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

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4. English « Masque/opera »

« To [stage] direct is to tell a story »

Ariane Mnouchkine, 1988[1]

« But when we are in the Metamorphoses,
we are walking on enchanted ground,
and see nothing but scenes of Magick lying round us. »

Joseph Addison, 1712[2]

John Blow's *Venus and Adonis* was featured in the Boston Early Music Festival's inaugural Chamber Opera Series in 2008. I staged two other English operas which were presented the following seasons, with performances extending from 2009 to 2015: Blow's *Venus and Adonis* was followed by *Acis and Galatea* of George Frideric Handel (1685–1759), and the cycle was completed in 2010 with *Dido and Aeneas* by Henry Purcell (1659-1695). However, the concept of an English set took shape in my mind only after Blow's opera was produced, when I suggested that we would continue the series with a piece by a well-known opera composer but also with another work sung in English. The idea was also to strengthen the Chamber Opera Series concept by relying on the desire of Boston audiences for librettos set in their native tongue. The multiple and brilliant authorship of the libretto of *Acis and Galatea* attracted my attention as well as my curiosity regarding a piece whose identity had not been well served by recent staged performances. It led me to commence extensive research into the perspective of a staged production that would perfectly fit the spatial concept, poetic and literal, of Chamber Opera. This study was interconnected with an attempt to question the anonymity of the libretto of *Venus and Adonis*.

4.1 Practice and context of the research

The first perspective chosen to establish the directions for the staging was to read the librettos from the contexts of their first performances and clarify the intentions of their creators. To identify for each opera the influence of a specific patronage over the compositions both in artistic terms of libretto and score, was the first step. Because *Venus and Adonis* was composed around 1683 for Charles II, performing forces, place of performance and poetic themes are deeply connected with the monarch, at both public and private levels. The origins

[1] « Mettre en scène c'est: raconter une histoire » was the answer Ariane Mnouchkine (b. 1939) gave to my question « Mettre en scène, qu'est que c'est, en trois autres mots? » during a private conversation while I was an intern at Théâtre du Soleil in 1985.

[2] Joseph Addison (1672–1719) in *The Spectator*, No. 417, 28 June 1712. Available on line at: http://web.mnstate.edu/gracyk/courses/web%20publishing/addison417.htm

of *Dido and Aeneas* and its exact date of creation are still an object of academic debate[3] which blurs its identity and that is why the research concerning Purcell's opera has been left out of this study[4]. Besides, the lack of original musical material results in too many vast questions about its original form and design[5]. Created in 1718, *Acis and Galatea* may have known the same fate: quite unique in the production of Handel, the patronage which created the piece was so linked to it that after the demise of the Chandos family, for which the piece was created, and the eradication of the Cannons gardens, where the piece was performed, the memory of this original version was lost. Only recently has *Acis and Galatea* been regaining its original shape, thanks to the work of John Butt which led to a new edition of the score[6].

My relationship with *Venus and Adonis* started earlier than the project, as the title had attracted me in a simple way for decades. The clear narrative focused on one couple, the relation of love and beauty, the definition of genders, and the hunting theme, were as many points of entry which were interesting for me because of their omnipresence in the visual arts of the period. The considerable occurrence of Venus in poetry and iconography helped me to become familiar with all the episodes of the existence of the character. Things were very different for Handel's opera. Although the myth was not as familiar to me, *Acis and Galatea* had the same characteristics and seemed to follow the exact same artistic path. When Paul O'Dette proposed *Venus and Adonis* to inaugurate our first Chamber Opera Series, the work was self-evident by its major characteristics: it is considered the first English opera, the short libretto in English being set to music from beginning to end[7]. The fact the Blow's church music is well known may also have played a role in the recognition of the composer's name and the then recent edition by Bruce Wood of the score had also attracted new interests of the early music community for the piece[8]. As explained in the introduction of Chapter 3, pairing Blow's *Venus* with Charpentier's *Actéon* was a dramaturgical gesture which, besides putting next to

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[3] A recent article by Professor Ellen Harris gave a vivid state of affair regarding *Dido and Aeneas*. See: Harris, Ellen T. "The More We Learn About *Dido and Aeneas*, the Less We Know". *New York Times*, 15 December 2017.

[4] Besides, from the point of view of the libretto, Virgilian poetical origins of *Dido and Aeneas* are superseding the Ovidian ones which unites the two other ones.

[5] For the 2010 performance of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, I used a large tapestry as a backdrop. A tapestry was a feature which connects with the identity of a room, giving a double identity, such as a chamber in a palace (or, as matter of fact, in a school, for a gala performance), and although it does not convey immediately today the idea of « opera stage », the use of Tapestry for creating a theatrical space in a palace was current during the seventeenth century. For example, Vigarani had used tapestry for Cavalli's *Xerse* for the performances in the Louvre Palace in 1660. See: La Gorce, Jérôme de. *Carlo Vigarani, intendant des plaisirs de Louis XIV*. Paris: Perrin, 2005, pp. 30–33.

[6] See: Handel, George Frideric [Georg Friedrich Händel]. *Acis and Galatea.* {Acis and Galatea (1718), (First « Cannons » Version)/HWV 49a/STTTB soli 2 oboes (doubling recorder), bassoon, 2 violins, bassi/edited by Clifford Bartlett} Huntingdon: The Early Music Company Ltd, 2009.

[7] *Venus and Adonis* is set in music from start to finish, as we can determine today following the earliest surviving score; the libretto was not published for the original performance, and a spoken epilogue, for example, may have been recited, or dances may have followed.

[8] Wood, Bruce. "Introduction" in Blow, John. *Venus and Adonis*, edited by Bruce Wood and Purcell Society. London: Stainer & Bell, 2008.

each other an English structure with a French one [9], also asked the general « question of the chamber »: how to establish a new relation with the performing side of the chamber opera repertoire; that is, how to represent the repertoire dramatically in an empty space? How to tell a story? If the care for the contexts was also the guide I followed to define the dramaturgical foundations of the staged productions, my investigation focused on what appeared to be some of the aesthetic principles behind the conception of the original works. The method undertook to discover the pieces reveals that both *Venus and Adonis* and *Acis and Galatea* could be considered as expressions of a fundamental question regarding opera as a genre: in the relations and correspondences between literature, music and visual arts, what are the structural connections they explore during a performance? These connections borrow from the long rich tradition of the English *Masque*, influenced during the Restoration by French and in the Georgian era by Italian *opera*. That is why I consider both Blow's and Handel's works as belonging to a genre I call, following Andrew R. Walkling's insights, *Masque/opera*[10].

4.1.1 Concept or design

As explained in the previous chapter, Blow's *Venus and Adonis*, associated with Charpentier's *Actéon*, was the first part, in my BEMF production, of a court divertissement given in the frame of a hunting party. The staging of its Prologue defined this frame to unite the two pieces. I enhanced the function of the Prologue, a theatrical means that poets and musicians have been using since ancient times, to create a new mental space suited to the empty stage of a concert hall and suitable for comprehending the two pieces. This Prologue format gave the dramatic template on which all my staged productions for this very space have been conceived. By reinvigorating its meaning in my staging, the Prologue was given back its original function: to offer a frame and a doorway for the audience to the story the operas represent. In fact, the Prologue is literally used to set the time and give the necessity to proceed with the story telling. I gave the Prologue the function to give the « dessein » of the performance following the seventeenth century where any intellectual or artistic project confused itself with its design (Figure 1). In 1690, Furetière explained that a « dessein » is a « Project, enterprise, intention. [… and] the thought that one has in the imagination of the order, of the distribution and of the construction of a painting, a Poem, a Book, a building. [… dessein] is also said in Painting, for these pictures or paintings that are without color, and that are sometimes executed in a big way. [… but] is also taken for the thought of a great work that is crudely drawn in small [size], to be executed and finished on a grand scale. »[11], the last meaning being close to the one of the Italian « modello », as we have seen in Chapter 1, when exploring Monteverdi's *Orfeo*. « Disegno », the Italian word for drawing or design, carries this complex meaning in art, involving both the ability to make the drawing and the intellectual capacity to invent the design. A French–English dictionary of 1673 had already given the translation of « dessein » as « a

[9] Aside from assuring our ongoing artistic work on French operatic repertoire as BEMF just had recorded Lully's *Thésée*, and produced and recorded his *Psyché*.

[10] See: Walkling, Andrew R. *Masque and Opera in England, 1656–1688*. London: Routledge, 2016.

[11] « Projet, entreprise, intention. […] la pensée qu'on a dans l'imagination de l'ordre, de la distribution & de la construction d'un tableau, d'un Poëme, d'un Livre, d'un bastiment. […] se dit aussi en Peinture, de ces images ou tableaux qui sont sans couleur, & qu'on execute quelquefois en grand. […] se prend aussi pour la pensée d'un grand ouvrage qu'on trace grossierement en petit, pour l'executer & finir en grand. » in Furetière, Antoine. *Dictionnaire universel, contenant généralement tous les mots françois tant vieux que modernes, et les termes de toutes les sciences et des arts... par feu Messire Antoine Furetière...* La Haye: A. et R. Leers, 1690.

design, plot, project, purpose, determination, resolution »[12]. These notions, which are applicable to both poetry and visual arts, were also applied to performing arts.

Figure 1: *Le Dessein*, engraving by Etienne Jeaurat (1699–1789)
From a painting by Sébastien Le Clerc (1637–1714).
Collection of Gilbert Blin.

To give visual purpose and in-motion shapes to poetic ideas is one of the tasks of the stage director, and the authors of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, themselves influenced by the ancient theorists, provide ample and useful perspectives on the subject. The Latin dictum « Ut pictura poesis », which literally means « As is painting so is poetry », comes to mind again and deserves attention. The statement occurs in Horace's *Ars Poetica*: « As is painting so is poetry. Some works will captivate you when you stand very close to them and others if you are at a greater distance. This work prefers a darker vantage point, that work wants to be seen in the light since it feels no terror before the penetrating judgment of the critic. This work pleases only once, that work will give pleasure even if we go back to it ten times over. »[13] Horace meant that poetry deserved the same careful consideration that was, in Horace's day, reserved for painting[14]. The concept that poetry and painting might somehow be linked from a certain point of view was not original to Horace, though he devised the motto « Ut pictura poesis ». But, as I have noted in my chapter about Monteverdi's *Orfeo*, the

[12] Cotgrave, Randle. *A French and English dictionary*. London: Anthony Dolle, 1673.

[13] Horace. *Ars Poetica*, Verse 361.

[14] Golden, Leon. "Reception of Horace's Ars Poetica" in *A Companion to Horace, edited by Gregson Davis*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010, p. 400.

comparison refers, through the Roman Plutarch (ca. AD 46–AD 120), back to the Greek lyrical poet Simonide of Keos (556 BC–468 BC)[15]. Plutarch, in his book on the fame of the Athenian, *De Gloria Atheniesium*[16], attributes to Simonides of Keos the idea that poetry is a speaking picture, painting a mute poetry: « Poema pictura loquens, pictura poema silens ». Plutarch employed the association to praise historians who wrote such imagistic texts that readers could « see » the moments they were reading, or, as a matter of fact, hearing, as poetry were read aloud or sung and therefore still perceived through a phonic medium[17]. This idea that poetry, when heard, can create in the mind images was to know a fervent development during the Renaissance, also thanks to the popularity of Aristotle's *Poetics*.

The mimetic representation of life in painting, poetry and theatre is central to Aristotle's *Poetics*, his treatise about aesthetics introducing the concept of mimesis. Aristotle stated that human beings are mimetic beings, feeling an urge to create texts and art forms that represent reality and offer reflections.[18] But Aristotle considered it important that there be a certain difference between the work of art on the one hand and life on the other: spectators draw knowledge and consolation from tragedies only because these events do not happen to them. Without this distance provided by the imitation, tragedy could not give rise to catharsis, the purgation of the soul of its bad passions. However, it is equally important for Aristotle that the text causes the audience to identify with the characters and the events in the text, and unless this identification occurs, it does not touch them[19]: Aristotle holds that it is through « simulated representation »[20], i.e., mimesis, that the audience respond to the acting on stage which is conveying to it what the characters feel, so that the audience may empathize with the characters in this way through the mimetic form of dramatic roleplay. It is the task of the stage director to produce the enactment to accomplish this empathy by means of what is taking place on stage. In short, catharsis, the purgation of the soul, can only be achieved if we see something that is both recognizable and distant from us.

4.1.2 *Masque/opera*: the meeting of sounds and images

This approach found a fertile ground in the formative years of the opera genre, as music de facto conferred a distance to the strong emotions depicted in a libretto. In opera, this distance is supplemented by different matters: i.e., the characters sing when they are sometimes

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[15] See: Harvey, Judith. "Ut pictura poesis." In *Glossary 2004, Theories of Medias*, The University of Chicago, 2002: http://csmt.uchicago.edu/glossary2004/utpicturapoesis.htm accessed 8 April 2018.

[16] Plutarch. *De Gloria Atheniesium*, III, 346f–347d.

[17] « We tend to think that to compare poetry with painting is to make a metaphor, while to differentiate poetry from painting is to state a literal truth. » in Mitchell, William John Thomas. *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986, p. 49.

[18] Praz, Mario. *Mnemosyne. The Parallel between Literature and the Visual Arts (« Bollingen Series », XXXV, 16)*. Princeton (NJ): Princeton University Press, 1970.

[19] My summary of Aristotle's views is inspired from notes taken during the Seminar *Esthétique Classique* of Professor Jacques Scherer, Sorbonne Nouvelle, 1980 and 1981. See: Scherer, Jacques. *La Dramaturgie Classique en France*. Paris: Nizet, 1986 and two study cases by the same author: Racine, Jean. *Bérénice, Édition avec analyse dramaturgique sous la direction de Jacques Scherer*. Paris: Société d'Édition d'Enseignement Supérieur, 1974; and Scherer, Jacques. *Racine: Bajazet*. Paris: Centre de Documentation Universitaire, 1971.

[20] Aristotle. *Poetics*. Chapter 1 and Chapter 2, notably 1488a, Chapter 3.

supposed to talk, and pioneers in the genre were aware of the problem[21]. During the Renaissance, the argument sprung up of which form, poetry, and sometimes music, or painting, and sometimes also sculpture, was superior. Painting took precedence in most of the cases, and Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519) recognized the imitation of nature in both arts but designated painting as the more noble art[22]. This competition, or « paragone » as da Vinci put it, between media of painting and poetry placed primacy on painting because sight was considered a higher-ranking sense than hearing, the sense on which poetry, and music, depended. Opera was the form elaborated to satisfy both senses equally: the 'weakness' of recited poetry being compensated by the added value of music and by the art of painting. As remarked by Lee Rensselaer (1898–1984), in his 1940 seminal study "*Ut Pictura Poesis* : The Humanistic Theory of Painting", the « sister arts », as they were called during the Renaissance, were acknowledged as different « in means and manner of expression » though they « were considered almost identical in fundamental nature, in content, and in purpose ».[23]

In the Classical age, the 1668 translation in French by Roger de Piles (1635–1709) of the Latin poem *De arte graphica* by another painter and theorist Charles Alphonse Du Fresnoy (1611–1668) proved influential in expanding the discussion of « Ut pictura poesis » with new editions in 1673, 1684 and 1688, all fundamental years when tracing the history of French opera and English *Masque*. While his opening lines[24] referred directly to Plutarch, his developed views inspired new avenues of exploration, and propose a method to compose pictures which denotes a sense of direction, where the organization of the space and the placement of characters in it contributes, if not makes clear, the story told by the picture. In England, it was at the request of non-speaking French painters that John Dryden (1631–1700) translated the de Piles version of the poem into English in 1695 but he added his own preface establishing « A Parallel betwixt Painting and Poetry »[25]. Dryden develops the idea of artistic perfection and likeness in mimesis and compare extensively epic poetry, theatre stage and painting purposes

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[21] This is particularly noticeable in the "Letter to the Duke of Buckingham upon operas" by Saint-Evremond from 1678, one of the first French critics to write about opera as a genre. See: Saint-Evremond, [Charles de]. *Œuvres Mêlées, revues, annotées et précédées d'une histoire de la vie et des ouvrages de l'auteur, par Charles Giraud de l'Institut, Tome Deuxième*. Libraire, Paris: J. Léon Techener fils, MDCCCLXV [1865], pp. 389–403. For an elegant English translation, see: *Letters of Charles Marguetel de Saint-Denis, Seigneur de Saint Evremond, Edited with an introduction and notes by John Hayward.* London: George Routledge & Sons, 1930, pp. 205–217. See also: Saint-Evremond, [Charles de]. *Les Opéra. Édition présentée, établie et annotée par Robert Finch et Eugène Joliat*. Genève: Droz, 1979.

[22] Leonardo da Vinci's views on poetry and painting are stated in his *Trattato della pittura*. For an online edition, see: http://www.dominiopublico.gov.br/download/texto/lb000840.pdf

[23] Rensselaer, Wright Lee. "*Ut Pictura Poesis*: The Humanistic Theory of Painting" in *Art Bulletin* 22, 1940, pp. 197–269.

[24] « La Peinture & la Poësie sont deux Soeurs qui se ressemblent si fort en toutes choses, qu'elles se prestent alternativement l'une à l'autre leur office & leur nom: On appelle la premiere une Poësie muette, & l'autre une Peinture parlante. » in Piles, Roger de. *L'art de peinture, de Charles-Alphonse Du Fresnoy, Traduit en françois, avec des remarques necessaire & tres-amples*. Paris: Nicolas L'Anglois, 1668, p. 3.

[25] *The Works of John Dryden, Volume XX: Prose 1691–1698 De Arte Graphica and Shorter Works*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990, pp. 38–207.

and methods[26]. Performed in 1683, *Venus and Adonis* by John Blow offers an operatic application reflecting these principles[27].

Closer in time to *Acis and Galatea*, Joseph Addison (1672–1719) in 1712 praises sight as « the most perfect and delightful of all our senses »[28] arguing for the vividness and universality of pictorial images in contrast to poetry, itself depending on a specific idiom: « description runs yet further from the things it represents than painting; for a picture bears a real resemblance to its original, which letters and syllables are wholly void of ».[29] Extending his reflection on gardening, Addison recommended « there are as many Kinds of Gardening as of Poetry »[30] and advised the man of taste to « make a pretty Landskip of his own Possessions »[31] with his garden, suggesting a very close relationship of landscape painting and garden design. A practitioner of the two arts, Alexander Pope, one of the librettist of *Acis and Galatea*, considered both the art of poetry and the art of painting to be equals, and it can easily be seen that he held that there was a close relationship of expressivity.[32] But his views on visual arts are supplemented and amplified by the fact that, when Pope started to reflect on the question, gardens were starting to be inspired by the taste for picturesque called for by Addison, defined by the influence of paintings by Nicolas Poussin (1594–1665) or Claude le Lorrain (ca. 1600–1682). By comparing gardening to landscape painting, Pope's eloquent writings will ultimately have an enormous influence on English garden design. The garden around his villa of Twickenham was the receptacle of all his experiences and research and became famous during his lifetime, but the gardens of Cannons, a place which triggered *Acis and Galatea*, had doubtless initiated the creative and reflexive process of the thinker, even if it may have been in negative terms.

By placing the art of painting in the center of my reflections on *Venus and Adonis* and on *Acis and Galatea* I try to work on the differentiation between the perception of time and

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[26] Already in 1691, for the dedication of the score of *The Prophetess*, which the poet drafted for Purcell's signature, Dryden begun by associating « All arts and Sciences » in their common need of patronage and asserted a closer relationship between music and poetry « acknowledgd [sic] Sisters », for « As poetry is the harmony of words, so musick is that of notes ». In the draft of the same text Dryden goes further and offers a comparison between music, poetry and painting, a comparison omitted from the publication. See: Roswell G. Ham. "Dryden's dedication for The Music of the Prophetesse, 1691" in *PMLA*, L (1935) pp. 1065–1075.

[27] See: Hagstrum, Jean H. *The Sister Arts: The Tradition of Literary Pictorialism and English Poetry from Dryden to Gray*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1958.

[28] Addison, Joseph. *The Spectator*, No. 411, 21 June 1712. Available on line at: http://web.mnstate.edu/gracyk/courses/web%20publishing/addison411.htm (last accessed 19 March 2018).

[29] Addison, Joseph. *The Spectator*, No. 416, 27 June 1712. Available on line at: http://web.mnstate.edu/gracyk/courses/web%20publishing/addison416.htm (last accessed 19 March 2018).

[30] Addison, Joseph. *The Spectator*, No. 477, 6 September 1712. Available on line at: http://archive.twoaspirinsandacomedy.com/spectator/spectator.php?line=477(last accessed 19 March 2018).

[31] Addison, Joseph. *The Spectator*, No. 414, 25 June 1712. Available on line at: http://web.mnstate.edu/gracyk/courses/web%20publishing/addison414.htm (last accessed 19 March 2018).

[32] See: Williams, Robert W. "Alexander Pope and « Ut Pictura Poesis »" in *Sydney Studies in English Journal,* Volume 9 (1983), pp. 61–75. Available on line (last accessed 19 March 2018): https://openjournals.library.sydney.edu.au/index.php/SSE/article/view/396/365

space in poetry and painting[33]. I argue that their complementarity in the artistic form I called the *Masque/opera* implies a staging which engages in a temporal movement concomitant to music but suggests the support of the adequate visual references. Factors such as essential time are inherent in the texture itself of a show with its instantaneous reception like they are for the contemplation of a picture, in its composition, or in its aesthetic arrangement.[34] In both cases, spectacle and painting, this empathy is happening in real time, as Jean Mairet (1604–1686) explained it in 1631: « From the point of view of imagination, history and comedy [spectacle] are not the same thing: the difference is in this point, that history is only a simple narration of things that happened before, aptly made for the maintenance of memory, and not for the contentment of the imagination; where the comedy is an active and touching representation of things as if they really happened in real time, and of which the main objective is the Pleasure of the imagination ».[35] In opera, the time of the score fixes the time of the contemplation of the stage and it is not a minor effect of the creative power of the composer. Taking into consideration the emphasis on the viewer's eye and the imagery that contributed to audience to be able to so vividly « watch » the plot of these poems unfolding, the two following essays try to place *Venus and Adonis* and *Acis and Galatea* in the larger aesthetical debates of their times. With a broad up-to-date attitude of investigation regarding their performing capabilities, I will, in the perspective of staging them, try to unearth what is the « Pleasure of the imagination » they can procure.

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[33] Silver, Larry. "Step-Sister of the Muses: Painting as Liberal Art and Sister Art" in *Articulate Images, The Sister Arts from Hogarth to Tennyson, Edited by Richard Wendorf*. Minneapolis (MN): University of Minnesota Press, 1983, p. 36–69.

[34] See: Wendorf, Richard. "Ut Pictura Biographia: Biography and Portrait Painting as Sister Arts" in *Articulate Images, The Sister Arts from Hogarth to Tennyson, Edited by Richard Wendorf*. Minneapolis (MN): University of Minnesota Press, 1983, p. 115.

[35] « L'histoire et la comedie pour le regard de l'imagination ne sont pas la même chose: La difference est en ce point, que l'histoire n'est qu'une simple narration de choses autrefois arrivées, faite proprement pour l'entretien de la mémoire, et non pour le contentement de l'imagination; où la comédie est une active et pathétique representation des choses comme si véritablement elles arrivaient sur le temps, et de qui la principale fin est le Plaisir de l'imagination. » in Mairet, Jean. *La Silvanire, tragi-comédie pastorale*. Paris: Targa, 1631.

4.2 *Venus and Adonis* by John Blow

« Among those Things with Beauty shine,
(Both Humane natures, and Divine)
There was not so much sorrow spi'd,
No, no that Day the sweet Adonis died! »

Anne Killigrew, *Upon a Little Lady Under the Discipline of an Excellent Person*.[36]

The story of the death of the beautiful hunter Adonis is recounted by Ovid, the Roman poet of the first century, in Book X of his illustrious compilation of *Metamorphoses*. Adonis inspired love in Venus, and the goddess was so taken by the mortal that she began to spend more time on earth than she did in the heavens. Yet, even though Venus warned him of the dangers of pursuing dangerous beasts, Adonis went hunting a monstrous wild boar. Adonis was mortally wounded by the beast, and Venus, with her tears, transformed her beloved's blood into a flower of the same color. Immortality was given to Adonis through these little red anemones, with a spring life as short his was: a flower so fragile that the wind disperses the petals of its passing beauty. From the Greek bucolic poet Bion of Phlossa, who flourished in Sicily in the late second and early first centuries BC, one complete poem, *The Lament for Adonis*, survives. As its title indicates, it focuses on the end of the tale, when Adonis is mourned by Venus and the metamorphosis happens: « The Paphian weeps and Adonis bleeds, drop for drop, and the blood and tears become flowers upon the ground. Of the blood comes the rose, and of the tears the windflower. »[37] If the metamorphosis is the end of the tale of Venus and Adonis, it is the hunt that marks the key events of it. Thus, hunting, and its conclusion in the fatal outcome, emerges through time as a dominant theme of the myth and many versions are found throughout literature and the visual arts. In poetry, the attachment of Venus for Adonis finds fertile ground with the parallels offered by hunting and love: the physical vocabulary of the art of the chase can be applied to the courtship, and the tale of the mother of love and the beautiful hunter offers many opportunities for shifts between them[38]. In painting, the meeting of the two lovers during Adonis's hunt and the death of the hunter frame the tale and remain among the most represented episodes, one in the gallant manner, and the other in the funeral

[36] « Upon a Little Lady Under the Discipline of an Excellent Person » in Killigrew, Anne. *Poems 1686*. Facsimile edition, edited by R. E. Morton. Gainesville, Florida: Scholars, 1967, p. 93.

[37] Bion. « The Lament for Adonis », Verse: 64, in *The Greek Bucolic Poets*. Translated by Edmonds, J. M. Loeb Classical Library Volume 28. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press and London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1912.

[38] For a synthesis of Adonis in literature, see: Caruso, Carlo. *Adonis: The Myth of the Dying God in the Italian Renaissance*. London: Bloomsbury, 2013.

mode[39]. Starting in the Renaissance, poetry and painting unite on stage to make the myth a love tragedy in pastoral scenery, where hunting finds an extra cultural setting. It is with this dual expressivity that, in 1683, John Blow composed his scenic version of *Venus and Adonis* as a « Masque » for Charles II (1630 –1685). It is necessary to explore how the theme offered a striking articulation between poetry and visual arts in the seventeenth century, before investigating in detail how the patronage informs us as to the purpose of this opera in societal terms, and how the private side of this royal backing shaped the piece in detail. These considerations about the cultural context allow me to offer a personal hypothesis about the authorship of the libretto, authorship which reinforces the singularity of Blow's *Venus and Adonis* and enlightens its contents.

4.2.1 Betwixt Poems and Pictures

Although there were editions printed of the *Metamorphoses*[40] in the original Latin and in French and English translations, the tale of Adonis was mostly known in England thanks to the poem by William Shakespeare (1564–1616). Published in 1593, *Venus and Adonis* was probably Shakespeare's first publication, and gives a beautiful visual description of the metamorphosis[41]. By the end of the seventeenth century, however, the vivid eroticism of the rest of the poem was considered lecherous[42]. This vision may have been accentuated by religious concerns, catholic and reformed, who saw in Adonis one of the false idols of the Antiquity, adored for his beauty, a belief which finds an echo in by the works of Bion[43]. The importance of Shakespeare's poem is not to be underestimated, but in England it was soon superseded. The Italian poet Giambattista Marino (1569–1625) wrote *L'Adone*, published in Paris and Venice in 1623. Marino's work has substance: the myth is related by Ovid in

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[39] See: Price, Hereward T. "Function of Imagery in Venus and Adonis" in *Papers of the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts, and Letters* 31 (1945), pp. 275–297 (This essay is reprinted pp. 107–122 in the anthology of Kolin, see note 7). See also: Sillars, Stuart. *Shakespeare and the Visual Imagination*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015, pp. 55–94.

[40] For an English translation from Shakespeare's time, see the first widely available English translation (and the first to be translated directly from the Latin) by William Golding: [Ovid]. *The Fyrst Fower Bookes of P. Ovidius Nasos worke, entitled Metamorphosis, translated oute of Latin into Englishe meter*. [Edited by J. M. Cohen. Translated by Arthur Golding]. London: Willyam Seres, 1565 & 1567.

[41] « And in his blood that on the ground lay spill'd / A purple flower sprung up, chequer'd with white, / Resembling well his pale cheeks, and the blood / Which in round drops upon their whiteness stood. » in [Shakespeare, William.] *Venus and Adonis*. London: Richard Field, 1593, Verses 1167–1170.

[42] For the reception of Shakespeare's poem see: Kolin, Philip C. "Venus and/or Adonis among the Critics" in *Venus and Adonis: Critical Essays*, edited by Philip C. Kolin. New York: Garland, 1997, pp. 3–66, and for its reputation of lechery during the seventeenth century more specifically, see: pp. 10–12.

[43] « Un sanglier ayant malheureusement tué Adonis, Vénus le pleura d'une manière inconsolable. La plupart des peoples de l'Orient, à l'imitation de ce deüil, établirent des Fêtes pour pleurer Adonis. Les Poëtes racontent que Vénus obtint de Proserpine qu'Adonis ressusciteroit , & passeroit six mois sur la terre, & six mois dans les enfers. C'est sur cela qu'étoient fondées les réjoüissances qui suivoient le deüil de la mort d'Adonis. » in Calmet, Augustin. *Dictionnaire historique, critique, chronologique, géographique et littéral de la Bible, par le R. P. Dom Augustin Calmet,...* Paris : Émery, 1722-1728, p. 30. In the same book, see also N° 5: Adonis in "Hauts-lieux consacrez au culte des Idoles, & à toute sorte d'abominations", engraving by Charles-Nicolas Cochin Père (1688–1754), plate between pp. 334 and 335.

approximately 100 lines but was expanded to more than 40,000 lines by Marino[44]. Near the middle of the poem, the description of a garden occupies three entire cantos, 5,000 lines. This « Garden of Pleasure » is described in five sections: the Garden of the Eye, the Nose, the Ear, the Mouth, and the Garden of Touch. Here Marino displayed his gift for « ingegno » and « acutezza », the ingenuity and the wit the readers of his time appreciated in him, and here especially he earned the title « Poet of the Five Senses »[45]. This mannerist style invigorated the perception of the myth with sensory descriptions and influenced many writers[46], including the French poet Jean de La Fontaine (1621–1695), who in his *Adonis*, written in 1658, also treats the story with great care for visual effects.[47] Like Marino, La Fontaine expands the topical scenes of the tale by dividing it into episodes, which prompts a number of lavish descriptions and offers opportunity for sensorial exploration[48]. The tale of Adonis, by the time of La Fontaine, has become an eminently pictorial subject and La Fontaine cannot ignore this, and it may be a sign that *Venus and Adonis* was published in 1669 with his *Les Amours de Psyché et Cupidon*: the tale of Adonis, associated in publication with his eminently visual version of Psyché, immediately places the work in resonance with pictorial art. From 1670, the imaginary myth of Adonis was already formed at the crossroads of Ovid's original *Metamorphoses*, the contemporary poets' versions of the tale of Adonis and an illustrative tradition spread throughout Europe, defined through many illustrations and well-known masterpieces in England.

The tale of Venus and Adonis has held a major place in the production of illustrative artists since the Renaissance, suggesting its innately visual aspect. Any reader of *The Metamorphoses* would have expected engravings to accompany the fable of Adonis in illustrated editions since *The Metamorphoses* with figures by Bernard Salomon (1506–1561) was published in Lyon in 1557. This intense scene between the lovers, although not literally in the Ovidian text, is marked in Salomon's engraving by the amorous body language of lovers and was highly influential (Figure 1). Not only has Salomon's plate been repeated in numerous editions throughout Europe but his composition was reused, copied and imitated many times, as the engraving by Jean Mathieu (1590–1672), itself repeated in many different editions, exemplifies (Figure 2). The embracing couple became, for the engravers, the most used configuration inspired by the tale[49].

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[44] For an introduction to Marino, see: Priest, Harold. "Marino and Italian Baroque" in *The Bulletin of the Rocky Mountain Modern Language Association*, Vol. 25, No. 4 (Dec. 1971), pp. 107–111.

[45] For Marino in England, see: Mirollo, James V. *The Poet of the Marvelous: Giambattista Marino*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1963, pp. 243–264.

[46] See: *Tutte le opere di Giovan Battista Marino, volume 2, tomo 1,* a cura di Giovanni Pozzi. Milano: A. Mondadori Editore, 1976.

[47] See: Dandrey, Patrick. "Marino et La Fontaine ou l'allégorie détournée" in *Revue d'Histoire Littéraire de la France*, 112e année, No. 2, avril 2012, pp. 305–313. See: La Fontaine, Jean de. *Œuvres galantes* (*Adonis, Le Songe de Vaux, Les Amours de Psyché et de Cupidon*). Paris: Klincksieck, 1996. [Critical anthology chosen and presented by Patrick Dandrey. Introduction, pp. 3–15. Bibliography, pp. 16–29].

[48] See: Dandrey, Patrick. "Les temples de Volupté. Régime de l'image et de la signification dans *Adonis*, *Le Songe de vaux* et *Les Amours de Psyché*", *Littératures classiques*, No. 29, 1997, pp. 181–210. See also: Bohnert, Céline. "La Fontaine peintre de mythologie: art de l'ecphrase et goût pictural dans l'Adonis (1658–1669)" in *Dix-septième siècle,* Vol. 245, No. 4, 2009, pp. 683–698.

[49] For illustrations of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, see the extensive, albeit confusing, website of the University of Virginia dedicated to Ovid: http://ovid.lib.virginia.edu/index.html#Latin (last accessed 9 March 2018).

Figure 1: 1557, *Venus & Adonis*
Woodcut by Bernard Salomon (1506–1561) for *La métamorphose d'Ovide figurée*
by Jean de Tournes (1504–1564). Lyon: Jean de Tournes, 1557.
Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Figure 2: *Adonis aimé de Vénus*
Engraving by Jean Mathieu (1590–1672) in Nicholas Renouard (16??-165?), *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: Pierre Bellaine, 1637, p. 294.
Collection of Gilbert Blin.

Titian (ca. 1488/1490–1576), in his various *Venere e Adone*, chose to focus on another episode, in the middle of the tale, which integrates both the foundation of the tale and its tragic ending: the departure of Adonis for the hunt. Remarkably for our argument, « poesie », poems, is the term applied by Titian to the group of his paintings that *Venere e Adone* belongs to. Aimed at exciting the senses, this series of mythological works[50] was executed between 1553 and 1562 for Philip of Habsburg (1527–1598), then king of England, later king of Spain as Philip II. Titian's first *Venere e Adone* was painted in the 1520s[51], and the painter revisited the theme years later for a painting meant for the 1554 wedding of Philip with Queen Mary I of England (1516–1558). Several compositions by the Venetian painter, based on the 1554 version, keep the axis of tension which makes the work so powerful: Venus tries to detain Adonis who is leaving to hunt. On the left side of the painting, Venus is accompanied by Cupid, who is asleep among the protective trees, while on the right side, Adonis is led by his dogs toward an open space. This configuration has the ability to condense the narrative and renew the theme. Most artists isolate the couple in a landscape with the opposition of the two sides, the open space, towards which the hunter belongs, opposed to the lavish vegetation which harbors Venus, but is balanced in Titian's painting by his great care to represent the lovers in a very lifelike manner.

Contemporary viewers hailed *Venere e Adone* as the most erotic of the « poesie » and Lodovico Dolce, in a letter to the noble Venetian Alessandro Contarini (1486–1553), acutely reflects on the dual power of Titian's painting: « This poem on Adonis was painted recently […] One can see that this unique master tried to express in his face a graceful beauty, which while partaking of the feminine, does not however depart from the virile: hereby I mean that a woman might have a certain something male about her, and a man a something beautifully female – a mixture difficult to achieve, agreeable, and (if one believes Pliny) one most highly valued by Apelles ».[52] Dolce admired without inhibition, as Marino will, the beauty of Adonis[53] but especially marveled at how the goddess seemed to be alive and, aware of the eroticism of

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[50] *Jupiter and Danaë* (London, Aspley House), *Perseus and Andromeda* (London, Wallace Collection), *Diana and Actaeon* (Edinburgh, National Gallery), *Diana and Callisto* (London, National Gallery), *The rape of Europa* (Boston, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum), and *Venus and Adonis* (Madrid, Museo del Prado). The version now in Madrid's Museo del Prado is generally considered to be the earliest of the surviving versions. Although not certainly documented until 1626, it is regarded as the painting dispatched to King Philip in London by Titian in September 1554. (Research about the painting at the Museo del Prado [Exhibition *Tiziano, Dánae, Venus y Adonis. Las primeras poesias*] was carried out in January 2015 during my residency with the Boston Early Music Festival at the Auditorium Nacional de Música, Madrid).

[51] A 1631 copy by Peter Oliver (1594–1647) of this first version was in an English private collection in the seventeenth century and is now in the Burghley House collection in Lincolnshire. See: Joannides, Paul & Shoaf Turner, Jane. "Titian's Rokeby Venus and Adonis and the Role of working templates within his development of the Theme" in *Studi tizianeschi, n. IX*, 2014 (issued in 2016), pp. 48–76. See also: Joannides, Paul. "Titian in London and Madrid" in *Paragone, 657*, November 2004, pp. 3–30.

[52] « Fu questa poesia di Adone poco tempo addietro fatta […] E vedesi, che nell'aria del viso questo unico maestro ha cercato di esprimere certa graziosa bellezza, che participando della femmina, non si discostasse però dal virile: vuo' dire, che in donna terrebbe non so che di uomo, e in uomo di vaga donna: mistura difficile, aggradevole, e sommanente (se creder dobbiamo a Plinio) prezzata da Apelle. » in Dolce, Lodovico. "Al magnifico M. Alessandro Contarini" in [Bottari, Giovanni Gaetano] *Raccolta di lettere sulla pittura, scultura ed architettura*, Volume 3, Roma: Niccolò & Marco Pagliarini, 1757–1773, pp. 257 & 258.

[53] Male beauty was Adonis's characteristic and Marino expands on the theme by describing a male beauty contest in Canto XVI of his *Adone*. The beauty contest, in the temple of Venus, between young men aspiring to the kingship of the island of Cyprus, includes the main praise of the beauty of Adonis, praise which by itself is opportune from the point of view of the fable, but also contributes to a real treatise of aesthetics.

the painting, declared that the viewer of such a beautiful nude must feel aroused: « one cannot find a man so acute of vision, and of judgment, who seeing her does not believe her to be alive, none so chilled by years nor so hard of complexion that he does not feel himself warmed, softened and all the blood stirring in his veins ».[54] With Titian's painting, the myth of Adonis and Venus acquired a clear eroticism that would thereafter be the primary aspect of any artistic rendering.

Figure 3: *Venere e Adone*
1554 by Titian (ca. 1488/1490–1576)
Madrid, Museo del Prado.

Titian had included the erotic tale of Venus and Adonis in his series of « poems » about the love between gods and mortals, but the tale was expanded by other artists in more than one painting, retelling the different episodes of the story. Often destined to be displayed one next to the other, most of the other versions of Venus and Adonis retain the embodiment of genders but additionally express an opposition between love and death. This led to the prominence of two other narrative moments: the love encounter and the hunter's death. These episodes gave birth to an iconographic tradition in which viewers would have recognized the tale of Venus and Adonis, notably in works where the cupids are often multiplied and

[54] « Vi giuro, Signor mio, che non si truova uomo tanto acuto di vista, e di giudicio, che veggendola non la creda viva: niuno così raffreddato dagli anni, o sì duro di complessione, che non si senta riscaldare, intenerire, a commoversi nelle vene tutto il sangue. » in Dolce, Lodovico. "Al magnifico M. Alessandro Contarini" in [Bottari, Giovanni Gaetano] *Raccolta di lettere* …, Volume 3, Roma: Niccolò & Marco Pagliarini, 1757–1773, p. 259. It is worth mentioning that Lodovico Dolce published his own translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in 1553.

sometimes accompanied by the three Graces. This situation happens in France when in 1685 Louis XIV acquired a series of four paintings by Francesco Albani (1578–1660), which were seen and understood by the French as depicting the full story of Venus and Adonis, albeit the death and metamorphosis were not represented[55]. This interpretation, possibly prompted by the earlier, 1671 acquisition by Louis XIV of a small Albani painting showing the encounter of the goddess and the hunter, was in fact erroneous. The first intention of the painter for the series seems to have been representing an allegorical battle between Venus and Diana, Love and Chastity[56], but as Diana is the goddess of hunt, and as Adonis seems to forsake Venus to go hunting, the French viewers related to the paintings on a narrative level, not on the complex allegorical one, and the series was appropriated by the Ovidian myth. Started in 1621, before the 1623 publication of Marino's *L'Adone*, and finished in 1633, when the fame of the exuberant poem by Marino was starting to reach far and wide, Albani's cycle of four cabinet pictures features a profusion of cupids, who by their large number and the variety of their activities, played a major role. The polymath Roger de Piles (1635–1709) wrote that Albani « marry'd a second Wife, who brought for her Portion a great deal of Beauty and good Humour. By this means he had quiet at home, and a perfect Model for the Women he was to Paint. She had very handsome Children, by whom he us'd to draw little Cupids Playing and Dancing, in all the variety of Postures imaginable, and by his Wife he drew all his Naked Venus's and Nymphs ». But this sense of truth and likeness in the imitation was balanced by the fact the learned painter « made use of his Knowledge of the *Belles Lettres* ingeniously to adorn the Subjects he treated of, with the Fictions of Poetry».[57] The attraction of the Albani series may also be based on the fact that the paintings offer proportions for the relation between figures and backgrounds that were close to the one offered by the theatre stage during this period.

The fascination for the « lifelike » found, around the time of the acquisition of the Albani series, a three-dimensional expansion in the « grand Groupe de pierre »[58] by Louis Le Comte (1644–1694) for Versailles (Figure 4). Furthermore, Albani chose to paint his characters in various landscapes whose compositions were evocative of stage sets. Above and beyond, this enlarged group of *dramatis personae*, where Venus and Adonis can be surrounded by cupids and Graces, huntress and dogs, suggested characters to be put on the opera stage, possibly as a varied « chorus »[59]. The dynamism conveyed by the visual depictions of the different episodes and this extended casting offered potential for the stage, and just as with visual artists since the

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[55] The paintings are now in the Louvre Museum. See: Bohnert, Céline. "Adonis dans les collections de peinture de Louis XIV" in *Vénus & Adonis, Tragédie en Musique de Henry Desmarest (1697), Livret, études et commentaires. Textes réunis par Jean Duron et Yves Ferraton*. Versailles: Centre de Musique Baroque de Versailles and Sprimont: Pierre Mardaga, 2006, pp. 17–30.

[56] See: Loire, Stéphane. *L'Albane (1578–1660)*. Paris, Réunion des musées nationaux, 2000, Cat. No. 16. For further research about Albani, see: Puglisi, Catherine R. *Francesco Albani*. New Haven (CT) and London, Yale University Press, 1999.

[57] *The Art of Painting, and the Lives of Painters: Containing, a Compleat Treatise of Painting, Designing, and the Use of Prints: With Reflections on the Works of the most Celebrated Painters, and of the several schools of Europe, as well Ancient as Modern. Done from the French of Monsieur de Piles*. London: J. Nutt, 1706, pp. 239 & 240.

[58] « Venus & Adonis, grand Groupe de pierre, fait par Le Comte, natif de Boulogne près Paris. 74. » in *Recüeil des figures, groupes, thermes, fontaines, vases, et autres ornemens tels qu'ils se voyent a présent dans le chateau et parc de Versailles : gravé d'après les originaux*. Paris: Thomassin, 1694, p. 12.

[59] One painting of Albani inspired a small cantata by a French composer of the eighteenth century: Lemaire, Louis (1693 or 1694–ca. 1750). *Venus et Adonis, tirée des Albanes, IIIe tableau. Cantatille nouvelle, pour un dessus avec accompagnement de violons et flutes*. Paris: Ballard, 1744.

Renaissance, the tale of Adonis and Venus had been the subject of many plays and entertainments prior to the creation of Blow's opera.

Figure 4: Simon Thomassin, engraving of *Venus et Adonis* (1687) by Louis Le Comte (1644–1694), from his *Recüeil des figures, groupes, thermes, fontaines, vases, et autres ornemens tels qu'ils se voyent a présent dans le chateau et parc de Versailles : gravé d'après les originaux.* Paris: Thomassin, 1694, pl. 74
(image reversed from the original sculpture).
Collection of Gilbert Blin.

In Italy, in addition to the numerous Italian paintings on this theme, the tale of Adonis after Marino's 1623 publication further inspired a number of stage versions, and the succession of literary genres these embraced makes a good illustration of the evolution of how the myth was perceived: from the « favola boschereccia » *La catena d'Adone* written by Ottavio Tronsarelli (d. 1646), with music by Domenico Mazzocchi (1592–1665)[60], continuing through the « tragedia musicale » *Adone* by Paolo Vendramin (?–?), performed in Venezia in 1639 at the Teatro SS Giovanni e Paolo with music by several composers[61], to the « drama per musica » of Giovanni Matteo Giannini (?–?), *Adone in Cipro,* performed at Teatreo San Salvaltore in Venice in 1675 with music by Giovanni Legrenzi (1626–1690)[62].

The influence of Marino is also present in *La Mort d'Adonis*, a « tragedie en musique » by the French poet Pierre Perrin (1620–1675). Perrin had previously created the libretto for

[60] Tronsarelli, Ottavio. *La catena d'Adone, Favola boschereccia*. Roma: Crobelletti, 1626 and Venezia: Ciotti, 1626. It is worth noting that the title page offers a similar composition to that of the edition of Marino's *Adone.*

[61] Vendramin, Paolo. *Adone. Tragedia musicale rappresentata in Venezia l'anno 1639 nel teatro de' SS. Giovanni e Paolo.* Venezia: Sarzina, 1640.

[62] Giannini, Giovan Matteo. *L'Adone. Drama per musica*. Venezia: 1676. See: Selfridge-Field, Eleanor. *A New Chronology of Venetian Opera and Related Genres, 1660–1760*. Stanford (CA): Stanford University Press, 2007, p. 116.

La Pastorale d'Issy[63], the very first French opera, with music composed by Robert Cambert (ca. 1628–1677)[64]. It premiered in 1659, and not long after the work was performed for the French king, Perrin published *La Pastorale d'Issy* in 1661 in Paris[65] and included a long letter, dated 1659, where he claimed that he « discovered and cleared a new land and provided my nation with a template of a comedy in music in the French style, the first in the pastoral genre; my *Ariane* will show them another one in the comedy style » but he added « and for the tragedy, *La Mort d'Adonis*, the composition of which I have entertained myself with for a few days, [it] will show that one can succeed in all dramatic genres »[66]. For this tragedy, Perrin worked with the composer Jean-Baptiste de Boësset (1614–1685); they would collaborate in the following years on songs and court spectacles, but unfortunately the music for the opera has been lost[67].

Figure 5: *Adonis tué par le sanglier*
Engraving by Jean Mathieu (1590-1672) from from *Les Metamorphoses d'Ovide, divisées en XV livres. Avec de nouvelles Explications Historiques, Morales et Politiques sur toutes les Fables, chacune selon son sujet. Enrichies de Figures. Et nouvellement traduites par Pierre Du-Ryer Parisien, de l'Académie Françoise.* Paris: Antoine de Sommaville, 1660, p. 463. Collection of Gilbert Blin.

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[63] La Laurencie, Lionel de. *Les créateurs de l'opéra français*. Nouvelle édition. Paris: Librairie Félix Alcan, 1930, pp. 171–192. The poet wrote *Ariane, ou le Mariage de Bacchus* but the planned performance of this comedy in Paris did not take place due to the death of Cardinal Mazarin in 1661.

[64] Robert Cambert left France in 1673 to pursue his career in England where he was well received at the court of King Charles II and quickly appointed to the position of « Master of the King's Band ».

[65] Perrin, Pierre. *Œuvres de poésie de Mr. Perrin, contenant les jeux de poésie, diverses poésies galantes, des paroles de musique, airs de cour, airs à boire, chansons, noël et motets, une comedie en musique, L'Entrée de la Reyne, et la Chartreuse*. Paris: Estienne Loyson, 1661.

[66] « j'ay l'avantage d'avoir ouvert & applany le chemin, d'avoir découvert et défriché cette terre neuve & fourny à ma nation un modèle de la Comedie Françoise en Musique, premièrement dans le genre Pastoral, mon *Ariane* leur en fera voir un dans le Comique & dans la tragique *La Mort d'Adonis* à la composition de laquelle je me divertis depuis quelques jours leur fera connoistre que l'on y peut reüssir dans tous les genres du Dramatique. » in Perrin, Pierre. "Lettre ecrite Monseigneur l'Archevesque de Turin." in *Œuvres de poésie*… Paris: Estienne Loyson, 1661, pp. 288 & 289.

[67] Dufourcq, Norbert. "Un musicien, officier du roi et gentilhomme campagnard au XVIIe siècle. Jean-Baptiste de Boësset (1614–1685)" in *Bibliothèque de l'école des chartes*, No. 118, 1960, pp. 97–165.

In Perrin's libretto, the story of Adonis is inserted in a larger plot involving the god Mars and a magician name Falsirene, two characters found in Marino's poem. In Act I, Scene 3, Amour, the Graces and Mercure sing « un hymne à la louange d'Amour », a scene that has been constructed following the celebratory structure of a prologue. In Act IV, a rapid succession of scenes gives most of the episodes of the Ovidian myth: Scene 1 shows the departure for the hunt with « Music of horns, cries and dogs, at the sound of which Adonis, carried away by the ardor of hunting, leaves Venus and follows the hunters »[68] and Scene 2 offers a dialogue between Venus, who is longing for Adonis's return, and Cupid. The last scene shows the return of the wounded Adonis and his death in Venus' embrace. In Act V the action takes place in front of the tomb of Adonis, where during a ceremony inspired by Bion, with a complex staging which owes a great deal to Marino's detailed approach, Venus sprinkles the heart of the unfortunate hunter with nectar and changes it into an anemone. The tragedy and the funeral ceremony end with *Le ballet des Jeux d'Adonis*, a spectacle which calls for « dancers, wrestlers, fencers, chariot runners, palm players, etc., as they are in the Adonis poem of the Cavalier Marin[o] ».[69]

The plan of this Act IV follows exactly the order of the libretto for Blow's opera, whose final chorus stands for the final ballet found in Bion/Marino. Excerpts of *La Mort d'Adonis* were executed in a private concert for the French monarch, and, according to Perrin, « the king was kind enough to defend against all the cabal of the *petit coucher*, which was trying to ruin it by particular motives of interest and passion ».[70] Indeed, the work may have been the victim of a cabal as it was neither performed nor printed[71]. The score, never completed, is lost; the libretto, however, is known to us through a manuscript offered in 1669 by Perrin to Pierre Colbert (1619–1683)[72], and it is possible to assume that Cambert brought another copy with him when immigrating to England, and this document became available to Blow.

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[68] « Musique de cors, de cris et de Chiens, au bruit de laquelle Adonis, emporté de l'ardeur de la chasse, quitte Venus et suit les chasseurs » in Auld, Louis E. *The Lyric Art of Pierre Perrin, Founder of French Opera, Part 3 Recueil de Paroles de Musique de M Perrin*. Musicological Studies Vol. XLII. Henryville (IN): Institute of Mediaeval Music, 2000, p. 140.

[69] « danseurs, lutteurs, escrimeurs, coureurs de char, joüeurs de paume &c. tels qu'ils sont dans le poème d'Adonis du Cavalier Marin. » in Auld, Louis E. *The Lyric Art of Pierre Perrin*… Henryville (IN): Institute of Mediaeval Music, 2000, p. 145.

[70] « La Tragedie de la mort d'Adonis, mise en musique par Mr Boesset, dont S.M. a entendu quelques pieces detachées à son petit coucher, chantées par cette mesme musique avec beaucoup de temoignages de satisfaction de sa part, et don't elle a eu souvent la bonté de prendre la defense contre toute la cabale du petit coucher, qui tachoit de l'abismer par des motifs particulier d'interet de passion. » in Auld, Louis E. *The Lyric Art of Pierre Perrin*… Henryville (IN): Institute of Mediaeval Music, 2000, p. xiv.

[71] It may even have not been fully composed by Boësset as Perrin indicates: « Le public jugera maintenant de la composition des vers et bientost de celle de la musique, mon dessein estant de luy donner imprimée celle qu'a composée Cet Intendant sur les premiers Actes de cette pièce. » in Auld, Louis E. *The Lyric Art of Pierre Perrin*… Henryville (IN): Institute of Mediaeval Music, 2000, p. xiv.

[72] Perrin offered this beautiful manuscript copy to Colbert, who supported him that same year for the privilege « pour l'establissement des Académies d'Opera ou Représentations en musique en vers françois, à Paris et dans les autres villes du Royaume » See: Duron, Jean. "Pierre Perrin un « Virgile françois »?" in Conihout, Isabelle de; Gabriel, Frédéric; Martin, Henri-Jean. *Poésie & calligraphie imprimée à Paris au XVIIe siècle, Autour de « La Chartreuse » de Pierre Perrin, poème imprimé par Pierre Moreau en 1647*. Paris – Chambéry: Bibliothèque Mazarine Éditions Comp'act, 2004, p. 150. It is remarkable that both La Fontaine and Perrin presented their versions of Adonis in sumptuous manuscripts, bringing the poetry closer to a visual art.

After 1669, the success of La Fontaine's published versions of his tales about Psyché and Adonis prompted a new interest and led immediately to new spectacles.[73] Donneau de Visé's *Les amours d'Adonis, tragédie en machines*, was performed on the stage of the Théâtre du Marais on 2 March 1670[74], with incidental music, possibly by Marc-Antoine Charpentier. It was followed soon after by the already discussed *Psiché*, a collaboration of Molière, Corneille, Quinault and Lully, performed at the Salle des Machines in the Tuileries castle in 1671, instead of the usual *Ballet de Cour*[75]. In England, Molière's play *Psiché* was translated and adapted by Thomas Shadwell (ca. 1642–1692) as *Psyche* for the Dorset Garden theatre in 1675. Shadwell had already produced comedies inspired by Molière and, the year before, a successful semi-opera, *The Enchanted Island*[76]. Supported by the Duke of Monmouth (1649–1685), son of Charles II, with sung music by Matthew Locke (ca. 1621–1677) and orchestral dances by Giovanni Battista Draghi (ca. 1640–1708), *Psyche* was the first dramatic musical score to be printed in England[77]. The production was presented « in all her Ornaments, new Scenes, new Machines, new Cloath, new *French* Dances: This Opera was splendidly set out, especially in Scenes »[78] which indicates the importance of the visual elements, specifically connected to the art of painting[79]. A certain Stephenson, named as the designer/painter by Shadwell in his preface, attests to this importance[80]. The British poet acknowledges his debt to the French: « The next sort I am to encounter with, are those who are too great admirers of the French Wit,

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[73] Sweetser, Marie Odile. *Parcours lafontainien: d'Adonis au livre XII des Fables*. Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag, 2004, pp. 28–81.

[74] Donneau de Visé, Jean. *Le sujet des amours de Venus et d'Adonis, tragédie en machines Représentée sur le Théâtre Royal du Marais, le 2 Mars 1670*. Paris: Pierre Promé, 1670. See alos: Donneau de Visé, Jean. *Les Amours de Vénus et d'Adonis*, tragédie. Paris: Guillaume de Luyne, 1670. The play was revived at the Comédie-Française in September 1685 with incidental music by Marc-Antoine Charpentier, music which I suggest may have been already performed in 1670. See: Hitchcock, H. Wiley. *Les œuvres de/The works of Marc-Antoine Charpentier, Catalogue raisonné.* Paris: Picard, 1982, p. 382.

[75] See Chapter 2 of this dissertation.

[76] *The Enchanted Island* was an adaptation from Davenant and Dryden's 1667 version of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. *The Sullen Lovers, or the Impertinents* was based on *Les Fâcheux* by Molière. His next plays, *The Humourists* (1670) and *The Miser* (1671–72), were rhymed adaptations of Molière. For fourteen years Shadwell produced a play nearly every year, and each showed his gradual shift toward the wit of the comedy of manners. Shadwell wrote eighteen works, including a pastoral, *The Royal Shepherdess* (1669), and a blank verse tragedy, *The Libertine* (1675).

[77] *A Companion to Restoration Drama*. Edited by Susan J. Owen. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2008, p. 346.

[78] John Downes, (ca. 1660–1712) worked as a prompter at the Duke's Company, and later at the United Company. At the end of his life, Downes wrote his history of the Restoration stage. See: Downes, John. *Roscius Anglicanus, or an Historical review of the Stage*…London: H. Playford, 1708, p. 35.

[79] Canova-Green, Marie-Claude. "Le spectacle de Psyché à Londres en 1675" in *La scenografia e le macchine teatrali dei 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. 143-157.

[80] Shadwell's description of the set showing Olympus which concludes the piece states « The Scene changes to a Heave'n. In the highest part is the Palace of Jupiter; the Columns and all the Ornaments of it of Gold. The lower part is filled with Angels and Cupids, with a round open Temple in the midst of it. This temple is just before the Sun, whose Beams break fiercely through it in diver places: Below the Heav'ns, several Semicircular Clouds, of the breadth of the whole House, descend. In these Clouds sit Musicians, richly Habited. » in Shadwell, Thomas. *Psyche: a Tragedy, Acted at the Duke's Theatre*. London: H. Herringman, 1675, p. 66.

who (if they do not like this play) will say the French *Psyche* is much better; if they do, they will say, I have borrow'd it all from the French. […] That I have borrow'd it all from the French, can only be the objection of those, who do not know that it is a Fable, written by Apulejius, in his *Golden-Ass*; where you will find most things in this play, and the French too ».[81] The fact that Shadwell refers to Apuleius as his first source reveals how the English artistic relation with French art was multifaceted but, as I will show, many French elements are present in the genesis of Blow's *Venus and Adonis*.

Figure 6: *Venus and Adonis*
Engraving after Virgil Solis (1514 – 1562) from an unidentified edition of *Ovid's Metamorphoses.*
Collection of Gilbert Blin.

4.2.2 Betwixt *Masque* and *opera*

Around 1683, the story of Adonis was chosen by Blow to compose his first and only opera: *Venus and Adonis*. The earliest musical score entitled the work « A Masque for the Entertainment of the King »[82]. Although « Masque » refers to the earlier English form of Royal entertainments where spoken dialogue alternated with songs and dances, the text of *Venus and Adonis* was set to music by Blow from beginning to end, like a French opera of the same period. John Blow may have had a personal agenda with the creation of *Venus and Adonis,* as we know that the same year, in April 1683, he had requested a « Royal Grant & License for the creating an Academy or Opera of Music, & performing and causing to be performed therein their

[81] Shadwell, Thomas. "Preface" for *Psyche: a Tragedy, Acted at the Duke's Theatre*. London: H. Herringman, 1675. See the notes on *Psyche* in *The Complete Works of Thomas Shadwell* edited by Montague Summers, Volume II. London: The Fortune Press, 1927.

[82] The earliest source is a manuscript copied by John Walter, organist at the Eton College, and kept today at the British Library (Add. MS 22100). See: Wood, Bruce. "Introduction" in Blow, John. *Venus and Adonis*, ed. Bruce Wood and Purcell Society. London: Stainer & Bell, 2008, p. xi.

Musicall Compositions »[83] a plan clearly inspired by the monopoly Lully enjoyed in France. The British designation of « Masque » for *Venus and Adonis* refers primarily to the context and performance of the royal premiere, more than the poetic text and musical proceeding. As we will see, the authorship of the libretto, after centuries of anonymity, is nowadays subject to various conjectures and, as it is the only lyrical work of Blow, the fact that the work was performed or at least written to be performed for King Charles II of England (1630–1685) remains the key point of approach to try to understand its meaning and define its artistic purpose. Blow and his librettist, in choosing to tell the misfortunes of Adonis, are not only in the poetry lineage of Shakespeare, Marino and La Fontaine, but they have selected an eminently pictorial subject. Because it seems to me that the ekphratic device[84], the description of Adonis and Venus in the libretto, is a natural result of the dynamism of the myth, I suggest that any staging of Blow's *Venus and Adonis* should be created in relation with the contemporaneous taste for the hunt, and even more so, with the esthetic elevation of this activity by literature and painting. Taking into consideration this cultural aspect, I will now bring the libretto of this *Masque/opera* closer to the context of its first performance, in circumstances related to poetry and music but also to the royal family itself.

Every work designed for a specific audience contains in its causes, if not in its effects, a number of identity components of the social group for whom it is intended. In dramatic and lyric works composed for the royal power, words and images were loaded by allegorical meaning that the presence of the monarch made comprehensible. This practice of including the patron in the revealing of hidden meanings, born in Italy, had been adapted into an aesthetic system at the court of France with the *Ballet Royal*, which spectacle foreshadowed the *Tragédie en musique*. Charles II and his younger brother, the Duke of York (1633–1701), later James II, had during the English Civil War gone into exile in France and while there experienced the French court ballet, with its complex scenic rhetoric which had the primary purpose of glorifying their young cousin, the Sun King. Both princes also inherited this taste from their French mother, Henrietta Maria (1609–1669)[85]. If the princes were both good dancers and had as their dancing master a French professor[86], it seems that Charles was confined in France to the role of spectator and left to his younger brother the task of performing.

Among the many ballets that the Duke of York took part in, there is one, *Le Ballet Royal de la Nuit*, which has many connections with *Venus and Adonis*. This seminal show took place from the evening of 23 February 1653 to the following morning at the Palais du Louvre. Among the dancers, « His Royal Highness the Duke of York » appeared first as « Lovesick

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[83] Wood, Bruce and Pinnock, Andrew. "« Unscarr'd by Turning Times »? The Dating of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*" in *Early Music. Vol. 20, N° 3*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992, p. 387.

[84] I use the word in the sense inherited from the Hellenistic rhetoric: « ekphrasis » refers to a self-contained argument or poetic description of an object, especially of a work of art. For the origin of « ekphrasis », see: Webb, Ruth. *Ekphrasis, Imagination and Persuasion in Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Practice*. London: Routledge, 2016.

[85] Britland, Karen. *Drama at the Courts of Queen Henrietta Maria*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

[86] Information about Sebastien la Pierre, whose name appears in some second-hand literature as Dance Master of the princes, is scarce. A dancer named La Pierre was dancing in *Pomone* by Cambert in Paris in 1671. Maybe La Pierre left France for England with the composer? See: *Dance, Spectacle, and the Body Politick, 1250–1750* edited by Jennifer Nevile. Bloomington (IN): Indiana University Press, 2008, pp. 121 & 122. See also: Ravelhofer, Barbara. *The Early Stuart Masque: Dance, Costume, and Music*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006, pp. 61, 75 & 217.

Lover » and then as « Genius of Honor ». The verses written by Benserade that accompanied the ballet's first entrée clearly refer to his exile; his place as « Genius » by the side of « Le Soleil » Louis XIV, in the final scene of the ballet, alludes to his rank and his close relationship to his cousin, the king of France. In *Le Ballet Royal de la Nuit*, the theme of the hunt appears in the fourth entrée of the first part: six hunters « sounding their horns »[87] with a « Valet de limier » and a « Huntsman with Dogs on a leash »[88] return from their day of hunting and refer in spoken verses to the story of Adonis and Venus. We find all these characters, and even the dogs who accompany them, in the first act of Blow's *Venus and Adonis*, when the hunters come to take the lover away from the arms of the goddess to go hunting: the subject of Titian's painting. Blow even wrote « a Hunters' Music » to signal their approach, which remains one of the earliest examples of musical treatment of the sound language of the hunt[89]. The verses where Adonis responds to the hunters, « You who the slothful Joys of City hate, / And early up for rougher pleasures wait », were certainly addressed to Charles II in the ears of contemporaries. The king was well known to be an early riser and his awakening was often followed by physical activities among which hunting was the one he preferred[90]. The king found a theorist of his habits in the person of Richard Blome (1635 or 1641–1705) who, in his illustrated book *The Gentleman's Recreation* begun in 1682[91], summarized that « *Hunting* is a commendable *Recreation*, and hath always been practised and highly prized by all *Degrees* and *Qualities* of *Men*, even by *Kings* and *Princes*; that it is a great preserver of *Health*, a Manly *Exercise*, and an increaser of *Activity* ».[92]

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[87] On hunting calls, see: Cummins, John. *The Hound and the Hawk, The Art of Medieval Hunting*. London: Phoenix Press, 2001, pp. 160–171.

[88] See: *Ballet de la Nuit*. Edited by Michael Burden and Jennifer Thorp. The Wendy Hilton Dance & Music Series No. 15. Hillsdale (NY): Pendragon Press, 2009.

[89] Symbolic of the outside world, the horn, whose decisive development from the primitive specimen depicted by Marin Mersenne in 1636 in his *Harmonie universelle* to its final stage years later is obscure as horns' range and tuning underwent constant changes. With the « trompe de chasse » in the middle of the century, a larger number of pitches became available for horn calls, and these calls are imitated in program music from the second quarter of the seventeenth century onward, though first scored not for actual horns but for strings only. An example is the « Chiamata a la caccia » in Francesco Cavalli's opera *Le nozze di Teti e di Peleo* (1639) (Act I, Scene 1). A few years later, Jean-Baptiste Lully used horn calls in a five-part piece for strings called « Les cors de chasse » in Molière's comédie-ballet *La Princesse d'Élide*, itself part of *Les plaisirs de l'île enchantée* (1664). Lully's scoring of the « second Air des valets des chiens et des chasseurs avec Cors de chasse » seems to be the first documented use of the new instrument in a musical composition, besides hunting signals and sound evocations in previous ballets de cour. In England, John Gaillard wrote the aria « With early horn », with an obbligato horn part, for the 1723 Masque *Jupiter and Europa*, later performed under the title *The Royal Chace, or Merlin's cave*.

[90] The tale of Cephalus, another Ovidian hunter, painted from 1666 to 1671 on the ceilings of the Tuileries Castle, had the purpose, according to Félibien, to « faire voir aux Courtisans quelles sont leurs obligations ». Indeed, the tale of Céphalus, « Ce Chasseur si considerable dans la Fable pour sa diligence, estant toûjours en cam[pa]gne avant le lever du Soleil, marque le soin qu'un vray Courtisan doit avoir d'estre matinal, & se trouver au Palais du Prince avant son lever. » in Félibien, André. *Entretiens sur les vies et sur les ouvrages des plus excellens peintres anciens et modernes. Tome second*. Paris: Florentin & Pierre Delaulne, 1690, p. 639. See also: Sabatier, Gérard. *Versailles ou la figure du roi*. Paris: Albin Michel, 1999, p. 115.

[91] Blome, Richard. *The Gentlemans Recreation in two parts. The First being an Encyclopedy of the Arts and Sciences.... The Second Part Treats of Horsmanship, Hawking, Hunting, Fowling, Fishing, and Agriculture. With a Short Treatise of Cock-Fighting*. London: S. Roycroft for R. Blome, 1686.

[92] Of course, sound and music being linked to the hunt, the book also contains some musical indications for hunting calls, including the first call in the morning: « A Good *Huntsman* ought to be loving to his *Hounds*, especially after hard labour. His first business every *Morning* should be, to cause their *Kennels* to be cleansed;

The theme of the hunt, both work and pleasure, and the story of Adonis, had thus already formed the entertainment of the royal family of England during their exile in France. It is not unlikely that the memory of the lavish *Ballet de Cour* of the new monarchy of Louis XIV in the 1650s influenced the design of entertainments at the English court, and among them *Venus and Adonis*. The court spectacle with coded messages was not something new in Britain, but with the Restoration in 1660, the *Masque* was under French influence[93]. From 1660 until 1688, musicians and poets circulated between the two kingdoms and the intense musical and theatrical French life influenced English poets and composers. It is fair to say that England discovered opera through the Gallic ears and eyes, more than through a direct Italian inspiration. An Italian opera troupe arrived in London around 1664, recruited by Thomas Killigrew (1612–1683) with the king's support[94], but alongside the Italian singers, French vocalists were also present at the English court during the Restoration. The political, religious and personal contacts between the English and French courts encouraged an interest in French music. In the 1660s, the royal English court had an ensemble of six French musicians, mostly singers[95]. French singers also appear in 1671 in the « concert des nations »[96] held at Whitehall for Charles II, the opera *Ariane* staged by Robert Cambert in 1674 and in the court performance of *Calisto* in 1675[97]. In 1676 Louis XIV sent three French singers to entertain the king of England with scenes from Lully's operas[98]. From its beginning, political patronage played a major role in the creation of opera and its diffusion, and the magnitude of French royal support eclipsed all others.

Performances at European courts, far from only fulfilling the function of entertainment, were also an opportunity to express the image of a political situation or the structure of the social relations of the moment. The royal spectacle, as a part of a wider policy, was an opportunity for participants to gain visibility under the eyes of the sovereign and give anew a readability of their ranks to the court. The placement of the spectators was already expressive of the position of each and every one, social status was made public, and the favor of the monarch clarified by the casting of performers. And indeed, if we are to understand that the choice of the story of Adonis for this performance is also about the context, then we must attempt to untangle the threads of the work and to try to better understand the libretto. While

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then he should take his *Horn* and Sound three or four times the *Call*, to encourage them and call them to him ». See: Blome, Richard. *The Gentlemans Recreation. ... An Encyclopedy of the Arts and Sciences ... [and] Horsemanship, Hawking, Hunting, Fowling, Fishing, and Agriculture. With a Short Treatise of Cock-Fighting*. London: S. Roycroft for R. Blome, 1686, pp. 68 and 72.

[93] For the Italian influence on the Stuart Masque see: Strong, Roy. *Art and Power, Renaissance Festivals 1450–1650*. Berkeley (CA): University of California Press, 1973, pp. 153–170. For the French influence on the Restoration Masque, see: Walkling, Andrew R. *Masque and Opera in England, 1656–1688*. London: Routledge, 2016.

[94] See: Mabbett, Margaret. "Italian Musicians in Restoration England (1660–1690)" in *Music and Letters* 67, 1986.

[95] See: Holman, Peter. *Four and Twenty Fiddlers, The Violin at the English Court, 1540–1690*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993, p. 290.

[96] See: Holman, Peter. *Four and Twenty Fiddlers…1690*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993, pp. 361–366.

[97] See: Walkling, Andrew R. "Masque and Politics at the Restoration Court: John Crowne's *Calisto*" in *Early Music Vol. 24, N° 1, Music in Purcell's London II*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996, pp. 34–36 & 51.

[98] Buttrey, John. "New Light on Robert Cambert in London, and his *Ballet en musique*" in *Early Music. Vol. 23. N° 2.* Oxford : Oxford University Press, 1995, pp. 199-221.

the English public and political conditions[99] of 1683 hardly seem conducive to entertainment, it is remarkable that no contemporary document mentions, if only briefly, the presentation of *Venus and Adonis*. This silence may have many reasons, but it is possible that the work had a character so intimate that it was considered neither good nor appropriate to report the details of the circumstances. The private nature of the performance is clearly borne out by what is known about the distribution of roles for the royal presentation[100].

4.2.3 Betwixt king and mistress

The manuscript[101] noted that *Venus and Adonis* was premiered at the Court with « Mary Davis », who sang the role of Venus, and « Lady Mary Tudor » as Cupid, the god of Love. With the Restoration, Mary « Moll » Davis (ca. 1650–1708) was one of the earliest English actresses to benefit from the lifting of the ban on women to appear on the English stage[102]. She was furthermore said to have danced in boy's clothing, a costume that was more revealing of her feminine gender[103]. As a member of the Duke's Theatre Company, which was under the patronage of James, Duke of York, she was noticed by Charles II, and became his mistress. With this new social status, she made her farewell to the professional stage in 1668 but continued to take part in performances at the court[104]. Between February and April 1675, she was the leading lady in the performances of the court *Masque* titled *Calisto: Or, the Chaste Nimph* by John Crowne (1641–1712) with music by Nicholas Staggins (1650?–1700)[105]. Moll Davis

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[99] The situation in England was tense in 1683: on June 12, the Rye House Plot to assassinate King Charles II was discovered. See: Owen, Susan J. "Restoration Drama and Politics: An Overview" in *A Companion to Restoration Drama*. Edited by Susan J. Owen. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2008, pp. 126–139.

[100] Rose, Stephen. "Performance Practices" in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Henry Purcell*, edited by Rebecca Herissone. London: Routledge, 2016, pp. 115–164.

[101] See: Blow, John. *Venus and Adonis*, edited by Bruce Wood and Purcell Society. London: Stainer & Bell, 2008.

[102] Fisk, Deborah Payne. "The Restoration Actress" in *A Companion to Restoration Drama*. Edited by Susan J. Owen. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2008, pp. 69–91.

[103] Moll Davis' activities are most assiduously noted by Samuel Pepys. See Pepys, Samuel. *The Diary of Samuel Pepys, In three volumes, Edited from Mynors Bright, With an introduction by John Warrington*. London: J. M. Dent & sons and New York : E. P. Dutton & co inc., 1953. He states, 7 March 1667, that at the Duke's playhouse (Lincoln's Inn Fields): « little Miss Davis did dance a jig after the end of the play, and there telling the next day's play, so that it come in by force only to please the company to see her dance in boy's clothes; and the truth is there is no comparison between Nell's [Gwynn's] dancing the other day at the King's house in boy's clothes and this, this being infinitely beyond the other.» II, p. 421. On 5 August 1667 he saw *Love Tricks, or the School of Compliments* by James Shirley, and chronicles that « Miss Davis dancing in a shepherd's clothes did please us mightily. » III, p 31. On 11 January 1667-8 he says: « Miss Davis is for certain going away from the Duke's house, the king being in love with her, and a house is taken for her and furnishing; and she hath a ring given her already worth £ 600 ». III, p. 146.

[104] Her final departure from the stage is chronicled 31 May 1668: « I hear that Mrs. Davis is quite gone from the Duke of York's house ». She had danced « her jig » at a performance at court a few nights previously, when the queen, through supposed displeasure, « would not stay to see it, which people do think was out of displeasure at her being the King's mistress, that she could not bear it. » in Pepys. *Diary*, III, 1953, p. 238.

[105] See: Walkling, Andrew R. "Masque and Politics at the Restoration Court: John Crowne's *Calisto*" in in *Early Music Vol. 24, N° 1, Music in Purcell's London II*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996, pp. 27–62.

portrayed the shepherdess Sylvia in the « songs betwixt the acts »[106], but also the River Thames in the sung prologue. Crowne defended his unorthodox casting of a woman as a river god, a divinity of male gender by ancient tradition, saying that his purpose was to delight the court: « and the graceful motions and admirable singing of Mrs. Davis, did sufficiently prove the discretion of my choice »[107]. In the *Calisto* performances of 1675, Moll Davis appeared in the cast of 111 performers among other professionals, but alongside lord and ladies of the court, including Princesses Mary and Anne, daughters of the Duke of York. In this category of recreational players, it is remarkable that two of the king's illegitimate offspring, James, Duke of Monmouth, and Anne Fitzroy, Countess of Sussex (1661–1721 or 1722), were also dancing. Mary Davis' singing and dancing talents, supplemented by her exuberant personality, seem to have produced a strong stage presence: in his 1675 *Epigrams*, Richard Flecknoe (1600–1678) created a second tribute « To M. M. Davies. On her Excellent Dancing and Singing »[108] to supplement his first poetic effusion « On her Excellent Dancing » from 1669[109]. But, after this new epigram dedicated to Mary Davis, he added another one, « On her pretty Daughter »[110], certainly an homage to the baby girl the actress had from Charles II in 1673, who was known as « Lady Mary Tudor ».

Lady Mary Tudor was ten years of age at the time of the presentation of *Venus and Adonis* at the royal court[111]. Casting a former mistress of the king in the role of the goddess of beauty was certainly gallant enough and also an opportunity to display some conventional nudity, but the courtesy, with a degree of voyeurism, was tinged with other motivations by awarding the role of Cupid, child of Venus, to their daughter. By giving Mary Tudor the role of a god born from the adulterous love of Mars and Venus, as some poets believed, the audience could complete an allegorical family picture. Unlike many other versions of the myth,

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[106] *Calisto, or, The chaste nimph, the late masque at court as it was frequently presented there, by several persons of great quality: with the prologue, and the songs betwixt the acts / all written by J. Crowne*. London: James Magnes and Richard Bentley, 1675.

[107] Vere Beauclerk-Dewar, Peter de. & Powell, Roger S. *Right Royal Bastards: The Fruits of Passion*. London: Burke's Peerage & Gentry, 2006, p. 55.

[108] Flecknoe, Richard. *Euterpe revived, or, Epigrams made at several times in the years 1672, 1673 & 1674 on persons of the greatest honor and quality most of them now living: in III books*. [London], 1675, p. 64. See, text: https://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/eebo/A39713.0001.001/1:6.4?rgn=div2;view=fulltext (Accessed 11 March 2018). Giving the role of river to a female performer was not rare in France, as « rivière » is feminine while « fleuve » is masculine. In Quinault and Lully's *Alceste* of 1674, the year *Calisto* was in the making, the prologue includes La Nymphe de La Seine and La Nymphe de la Marne.

[109] Flecknoe, Richard. *A collection of the choicest epigrams and characters of Richard Flecknoe being rather a new work, then* [sic] *a new impression of the old*. [London]: Printed for the author, Will Crook, 1670, p. 43. See text: https://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/eebo/A39710.0001.001/1:5.31?rgn=div2;view=fulltext (Accessed 11 March 2018)

[110] « Pretty childe, in whom appears / All the *seeds*, above thy years,/ Of every *Beautie*, every *Grace*, /

As ere was *sown* in *minde* or *face*. / Never by Nature yet was made / A Childe who more *perfections* had;/ Nor ever, though she'd ne'r so fain, / Can she make the *like* again. / Thou art th' *Epitome* of all / We *pretty*, *fair*, and *sweet* do call: / And for the more Conformity, / This is th' *Epitome* of Thee. » in Flecknoe, Richard. *Euterpe revived, or, Epigrams made at several times in the years 1672, 1673 & 1674 on persons of the greatest honor and quality most of them now living: in III books*. [London], 1675, p. 65.

[111] Lady Mary died in Paris on 5 November 1726, at the age of 53. See: Wilson, John Harold. *All the King's Ladies: Actresses of the Restoration*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958, p. 140.

the god Mars is absent from Blow's opera, or better yet, absent from the stage. The presence of Charles II/Mars in the auditorium seems to give him the role of a witness to the story, even as a god adamant that revenge should be taken on the unfaithful Venus. Indeed, many variants of the story, including Marino, indicate that it is the god Mars himself, in the guise of angry wild boar, who jealously kills Adonis. Whatever the way he was supposed to see his role, Charles II could only smile at the tongue-lashing the god of love gave to the fickle courtiers. All of the lines written for Lady Mary Tudor are imbued with humor, especially appreciated by a court audience, and her childish words, which have an element of double entendre to them, were colored with added irony by the presence of her august father.

This rapprochement between father and daughter virtually amounted to a public recognition of her and given the practices of royal courts in the seventeenth century it is quite possible that the show was the occasion of the first appearance of Lady Mary Tudor at court. It was indeed the custom to formally present a child during a party, and it was probably the first time Mary had a visible role in a social event. Consequently, if it is fair to attribute the casting of Venus to the occupational status of Moll Davis, professional actress, the casting of Cupid was indeed in the tradition of the royal Masque, of a recreational order[112]. The official presentation coincided with a more substantive recognition by Charles II of his natural daughter, and in September 1683, Lady Mary Tudor received from the king the benefit of a pension of £1,500 that was to ensure that she would be able to hold a social position worthy of her illustrious father and become a party of interest to a potential husband[113]. In kingdoms of the seventeenth century, a first appearance at the Court often took place at a ballet in which the child could display her self-control and demonstrate her ability to join the adult world of the court[114]. How little Mary was able to overcome the difficulties and the length of the singing role of Cupid remains a mystery of this royal rite of passage[115].

Lady Mary Tudor appeared as Cupid only in the Prologue and Act II of *Venus and Adonis*. Although the prologue does not give any clues about the upcoming tale of Venus and Adonis, the leading role is given to Cupid, who interacts with Shepherds and Shepherdesses. It anchors the show in a pastoral setting of « sweet groves » offering « close shades » propitious to amorous intimacy. And indeed, the opera is set in a single space and Adonis himself refers

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[112] Lady Mary Tudor may have benefited from acting lessons from her mother, but it was certain that, due to her paternal lineage, she would never become a professional actress.

[113] Lady Mary Tudor's pension was larger than the one given to her mother, who received a pension of £1,000.

[114] Mademoiselle de Nantes (1673–1743), illegitimate daughter of Louis XIV and Madame de Montespan, had married Louis de Bourbon, Duke of Bourbon, on 24 July 1685 (*Adonis ou l'hymen triomphant* by M. Laurent was performed *au mariage de LL. AA. SS. Monseigneur le duc de Bourbon et Mlle de Nantes.* #3587 in *Bibliothèque dramatique de Monsieur de Soleinne, Tome 3*. Paris: Administration de l'Alliance des arts, 1844, p.270). Mademoiselle de Nantes danced entries and was admired for her good grace and the accuracy of her dance in *Les Fontaines de Versailles* (the entertainment composed by Lalande in 1683), revived in Marly on July 28, 1685, in front of the French king and the Dauphine. Lalande, who taught the harpsichord to Mademoiselle de Nantes, composed *Venus et Adonis, Divertissement en musique*, in 1696. See: Sawkins, Lionel. *A Thematic Catalogue of the Works of Michel-Richard de Lalande (1657–1726)*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

[115] Another example of this rite of passage is *Les Noces de Pelée et de Thétis* (May 1654, Petit Bourbon) where right after Louis XIV appears as Apollo, Henriette Anne Stuart (1644–1670), the ten-year-old sister of Charles and James, performed the role of Erato. To her verses on « the fall of the crowns » correspond, in the third « Entrée », verses of the Duke of York, which leave little ambiguity on the ideas of the court of France at that time: « Loin de ne faire ici que pescher le coral / Il faut que d'un endroit malheureux & fatal, / Que la vaste Mer environne, / Je m'applique en homme expert, / A pescher tout ce qui sert / A refaire une Couronne ». See: *Les oeuvres de M. de Benssérade, Tome II*. Paris: Charles de Sercy, 1697, pp. 72–100.

in the following act to « the shadiest covert of this grove » and the final chorus of Act III alludes to « this forsaken grove ». A single set made of painted shutters and a backdrop showing trees must have been the simple scenery of *Venus and Adonis*. But, in the traditions of the *Masque* and the *Ballet de Cour*, Cupid addresses « courtiers » directly and refers to the rarity of constancy « at court » and opposes to the naturalness of love in « these sweet groves », a topical opposition found in poetry since the Renaissance. The character of Cupid introduces comedy into a structure hitherto regarded as tragic. This satire of ill lovers from the court is developed in the second act, which does not owe much to Ovid, as it presents Venus interacting with Cupid and being attended by the Graces. Indeed, Ovid's story almost ignores the son of Venus, who disappears after mistakenly striking the goddess with his arrow. But, as we have seen, the character is often present in paintings: as a mischievous child, a sleeping companion, an accomplice of Venus' desire, he intervenes in the game of love and highlights its nature.

In poetry, equipped with a half-narrative, half-heuristic role, Cupid is both in the tale and outside, actor of the subject represented and part of its interpretation, and that is the way Blow's *Venus and Adonis* integrates the character. This is an opportunity for Blow and his librettist to expand the role of Cupid by adding a number of cherubs to take part in Cupid's lesson, where the god instructs the other « amores » about who they should make the victims of their darts. For this scene, boys from the Royal Chapel must have joined Lady Mary Tudor for the chorus, as John Blow, aside from being a « gentleman of the Chapel Royal », had since 1674 been the « Master of the children », responsible for the musical education of the youngest members of the royal institution. The subsequent appearance of the Graces, who were also present in the paintings of the period, next to the proliferation of cupids, gives the second act of *Venus and Adonis* a feminine counterpart to the masculinity defined in the first act by the hunters around Adonis. By its lightness and its humor, the second act functions as an Antimasque, shedding new light on the main plot by using a new, more detached tone. After the cupids have recited their theoretical lesson about love, a riddle whose sense has been obscured by time, the Graces take over and embody it with singing and dancing. It is also a chance to incorporate dancing in a dramatic logical context, as « While the Graces dance, the Cupids dress Venus, one combing her head, another ties a bracelet of pearls round her wrist etc. [sic] », a scene previously treated by painters and notably by Albani. Altogether the Graces dance four numbers, likely performed by the young ladies of the court, the longest dance section of the piece occurring while the cupids attend Venus with the contents of « the Magazine of Beauty », a coffer containing cosmetics and grooming tools for the morning toilette of a lady. As I will show later, this act, often given short treatments in academic commentaries because it is external to the original Ovidian myth, may well offer a piece of evidence to the possible authorship of the libretto.

4.2.4 Betwixt life and death

The family background with its mirror effects in the myth may already suggest a close link between the hunter abandoning his lover to go hunting, a scene which acquired a high degree of pathos thanks to the painting by Titian, and Charles II always in pursuit of new pleasures. The king of England was in fact, like most monarchs of his time, an avid hunter and a flighty lover. The monarch's passion for dogs, hounds and pets was also well known, and the breed of miniature spaniels known as Cavalier King Charles Spaniel still bears living testimony of it. *Venus and Adonis* contains several themes, which work together in a play of references to give warning to the flighty man: to flee the pleasures of love for the hunt may prove fatal. This evocation of the unhappy fate of the hunter is supported by a detail which in this context takes

on a poetic significance: in *Venus and Adonis*, the hunters call their dogs by their names[116]. Three of these have identical names to the dogs of Actaeon, another unfortunate hunter from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* who was ultimately transformed into a stag and met a horrible death, devoured by his hounds. Among Actaeon's pack of forty dogs mentioned by Ovid, *Venus and Adonis* distinguishes three to which Blow's librettist adds new elements: the dog Melampus from Sparta is accompanied by Ladon from Sycon with lean flanks who becomes « strong and bold », and Lachne, who Ovid describes as shaggy, is here an « old » bitch, although this last predicative adjective could be merely a choice of translation from the Latin. These small touches, highlighted by the music that Blow created to set the words, could suggest that the dogs from the Ovidian myth were present on stage.

These dogs elevated to the rank of characters were perhaps performed on stage by the bloodhounds of the royal kennel, the Privy Pack. The dogs would have been accompanied by their huntsmen, and their leashes would help to control their movements. Actual dogs had been used on the stage since Shakespeare[117]. But there is another possibility, considering that the animal the hunters invite Adonis to pursue was the wild boar[118]. They would have taken advantage of the « costume » real dogs had to wear for their protection during their encounter with a wild boar and have a child (or a dwarf) representing the animal, with the help of a mask. An engraving made of a costume for an earlier French ballet gives a good idea of the look that could be achieved. The iconographic sources for costumes for small actors playing a dog as a character are not contemporaneous, but this personified animal sometimes appeared in court entertainments of the period, most famously in the *Ballet de la Délivrance de Renaud* where « pleasant and deformed Monsters together » in the shape of owls and monkeys wearing judge and chambermaid costumes were seen, and « two others had the head, arms, and legs of the Dog, the rest of the body related to a peasant ».[119] The satirical costume of an animal dressed

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[116] For context about hounds, see: Cummins, John. *The Hound and the Hawk, The Art of Medieval Hunting.* London: Phoenix Press, 2001, pp. 12–31 and Salvadori, Philippe. *La Chasse sous l'Ancien Régime*. Paris: Fayard, 1996, pp. 91–98.

[117] In Shakespeare's *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (ca. 1590 but published in 1623) the clownish servant Launce has a long conversation with his dog, named Crab, Act II, Scene 3. The role of Launce may have been written for the famous comic actor Richard Tarlton (Queen Elizabeth's favorite clown); this theory stems from the fact that Tarlton had performed several extremely popular and well-known scenes with a dog. See: *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, with an introduction by Stanley Wells, in *William Shakespeare: The Complete Plays: Early Comedies*. London: Folio Society, 1997, p. 4. See also: Brooks, Harold F. "Two clowns in a comedy (to say nothing of the dog): Speed, Launce (and Crab) in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*". *Essays and Studies.* XVI, 1963, pp. 91–100. My own staging of the play in 1982 for a student's group (Centrale Theatre, Chatenay-Malabry) had a real dog, although not trained: one could easily imagine the spectacle Tarlton would have presented with a trained one.

[118] Topical coincidence: 1683 was the last year that a wild boar was seen in England. See: Strutt, Joseph. *The sports and pastimes of the people of England from the earliest period, including the rural and domestic recreations, may games, mummeries, pageants, processions and pompous spectacle, illustrated by reproduction from ancient paintings in which are represented most of the popular diversions*. London: J. Charles Cox, 1801, p. 14.

[119] « deux autres avoyent la teste, les bras, & les jambes de Chien, le reste du corps rapportant à un païsan […] Monstres plaisans & difformes tout ensemble. » in [Durand, Étienne (1585–1618), Bordier, René (d. 1658?), Guédron, Pierre (1564–1619/1620)]. *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, p. 13 and following plate showing the costumes of owl, dogs and monkeys.

as a man[120] gives a brilliant counterpart to the humans metamorphosed into flower and animal. Here also the memory of French experience may have played a role, as children had played hunting dogs in The *Ballet de la Nuit* in 1653[121]. In Stuart *Masques* before the English Civil War, many animals had already appeared on stage: hounds, by their connections through the hunt to the other animals, were bringing a larger Nature for indoor performances[122]. Familiar but also fierce, dogs appear as a symbolic medium between the realm of the stage and the world of the hunt.

The story of Adonis presents the departure to and the return from the hunt and it is likely, in view of the habits of the European courts, that the work was presented after a hunting party as a light spectacle after a tiring day of sport. The connection with the time and the space opens the possibility that the performance might have taken place in Windsor, the « country » royal residence, west of London, where the king would spend the summer months and from where the court would start royal hunts. The sweet groves referred to in the prologue of *Venus and Adonis* may well be the famous forest of Windsor[123], and the Armory room of the castle a fitting place for a performance celebrating the hunt, in a single dramatic space requiring minimal decoration.[124] Like in Quinault's prologues for some of Lully's operas, the place of this action gives the representation of myth an extra reality while its location may offer direct connections for the satirical lines of the prologue to members of the court[125].

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[120] A design for the dogs' costume, on which the engraving of the *Discours* is clearly based, is attributed to Daniel Rabel (1578–1637) and kept in the collections of the Victoria & Albert Museum. Museum number: S.1159–1986. See: http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O1222908/costume-design-rabel-daniel/

[121] *Ballet de la Nuit*. Edited by Michael Burden and Jennifer Thorp. The Wendy Hilton Dance & Music Series No. 15. Hillsdale (NY): Pendragon Press, 2009, pp. 21, 29, 32, 91 & 98.

[122] Staging animals in entertainments was common since the Renaissance and next to horses and dogs, one finds example of bears and birds. See: Nicoll, Allardyce. *Stuart Masques and the Renaissance Stage, with one hundred and ninety-seven illustrations*. New York : Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1938, pp. 205-207. See also: Norman, Buford. "Hybrid Monsters and Rival Aesthetics: Monsters in Seventeenth-Century French Ballet and Opera" in *Theatrum Munid Studies in honor of Ronald W. Tobin*. Edited by Claire L. Carlin and Kathleen Wine. Charlottesville (VA): Rookwood Press, 2003, pp. 180–188.

[123] Roberts, Jane. *Royal Landscape: The Gardens and Parks of Windsor*. New Haven (CT): Yale University Press, 1997.

[124] « On 20 April 1683 the Lord Chamberlain wrote orders to the Officers of the castle of Windsor: "These are to signifie His Mat[es] pleasure that you cause a Theatre to be forthwith made, in the White Tower in Windsor Castle where the Armory is: as soone as the Lord Dartmouth Master of Ordinance shall by His Mat[es] Command, have removed all the Armes from thence & cleared the same: and that you make ye same Theatre in all parts as you shall receive direction from His Mat[es] upon the place." », quoted by Boswell, Eleanore. *The Restoration Court stage, 1660–1702, with a particular account of the production of Calisto*. 2nd Edition. London: G. Allen and Unwin, 1966, p. 61.

[125] The 1674 prologue of *Alceste* took place in the gardens of the Tuileries Palace, the 1675 one of *Thésée* in the Versailles' gardens, although the work was created in the Castle of Saint-Germain-en-Laye. *Venus et Adonis*, a tragédie lyrique by Henri Desmarest (1661–1741) on a libretto by Jean-Baptiste Rousseau (1670–1741) and created at the Académie Royale, has a prologue showing the forests of Marly, which was by then for Louis XIV what Windsor was for Charles II. See: *Vénus & Adonis, Tragédie en Musique de Henry Desmarest (1697), Livret, études et commentaires. Textes réunis par Jean Duron et Yves Ferraton*. Versailles: Centre de Musique Baroque de Versailles and Sprimont: Pierre Mardaga, 2006.

The theme of the hunt was itself already connected to the nobility: hunting rights had been a tangible sign of membership in the elite class since the early Middle Ages, and, in 1671, Charles II strengthened the aristocratic privilege with a law known as the Game Act[126]. The hunt was certainly a leisure pastime, but according to certain thinkers, it was also a morally healthy activity that could distract a man from the futility of his condition. The hunt of the seventeenth century was above all a collective work of art that rallied communal experiences around itself: shared meals, sacred rituals, vigils. All texts of the period concerning the hunt agree on this aspect of fellowship and emphasize the fraternal friendship that unites the hunters. Pavilions and sumptuous halls were built to welcome such celebrations[127]. Trophies, real or sculpted, gave ample opportunities to remember previous hunts and dream about future heroic successes[128]. The sociability of the hunt was expressed equally in the assembly that preceded it as in the repast that succeeded it: such a feast was indeed the occasion to sing the legends of the hunt and seems to be an appropriate environment, aimed at exalting the senses, for a performance of *Venus and Adonis*, « A Masque for the Entertainment of the King ». Presented in the course of the festivities around a royal hunting party, the story of Adonis was a reminder that if hunting might seem a pleasure of life, it remained primarily a labor where death had to be the outcome and rebirth the mystery.

4.2.5 Betwixt Anne Finch and Anne Killigrew

Confronted by such a refined libretto which integrates so many other versions of the myth and is so well connected with the societal context of its performance, one cannot help but wonder who its author was. The libretto of *Venus and Adonis* has remained anonymous for over three centuries. No indication of authorship of the poem appears on the score. The first printed libretto, published in 1684 by Josias Priest (ca. 1645–1735) for his school performance of this « OPERA », announced in capital letters, in Chelsea, does not bear any name[129]. The poetess Anne Kingsmill Finch (1661–1720), then Anne Kingsmill, has recently been proposed as the author of the libretto[130], but I suggest here that her contemporary, Anne Killigrew (1660–1685), may be a more convincing attribution[131]. Poetesses and even female playwrights were

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[126] Munsche, Peter B. *Gentlemen and Poachers: The English Game Laws 1671–1831*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.

[127] Sabretache [Albert Stewart Barrow]. *Monarchy and the Chase*. London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1948, pp. 87–103.

[128] See: Deuchar, Stephen. *Sporting Art in Eighteenth-century England: A Social and Political History*. Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art. New Haven (CT) and London: Yale University Press, 1988, pp. 86–91. See also: Salvadori, Philippe. *La Chasse sous l'Ancien Régime*. Paris: Fayard, 1996, pp. 148–175.

[129] Luckett, Richard. "A New Source for « Venus and Adonis »" in *The Musical Times*. Vol. 130, No. 1752 (Feb. 1989). London: Musical Times Publications, 1989, pp. 76–79.

[130] Winn, James A. "« A Versifying Maid of Honour »: Anne Finch and the Libretto for Venus and Adonis" in *The Review of English Studies*. Vol. 59, No. 238. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2008, pp. 67–85.

[131] Prof. Tim Carter attracted my attention to the fact that the same hypothesis has been explored recently: Pinnock, Andrew. "The Rival Maids: Anne Killigrew, Anne Kingsmill and the making of the court masque Venus and Adonis (music by John Blow)" in *Early Music*. (In Press). See: https://eprints.soton.ac.uk/421363/ . My work has been developed without knowing about Prof. Andrew Pinnock's research.

not rare during the Restoration[132], and several elements make the Killigrew attribution more than merely another possibility. Like Anne Kingsmill, Anne Killigrew joined the court of the Duke of York, the future James II[133], in London. In the spring of 1682, James was setting up a household for himself and his second wife, the then-pregnant Mary d'Este, better known to English speakers as Mary of Modena (1658–1718). In the refined coterie of the Duchess of York, both Maids of Honour wrote poems. Aside from this court circle and many similarities between the style of the libretto of *Venus and Adonis* and the vocabulary of Anne Killigrew's poetry, turns of phrases and themes of verses, three more arguments can be made in her favor.

Unlike Anne Kingsmill, Anne Killigrew came from a family prominent in the court of Charles II, particularly very close to James, Duke of York, a declared supporter of the performing arts. Her father Henry (1612–1700) was James' chaplain, and one of her uncles, William Killigrew (1606–1695), was an admiral under James. One of her aunts, Elizabeth Killigrew (1622–1680), had been a mistress of Charles II, by whom she had a daughter, Charlotte Killigrew (1650–1684), which meant that Anne Killigrew's cousin was Lady Mary Tudor's half sister. The family had strong ties to the theatre as well as the court. At the Restoration, among the first acts of Charles II was the issuance of patents for the establishment of two London playhouses; one of these was given to her other uncle, Thomas Killigrew. All three brothers wrote theatre plays[134]. Thus, Anne grew up in a well-connected and well-educated family. No details of her own education are known, but « being tenderly educated, she became most admirable in the Arts of Poetry and Painting »[135]. Her works, both in writing and in painting, display knowledge of Greek and Roman mythology and of biblical history. Her ambitious poem about Alexander the Great, her first poetry, has already a classical title « Alexandreis », and she later composed pastoral dialogues in the Greek style, and wrote poetry about two episodes of the life Saint John the Baptist.[136] As a young woman, Anne Killigrew moved in the highest court circles with her father and her other family members and in her poems, she addresses various members of the court, including Mary of Modena. Anne Killigrew's poem titled *Upon a Little Lady Under the Discipline of an Excellent Person* could be of great consequence for the 1683 *Venus and Adonis* possible authorship[137]. Still waiting for a full critical commentary, it does not only present a long section about Cupids but mentions Adonis

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[132] See: Hobby, Elaine. *Virtue of necessity: English women's writing, 1649–1688*. Ann Arbor (MI) : University of Michigan Press, 1989. See also: Lowenthal, Cynthia. "Two Female Playwrights of the Restoration: Aphra Behn and Susanna Centlivre" in *A Companion to Restoration Drama*. Edited by Susan J. Owen. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2008, pp. 396–411. See also: Fitzmaurice, James. *Major Women Writers of Seventeenth-century England.* Ann Arbor (MI): University of Michigan Press, 1997.

[133] John Blow was named a private musician to James II in 1685.

[134] Thomas wrote obscene comedies; Sir William published tragedy and comedy as well as works of prose and verse: *Ormasdes, or Love and Friendship* (1664), *Pandora, or the Conver*ts (1664), *Selindra* (1664), *The Siege of Urbin* (1666); and Anne's father, Henry, wrote a play called *The Conspiracy* in 1638, revising it for publication under the title *Pallantus and Eudora* in 1653.

[135] See: "Henry Killigrew" in Wood, Anthony. *Athenae Oxoniensis. An exact history of all the writers and bishops who have had their education in the University of Oxford*. 1721 edition. Volume II, columns 1035 & 1036.

[136] « A Pastoral Dialogue: Melibæus, Alcippe, Asteria, Licida, Alcimedon, and Amira. » in Killigrew, Anne. *Poems 1686*. Facsimile edition, edited by R. E. Morton. Gainesville (FL): Scholars, 1967, pp. 63-75.

[137] Killigrew, Anne. *Poems 1686*. Facsimile edition, edited by R. E. Morton. Gainesville (FL): Scholars, 1967, p. 93.

and even contains some verses which could be referring to the performance of *Venus and Adonis* at court. Killigrew died of smallpox on 16 June 1685, when she was 25 years old[138].

Figure 7: 1683?, James Duke of York (later James II)
By Anne Killigrew (1660-1685).
Oil and Canvas.
United Kingdom, HM the Queen Collection.

The posthumous publication of her *Poems* by her father in 1686[139] is opened by an ode written by John Dryden (1631–1700), incontestably the most important English poet of the period and a family friend. He addresses her as « the Accomplisht Young LADY Mrs Anne Killigrew, Excellent in the two Sister-Arts of Poësie, and Painting ».[140] Her talent as painter is corroborated by records of at least fifteen works[141]. Many of her paintings display portraits, including portraits of Mary of Modena and of James, Duke of York[142] (figure 7).

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[138] For a more complete biography, see: *Anne Killigrew: Printed Writings 1641–1700*, edited by Patricia Hoffmann. London: Routledge, 2003.

[139] Killigrew, Anne. *Poems*. London: S. Lowndes, 1686. See a transcription at: http://www.gutenberg.org/files/41076/41076-h/41076-h.htm

[140] Dryden, John. "To the Pious Memory / Of the Accomplisht Young LADY / Mrs Anne Killigrew, / Excellent in the two Sister-Arts of Poësie, and Painting. / An ODE." in Killigrew, Anne. *Poems*. London: S. Lowndes, 1686.

[141] Anne Killigrew was included in the English edition of Roger de Piles' *Vie des Peintres*. See: *The Art of Painting, and the Lives of Painters: Containing, a Compleat Treatise of Painting, Designing, and the Use of Prints: With Reflections on the Works of the most Celebrated Painters, and of the several schools of Europe, as well Ancient as Modern. Done from the French of Monsieur de Piles*. London: J. Nutt, 1706, p. 440.

[142] One self-portrait is kept at Berkeley Castle (see following note). Her portrait of James II is still in the Royal Collection. See: Wright, Christopher; Gordon, Catherine May; Peskett Smith, Mary. *British and Irish Paintings in*

Yet, the ambition of Anne Killigrew was to be considered as a learned painter, treating biblical and mythological subjects, and one early self-portrait showed her holding a paper, likely one of her poems, in a classical landscape filled with old ruins, suggestive of a representation in the guise of a muse, likely Calliope[143]. Admiral William Killigrew owned six of his niece's canvases. Their titles, recorded in 1727 by the catalog of a sale, are representative of her choice of subjects: *A woman's head* (likely a self-portrait), a biblical *Judith and Holofernes*, and among the mythological genre, praised by the verses of Dryden, a *Satyr playing on a Pipe*, and most importantly for us, a painting recorded as: *Venus and Adonis*. This painting of *Venus and Adonis* seems lost but the myth had attracted Anne Killigrew at least twice: another of her paintings showing *Venus attired by the Graces*, has been recently discovered and its similarity with Act II of the opera by Blow is too striking to be dismissed. While some verses of Dryden may be evocative of her painting titled *Satyr playing on a Pipe*, for he describes its scenery « Of lofty trees, with sacred shades, / And perspectives of pleasant glades, / Where nymphs of brightest form appear, / And shaggy satyrs standing near, / Which them at once admire and fear ».[144] This may well be evocative of *Venus attired by the Graces* as shown on Figure 8.

Dryden was not the only poet to write about Anne Killigrew's paintings; she « her self » wrote verses about her own pictures, and this ekphratic style is of consequence for the possible attribution of the libretto of Blow's opera. In her *Poems* one can find verses on « St. John Baptist Painted by her self in the Wilderness, with Angels appearing to him, and with a Lamb by him » and on « Herodias Daughter presenting to her Mother St. John's Head in a Charger, also Painted by her self ». Closer to *Venus and Adonis*, her works also contain a poem « On a Picture Painted by her self, representing two Nimphs of Diana's, one in a posture to Hunt, the other Batheing. »[145] which alludes beautifully to the themes of the hunt and of the intimate, in a vocabulary close to the lyrics of *Venus and Adonis*. Besides the similarity of poetic vocabulary found in the succession of verses destined to be sung, and that only an extensive lexical comparison could fully demonstrate, it is by its stage directions that the libretto displays a clear desire to elevate the dramaturgy to a specific purpose.

Public Collections: An Index of British and Irish Oil Paintings by Artists Born Before 1870 in Public and Institutional Collections in the United Kingdom and Ireland. New Haven (CT) and London: Yale University Press, 2006, p. 920.

[143] I was not able to trace the location of this painting, but it may be the one kept in Berkeley Castle. I date this portrait, following the fashion of the dress, of the mid 1673s when Ann was around 13 years old and making her debuts at court. Further research is needed to trace the location of this painting, starting by Berkeley Castle. For a black and white reproduction, see: http://www.jimandellen.org/finch/emion1-3.htm

[144] Dryden, John. "To the Pious Memory / Of the Accomplisht Young LADY / Mrs Anne Killigrew, / Excellent in the two Sister-Arts of Poësie, and Painting. / An ODE." in Killigrew, Anne. *Poems*. London: S. Lowndes, 1686.

[145] « On a Picture Painted by her self, representing two Nimphs of DIANA's, one in a posture to Hunt, the other Batheing. WE are Diana's Virgin-Train, / Descended of no Mortal Strain; / Our Bows and Arrows are our Goods, / Our Pallaces, the lofty Woods, / The Hills and Dales, at early Morn, / Resound and Eccho with our Horn; / We chase the Hinde and Fallow-Deer, / The Wolf and Boar both dread our Spear; // In Swiftness we out-strip the Wind, / An Eye and Thought we leave behind; / We Fawns and Shaggy Satyrs awe; / To Sylvan Pow'rs we give the Law: / Whatever does provoke our Hate, / Our Javelins strike, as sure as Fate; / We bathe in Springs, to cleanse the Soil, / Contracted by our eager Toil; /In which we shine like glittering Beams, / Or Christal in the Christal Streams; / Though Venus we transcend in Form, / No wanton Flames our Bosomes warm! / If you ask where such Wights do dwell, / In what Bless't Clime, that so excel? / The Poets onely that can tell. » in Killigrew, Anne. *Poems*. London: S. Lowndes, 1686, pp. 28 & 29.

Figure 8: 1683?, *Venus attired by the Graces*
By Anne Killigrew (1660-1685).
Oil and Canvas, 44 x 37 1/3 inches, 112 x 95 cm.
Falmouth, Falmouth Art Gallery.

The libretto is a device to show *pictures where text can be sung*. Indeed, the Prologue, and what is rarer, each act, opens with a mention of a curtain "drawn" to reveal various tableaux vivants, composed like mythological paintings of the period[146]. In the prologue « The curtain is drawn where is discovered Cupid, with a bow in one hand and an arrow in the other hand, and arrows by his side, and round him Shepherds and Shepherdesses ». This picture is close to an emblematic symbol and anchors the tale in a moral ambition, like an illustration on a title page. But in the first act, the curtain reveals the scene so often copied by the illustrators of Ovid: «The curtain opens and discovers Venus and Adonis sitting together upon a couch, embracing one another ». This practice of the curtain is distinct from the theatre customs of the period, as the set of « groves » does not change, and its repeated use should be seen in relation with the custom of the period to place a little curtain in front of certain picture to protect them for sight. This largely documented picture curtain[147], could manually be drawn to reveal the painting to the eyes. Although it originates in the habit to cover holy pictures, it was, by the late seventeenth century, mostly used to cover paintings which displayed nudity, and Venus and Adonis were both erotic models[148]. While the second act shows the side of the character of Venus as a mother, « The curtain opens and Venus and Cupid are seen standing with Little Cupids round about them », the third act focuses on the lonely forsaken female lover: « The curtain opens and discovers Venus standing in a melancholy posture ». In *Venus and Adonis*, the librettist's poetic ambition reveals itself when it is integrating openings of curtain to reveal carefully composed pictures: stage effects of the libretto apply some devices coming from the painting practice and theory.

The crimson velvet curtain which features on the portrait painted by Peter Lely (1618–1680) at the end of his life, is also revealing the artist Anne Killigrew at work, designing what appears to be a classical male portrait (Adonis?), in a luxurious yellow silk dress with a pearl baldrick evocative of a *Masque* costume, in front of a window opening on a shadowy grove (Figure 9). Despite the convention of the picture, Lely manages to bring many elements allusive to Anne Killigrew's identity as maid of honour, as a painter, as an artist.

Is it probable that the libretto of *Venus and Adonis* was written by Anne Killigrew at the time she was painting her canvases?[149] Her painting titled *Venus and Adonis* seems lost, but the designation suggests a composition around the two lovers, showing either the couple in embrace or the discovery of the dead Adonis by the goddess. The fact that the myth had attracted her at least twice shows a true interest in the narrative and dramatic developments of

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[146] On tableaux vivants, see: Holmström, Kirsten Gram. *Monodrama, Attitudes, Tableaux vivants, Studies on some Trends of theatrical Fashion 1770-1815*. Uppsala : Almqvist & Wiksell, 1967.

[147] On the use of curtain in England, see: Nicoll, Allardyce. *Stuart Masques and the Renaissance Stage.* New York : Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1938, pp 39-44. For France, see: Scherer, Jacques. *La Dramaturgie Classique en France.* Paris : Nizet, 1986, pp. 171-175. On the curtain in front of painting, see: Kemp, Wolfgang. *Rembrandt: "La Sainte Famille" ou l'art de lever un Rideau.* Paris: Adam Biro, 1989.

[148] The representation of Adonis is being purged of possible homosexual connotations by the presence of Venus.

[149] The painting has been on sale at the Philip Mould & Co. gallery in 2012. Now in the Falmouth Art Gallery private collection, the provenance of the painting has been traced to the Killigrew sale of December 1727. Literature: 'Vertue Note Books', Volume II, *Walpole Society Volume XX*, 1931-2, pp. 4 & 58. Collins Baker, Charles Henry. *Burlington Magazine*, Vol. 28, no. 152, Dec 1915, pp. 112 & 114 illus. Barash, Carol. *English Women's Poetry, 1649-1714: Politics, Community and Linguistic Authority*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996, p. 157. See: http://www.historicalportraits.com/Gallery.asp?Page=Item&ItemID=1491&Desc=Venus-Attired-by-the-Graces-|-Anne-Killigrew (last accessed 24 June 2018)

it. Her painting of *Venus attired by the Graces* (Figure 8) shows a landscape ornamented by a sculptured fountain, with a naked Venus attended by the three Graces: one combing her hair, another tying a bracelet of coral around her ankle, while another one is preparing an embroidered belt. A satyr, whose presence may suggest the idea of lust, supported by his offering of grapes, balances a composition capped by Cupid flying above. While one can only wonder whether the lost painting, the one that belonged to her uncle William, was related to either Act I or Act III of Blow's *Venus and Adonis*, this surviving scene is evocative of Act II. In a composition influenced by the works of Albani, known thanks to engravings, Anne Killigrew's painting *Venus attired by the Graces* could be a part of a coherent series of pictures of which the poetic libretto would be the ekphratic pendant.

Figure 9: 1680?, Anne Killigrew at her design table (1660-1685) by Sir Peter Lely (1618–1680)
Oil and Canvas.
England, Private collection.

Beyond the similarities in poetic vocabulary of Anne Kingsmill and Anne Killigrew and their common social context, the fact that the latter was connected to a family of playwrights made her a more suitable candidate to be writing the text of a royal *Masque*, especially considering her family's ties to Lady Mary Tudor. More importantly, she had painted at least two works about the myth, and even beyond her demonstrated interest in the mythical lovers, we know she was accustomed to write poetry about her own paintings. All of these elements make her a serious candidate for the maternity of the libretto of *Venus and Adonis*. Her early death, in the year after the last known performance given while Blow was still alive, the one at Priest's school in Chelsea, may well be the reason for the obscurity that ultimately

befell the authorship of the libretto. Her father, if he found a manuscript of it in her papers, separated from the visual element of its ekphratic component, may well have disregarded it as he was concerned to establish the reputation of his departed daughter as a vestal poetess, as Dryden called her: « a Youngest Virgin-Daughter of the Skies »[150]. *Venus and Adonis* would have not fit well in this picture: in the same way Venus's nudity in Anne Killigrew's painting was subsequently covered with a drapery[151], the libretto of *Venus and Adonis* was separated from its genitrix.[152] There is no doubt in my mind that *Venus and Adonis* offers a arresting example of the complex relation between poetry and painting in England.

[150] Dryden, John. "To the Pious Memory / Of the Accomplisht Young LADY / Mrs Anne Killigrew, / Excellent in the two Sister-Arts of Poësie, and Painting. / An ODE." in Killigrew, Anne. *Poems*. London: S. Lowndes, 1686.

[151] A yellow drapery was painted over the nudity at a later date, but the painting has been now restored to its original state. See notice of the Philip Mould & Co Gallery, London at: http://www.historicalportraits.com/Gallery.asp?Page=Item&ItemID=1491&Desc=Venus-Attired-by-the-Graces-|-Anne-Killigrew

[152] Research for this paper, presented during lectures (Juilliard School of Music, New York, 19 March 2014 & 20 March 2018), has been carried out in the frame of the Boston Early Music Festival for my stage production of *Venus and Adonis* (2008, 2009) and for the Audio recording of it (2011: CPO 777 614-2). The central part of it has been published in successive BEMF program books and in the booklet accompanying the recording, which also includes pictures from the staging. I am indebted to Dr. Camille Tanguy for her assistance in the preliminary research. I am also grateful for Dr. Andrew Walkling's interest in my interpretation and our stimulating conversations.

4.3 *Acis and Galatea* by George Frideric Handel

« Consult the genius of the place in all;
That tells the waters or to rise, or fall;
Or helps th' ambitious hill the heav'ns to scale,
Or scoops in circling theatres the vale;
Calls in the country, catches opening glades,
Joins willing woods, and varies shades from shades,
Now breaks, or now directs, th' intending lines;
Paints as you plant, and, as you work, designs. »

Alexander Pope, *Epistle IV*[153]

In the summer of 1717, after the highly successful performance on the river Thames of his *Water Music* for the King of England, George Frideric Handel went to take up residence at Cannons, a rural domain few miles north of London. It was there that his « little opera » of *Acis and Galatea*, as a witness of the time called it[154], was to be written and first performed in the late spring of 1718[155]. The composer had accepted the invitation of one of his patrons: James Brydges (1674–1744), the Earl of Carnarvon and Baron Chandos, who would later be elevated to the title by which he is best known, the Duke of Chandos[156]. As Paymaster-General of the English armies during the War of Spanish Succession, Chandos was able to amass a colossal fortune starting in 1705. His first marriage allowed him to buy the large grounds of Cannons in 1709. His second wedding, in 1713, to a rich cousin, had added to his wealth. Highly cultivated and artistic, Cassandra Willoughby (1670–1735) had a keen interest in the history of painting and was an amateur painter herself. Her educated interest in the arts made her a perfect match for Chandos, who was an avid art collector and a liberal patron[157], as

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153 Pope, Alexander. *Of false taste; an epistle to the Right Honourable Richard Earl of Burlington. Occasion'd by his publishing Palladio's designs of the baths, arches, theatres, &c. of ancient Rome*, 3rd edition. London: L. Gilliver, 1731, Verses 57–64.

154 « I have been at Canons with E: of Carnavan who lives *en Prince* & to boot is a worthy beneficent man, I heard sermon at his parish church which for painting and orniment exceeds every thing in this Country he has a Choorus of his own, the Musick is made for himself and sung by his own servants, besides which there is a little opera now a makeing for his diversion whereof the Musick will not be made publick. The words are to be furnished by M^rs^ Pope & Gay, the musick to be composed by Hendell. » Letter from Sir David Dalrymple (d. 1721) to Hugh Campbell, 3rd Earl of Loudoun (d. 1731), dated 27 May 1718, transcribed in: Rogers, Patrick. "Dating *Acis and Galatea*: a newly discovered letter" in *The Musical Times,* Vol. 114, No. 1566 (August 1973), p. 792.

155 The exact date of the performance, if a performance did take place, has not yet been determined.

156 For a biography and larger assessment of the Duke of Chandos's patronage, see: Jenkins, Susan. *Portrait of a Patron, The Patronage and Collecting of James Brydges, 1st Duke of Chandos (1674–1744)*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007.

157 Charles Gildon's poem of 1717, *Canons or the Vision* is praising Chandos' s patronage. See: Gildon, Charles. *Canons: or, The vision. A poem address'd to the Right Honourable Earl of Caernarvan, &c.* London, 1717. Eighteenth

Handel would appreciate himself during the years he spent as his guest. The couple was enjoying the grand life befitting their high noble rank and political connections, and their large estate of Cannons was to be both the symbol of this success and the backdrop of *Acis and Galatea*; it was also the motive for its creation, as I will demonstrate[158]. The poetic and spectacular role of a real garden confers on *Acis and Galatea* a very special identity. This identity must be taken into consideration when staging the piece: clues of a visual nature, signs of movements and tensions, evidence of symbols and metaphors, all show that *Acis and Galatea* was more than a minor *Masque*: rather, it was an attempt to integrate all elements of an Augustan patronage in order to celebrate it. *Acis and Galatea* can be considered to belong to the genre of *Masque/opera*.

4.3.1 Cannons : the place

The year following his second marriage, Chandos had started to radically transform his Jacobean house at Cannons into a sumptuous up-to-date residence. Daniel Defoe (1660–1731), who characterized it in 1725 as « the most Magnificent in England » in his *A Tour Thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain*, further expressed his admiration as follows: « The great palaces in *Italy*, are either the work of Sovereign Princes, or have been Ages in their Building; one Family laying the Design, and ten succeeding Ages and Families being taken up, in carrying on the Building: But *Cannons* had not been three Years in the *Duke's* Possession, before we saw this Prodigy rise out of the Ground ».[159] The comparison was well-founded as the new mansion itself was designed in the Italian style, a rather new trend in English architecture that was strongly influenced by the villas built by Palladio around Venice and the buildings of Rome[160]. England was then as fascinated by Italian art, past and contemporary, as the rest of Europe was, and by the end of the seventeenth century a journey to Italy was a must for the education of every young man of good family. If the entrepreneurial and busy Chandos, deeply involved in trade and business life, could not himself go to Italy, he wished nevertheless to have Italy around him, a cultural image of both classical tradition and pragmatic modernity. Consequently, the house designed for him by numerous architects, most notably James Gibbs

Century Collections Online. Gale. Universiteit Leiden / LUMC. Accessed 16 February 2018 http://find.galegroup.com.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2048/ecco/infomark.do?&source=gale&prodId=ECCO&userGroupName=leiden&tabID=T001&docId=CB3330554004&type=multipage&contentSet=ECCOArticles&version=1.0&docLevel=FASCIMILE

[158] Preliminary versions of this research have been presented during public and private lectures (Vancouver Public Library, Vancouver, 19 March 2011, and Juilliard School of Music, New York, 21 March 2014 & 22 March 2018), and has been carried out in the frame of the Boston Early Music Festival for my staged production of *Acis and Galatea* (2009, 2011, 2015) and for the audio recording of it (2015: CPO 777 877-2). A summary has been published in successive BEMF program books and included in the booklet of the recording, together with photographs of the original staged production. I am indebted to Dr. Camille Tanguy for her assistance in the preliminary research. I am also grateful for Dr. Ellen Harris's interest in my interpretation and helpful comments on early drafts. I am indebted to the research on Cannons of Dr. Suzanne Jenkins and to the works of Dr. John Dixon Hunt on the English Garden.

[159] Daniel Defoe is best known as the author of *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), but he was also famous as a political pamphleteer and was considered a pioneer of modern journalism. His three-volume travel book, *A Tour Thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain*, was published between 1724 and 1727, and was innovative because Defoe had actually visited the places he described. For Cannons, see: Defoe, Daniel. *A Tour Thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain, Divided into Circuits or Journies*, […] Vol II. London: G. Strahan, 1725, pp. 8–12.

[160] The influence of Italy on the taste of Handel's other great English patron, Richard Boyle, 3rd Earl of Burlington (1694–1753), is also visible in his own work as an architect. See: Kingsbury, Pamela D. *Lord Burlington's Town Architecture*. London: RIBA Heinz Gallery, 1995.

(1682–1754)[161], active in Cannons in the years 1716-1720, was to have all the classical features of symmetry and proportion, with large Venetian windows and elegant Ionic pilasters creating a Roman portico. The inside of the house was still under construction in 1717, when Handel arrived, as the plans for the interior were as ambitious as for the exterior. Numerous artists were commissioned to make it the finest house in England, and Chandos spared no expense to have everything be as rich as possible. The rooms, opulently painted and decorated, were intended to welcome the art treasures he had begun collecting before Cannons was built. Ironically, one of the difficulties he faced when collecting was that the War of the Spanish Succession, which was a key factor in his great wealth, also made it more difficult to import art directly from the continent[162]. Even so, his collection of paintings included some of the great Italian masters like Caravaggio, Titian and Giorgione[163]. The French school was less well represented, perhaps for political reasons, though several paintings by Poussin, an artist who was renowned for his Italian affinity, had been obtained[164]. Portraits with musical instruments, water landscapes and mythological paintings show the taste of Chandos for classical subjects.

Masterpieces adorned the walls of the house, and Cassandra Willoughby's own excellent copies of old masters decorated the private apartments. Aside from these museum pieces and family treasures, Italian and French fresco painters[165] were called to lavish their talents on a series of rooms that were designed to embody a princely life. At a time when public appearances and social gatherings were expressions of power, these spaces were also a kind of stage set, where the Earl and Countess of Carnarvon could play their private roles with magnificence. The vast apartments were specifically fit out to accommodate their passions for the arts, and included a picture room, a « stone gallery » to displays sculptural antiques, a tapestry room, a needlework room, and a huge library. There was a special music room which was situated next to the dining room to allow the noble couple to eat in style: in private but immersed in music, the orchestra being unseen from the table. Described in 1722 as « very spatious » by John Macky (d. 1726) in his *Journey through England*, this Dining Room had indeed « at the End of it, a Room for his Musick, which performs both Vocal and Instrumental, during the Time he is at Table; and he spares no Expence to have the best ».[166] An orchestra and a

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161 Trained in Rome, and particularly known for the domed Radcliffe Camera at Oxford University, James Gibbs (1682–1754) also transformed the villa of Alexander Pope. His impact on the British architecture of his time was significant, notably thanks to his book: *A Book of Architecture, containing designs of buildings and ornaments* published in 1728. See: Friedman, Terry. *James Gibbs*. New Haven (CT): Yale University Press, 1984.

162 See: Weiss, Benjamin. "Arcadian Visions: The Art Collection of the Duke of Chandos" in *Boston Early Music Festival Program Book, 2015–2016 Concert Season, BEMF Chamber Opera Series, Handel's Acis and Galatea*. Cambridge (MA): Boston Early Music Festival, 2015, pp. 24–27.

163 See: Jenkins, Susan. *Portrait of a Patron, The Patronage and Collecting of James Brydges, 1st Duke of Chandos (1674–1744)*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007, pp. 127–138.

164 Works by Nicolas Poussin (1594–1665) also feature in Handel's collection. See: McGeary, Thomas. "Handel as art collector: art, connoisseurship and taste in Hanoverian Britain" in *Early Music. Vol. 37, N° 4*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009, pp. 533–574.

165 Chandos commissioned painters directly, and for the decoration of the interiors of his house he had an international taste, inviting the Italian Antonio Belluci (1654–1726), the French Louis Laguerre (1663–1721) but also the British William Kent (1685–1748). See: Jenkins, Susan. *Portrait of a Patron, The Patronage and Collecting of James Brydges, 1st Duke of Chandos (1674–1744*). Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007, pp. 58–72.

166 Macky, John. *A Journey through England in Familiar Letters from a Gentleman Here to his Friend Abroad*. Volume II. London: J. Pemberton, 1722, Letter I, p. 9. Daniel Defoe also mentions: « Nor is the Chapel only Furnish'd

male vocal ensemble were part of the permanent household at Cannons, and their activities were concerned as much with the spiritual life of the estate, with daily services at the chapel, as with the social aspects, which included court-like entertainments[167].

To head his musical establishment, in 1712 the future duke appointed Johann Christoph Pepusch (1667–1752). This Berlin-born composer started his career in England as a viola player and later as harpsichordist at the Royal Theatre in Drury Lane[168]. There he was appointed musical director in 1714 and collaborated with several of the leading theatrical figures of the day, including in the production of a series of English *Masques*. Among these spectacles, *Venus and Adonis*, on the same subject as Blow's opera, did much to establish his reputation in 1715 as a composer in the London musical world[169] and was followed by other successes, including *Apollo and Daphne* in January 1716, also based on Ovid's *Metamorphoses*[170]. Pepusch, who had been awarded the degree of Doctor of Music at Oxford in 1713, served for about twenty years as musical director to the Duke of Chandos, and wrote a considerable amount of church music for the chapel at Cannons. In 1717 or 1718, he married the renowned Italian-born singer Margherita de L'Epine (1680–1746), who is likely to have sung the role of Galatea at Cannons, as she had created all of the lead soprano roles in the operas Handel had composed for the London stage since 1712[171]. Pepusch and L'Epine were the true core of

with such excellent Musick, but the Duke has a Set of them to entertain him every Day at Dinner. » in Defoe, Daniel. *A Tour Thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain, Divided into Circuits or Journies*, […] Vol II. London: G. Strahan, 1725, p. 11.

167 Speaking of the chapel of Cannons, Defoe notes its « singularity, not only in its building, and the beauty of its workmanship, but in this also, that the duke maintains there a full choir, and has the worship perform'd … with the best musick after the manner of the chapel royal, which is not done in any other noble man's chapel in Britain » in Defoe, Daniel. *A Tour Thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain, Divided into Circuits or Journies*, […] Vol II. London: G. Strahan, 1725, p. 10.

168 See: Cook, Frederick Donald. *The life and works of Johann Christoph Pepusch (1667–1752), with special reference to his dramatic works and cantatas.* Doctoral Thesis. London, King's College London, 1982, pp. 69–183. See: https://kclpure.kcl.ac.uk/portal/en/theses/the-life-and-works-of-johann-christoph-pepusch-16671752-with-special-reference-to-his-dramatic-works-and-cantatas(3fb21beb-a99b-4be5-aa3e-951495d3986a).html (Accessed 28 February 2018).

169 *Venus and Adonis* was written by Colley Cibber (1671–1757) and premiered on 12 March 1715. The piece was revived at the theatre at Lincoln's Inn Fields, where Pepusch became director of music, during the 1718–1719 season, and again in 1725 and 1730. See: Cook, Frederick Donald. "*Venus and Adonis*: An English Masque « After the Italian Manner »" in *The Musical Times.* Vol. 121, No. 1651 (September 1980). London: Musical Times Publications, 1980, pp. 553–557.

170 *Apollo and Daphne* was set by Pepusch on a text by John Hughes (1677–1720). See: *Poems on Several Occasions with some select essays in prose in Two Volumes by John Hughes, Esq*. London: Tonson & Watts, 1735, Volume II, p. 107. In the gardens of Cannons a statuary group showing Apollo in pursuit of Daphne, and holding her as she transformed into a laurel tree, was visible on the south side of the canal. See: Jenkins, Susan. *Portrait of a Patron, The Patronage and Collecting of James Brydges, 1st Duke of Chandos (1674–1744)*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007, p. 85.

171 Margherita de L'Epine sang Adonis in Pepusch's *Venus and Adonis*. See: Middleton, Lydia Miller. "Epine, Francesca Margherita de l' " in Stephen, Leslie. *Dictionary of National Biography*. Volume 17. London: Smith, Elder & Co, 1885–1900, pp. 380 & 381. See also: Dean, Winton. "l'Epine, (Francesca) Margherita de" in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*. Volume 10: "Kern to Lindelheim". London: Macmillan, 1995, pp. 682 & 683.

Musical Cannons at the time and may have been instrumental in connecting Handel and Chandos[172].

4.3.2 Cannons: the gardens

But even more than the house and its musical staff, it was the gardens of Cannons that were renowned for their magnificence, their size and their variety. When Handel arrived, this admiration was already widespread, and the scale of the work put Cannons at the front line of the avant-garde. « The gardens are so well designed, and have so vast a variety, and the canals are so large, that they are not to be out done in *England* »[173]. Thanks to his large grounds, Chandos was able to create a harmonious compendium of different styles. English gardens knew the beginning of a renewal in these years, where the models of Italian, Dutch and French gardens were copied but also adapted to allow less formality[174]. In Cannons, like in Het Loo in the Netherlands, there was a pleasure garden and an orchard, but also a grand terrace opening on a parterre with sculptures, based on the geometric model of Versailles, which opened in turn onto a huge park with a canal in the far end. The general layout of the grounds, reflecting the new fashion of gardens opening directly on wild nature, was planned by George London[175], who died in 1714. Several head gardeners were successively involved in the landscaping of Cannons, and by 1717 the post had been given to Richard Bradley (1688–1732), who was later to become the first Professor of Botany at Cambridge University. For his research, Bradley, although more a naturalist than a designer, was allowed by Chandos to build a greenhouse, some walled kitchen gardens, an orchard, a physic garden, and one hot house, where pineapples were a great culinary favorite of his experiments. In 1718, the year *Acis and Galatea* was created, Bradley published a third part to his *New Improvements of Planting and Gardening both*

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172 Under the direct patronage of Chandos for approximately two years, Handel wrote ten anthems known today as the *Chandos Anthems* and a *Te deum*. In addition to *Acis and Galatea*, he wrote music for *Haman and Mordecai*, « oratorium », later reworked as the oratorio *Esther*. Despite the fundamental difference between their literary sources, the two works offer striking similarity in their forms and possibly performance formats. See: Harris, Ellen T. *George Frideric Handel, A life with friends*. London and New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2014, pp. 64–66. And: Harris, Ellen T. *Handel as Orpheus, Voice and Desire in the chamber cantatas*. Cambridge (MA): Harvard University Press, 2001, pp. 210–239.

173 Defoe puts Cannons' gardens at the top but adds « possibly the Lord *Castlemains* at *Wanstead*, may be said to equal but can not exceed them ». See: Defoe, Daniel. *A Tour Thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain, Divided into Circuits or Journies*, […] Vol II. London: G. Strahan, 1725, p. 10. Due to the expansion of the London agglomeration, both estates have disappeared. There is still a park in Cannons, where very little of the original design survives.

174 See: Hunt, John Dixon. *Gardens and the Picturesque*… Cambridge (MA): MIT Press, 1997, and *The Anglo-Dutch Garden in the Age of William and Mary/De Gouden Eeuw van de Hollandse Tuinkunst*, Journal of Garden History Volume/Jaargang 8 Numbers/Nummers 2 & 3 April–September 1988. Edited by John Dixon Hunt. London: Taylor & Francis Ltd, 1988.

175 George London (ca. 1640–1714) was an English nurseryman and garden designer. He aspired to the baroque style and was a founding partner in the famed Brompton Park Nursery in 1681. Henry Wise (1653–1738) was his apprentice, and the two later worked as partners on parterre gardens at Hampton Court, Chelsea Hospital, Longleat, Chatsworth, Melbourne Hall, Wimpole Hall, Castle Howard, and Cannons. His Garden designs at Hanbury Hall near Bromsgrove have been recently reinstated using plans, contemporary surveys and archaeological evidence. See: https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/hanbury-hall-and-gardens (Accessed 16 February 2018).

Philosophical and Practical[176], and gratefully dedicated his book to Chandos. The libretto of *Acis and Galatea* contains evocations of many fruits: grape, plum, berry and cherry, and the book by Bradley provided advice on how to cultivate them. Among the cherries the gardener recommends, the « Carnation » and the « Cluster »[177] of Cannons may have inspired the metaphors Polyphmeus uses to praise Galatea « O ruddier than the Cherry / O sweeter than the Berry! / O nymph, more bright / Than Moonshine Night! / Like Kidlings blithe and merry. / Ripe as the melting Cluster ». Ovid was the inspiration but, by the choice of a vocabulary used on the grounds of Cannons, the poetic resonance was given a local flavor, where the sense of hearing, viewing and tasting were associated[178].

The production of fruit and other harvests was a minor facet of Cannons and the gardens were not merely used for the purpose of consumption and botanical experimentation. The grounds were ornamented with a great basin, a canal and numerous fountains. The water features in Cannons were to be of double importance, at the same time technical prodigy and artistic fantasy. The canal led John Macky to share his amazement in 1722: « The Canal runs a great Way, and indeed one would wonder to see such a vast Quantity of Water in a Country ». These water features were installed in a spot « where are neither Rivers nor Springs »[179], and water had to be brought from the closest mountains. Mastering these diverse aspects was to define its symbolic eloquence in the same mode as at Herrenhausen, the Hanoverian palace of George I, King of England (1660–1727), where Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646–1716) was busy trying in 1696 to create the highest « jet d'eau » in Europe[180], and where Handel had been named Kapellmeister in 1710[181]. In an influential text celebrating the « Act of Settlement », by which the English crown was presented to the Hanoverian dynasty, John Toland (1670–1722) expressed his admiration in 1702 for the gardens of Herrenhausen and more specifically for the great waterworks there: « The Garden is delicat indeed, the Water-works great and noble, the Basins and Fountains extremely large »[182]. Keen to align himself with the new dynasty, Chandos had great plans for Cannons, and to direct such king-like undertakings, Chandos was

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176 Bradley, Richard. *New Improvements of Planting and Gardening both Philosophical and Practical; explaining the Motion of the sapp and Generation of Plants*…. London: Mears, 1718. Parts I and II are dedicated to Henry Grey, 1st Duke of Kent, (1671–1740), who is one of the founders, with the Duke of Chandos and the Earl of Burlington, of The Royal Academy of Music in February 1719.

177 « *Cherries;* the *Early* or *May-Cherry*; the *May-Duke*; the *Black*, *Red*, and *White-Heart-Cherries*, the *Carnation*, the *Morella*, the *Flemish-Cherry*, and the *Common-Black*; and also the *Cluster-Cherry*, well enough deserves a Place in our Gardens for the Curiosity of its Fruit. » in Bradley, Richard. *New Improvements of Planting and Gardening both Philosophical and Practical*… London: Mears, 1718, pp. 43 & 44.

178 See: Solomon, Jon. "Polyphemus's whistle in Handel's *Acis and Galatea*" in *Music & Letters. Vol. 64, No. 1/2 (January–April 1983)*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983, pp. 37–43.

179 Macky, John. *A Journey through England in Familiar Letters from a Gentleman Here to his Friend Abroad*, Volume II. London: J. Pemberton, 1722, Letter I, p. 9.

180 For a general introduction to the gardens of Herrenhausen, see: Barlo, Nik. *Herrenhausen gardens*. Rostock: Hinstorff, 2008, pp. 21 & 67.

181 See: Harris, Ellen T. *George Frideric Handel, A life with friends*. London and New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2014, p. 31.

182 See: Toland, John. *An Account of the Courts of Prussia and Hannover; Sent to a Minister of State of Holland*. London: John Darby, 1705, p. 72.

fortunate enough to have a water engineer in his household in the person of John Theophilus Desaguliers (1683–1744)[183].

Born to a Huguenot family and employed as Chaplain of Chandos' private chapel by 1716, this expert created a complex system of pipes and bores to feed the water features of Cannons. In 1718 his research reached a peak and Desaguliers dedicated to Chandos his translation of a French treatise on water by Edme Mariotte (1620–1684)[184]. To *The Motion of Water,* was added a *Little Treatise of the same Author; giving Practical Rules for Fountains, or Jets d'Eau*[185] nourished by his own experiments in the gardens of Cannons. This mastery over the natural elements, and the patronage which allowed it, can be seen to correspond to the myth of the transformation of Acis into a fountain by Galatea. The gardens and waters of Cannons were in the background of the creation of *Acis and Galatea*, a work specially designed for the lord and the lady of the manor. It was conceived to please them by reflecting on the nature of their domain: a nature metamorphosed by their power and care, as was the transformation of Acis into a fountain by Galatea. In his dedication to Chandos which opens his translation, Desaguliers praises the interest in Arts and Science of his patron and even compares him to the Roman emperor Augustus, famous for his profligate patronage, by quoting from Virgil's *Eclogues* « a god grants us this peace » and also « upon whose altar / A young lamb from our folds will often bleed »[186]. The verses of Virgil which follow these, verses that a well-learned gentleman like Chandos would have known, state that Augustus « has allowed, you see, my herds to wander and me to play as I will on my shepherd's pipe ». This connection between the work of Desaguliers and the classical pastoral poetry and music reveals the classical roots of the Cannons microculture where theory and practice were largely contributing to the Augustan Age that England knew at the time[187].

Chandos may have had a keen interest in experimental physics, but his wife Cassandra was likely the artistic mind behind the water ornaments of the gardens of Cannons. In her private writings the future first Duchess of Chandos described parks and gardens of various English estates that she visited prior her wedding, and her passion for water features is often

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183 Desaguliers, born in La Rochelle in France, emigrated to England and went to Oxford University, and then developed a rich career in experimental philosophy (physics). He worked on developing early steam machines. Seven of these were erected to his designs for pumping water to fountains, the first in the gardens of Peter the Great in St. Petersburg. Desaguliers was made a member of the Royal Society in 1714. See: *A Biographical Dictionary of Civil Engineers in Great Britain and Ireland, Volume 1: 1500–1830*. London: Thomas Telford and The Institution of Civil Engineers, 2002, pp. 177 & 178.

184 *Traité du mouvement des eaux et des autres corps fluides, divisé en V parties, par feu M. Mariotte, de l'Académie Royale des Sciences. Mis en lumière par les soins de M. de La Hire, Lecteur & Professeur du Roy pour les Mathématiques, & de l'Académie Royale des Sciences*. Paris: Jean Jombert, 1700. For an online copy of this important work, see: https://archive.org/details/traitdumouvemen02marigoog (Accessed 16 February 2018).

185 *The Motion of WATER, and other FLUIDS. Being a Treatise of Hydrostaticks. Written originally in French, by the late Monsieur Marriotte, Member of the Royal Academy of Sciences at Paris. Divided into Five Parts, and Translated into English. Together with a Little Treatise of the same Author, giving Practical Rules for fountains, or Jets d'Eau. By J. T. Desaguliers, M. A. F. R. S. Chaplain to the Right Honourable James Earl of Caernarvon. By whom are added, Several Annotations for Explaining the doubtful Places.* London: J. Senex and W. Taylor, 1718.

186 « O Meliboee, deus nobis haec otia fecit: / namque erit ille mihi semper deus, illius aram / Saepe tener nostris ab ovilibus imbuet agnus. » in Virgil, *Bucolics*, *Eclogue* 1.

187 For an overview of the concept of the Augustan Age, see: Rogers, Pat. *The Augustan Vision*. London: Methuen, 1974.

expressed by her disappointment when viewing mediocre waterworks, and her taste for the more formidable displays. Convinced that waterworks were adding much to the Beauty of the Place, she marvels at the height of a « jet of water » or the extent of a cascade. Of Boughton House in Northamptonshire, she comments that: « the Waterworks there are extremely fine, ye Cascaid [*sic*] is made by turning a Mill dam to play into ye Great Bason where there are 5 large Fountains ».[188] In her accounts of visits to Badminton[189], she notices that « in it [the wilderness] and the gardens are 22 fountains, which are in [her] opinion all too small, there is not one large jet of water in the whole garden, a river or greater command of water would add much to the beauty of the place »[190]. The tale of Galatea, which culminates in the use of her creative « command » over the motions of waters, would have also appealed to her inclination for classical subjects, long nourished by her passions for paintings and for gardens. The characters of *Acis and Galatea* come from the literature of Antiquity and, of course, Latin and English editions of the classical works were present in the rich library of Cannons[191]. The Greek story can first be found in Theocritus's *Idyll* XI, entitled *The Cyclops*. Theocritus, born in Sicily, tells the longing song the Cyclops Polyphemus addressed to his love, the sea-nymph Galatea, who prefers the mortal Acis. Since Acis changes form at the end of the tale, this story is recounted by Ovid, the Latin poet of the first century, in his influential compilation called the *Metamorphoses*. After Acis had been crushed under a boulder launched by the jealous Polyphemus, Galatea metamorphosed Acis into a water source, the young shepherd's blood being changed into the crystal liquid.

4.3.3 « Ut Pictura Poesis, Ut Pictura Hortus »[192]

While this Ovidian story was familiar to Handel, who had already composed an Italian cantata on the same theme during his time in Naples[193], it was also largely appealing to the poets who were by then the literary masters of the intellectual circle at Cannons. Alexander Pope (1688–1744), John Gay (1685–1732) and John Hughes (1677–1720)[194] collaborated to

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188 See: Jenkins, Susan. *Portrait of a Patron, The Patronage and Collecting of James Brydges, 1st Duke of Chandos (1674–1744)*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007, p. 15.

189 On Richard Bradley, the gardens of Badminton, and the Duchess of Beaufort, see: Laird, Mark. *A natural history of English gardening*. New Haven (CT): Yale University Press, 2015, pp. 64–107.

190 See: *Cassandra Brydges (1670–1735), First Duchess of Chandos: Life and Letters*. Edited by Rosemary O'Day. Martlesham: Boydell Press, 2007, p. 37.

191 Jenkins, Susan. *Portrait of a Patron, The Patronage and Collecting of James Brydges, 1st Duke of Chandos (1674–1744)*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007, pp. 143–146.

192 The title of this section and the reflection it introduces, owes a great deal to the inspiring works of Dr. Hunt. See: Hunt, John Dixon. *Gardens and the Picturesque, Studies in the History of Landscape Architecture*. Cambridge (MA): MIT Press, 1997.

193 The « serenata a tre », entitled *Aci, Galatea e Polifemo* (HWV 72), was composed in June 1708 for a wedding feast in Naples. This was followed by the cantata *Il Tebro* created in September in Rome. See: Trowell, Brian. "Acis, Galatea and Polyphemus: a « serenata a tre voci »?" in *Music and Theatre, Essays in Honour of Winton Dean*. Edited by Nigel Fortune. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987, pp. 31–93. See also: Harris, Ellen T. *Handel as Orpheus, Voice and Desire in the chamber cantatas*. Cambridge (MA): Harvard University Press, 2001.

194 Alexander Pope and John Gay had just completed some contributions to a new edition of *Metamorphoses*, translated by John Dryden (1631–1700), published in 1717. This translation appeared a year before the creation of *Acis and Galatea*; Samuel Garth brought together works by John Dryden, several tales by Joseph Addison,

provide the English libretto. These poets were all deeply connected with pastoral theory[195], but the choice of the story of Galatea and Acis was certainly influenced as much by their deep knowledge of the classics as by a strong desire to please their noble patrons with a fitting subject for Cannons. Since the publication in 1715 of his *An Essay on Allegorical Poetry With Remarks on the Writings of Mr. Edmund Spenser*, John Hughes was considered to be the expert on the English pastoral tradition. But his translations from Latin poetry and French drama, including Molière, gave him the ability to consider his national heritage in a more European context. Hughes was keen to explore the relation between poetry and music and his English cantatas, set to music by Pepusch[196] and by Handel[197], « were design'd as an Essay (which was the first in its kind) for Compositions in *English* after the manner of the *Italians* »[198]. John Gay had just published *Trivia: Or, The Art of Walking the Streets of London* where many pages of this poem/guide were devoted to the river Thames.[199] In his address to the reader in *The Shepherd Week*, published in 1714, he boasted that « no poet (though otherways of notable Cunning in Roundelays) hath hit on the right simple Eclogue after the true ancient guise of Theocritus, before this mine Attempt ». His six classical pastorals are given English settings, which he is convinced are « in no wise sure more unworthy a *British* Poet's imitation, than those of *Sicily* or *Arcadie* »[200]. Of the three poets, Alexander Pope, although the youngest, was the leading figure; in his *Pastorals*, published in 1709, he had already given classical names to his shepherds as well as incorporated traditional pastoral situations, but he transported them to early

and contributions from Alexander Pope, Nahum Tate, John Gay, William Congreve, and John Rowe, as well as those of eleven others including Garth himself. Verses from this translation can be found in the libretto of *Acis and Galatea*. See: Ovid. *Metamorphoses*. Translated by John Dryden, and others, edited by Samuel Garth. With an introduction by Garth Tissol. Ware: Wordsworth Editions, 1998.

195 See: Harris, Ellen T. *Handel and the Pastoral Tradition*. London: Oxford University Press, 1980, pp. 193–199.

196 On 13 April 1706 Margherita de L'Epine introduced at Drury Lane a new English cantata « written and compos'd after the Italian manner », likely one of the ten English cantatas composed by Pepusch on texts by Hughes. See: *Poems on Several Occasions with some select essays in prose in Two Volumes by John Hughes, Esq*. London: Tonson & Watts, 1735, Volume I, pp. 125–140.

197 Handel had composed an English cantata to a text by John Hughes in 1710–12. See: Harris, Ellen T. *George Frideric Handel, A life with friends*. London and New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2014, p. 48. The text of « Venus and Adonis, A Cantata set by Mr. Handel » appears in the posthumous collected works of Hughes published in London in 1735: *Poems on Several Occasions with some select essays in prose in Two Volumes by John Hughes, Esq*. London: Tonson & Watts, 1735, Volume II, p. 64. See: Burrows, Donald. *Handel*. Second Edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012, p. 127.

198 Hughes continued, « They were writ [sic] before the introducing of Italian Operas on the English Stage, tho' not publish'd till afterwards. » In: *Poems on Several Occasions with some select essays in prose in Two Volumes by John Hughes, Esq*. London: Tonson & Watts, 1735, Volume I, p. xv.

199 Gay, John. "The Frozen river" in *Trivia: Or, The Art of Walking the Streets of London*. London: Bernard Lintott, 1716, p. 14. With his libretto for *The Beggar's Opera*, created in 1728 with music by Pepusch, John Gay's contribution to musical drama was definitely established. See: *The Beggar's Opera by John Gay. A faithful reproduction of 1729 Edition which includes the words and music of all the AIRS, as well as SCORE for the overture, with commentaries by Louis Kronenberger and Max Goberman on the literary and musical background and with the original words of all the airs John Gay adapted for this work*. London: John Watts, [1729] facsimile Larchmont (NY): Argonaut Books, 1961.

200 Gay, John. "The proeme to the courteous reader" in *The Shepherd's Week: In Six Pastorals*. London: Ferd. Burleigh, 1714.

eighteenth-century England on the banks of the river Thames[201]. The three poets were united by their desire to create a national Pastoral genre and the setting of classical characters in a real English landscape was also the treatment chosen to tell the story of the river god Acis. This treatment was not new: as early as 1701, a *Masque* by John Eccles (1668–1735) titled *Acis and Galatea* was performed at Drury Lane[202], but Cannons offered deeper resonances with the myth than a theatre stage, albeit a royal one. Credited for having introduced the weeping willow in the landscape of the banks of the Thames, soon famous for the design of his own garden, and more specifically for his grotto, Pope's interest in garden design must have found in Cannons if not a starting point, a clear resonance. While performing *Acis and Galatea* in English verses, within the gardens of Cannons or with them in the background, the poetical and musical evocations of water produced by the collaborative process between writers and composer was inspired and complemented by the presence of the waterworks of the garden.

4.3.4 Theatrical and non-theatrical performances of *Acis*

As I have shown, a great deal of the context of the composition of *Acis and Galatea* can be traced, but we do not have direct information regarding the exact shape of the private performance at the Chandos estate in the summer of 1718. In fact, the later performance history of the piece further blurs the original conception: Handel continued to alter the work, first to make his 1732 version and then for successive performances up through 1741. He also gave performances of the original English work, adapting it into its two-act form in 1739. *Acis and Galatea* was the work by Handel that enjoyed the greatest popularity during his lifetime: it received more than seventy performances, and the composer conducted a concert including it for the last time in 1742, during his famous trip to Dublin to create the *Messiah*[203]. Comparing *Acis and Galatea* with other English operas of the period generally leads to the conclusion that the work was originally devised as a *Masque.* Although this term refers to the earlier English form of courtly entertainments where spoken scenes were interrupted by songs and dances[204], the English text of *Acis and Galatea* is indeed set to music from beginning to end, bringing it closer to the contemporary stage works of Pepusch and Johann Ernst Galliard (1687–1749)[205].

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[201] For an introduction to Pope's pastoral poetry, see: Heath-Stubbs, John. *The Pastoral*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969. pp 49–53 and for a choice of his writings, see: *Early Eighteenth Century Poetry*. Edited by James R. Sutherland. Columbia (SC): University of South Carolina Press, 1970, pp. 78–136.

[202] See: Hook, Lucyle. "Introduction" in Motteux, Peter Anthony & Eccles, John. *The Rape of Europa by Jupiter (1694) and Acis and Galatea (1701), Volume 208 of Publications, Augustan Reprint Society*. Los Angeles: William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, University of California, 1981.

[203] *The Messiah* premiered in Dublin on 13 April 1742. See: Harris, Ellen T. *George Frideric Handel, A life with friends*. London and New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2014, pp. 194 & 195.

[204] The history of the Masque as a genre is too complex to be summarized here but composers such as Thomas Campion (1567–1620), who wrote and published numerous ones, are worth mentioning. See: Nicoll, Allardyce. *Stuart Masques and the Renaissance Stage*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1938. See also: Reyher, Paul. *Les Masques Anglais, Étude sur les ballets et la vie de cour en Angleterre (1512–1640)*. New York: Benjamin Blom, 1964. See also: *Trois Masques à la Cour de Charles Ier d'Angleterre/The Triumph of Peace, The Triumphs of the Prince d'Amour, Brittannia Triumphans/Livrets de John Shirley et William Davenant, Dessins d'Inigo Jones, Musique de William Lawes. Introduction, commentaires et transcriptions par Murray Lefkowitz*. Paris: CNRS Éditions, 1970.

[205] Johann Ernst Galliard, born in Celle (Germany) to a French wig-maker, studied composition at the Court of Hanover with Agostino Steffani. As an esteemed oboe and recorder player, he earned a seat in the chamber music of George, Prince of Denmark. Later, he moved to England where he became the chapel-master of Somerset House. There, in response to war victories, Galliard composed a *Te Deum*, a *Jubilate* and some

By the beginning of the eighteenth century, this designation of *Masque* refers more to the English language of the libretto, to clearly distinguish these works from the Italian *operas*, than to the performance format of the premiere. Besides, *Acis and Galatea*'s similarity in style to this type of contemporary entertainment should not influence our understanding of its spectacular form, and certainly *Acis and Galatea* was not meant to be staged at Cannons in the same manner that other English *Masques* were being presented in theatres in 1718. For a start, the original Cannons version included only five solo singers, a soprano, three tenors and a bass, who not only sang the principal roles but also served together as the vocal ensemble in a style inherited from Greek theatre, a chorus commenting on the story but not taking any active part in it[206]. The few recitatives between characters show that the piece owes a lot to the form of the English cantata as developed by Hughes and Pepusch. Another piece of evidence about the narrative and symbolic aspect of the original staging of 1718 was given years later, when a theatre production of the work was presented by Thomas Arne (1710–1778), probably without the consent of Handel: *Acis and Galatea* was advertised in London in 1732 as « being the first Time it ever was performed in a Theatrical Way. »[207]

Although *Acis and Galatea* was not « performed in a Theatrical Way » when created, we can deduce the form the performance might have taken in 1718, thanks to a subsequent performance, this time supervised by Handel, which gives enough clues to the original artistic conception of the composer: As we have just pointed out, the short recitatives of 1718 do not, at any rate, give very many opportunities for dramatic interactions and there is almost no dialogue between characters. In 1732, Handel, to compete with Arne's production, chose to extend the piece with the addition of Italian arias he composed for his 1708 Naples *Aci, Galatea e Polifemo*. For the performance, he opted to present the piece as a *serenata* in costumes in front of a theatre set showing, « in a Picturesque Manner, a rural Prospect, with Rocks, Groves, Fountains and Grottos ».[208] The list of elements suggests a different space for each of the main events of the piece[209], but the composite nature of this set looks like the intended view of a

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anthems. He participated in the founding of the Academy of Ancient Music. In 1712 he wrote the music to the opera *Calypso and Telemachus*, on a libretto by John Hughes. He joined Handel's Italian Opera in 1713 as a wind soloist. In 1718 he composed *Pan and Syrinx*, a fitting subject for the virtuoso wind player he was and, considering their complexity, the parts for the recorder and oboe in *Acis and Galatea* may have been written by Handel for him. Thanks to Dr. Jed Wentz for introducing me to the work of this composer.

[206] This dual function causes a dramatic hiatus when the tenor singing Acis must take part in the ensemble mourning his own death to complete the voices needed (it is worthy to note that it is same line up as for the Chandos Anthem: STTTB). See: Handel, George Frideric. *Acis and Galatea* 1718, (First « Cannons » Version) / HWV49a / STTTB soli 2 oboes (doubling recorder), bassoon, 2 violins, bassi: edited by Clifford Bartlett. Huntingdon: The Early Music Company Ltd, 2009.

[207] Announcement of 17 May 1732 in the *Daily Post* « At the New Theatre in the Hay-market, this present Wednesday being 17th day of May, will be perform'd in English, a Pastoral Opera, call'd ACIS and GALATEA. Compos'd by Mr HANDEL. With all the Grand Chorus's, Scenes, Machines, and other Decorations: being the first Time it ever was performed in a Theatrical Way. » in Gilman, Todd. *The Theatre Career of Thomas Arne*. London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2013, pp. 39–41.

[208] « 1732 […] Acis & Gallatea [*sic*] – a Serenata by Mr Handell » in Sasse, Konrad. « Opera Register from 1712 to 1734 (Colman-Register) » in Händel-Jarbuch 5. Edited by Georg-Friedrich-Händel-Gesellschaft. Wiesbaden: Deutsche Verlag für Musik, 1959, pp. 199–223.

[209] If we leave aside the plural form of some of the listed elements, likely due to a commercially driven exaggeration, we can reorganize them in relation with the narrative of the libretto: 1. The *Grove* where the shepherds Damon and Coridon meet the main characters, 2. The *Grotto* where Acis and Galatea hide, 3. The *Rocks* that Polyphemus throws, 4. The *Fountain* which concludes the metamorphosis of Acis. This may suggest

real garden, and one is irresistibly reminded of the Chandos estate. The word « Picturesque », so important in the foundation of the specific aesthetics of the English garden, deserves attention as, besides its etymology, it suggests, having in mind its period use in language, a pictorial attitude towards the set. « Picturesque » emphasizes the manner in which the set was conceived: as an easel painting[210]. The lack of movement in the staging is indeed confirmed by the 1732 playbill: « There will be no Action on the Stage ». In other words, the composer intended *Acis and Galatea* to be performed before an audience, but not staged like an opera. This serves as evidence that for Cannons, *Acis and Galatea* was devised more as a succession of pastoral pictures (maybe some *tableaux vivants* like I suggested was the case for Blow's *Venus and Adonis*) leading to an apotheosis than a real drama to be performed in a theatrical way. Visual cycles dedicated to the *Metamorphoses* had been popular since the Italian Renaissance and the genre found in the myth of Galatea and Acis a favorite subject. The costumes would have played an important part, as all characters suggest clothes which types were traditionally presents in British *Masques* and Italian operas: shepherds, cyclops and nereid. Costumes would have offered easily decipherable identity signs, such as coral and mother of pearl for Galatea, for example, maybe with shepherd's crooks *à la Poussin* as hand props, culminating with the metamorphoses of the shepherd Acis into a new river god, with a « wreath that binds his head »[211].

If, in addition to costumes, an extra illusionist theatrical element was necessary, some scenery may have been used, and if so the painter Joseph Goupy (1689–1769)[212] may have served as set designer. Goupy, a friend of Handel, was credited with painting the sets of his operas in the years immediately following *Acis and Galatea*, and furthermore his easel work offers many relations with the operatic work of the composer[213]. Goupy provided Chandos with many paintings and notably a copy of Poussin's *The Death of Sapphira*[214]*,* a painting which uses a fully theatrical point of view, integrating in the background a city composed as a set for

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that the focus of the action moved from one part of the set to another. Two spaces could also be used simultaneously, like for the trio sung by Galatea, Acis and Polyphemus when the cyclops observes the lovers. For a set of this composite nature designed in 1710 by Francesco Galli Bibiena, see: Lenzi, Deanna, and Bentini, Jadranka. *I Bibiena, une famiglia europea*. Venezia: Marsilio, 2000, No. 25, pp. 260 & 261. For a later spacing of the same episode see the design by Cochin showing a performance of *Acis et Galatée* in the *Théâtre des Petits Appartements* in 1749. See: Caude, Elisabeth et al. *Fêtes & divertissements à la cour*. Catalogue d'exposition (Château de Versailles du 29 novembre 2016 au 26 mars 2017). Paris: Gallimard, 2016, pp. 94 & 95.

[210] On the notion of the picturesque, see: Hunt, John Dixon. *Gardens and the Picturesque, Studies in the History of Landscape Architecture*. Cambridge (MA): MIT Press, 1997.

[211] *Acis and Galatea.* Libretto, last chorus. Addison, while recommending Ovid as inspiration for the power of his creative imagination, admired the way Ovid excels at describing the metamorphosis, emphasizing the troubling moment between the two different states of the transformation (Addison. *The Spectator*, No. 417, 28 June 1712). For how this metamorphosis was leading to a costume change, see in the present dissertation: "River gods theatrical costumes", p. 291.

[212] See: Harris, Ellen T. "Joseph Goupy and George Frideric Handel: From Professional Triumphs to Personal Estrangement" in *Huntington Library Quarterly 71/3* (2008), pp. 397–452 and Harris, Ellen T. *George Frideric Handel, A life with friends*. London and New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2014.

[213] See: Harris, Ellen T. *George Frideric Handel, A life with friends*. London and New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2014, pp. 65–67 & 73–75.

[214] The location of the Goupy is unknown to me but the original painting by Poussin, acquired in 1685 by Louis XIV, is now in the Louvre Museum. See: http://cartelfr.louvre.fr/cartelfr/visite?srv=car_not_frame&idNotice=2139 (accessed 24 Feburary 2018)

tragedy following the typology of Serlio: it shows Goupy's familiarity with the conventions of Italian set designs. We also know that Goupy made numerous copies of an oil painting by Luca Giordano (1634–1705) depicting the end of the Ovidian tale[215], focusing on the moment when Acis's body is spreading water like a fountain. The allegorical content of the libretto and its poetic variations around the water theme[216] may indeed offer a key, if framed by an Arcadian set. Regardless of its means of representation, whether natural, as the actual garden, or artificial in the form of a painted set, or even combined in an outdoor theatre, this ideal vision of a bucolic landscape was definitely conceived as a work of art as elucidated a little later by the verse of Alexander Pope: « Paints as you plant, and, as you work, designs. »[217]

4.3.5 *Acis*, as Genius of Cannons

The allegory of the power over water found in Cannons a setting full of reflections for the eyes of the Chandos family during the first performance in 1718. Ten years later, Pierre-Jacques Fougeroux (1678–1743) made a tour of the best English houses around London. The French traveler wrote that Cannons « passes for the finest and best-decorated of all the country houses in the neighborhood of London » but was disgusted by the luxury of it. More impressed by the garden, he concedes that « one could call it grand ». His description shows his admiration: « It has fine lawns, with groups of figures in the middle, emphasized by tall avenues and bosquets, and flanked more effectively by gilded lead urns. The view ends magnificently in a long stretch of water in the form of a canal. The garden extends on the left, between more bosquets, with salons and a vegetable garden. In the middle of a very long allée there is piece of water with a fine jet. This allée takes you in all directions and crosses all the others in the garden. One allée is closed by a gilded lead equestrian statue of George I on a fine pedestal »[218]. Thanks to this eloquent description, augmented by the plan Fougeroux drew during his visit of 1728 (the only still-extant diagram of Cannons), we can visualize a possible spot for the performance in the gardens. If the spectacle took place in conjunction with the

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[215] One of these copies seems to be have been in the collection of Lord Burlington, and I proposed that this Giordano painting be reproduced on the front cover of the 2013 recording of *Acis and Galatea* by the Boston Early Music Festival, with Musical Directors Paul O'Dette and Stephen Stubbs, for which I served as Drama coach (CPO 777 877-2). The booklet which accompanies the recording presents a summary of the present research and some photography of my 2011 staged production.

[216] In the libretto, the word « Fountain » appears six times and this frequency is accentuated by the variety of other descriptions or evocations of water: « bath », « bed », « bubbling », « dew », « flood », « rain », « rove », « showers », « stream », and « waves ». This vocabulary is used by Galatea and by Acis and, infrequently, by the Chorus. The verses given to Polyphemus, Damon and Coridon do not contain any of these watery words.

[217] Pope, Alexander. *Of false taste; an epistle to the Right Honourable Richard Earl of Burlington. Occasion'd by his publishing Palladio's designs of the baths, arches, theatres, &c. of ancient Rome*, 3rd edition. London: L. Gilliver, 1731, Verses 57–64. The main idea of this poem about the notion of *good taste* equals *good sense* is set out in the « Argument », which Pope added in 1735: « That the first principle and foundation in this as in every thing else, is Good Sense. The chief proof of it is to follow Nature, even in works of mere luxury and elegance. Instanced in Architecture and Gardening, where all must be adapted to the genius and use of the place, and the beauties never forced into it, but resulting from it ». See: *Early Eighteenth Century Poetry*. Edited by James R. Sutherland. Columbia (SC): University of South Carolina Press, 1970, pp. 122–131.

[218] The manuscript is now in the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum: V&A Library, MS86NN2. See: Jacques, David & Rock, Tim. "Pierre-Jacques Fougeroux: a Frenchman's commentary on English gardens" in *Experiencing the Garden in the Eighteenth Century*, edited by Martin Calder. Oxford: Peter Lang, 2006, pp. 213–236. Fougeroux also gave accounts of three Handel's operas in London. See: Dean, Winton. "A French Traveller's View of Handel's Operas" in *Music & Letters*, Vol. 55, No. 2, 1974, pp. 172–178.

inauguration of a new fountain by Desaguliers (and, as I have shown, this is more than a probability), two places are possible: both are supported by the placement of the statue of King George in the background, establishing an axis between the King and Chandos, united by the new fountain. This confirms that the historic parallel between *Water Music* and *Acis and Galatea*[219] is not only due to their contemporaneity but also to their poetic purposes.

The first possible location is outdoors: on Fougeroux's map, a water feature on the north side of the house is intriguing because of its specific shape. Two basins, one larger than the other, were connected by a small canal. This special shape is evocative of Italian fountains where water would shoot up in one basin and then flow along the little channel between them and fall into the other one, which could be called the receptacle pond[220]. Fougeroux shows a vertical jet in the bigger pool, indicating that the water, thanks to Desaguliers, was in motion: rising first from a fountain, it then became horizontal, evoking the new stream of a river. Such a configuration in the style of the *water chains* owes a lot to Italian gardens, like the Villa Farnese in Caprarola or the Villa Lante. Examples from the late seventeenth century can be found in Versailles, where the *Bosquet des Trois Fontaines* offered a similar albeit extended progression[221], while in Het Loo the small canals, whose bottoms were set with colored pebbles, offered the sound of running water[222]. The source of the jet was a statue depicting a river god, possibly Acis[223]. In the case of an indoor performance, a view through the windows of the Acis fountain

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[219] For some fresh views on *Water Music* which reestablishes it in the royal context of the river, see: Doran, Susan. *Royal River: Power, Pageantry and the Thames*. London: Scala Publishers Ltd, 2012, pp. 134–137. For a reconstruction of the original performance, see the film: Ackroyd, Peter & Manze, Andrew. *Händel, Georg Friedrich. Handel's Water Music, Re-creating a Royal Spectacular*, DVD, BBC. London: Opus Arte, 2003. Some recent compositions which link the Thames and the British crown were prompted by the Diamond Jubilee of Elizabeth II that took place in 2012; but decades earlier in 1969, the British composer Andrzej Panufnik (1914–1991) composed the full-scale Cantata *Thames Pageant*, which was, as he put it in his notes to the work, « an expression of [his] love for the River Thames which flows past [his] garden ». This work integrates a beautiful tribute to « Pope's Weeping Willows: An elegy to the memory of Alexander Pope who introduced the willow tree to the River Thames. In three sections: the first Allegretto, musically characterizes the wit of the poet; the second, a slower section with one solo voice, pays tribute to him; and the third section, Andante, is "weeping willow music", the choirs lamenting wordlessly. No brass instruments take part ». See: Panufnik, Andrzej. *Thames Pageant*. London: Boosey & Hawkes, 1969.

[220] Water technical equipment and garden features are described by Antoine Joseph Dézallier d'Argenville (1680–1765) in the chapters IX and X of the second part of his influential 1709 book about gardens: *La Théorie et la Pratique du Jardinage*. The general layout of the grounds of Cannons is indebted to the first plate of the book by Dézallier d'Argenville.

[221] The *Bosquet des Trois Fontaines* was conceived in 1677–1679 by Louis XIV and designed by his gardener André Le Nôtre. See: *Versailles à Stockholm, Dessins du Nationalmuseum, Peintures, Meubles et Arts Décoratifs des Collections Suédoises et Danoises*. Stockholm: Nationalmuseum, 1985, pp. 31, 38, 39, 49 & 50. Destroyed during the reign of Louis XVI, it was reconstructed between 1999 and 2004 thanks to the patronage of the society of the Amis de Versailles and to the financial participation of the association of The American Friends of Versailles. See: Richard, Pascale. *Versailles, the American Story*. Paris: Alain de Gourcuff, 1999, pp. 158–161.

[222] See: Vosteen, Ing. R. "Het Water in de [Het Loo] Tuin" in *Groen*, 40e jaargang – nr. 6. Bussum: S.I. Publicaties B.V., 1984, pp. 232–242. In 1711, Addison evokes a garden where « The Springs are made to run among Pebbles, and by that means taught to murmur very agreeably » in *The Spectator, No. 37*, 12 April 1711.

[223] In the English translation of Dézallier d'Argenville's book, *The Theory and Practice of Gardening wherein is fully handled all that relates to fine gardens, commonly called pleasure-gardens, as parterres, groves, bowling-greens &c. ...* London: John James, 1712, for which Chandos was a subscriber (listed as « The Hon. James Brydges Esq. e»), one can read on page 76, speaking of statues: « These figures represent all the several Deities, and illustrious Persons of Antiquity, which should be placed properly in gardens, setting the River-Gods, as the *Naiades*, *Rivers*, and *Tritons*,

would have been a prerequisite; the interior architecture of the house could give us a second possible location. On the north side of the house, a room designed a « Hall » in the inventory of 1725[224] seems a likely candidate, as it is situated on the gentlemen's side of the house, suitable for the all-male Cannons musical establishment, and may have occasionally been used as an Assembly room. Suitable for musical rehearsals, this room could have been chosen as the space of the performance, as it offers, through a French door, not only a view of the jet, but access to it. From a certain angle it also provides all viewers a sight on the gilded statue of George I in the perspective: a fitting focus point in the perspective of an Augustan design.

The gardens and waterworks created at Cannons made a suitable backdrop for the English pastoral of Handel. The staging of *Acis and Galatea* may have involved the opening of a large tap at the crucial moment: a display of waterworks marking the final metamorphosis. The original performance may even have taken place concurrent with the inauguration of a new fountain. By this technical and artistic gesture, the gallant allegory of the power of Galatea/Cassandra over the Waters of Cannons would have been crystalline. A flawless visual testimony of such a relation still exists: a portrait of the Duchess in a glossy blue dress holding a shell in one hand like a Nereid. Attributed to Godfrey Kneller (1646–1723), the painting shows Cassandra, in the guise of Galatea, in a park, next to a fountain[225]. In 1718, Acis would have become « the genius of the place », in the words of a dictum revived in 1709 by the philosopher Anthony Ashley Cooper, 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury (1671–1713)[226] and which Pope was soon to expand into a rule for inspiration in English garden design[227]. Inspired by the Greek tradition of mythic mapping[228] and by the protective spirit of a place of the classical

in the Middle of Fountains and Basons, and those of the Woods, *Sylvanes*, *Faunes*, and *Dryads*, in the Groves ». See: https://archive.org/stream/theorypracticeg00DeYz#page/18/mode/2up Accessed 26 February 2018.

[224] Jenkins, Susan. *Portrait of a Patron*… Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007, p. 33.

[225] The portrait is today in the collection of Lord Middleton at Birdsall House, North Yorkshire. Reproduced as frontispiece in *Cassandra Brydges (1670–1735), First Duchess of Chandos: Life and Letters*. Edited by Rosemary O'Day. Martlesham: Boydell Press, 2007.

[226] « Your Genius, the Genius of the Place, and the GREAT GENIUS have at last prevail'd. I shall no longer resist the Passion growing in me for Things of a *natural* kind; where neither *Art*, nor the *Conceit* or *Caprice* of Man has spoiled their *genuine Order*, by breaking in upon that *primitive State*. Even the rude *Rocks*, the mossy *Caverns*, the irregular unwrought *Grotto's*, and broken *Falls* of Waters, with all the horrid graces of the *Wilderness* it-self, as representing NATURE more, will be the more engaging, and appear with a Magnificence beyond the formal Mockery of Princely Gardens ». See: [Cooper, Anthony Ashley, 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury]. *The Moralists, a Philosophical Rhapsody. Being a Recital of certain Conversations upon Natural and Moral Subjects*. London: John Wyat, 1709, pp. 62, 156, 162 & 205.

[227] For a selection of Pope's texts about gardens, see: *The Genius of the Place, The English Landscape Garden 1620–1820*. Edited by John Dixon Hunt & Peter Willis. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1975, pp. 204–214.

[228] Storytelling was a part of how the Greeks charted their world: mythic maps existed alongside more objective methods. Myths gave sense to environments and were crucial to the conceptual resonances of places. The Sicilian origin of the myth of Acis reveals its anchorage in geography. The Cyclops is connected to Mount Etna, an active volcano, and a little sea harbor, called Acis on a seventeenth-century map, named today Acireale, was built on the spot of a fresh-water spring, with impressive boulders believed to have come from a volcanic eruption in the bay: landscape features acted as repositories of myth and spurred their retelling. See: Buxton, Richard. "Landscapes of the Cyclopes", and Robinson, Betsey A. "Fountains as Reservoirs of Myth and Memory" in *Myths on the Map, The Storied Landscapes of Ancient Greece*. Edited by Greta Hawes. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.

Roman religion, this « genius loci »[229] principle finds a clear expression when Pope planned, in his own villa of Twickenham, to establish a statue of the river Thames, in the spirit of both a reference to Antiquity and a desire to establish a British iconology. The river Thames floated by his garden, and the presence of the statue showed that if the « Genius of the place » was first an artistic concept, Pope was willing to signify it by a sculpture. The original Latin expression finds a British echo, albeit more in terms of ingenuity, in the words of John Macky in 1722: « The Disposition of the Avenues, Gardens, Statues, Painting, and the House of *Cannons*, suits the Genius and Grandeur of its great Master ».[230] This mastered « Disposition » can be understood as a term suggesting that Cannons was a « work of art » destined to capture the « genius of the place »: in the gardens of the Chandos family, Handel, Pope, Gay, and Hughes had created a suitable celebratory pastoral for the water marvels of Desaguliers, and Chandos had found, in the water-god Acis, a perfect « genius loci » for Cannons. And Acis, if not totally proven to have been signified by a river god sculpture, was at least present as a poetical emblem of an attempt to define the « genius of the place ».

The « Grandeur of its great Master » that Macky associates to the Genius may also have been the Achilles' heel of the gardens of Cannons and from the beginning of its history critics about its over-the-top nature and its lack of refinement made it soon out of fashion. This may also be a possible reason for the ill fate of the original version of *Acis and Galatea*, as it was so much associated with its place of origin. Alexander Pope himself, in a famous 1731 satire[231], versified about his disapprobation of the garden of « Timon's villa », whose luxurious superficiality he placed in opposition to the quintessence of his views on picturesque garden design; the Duke of Chandos's mansion at Cannons has been suggested as the target of what would be then an ekphratic poem[232]. Although it has been argued that Pope's attention is more likely directed at an imaginary and composite image of the contemporary absurdities in garden design, still some verses deserve attention, because of their evocation of dry fountains: « The suff'ring Eye inverted Nature sees, / Trees cut to statues, Statues thick as Trees, / With here a Fountain, never to be play'd, / And there a Summer-house, that know no Shade. / Here Amphitrite sails to Myrtle bow'rs; / Then Gladiators fight, or die, in flow'rs; / Un-water'd see the drooping Sea-horse mourn, / And Swallows roost in Nilus' dusty Urn… ». While a

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[229] A comparable aspiration for a « genius of the place » occurred in the Netherlands: in 1714, a statuary group was installed on a property at Driemond, not far from Amsterdam, where two rivers came together, the Gein and the Gaasp. The statues by Ignatius van Logteren (1685–1732) of a reclining man and woman represent the river gods Gein and Gaasp. Although doubtful in my eyes, the boy Arion, the poet-singer who was saved by a dolphin, would represent the Smalweesp, a stream in the center. See: Stokroos, Meindert. *Fonteinen, in Nederland, Historische watervoerende monumenten*. Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2005, pp. 57 & 58, and: Fischer, Pieter M. "De fontein van Frankendael Gein, Gaasp en Smalweesp aan de Middenweg" in *Ons Amsterdam,* jg 37 nr 2, 1985, pp. 42–47.

[230] Macky, John. *A Journey through England in Familiar Letters from a Gentleman Here to his Friend Abroad*. Volume II. London: J. Pemberton, 1722, Letter I, p. 5.

[231] Pope, Alexander. *Of false taste; an epistle to the Right Honourable Richard Earl of Burlington. Occasion'd by his publishing Palladio's designs of the baths, arches, theatres, &c. of ancient Rome*, 3rd edition. London: L. Gilliver, 1731, p.10.

[232] « Pope's scorn of Timon's villa in his *Epistle to Burlington* is precisely for compositions so random and so lacking in the art that arranges how details contribute to a whole *histoire*. » in Hunt, John Dixon. *Gardens and the Picturesque, Studies in the History of Landscape Architecture*. Cambridge (MA): MIT Press, 1997, p. 112.

Borghese gladiator was recorded in the gardens of Cannons[233], Amphitrite and a statue of the Nile resting on his urns have not appeared in any record. But if one replaces the mention of « Amphitrite » by the one of « Fair Galatea » fleeing to the sea after Polyphemus' attack; and the mention of « Nilus » by « Acis », the satire gives some new light to the silence which surrounds the first performance of Handel's opera at Cannons. The fact the « dusty urn » of the river god is dry during summer (the season when swallows are yearly nesting) shows more a neglected than an unpleasant garden. This seems to me more important than the idea of a « bad garden » that some readers of Pope see in this Satire. The « Fountain never to be play'd » may even suggest a technical failure, and the beautiful meanings of the verb's construction « be play'd », as it can also be understood, beside its adequacy to a working fountain, as an evocation of the sound of water and therefore music.

[233] See: Jenkins, Susan. *Portrait of a Patron…* Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007, p. 84. A Gladiator Borghese, also in a gilded version, is also present in the gardens of Herrenhausen, showing that Chandos was deliberately trying to align himself with George I's taste and inclinations.