The reflections of memory : an account of a cognitive approach to historically informed staging
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7   Case Studies

These three cases are approached from the point of view of one of the elements of the staging discourse: costumes, sets and machines. Case-study 1 offers an example of the type of investigation envisaged when designing a costume for a Historically Informed staged production. In direct relation with *Acis and Galatea* it is centered on the river gods' theatrical costume in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries but reveals a more general method of investigation that is applicable when costuming river gods in other pieces but also other figures. Case-study 2 is dedicated to the performance of *Psiché* in the Drottningholms Slottsteater in 1766 and provides an example of the place of scenery and stage machinery in a period performancing space. Case-study 3 is dedicated to the implementation of a flying machines in my recent production of *Niobe, Regina di Tebe*.

7.1   River gods theatrical costumes

> "'That Acis to his lineage should return;
> And rowl, among the river Gods, his urn.
> Straight issu'd from the stone a stream of blood;
> Which lost the purple, mingling with the flood,
> Then, like a troubled torrent, it appear'd:
> The torrent too, in little space, was clear'd.
> The stone was cleft, and through the yawning chink
> New reeds arose, on the new river's brink.
> The rock, from out its hollow womb, disclos'd
> A sound like water in its course oppos'd,
> When (wond'rous to behold), full in the flood,
> Up starts a youth, and navel high he stood.
> Horns from his temples rise; and either horn
> Thick wreaths of reeds (his native growth) adorn.
> Were not his stature taller than before,
> His bulk augmented, and his beauty more,
> His colour blue; for Acis he might pass:
> And Acis chang'd into a stream he was,
> But mine no more; he rowls along the plains
> With rapid motion, and his name retains."

Ovid. *Metamorphoses*, Book XIII, translated by John Dryden, 1693, republished 1717[1].

In early beliefs water was of godlike nature and, in their anthropomorphic pantheon, Greek and Roman times identified the seas, but also the rivers and springs, as water gods and nymphs. The classical Greek myth of Galatea and Acis, as developed by the Roman poet Ovid, tells the story of Acis' metamorphose into a stream: Galatea, a nymph of the sea, and the shepherd Acis loved each other but the jealous cyclops Polyphemus hurls a rock at Acis and kills him. With her divine powers Galatea changes the blood pouring from under the boulder into clear water and makes Acis immortal by transforming him into a source and therefore elevates him to a river god. In 1718, Handel composed *Acis and Galatea,* with a libretto by a group of classical inspired poets, most notably Alexander Pope, John Gay and John Hughes. The work was revived on stage several times during the eighteenth century and the water element of the myth must have been represented following the theatre practices and customs of this period. The transformation of Acis is the crowning of the piece and was likely to be represented by a change of costume for the singer: from mortal shepherd to river god.

The French Michel de Pure (1620–1680) in his *Idée des Spectacles,* published in 1668, established the importance of the « règle de convenance des habits», a system of rules for the conception of the stage costumes to guarantee a rich readability, supporting the poetic message

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[1] See: Ovid. *Metamorphoses*. Translated by John Dryden, and others, edited by Samuel Garth. With an introduction by Garth Tissol. Ware : Wordsworth Editions, 1998. This translation, published by Samuel Garth a year before the creation of *Acis and Galatea,* brings together works by John Dryden, and adds several tales translated by Joseph Addison, Nahum Tate, William Congreve, and Nicholas Rowe, as well as those of ten others including Sir Samuel himself. John Gay, and in a smaller proportion, Alexander Pope also contributed. (Books I and XII translated by Dryden, VIII, X-XI, XIII, and XV, by Dryden and others; II-III, by Addison; IV, by Addison and Laurence Eusden; V, by Arthur Mainwaring; VI, by Samuel Croxall; VII, by Tate and William Stonestreet; IX, by Gay and others; XIV, by Samuel Garth). Dryden already translated the story of Acis in 1693, for his *Examen Poeticum* (Third Miscellany) and this version was used by Garth. There are some striking similarities between the libretto of *Acis and Galatea* and his verses.

of the libretto. In this instruction for the appropriateness of costumes to the purpose of the spectacle, he insists that: « If the clothes are badly organized, it is impossible for the Entrées to express what they must express, and for the Spectator to have the pleasure he could take ».[2] Unfortunately, no period stage design for Handel's *Acis and Galatea* has been identified so far and to be able to give Acis an appropriate river god costume in a Historically Informed and/or Inspired stage production, one should try, through various European references, to trace the allegorical conventions of the period, conventions being inspired by the classics and present in literature and visual arts. The following essay tries to follow the advices and precepts articulated by Michel de Pure. In one of the rare texts explaining how the costume designer should work, when conceiving, he recommends a research which should include: « To consult at least the scientists, the curious, for Prints or for Medals»[3], and, following this precept, this study is based on many visual documents. The first ones correspond to the sources De Pure recommends consulting. Since the antiquity, rivers have been depicted in the form of human shaped gods with special attributes. A few examples of Greco-Roman culture are presented in the first part of this study. During the Baroque period, illustrators of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and painters inspired by his mythological tales were re-using the iconological code established by the Romans and spread the visual elements through Europe with prints. A personal selection of this characterization is presented in the second part.

Transmutation in water occurs in other myths and this liquid element is also presented in a selection of costume designs which offers some alternative details imagined by various costume designers to represent the fluid element. As Joseph Addison noticed in 1712, « OVID [sic] in his *Metamorphosis* [sic], has shewn us how the Imagination may be affected by what is Strange. He describes a Miracle in every Story, and always gives us the Sight of some new Creature at the end of it. His Art consists chiefly in well-timing his Description, before the first Shape is quite worn off, and the new one perfectly finish'd, so that he every where entertain us with something we never saw before, and shews Monster, after Monster, to the end of the Metamorphosis…»[4]. As part of this category of "Monster after Monster", the character of the river god can be found in ballets, operas and masquerades throughout the seventeenth century and eighteenth centuries. To define what the costume of a river god, i.e. Acis, after his metamorphose, could have looked like on stage, a small compendium in the third part presents various costume designs. This selection, presented chronologically, is an extra corpus of references, which takes in consideration the circulation of ideas and style at the time in Europe: made from French documents in public collections and tries to define what constitutes the traits and marks of a river god costume. French theatre costumes, often connected with Royal patronage, were renown all over Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and it seemed fair to base such a case study on a defined corpus of influence. Since designs are from different hands over a rather long period, they should be put mentally in relation with other projects for Decorative arts of the same period to understand better the relationship between project and art work. The relation between the graphic hand of the designer and the costume as a final product will become more accurate: the hand of the

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[2] « si les habits sont mal ordonnez, il est impossible que les Entrées expriment bien ce qu'elles doivent exprimer, & que le Spectateur y ait le plaisir qu'il pourroit prendre » in Pure, Michel de. *Idée des Spectacles Anciens et Nouveaux. Des Anciens {Cirques, Amphitheatres, Theatres, Naumachies, triomphes ; Nouveaux {Comédie, Bal, Mascarades, Carosels, Courses de Bagues &t de Testes, Joustes, Exercices & Revues Militaires, Feux d'Artifices, Entrées des Rois & des Reynes.* Paris: Michel Brunet, 1668, p. 287. Permalink: http://bibliotheque-numerique.inha.fr/idurl/1/15543

[3] « consulter du moins les sçavants, les curieux, en Estampes ou en Medailles » in Pure, Michel de. *Idée des Spectacles Anciens et Nouveaux…* Paris: Michel Brunet, 1668, p. 286.

[4] Addison. *The Spectator*, N°417, 28 June 1712.

artist used the style of his time to project a reality, and renderings of convention, as the design was to be read and executed by various craftsmen.

A conclusion is presented in the form of a list, which could take easily the shape of a Memory map, as an attempt to make a synthesis to use when creating a historically informed design for the character of a river god. By assimilating twelve fundamental elements to have in mind when designing this specific theatrical costume, and by integrating specifics about the body of the performer, the depiction of a river god would be historically accurate.

7.1.1   The definition of an iconic figure

The idea of humanizing the rivers dates back to antiquity. Virgil describing the Tiber wrote in the *Aeneid*: « Then, thro' the shadows of the poplar wood, / Arose the father of the Roman flood;/ An azure robe was o'er his body spread, / A wreath of shady reeds adorn'd his head».[5] Ovid in the *Metamorphoses* also mentions the reeds in his depiction of the river god Achelous « Whence thus the Calydonian stream reply'd, / With twining reeds his careless tresses ty'd »[6]. These textual evidences are corroborated by abundant visual works. Hereafter examples are being presented, taken from the Roman arts of mosaic, sculpture and painting.

Figure 1: *The river Ladon and the nymph Psanis.* Imperial Roman mosaic, ca 250 - 275 AD. Antakya, Turkey, Antakya Museum.

The Roman mosaic shown on Figure 1 contains a great number of figurative symbols and is a good example of how Greco-Roman art sets up the iconological form. It depicts a river god as a half naked figure with an open vessel from which water flows. Besides its linear and polychrome precision, this work is also exemplary because the identity of the gods as rivers is confirmed by the text inscribed next to them[7]. The river god on the left is labelled as Ladon. Ladon is a known river of north-eastern Arkadia, in the Peloponnesus (southern Greece) but it was also believed to flow near Daphne, the Syrian town where the mosaic was found. The river-god Ladon is here represented opposite Psanis (or Psalis) a nymph of an Arkadian spring who, in ancient belief, may have been the wife of Ladon. Psanis is considered as one of the *Pegaeae*, a type of naiads that lived in springs. They were often considered relatives of the river gods *Potamoi*, thus establishing a mythological relationship between a river itself and its springs.

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[5] *The Aeneid* by Virgil (Book VIII, Verses 31-34) translated by Dryden, 1697.

[6] *Metamorphoses* by Ovid (Book IX, verse 3) translated by John Gay, 1717, See note 1.

[7] « The Ladon river, according to Syrian sources, flowed near the famed Temple of Apollo at Daphne. » in Cimok, Fatih. *Antioch Mosaics*. New York: Penguin, 2000, p. 21. This book includes the most important Antioch mosaic pavements displayed in the Hatay Archaeological Museum at Antakya, Turkey, seventeen different institutions in the USA and the Louvre. The mosaics were brought to light in and around Antioch on the Orantes (Antakya), Seleucia Pieria (Cevlik) and Daphne (Defne) in 1932–1937.

The bearded god, half naked, is crowned with reeds, and holds a horn of plenty. The cornucopia is overflowing with water while the nymph, also bare-chested, is resting on an urn pouring water and holding a reed. Although it is difficult to trace the oldest example of such portrayal, we will see these two attributes, the flooding urn and the cornucopia, alternate in depictions of river gods.

Figure 2: River god, fresco from Pompeii, Campania, Italy, Roman Civilization, 1st century AD.
Paris, Musée du Louvre.

Coming from a Pompeian fresco, the painting of Figure 2 shows an unidentified river under the appearance of an old man with a short grey beard. The reclining position leaning on an urn as an alternative to the cornucopia has become typical to indicate the source of the river. The crown of reed is echoed by the long one the god is holding in his right hand. This vegetal attribute, maybe because of the difficulty to treat it in three dimensions or the fragility of its confection, seems not to be found in Greco-Roman sculpture and will be replaced in the Baroque period by an oar, which also indicates that the river is navigable, as clearly indicated in 1645 by Cesare Ripa[8]. For example, when restoring the famous Roman statue of the Tiber, the sculptors of the eighteenth century gave an oar to the river god, but nothing indicates for sure that the god was holding one in the original setting. On the etching made by François Perrier (1590–1650) prior the restoration, the river god (Figure 3) has nothing in his hand, although the closed fist suggests he was holding something[9]. Like in the Fountain of the Nile (Figure 4), it may have been a reed. Nevertheless, the attribution of the oar seems only to be present since the late renaissance.[10]

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[8] Ripa, Cesare. *Iconologia,* 1645, p. 218: « Il remo dimostra esser fiume navigabile, & commodo all mercantile ».

[9] For other designs of period witnesses see the one of Hendrick Goltzius (1558–1617), kept by the Teylers Museum in Haarlem. His designs show before their restoration, in the years 1590–1591, the roman statues of the Nile and the Tiber, unearthed in 1512.

[10] Tervarent, Guy de. *Attributs et symboles de l'art profane : Dictionnaire d'un langage perdu (1450–1600).* Paris : Droz, 1997, p. 359.

Figure 3: 1638, *Le Tibre,* French etching by François Perrier (ca 1590–1650), from *Segmenta nobilium signorum e statuaru[m]*. Rome and Paris: chez de Poilly, 1638.
Collection of Gilbert Blin.

Figure 4: Fountain basin with a figure of the Nile, Roman Imperial Period, 98–138 AD.
(Photography: Gilbert Blin).
Boston, Museum of Fine Arts.

A remarkable sculpture kept in the Museum of Fine Arts of Boston shows a bearded river god who appears with wreathed hair swept back in a bun by a small crown (Figure 4)[11]. He is in the nude apart from a cloak draped over his legs and holding a horn in his left hand. As the top is missing, it could have been filled with fruits as a cornucopia, or with water as depicted on the mosaic of Daphne (Figure 1). The right hand holds the remaining part of a stick, which could have been a reed or an oar, but as this figurative part is absent, the attribute could have been of a different nature. The god's left elbow reclines against a figure recognizable as a sphinx even if the head is missing, an Egyptian feature which suggests the identification with the Nile. Since early times, the Nile was represented as a river god of robust masculine

[11] http://www.mfa.org/collections/object/fountain-basin-with-a-reclining-river-god-337606

form[12]. The fertility of the mighty river, the effect of its famous flooding, is made visible by the cornucopia, a figure of abundance. Water was present in its image and reality: the god is surrounded by sculpted floating water and a slot is open beneath him where real water was flowing from. This water was received in a first basin which overflows in a second one: a simple but clear evocation of the flooding of the Nile.

Figure 5: *Fontaine* in Montfaucon, Bernard de. *Supplément au livre de L'antiquité expliquée et illustrée en figures.* Tome III, 1724. Liv VII, Plate N° 63, after p. 168. Collection of Gilbert Blin.

The sculpture of a reclining river god kept in Boston is indeed part of a fountain believed to be designed as an ornement for the atrium of a villa[13]. Known in the late seventeenth century this fountain was drawn by M. Fritsch (?-?) for Bernard de Montfaucon (1655–1741) in his *L'antiquité expliquée et illustrée en figures*. Its engraving (Figure 5) is presented

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[12] Penders, Stefan M. H. J. "Imperial Waters, Roman river god art in context", Mphil Ancient History thesis, Leiden University, 2012, pp. 6 and 7.

[13] Other examples of Roman fountains can be found in Morton, Henri Volam. *The Waters of Rome, with 49 colour photographs by Mario Carrieri and other illustrations*. London : The Connoisseur and Michael Joseph, 1966.

in the *Supplement* which was published in 1724[14]. Montfaucon describes the fountain by emphasizing how the treatment is exemplary of other representations of river gods: « The old man, half lying, is in a kind of cave, holding the cornucopia in one arm, and some fruits in the other. These half-lying old men were the ancient symbol of the rivers, as we have seen so many times; so this could be a river or a river represented here in its source ».[15]

Figure 6: 1638, *Le Nil,* French etching by François Perrier (ca 1590– 650),
from *Segmenta nobilium signorum e statuaru[m*]. Rome and Paris: chez de Poilly, 1638.
Collection of Gilbert Blin.

The presence of the cornucopia and of the sphinx can be found on one of the most famous Roman sculptures of a river god: the Vatican Nile, itself being probably a copy of a Hellenistic statue —Alexandrian in origin— which was discovered in the early sixteenth century during excavations in Rome.[16] Numerous engravings showing the statue kept in the Vatican made it famous, hence its name, notably the engraving of François Perrier (Figure 6), executed before its restoration of 1774. Many copies of the statue, some of which were completed with the missing parts, adorned subsequently royal gardens and appear in the collections of the baroque era. The ideas of power and wealth are dominant, the latter notably signaled by children, supposed to symbolize the flooding of the Nile[17]. Pliny the Elder (23−79 AD) mentions the original black basalt sculpture in Rome in his *Natural History* explaining the signification of the sixteen babies surrounding the river god: « No larger specimen of this stone has ever been found than that dedicated by the emperor Vespasian in the temple of Peace, the subject of

[14] Montfaucon, Bernard de. *Supplément au livre de L'antiquité expliquée et illustrée en fig*ures. Tome III, 1724. Liv VII, Plate N° 63, after p. 168.

[15] « Le vieillard, couché sur son séant, est dans une espèce d'antre, tenant la corne d'abondance sur un bras, et de l'autre quelques fruits. Ces vieillards à demi couches étoient l'ancien symbole des fleuves, comme on a vû tant de fois ; ainsi ce pourroit bien être quelque fleuve ou quelque rivière représentée ici dans sa source. » in Montfaucon, Bernard de. *Supplément au livre de L'antiquité …*. Tome III, 1724. Liv VII, p. 168.

[16] Draper, James David. "*The River Nile*, a Giovanni Volpato Masterwork." in *Metropolitan Museum Journal*, Vol. 37. New York: 2002.

[17] In his 1647 *The finding of Moses* (Paris, Musée de Louvre) and his *The exposition of Moses* (Oxford, Ashmolean Museum) of the same period, Nicolas Poussin (1594–1665) integrated this figure of the Nile but omitted the children.

which is the Nile, with sixteen of the river god's children playing around him, these denoting the number of cubits reached by the river in flood at its highest desirable level».[18] This number represents the ideal height to which the Nile River was rising annually, and thereby was assuring abundant fertility in Lower Egypt.

7.1.2 The baroque characterization of the figure of the river god

During the Renaissance the river gods re-appear in many works of art inspired by the classical mythology. The first edition of Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia* was printed without illustrations in 1593 but numerous subsequent editions were published with woodcuts and engravings. To embody various concepts, Ripa proposed for each of them a verbal description of the human allegory by giving the type of its clothing and its various symbolic paraphernalia. He does so along with the reasons why these were chosen, reasons often supported by references to classical and modern literature. The *Iconologia overo Descrittione Dell'imagini Universali cavate dall'Antichità et da altri luoghi* was a highly influential book based on Egyptian, Greek and Roman emblematical representations. The book was used by orators, artists, poets and costume designers to give substance to qualities such as virtues, vices, passions, arts and sciences, and was extremely influential in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In the Italian edition of 1645, Ripa devotes a full chapter to "Rivers and first The Tiber", although without any illustration[19]. After quoting Virgil's description of the Tiber's crown of reeds in *The Aeneid*, Ripa adds simply « This crown of reeds that Virgil gives him suits all rivers, because this plant easily grows in wetlands ».[20] The iconological fortune of this treatment dominates the pictorial allegories of the Baroque era. I present here a quick overview, taking examples showing the variety of the presence of the river god figure.

A painting of 1615 by Rubens (1577–1640) is a good example of the use of these allegorical features, and their variations at the beginning of the seventeenth century to create possible distinctions in identity. Long thought as an allegory of the four continents, with the interpretation then primarily based on the four female characters, the painting of Rubens, kept in Vienna, is today rightly entitled *The Rivers*. It may be either an allegory of the old world showing the four main rivers of the ancient world, or what Christian exegesis calls the "rivers of paradise"[21]. The actual subject matter of the painting is confirmed by the printed title of the engraving of 1786 presented here (Figure 7) and which was executed when the painting, although then attributed to Martin de Vos, was hung in Paris: "Les Fleuves"[22].

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[18] Pliny. *Natural History*, BOOK XXXVI, Alinea XI. (Accessed 11 January 2016).
http://www.masseiana.org/pliny.htm#BOOK XXXVI

[19] « Fiumi, et prima Tevere» in Ripa, Cesare. *Iconologia.* Venetia: 1645, p. 218.

[20] « La ghirlanda di canna che gli dà Virgilio, convienne à tutti I fiumi, perche facilmente nascono I luoghi acquosi » in Ripa, Cesare. *Iconologia.* Venetia: 1645, p. 218.

[21] See McGrath, Elisabeth. "River-gods, Sources and the Mystery of the Nile in Rubens' Four Rivers in Vienna" in *Die Malerei Antwerpen-Gattungen, Meister Wirkungen* (International Kolloqium, Wien 1993). Cologne: Verlag Locher GmbH, 1994, pp. 72–82.

[22] « Peint par Martin de Vos, Gravé par Delongueille, Grav.r du Roy/Les Fleuves/ De la Galerie du Palais Royal. /École Flamande. /IIe tableau de Martin de Vos. /Peint sur Toile, ayant de hauteur 6 pieds 11 pouces, sur 8 pieds 8 pouces de Large./ Ce tableau représente les principaux Fleuves de l'Asie et de l'Afrique avec des Nayades. Le Nil est le seul qui soit caractérisé d'une manière distincte, il est assis sur le bord du Rivage, vu par

Figure 7: 1615, *Les Fleuves,* etching by Joseph de Longueil (1730–1792) after Rubens
(attributed in the past to Maarten De Vos (1532–1603)) from *Galerie du Palais Royal*, 1786.
Collection of Gilbert Blin.

On the foreground the river Nile is easily identifiable by the crocodile as the Ganges may be by the tiger with the pups sucking its milk. On the second plan one can see two characters representing the Euphrates and the Tigris, the two great rivers that define Mesopotamia; while one of them seems sleepy, resting his head on the palm of his hand, maybe a position suggesting the slow course of the Euphrates, the other -The Tigris - holds an oar, showing its navigability. The Ancient Greek form Tigris (Τίγρις) meaning "tiger", if treated as Greek) was adapted from Old Persian (Tigrā). The original Sumerian name of the Tigris alludes to "running water", which can be interpreted as "the swift river", contrasted to its neighbour, the Euphrates, whose leisurely pace caused it to deposit more silt and build up a higher bed than the Tigris. All river gods are crowned by Rubens with reeds and, in the painting, draped with blue fabric. This color distinguishes them from the four female characters draped in red, whose identity is clearly of a different status than the river gods. Red is surprising, but it was already the color of the drape of the river Psanis on the Roman mosaic discussed earlier (Figure 1). The French comment under the etching identifies them clearly as « Nayades », and the colored woman in the arms of the Nile is called a "Nayade moresque", an interpretation which is supported by the pearls which adorn the black beauty and the woman behind her.

le dos, un bras appuyé sur un vase et de l'autre soutient une Nayade moresque qui se détourne. En dessous de lui on voit des enfans qui jouent avec un crocodile et qui paroissent l'animer contre une lionne qui allaite ses petits. Ce tableau forme deux groupes de figures dont les oppositions donnent lieu à un effet très piquant. L'on voit ici comme dans tous les ouvrages de ce maître cette grande manière qu'il avait prise dans l'École de Rubens son maître. La couleur en est belle et rigoureuse. La touche libre et moelleuse, et la lionne sur-tout est d'une grande beauté. La partie du clair obscur y est savamment ménagé et produit un effet très harmonieux. /Ce tableau est bien conservé. » in *Galerie Du Palais Royal. Gravée d'après les tableaux des différentes écoles qui la composent. Avec un abrégé de la vie des peintres et une description historique de chaque tableau par Mr l'abbé de Fontenai. Dédiée à S.A.S. Monseigneur le Duc d'Orléans, Premier Prince du Sang, par J. Couché Graveur de son Cabinet*. Paris: J. Couche, 1786.
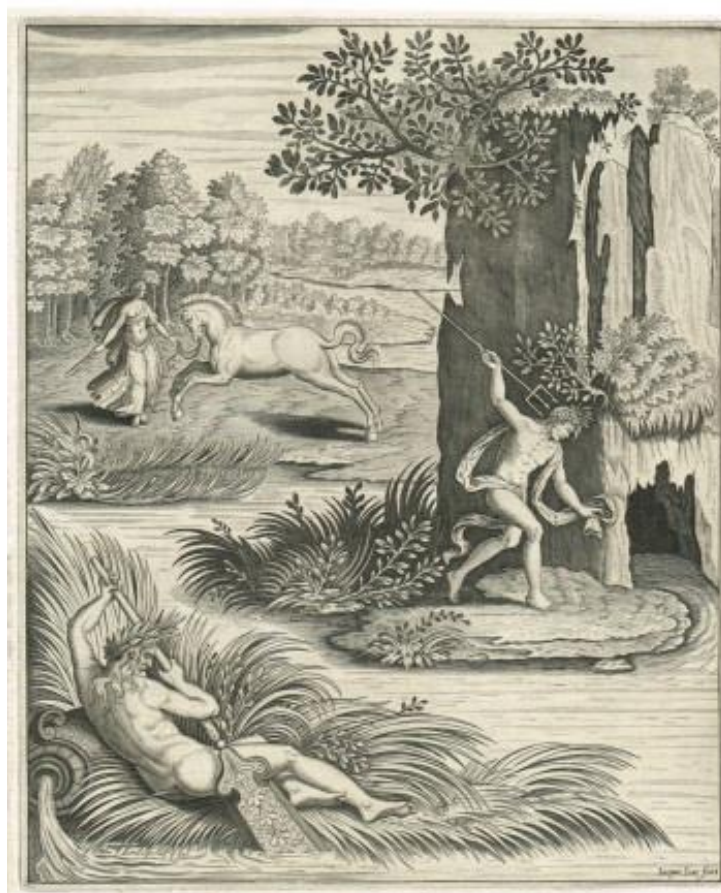
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Figure 8: 1637, « La Thessalie », etching by Jaspar Isaac (1585?–1654),
from *Les Images ou Tableaux de Platte-Peinture des deux Philostrates Sophistes mis en français par Blaise de Vigenere bourbonnois enrichis d'arguments et d'annotation…* Paris : Guillemot, 1637.
Collection of Gilbert Blin.

In 1637, the book entitled *Les Images ou Tableaux de Platte-Peinture…* inherits the composite style of Renaissance art of showing on the same picture different tales[23]. The book is a compendium of Greco-Roman myths presented in text and pictures. The plate illustrating Thessaly, the part of Greece where many myths took place, shows in the foreground the river god Peneus which flows in this region (Figure 8)[24]. The figure displays firmly the two essential attributes of the classical river god as found in Roman art: a naked male god crowned with water plants and resting on an urn. The river god is using an oar, maybe to move the raft of reeds on the water. Both the oar and the urn, treated with the same level of decorative and therefore cultural refinement, contrast with the natural nudity of the river god and bring the character a step further away from "reality" (Figure 8B). This decorative treatment of the attributes and the body will be extended to the costumes of the river god by designers of the

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[23] This coexistence in the same picture, of different tales, is a variation on the convention coming from the Middle Ages showing different episodes of the same story on the same image. (A convention still used in 1637 in Florence in the engravings of *Le Nozze degli Dei)*. I have been using this concept in my production of *Orfeo* by Monteverdi, where the staging was integrating some events happening at the same moment in different locations on the stage: for example, the death of Euridice is happening during the celebrations of the beginning of Act II and is shown on a part of the stage. (This double action was also allowing a new depth to the character of Messagiera, who we saw being a witness of the death, before hearing her narrating it.)

[24] French etching by Jaspar Isaac (1585?–1654) from *Les Images ou Tableaux de Platte-Peinture des deux Philostrates Sophistes mis en français par Blaise de Vigenere bourbonnois enrichis d'arguments et d'annotation…et représentez en taille douce en cette nouvelle edition avec des épigrammes sur chacun d'iceux par Thomas Artus sieur d'Embry.* Paris : Guillemot, 1637.

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seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The stage appearance will articulate these three fundamental classical elements: nudity, water, and reeds through lines, patterns and colors.

Figure 8B: 1637« La Thessalie » detail of a French etching by Jaspar Isaac (1585?–1654) from *Les Images ou Tableaux de Platte-Peinture des deux Philostrates Sophistes mis en français par Blaise de Vigenere bourbonnois enrichis d'arguments et d'annotation…* Paris : Guillemot, 1637.
Collection of Gilbert Blin.

Beginning with the Renaissance, illustrated editions of Ovid have been showing the numerous rivers which act in the various tales in the shapes of river gods. In a series of etchings which does not seem to belong to any edition of the Ovidian text, although depicting some *Metamorphoses*[25], the German artist Johanna Sybilla Küsel Krausen (c.1650–1717) shows the legend of Pan and Syrinx (Figure 9)[26]. Syrinx was a nymph of the river Ladon pursued by the god Pan. To avoid his amorous embrace, as she was a follower of Diana and dedicated to virginity, she was transformed into a reed plant by the other river nymphs. Pan discovered that when he sighed, the air passing through the reeds produced a pleasant melody. He thought to assemble the reeds with wax to make the panpipes, to which he gave the name of syrinx. This tale is the poetic reason why recorders are often used by composers during the baroque period to write for scenes where river gods and/or water nymphs are present. The reeds acquire by their double, simply visual and musical, presence then a new, almost mystical, meaning thanks to the evocation of the metamorphoses of Syrinx in reeds and the second transformation of these reeds in panpipes.

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[25] I was not able to trace an Ovidian edition to which these four original etchings could directly relate. The three other stories illustrated in this series by Johanna Sybilla Krausen, born Johanna Sibylla Küsel, (c.1650 – 1717) are: Apollo watching king Admeto's life stock, Hercules slaughtering the cows of the island of Kos and Apollo judging the Pierides. The German text under the Pan and Syrinx's refers to the construction of the flute in the Ovidian text: « Mercurus, um den Argus um so viel desto eher einzuschäffern, erzehlte demselben, wie die Flöte sey erfunden worden; daher er ihm die Begebenheit vorbrachte, wie der Pan sich in die Nymphe Zyrinx verliebet, die hernach in ein Rohr verwandelt worden: aus welchem derselbe die erste Flöte gemacht.» : « Mercury, in order to put Argus to sleep as soon as possible, told him the story of how the flute was invented: thus, he told him how Pan fell in love with the nymph Syrinx who then was transformed into hollow water reeds, out of which he made the first flute. » Thanks to Matthias Zins for his help with the translation.

[26] See: Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, Book I, Verses 625–724.

Figure 9: *Pan and Syrinx,* etching by Johanna Sybilla Krausen, born Küsel (c.1650–1717).
Collection of Gilbert Blin.

Krausen shows Ladon as a naked god, with his urn and his oar, crowned with reeds (Figure 9B). His seating position contrasts with earlier lying positions of river gods and maybe this was an attempt of Krausen Küsel to follow Ovid's characterization of Ladon as "placid", as she also indicates in the calm surface of the water course.

Figure 9B: Ladon*, detail from *Pan & Syrinx,*
etching by Johanna Sybilla Krausen, born Küsel (c.1650–1717).
Collection of Gilbert Blin.

By the mid-seventeenth century the convention of the depiction of a river under the shape of a human body starts to be well established and the knowledge of its symbolism allows it to be used as an emblem. Since the Roman time, its function was often to embody a place, and the river god is still used during the Baroque period in a way of identification for a geographical point[27]. But the reverse is also possible, and the presence of a town may lead to

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[27] « Ainsi, les civilisations du Nord peuvent se rapprocher de celles du Sud par des traits communs et une sacralisation progressive des eux. Sources, fontaines, puits des villages sont encore liés à un culte. Dans les

identify the river. There are many examples of this convention, but the custom is especially significant in two decorative arts: the designers of the medal and the book frontispiece, by associating different Ripa's precepts, elaborate more content, by creating a grammar of the images, like the *Ballet de Cour* does.

Vis-à-vis the medals, the presence of river gods shows that the symbolization, being rather simple and economical with elements, is suitable to the small space the face of a medal offers. The numismatics record many medals where the convention to describe a real river is used. An exemplary situation is when the event the medal celebrates took place next to a river. When the river god is associated to another allegory showing a town, the viewer gains a geographical mnemonic support. This idea of localization is present in a French medal coined in 1670 to commemorate the "Embellissement & agrandissement de Paris"[28]. It displays in the background the two scaled projects for the arches of the Porte Saint Martin and of the Porte Saint Denis on a kind of river bank made of stones. In the middle a seated figure representing the city, crowned with its walls, is holding on a left hand a ship and on her right a horn of plenty. Her left foot is supported by an urn sprouting water, the urn is presented by a reclining figure of a naked man with floating beard and locks: it is the river god of the Seine whose waters occupy the length of the composition. The figure of the woman is identified by the word "Lutetia".[29] After favorizing the existence of Paris, the river Seine was still a key to its subsistence in the seventeenth century and the capital's growth was depending of its river.

Figure10: Engraving after Sébastien Le Clerc (1637–1714),
of the 1670 Medal *Ornata & ampliata urbe Lutetia,*
from *Recueil Des Portraits Des Hommes Illustres*, 1786.
Collection of Gilbert Blin.

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campagnes, il n'y a pas d'incompatibilité forte entre l'habitat concerné et la présence de lieux aquatiques sacralisés. » See : « l'eau et ses usages » in Roche, Daniel. *Histoire des choses banales, Naissance de la consommation, XVIIe-XIXe siècles*. Paris: Fayard, 1997, pp. 151–182.

[28] Lambert, Claude-François. *Histoire littéraire du règne de Louis XIV dédiée au Roy. par M. l'Abbé Lambert. Tome Troisième*. Paris: Prault, 1751, p. 372 and p. 373.

[29] *Recueil Des Portraits Des Hommes Illustres dont il est fait mention dans l'Histoire de France commencée par MM. Velly & Villaret & continuée par M. l'Abbé Farnier. Tome VI, Contentant la suite du Regne de Louis XIV, & un Supplément pour différens Regnes*. Paris: Nyon l'aine, 1786, Plate of p. 42. The motto of Paris, *Fluctuat nec mergitur*, is translated « She[the city] is tossed by the waves but does not sink ». Used since at least 1358 by the city of Paris, this motto is present in the city coat of arms depicting a ship floating on a rough sea. Both motto and arms have their origins in the river Seine boatsman's corporation: this guild ruled the city's trade as early as the Roman era.

The relation between a river and a city is also emphasized in the frontispiece of a book, designed the same year as the French medal and published in Amsterdam in 1671, devoted to the *Ystroom*[30]. Through the eyes of a contemporary, the long poem of 4000 verses gives a picture of the prosperity of Amsterdam in relation with this water wonder. In a large allegory, Joannes Antonides van der Goes (1647–1684) shows the IJ at the mythical nuptials of Peleus and Thetis where the IJ, then considered as a river, is assigned a more important place than the Thames, the Ebro and the Seine, which leads to a violent quarrel, filled with contemporary political allusions. As shown on Figure 11, The engraving for the book, designed in 1670[31] by Romeyn de Hoog (1646–1708), shows the IJ, and the city of Amsterdam, under the figure of a woman which is in a comparable position as the French medal depicting the Seine and Paris the same year. But, due to the medium, the pictorial treatment is at the opposite. The engraving is reproduced in the 1685 edition of the poetic works of Joannes Antonides van der Goes and I choose to present this edition, due to its lavish coloring[32]. The great ornate details, that the coloring of a copy of this edition kept in the collections of the Leiden University[33], emphasize an idea of opulence. The river god is shown bare torso, draped in blue, with a beautiful long undulating beard. He has an elaborate headset, with golden shells and green water plants, and as expected, he is resting on a (golden) urn and holds a (red) oar.

Since the start of the printing history, the custom was to present an elaborate frontispiece usually connected with the subject of the book and often to give keys about the way the subject was addressed by the author of the text, and this book is exemplary of this treatment. On another frontispiece (Figure 12) of a book celebrating the glory of the city of Amsterdam published in the middle of the eighteenth century, the focus has changed: the river god of the IJ, with the one of the Amstel[34], is in the background. They leave places to representatives of the various nations who came to offer their goods to the city, seated on a throne: an evocation of the faraway regions that brought Amsterdam its wealth. The smallest human figures of the whole composition and treated almost in shadows, the two river gods are facing each other alluding to the shape of a port: one of them, the one closer to the figure of Amsterdam, waves his oar in a gesture of triumph. Like in the 1670 engraving of Romeyn de Hoog, the two figures open to the sea where ships are sailing back to the city (Figure 12B).

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[30] Goes, Joannis Antonides van der. *De Ystroom*. Amsterdam: Pieter Arentsz, 1671. On line at: http://www.let.leidenuniv.nl/Dutch/Renaissance/AntonidesGedichten1685.html#Ystroom (Accessed 5 December 2017).

[31] The engraving is signed and dated lower corner right.

[32] Goes, Joannes Antonides van der. *Gedichten*. Amsterdam: Jan Rieuwertsz., Pieter Arentsz., en Albert Magnus, 1685.

[33] For another colouring and further perspective about the colouring of engravings during this period, see: Goedings, Truusje. *'Afsetter en meester-afsetters'. De kunst van het kleuren 1480-1720*. Nijmegen: Vantilt, 2015, p. 145.

[34] The two river gods were also present on maps like the one published by Hendrik de Leth, between 1736–1737, see: Hameleers, Marc. *Kaarten van Amsterdam 1538-1865*. Bussum: Thoth Uitgeverij, 2013, pp. 228–223, nr. 114.

Figure11: *Amsterdam*, Allegorical title page by Romeyn de Hoog (1646–1708) from the book of Joannes
Antonides van der Goes (1647–1684) *De Ystroom*.
Leiden, Leiden University, Bibliotheca Thysiana.

Figure12B: *Amsterdam*, Allegorical title by Reinier Vinkeles (1741–1816), after Cornelis Ploos van Amstel
(1726–1798) from the book of Jan Wagenaar (1709–1773) *Amsterdam, in zyne opkomst, aanwas, geschiedenissen,
voorregten, koophandel, gebouwen, kerkenstaat, schoolen, schutterye, gilden en regeeringe.*
Amsterdam: I[saac]. Tirion/Yntema & Tieboel, 1760 to 1767.
Collection of Gilbert Blin.

Figure12: *Amsterdam*, Allegorical title by Reinier Vinkeles (1741–1816), after Cornelis Ploos van Amstel (1726–1798) from the book of Jan Wagenaar (1709–1773) *Amsterdam, in zyne opkomst, aanwas, geschiedenissen, voorregten, koophandel, gebouwen, kerkenstaat, schoolen, schutterye, gilden en regeeringe.*
Amsterdam: I[saac]. Tirion/Yntema & Tieboel, 1760 to 1767.
Collection of Gilbert Blin.

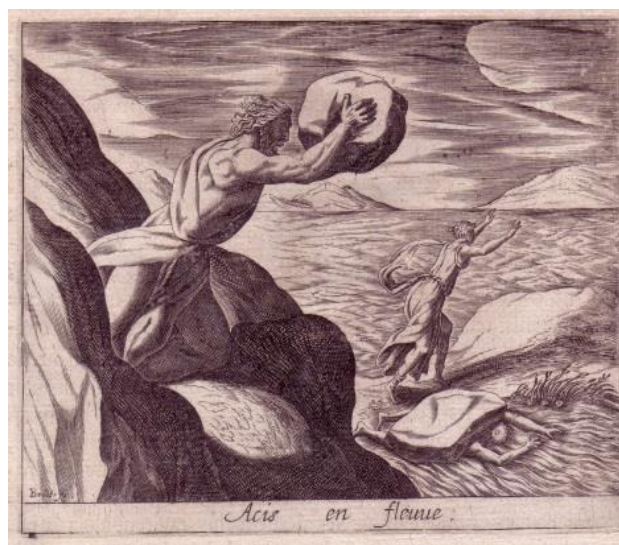### 7.1.3   Costume designs for water on stage

Figure 13 : « Acis en fleuve », French etching by Isaac Briot (1585–1670),
after illustration by Jean Mathieu (1590–1672) for Nicholas Renouard, *Les Métamorphoses d'Ovide,*
Traduites en Prose Françoise, et de nouveau soigneusement reveues, corrigées en infinis endroits, et enrichies de figures a
chacune Fable. Avec XV. Discours Contenans l'Explication Morale et Historique…
Paris : 1619, p. 385.
Collection of Gilbert Blin.

In the myth of Acis the blood of the shepherd crushed under a boulder is changed by Galatea in crystalline water. This transmutation is suggested on early illustrations of Ovid's work, which often shows the shepherd after his death with blood/water coming out of his body (Figure 13). The black and white nature of engraving adds an extra dimension to the depiction of Acis' metamorphoses, as the looker can not make up his mind about the nature of the liquid pouring out of Acis' body: is it still blood or is it already water? A conundrum the painting must answer because of the obligation it has to the choice of a color for the fluid, which may explain the rarity of this subject in the art of this period.

Rare indeed, are the painted works showing the actual metamorphoses of "Acis en Fleuve"; even rarer the ones showing the change of blood in water. In *The Triumph of Galatea*, related directly to Handel's circle, Luca Giordano (1634–1705)[35] offers a representation of Acis as river god/water deity by showing Acis right after his metamorphoses (Figure 14). The idea of sprouting water coming from Acis's blood is depicted by Giordano as jets of water are shown coming out of his head and his nipples: the body generates the fluid.

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[35] Dated between 1675 and 1677, this version is in The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg.

Figure 14: Between 1675 and 1677, *The Triumph of Galatea* by Luca Giordano (1634–1705),
Saint Petersburg, The State Hermitage Museum.

By the treatment in black and white inherent to the art of the engraving, the ambiguity water/blood is restored on the engraving by Jacques Firmin Beauvarlet (1731–1797) published around 1761–1762 and renamed *Acis et Galathée* (Figure 14B). This attempt to isolate the moment of the metamorphoses in its "out of time" essence, was more difficult to condense on a stage costume but there are few examples of this attempt. With some projects for costumes representing water, these designs for river gods are interesting because they all try to articulate the human shape with the liquid element, itself symbolized by the costume.

Figure 14B: ca 1761, *Acis et Galathée,* etching by Jacques Firmin Beauvarlet (1731–1797) after Luca Giordano
(1634–1705), *The Triumph of Galatea*.
Poland, Private Collection.

On stage, the moment of the metamorphoses, in its "out of time" essence and added to the fluid nature of both water and blood, was more difficult to represent, but there are few examples showing an attempt to depict water. I present here a selection of costumes which

integrate directly the idea of the liquid element in their design. It is not surprising that they are all found in the genre of the *Ballet de Cour* or conceived for Masquerades, as both events were easily merging during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. These costumes have often to describe a concept, an allegory, or an idea by themselves, that the body of the masker/dancer, by its regulated movement, gave the value of a life entity.

Paradoxically, no clear depiction of water seems to be present in the costume for the character of the "Esprit aquatique" (Aquatic spirit) coming from a French court ballet, which was danced on the 29th of January 1617 at the Louvre palace in Paris. The argument, chosen by king Louis XIII (1601–1643) himself for the first royal ballet of the reign, is taken from *La Gerusalemme liberata* of Torquato Tasso (1544–1595). The brave Christian knight Renault has been seduced by the enchantments of the magician Armide who bewitched him into her enchanted gardens, before he is made free by Frankish king Godefroy. The libretto edited by Pierre Ballard, *Discours au vray du ballet dansé par le Roy* […] *Avec les desseins, tant des machines & apparences differentes que de tous les habits des masques*[36], offers a description of the staging and some music, but also presents, as its title indicates, sets and costumes. The descriptions and engravings give us some indication of the refinement of the costumes for this ballet, costumes which can be attributed to Daniel Rabel (1578–1637)[37]. Like many of its followers, the real subject of the ballet is the glorification of the royal person, as shows the description of the first character danced by the king, le demon du feu: « for besides that his Majesty wished to show the Queen his wife, some representation of the fires which he felt for her, he also dressed so as to purposely show his goodness to his subjects, his power to his enemies, and his Majesty to foreigners ».[38] Louis XIII was then fifteen and a half years old, and was soon to assert himself more brutally by expelling his mother Marie de Medici (1575–1642), former regent of France and having her adviser Concino Concini (1575–1617), assassinated on the 24th of April 1617. In the Ballet, Renaud frees himself from the tyranny of Armida, and her demons, like the king frees himself of the control of the queen-mother, Marie de Medici, and her ill advisers. The ballet is known as *Ballet de la délivrance de Renaud*.

One engraving (Figure 15) presents four of the characters of the first Entrée and shows, in addition to Renault, the role played by the Duc de Luynes (1578–1621), favorite of Louis XIII, three demons, fire, air and water, left by Armide to entertain the knight[39]. King

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[36] [Durand, Étienne (1585–1618) ; Bordier, René (15 ?-1658?) ; Guédron, Pierre (156?–1620?)] *Discours au vray du ballet dansé par le Roy, le dimanche XXIXe jour de janvier. M. VIc. XVII. Avec les desseins, tant des machines & apparences differentes, que de tous les habits des masques.* Paris : Pierre Ballard, 1617.

[37] On Daniel Rabel, see : Christout, Marie Françoise. "Les Ballets-Mascarades des Fées de la Forêt de Saint Germain et de la Douairière de Billebahaut et l'œuvre de Daniel Rabel" in *Revue d'Histoire du Théâtre*, 1961, I. See also : Moureau, François. "Danses amérindiennes à la cour" in *Le Théâtre des voyages. Une scénographie de l'Âge classique*, Paris : PUPS, 2005, p. 11.

[38] « Car outre que sa Majesté voulut faire voir à la Reyne sa femme, quelque représentation des feux qu'il sentoit pour elle, il se vestit encores de la sorte a desseing de tesmoigner sa bonté a ses sujets, sa puissance a ses ennemis, & sa Majesté aux estrangers. » in *Discours au vray du ballet dansé par le Roy…*1617, p. 5.

[39] « Renault (représenté par Monsieur de Luynes, premier Gentilhomme de la chambre de sa Majesté, et son Lieutenant general au Gouvernement de Normandie) estoit couché sur l'herbe & sur les fleurs, au dedans d'une grotte enfoncée dans le milieu de cette montagne : Au-dessus & à l'entour de ceste grotte estoit sa Majesté, accompagnée de douze Seigneurs, representant autant de Démons laissez par Armide a la garde de son bien aymé, avec charge de lui faire passer le temps en tous les delices imaginables. » in *Discours au vray du ballet dansé par le Roy…*, 1617, p. 4.

Louis XIII was dancing « le demon du feu » while the Duc de Vendosme (1598–1629), half-brother of the king[40], was the « demon des eaux ». The costume for this « Esprit aquatique », as he is also named in the text edited by Ballard, seems to be entirely covered with reeds (Figure 15B). The engraved costume is not very detailed, but noticeable is the great collar, made from a line of stems which seem to grow from the waist up. The reeds are also used to create a second "tonnelet", worn above a skirt made with textile, of which the hem is cut with festoons, maybe imitating the waves of water.

Figure 15: 1617, anonymous engraving (with handwriting) of the costumes attributed to Daniel Rabel, for « demon du feu » (1), « Renaud » (2), « le demon des eaux » (3) and « esprit de l'air » (4) in *Ballet de la délivrance de Renaud*.
Paris, Bibiothèque national de France.

Although cryptic, the verses written by René Bordier (15..–1658?) for the introduction of « Monsieur le Chevalier de Vendosme representant un Esprit aquatique »[41] clearly established the relation between water and fire. It is indeed in the written description of the costume of the king that we may have an indication of the material used for these reeds. After

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[40] Alexandre de Vendôme (1598-1629), known as the Chevalier de Vendôme, Grand Prieur of France, second legitimized son of Henri IV of France and Gabrielle d'Estrées.

[41] "D'Ou puis-je attendre qu'il succede / A mes ennuis quelque remede, / Puis qu'un Dieu cause mes tourmens, / Et que l'espoir dont je me flatte / Se voit d'une façon ingratte / Trahy mesmes des Elemens ? // J'ay cru que ma flame secrette, / Dans l'onde où j'ay fait fait ma retraitte / Pourroit s'amortir peu à peu : / Mais las ! telle est mon adventure, / Que contre l'ordre de la nature / L'eau s'accorde avecques le feu. // Jamais mon ardeur ne s'appaise, / Les glaçons se changent en braise / Par les rayons de deux beaux yeux, / Dont le feu qui dans l'eau s'allume / Ne peut en fin qu'il ne consume / Et l'onde, & la terre, et les Cieux. » in *Discours au vray du ballet dansé par le Roy…,* 1617, p. 27.

having elaborated on the allegorical relation between Fire and the king, the text gives a valuable material indication: « It was for all these reasons that he wished to cover himself with flames, and these flames were enameled and made with such an artifice, that the fire itself was made more brilliant by them, when the innumerable rays of the torches of the hall were directed on them, and that those who looked at them received the reflection ». The text adds: « His mask and hairstyle were of the same composition as his costume ».[42] Even if the mention of «enameled » is not to be taken literally, it would mean that a thin shiny color cover was used to decorate the flames panel of the costume, the mask and headpiece[43]. But, considering the identity of the dancer, it is possible to imagine that the flames were indeed metal covered with enamel, like jewels. Such a complex artifact may have been justified by the royal identity of the dancer and may well have been extended for the costume of his half-brother. « The diamonds crammed on the clothes, and headpieces »[44] have been the subject of astonishment of the Court. Maybe the reeds of the costume of the « demon des eaux » were also enameled and the green and brown of the foliage gained a watery appearance due to their shininess?

Figure 15B: 1617, attributed to Daniel Rabel, costume for the « demon des eaux »
in *Ballet de la délivrance de Renaud*.
Paris, Bibiothèque national de France.

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[42] « C'est pour toutes ses raisons qu'il se voulut couvrir de flammes, & ses flammes estoyent esmaillées & faites avec un tel artifice, que le feu mesmes se rendoit plus esclatant par elles, lors que les rayons des flambeaux innombrables de la salle estoyent adressez dessus, & que ceux qui les regardoyent en reçevoyent la réflexion. Son masque & sa coiffure estoyent de mesme composition que son habit, & n'eust esté la douceur extreme de ses actions on eust creu que deslors fa Majesté s'estoit couverte de feu pour consommer ses ennemis. » in *Discours au vray du ballet dansé par le Roy…,* 1617, p. 6.

[43] « Certaine composition dont se servent les peintres, les vitriers, orfèvres & émailleur. [Émail fin. Emaux épais, émaux fins. Peinture en émail.] » in article « émail » in Richelet, Pierre. *Dictionnaire françois, Volume 1*. Genève : Widerhold, 1680.

[44] « Les diamants entassez sur les habits, & les coiffures » in *Discours au vray du ballet dansé par le Roy…,* 1617, p. 3.

The first entrée of fire and water was taking place in an elaborate set in form of a mount with different levels, « this Mountain adorned with so bizarre a beauty, filled with people so inventively masked and dressed, and so clear by the gems, and the embroidery reflecting against the opposite torches, that all thought to be in some pleasant dream, or who took for Demons those who represented them only » [45]. The mention of the light effect is a good reminder that, besides outdoor tournaments, water costumes, like all ballet costumes, were seen under artificial light. Costumes designers were concerned by the effect of light on their costumes, using reflecting material on fabric and ornaments to dazzle, amaze and glorify the court dancers: « The brilliance of the jewels had for a time concealed the majesty of the faces, and suddenly afterwards, the faces making themselves known, made all neglect the enrichments of the clothes ».[46]

Figure 16: 1653, costume design attributed to Henry Gissey for the « Démon de l'Eau »,
(representing the Phlegmatic humor),
in *Ballet Royal de la Nuit, Divisé en quatre Parties, ou quatre Veilles et dansé par sa Majesté le 23 Fevrier 1653*.
Waddesdon Manor, Rothschild Collection.[47]

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[45] « cette Montaigne ornée d'une si bizarre beauté, remplie de personnes si inventivement masquées & vestues, & si claire par les brillans, & broderies rejalissantes contre les flambeaux opposez, qui ne creut estre en quelque agreable songe, ou qui ne prit pour Démons veritables ceux qui les representoyent seulement. » in *Discours au vray du ballet dansé par le Roy…,* 1617, p. 4.

[46] « L'esclat des pierreries cacha pour un temps la majesté des visages, & soudain apres, les visages se faisant connoistre, firent négliger les enrichissements des habits. » in *Discours au vray du ballet dansé par le Roy…,* 1617, p. 24.

[47] *Ballet de la Nuit*. Edited by Michael Burden and Jennifer Thorp. Hillsdale (NY) : Pendragon Press, 2009, p. 183.

The *Ballet de la Nuit* took place at the Palais du Louvre from the evening of February 23, 1653 and continued into the following morning when during the final, the young Louis XIV was appearing as the rising Sun. The influence of this extraordinary event where every courtier seems to have danced, including among other English gentlemen, which constituted the court of the exiled Charles II, "His Royal Highness the Duke of York", represents another mile stone in the history of French court ballet by its length and pomposity. During the last wake of the *Ballet de la Nuit*, « from three hours after midnight until six when the Sun rises»[48], after the characters of « Sleep » and « Silence » have been praising the power of the king, the four Demons of Fire, Air, Water, and Earth do appear. They represent the four humors; or "temperaments"; of the human body: The Choleric, the Sanguine, the Phlegmatic, & the Melancholic. These humors and their disorder - "déréglement" - give rise to various dreams[49]. This complex allegory is based on ancient Greek medicine, for which each of the four humors is associated with one of the four elements and the poet Benserade in the *Ballet de la Nuit* refers to this medical knowledge.

Water is associated here with the humor phlegm, following the belief of Greek and Roman medicine. Phlegm was identified with water, since both were cold and wet. Under Hippocrates' bodily humors theory, differences in human moods come as a consequence of imbalances in one of the four bodily fluids: blood, yellow bile, black bile, and phlegm. Galen contributed a substantial amount to the Hippocratic understanding of pathology as he promoted the typology of human temperaments. In this theory, an imbalance of each humor corresponded to a particular human temperament: blood—sanguine, black bile—melancholic, yellow bile—choleric, and phlegm—phlegmatic. The belief that water was linked to human health and physiology was still largely spread in the seventeenth century. Since the Roman time the medical power of some waters has been identified and some special sources have been also associated with health cures. After the Greco-Roman devotion, Christian pilgrimages to miraculous fountains have been taking over[50].

Henry Gissey's design is an attempt to symbolize water (Figure 16): the body language of the character seems to fit the depiction of the phlegmatic temperament. The body is slightly bent, almost distorted, and the face of the dancer tense and sad. Looking behind his shoulder, as if being afraid, the character position refers to the description of the action in the dance: «The Dream of the Phlegmatic, from which comes stupidity & fear, expressed by a miserable, terrified of two shadows that follow him everywhere and that he cannot avoid»[51]. This design is therefore more than a costume design but rather a description of the dance and that fact argues for the thesis that this drawing and the other ones of the series may have been executed

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[48] *Ballet de la Nuit* : "depuis trois heures près minuit, jusques à six que le Soleil se lève." In [Benserade, Isaac de]. *Ballet royal de la Nuict, divisé en quatre Parties, ou quatre Veilles : et dansé par Sa Majesté, le 23 février 1653.* Paris : Robert Ballard, 1653. All quotes from Le Ballet de la Nuit are coming from this edition.

[49] *Ballet de la Nuit*, Première Entrée : « Les quatre Demons du Feu, de l'Air, de l'Eau, & de la Terre, qui représentent les quatre humeurs ou temperaments du corps humain, le Colerique, le Sanguin, le Flegmatique, & le Melancholique, d'où naissent les differens Songes ».

[50] Caulier, Brigitte. *Les cultes thérapeutiques autour des fontaines en France du Moyen Âge à nos jours.* Québec & Paris : Presses de l'Université de Laval & Beauchesne, 1990. See : « Introduction » pp. 7-14 and for the relationship with spirituality, see : pp. 26–39.

[51] *Ballet de la Nuit*, « V. Entrée Le Songe du Flegmatique, d'où vient la stupidité & la peur, exprimé par un misérable, épouvanté de deux Ombres qui le suivent par tout & qu'il ne peut éviter ».

after the ballet was given, and if not by Gissey himself, with the help of his designs. The research around the expression of the character relates to the study of emotions. This aspect was present in many ballets de cour and the poet Guillaume Colletet (1596–1659) conceived, for a ballet in 1632, dance as a mean of expression, and like poetry « a real picture of our passions »[52]. This concern will become a theory of passions, under the tutorship of Charles Le Brun at the Académie in 1668.[53] The character seems enveloped by rivulets of water. The costume is unicolor, white silver, and its relief is evocative of the movements of streams and currents. His head set is composed as a little fountain, with a central jet, which the designer underlines in metallic paint, silver and gold to give the effect of changing reflection given by the candles of the performance (Figure 16B).

Figure 16B : 1653, detail from a costume design attributed to Henry Gissey, for the « Démon de l'Eau » in *Ballet Royal de la Nuit, Divisé en quatre Parties, ou quatre Veilles et dansé par sa Majesté le 23 Fevrier 1653*. Waddesdon Manor, Rothschild Collection.

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[52] « Car comme la Poësie est un vray tableau de nos passions, & la Peinture un discours muet veritablement, mais capable neanmoins de reveiller tout ce qui tombe dans notre imagination : Ainsi la Dance est une Image vivante de nos actions, & une expression artificielle de nos secrettes pensees. » in Colletet, Guillaume. « Preface » in *Le grand Ballet des effects de la nature. Présenté au roy. Qui doit estre dansé le lundy 27. decembre 1632. & les trois jours suivans, à deux heures pécisément, au Jeu de paume du Petit Louvre, au Marest du Temple*. Paris : Jean Martin, 1632. See also : Paquot, Marcel. "La manière de composer les ballets de cour d'après les premiers théoriciens français" in *Les divertissements de cour au XVIIe siècle*. Cahiers de l'Association Internationale des Études Françaises Juin 1957, N°9, publiés avec le concours de l'Unesco. Paris : Les Belles Lettres, 1957, pp. 184–197.

[53] Le Brun, Charles. *L'Expression des passions & autres conférences, Correspondance*, éd. Julien Philipe. Paris : Dédale, Maisonneuve et Larose, 1994.

Figure 17: Costume for the element of water, « Das Wasser vorstellent », attributed to Johann Christoph Dehne
(fl. 1714–1726), from *Neu-eröffneter Masquen-Saal, oder: Der verkleideten heydnischen Götter, Göttinnen und vergötterter
Helden Theatralischer Tempel, darinnen in mehr als 200. Kupfer-Stichen vorgestellt wird, wie solche Gottheiten der Alten, bey
jetziger Zeit in Opern, Comœdien, Aufzügen und Masqueraden eingekleidet und præsentiert werden können ... Aus allerhand
sowohl heydnisch- als christlichen Büchern colligiret, und zu finden bey Johann Messelreuter ...*
Bayreuth: Gedruckt bey Joh. Lobern, 1723.
Dresden, Städtischen Bibliotheken.

This strange German costume (Figure 17) for a man is not a costume of a river god
but of Water, as one of the four elements[54]. Its German origins and its year of publication,
1723, bring it closer to Handel's *Acis and Galatea* of 1718. Likely to have been conceived for a
Masquerade, as the sword indicates, the costume itself is rather generic but integrates
depictions of large water animals in a shape reminiscent of classical and baroque dolphins and
the regular geometry of shells and pearls for the decoration. The costume is composed in a
strictly symmetrical way, but it offers an interesting variation for the headset (Figure 17B): on
a small hat, a little spray of water crowns the composition in form of a little hill. The miniature
picturesque landscape is form of feathers in shape of tree and a classical fountain with jets[55].
The setting is built on a tricorne and the overflooding of water may likely have been figured
by pearls or silver threads.

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[54] This rich volume of engravings, mostly by Johann Christoph Dehne, offers Greek and Roman heroes, gods
and goddesses in opera, drama, carousel and masquerades. The three other elements also exist in this series.:
http://www.slub-dresden.de/sammlungen/digitale-
sammlungen/werkansicht/cache.off?tx_dlf%5Bid%5D=57715   (Accessed 14 October 2015).

[55] See, for comparison, some projects for the gardens of Sceaux from Charles Le Brun, or his the circle : « Deux
fontaines et un vase avec jet d'eau », Paris : Musée du Louvre, département des Arts graphiques (Numéro
d'inventaire INV 30327). See : http://arts-graphiques.louvre.fr/detail/oeuvres/1/208114-Deux-fontaines-et-
un-vase-avec-jet-deau

Figure 17B: Detail from a costume for the element of water, « Das Wasser vorstellent »,
attributed to Johann Christoph Dehne (fl. 1714–1726)
from *Neu-eröffneter Masquen-Saal...* Bayreuth: Gedruckt bey Joh. Lobern, 1723.
Dresden, Städtischen Bibliotheken.

An idea of water movement can be found on another costume from the same German book (Figure 18). The costume for the nymph Ciane allows us to see another attempt to characterize water in motion as it is actually showing the very moment of the metamorphoses, when the body of Ciane dissolves into water. The myth as told by Ovid[56] is summarized in the text beneath the figure. Both tell the story of Ciane (or Cyane, or Kyane), a nymph who tried to prevent Pluto from abducting Proserpina, her playmate. Upon failure, she dissolved away in tears (Lower right of Figure 18). The Ciane (Sicilian: Ciani) is a short river in southern Sicily, not far from Syracuse.

The name Ciane, deriving from the Greek cyanos ("azure", "dark blue" in Greek), gives also the blue color of this costume. The dress is of simple cloth while the main decorative element depicting water is an attempt to show the transformation: long tinsels represent water. The material used on the costume for this effect could be the same as the one used on some scenery pieces kept in Drottningholm: irregular silver threads on which flickering candle light would produce irregular reflections evocative of the motion of liquid[57]. Besides the relation to the convention established by set designers to depict fountains in their sceneries these water jets on a costume bring the character closer to the numerous sculptures which ornate the water features since the Romans. By showing the water coming out of the body the costume designer shows the moment of metamorphoses, as moment the illustrators of Ovid were also keen to show (Figure 19)[58].

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[56] See: Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 5. 407–464.

[57] For an example of this kind of scenery, see "The Fountain of Love, a cascade with tinsel" for *Roland* of Piccini in 1781 at the Drottningholms Teater in Stribolt, Barbro. *Scenery from Swedish Court Theatres, Drottningholm Gripsholm.* Stockholm : Stockholmia Förlag - Drottningholms Teatermuseum, 2002, p. 203.

[58] The idea of body fluids and the confusion with other body growth, like beard or hair, is explored by Giulio Romano in *The Labor of the Golden Fleece* in the Sala di Psichi, 1527–30, fresco. Palazzo del Te, Mantua - See more at: http://wtfarthistory.com/post/9833155091/ejaculating-a-river-now-thats-labor#sthash.So29OvZ1.dpuf (Accessed 7 January 2016) .
Nowadays, for example, Bill Viola explores the idea of liquefaction of the body in many of his works, e.g the one exposed at the Biennale of Venice 2007: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=beMhIoeGQzQ (Accessed 7 January 2016).
On the popular stage the German singer Helene Fischer had appeared recently in a water dress made with a

Figure 18: Costume for the water nymph « Ciane » attributed to Johann Christoph Dehne (fl. 1714–1726) from
Neu-eröffneter Masquen-Saal... Bayreuth: Gedruckt bey Joh. Lobern, 1723.
Dresden, Städtischen Bibliotheken.

Figure 19 : « Rapt de Proserpine », French etching by Isaac Briot (1585–1670) after an illustration by
Jean Mathieu (1590–1672) for Nicholas Renouard, *Les Métamorphoses d'Ovide, Traduites en Prose Françoise,
et de nouveau soigneusement reveues, corrigées en infinis endroits, et enrichies de figures a chacune Fable. Avec XV.
Discours Contenans l'Explication Morale et Historique...,* Paris : 1619, p. 139.
Collection of Gilbert Blin.

A strange composite design attributed to Louis-René Boquet (1717–1814) is showing some of these features. This project (Figure 20) has been put by François Lesure in relation[59] to the Ballet *Les Élements* of Lalande and Destouches, which premièred in the Palais des Tuileries the 22 of December 1721, and if indeed the ballet was partly revived in 1763 - during the time of Boquet's activities - it does not contain the generic character of "élements". It is possible that the costume may represent the *Chaos* of the Greek cosmogony[60]: the exact piece requiring such a character has still to be identified. But, if the presence of the four elements is an allusion to the medical system of humors, the costume may also be an allegory of total "dérèglement des humeurs" and therefore be an allegory of global sickness, or even folly. In classical thought, the four elements water, earth, air, and fire frequently occur and this "humorous" costume is an attempt to integrate them all.

Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

Figure 20: Costume design attributed to Louis-René Boquet (1717-1814)
for a character combining the four elements, in a French opera (ca 1770?).
Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Opéra.[61]

Fire is burning from the stomach of the character while on his head, which is covered with a wig dressed up as small clouds, an opened cage where birds are flying away from, is

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[59] Lesure, François. *L'opéra classique français*. Genève : Minkoff, 1972, planche 75, p. 95 and Lesure, François. *Deux siècles d'opéra français*. (Paris, Musée de l'Opéra, 1972), n°128, p. 64.

[60] Water was one of many "archai" proposed by the Pre-socratics, most of whom tried to reduce all things to a single substance. However, Empedocles of Acragas (c. 495 – c. 435 BC) selected four archai for his four "roots": air, fire, water and earth. Empedocles "roots" became the four classical elements of Greek philosophy and Plato (427–347 BC) took over the four elements of Empedocles. Plato's student Aristotle (384–322 BC) developed a different explanation for the elements based on pairs of qualities. According to Aristotle, the four elements were arranged concentrically around the center of the Universe to form the sublunary sphere.

[61] http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b8455642d

depicting the air element. The right hand, like in a representation of Daphne's metamorphoses, is changing into a tree and symbolizes the earth element. Water sprouts from the left fingers and from the left knee of this costume. Noteworthy are the nozzle on his left shoulder and pipes which are on the arm, reminiscent of the art of the fountain maker and the water engineer. The overall style maybe a recollection of the famous composite style of Nicolas II de Larmessin (1632–1694), who himself created a costume of the fountain maker, "Le Fontainier", for his suite of *Les costumes grotesques et les métiers*, (Figure 21).
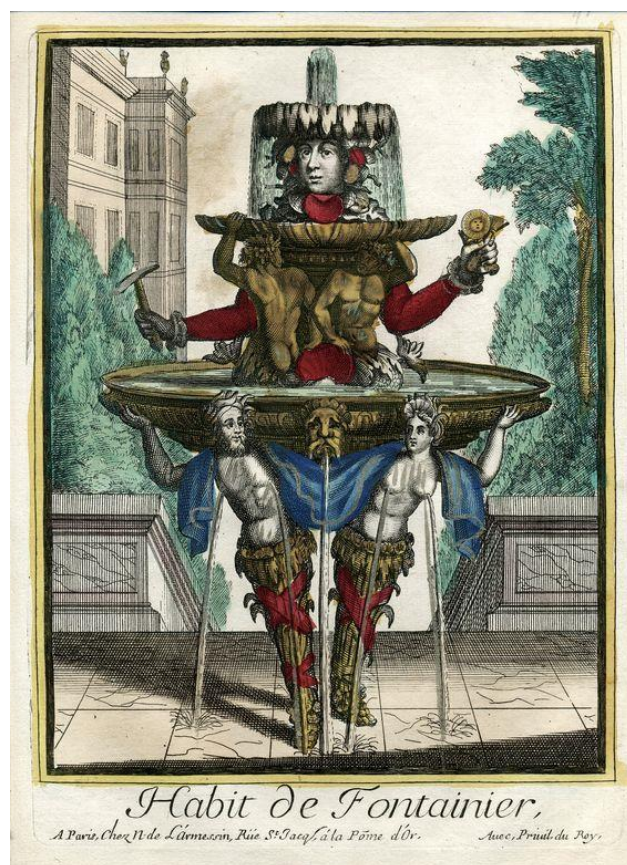

Figure 21 : « Habit de Fontainier » by Nicolas II de Larmessin (1632-1694),
from *Les costumes grotesques et les métiers*, 1695.

Although the costume is not a costume for the stage, the presence of a number of elements are in concordance with the visual paradigms of the period for symbolically depicting water. The headdress is based on the same idea as in the costume for the "Démon de l'eau" in the *Ballet de la Nuit* and shows a jet of water, falling in a basin overflooding on the shoulder of the character. A wig made of shells and water plants completes the idea. The presence of sculptures on the torso, showing tritons with water plants crowns, and the upper legs, presenting a water god and a nymph, elaborate on the relation between antic sculptures and modern depictions[62]. Noteworthy in this representation, are also the two boots made of reeds, tighten together by ribbons. Like the Tritons on the bust, these reeds have been hand-colored in gold on this plate. It may not be by chance, as reeds in metal were integrated to sculpted groups and the placement in water was offering a magical effect, like can be seen in the Fountain of Venus, dating from around 1699, in the gardens of Het Loo: « we come to a Noble

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[62] The water coming from the nipples of the statue of the woman may be a reminiscence of a Roman sculpture, while the statue of the man, can be brought closer from the painting of Luca Giordano (1634–1705) *Triumph of Galatea*, dated between 1675 and 1677. See Figures 14 and 14B.

Fountain, in the middle of whose *Basin* is a Marble Statue of *Venus*, full length, and another of Cupid under her left Hand, he holding a gilded Bow. This *Statue* is supported on a small *Whale* for its a *Pedestal*, with four great giled [gilded] *Tritons* below it, a large gilded *Shell* being between each of the *Tritons*, and each *Tritons* blowing in a large *Trumpet* with one Hand, their other hand being disposed in different Postures. At the end of each *Trumpet* the Water runs out in a broad Sheet, incircling a great part of the broad end of the *Trumpet*. Also about the *Tritons* there were many gilded Rushes and Water-lily Flowers, which all contribute to the Ornament of this *Magnificent Fountain*. »[63] (Figure 22).

Figure 22: Unknown sculptors, fountain basin with a figure of Venus, Paleis Het Loo.
(Photography: Gilbert Blin).
Paleis Het Loo, Apeldoorn.

The reporter, the physician of king William III, and also great moral supporter of the house of Orange, apologizes for the bare style of his description of Het Loo, taking a chance to pick at the French style used for the descriptions of another famous garden of the period, the one of Versailles: « I will not here enlarge in their praise and admiration, but leave it to the Reader to make a true judgment of them from the *Description* itself, which is at least natural and plain, and as perspicuous as the nature of such *Descriptions* (sometime necessarily intricate some through the great variety of matter) will admit, tho' indeed very destitute of the Ornaments and Flourishes that are usually made in the describing [of] Great Things, to make them even

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[63] In Harris, Walter. *A Description of the King's Royal Palace and Gardens at Loo. Together With a Short Account of Holland. In which There are Some Observations relating to their Diseases*. London: K. Roberts & T. Nutt, MDCXCIX, p.8. For other illustrations of the Venus Fountain, see also: Asbeck, Johannes Bernardus van, and Erkelens, Wies. *De restauratie van Het Loo, van paleis tot museum*. 's-Gravenhage : Staatsuitgeverij, 1976 and *Paleis Het Loo, Paleis en Tuinen, Palace and Gardens. ed. Eelco Elzenga*. Apeldoorn: Stichting 't Konings Loo, 2004.

Greater than they really are». [64] Even, not named, the allusion to Louis the Great concludes an introduction which already included a partisan view on French Architecture[65]. *Descriptions* may also be an allusion to the style used to describe the royal domain by Felibien in his *Recueil de descriptions de peintures et d'autres ouvrages faits pour le roi*, although, from the language point of view, the critic would be then unjustified as Felibien's writing style is simple and does not overuse praise.

The reeds which appear as metal on the costume of the « Fontainier » by Larmessin may be an allusion to the Bosquet du Marais in Versailles, where, since 1673, pipes made of tin plate in shape of reeds with their panicles painted in gold were seen[66]: « It is a little grove where there is a large square of water longer than wide, in the middle of which is a big tree so ingeniously made that it seems natural. From the end of all its branches, an infinity of streams of water cover the Marais. In addition to these fountains, there are still a large number of others that spring from the reeds that line the sides of this square ».[67]
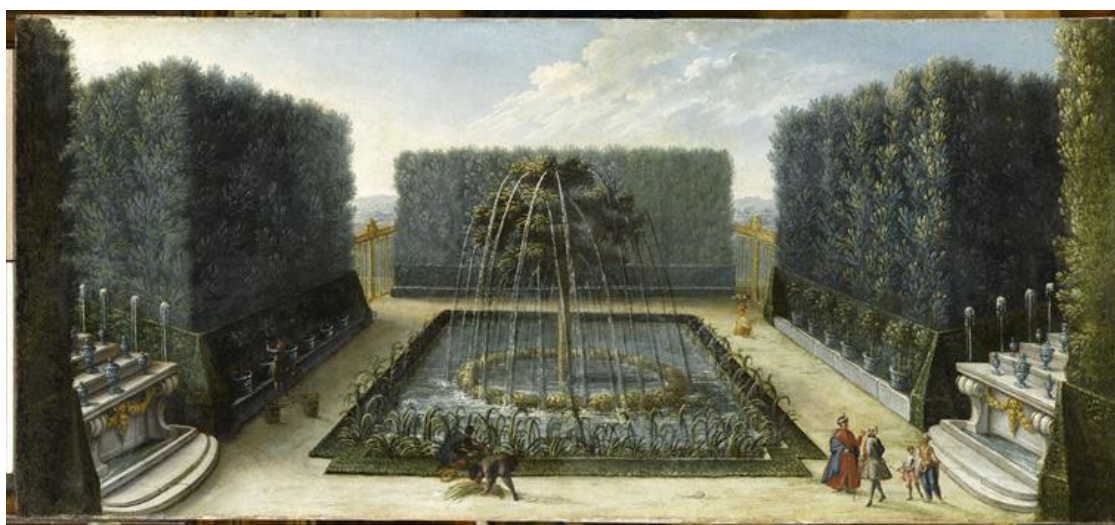

Figure 23: Eighteenth-century French School, *The Bosquet du Marais, garden of Versailles*.
Versailles, Musée du Chateau of Versailles et de Trianon.

[64] In Harris, Walter. *A Description of the King's Royal Palace and Gardens at Loo…* London: K. Roberts & T. Nutt, MDCXCIX, p. 3.

[65] «And *England* may deservedly glory on not only the stately *Cathedrals* she has built at home, as well as in her *Palaces, Universities*, and other Publick and Private Buildings, but hath left in *France* the lasting evidences of her *Magnificence*, by erecting those stately *Nostredames* at *Paris,* at *Amiens,* at *Rouen*, &c, at a time when a great part of *France* was under the *English Dominion*, and when the rest of it did as much dread the *English Power* and *Courage*, as themselves have of late Years been a Terror to all their Neighbours. » in Harris, Walter. *A Description of the King's Royal Palace and Gardens at Loo…*London : K. Roberts & T. Nutt, MDCXCIX, pp. 1 & 2.

[66] « Madame de Montespan donna le dessin de la pièce de marais, où un arbre de bronze jette de l'eau par toutes ses feuilles de fer-blanc, et où les roseaux de même matière jettent aussi de l'eau de tous côtés. » in *Mémoires, contes et autres œuvres de Charles Perrault : précédés d'une notice sur l'auteur par P. L. Jacob, et d'une dissertation sur les contes de fées par Charles Athanase Walckenaer*. Paris : Charles Gosselin, 1842, p. 80.

[67] « C'est un petit bois où il y a un grand carré d'eau plus long que large, au milieu duquel est un gros arbre si ingénieusement fait qu'il paraît naturel. De l'extrémité de toutes ses branches, sort une infinité de jets d'eau qui couvrent le Marais. Outre ces jets d'eau, il y en a encore un grand nombre d'autres qui jaillissent des roseaux qui bordent les côtés de ce carré. » in Félibien, André. *Recueil de descriptions de peintures et d'autres ouvrages faits pour le roi.* Paris : 1689, p. 337.

7.1.4 Costume designs for river gods on stage

Figure 24: ca 1690, costume design for a Sea Triton by the workshop of Jean I Berain (1640–1711).
Bibliothèque Municipale de Versailles.

When looking at costume designs, the characteristic of representation of a river god since Antiquity allows a distinction between two kinds of water gods: the ones of the sea (Neptune, Triton and other sirens) and river gods. The costume in Figure 24, by the workshop of Jean I Berain (1640–1711), shows the essential elements of the stage costume of a sea divinity: fish scales, shells, presence of coral[68]. In contrast, but also based on the iconology inherited from the Romans and the Renaissance, a couple of elements allows with certainty the identification of a design for a river god: an urn and/or an oar. In his treaty *Des Ballets anciens et modernes selon les regles du theatre*, Ménestrier gives in 1682 some simple indications about the costume of the river god: « The large Rivers and the smaller Rivers are presented with crowns of water leaves, with fish floating on their garments, and urns in their hand »[69]. The urn, considered part of the sceneries, is not very often represented by costume designers but, as I will show, most river gods on stage during the baroque period are depicted holding oars, which indicated that the rivers are navigable or holding reeds, if the water courses are of smaller importance, like a tributary or a stream.

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[68] La Gorce, Jérôme de. "Un aspect du merveilleux dans l'opéra français sous Louis XIV : les chars marins" in *La Scenografia Barocca, Atti del XXIV Congresso Internazionale di Storia dell'Arte*, a cura di Antoine Schnapper. Bologne : Clueb, 1982, pp. 65-72.

[69] « Les Fleuves & les Rivieres se representent avec des couronnes de feüilles d'eau, des poissons flottants sur leurs habits, & des urnes à la main. » in Ménestrier, Claude-François. *Des Ballets anciens et modernes selon les règles du théâtre.* Paris : René Guignard, 1682, p. 144.

The river gods can be distinguished in three kinds: mythic rivers of the underworld (Styx, Lethe, etc.), real rivers (Nile, Ladon, etc.) and more generic "river gods" who depict unspecified rivers and, more than offering special characters, are often presented as forces in relation with the element of water. Our selection tries to cover these three categories and to reveal what makes the difference between them. It may be important at this juncture to remember that French language has two very distinct words to refer to rivers: "Un fleuve" is a big river that flows into an ocean or sea (examples: The Nile, the Rhone). "Une rivière" is a natural watercourse that flows into another river, in a "fleuve", in the sea, in a lake, or becomes lost in the sands. The flow of a "rivière" is in principle less abundant than the one of a "fleuve", but more considerable than a stream. In French while "fleuve" is masculine, "rivière" is feminine. These genders are used by French artists quite strictly: les "Dieux Fleuves" are male, like in Roman times, and the "Rivières" are represented under female appearance. The following collection offers French designs for Dieu Fleuve/River God ranging from 1651 to 1791.

Figure 25: 1651, costume design for the "Fleuve d'Oubly" attributed to Charles and/or Henry Beaubrun or to Henry Gissey, in *Les fêtes de Bacchus*, Ballet du roi du 2 mai 1651.
Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France.

The Cabinet des Estampes in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris keeps a collection of designs of the costumes of *Les fêtes de Bacchus*, together with an original copy of the Livret by Benserade for the royal ballet of 1651. Whether these colored drawings showing all the characters were executed before the performances, as models for the tailors, or after, as a memento of this lavish *Ballet de Cour* is not known[70]. The attribution made in 1866, to the

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[70] http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k72469z.r=Les+festes+de+Bacchus+1651.langFR

Beaubrun cousins, painters en vogue at this period[71], can still be supported today by similarities in some paintings of the same artists, as the Beaubruns produced a number of portraits with noble seaters in masquerade costumes. But the designer could also be Henry Gissey (ca 1621–1673) who was already active at the French court[72]. Whoever the designer is, the costumes were appreciated by the English traveler John Evelyn who reported in his Diary: « the habits of the masquers were stupendously rich and glorious »[73].

The « Fleuve d'Oubly » (Figure 25), the river of oblivion, appears in the retinue of the « Dieu du Sommeil » among « Dreams and Fantasies, visions of Trophies, Men of Fire, Men of Ice » and other Fairies during the 19th *entrée* of the *ballet*[74]. In Greek mythology, Lethe was one of the five rivers of Hades. Flowing around the cave of Hypnos and through the Underworld, the Lethe was giving complete forgetfulness to all who drank from it. Lethe was therefore also the name of the Greek spirit of forgetfulness and oblivion, with whom the river was often identified. In the Ballet of 1651, the « Fleuve de l'Oubly » was performed by the marquis de Pisy-Genlis (1617–1696), known for his ugliness. The verses which accompanied his entrance were reflecting this appearance of what looks like a casting choice[75].

On the costume, a wavy pattern on a blue material is used for the bodice. This waving effect can also be seen on the shirt. The character is holding a cane maybe reminiscent of the reed seen during the Roman period. The headset is rather detailed, and it is its composition, similar to the belt, which gives the true identity of the character of oblivion: « a tall character with a long white beard, with shoulder decorations and a belt of poppy leaves, flowers and soporific plants, head fully covered with a similar crown, bristling with a gigantic and flamboyant plume »[76]. The overall costume of the river of oblivion is exemplary of how the costume designers of the *Ballet de Cour* attempted to give a visual identity to the character, even if of complex composite nature, here river god and god of oblivion. This determination to depict as clearly as possible the special character of the river god by adding elements specific to his identity finds various echoes in the work of Ménestrier. In his 1682 treaty *Des Ballets* he suggests adding « gold glitter to the Tagus because of its golden sand, since it is necessary much

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[71] Henri (1603-1677) and Charles Beaubrun (1604-1692) were two cousins, whose careers are virtually indistinguishable. They were both trained by their uncle, Louis Beaubrun (died 1627), and became portrait painters as the court of Louis XIII and Louis XIV. In 1648, they were among the founders of the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture.

[72] Christout, Marie-Françoise. "Sémiologie des Habits de danse : du Ballet de Cour au Ballet d'action (XVIe-XVIIIe siècles)" in *Costumes de danse ou la Chair représentée*, La Recherche en danse, 1997.

[73] *The diary of John Evelyn*, edited from the original mss. by William Bray. Volume I. New York & London: M. Walter Dunne Publisher, 1901. Entry of the 11th of May 1651. (Accessed 14 October 2015): https://archive.org/stream/diaryofjohnevely01eveliala#page/262/mode/2up/search/1651

[74] « Dieu du Sommeil sortant du Temple de Bacchus suiviy des Songes ou Phantosmes, Visions de trophées, d'Hommes de feu, d'Hommes de glace, du fleuve d'Oubly, & de Fées enfantant des Esprits follets » p. 20.

[75] Fournel, Victor. *Les contemporains de Molière : recueil de comédies rares ou peu connues, jouées de 1650 à 1680*. Paris : Firmin Didot, 1866, p. 317.

[76] « le Fleuve de l'oubli, un grand personnage à longue barbe blanche, avec des épauliéres et une ceinture de feuilles de pavot, fleurs et plantes soporifiques, la tête amplement couverte d'une couronne analogue, hérissée d'un plumet gigantesque et flamboyant » in Fournel, Victor. *Les contemporains de Molière…*, p. 313.

as one can to express properties of things »[77]. In another short text, published in 1658, Ménestrier used the same example: « The Rivers are clothed with a wavy fabric, which has to do with the color of the waters, the gold glitters are added to the Tagus because of its golden sands, they are given in their hands an urn, or a paddle, & we crown them with bulrushes, or with gladioli»[78]. The river Tagus, which was renowned for its gold-bearing sands[79] gives an example, here based on geology, of customizing some recurrent elements to amplify the identity of the river. In his book *Représentations en musique* while telling about a performance taking place in Florence in 1608 Ménestrier explains that: «The stage represents the city of Florence with its neighboring hills. On one side appeared in a grotto the Arno River which is passing in the middle of Florence, leaning on his urn, crowned with Beech Tree & water leaves, holding a Cornucopia»[80]. The crowning of the Arno with water leaves is assuring his identity as river god whiles the added beech leaves may symbolize the Tuscan vegetation.

Le Nozze di Peleo et di Teti, ou Les Nopces de Pelée et Thetis, Comédie Italienne en Musique entremeslée d'un ballet sur le même sujet was presented in Paris in 1654 with some ballets in the court style to adjust the Italian opera to the French taste.[81] Texts by Benserade for the ballet were added to the libretto of Francesco Buti set in music by Carlo Caproli (before 1620–after 1675). The performance was starting with a complex prologue, where the King of France was dancing the role of Apollo. Two river gods were appearing at the very beginning of the prologue and can be seen on the set design by Giacomo Torelli reproduced in Figure 26: « The first Scene, which serves as Prologue, is Mount Pietro of Thessaly, located between the two rivers Epidan and Onochonus, where the action takes place. [...] At the beginning of the scene are the two rivers seated on stones: over two surrounded by reeds, & other aquatic plants »[82]. One of them is shown on Figure 26B.

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[77] « On donne des étoffes ondées aux Rivières, on ajoûteroit des paillettes d'or au Tage à cause de son sable doré, car il faut exprimer autant qu'on peut les proprietez des choses. » in Ménestrier, Claude-François. *Des Ballets anciens et modernes selon les règles du théâtre*. Paris : René Guignard, 1682, p. 144.

[78] « On habille les Fleuves d'une estoffe ondée, qui ayt du rapport à la couleur des eaux, on ajouterait au Tage des paillettes d'or à cause de ses Arènes dorées, on leur donne à la main une urne, ou une rame, & on les couronne de joncs, ou de glayeuls. » in Ménestrier, Claude-François. *L'Autel de Lyon, Consacré à Louis-Auguste, et placé dans le temple de la Gloire, Ballet dédié à sa Majesté en son entrée à Lyon*. Lyon: Jean Moulin, MDCLVIII, transcribed by Christout, Marie-Françoise. *Le Ballet de Cour de Louis XIV, 1643-1672, Mises en scène*. Paris : Picard, 1967, p. 224.

[79] See: Ovid. *Amores*, 1.15.34. See also: Juvenal. *Satires*, 3.55.

[80] « La Scene representa la Ville de Florence avec ses Collines voisines. D'un côté parut dans une Grotte l'Arne qui est le Fleuve qui passe au milieu de Florence, s'appuyant sur son Urne couronné de Hestre & de feuilles d'eau tenant une Corne d'abondance » in Ménestrier, Claude-François. *Des Représentations en musique anciennes et modernes*. Paris: Robert Pepie, 1685, p. 258.

[81] Christout, Marie-Françoise. "*Les Noces de Pélée et Thétis*, comédie italienne en musique entremêlée d'un ballet dansé par le Roi (1654) "» in *Baroque* [En ligne], 5 | 1972.). URL : http://baroque.revues.org/375 (Accessed 3 August 2015).

[82] "« La prima Scena, che serve di Prologo, rappresenta il monte Pietro della Tessaglia, situato trà li due fiumi Apidano, e Onochono, dove succede l'azione.[...] All'entrata della scena sono assisi li due fiumi sudetti: sopra due sassi circondati di gionchi, & altre erbe aquose » in "Descrizione Regolare delle Machine, delle mutazioni del teatro, e incidenze dell'opera presente. Del Cavalier'Almateo" in : [Torelli, Giacomo & Silvestre, Israël.] *Décorations et machines aprestées aux nopces de Tétis, ballet royal, représenté en la salle du Petit Bourbon par Jacques Torelli, inventeur...* Paris: [s.n.], 1654.

Figure 26: 1654, engraving of Israel Silvestre (1621–1691) after a drawing from François Francart (1622–1672), showing the set by Giacomo Torelli for the prologue of *Le Nozze di Peleo e di Teti*. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Figure 26B: 1654, detail of the engraving of Israel Silvestre after a drawing from François Francart, showing the Front stage left of the set by Giacomo Torelli for the prologue of *Le Nozze di Peleo e di Teti*. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Although on the engraving of Israel Silvestre (1621–1691) the river gods are shown naked, linking them to antic sculptures, these rivers were not painted element of sceneries, which may have been the idea at some point[83], but acted by two performers. The costume design for one of them shows indeed that the performer was dressed up. Nevertheless, the costume design for the river Epidan (Figure 27) keeps the reclining position of the body and brings the depiction close to the river gods treated by sculptures since the antiquity and spread by paintings of the baroque period. Lying on his bed, the river Epidan, as indicated by the writing, is resting on its urn, from where its waters are sprouting. Next to this urn an oar completes the props and the position follows closely the indications of the libretto in the prologue where the Epidan was appearing on one side of the stage, while on the other side, Onochonus, another river from Thessalia, was present. « L'ouverture du Théâtre paressent Apollon & les Muses sur le haut de leur Montagne, & de costé & d'autre les deux fleuves principaux de la Thessalie ».[84]

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[83] The description seems to emphasize the space component of the two rivers acting as a referent for the location of the action, as often rivers were associated with the mountains they were coming from. The reclining position was the option I took for the river god in my production of *Psyché* in 2007.

[84] Benserade, Isaac de. *Les Nopces de Pelée et de Thetis*. Paris : Ballard, 1654. See : http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k717953/f3.image.r=Benserade,%20Isaac%20de.langFR

Figure 27 : 1654, costume design by Henry Gissey for the river god Epidan in *Le Nozze di Peleo et di Teti, ou Les Nopces de Pelée et Thetis, Comédie Italienne en Musique entre-meslée d'un Ballet sur le mesme sujet, dansé par sa Majesté.*
Bibliothèque de l'Institut de France, Paris[85]

The river Epidan was the famous witness of the Heliads' metamorphoses into poplars and like often on the illustrations of Ovid's works, the river god is identified by his reclining position and his urn. In the ballet of 1654, Epidan was sung by « le Sr Lallemand » wearing an imposing white beard showing the venerable age of the river. Noteworthy in this costume is first the color palette offered by the waving pattern, treated horizontally on the water blue and shiny white fabrics. The use of a patterned fabric is still recommended in the 1680's by Ménestrier in the various editions of his Treaty *Des Ballets*: « We give waving fabrics to Rivers »[86]. But as interesting is the use of green foliage and brown apex of reeds for the crown and the trimmings around the waist, the arms and calves, covered with stockings.

The large series of costumes designed by Gissey in 1671 for the first version of *Psyché*, titled *Psiché,* contains an interesting design (Figure 28). The urn and oar present on this drawing allow the identification of this river god with the "Fleuve" who, in Act III of the *comédie ballet* by Molière and his collaborators, welcomes Psiché in its waves. Without a beard this divinity shows an unusual young face for a river god – maybe a suggestion that this seductive youth is

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[85] http://www.photo.rmn.fr/archive/01-020977-2C6NU0G09GXY.html

[86]: « On donne des étoffes ondées aux Rivières. » in Ménestrier, *Des Ballets anciens et modernes selon les règles du théâtre*, Paris, René Guignard, 1682, p. 144.

apt to tempt Psiché to join him[87] - and only the big urn and the oar avoid a possible confusion with the other water divinities, featured in the prologue. Montfaucon, describing the Roman fountain with a river god (Figure 5) explains in 1724: « Someone said that the rivers that disgorge immediately into the sea, are represented by elders, and rivers that flow into rivers, are expressed by young men without a beard» but he adds cautiously, reminding us of the multifaceted laws which were ruling allegory: « but this is not sure, I think contrary examples are found »[88].

Figure 28: 1671, costume design by Henry Gissey for the river god in *Psiché*.
Nationalmuseum, Stockholm.

The costume is comparable in its structure to the one that Gissey designed for a river god in *Le Nozze di Peleo et di Teti*, but the waving pattern of the material used for the bodice and the *tonnelet* of the Epidan river is here replaced by a fabric panels simulating water plants, maybe a reminiscence of the costume of the "esprit aquatique" of the 1617 *Ballet de la Delivrance de Renaud*. Treated vertically, it finds its extension in the leaves which spread over the *tonnelet*. To fully appreciate the treatment of the legs, with a series of three leg bands made of foliage, the actor must have been walking when playing the role and not lying on a moving piece of scenery like in *Le Nozze di Peleo et di Teti*. Although the design is not colored, the presence of

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[87] La Gorce, Jérôme de. "Les costumes d'Henry Gissey pour les représentations de *Psyché*" in *Revue de l'Art, numéro 66*. Paris: CNRS Éditions, 1984, pp. 39-52. See also: Dock, Stephen V. "Unpublished Costume Drawings by Henry Gissey for Molière's *Psyché*" in *Theatre History Studies, Volume XIII*, éd. Ron Engle. Tuscaloosa (AL): University of Alabama, 1993, pp. 181–207.

[88] « Quelqu'un a dit que les fleuves qui se dégorgent immédiatement dans la mer, sont représenté en vieillards, & que les rivières qui se jettent dans des fleuves, sont exprimées par des jeunes hommes sans barbe ; mais cela n'est pas sûr, je crois même qu'il se trouve des exemples contraires » in Montfaucon, Bernard de. *Supplément au livre de L'antiquité expliquée et illustrée en figures*. Tome III, 1724. Liv VII, p. 168.

reeds which seems to grow behind the urn, apparently a piece of scenery, suggests a similar treatment of painted green for the costume. The headdress is comparable and made with water plants and reeds, although this time Gissey crowns it with feathers, maybe in the purpose of accentuating the "galant" side of the character.

Among the French designers of the late seventeenth century, Jean I Berain occupies the first rank, as much for the number as for the quality and diversity of designs[89]. Although such an intensive production may have relied on a well-organized workshop, there is no doubt that Jean I Berain was an artist of the first rank, with a great ingenuity and a sense of grandeur and structure which seems to characterize the arts during Louis XIV's reign. His work was also influential thanks to the numerous designs, and engravings made after them, which were circulating in France and Europe. Berain, involved in the feasts of the court and the stage performances of Lully's operas, drew many costumes of river gods, characters present in many of the librettos of Quinault. Most of them are likely to have been conceived for revivals at the Académie Royale de Musique of *Atys*, the *tragédie en musique* that Quinault and Lully created in 1676. *Atys* is said to have been the favorite opera of Louis XIV and was called "l'Opéra du Roi". This royal seal of approval contributed to the popularity of the piece and *Atys* was performed many times during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries[90].

Although not every revival implied new sets and costumes, there is a large number of designs, by Berain himself or coming from his workshop, which can be put in relation with one of the *Atys* divertissements. In Act IV, the river gods and the nymphs of the fountains celebrate the upcoming wedding of the daughter of the river Sangar with the son of the god of the sea, Celenus, king of Phrygia. « Le Dieu du Fleuve Sangar », the father of Sangaride, appears and welcomes his watery family and invites them to celebrate: « Troupe de Dieux de Fleuves, de ruisseaux, et de divinités de fontaines » and rejoice with singing and dancing, organized by Quinault on the similitude and difference between fleeting love and fluctuating water. Like water, their element, the river gods are protean in nature and their true spirit is like movement: they dance and sing in honor of ever-changing love. By the number of revivals of *Atys*, and the number of characters in this scene, this lavish divertissement has been generating a great deal of designs. I present here a selection of designs by Berain or his workshop and as the period of their production covers the many decades where the designer was active, I attempt to order them following their characteristics.

The first costume, in the "Grande manière" Berain uses for opera singers, was likely designed for the river Sangar (Figure 29). The designer, as he creates a costume for a singer is not anymore submitted to allow a physical freedom that the ballet costume required as Menestrier pointed it out: « the habit should not be restrictive, and should leave the body and the leg well free to dance. »[91] Jérôme de la Gorce connects this project, also known by

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[89] His work is better known and appreciated today thanks to the fundamental work of Jérôme de la Gorce: See La Gorce, Jérôme de. *Berain, Dessinateur du Roi Soleil*. Paris : Herscher, 1986. The following notes give several other references of works by the same author.

[90] Created in 1676, was revived in 1679, 1682, 1690, 1699, 1709, 1725, 1736. See : front page of : Quinault, Philippe. *Atys, tragedie représentée devant Sa Majesté, a Saint Germain en Laye, en 1676. & en 1682. par l'Academie Royale de Musique, en 1679. en 1690. en 1699. en 1709. & en 1725. Remise au theâtre le jeudy 16. fevrier 1736.* Paris : Ballard, 1736.

[91] « Que l'habit ne soit point embarrassant, & qu'il laisse le corps & la jambe bien libre pour danser. » in Ménestrier. *Des Ballets anciens et modernes selon les règles du théâtre.* Paris : René Guignard, 1682, p. 253.

numerous copies, including one in the Musée du Louvre[92], with a revival of *Atys* in 1703. Even if the date cannot be asserted with total confidence, this project is likely to be from the earlier part of the career of Berain.

Figure 29: ca 1703? Costume design for the river god Sangar in *Atys* by Jean I Berain (1640–1711). Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France.[93]

The figure of the river god, well defined by the costume, is at first look imposing. Imposing because the character's long white beard makes him akin to old kings, fathers, and other characters of authority in tragedy. And indeed, the river Sangar, due to its location in Lesser Asia was considered as an elder river. « Sangari, Sangarius, a River of the Lesser Asia, which arising out of the Mountain Dindymus, and flowing through the Greater Phrygia, falls into the Euxine Sea in Bithynia ».[94] Ptolomy (c.100–c.170 AD) mentioned it under the name of Sangaris in his writings, and that may be the reference Quinault used. The connection with Phrygia is used by Quinault, as the librettist locates the action of *Atys* in this country. « Sangar, Zagari, or Sagari, or Acada, River of Asia Minor or Natoli. It is the one that Ptolemy calls

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[92] La Gorce, Jérôme de. *Berain, Dessinateur du Roi Soleil.* Préface de Jacques Thuillier. Paris : Herscher, 1986, pp. 72–74.

[93] http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b8455609s/f1.item

[94] See: Bohun, Edmond. *A Geographical Dictionary, Representing the Present and Ancient Names of all the Countries, Provinces, Remarkable Cities, Universities, Ports, Towns, Mountains, Seas, Streights, Fountains and Rivers of the whole World…* London: Charles Brome, 1688.

Sangaris »[95]. This mention by the Greco-Roman historian makes Sangar an "elder river" in the French culture of the seventeenth century. To the definition of Montfaucon, that I have mentioned before, regarding the meaning of facial hair: « Someone said that the rivers that disgorge immediately into the sea, are represented by elders », it seems that the connection with Antiquity may also trigger the imagination in the depiction of elder river.

Besides this serious background, the figure appears light, using floating drapery treated in waves on the bodice. A treatment which is emphasized by a long majestic cloak which, worn asymmetrically, (one point of attach at the shoulder, the other side at the waist), falls in sinuous lines. Despite the first impression of grandeur given by the venerable age of the character, the text and the music given to the role insist indeed on its comic side, and present the River Sangar, as another "bourgeois gentilhomme", boasting of the rank of his future son in law. Celenus is indeed the king of Phrygia but also the son of Neptune, the supreme water god. The red color is unexpected for a river god, but the coloring of the design is not original. The pigments changed through time[96] as the hasty notes on the design confirm: « All the foliage in embroidered satin, the tonnelet in gold moiré embroidered silver, the shells in valances in form of fish in silver moiré, the scales in [?] »[97]. Unfortunately, the original paper of the design has been cut and the hand-written text cropped. Nevertheless, these notes, destined to the tailor, gives us significant information: the use of "moiré", a fabric that includes a water effect weaving and the mix of gold and silver which must have reflected candlelight during the performance.

The « Troupe de Dieux de Fleuves, de ruisseaux, et de divinités de fontaines » which follows the river Sangar is detailed in a long list in the libretto. This enumeration is clearly a direction for, or an account of, casting, staging and costuming for a specific performance, as it gives numbers and identities, genders and ages: « Douze grands Dieux de Fleuves chantants. Cinq Dieux de Fleuves joüans de la Flutte. Quatre divinitez de fontaines, et quatre Dieux de Fleuves chantants et dançants. Quatre Divinitéz de Fontaines. Deux Dieux de Fleuves. Deux Dieux de Fleuves dançants ensemble. Deux petits Dieux de Ruisseaux chantants et dançants. Quatre petits Dieux de Ruisseaux dançants. Six grands Dieux de Fleuves dançants. Deux vieux Dieux de Fleuves & deux vieilles Nymphes de Fontaines dançantes ». [98]

This impressive list is also interesting because, besides the distinction it creates between singers and dancers (and therefore offers the character a long cloak or not) it gives the difference between size (Grands Fleuves, Ruisseaux), age (Vieux/Petits), gender (Fleuves/Fontaines) and hand props (Oar/Flutes in Reed). The way the 49 characters are

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[95] Moreri, Louis. *Le grand Dictionaire Historique, ou Le mélange curieux de l'histoire sacrée et profane…, Neuvième édition, où l'on a mis le Supplément dans le même ordre Alphabetique, corrigé les fautes censurées dans le Dictionaire Critique de Mr. Bayle, & grand nombre d'autres, et ajouté plus de 600 Articles et Remarques importantes. Tome Quatrième. N-Z.* Amsterdam & La Haye : Dépens de la Compagnie, M.DCCII.

[96] The red may have been an evocation of the fact that this river was most of the time dry, offering the sight of a dray red clay bed. See « Sangar » in Bruzen de La Martinière, Antoine-Augustin. *Le Grand Dictionnaire géographique historique et critique. Tome cinquième Q-S*, Paris : Libraires associés, 1768.

[97] "Toust les feuillages de satin brodé le tonelet moire d'or brodé argans les coquilles dans les lembrequin de poissons en moire argan les écailles dans [?] ».

[98] Quinault, Philippe. *Atys, tragedie en musique*. Paris : Christophe Ballard, 1676. Bibliothèque nationale de France, YF-686. http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k5448680n

ordered in the didaskalia may also suggest an order of appearance, maybe reflecting the protocol then used in France for entrances on stage: first principal singers, followed by chorus singers and then dancers, younger first.[99]

Figure 30: ca.1703 ? costume design for a river god by Jean I Berain (1640–1711)
from *Costumes de fêtes et de mascarades - Tome III* (1696 DR à 1761DR).
Paris, Musée du Louvre.

The costume (Figure 30) is quite close to the costume for the river Sangar in *Atys* (Figure 29) and could be a design for the costume of this character, or, considering the similitude of position, even a variant of the previous one. At any rate the long cloak suggests a costume for a singer, maybe, if not the river Sangar, one of the « 12 big rivers gods singing » who follow him immediately. The tall headdress, surmounted by upright water foliage, and the festooned cloak dragging on the stage elongate the silhouette. The precision of « grands » may indicate that these characters are rivers of sufficient size, where ships or boats could sail: a navigable status that the rather refined design of the oar, on this project, seems to confirm.

Another costume for a river god, in Figure 31, seems less elaborate than the others, and a certain classicist rigor seems comprised in this design. Although of a slightly different style than the two mentioned above, the design of the oar is almost the same as the one found on the previous figure. It is this oar and once more the crown of reeds which confer the character its identity as river god, as the use of the drapery in front of the torso is reminiscent of Roman art and confers to the character a serious dignity. The panels over the « tonnelet » are shaped as water plant leaves and the coloring may have accentuated the identity of the god.

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[99] This order may also be in relation with a court protocol, as the rivers are associated with geographical places, and the etiquette of the French court was expressive of the respective importance of dukedom, comtés, marquisates, etc.

Figure 31: costume design for a river god attributed to Jean I Berain (1640–1711), from
Dessins Originaux et Croquis d'habillements, mascarades, scènes et décorations de théâtre, exécutés par les peintres et les costumiers du roi pour les ballets et les divertissements de la cour, depuis Henri III, et pour l'Académie royale de musique, depuis son établissement, en 1671, jusqu'à l'époque de Louis XVI.
Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France.

A second category of Berain designs shows costumes of river gods with a reed. Although kept in London, the costume drawing for a singer in figure 32 is clearly by the same hand and period as the costume for the river Sangar kept by the Bibliothèque nationale de France (Figure 28). The reed as hand prop indicates a river of less importance than the Fleuve Sangar but the cloak shows that the costume is for a singer. This design may be a project for one of the « Deux Dieux de Fleuves » which, with the « 12 big river gods singing » (Figure 29) that we have seen before, completes the group of male singers.[100]

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[100] La Gorce, Jérôme de. *Fééries d'opéra, Décors, machines et costumes en France 1645-1765.* Paris : Editions du Patrimoine, 1997, pp. 86-87.

Figure 32: 1703? costume design by Jean I Berain (1640–1711) for a river god in *Atys*.
London, Victoria & Albert Museum.

The oars present in different representations of river gods, have been rather consistent in shape and form. The regularity of their profile may come from the fact they were based on a real tool and as such had been already prompted many designs. Using ornamental figures which are characteristic of his style, Berain was also designing for the Marine Royale and the flotilla of Versailles was almost a nautical museum and included various paddles[101]. The reed as an alternative to the oar even prompted a special design showing it among other hand props (Figure 33).

A rare example where the reed and the oar get confused in one item can be found in a design by Berain in the collection of The Morgan Library and Museum (Figure 34). Wrongly titled *Protée* this design shows a costume for a river god, as performed by a singer. From the reed pole of the prop seems to grow a paddle which takes the place of the expected panicle.

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[101] For an example of Berain's design for a Gondole, see : *Versailles à Stockholm, Dessins du Nationalmuseum, Peintures, Meubles et Arts Décoratifs des Collections Suédoises et Danoises*. Stockholm : Nationalmuseum, 1985 p. 53. For the context see : Halna du Fretay, Amélie. "La flottille du Grand Canal de Versailles à l'époque de Louis XIV : diversité, technicité et prestige" in *Bulletin du Centre de recherche du château de Versailles* [Online]. Articles et études, (Accessed 2 December 2017). URL : http://crcv.revues.org/10312 ; DOI : 10.4000/crcv.10312

Figure 33: Design for hand props: a parasol, a lyre, a shepherd hook, a thyrsus, a spear and a reed.
Atelier des Menus Plaisirs du Roi.
Paris, Archives Nationales.

Figure 34 : *Protée,* costume design by the School of Jean II Bérain 1674-1726.
Gift of Mrs. Donald M. Oenslager, 1982.
New York, The Morgan Library and Museum.

Figure 35: 1703, costume design by Jean I Berain (1640–1711) for an old dancing river god in *Atys*.
Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France. [102]

This costume is remarkable due to the mask worn by the dancer, which merges with his wig, beard and headdress in a full green appearance (Figure 35). The river god almost appears like a water spirit, slightly scary and comical, and maybe one of two old river gods dancing that the libretto mentions: « Deux vieux Dieux de Fleuves & deux vieilles Nymphes de Fontaines dançantes ». The long alga and foliage which are hanging over the torso and legs may have been made with light material to move in the air, during the dance. The full green coloring also brings it closer to the bronze figures which decorate French gardens of the period, most notably statues which ornament the water features of Versailles such as the statue of the Rhône created in 1685–1688 by Jean-Baptiste Tuby (1635–1700) as seen on the Figure 35B.

Figure 35B: 1685–1688, *Le Rhône*, bronze sculpture by Jean-Baptiste Tuby, founded by the brothers Keller, placed at the "Bassin du Midi",
Parc du Château in Versailles, France. Photograph: Wikipedia.

[102] http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b8455608c

The little study shown on Figure 36 belongs to a large series of studies for heads and headdresses by Berain or his atelier. The bottom head shows a water god, with a headdress composed with foliage very close to the one of « old dancing river gods » designed by Berain (Figure 26): the wig seemed treated in the same foliage fashion. The wreath itself is ornate with scallop shells, which may also suggest a sea god. It is still very representative of the headset which is found on most river gods, and a part of his visual identity. In the line of Virgil and Ovid, the libretto for *Acis and Galatea* set by Handel in 1718, states: « Acis now a God appears!/ See how he rears him from his Bed!/ See the Wreath that binds his Head! » Wrongly catalogued as « portraits », the Bibliothèque municipale de Versailles houses a great number of these head studies, designs clearly aiming to provide some specific documentation to the workshops of the hatter, the wig maker and the mask maker.

Figure 36: ca 1690, design for two headdresses by Jean I Berain (1640–1711),
top for an unidentified character and, bottom, for a river god,
in Jean Berain. *Habillemens et décoration d'Opéra*, dessin n°226, N°identification: Ms F 88_E48.
Versailles, Bibliothèque municipale de Versailles.[103]

The puzzling design, reproduced in Figure 37, is also attributed to Jean I Berain (1640–1711) but in my view is more likely to come from the hand, or the workshop, of his son Jean II Berain (1678–1726). Its graphic style brings it clearly to the early eighteenth century. On the one hand it seems to belong to the *Ballet de Cour* style, but on the other, the long overcoat

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[103] http://banqueimages.crcv.fr/2011/fullscreenimage.aspx?rank=1&numero=22633

seems to make dancing difficult, if not totally proscribe it, as the movement of the legs would be impaired by the length of the overcoat. The overall costume seems highly influenced by court wear and does not relate to the usual personal style of Berain for opera costumes. There is definitely nothing reminiscent of antiquity in this design and the presence of the vest suggests an inference with an everyday wear wardrobe, although the subtle scallop cut of the edge and the leafy embroidery may be an attempt by the designer to clarify the identity of the character. It is the hat, in shape of a regular tricorn which is the most surprisingly modern. Likely to have also been conceived for a masquerade, this headdress brings him closer to the German costume shown in Figure 16 showing the costume of Water, as one of the four elements.

Figure 37: 17??, costume design by Jean I Berain (1640–1711) or Jean II Berain (1678–1726)
for a singing water god in an opera or a masquerade.
Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Besides the green coloring, only the reeds hand prop indicates a clear relation with the usual iconography of the river god. Indeed, the plants on the hat and on the dancing shoes are colored in red, like coral, and bring this river god closer to a triton or another see creature, enlarging the scope to water in general. Further research to locate costumes of the other elements by the same hand, as it is likely that this character was part of a larger group, is needed.

As indicated by the hand-written note on it, the costume for a "ruisseau", seen in Figure 38, is designed by Boquet for a stream in the 1765 revival[104] of *Les Fêtes de l'Hymen & de l'Amour*. This title was adopted to reflect the wedding circumstances of the first performance of 1747 of *Les Dieux d'Égypte* by Louis de Cahusac (1706−1759) and Jean-Philippe Rameau (1683−1764). The *Ballet héroïque* presents in three *entrées* the loves of the deities of the Egyptian

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[104] Opening on the 18 of June 1765.

pantheon. The second of these *entrées* is centered on the god of the Nile and bears his name as a title, *Canope*. In this ballet Cahusac develops the narrative integration of dance in sequences indicated as « ballets figurés» in the libretto, where the dances become significant because they represent some actions without which the drama cannot progress. The dance is used in such a narrative purpose when Cahusac presents on stage the flooding of the Nile: this overflow of the river represents the peak of the *entrée*, and Cahusac plans its staging in a complex way by ordering a specific sequence of elements of theater such as scenery, machinery, light and dance.

Figure 38: 1765, Costume design for a « ruisseau » by Louis-René Boquet (1717–1814),
in *Les Fêtes de l'Hymen et de l'Amour ou les Dieux d'Égypte*.
Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Opéra.

The annotation: « Ballet Ruisseau » indicates a costume for a dancer performing a creek, whilst other « water gods, followers of Canope » are singing and dancing, as required by the libretto and invading the stage during the flooding of the Nile. The youth of the character is made apparent by the choice of Boquet to omit the usual beard. The costume is in a late rococo style with a use of curved lines and shells which brings, at first glance, the costume of the stream closer to the one of a sea god, more specifically to one of a triton. As often with Boquet, the hasty annotation for the tailor compensates for the fact the design is not colored: « Bodice Amadis skin color, Drapery green, scales of silver//White tonnelet, gauze of water, Shell in organza, and falls of networks and fringes of water ».[105] Noteworthy is the indication

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[105] « Corps amadis chair Draperie Verte Ecaille dargent // tonnelet Blanc gaze Deau Coquille de gaze [Et chute] // de Reseau Et frange Deau » in manuscript notes on the design reproduced in Figure 38.

of bodice and "amadis" in skin color. The contemporary *L'Encyclopédie* gives us a definition of "Manches en Amadis": « The Amadis sleeves are little open, are lined with the same fabric they are made, from the wrist to the top of the hand slot or opening; are narrow and apply so exactly on the arm, they do not puff, and that hardly can they wrinkle ».[106] This was an attempt to express the half nudity of the river god, found in non-theatrical representations since the antiquity. By asking for a bodice and some sleeves in skin color, Boquet was following the modesty rules of "bienséance" as it was not allowed to show too much skin on the French stage. Suggesting a contrast with this natural color, the notes also indicate a green fabric with silver scales. Finally, light fabrics, gauze and organza, with fringes, are used for creating an effect of water, which may have been emphasized by their lightness during the movement of the dancer. A small headdress, crown with feathers, shows the "rank" of this river: a modest creek.

This river god is presented without any hand props. Maybe even a small reed would have limited the "port de bras" ("carriage of the arms") that the dancers of the Paris opera were so famous for. To convince the dancers to keep the props connected with the iconological sources which delimited the characters was not always an easy task. Already in 1682, Menestrier commented on the fact that: « It is difficult today to make the dancers take symbols that are specific to the people they represent, or to the action that one would like them to express ». The dancers were entering stage with the iconological attribute of their character but « As soon as we see on the Neptune Scene with his Trident, Mercury with his caduceus & Jupiter with his lightning, that they leave them before dancing. There are only staffs of pilgrims, swords, half-spades, and some similar instruments, which we retain, and whatever one may have been convinced of, that these performances are the most characteristic of the Ballets, the Masters can hardly bear them, and if this bad taste persists, we will soon see only balls instead of those ancient Ballets, which were so famous in Greece ».[107]

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[106] « les manches en Amadis sont peu ouvertes, sont doublées de la même toile qu'elles sont faites depuis le poignet jusqu'au dessus de la fente ou ouverture de manche ; sont étroites et s'appliquent si exactement sur le bras, qu'elles ne bouffent point, et qu'à peine peuvent-elles se plisser. » in *Encyclopédie*. Édition de Genève et de Neufchâtel, 1778, in 4, t. II, p. 256.

[107] « on a peine aujourd'hui à leur [les danseurs] faire prendre des symboles propres aux personnes qu'ils representent, où à l'action que l'on voudroit qu'ils exprimassent. » Still the dancers were entering on stage with their attributes but « A peine void-on sur la Scène Neptune avec son Trident, Mercure avec son caducée & Jupiter avec sa foudre, qu'ils les quittent devant que de danser. Il n'y a plus que des bourdons de pelerins, des épées, des demi piques & quelques instrumens semblables, que l'on retienne, & quoi que l'on soit persuadé que ces entrées de spectacle, soient les plus propres aux Ballets, les Maistres ont peine à les souffrir, & si ce mauvais goût persevere, on ne verra bien-tôt que des Bals au lieu de ces anciens Ballets, qui furent si celebres dans la Grece. » in Ménestrier. *Des Ballets anciens et modernes selon les règles du théâtre*. Paris : René Guignard, 1682, pp. 146 and 147.

Figure 39: 1770, costume design by Louis-René Boquet (1717–1814) for a river god in a French opera. Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Opéra[108].

On the costume by Boquet for a River god in an unknown piece shown in Figure 39, a long reed replaces the usual oar. The absence of a beard associates the character to a younger river god, like in the design by Boquet for a "ruisseau" for the 1765 revival of *Les Fêtes de l'Hymen et de l'Amour*. But this costume is for a singer as the tall headset suggests which is confirmed by the drapery floating on the floor: long drapes were not practical for the complex legs movements in the dance of the period. The "ruisseau" is shown here as a slim adolescent, and the thin chest is treated au naturel although, like in the previous drawing by Boquet, a tight fit for the torso, with sleeves "en amadis" for the lower arms, may have been used for the "corps". Besides his cloak, the vertical line of the costume is accentuated by the green and white stripes of the fabric, showing by comparison with the previous design, that the style of Boquet knows an evolution.

This detailed design may also have been useful for giving indications about the way the foliage of the reeds should look. By the time the project was elaborated it is likely they were made using cutouts of silk fabric, a process used for artificial flowers which knew then a major development in Europe. The *Encyclopédie* of Diderot dedicates in 1756 an article, attributed to Louis de Jaucourt (1704-1779), to the craft of the « Fleuriste Artificiel », and some plates show the cutting pieces the craftsman was using to create petals and foliage (Figures 40 and 40A). The aim was the total illusion as the definition states immediately: « FLEURISTE

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[108] http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b8455359n

ARTIFICIEL, is the one who knows how to represent by flowers, leaves, artificial plants, etc. the nature in all its productions » The writer mentions that « This art is new in France»[109] but after tracing back to China the origin of artificial flowers, the writer clarifies « This art is no less ancient in Italy, where the greater part of the nobility exercises it with honor. The flowers we draw from this country are better supported and are used more frequently and more generally than those of China. » He then explains which materials are used by the Italian: « These flowers are made of cocoons of silkworms, feathers, and canvases; » and gives the key of the shiny appearance of the foliage: « The greenery that accompanies them is of a dyed, gummed, and very strong canvas. They are superior to those elsewhere, in that they are stronger, and better represent the natural ones by the turn and the color which they know how to give them ».[110]
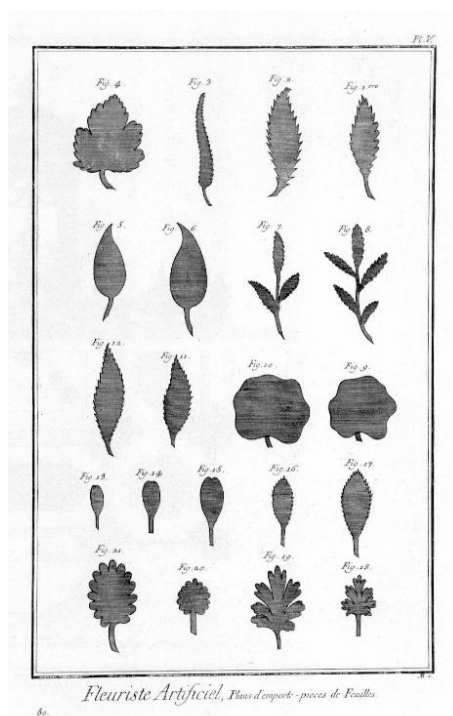

Figure 40: ca 1750, Plate V of « Fleuriste Artificiel » from *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*. Paris, 1751–1765.

The quality of Italian artificial flowers and foliage explains their success in France: « Paris florists, even those who could make them as beautiful, prefer to bring them from this country, because they have them cheaper. Italians use scissors to cut flowers, and rarely cut irons; which requires much more time for their works, and therefore makes them more expensive. These irons have only been used at the beginning of this century; it is to a Swiss that they owe their invention. These irons are very useful and shorten much the operations of

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[109] « FLEURISTE ARTIFICIEL, est celui qui sait représenter par des fleurs, des feuilles, des plantes artificielles, etc. la nature dans toutes ses productions […] Cet art est nouveau en France » in *Encyclopédie*, Édition de Genève et de Neufchâtel, 1778.

[110] « Cet art n'est pas moins ancien en Italie, où la plus grande partie de la noblesse l'exerce avec honneur. Les fleurs que nous tirons de ce pays se soutiennent mieux, et sont d'un usage plus fréquent et plus général que celles de la Chine. Ces fleurs sont fabriquées de coques de vers à soie, de plumes, et de toiles ; la verdure qui les accompagne est d'une toile teinte, gommée, et très-forte. Elles sont supérieures à celles qu'on fait ailleurs, en ce qu'elles sont plus solides, et représentent mieux les naturelles par la tournure et la couleur qu'on sait leur donner. » in *Encyclopédie*, Édition de Genève et de Neufchâtel, 1778.

the artist; since, by their means, one can cut at one blow, and in an instant, several leaves which would hold more than a day to cut with scissors. These irons are piece cutters, or molds hollow and modeled on the inside of the natural leaf of the flower that they must carry ».[111] This new method, which is still in use today[112], allowed a more effective way of production both in terms of quantity and quality. The abundance of flowers and foliage on the costumes designed by Boquet may be an effect of this development.
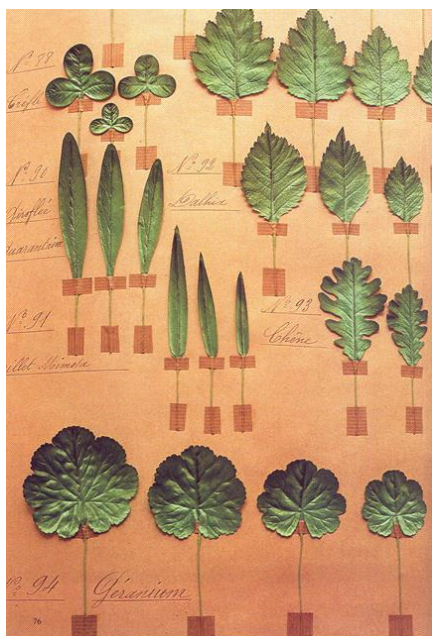

Figure 40A: Examples of foliage in the archives of Maison Legeron, Paris..

A Swedish costume for a wild man, made in the same period as *l'Encyclopedie,* shows some foliage manufactured following this craft (Figure 41). This costume[113], worn in 1778 for a tournament in Drottningholm, is based on many sources, including a design from Boquet's workshop representing a « sauvage »[114] (Figure 42) for the costume worn by Jean Dauberval in 1765 (Figure 43) in *Sylvie* the *Ballet Héroïque* by Pierre Laujon (1727–1811) with music by Jean-

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[111] « Les fleuristes de Paris, même ceux qui pourraient en faire d'aussi belles, aiment mieux les faire venir de ce pays, parce qu'ils les ont à meilleur compte. Les Italiens se servent de ciseaux pour découper les fleurs, et rarement de fers à découper ; ce qui demande beaucoup plus de temps pour leurs ouvrages, et les rend par conséquent plus chers. On ne s'est servi de ces fers qu'au commencement de ce siècle : c'est à un Suisse qu'on en doit l'invention. Ces fers sont fort utiles, et abregent beaucoup les opérations de l'artiste ; puisqu'on peut par leur moyen tailler d'un seul coup, et en un instant, plusieurs feuilles qui tiendraient plus d'un jour à découper aux ciseaux. Ces fers sont des emporte-pièces, ou des moules creux et modelés en-dedans sur la feuille naturelle de la fleur qu'ils doivent emporter » in *Encyclopédie*, Édition de Genève et de Neufchâtel, 1778.

[112] Founded in 1880, the Maison Legeron realizes artisanal flowers in feather or silk and is anchored in the eighteenth-century tradition of quality into the tools and preparation methods. Atelier Legeron, 20 rue des Petits Champs, 75002 Paris. Thanks to Bruno Legeron for his hospitality during a research carried out in 2003.

[113] Stockholm, Livrustkammaren, Inventory number: 29290 (17/162). See: Rangström, Lena. *Riddarlek och Tornerspel. Sverige - Europa.* Stockholm: Livrustkammaren, 1992, pp. 247–248.

[114] This design has often been exhibited and reproduced. See: *Deux siècles d'opéra français*. Paris : Bibliothèque nationale de France, 1972, N° 139, pp. 65-67.

Claude Trial (1732–1771) and Pierre-Montan Berton (1727–1780)[115]. Oak greeneries are used to express the sylvan identity of the character but, if the fake animal skin is replaced by a stripe fabric, one can easily imagine the same composition with water plants for a river god. This is clear when comparing this Swedish costume with the Boquet design shown on Figure 39.

Figure 41: "En vildes klädning" (a Wild man costume) worn by Duke Carl (1748–1818)
in the Drottningholm tournament *Dianas fest*, 1778.
Stockholm, Livrustkammaren.

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[115] *Théâtre de Cour, Les spectacles à Fontainebleau au XVIIIe siècle*. Paris : Réunion des musées nationaux, 2005, pp. 151–152.

Figure 42: costume design for a *femme Sauvage* and a *Sauvage* (Wild man)
from the workshop of Louis-René Boquet.
Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Opéra.

Figure 43: 1765–1766, Jean Dauberval and Marie Allard in S*ylvie*, drawing by Louis Carrogis de Carmontelle
(1717–1806).
Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, The Forsyth Wickes Collection, N°65 2550.,

The costume was worn by the Duke Carl (1748–1818), later king under the name of Carl XIII. Duke Carl, brother of Gustav III, was acting the part of Nessus in the tournament *Dianas fest*, on an elaborate scenario, where the Swedish court was at the same time actor and audience. Not assimilated to the character of a centaur in this spectacle, as the strict reading of the mythology would have requested, the part of Nessus is one of a faun. The costume shows how an artificial foliage made of silk was integrated in a costume, around this period. It also shows the use of a bodice (« corps » with sleeves « en amadis ») to imitate the naked body. The white part of the costume whose today discoloration is misleading, was of the same « couleur

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de chair » as the pants, as the indication for fabric used for the legs attests. The usage of fabric imitating the color of the naked skin was a trend which was also used for the river god.

Sweden during the eighteenth century knew a rich theater life, welcoming artists from Italy, France and Germany. Around 1791, choreograph Jean-Georges Noverre (1727–1810) sent an open work application to Gustave III, king of Sweden[116]. He added a large set of 147 costumes designs by Boquet, as an attempt to show the new style of costumes his ballet pantomime required. One of these designs shows a costume of an "Ondin" for a dancer (Figure 44).

Figure 44: 1790, costume design by Louis-René Boquet (1717–1814) for an « Ondin » in a ballet by Noverre. Stockholm, Kungliga Biblioteket.

The name of the character pays tribute to the Nordic and German mythology, maybe because of the Swedish destination of the costume, but the costume is undoubtedly the one of a river god[117]. Besides the usual oar, the character offers all the characteristics which have prevailed since the seventeenth century: the use of a bodice and a *tonnelet*, made with contrasted white and green fabrics, which are combined together to make a third fabric, a striped one. The costume is punctuated with trimmings and ornaments of water plants. This vegetation is

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[116] Noverre's application has been studied: Ginger, Irène and Modigh, Karin. "Une dernière tentative d'emploi de Noverre : le dossier de candidature au roi de Suède de 1791" in *Jean-Georges Noverre (1727–1810) Un artiste européen au siècle des lumières, Musicorum N°10*. Tours: Université de Tours, 2011, pp. 221–243.

[117] In the Manuscript the Ondin project is placed after projects for "Galathée" and a "Triton" before the ones for a "rivière", a "fontaine" and a "Naïade", creating a series of 6 water gods. See: *Habits de Costumes pour l'exécution des ballets de Mr. Noverre dessinés par M.r Boquet, premier Dessinateur des menus Plaisirs du Roi de France. Tome II*, [1791], Handskrift S 254:2, Kungliga Bibliotheket, National Library of Sweden. See: http://www.kb.se/soka/kataloger/regina?func=find-b&request=004053981&find_code=SYS&local_base=KBS01

also present on the simple headdress. For a better understanding of the identity of the character of his project Boquet draws some reeds in a natural setting at the feet of the character as the meaningful details of the crown size, already neo-classical in its restraint, could be missed. The influence of this style considered, the costume of the river god is defined in accordance with an iconology by then well established.

7.1.5 The stage costume of a male river god: Memo for the designer

Figure 45: 1695, « Habit de Comedien », etching by Nicolas II de Larmessin (1632-1694) from *Les costumes grotesques et les métiers.*

During the baroque and classical periods, on a stage costume whose general shape is comparable to one depicted by Larmessin around 1700 as « Habit de Comédien », in Figure 45:

1. The Costume integrates the Roman tradition establishing the representation of a river god as a male half naked crowned with a wreath made of water plants, sometime with an urn.

2. Water is suggested by shiny fabrics, of which the shimmering look take the light by reflection like the liquid element.

3. Water jets are also depicted, likely with silver threads, sometimes coming out of the body. Candlelight was emphasizing the shimmering effect of the costumes by its moving capacity.

4. The costume of the river god follows the style of the theater costume of its period and the general shape of the male baroque stage costumes: bodice close to the torso and *tonnelet* from the waist to the knees. If on stage, the River god is coming from metamorphoses, the costume may integrate some aspects of the previous identity of the character.

5. The headset is invariably made of reeds, likely artificial, and sporadically ornate with feathers, sometimes in the shape of water plants.

6. Reeds and water plants are used to ornate the costume by application of silk leaves.

7. The hair is often of a vegetal nature or evocative of liquid. Old rivers are shown with beard; young streams appear without facial hair. The bodice and its sleeves are often in the color of the skin to suggest nudity.

8. The palette is often blue in the seventeenth century but moves towards green during the eighteenth century. Blue or green associated with white and silver during both centuries.

9. Combination of colors (blue, green, silver, and white), patterns on fabric (waves, stripes) complete the characterization.

10. A long floating cloak is making the distinction between costumes for singers and costumes for dancers.

11. The feet, stockings and shoes, are most often of the same skin color as the pants.

12. There is some constancy in the attributes: the hand prop is more than often an oar but can also be a reed when the river is of less importance, like a stream.

7.2 *Psiché* at Drottningholms Slottsteater

It is fortunate that through the centuries the collection of eighteenth-century stage sets belonging to Drottningholms Slottsteater in Sweden was preserved[1]. It now allows people to fully experience a medium which is fragile because belonging to the performing arts. The collection of early sets is made of a great variety of pieces. Even if the collection is composed with elements of sceneries designed for several Swedish court theatres, the most important part of the collection was built for Drottningholms Slottsteater. This group represents a total of 494 separate elements which divides in four groups according to their nature and use on stage[2] but the collection of Drottningholm sets also includes the stage curtain and the unique clouds scenery which, being a fixed part of the stage machinery, cannot be taken away from the theatre of Drottningholm. Many of these sets are for Drottningholm and fit its machinery, which is the only one of the eighteenth century in work order today. Without the sets, the machinery is pointless. Without the machinery, the sets lose a major part of their interest.

Dated mostly from the 1760s to 1790s, the core of the collection is also exceptionally varied in types and presents architectures, landscapes and interiors. The styles cover different styles, from baroque to early romantic, through the rococo era and then the neo-classicism. The sceneries are works from various artists: Johan Pasch (1706–1769), Jean Eric Rehn (1717–1793), Carlo Bibiena (1721–1787), Lars Bolander (1731/35–1795), Lorenz Sundström (1738–1776), Louis-Jean Desprez (1743–1804), Johan Fredrik Lindman (1743–1813), Jacob Mörck (1748–1786), Jean-Démosthène Dugourc (1749–1825), Johan Zelander (1753–1814), Emmanuel Limnell (1766–1792)…This group of Swedish, French or Italian artists not only designed these sets, but in many cases oversaw their making and more than often painted them themselves. The importance of original hands cannot be under evaluated here: these canvases, these pictures are the original artistic expression of major artists. Artists such as Johan Pasch, Jean-Eric Rehn and Louis-Jean Desprez are not only theatre painters: their theatre works take place in a larger production of decorative arts and architecture. Indeed, beside their interest in theatre history, some of the sets in this collection are in themselves magnificent pieces of painting.

The artists who painted the sets have also been working in Drottningholm domain as architects, interior designers or painters. This relationship binds the collection tightly with the

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[1] Blin, Gilbert and Trotier, Rémy-Michel. *The Drottningholm's Collection of Historical Stage Sets, Perspectives on Conservation. Report after the Seminar 11-13 September 2007 organised with the generous contribution of Drottningholmsteaterns Vänner*. Paris : Académie Desprez and Stockholm : Stiftelsen Drottningholms teatermuseum, 2007.

[2] 216 side flats, most of the time paired, of which heights range from 2,50 to 5,90 m and widths from 1,10 to 4,30 m. All these elements, having a wooden structure, are of fixed dimensions; 26 backdrops (soft canvas, painted) of maximum dimensions 7,10 x 10 m ; 13 borders of approximative dimensions 2 x 7 m and 239 practicable elements of various shapes, makings and sizes.

buildings and the Royal Domain of Drottningholm. Drottningholms Slottsteater is the most perfectly preserved eighteenth-century theatre in the world and, in fact, the only one still functioning as a place of public enlightenment. Other theatres of the period exist, even other contemporary early stage sets. But none of these theatres still operate on a regular basis for a large audience, and none of such sets have an active playhouse of the period where they could be hosted in an authentic manner and researched in full context. By far the biggest collection in the world, the most varied in term of styles, the largest in term of time scope, the collection is also of the highest importance because of its original state. The conservation condition of the majority of the pieces is great. This situation has no equivalent amongst the few other collections existing.

Inventoried in 1777 and 1809, the stage sets remained, from 1792 to 1922, in Drottningholms Slottsteater. The flats were stowed away close to one another in the wings of the stage. Borders and backdrops were hanging from the flies. The cellar and the attic of the auditorium served as depot for other kinds of stage sets. After his "discovery" of the theatre of the Palace of Drottningholmin 1921, Art historian Agne Beijer (1888–1975) devoted his life to the study of the theatre and the Collection of Historical Stage Sets. In 1937, he published a monumental monography which made available black and white photographs of the collection to the world[3]: this first edition has been a reference for art and theatre historians ever since. In the 1930s and 1940s, the historical sets were used during special performances in the theatre. In the 1950s, gradually, following the need for the productions, the original sets were copied by the ateliers of the Royal Opera. These copies replace on stage the original sets which were stored in different buildings scattered over the domain of Drottningholm. In 1974, the sets were moved to their present location: a storage house built specifically for their storage near Drottningholm. It was a necessary step in the care of this collection to make the scientific inventory of it. Barbro Stribolt has devoted, from 1968 to 1998, a large part of her activity to an extensive study of the collection. This study was completed by the publication of the fully colour illustrated catalogue of the collection in 2002[4]. This thesaurus, which revealed worldwide the size and variety of the Collection and assessed its unrivalled value, has made possible this casestudy.

On Tuesday, 28th October 1766, the theatre at Drottningholm Palace officially[5] opened for the first time with a performance of Molière's *Psiché.* The approaching marriage of the crown prince, later to become king Gustave III, had motivated and accelerated the building of the

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[3] Beijer, Agne. *Slottsteatrarna på Drottningholm och Gripsholm*. Stockholm : Lindfors Bokförlag, 1937.

[4] Stribolt, Barbro. *Scenery from Swedish Court Theatres, Drottningholm Gripsholm*. Stockholm: Stockholmia Förlag - Drottningholms Teatermuseum, 2002.

[5] The royal family had already visited the building in July 1766, and experimented the acoustic with some dramatic and musical excerpts, all from the French repertoire: on the 8th, the prince Gustav recited a speech of Oreste from *Iphigénie en Tauride* by Guimond de la Touche and his sister the princess Sofia Albertina performed a scene from *Le Philosophe Marié* by Sedaine while Brita Horn, who served as « hovfröken» (Lady in waiting) to queen Louisa Ulrika, sung an air from *Le Roi et son fermier* by Monsigny also on a text by Sedaine. And on the 9th, some scenes of *Rhadamiste et Zénobie* by Crebillon were performed by the royal siblings. See: *Gustaf III:s Opera.* Stockholm: Aktiebolaget Gunnar Tisells Tekniska Förlag, 1923, p. 49. See also: Lewenhaupt, Inga. "Slottsteatrarna före den gustavianska tiden" in *Drottningholms slott, Från Hedvig Elenora till Louisa Ulrika,* (band I). Huvudredaktörer: Göran Alm and Rebecka Millhagen. Stockholm: Byggförlaget Kultur, 2004, pp. 368–395.

new « Kongl. Hof-Theatren »[6]. This innovative building, which had been erected on the same site as the previous Royal Court-Theatre which burnt down in 1762[7], was intended to be inaugurated during festivities held to coincide with the arrival of the bride, Princess Sofia Magdalena of Denmark, at Drottningholm[8]. The architect, Carl Fredrik Adelcrantz, who oversaw the royal architecture, had in 1764 designed this larger and more amply equipped court theatre where more extensive productions could be put on[9]. The work elected for the opening performance was chosen therefore to correspond to the requirements of a court wedding and, at the same time, to showcase the technical marvels of the new stage[10]. It was decided for a French play called *Psiché*. This play of Molière, the most performed French author in Sweden during this time, is one of few of the writer which requires a lot of scenic effects, all intricately linked to the action[11]. Since 1747, when five tapestries by Boucher on the subject were delivered to Stockholm Royal Castle, the visual appeal of the tale of Cupid and Psyche, was already well known[12]. The happy end with the two lovers being united in marriage was a fitting allegory in honour of the union of the high-born couple. Molière had created a stage version of this myth for Louis XIV, who had himself chosen the subject matter but with a different agenda[13]. The double aim was then to re-open the theatre of the Tuileries Palace in Paris and to produce in 1671 a lavish show to re-use the large scenery specially made for it[14].

Drottningholm's connections with this unique Parisian stage, known by the evocative name of *Salle des Machines*, are well established. In 1745 Carl Gustav Tessin had purchased a theatre model[15] in Paris which he then presented to King Adolf Fredrik of Sweden. This model was, following the sale catalogue, offering a working miniature machinery on the model of the

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[6] (sic) in *Inrikes Tidningar*, 30 October 1766, quoted by Beijer, Agne. *Les troupes françaises à Stockholm, 1699–1792, Listes de repertoire*. Rédaction Sven Björkman. Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, 1989, p. 123.

[7] On the 25th of August 1762, during a performance in front of the royal family, fire brook up and destroyed the building. See: Hilleström, Gustaf. *Drottnigholmsteatern förr och nu, The Drottningholm Theatre – Past and Present*. Foto Lennart Petersens. Stockholm: Bokförlaget Natur och Kultur, 1956, p. 7.

[8] This arrival of the Danish princess Sofia Magdalena in Drottningholm was not an easy case, involving protocol and family issues. See the letters by Queen Louisa Ulrika from the year 1766 in Schück, Henrik. *Gustav III:s och Louisa Ulrikas brevväxling, Första Delen*. Stockholm: Nordstedt & Söners Förlag, 1919.

[9] See: Fogelmarck, Stig. *Carl Fredrik Adelcrantz, Arkitekt*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1957, pp. 189– 200 and pp. 303–313. Adelcrantz was also the official head of the French troupe in Sweden from 1754 à 1771. See in the same book p. 511.

[10] This ambitious plan knew some difficulties and delays: « Adelcrantz se dédisant de tout pour le lundi, je crains encore la catastrophe pour le mardi » (Adelcrantz declining everything for this Monday, I fear again the disaster for this Tuesday) in Schück, Henrik. *Gustav III:s och Louisa Ulrikas brevväxling, Första Delen*. Stockholm: Nordstedt & Söners Förlag, 1919, p. 74.

[11] See: Beijer, Agne. *Les troupes françaises à Stockholm, 1699–1792, Listes de repertoire*. Rédaction Sven Björkman. Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, 1989, p. 123.

[12] N° 154 in *Le Soleil et l'Étoile du Nord, La France et la Suède au XVIIIe siècle*. Paris: Grand Palais, 1994, p. 121.

[13] See Chapter 2.

[14] See: La Gorce, Jérôme de. *Carlo Vigarani, intendant des plaisirs de Louis XIV*. Paris: Perrin, 2005, pp. 108–116.

[15] The model has originally been owned by Joseph Bonnier de la Mosson, great collector of models of machines.

theatre of the Tuileries Palace: « This Theatre or Salle des Machines is made on the model of the one which exists at the Palais des Thuileries; one has assembled in this Machine, as much as one has been able, the various movements which serve to change the Decorations and the different Scenes of an Opera »[16]. Even in 1766 this mechanical marvel was to be found in the king's study at Drottningholm Palace and would surely have been at the centre of discussions about the magical spectacles which the original might have enabled[17]. The general conception of the building by Adelcrantz is owed to this model, as well as maybe the choice of *Psiché* for the opening performance on the new stage, as this play was undeniably linked to the *Salle des Machines*. Even if Drottningholms Slottsteater was not able to compete in size with the Tuileries stage in Paris[18], its sophisticated machinery allowed Molière's lavish work to be presented with all the theatrical effects indicated by the playwright.

In the editions of Molière's drama which circulated in Sweden in the 1760s[19] *Psiché, tragédie-comédie et ballet*, in five acts with a prologue, is enacted in various settings. This complicated dramatic structure, which already makes *Psiché* like a French opera[20], albeit without a score composed throughout, requires wide-reaching changes of scenery to the playing of musical intermèdes while the curtain remains up[21]. In 1766, the new production at Drottningholm was based on quick shifts of scenery thanks to the stage machinery[22]. Between the frontstage and the back wall no less than six painted pairs of side flats and flies borders could be moved at the same time, so that the previous scenery gave way to the new, and so on. These spectacular

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[16] « Ce Théâtre ou Salle des Machines est fait sur le modele de celui qui existe au Palais des Thuileries; on a rassemblé dans cette Machine, autant qu'on l'a pû, les divers mouvements qui servent à changer les Décorations & les differentes Scenes d'un Opera » in Gersaint, Edme-François. *Catalogue raisonné d'une collection considérable de diverses curiosités en tous genres contenuës dans les cabinets de feu M. Bonnier de La Mosson...* Paris: Barois & Simon, 1744, p. 161.

[17] N° 553 in *Le Soleil et l'Étoile du Nord, La France et la Suède au XVIIIe siècle*. Paris: Grand Palais, 1994, p. 354.

[18] The depth of the Tuileries stage was of 41 meters, the one of Drottningholm is of 20 meters.

[19] See : "Psiché, tragi–comédie, et ballet" dans *Molière, Œuvres, Nouvelle éd., augmentée de la vie de l'auteur & des Remarques Historiques & Critiques par Voltaire avec de très belles Figures en Tailles douces*. Tome VI. Amsterdam and Leipzig: Arkstee & Merkus, 1765. The text and the illustrations of this edition are reproducing the one of the edition published by Prault, in 1734, with some engravings by Laurent Cars (1699–1771), after Boucher (1703–1770), known as « Édition Jolly ».

[20] The spectacle is recorded as « Operan *Psiche* » by the *Inrikes Tidningar* dated 30 October 1766. See: Beijer, Agne. *Les troupes françaises à Stockholm, 1699–1792, Listes de repertoire*. Rédaction Sven Björkman. Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, 1989, p. 123, note 252. See also: Schück, Henrik. *Gustav III:s och Louisa Ulrikas brevväxling, Första Delen*. Stockholm: Nordstedt & Söners Förlag, 1919, pp. 75–76: « Le Roi m'ordonne de vous faire mille amitiés et vous attend le mardi 28; c'est selon la première route, car quand il s'agit d'un opéra, il y a toujours quelque chose qui cloche. » (The King orders me to give you a thousand regards and expects you on Tuesday the 28th; this is according to the first plan, because when it comes to an opera, there is always something wrong).

[21] See: Canova-Green, Marie-Claude. "Le symbolique du décor dans la tragédie–ballet de 1671" in *Les Métamorphoses de Psyché*. Dossier établi par Carine Barbafieri et Chris Rauseo. Valenciennes: Presses Universitaires de Valenciennes, 2004, pp. 127–142.

[22] The newly composed score by Francesco Uttini (1723–1795), as the one of Lully a hundred years before, was linking act to act. Following Einar Sundström, only the orchestra parts of *Psiché* still exist at the Royal Opera Library. See: Sundström, Einar. "Francesco Antonio Uttini som musikdramatiker" in *Svensk Tidskrift för Musikforskning*. 1963. Thanks to Mattias Åkesson, Librarian at the Kungliga Biblioteket (*National Library of Sweden)* for his help on this matter.

« changements à vue »[23] enable a series of different scenes which brought Psyche – and the spectators – from a seascape to an enchanted place, and from exquisite gardens to the underworld. When Louis XIV commissioned *Psiché* in 1671 he ordered the creators to re-use the sumptuous scenery which had been created by the Vigaranis, father and son, for *Ercole amanté*[24], the opera by Buti and Cavalli, performed in 1662. In order to use the *Salle des Machines* from his remarkable production of *Psiché*, Molière had been forced to plan his future staging as soon as he was writing his first script[25]: He had to tell the story in spaces according to the existing sets of the Vigarani, father and sons. The French stage work of the designers acquired some fame at this time and was known in Stockholm, thanks to Nicodemus Tessin the Younger (1654–1728), who collected art works from France and acquired numerous designs in Paris at the end of the seventeenth century. Among them no less than « 17 décorations d'opéra de Paris » by Vigarani which entered the Royal collection in 1754[26].

At Drottningholm in 1766, all the scenery needed for *Psiché* would have been made new for the first performance. Besides the importance of the royal events, which seems to dictate an up-to-date style, the size and proportions of the new stage required many and large scenic elements, not to be found in the other existing Swedish theatres in 1766. Drottningholms Slottsteater, considered rightly as a « Masterpiece »[27] on its inauguration, is still existing and offers a lot of resources from the period. As we have seen the building is the oldest theatre preserved in its original state of use, a condition which makes it relevant for the understanding

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[23] Swedish language has kept in its vocabulary the word « changemang » and the *Svensk ordbok* of the Swedish Academy traces to 1716 the use of this word, coming from the French « changement», word used for the change between two sets.

[24] Vanuxem, Jacques. "Les fêtes théâtrales de Louis XIV et le baroque de la *Finta Pazza* à *Psyché* (1645–1671)" in *Baroque* [En ligne], 2 | 1967, URL : http://baroque.revues.org/253 ; (Accessed 13 October 2017).

[25] The "Avertissement" which opens the 1673 edition of the play, gives only the paternity of the « plan & la disposition du sujet » to Molière. « les vers qui se récitent dans le prologue [the spoken verses], le premier acte, la première scène du second acte, & la première scène du troisième » are also from Molière. The rest of the text is by Pierre Corneille and the words which are sung in music are by Quinault, except for the "plainte itlaienne", that a tradition attributes to Lully. See: Mahé, Yann. "*Psyché* de Lully, P. Corneille, Molière & Quinault : Etudes des sources imprimées en 1671" in *Les Métamorphoses de Psyché*. Dossier établi par Carine Barbafieri et Chris Rauseo. Valenciennes : Presses Universitaires de Valenciennes, 2004, pp. 113–126. To this list, it would have been fair to add Carlo Vigarani who directed the sets and the machinery in 1671 based on the ones his father designed in 1661 for *Ercole amante*, but it seems that the relation between Molière and Vigarani was not very good, see: Mazouer, Charles. "Molière et Carlo Vigarani" in *Gaspare & Carlo Vigarani, Dalla corte degli Este a quella di Luigi XIV, De la cour d'Este à celle de Louis XIV. A cura di/ dirigé par Walter Baricchi et Jérôme de La Gorce*. Versailles : Centre de recherche du château de Versailles and Milano : Silvana Editoriale Spa, 2009, pp. 319–326.

[26] Tessin le jeune, Nicodème and Cronström, Daniel. *Correspondance (extraits), Les Relations artistiques entre la France et la Suède, 1693–1718*. Stockholm: AB Egnellska Boktryckeriet, 1964, pp. 322, 334 and 337. The drawings' collection of Nicodemus Tessin the Younger forms part of the larger Tessin–Hårleman Collection (THC) at the Nationalmuseum, Stockholm. Thanks to Dr. Wolfgang Nittnaus, Nationalmuseum, Stockholm, for giving me personal access to this collection during the summer of 2007.

[27] The famous word of the witness Claes Julius Ekeblad (1742–1808): « Det måste medges att Adelcrantz här skapat ett mästerverk » (It must be admitted that Adelcrantz has created a masterpiece) is quoted in Hilleström, Gustaf. *Drottnigholmsteatern förr och nu, The Drottningholm Theatre – Past and Present*. Foto Lennart Petersens. Stockholm: Bokförlaget Natur och Kultur, 1956, p. 10.

of the technical context. Furthermore, the theatre is keeping a large collection of original sets[28] and among them sceneries which would probably have been made especially for its inaugural performance, an event never studied before. For this research, I compared Molière's requirements for a staged production of his *Psiché* with the oldest inventories, made in 1777 and in 1809, of the pieces of scenery kept in Drottningholm at that time. The examination in situ of the stage machinery still extant in the building[29] and an investigation of the set elements kept in its storage facility[30] enriched the process. A comparison with contemporary sources, favouring the ones kept in Swedish collections completed the research. I intend to offer here an almost complete list of sets, with an outline of the changes' effects - what the Italian designers were calling « scenario di mutazioni » and the French the « liste des changements à vue » - of the production of *Psiché* seen in 1766 at Drottningholm[31].

7.2.1 Prologue

« The stage represents a rural landscape in the front, with the sea in the background »[32], writes Molière as a direction for his Prologue. The rural landscape, traditionally adopted as a set for the *scena satyrica*, recommended by Vitruve for the pastoral play, had quickly become a typical set of Italian musical drama[33]. In Drottningholm, like in Paris, it would have been presented with painted wild trees on both sides of the stage. The set described as a « Skogs Decoration med 12 Collischer », (a forest set with 12 flats), which can be found in the inventory of 1777[34], may have been the one which was featured in *Psiché* but is no longer extant. More informative anyway is the seascape in the background. It was created by five horizontal spirals upstage, and these were rotated by means of handles turned by the stagehands. This technique introduced by Sabbattini at the beginning of the seventeenth century[35] remains in use on the continent but required a very deep stage in order that the three-dimensional image might work

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[28] For an extensive presentation of the existing eighteenth century collection of sets, see: Stribolt, Barbro. *Scenery from Swedish Court Theatres, Drottningholm Gripsholm*. Stockholm: Stockholmia Förlag - Drottningholms Teatermuseum, 2002. The inventory transcriptions are on p. 479 and p. 480.

[29] Numerous visits of the machinery took place between 1988 and 2008. Thanks to the *stage masters* of Dottningholm, Kurt Mattysek and Christer Nilsson, for their insights given so generously over twenty years.

[30] Study visits of the Storage started in August 2003 and were conducted the following summers of 2004, 2005 and 2007 under the supervision of Inga Lewenhaupt, then Director of the Drottningholms Teatermuseum.

[31] A summary of this research, initiated for my production of *Psyché*, opera of Lully (BEMF 2017), has been previously published without figures in 2007 in Swedish and English. See: Blin, Gilbert. "Scenery and Stage Machinery for Psiché at Drottningholm in 1766" in *Program 2007, Drottningholms Slottsteater*. Stockholm: Stiftelsen Drottningholms Teatermuseum, 2007, pp. 71–78.

[32] Molière. *Psiché*, Prologue. It is necessary to clarify that the edited text by Molière is slightly different from the one edited for the very first performance in the Salle des Machines. As the Swedish artists were likely to use the edition of 1734, called *édition Jolly*, and reprinted constantly in the eighteenth century, I refer in my notes to this version of the text but without pagination. See note 18.

[33] See Chapter 1.

[34] Stribolt, Barbro. *Scenery from Swedish Court Theatres, Drottningholm Gripsholm*. Stockholm: Stockholmia Förlag - Drottningholms Teatermuseum, 2002, p. 479.

[35] See: Sabbattini, Nicolo. *Pratique pour fabriquer scènes et machines de théâtre, Traduction de Maria Canavaggia et Louis Jouvet*. Neuchâtel: Ides et Calendes, 1942, p. 113.

to the full: it was the distance that guaranteed the illusion. The profound stage at Drottningholms Slottsteater was most definitely designed to welcome such machinery, since the far back area is not equipped with rails for side flats but opens towards a painted sky[36]. (Figure 1A) This space is equivalent to the « lontano », the back of the stage which comes directly from the ingenuity of Italian designers. Its use to create a maritime view was anchored in the scenography of Venetian opera[37], which Torelli and Burnacini, before Vigarani, has introduced in Paris and elsewhere.
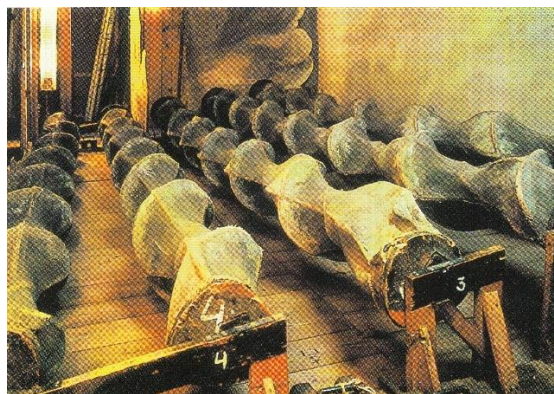
Figure 1A: Set pieces from Drottningholm collection.
Drottningholms Teatermuseum.

The goddess Venus' arrival at the end of the prologue would certainly have taken place with the assistance of stage machinery. Possibly she could have been coming out of the sea, as in the original story by the Roman Apuleius[38]? Molière had taken some freedom with the antic tale and had Venus descending from the skies while the verses, written by Quinault for the chorus to sing, expressly for the goddess to "descend". But when *Psyché*, in its opera version of 1678, was performed in Wolfenbüttel 1686, the printed libretto indicates that Venus was after her landing, coming from the see: « Les Tritons amenent Venus dans une coquille au bord de la mer »[39]. An extant piece of scenery at Drottningholms Slottsteater appears to support the hypothesis that the same was done in 1766: this painted element shows the inside of a large shell, something which since Classical times has been associated with Venus' birth from the waves[40] (Figure 1B). The element can also be the back of a small flying machine, as

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[36] This permanent disposition prefigures the cycloramas of the nineteenth century. See: Bergman, Gösta M. *Lighting in the Theatre*, Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis, Stockholm Studies in Theatrical History 2. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1977, p. 341.

[37] See: Glixon, Beth L. and Glixon, Jonathan E. *Inventing the Business of Opera, The Impresario and His World in Seventeenth–Century Venice*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.

[38] Venus appears in Book IV, chapter 22 of Apuleius, *Metamorphoses*, otherwise known as *The Golden Ass*.

[39] *Psyché Tragedie Representée, au Theatre Ducal de Wolfenbuttel au mois d'Aoust l'année M DC LXXXVI, La musique est composée par Mons. Jean Baptiste de Lully, les Ballets par Mons. Nanquer Maistre de Dance de la Cour.* Wolffenbuttel: Bismarck, [1686], Prologue, n.p.

[40] See DTM 40/1975 in Stribolt, Barbro. *Scenery from Swedish Court Theatres, Drottningholm Gripsholm*. Stockholm: Stockholmia Förlag - Drottningholms Teatermuseum, 2002, p. 285. In the inventory of 1809, this element, and its smaller companion (maybe for the front of the machine) are listed as « Tva ryggar till Säten, ett större, ett mindre föreställande Snäckor » (Two back of seats, one larger and one smaller, representing shells.).

seen on some of Berain's designs for Venus' cart[41].

Figure 1B: Set piece from Drottningholm collection (DTM 40/1975), 185x190 cm.
Drottningholms Teatermuseum[42].

It is remarkable that this first effect of the "merveilleux" was in 1766 visually expressed by a shell. The scallop shell, as a form, had become the emblem of *Rocaille*, the decorative movement still being in its full bloom in Sweden in the 1760s. The permanent decoration of the auditorium in Drottningholms Slottsteater also integrates the shell, notably in the decoration of the ceiling of the Auditorium. This decoration[43] was coordinated by Rehn, who, since his designs for the ceremony and celebrations around the coronation of Adolf Fredrick and Louisa Ulrika in 1751, was the most successful *Rocaille* designer in Sweden[44]. Besides designing interiors, he oversaw the decorations for numerous festivities, and among them the royal wedding of 1766[45]. More importantly we know, from his own hand, that Rehn, was responsible at Drottningholm for the decoration of the Spectacle as well as for its storage.[46] As such it is almost certain that Rehn, at the peak of his popularity in 1766, was the main artist of the sets for *Psiché*.

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[41].For Berain's designs showing the carriage of Venus see: La Gorce, Jérôme de. *Dans l'atelier des Menus Plaisirs du Roi: spectacles, fêtes et cérémonies aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles.* (Paris, Archives nationales de France, 19 janvier – 24 avril 2011). Versailles: Artlys, 2010, p. 143.

[42] This picture, and the following, showing sets from the Drottningholm collection comes from Stribolt, Barbro. *Scenery from Swedish Court Theatres, Drottningholm Gripsholm.* Stockholm: Stockholmia Förlag - Drottningholms Teatermuseum, 2002. The translation from the Swedish inventories should be credited to the same author with minor updates by me.

[43] This decoration was painted by Jacques Adrien Masreliez (1717 –1806).

[44] For examples of shell ornaments in the works of Rehn, see: Wahlberg, Anna Greta. *Jean Eric Rehn.* Lund: Bokförlaget Signum, 1983, pp. 44, 46, 60, 67, 68, 87, 88, 89 & 105.

[45] Rehn as festivities designer, received various commissions to celebrate the wedding, one notably from the Danish emissary. See Rehn's designs for 1766 feasts in Stockholm N° 770 & 771 in the Bukowskis 1993 *Sale: Bellinga Samlingen, Jean–Eric Rehn.* Stockholm, 6–7 Februari 1993. Stockholm: Bukowskis Auktioner Aktiebolag, p. 211.

[46] See: Wahlberg, Anna Greta. *Jean Eric Rehn.* Lund: Bokförlaget Signum, 1983.

7.2.2 Acte I and Acte II

The first act takes place in the palace of the king, the father of Psiché. « Le palais du Roi »[47] is the modest information that the later editions of Molière's play offer[48]. The history of this simple indication is revelatory of the evolution of scenography, from Italian opera to French theatre play. Indeed, after the Cypress alley of the first performance of 1671, a set coming straight from *Ercole amante*, Molière opted for the indication of a City for the performances in his own theatre. For another edition, the one likely used in Sweden in 1766, Moliere had finally opted for a more neutral space, still suitable for the action of the first act of *Psiché*. The « Le palais du Roi » is a « palais à volonté » (palace at will) which allows princes and princesses to debate in a realistic setting, which anchored the beginning of the story in the mortal world. In 1684, for the revival of *Psiché* at the Comédie-Française, the Bolognese painter Gioacchino Pozzoli (1651–1733) designed a palace room leading to an atrium (Figure 2)[49]. In Drottningholm, the « Gula Pelare saln" (the yellow pillared hall) seems a good candidate for the set of 1766: first because the survival pair of free standing flats, remarkable by their *Rocaille* style (with a beautiful shell at the top of the fronton), is well in the style of Rehn[50]. But also, because the architecture of the surviving flats suggests an atrium (Figure 2B). Frequent in Italian scenography at this period, the « Atrio Reggio » was the dramatic space reserved for action where a lot of different highborn characters would converge and converse.

Figure 2: Model set for *Psiché* by Alfred Devred (1889),
based on Gioacchino Pozzoli (1651–1733) design of 1684.
Paris, Comédie-Française.

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[47] Molière. *Psiché*, Acte I.

[48] The set of Act I was in 1671 « La grande allée de Cyprès, où l'on découvre des deux costez des Tombeaux superbes des anciens Rois de la Famille de Psiché. Cette décoration est coupée dans le fonds par un magnifique Arc de Triomphe, au travers duquel on void un éloignement de la mesme Allée qui s'étend jusqu'à perte de veuë ». It then became in 1673: « Une grande ville, où l'on découvre des deux costez, des Palais et des Maisons de diferens ordres d'Architecture »; the urban view « Stadts Decoration med 12 Collischer och fond » featured in the 1777 inventory could also be an option if the Swedish artists decided to follow this second possibility.

[49] Pizzoli has been called in France by the Duc de Nevers in 1680; his drawing for *Psiché* is reproduced in Decugis, Nicole and Reymond, Suzanne. *Le Décor de théâtre en France, du Moyen Age à 1925*. Paris : Compagnie Française des Arts Graphiques, 1953, p. 121.

[50] Stribolt, Barbro. *Scenery from Swedish Court Theatres, Drottningholm Gripsholm*. Stockholm: Stockholmia Förlag - Drottningholms Teatermuseum, 2002, pp. 153 and 154.
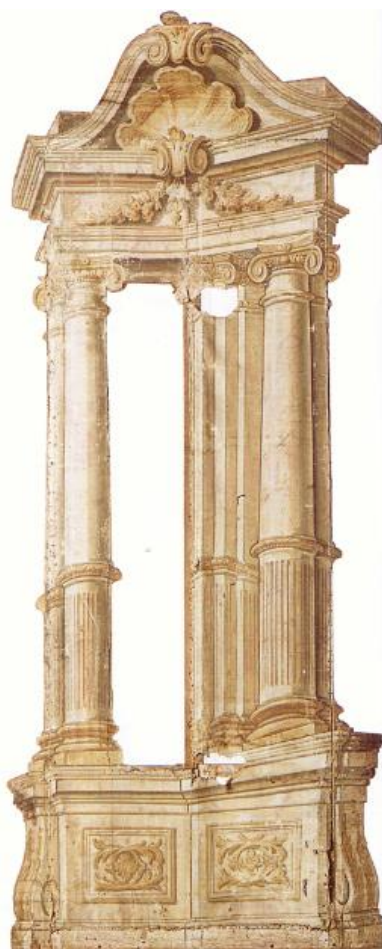
Figure 2B: Set piece from Drottningholm collection (DTM 203/1975), 380x150 cm.
Drottningholms Teatermuseum.

The « Premier intermède » shows « The stage [which] is changed into frightful rocks, and shows in the distance a horrifying solitude. It is in this desert that Psiché must be exposed to obey the oracle. A troop of afflicted people come there to deplore her disgrace ».[51] These rocks must have been close to the ones which can be seen on another famous set, also showing a sacrifice: the one Torelli designed for *Andromède* by Pierre Corneille in 1651 (Figure 3). Drottningholm's inventory of 1777 lists a « mountain's set with one backcloth and 14. Side shutters »[52]. A very special scenery piece, with a practical ledge, like the one holding Andromède in the set of Torelli, still exists in Drottningholm's collection and may belong to this mountain's set. This large piece adds the idea of an elevation by the way the rocks are presented behind each other. And indeed, the place of sacrifice[53] is mentioned by one character in *Psiché* who tells about the oracle asking for the sacrifice of Psiché on « le sommet d'un mont », on the top of a mountain. The ledge, after having supported Psiché, was may be reached by her suitors who want to follow her to death from « the top of this rock » (Figure 4).

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[51] « La scène est changée en des rochers affreux, & fait voir dans l'éloignement une effroyable solitude. C'est dans ce desert que Psiché doit être exposée pour obéir à l'oracle, Une troupe de personnes affligées y viennent déplorer sa disgrâce. » in Molière. *Psiché,* Premier intermède.

[52] « Bergs Decoration med en fond och 14. Collischer. » See: Stribolt, Barbro. *Scenery from Swedish Court Theatres*, *Drottningholm Gripsholm*. Stockholm : Stockholmia Förlag - Drottningholms Teatermuseum, 2002, p. 479.

[53] Molière. *Psiché,* Acte I, Scène 5.

Figure 3: ca 1651, engraving by François Chauveau (1613–1676) of the theatre set by Giacomo Torelli (1604–1678) for Act III of *Andromède* by Pierre Corneille and Charles d'Assoucy, 1650.
Collection of Gilbert Blin.

Figure 4: Set piece from Drottningholm collection (DTM 141/1975), 350x300 cm.
Drottningholms Teatermuseum.

The two first acts, being played out in the world of the mortals, do not offer any magical stage transformations. At the end of the act II, however, Psiché is rescued by the Zephyrs and is borne up to the skies by the wind gods. These flying effects, achieved with the help of ropes, were at Drottningholm created by means of a bridge in the heights of the stage where the

artists landed. The French term for a bridge of this kind, « le ceintre »[54], was an architectonic name for the arched structure itself and became the term used for the uppermost part of the stage space, into which the hanging scenery is hoisted. Several such journeys through the skies are undertaken in Molière's play: Zephyr and Mercury make their entrances from above, and Cupid, flies away when Psyche discovers his real identity. Apart from these free flights, flying machines were used to transport the Olympian gods who have no wings, as we have already seen for Venus' first entrance.

The second intermède begins with a humorous scene where the Cyclops, led by Vulcan, are still busy decorating the palace which Cupid intends for Psyche. They are busy forging gold vases destined to adorn the « palais de l'Amour» with the help of fairies. Two such painted vases, of a original set of four, are still preserved at Drottningholm (Figure 5)[55]. They offer striking resemblances, in shape and in size, with the one figured on the model that Charles-Antoine Coypel (1694–1752) painted, in 1748, for his Gobelins tapestry of *Psyché abandonée par l'Amour*[56], a tapestry which may have served as a reference, also for the colour of the columns as we will see (Figure 6).

Figure 5: Set piece from Drottningholm collection (DTM116/1975),
urn with two voluted handles and chased decoration. 40x36 cm.
Drottningholms Teatermuseum.

The Cyclops and the Fairies vanishes in a trice and the palace appears in all its glory. Besides the big machine which was allowing all six pairs of shutters to change simultaneously, five small openings in the stage floor of Drottningholms Slottsteater allowed the anvils and other smithing equipment to disappear in a twinkling, since these stage components, like the gold vases were not three dimensional but consisted of flat painted pieces of scenery.

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[54] The word "le ceintre" is spelled this way by Thomas Corneille in his 1678 adaptation in opera of the Molière play. Today the word is still used in French, often in its plural form, to name the part of the theatre above the stage, the fly house, where sets can be hung: "les cintres".

[55] See: Stribolt, Barbro. *Scenery from Swedish Court Theatres, Drottningholm Gripsholm*. Stockholm : Stockholmia Förlag - Drottningholms Teatermuseum, 2002, p. 253. These vases, whose absence of vegetation pleads for an interior decoration, are equipped for a system of rails allowing them to be connected to side shutters: this mechanism may also have been used for the end of the act, when the Palace was changing quickly into a Garden, allowing the vases to disappear at the same time.

[56] This model is kept in the collections of Musée des Beaux–Arts of Lille. For a presentation in context of this tapestry destined to Dresden. See: *Le théâtre des Passions (1697–1759), Cléopâtre, Médée, Iphigénie*. Catalogue d'exposition (Présentée au musée des Beaux–Arts de Nantes du 11 février au 22 mai 2011). Lyon : Fage éditions and Nantes : Musée des Beaux–Arts, 2011, p. 154. Unfortunately, the notice ignores the revivals of *Psyché*, the 1678 opéra by Lully and Thomas Corneille.

Figure 6: 1748, *Psyché abandonnée par l'Amour.*
Modello by Charles-Antoine Coypel for a tapestry of the Manufacture des Gobelins.
Lille, Musée des Beaux-Arts.

7.2.3 Acte III

One of Rehn's sets, showing a palace with blue columns and gold capitals, corresponds excellently to the « splendid courtyard, decorated with pillars of lapis lazuli and figures in gold, forming a radiantly beautiful palace »[57] which appears during the intermède between Act II and III of Molière's play. This scenery, at Drottningholm called the « Blue Pillar-Hall » [58], was irrefutably created by Rehn, as one preparatory sketch from the hand of the artist attests, and is shown on Figure 7. But it must be pointed out that the same motif with banded columns with three cubes, is already to be found in the work of Giuseppe Bibiena (1696–1757)[59] (Figure 8), itself largely disseminated by the « vues d'optique » (Figure 9). Rehn borrows from Bibiena's details of architecture but also adopted the three arched structure for the background of his set. However, Rehn opted for a central vanishing point in his symmetrical composition. By ignoring the perspective « per angolo » of Giuseppe Bibiena's original, Rhen anchors the set of Drottningholm in the classical seventeenth century French tradition which was favouring the central vanishing point.

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[57] Molière. *Psiché,* Acte II, II. intermède.

[58] Item A[1] in the Inventory of 1806. See: Stribolt, Barbro. *Scenery from Swedish Court Theatres, Drottningholm Gripsholm.* Stockholm : Stockholmia Förlag - Drottningholms Teatermuseum, 2002, p. 480.

[59] This set by Giuseppe Bibiena (1696–1757), was created for the nuptials of the Polish Prince in 1720, Prince Elector of Saxony, and was published in 1740 by Pfeffel. For a modern edition, see: Bibiena, Giuseppe. *Architectural and perspective designs, dedicated to His Majesty Charles VI, Holy Roman Emperor by Giuseppe Galli Bibiena, his principal theatrical engineer and architect, designer of these scenes.* With an introduction by A. Hyatt Mayor, Curator of Prints Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. New York : Dover Publications, 1964. In his introduction to the monography of Barbro Stribolt, and despite the analysis of this set by her, Per Bjurström surprisingly attributes the « Blå Pelare–Saln » to Lorenz Sundström with a reference to Francesco, not Giuseppe, Bibiena.
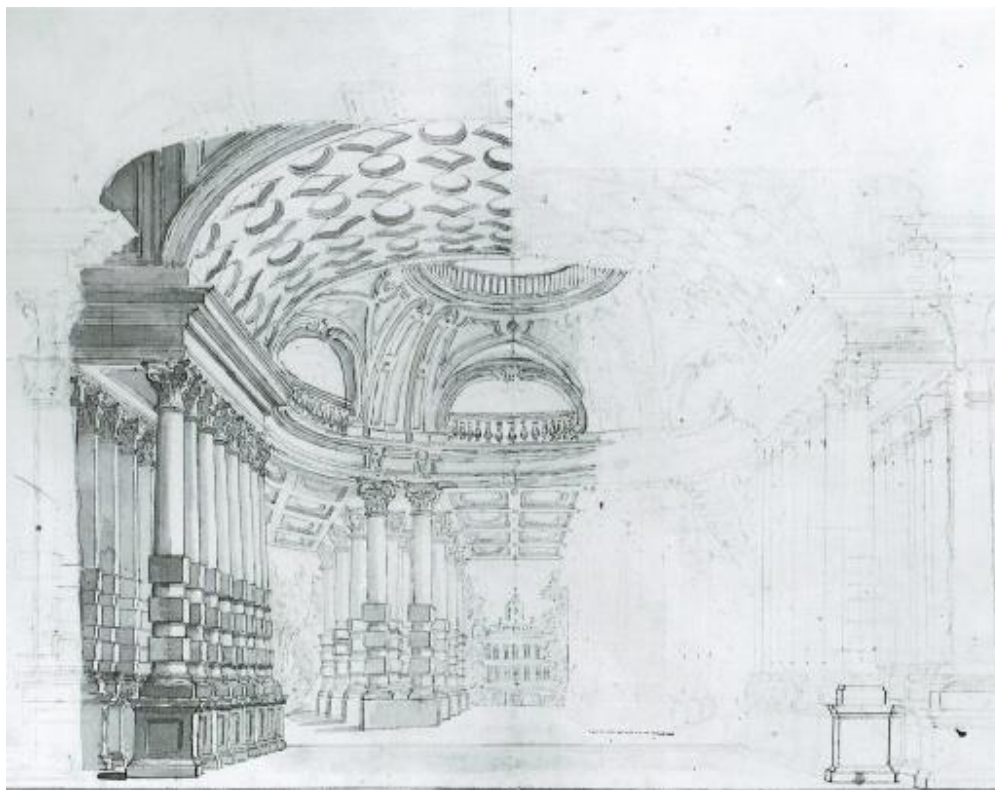
Figure 7: Jean Eric Rehn, sketch for a set for *Psiché,* Act II.
Stockholm Nationalmuseum (H871/1995).

Figure 8: 1720, set design by Giuseppe Bibiena (1696–1757) for "Scena della Festa Teatrale in occasione delli
Sponsali del Principe Reale di Polonia ed Elettorale di Sassonia" Engraving by Francesco Zucchi (1692-1764),
published in *Architecture , e Prospettive … da Giuseppe Galli Bibiena, …, Sotto la Direzione di Andrea Pfeffel.*
Augsburg, MDCCXL.
Smithsonian Libraries. Gift of Abram S. Hewitt, 1931.

Figure 9: ca1750, French optical view by Dumont, *Vue representant le Fameux Theatre de Reggio proche Modene*, reproducing the set design by Giuseppe Bibiena, for "Scena della Festa Teatrale in occasione delli Sponsali del Principe Reale di Polonia ed Elettorale di Sassonia".
Collection of Gilbert Blin.

The sketch for the « palais pompeux et brillant »[60] was done by Rehn in black and white[61], but the painters only needed to follow the exquisite blue and gold colour scheme prescribed by Molière, and already rendered by Coypel. This colouring was essential to produce something special which could not have been a simple « palais à volonté », an uncharacteristic palace like the one in Act I, in the carefully delineated magical settings of *Psiché*. Like the columns in the painting by Coypel, the style had to be the one of an enchanted palace coming from the world of the fairy tale, a literature style to which the 1669 novel of La Fontaine[62], *les Amours de Psyché et Cupidon,* can be attached. This book increased the popularity of the myth and has undoubtedly played a role in the creation of Molière. By mixing the ochre and the gold with the blue colour of the lapis lazuli mentionned by Molière[63], Rehn creates a truly special effect, which is a rare testimony of the vibrancy of the sets of this period. The central colonnade shows a coffered vault which must have been also painted on the borders (nowadays missing). The colonnades lead to a domed circular building, an atrium, from which colonnades radiate towards a park, with a palace in the centre.

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[60] Molière. *Psiché*, Acte II, II. intermède.

[61] The drawing of Rehn, once in the collection Bellinga, was N° 779 during the Bukowskis 1993 Sale: *Bellinga Samlingen, Jean–Eric Rehn.* Stockholm, 6–7 Februari 1993. Stockholm: Bukowskis Auktioner Aktiebolag, p. 213. It is nowadays in the collections of National Museum of Stockholm, See also: Stribolt, Barbro. *Scenery from Swedish Court Theatres*, *Drottningholm Gripsholm*. Stockholm: Stockholmia Förlag - Drottningholms Teatermuseum, 2002, p. 55.

[62] La Fontaine, in his "Preface" for *les Amours de Psyché et Cupidon,* wrote: « dans un conte comme celui–ci, qui est plein de merveilleux, à la vérité, mais d'un merveilleux accompagné de badineries, et propre à amuser des enfants, il a fallu badiner depuis le commencement jusqu'à la fin; il a fallu chercher du galant et de la plaisanterie ».

[63] « On fit ses murs d'un marbre aussi blanc que l'albâtre. / Les dedans sont ornés d'un porphyre luisant. /Ces ordres dont les Grecs nous ont fait un présent, / Le dorique sans fard, l'élégant Ionique, / Et le corinthien superbe et magnifique, / L'un sur l'autre placés, élèvent jusqu'aux cieux / Ce pompeux édifice, où tout charme les yeux. » in La Fontaine, *les Amours de Psyché et Cupidon,* Livre 1.

Figure 10: Backcloth from Drottningholm collection (DTM407/1975), 563 x 795 cm.
Drottningholms Teatermuseum.

Figure 11: Set piece, right flat, from Drottningholm collection (DTM229/1975[1]). 400x196 cm.
Drottningholms Teatermuseum.

7.2.4 Acte IV

Act IV begins in a « magnificent and delightful garden », that Molière described by means of « verdant arbours with gold terms (quadrangular pillars tapering downward and adorned on the top with the figure of the upper part of the human body), and ornate with orange tree pots »[64]. This association of lattice supporting plants and flowers, gold statues and orange trees evocate the splendour of French gardens of the period where the art of gardening was perfected by André Le Nôtre[65]. The « treillage », the art of creating three-dimensional structures with thin lines of wood stripes, became an object of decoration and was entrusted to workers named « treillageurs ». The treillageur had to have at least some elementary notions of architecture and to be skillful in « l'art du trait », the mastering of geometry, to design trellis as a gallery, portico, room, and other elements of construction[66]. It was not long before the « treillage » fashion spread through the gardens of Europe, through engravings, notably « vues d'optique » (Figure 12). L'art du trait was also one of the basic requirement for set designers, and soon enough these artists took advantage of the multiple possibilities these tangles of lines could offer on stage[67].

Figure 12: ca 1740, *Treillage Executé à Marly*, optical view by Dumont,
probably after an engraving for a book on gardens.
Collection of Gilbert Blin.

A document in the Swedish collection, showing the proscenium frame of the *Salle des Machines* displays what is probably the garden set for *Ercole amante,* and consequently, the same set appeared again in *Psiché* in Paris in 1671 (Figure 13). Like this document, various Garden

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[64] Molière. *Psiché,* Acte IV. « Jardin superbe et charmant, agrémenté de berceaux de verdure soutenus par des termes d'or et décoré de vases d'orangers et d'arbres de toutes sortes de fruits ».

[65] See: Thompson, Ian. *The Sun King's Garden, Louis XIV, André Le Nôtre and the Creation of the Gardens of Versailles*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2006.

[66] The *bosquet de l'Encelade* in Versailles is a good example of this type of garden.

[67] La Gorce, Jérôme de. "Jardins et Décors d'Opéras Français sous Louis XIV" in *Jardins d'Opéra*. Paris : Bibliothèque nationale de France and Louis Vuitton, 1995, pp. 9–21.

sets still extant at Drottningholm show treillage arches, but also as Molière specifies, sculptural terms used as caryatids (Figures 14 and 15). The first garden set of Drottningholm clearly has a strong relation with an earlier set by Torelli for *Andromède*, whose composition (Figure 16) can be seen again in the set created by the Vigaranis for *Ercole amante*. The magnificent and delightful garden corresponds also to the description given in a contract negotiated in 1660 for *Ercole amante*[68].
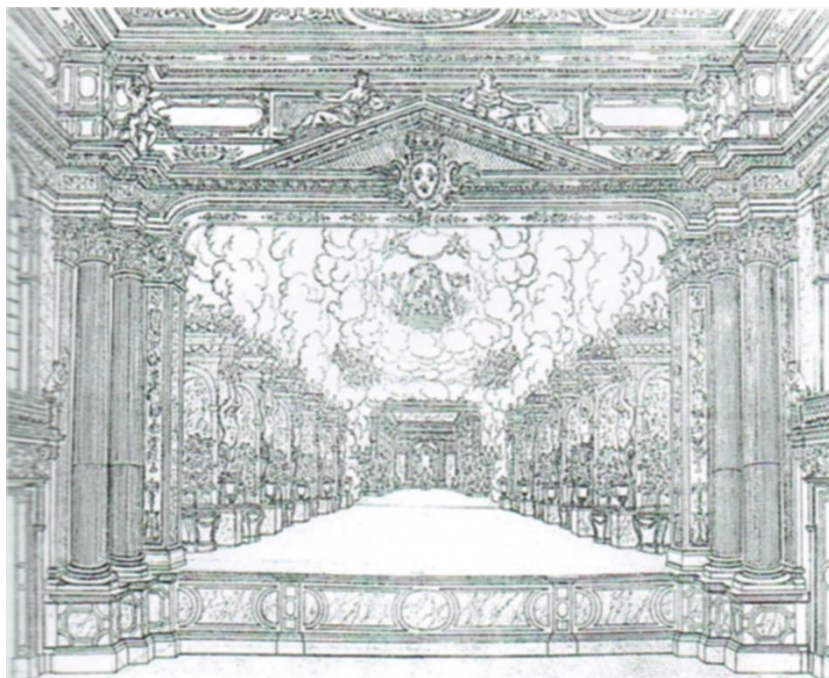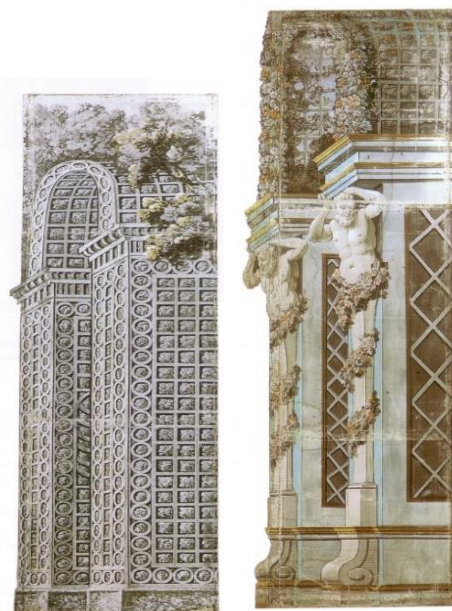

Figure 13: Drawing by workshop of Jean I Berain, scene 1 of Act III of *Ercole amante* (?). Stockholm, Kungliga Akademien.

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[68] For the contract between Vigarani and the painters Charles Errard and François Francart, see : La Gorce, Jérôme de. *Carlo Vigarani, intendant des plaisirs de Louis XIV*. Paris: Perrin, 2005, p. 111.

Figures 14 & 15: Set pieces from Drottningholm collection
(DTM215/1975^G & DTM215/1975^A). 450x135 cm & 520x178cm.
Drottningholms Teatermuseum.

Figure 15: ca 1651, etching by François Chauveau (1613-1676) of the theatre set by Giacomo Torelli (1604 - 1678) for Scene 5, Act II, of *Andromède* by Pierre Corneille and Charles d'Assoucy, 1650.
Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale.

Later, in the eighteenth century, an identical composition, ultimate witness of its popularity, was published as a "vue d'optique". The garden is enlarged but the flying characters disappear, and the fantasist caption is inspired by the huge orange trees: « *La Superbe Orangerie du grand Seigneur à Constantinople* » (Figure 16).

Figure 16: *Vue de la Superbe Orangerie du grand Seigneur à Constantinople*, anonym optical view after an engraving by François Chauveau (1613-1676) of a theatre set by Giacomo Torelli (1604 -1678) for Act II of *Andromède* by Pierre Corneille and Charles d'Assoucy, 1650.
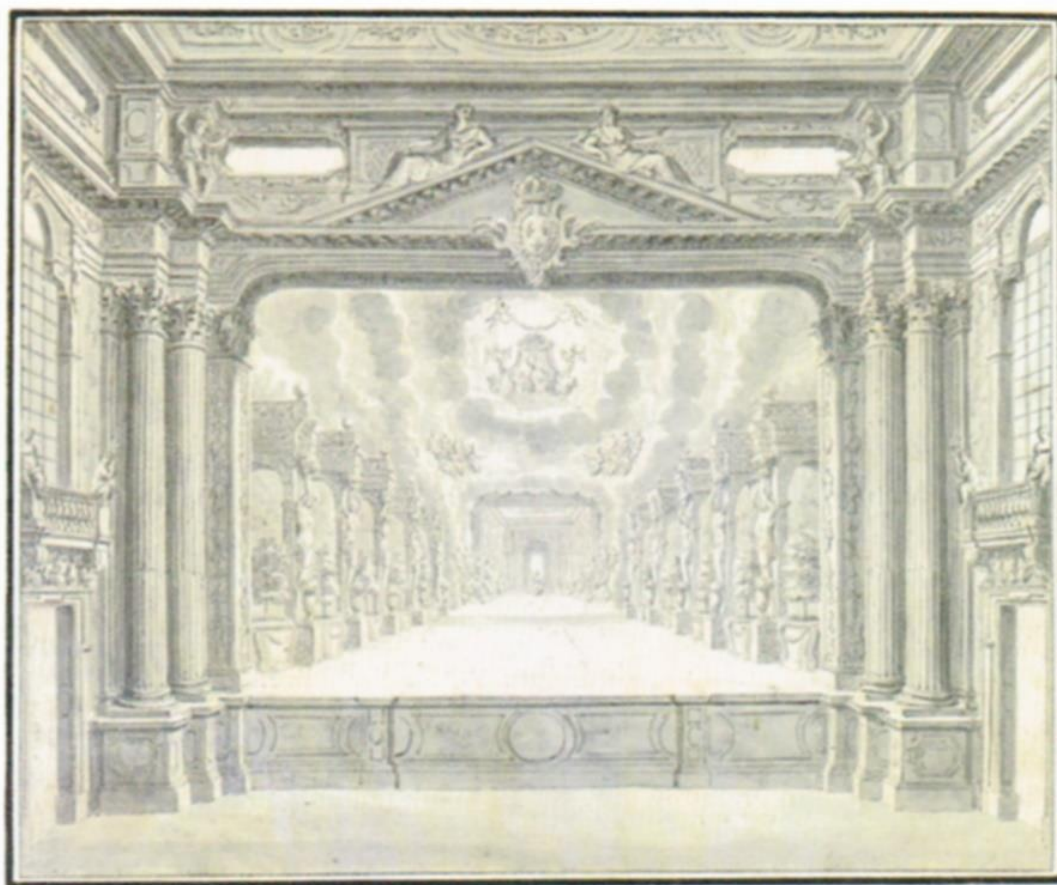Collection of Gilbert Blin.

Figure 18: Drawing by the workshop of Jean I Berain, set of Act III of *Ercole amante* (?).
Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Opéra.

The *Rocaille* style of the second garden is a strong clue about its possible relevance to *Psiché* in 1766. Like the first one it presents treillage and orange trees, but, while the set inspired by Torelli was showing grey stone terms, the *Rocaille* garden displays golden statues, as Molière suggested. It shows, following the inventory of 1777, « A garden, representing a host of pavilions in so-called Italian style, a lot of hedges and trees ». This vague description is clarified by the backdrop – now lost –described in the Drottningholm 1809 inventory as « A Backcloth, representing three Pavilions, and in the middle one a figure of Neptune with a Trident/ »[69]. This description follows Molière, who mentions « several rocky arches in the background, ornamented with shells, fountains and statues »"[70]. The pictorial elements of this scenery, evocative of an Italian grotto of the Renaissance revived in the *Rocaille* garden, agree with the visual requirements of *Psiché* and show similarities with a scenery by Giuseppe Bibiena. But now it is not only a single architectonic component which has been adopted, like for the Blue

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[69] Inventory of 1809 « [A Backcloth, representing three Pavilions, and in the middle one a figure of Neptune with a Trident/ » See : Stribolt, Barbro. *Scenery from Swedish Court Theatres, Drottningholm Gripsholm*. Stockholm: Stockholmia Förlag - Drottningholms Teatermuseum, 2002, pp. 45–54.

[70] Molière. *Psiché*, Acte IV.

hall, but a whole composition which can be found in the painting of the side flats (Figure 19).

Figure 19: Set piece from Drottningholm collection (DTM212/1975[H]). 455x183 cm.
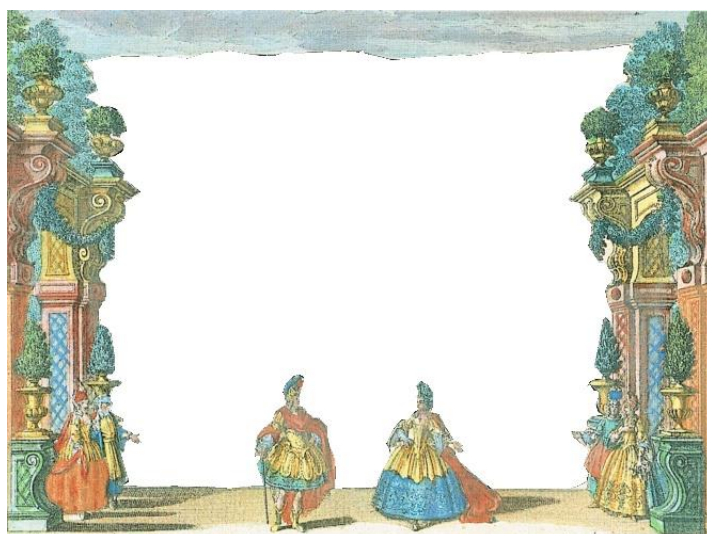Drottningholms Teatermuseum.

Figure 20: 1745, first sheet, of six, of a diorama scene entitled "Praesentation einer Opera",
on a design by Jeremias Wachsmuht (1712–1771), engraved by Martin Engelbrecht (1684-1756),
after a set design by Giuseppe Bibiena (1696–1757).
Drottningholms Teatermuseum.

One would like to ascribe this set to the court painter Johan Pasch, one of the pupils of the French Guillaume Taraval (1701–1750) whose large workshop for the ceilings of the Royal palace in Stockholm had both educated French and Swedish painters. This attribution to Pasch is made more probable by the fact this artist, together with Rehn, had personal contact with

Giuseppe Bibiena in Berlin, as we will see later[71]. Besides this personal connection, the various copies and variations inspired by the print of the Italian master would explain the similitude between compositions by Pasch and by Bibiena. For example, the garden by Bibiena even found his way, albeit without the golden terms and with a different backcloth, to one of the famous dioramas[72] (Figure 20) printed by Martin Engelbrecht (1684–1756) in Ausburg, the same city that published Bibiena print[73] (Figure 21).

Figure 21: 1720, set design by Giuseppe Bibiena (1696–1757), published in *Architecture, e Prospettive dedicate all Maesta di Carlo Sesto imperador de' Romani, da Giuseppe Galli Bibiena, suo primo Ingegner Teatral, ed Architetto, Inventore delle medesime, Augusta, Sotto la Direzione di Andrea Pfeffel.* Augsburg: MDCCXL.
Smithsonian Libraries. Gift of Abram S. Hewitt, 1931.

In this beautiful garden Psyche tries, in the play of Molière, to investigate her lover's real identity despite the interdiction. When she finally succeeds the enchantment is broken: « Cupid flees and the garden vanishes »[74], being transformed into a « wilderness with wild river banks »[75]. This spectacular « changement » coincides with the emotional climax of the piece,

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[71] Stribolt, Barbro. "Influence of Giuseppe and Carlo Bibiena on Swedish scenography of the eighteenth century" in *Opernbauten des Barock*. München: Icomos Heftes des deutschen Nationalkomitees XXXI, 1998, pp. 79–83.

[72] For a general presentation of these dioramas theatres, or perspective theatres as they are also sometimes called, see: *La camera dei sortilegi, Autoritratto di une società nei diorami teatrali del '700*. Mostra diretta da Giorgio Strehler. (Milano, Museo Teatrale alla Scala, 3 dicembre 1987 – 31 gennaio 1988). Milano : Electa, 1987.

[73] See: Stribolt, Barbro. *Scenery from Swedish Court Theatres, Drottningholm Gripsholm*. Stockholm : Stockholmia Förlag - Drottningholms Teatermuseum, 2002, p. 46.

[74] Molière. *Psiché*, Acte III, Scène III.

[75] Molière. *Psiché*, Acte III, Scène IV.

enhancing it by the striking contrast between the two places[76]. Psyche has been breaking the spell and loses everything. The French expressions of « Desert » and « Solitude » used to describe such a place emphasize the loneliness of the character in it. The scenery representing the wilderness, filled with springs and waterfalls, painted by Lorenz Sundström, illustrates perfectly this sombre episode of the end of Act IV[77]. Drottningholm still has some of the flats (Figures 22 & 23) and a backdrop belonging to this wilderness: «- 6 Flats deep, the 7th the Blackcloth, and a dark Cave »[78].

Figures 22 and 23: Set pieces from Drottningholm collection
(DTM231/1975^F & DTM231/1975^C), 495x162 cm and 495&165cm.
Drottningholms Teatermuseum.

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[76] Coypel chose to paint the equivalent climax but bases his understanding of the spaces on the opera version of 1678, where this change happens between the blue palace and the wilderness: Coypel does not illustrate Molière's 1671 play *Psiché* but Thomas Corneille's 1678 libretto for *Psyché*.

[77] See: Stribolt, Barbro. "Ödemarken i Orpheus och Euridice" in *Program 1996*, *Drottningholms Slottsteater*. Stockholm: Drottningholms Teatermuseum, 1996, pp. 90–98.

[78] « En Ödemark » « 6 Kulisser djup den 7de Fonden, samt en mörk Grotta ». The inventory keeps on with this puzzling note: « / NB på Konungens Sida fattas tuan, men däremot äro 2 femmor/ ». NB on the King's Side number two is missing, but on there are 2 number fives. See: Stribolt, Barbro. *Scenery from Swedish Court Theatres*, *Drottningholm Gripsholm*. Stockholm : Stockholmia Förlag - Drottningholms Teatermuseum, 2002, p. 77. This "missing" shutter could also suggest that the river god was appearing from the side, coming from another lateral grotto, which would have been a different type of flat? This is the direction, suggested also by the sketch of Sundström, I have chosen for my staging of Lully 1678 *Psyché* (BEMF 2017).

The heroine, grief-stricken, intends to take her life by throwing herself into the water, when suddenly « The River God » appears, « lying on a pile of reeds and leaning against an urn »[79]. Ever since the beginning of the seventeenth century the gods of rivers were shown stretched out and resting on urns from which water flowed. When Boucher was to illustrate Molière's work he chose this episode for *Psiché* (Figure 24) and we know that Queen Louisa Ulrika owned a copy of that edition in her library[80]. On the engraving a grotto in the left of the composition predicts the "dark Cave" of the Drottningholm set.

Figure 24: *Psiché,* engraving by Laurent Cars (1699–1771) after François Boucher (1703–1770),
Illustration for *Psiché* of Molière, *Oeuvres...* Nouvelle edition. Paris: P. Prault, 1734 [1735],
known as "Edition Jolly", illustrated by Boucher.
Collection of Gilbert Blin.

The same pictorial convention for the river god was characteristic of sculpture, painting and theatre, and would certainly also have applied to performances at Drottningholm[81]. But how does one introduce a character unable to walk? On the stage the river could flow up from

[79] Molière. *Psiché*, Acte IV, Scène IV.

[80] The edition of Molière by Voltaire from 1765 reprints the engravings after Boucher and the text of the edition of 1734. One copy in mentioned in the library of Louisa-Ulrika in Kina Slott at Drottningholm: N°419–20. See: Setterwall, Åke; Fogelmarck, Stig; Gyllensvärd, Bo. *The Chinese Pavilion at Drottningholm*. With contributions by Sten G. Lindberg, Peter Stenberg and Walter Bauer. Malmö: Allhems Förlag, 1972, p. 217.

[81] *Un fleuve et une fontaine* by Charles Joseph Natoire, respecting this code, was acquired by Tessin in 1740, and, since 1749, belongs to the Royal collections. See: N° 189 in *Le Soleil et l'Etoile du Nord*, *La France et la Suède au XVIIIe siècle*. Paris: Grand Palais, 1994, p. 135. For the river god appearance on the baroque stage see: Chapter 7, Study Case 1.

underneath through the trap in the middle, appearing in the grotto at the back of the lay-out of the sets. This brilliantly designed mechanism is sufficiently wide for two people and could be used first for the entrance and then for the exit, since the river is to carry Psyche on the way down to the underworld.

7.2.5 Acte V

A painted sketch by Sundström[82] (Figure 25) shows the wilderness[83], but in the same picture, the artist also creates the change to the following set[84], where, according to Molière, one sees through the mouth of the cave « a burning sea with waves in constant movement » [85].

Figure 25: 1766, sketch by Lorenz Sundström for the change of sets between act III and Act IV of *Psiché*. Drottningholms Teatermuseum.

This sea of fire gave a chance to re-use the upstage machinery, which after having been picturing a sea in the Prologue was then supposed to represent a see of fire. The support structure stayed in place while the rollers were changed: In the inventory of 1809 we read, « 3 Rollers with red gold fabric on one and red fabric on the other representing streams of fire 3

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[82] This sketch has been misunderstood as a set design picturing one scenery, when in fact it shows a « changement à vue » in *Psiché*, presenting elements of two different sets. This confusion has made the distinction between the two ensembles of sceneries kept in Drottningholm difficul. This gouache, in the collections of the Stockholm Nationalmuseum, is reproduced in: Stribolt, Barbro. *Scenery from Swedish Court Theatres*, *Drottningholm Gripsholm*. Stockholm : Stockholmia Förlag - Drottningholms Teatermuseum, 2002, p. 79. For more information about Sundström, see p. 38.

[83] « Ödemark ».

[84] Coypel before him, had also explored in his *Psyché abandonee par l'Amour* the idea to represent a change, certainly the most spectacular of any performance of *Psiché*. But Coypel represents the set change taking place in Lully and Thomas Corneille's opera of 1678.

[85] Molière. *Psiché*, IV. intermède.

seashore Boards, with Transparencies, representing a molten Lake of Fire and Stones »[86]. In Paris, in 1671, it was, among all Vigarani's sets for *Ercole amante*, the one of the underworld which Louis XIV did want to see once more[87]. In Drottningholm, in 1766, the new scenery by Sundström – now incomplete – would certainly have been used for this intermède, where it was to form the framework for the sea of fire: « surrounded by ruins in flames; and right out among the troubled waves Pluto's underworld castle is to be seen through a dreadful mouth»[88]. Part of this scenery also appears in the inventory of 1809: « [K. The Maw of Hades: A Backcloth with a big opening in it, painted as to represent the great maw of a Beast, with teeth above and below, and streaks of gold and red representing Flames of Fire] »[89]. Unfortunately, this pierced backcloth is missing today but a composition of the same spirit, with the mouth of hell, can be found in the engraving of a famous set by Ludovico Ottavio Burnacini for *Il pomo d'oro* by Antonio Cesti (1623–1669) and Francesco Sbarra (1611-1668), performed in Vienna in 1668[90]. Psyché on a « barque », probably to look like the boat on the set of Burnacini (Figure 26), was also crossing the sea of fire.

Figure 26: *The mouth of hell*, engraving of a set by Ludovico Ottavio Burnacini (1636–1707) for *Il pomo d'oro* by Antonio Cesti (1623–1669) and Francesco Sbarra (1611–1668), performed in Vienna in 1668. Cambridge (MA), Harvard University.

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[86] « 3 Walsar med rödt guldtyg på enda och rödt tyg på den andra föreställande eldströmmar 3 Stradbräden, med Transparenter, forestaller en flytande Eldmassa orch Stenar » in Stribolt, Barbro. *Scenery from Swedish Court Theatres, Drottningholm Gripsholm*. Stockholm: Stockholmia Förlag - Drottningholms Teatermuseum, 2002, p. 155. The lightning could also be changed thanks to colored glass set in front of the reflectors. This custom had already been explored in Europe at the beginning of the seventeenth century and Stockholm, large producer of glass in the middle of the eighteenth century, did not lack resource: Kungsholm Glasbruk, the glass factory of Kungsholm, was in production from 1676 to 1815.

[87] This point is only known to us by the eighteenth-century testimony of the writer La Grange Chancel, see: Chapter 2.

[88] Molière. *Psiché*, IV. intermède.

[89] « [K. Helfvetes Gapet: En Fond genomskuren med ett stort hål, måladt på det sätt att det f́preställer ett sort gap af ett Djur, med tänder ofvan och nedan, samt strimmor af guld och rödt föreställande Eldslågor.] » quoted in Stribolt, Barbro. *Scenery from Swedish Court Theatres, Drottningholm Gripsholm*. Stockholm : Stockholmia Förlag - Drottningholms Teatermuseum, 2002, p. 160.

[90] http://www.harvardartmuseums.org/collections/object/100554?position=0 (accessed 9 October 2017).

The dark gloom of this underworld could be supported by lighting effects, since there is a mechanism at Drottningholm to allow for rapid dimming. The ramp of the forestage can be lowered under the floor, and the rotating columns behind each side flat, equipped with wax candles and reflectors, can be turned towards the exterior of the stage[91]. The dimmed direct light playing over the painted surfaces of the set and the actors produced a mysterious atmosphere in this scene, which was full of countless « imps doing somersaults »[92]. The light also emphasised the supernatural aspect of the Furies, who probably came up through the trap on the right-hand side of the stage (seen from the auditorium): under this was a stair which allowed these inhabitants from the underworld to make a swift entrance[93].

In these hellish surroundings Psyche faints. As in the seventeenth century, it was also unseemly in the eighteenth century to lie down on the wood boards of the stage. Without doubt « le Banc de scène » [94], a set piece, was used; on this bench the actress could both lower and, more importantly, raise herself in a more refined manner. Drottningholm has kept several of these three-dimensional structures, painted to represent small slopes covered in stones or grass, which allowed the actor to occupy an appropriate posture following with the *étiquette* of the day for the character. This embankment was to be placed over the trap in the middle of the stage in order that it might disappear downwards at the apotheosis of the finale, when Jupiter settled the quarrel between the beautiful mortal and the goddess of beauty.

In Paris, in 1671, only the final tableau demanded completely new scenery and Carlo Vigarani was very proud of his clouds, which filled the whole stage space[95]. In 1766, Jupiter undoubtedly came as flying *deus ex machina*, according to Molière's directions attended by « the rumble of thunder »[96], easy to achieve with the assistance of the thunder machine built in behind the framework of the proscenium of Drottningholm. Stones in a large wooden box rolled backwards and forwards and called forth a sound which was powerfully strengthened by its ingenious positioning. The ruler of the gods would certainly have arrived in the grand triumphal chariot which has been at Drottningholms Slottsteater ever since (Figure 27). In this « Gloire », the mechanical arrangement of clouds surrounding Jupiter, divided into several synchronised layers, is lowered from the fly loft. The clouds broaden out like a fan and gradually fill the field of vision. In this last piece of stage machinery, which conceals the underworld and reveals the whole stage into a vision of heaven itself, Psyche is elevated to the rank of goddess and makes her entrance with the divine multitude.

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[91] See: Rangström, Ture. "The Stage Machinery at Drottningholm - Instructions for use" in *Gustavian Opera, An interdisciplinary Reader in Swedish Opera, Dance and Theatre, 1771–1809*. Uppsala: Royal Swedish Academy of Music, 1991, p. 101.

[92] Molière. *Psiché*, Acte IV, II. Entrée de ballet.

[93] As I experimented myself for the arrival of the furies in my 1998 Drottningholm production of Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice*.

[94] See: DTM 63/1975 et DTM 62/1975 in Stribolt, Barbro. *Scenery from Swedish Court Theatres, Drottningholm Gripsholm*. Stockholm : Stockholmia Förlag - Drottningholms Teatermuseum, 2002, p. 256.

[95] see : La Gorce, Jérôme de. *Carlo Vigarani, intendant des plaisirs de Louis XIV*. Paris: Perrin, 2005, p. 113.

[96] Molière. *Psiché*, Acte V, Scène V.

Figure 27: Cloud machine from Drottningholms Slottsteater.
Drottningholms Teatermuseum.

No set for the heavenly realms survives in Drottningholm if we leave aside all the various clouds elements present in the collection, but a sketch by Rehn for a backcloth (Figure 28) gives an idea for this Olympus[97] : « The Palace of Jupiter descends, and reveals in the distance, by three vanishing perspectives, the other palaces of the most powerful gods of heaven »[98]. This design could correspond to item X in the inventory of 1809: « A small backcloth. called in the old inscription Olympus, depicting a see-through Architecture surrounded by very red clouds ».[99] Because of the mention of columns « torses », also called Solomonic, present on the sketch by Rehn, it is reasonable to associate to it: the « Olympus, 14 flats for a decoration, so-called, imaginary red columns Torses, with a flower garlands around; the whole rest is filled with clouds. »[100]

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[97] See: N° 785 of the Bukowskis sale of the collection Bellinga. *Bellinga Samlingen, Jean–Eric Rehn.* Stockholm, 6–7 Februari 1993. Stockholm: Bukowskis Auktioner Aktiebolag (Catalogue de Vente), p. 215. See: Stribolt, Barbro. *Scenery from Swedish Court Theatres*, *Drottningholm Gripsholm*. Stockholm : Stockholmia Förlag - Drottningholms Teatermuseum, 2002, p. 482 & p. 484.

[98] Molière. *Psiché*, Acte V, intermède: « Le Palais de Jupiter descend, & laisse voir dans l'éloignement, par trois fuites de perspective, les autres palais des Dieux du ciel les plus puissants ».

[99] « X En liten Fond. kallad i gammal påskrift Olympen, föreställande en genombrunten Arkitecture omgifven af mycket röda Skyar. » quoted in Stribolt, Barbro. *Scenery from Swedish Court Theatres*, *Drottningholm Gripsholm*. Stockholm : Stockholmia Förlag - Drottningholms Teatermuseum, 2002, p. 482.

[100] « X Olympen, 14 kulisser till en Dekoration så kallad, föreställande röda Colonner Torses, med Blomsterband om ; hela resten är uppfyldt med skyar », quoted in Stribolt, Barbro. *Scenery from Swedish Court Theatres*, *Drottningholm Gripsholm*. Stockholm : Stockholmia Förlag - Drottningholms Teatermuseum, 2002, p. 484.
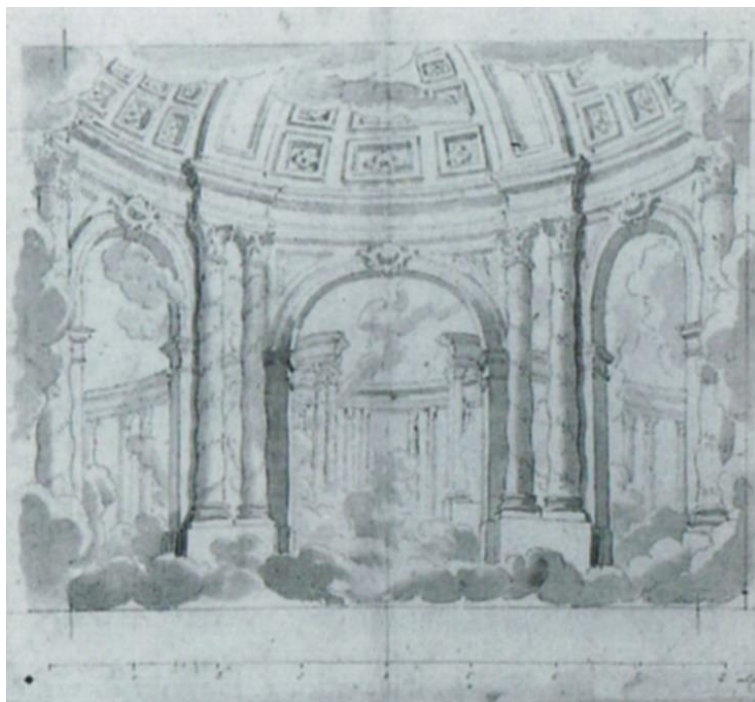
Figure 28: Rehn, set design for *Psiché*'s final intermède, 27x 30,7 cm.
Stockholm Nationalmuseum.

The machinery at Drottningholm was first ascribed to an Italian carpenter whose work is almost undocumented - Donato Stopani (17?? –17??) - who was indeed engaged in 1766 in connection with the festivities for the wedding of the prince[101]. Recent research, however, has shown the influence of Christian Gottlob Reuss (17?? –17??), master of the machinery at Dresden, via technical studies undertaken by Georg Fröman (17?? –17??), a Swedish master carpenter[102]. Fröman had been assigned to collect information on the art of building stage machinery[103] while he was travelling on the Continent with Rehn and Pasch, who shared the chief responsibility for the scenery for *Psiché*. Queen Louisa Ulrika had at her own expense allowed these three Swedes to be sent out to pick up technical and artistic innovations. Half as industrial spies, and half as collectors, they had journeyed through the German countries, Italy, France and the Netherlands and obtained a large amount of documentation: drawings, catalogues and memoranda, all of which were assiduously used ten years later. Drottningholms Slottsteater and its inaugural performance gained much from the European round tour of 1755 and 1756.

[101] See: Beijer, Agne. *Drottningholms Slottsteater på Louisa Ulrikas och Gustaf III:s tid.* Stockholmsmonografier utgivna av Stockholms kommun. Stockholm: Drottningholms Teatermuseum, 1981, p. 125 and note 9.

[102] See: Edström, Per Simon. "Der deutsche Machinmeister Christian Gottlob Reuss und die Bühnenmaschinerie des Drottningholmer Schlosstheaters" in *Opernbauten des Barock*, Icomos Heftes des deutschen Nationalkomitees XXXI. München: 1998, p.104–105. A summary in Swedish and English, "Den tyske maskinmästaren Christian Gotlob Reuss betydelse för utseendet på kulissmaskineriet på Drottnigholms Slottsteater" was published in *Program 1999*, *Drottningholms Slottsteater*. Stockholm: Drottningholms Teatermuseum, 1999, pp. 98–100.

[103] On the European Grand Tour by Rehn and his colleagues in 1755–1756 financed by the Manufakturkontoret and sponsored by Queen Louisa Ulrika, see: Wahlberg, Anna Greta. *Jean Eric Rehn*. Arlöv: Bokförlaget Signum, 1983, p. 19 and the contribution of Martin Olsson in Strömbom, Sixten. *Fem stora Gustavianer*. Stockholm: P.A. Nordsted & Söner, 1944, pp. 62–75.

As patron of this journey queen Louisa Ulrika was then able to observe the effects of the funding she had allocated for her Swedish artists, enabling them to get to know the theatres of Europe better[104]. It is therefore highly appropriate that Drottningholm's curtain, painted by Pasch on a design by Rehn, shows a helmeted Minerva, protectress of the arts, holding up the queen's monogram: in 1766 it was indeed this well-read apotheosis that opened *Psiché*'s spectacle (Figure 29). Louisa Ulrika was so proud of *Psiché* that, to celebrate the visit of prince Heinrich of Prussia, her younger brother, the production was revived at Drottningholm on the 13th of August 1770.

Figure 29: Theatre curtain from Drottningholms Slottsteater.
Drottningholms Teatermuseum.

A comparison with other European stages of the period – Schouwburg in Amsterdam, the Berlin Hofoper, the court theatres at Dresden and Bayreuth, and also the theatre at the Palais Royal in Paris, stage of the *Académie Royale de Musique*[105], shows just how much Drottningholms Slottsteater owes to them. The conception of the relation between audience in an auditorium and the deep mechanical stage was inspired by the works of Vigarani in Modena and Paris. The *Salle des Machines,* which had welcomed the very first performance of *Psiché,* was in 1756 presenting the shows by Giovanni Niccolò Servandoni (1695–1766), and it is likely that the

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[104] Rehn did numerous sketches. See: *Bellinga Samlingen, Jean–Eric Rehn.* Stockholm, 6–7 Februari 1993. Stockholm: Bukowskis Auktioner Aktiebolag, 1993, and Fröman kept a journal of the trip, see: Beijer, Agne. "Theaterzeichnungen im Reisejournal des Schlossbaumeisters Georg Fröman von seiner Reise nach Dresden und Wien in Jahre 1755" in *Bühnenformen– Bühnenräume –Bühnendekorationen.* 1974, p.77.

[105] In Paris, in 1656, Rehn and Pasch met the dancer Gallodier, who was then belonging to the troupe of the Académie Royale de Musique and convinced him to come to Sweden*,* where he had a productive career; it is more than likely that Gallodier danced in *Psiché* in 1766. See: Blin, Gilbert and Trotier, Rémy–Michel. "The Young Gallodier's Years of Apprenticeship, seen against the background of the abundant French dance life of the mid–eighteenth century" in *Program 2003, Drottningholms Slottsteater.* Stockholm: Drottningholms Teatermuseum, 2003, pp. 81–86.

Swedish artists, curious of all the last French trends, attended a rehearsal or a performance of Servandoni's lavish spectacle of *La Conquête du Mogol*[106]. Later, in Drottningholm, Adelcrantz and his team of specialists had made up their minds to introduce all the technical possibilities of the time in their new theatre building, and to unite Giuseppe Bibiena's latest pioneering efforts with earlier Italian and traditional French techniques[107]. It is this aspect which makes Drottningholms Slottsteater so valuable for a stage director: its capability to encapsulate a century of European theatre practice and taste.

Brilliantly inaugurated with *Psiché* by Molière, a work of utmost historical significance for the development of stage machinery[108], Drottningholms Slottsteater still has sufficient original stage elements today for the staging script, which outlined the changes' effects, to be reconstructed[109]. The stage machinery there is a goldmine of technical solutions to enable the performative poetry in *Psiché* to come to life. The still extant scenery[110] together with the descriptions in the inventories, propose to us vivid pictures of Molière's sets directions of *Psiché*. Since the *Salle des Machines* in Paris no longer exists, and since very few documents show the sets created by Vigarani, Drottningholms Slottsteater with its collections remains today a unique witness of what a baroque period performance of *Psiché* might be like. By offering a large investigation, this case study brings the principle of Historically Informed Practice into the elaboration of the sets for *Psiché*. But it also presents all the elements to take into consideration during a reflection for a staging and for the elaboration of sets for an Historically Informed production of any baroque opera. The theatre of Drottningholm offers the ideal setting of *Remaining Parts*, architecture, sceneries, machines, and archives, for a spectacle turned to the most original style but more importantly it gives the possibility of a context where the combination of *Structural* and *Performing Parts* allows a better definition of a baroque performance.

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[106] Maybe the forthcoming book on Servandoni by Jérôme de la Gorce will give some light on the impact the set designer had on the Swedish school.

[107] At the end of the seventeenth century, Nicodemus Tessin (1654–1728) had acquired a large amount of designs by Berain and this collection had been likely studied by Adelcrantz. These drawings and the albums of the Prince de Carignan from the collection Tessin–Hålerman, are kept in the Nationalmuseum.

[108] *Psiché* knew multiple adaptations and performances. The production of London was one of the first and one well documented: see Canova–Green, Marie–Claude. "Le spectacle de Psyché à Londres en 1675" in *Gaspare & Carlo Vigarani, Dalla corte degli Este a quella di Luigi XIV, De la cour d'Este à celle de Louis XIV, a cura di Walter Baricchi & Jérôme de La Gorce*. Versailles: Centre de recherche du château de Versailles et Milano : Silvana Editoriale Spa, 2009, pp. 143–157.

[109] See the letter by prince Gustave to queen Louisa Ulrika of 15 July 1770 reproduced in Schück, Henrik. *Gustav III:s och Louisa Ulrikas brevväxling, Första Delen*. Stockholm: Nordstedt & Söners Förlag, 1919, p. 207. See also: Beijer, Agne. *Les troupes françaises à Stockholm*, *1699–1792*, *Listes de repertoire*. Rédaction Sven Björkman. Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, 1989, p. 123.

[110] As the sets of *Psiché* were covering the quasi totality of generic spaces which can be found in the dramatic and operatic repertoires, they allowed future re–uses for a varied repertoire: despite the wedding circumstances, the choice of the piece, with its various stage components, revealed itself as a judicious investment for the future activity of the theatre, and indeed it seems the sets were used constantly after 1766, that is until the closing of the theatre in 1809.

7.3 Sets project for *Niobe* 2011

The following texts are based on the Staging and on the Machine projects for Niobe *as presented in 2010 to Patrons of the Boston Early Music Festival, one year before the performance, and to the Technical team, few months before the 2011 rehearsals.*

7.3.1 Characters and costumes

To explore the artistic possibilities of stage reconstruction has been one of the ambitions of my residency as Stage Director for the Boston Early Music Festival and my staging of *Niobe* was a major step in this direction. Staging an early opera is therefore a process which has a double identity for me: on the one hand, it is historical research through original documents, the manuscript score, the original libretto, and period iconography; on the other hand, the translation of these original elements in modern times is the core of my artistic approach which mixes poetic vision, modern media, and personal choices. As I noted in the introduction, the beginning of this process, which I am sharing here, is to try to define « What will we need to stage *Niobe »* in terms of both human resources and material resources. The rest is a question of designs through spatial and temporal developments.

There are 9 main singing performers listed: 3 women—Niobe, Manto, and Nerea— and 6 men. That indicates a minimum of 9 costumes for 9 characters. All of the characters, but one, are of high social rank: kings, princes, and clerics struggle for power and love amidst a war and a religious crisis. In the course of the action there are some specifications for costuming: Anfione gives his royal mantle to Clearte when he makes him the new ruler in Act I, Scene 2, though this should not require an extra costume for either. More important to the plot, in order to fool Niobe in Scene 9 of Act II, the magician Poliferno appears disguised as the god Mercury and the prince Creonte as the god Mars. The libretto also mentions a new "godlike" costume for Niobe (Act III, Scene 1). Each requires a new costume for these godly guises. These libretto-based requirements bring the list of costumes for the 9 principal roles to a minimum of 12.

The 9 Soloists are at the center of the plot and have a lot to do. The three stories that develop around the central character of Niobe—her relationship with her husband Anfione, her affairs with Clearte and Creonte, and her conflicts with Tiresia and Manto—are told through the words and actions of the 9 main characters. These 9 characters have a public role: Queen and Priest, Kings and Princes, they have authority over many people: sons and daughters, soldiers, citizens, and faithful's. Because of the lack of extended choirs in *Niobe*, the numerous supernumeraries act throughout the piece and add an element of History and a taste of the Epic to the plot. My proposal would be to keep them and follow the instructions in the libretto as much as possible. In addition to their necessary dramatic roles, they would add to our production the element of lavishness which appears on the original prints of stage productions in Munich in the 1680s, as there is no doubt that these retinues also have a decorative appeal.

There is a large number of supernumeraries, but there is a distinction to be made between the 12 children of Niobe and Anfione, who are an essential key to the plot, and the

other supernumeraries who have a social and decorum function, each soloist having a retinue to indicate his or her rank. The Niobids are part of the myth, while the others help to establish the social status of the main characters and give their conflicts a political resonance. The critical point is that the two groups appear on stage together. At the start of Act I, the Niobids are present at the same moment as Anfione, Niobe, and Clearte with their retinue groups: some Noble Thebans, Pages, Knights, and Ladies of the Court. The stage must have been full of people with various types of costumes to show the wealth of Thebes.

Another crowd scene is the triumph of the Niobids and their extermination by the Gods. Clearte presents the children to the people of Thebes in a triumphal ceremony. To these extras one should add the gods, who do not appear on the list of supernumeraries but who are present in this scene. Latona, Apollo, and Diana who strike down from above the Niobids are thus an essential part of the action. Two specific examples illustrate the versatility of the word « Comparse »: the citizens of Thebes, whom Anfione addresses, answer him by singing «Viva Anfione, viva » which makes them a choir. And the wild beast killed by Tiberino, for which Steffani wrote special music, may have been an actor in an animal costume.

Supernumeraries should be divided into 3 groups. The first group is the 12 Niobids, the second is the group of gods and followers, and the third group is the dancers. The 12 Niobids should be treated as an entity. The children of Niobe and Anfione are not necessarily young infants: this sentimental 19th-century vision is contradicted by most of the depictions of the story in the Baroque era. Indeed, in the first scene of Act one, they appear in Warrior costumes. These costumes are meaningful as they tie together in a single picture the strength of Anfione and Niobe as parents known from the myth with their power as rulers of Thebes, the idea dominating the plot. Because of her rivalry with Latona, who had only one pair of twins, it would reinforce the meaning of the myth to show that Niobe had given birth 6 times to twin children. All the children should anyhow be twin-like: resembling 12 idealized clones of Niobe and Anfione. Having all twelve children look the same age would stretch credulity. If the Niobids are young adults, they could also be used for other supernumerary roles (Minimum: 12).

The second group of supernumeraries contains Latona, Apollo, and Diana (gods that should be able to "fly" and it should be a must to cast real twins), numerous Thebans (accompanying Anfione, Niobe, Clearte, Manto, and Tiresia), Thessalians (with Creonte), Albans (for Tiberino), and Atticans (with Poliferno). To make a retinue a retinue, a minimum of two followers is needed. That brings the total amount to a minimum of 16 extras, as all these people appear on stage at the same time at the end of the piece. This second group could be divided into singers (Minimum: 4 or 8 who can sing the chorus with Anfione), and mimes (Minimum: 8, if 8 singers; 12, if 4 singers).

The story of *Niobe* itself can be performed dramatically without any Dance. The story is told by the singers, and the dance is not linked dramatically with the plot. Ballet is not a part of the drama, but as a decorative element of style, an ornament, it does provide a release from the dramatic tension. Depriving our performance of it would be depriving the show of a color, an element of contrast. As we saw earlier, the dance element cannot be separated from a staging element especially important in Munich, the supernumeraries. Therefore, this third group of supernumeraries could be made of 6 dancers, who in addition to dancing can enhance the retinues of soloists (Minimum: 6).

Because their (lost) music was from another composer rather than by Steffani, the three Ballets appear rather straightforward at first glance, and it is tempting to consider the

dance as separated from the rest of the play: a ballet would occur at the end of each act and they would be distinct from the rest of the action. However, such an approach would be misdirected, not only because one of these ballets occurs in the middle of an act, but because another one is not listed in the printed list of the libretto. This list of dancers is better seen as an adjunct to the list of supernumeraries, as all the ballets are danced by "Comparse".

The citizens of Thebes, in the first ballet on the list, dance midway through Act II to adore Anfione as a god, but there has already been a ballet at the end of Act I that is not specified here: the hunters, recorded in the list of supernumeraries as followers of Tiberino, are dancing. The second ballet listed, for shepherds at the end of Act II, is danced by the followers of Manto (Nymphs with musical instruments in their hands) and might be joined by Tiberino's companions (hunters) and the shepherds indicated in the list. After the Niobids are dead—though still on stage—the opera concludes with the third listed ballet, a dance of celebrating soldiers from Creonte's army, who are first mentioned in the list of supernumeraries: "Warriors with Creonte."

It is therefore likely that some of the supernumeraries were chosen to dance in their characters for these four ballets, or that the dancers were also acting as supernumeraries. In any case, the number of costumes needed for the ballets will be a minimum of four times the number of dancers, though these costumes would also be used by them when being supernumeraries. The same historical reference to 1688 Munich should also inspire the work on the 60 costumes for *Niobe*. There are two main ways to produce these *Niobe* costumes: either they come from the stock or are newly made. Productions of *Venus/Actéon*, *Poppea*, and *Acis* should be kept intact given the prospect for revivals. Considering that some of the costumes from the stock are already slated to be used for *Antiochus*, our planned Chamber Opera Series 3, *Dido* will certainly almost exhaust the stock in term of possibilities for the 2011 festival. It is already clear that most of the 60 costumes for *Niobe* will have to be made new.

7.3.2 Sets

To assure adequate stylistic accuracy, the sets should be composed of flat elements[1]. To reduce cost, these flats can have a printed front picturing architecture represented in painted perspective. Although this process is more economical than painted sets, to do the 13 original sets would require a very consequential budget[2]. There is no indication of any set designer in the libretto, and no prints depicting the sets of Niobe were published at the time. A HIP hypothesis for this omission is that the sets may not have all been newly designed: it is possible that some of the 11 sets designed by the brothers Mauro for Steffani's *Servio Tullio* in Munich in 1686 were reused for *Niobe*. In the same way of thinking, the sets of our production of *Niobe, Regina di Tebe* is another opportunity to continue the process initiated in 2008 for the project for the sets of Graupner's *Antiochus und Stratonica*. The project for *L'incoronazione di Poppea* is the most recent fruit of this research: a permanent period frame which holds various sets was reconstructed from original documents. The system for changing sets elaborated in the frame of the project for *Antiochus* could be used first for *Niobe*.

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[1] For a full Story Board of the Staging, see the page created by Rémy-Michel Trotier, my collaborator for the sets of *Niobe*: http://www.academiedesprez.org/recherche/displays/Niobe_Storyboard.htm

[2] On the sets of Niobe in 2011 in Boston, see: https://www.classical-scene.com/2011/06/18/scene-for-bemf%E2%80%99s-niobe/

But the strong historic component of the set calls into question the usual interactive process between designer and production team. Interactions between vision and budget induce necessary adjustments; the project therefore should present several possibilities for consideration. The sets for *Niobe*, like those designed for *Poppea*, should be conceived with a number of options that, combined in various ways, would provide a range of costs, and result in a show that is "in style," but also in harmony with our budget. This process should be implemented with the creative involvement of the Production Manager. Finally, an extensive use of existing elements present in the BEMF stock, notably from previous productions, is recommended. In the same Baroque spirit of reuse, we should develop the stock further. It would be interesting to invest in some generic sets that could also be used in 2013 for *Antiochus* (e.g., a generic woodland, a royal palace, etc.). Both of these directions—optimization and development of the stock—can only be undertaken with the customs of the time.

7.3.3 Machines

Most of the machines are part of the action, mentioned in the sung text of the characters who comment about what is happening. Additionally, one of the special attributes of the machines in *Niobe* is that some of them function in deep relation with the music in the arias of soloists (the ultimate expression of this approach being of course the raising of the walls during Anfione's singing), and there is also the special music written by Steffani to go with a few of the effects (for example, the arrival of Latona, Apollo, and Diana). Machines are the area where BEMF's experience and expertise is the most limited. I propose to concentrate on machines that are absolutely necessary to the action, and also on those machines for which Steffani wrote special music. Even with this limitation, the number of mechanical systems to be implemented for *Niobe* remains quite substantial. The historical inspiration should be the guide for such an undertaking. Research on historical machinery is in progress to understand fully the historical meaning of these stage components: how they were made, but more importantly, how did they "play".

After that, there is a need of competence to adapt our understanding of the original to systems available today. In a modern theater these machines are not a permanent part of the technical equipment. Here also there is a need for mechanical systems to make their movements happen. These mechanical systems will need to be identified, and bought, rented, or in some cases specially conceived and built. The technical competence for these systems should encompass American standards for safety, construction, and operation[3].

To summarize, the staged production should first consider a Fidelity to the sources. The manuscript score and original libretto are full of information, which should be considered. The number of people on stage and the variety of sets and machines are both important. We should try to keep all the elements of the libretto and focus on the relations between them but scale down their proportions accordingly to fit our means. The context of the original performance must be of help in this process, allowing Creativity with History. For doing the sets and machines, various options—full out, eliminating one or more of the sets, eliminating one or more of the machines, scaling back on one or more elements in a set or machine—will be listed, and then artistic concerns, technical requirements, and budgetary realities will be considered when selecting from those options to make a final plan of what to include in the spectacle. From BEMF's perspective, the production will need to see a New Involvement of the production team, so historical, artistic, and economical solutions can be achieved.

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[3] The flying effects were under the technical supervision of the company *Flying by FOY*. For more information, see: http://flybyfoy.com/portfolio/professional-theatre/

7.3.4 Flying machines

This section presents a description of all the flying effects in my staging of *Niobe* for the Boston Early Music Festival 2011. In this Internal Document, effects are presented with photographs of the model in volume of the sets I designed for the production. All the flying effects mentioned in the original libretto of 1688 are planned for our production: six flights, to which an extra one is added for the very end of the performance, following the apotheosis tradition of Italian and French operas. In total seven flights, involving five artists, take place in the production.

The Flying Machine is made of a single carriage which has 4 different "dressings":
1. The Dragon Chariot (marked DC).
2. The Cloud, (CL).
3. The Planet Mars (PM).
4. The Horses Chariot (marked HC).

The Flying Machine can carry up to 3 adults at the same time. Role/Artists Flying in the Machine were:

1. Niobe/Amanda Forsythe
2. Creonte/Matthew White
3. Poliferno/Jesse Blumberg
4. Apollo/Frederick Metzger
5. Diana/Emy Metzger

(For safety reason, a written agreement had to be obtained from all artists involved a year in advance.)

Page and bar numbers refer to BEMF's edition fo the score: [Orlandi, Luigi, Steffani, Agostino et Ardespin, Melchior d']. *Niobe.* [*Niobe/Regina di Tebe*] Cambridge (MA) : Boston Early Music Festival, 2010.

ACT I
First Dressing of the Machine: The Dragon Chariot DC

Flight #1(a)   Music p42-b14

Flight #1(a)	**Dragon Chariot flies in, stops and hoovers** DC
	with Matthew White (Creonte) & Jesse Blumberg (Poliferno)
	Speed: SLOW

Flight #1(b)   Music p42-dc-b14

Flight #1(b)	**Dragon Chariot flies down, lands** DC
	with Matthew White (Creonte) & Jesse Blumberg (Poliferno)
	who get out.
	Speed: SLOW

Flight #1(c)   **Music: p51-dc-b63**

Flight 1(c)	**Dragon Chariot flies out** DC

Flight 1(c)   **Dragon Chariot flies out**   DC
with Matthew White (Creonte) & Jesse Blumberg (Poliferno) in.
Speed: MIDDLE FAST

Scene 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 (Anfione, Niobe, Clearte, Nerea) ....
Scene 19 & 20 (Creonte, Poliferno)...

Flight #2(a)   **Music p79-II-b47.2**

Flight #2(a)   **Dragon Chariot flies and land**   DC
with Matthew White (Creonte) & Jesse Blumberg (Poliferno) who get out of it.
Speed: SLOW

Flight #2(b)   **Music: p85-b32**

Flight 2(b)	**Dragon Chariot flies out <u>empty</u>** (on a gesture of Poliferno/Jesse Blumberg) **DC** Speed: MIDDLE FAST

Scene 21, 22, 23 (Anfione, Nerea, Niobe, Tiresia, Tiberino, Manto).................................

END of FIRST ACT

INTERMISSION

During intermission: Change of the Dressing of the Machine:

The Clouds **CL** are put on the Machine

ACT II

Scene 1 (Creonte, Poliferno) ....

Flight #3(a) **Cloud empty flies down and lands** **CL**
Speed: SLOW

Flight #3b	Music p117-dc-b1

Flight #3(b) **Cloud flies up to stay hovering above the stage** **CL**
with Matthew White (Creonte) & Jesse Blumberg (Poliferno) in.
Speed: SLOW

Flight #3c	Music p136-b1

Flight #3(c)	**Cloud flies down and lands** `CL`
	with Matthew White (Creonte) & Jesse Blumberg (Poliferno) in.
	Speed: MIDDLE FAST

Flight #3(d)	Music p138-b32

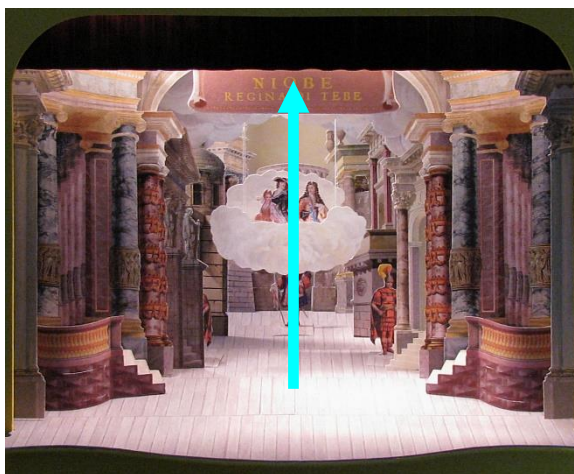| **Flight #3(d)**	**Cloud flies up** `CL`
	with Matthew White (Creonte), Jesse Blumberg (Poliferno) joined by Amanda Forsythe (Niobe)
	Speed: MIDDLE FAST

AFTER THIS FLIGHT WE CHANGE THE DRESSING OF THE MACHINE: THE PLANET MARS `PM` IS PUT ON THE BACK
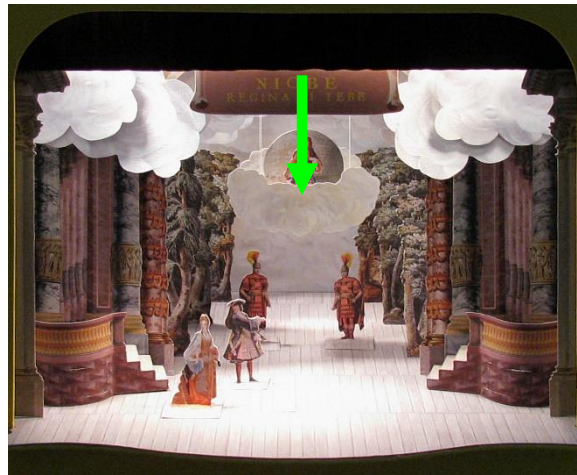
Scene 5 (Anfione)..

Scene 6, 7, 8 (Tiresia, Tiberino, Manto)...

Scene 9 (Niobe as Venus, Creonte as Mars, Poliferno as Mercury) ....

Flight #4a	**Music p161-b1**

Flight #4(a)   **Planet Mars flies in and stays up**   PM
with Matthew White (Creonte as Mars)
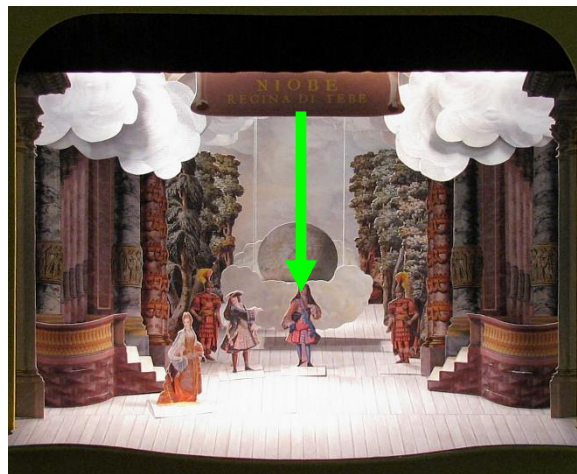Speed: SLOW

Flight #4(b)	**Music p163-b45**

Flight #4(b)   **Planet Mars lands**   PM
with Matthew White (Creonte as Mars) in, then going out
Speed: SLOW

Flight #4(c)   **Music p171-b38**

Flight #4(c)   **Planet Mars flies up**   **PM**
with Matthew White (Mars), Jesse Blumberg (Mercury)
joined by Amanda Forsythe (Niobe)
Speed: SLOW

END OF THE SECOND ACT

INTERMISSION

ACT III
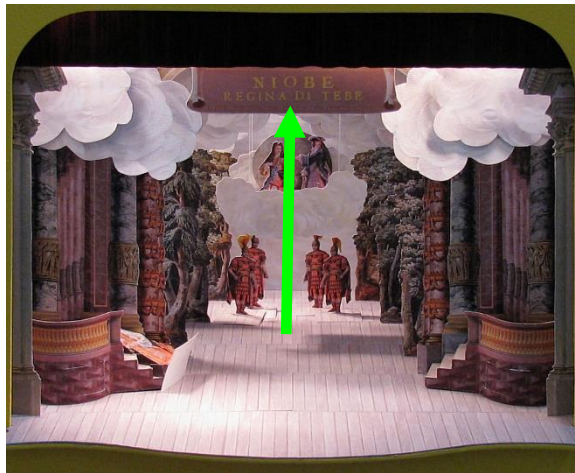### Scene 1 (Creonte as Mars, Poliferno as Mercury, Niobe as Venus).......................

Preparation	**Planet Mars is down**...	**PM**

Scene 2 (Creonte, Poliferno, Niobe)..

Flight #5a	**Music p.205-b47**

Flight #5(a)	**Planet Mars flies up**	**PM**
	with Matthew White (Mars) and Jesse Blumberg (Mercury)	
	Speed: MIDDLE FAST	

AFTER THIS FLIGHT, WE CHANGE THE DRESSING OF THE MACHINE :
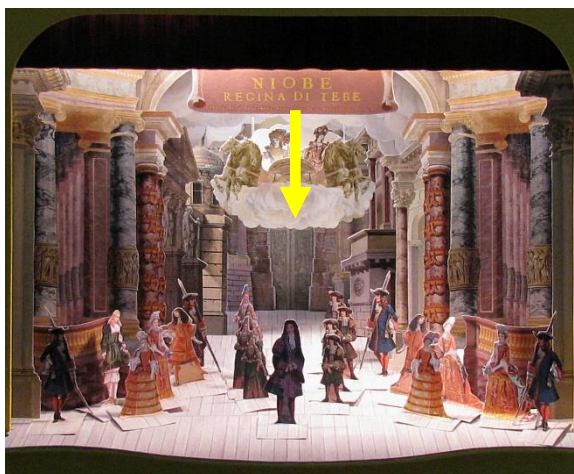THE HORSES CHARIOT HC IS PUT ON FRONT, The CLOUD ON THE BACK

Scene 10 (Clearte & Niobids, Apollo & Diana)..

Flight #6a	**Music p228-b1**

Flight #6(a)	**Horses Chariot flies down and stays hoverring** **HC**
	with Frederick Metzger (Apollo) and Emy Metzger (Diana)
	Speed: MIDDLE FAST

Flight #6b	**Music p229-b15**

Flight #6b	**Horses Chariot flies up** **HC**
	with Frederick Metzger (Apollo) and Emy Metzger (Diana)
	Speed: FAST
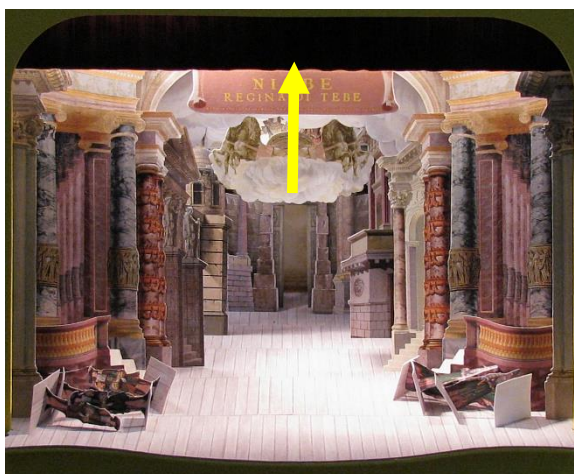
Scene 11, 12 (Anfione, Niobe) ....

Scene 13 (Creonte, Poliferno, Nerea, Tiresia, Manto, Tiberino)...

<div style="border: 1px solid black;">

Flight #7a   Music End of Chaconne
              p254-b89

</div>

Flight #7(a)	**Horses Chariot flies down and stays hoverring**	HC
	with Frederick Metzger (Apollo) and Emy Metzger (Diana	
	Speed: SLOW	

THIS WAS THE LAST EFFECT THE PERFORMANCE