de Pigmalion)…"Charles Bâton, *Examen de la Lettre de M. Rousseau sur la musique Françoise, dans lequel on expose le plan d'une musique propre à notre langue* (Paris, 1754)*,* 20.

[382] Genlis, *Mémoires*, II, 1-2.

[383] Rousseau, *Essay on the origin of languages*, 130.

unusual within Rameau's output. Most importantly, Rameau repeats the melody four times in the short monologue, and always at the same pitch level. This repetition creates the regularity that Grimm found compelling. La Barre's melody is also more simple and direct than the melodies one typically finds in Rameau's music, and it adds an underlying clarity to the monologue. In addition, Rameau harmonically links the first two statements of the melody (ex. 6.3a) by concluding the first on the dominant and the second on the tonic. The second statement also follows the first without pause, and its beginning imitates the beginning of the first. This creates the equivalent of a parallel period with antecedent and consequent phrases. The melodic focus and periodization of the melody exemplify an aesthetic that was primarily associated with Italian music during the *querelle*.[384]

Undoubtedly, Grimm influenced the reception of Rameau's *Pygmalion*, and his praise of "Fatal amour" was widely read. Grimm's critics acknowledged the popularity of his letter, despite taking issue with his arguments and the zealous tone of his praise. Rousseau concluded his *Lettre à Grimm* by admitting that "the Public has judged and applauded [Grimm's writings], and has recognized with pleasure the man of intelligence and of taste."[385] Raynal began his response by addressing Grimm and noting acerbically that he heard about and then read the letter only because of "the advice of the Author in the *Mercure* [*de France*] this month, who *exhorts those who have not read you to read you, and those who have read you to reread you*."[386] Arguably, the letter offers some sense of the public's sentiments towards *Pygmalion*. Grimm's praise of *Pygmalion*

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384 Waeber, "Jean-Jacques Rousseau's 'unité de mélodie'," 84-94.

385 Rousseau, *Essay on the origin of languages*, 132.

386 Ibid., 115.

undoubtedly reached the public with such success in part because that public already held the work in high regard.

The combination of popularity and critical praise meant that *Pygmalion*, and especially its opening monologue, had a vibrant life for decades as a source for quotations, airs, and parody. In 1754, Georges Noverre used the tunes of "Fatal amour" and "Règne amour," another number from *Pygmalion*, in his early ballet *La Fontaine de jouvence*.[387] The ballet premiered at S. Laurent as the divertissement that followed *La Nouvelle Bastienne*, a one-act opéra-comique by Jean-Joseph Vadé. "Fatal amour" was published as an air with new text. The air replicates Rameau's melody almost exactly with only a few minor rhythmic simplifications, while the text echoes *Pygmalion* in its description of love's power to awaken: *Sois favorable à nos desirs, Amour, tu peux nous rendre aux beau jours; aux plaisirs…Viens, Amour, ranimer nos sens* [Be favorable to our desires, Cupid, you can give us beautiful days; pleasures…Come, Cupid, animate our senses] Other comedies incorporated "Fatal amour" as an air as well; for example, more than two decades after the premiere of *La Fontaine de jouvence*, it appeared in Moline and D'Orvigny's 1775 comedy *Roger-Bontems et Javotte*, a parody of *Orphée et Euridice* at the Comédie-Italienne.

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[387] *La Fontaine de Jouvence* was Noverre's second ballet, and unlike his later works that established the *ballet d'action*, it was more typical of then-popular *comédies mêlées d'ariettes*. A year earlier, Noverre had staged his first ballet, *Les Fêtes Chinoises*, at the Opéra-Comique to great success. François Boucher designed the sets, and it is possible though not certain that Rameau composed music used in the production. If Rameau was in fact a collaborator, this may have encouraged to use Rameau's music including "Fatal amour" in his next production. On the other hand, Noverre's esteem for Rameau went beyond a practical appreciation of the composer's music. In his *Lettres sur la danse* of 1760, Noverre wrote "Dancing owes all its progress to M. Rameau's varied and harmonious writing, to the *traits* and witty conversations that prevailed in his tunes." Perhaps Noverre recognized a type of expression in "Fatal amour" that lent itself to dance. Unfortunately, we know little about Noverre's choreography for *La Fontaine de Jouvence*. See quotation from Noverre in Daniel Heartz, *Music in European Capitals: The Galant Style, 1720-1780* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2003), 626.

In 1753, the Comédie-Italienne mounted a parody of *Pygmalion* using marionettes; the work by M. Gaubier, titled *Brioché; ou l'Origine des Marionettes*, opened with the text for "Fatal amour" as set to the popular tune "Monsieur le Prevôt des Marchands."[388] The tune bears some resemblance to the original melody, notably in its strong opening ascent to its highest pitch, and Gaubier may have chosen it because the public would aurally recognize it as not only a textual parody but also a musical one. The similarities between the popular tune and the original heighten the differences between the two; the major key, jaunty rhythms, and quick tempo cast an entirely different affect upon the text. Fig. 4 shows the first page of the livret and a realization of the Air with one of the variants of the tune that was in circulation.[389] As was common practice for tunes used as timbres for new texts, only the first two lines are retained from the original. Through this practice, the first two lines of the tune and text of "Fatal amour" became the most recognized element of the monologue, and ironically, this material was most directly indebted to La Barre and La Motte.

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[388] *Brioché, ou l'Origine des Marionettes* premiered on 26 September, 1753. An indication of the production's popularity: the *Mercure de France* published extracts from the livret in its December issue that year, 170-74.

[389] This tune was known under several names, including "Tout cela m'est indifféret" and "Voulez-vous savoir qui des deux." The variant used in the example fits the text with only two minor rhythmic adjustments, and it is catalogued at
<http://www.theaville.org/kitesite/index.php?r=vaudevilles/afficher&id=899&affiche=764>

Fig. 6.2   Gaubier, *Brioché, ou l'Origine des Marionettes* (1753): first page of the livret (Pierre Gosse, 1785) and realization of the parody of "Fatal amour" set to the tune of "Monsieur le Prevôt des Marchands"

The notoriety of "Fatal amour" grew, and by the 1760s, composers and librettists began to quote the *ariette* in new works outside of France. Rameau was the most famous French composer of the period, and *Pygmalion* was his most popular work, so in some cases, as Bruce Alan Brown has observed, the opening lines of "Fatal amour" were parodied as a symbol of French music itself.[390] In 1768, the composer Nicolò Jommelli and librettist Gaetano Martinelli wrote the opera buffa *La Schiava liberata* and worked in a short scene that consisted solely of a comic French Consul who sang mock-French recitative. The scene concludes with the Consul singing the opening lines of *Pygmalion* at the same time that, as the stage directions indicate, he was "walking with caricature" (*passeggia con caricatura*), likely assuming a particularly affected posture that would

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[390]   Bruce Alan Brown, "*Le Pazzie d'Orlando*, *Orlando Paladino*, and the Uses of Parody," *Italica* 64/4 (1987), 589.

have evoked French stereotypes. Though *La Schiava liberata* premiered at the ducal palace of Ludgwigsburg outside Stuttgart, it was performed around Europe and two years later performed and published in Lisbon, complete with the French Consul's scene and the quotation of "Fatal amour."[391]

This scene may have inspired a similar comic use of "Fatal amour" in a *proverbe dramatique* written by Louis Carrogis Carmontelle the following year. The *proverbe dramatique* was a witty divertissement for salon entertainment. Carmontelle was the leading author of the genre at the time that he wrote *Prince Wourtsberg, ou gros Jean qui remontre à son Curé*.[392] In one scene, a French *chanteur* named M. Brillantson is invited as musical ambassador to the court of Prince Wourtsberg. The scene begins with the Prince and Princess anxiously waiting for Brillantson to sing, and they discuss whether or not he will sing well and how they should behave while he performs. Finally, Brillantson begins, and he opens with "Fatal amour." Unfortunately, the song creates a first impression of French music that is not to the Prince's liking, and the Prince sends a messenger named Baron Schloff to tell Brillantson to sing faster, and then to sing something else.

Sometime between 1796 and 1797, Franz Joseph Haydn set this short scene to music. According to H. C. Robbins Landon, the piece labeled "Fatal amour" (H. XXX:4) in Haydn's collected works marks Haydn's only documented attempted to set a French text.[393] Haydn composed the piece as incidental music for a production of *Prince*

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[391] Nicolò Jommelli and Gaetano Martinelli, *La Schiava liberata* (Lisbon: Stamperia Reale, 1770), 72.

[392] For a study of Carmontelle's works and influence, see Jean-Hervé Donnard, *Le Théâtre de Carmontelle* (Paris: A. Colin, 1967).

[393] H. C. Robbins Landon, *Haydn: The Years of "The Creation" 1796-1800*," (Bloomington, London: Indiana University Press, 1977), 187.

Wourtsberg in Eisenstadt, and he scored it as a recitative and aria with spoken

interjections for tenor, flute, two oboes, two bassoons, two horns, and strings (ex. 6.7).

James Dack suggests that Rameau's *Pygmalion* may have been known at the Esterházy

palace in the 1790s, given its international fame,[394] and Haydn's setting offers some

evidence to support this possibility. The vocal line opens with an ascending scalar

gesture, and though it is brief, the gesture may represent a musical nod to the opening of

Rameau's vocal line. In fact, Haydn's vocal line continues a general ascent upward,

ending comically on a sudden *fz* hammering of the VII6 chord on the word "cœur." The

absurd trajectory of the melodic line and the harmonic progression (I-IV-V4-2/VII-VII7)

could be a deliberate antithesis of Rameau's melodic line, with its balanced ascent and

descent and its exemplary setting of harmony and text. Everything about Haydn's setting

of the text is wrong, from the incorrect placement of strong beats to the Presto tempo that

turns the text into comic patter.

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[394] James Dack, "Foreword" to Franz Joseph Haydn, *Chöre, Schauspielmusik und andere Vocalwerke mit Orchester*, ed. James Dack (Munich: G. Henle, 2011), xiv.

Ex. 6.7 Franz Joseph Haydn, Incidental music setting of "Fatal amour" (Hob. XXX:4). From Haydn, *Werke*, Series XXVII, Vol. 3, ed. Dack, 218.

Such a humorous treatment fits the scene, in which M. Brillantson's performance of French music is immediately distasteful and confusing to the Prince. In fact, Haydn's musical setting may represent a shifting of the comic intent from Carmontelle's original

proverbe dramatique. For Carmontelle, the Prince's failure to appreciate the beauty of M.

Brillantson's singing of "Fatal amour" and the other selections from the French repertoire

represents a satirical illustration of the ignorance of the Prince and of German taste more

broadly.[395] In Haydn's musical treatment, the French singer becomes the character with

no taste, and the Prince's rejection of French music becomes an illustration of his good

taste. Though Haydn's setting of "Fatal amour" could work comically without reference

to Rameau's setting, Haydn's audience would have appreciated his wit even more had

Rameau's *Pygmalion* been familiar to them. In any case, whether or not Haydn knew

Rameau's setting, his setting of "Fatal amour" demonstrates how far this *récitatif* had

spread since its beginnings in La Barre's score nearly a century earlier.[396]

6.2   Animating La Barre: "O Venus" and the Awakening of the Statue

Rameau could not have anticipated the phenomenal reception of *Pygmalion* and

especially of "Fatal amour." He did, however, value the melody of "Fatal amour" enough

to make it a recurring theme in the ballet. The melody serves as a link between the two

monologues of the work. The first monologue constitutes the entire first scene, and the

second opens the third scene. When Rameau returns to La Barre's melody in the third

scene of *Pygmalion*, he continues to explore its harmonic and dramatic possibilities. He

first establishes the connection between the first and third scenes by recalling the

orchestral introduction to "Fatal amour" at the beginning of the third scene. Rameau also

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[395] Ibid., xiii.

[396] It is possible that Haydn knew of La Barre's score to *Le Triomphe des arts*, either through one of the German collections that reprinted dances from the work or through Mattheson's praise in *Der vollkommene Capellmeister*, a text that Haydn knew well; on Haydn's familiarity with Mattheson, see Elaine Sisman, *Haydn and the Classical Variation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), 23.

sets the scene in G minor, a harmonic continuity that underlines the dramatic relation

between the monologue texts. In the second monologue, Pygmalion implores Venus once

again to free him from his desire for the statue:

> Que d'appas! Que d'attraits! Sa[397] grâce enchanteresse
> M'arrache malgré moi des pleurs et des soupirs.
> Dieux! Quel égarement! Quelle vaine tendresse!
> O Vénus, ô mêre des plaisirs
> Étouffe dans mon cœur d'inutiles désirs.
> Pourrais-tu condemner la source des mes larmes?
>
> [What beauty! What charm! Its (her) enchanting grace /draws tears and sighs from
> me against my will. /Gods! What madness! What vain tenderness! /O Venus, o
> mother of pleasures /extinguish these vain desires in my heart. /Can you banish
> the cause of my tears?]

Pygmalion continues by blaming his love of the statue on Cupid, and soon

thereafter the statue comes to life. Notably, in Sovot's livret, Pygmalion remains focused

on his desire to rid himself of his love of the statue, even up to the moment that the statue

awakens. Not once does he ask Venus to make the statue human, nor does he utter any

line indicating that the idea crosses his mind. Dramatically, this enhances the surprise of

the statue's animation. It also represents a departure from both La Motte and Ovid.[398]

Though Pygmalion's text contains no awareness of the imminent animation,

Rameau composes a musical anticipation of the event. For Pygmalion's direct address to

Venus (ex. 6.8), Rameau imposes a key change to G major that dramatically represents a

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[397] Though one finds this line typically translated as "her enchanting grace," Pygmalion's perception of the statue's ontological status is complex, this complexity constitutes the crux of the myth. I have therefore translated the line as "its (her) enchanting grace," because the idea that the statue could become a woman exists only as an unspoken desire for Pygmalion at this point in Sovot's livret.

[398] In "La Sculpture," Scene 2, Pygmalion has a moment of distraction during his dialogue with the Propétide in which he fleetingly wonders about the statue coming to life: PYGMALION, *regardant la Statue*, Ah! 'sil était une mortelle… [*looking at the statue*, Ah! If only it were mortal…] In Ovid, Pygmalion prays to Venus to bring his statue to life, though, out of shame, he corrects himself mid-prayer to ask Venus for a real woman *like* the statue.

change in the air, perhaps the hint of Venus's presence, or a change in Pygmalion's emotional state. "O Venus" is preceded by a brief orchestral introduction in m. 21, and Grimm declares his admiration for this musical device: "[Rameau] seizes me all of a sudden by a stroke of genius: two chords which precede Pygmalion's prayer to Venus, and which are all the more sublime, which he makes with extreme simplicity and a straight change from the minor to the major mode."[399] Rameau then recalls the melody from "Fatal amour" in m. 24 and transforms it to create an entirely different affect. In addition to changing the key to G major, he uses a simplified, descending bass line that contains none of the harmonic tension of the chromatic bass lines in the opening monologue. He also alters the beginning and ending of the vocal line (m. 25 and m. 29-30) to soften the agitated ascent and fall of the original. Finally, he omits the flutes with their falling seventh sigh motives, rendering the texture more clear and consonant. He does, however, retain a few key elements from the original melody, including the symmetrical melodic contour and the V/IV harmony at the highpoint of the melody (m. 28).

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[399] Rousseau, *Essay on the origin of languages*, 112.

Ex. 6.8   Rameau, *Pygmalion*, Sc. 3: transformation of the melody from "Fatal amour" at the moment Pygmalion calls to Venus (pg. 10-11)

At this turning point in the *acte de ballet*, the transformed "Fatal amour" musically redefines Pygmalion's despair by surrounding the text with an air of hope. The key change to G major for the transformation of the melody sets up the even more striking key change to E major at the animation of the Statue, the climactic dramatic moment of *Pygmalion*. This passage held a special significance for the composer, as it contained a representation of the *corps sonore*, Rameau's conceptual term for the first six partials in the harmonic series. His initial writings about the *corps sonore* treated it as a wonder found in nature, but *Pygmalion* marked a turn towards Rameau's conception of the *corps sonore* in metaphysical terms, as something from the divine realm.[400] In *Pygmalion*, the *corps sonore* becomes an acoustic event with the metaphysical power to

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[400] On Rameau's invocation of the *corps sonore* in *Pygmalion*, see Christensen, *Rameau and Musical Thought*, 218-41; Geoffrey Burgess, "Enlightening Harmonies: Rameau's *corps sonore* and the Representation of the Divine in the *tragédie en musique*," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 65/2 (2012), 406-10; and Daniel Chua, *Absolute Music and the Construction of Meaning* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 98-104.

animate the Statue. Since the eighteenth century, listeners have been struck by the abrupt

turn from G to E major that sets up the *corps sonore*.[401] About this passage (ex. 9),

Grimm wrote "the bold and felicitous change from G major to E major at the moment of

the miracle . . . tears at the soul."[402]

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[401] Rameau's voicing approximates the *corps sonore*, because it introduces pitches that are not among the *corps sonore*'s partials. In the final scene, Rameau gives an accurate voicing of the *corps sonore* to the choir on their final iteration of the words "L'amour triomphe." Leanne Eleanore Dodge argues that the imprecision of the voicing in the first *corps sonore* is intentional, and that Rameau the later appearance of the true *corps sonore* establishes a musical transformation that represents both the triumph of love and of the power of music. Dodge, "The Sensible Listener on Stage: Hearing the Operas of Jean-Philippe Rameau through Enlightenment Aesthetics," (PhD diss, Yale University, 2011), 301.

[402] Rousseau, *Essay on the origin of languages*, 112.

Ex. 6.9   Rameau, *Pygmalion*, Sc. 3, Abrupt key change to E major (and allusion to
corps sonore) at moment of Statue's animation

This harmonic juxtaposition has no significant parallel in Rameau's music, nor is

it justified anywhere in Rameau's harmonic theories, as Brian Hyer notes.[403] In fact, the

inspiration for this famous harmonic turn likely derives from La Barre's score. As shown

in Table 3, Rameau's tonal plan is clearly based on that of La Barre. Both works center on

a G/E tonal axis until the beginning of the divertissement (Scene 5 in "La Sculpture" and

Scenes 4-5 in *Pygmalion*). Both works also end in D major. In his adaptation, Sovot cut

out the entirety of La Motte's Scene 3, which means that Scene 3 of *Pygmalion* aligns

with Scene 4 of "La Sculpture." Sovot also incorporated much of the text from La

Motte's Scene 4 into his Scene 3, as reflected in the parallel titles "Des mes maux," "Quel

heureux sort," and "Pour un cœur."

In Scene 4 of "La Sculpture," La Barre modulates from G major to E major

through E minor. He sets the Statue's first thoughts, unsure and searching, to E minor. At

the pivotal moment (ex. 10a), when the love between the Statue and Pygmalion

crystalizes, he turns to E major. The Statue sings:

> Quel heureux sort pour moi!
> vous partagez ma flame.
> Ce n'est pas votre voix qui m'en instruit le mieux:
> Mais je reconnais dans vos yeux
> Ce que je ressens dans mon âme.

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[403] Hyer, "'Sighing Branches'," 10. Christian Berger argues that there must be a theoretical justification for
the key change, and asserts that Rameau uses E major because it features a chromatic alteration (G#) of
the G in G major, which he argues is linked to the chromatic third alterations in the earlier modulations
from G major to G minor; see Berger, "Ein 'Tableau' des 'Principe de l'harmonie': *Pygmalion* von
Jean-Philippe Rameau," in *Jean-Philippe Rameau: colloque. . . Dijon, 1983: actes*, ed. Jêrome de La
Gorce (Paris-Genève: Champion-Slatkine, 1987), 375-81. Christensen does not find Berger's claim
convincing, and believes that the key design reflects musical considerations over theoretical ones; see
Rameau and Musical Thought, 231. I would suggest that La Barre's score is the most likely inspiration
for the key change.

[What a happy fate for me! /You share my passion. /It is not only your voice that instructs me the most: /But I recognize in your eyes /that which I feel in my soul.]

It is here that the Statue truly becomes real and art, inspired by love, triumphs. In her actualizing moment (albeit as a mirror image of her sculptor-creator), the Statue recognizes a passion that unites her with Pygmalion, body and soul. The boundary between inanimate and animate has been breached, not by Cartesian logic but by love. La Barre expresses this new union musically by giving Pygmalion's thematic material from "Fatal amour" to the Statue, as indicated by brackets in ex. 10a. Initially, the recalled material directly imitates the opening of "Fatal amour" with ascending bass and melodic lines in parallel thirds (compare m. 66 in ex. 10a to the opening of ex. 1a).[404] What follows represents Pygmalion's despair as transformed to joy in the voice of the Statue. The subtle evocations of "Fatal amour" recur seven times (with the repeat). Harmonically, La Barre moves through E major, B major, and F# minor before returning to E major to create a sense of triumphant reversal and closure. La Barre's recall of this material, it should be noted, is the kind of dramatic characterization through thematic repetition that James Anthony praised as innovative in the music of Campra.[405]

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[404] Rameau features a very similar figure near the end of Scene 3 of *Pygmalion*. He uses the figure to set the words "Que votre ardeur," which perhaps coincidentally are the first words of the line that Voltaire specifically criticized in the *Lettre sur l'Esprit*. This figure may represent an intentional nod to La Barre's score; notably, Rameau does not compose parallel bass and vocal lines in this way at any other point in his score.

[405] James R. Anthony, "Thematic Repetition in the Opera-Ballets of André Campra," *The Musical Quarterly* 52/2 (1966), 211. Anthony notes three main ways in which Campra uses thematic repetition for dramatic purposes, including "repetition of a general melodic shape and rhythmic organization" and "repetition of a phrase of music and text from a particularly important air or ensemble." La Barre employs both of these devices in "Quel heureux sort."

Ex. 6.10a   La Barre, *Le Triomphe des arts*, Entrée V, Sc. 4: "Quel heureux sort" beginning with key change to E major [thematic recalls of opening "Fatal amour" melody marked with brackets]

Sovot used La Motte's lines for "Quel heureux sort" essentially unaltered in Scene 3 of *Pygmalion*.[406] Rameau must have noticed La Barre's thematic recall for this text, and apparently he liked the device enough to borrow it. As shown in ex. 10b, the Statue's air in *Pygmalion* is based on Rameau's melody for "Fatal amour" (to facilitate comparison, the melody for "Fatal amour" has been transposed to E minor and placed an octave higher). Notably, Rameau does not adopt the major key or give the air the same sense of triumphant closure and love won that one finds in La Barre's setting. Rameau does not pass through a series of key centers, but remains in E minor save for a cadence in G major on the third measure (mm. 122-23), which does not appear in the original melody. This cadence opens the setting of the happy text with a sense of joy, and it may have been suggested by La Barre's use of a major key, but the major key is fleeting. In the next measure, Rameau recalls the yearning chromatic ascent from "Fatal amour" (m. 124). Though his Air is more understated, and in a way less sentimental than La Barre's, the differences undoubtedly reflect Rameau's intention to save his most overt musical expressions of love's triumph for the airs in the fifth scene, "L'amour triomphe" and "Règne, Amour." In any case, the thematic recalls in both works show that the two composers draw on a common interpretation of the myth. Both La Barre and Rameau portray the Statue more as a musical reflection or variant imitation of Pygmalion rather than as an independent individual.[407]

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[406] Sovot changed only one minor word, replacing "mais" with "et" in the line "Et je reconnais dans vos yeux."

[407] This interpretation of the myth is also reflected by the Statue's lack a name. Dodge argues that, in the final two scenes of *Pygmalion*, Rameau breaks from this characterization of the Statue as a reflection of Pygmalion. She interprets the Sarabande, where Rameau turns to F major, as the point at which Rameau begins to use musical material for the Statue that has no basis in the musical material for Pygmalion. See "The Sensible Listener," Chapter 5.

Ex. 6-10b   Rameau, *Pygmalion*, Sc. 3: Statue's Air "Quel heureux sort" [adapted from opening "Fatal amour" melody, shown in top staff]

In addition to thematic recall, Rameau likely adapted another aspect of La Barre's Scene 4: the tonal plan GM-em-EM. Rameau applied this tonal plan to his Scene 3, but significantly, he reversed the order of E minor and E major, creating the juxtaposition of G major and E major. La Barre's score may have inspired Rameau's choice of E major as the key for the pivotal animation of the statue; given his emulation of La Barre's thematic

recall, Rameau must have recognized the dramatic importance that La Barre assigned to the key.[408] The reassignment of E major from love scene to animation scene harmonically illustrates Rameau's turn away from the investigation of love, as framed in 1700 by the Moderns as a political, literary, and scientific endeavor. In 1748, the new object of investigation had become the senses and the nature of consciousness.

More than anything, *Pygmalion* stands apart from its model in its dramatic focus on sensation. In "La Sculpture," the pivotal moment ("Quel heureux sort") reflects the contemporary belief that music should express the passions in a rational manner.[409] The Moderns argued that modern advances, including new understandings of love, were indebted to rationalist thinking inherited from Descartes.[410] In this context, it makes sense that the emotional transformation in La Barre's "Quel heureux sort," would feature text. By contrast, the pivotal moment in *Pygmalion* arrives in the form of pure sound, and furthermore, it exists in the work as a diegetic sensory stimulus to the characters. I have already alluded to Rameau's involvement with sensationalist ideas and their influence on *Pygmalion*. Generally, sensationalist philosophy argues that all ideas derive from sensory information, and that the mind begins as a *tabula rasa*. Given that sensory experiences differ from person to person, sensationalism holds that ideas are more subjective than rational.[411] In *Pygmalion*, the pivotal moment of the animation centers on the diegetic

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408 Unfortunately, one can only speculate as to whether Rameau's idea to use the *corps sonore* inspired the adaptation of La Barre's tonal plan in the scene. He may have started with the idea to use the *corps sonore* in the work, or he may have started with La Barre's tonal plan.

409 On the artistic tenets of the French music in this period, see Georgia Cowart, "Introduction," in *French Musical Thought*, ed. Georgia Cowart (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1989), 1-6.

410 Larry F. Norman, *The Shock of the Ancient: Literature and History in Early Modern France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 77-88.

411 On eighteenth-century sensationalism and French aesthetics, see John C. O'Neal, *The Authority of Experience: Sensationist Theory in the French Enlightenment* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania

sound that derives its importance from sensationalism. Yet the sound itself, an allusion to the *corps sonore*, derives from Rameau's rationalist conception of music, and so the moment of the animation enacts a convergence of the subjective and the rational.

It is possible that Rameau, a modern in his own time, presented *Pygmalion* as an artistic exploration of contemporary philosophical ideas. He also would have been aware of La Motte's status as a modern, and may even have recognized the modernist aesthetic that La Motte and La Barre promulgated in *Le Triomphe des arts*. La Motte's writings were still widely circulated in 1748, and given Rameau's admiration for La Motte, he may have been more familiar with La Motte's writings than most. We have no evidence that the aesthetic borrowing is as clear as the musical borrowing, but Rameau definitely would have seen *Le Triomphe des arts* as iconoclastic and new in its own time, and so it follows that he could have viewed *Pygmalion* as iconoclastic and modern in the same way.

The importance of the philosophical orientations of the two works is important because it has been overlooked in assessments of "La Sculpture." Because of the fame of Rameau's animation scene, the scant scholarly attention that La Barre's score has received has focused on its anticipation of this scene. Most recently, Geoffrey Burgess compares Rameau's use of the *corps sonore* for the arrival of Venus to La Barre's music for the same moment, and describes the latter as the old-fashioned and less effective precursor to Rameau.[412] While Burgess's description is fair, I would argue that it lacks some context. The arrival of Venus and the animation is of secondary dramatic

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State University Press, 1996). O'Neal prefers the term "sensationism" to "sensationalism" to avoid confusion with the modern usages of the latter, but I have opted to use the more familiar term in this essay.

[412] Burgess, "Enlightening Harmonies," 408, 442.

importance in "La Sculpture" to the love between Pygmalion and the Statue (which is celebrated by the apotheosis and love and art in the final scene), and this may explain why La Barre paints the musical moment of *merveilleux* with such a conventional brush.[413] Burgess does not discuss any other part of La Barre's score. Rameau likely would have agreed with Burgess's assessment of La Barre's animation scene, but as the preceding discussion has demonstrated, he found much of the rest of La Barre's score to be worthy of adaptation.

Table 6.2   Comparison of Tonal Plans for "La Sculpture" and *Pygmalion*

Le Triomphe des arts, Entrée V			*Pygmalion*	
Sc. Number	*Keys*	*Sc.*	*Number*	*Keys*
			Overture	GM, (DM)
1 "Fatal Amour"	cm	**1**	"Fatal Amour"	gm
2 Recitative	gm, B♭M	**2**	Recitative, "Pygmalion"	B♭M, gm
"O Venus"	gm	**3**	Recitative, "Que d'appas"	gm
Symphonie	GM		*Recitative, "O Venus"*	*GM*
3 "Je viens finir les maux"	GM		*Symphonie [animation]*	*EM*
Rec.: "Cruelle, à quel exces"	GM		*Recitative, "D'où naissent"*	*EM*
"Souffre à ton tour"	em		*Air, "De mes maux"*	*em*
"Mais il m'échappe"	GM		*Air, "Quel heureux sort"*	*em*
"J'ay pitié de sa peine"	GM		*Air, "Pour un coeur"*	*em*
"Toy, reconnois"	GM		*Recitative, "Mon premier désir"*	*em*
4 *Prelude [animation]*	*GM*	**4**	Recitative, "Du pouvoir"	GM
"Que vois je?"	*em*		Ariette, "Jeux et Ris"	GM (DM, em)
"De mes maux"	*em*		Air, Gavotte, Menuet, Gavotte	GM

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413 *Le Triomphe des arts* is after all an opéra-ballet, though it is an unusual example of its genre because it features mythological gods and goddesses, especially Venus, that play significant roles. Beginning with the first opéra-ballet (La Motte and Campra's *L'Europe galante* of 1697), the genre distinguished itself from the *tragédie en musique* in part through its emphasis on realism and its omission or limitation of the power of mythological figures. A discussion of *Le Triomphe des arts* as a whole is beyond the scope of the present argument, but in "La Sculpture," I would suggest that the emphasis on the drama of love over the drama of divine power is consistent with the generic innovations that La Motte originated. Arguably, Venus operates in the opéra-ballet more as a recurring and unifying symbol (within the ideological program that Cowart has established, as referenced above) rather than as a key player in dramatic events.

"Quel heureux sort"	*EM*	Chaconne	gm
Air: "Pour un coeur"	*EM*	Loure très grave	CM, GM
"Et mes premiers soins"	*EM*	Passepied vif	CM
"Aimons-nous"	*EM*	Rigaudon vif	CM
Prelude and "Ce concert"	GM	Sarabande pour la Statue	Fm, (A^{b}M)
Instrumental Rondeau	GM	Tambourin fort et vite	FM
5 "J'Ouissez d'un Bonheur"	GM	Recitative, "Le peuple"	FM
Air: L'Agriculture	GM	**5** Air gay	FM, (CM)
Air Pastre	gm	Air, "L'Amour triomphe"	FM, (CM, dm)
Rondeau from Sc. 4	GM	Pantomimes	FM, (CM, dm)
D. C. Aria "Un dolce canto"	B^{b}M	Air, "Règne, Amour"	FM, (CM, dm)
Rigaudon I, II	gm	Air gracieux	dm
"Amants, que l'avenir"	GM	Rondeau contredanse	DM, (AM)
Passepied I, II	DM		
"Du doux bruit"	DM		

6.3   Animating La Barre: Instrumental dances

With only one exception, Rameau's instrumental numbers in *Pygmalion* (including the well-known series of dances for the Statue) do not contain discernible traces of La Barre's influence.[414] This is unsurprising given that, in terms of dramatic content, the final two scenes substantially deviate from "La Sculpture." It is particularly

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[414] A second possible instrumental borrowing occurs in the passepied, though because the musical materials that link Rameau's and La Barre's passepieds are highly conventional, I stop short of conclusively identifying this example as a borrowing. In Rameau's score the passepied has the distinction of being the dance of the Graces, and Rameau uses only one passepied, a *passepied vif*, while La Barre includes two. It is La Barre's second passepied that may be a source for Rameau's. The passepieds show similar melodic gestures, notably an opening scalar descent of a fourth in both voices (in imitation in Rameau's passepied); and a second gesture that appears at the high points of Rameau's passepied and in sequence in La Barre's, consisting of an eighth note followed by falling sixteenth notes that begin a step above the eight note. Both passepieds build in rhythmic and melodic density, and both include wind instrument pairs (La Barre adds two *hautbois*, and Rameau two recorders). Considering the context of Rameau's other borrowings from La Barre in *Pygmalion*, these similarities may be more than coincidence. If this were an intentional borrowing, it constitutes a more superficial engagement with La Barre's music than one finds in "Fatal amour."

in scenes i and iii, the monologue scenes, where Rameau's debt to La Barre's model is most concentrated. In scenes iv and v, Rameau moves away from the E/G tonal axis that he adapts from La Barre by descending by fifth from G to C to an arrival on F at the Statue's Sarabande. In scene v, Rameau sets up a new tonal axis around D/F.[415] In contrast, La Barre remains centered on G for the final scene of "La Sculpture." Rameau also significantly expands the divertissement, in part because of the influence of Marie Sallé.[416] He adds new dances and pantomime, turning it into a virtual catalogue of characteristic dances of the period. Though his treatment of the dance represents the most original contribution to his adaptation of "La Sculpture," it should be noted that dance played an important role in La Barre's score as well. As Georgia Cowart has noted, "La Sculpture" represented a celebration of dance within the program of *Le Triomphe des arts*.[417]

Rameau borrows his instrumental material from a passage that occurs in a similar dramatic context. At the end of scene iv in La Barre's score, an orchestral prelude introduces an announcement by Pygmalion of a festive celebration of the arts. The prelude and announcement, both in G major, are brief; the prelude is eight measures, and Pygmalion's announcement only six (ex. 11a). From these simple materials, Rameau fashions a significantly expanded orchestral prelude for the air "L'Amour triomphe" to open scene v in *Pygmalion* (ex. 11b). Rameau extends the prelude to forty-six measures,

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[415] On Rameau's move to a second tonal axis in the final two scenes of *Pygmalion*, see Dodge, "The Sensible Listener," 251-54.

[416] Rameau deviates furthest from La Barre's harmonic scheme in his Scene 4; this deviation reflects the entirely new material of that scene, which was undoubtedly inspired in part by Sallé's ballet-pantomime *Pygmalion* of 1734. On the working relationship between Sallé and Rameau, see Ibid., 263-68.

[417] Georgia Cowart, *The Triumph of Pleasure: Louis XIV and the Politics of Spectacle* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 175-76.

and builds it around three melodic figures that he derives from La Barre's prelude. The most prominent melodic figure comes from the second measure of La Barre's prelude, and is labeled X in exs. 11a and 11b. The figure Y in Rameau's prelude appears to be a variant of the first measure of La Barre's prelude, and the figure Z derives from the La Barre's pickup gesture to mm. 1 and 5.

Ex. 6.11a   La Barre, *Le Triomphe des arts*, Entrée V, Sc. 4: "Orchestral prelude to *ariette* "Ce concert""

Ex. 6.11b   Rameau, *Pygmalion*, Sc. 5: Orchestral prelude to *ariette* "L'Amour triomphe"

Rameau's elaboration of these figures into an extended prelude in binary form gives another indication of his desire to improve upon his predecessor's model. As in "Fatal amour," Rameau's adaptation takes La Barre's source material to another level of grandeur. At the same time, he takes a different approach to adapting La Barre's material for the prelude. In "Fatal amour," Rameau keeps La Barre's melody intact while

progressively enhancing its harmonic progressions and orchestration. In the prelude, Rameau breaks La Barre's music down into individual cells and then uses these to build a new prelude. This approach has a known precedent; Sadler identifies a similar reworking of Handel's music in the *Nouvelles suites de pieces de clavecin* (1729/30).[418] Rameau based the Gavotte and six *doubles* that concludes the second suite on Handel's D minor Air and five variations from the harpsichord suite no. 3 (HWV428). In the first three *doubles*, Rameau builds his music from motives derived from Handel's variations by manipulating and interspersing the motives amidst new material, just as he does in the prelude in *Pygmalion*. Sadler uses the term "compositional modelling" to differentiate Rameau's use of Handel's music from musical borrowing; this term could apply to Rameau's reworking of La Barre's music.

6.4 Conclusion

The musical passages discussed in this essay reveal the most extensive known act of musical borrowing—and arguably the most high-profile—in Rameau's œuvre. Rameau's sophisticated and creative development of La Barre's music rises above mere borrowing to become an act of artful adaptation, an act that surreptitiously gave new life to an old score that had been all but forgotten. This essay situates Rameau's extraordinary choice to adapt La Barre's music within a distinct moment in both his career and in the arts in France. Between 1740 and 1744, Rameau heavily revised a number of his scores in order to capture the latest musical ideas as well as to make them more appealing to the

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[418] Graham Sadler, "From Themes to Variations: Rameau's debt to Handel," in *'L'Esprit français' und die Musik Europas: Entstehung Einfluß und Grenzen einer aesthetischen Doktrin*, ed. Michelle Bigt and Rainer Schmusch (Hildesheim: Olms, 2007), 595-600.

public.[419] For *Pygmalion*, Rameau applied his zeal for revision to La Barre's music, and with great success. In addition, the composition of *Pygmalion* coincides with the period during which literati and *philosophes* frequently took up *Le Triomphe des arts* as a basis for new treatments of the myth of Pygmalion. Rameau's adaption of La Barre's music represents a previously unrecognized contribution to this intertextual discourse.

Though Rameau had many possible reasons for adapting the music and text of "La Sculpture," to borrow from an earlier composer represented a creative gamble that made him vulnerable to criticism. For more than a decade, Rameau's detractors had subjected him to vitriolic critiques, and had used any identified musical borrowing to accuse him of lack of originality. Fortunately for Rameau, his critics showed limited ability to identify his borrowings, and seem only to have located his reuses of his harpsichord pieces.[420] His knowledge of his critics, coupled with the relative obscurity of the score to *Le Triomphe des arts*, suggested to Rameau that borrowing from La Barre would likely go unnoticed.

The threat of criticism also provided an incentive for him to transform La Barre's score enough to cover his tracks. Though not a single person seems to have recognized Rameau's borrowings in *Pygmalion*, at least one critic, the perceptive Grimm, intuited a qualitative difference between the sections that were most indebted to La Barre (the

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[419] Rameau's enthusiasm for musical revision predated the period when the Académie Royale de Musique began extensively revising Lully's operas. As Lois Rosow has discussed, the revisionary approach to Lullian opera began in earnest in the mid 1750s and carried on into the 1770s. A revival of *Armide* in 1746 featured limited revisions and is notable as an early, tentative example of this new reform attitude; yet, for the most part Lully's operas were left relatively untouched in the 1740s. Compared to the revisions in that production of *Armide*, Rameau's adaptation of "La Sculpture" in 1748 is extraordinarily extensive. Ironically, Rameau apparently did not contribute to any of the revised Lullian operas. Rosow, "How eighteenth-century Parisians heard Lully's operas: the case of *Armide*'s fourth act," in *Jean-Baptiste Lully and the Music of the French Baroque: Essays in Honor of James R. Anthony*, ed. John Hajdu Heyer (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 226-28.

[420] Graham Sadler, "A re-examination of Rameau's self-borrowings," 262.

monologue scenes i and iii) and the rest of the work. In fact, Grimm found the

monologues to be "warmed by that divine fire we call genius," while the rest of the work

he judged to be "merely the production of a man of taste," and he confessed to his readers

that

> the enthusiasm these [monologues] inspire prevents me from speaking to you
> of that brilliant overture, of that admirable sarabande danced by the Statue, of
> that majestic chorus, *l'amour triomphe*, of that original character of the
> innocent Pantomime, finally, of each piece which makes up part of this
> immortal work.[421]

Grimm also urged the public to perceive these differences as well: "It is the same

workman, I know, who wrote both [the monologue and the rest of the work], but men

should be affected wholly differently by what is beautiful than by what is merely

pleasing."[422] Of course, as I have demonstrated, it was not exactly the same the workman

who composed the monologues, if one takes into consideration La Barre's contribution.

Ballot de Sovot's livret for *Pygmalion* did not fare as well as Rameau's score with

critics, who disparaged it for, as David Charlton writes, "slipping under the coat-tails of

old words."[423] Ironically, both Rameau and Sovot approached their source material as

adapters in the similar ways. They also were not alone in recognizing the potential of the

material. The fact that multiple French composers reset *Le Triomphe des arts* at a time

when doing so was virtually unheard of in France indicates that this unjustly neglected

work had an elusive influence on artists of the eighteenth century. Rameau must have felt

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[421] "l'enthousiasme que ces [monologues] inspirent, m'empêche de vous parler de cette ouverture brillante, de cette sarabande admirable dansée par la Statue, de ce Chœur majestueux: *l'amour triomphe*, de ce caractere original de la Pantomime niaise, enfin de chaque morceau qui fait partie de cet ouvrage immortel." Rousseau, *Essay on the origin of languages*, 112.

[422] "C'est le même ouvrier, je le sçai, qui a fait l'un & l'autre morceau, mais les homes devroient être affectes tout différemment par ce qui est beau, que par ce qui n'et qu'agréable." Ibid., 111.

[423] Charlton, *Opera in the Age of Rousseau*, 178.

the value of the music was worth giving his hostile critics a ready-made reason to condemn him, and history has proven that he gambled well. He even wept openly at the public's love for his work. In his journal for March, 1751, Rameau's friend Charles Collé wrote "

> The applause [for *Pygmalion*] overwhelmed poor Rameau, according to Monticourt, who saw the grand artist several days later; he was transported, he wept with joy. He was inebriated with the reception he had made with the public; he swore to devote the rest of his life . . . [he said] "the public will find all of these works upon my death, and I will work until the last breath to show it my gratitude."[424]

Perhaps he reserved some of that gratitude for Michel de La Barre.

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[424] 'Ces applaudissements ont comblé de joie le pauvre Rameau, à ce que m'a dit Monticourt, qui vit ce grand artiste quelques jours après; il étoit transporté, il pleurait de joie. Il étoit ivre de l'accueil que lui avoit fait le public; il juroit de lui consacrer le reste de sa vie…lui disait-il…*le public trouvera tous ces ouvrages à ma mort, et je travaillerai jusqu'au dernier soupir pour lui marquer ma reconnaissance.*"

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