Comedy-Ballet and Court Festivities: Three Extreme Scenarios

by
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"Quittons, quittons notre vaine querelle" and "Unissons-nous tous trois d'une ardeur sans seconde." So sing Comedy, Music and Ballet in the prologue to Molière and Lully's *L'Amour médecin*, in lines that have often been cited as a motto for comedy-ballet.[1] The comedy-ballet can be defined as a dramatic hybrid designed to enliven and enhance celebrations at the French court, and composed of alternating segments in which a spoken comedy is punctuated by episodes of music and dance. The components are called *actes* and *intermèdes*, although in fact the performance was continuous and the interludes (unlike, for example, the *intermezzi* from the Italian operatic tradition) had to maintain a link, however tenuous, with the action of the comedy. Ideally, the three art forms could be fused into a perfectly balanced spectacle in which all three played an indispensable part. However, complete success in integrating the components was not always achieved, even with such brilliant collaborators as Molière and Lully. There are even cases where one of the arts far outshines the others. Such plays, though not masterpieces on the order of *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme*, are far from being aesthetic failures. I propose to examine three such plays, written for three different patrons, and to show how each one, by giving primary importance to one of the three components in the *intermèdes*, sheds light on the hybrid genre's possibilities and limitations. In each case I also plan to demonstrate that theme, décor and choreography were tailored to the original occasion and to the tastes of the patron.[2]

Les Fâcheux (1661), the very first comedy-ballet, was commissioned by the finance minister Fouquet as

part of the gala entertainment at which he showed off his splendid chateau at Vaux to the king and court. In this instance we know that the ballets quite literally came first; Molière was the last of the collaborators to be called in. Because Fouquet conceived the project within the framework of the *ballet de cour* tradition, he did not see the necessity for vocal music or for a genuinely dramatic and unifying plot. Instead, he aimed to achieve an ambiance of mirth and gentle humor. Thus, the ballets, organized by Beauchamp, the principal choreographer for such festivities, avoid the extremes of wildly grotesque episodes, on the one hand, and serious, dramatic scenes, on the other, even though both types of scenes had been featured in previous court ballets. Instead, the dancers in *Les Fâcheux* fall into two basic categories: people enjoying innocent pastimes (courtly, pastoral, popular) and allegorical displays of the restoration and glorification of royal authority (represented by the naiad of the prologue and the Swiss guards of the finale).

Each of the ballet sequences following the acts of the spoken comedy is subdivided into two or more seemingly unrelated *entrées*. Yet, despite the tenuous links between the dance sequences, it is possible to speak of two types of progressions. The first *entrée* of each group involves physical contact with Eraste, the central character of the comedy, who remains on stage uninterruptedly during the spoken part of the play. In each case Eraste retires from the stage before the dancing is over, but there is a marked increase in the respect with which he is treated by the dancers. In the Act I ballet a group of rowdy croquet players immediately drives him off; and when he tries to return after their departure, a group of "curieux" (perhaps the equivalent of our modern-day autograph seekers) crowds around him, which again forces him to withdraw. In Act II Eraste is called upon to arbitrate a dispute between several *joueurs de boule*; as with the two *précieuses* earlier in the act, he is detained by them at some length before being able to make his escape. In the Act III ballet Eraste is finally in control of the dancers, since it is he who calls in the Swiss

guards to chase away the maskers. In effect, he is forcing one type of ballet (the pleasure seekers) to yield to the symbols of royal authority. I think it logical to assume that, just as in the previous acts, Eraste remains on stage for the first portion of the first *entrée*, during which the maskers are chased away.

The second type of progression is the move from the world of reality to that of fantasy. The prologue to the first performance began with a speech given by Molière, in street clothes, looking surprised and embarrassed, and apologizing in advance for an entertainment unworthy of a king. (Unfortunately, this speech was not included in printed editions of the play, and we must rely on the brief summary of it in Molière's preface.) The performance moved abruptly into the realm of mythology when a speaking naiad appeared out of a mechanical shell, soon followed by dancers garbed as fauns, dryads and satyrs. The solo dance by a gardener at the end of the Act II ballet could be said to announce the pastoral world of the finale. In the Act III ballet the "masques fâcheux" bear a much closer resemblance to the courtly audience (masked balls being an aristocratic entertainment). It is only after chasing away this last and perhaps loftiest avatar of the *fâcheux* that a full-fledged pastoral mood can bring the play to a close, in the dance of four shepherds and a shepherdess.

Since the *intermèdes* consist entirely of dance, it is not surprising to find that Molière's play has largely replaced the traditional dramatic unity of plot with a thematic link deriving from gesture. The *fâcheux* are people who literally get in the way, and they do so on two levels. Most obviously, in terms of the play's nominal plot, the blocking characters frustrate Eraste's attempts to converse with his beloved Orphise in a public park, while Orphise's guardian Damis, whom Eraste calls the worst *fâcheux* of all, is actively scheming to prevent not just their meetings, but their marriage. Secondly, there is the literal gesture of one character physically getting in the way of another. This can happen in three different ways. First,

speaking characters may step in front of Eraste or step between him and Orphise: in the opening scene the bumbling valet La Montagne tries to adjust and brush Eraste's clothing, but in the process nearly chokes him and drops his hat; Alcandre brazenly interrupts the tête-à-tête with Orphise (I, 6); Orante and Clymène stop Eraste as he is strolling, lost in thought (II, 4) and also block Orphise, who has come to rejoin Eraste; Dorante stops him from pursuing Orphise (II, 6); Filinte nearly prevents Eraste from attending a rendez-vous by insisting on accompanying him everywhere (III, 4). The last act adds an amusing twist in which one *fâcheux* blocks another: the would-be economist Ormin notes that he wished to speak to Eraste earlier, but had to wait for the importunate Caritidès to leave. Eraste's amorous triumph results from his literally standing in the way of La Rivière and his associates who threaten bodily harm to Damis; the latter, feeling that he owes his life to Eraste, now consents to the latter's marriage with Orphise.

Second, the gesture of getting in the way can also be accomplished by dancers. Thus, Eraste is harassed in the Act I ballet by the croquet players, who all but jump in front of him, and by the "curieux" who crowd around him; he is detained in the Act II ballet by the bowlers; and in the final ballet he has the guards chase away the maskers. During the Act II ballet, we are told that the children with slingshots and the cobblers are driven away, each presumably evicted by the next group. The most farcical of such episodes is when Lysandre forces Eraste to dance a courante with him, with our hero doing the woman's part (I, 3).

Third, as if we did not see enough characters literally blocking other characters, the gesture receives prominent mention in a number of *récits*. Eraste begins the play proper by recounting how a foppish marquis, having arrived late at a performance in a public playhouse, moves his chair to center stage, thus blocking the view for most of the spectators; the would-be singer and dancer Lysandre announces that he will seek out Lully and badger him into writing an

accompaniment for his tune (I, 3); Orphise tells how she was accosted by a *fâcheux* of her own who prevented her from joining Eraste (I, 5); the fanatical hunter Dorante tells how a boorish country squire insisted on joining a hunting party, encouraged the dogs to pursue the wrong stag, and finally violated all the rules of the sport by shooting the animal with a pistol (II, 6); Eraste complains that Damis has in effect banned him from the house (III, 1); Caritidès mentions that his repeated attempts to visit Eraste at home have been foiled by valets who refused to let him in; similarly, he has failed to gain admission to the king, being blocked in the outermost chamber by the royal *huissiers* (III, 2).

It is possible to speculate that Fouquet, or Molière, or both, intended Eraste as a reflection of the monarch, beset by petitioners and courtiers, and required to put service to others before his private pleasures. The pastoral ballets would then represent both the legitimacy of the monarchy (the tradition in which kings were assimilated to the gods of classical mythology had permeated earlier court ballets and survive in the later *tragédies lyriques*), and the triumph of grace, harmony and serenity over the forces of folly or disorder. What is significant is that the triumph of Eraste and of the monarchy is staged exclusively by dancers; the comedy prepares that triumph but does not celebrate it; and there is no vocal music at all, except for the grotesque singing and dancing of the farcical Lysandre (a role played by Molière himself). His courante has no words, and, given the countertenor key in which it was written, it was probably sung in falsetto, much like "Je croyais Jeanneton" in *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme*.

The fact that the dance monopolized the *intermèdes* and dominated the comedy must be attributed to the taste of Fouquet, who commissioned *Les Fâcheux*. Molière would never again write a comedy-ballet without vocal music. To be sure, the presence of Lully as equal partner in future productions had much to do with this decision, but even when Lully made himself

unavailable, Molière immediately turned to Charpentier to supply a considerable amount of vocal music for his last comedy-ballets, in addition to the mandatory overture and ballet music.

My second example, *La Princesse d'Elide* (1664), is again atypical. This time ballet has a subordinate role, vocal music is extremely important, and comedy is the predominant component. Three of the six *intermèdes* feature the unusual device of a conversation between singing characters and speaking characters--a technique with rich comic possibilities that Molière would employ in only a handful of other plays.[3] The *intermèdes* of *La Princesse d'Elide* are the closest we come in Molière's corpus to the Italian tradition in which a multi-act comic play or opera was inserted between the acts of a serious work. The three episodes dealing with Moron and Philis dramatize the stages in the court jester's unsuccessful courtship of the Princess's *suivante*. They consist largely of spoken dialogue, to which are added a group of male dancers (the hunters of the second *intermède*) and two singers (the Satyr in the third and Tircis in the fourth). The songs and dances are an indispensable part of the subplot, and the subplot in turn provides a comic commentary upon the events in the main plot (Lawrence, ch. 11).

The radically diminished role of ballet is the most puzzling of the play's abnormalities. Since, as Claude Abraham has shown, the first and last *intermèdes* function primarily to link *La Princesse d'Elide* with the festivities of the two other days of the Versailles gala, called "Les Plaisirs de l'île enchantée," the absence of dance from three of the four internal *intermèdes* is especially conspicuous (Abraham 24-25). Dancers intervene in the second *intermède* in order to rescue Moron from a bear that has been chasing him. But in the following *intermède*, instead of using professional dancers or courtiers, the ballet music is given to a comic actor (Molière playing Moron) and to a singer (the Satyr), who apparently cavorted around the stage for 27 bars with more pantomime than real dancing. The score actually refers to this minuet-like passage as

"Les Gestes de Molière et du Satyre." Not until the conclusion of the play will serious dancers reappear, consisting of four shepherds and four shepherdesses.

The first explanation for the scarcity of ballet is that the comedy was designed to be just one entertainment within the context of a three-day *fête*, and that Molière and Lully presumably wished to make each event as distinctive as possible. The destruction of Alcine's magic island on the third day, although it included a brief spoken scene between the sorceress and her two companions, was mostly danced. To balance this, the comedy on the second day had just the minimum of ballet needed to establish the festive mood.

My second explanation is that in this play Molière allowed the comedy to invade the province of dance and to dominate it. Thus, the ballet in the first *intermède*, straightforward in itself, becomes comical because the buffoon Lyciscas, played by Molière, sets himself up as master of ceremonies. Having himself been awakened only with the greatest difficulty, he resolves to awaken everyone else. The score indicates that the first *entrée* was for the "valets de chiens endormis," while the second brought in hunters (presumably professional musicians) playing hunting horns. It would seem that Lyciscas spent much of the first *entrée* trying to rouse the dancers, gave up, led in the hunters and cued them to start playing the appropriate fanfares. The third *entrée* specifies "valets de chiens éveillés;" they, like Lyciscas, have taken an inordinate amount of time to shake off their slumber. During the second *intermède*, the jester Moron directs the hunters through their first *entrée* by speaking and gesturing, and acting at times like a sports announcer: "Bon! le voilà qui fuit. Le voilà qui s'arrête, et qui se jette sur eux. Bon! en voilà un qui vient de lui donner un coup dans la gueule. Les voilà tous à l'entour de lui." Moron follows this *entrée* with an extremely funny pantomime scene in which he plays the braggart and attacks the now-dead bear. It is not clear whether he withdraws at this point or whether he remains on

stage for the second *entrée*, in which the hunters literally dance for joy. In either case, an otherwise serious ballet sequence becomes humorous because of its association with a dynamic comic character.

I have already discussed the expropriation of ballet by Moron and the Satyr in the third *intermède*. There was probably an elaborate pantomime scene for Moron in the fourth *intermède*, as well, during his last speech when he produces a dagger and proclaims that he is about to kill himself for love. I suspect that there was even a pantomime scene in the fifth *intermède*. Although printed texts give the impression that it consisted solely of a duet for two sopranos, Lully preceded the duet with a self-contained and unusually long orchestral introduction. What exactly was going on during those 32 bars, during which time the stage was by no means empty? The music seems suitable for ballet, and a modern production would probably bring in dancers here. However, I suspect that the original production had no dancing here, since whenever there is ballet the term *entrée* is consistently utilized in the score.[4] Even if we imagine that the two singers brought in music stands and spent some time setting them up, this would hardly account for the great length of the orchestral solo. Although I have no evidence on which to base this conjecture, I would like to speculate that the following occurred in the original staging: Moron, dismissed by the Princess a few moments earlier, has remained hidden at a corner of the stage eavesdropping on her soliloquy; as soon as he hears her call for singers to soothe her ("tâchez de charmer avec votre musique le chagrin où je suis"), realizing that she is on the verge of yielding to love, he takes the two singers aside and gives them the text which he wants them to perform. The Princess, lost in reverie and with her back turned to the singers, notices none of this. The duet, consisting of a debate as to whether love is a good or bad thing and whether a sensible woman ought to give in to it, is so directly relevant to the heroine's situation that the choice of text could hardly be an accident. Moreover, the words with which she dismisses the musicians leave no doubt that

the song has had its full impact upon her: "Achevez seules, si vous voulez. Je ne saurais demeurer en repos; et quelque douceur qu'aient vos chants, ils ne font que redoubler mon inquiétude." If my conjecture is valid, then once again Moron is the center of attention, manipulating the emotions of the Princess through music, just as, in the two previous *intermèdes*, he had attempted to both imitate and ridicule two male singers, the satyr and Tircis, in order to manipulate the emotions of Philis. There is delicious irony in the fact that, while Moron succeeds brilliantly with the Princess in his role as matchmaker, he fails every time when he acts on his own behalf.

To the extent that the six *intermèdes* form any kind of thematic unity, I would place it in the dichotomy between spectator/outsider and participant. Usually it is the comic character who is the outsider: Lyciscas, who cannot join in the singing of his comrades and cannot wake up spontaneously when the goddess Aurore sings her morning song; Moron, who cannot deal with the boars and bears to be encountered in the princely sport of hunting; Moron again, who cannot woo his lady in the proper way by singing beautifully and making extravagant declarations of love in *galant* style; the Princess, who becomes an audience for her musicians when she hesitates to acknowledge her true feelings, and perhaps Moron yet again, who chooses the program for that performance. Only in the final ballet are comic outsiders allowed to join in the courtly dance. We are told that a huge machine in the form of a tree emerged through a trap door, and that in the branches were eight flautists and eight violinists garbed as fauns (a creature often presented as comic). Although the stage directions are not fully clear, it seems that some of these instrumentalists participated in the dancing: "quatre bergers et quatre bergères vinrent danser une fort belle entrée, à laquelle les faunes descendant de l'arbre se mêlèrent de temps en temps...." The mechanical tree might even have reminded the audience of the tree which Moron tried to climb during the second *intermède*, when he was pursued by the bear. If my interpretation is correct,

then the final song and ballet mark the integration of comic characters and actions into a stately aristocratic celebration.

The same dichotomy between spectator/outsider and participant could also be used to characterize the main plot of *La Princesse d'Elide*. The opening lines of the play proper reveal the degree to which Euryale, the young Prince of Ithaca, is an outsider at the court of Elide. Besides being a foreigner and a suitor who has never declared his love, he contributes to his own isolation by seeking solitude in the forest. Moron, the court jester, is likewise an outsider, having been born in Ithaca, Euryale's country; he is also a plebeian in an aristocratic surrounding, and a comic-realistic figure in a world of fairy-tale grace and perfection. Euryale is quick to spot Moron's secret weapon: "Il a plus de bon sens que tel qui rit de lui" (I. 1.152). The jester, who may be the prince's illegitimate half-brother, as he none too subtly suggests (I.2.251-62), understands perfectly the thoughts and feelings of the nobility, although he disassociates himself from all their values--all, that is, except courtly love, and it is only in this one vulnerable spot that he ever fails. Through keen observation, clever strategy and skilful role playing, the pair of outsiders achieve their joint objective: Euryale's marriage with the Princess, which will turn the prince and his trusty advisor into central participants at the court of Elis. Moreover, their success in besting the Princess and her court at their own games (both the game of love and the physical contests) could be seen as the symbolic victory of the comic force.

Molière was never to repeat the technique of using one of the characters from the main plot as hero of a subplot that runs through the *intermèdes*. While Molière and Lully both seemed to delight in combining heroic and parodic scenes, they chose to keep experimenting with new formulas in their subsequent collaborations, such as *George Dandin* and *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme*. In any case, the double plot of *La Princesse d'Elide* proved especially suitable for the Versailles gala, since it allowed the king to indulge at

the same time his taste for heroic self-glorification (the pseudo-Greece may well refer to Louis's desire to restore and surpass the achievements of classical antiquity), and his enjoyment of humor, both physical and verbal.

Thus far I have analyzed two extreme scenarios for comedy-ballet, in which one of the three principal components (dance or comedy) clearly predominates. I do not find any examples in Molière where vocal music stands out at the expense of dance and comedy; in fact, in his greatest comedy-ballets the three arts are perfectly fused in order to create a contagiously mirthful world of carnival. But there is a little-known comedy-ballet written shortly after the death of Molière, in which vocal music does indeed dominate the *intermèdes* and becomes thematically central to the main plot. The play, *Rare-en-tout* by Anne de La Roche-Guilhen (1677), was commissioned by King Charles II of England for his birthday celebration. A Francophile who, let it be remembered, had spent a decade of exile in Paris, and who made periodic efforts to encourage the development of French and Italian opera companies in London, Charles decided to regale his court with a play in French by a French-born author and with music by a French-born composer, Jacques Paisible (or Peasible, as he later styled himself).

Perhaps the most unusual feature of the main plot is that the title character, a conceited, young man-about-town, has a tendency to fall in love with ladies, sometimes sight unseen, just by hearing them sing. His passion for Climène arises from hearing her voice one winter night as he is passing in the street. When Climène's father suddenly leaves Paris for London, Rare-en-tout follows her across the Channel and manages to track her down, but only to fall in love with an English singer whom he meets at a concert. Isabelle, his new flame, is an eccentric lady who insists on singing all the time, rather than speaking, and who will not admit anyone to her household staff who is not a musician. Likewise, she will encourage only those admirers who are excellent singers. Rare-en-tout, who

claims to have studied with Michel Lambert (a much esteemed voice teacher and composer and, incidentally, the father-in-law of Lully), acquits himself well at his "audition" and might even win the hand of the lady, were it not for his incurable habit of soliloquizing. Isabelle overhears him boast of his irresistible talents in love, music and battle, and of his unwillingness to tie himself down to one woman, since so many of them are constantly chasing after him. Isabelle and her companion Finette retaliate at once by arranging marriages with other men, leaving our hero and his valet, La Treille, empty-handed. But Rare-en-tout, undaunted by this setback, vows to leave London and seek new conquests elsewhere. The two internal *intermèdes* are directly linked to the plot, since the first is a concert arranged on the banks of the Thames, apparently by Isabelle's other suitor, the singer Tirsis, and the second is a private concert which Rare-en-tout arranges for Isabelle and Finette in his lodgings.

Given all the talk about singing, it is hardly surprising that vocal music plays a major role within the acts, as well as between them. In fact, of the six characters in the play proper, three are singers who never speak (Climène, Isabelle and Tirsis), which leaves the entire spoken dialogue of the comedy to the three remaining characters (Rare-en-tout, La Treille and Finette). In Act II the hero sings a French air and an English air, to prove that he is worthy of Isabelle's affection; this makes him the sole character who both sings and speaks. This division of labor into singers who do nothing but sing and actors who do nothing but speak is reminiscent of the machine tragedies, and reflects the fact that until the final decades of the seventeenth century professional acting troupes in France did not require their members to do any singing. It also reflects the view, most forcefully expressed by Corneille but shared by most of his contemporaries, that any part of the text that was indispensable to the understanding of the plot should be spoken, rather than sung. (This attitude, which did much to delay the acceptance of opera by the French public, was finally starting to decline in the 1670's.)[5]

In *Rare-en-tout* the prologue, epilogue and two *intermèdes* are sung throughout, with the ballet sequence at the end of each serving as little more than an ornament. Since Paisible's score is lost, we cannot tell how much music he wrote for the *entrées*. In every case, however, the dancers had to wait for the singers to finish before they could begin; and in at least one segment the dancers were present on stage during the singing and functioned as an enthusiastic audience: "L'Intermède du premier acte, est une dispute amoureuse de Tritons et de Néréides, sur les bords de la Tamise; des pêcheurs qui tirent leurs filets sur le rivage, charmés de voir des Divinités, témoignent leur joie par une danse agréable."[6]

The text of the prologue and epilogue are devoted to the usual obsequious flattering of the monarch. But, unlike the prologues of the operas and hybrid plays commissioned by Louis XIV, that of *Rare-en-tout* hails Charles as the great peacemaker and non-warrior of Europe. It begins with the personification of Europe, distraught over the interminable warfare wracking her continent, seeking an enlightened ruler who can grant her a secure refuge. The "Nymphe de la Tamise" assures her of Charles's humanity, generosity, wisdom and courage. Europe thereupon summons all her nations to sing and dance in the English king's honor and to pay him homage. The words sung by the chorus are on the surface quite reminiscent of texts set by Lully, but the original audience must have been aware of the different connotations of such expressions as "sa vertu" or "le bruit de son Nom," when applied to Charles. The epilogue is even more remarkable, since it suggests that London has replaced Paris as capital of both love and music. Cupid appears, tears off his blindfold, declares that the ladies of the English court are so beautiful that he is transfering his residence from Cythera to London, and calls in a group of shepherds, shepherdesses and satyrs to sing and dance for him. When Cupid cries, "Inventez des plaisirs nouveaux,/Et célébrez ici ma fête" (vv. 923-24), we are probably intended to connect that divinity

with Charles, since, after all, the "fête" was the king's birthday, and the "plaisirs nouveaux" could well refer to the novelty of a comedy-ballet in the French style at the English court. The concluding entertainment, a musical dispute between the followers of Love and those of Bacchus, followed by a reconciliation in which singers and dancers of both camps join forces, was hardly a novelty. Lully and Molière had used it with great effectivensess in such earlier works as *George Dandin* and *Psyché*, enacting the symbolic union of comedy and heroic drama, of reality and fantasy. But in this play the pastoral finale marks the culmination of a long series of complimentary references to all things English. It also follows the humiliation of the French braggart hero who, although he has demonstrated his competence as a lover and as a singer, is seemingly outdone in both roles by the English; his claim to military valor is never put to the test and remains mere talk. The epilogue consecrates the superiority of England in all these areas, suggesting that what I call the *translatio amoris* is complete. It is no wonder that La Roche-Guilhen never attempted to have her play staged or printed in Paris.

It should be apparent that the comedy-ballet was an unusually inspiring and liberating form for playwrights and composers alike--so much so that even plays where the components were not harmoniously balanced could still be viable, even captivating works of art. To be sure, there could be serious constraints, like the short deadlines frequently imposed on Molière, or other types of demands imposed by the patron, such as Fouquet's wish to spotlight ballet or Charles's penchant for opera; the choice of décor, whether it showed real places like Vaux-le-Vicomte or the Thames, or imaginary locales like the pseudo-Greece of *La Princesse d'Elide*; sometimes the patron even dictated the choice of costumes, as with the Turkish ceremony in *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme*. Nevertheless, these complex demands could serve as a stimulating artistic challenge. The baroque fascination with generic experimentation and combination, frowned upon by theorists of classicism, led to the composition of plays

that have kept their freshness and charm even after three centuries. As Robert Sherwood has stated, Louis XIV's lively interest in musical productions stemmed not just from the pleasure and relaxation they afforded, but also from their usefulness in keeping before the court, the Paris populace and foreign visitors an image of the heroism, benevolence and brilliance of the monarchy.[7] Of these musical productions, the comedy-ballets, which succeeded remarkably well in both functions, tended to be the least pompous and the most endearing.

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Notes

[1]Quotations from Molière are taken from the Georges Couton edition of the *Oeuvres complètes.* The music for the comedy-ballets has been reprinted in Henry Prunières's edition of the works of Lully.

[2]Among the earlier work on comedy-ballet that I found most helpful, I note the studies of Louis Auld, Claude Abraham, Donald Jackson, Kevin Elstob, and Robert McBride.

[3]The other instances are in *Le Mariage forcé* (twice), *L'Amour médecin, Pastorale comique* (at least once), and *Le Malade imaginaire.*

[4]The term "Ritournelle" occurs in Lully's comedy-ballet scores to designate an orchestral solo preceding a vocal piece. It is usually a totally separate and detachable movement. (There are only a few cases where the term is used for an orchestral solo occurring in the middle of a song.) Fewer than half of the vocal selections in the comedy-ballets feature *ritournelles*, and it is hard to determine a consistent pattern in their use or absence. However, in most of the cases where the singers are not already on stage and need to make

their entrance, Lully tends to write a *ritournelle*. For example, the only other *ritournelle* in *La Princesse d'Elide* occurs at the start of the first *intermède*, when L'Aurore needs to enter in order to sing her solo. In this instance, as in virtually all *ritournelles*, the stage is not empty during the orchestral introduction: the sleeping hunters are already present, as is the Princess herself at the start of the fifth *intermède*. James Anthony, who shows how skilfully Lully used such passages in the *tragédies lyriques*, also speculates about possible stage action during the orchestral solos: "Surely many preludes and *ritournelles* were also converted into genuine dramatic symphonies by means of dance pantomimes although the scores and even the *livrets* are singularly uncommunicative in this regard." *French Baroque Music from Beaujoyeulx to Rameau* (New York and London: W.W. Norton, 1978), p. 102.

[5]In the "Argument" (1651) to *Andromède*. See my "On the Use of Music and Dance in the Machine Tragedies" in *PFSCL* 29 (1988), 463-76.

[6]Quotations are taken from my own edition of *Rare-en-tout* with modernized spelling (in progress). The original edition (London, 1677) is riddled with several hundred errors. See Alexandre Calame, *Anne de La Roche-Guilhen, romancière huguenote* (Geneva: Droz, 1972); Spire Pitou, "A Forgotten Play: La Roche-Guilhem's *Rare-en-tout* (1677)" in *Modern Language Notes* 72 (1957), 357-60.

[7]Robert Isherwood, *Music in the Service of the King* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1973), p. 148.

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