CHOREOLOGICA

Apollon: disheartened hero or afflicted god?

Noverre's and Angiolini's pantomime ballets:
the theoretical implications of the choice of ballet subjects

Loie Fuller, the American Dream made in France

Countess Maria Aurora von Königsmarck
as Poet and Dancer at the Court of Dresden

Reviews

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Contents

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Ricardo Barros

Throughout the course of the modern period of revivals of Baroque dance repertoire – mainly the second half of the 20th century and, to some degree, in these first two decades of the 21st century – some choreographies stand out as icons, be it for their beauty, their complexity, or their socio-political and historical associations. Amongst these, the choreography for the '*Entrée d'Apollon*' (LMC 2720)[1] by Raoul-Auger Feuillet, published in the pioneering 1700 *Recüeil des Dances*[2] and set to the homonymous musical passage in the *quinzième* entrée of Lully's *Le Triomphe de l'Amour*,[3] certainly occupies a prominent position in the list of most cherished dances, having been revived by numerous dance historians and practitioners.

Having revived, performed and researched this dance, its musical source and the literally source in the form of the *livrets* by Philippe Quinault and Isaac de Bensérade (with later additions by Antoine Danchet for the 1705 revival, also containing added musical passages by André Campra), I have noticed some discrepancies between the generically 'accepted' standardised interpretation of the choreography and the overall image proposed by the above primary sources. In a quest to achieve a sympathetic choreographic interpretation of the dance, at first I proposed a historically informed interpretation of them, mainly through the comparative choreo-musical analyses of the choreographic, musical and literary sources in Feuillet's choreography and its equivalent by Guillaume Pécour (published in 1704),[4] while observing their oratorical structure and rhetorical devises employed. The initial research served as basis for my PhD thesis *Dance as a Discourse*.[5] The present paper delves further in this repertoire, observing the depiction of Apollo in 17th-century French operas and ballets. It proposes a cross-examination of musical sources and *livrets* ranging from 1653

1 LMC – Little and Marsh Catalogue: Meredith E. Little and Carol Marsh, *La Danse Noble*, Broude Brothers, New York, 1992.

2 Raoul-Auger Feuillet, *Recueil de Dances composées par Mr Feuillet, Maître de Dance*, Paris, 1700, pp.60-66. <https://www.loc.gov/item/14002126/> (all web addresses last accessed June 2019).

3 Jean-Baptiste Lully, *Le Triomphe de l'Amour*, Paris, 1681, pp.87r-88r, <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b10523324f/f181.image.r=Lully triomphe de l'amour>.

4 Feuillet, *Recüeil de Dances contenant un tres grand nombres, des meilleures Entrées de Ballet de Mr Pecour*, Paris, 1704, pp.195-201, <https://www.loc.gov/item/11027715/>.

5 Ricardo Barros, *Dance as a Discourse – The rhetorical expression of the passions in French Baroque dance*, Lambert Academic Publishing, Saarbrücken, 2010.

to 1686, together with a close examination of the extant choreographies.

Wherever one looks, in the present time there seems to be a consensus in choreographically portraying Apollo as an heroic, powerful, chivalrous and seductive figure. In consideration, there are three strong factors that support this assumption:

1. First and foremost, the forceful association of the royal image with the mythological god sets a strong case in favour of the quasi-arrogant imprinting of the above qualities to the dance. Louis XIV was undoubtedly one of the most powerful men in the modern era, and his explicit favouring of Apollo is evident throughout architecture, literature, music, fine arts and dance. Indeed, Louis took pride in assuming the role of Apollo on stage many times, but particularly as a statement in the *Ballet de la Nuit* (1653) in which through this *début* – having officially reached adulthood two years before – he sent signals that he no longer wished to be a follower (conversely heretofore he was often cast as a muse or nymph in the court ballet), but a leader. Here he employed the associated image of the 'Rising Sun' for the first time (in Greek mythology, Apollo is seen as a 'Sun god', an identification established in the fifth century BC and made common ever since,[6] and indeed asserted by Louis XIV, as it can be seen in the Salon d'Apollon in the Chateau de Versailles).

2. The musical properties of the score often promote an interpretation in which grandeur and pride are common place. The dotted rhythms and defined harmonic pulse, corroborated by a driving duple time notation, can easily lead one to associate such *entrées* to the majestic pomp of *ouvertures*: despite the lack of running ascending *tirades*, commonly found in the score of an *entrée*, the epic ascending jumps of a 5th, 6th, octave or even wider intervals in this danced movement make the association to the *ouverture* a nearly unavoidable fate.

3. Lastly, the choreographic elements found in the extant choreographies of the *Entrée d'Apollon* can lead to the portrayal of a quasi-pedantic character, particularly if supported by a similar musical interpretation of the score: the profusion of *cabrioles*, *entrechats* and *pirouëtes* with multiple turns demand mastery of advanced technical skills. As such, it is easy to see such choreographies as pure display of virtuosic impulse, of supernatural powers which transcend the royal embodiment and acquire mythical qualities.

6 Michael Grant and John Hazel, *Who's who – Classical Mythology*, J M Dent, London, 1973, p.38.

Together, these three factors promote a strong case towards an heroic depiction of Apollo, with dance practitioners being somewhat excused (if not too willingly) for being led to such conclusions. However, the *livrets* – and indeed the passage in mythological writings that serves as basis for most of the plots employed in the body of works analysed as we shall see – seem to diverge from this assumption. Moreover, literary works prompt a more careful analysis and interpretation of both musical score and choreographic material, thus shattering pre-conceived ideas that have lasted for decades in modern day systematic practices of 'historically informed' music and dance interpretation.

In view of these discrepancies, a thorough analysis of the material is proposed. The parameters of the research are the French ballets and operas between 1653 and 1686 which feature *Entrées d'Apollon* and those of the *Soleil levant,* namely:

- ***Ballet de la Nuit*** (1653), music by Jean de Cambefort, Jean-Baptiste Boësset and Michel Lambert, *livret* by Isaac de Benserade.
- ***Les Noces de Pélée et de Thétis*** (1654), music by Carlo Caproli (with interludes by Lully), *livret* by Benserade.
- ***Ballet de la Naissance de Vénus*** (1665), music by Lully, *livret* by Benserade.
- ***Ballet Royal de Flore*** (1669), music by Lully, *livret* by Benserade
- ***Les Amants Magnifiques*** (1670), music by Lully, *livret* by Molière.
- ***Alceste*** (1674), music by Lully, *livret* by Philippe Quinault.
- ***Psyché*** (1671/78), music by Lully, *livret* by Quinault and Thomas Corneille.
- ***Le Triomphe de l'Amour*** (1681), music by Lully, *livret* by Benserade and Quinault (with later additions by André Campra and Antoine Danchet).
- ***Acis et Galatée*** (1686), music by Lully, *livret* by Jean Galbert de Campistron.

Figure 1 – Designs for theatrical costumes (from left to right): a. & b. Apollon, by Henry de Gissey, for *Les Noces de Pélée et de Thétis* (1654); c. Soleil, by Jean Bérain, for an unidentified ballet performed in Aix-en-Provence (1660); d. Soleil, by Henry de Gissey, for *Ballet de la Nuit* (1653).

Are the sources cohesive in portraying Apollo? What traits are depicted, and what image is painted of him? An overview of the *livrets* show that authors explore various facets of the mythological figure, as we shall see.

1. THE *LIVRETS*

In the *Ballet de la Nuit* Benserade explicitly links Louis XIV with the image of Apollo (the sun); Aurore (Dawn) singing the verses 'The sun that follows me is the young Louis', irrefutably placing the king in an unchallengeable position noting that 'the weak lights of the night that triumphed in his absence dare not stand up to his presence'.[7] The following *récit* for the rising Sun makes a clear political statement in which the king asserts his position. The opening verses set the tone of superiority, stating he shines 'over the summit of mountains', making himself 'adored' by all. He admonishes potential rebels likening them to the careless *Phaëton*, also committing to clear the 'darkness over France'. After briefly mentioning his attraction for Daphne (a topic that was further explored by Benserade in later works, as we shall see), Apollo delivers a statement only surpassed as the paragon of absolutism by Louis XIV's emblematic '*l'etat, c'est moi*':

7 Isaac de Benserade, *Ballet Royal de la Nuit*, Paris, 1653, p.65, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k724705/f1.image.r=ballet%20de%20la%20nuit>.

Without doubt I belong to the world I serve,
I am not for myself, but for the universe,
I offer the rays that crown my head,
It is up to me to rule my time and my seasons.[8]

Apollo's opening verses in *Les Noces de Pelée et de Thétis*, performed in the following year, boasts a great deal of vanity and confidence claiming: 'Shinier and better formed than all other gods together, Earth and heavens possess nothing like me'. Here, for the first time, Benserade mentions the tale that originated the Pythian games in Ancient Greece in order to underline Apollo's heroic traits, while delivering a political message making a direct reference to the rebels of the Fronde:

I defeated the Python that devastated the world,
This terrible serpent whose venom was seasoned by Hell and the Fronde.
In a word, rebellions would no longer cause me harm,
So I preferred to destroy it.[9]

The author also briefly tells of Apollo's relationship with Daphne but, rather than clearly painting a vulnerable god tormented by unrequited love, Benserade in this instance twists the tale and show a rather volatile Apollo bragging about being 'condemned' to suffer his amorous urges, suggesting that there is no 'muse, queen or goddess' who would not wish to be in Daphne's place (i.e. the object of his amorous impulses). Could this have been a message to the king's lovers, reminding them of the ephemeral and rather fragile nature of their relationships?

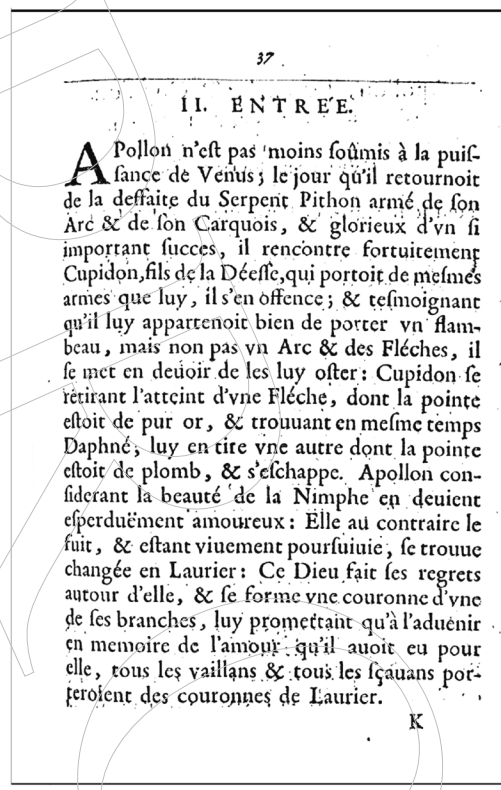
In *Le Ballet de la Naissance de Vénus*,[10] however, Benserade describes the full passage in which Cupid, in revenge for being chased by Apollo, aims a gold-tipped arrow at him and a lead-tipped one at Daphne, thus making Apollo fall in love with the nymph, and the latter to reject the amorous advances of the god. In despair for being chased by Apollo, Daphne turns herself into a laurel bush – thus prompting him to fashion a crown of its leaves as a memento of Daphne [figure 2].[11]

8 Ibid., pp.66-67.

9 Benserade, *Les Noces de Pelée et de Thétis*, Paris, 1654, p.6, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k717953/f7.image>.

10 Benserade, *Ballet Royal de la Naissance de Vénus*, Paris, 1665, p.37, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k719511/f1.image.r=naissance+de+v%C3%A9nus+ballet.langFR>.

11 The well-known tale has served as inspiration to Baroque painters such as Giacinto Gimignani, Francesco Trevisani, Sebastiano Ricci, Michele Rocca, Francesco Albani, Jean-François de Troy, Noel-Nicolas Coypel, Jan Van Cleve, Cornelis de Vos, Luca



37

II. ENTRE'E.

APollon n'eſt pas moins ſoûmis à la puiſſance de Venus; le jour qu'il retournoit de la deffaite du Serpent Pithon armé de ſon Arc & de ſon Carquois, & glorieux d'vn ſi important ſuccés, il rencontre fortuitement Cupidon, fils de la Déeſſe, qui portoit de meſmes armes que luy, il s'en offence; & teſmoignant qu'il luy appartenoit bien de porter vn flambeau, mais non pas vn Arc & des Fléches, il ſe met en deuoir de les luy oſter: Cupidon ſe retirant l'atteint d'vne Fléche, dont la pointe eſtoit de pur or, & trouuant en meſme temps Daphné, luy en tire vne autre dont la pointe eſtoit de plomb, & s'eſchappe. Apollon conſiderant la beauté de la Nimphe en deuient eſperduëment amoureux: Elle au contraire le fuit, & eſtant viuement pourſuiuie, ſe trouue changée en Laurier: Ce Dieu fait ſes regrets autour d'elle, & ſe forme vne couronne d'vne de ſes branches, luy promettant qu'à l'aduenir en memoire de l'amour qu'il auoit eu pour elle, tous les vaillans & tous les ſçauans porteroient des couronnes de Laurier.

K

Figure 2 – Benserade, *Ballet de la Naissance de Vénus*, livret, Paris, 1665, p.37.

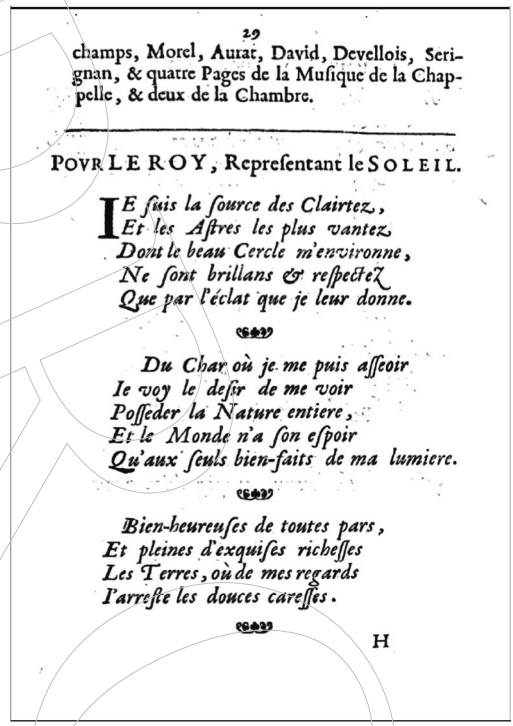
It is arguable if the author might have chosen to portray a susceptible Apollo even if the role was to be played by the king, considering that in this instance the role was taken by the Marquis de Beringuen instead.

Rather than a susceptible unrequited lover, Apollo (in his astral embodiment) defeats the winter, bringing fertility and warmth in an continuous spring season in the *Ballet Royal de Flore*. Egocentrism is taken to a curious level, as the king praises himself in the third person. Vanity aside, some spitefulness is used to apparently conceal some bitterness when, at the end of the spoken verse, Apollo questions himself if he would be accompanied by the likes of Daphne and Phaëton, referring to her as an 'inhumane' woman who simply 'runs away' from him.[12]

While *Alceste* and *Psyché* – and later on *Acis et Galatée* – present Apollo as an

Giordano, Carlo Maratta, to name a few. It has also been used by Bernini in his celebrated sculpture *Apollo e Dafne* (1625).

12 Benserade, *Ballet Royal de Flore*, Paris, 1669, pp.10-11, <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k722562/f11.image.r=Ballet royal de flore>.



29

champs, Morel, Aurat, David, Devellois, Serignan, & quatre Pages de la Musique de la Chappelle, & deux de la Chambre.

POVR LE ROY, Representant le SOLEIL.

IE suis la source des Clairtez,
Et les Astres les plus vantez
Dont le beau Cercle m'environne,
Ne sont brillans & respectez
Que par l'éclat que je leur donne.

Du Char où je me puis asseoir
Je voy le desir de me voir
Posseder la Nature entiere,
Et le Monde n'a son espoir
Qu'aux seuls bien-faits de ma lumiere.

Bien-heureuses de toutes pars,
Et pleines d'exquises richesses
Les Terres, où de mes regards
I'arreste les douces caresses.

H

Figure 3 – Molière, *Les Amants Magnifiques*, livret, Paris, 1670, p.29.

encouraging, capacitating, positive character, with relatively weaker dramatic impact, it is in *Les Amants Magnifiques* that we see an unsurpassed praising of the king: written originally by Molière for Louis XIV, the *récit* for *Le soleil* (Apollo) is an unashamed self glorifying monologue [figure 3].

However, sometime between the printing of the *livret* and the actual *première* the king retired from dancing, and the role of Apollo was performed by the Marquis de Villeroy instead (as reported by *La Gazette* shortly after the opening).[13]

Nevertheless, the ornamented original text remained, displaying an egocentric tirade which could only be described in modern days as of 'Trumpian' proportions:

> I am the source of light / And all other glorified stars /
> Which surround me in a beautiful circle / Can only shine and be respected /
> Through the light I shed onto them.
>
> From the chariot I am seated / I witness the desire of seeing me /

13 *Recueil des Gazettes Nouvelles*, Paris, 1671, pp.168 and 179, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k6450279m/f173.item.r=villeroi>.

Possess the whole Nature, / And so the world is helpless /
Other than by the generosity of my light.

Quite fortunate throughout / And full of treasures /
Are the realms where, with my looks /
I attract gentle caresses.[14]

Crucially, the same plot that had been fully described by Benserade in the *Ballet de la Naissance de Vénus* was used again sixteen years later in *Le Triomphe de l'Amour* (the work that served as basis for the favoured choreographies by Feuillet and Pécour). Here too, after having slaughtered the Python, Apollo has that eventful meeting with Cupid and Daphne in the woods, as described before. Later in 1705, in a revival of *Le Triomphe de l'Amour* featuring added musical passages composed by Campra – set to added verses by Danchet – the plot is further clarified, providing a fuller insight of Apollo's state of mind in that scene, through the verses:

Enough of celebrating my power,
At last Cupid is my conqueror;
I have up to now defied his vengeance,
But he has pierced my heart with a flaming arrow.

It's for Daphne that I sight,
Her presence embellishes this sojourn every single day;
Go forth! May all leave now;
For I wish, without any witnesses, to declare my love to her.[15]

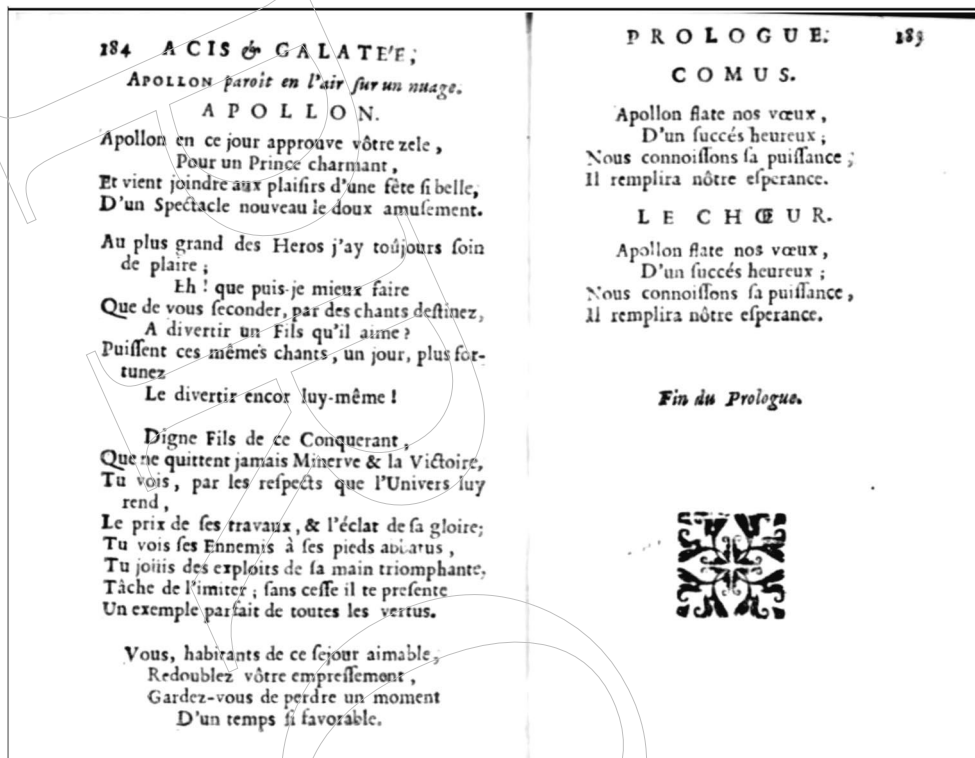
Undoubtedly Danchet highlights and stresses the sense of weakness and susceptibility already conveyed by Benserade in the original *livret*, where Apollo succumbs to the powers of *Amour* in a ballet whose main plot was to demonstrate, through various separate scenes, Cupid's 'Triumph' over mortals and other deities alike.

In *Acis et Galatée* both *livret*[16] [figure 4] and score offer a sung aria by an *haute-contre Apollon,* followed by a choir rejoicing on Apollo's approval on their efforts,

14 Jean-Baptiste Poquelin (Molière), *Les Amants Magnifiques*, Paris, 1670, p.29, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k114435p/f29.image>.

15 Antoine Danchet, *Le Triomphe de l'Amour*, Paris, 1705, p.54, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k721365/f44.image.r=dqnchet%20le%20triomphe%20de%20l'amour>.

16 Jean Galbert de Campistron, *Acis et Galatée*, Paris, 1686, <https://www.loc.gov/resource/musschatz.21466.0/?sp=1&r=-0.932,0,2.865,1.538,0>.



184 ACIS & GALATE'E;

APOLLON *paroit en l'air ſur un nuage.*

APOLLON.

Apollon en ce jour approuve vôtre zele,
Pour un Prince charmant,
Et vient joindre aux plaiſirs d'une fête ſi belle,
D'un Spectacle nouveau le doux amuſement.

Au plus grand des Heros j'ay toûjours ſoin de plaire;
Eh! que puis-je mieux faire
Que de vous ſeconder, par des chants deſtinez,
A divertir un Fils qu'il aime?
Puiſſent ces mêmes chants, un jour, plus fortunez
Le divertir encor luy-même!

Digne Fils de ce Conquerant,
Que ne quittent jamais Minerve & la Victoire,
Tu vois, par les reſpects que l'Univers luy rend,
Le prix de ſes travaux, & l'éclat de ſa gloire;
Tu vois ſes Ennemis à ſes pieds abbatus,
Tu joüis des exploits de ſa main triomphante,
Tâche de l'imiter; ſans ceſſe il te preſente
Un exemple parfait de toutes les vertus.

Vous, habitants de ce ſejour aimable,
Redoublez vôtre empreſſement,
Gardez-vous de perdre un moment
D'un temps ſi favorable.

PROLOGUE. 185

COMUS.

Apollon flate nos vœux,
D'un ſuccés heureux;
Nous connoiſſons ſa puiſſance;
Il remplira nôtre eſperance.

LE CHŒUR.

Apollon flate nos vœux,
D'un ſuccés heureux;
Nous connoiſſons ſa puiſſance,
Il remplira nôtre eſperance.

Fin du Prologue.

Figure 4 – Campistron, *Acis et Galatée*, livret, Paris, 1653, pp.184-185.

but the lack of acknowledgement of the performing cast in the *livret* – coupled with the vague titling in both score and choreography – pose questions whether the ensuing 'air' was danced or not in its operatic context. However, the nature of composition and choreography indicate that, if not danced on the actual pastorale, the choreography created by L'Abbé for the dancer Desnoyer at least evoked the role of Apollo, as shall be discussed.

It is clear, through the overview of *livrets*, that certain particular traits emerge: heroism, vanity and volatility are displayed whenever the king embodied Apollo onstage (or was originally intended to), namely in the *Ballet de la Nuit*, *Les Noces de Pelée et de Thétis* and *Les Amants Magnifiques*; however, we also see the more mundane, realistic traits of weakness, susceptibility and servitude that would more aptly be associated with mortals rather than gods.

2. THE SCORES

At first look, the musical scores for the *Entrées d'Apollon* covered in the scope of this research offer a mixed image: some elements, such as the duple metre, presence of dotted rhythms and sudden jumps of intervals of 5th, 6th and octave

permeate all scores. With the exception of the *Ballet de la Nuit* (for which only the treble line survives) and *Les Noces de Pelée et de Thétis* (for which only the treble and bass line survive, with inner *parties de remplissage* left blank), all other scores are complete, following the traditional 5-part structure (*dessus, haute-contre, taille, quinte, basse*), typical of the 17th-century orchestral scoring adopted by Lully.

At closer inspection, however, the scores reveal a gradual adoption of different compositional techniques over the decades. The techniques adopted are not radically based on new compositional material, but derive from the earlier models. As we shall see, Lully alters the use of large intervals, preferring to use them more scarcely and in important points along the musical score. Sometimes a large interval is 'abridged' by consecutive notes, and there are instances (particularly in later works) where this abridging technique is exacerbated by the use of chromaticism. Another evident mutation is the rate at which the harmonic rhythm progresses. As we shall see, these are not random decisions, but carefully constructed devices to incite specific passions (in the 17th-century Cartesian sense), a mood or state of mind. These changes are often intrinsically linked with the oratorical structure of the pieces, and crucially in agreement with the depiction of the scene proposed by the *livret* and specific characteristic traits displayed by Apollo, as discussed above.

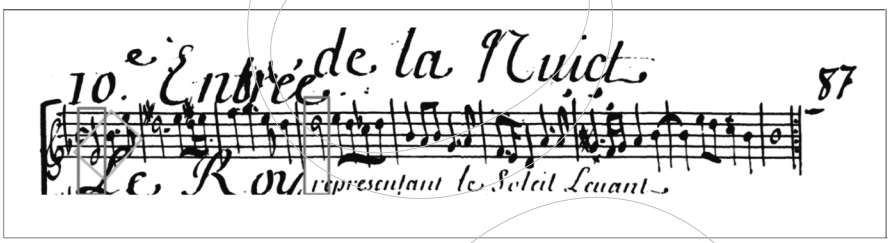


Figure 5 – Opening bars, Cambefort, Boesset, and Lambert, '10e Entrée – Le Roy representant de Soleil Levant', *Ballet de la Nuit*, Paris, 1653, p.87.

In the *Ballet de la Nuit*[17] the image of the *'Soleil Levant'* (rising Sun) is suggested by the composer with a bold interval of ascending 5th as the opening statement [for illustrative purposes, indicated in the score with a tilted box], conveying determination and confidence of a young Louis XIV emboldened to claim his right to rule [figure 5]. The same ascending motif is used by Lully in the *ritournelle* for the *Récit de l'Aurore* (Dawn) in the *Les Plaisirs de l'Île Enchantée*

17 Jean de Cambefort, Jean-Baptiste Boësset and Michel Lambert, *Ballet Royal de la Nuit*, Paris, 1653, copied by Philidor Laisnée in 1690, pp.87-88, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k107422s/f87.image.r=Ballet de la nuit>.

in 1664, which pre-dates by one year the composer's first *Entrée d'Apollon* (in the *Ballet de la Naissance de Vénus,* as we shall analyse). Two other important characteristics that set the benchmarks for development in later *Entrées d'Apollon* are the use of syncopations (in bars 3, and 7-8), and the trilled notes finalised by semiquavers (on bars 2 and 7). The neat trilled notes might be interpreted in this instance as 'brilliance' and 'boldness', as the sun cast its rays after having raised 'over the summit of the mountain' with the opening ascending 5th. Likewise, the syncopations could be seen as a reassurance of the 'determination' and 'firmness' necessary to go against established institutions (cardinal Mazarin's ruling as chief minister). However, the most striking compositional feature is the sudden shift from minor key (Gm) to its relative major (BbM) which occurs quite early in the music, placed on bar 4 and marking the end of the first semi-phrase [marked in the score with vertical boxes]. The shift between relative minor and major keys symbolises a drastic change, be it of passion, attitude, disposition, or circumstances. Namely when the change occurs from a minor to a major key (as is the case here and in subsequent examples), the neuropsychological response to the sensory stimulus is that of establishing a relation to the transition from dark to light, sombre to bright, sad to happy, or introspective to extrovert. In this instance, the association with the shift from 'dark and light' is a difficult one to avoid, due to the character presented and the political message being conveyed of bringing a new era of enlightenment as Louis banishes 'the darkness over France'.

In the following year, Caproli adopted most of the features above in *Les Noces de Pelée et de Thétis*,[18] but instead of employing the long trilled notes finalised by semiquavers (which in the previous work culminated the opening ascending figure by intervals of 5th and octave), he adopts a much simpler trilled minim on bar 6; the result is a less brilliant, a less ornamented writing, which in its simplicity conveys stoical, factual qualities, also emphasised by the long and poised opening note [figure 6]. When observed with the *livret,* these compositional devices seem to focus more on the rather sombre 'killing of the Python' rather than self-adulation by Apollo.

In his musical representation of Apollo in the *Ballet de la Naissance de Vénus*,[19] Lully incorporated the elements presented above, but chose to assign the raising 5th (previously seen in the treble part in the previous two examples) to the bass line [figure 7]. In the treble he opted for a poignant embellished figure on the 1st bar, which makes use of double dotting, and the trilled note finalised by semi-

18 Carlo Caproli, *Les Noces de Pelée et de Thétis*, Paris, 1654, p.3, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k107421d?rk=42918;4>.

19 Lully, *Ballet de la Naissance de Vénus*, Paris, 1665, copied by Philidor in 1690, pp.49-50, <http://imslp.org/wiki/La_naissance_de_Vénus%2C_LWV_27_(Lully%2C_Jean-Baptiste)>.

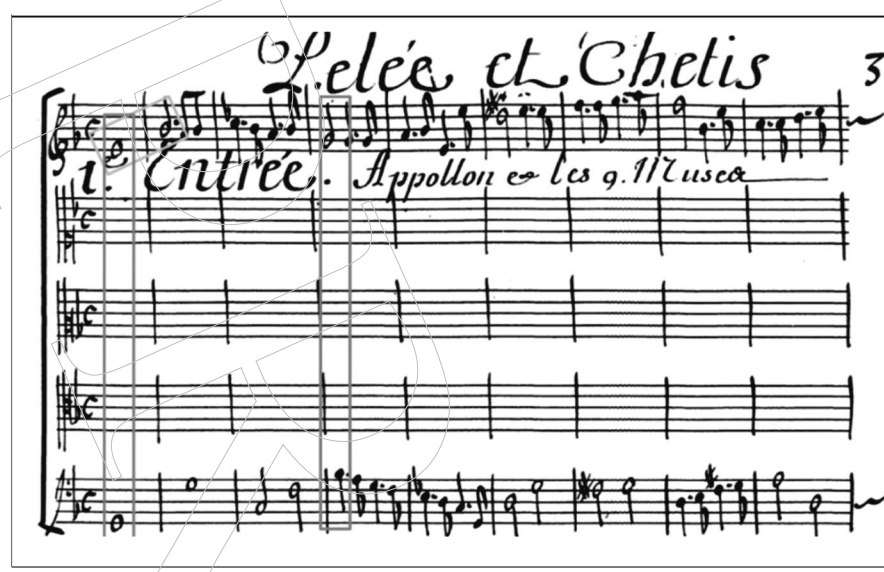


Figure 6 – Opening bars, Caproli, '1e Entrée – Appollon (sic) et les 9 Muses', *Les Noces de Pélée et de Thétis*, Paris, 1654, p.3.

quavers as featured in the *Ballet de la Nuit*. One might argue that this figure is a direct quotation from the latter, but here it assumes a different trait: rather than being the bright resolution of an ascending figure, it is used as an 'abrupt exordium' [marked in the score with an oval shape] – an oratorical device in which an exclamatory uttering is employed in exceptional circumstances.

According to Michel Le Faucheur:

> The Exordium ought to be spoken with a low and modest Voice; for to begin with Modesty, is not only agreeable to the listeners, as it is a Virtue which shows how great an esteem we have of them, and demonstrates the Respect we pay to their Presence. [...] But this Rule yet will admit of an Exception; for there are some Exordiums [that] do not fall under it, which we may call unexpected or abrupt. Whenever we have occasion to make use of them, 'tis manifest that they are to be spoken with an elevated voice, according to the passion, either of Anger that transports, or of grief that afflicts, and obliges us to set out so abruptly in our discourse.[20]

Thus, rather than denoting brilliance or pride, herewith the passage depicts the grief – as described by Le Faucheur – as result of the momentary pain caused

20 Michel Le Faucheur, *The Art of Speaking in Publick*, 1727, anon. translation of *Traité de l'action de l'orateur ou de la prononciation et du geste*, Paris, 1656, pp. 121, 124, <https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=JXRaAAAAcAAJ&printsec=frontcover>.

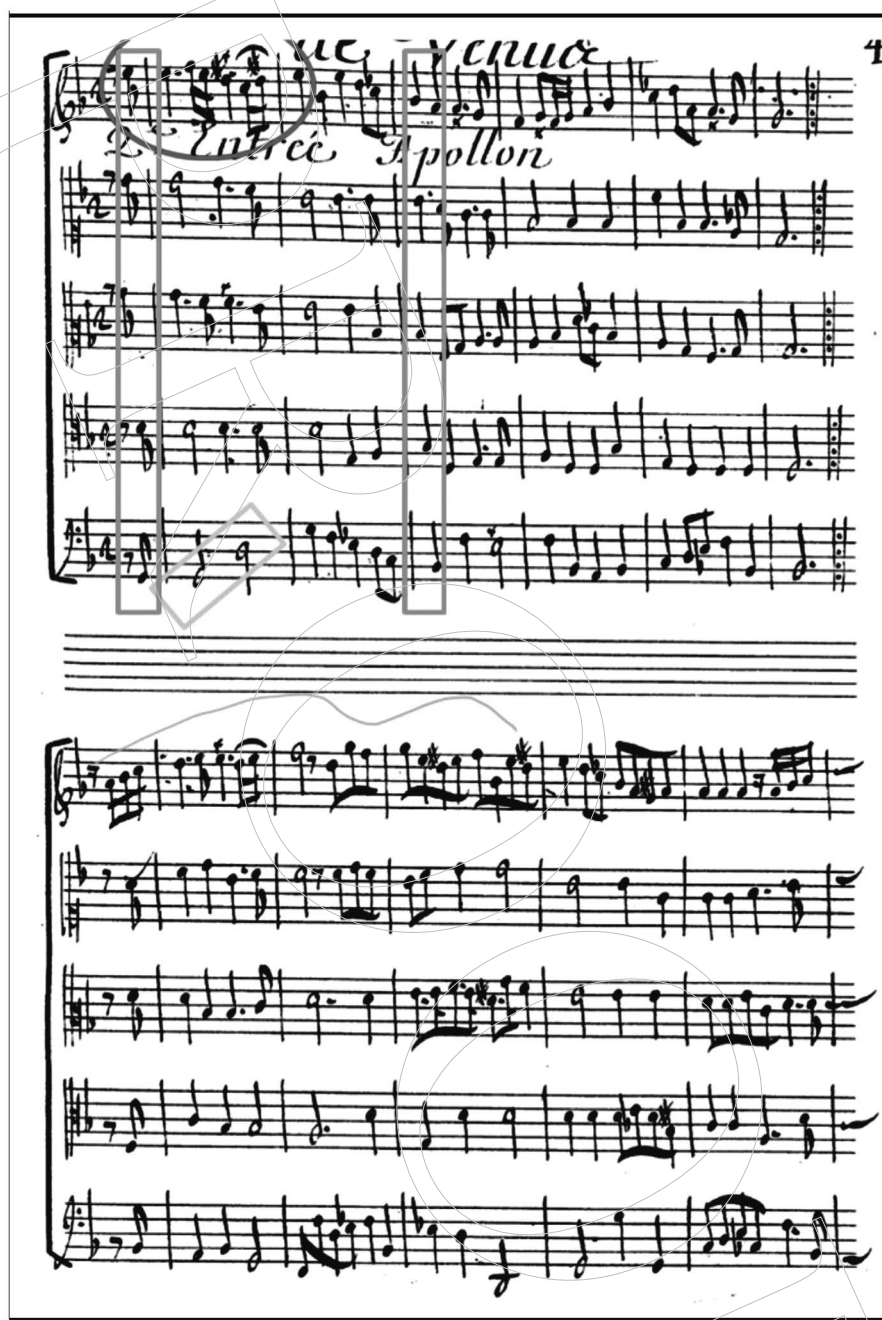


Figure 7 – Opening bars, Lully, '2e Entrée – Apollon', *Ballet de la Naissance de Vénus*, Paris 1665, p.4.

by the piercing dart, therefore in agreement with the *livret*. As we shall see, the abrupt exordium is recalled in later works too.

In the B section (starting on the upbeat to bar 7, in the second system) Lully employs a curious figure [marked in the score with an undulating line]: the fast ascending semiquavers evoke the fleeing speed with which Apollo chases Cupid; the chase being represented by the repetitive ensuing *fugato* passage in quavers between treble and bass, in bars 8-9. This same musical representation of the chase in the *livret* is recalled later in *Acis et Galatée*.

In the later period of the pieces in the scope of this research – starting with the *Ballet Royal de Flore* in 1669 – Lully expands on the compositional techniques previously employed, making use of:

- Abridging of the initial leaping interval of an ascending 5th with all notes in the diatonic scale within that interval;
- Extrapolation of the diatonic scale with ascending chromaticism;
- Use of harmonic suspensions;
- Increased use of dotted rhythm.

The *Ballet Royal de Flore*[21] provides further examples of literal musical representation. Here the ascending interval of 4th is abridged on the treble line, thus conveying the image of the rising sun (marked with inclined box) [figure 8].

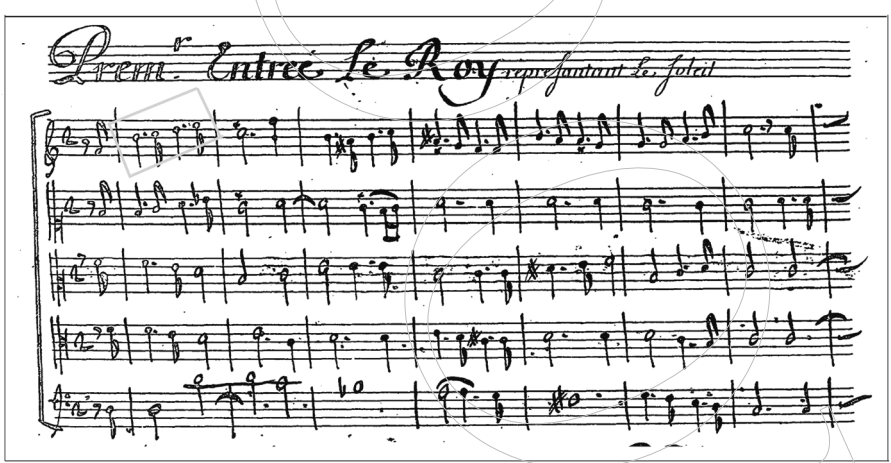


Figure 8 – Opening bars, Lully, 'Prem.r Entrée – Le Roy representant Le Soleil', *Ballet Royal de Flore*, Paris, 1669, p.13.

21 Lully, *Ballet Royal de Flore*, Paris, 1669, pp.13-14, < https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k103667k.r=Ballet royal de flore?rk=42918;4>.

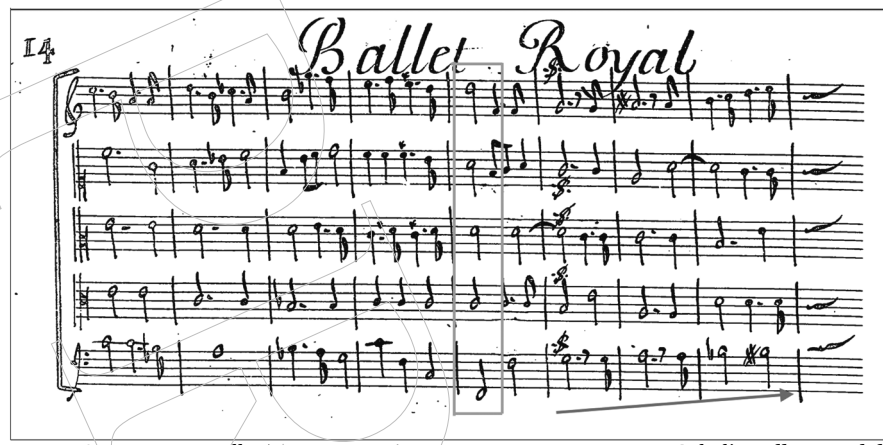


Figure 9 – Extract, Lully, 'Prem.r Entrée – Le Roy representant Le Soleil', *Ballet Royal de Flore*, Paris, 1669, p.14.

Surprisingly, Lully breaks with the trend established in the previous examples and does not present a sudden change from tonic minor key to relative major key. This, instead, only happens in the B section (bar 19). Another compositional feature that appears for the first time (within the scope of this investigation) is the ascending chromatic line, here found on bars 20-23 in the bass (marked with ascending arrow) [figure 9]. The chromatic ascent is accompanied by a rather disrupted melodic line in the other parts, perhaps conveying the use of caution and prudence when encountering amorous interests, agreeing with the disdaining sarcasm conveyed by the *livret.*

An overview of the ensuing three works *Les Amants Magnifiques*[22] [figure 10], *Alceste*[23] [figure 11] and *Psyché*[24] [figure 12] shows an increasingly faster harmonic speed, with the modulations between tonic minor key and relative major happening within a few bars, in stark contrast to the example in *Ballet Royal de Flore*. In the case of *Psyché,* the modulation occurs as sudden as between bars 1 and 2. All three pieces employ 'abrupt exordia', but these are less eloquent than in the *Ballet de la Naissance de Vénus*. Instead of grief, they evoke a poised sense of grandeur, seen in *Les Amants Magnifiques* and *Psyché* with the descending arpeggio of Dm chord, prompt followed by a surging leap of minor 6th, followed by a steady ascending bass line: whereas the leaping 5th is kept in the bass line in *Alceste,* in these two pieces Lully abridges that gap with the diatonic scale.

22 Lully, *Les Amants Magnifiques, ou Ballet des Jeux Pithiens*, Paris, 1670, p.88, <http://imslp.org/wiki/Les_jeux_pithiens%2C_LWV_42_(Lully%2C_Jean-Baptiste)>.

23 Lully, *Alceste*, Paris, 1674, copied by Philidor in 1703, pp.284-85, <http://imslp.org/wiki/Alceste%2C_LWV_50_(Lully%2C_Jean-Baptiste)>.

24 Lully, *Psyché*, Paris, 1671/8, copied by Philidor in 1702, p.163, <http://imslp.org/wiki/Psyché%2C_LWV_56_(Lully%2C_Jean-Baptiste)>.

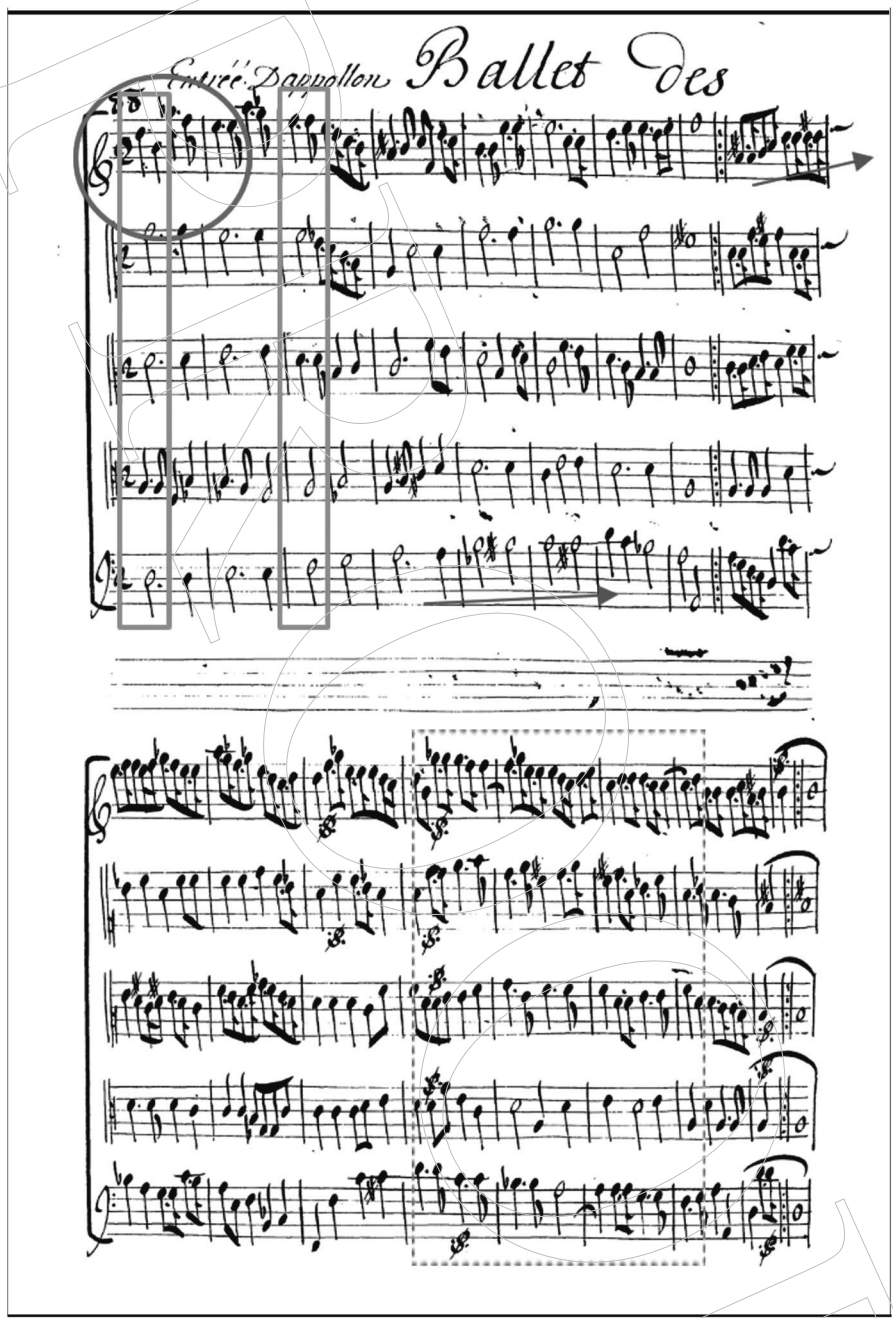


Figure 10 – Opening bars, Lully, 'Entrée d'Appollon' (sic), *Les Amants Magnifiques*, Paris, 1670, p.88.

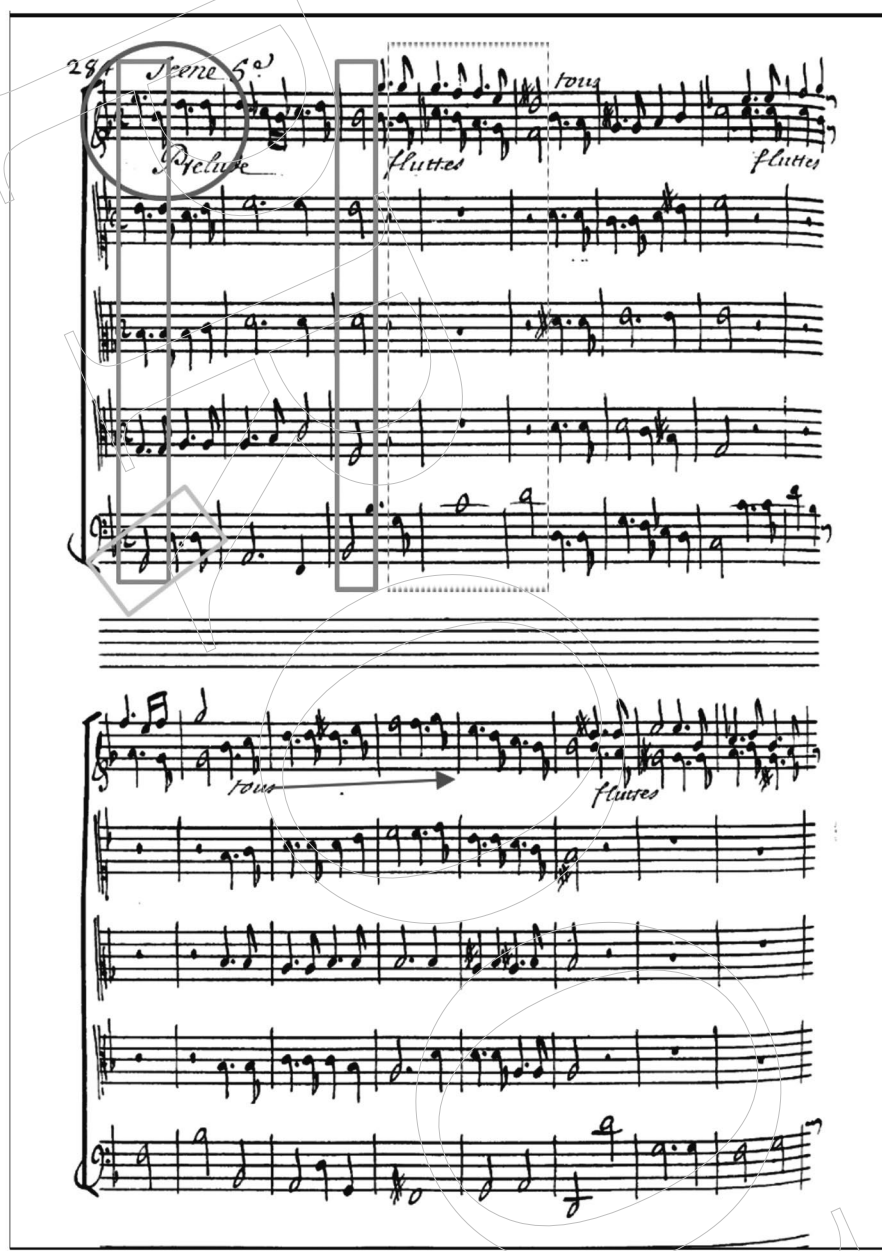


Figure 11 – Opening bars, 'Prélude', Scene 5e, *Alceste*, Paris, 1674, p.284.

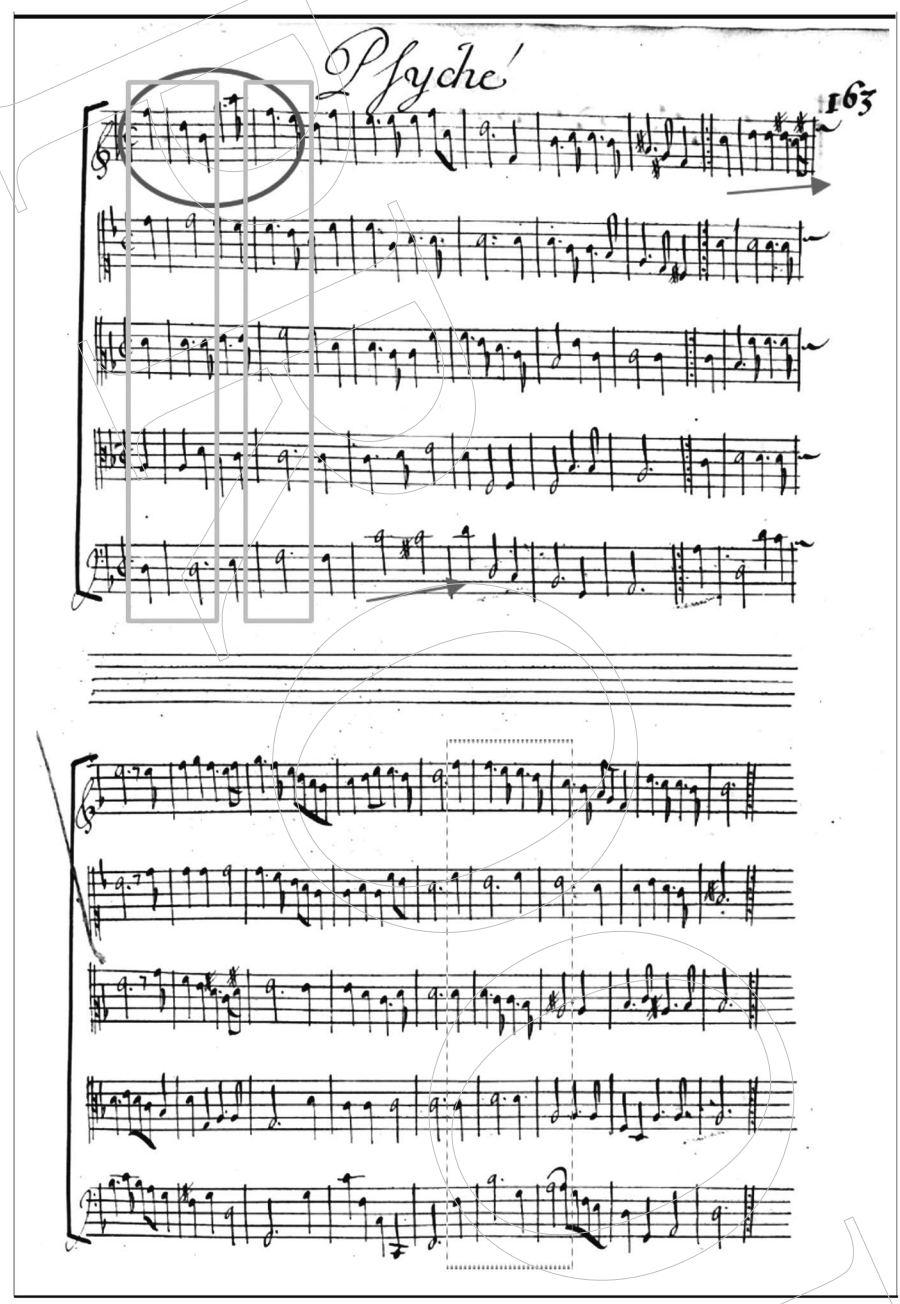


Figure 12 – Opening bars, 'Ritournelle', Scene Dernière, *Psyché*, Paris, 1671/8, copied by Philidor, 1702, p.163.

The two most remarkable features are the use of the ascending chromaticism both in the treble and bass lines [marked on the score with an ascending arrow], and the harmonic '7 – 6' suspensions [marked on the score with dashed line boxes]; whereas the ascending chromaticism often represents the quest for the unattainable, a series of suspensions suggest a series of hurdles: as soon as one is resolved, the listener is presented with another one. The suspensions are formed as the bass distances itself in a descending line from the treble, forming a dissonant and 'tense' chord of a 7th; this is somewhat lightened (but not entirely resolved) as the treble line tardily descends to follow the bass, thus forming the interval of a 6th (hence the name '7 – 6 suspension'), but the hurdles can progress with subsequent suspensions, until the composer finally resolves them with a cadence. The fatidic nature of such suspension may be linked to the 'helplessness' to which the world is doomed without the sun (as proposed in the *livret* for *Les Amants Magnifiques*) or, in contrast, to the encouraging and enabling positive traits displayed in the *livrets* for *Alceste* and *Psyché*, showing that one can overcome hurdles when guided by Apollo.

As this comparative analysis has shown so far (as in the case of passages of trilled notes and harmonic suspension), it is crucial to note at this point that the interpretation of compositional and choreographic features are to a certain extent subject to a wholesome understanding of the dramatic work and the context of the *livret*. Just as a musical figure might assume various facets, depending on so many variables (i.e. harmony, rhythm, key, articulation, etc), a choreographic step-unit or phrase might also present different meanings depending on the context, and indeed is subject to the musical source and – whenever present – the literary work to which it is attached, story, or scene depicted.

In *Le Triomphe de l'Amour*[25] Lully reverts to the model used in the *Ballet Royal de Flore,* abandoning the fast-ensuing modulation from tonic minor to relative major keys. The opening statement offers an ominous background by means of an harmonic progression from tonic Gm to a passing subdominant Cm, and back to tonic. The unusual 'distortion', emphasised with a pedal note of G throughout this musical passage, would most commonly suggest solemn grandeur.[26] However, this image is dissipated by a rather subtle and very effective chromatic alteration to the treble part, found exclusively in the second bar of Feuillet's choreography (1700). Namely, the B flat is momentarily altered

25 Lully, *Le Triomphe de l'Amour*, Paris, 1681, pp.188-190, <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b9062398b.r=Triomphe de l%27amour lully?rk=42918;4>.

26 The same harmonic progression with pedal note (but with different melodic material) is also found in the opening bars in the *récit* for a singing Apollo on page 198 of Lully's *Phaëton*, premièred only two years later in 1683, <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b9062397x/f269.image.r=Lully phaeton>.

to B natural, a change that offers a fleeting feeling of 'easing' brought by a major tonic (GM, instead of the original Gm). Such an important alteration – which, as we shall discuss, makes crucial changes to the nature of the piece and consequently to its dramatic delivery – is only present in the choreographic notation by Feuillet, denoting perhaps a choice made after the composition was completed [figure 13], and unfortunately has not been acknowledged (either by choice or overlooking) in present day reconstructions.[27]

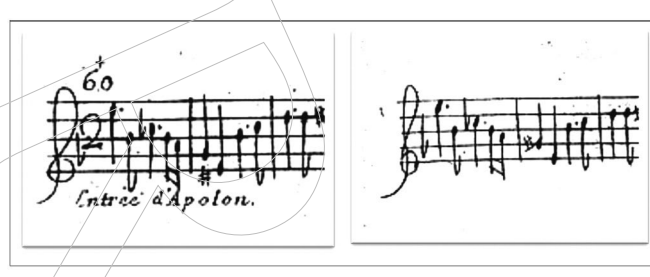


Figure 13 – Excerpts from pages 60 & 61 in Feuillet's *Recüeil de Dances*, 1700, showing pitch change on each second bars.

Curiously, a similar chromatic alteration is present in the bass line (bar 3), in the ensuing 'Deuxième air pour les mesmes', presumably danced by Apollo and the accompanying 'quatre bergers heroyques' [figure 14].[28] Could Feuillet have been inspired by this passage when choreographing the *Entrée d'Apolon (sic)*?

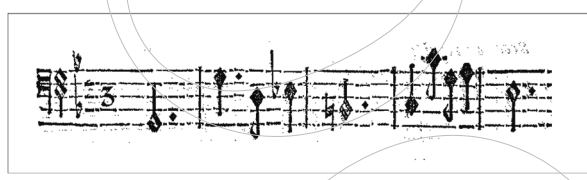


Figure 14 – Opening bars, bass line in 'Deuxième air pour les mesmes', *Le Triomphe de lAmour*, 1681, p.190.

The other most notable traits in the score are the unashamed opening abrupt exordium in a high range [marked by a circle], the recurring dotted rhythmic figuration, the chromatic ascending lines [marked by arrows], and the '7-6' suspensions [marked by dashed line boxes], as noted earlier [figures 15-16].

Quite interestingly, a closer inspection of the score shows Lully's genius at work, and a testament that he was versed in oratory (or at least familiar enough to employ it musically): he structures the piece to conform to an

27 The *parties de remplissage* (i.e. inner parts in the score) clearly form a Gm chord, as the *taille* part reaffirms the B flat present in the treble on bar 2.

28 Lully, *Le Triomphe de l'Amour*, Paris, 1681, pp.190.

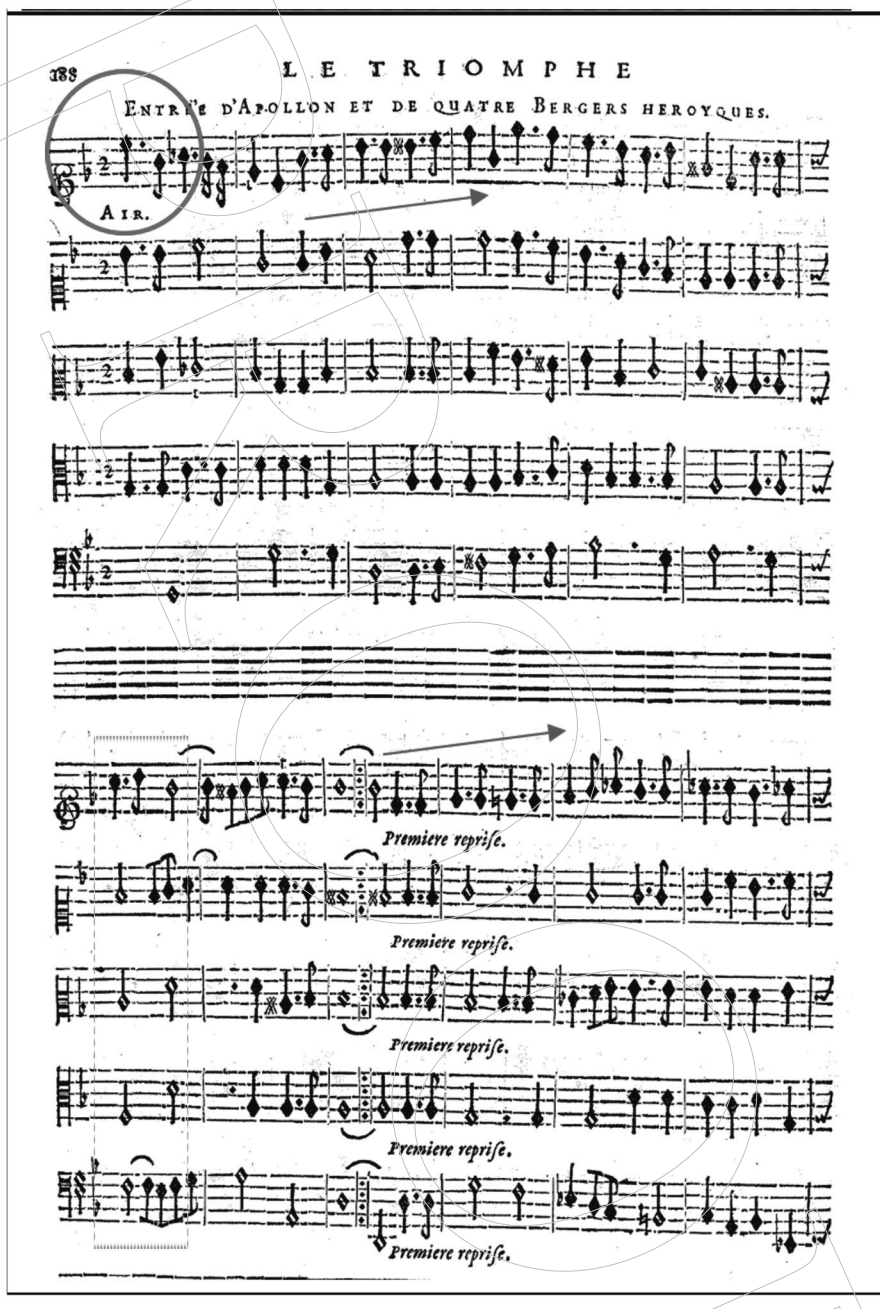


Figure 15 – Opening bars, Lully, 'Entrée d'Apollon et de Quatre Bergers Heroyques', *Le Triomphe de l'Amour*, 1681, p.188.

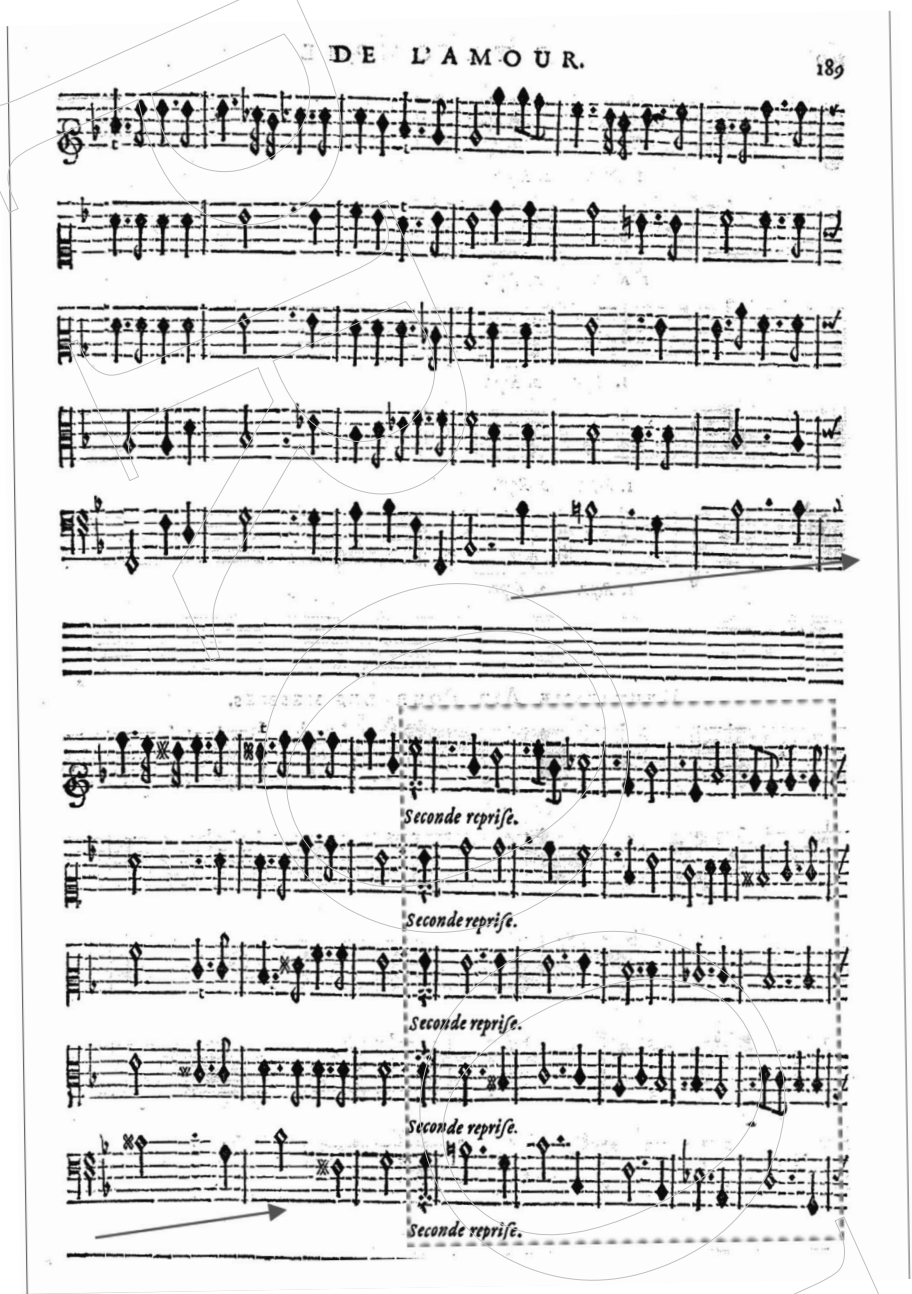


Figure 16 – Extract, Lully, 'Entrée d'Apollon et de Quatre Bergers Heroyques', *Le Triomphe de l'Amour*, 1681, p.189.

oratorical speech in 5 parts, where the A section corresponds to the *Propositio*, encapsulating *Exordium* (opening statement), *Narratio* (statement of matter to be addressed) and *Partitio* (enumeration of topics), while the B section expands the argumentation into *Confirmatio* (confirmation of proposed matter and presentation of proof), *Confutatio* (banishing of contrary argumentation) and *Conclutio* (reinstatement of initial idea in proposition) [figure 17].

Section	Bar numbers	Part of Oration
A	1 to 9.i	• Propositio
B	9.ii to 16.i	• Confirmatio
	16.ii to 20.i	• Confutatio
	20.ii to 28	• Conclutio

Figure 17 – Subdivisions of score applied to score of the Entrée d'Apollon in *Le Triomphe de l'Amour*.

Extraordinarily, the whole A section of the composition orderly presents the thematic elements to be further developed in the following three main sections, in the B part [figure 18].

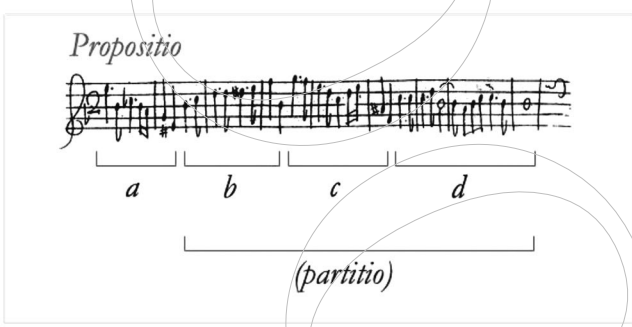


Figure 18 – Treble part in section A of the Entrée d'Apollon, *Le Triomphe de l'Amour*, subdivided in four semi-phrases.

The technique is akin to the oratorical device *Partitio*, where a speaker enumerates the ensuing topics of his speech, to make his argument clearer, and masterly inserts this *en passant* while delivering the *Propositio* [figure 19].[29]

29 For a full choreo-musical-oratorical analysis of this work, please refer to Ricardo Barros, *Dance as a Discourse-The rhetorical expression of the passions in French Baroque dance*, Lambert Academic Publishing, Saarbrücken, 2010.

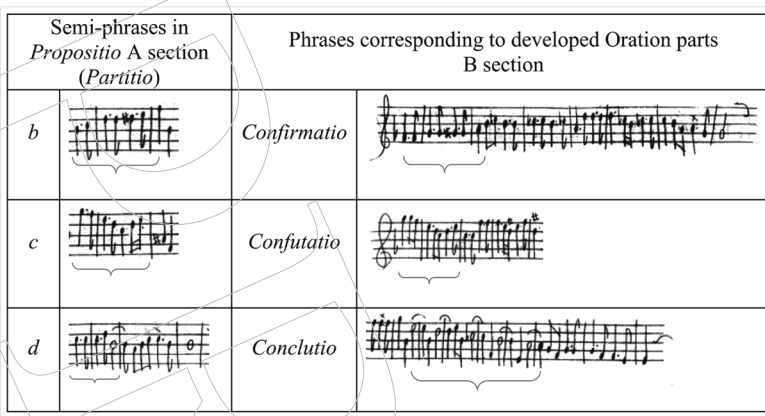


Figure 19 – Relation between semi-phrases presented in section A of the *Entrée d'Apollon*, their further development in section B, and their corresponding oratory function.

The complexity of texture and interweaving in the composition offers a variety of affects that propose an equally complex persona, in agreement with the troubled figure painted by the *livret* and, as we shall see, with the extant choreographic material.

Although unmarked, the '*Air*' in the Prologue of *Acis et Galatée*[30] – used by Anthony L'Abbé for his equally generically titled '*Entrée*'[31] – certainly has all the compositional characteristics to be defined as an *Entrée d'Apollon*, and for its placement in the narrative which, according to the *livret*, has Apollo as the main character in that point of the Prologue.

Comparatively simpler than its predecessors, the score [figure 20] disregards the '7-6' suspensions and quick harmonic modulations from minor to relative major observed in earlier works. But other features such as the abrupt exordium and chromatic ascending lines (both in treble and bass lines, at different times) are maintained. Certain elements seen in much earlier examples are reinstated: the *fugato* figuration (marked with stars, on bars 7-9) as previously seen in *Ballet de la Naissance de Vénus,* and some eloquent syncopations (on bars 13, 16, 20 and 22) as previously seen in the *Ballet de la Nuit.* As further evidence of the association of this *air* to an *Entrée d'Apollon,* we find on bars 2-4 a verbatim quotation of both treble and bass parts in a passage in the *Entrée d'Apollon* in *Le Triomphe de l'Amour,* (treble part, bars 3-5) [figure 21]. Not surprisingly, some choreographic passages in the choreographies by Feuillet and L'Abbé for the respective works bear striking resemblance, as shall be pointed out in the ensuing choreographic analyses.

30 Lully, *Acis et Galatée*, Paris, 1686, pp. xlvij-xlix, <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k4500453h.r=Lully acis et galatee?rk=21459;2>.

31 Anthony L'Abbé, *A New Collection of Dances*, containing a great Number of the best Ball and Stage dances, London (n.d.).

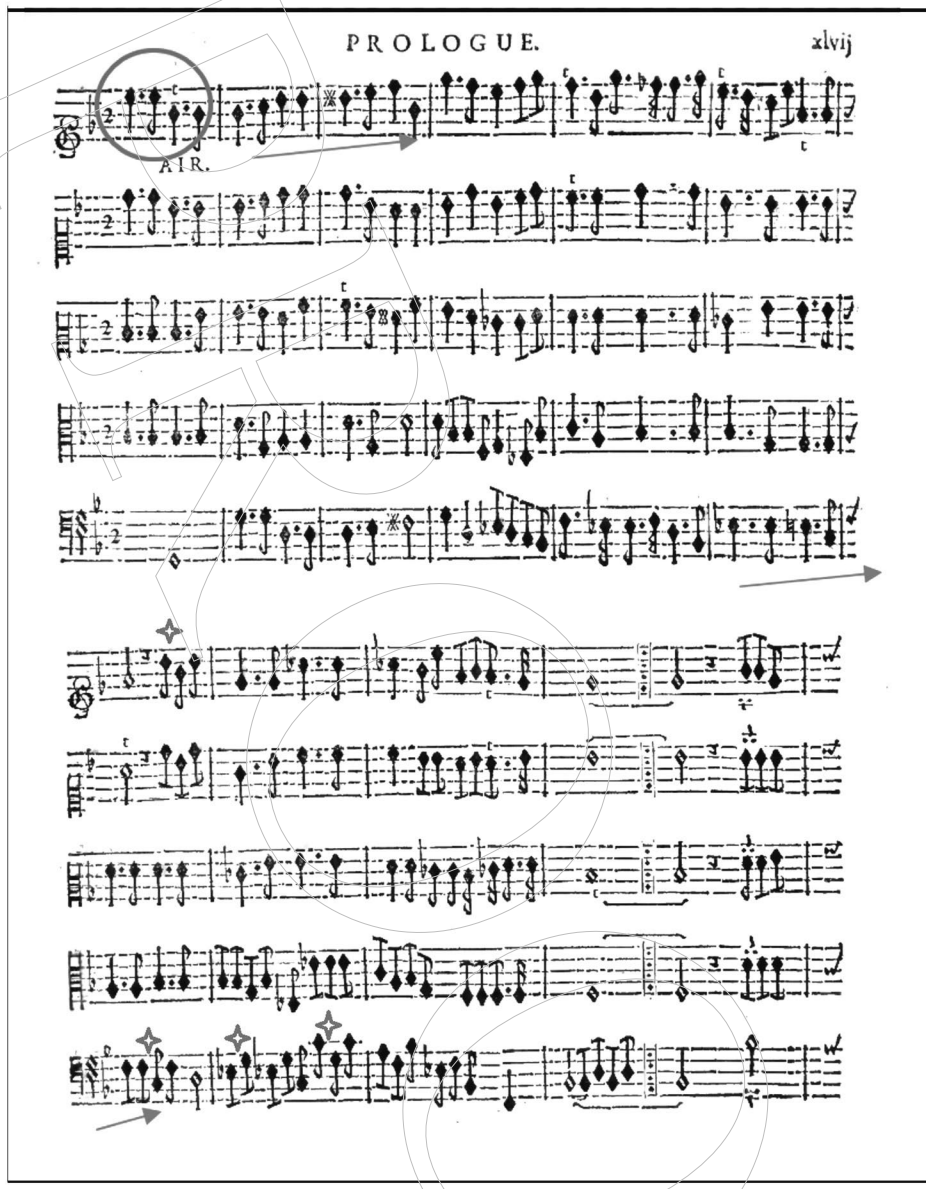


Figure 20 – Opening bars, Lully, Air, Prologue, *Acis et Galatée*, 1686, p.xlvii.

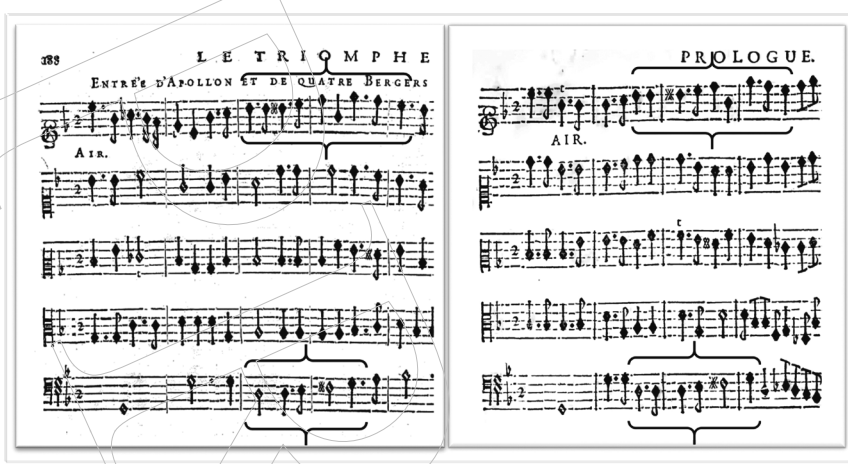


Figure 21 – Comparison between opening passages in Entrée d'Apollon, *Le Triomphe de l'Amour* (left), and Air, *Acis et Galatée* (right), with verbatim quotations shown within brackets.

3. THE CHOREOGRAPHIES

Despite the numerous appearances of Apollo in French ballets and operas in the *Grand Siècle* – be it in danced or sung roles – there is only a handful of surviving choreographies of the period for this character, albeit none of them bear indications of being performed on stage. Choreographed by Feuillet, Pécour and L'Abbé, these dances were published within the period c.1700-1725, and might have been created for the competent amateur in noble ranks, or perhaps for appearances by professional dancers in the many balls held at court, or in other events.

As we shall see in the following analyses, certain elements are recurring: at times whole passages are reused in different choreographies, either by the same author or as a citation by another one. The degree of difficulty varies, but overall all of the dances demand a high degree of skill, control and expressivity.

Due to constraints of size, I have focused on presenting the analyses of the opening pages of each choreography and, in the case of choreographies by Feuillet (originally published in 1700), I have adopted the revised edition of 1709, containing clear corrections, mostly regarding timing of steps and their placement within the musical bar lines.

3.1 *'Autre entrée pour homme'* – Feuillet (1700)[32]

The short choreography for the *Entrée in Ballet Royal de Flore* is the least demanding of all [figures 22-23].

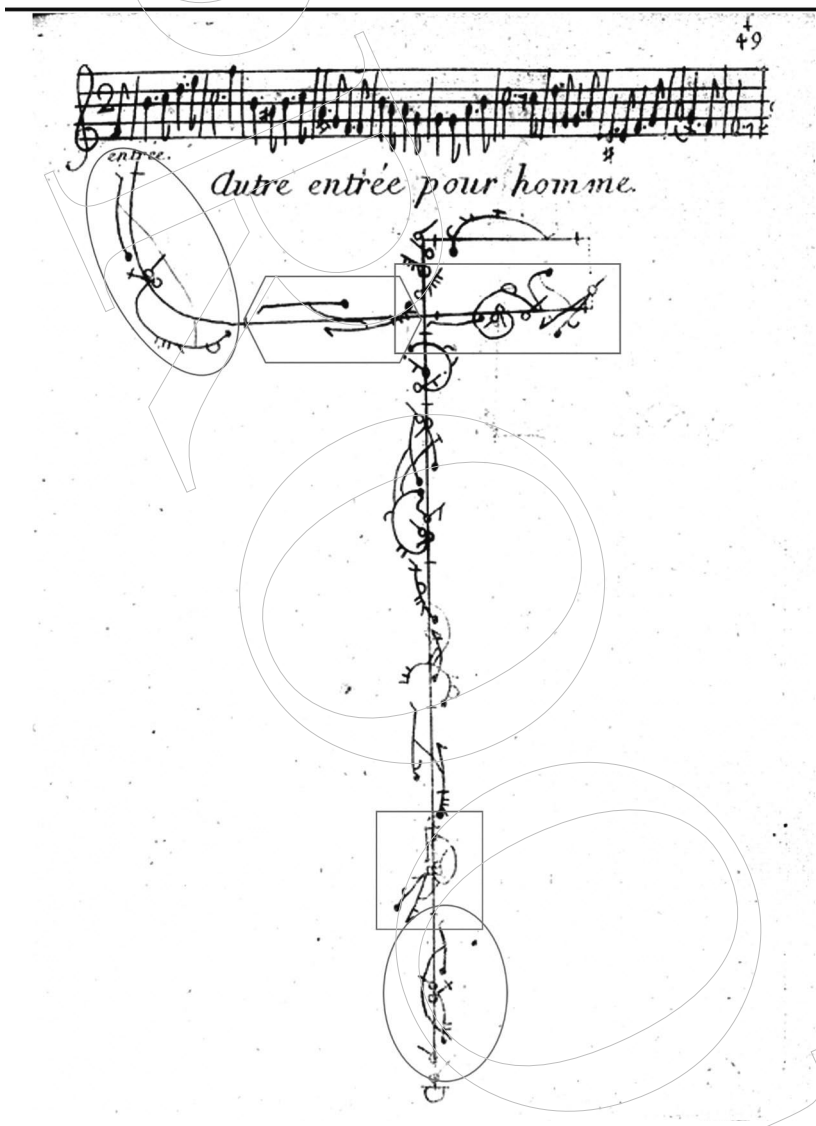


Figure 22 – Feuillet, 'Autre entrée pour homme', *Recüeil de Dances,* 1700, p.49.

32 Feuillet, *Recueil de Dances composées par Mr Feuillet, Maître de Dance*, Paris, 1700, pp.49-52. <https://www.loc.gov/item/14002126/>.

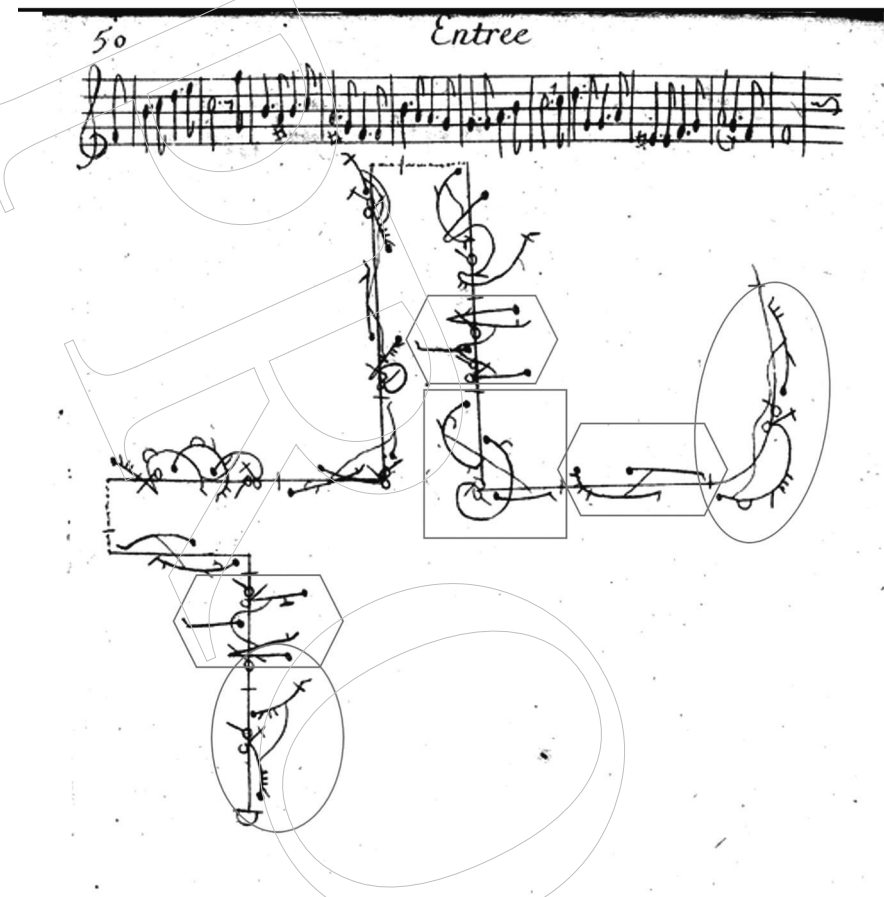


Figure 23 – Feuillet, 'Autre entrée pour homme', *Recüeil de Dances*, 1700, p.50.

Unusually, for a virtuoso solo *Entrée*, it contains one step-unit per bar – which immediately demands a relatively faster tempo than those containing two step-units per bar (so to avoid stagnant phrasing and heavy landings on jumps).

Opening with a *cabriole*, the choreography establishes an iconic and strong image from the outset. Here it conveys the image of the hero who vanquished the Winter, bringing promises of good weather (or 'prosperity' under Louis XIV' reign). Used as a statement, this step is more of an allusion to the royal image rather than an accurate portrayal of the image and mood suggested by the *livret* and score: the musical score does not offer an abrupt exordium – to which the bold step would have been better suited – but instead a rather gentle and gradual ascent by degree in the treble part, while the *livret* puts forward a slow rising sun. The *cabriole* is also used consistently as a step of transition between phrases and oratorical parts [marked throughout with a circle/oval shape]. We also note some degree of hesitation or caution (also proposed elsewhere in the musical

score) as the dancer employs *emboëttes* [marked throughout with a square/ rectangular shape], which in the first page makes him turn to face the sides. Additionally, one can argue that the steps in 2nd position – present in both *coupés* or *contretemps* sideways, or more concealed in *pas de bourée en presence* [marked throughout with a hexagonal shape] – can convey some vulnerability due to its defenceless and exposed stance, particularly when compared to steps in 3rd and 4th position where the body is rendered more alert and protected.

Curiously, the whole passage containing the four last bars in page 1, as well as the second half of page 2, are either exact or slightly shortened quotations of similar passages in Feuillet's *'Entrée d'Apolon'* [sic], printed a mere 11 pages later in the same collection.[33]

3.2 *'Entrée d'Apolon'* – Feuillet (1700)[34]

Perhaps one of the most iconic choreographies in the solo repertoire notated in Feuillet-Beauchamps notation, the '*Entrée d'Apolon*'(sic) is notable for its close relationship with the musical score, and for elegantly delivering a speech framed by a classic oratorical frame [figures 24-25]. More than that, it openly portrays a susceptible character, focusing the story-telling on his inner turmoil as he is torn between his apparent unscathed divine majesty and the acknowledgement of his love for Daphne (and therefore his surrender to Cupid's power).

In contrast to '*Autre entrée pour homme*' above, Feuillet's use of the *cabriole* as an opening statement is consistent with the musical score and *livret*, expressing the 'grief that afflicts'[35] caused by a piercing dart.[36] This is immediately followed by a *battü*, *ronds-de-jambe* and *pied-en-l'air*, while balancing on the opposite leg *en demi-pointe* which – other than the obvious technical demand of control, strength and balance – requires great interpretative skills from the dancer if he is to portray the shivering and nearly orgasmic ecstasy suggested by this passage: as Descartes suggested, 'the passion that most commonly brings about this effect [listlessness] is love, combined with desire, for a thing whose

33 In the context of the *Recueil de dances composée par Mr Feuillet* (1700), the passage in bars 7-10 on page 49, and 20-22 on page 50 ('*Autre entrée pour homme*') paraphrase bars 7i-9 on page 60 ('*Entrée d'Apolon*'). Likewise, bars 6-7 on page 50 are literally quoted in bar 4 on page 60.

34 Feuillet, *Recueil de Dances composées par Mr Feuillet, Maître de Dance*, Paris, 1700, pp.60-66. <https://www.loc.gov/item/14002126/>

35 Le Faucheur, *The Art of Speaking in Publick*, 1727, anon. translation of *Traité de l'action de l'orateur ou de la prononciation et du geste,* Paris, 1656, pp. 124, <https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=JXRaAAAAcAAJ&printsec=frontcover>.

36 For a full analysis of this choreography, please refer to Ricardo Barros, *Dance as a Discourse – The rhetorical expression of the passions in French Baroque dance*, Lambert Academic Publishing, Saarbrücken, 2010, pp.103-129.

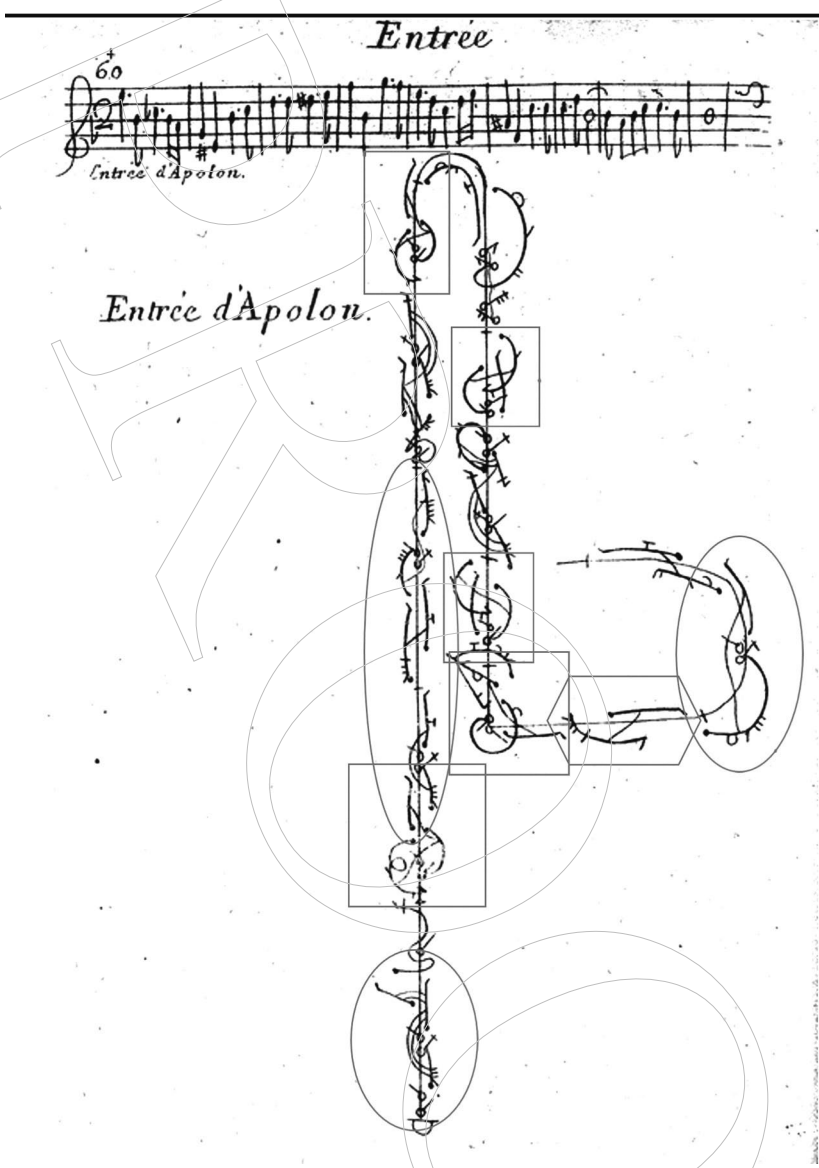


Figure 24 – Feuillet, 'Entrée d'Apolon, *Recüeil de Dances*, 1700, p.60.

acquisition is not imagined to be possible at the present time'.[37] This opening semi-phrase is concluded with the first of many *emboëttés* that permeate the choreography, here accompanied by the tonal temporary modulation to GM and

37 René Descartes, '*Les Passions de l'âme*' (Paris, 1649), in *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, trans. Robert Stoothoff, Cambridge, 1985, pp.325-404.

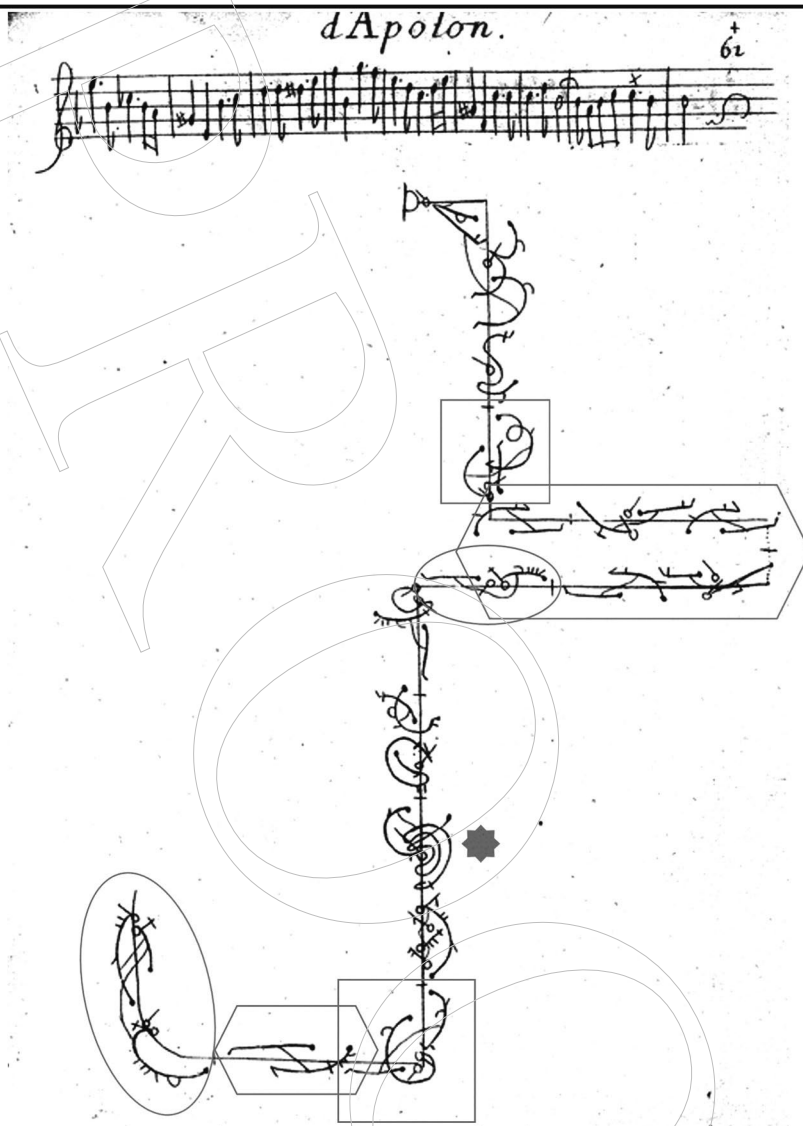


Figure 25 – Feuillet, Entrée d'Apolon, *Recüeil de Dances*, 1700, p.61.

suggesting Apollo's surrendering to Cupid's capricious desire, denoting a drastic change of passion.

Applied with frequency, the *emboëttés* are used as a punctuation, denoting a 'change of heart' or a change of emotion – in contemporary terms it would be akin to a trigger to bi-polarity which, in the choreography, often flanks sections

where Apollo is clearly in conflict (displayed with beaten steps, turning *pas grave* or sudden *sissones*, insisting *jettés-chassés*, as seen on page 60), or instead revels in ecstasy of love. A clear example of Apollo's surrender to Cupid's power is proposed by the series of *pas-tombés* in bars 2ii-4 on page 61, in a sequence akin to that described by Père Pomey in 1671:

> Sometimes, with the most beautiful timing in the world, he would remain suspended, immobile, and half leaning to the side with one foot in the air; and then, compensating for the rhythmic unit that had gone by, with another more precipitous unit he would almost fly, so rapid was his motion.[38]

This sequence is followed by another brief attempt to deny love (with a *cabriole* and a turning, beaten *contretemps*), but ensued by a magnificent passage when Apollo first stands immobile, with one leg *en l'air*, and progressively speeds up his actions with two *battüs* and faster four *battements* [marked with a star]. Applying Descartes's theory to the passage, the initial static figure would reflect the listlessness caused by the desire of an unattainable object of love. Apollo's gradual acceptance of this passion would make him realise the prospect of fulfilling his desire, therefore making him more agile for, according to Descartes, 'when the body is in this condition, the desires of the soul are rendered stronger and keener'.[39]

When observed from this literary and musical perspective, this opening choreographic segment portrays a dramatic image, a far cry from the haughty image of an absolutist Apollo.

In consideration of the whole work as an homogenous amalgamation of literary, choreographic, musical and oratorical forces, some pre-conceived ideas are replaced with revealing, enlightening and refreshing new meaning: emphatic dotted rhythm, often employed to suggest a 'drive' or 'determination' when displaying epic courage, tragedy or heroism, here reflects the 'anguish' and 'turmoil' of a troubled character. This is reinforced by the ascending chromatic lines, portraying 'difficulty' exemplified by a long sinuous route to reach the climactic note, here painting the search for the unattainable (Daphne as the object of Apollo's amorous interests). Interestingly, the '7-6' suspensions often linked to 'unresolved issues' or 'ongoing plights', here suggest that a long conflict can lead to resolution and balance instead.

Consequently in the choreographic discourse, in order to illustrate the power and triumph of Cupid (*Le Triomphe de l'Amour* as the Ballet's title announces) Feuillet explores Apollo's astonishment and wonder with the prospect of being

38 François Pomey, 'Description d'une Sarabande dansée', *Le dictionnaire royal augmenté*, Lyon, 1671, appendix, pp.20-21, <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k96365651/f1060.image>.

39 Descartes, ibid., pp.367, 370.

in love and expressing his desires. The subliminal message conveyed by the choreographer is that wonder and astonishment are the actual causes for the character's instability, and not love and desire. Apollo's struggle during the *Confutatio* is caused by such instability, which vanishes once the character learns that the new passions will not be detrimental to his imposing divinity. On the contrary, by uniting all choreographic elements in the final *Conclutio,* which also explores the surmounting ecstasy caused by suspended chords and dissonances in the harmonic cycle of fifths, Apollo is finally portrayed not in the disadvantaged position of a captive of Cupid, but rather as an enlightened, pleasant, inspiring and much more diverse character. Love is portrayed as an inevitable, positive passion even when unexpectedly imposed: any attempt to set this passion aside is clearly demonstrated as unfruitful and leading not only to frustration, but also to the defacing of one's previous persona.

3.3 'Entrée d'Appolon'(sic) – Pécour (1704)[40]

Although not strictly complying with an oratorical frame, as its counterpart above – but instead abounding with Pécour's characteristic shifting of choreographic phrases onto dissimilar musical passages, in paraphrases – the choreography presents the same trademark steps. The same eloquent *cabrioles* are used in the abrupt exordium and punctuation of phrases, the recurring *emboëttes*, the steps denoting susceptibility such as the *pas de bourée ouvert* and sideways *coupé*, highlighting the open 2nd position, the collapsing *pas tombé* with its Cartesian connotations and finally the same compelling battements conveying Apollo's increasing excitement [figures 26-27]. Despite some incongruences in the choreo-musical relation – such as the use of *entrechats* on bar 2 where harmony reverts to Gm, instead of the relatively more strained Cm on bar 1ii – Pécour's choreography also reinstates some ideas already used by Feuillet in the two choreographies above: here, the hurried steps to stage right on bar 5 (p.195) followed by the return to stage left with a *pas tombé* is a paraphrase of Feuillet's *Apolon* (p.61, bars 2.ii-4), while the *coupé* to stage left and turning *contretemps* on bar 7 reminds us of Feuillet's Soleil (p.50, bars 3-4). The overall impression is that in Pécour's eyes, the re-gaining of control by Apollo is suggested by his ability in mastering increasingly difficult steps rather than matching choreographic elements to their musical counterparts, or harmoniously combining them all in a climactic final *Conclutio*, as proposed by Feuillet.

40 Feuillet, *Recueil de dances contenant un tres grand nombres des meuilleures Entrées de Ballet de Mr. Pécour*, Paris, 1704, pp. 195-201, <https://www.loc.gov/item/11027715/>.

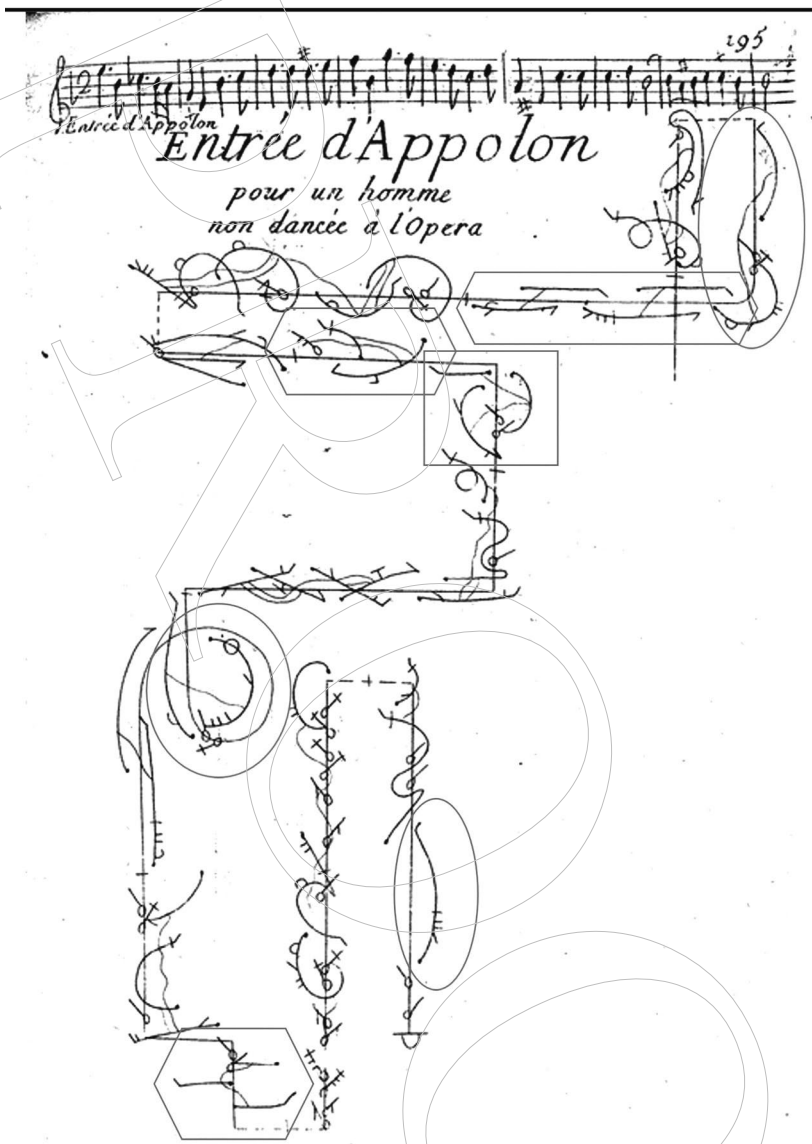


Figure 26 – Pécour, Entrée d'Appolon, *Recüeil de Dances*, 1704, p.195.

3.4 *'Entrée performd' by Mr Desnoyer* – L'Abbé (c.1725)[41]

Enigmatically billed as having been 'performd' by Mr Desnoyer', the present choreography might have been the result of a partnership between L'Abbé and his compatriot George Desnoyer, who premièred in London's Drury Lane Theatre

41 Anthony L'Abbé, *A New Collection of Dances*, London, n.d. (c.1725), pp. 76-83.

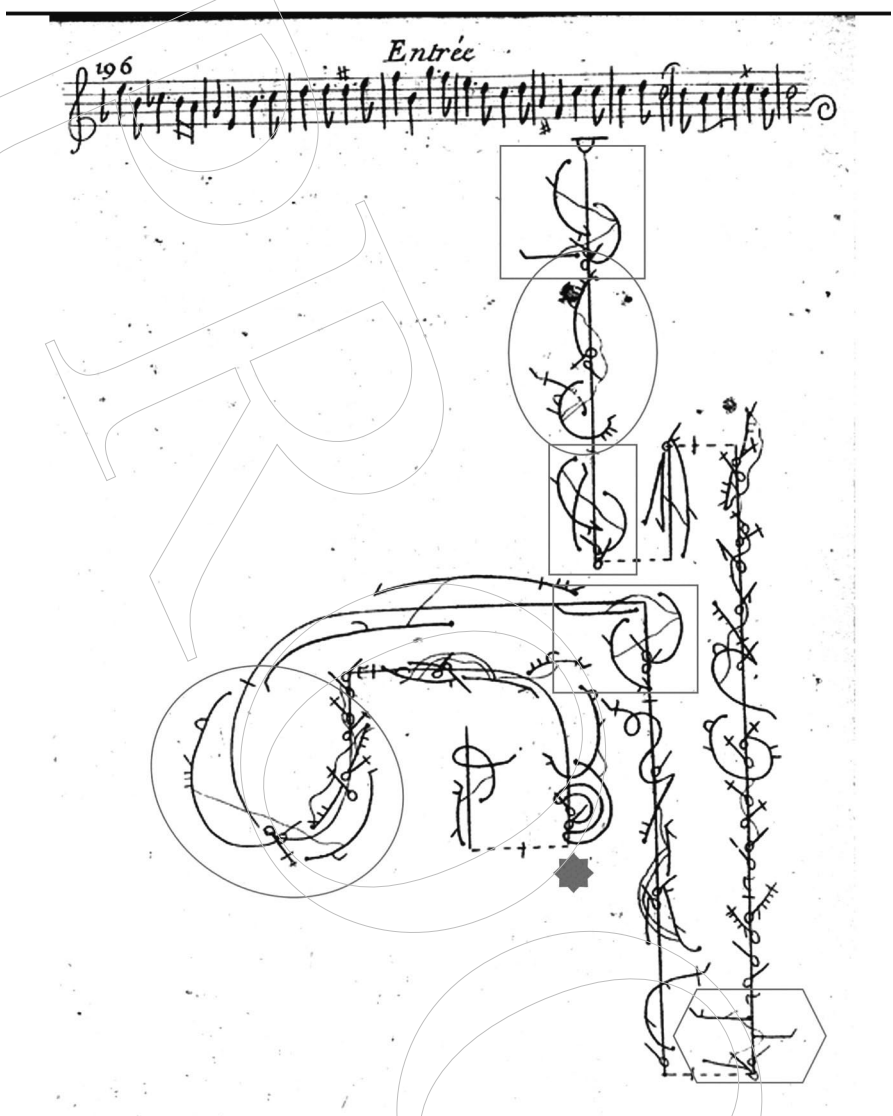


Figure 27 – Pécour, Entrée d'Appolon, *Recüeil de Dances*, 1704, p.196.

in 1721. The choreography stands alongside two others naming Desnoyer as a performer: a *Spanish Entrée* (set to the *Sarabande Espagnole* in Lully's *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*) and a *Turkish Dance* in which he performed with Mrs Younger (set to the March in *La Turquie*, an *entrée* in Campra's *L'Europe Galante*). These might have been showcase numbers, as all dances display strong characters (Apollo, a Spaniard and a Turk) in virtuoso choreographies. Would the absence of a clear labelling as an *Entrée d'Apollon* in the choreography be due to L'Abbé's judicious

caution as to avoid unintentionally giving the impression of corroborating a French propaganda (by exalting a French monarch, when perpetrating the established association between Louis XIV and Apollo), and thus safeguarding his position as dancing master to King George I's granddaughters Anne, Amelia and Caroline?

The choreographic elements in this dance [figures 28-31] – together with evidence provided by the *livret*, musical score and performance circumstances – corroborate its identification as an *Entrée d'Apollon*. It starts with a verbatim quotation of the opening exordium in Feuillet's *Entrée d'Apolon* (sic) (1700), with its *cabriole*, *pas pointé*, *battüs* and *ronds-de-jambe*, all squeezed in the first bar. Interestingly, in the opening page (p.76) the dancer persistently faces upstage while performing steps in 'wide' second position, and uses *cabrioles* to momentarily turn back to face the audience, only to turn its back to them immediately after with a *jetté*. This apparent turmoil is augmented with yet renewed attempts to settle, which are fruitless due to turning *sissones* that frustrate such attempts.

The choreography is quite demanding, particularly in terms of timing of steps. Rather than complying with the oratorical structure proposed by the musical score, the choreography develops its own discourse, albeit utilising some of the associations found in Feuillet's *Entrée d'Apolon* (sic) insofar as the *emboëttes* seem to indicate a change of attitude: for example, after the struggles on the opening page (as mentioned above), the dancer continues to proceed sideways towards upstage on page 77. An eloquent *cabriole* on bar 2 (perhaps depicting the exacerbation of his anguish) is promptly followed by an *emboëttes*, which now enables him to confidently face the audience and perform some *entrechats*. Such boldness persists through the beginning of page 78, culminating into yet another *cabriole* on bar 3, followed by *battements en tournant* [marked with a star]. From here on, his confidence vanishes, markedly on bar 4 with a variant of a *pas de bourée* à deux mouvements, concluding with a leg gesture (curiously a step often employed by Pécour and seen as one of his signature steps). This leads to scuttling steps, retreating backwards towards upstage. The contrast between confident and cautious steps as a reflection of the initial unsettlement portrayed on the opening page certainly paints the image of a troubled character who tries to reconcile opposing forces while attempting to make sense of them.

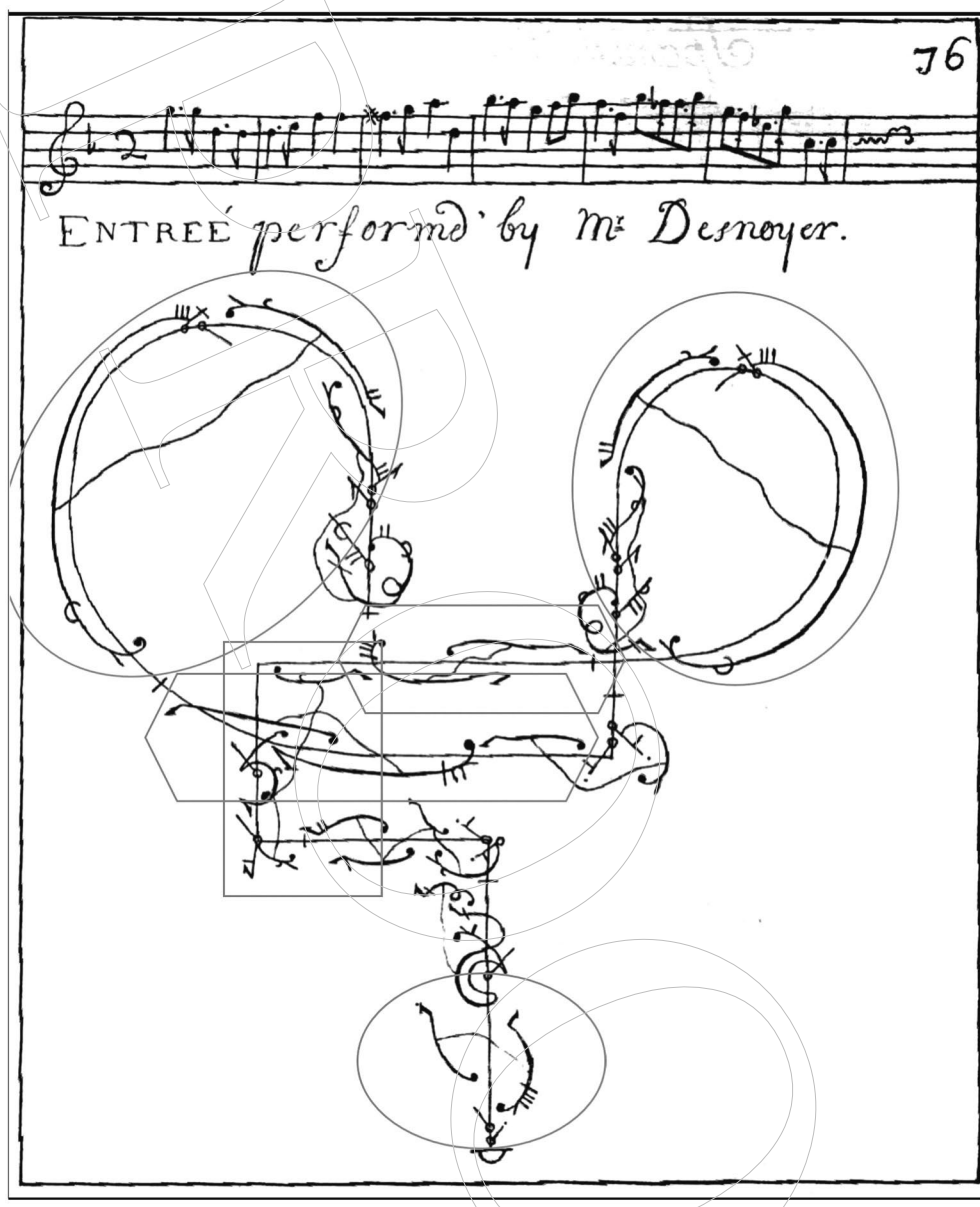


Figure 28 – L'Abbé, Entreé performd' by Mr Desnoyer, *A New Collection of Dances*, c1725, p.76.

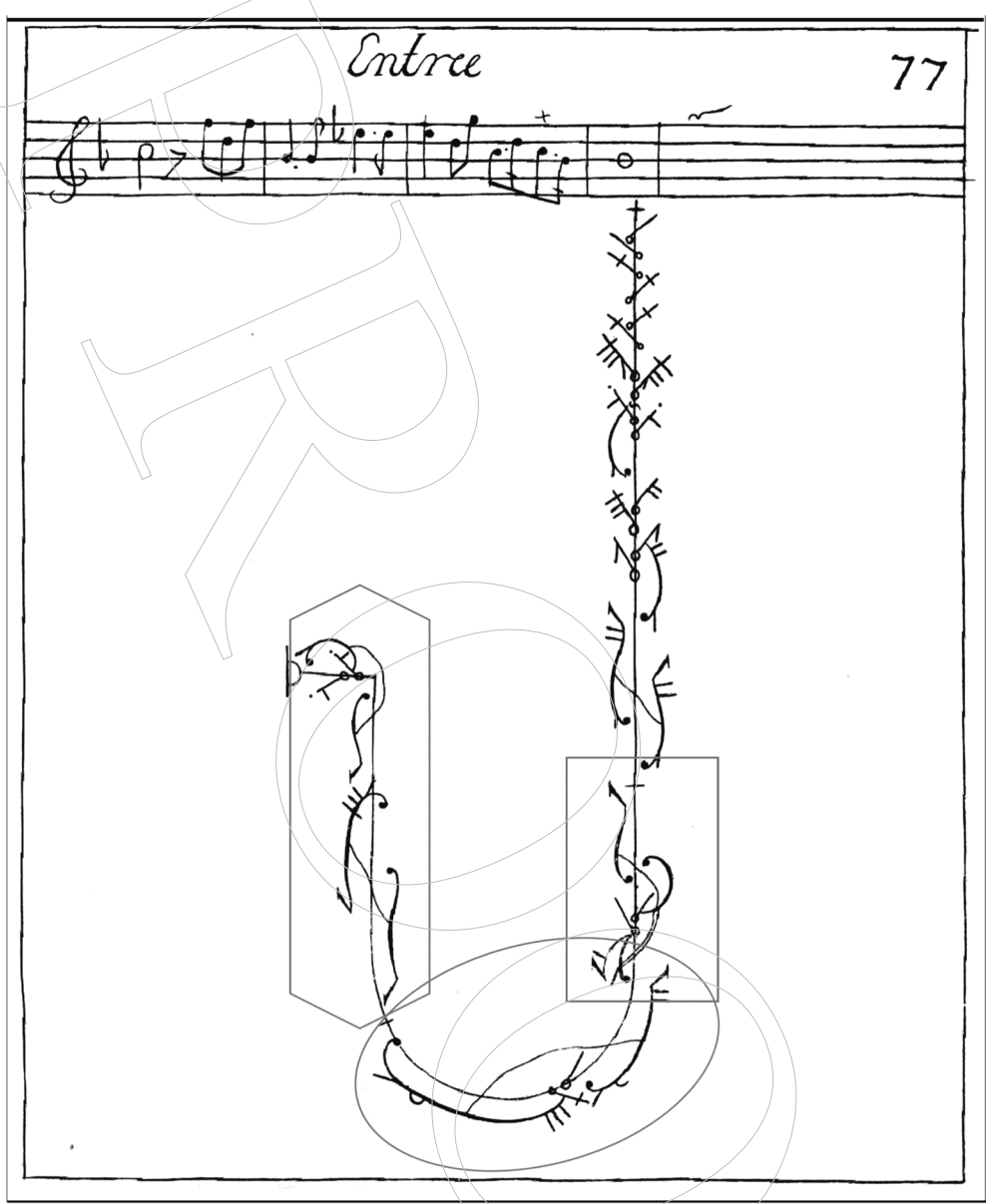


Figure 29 – L'Abbé, Entreé performd' by Mr Desnoyer, *A New Collection of Dances*, c 1725, p.77.

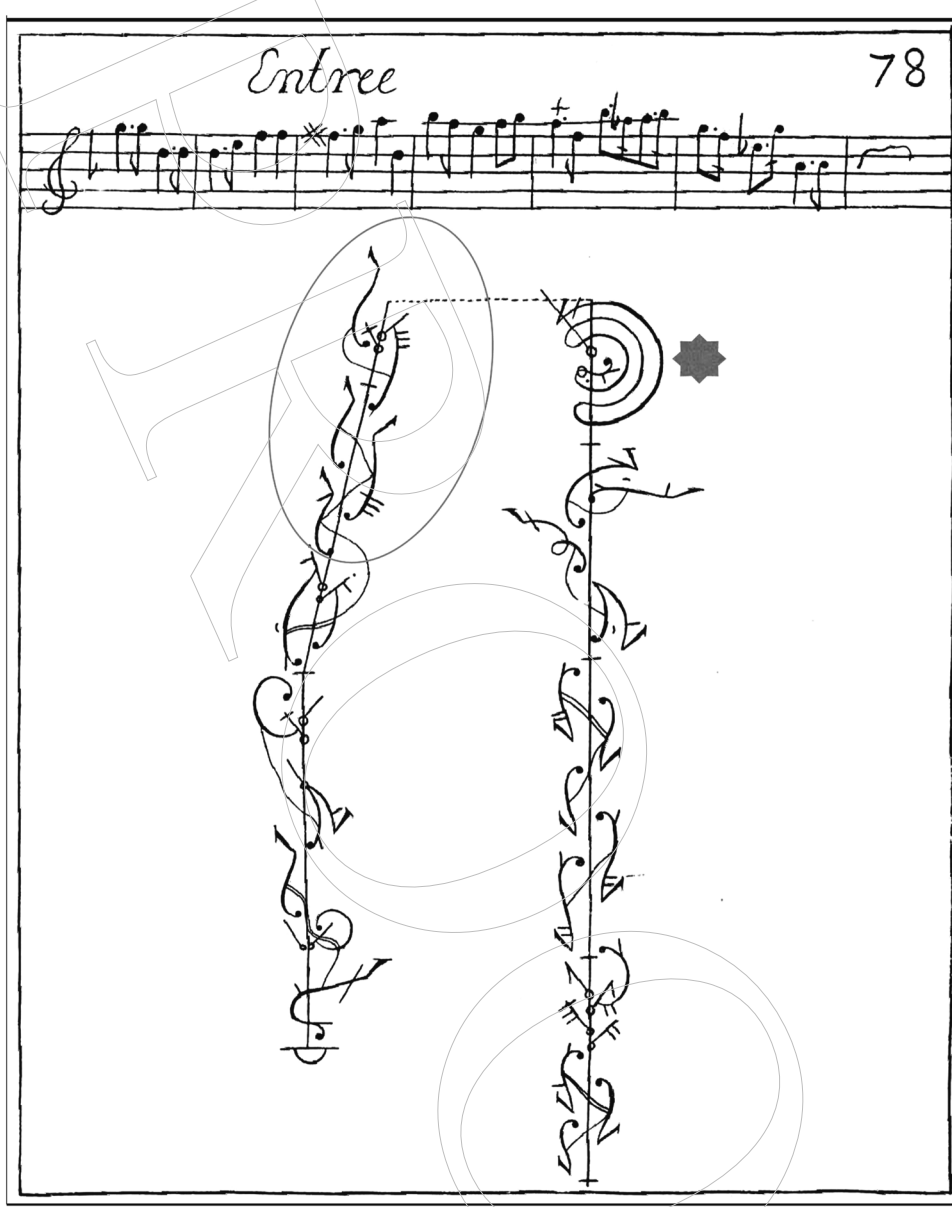


Figure 30 – L'Abbé, Entreé performd' by Mr Desnoyer, *A New Collection of Dance*s, c 1725, p.78.

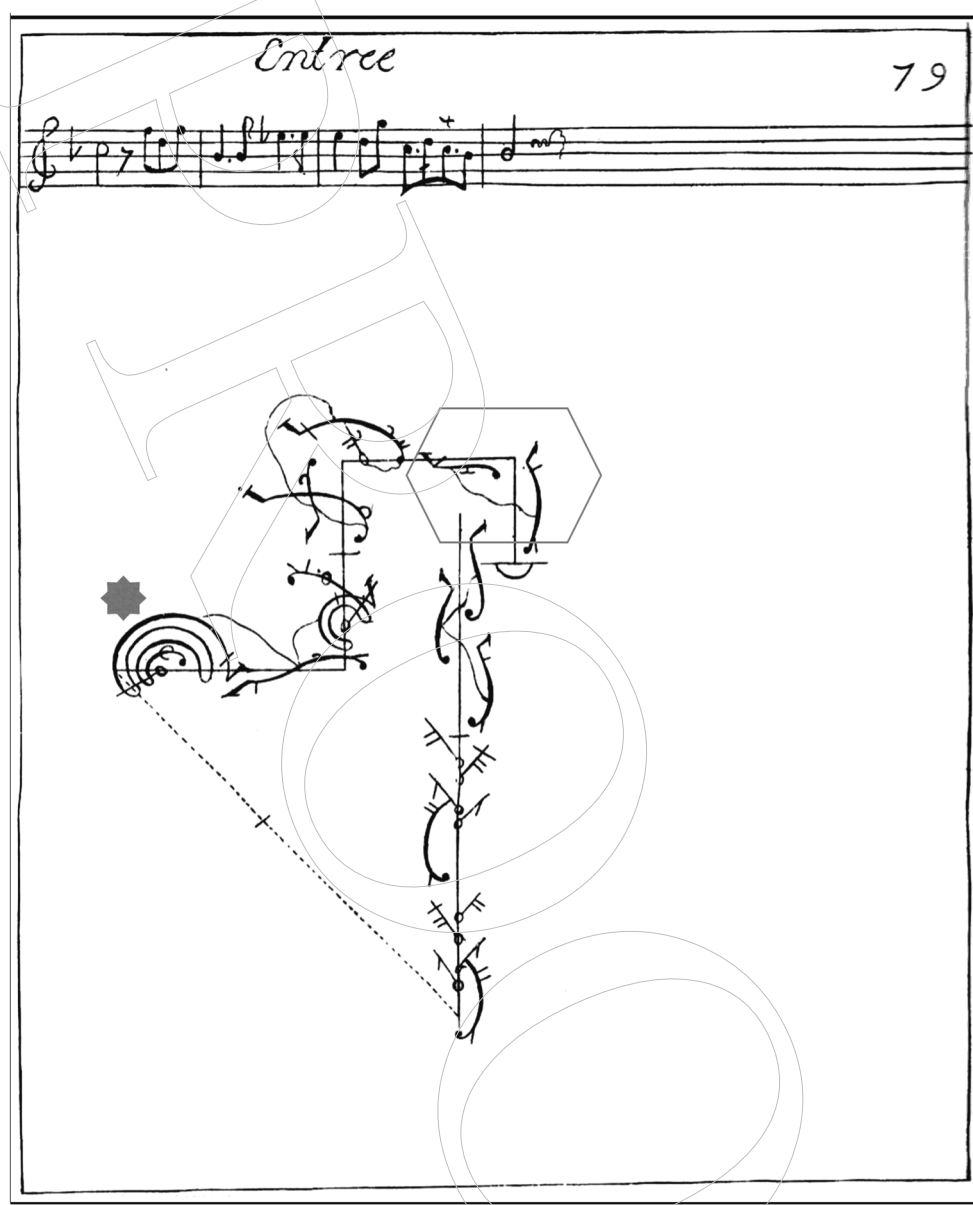


Figure 31 – L'Abbé, Entreé performd' by Mr Desnoyer, *A New Collection of Dances*, c 1725, p.79.

CONCLUSION

The evidence above shows at least two very distinct facets of Apollo's persona: the heroic, positive god who embodies the Sun and whose rays shine supreme over other gods (other nations or opponents to Louis) and mortals alike, banishing darkness and the forces of evil; but we also see the susceptible, amorous and agitated lover who has to deal with his unrequited love (a constant in Apollo's tales) and the admission he has been vanquished by another god (Cupid), thus having his supremacy diminished.

In itself, the choice of subject matter (amongst the many stories surrounding Apollo, in classic mythology) – and its inevitable royal association (with the king's consent, nonetheless) – of a suffering, tormented Apollo who chases his swain, raises a few questions: was this a deliberate or unintentional attempt to show a rather more mundane, 'carnal' side of the monarch? Or would this message have been meticulously devised by Louis himself, in memory of a possible certain 'Daphne' for which his amorous interests were frustrated and, as such, someone who remained as an idolised muse to him? If so, would this episode be known amongst his inner circle, or even by other courtiers? It is intriguing that a king so obsessed with, and so controlling of his own image would allow for such a transparent and direct connection to be drawn with a potentially weakening image, unless such parallel had been carefully devised in the first place – a commonplace operation amongst PRs nowadays, and perhaps equally so 350 years ago. The change of tone between the somewhat chauvinistic statement in *Les Noces de Pelée et de Thétis* (1654) and the complete opposite in *Ballet de la Naissance de Vénus* (1665) where Apollo laments having lost Daphne and gathers leaves from her transformed body (now a laurel bush) in order to keep her memory alive, are striking. Would this perhaps be a reflection of the king grieving the departure of Marie Mancini (Cardinal Mazarin's niece), with whom Louis briefly nurtured an idealistic, unconsummated love between June 1658 and June 1659 when she 'fled' away (and he found himself betrothed to Marie-Thérèse d'Autriche instead)? Their relationship, nurtured from a tender age of naivety, imprinted on Louis a zest for art and erudition but also lit his ardour for a rebellious, disparaging liaison with Marie?[42]

Choreographically, we can observe a predominant positive character in the *Autre entrée pour homme* (Feuillet, 1700) in the *Ballet Royal de Flore*, and a prevalence of the dark, afflicted character in all other three choreographies (Feuillet, 1700; Pécour, 1704; L'Abbé, c.1725). These two different facets

42 For an account of Marie Mancini's brief relationship with Louis XIV, and the potentially lasting influence she had on him, refer to Christine Féret-Fleury, *J'ai aimé le Roi-Soleil, Journal de Marie Mancini, 1656-1659*, Paris, 2018, and Antonia Fraser, *Love and Louis XIV*, London, 2006.

demand particular characterisation in order to highlight one or other trait. As advised by Michel De Pure:

> Herein lies the ability of the dancing master, to reconcile the dancer's movement both to his idea and to the rhythm of the music, and to do so in such a way that it does not contradict either: to observe in a furious [character] an abrupt step, fiery, and that by means of an affected timing, or through a broken [interrupted] cut one might perceive the disturbances and distractions of the character. In this way, in the case of a lover, a convalescent, a sad or a happy character, he must endeavour to convey well the many alterations that love, sickness, sadness or happiness may cause in the countenance, or in other [body] parts that may be most appropriate to portray the internal feelings [...]. Without those, the steps are mere convulsions of the dancing master and of the dancer, nothing but a bizarrerie without spirit or design and, consequently, a flawed dance [...] that has no more sense than those who created and performed it.[43]

When addressing the 'essence of the Ballet', De Pure enlightens his readers regarding the expressive qualities of dancing by stating that 'a ballet step does not simply consist of subtle feet movements or various agitations of the body. It consists of a combination of both and comprises everything that a well skilled and trained body could have in gestures or actions in order to express something without speaking [...]. However, the principal and most important rule is that in order to make the step expressive, the head, shoulders, arms and hands should make comprehensible what the dancer does not say.' His enlightening words, combined with those of his contemporary Claude-François Ménéstrier,[44] highlight a crucial element of dramatic expressivity which seems to have been forgotten in our attempts to evoke the impacting eloquence as described by Père François Pomey in his breath-taking *Description d'une Sarabande dansée*.[45]

POST SCRIPTUM

The field known as 'early dances' has experienced a rapid growth since the 1990s, with historians and practitioners (particularly those specialised in Baroque style) reaching, to a certain extent, a somewhat unified style of performance, interpretation of steps and characterisation. However, if dance

43 Michel de Pure, *Idée des spectacles anciens et nouveaux*, Paris, 1668, reprint Geneva, 1972, pp.250-251.

44 Claude-François Ménéstrier, *Des ballets anciens et modernes selon les règles du théatre*, Paris, 1682, reprint Geneva, 1972.

45 François Pomey, 'Description d'une Sarabande dansée', *Le dictionnaire royal augmenté*, Lyon, 1671, appendix, pp.20-21, <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k96365651/f1060.image>.

is to benefit from the same quantum leap experienced by their musician colleagues, it is crucial that we go far beyond these agreed conventions. Namely, we must discern and understand the multiplicity of facets a character might portray, be better equipped in taking into account vital information proposed by musical, literary, and visual sources and, finally employ dramatic devices such as a vocabulary of facial expressions (i.e. as those proposed by Charles Le Brun[46]) and gestures (i.e. as those proposed by Jelgerhuis,[47] and Austin,[48] to name a few) in our reconstructions. Equally, musicians should boldly revisit and question pre-conceived ideas formed on assumptions, instinct-led 'performance practices' and generalisations for, as seen above, the most subtle change of approach (character, tempo, texture) or technique (bowing techniques, phrasing, articulation) can drastically change the overall result when jointly approached with dance and text. The task will become much more arduous for the dancers, directors and historians, but undoubtedly will transform the way artists and audiences likewise approach, enjoy and gain enrichment from these precious art works.

As an after thought, I present the wise words of Ménéstrier for reflection, in hope that a growing number of dancers and historians embark in the 'difficult task' of unifying technically skilled steps, expressiveness, drama, passion and grace into eloquent performances:

> Ballet does not exclusively imitate actions; it imitates, according to Aristotle, the passions and manners, which is a rather more difficult task than to communicate the actions. Such imitations of the manners and affections of the soul are founded on the impressions that the soul naturally makes on the body, and on the judgement we pass on other people's manners and inclinations [tendencies] through these exterior movements [...]. One must thus express, in ballet, the movements of the heart and the affections of the soul; this is the *chef-d'œuvre* of this art, for one should perfectly know their nature in order to express them well.[49]

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46 Charles Le Brun, *Méthode pour apprendre à dessiner les passiins proposée dans une conférence sur l'expression générale et particulière*, Paris, 1698, < https://bibliotheque-numerique.inha.fr/collection/item/19946-conference-de-monsieur-le-brun-sur-l-expression-generale-et-particuliere-des-passions?offset=3>.

47 Johannes Jelgerhuis, *Theoretische lessen over de gesticulatie en mimiek gegeven aan de kweekelingen van het fonds ter opleiding en onderrigting van tooneel-kunstenaars aan den Stads schouwburg te Amsterdam*, Amsterdam, 1827.

48 Gilbert Austin, *Chironomia; or a Treatise on Rhetorical Delivery: comlrehending many precepts, both ancient and modern, for the proper regulation of the Voice, the Countenance, and Gesture. Together with an Investigation of Gesture, and a New Method for the Notation thereof*, London, 1806.

49 Ménéstrier, *Des ballets anciens et modernes*, Paris, 1682, reprint Geneva, 1972, pp.160-162.

Noverre's and Angiolini's pantomime ballets: the theoretical implications of the choice of ballet subjects

Béatrice Pfister

The development of pantomime ballet during the second half of the eighteenth century gave rise to an abundant production of theoretical texts, the most notable of which were written by the two choreographers who led this aesthetic revolution, the Frenchman Jean-Georges Noverre and the Italian Gasparo Angiolini. This allows us to confront theory and practice on a crucial issue: the choice of ballet subjects. What kind of subject to choose preferably: a tragic, heroic, dramatic, half-serious, comic or grotesque subject? A literary adaptation or a brand-new plot? Our purpose here will be to offer an insight into the various theoretical implications that the choice of ballet subjects had for both choreographers.[1]

Noverre's and Angiolini's most evident aims can be difficult to combine. To the necessity of pleasing the viewers for commercial success and of achieving a show of a certain artistic quality is added that of an easy understanding of the dramatic plot, since pantomime ballet aims to represent stories exactly like theatre plays but without speech. But if we study their treatises along with the prefaces to their ballet programmes and the parts of their books where they talk about their ballets (or even reproduce their programmes as in the case of Noverre), we can identify two major concerns which determine their approach to the question. The first one is that both theoreticians want to increase the prestige of ballet by proving that it can be equal to theatre, and particularly to tragedy. The second one is that ballet should grow into an independent art form which should be able to find its inspiration and its justification in itself. The choice of a ballet subject is often intended as a meaningful theoretical gesture destined to promote their ballet reform and, more generally, to allow ballet to be at last considered as an art. This shared goal is the reason why both theoreticians express similar views on this topic, though their opinions differ

1 It is not our purpose here to assess objectively Noverre and Angiolini's originality in comparison with the common ballets of the first half of the century. But such an endeavour could find support from a very recently published study of ballets in operas in the first half of the century. See Rebecca Harris-Warrick, *Dance and drama in French baroque opera: a history*, Cambridge Studies in Opera, Cambridge University Press, 2016.

when it comes to the best strategies to serve their art and their career or to the best way to reach suitable compromises between contradictory necessities. We shall study the impact on the choice of subjects of both the parallel with theatre and the desire to prove the self-sufficiency of ballet.

Ballet as theatre

The heart of the ballet reform promoted by Noverre and Angiolini is that ballet must represent a real theatrical plot with the help of pantomime. It must focus on the expression of human feelings in order to move the audience deeply. In this context, it is not surprising that both Noverre in 1760 and Angiolini in 1765 explain the hierarchy of the different genres of dance and ballet by comparison with the hierarchy which prevails in the field of theatre. This is how Noverre phrases this hierarchy for dance in his *Letters on Dance*:

> Serious and heroic dance bears the mark of tragedy. Mixed or half-serious dance, which is commonly named *demi-caractère*, is that of noble comedy, in other words of the 'high comic'. Grotesque dance [...] borrows its features to the comedies of a comic, gay and pleasant kind. [...] The first dancer will take his subjects in history or mythology; the second one in pastoral, and the third one in the coarse and rustic condition.[2]

Because for centuries dance has been associated with entertainment, comedy and frivolity, Noverre and Angiolini are particularly eager to increase the prestige of ballet by raising it to the level of theatre and especially of tragedy, since this noble, serious and ancient genre dominates the hierarchy of the theatre. This aspiration has an enormous impact on their choice of ballet subjects, as can be seen both in their books and in the prefaces to their ballet programmes.

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2 All translations into English are my own, whether because of the absence of available translations or by desire of precision for Noverre. *The Letters on Dancing and Ballets* are available in English in a translation dating back to 1930, based on the first volume of the edition of Saint Petersburg, 1803: *Letters on dancing and ballets*, by Jean Georges Noverre,... translated by Cyril W. Beaumont,..., London, 1930.

Jean-Georges Noverre, *Lettres sur la danse et sur les ballets,* Stuttgart, Lyon, 1760, pp. 229-230 : 'La Danse sérieuse et héroïque porte en soi le caractere de la Tragédie. La mixte ou demi-sérieuse, que l'on nomme communément demi-caractere, celui de la Comédie noble, autrement dit le *haut-comique.* La Danse grotesque [...] emprunte ses traits de la Comédie d'un genre comique, gai et plaisant. [...] Le premier [danseur] puisera ses sujets dans l'Histoire et la Fable ; le second dans la Pastorale, et le troisieme dans l'état grossier et rustique.'

As for Angiolini, see his *Dissertation sur les ballets pantomimes des Anciens, pour servir de programme au ballet pantomime tragique de Sémiramis*, Vienna, 1765, reproduced in Ranieri Calzabigi, *Scritti teatrali e letterari,* Rome, 1994, vol. 1, pp. 170-174.

Literary adaptations

A great number of ballets are adapted from literary works, most of the time plays, and sometimes also from famous operas, which is a way to share the glory of literature or music and to prove that dance and pantomime are as effective as words to express things.

When Angiolini adapts his first tragedy, *Semiramis* by Voltaire, in 1765, he writes a *Dissertation sur les ballets pantomimes des Anciens, pour servir de programme au ballet pantomime tragique de Sémiramis* (*Essay on the pantomime ballets of antiquity, to serve as programme for the tragical pantomime ballet of Semiramis*) in which he claims that 'there is no tragedy on this theatre that could not be treated successfully as a pantomime ballet'.[3] In his *Letters on Dance*, Noverre says that choreographers should get their subjects from the masterpieces by 'Racine, Corneille, Voltaire, Crebillon and the like' for noble dance, and Molière or Régnard for comedy.[4]

Both Noverre and Angiolini usually tell the viewers about their sources in their ballet programmes and often explain how they used them. Angiolini adapts for ballet plays by Voltaire, short stories by Marmontel and operas by Metastasio for example, while Noverre adapts Eschylus, Euripides or Corneille.[5] In the preface to his ballet *La caccia d'Enrico IV* (*Henry IV hunting*), Angiolini explains that he chooses on purpose famous artists of his time because the Greek and Roman ones are less well-known to his audience:

> Nowadays, who is better-known than Metastasio, Voltaire, Racine and the like who are the ornament of our theatres? This truth led me years ago to

3 Angiolini, *Dissertation sur les ballets pantomimes des Anciens…*, p. 168: 'il n'y a aucune Tragédie de ce Théâtre, qui ne puisse être traitée avec succès en Ballet Pantomime.'

4 Noverre, *Lettres sur la danse*, pp. 80-81: 'Les chefs-d'œuvres des Racine, des Corneille, des Voltaire, des Crebillon ne peuvent-ils pas encore servir de modele à la Danse dans le genre noble? ceux des Moliere, des Regnard et de plusieurs Auteurs célebres, ne nous présentent-ils pas des Tableaux d'un genre moins élevé?'

5 If we look into Angiolini's ballets to highlight a few examples, *Semiramis* and *Alzira o gli Americani* are adapted from Voltaire, *Solimano II* and *Lauretta* from Marmontel, *Il sacrificio di Dircea* and *Lo scoprimento d'Achille* from Metastasio. As for Noverre's ballets, *Agamemnon vengé* is taken from Eschylus, Alceste and *Iphigénie en Tauride* from Euripides and *Les Horaces et les Curiaces* from Corneille.

About the paradoxical success of Marmontel's writings as a source for pantomime ballets in Venice, see José Sasportes, 'Marmontel musa dei balli a Venezia', in *L'Opera tra Venezia e Parigi: atti del Convegno internazionale, Venezia, 11-13 settembre 1986. 1*, dir. Maria Teresa Muraro, Studi di musica veneta, Florence, 1988, pp. 91-104. For details about Angiolini's lifework, see Lorenzo Tozzi, *Il Balletto pantomimo del settecento: Gaspare Angiolini*, L'Aquila, 1972.

> prefer modern and famous authors to those of antiquity, though they are very respectable.[6]

Diversity of subjects

A second consequence of the growing influence of theatre is that the diversity of subjects reaches an unprecedented level, which is intended to show that ballet can embrace everything, and is supposed to prevent the viewers from getting bored. Indeed, in the preface to his ballet *Teseo in Creta*, Angiolini dwells proudly on the great variety of genres of his recent works:

> During the last theatre seasons, my main effort has necessarily been on the variety of subjects; the tragic, the heroic, the pastoral, the comic, the national, the fantastic genres have been the themes of my compositions; in this way I have attempted to avoid (and I have been praising myself on it) the fatal pitfall of the arts, monotony, and its inseparable companion, boredom [...].[7]

As for Noverre, when he looks back on his career in the edition of his *Letters* published in 1807, he seems eager to insist on the diversity of the genres he tried:

> One should not believe that my taste for the tragic genre was exclusive; I have skimmed through all genres. *Variety* must be the motto of the ballet master. [...] out of a hundred ballets of mine, only thirty are truly tragic.[8]

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6 Angiolini, *La caccia d'Enrico IV*, Milan, 1773, p. 2 verso: 'Ora chi è più conosciuto ai nostri giorni di un Metastasio, d'un Voltaire, d'un Racine, e di tutti quelli, che fanno l'ornamento de' nostri Teatri? Questa verità già da molti anni mi ha indotto a preferire i moderni celebri Autori agli altri sempre rispettabili dell'antichità.'

7 Angiolini, *Teseo in Creta, ballo eroico-pantomimo, included in Breve ragionamento sopra i balli da rappresentarsi nel teatro grande alla Scala di Milano l'autunno dell'anno 1782. Inventati da Gasparo Angiolini...*, Milan, 1782: 'Nelle scorse Stagioni il mio principale studio ha dovuto consistere nella varietà dei Soggetti; il Tragico, l'Eroico, il Pastorale, il Comico, il Nazionale, il Fantastico hanno vicendevolmente servito di tema alle mie composizioni; in questa maniere ho procurato, e mi sono anche lusingato talora d'avere evitato il fatale scoglio delle arti, la monotonia, e la sua compagna inseparabile, la noja [...].'

8 Noverre, *Lettres sur les arts imitateurs en général et sur la danse en particulier*, Paris, The Hague, 1807, v. 1, p. 221: 'Il ne faut pas croire cependant que mon goût pour le genre tragique soit exclusif ; j'ai parcouru tous les genres. *Variété* doit être la devise du maître de ballets. |...] sur cent [ballets] il n'y en a que trente qui soient véritablement tragiques'.

According to Edward Nye, if we add to tragic ballets the heroic ones of a less innovative kind, that makes up about two-thirds of the pantomime ballets throughout Europe: no wonder Noverre and Angiolini felt they had to put forward their comic ballets as well. Edward Nye, *Mime, music and drama on the eighteenth-century stage: the ballet d'action*, Cambridge University Press, 2011, p. 53.

Tragic and partly tragic ballets

This sentence by Noverre leads us to the third and main consequence of the attraction towards theatre and tragedy: the sudden rise of tragic ballets but also, most importantly, of partly tragic ballets. These two innovative kinds of subjects are supposed to establish that ballet is as worthy as tragedy and can move the viewers to tears. In addition to tragic ballets like *Médée et Jason* by Noverre or *Didone abbandonata* by Angiolini, we have to take into account the numerous happy-ending ballets which include tragic or dramatic elements, leaving the outcome uncertain till the end.

For example, in 1760 in his *Letters on Dance*, Noverre relates his ballet *Le jaloux sans rival* (*The jealous man without a rival*) in which the heroine is wrongly accused of being unfaithful and pretends to stab herself to give a lesson to her lover; he tries to kill himself, and only then does she rise and reveal her trick both to him and to the viewers. Noverre explains that he wanted with this ballet 'to test the viewers' taste and to convince [himself] of the possibility of associating the tragic genre to dance'.[9] He points to the fact that all the ballets he describes in his book include people fighting to death with swords or trying to assassinate each other with daggers, and he jokes that maybe he will be nicknamed later 'dagger-man'.[10] He explains that what he appreciates in the tragic genre is drama because it gives pantomime the intensity of passion it needs to move the audience deeply.[11]

His ballet *L'Amour Corsaire*, also detailed in the *Letters*, starts in a dramatic fashion like a bourgeois tragedy by Diderot, but turns into a mythological, conventional and spectacular happy-ending with the heroes saved miraculously by the apparition of Cupid. At the time, people are used to happy-endings and also to spectacular visual effects and apparitions of gods, both in ballets and operas; this is why Noverre is fond of spectacular and sumptuous effects even though they would seem inappropriate in tragic plays. About his ballet *Les Grâces*, Noverre acknowledges in the preface the fact that he added Venus to the characters to 'gain, through pomp and machinery, a part of the delicious things [he had] been forced to sacrifice because of the insufficiencies of pantomime'.[12]

As for Angiolini, in the preface to *Le festin de pierre* (*Dom Juan or The Feast with the Statue*) in 1761, his first real pantomime ballet, we can clearly see that he

9 Noverre, *Lettres sur la danse et sur les ballets,* Lyon, 1760, p. 464: 'pour tâter le goût du Public et pour me convaincre de la possibilité qu'il y a d'associer le genre tragique à la Danse.'

10 Noverre, *Lettres sur la danse*, p. 451: '*l'homme aux Poignards'*.

11 Noverre, *Lettres sur la danse,* pp. 30-31.

12 Noverre, *Lettres sur les arts imitateurs en général et sur la danse en particulier*, Paris, La Haye, 1807, v. 2, p. 372: 'gagner, du côté de la pompe et de la machine, une partie des choses délicieuses que j'ai été obligé de sacrifier à l'insuffisance de la pantomime'.

considered this subject as nearly tragic.

> The subject is a sad one, I must confess, but are those of most tragedies happy? Actors please us by both terrible and pleasant actions; the variety that is required for shows demands that we treat alternately both genres. Would it be forbidden to us to terrify by dancing as well as by declaiming? Terror pleases us in tragedies, we cry with a sort of sweet sensitivity that is charming to us.[13]

We can point to the fact that Angiolini chose to adapt the Spanish *commedia* rather than the French comedy by Molière because this Spanish genre was neither comedy nor tragedy: it was a step closer towards his aim of introducing tragedy into ballet.

In 1773, Angiolini himself tells the story of how he had gradually introduced tragedy in his ballets and how he had had to cope with the viewers' habits and taste. He does so in his first book, *Lettere a Monsieur Noverre sopra i balli pantomimi (Letters to Sir Noverre about pantomime ballets)*, a pamphlet with which he starts a quarrel with Noverre by stating that Noverre lied when he claimed to be the one who had first introduced pantomime and tragedy in ballets. Angiolini enhances his first three pantomime ballets and their theoretical prefaces as a coherent whole, drawing with time more and more ballet towards tragedy: *Don Giovanni*, *Citera assediata*, inspired by an opera-comique for which Metastasio had composed several pieces of music, and *Semiramis*, adapted from a tragedy by Voltaire. He also mentions the outcry prompted by the bold novelty of a tragic ballet.[14]

Noverre had similar difficulties to promote tragic ballets. He had to bear particularly virulent criticism a year later when he created *Les Horaces et les Curiaces (The Horatii and Curiatii)* inspired by Corneille's tragedy, as can be seen from this comment by Alessandro Verri:

> in certain sublime moments in which the audience remembered some

13 Angiolini [Calzabigi], *Le festin de pierre, ballet pantomime composé par M. Angiolini...*, Vienna, 1761, reproduced in Ranieri Calzabigi, *Scritti teatrali e letterari*, Rome, 1994, vol. 1, p. 150: 'Le sujet en est triste, je l'avoue, mais ceux de la plus-part des tragédies sont-ils rians ? Les comédiens plaisent par le terrible ainsi que par l'agréable ; la variété qu'on demande dans les spectacles exige que nous traitions alternativement les deux genres. Nous seroit-il défendu d'épouvanter en dansant ainsi qu'en déclamant ? La terreur nous fait plaisir aux tragédies, nous y pleurons avec une espèce de sensibilité douce qui nous charme.'

14 Angiolini, *Lettere a Monsieur Noverre sopra i balli pantomimi, 1773*, in *Il ballo pantomimo: lettere, saggi e libelli sulla danza 1773-1785*, Carmela Lombardi (ed.), Turin, Paravia, 1998, pp. 54-55.

extremely noble verse, a cabriole, a step, a gesture were felt like a real parody.[15]

Angiolini's attitude towards Aristotelian unities and allegory

One last consequence of the influence of theatre lies in Angiolini's distinctive attitude towards Aristotelian unities and allegory. His will to turn ballet completely into danced theatre makes him dismiss two important elements of the choreographic tradition dating back to the origins of court ballet, which are allegory and baroque aesthetics with a taste for freedom and intricacy.

In his opinion, starting with *Semiramis* in 1765,[16] ballets should be submitted to the three unities of French classical theatre in order to possibly be masterpieces; simple and straightforward plots should be preferred to the ones with subplots and weak structures, because they would move the viewers much more. Noverre strongly opposes the idea that ballet should abide by the laws of theatre,[17] as is coherent with his taste for sudden twists in the action, for subplots and for spectacular and sumptuous scenes with a lot of figurants and impressive changes in stage sets.

Angiolini is also particularly opposed to allegorical characters featuring abstract concepts because 'they do not touch the delicate heart':[18] allegory is an obstacle to emotion and to the identification with the characters.[19]

Noverre, more attached to traditions than Angiolini, seems to accept the use of allegoric characters and only advises to take painters as examples for more natural masks and costumes.[20]

Whereas the reasons for Noverre to object to these ideas of Angiolini were mostly on the side of tradition, creative freedom and commercial success, Angiolini's motives were linked to the efforts of the Italian famous Academy of

15 Alessandro Verri, letter to his brother Pietro sent from Rome on the eighteenth of November, 1780, quoted in Il ballo pantomimo: lettere, saggi e libelli sulla danza 1773-1785, Carmela Lombardi (ed.), Turin, Paravia, 1998, p. 190: 'in certi momenti sublimi nei quali il teatro si ricorda di qualche nobilissimo verso, una capriola, un passo, un gesto è sembrata una vera parodia'.

16 Angiolini, *Dissertation sur les ballets pantomimes des Anciens…*, pp. 161-162.

17 Noverre, *Lettres sur la danse*, 1760, pp. 124-125. Noverre, *Introduction au ballet des Horaces, ou Petite réponse aux grandes lettres du Sr. Angioline*, [Vienna], 1774, pp. 4-5.

18 Angiolini, *Lettere a Monsieur Noverre sopra i balli pantomimi, 1773*, in *Il ballo pantomimo: lettere, saggi e libelli sulla danza 1773-1785*, Carmela Lombardi (ed.), Turin, Paravia, 1998, p. 79: 'non toccano i cuori delicati'.

19 For a general insight into the change in aesthetics which leads to the victory of human passions over the *ordo mundi* of the gods, see Etienne Broglin, 'L'opéra des Dieux' in *Histoire, économie et société*, 2003, vol. 22, n°2, pp. 153-175.

20 Noverre, *Lettres sur la danse*, 1760, pp. 204-206.

Arcadia to reform theatre and opera in order for Italy to enjoy greater prestige, by inventing an Italian tragic tradition, putting an end to *commedia dell'arte*, promoting the Aristotelian unities and banishing allegory.[21] All in all, Angiolini seems much more extreme than Noverre in his will to assimilate ballet to theatre, stressing the necessity to choose ballet subjects accordingly, even though on other aspects he seems keener on turning it into an independent art form.

Ballet as an independent art

Although Noverre and Angiolini made great efforts to establish ballet as an equivalent in dignity of theatre and tragedy by choosing their ballet subjects for this purpose, they had a lot of difficulties to deal with other than the force of habit and prejudices. These were the downside of the numerous advantages of their attempts to draw ballet closer to theatre: it was very complex to do so while proving at the same time that ballet was an independent art form.

The difficulties of adaptations

The first problem was that whenever they adapted a famous literary work, they had to defend every modification they made. It was one of the main purposes of the prefaces to their ballet programmes. It is obvious that Noverre and Angiolini strove to prevent criticism and to educate the readers about the rules with which they should assess their work.[22]

For Noverre, it included explaining that his ballets should not be judged by theatrical standards. For example, in the preface to his ballet *Agamemnon vengé* (*Agamemnon avenged*), Noverre stressed that he should not be blamed for not taking into account the Aristotelian unities by adapting nearly all three plays of the *Oresteia* in only one ballet:

> I should not be judged according to the same laws by which a playwright would be found guilty: there are no rules written for the poetics of dance by an expert, no such things exist.[23]

Paradoxically, to explain that ballet was an independent art that differed necessarily from theatre, both Noverre and Angiolini put forward the

21 See Arianna Fabbricatore, *La querelle des Pantomimes: danse, culture et société dans l'Europe des Lumières*, Rennes, 2017, pp. 100, 178.

22 For a more detailed overview of the problems related to programmes, see Edward Nye, *Mime, music and drama on the eighteenth-century stage: the ballet d'action*, Cambridge University Press, 2011, chapter 9, especially 'Programmes as paratexts'.

23 Noverre, *Agamemnon vengé. Ballet tragique en cinq actes par M. Noverre, exécuté sur les théatres de Vienne en 1772*, Vienne, 1772, p. 16: 'Je ne dois pas être jugé par les mêmes loix qui condamneroient un Auteur Dramatique : il n'est aucune régle écrite par un homme de l'Art pour la Poëtique de la Danse, il n'en existe point.'

insufficiencies of pantomime. In the preface to his ballet *La caccia d'Enrico* IV, Angiolini explained that the alterations to the play were due to the fact that gesture, unlike speech, could not express the past nor the future, in addition to the fact that he did not want to be a 'a servile copyist'.

> Neither this ballet nor all the others I have adapted at will from operas, comedies or tragedies are or will ever be a close imitation of the plan or manner of their originals.[24]

As for Noverre, he explains in the preface to his ballet *Iphigénie en Tauride* (*Iphigenia in Tauris*) that it is necessary for a pantomime ballet to focus on striking situations and to skip most of the things in between for fear of being boring, since passions and dramatic tensions are best suited to pantomime, as opposed to the beauties of verbal language. He clearly wants to make Euripides seem livelier and more eventful:

> It has not been possible to me to imitate slavishly Euripides, nor to copy exactly Guymond de la Touche; my purpose has been to avoid distorting the historical fact with embellishments and extraneous ornaments which would have disfigured the characters. I have avoided Euripides's large monologues and long narratives; [...] because the successful means of one art are often unsuitable for another one, and because what is richness in poetry is often only mediocrity, tediousness and confusion in pantomime; by removing sentences, I added to the action, I multiplied the episodes, the sudden twists in the action and the *tableaux de situation*.[25]

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24 Angiolini, *La caccia d'Enrico IV*, Milan, 1773, p. 2: 'nè questo [balletto], nè gl'altri tutti, che dall'Opere, dalle Commedie, e dalle Tragedie a mio piacere ho ricavato non sono, nè mai saranno strette imitazioni del Piano, e della tessitura de' loro originali.' Defending the changes made to the original plot quickly becomes a commonplace when ballet programmes with prefaces get more frequent in Italy. See for example *Porzia di Giuseppe Canzani*, adaptation of the play by Agustin Moreto, in Venezia in 1776: 'I protest that I do not want to be slavishly true to the portion of history Moreto chose to stage' ('[...] protestando di non voler essere malevadore nella fedeltà del punto di Storia del Moreto preso a trattare').

25 Noverre, *Lettres sur la danse, sur les ballets et les arts*, Saint Petersburg, vol. 4, 'Iphigénie en Tauride', p. 238 : 'Il ne m'a pas été possible d'imiter servilement Euripide, ni de copier strictement Guymond de la Touche; je me suis attaché à ne point altérer le trait historique par des embellissemens et des ornemens étrangers qui en auroient défiguré les caractères. J'ai évité les grands monologues et les longs récits d'Euripide; [...] car les moyens heureux d'un art ne s'étendent pas toujours sur un autre art, et ce qui fait richesse en poësie, ne produit souvent que disette, longueur et confusion en pantomime; en retranchant des phrases, j'ai ajouté à l'action, j'ai multiplié les incidens, les coups de théâtre et les tableaux de situation'. *Iphigénie en Tauride* by Guymont de La Touche was created in 1757.

Like Noverre, Angiolini insists on the fact that pantomime ballet has its specificities and its own merits, which differ from those of theatre and poetry: in the programme of *Solimano II*, he explains he had to 'adapt the subject itself to the art of pantomime, which, having its own beauties, cannot possess those which are specific to its sister arts'.[26]

Proving one's creativity

A second downside of drawing inspiration from theatre is that people could think ballet masters had not enough genius to imagine their own plots and to be real artists, which would prevent ballet from being considered truly as an art. We can observe that, in his *Letters on Dance* in 1760, Noverre explained he did not wish to dwell on his tragic ballets but to relate the ones he had invented himself:

> I do not intend either to talk to you about those [ballets] I believed I had to create in the high genre, such as the ballets I called *The Death of Ajax*, *The Judgment of Paris*, *The Descent of Orpheus to the Underworld*, *Renaud and Armide*, etc. And I will also keep quiet about those of *The Fountain of Youth*, and of *The Whims of Galathea*. [...] I believe, sir, that you will enjoy more the account of the works which owe their existence entirely to me and which you can consider a complete figment of my imagination.[27]

However, in the latest editions of his *Letters*, he included a great variety of ballet programmes from his more mature works, thus drawing attention to the tragic masterpieces he had created later.

New but easily understandable subjects

In Angiolini's opinion, inventing brand-new plots was not enough; this aim of proving one's creativity was inseparable from another one. The choreographer should also refrain from including the synopsis in his programme, because a major downside of adapting plays lies in the fact that people may think it impossible to follow a ballet plot without knowing already the adapted play or

26 Angiolini, programme of *Solimano II* without title page nor date (probably 1773), *Avviso del compositore de' balli*, p. 4, in the Library of the Opéra de Paris under the shelf mark Liv. It. 3530 (18): 'adattare il Soggetto stesso all'Arte Pantomima, la quale avendo le sue particolari bellezze, non è suscettibile di quelle, che proprie sono delle altre Arti sue Sorelle.'

27 Noverre, *Lettres sur la danse*, pp. 402-403: 'Je ne me propose point aussi de vous parler de ceux que j'ai cru devoir traiter dans le grand, tels que les Ballets que j'ai intitulé, *la Mort d'Ajax, le Jugement de Pâris, la Descente d'Orphée aux Enfers, Renaud et Armide*, etc. Et je me tairai même encore sur ceux de la *Fontaine de Jouvence*, et des *Caprices de Galathée*. [...] je pense, Monsieur, que la description des ouvrages qui me doivent entiérement le jour et que vous pouvez regarder comme le fruit unique de mon imagination, vous plaira davantage'.

opera. Angiolini is proud to prove through practice that one does not need to know the plot beforehand to understand the ballet, which should not be too intricate. This is what he writes in the preface to his ballet *La vendetta spiritosa*:

> The main goal I have had in mind when composing this ballet is to prove through practice that the art of pantomime, like all the other arts, is able to create and appropriate a subject, and to explain it perfectly itself without any external help. This ballet is entirely imagined.[28]

This is not a goal that Noverre shares with Angiolini: Noverre prefers to rely anyway on detailed programmes to ensure that the audience will follow his complex plots and also to allow his ballets to be known to people who never saw them, all over Europe and beyond his own time. On the contrary, Angiolini thinks that it is a shame to need programmes to be understood, and that their mere existence induces people to believe that ballet is unable to convey neatly a plot without the help of a written text.

> Moreover, there is the ridicule that these programmes heap on the art of pantomime, [...] by confusing the representative arts with the narrative ones; and we shall see how necessary it is to banish from the art of pantomime such a useless, corrupted, absurd and monstrous thing.[29]

This purpose of Angiolini, of course, is consistent with his preference for simple plots with unity of action, time and place. He insists on the difference of nature between ballet and literature to enhance the fact that ballets are self-sufficient and do not need to be coupled with a book. Therefore, many of his late ballet programmes include only the list of the characters with the cast and a kind of preface without any synopsis, stating their uselessness.[30] This is what he does in the programme of *L'amore al cimento* (*Love to the test*), for example:

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28 Angiolini, *La vendetta spiritosa, ballo comico pantomimo*, included in *Breve ragionamento sopra i balli da rappresentarsi nel teatro grande alla Scala di Milano l'autunno dell'anno 1782*: 'Lo scopo principale, che io ho avuto in vista nella composizione di questo Ballo, si è il provare col fatto, che l'Arte Pantomima, siccome tutte le altre, è capace di creare, e farsi proprio un Soggetto, e spiegarlo perfettamente da se, senza alcun ajuto straniero. Tutto questo Ballo è d'immaginazione.'

29 Angiolini, *Riflessioni sopra l'uso dei programmi*, 1775, in *Il ballo pantomimo: lettere, saggi e libelli sulla danza. 1773-1785*, Carmela Lombardi (ed.), Turin, Paravia, 1998, p. 118: 'Aggiunghiamo il ridicolo che questi programmi spargono sull'arte pantomime, [...] confondendo le arti rappresentative colle narrative; e vedremo quanto sia necessario di sbandire dall'arte pantomima una inutilità, una corruttela, un'assurdità così mostruosa.'

30 See Angiolini's programmes entitled 'Avviso' and 'Avviso del compositore de' balli' for *La partenza d'Enea o sia Didone abbandonata and Solimano II*, with no dates (probably from 1773), in the library of the Opéra de Paris, under the shelf marks Liv. It. 3530 (17) and Liv. It. 3530 (18).

> [...] this danced comedy is intended to prove through facts that the art of gesture, with but its own means, not only without a programme but also without the slightest hint of any kind beforehand, can explain perfectly and manage a complex and characterized action on a completely original and invented subject: difficulty which I have repeatedly heard described as the pitfall of the art. [...]
>
> This engagement which I now contract does not allow me the slightest explanation on the subject I mean to present. I will only seize this rare opportunity I have now to address one more time this public and express my most respectful gratitude [...].[31]

As a conclusion, what is most striking in Noverre's and Angiolini's writings on this topic is that clearly the choice of ballet subjects was not for them a simple question of what inspired them most at the time nor of what the audience would best like to see: they added to these short-term necessities a strong will to show through practice what they expressed in their theoretical texts. Both Noverre's and Angiolini's ballets are strong points of their theoretical argumentations. Their choices and their explanations reveal a keen consciousness of the prevailing hierarchy between the different theatrical genres and between the different arts. They are all part of a great strategy to increase the prestige of ballet. This strategy consists in proving that ballet can be the equal of theatre by achieving the same things, but without forsaking its own artistic identity and specificity. Noverre and Angiolini do not agree as to when to stop imitating theatre and how to show that ballet is free from the tutelage of literature: Noverre does so by refusing the Aristotelian unities whereas Angiolini focuses on the self-sufficiency of ballet to be understood without a programme and seems closer than Noverre to the aesthetics of theatre. The difficulties of their position are mirrored by the tensions and the complexity which are characteristics of those texts that make the connection between theory and practice: we can find there the most interesting aspirations and challenges that shaped their artistic careers.

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31 Angiolini, *L'Amore al cimento, ossia Il sofi generoso, ballo eroi-comico pantomimo da rappresentarsi nel Teatro Grande alla Scala di Milano l'Autunno dell'anno 1782*, Milan, 1782, pp. 2-4: 'questa Commedia ballata tende a provare col fatto, che l'Arte de' cenni può co' soli mezzi, che le sono proprij, non solo senza Programma, ma anche senza la menoma precedente indicazione di sorte alcuna spiegare perfettamente, e condurre un' Azione complicata, e di carrattere sopra un Soggetto totalmente originale, e d'invenzione: Difficoltà, che ho replicatamente udito citare, come lo scoglio dell'Arte. [...]
Quest'impegno, che presentemente contraggo, non mi permette il menomo schiarimento sul Soggetto, che imprendo a trattare. Approffiterò solo della preziosa occasione, che mi si presenta d'addirizzarmi ancora una volta a questo Pubblico per attestargli quei sentimenti della più viva rispettosa riconoscenza [...].'

Loie Fuller, the American Dream made in France

Susan Hamlin

The poster of *La Loïe*, by the artist Jules Chéret, is an iconic image from the Belle Epoque, however, the dancer it represents spent many years in historical purgatory. There has been no romantic mythology around the memory of Loie Fuller, although the poet and critic Stéphane Mallarmé called her performance a *phantasmagoria*.[1] She was neglected in dance history course syllabi or passed over rapidly, dismissed, for the better part of the twentieth century, as a precursor to what would become modern dance. The reasons for this negligence are several, but the most prominent is the fact that much of her career took place in music-hall venues. Her popularity in theatres such as the *Folies Bergères* or *l'Alhambra* in Paris, and the Gaiety and Palace Theatres in London led to her relegation to the ranks of a performer of low-brow entertainment lacking the creative spirituality of her modern dance contemporaries such as Isadora Duncan, whose career she launched and who later became a rival.

Fuller not only produced her own work, she also managed and introduced other artists to the European public. She had a crucial role in bringing the work of Rodin to the United States. She had no sense of snobbery, although she frequented and befriended royalty, artists and scientists, alike. What was important to her were the results of her experimentation and the discovery of new methods to enhance her performances. Performances she often produced for philanthropic purposes.

Her influence on artists and artistic movements during and after her lifetime has been researched and discussed by dance and art historians. Her relationship with the venues where she began, and often returned to during her career, has undermined her historical importance in the evolution of twentieth century dance, but it is the fact of those humble origins and her ability to bring together an audience composed of all classes and backgrounds combined that made her a truly modern artist.

Fullersburg[2] was a small town south of Chicago, founded when the family for

1 '...lime-light phantasmagoria of dusk and grotto...', Stéphane Mallarmé; Albright, Anna Cooper, *Traces of Light, Absence and Presence in the Work of Loie Fuller.* (Middleton, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2007) p. 86.

2 Fullersburg, Illinois was originally known as Brush Hill. Jacob Fuller, Loie's grandfather, changed the name in 1851.

whom it was named stopped their covered wagons on the way west from New York and settled. Reuben Fuller married Delilah Eaton there in 1850 then left for California hoping to make his fortune in the gold rush. Delilah waited for two years without news of him. Reuben finally returned home with enough money to buy a farm and began raising horses. For the rest of their lives together Delilah followed Reuben from place to place, from one business venture to another, from farm to boarding house to hotel and dancing academy.[3] She would do the same with their daughter, Loie, who also took her mother on many voyages, far beyond Fullersburg, before finally settling again, this time in Paris where Loie became a star.

Marie Louise Fuller was born in her paternal grandfather's tavern surrounded by her family who had gathered on a freezing night in 1862 for the warmth provided by a large wood burning stove in the barroom. By the age of fifteen she had embarked on her theatre career and soon after chose her stage name. She would be known as Loie. Another fifteen years passed before she was transformed into *La Loïe* on the posters of the Parisian music hall *Folies Bergères* from where she gained international acclaim.

Prior to becoming one of the most famous dancers in the western world at the turn of the twentieth century, Fuller was an ingénue of mediocre talent. She was thirty years old when she became an overnight sensation in Paris. Her performances until then had garnered luke-warm praise from critics in the Midwest and on the eastern seaboard. Yet, those early years on the vaudeville circuit, including a stint with Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show,[4] were not lost on Loie. While she was acting and singing in popular venues, she was also observing the theatrical techniques, which she would later apply to her unique style.

Her apprenticeship encompassed the business side of the show, as well. Having witnessed her father's entrepreneurial undertakings all of her young life, Loie fearlessly took her career into her own hands. At the tender age of twenty she became her own producer for the first time. A singing group, which was her earliest endeavour, did not last for long, but Loie's momentum was unstoppable.[5] It was during an investment capital campaign for a play to be staged in Jamaica that she met and married a businessman of doubtful personal and professional morals. The role of Colonel William B. Hayes in Fuller's theatrical enterprises

3 Reuben Fuller owned the National Hotel and Dancing Academy in Monmouth, Illinois from 1873-76. Current, Richard Nelson and Current, Marcia Ewing, *Loie Fuller, Goddess of Light* (Boston, MA: Northeastern University Press, 1997). p. 13.

4 Fuller toured in *The Prairie Waif,* produced by William F. Cody during the 1881-82 season. Ibid. pp. 14-15.

5 At the beginning of her stage career Fuller had ambitions of becoming an opera singer. Ibid. p. 15.

and her family's business is well documented.[6] It is less clear whether he was as supportive emotionally and financially as some historians believe. The most dramatic rendition of their relationship draws him as a manipulative bigamist and, possibly, a murderer. In this version of events he abandoned Loie and her mother in London when a show she had mounted at the Globe was a flop. Fuller sent her father on a mission to confront the scoundrel and Reuben died only hours after having dined with Hayes. Loie suspected that her husband had poisoned her father, but could not prove it. Upon her return to New York, she was confronted by a woman who claimed to be Hayes' wife. This was the evidence she needed to take him to court. With no official document as proof of their marriage, all she got was an apology. Her unsuccessful divorce from a sham marriage was only one of many litigious bouts during her lifetime. Much of her revenue went to lawyers' fees in disputes over contracts and copyrights. After several suits taken against imitators in the U.S., Fuller began to patent her costumes and the technical material she invented for her perfomances.[7]

While she and Delilah were left stranded and penniless in London by the philandering Colonel, Fuller found work as an understudy at the Gaiety Theatre, a music hall best known for its *Gaiety Girls*. The popular *Skirt Dance*, for which the girls were famous, was the inspiration for the *Serpentine Dance* that would bring Fuller to fame.[8] Thanks to her newly acquired dancing skills she had a taste of success once back in New York, but she soon decided that her audience was to be found in Europe.

Mother and daughter once again debarked in London, but Loie's previous failure cast a pall over that city. They travelled on and eventually arrived in Paris where Fuller dreamed of dancing at the recently completed opera house. She was disappointed, however. Unable to obtain a satisfactory booking at the *Opéra de Paris*, Loie went back to her music-hall roots only to find an imitator performing her dances at the *Folies Bergères*.[9] Outraged (but also a bit flattered), Loie quickly ousted her rival and took her rightful place in the limelight. The combination of modern lighting effects and the flowing forms created by the swirling fabric surrounding her instantly captivated the Parisian public. Within weeks her likeness was everywhere on street corner billboards and wagons advertising

6 Ibid, pp. 27-29.

7 In an important infringement suit brought by Fuller against an imitator, Minnie Renwood Bemis, a U.S. Circuit Court Judge ruled that her dance was not protected as intellectual property as it was not a 'dramatic' or 'dramatic-musical composition', a decision that remained in place until 1976. Kraut, Anthea, *Choreographing Copyright: Race Gender and Intellectual Property Rights in American Dance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016) pp. 43-44.

8 Fuller, Loie, *Fifteen Years of a Dancer's Life* (Boston: Small, Maynard and Company, 1913) pp. 33-34. Albright, Anna Cooper, *Traces of Light*, pp. 15-24.

9 Fuller, *Fifteen Years*, pp. 53-54.

La Loïe. Department stores sold fans, handkerchiefs and knick-knacks with her image painted and embroidered on them. When Loie saw this she regretted not receiving a share in the profits, but she was too busy with stardom to sue for a piece of that pie. Fashion designers created flowing dresses draped elegantly á la Loïe.[10] The struggling ingénue from Fullersburg was now a Parisian It Girl.

The years between her *Folies Bergères* debut in 1892 and the Universal Exposition of 1900 were a whirlwind during which she was introduced to and befriended by artists, writers and scientists, all of whom were bewitched by her otherworldly performances and charmed by her down-to-earth off-stage persona. The list of her friends from that time includes Camille Flammarion, Pierre and Marie Curie, Alexandre Dumas fils, Sarah Bernhardt and Rodin.

Auguste Rodin was a mature and established artist when Fuller sought him out on the pretext of rendering the respect due to the reigning monarch of the Parisian art world. What she really wanted was to be his muse. Not satisfied with the multitude of images that her dancing had inspired in the Art Nouveau circles, as well as the praise from the more intellectual Symbolists,[11] she craved the consecration of her effigy by Rodin's hand. In her no nonsense way, she insinuated herself into the great sculptor's entourage and became his intimate friend. Not intimate in the way of many of his female models, hailing from the basest to the highest classes, who were more often than not his mistresses, but as an adoptive daughter and confidante. However, Rodin was never able to sculpt her. The ephemeral quality of Fuller's dancing and the play between the light and the veils that hid her body were the opposite of the earthy sensuality in his work.[12] In spite of this divide and a sometimes rocky relationship, they remained loyal friends until Rodin's death.

The 1900 Universal Exposition arrived at the height of *La Loïe*-mania. Eight years in Paris had only fuelled her popularity and, savvy businesswoman that she was, Fuller decided to take the opportunity the Exposition presented as an occasion to self-promote. With only six months to the opening she set about building the Loie Fuller Theatre. The first attempt at construction was abandoned and sold to puppeteers. The second was nearer to the entrance of the Exposition and more to her taste. The art critic, Arsène Alexandre, described Fuller admiringly as she oversaw the building site as 'a very pushing woman'.[13] With twenty-five years of experience on stage and behind the scenes she was

10 Current, *Goddess of Light*, pp. 54-55.

11 Rousseau, Pascal, *Corps fluidique: danse, hypnose et médiumnisme au passage du siècle*, catalogue, *Danser sa Vie* (Paris: Editions du Centre Pompidou, 2011), pp. 101-102.

12 Lista, Giovanni *Loie Fuller, danseuse de la Belle Epoque* (Paris: Nouvelle Librarie de la Danse, 1994), p. 313. Biass-Fabiani, Sophie, *Danser/dessiner, Des danses contemporaines*, catalogue, *Rodin et la danse* (Paris: Editions Hazan, 2018), pp. 71-72.

13 Current, *Goddess of Light*, p. 5.

perfectly capable of getting a theatre built within six months. The *Palais de la Danse* was already adorned with a plaster statue of Loie dancing her *Butterfly Dance*. The official Loie Fuller Theatre was embellished with her life-sized replica and two dancers enveloped in a rippling drapery around the large entrance designed by Pierre Roche.[14] Inside she exhibited her personal collection of paintings, sculptures and Art Nouveau objects inspired by her dances. She performed on a small stage in a 200-seat theatre. This was where Fuller took her first chance as an impresario in Europe, producing a Japanese theatre company led by Otojiro Kawakami and his wife, Sada Yacco.[15] The juxtaposition of Loie's spectacular style and the sobriety of their eastern sensibility was a huge success and they toured together throughout Europe once the Exposition ended.

The experience of travelling with and providing for a demanding troupe of thirty people from a different culture was trying. Nevertheless, Loie had acquired a taste for management and decided to found her own company of dancers. It is in doing so that she came to know and work with Isadora Duncan, who would outshine her mentor and even push Fuller out of the history books for the better part of a century. Isadora, recently arrived in Paris, saw Loie dance during the Universal Exposition and, by way of a fellow American and mutual acquaintance, introductions were made. Like many others, Loie was seduced by the voluptuous naturalism of Duncan's dancing. She immediately offered her a place in the newly formed troupe and proposed that she join the tour in progress. From the start Duncan played the prima donna, falling ill for the first performance then making an audience of dignitaries wait an uncomfortably long time before appearing nearly nude to shock and dazzle them.[16] Yet, with her habitual energy and enthusiasm Loie orchestrated her protégée's debut across Europe, using her connections to introduce her to the upper crust of society in each country that they visited. She was repaid by betrayal and desertion when Duncan, having decided that Fuller had served her purpose, broke her contract and left Loie to clean up the mess in Budapest.[17]

To add insult to injury, Isadora had modelled for Rodin, who was quite taken with her.[18] Although Loie's relationship with the artist was platonic, the fact that he continued to avoid sculpting her was hurtful. A similar scenario occurred several years later with another of Loie's impresarial projects when the Japanese actress, Hanako, for whom Fuller produced, wrote and directed

14 Lista, *Danseuse de la Belle Epoque*, p. 313.

15 Fuller may have been introduced to Sada Yacco by Ruth St. Denis. Ibid, p. 329.

16 Garelick, Rhonda K., *Electric Salome, Loie Fuller's Performance of Modernism,* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2007), pp. 103-106.

17 Fuller, *Fifteen Years,* pp. 227-229.

18 Duncan, Isadora, *My Life*, (New York/London: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 1927), pp. 74-75.

plays, inspired hundreds of drawings and almost as many sculptures by Rodin.[19] And still, it was his friendship and work that would open the doors to her next phase of activity during which she made use of all her talents and exhibited her endless generosity.

Not long after Isadora's departure from the tour, Loie was obliged to disband the company. Financially stretched, she continued to perform solo and arrived in Bucharest, exhausted. Princess Marie of Romania, granddaughter of Queen Victoria, was a sophisticated and sensitive sovereign. Upon hearing that *La Loïe* was dancing in the capital, she requested a private performance at the royal residence for herself and her children. In her autobiography, Loie recounts their first meeting with emotion.[20] She felt that she had encountered a soul mate and their affinity led her into projects that renewed her ties with her homeland in roundabout ways and with far-reaching results.

Many young American women, some with substantial means, came to turn-of-the-century Paris in search of freedom from the puritanical restraints in the U.S. and to find inspiration from a cultural history that was lacking at home. Alma de Bretteville Spreckels was one of them. Wife of a California sugar mogul, she arrived in 1914 when war was on Europe's doorstep. Ill at ease in French society, she was relieved to make the acquaintance of a fellow American and Loie was pleased to take her under her well-known wing. Alma wanted to buy art and Loie knew an artist. Thus began the introduction of Rodin's work into the provincial and conservative American art world. With the dancer's encouragement and, what was sometimes seen as interference, Spreckels began, with her first purchases of Rodin's work, the long road to what would lead to the founding of the Legion of Honor in San Francisco.[21]

Much in the same way, Loie convinced the millionaire, Samuel Hill, to turn what was meant to be his palatial home near Portland, Oregon into what is now Maryhill Museum. It holds Hill's collection of Rodin's sculptures, as well as Loie Fuller memorabilia and a gallery dedicated to and containing gifts from Marie of Romania.[22]

The affiliation with these wealthy compatriots at the outbreak of World War I and her close binds with the exiled Queen of an occupied country brought about yet another transformation in Fuller's career. Mobilizing all of her energy and her network of well-to-do friends, she sailed back and forth across the Atlantic soliciting their aid in philanthropic causes. Money was raised for Romanian refugees and an ambulance brigade. Tirelessly, Loie worked to engage the U.S. in

19 Fuller, *Fifteen Years,* pp. 207-216.

20 Fuller, *Fifteen Years*, pp. 151-157.

21 Pinet, Hélène, *Loïe Fuller and Auguste Rodin: Dancer and Impresario*, catalogue, Body Stages, The Metamorphosis of Loïe Fuller, (Milan: Skira Editore) pp. 62-63.

22 Current, *Goddess of Light*, pp. 254-257.

the fate of France and Romania, all the while maintaining her company and the school she had opened before the war. Her students carried on her legacy after her death in 1928.[23]

In the ten years from the end of the war to the end of her life, Loie continued to revolutionize on stage and screen. She was fascinated by the creative possibilities in cinema, then in its infancy, just as she had been with electricity, and made several forays into filmmaking.[24] Until her final days she advised on and meddled in the plans for the museums she had willed into being in a country she had left behind nearly forty years before. Performer, inventor, impresario, filmmaker or philanthropist, Loie Fuller's multi-faceted career is a model for the artist-entrepreneur and an example *par excellence* that continues to inspire.

23 Gabrielle Bloch, Fuller's companion carried on her work with the school and the company after her death. Lista, *Danseuse de la Belle Epoque*, p. 279.

24 Garelick, *Electric Salome*, pp. 193-201.

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Countess Maria Aurora von Königsmarck as Poet and Dancer at the Court of Dresden

Uta Dorothea Sauer

Countess Maria Aurora von Königsmarck was one of the most art-loving courtiers in Europe during the Baroque era. Her affinity for art was admired by personalities such as Voltaire, Johann Mattheson, Reinhard Keiser, or Georg Christian von Lehms.[1] The librarian and poet Von Lehms (1684-1717), working in Hessen-Darmstadt, dedicated the book *Teutschlands Galante Poetinnen* to her and described her therein as Minerva.[2]

Preserved from her poetic works today is the anthology *Nordischer Weyrauch*. Moreover, a debut performance of Jean Baptiste Racine's *Iphigénie* at the Court of Stockholm, as well as the libretto of the Opéra-ballet *Fastnachts-Lust,*[3] which were performed twice within the scope of 'Redoutes' (masked balls) during the carnival period of 1697, are undoubtedly attributable to Maria Aurora. This piece was to be presented in comparison to the Opéra-ballet *Musen-Fest*, in which Maria Aurora danced and sang.

Biographical Background

When she was born in April 1662 in Stade, the Königsmarcks were among the most distinguished noble families in the kingdom. Their good reputation was based on the military successes of their grandfather Hans Cristoph, who was given many landed estates by the Swedish king for his services. The Königsmarck family ascended from Brandenburg landed gentry into a major Swedish family. Maria Aurora, her sister Amalie Wilhelmine, and her brothers Karl Johann and Philipp Christoph were brought up in this sophisticated atmosphere. Maria Aurora, who was interested in art, benefited in particular from the culture in Stockholm, where she lived after the death of her father, General Kurt Christoph von Königsmarck. The court culture in Stockholm had

1 Sylvia Krauss-Meyl, *Maria Aurora von Königsmarck – Überblick über das Leben der 'berühmtesten Frau zweier Jahrhunderte'*. In: *Maria Aurora von Königsmarck. Ein adeliges Frauenleben im Europa der Barockzeit*. Ed. by Rieke Buning, Beate-Christine Fiedler and Bettina Roggmann. Köln, Weimar, Wien 2015.

2 Ibid. pp. 31-42, here 34.

3 On the title page of the handwritten music score is the note: 'Poesia Gräfin von Königsmarck'. The score is in the British Library (GB-Lbl). Two text books have been found in the Sächsisches Staatsarchiv – Hauptstaatsarchiv Dresden (D-Dla) as well as in the Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Sachsen-Anhalt (http://digitale.bibliothek.uni-halle.de/urn/urn:nbn:de:gbv:3:1-31522).

already been influenced before that by the interests of Queen Christina, who employed not only the French dance master Antoine de Beaulieu, but also René Descartes. Maria Aurora took part between 1680 and 1692 in the gatherings of the courtly poets surrounding Queen Ulrika Eleonora. She danced a great deal during court festivities, for which she was greatly admired. For example, she performed in 1684 in *Iphigénie*, which was staged as a *comédie-ballett*. During the festive season at the Karlsberg Castle in 1687, she portrayed the goddess Pallas in a *ballet*. In 1693, she danced the Turkish quadrille during the carnival in Hannover. A year later, she participated in a festive season in Braunschweig and danced in *ballets* as a shepherdess and a nymph.

Why did Maria Aurora come to Dresden?

While Maria Aurora worked as a dancer, singer, gambist, and poet, her sister married Saxon General Carl Gustav von Löwenhaupt. Her older brother Karl Johann died in 1686 as Commander of the French army.

Philipp, the younger of the two brothers, was recommended in 1694 by Elector Frederick Augustus into the army of George Ludwig, Duke of Brunswick-Lüneburg, and later of King George I of Great Britain. Philipp disappeared there in July 1694 after he had begun an affair with George's wife Sophia Dorothea. However, since Philipp was extremely important, after the death of his brother Karl, for the survival of the dynasty, Maria Aurora travelled to the Saxon Elector to inquire as to his whereabouts.

Maria Aurora's role in the court festivities in Dresden

In the winter of 1694, Augustus named Maria Aurora as his mistress.[4] During carnival in February 1695, she participated in many masquerades in a variety of genres, such as a 'Country Wedding' (Bauernhochzeit) and 'The Parade of Nations' (Nationen-Umzug); she also drove Apollo's carriage in Frederick Augustus I's opulent 'Gods Parade'.

One year later, during carnival in 1696, she played Minerva, Erato, and Euterpe in the Opéra-ballet *Musen-Fest*. A look at the libretto and the score shows that this work differed from the *ballets de cour* and should be categorized as an *opéra ballet*. Enacted on the stage of an opera house, all of the parts were set to music, as in a *dramma per musica*. Dialogues, arias, duets, recitatives, and other parts were sung, some interfused with dances, that interrupt the events, increase the tension, or – if they are at the end – portray the positive outcome of the story. In the prologue, nine *entrées,* and *grand-ballet*, it demonstrates the typical form of the *opéra-ballet*. However, unlike the ballet operas of Pascal

4 Their son Maurice, Count of Saxony, became famous as a general in the army of Louis XV and a friend of Voltaire. Maurice's great-granddaughter George Sand, who lived on Mallorca, followed in a way in the footsteps of her great-grandmother.

Figure 1 Image of Maria Aurora von Königsmarck

Figure 2 Image of the Parade of the Gods

Collasse or André Campra, which combined elements of the *tragédie lyrique* and the *ballet de cour*, the *Musen-Fest* contained a mixture of Italian opera elements and French *ballets de cour*.

The blend of musical styles was not new; at the Dresden Court they date back to the sixteenth century, to Antonio Scandello, who began in 1549 working with German, English, and French musicians and dancers. This could be the reason why the term 'Opéra-Ballet' was already represented early in the records and libretti of the Dresden Court (*Opera-Ballet von Würckung derer 7. Planeten* or *Opera-Ballet von dem Paridis und der Helena Raub* (1678/79)[5]), but was not used in France until later. This is because it reflects the aesthetics of these Dresden ballet operas. Whereas the opera elements indicate emotional transformations, dances reflect the virtues of the rulers or demonstrate the harmonious end of a dramatic conflict. Each of the *entrées* explained one of the virtues in the form of a small story in an Arcadian context or as a symbolic allegorical image. In all cases, the dances illustrated nobility and harmony, whereas the arias impart in some cases negative emotions.

Also in the *Musen-Fest*[6] arias, duets, dramatic dialogues, and short songs expressed the emotions; recitatives describe the actions; choruses replicate the messages of the muses as common viewpoint. Dances demonstrate harmony or signal the end of a conflict.

The context of the work is a festival that the muses arrange for Augustus the Strong, who is represented therein by Mars, the god of war. In the prologue, a tribute takes place; thereafter, in nine *entrées* the knightly virtues of the ruler are

5 D-Dla, OHMA, Lit. G No. 8, 220b unfoiled; OHMA, Lit. G No. 13-14.

6 D-Dla, 10006, OHMA, Lit. G No. 13, fol. 75r-94v; score: British Library, London, RM, 23-c-1.

described. The first *entrée* involves the defeat of jealousy by reason. Martesia and Artesia vie for the affection of Armundus. The conflict leads to hate; the rivals draw their swords. In this moment, the other Amazons intervene between them and settle the dispute – at the end, all dance together a dance that demonstrates harmony between the competitors.

The fifth *entrée* of Urania addresses the harmonic forces of the universe – through the movement of the stars. Song and dance parts are interwoven; for instance, the motif of the opening aria 'Tanzernde Sterne'[7] imitates the subsequent dance of the stars. First, the oboes play, then the violins move the theme through the voices. In measure 11, Urania takes it over before the oboes pick it up. After two recitatives, Urania repeats the 'Tanzernde Sterne' aria, followed by the 'Ballet der sieben Sterne'.[8]

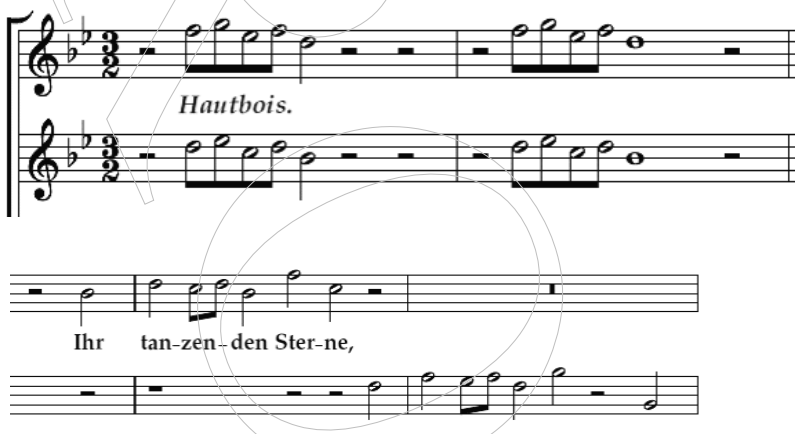


Figure 3a *Musen-Fest*, Arie of Urania 'Ihr tanzenden Sterne'

Motif (device) of the oboes and Hope as a tone-painting of dancing stars, 1-2 as well as 10-12

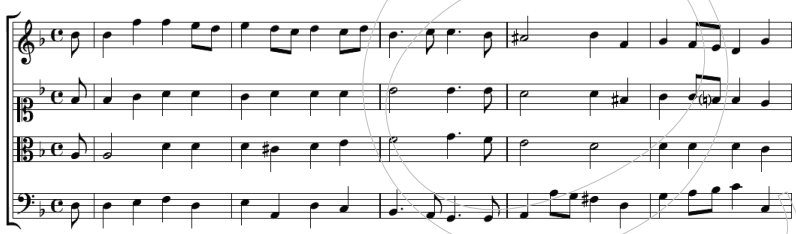


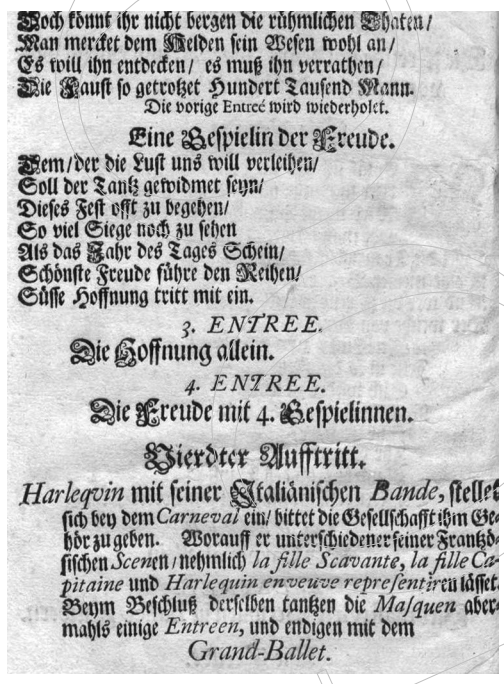
Figure 3b *Musen-Fest*, 'Ballet der sieben Sterne', 1-5

7 GB-Lbl, RM, 23-c-1, fol. 101v-108r.

8 Ibid, fol. 111r-112r.

As mentioned previously, in the *Musen-Fest* Maria Aurora played the role of Minerva, Euterpe, and Erato and danced in couples' dances. She appears initially in the prologue as Minerva, who together with Fama pays homage to the ruler. In the third *entrée* she plays Erato, who sings and dances solo. She claims in three arias that love is the basis for every military success, because love inspires the warrior to survive. At the end of the *entrée* Maria Aurora danced in a formation of four couples. In the sixth *entrée* she played Euterpe, who was in a dispute with Laodamie and Melpomene about the destruction of the wonders of the ancient world, which symbolized the decline of values. At the end of this *entrée* Maria Aurora danced together with Madame von Zehmen as Euterpe and Melpomene.

For the carnival in 1697, Maria Aurora wrote a libretto that was set to music by court conductor Johann Christoph Schmidt. *Fastnachts-Lust*[9] differs from *Musen-Fest* in its structure – it features a dramatic plot. In this work, an emotional discourse takes place. The personification of jealousy, hope, and joy wrestle for the favour of the gentleman, with the dramatic plot being sung and the deliverance from calamity being represented through dance. The transition to the real 'Redoute' (masked ball) takes place in the form of comedy scenes. *Fastnachts-Lust* contains thus opera elements, dances, and comedic parts.


Noch könnt ihr nicht bergen die rühmlichen Thaten/
Man merket dem Helden sein Wesen wohl an/
Es will ihn entdecken/ es muß ihn verrathen/
Wie Kauft so getrotzet Hundert Tausend Mann.
Die vorige Entreé wird wiederholet.

Eine Gespielin der Freude.

Wem/der die Lust uns will verleihen/
Soll der Tantz gewidmet seyn/
Dieses Fest offt zu begehen/
So viel Siege noch zu sehen
Als das Jahr des Tages Schein/
Schönste Freude führe den Reihen/
Süsse Hoffnung tritt mit ein.

3. ENTREE.

Die Hoffnung allein.

4. ENTREE.

Die Freude mit 4. Gespielinnen.

Vierdter Auffritt.

Harlequin mit seiner Italiänischen *Bande*, stellet
sich bey dem *Carneval* ein/ bittet die Gesellschafft ihm Ge-
hör zu geben. Worauff er unterschiedener seiner Frantzö-
sischen *Scenen*/ nehmlich *la fille Scavante*, *la fille Ca-
pitaine* und *Harlequin en veuve repräsentiren* lässet.
Beym Beschluß derselben tantzen die *Masquen* aber-
mahls einige *Entreen*, und endigen mit dem
Grand-Ballet.

Figure 4 Image of the libretto

9 Libretto: D-Dla, 10006, OHMA, Lit. G No. 13, fol. 333r-338v; score: GB-Lbl, RM, 24.9.19.

The plot tells the story of a nobleman in the conflict between envy and hope. Because he has decided to pursue hope, joy comes and leads him to the carnival ball. This moment is demonstrated through dances.

Ultimately, the personified Carnival takes the gentleman and guides him to the revellers. The protagonists go into the *grand-ballet*.

At the beginning of the work, the gentleman expresses his suffering in the aria 'Ihr heilet meine Schmerzen nicht',[10] with the atmosphere underscored by the sound of two obligatory gambas. Figures of suspiration accompany his emotions. After this aria, the gentleman appeals to the stars with a sweet, simple melody.

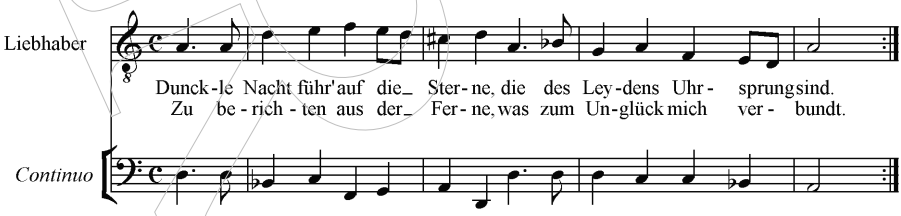


Figure 5 *Fastnachts-Lust*, Song of Gentleman 'Dunkle Nacht führ' auf die Sterne', 1-8

Now hope appears and tries to calm him. In an aria, she asks the gods for help; this aria 'Ihr Sterne gemach'[11] is structured as a minuet and underscores the dignity of hope. The harmony of the oboes and gambas, the idiomatic instruments of hope and the gentleman, demonstrate their unity. To move the process forward, the aria develops a singable melody that rises up, an impressive example of the functional aesthetics of the mixture of *belcanto* and *belle danse* in the *opéra-ballet*: the upward directed melodic line sets to music the positive attitude of hope, while the stability of the gentleman is expressed through the o*stinati*.

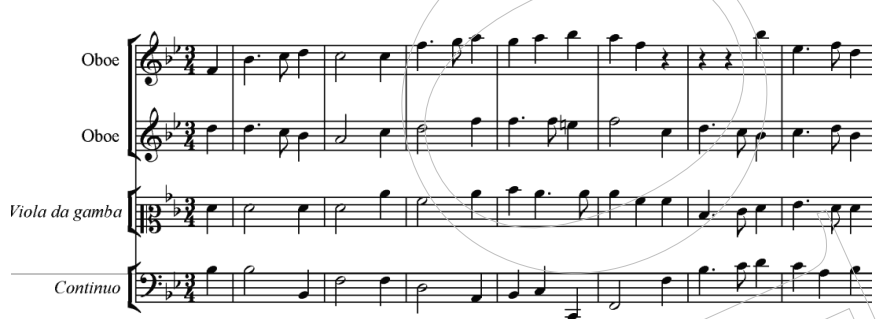


Figure 6a *Fastnachts-Lust*, Aria of Hope 'Ihr Sterne gemach', 1-7

10 GB-Lbl, RM, 24.9.19, fol. 2r-6v.

11 Ibid, fol. 9r-12v.

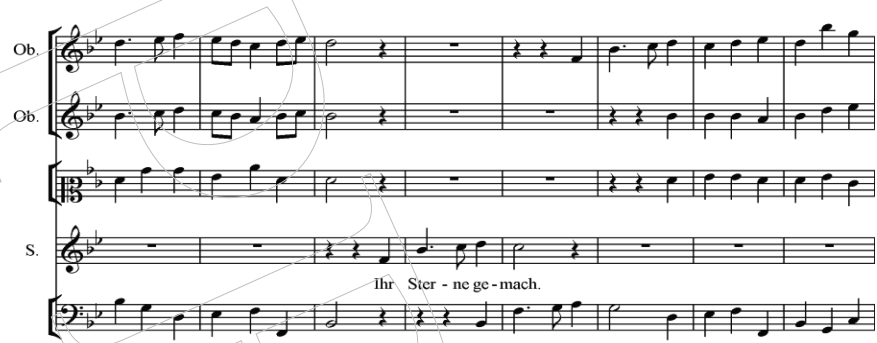


Figure 6b *Fastnachts-Lust*, Aria of Hope 'Ihr Sterne gemach', 16-23

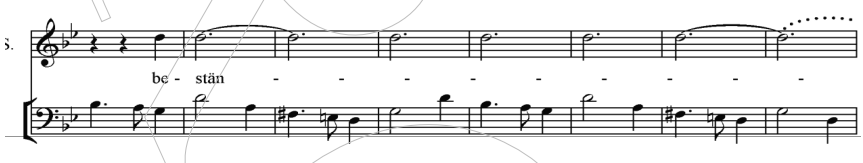


Figure 6c *Fastnachts-Lust*, Aria of Hope 'Ihr Sterne gemach' , 107-114

Organ point and ostinati

However, the gentleman remains stable. His intention is expressed in a *ritornello* played by a gamba, the instrument that symbolizes his basic emotion and the oboe, the sound of hope, as sign of their agreement in rhythm of a beautiful chaconne. The ensuing duet demonstrates their unity. Suddenly, jealousy reappears. It tries to convince the gentleman that hope only wanted to deceive him. Hope and jealousy wrestle with one another, a fight that hope wins.

In the third part, the personifications of carnival and joy appear. First, joy asks in a recitative about the reason for the sorrow. In a subsequent aria, it commands everyone to banish sorrow and surrender to the carnival festivity. It announces the victory of hope over jealousy and thus the end of sorrow. Dances and arias are now linked content-wise and stylistically interwoven. To underscore their lyrics, carnival dances solo, after which four masked dancers dance. Then joy proclaims the ball. Hope dances solo again, because it has won. Now, joy follows with its playmates, Harlequin and Comedians appear,[12] and together they go into the *grand-ballet*.

12 The comedy scenes explain probably the content of the piece and the *grand-ballet* was the door to the carnival ball.

The music of the opera elements is held in the style of the late Venetian *drammi per musica*, as composed by Agostino Steffani and Carlo Pallavicino. There are various aria structures, differently structured duets and trios. All forms are clearly delineated and begin with a special motif that sounds in all voices. It should be assumed that Schmidt was influenced directly by Pallavicino, who worked until 1688 in Dresden.[13]

Summary

Countess von Königsmarck had a significant influence on the structure, aesthetics, and stylistics of *Fastnachts-Lust* and *Musen-Fest*. The sources reflect vividly her passion for dance, music, and poetry. In this regard, these two *opéra-ballets* correspond in their structure, but also the stylistics, the composition of the most modern tendencies of her time, as evidenced by the da capo arias as well as the French dances. With the collaboration on these works, Maria Aurora enriched not only the culture of the court in Dresden but set standards. After her departure in the summer of 1697, as lady-provost in Quedlinburg she participated time and again in subsequent years in the Dresden festivities and maintained contact with court musicians. In addition to Johann Adolf Hasse, she communicated with Johann Mattheson, Reinhard Keiser, and probably Georg Philipp Telemann. Mattheson and Keiser dedicated their works to her and set her poems to music. Maria Aurora was also very closely connected to Anthony Ulrich, Duke of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel, and his poet Frederick Christian Bressand.

13 The scores of the pieces could have come to London with Caroline von Ansbach. Caroline's mother, as a widow, married the brother of Augustus the Strong, Johann Georg IV. in 1692. From that time on, Caroline spent a lot of time in Dresden. The fact that the Countess of Königsmarck and the Princess of Ansbach met is proven by the occupation of the Gods Parade in February 1695, in which Princess Caroline represented Venus, while Maria Aurora drove the carriage of Apollo (see Fig. 2). In 1705, she married the Prince Georg of Hanover, who inherited the throne of Great Britain because of the Act of Settlement. In 1727, Caroline became the English Queen as wife of King George II.

Book review: *Methods of the Classical Ballet: History and Consolidation* by Caroline Konzen Castro

Natália de Mira Braga Corrêa

Source: Castro, Caroline Konzen. *Methods of the Classical Ballet: History and Consolidation*/Caroline Konzen Castro. – 1. ed. – Curitiba, PR: CRV, 2015.

Methods of the Classical Ballet: History and Consolidation, written by Caroline Konzen Castro, is the result of her Master's Dissertation developed in the Graduate Program in Language Studies of the Federal Center of Technological Education of Minas Gerais (CEFET/MG). The book examines the beginning and development of the main schools of the classical ballet and their respective methods, namely: The Italian School – Cecchetti Method, The French School Natália de Mira Braga Corrêa – French Method, The Russian School – Method of Vaganova and The English School – Royal Academy Method of Dancing/ Dance (RAD), contextualizing the historical and political moment in which they emerged. However, it is not just a survey of historical data, because the work manages to address issues that lead us to the particularities of each school and the respective method of ballet. It stands out that the convergent point is the classical technique, developed in the tradition of a gestural aesthetics and translated into discipline and elegance.

Charles-Louis-Pièrre de Beauchamps made French the official language of the ballet by determining the technical teaching nomenclature (and also determining the inalterability of these technical terms) and creating the five positions of feet and arms that would be applied in all methods for ~~the~~ ballet teachings. This academic standardization ensured the preservation and execution of the same ballet movements by dancers from different localities.

The book is 190 pages long and structured in four main chapters. In the 'Final Considerations', there are important notes about each ballet school and the interrelationship between them. The chapter 'Historical Panorama of the development of the ballet methods in the world' and the index highlight the main facts and recapitulate the global content of the research.

The Italian School started from the performances of dances at the court: the choreographic and musical compositions were for the nobles and these social dances became known as Ballo, later they were called Ballet in France. The Italian ballet masters studied in the book are mainly Gasparo Angiolini, Salvatore Viganò, Enrico Cecchetti and Carlo Blasis.

The French School started with the trip of the Italian Princess Catherine

de Médici to France to marry the Duke of Orleans (later King Henry II). Their marriage caused the political union between the two countries, reflecting culturally in the development of the French Ballet: the Italian librettist and musician Baldassiarino da Belgioso (later known as Balthasar de Beaujoyeux) was sent to the French court and became an important choreographer. Later, one of the first conceptualizations for the ballet was attributed to him: 'A geometric arrangement of many people together, under the varied harmony of various instruments'. The book informs us that later, one of the first conceptualizations for the ballet was attributed to him: 'A geometric arrangement of many people together, under the varied harmony of various instruments' and that some authors consider Balthasar de Beaujoyeux was the choreographer of the first ballet show in Europe, the Ballet Comique de la Reine in 1581.

The historical and political analysis presented in the book allows the understanding of how the ballet became a French cultural influence through the systematization of rules and exercises organized by Pièrre de Beauchamps and published in 1700 with the name of *Choregraphie* by Raoul Auger Feuillet. Subsequently, Jean Georges Noverre proposes adjustments in the French ballet, seeking greater expressiveness and dramatization of the dancers in the execution of the movements. The foundation of the Royal Academy of Dance took place in 1661. In 1713, the first ballet school was created at the Academie Royale de Musique that was named L'Ecole de Danse de l'opera de Paris (the Paris Opera Ballet School is an institution linked to the Opera de Paris – known as the Palais Garnier and which continues to perform operas today).

The Russian School – Vaganova Method was originated with the arrival of French and Italian professionals in Russia. Initially, the ballet was introduced as a label and not as a dance, to give it social prominence of what was best in European education at the time. Another date in the history of the Russian ballet relates to a military school, because it was also a form of access to the ballet: the Imperial Russian Ballet School, (usually referred to as the Vaganova Ballet Academy, but now called the Academia Russkogo Baleta) was created in the Military Academy. The Russian ballet developed mainly in the cities of St. Petersburg (Imperial Russian Ballet School/Vaganova Ballet Academy/ Mariinsky Ballet) and Moscow (Bolshoi Ballet Academy/Bolshoi ballet). Jules Perrot, Arthur Saint Leon, Marius Petipa, Christina Johansson and Enrico Cecchetti stand out as the masters who built the foundation of the Russian ballet, and which was perfected by Agrippina Vaganova. A careful analysis of the movements performed began with this teacher, improving the teachings of the Italian and French masters. Through this work, the precision and fundamentals of a proper method were developed, singularizing the classical Russian dance. In 1934 Agrippina Vaganova published the book *Basic Principles of Classical Ballet*, being synonymous with the Russian school.

The English School – Royal Academy of Dancing/Dance (RAD) originated in England from two institutions: the Royal Ballet School and the Royal Academy of Dancing.

The dance master John Weaver boosted the development of the English ballet by translating, in 1703, the Parisian dance *Treaty Choregraphie*, which received the name of *Orchesography*. From this translation the French ballet system became accessible to English dancers.

Edouard Espinosa, a Russian dancer from the Paris Opera who moved to London in 1872, defended the creation of a curriculum for teaching dance that enabled the evaluation and distinction of qualified professionals, excluding the others. Based on his teachings, a group of dance teachers and dancers were formed to discuss teaching programmes and the formation of an association in order to solidify the career of dance professionals, to conserve the high standards of teaching and protect the public from professionals without training. It sought to create a curriculum to characterize '[...] The English technique of Academic Dance' (CASTRO, 2015, p. 147). Thus, the Association of Operatic Dancing of Great Britain (AOD), formed by dance teachers and dancers was founded in 1920. Subsequently, the AOD aiming for repute and credibility sought royal patronage and required authorization to use the word 'Royal' in the title: In 1936 King George V officially named the AOD with the title of the Royal Academy of Dancing which was renamed Royal Academy of Dance in 2001.

Through their schools and respective methods the beginning of classical ballet is analysed both historically and politically. It is important to clarify that the book is not about technical criteria that differentiate the four ballet schools, but describes their histories, connections, transformations and particularities. Castro concludes there is no '[...] Pure method' because in the intent to improve its principles and fundamentals, the characteristics of a method can be found in others, resulting from a cultural exchange of professionals, masters and dancers.

Review – concert at St John's Smith Square, London

11 May 2019

The concert at St John's Smith Square on 11 May 2019 as part of the Festival of Baroque Music was an eye opener to baroque music enthusiasts and a joy to dance historians and early dance enthusiasts alike. The Festival was eight days of glorious music, much of it dance music, but only one concert including dance. We must be thankful for small mercies and pray for larger ones in the future!

This concert was worthy of its place of honour in the Festival programme. Performed by the Bach Players and Mercurius Company its title was 'Dance of the Nations', very appropriate at a time of dissent and discontent in England. It began with Telemann's Orchestral Suite 'Les Nations' which picked out four nations lending themselves to dramatic or humorous interpretation. The opening Minuet may have been a glancing acknowledgement of its French connection but then Telemann had fun with Turks, Swiss, Muscovites and Portuguese and Ricardo Barros' choreography echoed this humour. His Turkish dancers twirled like dervishes while his two Swiss Guardsmen fell over their rifles nervously and the Muscovites happily enjoyed their vodka. Barros was obviously most comfortable with his Portuguese dances. He echoed the folk dances of the peninsula with a sombre dramatic beginning enlivened when the girls entered in their vibrantly coloured national costumes and the pace speeded up.

Couperin's 'Les Folies Françaises' for harpsichord followed where again Couperin made fun of imaginary characters depicted wearing different coloured dominoes. Then Barros performed Rebel's enigmatic piece 'Les Caractères de la Danse'. Musicians and choreographers have puzzled over the interpretation of this piece. Did it tell a *story*? Was it a solo intended for a man or a woman? Barros chose it as a solo in magnificent eighteenth century theatre costume. Unfortunately, very early in the dance his cloak became loose and although he coped with this hazard splendidly, he eventually took the opportunity of a break in the dance to remove it completely. This must have been a distraction, although he recovered his poise and ended magnificently.

Everyone, I think, recognises the simple fifteenth century tune known as La Folia which has been used by many composers over the centuries. In this concert the musicians started off with Vivaldi's variations ranging from simple even melancholy to vivacious and virtuosic. Then Barros returned, in another eighteenth century theatrical costume and playing castanets to give Raoul-Auger Feuillet's variations published in notation in 1700. His dancing reflected

the French impression of Spanish passion and fire. By the end the audience were left holding their breath, spellbound by the exuberance of the music and the dancing, until as one they gave a sigh and broke into ecstatic applause.

This could only be followed by comedy to relieve the tension. It was provided first by a short harpsichord solo from Couperin's *Piece de Clavecin* 'Les Petits Moulins a vent' which introduced Telemann's 'Burlesque de Quixote'. Burlesque it certainly was. Barros danced a vague and dreamy old man fighting his two very cleverly costumed windmills, their arm movements depicting their sweeping sails. He sighed hopelessly over a very seductive Dulcinea and then, like all good pantomime, the comic Sancho Panza entered with two very clever dancing donkeys and the whole scene dissolved into choreographic chaos until Quixote was lulled back to sleep. All this was achieved with baroque dance technique cleverly adapted to the occasion.

The cheering and applause which ended the evening were a clear sign that the audience had thoroughly enjoyed this experience of combined music and dance. This was not simply musicians accompanying dancing or dancers dancing to music but a real 'harmony of music and dance'.

My only small criticism of the evening is that it was described as a performance 'in the round', but I must dispute this. In fact the hall had been rotated with a stage built down one side and the audience in lines facing it. From my seat in the sixth row back I did miss much of the interesting footwork and I wonder whether the actual dancing area was big enough for the baroque solos which I know require depth as well as width. However, I hope this will not deter St John's Smith Square from trying again to include dance in their programmes, and I think from the reaction of the audience they would agree with me.

Madeleine Inglehearn

Report on the 2018 EADH Conference in London

Held at Wilton's Music Hall, the Victoria and Albert Museum and Swedenborg Hall 9 – 10 November 2018

The theme for the 2018 Conference was 'Dancing Beyond the Opera House, 1850-1910' and consisted of two optional site visits on the first day and the regular set of conference presentations on the second.

On Friday 9th November all met early in the morning at the Wilton's Music Hall for a guided tour with the curator, Alice Cox. She explained in detail the history of the building with emphasis on its time as a music hall from 1859-1881 after which delegates were free to walk around the theatrical space and make discoveries themselves with Alice on hand to answer any questions. The somewhat 'earthy' facilities of the music hall as opposed to the elegant atmosphere of an opera house set the scene for the conference.

A short break for coffee and a light lunch bridged the gap before moving to the archives of Victoria and Albert Museum at Blythe House in West London. Our host was Jane Pritchard, the Museum's Curator of Dance, Theatre and Performance. Jane needs no introduction as she is one of the leading lights of Dance History in the UK and abroad.

This was a fascinating afternoon with a tour of the archive and in-depth explanation of its holdings, special collections, accessibility, and the in-house expertise available to assist researchers. Jane had selected some of its treasures to illustrate the tour. Of course, delegates became distracted when passing through some of the amazing artefacts and its library. The extensive nature of material caused quite a buzz amongst the visitors.

The day was completed by a very pleasant dinner at an Italian restaurant in London's West End.

The second day of the conference took place at the Swedenborg Hall in central London. The conference proper was opened by Madeleine Inglehearn who introduced Jane Pritchard as the keynote speaker beginning the series of papers and presentations.

Jane's opening presentation revealed the plethora of dance presented outside of the opera houses in London, often overlooked nowadays. She highlighted the performances by some of the leading classical ballerinas of the age, notably Adeline Genée, Virginia Zucchi, Carlotta Brianza and Pierina Legnani, amongst others. They often appeared in theatres other than opera houses in London,

notably the 'Alhambra' and 'Empire', which also enabled many of them to earn money when the main European opera theatres were closed. The contributions of many other dancers who enjoyed success at these other venues in ballet and other genres such as Ethel Austin, Kate Vaughan, Caroline Otero were highlighted. The grand extravaganzas were often patriotic, such as 'Our Army and Navy,' or topical, such as 'Entente Cordiale' of 1904. Some of these works which achieved renown across Europe were also often adapted to fit the local audiences with the role of Civilisation in 'Excelsior' invariably wearing the flag of the country in which it was being performed. We were treated to some very rare film footage of the period which brought the subject to life.

Keith Cavers followed with a fun take on 'Ballet Burlesqued' which focused on 200 years of male dancing 'en travestie' in ballet parodies dating back to 1681.

The parodies of the romantic period were well illustrated by examples of John Reeve (1799-1838) and his very successful imitation of Marie Taglioni 'en pointe' in his 'Cupid' from 1832. Fanny Elssler was also brought into comedy by Thomas Matthews in his 'Cashew Nut Dance', a parody of Elssler's celebrated 'Cachucha'. Her equally renowned 'Cracovienne' also merited his attention.

Keith concluded his presentation with mention of some of the early twentieth century performers such as Malcolm Scott, brother of the Antarctic explorer, Captain Scott, who was considered a sensation in burlesque and Mr Tiki Carpenter, 'The Dancing Australian', who danced classical ballerina parodies during and after the First World War.

Susan Hamlin's paper took us far away from the world of balletic-based dance with an exposé of 'Loie Fuller – The American Dream made in France'. She covered Fuller's impact in Paris between 1892-1900, her association with leading academics and artists of fin de siècle Paris and her financial acumen which helped in fulfilling her dream. The article created from this paper is in this edition of *Choreologica*.

Our final presentation for the morning session came from Lisa Fusillo exploring 'Imports, exports and exploitation; American Theatrical Dancing 1840-1898'.

Lisa covered the genesis of American Dancing from the plantations with minstrel dancers evolving from William Henry Lane, an African-American slave who danced as Master Juba in the 1840s, and John Diamond, a white performer who wore black-face around the same time. His influence as a minstrel performer led to a myriad of white performers wearing black-face and racial stereotyping which became the foundation of vaudeville humour at that time. Film clips of early performers were shown.

There was a detailed analysis of the production of 'The Black Crook' premiered in Niblo's Theatre in New York in 1866 which is often credited as the first 'musical' and included all manner of up to the minute stage effects, a ballet

company and achieved immense popularity running for 474 performances. It starred two leading ballerinas from the Teatro alla Scala Milan, Maria Bonfanti and Rita Nangalli. The production toured extensively for decades and a version of it was performed in the Alhambra in London in 1872.

There was a short break for lunch when we were entertained with a cabaret followed by the afternoon session and four further presentations.

Theresa Buckland opened the proceedings with, 'Models for Modernity: couple dancers on display in English theatre and society, 1900-1910' considering developments in social dance and society's renunciation of the nineteenth-century dances. The impact of the gramophone alongside popular theatre led to the inclusion of American dances such as barn dances and the cakewalk which had achieved popularity in the 1903 American musical comedy 'In Dahomey' featuring George Walker and Bert Williams, a popular minstrel duo of the time. Whilst the cakewalk did not find favour with the English upper class it was extremely popular among the middle class in northern England. The popularity of the waltz was explained in the musical theatre productions of the early twentieth century and the use of social dance in the media to promote themselves and their latest theatrical offerings.

Christine Bayle made a presentation about her teacher Nina Tikhonova. She focused on her performances outside of the Diaghilev Ballet in Berlin and Paris and her work as a teacher.

Matthew Spring continued his article published in the 2017 edition of *Choreologica* on social dance in Georgian Bath with an analysis of social dance in Bath in the nineteenth century and the changes over that period. Where the *ridotto* had been the mainstay of the eighteenth century, the emergence of music businesses and locally published music led to the involvement of local musicians and the inclusion of polkas and other national style dances being performed well into the latter part of the nineteenth century.

The final presentation by Tizianna Leucci revealed the great interest in Asian dances at various Colonial Exhibitions between 1889-1920. There was a strong accent on the French colonial influences from Java and Cambodia with the Expositions Universelle de Paris of both 1889 and 1900 as an inspiration to Claude Debussy, Auguste Rodin, Cléo de Mérode and the American Ruth St. Denis. The influence of the Asian dancers themselves like Sahary Djeli, Dourga L'hindoue, and Nyota Inyoka was explored.

The proceedings were ended by Madeleine Inglehearn and Ricardo Barros with the Annual General Meeting.

Geoff Whitlock

CHOREOLOGICA

The refereed journal of the European Association for Dance History aims to provide a forum for historical and theoretical explorations of dance histories and practices. Articles for submission are welcomed. These may include analyses of individual works or investigations, whether they be monographic, contextual or interdisciplinary. Submissions may address topics ranging from the past dance practices to contemporary themes. The editorial board particularly welcomes essays rethinking current approaches and theoretical understanding of dance practice, history or crossovers into other disciplines.

For guidelines on submission please see the publications section on:
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