

WATTEAU, MUSIC,
AND THEATER

THE METROPOLITAN
MUSEUM OF ART



WATTEAU, MUSIC, AND THEATER



WATTEAU, MUSIC, AND THEATER

EDITED BY KATHARINE BAETJER

With an introduction by Pierre Rosenberg

and an essay by Georgia J. Cowart

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DIRECTOR'S FOREWORD

Watteau, Music, and Theater honors Philippe de Montebello, Director Emeritus of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, who was Director of the Museum from July 1, 1977, until December 31, 2008, and whose passion for French arts and culture is widely known. This publication and the exhibition it accompanies bring together notable paintings and drawings by Jean-Antoine Watteau, most of them on loan, with additional French and other European paintings, drawings, prints, gold boxes, porcelains, and musical instruments from the Metropolitan Museum's holdings. The works of art are presented in the musical and theatrical context of early eighteenth-century France. The exhibition was conceived by Georgia J. Cowart, Professor of Music, Case Western Reserve University. Katharine Baetjer, Curator of European Paintings, organized and coordinated the contents and production of the catalogue.

The project has benefited greatly from a grant awarded by The Florence Gould Foundation, which over many years has been a notable force in ensuring the Museum's ability to present exhibitions and permanent installations of French art meeting the highest possible standard. We are indebted to two of the Museum's esteemed trustees for their generous interest in this presentation. Drue Heinz once again has demonstrated her vision and commitment to scholarly work through the funding of the catalogue, and Mr. and Mrs. David T. Schiff have underwritten the musical programming associated with the exhibition. The Museum warmly acknowledges these funders and thanks them for their steadfast support. The exhibition is also supported by an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities.

Thomas P. Campbell
Director, The Metropolitan Museum of Art

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Watteau, Music, and Theater has been dedicated since its inception to Philippe de Montebello. It is possible to organize an exhibition without the permission of the director, as he then was, but it is not possible to do so without his knowledge. Therefore in due course it fell to Philippe to authorize both the project and the budget, but without knowing anything of the contents of the exhibition, which was surely a unique occurrence. The idea for the show came to me from Georgia J. Cowart, professor of music at Case Western Reserve University and a fellow at the Museum in the academic years 2007–2009. It is a privilege to publish a short essay by Pierre Rosenberg, who was Philippe's partner in preparing many of the most important European paintings exhibitions held in New York and Paris over the last thirty years of the twentieth century.

The Metropolitan Museum gratefully acknowledges the loan of paintings by Watteau from the museums of Germany: Gemäldegalerie Staatliche Museen zu Berlin; Städelsches Kunstinstitut und Städtische Galerie, Frankfurt; Stiftung Preussische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg. Mahrukh Tarapor and Uté Collinet have assisted me in securing these paintings for the show, and it is worth noting that their absence probably would have resulted in the cancellation of the entire project. This is not to suggest that we do not equally appreciate the cooperation of private collectors, directors, and curators of museums here and abroad, particularly Dulwich Picture Gallery, London, Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid, and the museums of Boston, Chicago, and San Francisco. Thanks to Jean-Luc

Baroni, Guy Wildenstein, and Alan Wintermute for their interventions on the Museum's behalf. Emily Rafferty kindly signed the loan requests in Philippe's place.

I have always enjoyed working with curators in other departments of the Museum, and I thank Perrin Stein, Jeff Munger, and Jayson Dobney for selecting works for the exhibition and for writing entries for the catalogue. I wish that Donald Posner could have seen this show, as Watteau was one of his subjects and as many of the contributors to this publication were trained under his supervision at the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University. Thanks also to John P. O'Neill, Bruce Campbell, Barbara Cavaliere, and Gwen Roginsky, who made this book possible, as well as to Kathryn Ansite, Renée Barrick, Kim de Beaumont, Esther Bell, Aileen Chuk, Clint Coller, Nina Diefenbach, Josephine Dobkin, Charlotte Hale, Tav Holmes, Dorothy Kellett, Theresa King-Dickinson, Sue Koch, Gary Kopp, Jayne Kuchna, Michael Langley, Rich Lichte, Dorothy Mahon, Patrice Mattia, John McKanna, Linda Sylling, and Christoph Vogtherr. I was fortunate to have had the assistance of Anna Piotrowska, who during her curatorial internship in the Department of European Paintings contributed significantly to the preparation of the exhibition and catalogue.

For thirty years, on every trip to Paris, I stayed with my uncle, George Hook, in the rue d'Artois but also at his farm, near Gaillon in Normandy. All things French remind me of him and of his widow, Rosalie, who died as this book went to press. It gives me pleasure to remember them here.

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CHRONOLOGY

Note: The following lists the few recorded events in the life of Jean-Antoine Watteau.

1684

October 10: Jean-Antoine Watteau, the son and grandson of roofers, is baptized in the parish church of Saint-Jacques, Valenciennes.

1694/95

Watteau may have been apprenticed to a painter in Valenciennes.

Ca. 1702

Watteau arrives in Paris. He works as a copyist, with Claude Gillot (1673–1722) and later with Claude III Audran (1658–1734).

1709

April 6: Watteau is authorized to participate in the competition of the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture.

August 31: The works are judged, and Watteau wins second prize.

Later, he returns to Valenciennes for an indeterminate period.

1712

July 30: Watteau presents himself to the Académie. He is received and invited to submit a reception piece, the subject to be of his own choosing.

1714

January 5: Watteau is invited to account for his failure to present a reception piece.

1715

January 5: The Académie claims its reception piece from Watteau.

June 13: Count Carl-Gustaf Tessin (1695–1770) visits him at Quai Conti and purchases two paintings.

1716

January 25: Watteau is granted another postponement by the Académie.

Before December 22: He is introduced to Sebastiano Ricci (1659–1734) by Pierre Crozat (1661–1740).

1717

January 9: Watteau is granted another postponement.

May 4: He receives 200 *livres* for two paintings bought by Léopold-Charles de Ligne, duc d’Arenberg (1690–1754).

August 28: He is admitted to the Académie upon presentation of “le pèlerinage à Lisle de Citere.” The title of the work is crossed out and replaced with “feste galante.”

September 4 and December 31: He attends sessions of the Académie.

By the end of the year, he is living with Crozat.

1718

By the end of the year, Watteau is living with Nicolas Vleughels (1668–1737).

1719

September 20: Watteau still lives with Vleughels.

By the end of the year, he is in England.

1720

August 20: Watteau meets Rosalba Carriera (1675–1757) in Paris.

1720

August 20: Watteau meets Rosalba Carriera (1675–1757) in Paris. By the end of the year, he is living with Edme-François Gersaint (1694–1750).

1721

February: On Crozat's initiative, it is announced that Watteau will draw copies of paintings from the royal collection (the so-called *Recueil Crozat*).

February 9: He receives Rosalba's visit.

February 11: He poses for her.

Spring: He is living in the house of Philippe Lefebvre (d. 1750) at Nogent-sur-Marne.

July 18: Watteau dies at Nogent-sur-Marne.

WATTEAU'S CLIENTS AND PATRONS

About 1709, Pierre Sirois (1665–1726) buys from Watteau the *Departure of the Troops* (lost) for 60 *livres* and commissions a pendant, *The Bivouac* (Pushkin Museum, Moscow) for 200 *livres*.

On May 4, 1717, the duc d'Arenberg acquires two (unidentified) paintings for 200 *livres*.

Pierre Crozat commissions four allegories of the seasons for the dining room of his Paris house in about 1715–16 (*Summer* is in the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; the others are lost).

In London, in 1719–20, Watteau paints two pictures for Dr. Richard Mead (1673–1754): *Italian Comedians* (National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.), and *Peaceful Love* (lost).

In 1721, Edme-François Gersaint receives *Gersaint's Shop Sign* (Stiftung

Preussische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg) as a token of friendship.

WATTEAU, MUSIC, AND THEATER



*Assis, au près de toy, sous ces charmans Ombregés,
Du temps, mon cher Watteau, je crains peu les outrages,
Trop heureux! si les Traits, d'un fidele Burin,*

*En multipliant tes Ouvrages,
Instruisoient l'Univers des sinceres hommages
Que je rends à ton Art divin!*

Paris. Chez Desdignes du Reg.

Figure 1. Nicolas-Henry Tardieu (French, 1674–1749) after Jean-Antoine Watteau, *Assis, au près de toi...* (Watteau's Self-Portrait with Jean de Jullienne), 1731. Etching and engraving, image: 15 x 11 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (37.9 x 29.4 cm); platemark: 16 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 12 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (43 x 31.2 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert N. Straus, 1928 (28.113(1-3))

SOME MODEST REFLECTIONS ON JEAN-ANTOINE WATTEAU (1684–1721)

PIERRE ROSENBERG

To Sir Michael Levey (1927–2008), to whom Watteau owes so much

Since 1984–85 and the exhibition *Watteau* in Washington, D.C., Paris, and Berlin,¹ since 1996 and the appearance of the catalogue raisonné of the artist's drawings,² has the idea—or rather, the image—we have of Watteau radically changed; has it been altered? In what ways and by whom has it been substantially modified? Has the status of this painter and draftsman in art history, in the history of the arts in France and in Europe during the first two decades of the eighteenth century, gone up or down? For the post-1984 generations, whether art historians, artists, or the cultivated public, has his name fallen into obscurity or, on the contrary, become more firmly ensconced? It is not my intention (this would call for a book in itself or, at any rate, a much broader discussion) to set up a balance sheet, to name the key publications and major articles devoted to Watteau, to categorize them by themes—iconography of the works, their interpretation, their reception in France as well as abroad, the publication of previously unpublished material, modifications in the chronology of the oeuvre, entries in catalogues, reviews of exhibitions (of which there have been relatively few), and the list is not exhaustive—or to select the best among them. Neither is it my intention to bring up to date the catalogues raisonnés of Watteau's paintings and drawings or to give an account of the reappearances, discoveries, acquisitions, and new material that others are busy compiling. Instead, I wish to explore the place of Watteau among the most innovative artists of the time.

As often happens at the end of a reign, that of Louis XIV was gloomy, in art as in politics. The deaths of Charles Le Brun in 1690 and of Pierre Mignard five years later brought the century to its close. What of their legacies? The question remained open. Certainly, each left many

students, some greatly talented. Among the boldest of them could be sensed a desire for renewal, an openness to new currents. No longer were their sole points of reference Raphael or Poussin, for now Correggio and Barocci, and, of course, Rubens inspired them; no longer was history painting in the grand manner their sole concern, but equally gallant, lighthearted mythologies, genre scenes, and ornamental painting. They preferred everyday life to antiquity, were drawn to a more carefree and, to some degree, more accessible art. At the same time, they felt that painting, at least in France, had reached a dead end, and were unsure how to turn it around. They hoped for a revelation, a revolution, not knowing what form it would take. They awaited the arrival of a savior, which nevertheless came as a surprise to more than one. When the king died in 1715, Watteau was thirty-one. Six years later, he, in turn, left the world.

Let us return to this expectancy and this hope. As noted above, the arts were stagnant. The most informed among people who followed the arts were fully aware of the situation (this perception that French painting was experiencing a crisis calls for a more extended, more subtle analysis), and they asked themselves how it had come about. Were the national resources sufficient? Was it necessary to look to foreign artists to infuse new life into the arts and revive them? The latter choice was deliberately adopted by the Regent, the duc d'Orléans, and his artistic advisers, who invited the top Venetian artists of the time—Gian Antonio Pellegrini, Sebastiano Ricci, the illustrious Rosalba Carriera—to France, with demonstrable success. I have too often reflected on the significance of the Parisian sojourns of these first-rank creators, about the impact of their paintings, their pastels, their



Figure 2. Nicolas-Henry Tardieu (French, 1674–1749) after Jean-Antoine Watteau, *L'Embarquement pour Cythère*, 1733. Etching and engraving, image: 19 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 28 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (49.8 x 71.8 cm); platemark: 21 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 29 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (54.8 x 74.5 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert N. Straus, 1928 (28.113(1-3))

large-scale decorative works, to revisit this exciting episode in the history of French painting—the conquest of Paris by Venice—but I will emphasize once more the importance of this voluntary and universally accepted colonization, which had such a salutary effect.³ Yet it did not last long, and it would not have given the arts an essential new spark were it not for Watteau. If I may venture to say so, he had been wished for and waited for without, of course, any realization about who he would be or, above all, what he would do. How, for even a moment, could one imagine that the son of a roofer from Valenciennes, a small city on the Flemish frontier that had recently become part of France, a young man with no special education, without the kind of exposure to the arts that so often influences the choice of such a career, without the training offered by the powerful Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture (although it, too, was experiencing a moment of crisis or, at least, self-examination), would become this anticipated revolutionary?

Was this understood immediately? How did it really happen? While the analysis of the details of this triumphant progress is in great part yet to be written, and while areas of shadow remain that our youngest scholars will want to examine further (but not without encountering, I am sure, some obstacles), it is possible to draw the broad picture, which I permit myself to evoke briefly here.

All, or very nearly all, remains to be learned about Watteau's earliest years in Valenciennes. Even his date of birth in 1684 has not been established securely. It could not have been foreseen that the terms of the Treaty of Nijmegen of 1678, which transferred to France the city of Valenciennes (up to then under Spanish control), would not be reversed after a series of new wars less fortunate in their outcome than those that made it possible for the young Louis XIV to conquer Flanders. And what was left behind of the Spanish occupation in Valenciennes if not the emblematic presence of works by Rubens and his students? What tokens of the past may have made their mark on the young Watteau? What local artistic traditions influenced him? Without going so far as to examine the accidents of fate that would miraculously advance the career of the young Antoine, it is essential, even indispensable, to investigate his training, which called for complex technical skills whose

constraints are not fully understood today. In any case, apparently by 1702, the date given by some of the artist's earliest biographers (those crucial first biographers), Watteau was in Paris, doubtless under his own initiative, but, again, we have no document to confirm this. Then, we have the oft-repeated episode of the tradesman of religious images (his name was learned recently) who kept a shop on the Pont Notre-Dame (bridges played such an important role in the painter's career) and for whom Watteau copied all day long an old woman wearing spectacles and reading by Gerard (or Gerrit) Dou, one of the Dutch painters then popular in Paris. Then came Claude Gillot and Claude III Audran. While the second, who was concierge—as it was then called—of the Palais du Luxembourg (today, we would call him the curator), allowed Watteau to copy Rubens's series of paintings known as *The Life of Marie de Médicis* (now in the collection of the Musée du Louvre), the first was an artist of great talent (we eagerly await a monograph on this attractive figure, better known today for his graphic art than for his paintings). And, although the relationship between Watteau and the latter deteriorated over the years, owing as much to their incompatible temperaments as to the older man's jealousy of the younger, it is no less true that this artist must have been instrumental in educating Watteau. Another reliable fact is the role of the Académie Royale. Beginning in 1709, at the age of twenty-five, Watteau participated in its painting contests and won a second prize (how much one would like to find the competition entry, representing *Abigail Bringing Provisions to David*), while the first prize went to one Antoine Grison, who did not make a significant mark in painting.

The reasons for Watteau's return to Valenciennes in 1709 remain mysterious. Did he seek a career as a painter there? Was he spurred to revisit the scene of his youth for family reasons? We do not know. Regardless, on July 30, 1712, Watteau presented himself to the Académie Royale as a candidate and was accepted on the spot. This spectacular official recognition of an artist who had until then offered little formal evidence of his skills is astounding. Can we ascribe it to an exceptional clairvoyance on the part of the Académie, or did Watteau already have powerful supporters? And why did Watteau, who was expected to make obeisance to this institution, wait so long to submit his reception

piece, causing the Académie, regularly and insistently, to clamor for it? That he wanted to make a dazzling impression and that he did not feel ready before August 28, 1717, the memorable date of his reception with his *Le Pèlerinage à l'isle de Cythère* (*Pilgrimage to the Island of Cythera*) is one possible explanation for his successive postponements. For, between 1712 and 1717, Watteau made himself known. Dealers and collectors, especially dealers, those celebrated “dealers of Watteau,” fought over his paintings, the collectors over his company. He got to know the very wealthy Pierre Crozat, who in the last months of 1716 introduced him to the Venetian painter Sebastiano Ricci. From that date, Crozat considered him the only one “among all our painters” worthy of being presented to the illustrious Rosalba Carriera, whose arrival in Paris was awaited (Charles de La Fosse died on December 13 of the same year). Watteau lived with Crozat for a while (only for a while, as Watteau moved continually from place to place and never settled anywhere permanently).

What was the reaction to *Pilgrimage to the Island of Cythera*? We have no contemporary accounts. For myself, I am convinced that the work caused a sensation. Otherwise, it would be puzzling that Watteau’s biographers (to whom I will shortly devote some pages), despite their discretion on the subject of this large canvas, were willing to dedicate themselves with such benevolence to its creator, which was unusual in the early years of the eighteenth century. One of them, writing in 1725, refers to him as “showered with praise and esteem.” Watteau’s friendship with the notable painter Nicolas Vleughels, like Watteau of Flemish extraction but an unreserved Venetophile and the future (and brilliant) director of the Académie de France in Rome, with whom Watteau shared lodgings, calls for closer analysis. And why did he, who so longed to see Italy (most likely Venice rather than Rome), take off for London in 1719 (although the date is not certain) for (apparently) a year? Was it for medical reasons, to avail himself of treatment by the famous Dr. Richard Mead? Was it to rebuild his finances, shaken by the collapse of the system devised by John Law (a precursor of Bernard Madoff)? Was it to find new patrons? Unfortunately, the passport required of all visitors to England has disappeared. More unfortunate is the absence of any details or information at all about this sojourn,

which must have had an effect on the ever curious Watteau, a staunch admirer of Anthony van Dyck.

By August 1720 at the latest, Watteau was back in Paris. At that time, he took up residence with Edme-François Gersaint. For the latter’s shop on one of the bridges of Paris, he made the finest work among French paintings of the eighteenth century, *L’Enseigne de Gersaint* (*Gersaint’s Shop Sign*). Painted “from life” in “eight days, working only in the mornings . . . , in order to warm up his fingers,” according to his own description (Watteau was not lacking in coyness), this painting, along with Velázquez’s *Las Meninas*, Courbet’s *The Studio of the Painter*, and Picasso’s *Les Femmes d’Alger*, counts among the greatest reflections on the very essence of painting, reality, and illusion.

Having fallen seriously ill (most likely suffering from tuberculosis), Watteau moved to Nogent-sur-Marne at the gates of Paris, to a house owned by Lefebvre, a court official (his title was *intendant des Menus Plaisirs du Roi*). He died there on July 18, 1721, after dividing his drawings (those that he had not destroyed, a number still open to debate) among his friends Jean de Jullienne, the Abbé Haranger, Nicolas Henin, and Gersaint.

In 1984, I published (more precisely, reprinted) the old texts written about Watteau, *Vies anciennes de Watteau*, to which I added several new texts in the Italian edition that appeared some years later.⁴ I strongly urge Watteau’s admirers to read these texts, some of which (the oldest, it goes without saying) were written by contemporaries of the artist who knew him personally. One contemporary was Nicolas Henin, mentioned above. He held various official posts (that is, *Conseiller du Roi au Châtelet de Paris* and, from 1720, *Intendant et Ordonnateur des Bâtiments du Roi*). Let us listen to the comte de Caylus, who, it seems, did not make Watteau’s acquaintance until 1718 and on February 7, 1748, read to the Académie Royale his “life of Watteau” (which, most likely, had been written well before that date):

Enjoying an excellent reputation, he had no other enemy than himself and a certain spirit of instability that prevailed in him. No sooner was he settled in a dwelling than he turned against it. He changed his lodgings over and over again, and always under pretexts that, through shame at such behavior, he made sure to render plausible.

Those places he returned to most often were several rooms I had in different quarters of Paris, which we used only for posing models, painting, and drawing. In these spaces dedicated solely to art, removed from every disruption, we experienced, he and I, with a friend in common drawn by the same inclination, the pure joy of youth, joined to the liveliness of imagination, the one and the other united without hesitation to the delights of painting. I can say that the Watteau so serious, so morose, so shy and so caustic everywhere else, here was no longer anything but the Watteau of his paintings: that is, the artist that they would have imagined as amiable, tender, and perhaps something of a swain.

It was in these refuges that I discovered, to my benefit, how deeply Watteau thought about painting, and how inferior his execution was to his ideas.

This wonderful text should always be kept in mind when looking at a painting or a drawing by Watteau. But who is this “friend in common” that Caylus mentions? He turns out to be none other than Nicolas Henin, who, as we discover incidentally and to our surprise, practices the arts and “poses the model” (female or male?) as did Caylus himself.

These “lives” of Watteau constitute an inexhaustible source of information not only on the artist but also, more importantly, on the man. Yet even this feast often leaves one hungering for more on his art, his oeuvre, his “ideas,” his ambitions.

Watteau “was of medium height and of a sickly constitution” (Jean de Jullienne). “His health [was] absolutely devastated,” added Mariette. According to Gersaint, “his face was in no way impressive,” “his eyes gave no sign of either his talent or the liveliness of his mind” (Caylus). “He was of a sweet and affable nature” (La Roque), “a sad disposition,” and a “delicate and weakened temperament,” also “indolent” and “impatient” (Gersaint). A single man, he had no known liaisons, whether with women or with men. “He was naturally modest and shy,” specified La Roque, to which Mariette added, “he dragged along with him an air of weariness that was accompanied by distaste.” “Constant work made [him] a bit melancholy [a word used repeatedly in all the biographies], cold and constrained in manner. . . . The truth was that he was not overly endearing. He was restless, always dissatisfied with himself, fond of change, never happy where he was, which often made

him insufferable to himself, and sometimes to his friends” (Abbé Leclerc). The best portrait of the man comes from the pen of Jullienne: “He had a lively and penetrating mind and a lofty sensibility. He spoke little but well and wrote the same way. He was almost always meditative, a great admirer of nature and of all the masters who had imitated it. . . . Constant work had made him a bit melancholy, cold and constrained in manner, which often made him insufferable to himself, and sometimes to his friends.” We find these same words in Gersaint’s characterization, giving the impression that authors copied from each other, especially later in the century. “He had no use for money,” observed Caylus. What Watteau loved was music and singing (as confirmed by his paintings and many of his drawings). Although “reading was his greatest relaxation,” we find no allusion in any of his contemporary biographers to the theater (or the world of actors), despite the important role it played in his artistic production, allowing him to mingle (following an invention that, if not his own, he endowed with all its amplitude) the illusion of performance with the tragicomedy of life.

Although the account of the man, despite some shadowed areas, was sketched out in broad outlines and has not been substantially revised since the first half of the eighteenth century, the same cannot be said for his paintings, their interpretation and meaning. The artist’s intentions, his “ideas,” have given rise, for close to half a century, to a wealth of “readings,” often contradictory and rarely convincing, “readings” that belie the essential: the works themselves and their beauty.

Before discussing quickly (too quickly) this important issue, I would like to devote several lines to Watteau’s very particular working method, that (it has not been sufficiently emphasized) of an autodidact. To return to Caylus: “His habit was to sketch his studies in a bound book, so that he would always have many of them at hand. He had some elegant clothes, some of them comical, which he would put on persons of either sex, depending on whom he could find willing to hold still and whom he would record in poses presented to him by nature, deliberately choosing the simplest over the others. When he had the inclination to make a painting, he had recourse to his collection of sketches [his “bound book”]. From it, he selected the figures that best suited him at that moment. He arranged them into groups, most often with a landscape

background that he had imagined or prepared. It was rare for him to proceed otherwise.” Following a practice of which we know no other examples and which must always be kept in mind when examining one of his works, Watteau owned a large collection of costumes, which he used to dress his models. He sketched them, then composed his paintings with the assistance of his drawings, some of them several years old. Watteau seldom made drawings with the idea of a painting in mind.

Although Watteau is judged among the three or four greatest French draftsmen (a claim no one today would think of contesting)—perhaps even the greatest of all—the painter encountered technical difficulties that he did not always know how to resolve. He regularly altered his paintings, erasing (the word is Mariette’s) passages “well thought out and well executed,” and sometimes replacing them with much weaker ones. There is the matter of the infamous medium rich with oil that Watteau used habitually. Mentioned by all his biographers, this material is blamed for the poor state of conservation of so many of the artist’s canvases, a condition that grieved his admirers beginning in the eighteenth century and that today makes judging the authenticity of a number of his pictures so difficult. Gersaint judged that only the works “free from this defect” (the use of a rich medium, which allowed Watteau to paint quickly but rapidly caused changes in color) are “wonderful and will always be kept in the greatest collections.”

Already in the eighteenth century, during the years that directly followed his death, the questions began. Should the painter be favored over the draftsman or, on the contrary, should the painter be disregarded to the exclusive benefit of the draftsman, as Gersaint believed? Watteau himself, as reported by the latter, “was more satisfied with his drawings than with his paintings.” But this ignores what is essential. If Watteau’s efforts to transcribe his ideas on his canvas by means of his own personal method, which had nothing to do with the academic teaching of the period or with either Italian or northern practices, were not always successful, it remains no less true that it was his most ambitious compositions, whether they had a subject, as today’s art historians want to assume, or did not, as many of his contemporaries thought, that gave evidence of his ambitions. They were prodigious, and they secure their author’s immortality. None has known better than he how to paint

tenderness and jealousy, affection and loneliness, the fickleness of the heart, surrender and delight. Painter of ambiguity and the timelessness of emotions, of confusion between dream and reality, of the impalpable boundary between them, he worked soil that no painter before him dreamed of tilling, and the pictures affect us still, as they are for all centuries, for all time, for all ages.

* * * *

This brief text, written in homage to Philippe de Montebello, a great admirer of Watteau, reminds me of an episode from the exhibition of 1984–85, held in Washington, Paris, and Berlin, which I would like to describe here.

Why Washington-Paris-Berlin and not in New York, as had already become habitual? There were without any doubt many reasons for this choice that I have forgotten. The arrival of the most important masterpieces by Watteau in Washington alone hurt Philippe (I cannot think of a better word). The exhibition closed at the National Gallery of Art in Washington on September 23. It was to reopen at the Grand Palais in Paris on October 23. One month to remove, pack, transport, and install some 150 drawings and prints and the 73 paintings in the exhibition was not too much time. Philippe came into play then, knew how to make himself heard, and carried the day: he was able to exhibit at the Met, his Met, for the New York public, his public, the *Pilgrimage to the Island of Cythera* from the Louvre and *Gersaint’s Shop Sign* from Berlin. Bravo, Philippe, for this feat. . . .

1. See Grasselli and Rosenberg 1984. I was responsible for the paintings section of this exhibition. In the present essay, I deliberately did not cite any of the authors, numerous and of every nationality, who have evinced interest in Watteau and his work since 1984, including those currently involved in the subject. I offer here neither a listing of such work nor a synthesis of the publications devoted to the artist over a quarter of a century (which, in fact, would be most useful).
2. This was a collaboration between me and Louis-Antoine Prat.
3. Pierre Rosenberg, “Ignorance et incompréhension réciproque: Un Point de vue sur les difficiles relations artistiques entre la France et l’Italie au XVIII^e siècle,” reprinted, most recently, in Pierre Rosenberg, *De Raphaël à la Révolution: Les Relations artistiques entre la France et l’Italie* (Milan, 2005), pp. 153–68.
4. Pierre Rosenberg, ed., *Vies anciennes de Watteau* (Paris, 1984); Italian ed., *Watteau: Le vite antiche* (Bologna, 1991).

THE MUSICAL THEATER IN WATTEAU'S PARIS

GEORGIA J. COWART

When Watteau arrived in Paris at the beginning of the eighteenth century, the French capital was a city of approximately half a million inhabitants, second only to London in population and second to none in the vibrancy of its artistic and cultural life. In the late years of the seventeenth century, this urban metropolis had virtually superseded the court at Versailles as the wellspring of French art and culture. Watteau's art represents a radical new aesthetic that, eschewing the formulas previously associated with academic painting, appealed to the developing taste of the Parisian public sphere. That taste is clearly seen in an emerging public theater, which during Watteau's lifetime began to move away from traditional heroic, mythological, and historical themes toward an emphasis on the lighthearted pleasures of comedy and spectacle.

In 1702, Louis XIV had already reigned for fifty-nine years (figure 3). Suspicious of the Parisian populace since the civil wars of his childhood, he had moved his court from Paris to Versailles in 1682. The following decades, characterized by military defeat, economic crisis, and religious unrest, witnessed the erosion of Louis's former glory. In this period, the king turned to increasing piety and withdrew from public life as well as the social life of the court. Under the influence of the devout Madame de Maintenon, and probably also because of financial constraints, he severely curtailed the scale of court entertainment in the late years of his reign.

Although some courtiers joined the devout faction loosely gathered around the king, many welcomed the relaxation of their social obligations at court as an opportunity to revel in the delights of urban Paris. Some courtiers moved to the city, while others frequented the capital by night, returning by carriage to Versailles in the early

morning hours. The first among European cities to be illuminated, nocturnal Paris blazed with the light of 6,500 lanterns. By night and day, it sparkled with the latest in fashion, brilliant conversation, and an enlightened attitude that would shape the intellectual life of eighteenth-century Europe.

In the city, members of a liberated nobility rubbed shoulders with an increasingly prosperous bourgeoisie, who used their proximity to noble fashions and habits to redefine themselves as a privileged urban elite. The increasing wealth of this class, a growing rate of intermarriage, and Louis XIV's practice of ennobling civil servants had all begun to blur the lines of class difference. With the breakdown of the old bloodlines, the court aristocracy sought more than ever to define itself through a refinement in taste, manners, and fashion—a strategy that in turn inflamed the desire of the bourgeoisie for the promise of a new kind of nobility, achieved through artful living rather than pedigree. Several decades after Molière had ridiculed bourgeois pretensions, many had succeeded where his *bourgeois gentilhomme* had failed, in parlaying their wealth into a discerning appreciation for the arts. Music and the theatrical arts were especially prized because of their association with the privilege of court entertainment, which in the earlier days of Louis's reign had set a standard for Europe.

The public theaters of Paris, although generally retaining a hierarchical structure based on ticket pricing, provided one of the few venues (besides the church, the fair, and the salon) for persons of different social classes to mingle with some degree of freedom. Theatrical entertainment began to flatter and cater to this mixed audience, who collectively saw themselves as inheritors of spectacular entertainments formerly associated with the king and his court.

Although the spoken and operatic forms of tragedy (the latter known as the “tragedy in music”) continued to draw audiences, lighthearted entertainments, such as the opera-ballet and spoken comedy interlaced with musical spectacle, reflected the taste of this theatergoing public. The most prominent Parisian theaters, including the Académie Royale de Musique (Royal Academy of Music, informally known as the Opéra), the Comédie Française, the seasonal theater of the fairgrounds (*théâtre de la foire*), and (after 1715) the Nouveau Théâtre Italien (New Italian Theater), vied to offer entertainments that were satirical and libertine in tone, and to find a voice distinct from both the entertainments of Louis’s court and the oppressive piety that now characterized it. The result was a pleasure-oriented style associated with the period of the Regency (1715–23) but actually established in Paris well before the death of the Sun King.

THE PARIS OPÉRA

Of the Parisian theaters, the Opéra was the most prestigious. It was housed in the Palais-Royal, a former royal residence then in the possession of Philippe, duc d’Orléans, Louis XIV’s nephew, who would serve as Regent of France from 1715 to 1723. This palace, also the former site of Molière’s theater, provided a resplendent countercourt for a nobility seeking to avoid the watchful eye of the king and for a social-climbing bourgeoisie.

The taste of this audience was for the ballet, a genre that had appeared only sporadically since the days of the court ballet in the 1650s and 1660s, when the king and members of his court had danced in opulent spectacles produced during the carnival season. These court ballets, the last of which had begun to appropriate a more absolutist imagery, had given way in the 1670s and 1680s to the more serious operatic tragedy, a genre deemed appropriate for a king at the zenith of his power. The stage ballet was kept alive through scenes emphasizing dance, called *divertissements*, in these musical tragedies, and also by occasional performances at court and at the Opéra in the later part of the century. For the marriage of the grand dauphin, Louis’s son, in 1681, the court ballet entitled *Le Triomphe de l’Amour* (see nos. 34, 35)



Figure 3. Hyacinthe Rigaud (French, 1659–1743), *Louis XIV*, 1701. Oil on canvas, 109 x 76 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (277 x 194 cm). Musée du Louvre, Paris (inv. 7492)

showcased a new generation of noble dancers. Later in the year, the same ballet, danced by male courtiers, at the Opéra, was received enthusiastically by the audience. Instead of the noble ladies who had danced in the court production, professional female dancers were sub-

stituted, inaugurating the brilliant—and notorious—tradition of the *danseuse* on the Paris stage.

Le Triomphe de l'Amour served as a link between the old court ballet and the opera-ballet, a new genre emerging at the Opéra about 1700. This genre, which became one of the most fashionable forms of entertainment, typically consisted of a series of four acts or entries. Each revolved around a slender plot serving hardly more than an excuse for spectacular song and dance enhanced by exotic settings, sumptuous costumes, and lavish stage design. Celebrating its home at the Palais-Royal as a utopian venue rivaling Versailles, the opera-ballet flaunted its liberation from heroic themes traditionally associated with the king. Performances particularly highlighted the ideals of pleasure cultivated by women in the salon and at court, which now set the tone for an upper-class public sphere. These included an emphasis on decoration, a flirtatious tone known as *galanterie*, an artful libertinism, and a comic spirit imbued with satiric wit.

André Campra, the most celebrated composer of the opera-ballet, and his contemporaries capitalized on this taste, which updated themes from the old court ballet for a modern audience. Just as the court ballet had flattered its noble audience by presenting the court as a privileged utopia, so did the opera-ballet present the Opéra and its audience as a fashionable elite enjoying the prerogative of pleasure. Campra's music was filled with tunefulness, infectious dance rhythms, and virtuosity. The choreography by Guillaume-Louis Pécour (also an acclaimed dancer) matched the brilliance of Campra's compositional style.

The opera-ballet began to treat subject matter less lofty than the gods and heroes of opera and tragedy. Its dominant pastoral mode, continuing a time-honored association with music and dance, was supplemented by comedy, satire, local color, and exoticism. Even mythological themes were often treated satirically and occasionally contained veiled innuendo. In the opera-ballet, the old mythology of sovereign power, drawing on the imagery of Olympic gods such as Jupiter and Apollo and military heroes like Rinaldo, was mocked by a new pantheon, including Venus and Cupid, goddess of love and her son; Bacchus, god of hedonism; Momus, god of satire; and Folly, female fool and goddess of comic madness.

Although the Opéra was not the only official theater known for its libertinism, it was despite its elegance the most notorious. Prostitutes roamed its vestibules and corridors, and even among the upper classes, spectators used the foyers to form amorous liaisons with dancers and singers. Police records from the eighteenth century reveal that the Opéra chorus and *corps de ballet* provided a front for Parisian courtesans placed there by influential lovers, since performers in official theaters were granted automatic immunity from prosecution for immorality. These women, known as *les filles de l'Opéra* (Opéra girls), were at once the beneficiaries and victims of an unofficial patronage system that made it difficult for even talented performers to survive without a male patron.

The Grand Dauphin, unofficial leader of the Opéra's countercourt until his untimely death in 1711, and the future Regent, whose apartments in the Palais-Royal opened onto his box at the Opéra, were known for their liaisons with these *chanteuses* and *danseuses*. Glittering with the jewels bestowed upon them by their lovers, *les filles* appeared on the street, at the fair, and in other public venues dressed as noblewomen. In this, as well as the adoration in which they were held by their public audience, can be discerned the rise of a star system that had already begun to supplant noble lineage as a marker of distinction.

THE COMÉDIE FRANÇAISE

The Comédie Française had been created in 1680 when Molière's old troupe merged with other companies to become the only professional French theatrical company in Paris. In this period, the king and his ministers kept close control over theatrical fare through a system of monopolies (*privilèges*). The Comédie Française profited from this system, which barred other Parisian companies from producing plays in the French language, but it also suffered from the Opéra's monopoly on music, which forbade other companies throughout France to produce operas or to use more than two singers and six instrumentalists.

The Comédie Française was located on the Left Bank, in the rue des Fossés-Saint-Germain-des-Près (now the rue de l'Ancienne Comédie). After a period dominated by the classical tragedies of Pierre Corneille

and Jean Racine, the 1680s and 1690s brought a resurgence of the comic spirit. Florent Carton Dancourt, the best-known comic playwright at the turn of the century, specialized in the “comedy of manners.” This genre, a satirical survey of the profligate moral milieu then prevailing in Paris, stood in stark contrast to the tragedies of the *grand siècle* and their second-rate successors, whose themes of heroism and virtue now served as the object of cynical derision.

The music of Dancourt’s plays and those of his contemporaries drew on vaudevilles (from *vaux de ville*, “voices of the city”), well-known songs of all kinds that had passed into common usage over time. Known as “vaudeville comedies,” these works incorporate *divertissements* (scenes emphasizing music and dance) at the end of most acts. Dancourt’s *Les Trois Cousines* (1700), for example, is a three-act play in which the *divertissements* of the first act, featuring village millers, and of the second act, featuring gypsies and peasant couples, are integrated into the plot as the offerings of two wealthy suitors to two sisters. The final *divertissement* represents a stratagem devised by a younger generation of lovers wishing to elope. They have persuaded the village youths to masquerade as pilgrims in order to make a “pilgrimage” to the “Temple of Cupid” (a euphemism for the libertine haunts of Paris), under cover of which they will make their escape from the village. Before this event takes place, however, the plot is discovered by the parents and guardians, and resolved by their consent to marry; the play then ends with multiple weddings and a festive *divertissement* celebrating love and *libertinage*. This final *divertissement* is believed to be an important source for Watteau’s *L’Isle de Cythère* (no. 1).¹

Music had played an important role at the Comédie Française over the course of the late seventeenth century, despite the monopoly of the Opéra. That restriction, or at least the rigor of its enforcement, was somewhat relaxed in the late years of the century; although it prescribed an instrumental accompaniment of only six stringed instruments, one finds the occasional musette, guitar, oboe (see nos. 61, 60, 62), trumpets, and drums. Later, in 1719, instrumentation for the Comédie Française was listed as one oboe, three violins (see no. 59), and two double basses.

Dancourt collaborated with Jean-Claude Gillier, a double-bass player and composer-in-residence of the company from 1694 to 1717.

Many theater pieces, for this and other Parisian companies, are attributed to Gillier; they consist of new music as well as arrangements of vaudevilles. Together, Dancourt and Gillier made a virtue of the restriction on musical forces by setting their musical numbers against the humble backdrop of life in the village and Parisian suburbs, and by creating simple musical arrangements of vaudevilles that could be sung by the entire troupe. For more elaborate settings, professional singers were employed and at times maintained on the payroll. This type is exemplified by Dancourt’s prologue and new *divertissements* for a revival of Thomas Corneille’s comedy *L’Inconnu* in 1703. The prologue includes an operatic lament and an aria in the Italian style, along with extensive *divertissements* for all five of its acts.

The prologue to *L’Inconnu* is introduced by the character Crispin, the most famous comedian of the French stage and symbol of French comedy. This figure, known for his knee boots, sword, black clothing, and white ruff, was played by the well-known actor Paul Poisson, who had succeeded his father, Raymond Poisson (known as Belleruche), in the role in 1686. In the prologue of *L’Inconnu*, Crispin welcomes Thalia, Muse of Comedy, back to the stage of the Comédie Française after her long absence (a reference to the decline of comedy in the previous period) and introduces her to members of his company and to the enhanced *divertissements* of their theater. Crispin can be seen, again probably as a symbol of French comedy, in nos. 4, 7, and 14.

Some of Dancourt’s own plays were labeled *comédie-ballet*, a reference to the genre developed by Molière and Jean-Baptiste Lully in the 1660s. One of Dancourt’s comedy-ballets, *L’Impromptu de Suresnes*, has been suggested as an inspiration for Watteau’s *L’Amour au théâtre français*.² The plot involves two young couples, aided by the operatic characters Folly, Bacchus, and Cupid in overcoming a father’s resistance to their marriage. The theme of traditional young lovers against an old father is embellished with Dancourt’s typical cynicism. Much of the success of *L’Impromptu de Suresnes* revolves around the clash between Dancourt’s village humor and the operatic tone of the mythological gods. Its ideological message is the intervention of the new operatic pantheon of Cupid, Bacchus, and Folly (who make a toast in the background of Watteau’s painting) in the affairs of ordinary

humans, unlike the lofty gods of the tragic opera. The play celebrates the humble village and its denizens despite (or because of) their all-too-worldly libertine propensities, in contrast to the high-flown moralism of the more serious tragic theater.

THE COMÉDIE ITALIENNE

The *divertissements* of Dancourt's plays reflect the influence of the Comédie Italienne, the Parisian troupe of the *commedia dell'arte*, which had taken up permanent residence in France in the mid-seventeenth century. The Italian troupe featured characters long revered in their native country: Harlequin, with his diamond-shaped patches, black mask, and slapstick; the old doctor with his academic gown; and Scaramouche, dressed in black with a black beret and white ruff. Mezzetin, wearing a red or striped costume, came to prominence in France at a later date; Pierrot, in the white French peasant's suit and ruff, was of later origin, possibly French. Harlequin, Pierrot, Mezzetin, and Scaramouche, like the French Crispin, were servant characters, often aiding and abetting young lovers against parents or guardian figures. Forerunners of Beaumarchais's Figaro, these characters represented the triumph of the simple Everyman over authoritarian control. In the Comédie Italienne, and later at the Opéra and Comédie Française, these characters were occasionally given female counterparts as dancing partners, wearing dresses made from the same fabric as the costumes of their partners; the central female character in Watteau's *Les Plaisirs du bal* (no. 9) wears the shimmering stripes of Mezzetin (see also no. 56).

In the 1690s, the Italian Theater had begun to incorporate spectacular *divertissements*, complete with elaborate stage sets and machinery, in addition to the traditional acrobatics, tightrope walking, and magic tricks. Some of the most important writers for the Comédie Italienne, such as Jean-François Regnard and Charles Rivière Dufresny, were also musicians who contributed original songs for many of their plays; both of these playwrights also wrote for the Comédie Française. Arrangements and additional settings would have been supplied by a composer such as Gillier, who in addition to his work at the Comédie

Française also worked for the Italians, and by a few Italian composers living in Paris. By this time the plays were written in French, with only improvisational scenes in Italian, and the *divertissements* incorporated both French chansons and Italian arias. The French songs drew on newly composed works as well as the vaudeville repertoire, while the Italian arias, which are sometimes quite elaborate, may have been taken from contemporary Italian operas. Many of the Italian actors, unlike those at the Comédie Française, were skilled musicians. The troupe also employed a *canterina*, a female singer who specialized in musical numbers.

The status of the Italian Comedy as a musical theater opened the way to stardom for Mezzetin, most famously played by Angelo Costantini, a servant character possessing excellent musical skills. A singer and guitarist/lutenist, Costantini as Mezzetin became known as the leader of the troupe's musical *divertissements* in the 1690s. Costantini, known to be a troublemaker, left France in 1697, not to return until 1729. According to a colorful but questionable account of his adventures written by Evaristo Gherardi, the leader of the troupe before the banishment, Costantini was given a patent of nobility by the king of Poland, who hired him to organize entertainments in Dresden. Discovered by the king in the act of propositioning the royal mistress, the unfortunate actor was arrested and imprisoned for twenty years in the castle of Königstein. During his absence from France, the role of Mezzetin became fixed as one of the most important types at the fair-ground theaters. According to current scholarship, Watteau's *Mezzetin* and his depictions of the other Italian players should probably not be seen as literal portraits of Costantini or of any other actor but as the result of the painter's practice of dressing his models and friends in theatrical costumes (see nos. 2, 3, 9, 10, 12, 13).³

The Comédie Italienne had for some time satirized the king indirectly, through parodies (especially opera parodies) mocking the heroism and heroic roles associated with royal propaganda. In 1697, the troupe was banished by Louis XIV, probably most immediately for the satire of public officials and perhaps even Madame de Maintenon. The expulsion of the troupe coincided with a craze for *italianisme* in France, both as a mark of the latest fashion and probably as a way of

expressing distaste for the regime of Louis XIV as it entered its dismal final phase.

Although some accounts indicate that the enthusiasm of the court aristocracy for the Italian troupe had waned in the 1690s, ostensibly because of their popularity with the bourgeoisie, nostalgia for the troupe and their irreverent antics seems to have motivated an upper-class Parisian elite in the early eighteenth century. Members of this society appropriated the Italians' costumes for portraiture, private theatricals, and costume balls, and a public comprising all social classes flocked to the entertainments of the fair to enjoy French and Italian actors in the beloved roles of Pierrot, Mezzetin, Harlequin, and Scaramouche.

THE FAIRGROUND THEATERS

The area in and around Paris embraced many seasonal fairs, of which the Foire Saint-Laurent and the Foire Saint-Germain were the largest and most famous. The Foire de Bezons took place in a small village to the northwest of Paris, on the first Sunday in September. Dancourt used the fairs as the setting of two of his plays for the Comédie Française, *La Foire de Bezons* (1695; see nos. 49, 57) and *La Foire Saint-Germain* (1696). The latter was undoubtedly inspired by Regnard and Dufresny's *La Foire Saint-Germain* for the Comédie Italienne (1695), which included the famous "battle of the cab drivers." This scene was later depicted by Claude Gillot (see no. 37), Watteau's teacher, who may have seen a version of the play at the fair in 1707.⁴ In these plays, as at the fair itself, a holiday atmosphere sets the tone for a series of encounters among individuals from the widest range of social classes, igniting an equally wide range of libertine intrigue.

The fairground theaters had begun as lower-class entertainment but—partly under the influence of the banished comedians—grew in complexity and sophistication over the first decades of the eighteenth century. Their theatrical productions originated with gymnasts and tightrope walkers, who after the Italian comedians' banishment began to pay actors to incorporate spoken parts, often based on the Italians' repertoire, into their acrobatic shows. Song and dance were substituted for spoken dialogue when the Comédie Française filed complaints that

their monopoly had been infringed, with the result that the *théâtre de la foire* became an intrinsically musical theater. Because of the poor financial condition of the Opéra in this period, the fairground theaters were able to negotiate a relaxation of its monopoly on music in return for an annual stipend. At first, the music of these theaters drew primarily on vaudevilles, as well as parodies of well-known opera tunes, to which new lyrics were added; over time, it grew more sophisticated, while still retaining a popular orientation. The importance of music was recognized in the name by which the fairground theaters collectively came to be known in 1715, the *opéra-comique*. From 1713, Gillier contributed music for this emerging theater.

As in the earlier Italian troupe, the Mezzetin of the fair was known as an actor, musician, and director of the musical *divertissement*. The character of Pierrot was also associated with music. Both Mezzetin and Pierrot, often depicted with their guitars, held increasing importance for the troupe as it evolved into *opéra-comique*. Punchinello was another popular figure of the fairground theaters, not known to have figured in the Comédie Italienne. Dressed in white, with a big belly, hunchback, and tall hat in the shape of a sugarloaf, he also became a favorite of the marionette theaters and the prototype for the English character Punch, a name shortened from the Anglicized Punchinello (see no. 24).

THE REGENCY (1715–23), THE RETURN OF THE ITALIAN THEATER, AND THE BALS DE L'OPÉRA

In the last decade of his reign, Louis XIV lost his son, the Grand Dauphin; two grandsons, the duc de Bourgogne and the duc de Berry; and two great-grandsons, all successive heirs to the throne. At his death in 1715, the crown passed to the third son of the duc de Bourgogne. Philippe II d'Orléans (figure 4), regent for the five-year-old Louis XV, chose to move the king and the court back to Paris and to govern from his home at the Palais-Royal, for which he had long eschewed his apartments at Versailles. In spite of his prodigal behavior, in part a reaction to the enforced piety of Louis XIV's court, Philippe was intelligent and tolerant. He was a connoisseur and patron of the arts, with a love of Italian art and music.



Figure 4. Jean-Baptiste Santerre (1651–1717), *Philippe II d'Orléans, duc d'Orléans* (1674–1723), early eighteenth century. Oil on canvas, 55½ x 41 in. (140 x 104 cm). Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid (inv. 2344)

He was also an adept musician, the composer of three operas, who had studied with the well-known composer Marc-Antoine Charpentier. His opera *Penthée* (1703), an Italianate piece in which Bacchus triumphs over a prince who has attempted to ban his cult, reads in some ways like his own relationship with Louis XIV. The regent was in constant atten-

dance at the Opéra; in fact, he used his loge as an unofficial office and conducted business there. He was also known to have enjoyed the entertainments of the fair and to have sponsored at least one performance of the *opéra-comique* in his apartments. In many ways then, the regent made Parisian public taste official.

Philippe played an important role in the theatrical life of Paris. Soon after becoming regent, he invited a new Italian troupe, under the direction of Luigi Riccoboni, to establish itself as the Nouveau Théâtre Italien (the New Italian Theater). This theater produced entertainments that built on the repertoire, machinery, staging, music, and choreography of the old Comédie Italienne and the *opéra-comique*. Like the banished company, the new Italian troupe was housed in the Hôtel de Bourgogne. This theater, built in 1548 on the ruins of the palace of the ducs de Bourgogne (now the rue Étienne-Marcel, near the Forum des Halles), was the oldest theatrical venue in Paris and the home to many earlier companies.

The Nouveau Théâtre Italien introduced new players to Paris under the old masks of Harlequin, *le Docteur*, and Scaramouche, along with another rascally character known as Scapin (Scapino). The regular players also included the traditional lovers and servants, and a *cantarina*. Dominique Biancolelli, son of the great Harlequin of the banished company, was another. His role of Trivelin, taken from the old company, mirrored that of Harlequin, and he wore a costume similar to Harlequin's but without the patches. Although Biancolelli initially played Pierrot, neither Pierrot nor Mezzetin proved to be notable roles at the New Italian Theater. A character of greater importance was Pantelone, the miserly old man of the Italian commedia dell'arte, who had also figured in the banished company.

In 1717, Jean-Joseph Moutet, arguably the most popular composer of the Regency, became the composer and musical director of the Comédie Italienne. By that time, he was also serving as director of the orchestra at the Opéra as well as composing *divertissements* for Dancourt's later comedies at the Comédie Française. His first collaboration with Riccoboni's troupe also represented the first play the company presented in French. (In order to succeed, the new troupe, like its predecessor, was obliged to turn to plays in French, with only occa-

sional scenes in Italian.) Mouret, known posthumously as *musicien des grâces* for his gracefully ornamented melodies, composed many *divertissements* for the Nouveau Théâtre Italien over the two decades he worked there. A six-volume collection of these works includes instrumental symphonies and accompaniments, airs for violins, flutes, oboes, and musettes, as well as Italian arias.

Only a few months after the death of Louis XIV, the public ball was inaugurated at the Opéra. The Regent was a frequent attendee at these immensely popular entertainments, and he guarded the right of the Palais-Royal to host these events. Having moved the government back to Paris, he understood the value of having a venue, however untraditional, that could serve as a place for courtiers to gather. As the Opéra had served as a countercourt to Louis XIV's Versailles, it now became the unofficial court of the Regency.

The Opéra balls drew a distinguished clientele, mainly from the aristocracy and upper bourgeoisie. The price of a ticket was the same for everyone, and the only entry requirement, aside from rules for decorum, was that participants be masked. The dances, including the minuet for couples and the contredanse for groups, were similar to those used for the formal balls (*bals parés*) at court and in society, but they held a different social motivation. While the court ball sought to uphold social distinction by means of rigorous hierarchies and regulations, the Opéra ball fostered social leveling by masking identity. To reveal one's own identity or that of others was considered to be in bad taste.

The Opéra balls, by all accounts electrifying in their effect on participants, could not have contrasted more dramatically with the stultifying atmosphere of the court in Louis XIV's final years, whose balls Madame de Sévigné had described as "sad." The immense ballroom floor was created by raising the floor of the parterre to the level of the stage at one end and the loges at the other. Each of two orchestras, one at either end of the room, comprised fifteen strings and/or oboes. A reduced version of this instrumentation may be seen in the small orchestra of Watteau's *Les Plaisirs du bal*.

The ballroom was lit by as many as 500 candles, and the effect was similar to that of the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles, on which the décor may have been modeled. The Hall of Mirrors served as a ballroom in

Louis XIV's earlier reign and occasionally in his later years, as well as during the reign of Louis XV (1723–74). The Yew Tree Ball (see no. 47), named for the costumes mimicking topiary yew trees that were worn by Louis XV and his attendants, was held at Versailles in 1745 to celebrate the marriage of his son, the dauphin, to the Spanish infanta. A performance of *La Princesse de Navarre* (see no. 46), a comedy-ballet by Jean-Philippe Rameau, with text by Voltaire, also formed a part of these festivities.

THE "WAR OF THE THEATERS," PARODIES, AND COMMON THEMES

One of the results of the monopolies held by the official theaters was the *guerre des théâtres*, a vicious competition embroiling the theaters of Paris. In the early eighteenth century, the system of monopolies was exacerbated by the rise of the fairground theaters, which operated on an illegal or at best semilegal basis. For a time, spoken dialogue was prohibited at the theaters of the fair. Rather than being deterred, the players turned first to monologues, and when those too were banned, to large placards (*écritaux*) revealing their lines. Later, these *écritaux* displayed the texts to familiar tunes that could be sung by the audience. Instead of quelling competition, this practice appealed more than ever to audience members, who lustily abandoned themselves to the communal experience of fête. In 1718, the theaters were banned from the fairgrounds for a number of years, for their infringements of the monopoly and for the threat they posed to the official theaters.

The competition among Parisian theaters was accompanied by the practice of borrowing, with the result that plots and themes regularly made the rounds. The most important use of borrowed material was for the purpose of parody. The operatic tragedy served as a common target; it was parodied in the comedies of Dancourt, at the Comédie Italienne, and at the fairground. The spoken tragedy came in for its share of derision as well; at the fair, the tragedians of the Comédie Française were lampooned as "Romans," because so many of their plots were set in ancient Rome. A number of frontispieces to the plays of the fairs attest to their parody of the military costumes worn by heroic figures at the Comédie Française and at the Opéra (see no. 14).

Among the other themes common to the Parisian theaters is the pilgrimage to Cythera, which probably originated in the opera-ballet. Dancourt's treatment of the pilgrimage theme has been mentioned above. In a series of later fairground plays, mostly by Louis Fuselier, audiences are invited to the theater as "pilgrims" to Cythera. The Parisian theaters also picked up the costumes and masks of the banned Comédie Italienne. Its characters were brought into the Opéra as dancing characters in exotic "Venetian" spectacles such as Campra's *Le Carnaval de Venise* (1699) and *Les Fêtes vénitiennes* (1710). The latter was parodied in Dancourt's *La Comédie des comédiens*, with *divertissements* so extensive as to be considered quasi-operatic. *Les Fêtes vénitiennes* had an extraordinarily successful run of almost fifty years (see no. 48). Other opera-ballets, such as Campra's *Les Muses* (1703) and Michel de La Barre's *La Vénitienne* (1705), are introduced by the fool Momus, who figures prominently in the Nouveau Théâtre Italien and the fairground theaters (see nos. 7, 13, 49, 50).

Several works produced at the Opéra in the early years of the century celebrated the genre of comedy over the superannuated genre of tragedy. Jean-Joseph Mouret's opera-ballet *Les Fêtes, ou Le Triomphe de Thalie*, produced at the Opéra in 1714, went so far as to depict the humiliating defeat of Melpomene, Muse of Tragedy, at the hands of Thalia, Muse of Comedy. The piece, a *succès de scandale*, caused such a furor that Mouret and his librettist were forced to delete the subtitle, *Le Triomphe de Thalie*, and to assert that the success of the work was due only to its use of music and dance (see no. 4).

In the early eighteenth-century musical theater, the *divertissements*, sometimes known as *fêtes galantes*, provided a respite from the action and a compendium of festive entertainment including balls, fairs, serenades, and garden parties. A variation on the *fête galante* was the *fête champêtre*, using the rural countryside or forest glen as a setting for village or country weddings, the celebration of the wine harvest, and the dances of shepherds and shepherdesses, peasants, sailors, and wandering gypsies. The *fête champêtre* traditionally highlighted woodwind instruments, which had close associations with bucolic settings. Oboes, flutes (see no. 63), bassoons, and musettes were the most common of these pastoral winds, often used in conjunction with stringed

instruments. Occasionally, woodwind instruments were also performed onstage as part of the spectacle. The entry "La Pastorale" in Campra's opera-ballet *Les Muses* features musettes as part of the *fête champêtre* that serves as its finale. A drawing by Jean Berain (see no. 33) represents the set design and costumes for this *divertissement*. In the staged *fête champêtre* of Watteau's *L'Amour au théâtre français* (no. 7), a couple dances to the music of an oboe, a musette, and a violin. Lancret's portrait of Mademoiselle Camargo (see no. 19), also drawing on the conventions of the *fête champêtre*, depicts a bassoon, two violins, and a pipe and string drum known as the *tambourin à cordes*. This instrument, with its rustic origins, was appropriated, like the musette, for use in theatrical pastorals and by upper-class amateurs.

WATTEAU AND THE MUSICAL THEATER

Even if Watteau's paintings were devoid of musical instruments or theatrical costumes, they would still stand as iconic representations of the lyrical and the performative. Enigmatic as it remains, however, Watteau's art would be unthinkable without the culture of the Parisian musical theater from which it sprang. Biographical accounts of Watteau's life have little to say about his connections with the theater, although documentary evidence suggests that he may have worked at the Paris Opéra, probably as a set painter, for a brief period after he arrived in the capital.⁵ He was a close friend of Antoine de La Roque, a librettist for the Opéra, and through him may also have known the librettist Louis Fuselier, who was La Roque's friend and co-editor at the *Mercure galant*. An avid reader, Watteau may have read the published plays and operatic *livrets* (libretti) that circulated widely. It is likely, though not established, that he would have witnessed in person the French stage of his time; the similarities of his backgrounds to theatrical stage sets have been noted frequently.⁶

Watteau also would have come in contact with professional singers and musicians at the home of his friend and patron Pierre Crozat. The founder of an important series of subscription concerts in 1720, Crozat created a life of artistic luxury in Paris and at his country estate at Montmorency (see nos. 8, 16, 17). Watteau's circle of friends also

included serious amateur musicians. La Roque played the flute, and Jean de Jullienne (pictured with Watteau in figure 1) played the viol, an instrument that reached its zenith in late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century France and remained in use in certain circles until the French Revolution.

In summary, Watteau's art embraces a theatrical mystique unique to Paris in the early years of the eighteenth century, when the taste of a public audience was contributing to a new aesthetic in art, music, and theater. Like the opera-ballet, Watteau stages a refined hedonism epitomized by the *fête galante* and *fête champêtre*; like the Italian Comedy and the fairground theaters, he highlights the satirical spirit of Momus, Mezzetin, and Pierrot. Like the French Comedy, he celebrates the *fête villageoise* and Crispin as Everyman. Like the ball, he draws us into a sensational and evocative space between reality and theater. And finally, like all the forms of theater discussed here, Watteau delights us with the irrepressible spirit of music and comedy.

1. Rosenberg in Grasselli and Rosenberg 1984, p. 263.
2. Robert Tomlinson, *Watteau et Marivaux: La Fête galante* (Geneva, 1981), p. 97.
3. Rosenberg in Grasselli and Rosenberg 1984, p. 362.
4. François Moureau, "Watteau in His Time," in Grasselli and Rosenberg 1984, p. 487.
5. Jérôme de La Gorce, "Watteau à l'Opéra (1702)²" in *Antoine Watteau (1684–1721): Le Peintre, son temps et sa légende*, ed. François Moureau and Margaret Morgan Grasselli (Paris, 1987), pp. 11–15. According to La Gorce, three contemporaries mention Watteau at the Opéra in 1702. He was said to have been brought to Paris by an unidentified artist who was working there at that time.
6. For example, Jérôme de La Gorce, "Quelques Rapports entre les dessins d'opéras français du règne de Louis XIV et l'architecture, la sculpture et la peinture," *Iconographie et arts du spectacle*, ed. La Gorce (Paris, 1996), p. 141.

CATALOGUE

JEAN-ANTOINE WATTEAU (FRENCH, 1684–1721)

1. *The Island of Cythera (L'Isle de Cythère)*, ca. 1709–10

Oil on canvas, 17 x 21 in. (43.1 x 53.3 cm)
Städel Museum, Frankfurt am Main

According to the gifted connoisseur and drawings collector Pierre-Jean Mariette, the reproductive engraving by Philippe Mercier of this image was made in London;¹ Mercier's print, in reverse to the painting, is titled *the Island of Cythera* and is thought to date to about 1725. However the matter is complicated by the existence of a second, more or less identical, engraving by Nicolas III de Larmessin, which was announced in the August 1730 Paris journal *Mercur de France*. The inscription on Larmessin's print identifies the Parisian textile manufacturer Jean de Jullienne as the painting's then owner. A great part of Watteau's oeuvre, both paintings and drawings, belonged briefly to Jullienne, who is unalterably associated with Watteau studies: subsequent to the artist's death in 1721, he published, in the *Recueil Jullienne*, a graphic record of Watteau's oeuvre that is the foundation of our knowledge. Mercier's print, though, is a little closer than Larmessin's to the present canvas, which seems to have been in England from a very early date. It is thus likely that Larmessin, in the employ of Jullienne, reproduced a lost replica.

The canvas is an early work populated by slender upright figures with very small heads and hands, seven of whom carry the staff that is the traditional attribute of a pilgrim. One of the staffs is crowned with a heart, a second with an arrowhead, and a third with a tiny winged cupid, indicating the pilgrims' amorous intent. The earth tones and rather harsh local colors of the foreground contrast with an ethereal bluish-green distance. Cupids, one with a quiver of arrows, urge the travelers to board a shallow craft with a shelter draped in silk curtains and crowned with torches, one of which is lit. They will be accompanied also by the cupids in flight, brandishing a flaming torch and a bow, as they cross the sea, or the lake, to a flight of marble stairs crowned with a balustrade where more gamboling cupids await them. This, then, must be Cythera, immortalized since antiquity as the island home of Venus, goddess of love. The umbrella pines, cypresses, and garden architecture may be intended to suggest the Italian lakes (even though Cythera is a Greek island in the Mediterranean Sea), Italy being the

place where, according to tradition, the arts of love are played out in a pastoral landscape. Pilgrim actors (and models?) whose proportions and costumes are similar if not identical are among the earliest subjects drawn by Watteau, and for years these studies as well as the present painting have been associated with the *divertissement*, or finale, of Florent Carton Dancourt's *Les Trois Cousines*, in which French villagers undertake a pilgrimage to the temple of Venus's son Cupid in search of love. *Les Trois Cousines* was staged in Paris at the Comédie Française in 1700, when Watteau, young and untrained, was still living in his native Valenciennes, near the Flemish border. It was revived on May 17, 1709, when the artist, having completed his apprenticeships with Claude Gillot and the painter-decorator Claude III Audran, had been authorized to participate in the competition for the Prix de Rome of the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture.

There are differences between the costumes of male actors, including pilgrims, and fashionable contemporary dress. In prints and drawings dating to about 1710, Watteau depicts both.² A gentleman wore knee-breeches and hose under a long, fitted waistcoat and a collarless knee-length coat with sleeves finishing in wide cuffs. His hair, loose and curled, fell at least to the collarbone. A pilgrim was identified by a traveling coat reaching to the hip, a short cape, and often a hat with a soft brim that provided shade from the sun. Actors' costumes frequently were trimmed with a multitude of ribbons. Ladies wore a pointed bodice with a low neckline often inset with lace, wide sleeves, and a high headdress combined with a veil, while pilgrims of the gentle sex were outfitted in a skirted jacket and a cape. An apron suggested a peasant; a tiny tricorne hat designated a traveler.

In some of the drawings, scallop shells ornament the pilgrims' clothes, and gourd-shaped water bottles are tied to their staffs. Traditional attributes of those on the road to the Spanish pilgrimage church of Santiago de Compostella, these objects are subverted here to another, erotic interpretation. Watteau's pilgrims seek only to conquer and be conquered by love. The Frankfurt picture is the precursor of two of his famous works, *Pilgrimage to the Island of Cythera* (Musée du Louvre, Paris) and *Embarkation for Cythera*



(Schloss Charlottenburg, Stiftung Preussische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg). It has also been described as the prototype in painting of the *fête galante*.
KBB

1. If the picture was in London by about 1725, it could at that date have belonged to the tax commissioner and art collector Thomas Walker, in whose family it apparently descended until 1980.

2. For a gentleman, see Rosenberg and Prat 1996, vol. 1, pp. 64–65, nos. 39, 40, ills., and figs. 39a, 39b, 40a; for a pilgrim, vol. 1, pp. 82–83, no. 51, ill., and figs. 51a–c; for a lady, vol. 1, pp. 88–89, nos. 55, 56, ills.; and for her pilgrim counterpart, vol. 1, pp. 80–81, no. 50, ill.

Ex coll.: Thomas Walker, Wimbledon, Surrey, and London (by about 1725?–d. 1748); his nephew, Stephen Skinner (from 1748); his daughter, Mrs. William (Emma) Harvey, Rolls Park, Chigwell, Essex; her son, William Harvey, Rolls

Park (until d. 1779); his brother, Admiral Sir Eliab Harvey, Rolls Park (1779–d. 1830); his daughter, Mrs. William (Maria) Tower, Upp Hall, Braughing, Ware (1830—at least 1835); her daughter, Mrs. Edward (Louisa) Goulburn, Betchworth House, Surrey; her son, Major Henry Goulburn, Betchworth House (until d. 1928); his son, Cuthbert Edward Goulburn, Betchworth House (1928–d. 1944); his son, Major General Edward Henry Goulburn, Betchworth House (1944–d. 1980; sale, Christie’s, London, December 18, 1980, no. 97, as by Watteau, withdrawn; sale, Christie’s, London, December 11, 1981, no. 6, as attributed to Watteau, to Segoura); [Segoura, New York, 1981–82; sold to Städel Museum]

JEAN-ANTOINE WATTEAU (FRENCH, 1684–1721)

2. *Pierrot Content* (*Pierrot content*), ca. 1712

Oil on canvas, 13¾ x 12¼ in. (35 x 31 cm)
 Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid

On July 30, 1712, Watteau came with his work before the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture to present himself for membership. He was provisionally accepted (*agrégé*). According to Pierre-Jean Mariette, he presented a painting relating closely to this one; it disappeared long ago but had been engraved by Gérard II Scotin under the title *Les Jaloux*. *Pierrot Content* was engraved as well, in 1728, by Edmé Jeaurat for Jean de Jullienne, and the engraving appeared in the *Recueil Jullienne*. The compositions of *Pierrot Content* and *Les Jaloux* are more or less identical except for the fact that the young man seated on the ground is omitted from *Les Jaloux*. Engravings of both show them to have been horizontals. Pierre Rosenberg, reviewing the various sales in which *Pierrot Content* seems to have appeared, has argued convincingly that the present canvas was cut down after 1757 (or after 1787) and before 1830. A column and a pool originally in the right foreground of the canvas were thus eliminated.

Pierrot Content must date to about 1712 and is among the earliest Watteau paintings (or if not, then the earliest that we know to survive) whose subject is actors, or, more probably, models dressed as actors, from the Comédie Italienne—heir to the much older traditions of the com-

References: Dacier and Vuafart 1921–29, vol. 3 (1922), pp. 76–77, nos. 155, 155A, vol. 4 (1921), pl. 155 (engraving by Nicolas III de Larmessin); Margret Stuffmann, “Insel Cythera: Verzauberte Insel,” in *Jean-Antoine Watteau: Einschiffung nach Cythera; L’Île de Cythère*, exh. cat., Städtische Galerie im Städelschen Kunstinstitut (Frankfurt am Main, 1982), pp. 74–88; Rosenberg in Grasselli and Rosenberg 1984, pp. 261–64, no. 9 (with bibliography), colorpl.; Rosenberg and Prat 1996, vol. 1, pp. 6–7, 18–19, 42–43, 76–77, 80–81, 220–21, nos. 2, 10v, 23, 47, 50, 138, ill., and pp. 222–23, no. 139, colorpl.

media dell’arte—as well as from the Comédie Française. By Watteau’s time, the Italian and French comedic traditions had tended increasingly to merge, especially after 1697, when Louis XIV closed the theater that had long been the home of the Italian troupe and banned the performers from Paris and its environs. Their expulsion proved greatly to the advantage of the other companies, especially the smaller ones performing at the *foire* Saint-Laurent and the *foire* Saint-Germain. The fairs, offering seasonal entertainment for some months of each year in established locations on the margins of the city (see nos. 22, 49, 57), had become increasingly popular with all classes of society. Pictures like this one, touchingly sympathetic and intimate in their portrayals of theatrical figures, suggest that the solitary Watteau was attracted to the loose, informal atmosphere of the fair theaters and that he must have felt at home among the multiplicity and variety of its denizens, who came from Paris, the countryside, and abroad.

The principal male “actors” in this picture are Mezzetin, wearing a white ruff over a costume striped in pink, blue-green, and white, and a loose beret of the same material, and Pierrot, in a cream-colored suit, a white blouse, ruff, and cap, and a hat with a soft brim. In the woods to the right (now barely visible in the darkened background but legible in the engraving) is a figure who may be Scaramouche, arms outstretched in alarm, with a ruff



and costume similar to Mezzetin's; he is accompanied by Harlequin, masked and gesticulating, clothed in accordance with tradition in a tight suit patterned with diamonds. Harlequin's wild gesture here was used repeatedly by Watteau in his later work.

Pierrot could be a mime as well as a musician and is especially associated with the French theater. The roles of the other male players depicted had evolved at the hands of Italian actors and are servants' roles, often noisy, disobedient, provocative, and sometimes also acrobatic. Mezzetin in particular was known to all as both a schemer and a flirt. He and Pierrot performed together and, in view of their differing temperaments, as opposites. Mezzetin addresses himself to an elegant and self-possessed guitarist, a lady with powdered hair in a bright, varicolored costume, a plumed hat, and a ruff, the latter an element of formal seventeenth-century costume that was subsequently adopted both as fancy dress and in the theater. Pierrot, at center, maintains a composed and tranquil solitude. The couple to the right withdraws, in the case of the lady quite literally, as Watteau's initial intention had been to place her head close to Pierrot's, and its former position is still a shadowy presence (and not intended by Watteau to be visible). The separation of this pair is reinforced by their languid poses and by the receding earth-toned colors Watteau chose for their costumes. *Les Jaloux* had essentially the same subject as *Pierrot Content*. Their differing titles indicate that nobody knew what meaning the painter intended.

KBB

Ex coll.: Baron Carl Heinrich von Heineken (by 1757; cat., 1757, no. 144; sale, Rémy, Paris, February 13–18, 1758, no. 144, as “cinq Figures de caractere comique, dont une femme jouant de la guitare . . . treize pouces de haut, sur seize de large” [35.1 x 43.2 cm] for 170 livres to Slodtz for Perrier); Marie-Anne Bigot de Graveron, Présidente de Bandeville, Paris (until d. 1787; her estate sale, Rémy, Paris, December 3, 1787, no. 47, as “cinq Figures de caractere, assises dans un jardin & formant un groupe . . . 13 p. de haut sur 16 pouces de large” [35.1 x 43.2 cm] for 373 livres); Jean-Joseph-Pierre-Augustin Lapeyrière, Paris (until d. 1831; his estate sale, Henry, Paris, April 3, 1832, no. 51, “société galante dans un parc. Assise sur un banc de gazon, une jeune dame joue de la guitare. A ses côtés sont placés deux hommes, l'un aussi épris de ses charmes que de son talent, l'autre tout rayonnant de plaisir; celui-ci est vêtu en pierrot. Le succès de la jolie musicienne inspire de la jalousie à une autre femme, sur les genoux de laquelle s'appuie familièrement celui dont elle a gagné le coeur . . . h. 13 p., l. 11 p.” [35.1 x 29.7 cm] for fr. 229); Mrs. Robert S. Russell and Charles Pelham Curtis, Boston (by 1917–at least 1946); [Newhouse, New York, until 1952; sold to a private collection]; private collection, Houston (1952–ca. 1972; sold to Newhouse); [Newhouse, New York, ca. 1972–77; sold to Thyssen]; Baron Hans Heinrich Thyssen-Bornemisza, Lugano (1977–93); Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid (from 1993)

References: Dacier and Vuaflart 1921–29, vol. 3 (1922), pp. 87–88, no. 180, vol. 4 (1921), pl. 180 (engraving by E. Jaurat), and see also vol. 3, p. 38, pl. 77, vol. 4, pl. 77 (engraving by P. Chedel of *Harlequin jaloux*), and vol. 3, p. 63, pl. 127, vol. 4, pl. 127 (engraving by Gérard II Scotin of *Les Jaloux*); Rosenberg in Grasselli and Rosenberg 1984, pp. 274–77, no. 13 (with bibliography), colorpl.; Rosenberg and Prat 1996, vol. 1, pp. 148–49, 158–59, 210–11, 246–47, nos. 94, 100, 133, 158, ills.

JEAN-ANTOINE WATTEAU (FRENCH, 1684–1721)

3. *The Foursome (La Partie quarrée)*, ca. 1714

Oil on canvas, 19½ x 24¾ in. (49.5 x 62.9 cm)

Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, Museum Purchase, Mildred Anna Williams Collection (1977.8)

The engraving (in reverse) is by Jean Moyreau and was announced by Watteau's friend the art dealer Edme Gersaint in the June 1731 *Mercure de France*. The print does not record the name of the then owner (perhaps Gersaint himself?) but notes the size, 51 by 64.8 centimeters, indicating that the canvas may have been cut down by about 1.5 centimeters in

height and two in width. If this work is one of a pair appearing as *A Musical Conversation* and *Italian Comedians* in the 1764 sale of Roger Harenc (or Harene), then it went to England at an early date. We next hear of it, or a variant of the same subject, in the catalogue of an 1839 Paris sale: “In a charming wood embellished with playing fountains, Pierrot, his guitar at his back, and a sort of Crispin amuse themselves with their companions”; the description captures its delicate spirit and demonstrates that we knew (and know) nothing about how Watteau intended that we should perceive it. The painting may also be called a modern discovery, lost from sight for more than a century until 1958 and held by the Paris dealer Cailleux for some two decades before it was bought by the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco.



Although the title, which has been translated either *Party of Four* or *The Foursome*, was not used until 1731, still we should bear in mind that at that time the phrase *la partie quarrée* implied amorous dalliance among the persons or couples represented. For Watteau, the presence of an instrument that is not played, as is the case here with Pierrot's beribboned guitar, does not imply music but, on the contrary, a profound silence, perhaps even suggesting that the instrument's bearer should be read as mute. His hesitant

stance (arms drawn in to his torso, shoulders sloping deeply) and hidden face, and the lack of touches of color in his white costume contribute to indicating a lack of engagement or perhaps the absence of resolution, either of which might be suitable to the ambiguity of the actor's proprietary but nonparticipatory role in a comedy-drama from, but not on, the stage. The male figure opposite, frontal, but still set slightly apart, wears the knee-breeches, blouse, cape, and hat associated with Mezzetin, except that

the costume is not striped but of a satiny silver color shot with pink. The two could be read as the loveless companions of the theater of Watteau's imagination.

Between them are the actresses, seated confidently and confidingly on a grassy bench, leaning toward each other and against a column that supports a large urn. The costume of the lady with the fan is conceived along the same lines as that of the guitarist in the Thyssen-Bornemisza picture (no. 2). Her ribbons and bows, each of a different color, contrast with the burnt orange of her jacket and the brown of her hair. Her companion proffers a black Venetian half-mask, which might suggest a desire on her part not to reveal all to the uncertain Pierrot. Such sentiments or suggested behaviors would fit the sort of one-act play presented on the small stages of the fairs. The group occupies a dense woodland glade that opens onto patches of twilight sky. The only embellishment is a shell-shaped fountain supporting a putto riding on the back of a spouting dolphin.

The heads of the two young women are thought to have been based on drawings dating perhaps to 1714–15, and in general, the forms are more ample, smooth, and suave than those in the Thyssen painting, which might serve to confirm that this work is later.

It lies within the realm of possibility that the present work, which has been cut down, was paired with *Italian Comedians* (no. 13) when in the

London collection of Roger Harenc, or Harene, although the two are not of the same date.

KBB

Ex coll.: ?Roger Harenc, or Harene, London (until d. 1763; his estate sale, Langford, London, March 3, 1764, no. 52, as one of a pair, "A Musical Conversation, and Italian Comedians, its Companion," for £8.18.6 to Grafton); Augustus Henry Fitzroy, 3rd Duke of Grafton (from 1764); ?private collection, France (until 1839; sale, Bondon, Paris, May 30–June 1, 1839, no. 114, as "Dans un charmant bosquet embelli de fontaines jaillissantes, un Pierrot, sa guitare sur le dos, et une espèce de Crispin s'entretiennent avec leurs belles"); ?Hon. John Allan Rolls, 1st Baron Llangattock, The Hendre, near Monmouth (by 1907–d. 1912); Hon. John Maclean Rolls, 2nd Baron Llangattock, The Hendre (1912–d. 1916; his trust, 1916–58; sale, Christie's, London, November 28, 1958, no. 79, to Cailleux); [Cailleux, Paris, 1958–77; sold to Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco]

References: Dacier and Vuafart 1921–29, vol. 3 (1922), p. 83, no. 169, vol. 4 (1921), pl. 169 (engraving by J. Moyreau); Jean Cailleux, "A Rediscovered Painting by Watteau: 'La Partie Quarrée,'" *Burlington Magazine* 104 (April 1962), suppl., pp. i–v, pls. 1, 2 (engraving); Rosenberg in Grasselli and Rosenberg 1984, pp. 277–80, no. 14 (with bibliography), colorpl.; Pierre Rosenberg and Marion C. Stewart, *French Paintings, 1500–1825: The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco* (San Francisco, 1987), pp. 324–28, colorpl.; Rosenberg and Prat 1996, vol. 2, pp. 684–85, no. 414, ill., and pp. 686–87, 810–11, 1038–39, nos. 415, 484, 609, colorpls.

JEAN-ANTOINE WATTEAU (FRENCH, 1684–1721)

4. *The Union of Comedy and Music* (*L'Alliance de la musique et de la comédie*)

Oil on canvas, 25⁵/₈ x 21¹/₂ in. (65 x 54.5 cm)

Private collection

The title in its usual formulation derives from the reproductive engraving by Jean Moyreau that was announced in the March 1730 *Mercure de France*. Because the print image, except for the escutcheon, is reversed, the title reads *L'Alliance de la musique et de la comédie*, and it is followed

by a gloss noting that Music and Comedy are shown in the guise of their muses, with their arms and attributes ("sous la figure de leurs Muses, avec leurs Armes et attributs"). The name of the owner of the painting is not disclosed.



Watteau gave precedence to Comedy, to the left, who in view of the suggestion offered in the inscription is identified with the muse Thalia. Her garland could be ivy, and according to tradition, she holds and in this case closely examines a comic mask that takes the form of a florid oval face with a bulbous nose. Thalia's pose is *dégagé*, and she wears leggings more or less in antique style embellished with animal masks and lined with fur. Curiously enough, her principal attribute is the *battocchio*, or slap-stick, an object usually associated with Harlequin, of the *commedia dell'arte*, which makes a loud clapping noise when struck. Music, wearing a belted tunic and holding a lyre, is presented in the guise of the muse Euterpe. Her attribute, a flute, is crossed with the *battocchio*. The central escutcheon displays a gold mask and musical clefs in an old-fashioned style; it is surrounded by a garland of scores and ancient and modern instruments, a violin, viola, lute, guitar, horns, panpipes, tambourines, and castanets. There are also four hooded fools' heads, tiny but colorful, separated from their wands but with their ribbons and bells.

Surmounting the escutcheon is the mask-like face of a man with dark eyes and eyebrows and traces of a beard, and wearing a flat white collar and a black hat with its stiffened brim turned up in front. The costume is that of the comic figure Crispin, the scheming valet of the *Comédie Française*. His character is similar to that of the greedy, interfering, dissatisfied personal servants of the Italian tradition. The "crown" above his head should probably be read as two laurel wreathes intertwined. The symmetrical composition would be suitable for a coat of arms or for the title page of a book but surely was intended for neither. The picture is unique in Watteau's oeuvre, so atypical that it may have been commissioned, but it is unlikely to be a design either for a shop sign or a theater curtain, so elliptical is the message.

While the now little understood but evidently specific subject is unprecedented in his oeuvre, as early as about 1710, Watteau had made a drawing inspired by music and comedy in which, flanking a bust of the Greek god of satire, Momus, Mezzetin plays the guitar and Harlequin adopts a comic pose. Watteau's studies of nudes and draped figures include a few mythological subjects but no drawings of quasi-antique costumed figures of the type shown here. The picture, difficult to date, has been placed around 1715, but the uncertain handling of the nude anatomy suggests that it might be earlier.

KBB

Ex coll.: Daniel Saint, Paris (until 1846; his sale, Hôtel des Ventes, Paris, May 4–7, 1846, no. 66, for fr. 500); Paul Barroilhet, Paris (by 1856–d. 1871; his sale, Hôtel des Ventes Mobilières, Paris, March 10, 1856, no. 68, bought in; Hôtel des Ventes Mobilières, Paris, April 2–3, 1860, no. 130, withdrawn; his estate sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, March 15–16, 1872, no. 20, for fr. 2,140); Eugène Féral (in 1875); Henri Michel-Lévy, Paris (until d. 1914; his estate, 1914–19; his estate sale, Galerie Georges Petit, Paris, May 12–13, 1919, no. 29, to Hoven); private collection (until 1921; sale, Galerie Georges Petit, Paris, April 21, 1921, no. 25); [Wildenstein, Paris and New York, 1921–2006]; private collection (from 2006)

References: Dacier and Vuaflart 1921–29, vol. 3 (1922), p. 24, no. 39, vol. 4 (1921), pl. 39 (engraving by J. Moyreau); A.-P. de Mirimonde, *L'Iconographie musicale sous les rois Bourbons: La Musique dans les arts plastiques (XVII^e–XVIII^e siècles)*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1977), p. 24, n31, fig. 12 (engraving); François Moureau, "Watteau in His Time," in Grasselli and Rosenberg 1984, p. 489, fig. 18 (engraving); Rosenberg and Prat 1996, vol. 1, pp. 142–43, no. 90, ill., and figs. 90a, 90b (engraving); Joseph Baillio in *The Arts of France, from François I^{er} to Napoléon I^{er}: A Centennial Celebration of Wildenstein's Presence in New York*, exh. cat., Wildenstein (New York, 2005), pp. 152–54, no. 44 (with bibliography), colorpl. and fig. 44a (engraving), color detail p. 387

JEAN-ANTOINE WATTEAU (FRENCH, 1684–1721)

5. *The Enchanter* (*L'Enchanteur*)

6. *The Adventuress* (*L'Avanturière*)

Oil on copper, each 7½ x 10¼ in. (19 x 26 cm)

Brodick Castle, Isle of Arran (National Trust for Scotland)

While Watteau's thematic material is more or less unique, he often painted autograph variants of the same subject, and there are two pairs of small paintings on copper, roughly the same size, called *The Enchanter* and *The Adventuress*. The pictures exhibited here are assumed to be the later pair. The two that preceded them, now in the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Troyes, had evidently belonged to Jean de Jullienne when they were engraved (in reverse) by Benoît II Audran. The Audran print of the so-called *Enchanter* was announced in the *Mercure de France* of December 1727, when the evocative titles would have been chosen. The works at Troyes suffered neglect during and after the Revolution and are poorly preserved, but their authenticity is not in question. They have been dated to about 1713.

The Brodick Castle paintings, on copper supports and undamaged by mishandling, are in an exceptionally beautiful state of preservation that is rare in the work of Watteau. They were recorded first in 1738, in the estate sale of the artist and connoisseur Charles-François Silvestre, who may have been their original owner and who with other members of his family served for generations as drawing masters to the royal children. Thereafter, this pair shared an illustrious, uninterrupted history, in the collections of the museum director Dominique-Vivant Denon and of William Beckford and his descendants, the dukes of Hamilton.

Watteau's nameless models wear clothes that are not modern and do not belong to any definable social class. If the dresses and cloaks of the women are contemporary, their ruffled collars are theatrical and reminiscent of seventeenth-century Flemish costume. The guitarist, the enchanter of one picture's title, wears a short striped cloak in the same salmon color as his close-fitting jacket, knee-britches, and stockings. A similar costume, but in stripes of different colors and with a beret rather than a tricorne hat, often identifies the clownish Mezzetin, who hovers here in the shadowy back-

ground to the right. Painted in a reddish monochrome, this Mezzetin is little different from a statue, the genie of the picture, ambiguous, perhaps slightly malign. The elegant woman in white who is the object of the musician's interest turns her head away from him, her uninviting posture stiffly erect. A companion holds a black mask, which is associated in the first instance with the Venetian carnival and also may be read as a souvenir of the theater, and there is a Watteau sheet with a preparatory study of this hand and mask that also includes a frontal head of the model appearing in profile as the guitarist. A tambourine (attribute of the satirical god Momus) lies in the corner beside a basket of flowers.

The adventuress of the companion picture must also be an actress. She has exchanged the fur-trimmed jacket, padded sleeves, and black hat of the Troyes picture for a summer straw hat suitable for a country outing. The sleeves of her black embroidered bodice are slashed with pink, in Anthony van Dyck style, and this garment is worn over a skirt whose white folds and wrinkles catch the light. Fair-skinned and plump, with heavy lids and a double chin, she is a distinctly Rubensian type. It might be said that Watteau in this little figure pays tribute to the twin polar stars of seventeenth-century Flemish art. A seated musician plays for her; a lady is seated beside him, and a Pierrot in profile and in white hovers in the background, listening. In the distant landscape, slightly reminiscent of the Frankfurt picture, minuscule figures are reflected in the still water. Here are elegant, courtly, theatrical (and ambiguous) private entertainments of the sort for which Watteau has achieved lasting fame.

KBB

Ex coll.: Charles-François Silvestre (until d. 1738); Nicolas-Charles Silvestre (1738–d. 1767); Jacques-Augustin Silvestre (1767–d. 1811; his estate sale, Paris, February 28–March 25, 1811, no. 79, for fr. 434 for both); Baron Dominique-Vivant Denon (1811–d. 1825; his estate sale, Paris, May 1–19, 1826, no. 188, for fr. 3,015 for both to Franchi); William Beckford, Lansdown Tower, Bath (from 1826); his daughter, Susan Euphemia Beckford, Duchess of Hamilton, and Alexander Douglas, 10th Duke of Hamilton, Brodick Castle, Isle of Arran (by 1844; by descent); National Trust for Scotland, Brodick Castle (from 1958)

References: Dacier and Vuafart 1921–29, vol. 3 (1922), pp. 11–12, nos. 11, 12, vol. 4 (1921), pls. 11, 12 (engravings by Benoît II Audran); Rosenberg in Grasselli and Rosenberg 1984, pp. 286–88, nos. 19, 20 (with bibliography), colorpls.; Rosenberg and Prat 1996, vol. 2, pp. 756–57, 810–11, 1038–39, nos. 456, 484, 609, colorpls.





6

JEAN-ANTOINE WATTEAU (FRENCH, 1684–1721)

7. *Love in the French Theater (L'Amour au théâtre français)*

Oil on canvas, 14⁵/₈ x 18¹⁵/₁₆ in. (37 x 48 cm)

Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen, Preussischer Kulturbesitz,
Berlin (468)

The painting, engraved by Charles-Nicolas Cochin the Elder for the *Recueil Jullienne*, belonged to Henri de Rosnel, a Parisian textile merchant, when, in March 1734, it was announced in the *Mercure de France*. The size was recorded as 37.3 by 48.4 centimeters, effectively as at present. At that time, Cochin engraved another painting of the same dimensions and from the same collection, under the title *Love in the Italian Theater (L'Amour au théâtre italien)* (no. 10). The coupling of the engravings, each of which was accompanied by a short poem by Pierre-Charles Roy, probably increased their popularity and had the effect of turning them into a pair, although they are evidently not of the same date. In the absence of any evidence at all, but in view of the correspondences in size and subject matter, it seems reasonable to suggest that Henri de Rosnel, or a previous owner, may have commissioned *Love in the Italian Theater*, the later painting, to go with this one. By 1769, both belonged to Frederick the Great of Prussia, and in a sense, they have never changed hands since.

All the costumes are theatrical, and the landscape is imaginary. A number of drawings with dates ranging from about 1709–12 until about 1714–15 are associated with the picture. The earliest of these belongs to The Morgan Library & Museum (no. 25); it includes, third from left, the principal male figure of the painting. His stance and costume, notably the plumed tricorne hat and the quiver of arrows strapped across his breast, are more or less the same in both. With his buckled shoes, he wears leggings lined with fur. The leggings and the hat should be understood as antique dress interpreted in French eighteenth-century terms (this costume is comparable in some ways to that of the principal actor in *French Comedians*, no. 14), and the quiver and arrows are attributes of the god of love, in his adult form referred to as Amour. To the right in the drawing is a man carrying a staff and wearing a wreath, with the pelt of an animal draped over his shoulder; he must be Bacchus, who is central also to the narrative of this picture,

whatever its precise subject. Two other drawings are connected with Amour and one with Bacchus, indicating Watteau's interest in these important figures.

The principals are accompanied by three village girls and a young man (similar types are found in Watteau's earliest work), and Crispin, who presides over the scene from the right. In the middle ground, a *dance à deux* is performed by a young couple, a blond girl wearing a ruff, a lilac bodice, and a black skirt and a youth in red with plenty of bows and a straw hat. A violinist, an oboist, and a musette player accompany them; other shadowy figures look on. Farthest back, but at the center of the composition, Bacchus, dressed in lavender and wearing a heavy wreath of overlarge leaves and bunches of grapes, reclines on a stone bench, extending a glass of wine to Amour. The exuberant vine fastened to the column at his back garlands a hooded bust-length figure on a pedestal above, who should probably be identified as Momus. He appears quite often in the work of Watteau (see no. 2).

It is evident that the artist took care in working up the comic figure of Crispin, whose role seems to be that of an interlocutor and whose smooth and sprightly oval face is highly individualized. His elegant but quite rotund upper body is supported on long, slender legs. All the more important elements of his traditional costume, which is Spanish in origin, are detailed: the close-fitting black cap, stiff white collar, wide leather belt, leather gauntlet, and sword. He bears no resemblance at all to the Crispin of *The Union of Comedy and Music* (no. 4) or to the Crispin of *French Comedians* (who have certain features, including their dark beards, in common), but he belongs with the others to the same theatrical tradition.

Many possible sources have been put forward. These include *L'Impromptu de Suresnes* of 1713 by Florent Carton Dancourt, in which lovers from the country and from the town seek the help of Bacchus and Cupid (Amour), and of Folly, in overcoming resistance to their marriage. *L'Impromptu* was written for a German patron living in France, the Elector of Bavaria, and was



first performed at Suresnes, his country estate near Paris. Another possibility is Jean-Baptiste Lully's opera *Festes de l'Amour et de Bacchus*. This pastoral was given performances in 1706 and 1716, suggesting a latest possible date for the picture, and included an intermezzo dedicated to the reconciliation of Bacchus and Cupid. We can only be certain that the intention was comic or satiric and that the figures, with the possible exception of Crispin, were studied from models.

This canvas and the one with which it is traditionally associated (no. 10) were shown at the Metropolitan Museum on one previous occasion, from May 17 through June 12, 1948, as part of an exhibition of paintings from the museums of Berlin that had been recovered at the end of World War II by General Patton's Third Army.¹ In a sense, that show, which was preceded by one in Washington, D.C. seen by "vast throngs of visitors," initiated the concept, if not the name, of the so-called blockbuster exhibition.

KBB

JEAN-ANTOINE WATTEAU (FRENCH, 1684–1721)

8. *The Perspective* (*La Perspective*)

Oil on canvas, 18 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 21 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (46.7 x 55.3 cm)

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Maria Antoinette Evans Fund (23.573)

The print after the painting, which was engraved (in reverse) with this title by Louis Crépy, was announced in the December 1729 *Mercure de France*. The work then belonged to Monsieur Guenon, whose identity has not been established. The dimensions, which evidently have been reversed, so that width precedes height, are noted as "1 p. 9 po. x 1 p. 5 po.," or 56.7 by 45.9 centimeters. The canvas therefore must have been cut down slightly at the sides.

While Watteau was a painter of his time and place, he was not a painter of reality. It is rare, therefore, that, as in the present case, a canvas by Watteau can be associated with the circumstances of his little documented life. If *The Perspective* is not a specific view taken in the park of Pierre Crozat's country house at Montmorency, and as far as we know Watteau

1. *Paintings from the Berlin Museums, Exhibited in Co-Operation with the Department of the Army of the United States of America*, exh. cat., The Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York, 1948), foreword and pp. 14–15, nos. 141 (the present work), 142, pl. XLVIII.

Ex coll.: Henri de Rosnel, Paris (in 1734); Frederick II (the Great) of Prussia, Schloss Sanssouci, Potsdam (by 1766–d. 1786); by descent, Schloss Sanssouci (1786–1830); Staatliche Museen, Berlin (from 1830; safekeeping during and after World War II [Wiesbaden])

References: Dacier and Vuaflart 1921–29, vol. 3 (1922), pp. 113–14, no. 270, vol. 4 (1921), pl. 270 (engraving by C.-N. Cochin the Elder); Robert Tomlinson, *Watteau et Marivaux: La Fête galante* (Geneva, 1981), pp. 91–98; Rosenberg in Grasselli and Rosenberg 1984, pp. 336–39, no. 38 (with bibliography), colorpl., and see also pp. 298–300, no. 24, colorpl.; Rosenberg and Prat 1996, vol. 1, pp. 42–43, 312–15, nos. 23, 196, 197, ill., and pp. 196–97, 292–93, 310–11, nos. 123, 185, 195, colorpls., vol. 2, pp. 648–49, 684–85, nos. 396, 414, ill.

never painted such a "real" landscape, then it is an evocation of the place, which can be identified because of the reminiscence of its splendid garden architecture.

Pierre Crozat, a member of a family of wealthy bankers from Toulouse and a voracious collector of drawings (see also nos. 16, 17), was among Watteau's principal patrons. We are first made aware of their acquaintance on December 22, 1716, when Crozat wrote to the Venetian pastelist Rosalba Carriera to express admiration for the younger artist. The next year, Watteau was living in Crozat's splendid townhouse in the rue de Richelieu, apparently in succession to Charles de La Fosse, who had died there on December 13, 1716. De La Fosse had painted the ceiling of Crozat's gallery, while Watteau would contribute to the decoration of his dining room. Watteau led an itinerant existence and toward the end of 1718 was sharing quarters with the Flemish-born artist Nicolas Vleughels. Some time after



his return from London in 1720, Watteau took up residence with the dealer Edme Gersaint, but he was still in Crozat's orbit and attended an elegant concert in the rue de Richelieu on September 30 that year.

In 1709, Crozat had bought an estate a little to the north of Paris at Montmorency, with a park designed at least in part by André Le Nôtre for the court painter Charles Le Brun. The banker commissioned a new house to replace Le Nôtre's from his own architect, Jean-Sylvain Cartaud, and directed that the seventeenth-century structure be torn down, leaving what must have been an immense two-storey loggia beside a reflecting pool. As luck would have it, the comte de Caylus, archaeologist, amateur engraver, and another of Watteau's sponsors, prepared an engraving that differs in some details but evidently shows the same building and inscribed it "à Montmorency." On the copy of the print at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris, he provided a further annotation, identifying the subject as "Maison de M. LeBrun, P[remier]. P[eintre]. du Roi L[ouis]. XIV," that is, the house of Le Brun, first painter to the king.

The picture shows an *allée*, a straight passageway bordered by trees, of a sort that is found in both French and Italian formal gardens (Crozat's visit to Italy in 1714 decisively influenced his taste in paintings and drawings, and conceivably in architecture and garden design as well). In this case, the *allée* is unusually narrow, and the trees, with their feathery leaves turning brown and even red, are very tall. A couple with their backs turned, standing at the balustrade, glances at the silhouette of the white marble screen with its tripartite Palladian arch reflected in the pool that lies between. It is conceivable that Watteau painted this view about 1714, as an early acknowledgment of Crozat's interest or in hope of future patronage, but more likely it dates later, perhaps to the moment of their most intimate association, closer to 1716–17.

One measure of Watteau's interest in a specific work lies in the degree of its elaboration, and another might be the number of drawings he brought to bear on a design. Here he selected many figure and costume studies from the model, not all of the same date but accumulated over several years' time. As Donald Posner remarked, the women and children in the painting are in contemporary dress, while the men, in costume, wear, among other garments, a short jacket, several capes, and hats suited only to the theater. An actor or entertainer dressed in pink with a seventeenth-century ruff, seated on the lawn, entertains the gathering with music and song. Le Nôtre's house would not have faced so narrow an *allée*, and the trees so near the pool in Crozat's park are unlikely to have been wildly overgrown and untended. In an imaginative leap, the artist drew the threads of his life together in the dream-like quasi-reality of the *fête galante*. KBB

Ex coll.: Monsieur Guenon, Paris (in 1729); Daniel Saint (until 1846; his sale, Paris, May 4, 1846, no. 56, for fr. 3,805); Richard Seymour-Conway, 4th Marquess of Hertford, Paris and London (?1846–d. 1870); Sir Richard Wallace, Baronet (1870–d. 1890); Lady Wallace (1890–d. 1897); Sir John Murray Scott, Baronet (1897–d. 1912; his estate sale, Christie's, London, June 27, 1913, no. 138, for £6,510 to Agnew); [Agnew, London, 1913–19; sold to Burns]; Walker Burns (from 1919); [Durlacher, New York and London, until 1923; sold to Museum of Fine Arts, Boston]

References: Dacier and Vuafart 1921–29, vol. 3 (1922), pp. 83–84, no. 172, vol. 4 (1921), pl. 172 (engraving by L. Crépy); Rosenberg in Grasselli and Rosenberg 1984, pp. 300–304, no. 25 (with bibliography), colorpl.; Donald Posner, *Antoine Watteau* (Ithaca, 1984), pp. 147–51, fig. 105; Rosenberg and Prat 1996, vol. 1, pp. 286–87, 316–17, 352–53, 520–21, nos. 182, 199, 222, 324, ill., vol. 2, pp. 792–93, 800–801, 916–17, nos. 475, 479, 542, colorpls., and see also vol. 3, pp. 1402–3, no. G136, ill.

JEAN-ANTOINE WATTEAU (FRENCH, 1684–1721)

9. *The Pleasures of the Ball* (*Les Plaisirs du bal*)

Oil on canvas, 20¾ x 25¾ in. (52.6 x 65.4 cm)

By Permission of the Trustees of Dulwich Picture Gallery, London (156)

When, in November 1730, the engraving of the painting (in reverse) by Gérard II Scotin was announced in the *Mercure de France*, it was referred to as “un Bal dans un Salon” (a ball in a salon), from the collection of Claude Glucq, who was the nephew of Watteau’s patron Jean de Jullienne. The setting is not a salon, and the title was perhaps intended simply to distinguish dancing in a covered space, before a large crowd, from dancing outside, before a small group, a subject that is more commonly met with in Watteau’s oeuvre. Mariette, noting that it had been engraved by Scotin le Jeune (Scotin the Younger), judged the Dulwich picture to be among the most beautiful canvases that Watteau ever painted, and as such it is generally regarded.

We know that at first, Watteau planned to set the ball in a closed interior; under the flattened arch at the upper left that frames two-thirds of the garden landscape, an x-radiograph has revealed the ceiling of an oval room. This the artist abandoned in favor of what might be read as an arcaded terrace, or even the proscenium of a stage, seen from the point of view of the actors rather than the audience. It is thought that the ivory and gray banded columns were based on the columns of Salomon de Brosse’s Palais du Luxembourg, with the appearance of which Watteau would have been intimately acquainted. Between the columns, and flanked by draped female herms in white marble supporting lidded urns, spectacular displays (one visible, the other, to the left, only hinted at) of gold plate garlanded with white flowers indicate the source of the refreshments that two servants dispense to the onlookers. The performance, by a lady and gentleman in colorful theatrical costume, is a *dance à deux*, to the twenty-first century onlooker self-evidently a couple dancing, but in the early eighteenth century something that was still relatively new in its concentration on the relationship between two people executing the intricate steps and patterns of a minuet, an essential component being the way in which they withdraw from and then rejoin each other, expressing stages of intimacy.¹ It had been traditional for one couple to dance at a time, observed by many others, but this

practice was breaking down in Watteau’s era as balls became lively public as well as private social occasions.

For the audience at the ball, Watteau drew on an exceptionally large number of his figure studies, some of which may have been prepared in connection with this picture, and he seems to have intended the spectators as a veritable catalogue of his sources and interests. The motifs upon which he drew fall into groups; two are from a work by a Venetian Renaissance painter (and three others possibly from seventeenth-century Flemish sources), while the more usual studies are from posed models in contemporary dress or theatrical costume. The Renaissance artist is Paolo Veronese, whose *Christ and the Centurion* (Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City) provided the source for the boy presenting a footed tray to the seated lady in black.² Watteau’s drawing (Musée du Louvre, Paris, inv. 33356) shows the figure facing to the left, as in Veronese’s canvas, and from the knees up; here, he is reversed.³ Leaning over a balustrade above and to the right is a second figure inspired by the same Veronese painting. Below and left of the oboe player, there are two men side by side—one with a beard and a small ruff and the other wearing a flat, pointed collar. It is possible that this pair was inspired by Anthony van Dyck. Near the right edge, close to and below the double-bass player, is a woman who wears a pointed bodice with a low neck and a high-standing collar resembling costumes worn by Marie de Médicis, and thus she is probably intended as a reminiscence of Peter Paul Rubens. The musicians, in general, seem worthy of the Antwerp master David Teniers the Younger.

As for the actors, they were inspired by the theaters of the fair or perhaps by the Comédie Italienne. All are in the bank of spectators to the left: at the back, Pierrot, in a soft hat and white costume, frontal, with his arms at his sides; just to his right, Harlequin, arms raised, wearing a hat and the traditional black mask and diamond-patterned costume; and seated in the foreground at the feet of the male dancer, the fool, cradling a guitar and dressed in a gold parti-colored costume and hood trimmed with bells. Of these three, apparently only Harlequin is based on a surviving drawing, a



study that Watteau employed often.⁴ A figure in a skullcap and gown, toward the back of the crowd and more difficult to read, might also wear an actor's costume.

Turning to those in the audience who are costumed more or less in contemporary fashion, here Watteau followed his usual practice; while the women are dressed in elaborate modern clothes, the men have theatrical cloaks and soft hats, and they do not wear the knee-length coat that was the norm. Most of these figures were prepared by Watteau in elaborate drawings, for example, the lady standing, in gold and blue, in the left foreground; the one seated and in black, taking a stemmed glass from a tray; and the man in a red cape and hat in the right foreground.⁵ There are several drawings of the woman wearing a cape with a black band at the throat, and one of them shows her holding a black half-mask.⁶ This detail is conceivably significant in dating the present painting, as public masked balls at the Opéra were first authorized in 1716.

KBB

1. These matters have been the subject of extensive research by Sarah R. Cohen. See particularly the chapter titled "Watteau's Performers" in *Art, Dance, and the Body in French Culture of the Ancien Régime* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 166–208.
2. Eliot W. Rowlands, *The Collections of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art: Italian Paintings, 1300–1800* (Kansas City, 1996), pp. 198–211, no. 24, colorpl., as Veronese and Workshop. For the provenance, see esp. pp. 206, 211.

3. Rosenberg and Prat 1996, vol. 2, pp. 696–97, no. 420, ill.
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 804–5, no. 481, colorpl.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 926–27, 732–33, nos. 548, 441, ills., and vol. 1, pp. 518–19, no. 322, colorpl.
6. *Ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 630–31, 638–39, nos. 381, 387, 388, ills.

Ex coll.: François II de Boyer de Bandol, Aix-en-Provence; Claude Glucq, Paris (by 1730); Louis Pasquier (by 1752–d. 1754); Vincent de Gournay, Paris (from 1754); Jean de Jullienne, Paris (by ca. 1756–d. 1764; bequeathed to de Montullé); Jean-Baptiste-François de Montullé (1764–83; his sale, Paris, December 22, 1783, no. 55, for 5,000 livres to Le Brun); [Le Brun, Paris, from 1783]; Jean-François, comte de Vaudreuil (until 1787; his sale, Paris, November 26, 1787, no. 60, for 4,000 livres to Le Brun); [Le Brun, Paris, from 1787]; Anne-Pierre, marquis de Montesquiou-Fézensac (until 1788; his sale, Paris, December 9, 1788, no. 212, for 3,000 livres to Le Brun); [Le Brun, Paris, 1788—at least 1791; his sale, Paris, April 11, 1791, no. 197, bought in; to Desenfans]; [Noël Desenfans, until 1792; to Hume]; Sir Abraham Hume (1792–97; to Desenfans); [Noël Desenfans, 1797—at least 1804; bequeathed to Bourgeois]; Sir Francis Bourgeois (Bourgeois bequest to Dulwich College, 1811)

References: Dacier and Vuafart 1921–29, vol. 3 (1922), pp. 54–56, no. 114, vol. 4 (1921), pl. 114 (engraving by Gérard II Scotin); Rosenberg in Grasselli and Rosenberg 1984, pp. 367–72, no. 51 (with bibliography), colorpl.; Rosenberg and Prat 1996, vol. 1, pp. 418–19, 518–19, nos. 264, 322, colorpls., vol. 2, pp. 630–31, 638–39, 646–47, 696–97, 732–33, 920–21, 926–27, nos. 381, 387, 388, 394, 420, 441, 544, 548, ills., and pp. 726–27, 804–5, nos. 438, 481, colorpls.

JEAN-ANTOINE WATTEAU (FRENCH, 1684–1721)

10. *Love in the Italian Theater* (*L'Amour au théâtre italien*)

Oil on canvas, 14 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 18 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (37 x 48 cm)

Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen, Preussischer Kulturbesitz,
Berlin (470)

The engraving of this painting prepared by Charles-Nicolas Cochin the Elder for the *Recueil Jullienne* was paired with his engraving of no. 7, *Love in the French Theater*, which also belonged to Henri de Rosnel. Both were announced in the March 1734 edition of the *Mercure de France*. Although of the same size, the two works apparently are not of the same date, and this one was painted later, perhaps as a pendant to the other.

Although this is a late work, it shares a certain lightness of heart, and perhaps even one or two motifs, with Watteau's earliest drawings of traveling players. Additionally, the man with long, straight fair hair who leans forward, his hands clasped on the head of a cane, appears in what seems to be Watteau's only surviving gouache, which Rosenberg and Prat have dated as early as 1713.¹ The man's curious crouch and stance are precisely the same in both. Among later studies, the correspondences are surprisingly few, and only two are precise. The head of the principal female figure in the painting, an elegant young blond, seems to have been based on a head study of a dark-haired woman at the lower left corner of a magnificent sheet in the Musée du Louvre, Paris (inv. 33384).² The hands of the woman holding a mask, although in a slightly different relationship one to the other, may be found in a sheet of the same date.³

Love in the French Theater, which is illuminated by the moon, as well as by a torch and a lantern, is the only night scene in Watteau's oeuvre and a great rarity in early eighteenth-century European painting. The moonlight, fitful (partly covered by cloud), cold, and distant, contrasts with the warmer glare of torchlight and the diffuse glow from below that emanates from the sheltered lantern. As is usually the case, while the cast is drawn from the theater, the setting is notionally out of doors, in the sense that Watteau here provides little more than a patch of bare ground and a quantity of indistinct foliage in the dark background.

Attributes of the stage are the half-mask held out by one of the women, their ruffs and those of several of the men, and costumes signifying the presence of the doctor, *il Dottore*, with, from left to right, Pierrot (in white), Harlequin (in diamonds), Mezzetin (in stripes), and Scaramouche (in black). These are the traditional and most familiar of the Italian commedia dell'arte roles, with the exception of that of Pierrot, who while French, had by this date been absorbed for all practical purposes into the pantheon, in an environment in which actors in a single play were often of several nationalities, while more than one language might well be used in a single performance. The Italians, banished in 1697, returned officially to the stage in Paris in 1716. Whether the darkness here recalls their absence, or their underground role, or celebrates their return, who can say.

The composition, unusual in its linearity, is bracketed by crouching figures, the doctor in his black legal gown at one end, and the man with the cane, in a black suit trimmed in red, at the other. A spotted dog of indeterminate breed looks on from his corner at the lower right.

KBB

1. Rosenberg and Prat 1996, vol. 1, pp. 189–90, no. 189, colorpl.
2. *Ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 810–11, no. 484, colorpl.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 808–9, no. 483, colorpl.

Ex coll.: Henri de Rosnel, Paris (in 1734); Frederick II (the Great) of Prussia, Schloss Sanssouci, Potsdam (by 1766–d. 1786); by descent, Schloss Sanssouci (1786–1830); Staatliche Museen, Berlin (from 1830; safekeeping during and after World War II [Wiesbaden])

References: Dacier and Vuaflart 1921–29, vol. 3 (1922), p. 114, no. 271, vol. 4 (1921), pl. 271 (engraving by C.-N. Cochin the Elder); Rosenberg in Grasselli and Rosenberg 1984, pp. 418–21, no. 65 (with bibliography), colorpl.; Rosenberg and Prat 1996, vol. 1, pp. 4–5, 8–9, 84–85, 174–75, 364–65, nos. 1, 3, 52, 111, 229, ill., and pp. 300–301, 502–3, nos. 189, 313, colorpls., vol. 2, pp. 724–25, 1068–69, nos. 437, 626, ill., and pp. 808–11, nos. 483, 484, colorpls.



JEAN-ANTOINE WATTEAU (FRENCH, 1684–1721)

II. *The Surprise (La Surprise)*

Oil on wood, 14 x 13½ in. (35.6 x 34.3 cm)

Private collection, courtesy of Jean-Luc Baroni Ltd.

The painting was engraved with this title by Benoît II Audran while in the collection of Jean de Jullienne; the engraving, announced in the December 1731 *Mercur de France*, was included in the *Recueil Jullienne*. According to Mariette, *The Surprise* had been painted, together with another work, *The Perfect Accord (L'Accord parfait)*, for Nicolas Henin, who was a court official and an amateur artist. Henin was among those to whom Watteau bequeathed a portion of his drawings; he also died young, in 1724, just three years after Watteau. *The Perfect Accord*, which had been lost from sight for more than a century, was acquired in 1998 by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.¹ That picture represents three musicians and a strolling couple with a statue of Momus in profile in the background. It is on panel, and, at about 33 by 27 centimeters, it is fairly close in size to *The Surprise*, but the figure scale and the composition differ greatly, and it cannot have been intended as a pendant, even though Mariette writes that in the Henin collection the two were hung side by side.

Two figure studies of very different types preceded *The Surprise*. The first is a faithful copy by Watteau, perhaps from the early teens, after a group depicted in Peter Paul Rubens's *Village Fair (La Kermesse)*, an elaborate multigure painting on panel that had been acquired by Louis XIV in 1685 (it is in the Musée du Louvre, Paris, while the drawing belongs to the Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris). Watteau in a sense was looking back when he drew this copy, to the study that he had made of Rubens's Médicis cycle some years earlier, in the course of his apprenticeship with Claude III Audran, the custodian of the Palais du Luxembourg, where Rubens's great paintings were housed. The drawing exhibits a raw strength and vigor that are quite northern, deriving from Rubens.

The second more brilliant and much more typical sketch, in red and black chalks, shows a costumed model holding a guitar (it was bought from the Groult collection in 1963 for the Musée du Louvre, Paris). This figure study was preparatory not only to the present work but also to a small

painting of a guitarist in the Musée Condé, Chantilly, and it was used as well for the musician in a fête galante now in the Gemäldegalerie, Dresden. Pierre Rosenberg pointed out that the sitter for the ex-Groult sheet appears repeatedly in Watteau's drawings. Two of these, referenced below, also show the model wearing the same clothes; in the first, his guitar is upside down; in the second, the body of the instrument is upside down with respect to the neck. The costume appears so frequently in Watteau's oeuvre that the artist must have owned it and drawn it at will.

The guitarist in *The Surprise*, who has often been referred to as a Mezzetin, wears a rose-colored coat and knee-breeches slashed with yellow in the manner of the Flemish master Anthony van Dyck, whom Watteau also admired. The musician's costume is embellished with blue ribbons and his shoes with blue rosettes. He is seated, tranquilly tuning his instrument before a sky in which the sun is setting, rather as he might be expected to do were he alone. But he is not. Very nearby, separated only by the folds of a cloak, there is another man, wearing a costume in silver slashed with white and shoes tied with red ribbons. His aggressive posture is taken directly from the drawing after Rubens, although in the painting he is seated rather than standing. His slanted brows, red cheeks, and tousled hair suggest force rather than gentility, and his embrace is not received with complete willingness on the part of the blond and rather buxom woman. His kiss is not returned.

Watteau suppressed the right leg of the man in the Rubens painting after which his own is modeled, pushing the female figure down so that her arm parallels the outside of his left leg in an elegant gesture. She wears the same bodice and blouse, which would have been understood as a peasant costume, but her sleeve is unbuttoned and her skirt is an elegant inflected bronze color. It is cut by the edge of the panel. The unevenly weighted composition, in which neither the single figure nor the couple occupies the center, is unusual for the period and worth contrasting with the serene stability of the Metropolitan Museum's *Mezzetin* (no. 12). At the lower right of *The Surprise*, a small black and white dog with bells or studs on its collar offers



another reminiscence of Rubens. Reversed and shifted to the opposite side, the dog is more or less identical to the animal in that artist's *Marriage by Proxy* (1622–25) from the Médicis series (Musée du Louvre, Paris).

The Surprise is in various respects exceptional. Lost from sight for well over two hundred years, it was offered for sale at Christie's, London, on July 8, 2008, and appears in a Watteau exhibition for the first time. As is the case with *The Perfect Accord*, which belonged to the same patron, *The Surprise* is painted over a quite different initial design, the composition of which is very close to that of *The Italian Serenade* (*La Sérénade italienne*), a panel painting belonging to the Nationalmuseum, Stockholm.² If the Mezzetin in *The Surprise* was painted over the Pierrot that lies beneath, to block it out, that would account for the placement of the single figure, which would have been painted first. When the couple was introduced afterward, there was not enough room to balance the whole. But this in no way explains the unsettling contrast between the quiet musician, his sangfroid undisturbed, and the explosive, invasive arrangement of the elegant coupling pair.

KBB

JEAN-ANTOINE WATTEAU (FRENCH, 1684–1721)

12. *Mezzetin* (*Mezzetin*)

Oil on canvas, 21¾ x 17 in. (55.2 x 43.2 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Munsey Fund, 1934
(34.138)

The painting is described in the 1767 estate sale catalogue of Jean de Jullienne as “un Mézétin jouant de la guitarre, il est assis sur un banc dans un jardin. Ce Tableau est bien conservé, les carnations ont le coloris de Rubens: ces avantages le distinguent. Il est peint sur toile, de 20 pouces de haut, sur 17 de large. Sa forme est ovale.” (“A Mezzetin playing the guitar, he is seated on a bench in a garden. The painting is well preserved, the carnations have the coloring of Rubens: these advantages distinguish it. It is painted on canvas, of 54 centimeters in height, by 45.9 centimeters in width. Its form is oval.”) When the engraving (in reverse) was made by Benoît II Audran, the picture was

1. See Eidelberg in Martin Eidelberg et al., *Watteau et la fête galante*, exh. cat., Musée des Beaux-Arts, Valenciennes (Paris, 2004), pp. 198–200, no. 56, colorpl.
2. Rosenberg in Grasselli and Rosenberg 1984, pp. 345–48, no. 42, colorpl.

Ex coll.: Nicolas Henin, Paris (until d. 1724; inv., 1724); Jean de Jullienne, Paris (in 1731); Ange-Laurent de La Live de Jully, Paris (in 1764; cat., 1764, p. 79, as “une Pastorale de Wateau sur bois, de quatorze pouces de haut sur onze pouces de large”); François-Michel Harenc de Presle, Paris (in 1792; his sale, Le Brun, Paris, April 16–24, 1792, no. 51; sale cancelled; sold to Robit); Citoyen M. Robit (until 1801; sale, Paillet, Paris, May 11–18, 1801, no. 165, for fr. 411 to M. Vandevallé); Lady Murray (until 1848; to private collection); private collection by descent (until 2008; sale, Christie's, London, July 8, 2008, no. 21, to Baroni for private collection); private collection (from 2008)

References: Dacier and Vuaflart 1921–29, vol. 3 (1922), pp. 20–21, no. 31, vol. 4 (1921), pl. 31 (engraving by Benoît II Audran), and see also vol. 3, pp. 15–16, no. 23, vol. 4, pl. 23 (engraving by B. Baron of *L'Accord parfait*); Rosenberg and Prat 1996, vol. 1, pp. 392–93, no. 245, ill., vol. 2, pp. 762–63, no. 459, colorpl., and see also vol. 2, pp. 854–55, 1004–5, nos. 509, 591, ill.; Christie's, London, July 8, 2008, sale cat., pp. 66–77, no. 21 (entry by Alan Wintermute), colorpl.

in Jullienne's collection. The dimensions are correct, but the engraving gives no indication of the oval shape to which reference is made, and the corners of the picture are in fact finished, the one at the lower right perhaps less so. We can therefore assume that by 1767, and for quite a long time, *Mezzetin* was framed as an oval. Evidence for this survives.¹ Audran's engraving of this work was on the same sheet with his engraving of *The Sultana* (*La Sultane*), which records a lost painting representing a young woman in a gown and an ermine-lined cloak with a train who is holding a black theatrical mask. They seem not to have formed a pair. Both were published in the *Recueil Jullienne*.



This small canvas has an illustrious history; owned by the artist's friend and ardent admirer Jean de Jullienne for over thirty years, it was bought at Jullienne's 1767 estate sale by an agent who was probably acting for Catherine the Great, Empress of Russia. The picture, which left the Hermitage in Saint Petersburg in 1930 through the agency of Calouste Gulbenkian, was acquired by the Metropolitan Museum in 1934. A closely observed sketch of a man's head with what could be read as the slight outline of a beret may have been prepared as a study for this work and also belongs to the Museum (no. 31). It is evidently the head of a model whose torso was nude. No other related drawings are known.

According to Dacier and Vuaflart, the costume shown here can be found in an engraving by François Joullain in *Livre de scènes comiques inventées par Gillot*, and it is in a style that came into use in 1680. If so, then this is further confirmation that the suit may be associated with the Veronese actor Angelo Costantini, who had debuted at the Comédie Italienne in 1682 and in 1683 performed there in the role of Mezzetin for the first time. In addition to a ruff, hat, and cape, Costantini favored a jacket and knee-britches with red-and-white vertical stripes. Various portraits of Costantini are known. However, the picture cannot represent him, because he had been sent off by Louis XIV in 1697 and came back to the French capital only briefly in 1729, the year of his death. The names of various other performers have been put forward, notably that of Luigi Riccoboni, who returned to the Paris stage in 1716. However, without supporting evidence, and given Watteau's practice, we should assume instead that the head was drawn from someone he brought into the studio, perhaps only once, as a model. It is noteworthy that this iconic Mezzetin does not represent the artist's preferred choice for either the costume or the model; these he painted on many more occasions, notably in *The Surprise* (no. 11).

The costumed guitarist here is among the most intensely felt figures in Watteau's depictions of music and theater, and it may be to this sensibility on the part of the artist that the viewer chiefly responds. The head and hands of the figure are highly colored, and not only the round, tilted face but also the large, bent, angular fingers and prominent knuckles are exceptionally expressive. They are not however handsome in the one case nor elegant in the other. Both the drawn and painted heads illustrate Watteau's style at its most Rubensian, that is, direct in handling and slightly raw in emotional tenor. In both, the sitter's white teeth can be seen between his parted lips. In both, the slightly bearded neck is thick, the nose is large, and the eyes roll

backward into the head. More than one reading of the musician is surely possible. On the stage, this character was comical, interfering, devious, and lovelorn; certainly he is not languorous here (nor was his theatrical persona), and he may be engaged in expressing an appearance rather than a truth. Watteau may not have intended that we should read this guitarist as a tragic figure nor interpret the garden statue of a draped female with her back turned as a weighty symbol of rejection and loss, as so often has been suggested.

The canvas, well preserved for a work of the artist, is painted with a combination of agility and delicacy, quite thinly in the lighted background, densely in the figure and in the dark shadow he casts. In the guitarist's features and hands, as well as in the costume and the decoration of the instrument, close examination reveals the flicker of individual strokes of the brush. Warm tones contrast with cool, as was Watteau's practice as a draftsman when working in *trois crayons*.² The costume is painted in stone, white, and blue, with the red stripes, a combination of lake and a color of greater opacity, brushed over the top. Some underdrawing can be observed, particularly in the musician's proper left hand. A "shadow" marks the area that was not masked by an insert that turned the visible surface into an oval in the later eighteenth century and perhaps for much of the nineteenth as well.

KBB

1. The earliest photograph of which we have a record was published by Gabriel Séailles, *Watteau* (Paris, 1901), p. 57, and indicates the darker tone of an oval mark on the rectangular surface.
2. This was pointed out to me by my colleague, conservator Dorothy Mahon (verbally 2009).

Ex coll.: Jean de Jullienne, Paris (by 1735–d. 1766; inv., ca. 1756, no. 157; posthumous inv., 1766, no. 1112, as "un Mezetin . . . dans sa bordure dorée"; his estate sale, Rémy and Julliot, Paris, March 30, 1767, no. 253, as an oval, for 700 livres to Rémy, probably for Catherine II; Catherine II, empress of Russia, St. Petersburg (1767–d. 1796); Russian imperial collection, St. Petersburg (1796–1917); Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg (1917–30; cats., 1903, 1916, no. 1503; sold to Gulbenkian); Calouste Gulbenkian, Paris (1930; sold to Wildenstein); [Wildenstein, Paris and New York, 1930–34; sold to MMA]

References: Dacier and Vuaflart 1921–29, vol. 3 (1922), pp. 100–101, no. 215, vol. 4 (1921), pl. 215 (engraving by Benoît II Audran), and see also vol. 3, pp. 99–100, no. 214, vol. 4, pl. 214 (engraving by Benoît II Audran of *La Sultane*); Rosenberg in Grasselli and Rosenberg 1984, pp. 362–65, no. 49, colorpl.;

Rosenberg and Prat 1996, vol. 2, pp. 1048–49, no. 615, ill.; (extensive bibliography can be found on the MMA website at www.metmuseum.org by going to

Works of Art, Collection Database, and entering the accession number in the search field)

JEAN-ANTOINE WATTEAU (FRENCH, 1684–1721)

13. *Italian Comedians (Comédiens italiens)*, ca. 1719–20

Oil on canvas, 25 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 30 in. (63.8 x 76.2 cm)

National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Samuel H. Kress Collection (1946.7.9)

In 1719, likely in the autumn, Watteau, who was probably suffering from tuberculosis, traveled to London. While he was in severe financial difficulty and may have been looking for new patrons, it is thought that his main purpose was to seek treatment from Dr. Richard Mead, a distinguished English physician, scholar, and collector of works of art. The critic and diarist George Vertue, writing some years after the artist's death, noted that Mead owned two paintings by "Watteaux," which he referred to as "Conversations painted in England,"¹ and this work and another by him appeared in Mead's 1754 estate sale. The title *Comédiens italiens* was first used for the reproductive print (in reverse) by Bernard Baron, which was announced in the March 1733 *Mercur de France* as newly engraved in England from a picture Mead had ordered. It is thus established that Mead commissioned the canvas and that Watteau painted it in London between the last months of 1719 and the late spring of 1720, which is rather more than we know about most of the artist's works.

The assemblage of so many players suggests the bows at the end of a performance on a stage, with steps in the foreground and, behind, a set comprising the high stone walls and door of a courtyard opening onto a view of foliage and sky. If the sculpted head above the door is not Momus, the Greek god of mockery, its mask-like grimace nevertheless suggests satire. The most important performer is Pierrot; his white costume and the open doorway before which he stands set him apart, and by comparison

with his fellow actors, he is innocent, incurious, and disengaged. Pierrot is presented by Brighella, in a gold suit and hat, while at his side is a rather proud-looking heroine, a Colombina type, wearing a silver satin dress and a tiny tricorne hat. To their left is the doctor, *Il Dottore*, whose role was that of an aged Bolognese jurist and sometime charlatan, wearing his usual professional gown and leaning on a cane. To their right are Harlequin, a seated guitarist, and Mezzetin, among others. A jester or fool in a traditional parti-colored hooded costume crouches in the foreground, cradling a fool's-head staff trimmed with bells and roses. Although the text on the posthumous engraving implies that the actors are specific personages ("ce sont presque tous portraits de gens habiles dans leur art que Watteau peignit sous les différents habits des acteurs du Théâtre Italien"), there is no other evidence to suggest this is so, and the annotation can be more or less disproved, because several of the related drawings are clearly from the model, not portraits, and had been used by Watteau for different roles in various pictures.

Watteau was little given to compositional sketches, rapid and relatively slight drawings used to record preliminary ideas for arrangements of several figures. In the more or less unique case of *Italian Comedians*, there are several related drawings of the kind. The least developed shows five actors, apparently including Pierrot, a guitarist, and Crispin, standing to the right of the center of the sheet; a curtain is drawn back at the right. The second includes nine figures to the right, with Pierrot, a guitarist, and a man holding back a curtain among them. In a third, Pierrot, again toward the right and

strictly frontal, stands at the top of two steps, accompanied by Crispin and two others; in the foreground at the left, a very Rubensian nude nymph leans on a dolphin. The sketch (National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.) that is closest to the finished painting illustrates a strictly centralized composition of many players surrounding Pierrot and with a curtain drawn up at the right, but the steps are replaced by the side flats, ceiling, and backdrop of a stage. There are no fewer than ten additional sheets with studies of single figures, heads, and hands that Watteau either prepared in connection with, or referred to, when painting this much cogitated picture. On grounds of style, the drawings should probably be dated over three years or more, and he must therefore have carried at least some of them with him to London so that he might use them for his work while there, which is in line with what we understand to have been his practice.

After the death in 1715 of Louis XIV, the Comédie Italienne was welcomed back to the Paris stage. If, as the drawings indicate, Watteau developed the composition of *Italian Comedians* slowly and with much deliberation, it is possible that the painting, even though it is several years later in date, should be read as celebrating their return. The scale of the figures as well as their number and elaboration make it one of Watteau's most important theatrical works, and although its state of preservation is somewhat compromised, it is also among his liveliest and most optimistic.

KBB

1. Quoted in Grasselli and Rosenberg 1984, p. 440.

Ex coll.: Dr. Richard Mead, London (until d. 1754; his estate sale, Langford, London, March 20, 1754, no. 43, to Wood for Beckford); Richard Beckford, London (1754–55; sold privately by Wood to Colebrooke); Sir James Colebrooke (from 1755); Roger Harenc, or Harene, London (until d. 1763; his estate sale, Langford, London, March 3, 1764, no. 52, as one of a pair, “A Musical Conversation, and Italian Comedians, its Companion,” for £8.18.6 to Grafton); Augustus Henry Fitzroy, 3rd Duke of Grafton (from 1764); Thomas Baring, Stratton Park, Hampshire (by 1851–d. 1873); Thomas George Baring, 1st Earl of Northbrook, Stratton Park (from 1873); [Asher Wertheimer & Agnew, London, until 1888; sold to Iveagh]; Edward Cecil Guinness, 1st Earl of Iveagh, County Down (1888–d. 1927); Walter Edward Guinness, London (1927–30; sold to Wildenstein); [Wildenstein, 1930; sold to Thyssen]; Baron Heinrich Thyssen-Bornemisza, Schloss Rohoncz, Rechnitz (1930–36; sold to Wildenstein); [Wildenstein, New York, 1936–42; sold to Kress]; Samuel H. Kress, New York (1942–46)

References: Dacier and Vuaflart 1921–29, vol. 3 (1922), pp. 94–95, no. 204, vol. 4 (1921), pl. 204 (engraving by B. Baron); Colin Eisler, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: European Schools excluding Italian* (Oxford, 1977), pp. 300–306, figs. 267–69; Rosenberg in Grasselli and Rosenberg 1984, pp. 439–43, no. 71 (with bibliography), colorpl.; Rosenberg and Prat 1996, vol. 1, pp. 278–81, no. 179v, ill., vol. 2, pp. 934–35, 1060–61, nos. 552, 622, ill., and pp. 1058–59, no. 621, colorpl. (compositional studies), vol. 1, pp. 348–49, no. 219, ill., vol. 2, pp. 850–51, 1064–65, nos. 507v, 624, ill., and pp. 1062–63, 1098–99, nos. 623, 643, colorpls. (single figures), vol. 2, pp. 850–51, 1106–7, nos. 507r, 647, ill., and pp. 804–5, 1108–9, nos. 481, 649, colorpls. (heads and hands), and see also vol. 1, pp. 142–43, no. 90, ill., and fig. 90a



JEAN-ANTOINE WATTEAU (FRENCH, 1684–1721)

14. *French Comedians (Comédiens françois)*, ca. 1719–20

Oil on canvas, 22½ x 28¾ in. (57.2 x 73 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, The Jules Bache Collection, 1949 (49.7.54)

In December 1731, the *Mercure de France* announced the publication of an engraving by Jean-Michel Liotard after this picture, describing it as “des Comédiens François, représentant une tragi-comédie.” The print bears the title, the name of the owner, Jean de Jullienne, and the dimensions: “haut de 1. pied 10. pouces sur 2. pieds 4. pouces de large,” or roughly 59.5 by 75.7 centimeters. In 1900 (as now), the size was recorded as 57 by 73 centimeters, and accordingly, the canvas must have been trimmed, reducing its dimensions by about 2.2 centimeters in height and 2.6 centimeters in width. This is confirmed by the engraving, which also shows that at the top, between the arches, there had been a shield or medallion with the three fleurs-de-lys of France (of which little is now visible) surrounded by branches suggesting a laurel wreath. The presence of the fleur-de-lys may have served as a reminder of the official status of the Comédie Française.

The actors and actresses of the Comédie Française belonged to a company that had been established in its final form in the late seventeenth century, presenting both comedies and more serious subjects. The leading stock comic character of the French stage was the cheerless and egotistical manservant Crispin, a role often played by Paul Poisson, whom the painter knew (allowing for the difficulty in assessing resemblance and taking into account the insufficiency of the evidence, it is unlikely that it will ever be possible to show conclusively that this is, or is not, his portrait. The likelihood is that it is not). Crispin had for long interested Watteau and appears often in the artist’s earlier work. He is usually swarthy and heavy-set but seems in the various paintings to have been studied from different models, and he is dressed in the traditional black, with a black headband and hat, a wide belt, a wide collar, high boots, and a sword. Here he enters the picture space from the right, as if climbing a flight of stairs from a garden where a fountain in the form of a putto embracing a dolphin throws up a jet of water. His appearance is unexpected and incongruous.

In contrast, the two principal male actors wear elaborate old-fashioned costumes and full formal wigs of a sort that are almost never depicted in Watteau’s theatrical works. The costumes are of seventeenth-century type and would then have been chosen for performances of high seriousness, but in Watteau’s time, perhaps they were considered appropriate also for tragi-comedy, as the *Mercure de France* noted. That of the principal actor (who is sometimes and on rather slight evidence taken as Jean de Jullienne) is lavishly fringed and embroidered in silver with elegant classical palmettes,¹ while his heroine’s dress is en suite, but with the colors reversed and without the salmon-pink trim. Apparently she dismisses him, referring to the crumpled letter in the left foreground. The hero’s padded chest and paneled skirt may be intended to suggest armor, a sort of parade armor in what would have been understood at the time as antique style. His sagging white silk stockings and red boots draw the spectator’s attention to his rather inadequate anatomy, notably his bowed legs and skinny ankles. The two women and the accompanying male actor express distress in the varying degrees appropriate to their sex. It has never been possible to identify the players or the play, and the fact that the dramatic actors playing traditional roles in the foreground would never have occupied the stage simultaneously with the comic actor in the background indicates that the painter’s intention was evocative (or perhaps one could say comparative) rather than specifically descriptive.

There is another indication that Watteau may have intended the more important vignette to be read as a subject from antiquity. This takes the form of an engraving titled *Spectacle françois*, after an earlier painting by the artist long lost to view. The engraving preserves the composition of a work in which another principal female actress tearfully dismisses the principal male actor. Each is accompanied by a companion of their own sex. To one side, in the background, Crispin appears as one of a group of three. Behind the main figures, a swathe of drapery is attached to the trunk of a tree from which a plumed classical helmet and a shield are suspended. Later in the century, that picture was titled “une scène de tragedie.”



Watteau rarely depicted buildings (when painting architecture, his purpose seems for the most part to have been the embellishment of his foreground or background landscapes). However in the present case, while experiencing some difficulty,² he eventually achieved a splendid result. He provided a floor of black, white, and flecked green Italian marble, which was put in before the figures and, owing to the increasing transparency of the pigments due to age, now shows through in some areas. And then he imagined an elaborate setting that reads as part of an arcade: a pilaster and five marble columns with elegantly drawn Ionic capitals and entablatures supporting arches that give onto a bright, cloud-strewn sky. If intended to evoke a stage set, the architecture is unusual in that it is not symmetrical, but it is in any case beautifully rendered. KBB

1. My colleague Joan Mertens (verbally, 2009) has pointed out to me that the palmettes could well have been studied from an antique source and also noted that the depiction of the Ionic capitals is of a very high order of quality.
2. It is worth mentioning that the silhouettes of two columns reaching to the top of the canvas that Watteau had originally planned but later painted over show through noticeably, above the shoulders of the male actors at the center.

JEAN-ANTOINE WATTEAU (FRENCH, 1684–1721)

15. *Italian Recreation (Récréation italienne)*, ca. 1720–21

Oil on canvas, 29 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 36 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (75.3 x 93.8 cm)
Stiftung Preussische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg,
Schloss Sanssouci, Potsdam (GK I 5599)

The engraving by Pierre II Aveline for the *Recueil Jullienne* was announced in the October 1733 *Mercure de France*. It illustrates a considerably bigger composition, which, however, cannot correspond to the impossibly large dimensions recorded (that is, 3 p. 2 po. by 3 p. 6 po., or 103 by 111 centimeters). At some point between 1733 and 1747, the present work was cut down on both sides and at the top.

*F*our men and four women have assembled along a stone step in a garden. The couple at center appears to be in an early phase of courtship. They sit on different levels and are separated by the odd figure of a girl

Ex coll.: Jean de Jullienne, Paris (by 1731—at least 1735; sold to Frederick II); Frederick II (the Great) of Prussia, Potsdam (by 1756–d. 1786); by descent in the Prussian royal family and the German imperial family, Potsdam and Berlin (1786–1888); Kaiser Wilhelm II, Berlin (1888–1927; sold through Hugo Moser to Duveen); [Duveen, New York, 1927–28; sold to Bache]; Jules Bache, New York (1928–d. 1944); his estate (1944–45)

References: Dacier and Vuaflart 1921–29, vol. 3 (1922), p. 95, no. 205, vol. 4 (1921), pl. 205 (engraving by J.-M. Liotard), and see also vol. 3, p. 124, no. 294, vol. 4, pl. 294 (engraving by P. Dupin of *Spectacle français*); Rosenberg in Grasselli and Rosenberg 1984, pp. 436–39, no. 70, colorpl.; André Blanc, “Watteau et le théâtre français,” in *Antoine Watteau (1684–1721): Le Peintre, son temps et sa légende*, ed. François Moureau and Margaret Morgan Grasselli (Paris, 1987), pp. 200–202, pl. 68; Rosenberg and Prat 1996, vol. 1, pp. 26–27, no. 14, ill., and pp. 242–43, no. 155, colorpl., vol. 2, pp. 816–17, 1048–49, 1094–95, nos. 487, 616, 640, ill., and pp. 966–67, 1058–59, nos. 569, 621, colorpls.; (extensive bibliography can be found on the MMA website at www.metmuseum.org by going to Works of Art, Collection Database, and entering the accession number in the search field)

with a dog; it is as if the man plays his guitar in an attempt to bridge the distance. Subsequent stages of love are shown on both sides—more aggressive advances of a man toward a woman on the left, and a peaceful couple consorting intimately on the other side. The man on the far right who poses with crossed legs and with his elbow resting on a tall pedestal is the loner of the group, turning away from the couples. This man and the sculpture of a reclining female nude on the opposite side frame the scene. The sculpture alludes to the erotic desires of the men. It is painted over a statue of a standing woman dressed in antique costume and seen from behind; although the clothed figure is now visible, this was not Watteau’s intention. He thus



changed the original half-circular composition into a linear one, far from our usual conception of Rococo design.

Because of its rigid composition, the painting has not received the attention it deserves. So far, it has been dated variously to about 1715–16 or 1720–21. The later date had been based on the assumption that it is unfinished, but closer technical examination suggests that we are looking at a work in a particularly problematic state of preservation. The sky was originally painted in a strong blue that has faded since 1747, when the present frame was made; the blue can still be seen along the edges of the canvas that are covered by that frame. Aveline's engraving features both female sculptures (neither is clothed) on the left, a clear indication of early deterioration. Even if the painting can no longer be regarded as unfinished, it still seems likely that it was painted during Watteau's last years. The concentration of figures in the front plane and the strict horizontal composition both occur in works that are now convincingly dated to shortly before Watteau's death.

The standing man served Jean-Baptiste-Joseph Pater as a model for a drawing in the Metropolitan Museum (*Man Leaning on a Wall*, 1996.23) executed either after the painting or, more likely, after Watteau's lost drawing for the figure, which is known from an engraving by Benoît II Audran.

Pater must have had access to both painting and drawing when he spent time with Watteau just before the latter's death. A century later, Aveline's engraving, in which the composition is reversed, caught the attention of Ingres, who sketched it (Musée Ingres, Montauban, inv. MI867.4071). His interest seems to have its basis in the simple and surprisingly classicizing composition, which more recently has given so much discomfort to art historians.

CMV

Ex coll.: Jean de Jullienne, Paris (1733); Frederick II (the Great) of Prussia, Schloss Sanssouci, Potsdam (by 1747–d. 1786); by descent, Schloss Sanssouci (1786–1945; safekeeping during and after World War II [Berlin and Wiesbaden], 1945–58); Schloss Charlottenburg, Berlin (1958–99); Schloss Sanssouci, Potsdam (from 1999)

References: Dacier and Vuafart 1921–29, vol. 3 (1922), p. 92, no. 198, vol. 4 (1921), pl. 198 (engraving by Pierre II Aveline); Rosenberg in Grasselli and Rosenberg 1984, pp. 342–44, no. 40 (with bibliography), colorpl.; Alexander Lobodzinski, "Zur Restaurierung des Bildes 'Récréation Italienne' von Jean Antoine Watteau," *Mitteilungen* (Deutscher Restauratoren-Verband) 7 (1985–86), pp. 44–60; Christoph Martin Vogtherr in *Französische Gemälde I: Antoine Watteau und sein Kreis*, Bestandskataloge der Kunstsammlungen, Stiftung Preussische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg (Berlin, 2009 [forthcoming]), no. 8

NICOLAS LANCRET (FRENCH, 1690–1743)

16. *Concert in the Paris Home of Pierre Crozat*, ca. 1720

Oil on canvas, 15 x 18 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (38 x 48 cm)
Alte Pinakothek, Munich

17. *Concert in the Oval Salon of Pierre Crozat's House at Montmorency*, ca. 1720

Oil on canvas, 14 x 17 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (35.6 x 44.5 cm)
Michael L. Rosenberg Foundation, Dallas

Lancret's more reality-based manner is fully on view in these two delightful sketches; they reveal just how early an interest in anchoring his scenes in his time and place finds concrete expression. Not only are Lancret's scenes vivid recollections of contemporary private concerts, but they are actually set in the homes of one of the most famous and important of concert patrons, and they include recognizable details of the furniture, musical instruments, and (possibly) even the man himself.

These architectural interiors stayed with the artist and then with his widow until her sale in 1782, when they were sold under lot 12, as "deux

concerts dans des salons, dont un orné d'architecture" ("two concerts in salons, one of which is decorated with architecture," certainly referring to the Dallas work). The concerts were attended by elegant parties of beautifully dressed spectators, in richly appointed apartments. The thinness of the paint and the rudimentary and sketchy detail lend an air of vivacity and sparkle and add much to their already considerable charms.

Lancret based his two scenes on rooms he had certainly visited and on events he had attended in the residences of Pierre Crozat. The Munich painting is set in his city hotel on the northern end of rue de Richelieu, near Palais Royal, in the *grande galerie* overlooking the garden. The house was built beginning in 1704 by Jean-Sylvain Cartaud, who was favored by Crozat for his Italianate designs, suitable to house Crozat's collections of Italian masterpieces. We know from contemporary accounts that the room was hung with red damask, and we can see that here. Also visible are the enormous mirrored panels that accentuate the light streaming in from the windows. Italian paintings, including works by Raphael, Domenico Feti, Federico Barocci, and Pier Francesco Mola, were hung there during the time of Lancret's sketch, although it would be hard to identify them from Lancret's slight descriptions. However, we can identify the antique busts on their bases in the style of André-Charles Boulle. The furniture, carved and gilded, was upholstered with leather for durability. The ceiling, created by one of Crozat's particular favorites, Charles de La Fosse, depicted Minerva and an assembly of the gods. Marianne Roland Michel long ago noted the presence of Crozat himself in the Munich painting, the man on the left holding a hat. The fauteuil in the left foreground is quite similar to one he owned that is now in the Musée du Louvre, Paris.

The Dallas painting depicts the oval salon ornamented with columns and statuary of M. Crozat's country home in Montmorency. The salon was the main room of the house and overlooked the gardens by André Le Nôtre. The house was built in 1709 by the same architect, Cartaud, on property once owned by Charles Le Brun (the painter of so much of Versailles for Louis XIV). The trompe l'oeil ceiling of this particular room was again by Charles de La Fosse and depicted a Fall of Phaeton.

Crozat was a banker from Toulouse who amassed one of the greatest collections of paintings and drawings ever in private hands. Eventually, his collection of drawings numbered 18,917 (the Metropolitan Museum's collection includes roughly 15,000). Many of the drawings were bought after his death for the royal collection and are now in the Musée du Louvre, Paris. In

one astonishing comment, a contemporary observer noted that Crozat owned all the Michelangelo drawings then in France. His paintings numbered around 500, including many sold to Catherine the Great of Russia that are still in the State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg, while about a dozen were bought in 1937 by Andrew Mellon from the Soviet Government and are now in the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. Crozat also bankrolled and organized the publication of a two-volume collection of engravings after the paintings and drawings of the Italian school in the two collections of King Louis XV and the regent, the duc d'Orléans.

Crozat opened his houses and his collections to artists and connoisseurs. Charles de La Fosse lived with him for a decade, and de La Fosse's niece Mademoiselle d'Argenon, a gifted singer, performed in many of the concerts. Watteau also stayed with Crozat, making copies of some of Crozat's peerless Venetian landscape drawings and painting a Four Seasons cycle for the town dining room. Many of the Italian artists who arrived in France passed through Crozat's doors, including Sebastiano Ricci and Antonio Pellegrini. The Venetian pastelist Rosalba Carriera stayed with him from 1720 to 1721.

Crozat's passion for the arts extended to music, and he held frequent concerts, two of which are described in Madame Carriera's journal. It has long been surmised that Watteau's drawing of three musicians in the Louvre was made at one of Crozat's concerts and depicts, among others, Mademoiselle d'Argenon in the middle.

It is these famous concerts that are represented here in Lancret's two sketches, and perhaps it was even Watteau who encouraged Lancret to attend; we have no way of knowing. The Munich painting of the city concert contains ten male musicians, who are playing the harpsichord, the bassoon, six violins, the double bass (contra-basse), and the cello. There is one female singer. The seating has been clustered around the harpsichord. The Dallas concert features a female singer, a female harpsichordist (possibly Mademoiselle Bouçon, who is known to have played in these venues), and six male musicians, one on cello, one on double bass, one on oboe, and three who appear to be on violins. The harpsichords in the paintings have been identified with instruments mentioned in Crozat's will,¹ and the paintings contain the only extant pictorial representation of the double bass, which Crozat owned, in French art at this early date.² The player in the Dallas painting may be Michel Pignolet de Montéclair, who introduced that instrument to music in Paris about 1700, or another well known musician, Jean Theobaldo di Gatti, called Théobalde.³

MTH





1. See Florence Gétreau and Denis Herlin, “Portraits de clavecins et de clavecinistes français (II),” *Musique, images, instruments* 3 (1997), pp. 77–79.
2. Michael Greenberg, written communication to author, April 5, 2006.
3. Ibid.

No. 16:

Ex coll.: Marie Boursault, Madame Lancret (until d. 1782; her estate sale, Rémy, Paris, April 5, 1782, no. 12, with pendant for 37 livres to Rémy); David David-Weill, Neuilly-sur-Seine (by 1924; for safekeeping, with [Wildenstein, New York, from 1937; checklist, 1937, no. 28]); private collection, New York (in 1969); [Galerie Nathan, Zurich, in 1983; sold to Alte Pinakothek]

References: Georges Wildenstein, *Lancret: Biographie et catalogue critiques; l'oeuvre de l'artiste reproduite en deux cent quatorze héliogravures* (Paris, 1924), p. 77, no. 86 or no. 87, and no. 88; Holmes 1991, p. 58, fig. 23; Mary Tavener Holmes, with a conservation note by Mark Leonard, *Nicolas Lancret: Dance before a Fountain* (Los Angeles, 2006), p. 49, fig. 42

NICOLAS LANCRET (FRENCH, 1690–1743)

18. *Dance before a Fountain*, ca. 1723

Oil on canvas, 37¹³/₁₆ x 54⁵/₁₆ in. (96 x 138 cm)

The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles (2001.54)

Dance before a Fountain is a classic fête galante. In their garden world, Lancret's young and fashionable characters play out the only one of life's dramas that really matters, the drama of love. As is often the case with Lancret, this evolution of romance is shown through the dance. His paintings, like Watteau's, usually feature minuets or rondes. The dance for four shown here is a rarity, known only in one other by Lancret, a close variant of this composition, *The Moulinet* (Schloss Charlottenburg, Stiftung Preussische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg).

The composition is based on a contemporary dance, published by Raoul-Auger Feuillet in the annual collections of social dances that he offered for sale in Paris between 1702 and 1725. This step is the fifth movement of *Le Cotillon, danse à quatre*, described and notated by Feuillet for his *Quatrième*

No. 17:

Ex coll.: Marie Boursault, Madame Lancret (until d. 1782; her estate sale, Rémy, Paris, April 5, 1782, no. 12, with pendant for 37 livres to Rémy); ?Lord Bunbury; [Anstalt für Handel in Gemälde und Zeichnungen, Vaduz; sold to Cailleux]; [Cailleux, Paris, until 1966; sold to Brewster]; Robert D. Brewster (1966–d. 1995; his estate sale, Sotheby's, New York, May 19, 1995, no. 120, to Rosenberg); Michael L. Rosenberg, Dallas (1995–d. 2003; his foundation, from 2003)

References: Georges Wildenstein, *Lancret: Biographie et catalogue critiques; l'oeuvre de l'artiste reproduite en deux cent quatorze héliogravures* (Paris, 1924), p. 77, no. 86 or no. 87; Marianne Roland Michel, “Observations on Madame Lancret's Sale,” *Burlington Magazine* 111 (October 1969), suppl., pp. iv–v, pl. 3; Holmes 1991, pp. 58–59, no. 2, colorpl. 6

Recueil de danses de bal pour l'année 1706: “The four dancers form a mill by joining their right hands (turning clockwise) then their left hands (turning counterclockwise)” (“Les quatres danseurs forment un moulinet en joignant les mains droites [tour en sense de la montre] puis les mains gauches [tour en sense inverse]”). The mill shape, with the linked hands forming an X, provides the ideal centering device, as the young woman turning toward the audience offers an invitation. Four other couples in varying stages of courtship accompany the central group, all eventually on their way to Cythera, the island of love, and two young women hold pilgrim's staffs, the traditional emblem for the journey in search of romance. A solitary man in red and black observes all this, a figure looking a great deal like the known engravings of Lancret himself, perhaps a self-portrait.



The grand working fountain in Lancret's painting, too big to be contained within the frame, provides depth to the stage on which the figures play and gives them their "room," if you will. However, the fountain not only defines the stage and provides a sense of luxury; it is a borrowing—the use of an actual built structure—and one with particular resonance. The astute visitor to Paris will recognize it as the fountain of Marie de Médicis (more properly called the Grotte de Luxembourg) in the gardens of her Luxembourg Palace. Lancret's depiction is quite faithful to its eighteenth-century appearance, but he has made no attempt to reproduce its setting.

Why this fountain? It has the virtue of being instantly recognizable, which locates our merry company in Paris, but it also has another significance. At the time, this palace was like a second Académie to the artists of the *fête galante*, bringing together in one place two of the most important elements essential to the development of this novel genre: a naturalistic park landscape and the art of Peter Paul Rubens, whose monumental cycle of the Life of Marie de Médicis lived inside this very building. The beguiling blend of natural and artificial found in the gardens and the sensual warmth of the art of Rubens were crucial influences to the artist creating this new form.

NICOLAS LANCRET (FRENCH, 1690–1743)

19. *La Camargo Dancing*, ca. 1727–28

Oil on canvas, 30 x 42 in. (76 x 107 cm)

National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Andrew W. Mellon

Collection (1937.1.89)

*M*arie-Anne de Cupis de Camargo is one of the most famous ballerinas of the eighteenth century, and it is thus that Lancret depicts her here, poised in a dance step, supported by a partner whose salmon costume is the perfect foil for her shining silver gown with salmon trim. Their *pas de deux* is performed in a shady clearing of a garden, with a fountain playing to the right and a sculpted pillar in the middle distance. Circling this "stage," in the shadows of the trees, are the familiar characters of the *fête*

For Lancret's art, in particular, the use of a borrowed structure or work of art is one of his most innovative and interesting characteristics. Much like the real dance, here the structure enhances the contemporaneity. Lancret would use real sites, real sculpture, real contemporary design, not to assist in the creation of a dream world but to subtly enhance the inextricable link between his scenes and contemporary Paris. If Watteau enchants us by his transcendence of time and the real, Lancret charms us by his fidelity to it.

MTH

Ex coll.: Catherine II, empress of Russia, St. Petersburg (until d. 1796; posthumous inv., no. [3]655, as *Pleasant Gathering*); Robert Herbert, 12th Earl of Pembroke (until d. 1862; his estate sale, Paris, June 30, 1862, no. 16, as *Danse dans le parc*, to Fould for fr. 25,700); Édouard Fould (1862–69; his sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, April 5, 1869, no. 10, for 63,000 fr.); Baron Gustav de Rothschild (until 1911); by family descent (1911–2001); [Didier Aaron, Paris, 2001; sold to Getty Museum]

References: Georges Wildenstein, *Lancret: Biographie et catalogue critiques; l'oeuvre de l'artiste reproduite en deux cent quatorze héliogravures* (Paris, 1924), p. 80, no. 133, fig. 35; Mary Tavener Holmes, with a conservation note by Mark Leonard, *Nicolas Lancret: Dance before a Fountain* (Los Angeles, 2006)

galante—musicians, lovers, children—who are costumed in luminous silks. One man wears the gaudy ribbons of a performer. While there is no indication that Mademoiselle Camargo is portrayed in a specific ballet, it has been suggested that her companion here is the choreographer Laval, a frequent partner.

Of the several portrayals of Camargo by Lancret, this is the only one embedded in a *fête galante* and the only one in which she is partnered.



Although this author once suggested the Washington picture is the last in the line of his portrayals of Camargo, Margaret Morgan Grasselli is surely correct in her assertion that the opposite is true, that Lancret moved from the complex to the simple and thus that this painting must be earlier than the 1730 Camargo (Wallace Collection, London), the first of the unpartnered portraits. It seems clear that Lancret excerpted the simpler figure from this elaborate concoction, building on the fame of the sitter to create an image he repeated several times and had engraved to great renown.

Some of the attention that Lancret's portraits of Camargo received was no doubt due to reflected glory. Born in Brussels to a dance master and brought to Paris by the princesse de Ligne to study with Mademoiselle Prévost, Camargo became one of the most celebrated dancers at the Paris Opéra, renowned for the athletic energy of her steps, her quicksilver virtuosity, and her strong leaps. One contemporary said she "danced like a man." Camargo's style was in marked contrast to that of the demure and graceful Mademoiselle Sallé, her rival. Lancret painted a pendant portrait of Sallé (Schloss Rheinsberg, Stiftung Preussische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg) to go with the unpartnered image of Camargo; it shows Sallé in a park glade, before a Temple of Diana, and accompanied by three dancing Graces. Lancret illustrates their contrasting styles. In all the versions, Camargo is on balance, in an energetic step that sends her skirt flaring and swinging, while Sallé is all quiet poise, the cool and virginal Diana.

Lancret's triumph here is his masterful blend of portrait and fête galante. This combination, hinted at by Jean Raoux's *Mademoiselle Prévost* in Tours,

had never before been so gracefully achieved. Camargo's profession, in which such a large element of fiction predominates, makes Lancret's fictional subject entirely believable and even appropriate. Did she not, after all, do largely the same thing every night on the stage? The overtly artificial world of the stage set has been abandoned for the more subtle fiction of the fête galante. Lancret is a deft and fearless weaver of genres; Camargo's dance finds its rightful place among the glades of Cythera. If it is clear that one cannot imagine Gainsborough's *Giovanna Bacelli* (Tate, London) without Lancret's achievement, it is perhaps less obvious but equally true that one also cannot imagine Fragonard's *Fête at Saint-Cloud* (Musée du Louvre, Paris) without Lancret's achievement. MTH

Ex coll.: Victor-Amédée de Savoie-Carignan (until d. 1741; his estate sale, Paris, July 30, 1742); Fredrick II (the Great) of Prussia, Potsdam (until d. 1786); by descent in the Prussian royal family and the German imperial family, Potsdam and Berlin (1786–1888); Kaiser Wilhelm II, Berlin (1888–1927; sold through Hugo Moser to Duveen); [Duveen, New York, 1927–28; sold to Mellon]; Andrew W. Mellon, Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C. (1928–d. 1937); Andrew W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh (1937)

References: Émile Dacier, "Mlle Camargo dans les portraits de Lancret," *Les Vieilles Années*, 1910, pp. 31–36; Georges Wildenstein, *Lancret: Biographie et catalogue critiques; l'oeuvre de l'artiste reproduite en deux cent quatorze héliogravures* (Paris, 1924), p. 110, no. 585, fig. 140; Margaret Morgan Grasselli, "Eleven New Drawings by Nicolas Lancret," *Master Drawings* 23–24, no. 3 (Autumn 1986), pp. 383, 385, fig. 13; Holmes 1991, pp. 67–69, no. 3, colorpl. 9 and frontispiece (color detail)

JEAN-BAPTISTE-JOSEPH PATER (FRENCH, 1695–1736)

20. *Troops on the March*, ca. 1725

21. *Troops at Rest*, ca. 1725

Oil on canvas, each 21¼ x 25¾ in. (54 x 65.4 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Bequest of Ethel Tod

Humphrys, 1956 (56.55.1, 2)

Although Pater submitted a military subject to the Académie as his reception piece, troop pictures account for only a small part of his production. Often conceived as pairs, the paintings show both soldiers and camp followers, women, often with nursing babies or small children, who walk or ride with the men on the march and sit with them beside the fire. The soldiers, in uniform coats of various colors and tricorne hats, carry sabers, muskets, pikes, and ammunition bags. There are no officers of rank, only victuallers, and although some couples embrace, the mood is somber. The rolling imaginary landscape backgrounds are furnished with filmy trees in leaf, wagons, tents, dilapidated houses and fences, and sometimes quite elaborate ruined walls and gates.

The palette of a number of the military scenes, worked up over an earth-colored ground, is darker than usual for Pater. The somber overall tone is a characteristic they share with Watteau's works in this genre, which are among his earliest. Watteau painted a *Departure of Troops* (lost) for Gersaint's father-in-law, and with the proceeds of the sale of the picture, he returned in 1709 to Valenciennes. While there, he received a commission for a pendant, representing soldiers in camp (Pushkin State Museum, Moscow), the painting by Watteau that the present *Troops at Rest* most closely resembles. Doubtless Pater saw pictures of the kind while he was Watteau's assistant. A date for this pair in the 1720s might be envisaged. The thirty or more small figures in each are minutely painted in a tight, descriptive style. A

signed replica (location unknown), close in size with variations in detail, of *Troops on the March* was engraved by Nicolas III de Larmessin.

In 1701, Europe went to war over the Spanish succession, a conflict whose outcome would determine the fate of the Spanish Netherlands, France's neighbor to the north. Louis XIV was forced to abandon his expansionist intentions in 1708, when French forces were driven back over their northern border following a defeat at Oudenaarde; in 1709, his army suffered a bitter loss at Malplaquet, near Valenciennes. The child Pater certainly saw, if he did not suffer, deprivation in the wake of the troop movements and other travails of war. His military scenes are closely observed.

KBB

Ex coll.: Baron Adolphe de Rothschild, Paris (until d. 1900); Baron Maurice de Rothschild, Paris (1900–1924; sold to Wildenstein); [Wildenstein, Paris and New York, from 1924; sold to Macbride]; Ethel Tod Macbride, later Humphrys, New York (by 1928–d. 1956)

References: *An Exhibition of French Art of the XVIII Century*, exh. cat., City Art Museum of St. Louis (St. Louis, 1923), nos. 20 (ill.), 21; Ingersoll-Smouse 1928, pp. 13, 16, 70, 73, nos. 417, 449, figs. 125, 126; Katharine Baetjer in *The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York: Chefs-d'oeuvre de la peinture européenne*, exh. cat., Fondation Pierre Gianadda (Martigny, Switzerland, 2006), pp. 189–94, nos. 34, 35, colorpls.





JEAN-BAPTISTE-JOSEPH PATER (FRENCH, 1695–1736)

22. *The Fair at Bezons*, 1731–33

Oil on canvas, 42 x 56 in. (106.7 x 142.2 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, The Jules Bache
Collection, 1949 (49.7.52)

The Fair at Bezons is one of Pater's largest and most ambitious canvases, showing the artist in full command of the new genre of the fête galante. The painting emulates Watteau's *Fair with Actors in a Southern Landscape* of 1708–10, painted at a time when Pater briefly studied with Watteau.¹ Pater took the main elements of the composition from his teacher: its Italianate landscape, the wide clearing that stretches far into the left background, but even more importantly the fair bringing together country folk, townspeople, showmen, and actors. In both paintings, a large number of small figures, dancing, eating, and assembling around wooden stages, inhabit a wide plain. The parallels are so obvious that Pater's painting must be considered a modernized version of Watteau's earlier works, compositions he had based on Flemish seventeenth-century depictions of country fairs.

The Italianate backdrop for the partly fashionable, partly rustic French gathering is a reminder that the painting is not meant to depict a real country fair. It was first identified as the popular fair of Bezons near Pontoise in 1793, but there is no indication that this title reflects Pater's intention. Instead, the painting should be seen as an idealized construction of a care-free grouping effortlessly uniting obvious contrasts—north and south, city and country, stage and reality. Music and dance tie these disparate elements together into one harmonious fête galante.

The main female dancer can be identified as the actress Mademoiselle Marie-Anne Botot d'Angeville. Pater took her figure from his own allegorical portrait of d'Angeville, which Jacques-Philippe Lebas had engraved in 1731. Shortly before and in a similar vein, Nicolas Lancret had painted a portrait of the famous dancer Marie-Anne de Cupis de Camargo (no. 19), and later, he also integrated her figure into a multifigured fête galante. In 1731, Pater's engraving of d'Angeville was announced as a pendant to the print after Lancret's Camargo. Neither painting, however, should be seen as an illustration of an existing theater scene. So far, it has not been possible to

identify any fête galante as a direct rendering of a real theater performance. In fact, their purpose seems rather to blur the boundaries between stage, dream, and reality.

Two closely related versions of the composition exist; the smaller one, dated 1733, is today in Sanssouci Palace in Potsdam.² Their relative chronological sequence has remained an open question, but technical examinations now make it appear more likely that the New York version was painted first. While the Potsdam version has revealed virtually no pentimenti, there are some indications of changes made in the Metropolitan Museum's version. Given the complicated nature of the composition, one would expect them in the first version of a painting, in particular as no compositional drawings by Pater are known. The portrait of Mademoiselle d'Angeville of 1731 and the Potsdam version of 1733 would then provide a framework for the dating of the painting in New York. While the latter can be regarded as Pater's most elaborate fête galante, the Potsdam version is slightly reduced, although its signature and dating suggest that it was considered an important commission.

CMV

1. Schloss Sanssouci, Potsdam, Stiftung Preussische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg (inv. GK I 5602); Rosenberg in Grasselli and Rosenberg 1984, pp. 264–66, no. 10, colorpl.
2. Stiftung Preussische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg (inv. GK I 5292); Martin Eidelberg et al., *Watteau et la fête galante*, exh. cat., Musée des Beaux-Arts, Valenciennes (Paris, 2004), fig. 27.1.

Ex coll.: d'Espagnac or Tricot (sale, d'Espagnac and others, Le Brun, Paris, May 22 and following days, 1793, no. 101, for 3,001 livres to Desmarests); [Desmarests, from 1793]; Baron Alfred Charles de Rothschild, Paris (until d. 1918); Almina, Lady Carnarvon, London (from 1918; sold to Duveen); [Duveen, London and New York, until 1925; sold to Bache]; Jules S. Bache, New York (1925–d. 1944; his estate, 1944–49; cats., 1929, 1937, no. 53, 1943, no. 52)



References: Ingersoll-Smouse 1928, pp. 8, 12, 15–17, 42, no. 55, fig. 45; Christoph Martin Vogtherr in *The Age of Watteau, Chardin, and Fragonard: Masterpieces of French Genre Painting*, ed. Colin B. Bailey, exh. cat., National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., and Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Gemäldegalerie (New Haven, 2003), pp. 160–61, 358, no. 21, colorpl.; Eidelberg in Martin Eidelberg et al., *Watteau et la fête galante*, exh. cat., Musée des Beaux-Arts, Valenciennes (Paris, 2004), pp. 136–39, 269, no. 27, colorpl.; Christoph Martin Vogtherr in *Französische Gemälde I: Antoine Watteau und sein Kreis*, Bestandskataloge der Kunstsammlungen, Stiftung Preussische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg (Berlin, 2009 [forthcoming]), no. 37; (extensive bibliography can be found on the MMA website at www.metmuseum.org by going to Works of Art, Collection Database, and entering the accession number in the search field)

ATTRIBUTED TO ANDREAS ALTOMONTE (AUSTRIAN, 1699–1780) OR, POSSIBLY, TO JOSEF LEDERER (CZECH, ACTIVE IN 1748)

23. *A Masked Ball in Bohemia*, ca. 1748

Oil on canvas, 19 x 38 in. (48.3 x 96.5 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of Mariana Griswold Van Rensselaer, 1934 (34.83.2)

Nearly fifty years ago, when this study was first associated with Lederer's work at Český Krumlov, the Museum applied for information about the Masquerade Hall to Jiří Hilmera of the Theater Department at the National Museum in Prague. It was his view that the sketch is too skillful to be by Lederer (whose figures, gay and charming, are also rather crudely painted). In 1966, Hilmera suggested that as the room had been designed by Andreas Altomonte, the picture may instead have been painted by him or by someone in his circle. In view of the sophistication of the elaborate illusionistic design, the former seems likely. The elegant architecture, with balconies and a terrace open to the sky, was painted first. Account has been taken of both linear and aerial perspective, so that the figures standing on the



raised floor in the foreground are larger and more brightly colored, while those conceived of as farther away are smaller and delineated with less precision, in softer tones.

In the foreground at the right is Harlequin, in his parti-colored suit, with mask and clappers, entertaining a young gentleman who must be Prince



Josef Adam zu Schwarzenberg, for whom Altomonte often worked. On the first balcony to the left is Pantalone, with a pointed beard, and in a soft black hat and coat; on that to the right is the ghostly Pierrot, painted entirely (face, extended hand, and costume) in white. Each vignette contains one or more figures wearing a mask, and beside the prince is a standing gentleman

in a combination of court and carnival costume. With his gold-embroidered coat, he wears a plumed hat, mask, long cloak, and mantle. In the crowd are men and women of various classes in regional dress or theatrical costume, soldiers in many different uniforms, and Turks with mustaches and turbans.

In 1748, Altomonte designed the costumes for Christoph Willibald Gluck's opera *Semiramide*, which was performed in Vienna. When he was young, Altomonte had been very involved with the theater, and as he was raised in an artist's studio, there is no reason to think that he could not have painted this evocative picture.

KBB

Ex coll.: Mariana Griswold Van Rensselaer (until 1934; as Italian, Neapolitan, late 18th century)

GIOVANNI DOMENICO TIEPOLO (ITALIAN, VENETIAN,
1727–1804)

24. *A Dance in the Country*, ca. 1755

Oil on canvas, 29¾ x 47¼ in. (75.6 x 120 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wrightsman, 1980 (1980.67)

At the center is the stern mask of a Punchinello, whose costume comprises a white coat, ruff, and conical hat, and a dangling earring. He stands with his back to a young woman, perhaps the heroine, Colombina, who wears a small round black mask. Beside her is the Doctor, also masked; his wispy hair and beard, cloak, and wide-brimmed hat contribute to his sinister appearance. Harlequin, in a diamond-strewn suit, perches on a ladder leaning against a tree trunk and wears a clapper in place of a saber in his belt. It is not in accordance with tradition that one of the elegant young dancers (presumed to be lovers) also wears a mask, but *commedia dell'arte* is a theatrical tradition of improvisation, and so there must be room for variance. At the margins are other theatrical figures, and under the tree, in the shade, musicians with their horns and stringed instruments.

Villeggiatura was the name given by the Venetians to their practice of retreating during the hottest months from the claustrophobic conditions of the city to airy houses on agricultural estates within sight of the Dolomites. In the foreground to the right is the lady of this imagined country house.

References: Jiří Hilmera, "Die bühnenbildnerischen Beziehungen zwischen Böhmen und Österreich im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert," *Maske und Kothurn* 12, nos. 2–3 (1966), p. 164, pl. x, 2; Denis Gontard, "Scènes de fête en Bohême," *Connaissance des arts*, no. 367 (September 1982), pp. 82–89; P. Benedikt Wagner, "Andreas Altomontes Leben und Werk: Eine Spurensuche," in *Illusion & Illustration: Altomonte; Reise in eine 300 Jahre alte Bilderwelt*, exh. cat., Stift Seitenstetten (Seitenstetten, 2003), pp. 97–129; (extensive bibliography can be found on the MMA website at www.metmuseum.org by going to Works of Art, Collection Database, and entering the accession number in the search field)

Over a voluminous blue skirt, she wears a white coat and a pleated starched bonnet. She is seated on an upholstered chair brought out from the house and holds a cup and saucer, doubtless containing hot chocolate. At the left, near the coach, are ladies and gentlemen in what could be traveling clothes. Additional figures perform a sort of choral function in the background; one group, on a balcony, includes musicians, and another, at a window, a Pierrot and perhaps an actress. These are painted in semi-grisaille, which was often used for distant figures in frescoed ceilings.

Domenico's earliest genre painting may be *The Gypsy Camp* (Mittelrheinisches Landesmuseum, Mainz), which, with the *Stories of Abraham* (private collection, Rome), was painted in Würzburg in 1752 or 1753. The present canvas is probably his first scene of specifically Venetian life. It is rather similar in its horizontal design to *The Separation of Abraham and Lot*, in which the trunks and lower branches of trees form a central focus, and the travelers are also watched by an alert black-and-white dog. Recorded in a private collection in Germany in 1791, Tiepolo's picture may also have been



painted there. Later versions of the subject are in the Musée du Louvre, Paris; the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, Barcelona; and the Villa Valmarana ai Nani. All date from the 1750s.

KBB

Ex coll.: Johann Heinrich Merck, Darmstadt (until d. 1791); by descent to Caroline Reinhold-Merck, Darmstadt (until 1963; sale, Sotheby's, London, July 3, 1963, no. 75, to Rosenberg & Stiebel for Wrightsman); Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wrightsman, New York (1963–80; cat., 1973, no. 27; cat., 2005, no. 30)

References: Adriano Mariuz, *Giandomenico Tiepolo* (Venice, 1971), pp. 44, 48, 50, 130, pl. 81, and p. 17, pl. 11 (color detail); Fahy in *The Wrightsman Collection*, vol. 5, *Paintings, Drawings, Sculpture* by Everett Fahy and Francis Watson (New York, 1973), pp. 258–68, no. 27, colorpl. and figs. 1–6; Fahy in *The Wrightsman Pictures*, ed. Everett Fahy (New York, 2005), pp. 103–6, no. 30, colorpl.; (extensive bibliography can be found on the MMA website at www.metmuseum.org by going to Works of Art, Collection Database, and entering the accession number in the search field)

JEAN-ANTOINE WATTEAU (FRENCH, 1684–1721)

25. *Studies of Theatrical Figures and Two Studies of a Man Seated on the Ground*, ca. 1709–12

Red chalk on cream-colored antique laid paper, 6½ x 8⅞ in.

(16.5 x 20.5 cm)

The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York (I, 275)

This lively and charming sheet of studies has a disjointed quality that one sometimes encounters in Watteau's graphic oeuvre. In contrast to the methods of more formally trained painters, Watteau often drew without a specific purpose in mind, occasionally returning at a later time to add more sketches to make full use of the sheet. Many of his *fête galante* paintings seem to have been populated by flipping through the pages of his sketchbooks and combining studies made at different times.

Except for the figure of the woman, all the sketches on this sheet have been connected with paintings. The two reclining men do not seem to have been based on figures associated with the theater; they were used—with their positions swapped—in the *Gathering near the Fountain of Neptune* (Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid), a *fête galante* subject. At the center of the band of standing figures, the man with the plumed hat and quiver of arrows appears as Cupid in *Love in the French Theater* (no. 7). The two figures holding staffs have been associated with Watteau's panels for the *Hôtel de Nointel*, an early decorative work with figures set into elaborate arabesques. The one on the left with the pinned-up wide-brimmed hat appears to be a shepherd or peasant type, while the one on the right, accompanied by a putto astride a cat, must be Bacchus.

The stylistic disparity between the sketches of the upper and lower registers has elicited a number of different theories as to the dating of the sheet. The figures in the upper tier are all theatrical in their attire and recall the

elegant and whimsical manner of Claude Gillot, in whose studio Watteau had worked. The studies of the man seated on the ground, seen from two different angles, are more substantial and appear to be drawn from life. Although Margaret Morgan Grasselli has pointed to the uniformity of the color of the chalk throughout the sheet,¹ more recently, scholars have proposed that three or four years separate the sketches above from those below.²

PS

1. Grasselli in Grasselli and Rosenberg 1984, pp. 74–75, no. 15.
2. Rosenberg and Prat 1996, vol. 1, pp. 42–43, no. 23 (ca. 1709–12); Wintermute in Alan Wintermute et al., *Watteau and His World: French Drawing from 1700 to 1750*, exh. cat., Frick Collection, New York, and National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa (London and New York, 1999), pp. 96–97, no. 2 (ca. 1708–12).

Ex coll.: Mr. Riggall; Charles Fairfax Murray, London (by 1905–10; sold to Morgan); J. Pierpont Morgan (1910–d. 1913); Morgan Library, New York (from 1913)

References: Grasselli in Grasselli and Rosenberg 1984, pp. 74–75, no. 15, ill.; Cara Dufour Denison, *French Master Drawings from the Pierpont Morgan Library* (New York, 1993), pp. 82–83, no. 34, ill.; Rosenberg and Prat 1996, vol. 1, pp. 42–43, no. 23 (with bibliography), ill.; Wintermute in Alan Wintermute et al., *Watteau and His World: French Drawing from 1700 to 1750*, exh. cat., Frick Collection, New York, and National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa (London and New York, 1999), pp. 96–97, no. 2, colorpl.



JEAN-ANTOINE WATTEAU (FRENCH, 1684–1721)

26. *Three Studies of Seated Women*, ca. 1717

Red, black, and white chalk with graphite on gray-brown laid paper,

10¼ x 14⅝ in. (26 x 37 cm)

The Art Institute of Chicago, Gift of the Joseph and Helen Regenstein Foundation (1958.8)

The dazzling effect of this sheet is due in part to the repetition of the same black dress in each individual study. The distinctive costume, with its dark, solid expanses set against the slashed sleeves and white fabric trim, lends a greater sense of contrast to this sheet relative to Watteau's other *trois crayons*. Plausibly drawn from left to right, the woman—if she is the same model—engages in a different activity in each study. The figure at left leans through what is presumably a book of music, while the woman at center plays a guitar and wears a small hat. The figure to the right is of a slightly larger scale and is less specific in her activity. She stares off into space, her arms and hands still, as if attentively listening or watching an entertainment of some sort. Her dress differs from that of the others only in the cuffs, which feature ribbons rather than white fabric.

As is typical for the artist at this stage of his career, the figures do not interact or share a unified space. They are evocative of the types that people Watteau's painted *fêtes galantes*, and indeed variants of the center and left figures appear in two different paintings.¹ Likely the sketches were made without specific canvases in mind, to be used as part of the repertoire of poses Watteau looked to when composing his paintings. The three colors (red, black, and white chalk) are freely and intuitively combined. The speed at which the artist worked is evident in the variations of finish as well as the visible *pentimenti*, the latter most readily seen in the book and face of the figure at left.

PS

1. *L'Accord parfait* in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and the lost *Le Bal champêtre*, known from an engraving (see Rosenberg and Prat 1996, vol. 2, p. 908, fig. 538b).

Ex coll.: ?John Spencer (until d. 1746); ?John Spencer, 1st Earl Spencer, Althorp (1746–d. 1783); George John Spencer, 2nd Earl Spencer, Althorp (1783–1811; his sale, Philipe, London, June 10–17, 1811, no. 822, for 4 gn. 6 p. to Coxe); Edward Coxe, Hampstead Heath (1811–15; his posthumous sale, Squibb, London, April 13–15, 1815, no. 132, for £5.2.6); William Esdaile (until d. 1837; his estate sale, Christie's, London, June 18, 1840, no. 1242, for 8 gn.); Andrew James (until d. 1857); his daughter, Miss James, London (1857–91; her posthumous sale, Christie's, London, June 22–23, 1891, no. 338, for 210 gn. to Wertheimer); Hervé-Henri-André Josse, Paris (until d. 1893; his estate sale, Galerie Georges Petit, Paris, May 28–29, 1894, no. 45, for fr. 8,200); Camille Groult, Paris (until d. 1908); Jean Groult, Paris (1908–d. 1951); Pierre Bordeaux-Groult, Paris (from 1951); [Wildenstein, New York, until 1958; sold to Helen Regenstein for the Art Institute of Chicago]

References: Rosenberg and Prat 1996, vol. 2, pp. 908–9, no. 538 (with bibliography), colorpl.; Wintermute in Alan Wintermute et al., *Watteau and His World: French Drawing from 1700 to 1750*, exh. cat., Frick Collection, New York, and National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa (London and New York, 1999), pp. 152–53, no. 31, colorpl.



JEAN-ANTOINE WATTEAU (FRENCH, 1684–1721)

27. *Studies of a Woman Spurning a Man's Advances and a Woman Leaning Back*, ca. 1717

Black and red chalk with touches of white chalk and traces of gray wash
on beige antique laid paper, 6¼ x 5⅞ in. (16 x 14.3 cm)
Private collection, New York

The intuitive mastery of red, black, and white chalk that Watteau had achieved by about 1715 is fully evident in this lively sheet of studies. The woman on the left is drawn almost entirely in red chalk, with quick additions and revisions in black. The artist focused on the silky sheen of her skirt and the volume conveyed by its crisp folds. The man seeking to embrace her is drawn in extraordinary shorthand. He appears almost as a ghost, details of costume suppressed in favor of fluid contours expressing movement. The figure of the woman to the right exploits the painterly potential of the chalk in a completely different way. Her clothing is drawn mostly in black chalk, her head and hands in red. Touches of white pull out highlights on her collar and sleeve, while stripes on her hem are added in red.

Like many of Watteau's figure studies, the emphasis here is on neither anatomy nor costume but on the shades of social nuance present in the gestures and body language. The two halves of the sheet do not share a unified space but create a *mise-en-page* of simultaneous balance and tension. Although the figures were not used in any known painting, their expressiveness, with sparkling execution and palpable sense of movement, evokes the amorous mood and elegance of a *fête galante*. PS

Ex coll.: Contat-Desfontaines, Paris; Raoul Dastrac, Paris (by 1957); private collection, France; [Katrin Bellinger, Munich; sold to private collection, New York]

References: Marianne Roland Michel, *Watteau: An Artist of the Eighteenth Century* (New York, 1984), pp. 136, 140, colorpl. xxix; Rosenberg and Prat 1996, vol. 2, pp. 924–25, no. 546, colorpl.



JEAN-ANTOINE WATTEAU (FRENCH, 1684–1721)

28. *Two Studies of Mezzetin Standing*, ca. 1717

Red chalk on cream laid paper, 7 x 7½ in. (17.8 x 18.9 cm)

National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, purchased 1939 (NGC 4548)

Antoine-Joseph Dezallier d'Argenville was one of Watteau's earliest biographers. A collector, reputedly assembling six thousand drawings, including over twenty by Watteau, he also penned *Abrégé de la vie des plus fameux peintres* (published Paris, 1745–52), an art historical treatise that combined biographies of artists with advice on collecting and connoisseurship.¹ His expressed taste for sheets showing facility and inspiration, rather than for the more finished drawings that were preferred by collectors of the previous century, can be seen in examples such as this one, which bears his paraph and number at lower right.

Executed with great speed and with red chalk alone, the sheet features two studies of a standing actor in the costume of Mezzetin. On the left, this stock character from the commedia dell'arte strikes a confident pose. The vantage point chosen allowed the artist to study the costume as seen from behind. Quick, decisive strokes of chalk detail the striped and beribboned britches and the flamboyant ruffle-edged cape. Heightening the pressure of the mark created defined pockets of shadow, lending a naturalistic sense of

volume to the figure. In the sketch on the right, the actor has removed the cape and holds it before him, his expression lost in shadow. Working quickly to capture the pose, Watteau dispensed with all but the most essential details.

PS

1. See Jacqueline Labbé and Lise Bicart-Sée, *La Collection de dessins d'Antoine-Joseph Dezallier d'Argenville; reconstituée d'après son "Abrégé de la vie des plus fameux peintres," édition de 1762* (Paris, 1996).

Ex coll.: Antoine-Joseph Dezallier d'Argenville (until d. 1765; his estate sale, Paris, January 18–28, 1779, part of no. 392 or no. 393, to Lenglier); Madame de Saint . . . (according to an annotation on an old mount, now lost); [Hans Calmann, London, until 1939; sold through Paul Oppé, to the National Gallery of Canada]

References: Rosenberg and Prat 1996, vol. 2, pp. 932–33, no. 551 (with bibliography), ill.; Wintermute in Alan Wintermute et al., *Watteau and His World: French Drawing from 1700 to 1750*, exh. cat., Frick Collection, New York, and National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa (London and New York, 1999), pp. 156–57, no. 33, colorpl.



JEAN-ANTOINE WATTEAU (FRENCH, 1684–1721)

29. *Studies of a Flutist and Two Women*, ca. 1717

Red, black, and white chalks on buff laid paper, 10½ x 9¼ in. (26.6 x 23.1 cm)

Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, Massachusetts (1955.1839)

The Williamstown sheet combines studies of a standing flutist seen from behind with two bust-length drawings of a female model. The flutist, like many of Watteau's musicians, seems to have been drawn from a live performance rather than a posed model, if we are to judge from the apparent speed of execution. The costume, with its slashed sleeves and gathered britches, is likewise suggestive of the stage.

The two studies of women must have been drawn afterward, as they are placed to make maximum use of the remaining space on the sheet. Worked in a more leisurely manner, they combine careful modeling and a painterly mix of the three chalks to depict not just the features but also the delicate rose and porcelain complexions of the sitters. Based on physiognomy alone, the two studies seem to represent different models, although the coiffure and ruffled collar are identical.

PS

Ex colls.: ?Dominique-Vivant Denon (until d. 1825; ?his sale, Paris, May 1–19, 1826, no. 823, for 30.05 livres); Adrien Fauchier-Magnan, Neuilly-sur-Seine and Cannes (until 1935; his sale, Sotheby's, London, December 4, 1935, no. 64, to Knoedler); [Knoedler, London, 1935, sold to Clark]; Robert Sterling Clark (1935–55); Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute (from 1955)

References: Rosenberg and Prat 1996, vol. 2, pp. 970–71, no. 571 (with bibliography), ill.; Wintermute in Alan Wintermute et al., *Watteau and His World: French Drawing from 1700 to 1750*, exh. cat., Frick Collection, New York, and National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa (London and New York, 1999), pp. 158–59, no. 34, colorpl.



JEAN-ANTOINE WATTEAU (FRENCH, 1684–1721)

30. *A Man Playing the Guitar*, ca. 1717–18

Red, black, and white chalk on gray-brown antique laid paper,

10 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 10 $\frac{5}{16}$ in. (25.7 x 26.2 cm)

Private collection, New York

Watteau had first started to experiment with the *trois crayons* technique, which combines red, black, and white chalks, around 1714 or 1715. Scholars have generally dated this sheet to about 1717–18, a period when Watteau not only had gained fluency in the technique but had begun to use it in a loose and intuitive manner that was widely admired and has never since been equaled. As Margaret Morgan Grasselli has pointed out, the many visible pentimenti suggest that this study was based on a live stage performance rather than a posed model.¹ The forceful rendering of the hands, especially the foreshortened one at the center of the sheet, supports this idea.

Although guitarists make frequent appearance in Watteau's graphic and painted oeuvres, this particular pose was not used in any known painting. The guitar was associated with the commedia dell'arte character of Mezzetin. Indeed, he is playing a very similar instrument in the Metropolitan's painting (no. 12). Although the guitarist does not wear a beret, aspects of his

costume, with its slashed sleeves, cape, ruffled collar, and striped silk jacket, can be compared to portrayals of Mezzetin elsewhere in Watteau's oeuvre.

PS

1. Grasselli in Margaret Morgan Grasselli et al., *Private Treasures: Four Centuries of European Master Drawings*, exh. cat., Morgan Library & Museum, New York, and National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. (Washington, D.C., and New York, 2007), p. 126.

Ex coll.: Camille Groult, Paris (until d. 1908); Jean Groult, Paris (1908–d. 1951); Pierre Bordeaux-Groult, Paris (1951–57); private collection, Paris; [Didier Aaron, New York, until 2005; sold to private collection, New York]

References: Rosenberg and Prat 1996, vol. 2, pp. 1016–17, no. 597 (with bibliography), colorpl.; Grasselli in Margaret Morgan Grasselli et al., *Private Treasures: Four Centuries of European Master Drawings*, exh. cat., Morgan Library & Museum, New York, and National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. (Washington, D.C., and New York, 2007), pp. 126–27, no. 48, colorpl.



JEAN-ANTOINE WATTEAU (FRENCH, 1684–1721)

31. *Head of a Man*, ca. 1718–20

Red and black chalk on buff antique laid paper, $5\frac{7}{8} \times 5\frac{3}{16}$ in.

(14.9 x 13.1 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Rogers Fund, 1937

(37.165.107)

It is in his depictions of figures in the guise of commedia dell'arte characters that Watteau achieved his most emotional expressions of the human psyche. This robust red and black chalk drawing of a man's head, thrown back and gazing upward, is related to one of his most memorable images, the *Mezzetin*, also in the Metropolitan Museum (no. 12). In the painting, a man in the striped silk costume of the Mezzetin sits on a garden bench outside a building. A melancholy personification of unrequited love, he plays the guitar while his eyes gaze longingly toward an unseen window.

According to his friend and biographer the comte de Caylus, Watteau typically made figure studies without a specific painting in mind. Yet this sheet seems to be an anomaly. Lightly sketched lines in red chalk indicating the placement of the beret suggest that Watteau had already formulated the painting's composition before making this study. In the Metropolitan's drawing, the Mezzetin's yearning is palpable; from the unusually low vantage point, we see his straining neck muscles, his unconsciously parted lips,

the contorted shape of his uplifted eyes. Exploiting the pictorial effects of the red and black chalk, Watteau used red on the cheeks and bridge of the nose to suggest a flushed complexion and black to suggest recent growth on an unshaven chin. In its emotional force and the melding of the two colors of chalk, this sheet recalls the precedent of Peter Paul Rubens, an artist much admired by Watteau.

PS

Ex coll.: Jules Niel, Paris (until d. 1872) (according to the Biron sale catalogue); ?his daughter, Gabrielle Niel (from 1872); Pierre-Charles-Henri de Gontaut-Biron, marquis de Saint-Blancart (by 1914–37; his sale, Galerie Georges Petit, Paris, June 9–11, 1914, no. 63, for fr. 19,000 to Wildenstein for Biron; sold to MMA)

References: Grasselli in Grasselli and Rosenberg 1984, p. 188, no. 110, ill.; Rosenberg and Prat 1996, vol. 2, pp. 1048–49, no. 615 (with bibliography), ill.; Wintermute in Alan Wintermute et al., *Watteau and His World: French Drawing from 1700 to 1750*, exh. cat., Frick Collection, New York, and National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa (London and New York, 1999), pp. 170–71, no. 40, colorpl.



JEAN-ANTOINE WATTEAU (FRENCH, 1684–1721)

32. *Italian Comedians*, ca. 1719

Red, black, and white chalk on beige laid paper, 10¼ x 15⅞ in.

(26 x 40.2 cm)

The Art Institute of Chicago, Gift of Margaret and Tiffany Blake (1954.1)

This magnificent drawing dates to Watteau's last years, when his technique in *trois crayons* was fluid and unhesitating. The prominence of the white chalk throughout the sheet allowed the artist to suggest the sheen of the white satin costumes as well as the dramatic lighting of the stage. The addition of two head studies, one frontal and masked and one in profile, and a hand study at lower right—perhaps a reprise of the left hand of the kneeling figure—makes full use of the sheet and creates a lively mise-en-page, full of movement and shifts of scale. The details of the costume particularly captivated Watteau, who showed such embellishments as the dark tassels or ribbons that run along the chest and thighs and the small rectangular pouch strapped onto Brighella's belt.

Although sometimes referred to as Mezzetin, the figure depicted in the Chicago sheet most closely corresponds to Brighella, a highly changeable character in the Italian commedia dell'arte, often taking the role of a crafty servant. His attire was marked by bands of parallel decoration, reminiscent of livery or military attire, along the chest and sides of the legs. He was further distinguished by his pouch strapped onto his belt, often with a dagger tucked behind. He wore a half-face mask, recognizable for its hooked nose and pronounced eyebrows. The same costume can be seen on the actor gesturing toward Pierrot in the *Italian Comedians* (no. 13), although in the painting, Watteau changed the color of the fabric to ocher, presumably so

as not to compete with the centrality of the stiffly posing Pierrot, clad head-to-toe in white.

The motifs of both the standing and the kneeling figures in the drawing, as well as the masked head, found wider dissemination through Jean de Jullienne's *Les Figures de différents caractères*, an ambitious publishing venture that sought to translate Watteau's graphic oeuvre into prints. The etchers employed in the project did not seek to replicate the composition of the sheet but picked and chose individual motifs on which to base their prints.¹

PS

1. Grasselli in Grasselli and Rosenberg 1984, p. 185.

Ex coll.: Andrew James (until d. 1857); his daughter, Miss James, London (1857–91; her posthumous sale, Christie's, London, June 22–23, 1891, no. 341, for 160 gn. to Bourgeois); Camille Groult, Paris (until d. 1908); Jean Groult, Paris (1908–d. 1951); Pierre Bordeaux-Groult, Paris (from 1951); [Wildenstein, New York; sold to Blake]; Margaret and Tiffany Blake (until 1954; given to the Art Institute of Chicago)

References: Grasselli in Grasselli and Rosenberg 1984, pp. 184–85, no. 107, ill.; Margaret Morgan Grasselli, "The Drawings of Antoine Watteau: Stylistic Development and Problems of Chronology" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1987), pp. 394–95, no. 296; Rosenberg and Prat 1996, vol. 2, pp. 1098–99, no. 643 (with bibliography), colorpl.



JEAN I BERAIN (FRENCH, 1640–1711)

33. *Design for the Divertissement from La Pastorale*, 1703

Pen and black ink and brush and gray wash with red, blue, and yellow wash, with graphite, on cream laid paper, 13⁷/₈ x 18¹/₄ in. (35.1 x 46.3 cm)

Watermarks: “B [heart] C” in the center

The Cleveland Museum of Art, Bequest of Muriel Butkin, 2009 (2008.379)

The opera-ballet *Les Muses* by librettist Antoine Danchet and composer André Campra premiered at the Paris Opéra on October 1, 1703. The first of four acts, “La Pastorale,” told the story of shepherd lovers Palemon and Sylvie, the latter secretly desired by Arcas, the prince of Arcadia. Berain’s drawing relates to the third scene, in which shepherds and shepherdesses under Sylvie’s lead render homage to protective deities in a wooded grove. Their celebration, accompanied by flutes and a musette, formed a lighthearted musical interlude or *divertissement*, an indispensable component of each entry of an opera-ballet.

In his design, Berain carefully spelled out the spatial relationship between the actors and the theater set. The altar, framed by four towering trees and four peasant musicians, occupies the center stage. The six shepherds around it, sporting simple bell-sleeved tunics, felt hats, and tree branches, are chorus members. Their female counterparts—the *choeur des bergères* mentioned in the libretto—occupy the second row together with male dancers, recognizable by their vigorous movements, short skirts, and tambourines. This symmetrical arrangement of cast members in two concentric semicircles must have reflected the actual choreography of the *divertissement*.

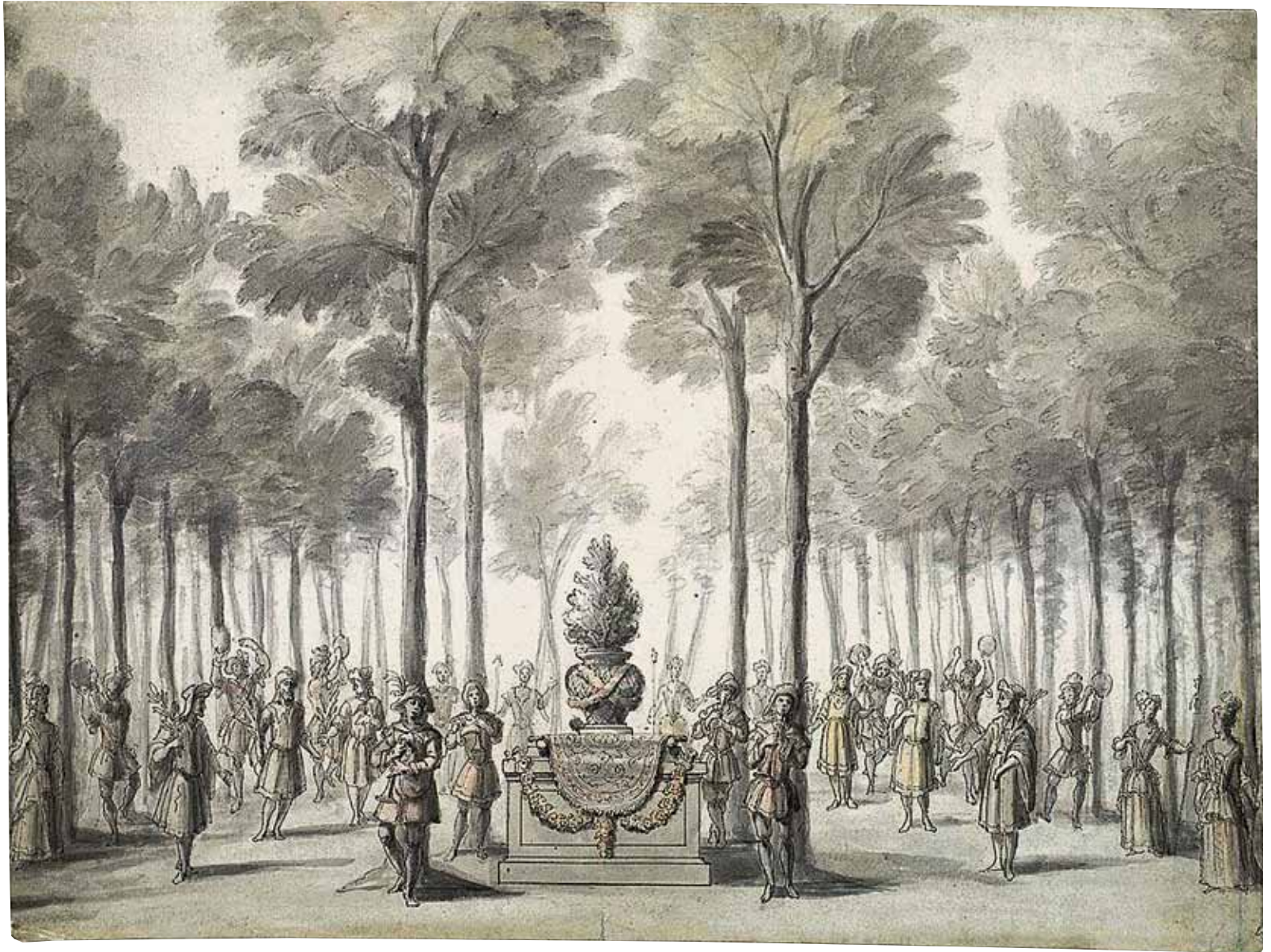
Berain executed the figures and the altar decorations in his characteristic minute penmanship, reinforced with washes. By contrast, the tree coulisses receding in perspective on both sides of the stage are more summarily drawn. Clearly, the artist did not feel obligated to elaborate on standard woody scenery, a staple at the Paris Opéra performances. He left that mechanistic task to his studio assistants, who copied the original design, meticulously filling in the stage-set details (Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Stockholm; inv. cartoon no. 213, port. 22, no. 318).¹

AKP

1. See Jérôme de La Gorce in Carter E. Foster et al., *French Master Drawings from the Collection of Muriel Butkin*, exh. cat., Cleveland Museum of Art and Dahesh Museum, New York (Cleveland, 2001), p. 14, fig. 1.

Ex coll.: Sale, Christie’s, London, March 19, 1975, no. 65, to Yvonne French; [Shepherd Gallery, New York, from 1975]; Muriel Butkin, Cleveland

Reference: Jérôme de La Gorce in Carter E. Foster et al., *French Master Drawings from the Collection of Muriel Butkin*, exh. cat., Cleveland Museum of Art and Dahesh Museum, New York (Cleveland, 2001), pp. 14–15, no. 2, ill.



JEAN DOLIVAR (SPANISH, 1641–1692) AFTER JEAN I BERAIN
(FRENCH, 1640–1711)

34. *Costume of an Indian Woman from the Ballet
Triumph of Love (Habit d'Indienne du ballet du
Triomphe de l'Amour)*, 1681–92

Etching and engraving, platemark: 11¼ x 7¾ in. (29.5 x 19.7 cm);

sheet: 16¼ x 10⅝ in. (41 x 27 cm)

Inscribed: *J. Berain del.* (lower left); *Habit d'Indienne du balet du Triomphe
de l'amour./ Jean Dolivar fec. Le Pautre exc. sous les Charmiers
S'. Innocent Avec Privil.* (under the image)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, The Elisha Whittelsey
Collection, The Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 1960 (60.699.1)

The court ballet *Triumph of Love* was composed by Jean-Baptiste Lully to celebrate the marriage of Louis XIV's oldest son to Marie-Anne Christine-Victoire of Bavaria in 1680. It premiered on January 21, 1681, in the royal castle at Saint-Germain-en-Laye. Ballets were an immensely popular form of entertainment at the French court during the carnival season and featured both professional performers and the members of the royal family and their entourage. While Louis XIV—an avid and talented dancer—did not star in this particular production, several of his children did, along with many male and female courtiers. Dancing interludes alternated with duos, trios, quartets, and choruses sung by the artists from the Royal Academy of Music or Opéra.

Jean Berain the Elder designed Indian costumes for opera soloists Catherine Ferdinand and Anne-Renée Rebel. On the opening night, they sang the parts of the female companions of Bacchus returning from the conquest of the Indian peninsula in Entry XII. Berain had had previous experience with such exotic fantasies, having provided African, Persian, and Moorish outfits for a court masquerade at Saint-Germain-en-Laye in 1679.

In this Indian costume, however, he clearly drew on the designs by his predecessor Henry Gissey for the 1662 carousel at the Tuileries Gardens. The feathered and plumed diadem and feathered tassels hanging from the sleeves are borrowed from Gissey's Indian horsemen. In both designs, bodices and skirts are embroidered with bands of pearls and rimmed with more feathers and plumes, creating the effect of exotic opulence. Typically for a singer's stage costume, Berain extended the back of the skirt into a long train.

In this print after Berain, Jean Dolivar placed the figure against a distant vista of a fortified city by the seaside. The generic architecture of crenellated ramparts, bastions, and towers is meant to evoke the character's land of origin. Thus contextualized, Berain's costume design was marketed to a broader public as a fashion print.

AKP

Ex coll.: [Kay Gregory, New York; sold to MMA]

References: Roger-Armand Weigert, *Jean I Berain: Dessinateur de la chambre et du cabinet du Roi (1640–1711)* (Paris, 1937), vol. 2, pp. 112–13, no. 127; Roger-Armand Weigert, *Inventaire du fonds français: Graveurs du XVII^e siècle*, vol. 3, Bibliothèque Nationale, Département des Estampes (Paris, 1954), p. 469, no. 268



Habit d'Indienne du balet du Triomphe de l'amour.

Jean Dulaar sc.

Le Theatre exc. sous les Charniers d' Innocent Avec Prud.

JEAN DOLIVAR (SPANISH, 1641–1692) AFTER JEAN I BERAIN
(FRENCH, 1640–1711)

35. *Costume of Endymion from the Ballet Triumph of Love*
(*Habit d'Andimion du ballet du Triomphe de*
l'Amour), 1681–92

Etching and engraving, platemark: 11¼ x 7¾ in. (29.8 x 19.8 cm);
sheet: 16 x 10⅝ in. (40.5 x 27 cm)

Inscribed: *J. Berin del.* (lower left); *Habit d'Andimion du balet du Triomphe*
de l'amour./Jean Dolivar fec. Le Pautre exc. sous les Charniers S'. Innocent
Avec Privil. (under the image)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, The Elisha Whittelsey
Collection, The Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 1960 (60.643.2)

Endymion, a beautiful youth from Greek mythology who spent much of his life in sleep, made an appearance in Entry X of the ballet and was impersonated by Jean Favier, a famous dancer, choreographer, and dance teacher to the dauphine. His costume is characterized by theatrical opulence worthy of a prince: a plumed crown, a gem-studded cape chain and clasps, and flounced, two-tiered muslin sleeves. The fanciful bow of ribbons clearly plays up to contemporary fashion. The coat and skirt are covered with arabesque patterns, departing from the geometric decorative mode of the Indian costume and revealing Jean Berain's talent as an ornamentalist. His costumes for the *Triumph of Love* caused a sensation and were compared in their beauty and sophistication to Jean-Baptiste Lully's music for the work.

Berain's workshop used a stock of standardized silhouette prints on which clothes were drawn. Endymion's graceful figure, stepping forward with one foot, holding out one arm to the side and curling the other one upward, reappears in many other costume designs. The partially closed fingers with extended pinkies may hold castanets—a ballet dancer's occasional accessory—replaced here by a festooned pike signifying Endymion's status

as a hunter. By contrast, the silhouettes used for singing roles share the same static attitude, with their balance shifted onto one foot and both arms held out to the sides, as seen in the preceding print.

During his career, Jean Dolivar engraved numerous compositions and costume drawings after Berain, including five designs for the *Triumph of Love*. He placed Endymion in a sharply foreshortened park *allée* converging on a fountain and a palace facade. While certainly derived from theater set designs, this backdrop does not represent the ballet's actual stage scenery, which depicted the interior of Venus's palace. The five summarily drawn figures on the right clearly evoke participants of Entry X: Endymion, recognizable by his pike, Diana, and the trio of Night, Mystery, and Silence.

AKP

Ex coll.: [Walter Schatzki, New York; sold to MMA]

References: Roger-Armand Weigert, *Jean I Berain: Dessinateur de la chambre et du cabinet du Roi (1640–1711)* (Paris, 1937), vol. 2, pp. 111–12, no. 125; Roger-Armand Weigert, *Inventaire du fonds français: Graveurs du XVII^e siècle*, vol. 3, Bibliothèque Nationale, Département des Estampes (Paris, 1954), p. 468, no. 266



Habit d'Andimion du balet du Triomphe de l'Amour.

Jean Dalmor scul.

Le Theatre. etc. sous les Charniers S^t Innocent Auxc Prusl:

AFTER JEAN I BERAIN (FRENCH, 1640–1711)

36. *Du Moulin in Peasant Garb Dancing at the Opéra*
(*Du Moulin en habit de paysan dansant à l'Opéra*)

Etching and engraving, platemark: 12 x 8 in. (30.2 x 20.2 cm);

sheet: 13¼ x 9¼ in. (33.6 x 23.5 cm)

Inscribed: *A Paris Chez I. Mariette rue S^t Jacques aux Colonnes d'Hercules.*
(lower left); *Berain inv.* (lower right); *Du Moulin en habit de Paysan/
Dansant à l'Opera* (under the image)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of the Estate of
Randolph Gunter, 1962 (62.676.20)

Four ballet dancers belonging to the Dumoulin family are recorded at the Paris Opéra: Henri and his three half-brothers François, Pierre, and David. According to Jérôme de La Gorce, the print's caption refers to François who, between 1700 and 1711, impersonated peasants in five different productions, occasionally accompanied by one of his younger brothers.¹ In fact, the Dumoulin family specialized in this role into the 1720s, starring as two "comic peasants" in Michel-Richard de Lalande's opera-ballet *The Elements* (1721).

Jean I Berain dressed the character in a feathered felt hat with upturned brims in front and behind, a thigh-length coat flaring from waist down, a lace-up waistcoat, britches gathered above and below the knees, and ribbon-laced shoes. The fanciful puffed sleeves, pleated collar, and occasional appliqués on the chest and at the elbows enliven this otherwise simple and sober outfit. In the background are a fountain and a water parterre surrounded by decorative orange-tree pots, hedges crowned with statues and balustrades, and tall manicured trees. Such theatrical sceneries were common backdrops in contemporary fashion prints, regardless of costume type.

The etching was among several anonymous plates republished after 1700 by Jean Mariette, depicting the actors of the Royal Academy of Music and the Italian Theater in their most memorable roles, for example, Dominique Magny as an old Athenian man in the opera *Theseus* (1675), Pierre Deschars

as Punchinello, or Marc-Antonio Romagnesi as Doctor Balouard. Their individualized physical features and expressive body language distinguish them from the generic opera silhouettes of the Indian Woman and Endymion. While not necessarily an accurate likeness, Dumoulin's craggy face with protruding brow ridges, large nose, and rough, spiky beard convincingly conveys his stage role. He is shown in the middle of a dance step, balancing gracefully on the ball of his left foot, with his head turned to the right and both arms raised. This animated pose perfectly corresponds to the pictorial conventions of stock peasant figures as exemplified in fashion prints.

AKP

1. Jérôme de La Gorce, "Opéras et mascarades en France sous Louis XIV: Recherches sur l'interprète et son costume à travers les sources iconographiques," in *Documentation et art de l'acteur: Société Internationale des Bibliothèques et des Musées des Arts du Spectacle, 18^{ème} Congrès International, Stockholm, 3–7 septembre 1990 / Records and Images of the Art of the Performer: International Association of Libraries and Museums of the Performing Arts, Eighteenth International Congress, Stockholm, 3–7 September 1990* (Stockholm, 1992), pp. 54–55.

Ex. coll.: Randolph Gunter (until d. 1961; his estate, 1961–62)

Reference: Roger-Armand Weigert, *Jean I Berain: Dessinateur de la chambre et du cabinet du Roi (1640–1711)* (Paris, 1937), vol. 2, p. 188, no. 248



A Paris chez L. Marolles rue d'Anjou aux Galeries d'Orléans. *Revan. inv.*
*Du Moulin en habit de Paysan
Dansant à L'Opera*

CLAUDE GILLOT (FRENCH, 1673–1722)

37. *The Scene of the Two Carriages*
(*La Scène des deux carrosses*)

Pen and black ink, brush and red chalk washes, on off-white antique laid paper, 6¼ x 8½ in. (16 x 21.7 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Purchase, David T. Schiff and Oscar de la Renta Ltd. Gifts, 2006 (2006.93)

This expressive and humorous drawing was made as part of a series of about thirty scenes inspired by the commedia dell'arte, or Italian theater. Twelve of the sheets, including a variant of the Metropolitan's drawing (Musée du Louvre, Paris), were etched as a suite by Gabriel Huquier titled *Livre de scènes comiques*.¹ The commedia dell'arte troupe had been expelled from France in 1697, but its characters continued to be popular as stock figures in many of the comic performances put on at Paris's street fairs. The Metropolitan's drawing is also closely related to Gillot's most famous painting, *Les Deux Carrosses* (Musée du Louvre, Paris). The subject was directly inspired by a short comic sketch appended to a three-act comedy, *La Foire Saint-Germain* by Jean-François Regnard and Charles Rivière Dufresny, first performed in 1695.

In the sketch, an altercation breaks out between two cabmen and their passengers (Harlequin and Scaramouche, both dressed in women's clothing) when the carriages meet in a narrow alley and each refuses to back up to let the other pass. In the Louvre painting, the cabmen face off, just inches apart. The New York sheet, however, demonstrates that Gillot had considered depicting a slightly later moment of the story, when a judge inserts himself between the two parties, hoping to negotiate a compromise, but instead becomes the focus of the collective ire and is chased offstage. A related drawing in the Musée du Louvre (inv. RF 29326), also from the collection of Princess Murat, is closer to the composition of the painting, although differences remain, especially in the treatment of the architecture and the carriages.

PS

1. See Bernard Populus, *Claude Gillot (1673–1722): Catalogue de l'oeuvre gravé* (Paris, 1930), p. 193, nos. 342–53. An album of theatrical drawings by Gillot that came to light in 2004 included two other instances of Gillot having made a variant composition to one of his commedia dell'arte scenes. See Jennifer Tonkovich, "A New Album of Theater Drawings by Claude Gillot," *Master Drawings* 44, no. 4 (Winter 2006), p. 466.

Ex coll.: Cécile Ney d'Elchingen, Princesse Murat (by 1920–42; her sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, February 4, 1942, no. 6, for fr. 23,500 to Wildenstein); [Wildenstein, Paris, 1942–2006; sold to MMA]

References: Émile Dacier, "Une Peinture de Claude Gillot au Musée du Louvre," *Revue de l'art ancien et moderne* 44 (June 1923), pp. 41–46, ill.; Jennifer Tonkovich, "Claude Gillot and the Theater, with a Catalogue of Drawings" (PhD diss., Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, 2002), pp. 243–46, no. 17, fig. 35; Joseph Baillio in *The Arts of France, from François I^{er} to Napoléon I^{er}: A Centennial Celebration of Wildenstein's Presence in New York*, exh. cat., Wildenstein (New York, 2005), pp. 149–50, no. 42 (with bibliography), colorpl.; Perrin Stein in "Recent Acquisitions: A Selection, 2005–2006," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, n.s., 64, no. 2 (Fall 2006), p. 39, colorpl.; Jennifer Tonkovich, "A New Album of Theater Drawings by Claude Gillot," *Master Drawings* 44, no. 4 (Winter 2006), p. 485, n. 14



CLAUDE GILLOT (FRENCH, 1673–1722)

38. *Figures in Theatrical Costumes*

Pen and brown ink, brush and red chalk wash, over red chalk, on off-white antique laid paper, 5½ x 7⅞ in. (13.8 x 20.1 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Rogers Fund, 1910
(10.45.15)

In addition to illustrating commedia dell'arte scenes, Gillot also made sheets of costume studies, of which almost thirty are known today. They are typically in pen and brown ink with either red chalk wash or watercolor added. It is difficult to say with certainty if they are designs for costumes or sketches inspired by performances Gillot attended, although the speed with which they were executed and the dramatic poses of certain figures would appear to support the latter theory.¹

The four figures in the Metropolitan's sheet are arrayed in a horizontal band but do not interact or occupy a unified space. As Jennifer Tonkovich has observed, they were probably made sequentially as distinct sketches.² Some are more elaborately rendered with modeling in wash, while others are simply pen and ink over a quick preliminary sketch in red chalk. The figure at left with his hands on his head wears the recognizable striped suit of Mezzetin. The figure second from the left with the floppy, wide-brimmed hat recalls the theatrical guise of the peasant. Second from the right, the smiling figure with a rounded belly and oversized buttons represents Punchinello, while the quickly sketched figure at the right, with his arms raised in distress, is most likely Scaramouche.³

PS

1. For Gillot's involvement with theatrical décor and costumes, see Jérôme de La Gorce, *Féeries d'opéra: Décors, machines et costumes en France, 1645–1765* (Paris, 1997), p. 20.
2. Jennifer Tonkovich, "Claude Gillot and the Theater, with a Catalogue of Drawings" (PhD diss., Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, 2002), p. 336.
3. Ibid.

Ex coll.: Jonathan Richardson Jr. (his collector's mark, Lugt 2170, at lower right); [Horne, London, until 1910; sold to MMA]

References: Jacob Bean, with Lawrence Turčić, *Fifteenth–Eighteenth Century French Drawings in The Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York, 1986), p. 115, no. 119, ill.; Alan Wintermute, "Le Pélerinage à Watteau: An Introduction to the Drawings of Watteau and His Circle," in Alan Wintermute et al., *Watteau and His World: French Drawing from 1700 to 1750*, exh. cat., Frick Collection, New York, and National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa (London and New York, 1999), pp. 17–18, fig. 6; Jennifer Tonkovich, "Claude Gillot and the Theater, with a Catalogue of Drawings" (PhD diss., Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, 2002), pp. 335–37, no. 58, fig. 97; Jennifer Tonkovich, "A New Album of Theater Drawings by Claude Gillot," *Master Drawings* 44, no. 4 (Winter 2006), p. 485, n. 23



CLAUDE GILLOT (FRENCH, 1673–1722)

39. *Figures in Theatrical Costumes*

Pen and brown ink, brush and red chalk wash, over red chalk, on off-white antique laid paper, 5½ x 7⅞ in. (15.5 x 18.6 cm)

Inscribed in red chalk at upper right: 3

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Rogers Fund, 1906
(06.1042.7)

Although there are not enough benchmarks to construct a precise chronology of Gillot's oeuvre, one can assume that this is the type of drawing to which Watteau would have had access during the time he spent in Gillot's studio in about 1705–8. The nearly thirty sheets of this type that have survived capture the elaborate costumes and poses of actors divorced from any narrative or spatial context. Many feature the well-known commedia dell'arte characters, but others are inspired by the costumes seen in productions of the Opéra and the Comédie Française.

The two figures at the center of this sheet evoke the tradition of Jean I Berain (nos. 33–36) and others who designed costumes for royal productions. From their fantastic headwear, to their richly ornamented garb featuring fringed shawls and animal motifs, to their long, flowing white beards, these studies are quite distinct from the stock types of the Italian theater and suggest the wide range of sources Gillot drew upon for his theatrical imagery.

PS

Ex coll.: Jonathan Richardson Jr. (his collector's mark, Lugt 2170, at lower right); [Carfax, London; sold, through Fry to MMA]

References: Jacob Bean, with Lawrence Turčić, *Fifteenth–Eighteenth Century French Drawings in The Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York, 1986), pp. 114–15, no. 118, ill.; Jennifer Tonkovich, "Claude Gillot and the Theater, with a Catalogue of Drawings" (PhD diss., Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, 2002), pp. 332–35, no. 57, fig. 95; Jennifer Tonkovich, "A New Album of Theater Drawings by Claude Gillot," *Master Drawings* 44, no. 4 (Winter 2006), p. 485, n. 23



GABRIEL HUQUIER (FRENCH, 1695–1772) AFTER CLAUDE
GILLOT (FRENCH, 1673–1722)

40. *Théâtre Italien, Frontispiece to the Livre de scènes
comiques*, ca. 1729–32

Etching with engraving, second state of two, image: 7½ x 8¼ in. (19.1 x
22.1 cm); sheet: 7¾ x 8¾ in. (19.6 x 22.3 cm)

Inscribed: *THÉÂTRE ITALIEN* (top); *LIVRE DE / Scènes / Comiques /
Inventées / par / Gillot* (lower left); *AParis chez Huquier vis à vis le / Grand
Chatelet.* (under the image)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, The Elisha Whittelsey
Collection, The Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 1963 (63.562.13(1))

Although Claude Gillot sometimes etched his own designs, his drawings were also disseminated in the form of reproductive prints, during both his lifetime and the years directly following. His idiosyncratic style of draftsmanship found particularly sensitive interpretation in the hands of Gabriel Huquier, who published several suites of prints exploring the range of Gillot's subject matter from biblical scenes to vignettes from the comic stage.

This allegorical scene functions as a frontispiece to Huquier's *Livre de scènes comiques inventées par Gillot*. Seated on a cloud and surrounded by other allegorical figures, Comedy directs the attention of Scaramouche, who has entered from the right, to a canvas depicting the commedia dell'arte

figures of Columbine, Harlequin, and Punchinello. The palette-bearing putto beside her is presumably the artist. Other putti present a large basket of theatrical masks. The scene is bracketed by illusionistic pilasters and garlands that spill down from the central cartouche.

Huquier's place of business is described in the plate's inscription as "vis à vis le Grand Chatelet," a location he occupied from about 1729 to about 1737, so the *Livre de scènes comiques* must have been published after Gillot's death in 1722. PS

Ex coll.: [James J. Kane, New York; sold to MMA]

Reference: Bernard Populus, *Claude Gillot (1673–1722): Catalogue de l'oeuvre gravé* (Paris, 1930), p. 193, no. 342



NICOLAS LANCRET (FRENCH, 1690–1743)

41. *Two Studies of a Guitar Player in Turkish Costume*,
mid-1720s

Red chalk on buff laid paper, laid down on cream paper, 8¾ x 12¼ in.
(22.1 x 31 cm)

The Art Institute of Chicago, Restricted gift of the Joseph and Helen
Regenstein Foundation (1971.530)

This lively and exotic sheet shows two views of one of Lancret's favorite and best-known characters, the Amorous Turk. Lancret depicted this character in his paintings numerous times, pairing him most often with the Belle Greque (Beautiful Greek) in single portrait-like pendants, in costume, engaged in their theatrical roles, and more rarely as a participant in a *fête galante*. He makes one of his earliest appearances in Lancret's oeuvre in a decorative panel for the Hôtel Peyrenc de Moras with a date of about 1724. In his painted characterizations, the Turk's vest and wide billowing pants are pink, his shirt blue. Although no specific source in theater for Lancret's Turk and Greque is known, the mysterious East had been a popular factor in French literature and visual art since the sixteenth century, and countless theater pieces had imaginary Chinese or Turkish settings and figures. By the eighteenth century, this fashion for the exotic was quite widespread and had influenced the *commedia dell'arte* and the popular fair plays. Indeed, one such play, *Punchinello the Grand Turk*, may have been authored by Lancret's early employer and mentor Claude Gillot (nos. 37–40). Typically, these plays tell of a noble Turk freeing his ladylove from the seraglio, a tradition clearly reflected in Lancret's proud lover. Lancret was also profoundly influenced by the depiction of the Turk in the French print tradition; to cite just one example, a close prototype for his Turk is easily located in the very popular *Recueil de cent estampes représentant différentes nations du Levant* (Set of One Hundred Prints Representing Various Nations of the Levant), engraved from paintings made in 1707–8 by Jean-Baptiste van Mour.

This drawing was made in Lancret's early maturity; his drawing style had evolved from the rounded softness of the chalk strokes and weightless forms of his earliest drawings. However, he had not yet moved to the angular strokes and spare definition of form typical of work of the 1730s and 1740s. Here, the artist gave the exotic costumes his closest attention, going over folds and puckers with more chalk, accentuating and embellishing. By comparison, the small heads are described only delicately. Lancret experimented here with two poses for the Turk—the more common one, with his guitar hanging unplayed and arms akimbo, and the more rare one, of him actually strumming the guitar. Lancret depicted the Turk in another beautiful red chalk drawing, today in the Musée du Louvre, Paris (inv. 27.539). None of the artist's painted versions shows the guitar being played. MTH

Ex coll.: ?G. W. Knobelsdorff, Potsdam; ?by descent to Andreas Kruger (d. 1759), Potsdam; by descent to his nephew, Andreas Ludwig Kruger (1743–1822), Potsdam; by descent to his son; [Adolphe Stein, Paris, until 1971; sold to the Art Institute of Chicago]

References: Harold Joachim, "A Group of Drawings by Nicolas Lancret," in *Liber Amicorum Karel G. Boon*, ed. by Dieuwke de Hoop Scheffer, Carlos van Hasselt, and Christopher White (Amsterdam, 1974), pp. 102–9, fig. 6; Harold Joachim, *French Drawings and Sketchbooks of the Eighteenth Century*, Art Institute of Chicago (Chicago, 1977), pp. 32–33, no. 1F8, ill.; Holmes 1991, pp. 64–66, 118–19, no. 25, colorpl. 30; Margaret Morgan Grasselli, "Lancret Revisited: A Dozen New Drawings from the Collection of Lord Rothschild," *Master Drawings* 44, no. 4 (Winter 2006), p. 454, under no. 5



NICOLAS LANCRET (FRENCH, 1690–1743)

42. Verso: *Young Lady Dancing*, ca. 1732–33

Black and white chalk on gray paper, 6 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (16.8 x 24.7 cm)

The Art Institute of Chicago, Restricted gift of the Joseph and Helen Regenstein Foundation (1971.529)

Both sides of this elegant sheet exemplify the skill and confidence of Lancret's mature drawing manner. On the recto are studies of an old woman seated, drapery, and the head of another old woman. The young lady dancing on the verso is a preparatory study for his *Dance between a Pavilion and a Fountain* (Schloss Charlottenburg, Stiftung Preussische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg), a painting known since the eighteenth century as one of the artist's finest achievements. Lancret thought so highly of it that he based his bid for the office of *conseiller* to the Académie on the submission of this single work. He presented it to the Académie in July 1735, and won the office, the highest available to a genre painter.

The graceful dancer in the Chicago drawing appears in Lancret's painting in a duet with her partner on the cleared stage between the massive pavilion and craggy fountain, circled by a gracious *fête galante*. Her pose, with body angled slightly and arms elegantly extended, and her costume with short overskirt are exactly the same as in the present drawing.

It seems likely that Lancret based this dancing lady, both drawn and painted, on the figure of Mademoiselle Sallé, whose portrait he had recently completed (between 1731 and 1732). The face resembles hers, as does the shortened skirt, a style she favored and popularized. Her figure is executed with simplicity and confidence, and her form has weight and presence. This control and clarity, found in Lancret's drawings of the 1730s and 1740s, also

characterize the drawing on the recto of this sheet, which depicts a figure for the scene of Old Age in the series of paintings, *The Four Ages of Man*, today in the National Gallery, London. The engravings for that series were announced in July 1735. The Charlottenburg painting had always been understood as that rarity in Lancret's work, the securely signed and dated piece (the signature and date in the shadows of the lower left), a date long read as 1732. It *is* signed and dated, but we have been reading the date incorrectly! Recent conservation of the painting has revealed that the last digit is a 3, not a 2, and a date of 1733 is now in order. MTH

Ex coll.: ?G. W. Knobelsdorff, Potsdam; ?by descent to Andreas Kruger (d. 1759), Potsdam; by descent to his nephew, Andreas Ludwig Kruger (1743–1822), Potsdam; by descent to his son; [Adolphe Stein, Paris, until 1971; sold to the Art Institute of Chicago]

References: Harold Joachim, "A Group of Drawings by Nicolas Lancret," in *Liber Amicorum Karel G. Boon*, ed. by Dieuwke de Hoop Scheffer, Carlos van Hasselt, and Christopher White (Amsterdam, 1974), pp. 102–9, figs. 4, 5; Harold Joachim, *French Drawings and Sketchbooks of the Eighteenth Century*, Art Institute of Chicago (Chicago, 1977), p. 33, nos. 1F9, 1F10, ill.; Margaret Morgan Grasselli, "Eleven New Drawings by Nicolas Lancret," *Master Drawings* 23–24, no. 3 (Autumn 1986), pp. 382–83, 388, n. 22, figs. 10, 11





43

JACQUES DE LAJOÛE (FRENCH, 1686–1761)

43. *Study for a Stage Set (I)*, ca. 1732–35

44. *Study for a Stage Set (II)*, ca. 1732–35

Pen, gray ink, with gray and colored wash over traces of black chalk and graphite; framing line, 10 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 16 in. (25.6 x 40.7 cm)

Signed (at bottom right, in gray ink): *Lajoüe*

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1935 (35.76.1, .2)

In her definitive study on Jacques de Lajoüe, Marianne Roland Michel suggested that these two drawings, pendants, are studies for theater decoration. She noted the similarity of the second drawing to Le Maire’s “dessein de la décoration pour les tragédies du Collège Louis le Grand” of 1732,¹ a design evoked by Lajoüe in another drawing (Kunstbibliothek, Berlin, inv. 2473/7) with some of the same elements of garden arcade and Corinthian columns. She further cited the similarity of both drawings to two engraved optical views representing the “Décoration d’un théâtre” and the “Vue du jardin des délices.”² This suggestion is borne out amply in the drawings themselves, their compositions strongly reminiscent of set design. Both feature foreground elements evocative of proscenium arches, and both



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give onto an empty theatrical “stage” area, flanked at the sides by wing-like elements proceeding back into space much like a set.

The first drawing, the simpler of the two, displays an elegant garden terrace, bordered by fountains, stairs, and trellised archways, and introduced beneath graceful flowering swags. The second, more elaborate and architectural, depicts an outdoor courtyard encircled by a curved arcade or portico, topped with statues. This court is enhanced by numerous architectural elements, volutes with reclining statues, stairs, balustrades, applied Corinthian columns, urns—in short, nearly every embellishment available to this most architectural of visual artists.

MTH

1. Département des Estampes et de la Photographie, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris (coll. Hennin, t. 94).
2. Département des Estampes et de la Photographie, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris (Li 72, t. 9).

Ex coll.: [E. Parsons and Sons, London, until 1935; sold to MMA]

References: Marianne Roland Michel, *Lajoüe et l'art rocaille* (Neuilly-sur-Seine, 1984), p. 282, nos. D207, D208, figs. 289, 291, and see also p. 277, no. D196; Mary L. Myers, *French Architectural and Ornament Drawings of the Eighteenth Century*, exh. cat., The Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York, 1991), pp. 84–86, nos. 52, 53, ill.

CHARLES-NICOLAS II COCHIN (FRENCH, 1715–1790)

45. *The Marquise de Pompadour in a Scene from
Acis et Galathée*, 1749

Gouache and watercolor over traces of black chalk on ivory laid paper,
5½ x 15⅞ in. (14 x 38.5 cm)
Signed and dated (at center of lower margin): *C.N. Cochin filius. inv. et
pinx. 1749*
National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, purchased 2006 (NGC 41953)

This exquisite gouache is without parallel in Cochin's oeuvre. It depicts Louis XV's mistress Madame de Pompadour in the role of Galatea in an intimate theatrical production staged at Versailles on the evening of February 10, 1749.¹ She is shown at the left, arms outstretched, as if singing, in a frothy dress with a wide skirt decorated with seagrass motifs. Before her, in an ornate red costume, is the vicomte de Rohan, in the role of Acis, while the jealous Cyclops Polyphemus, seen on the rock above, prepares to hurl a boulder at his unlucky rival. First staged in 1686, *Acis et Galathée* was a pastoral opera in three acts with a musical score by Jean-Baptiste Lully. Such productions, created for the amusement of the king and the court, combined the talents of professional actors, singers, and musicians—seen just below the stage, with courtiers, and sometimes members of the royal family, participating as amateurs.

In Cochin's jewel-like rendering, the dramatic scenery of the stage set, with its windswept coastline and overgrown rocky outcroppings, is in perfect counterpoise to the playful Rococo décor and refined spectators to the right. The performance took place in the tiny Théâtre des Cabinets, a temporary and portable playhouse created for the king's new mistress in 1748 and first erected on the first floor of the palace of Versailles, just below the Escalier des Ambassadeurs. Decorated with gilt ornament in relief over turquoise panels set between faux marble pilasters, the elegant space accommodated only a small number of spectators. Cochin's minutely detailed style allows for the identification of the king, Queen Marie Leczinska, and other members of the royal family in the balcony at right.

Never of robust health, Madame de Pompadour died at age forty-two. Cochin's gouache is documented in the collection of her younger brother,

the marquis de Marigny, who through her influence, had gained the powerful position *Directeur des Bâtiments* in 1751.² PS

1. This entry draws heavily on Joseph Baillio's excellent cataloguing of the gouache in *The Arts of France, from François I^{er} to Napoléon I^{er}: A Centennial Celebration of Wildenstein's Presence in New York*, exh. cat., Wildenstein (New York, 2005), pp. 205–6, no. 75.
2. Alden R. Gordon, *The Houses and Collections of the Marquis de Marigny, Documents for the History of Collecting*, French Inventories 1 (Los Angeles, 2003), p. 291, under no. 761, and n. 58.

Ex coll.: Abel-François Poisson de Vandières, marquis de Marigny and marquis de Ménars (until d. 1781; his estate sale, Basan and Joullain, Paris, March 18–April 6, 1782, no. 304, for 37 livres 1 solde to Pichenau); comte Jacques de la Béraudière, Paris (by 1874—at least 1881); ?Richard Lion (per inscription in a copy of the Josse sale catalogue, Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie, The Hague); Hervé-Henri-André Josse, Paris (until d. 1893; his estate sale, Galerie Georges Petit, Paris, May 28–29, 1894, no. 8, for fr. 16,600 to Bardac); ?Sigismund Bardac (from 1894; per inscription in another copy of Josse sale catalogue, RKD); [Arnold Seligmann and Wildenstein, Paris, until 1923; sold to Schiff]; Mortimer L. Schiff (1923–d. 1931); John M. Schiff, New York (1931–d. 1987); private collection (until 2005; sale, Sotheby's, New York, January 26, 2005, no. 158, to Wildenstein); [Wildenstein, New York, 2005–6, sold to the National Gallery of Canada]

Reference: Joseph Baillio in *The Arts of France, from François I^{er} to Napoléon I^{er}: A Centennial Celebration of Wildenstein's Presence in New York*, exh. cat., Wildenstein (New York, 2005), pp. 205–6, no. 75 (with bibliography), colorpls.



CHARLES-NICOLAS II COCHIN (FRENCH, 1715–1790)

46. *Decoration of the Theater Constructed at Versailles for the Performance of the Princesse de Navarre*, ca. 1745

Etching, platemark: 29⁷/₁₆ x 21¹/₈ in. (74.8 x 53.6 cm); sheet: 33¹⁵/₁₆ x 24¹³/₁₆ in. (86.2 x 63 cm)

Inscribed: *DECORATION DE LA SALLE DE SPECTACLE* (at bottom)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, The Elisha Whittelsey Collection, The Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 1960 (60.622.1)

In his capacity as draftsman and engraver for the Menus-Plaisirs, Cochin was responsible for memorializing important royal festivities. Here he depicted a performance of Voltaire's *La Princesse de Navarre* that was presented for Louis XV and Queen Marie Leczinska, the young dauphin, and his Spanish bride, the infanta Maria Teresa. The royal group, seated in front, attends a comedy-ballet celebrating the marriage that was written for the occasion by Voltaire and set to music by Jean-Philippe Rameau, and that featured acclaimed performers, including the actress Mademoiselle Clairon and the ballerina Mademoiselle Camargo.¹ The present print, the preparatory drawing for which is in the Musée du Louvre, Paris, was exhibited in the Salon of 1750 with a pendant featuring the wedding ceremony.²

The performance hall was designed by the brothers Sébastien-Antoine and Paul-Ambroise Slodtz, *Sculpteurs et Décorateurs du Roi*, with assistance from the painter Pierre-Josse Perrot. It was installed in the Grande Écurie at Versailles and had two stories with ornately decorated loges, a parterre, and an orchestra pit seating approximately sixty musicians. The entire ensemble was designed so that the loges could be dismantled within twenty-four hours and replaced with the arcades, mirrors, and faux marble of a ballroom. The space was impressive, as was the facade of the building, which was illuminated by candles when the guests emerged from the performance three and a half hours later.³

If we are to believe Cochin's depiction of the event, one did not come to the royal performance only for the verse, the acting, and the ballet. The full

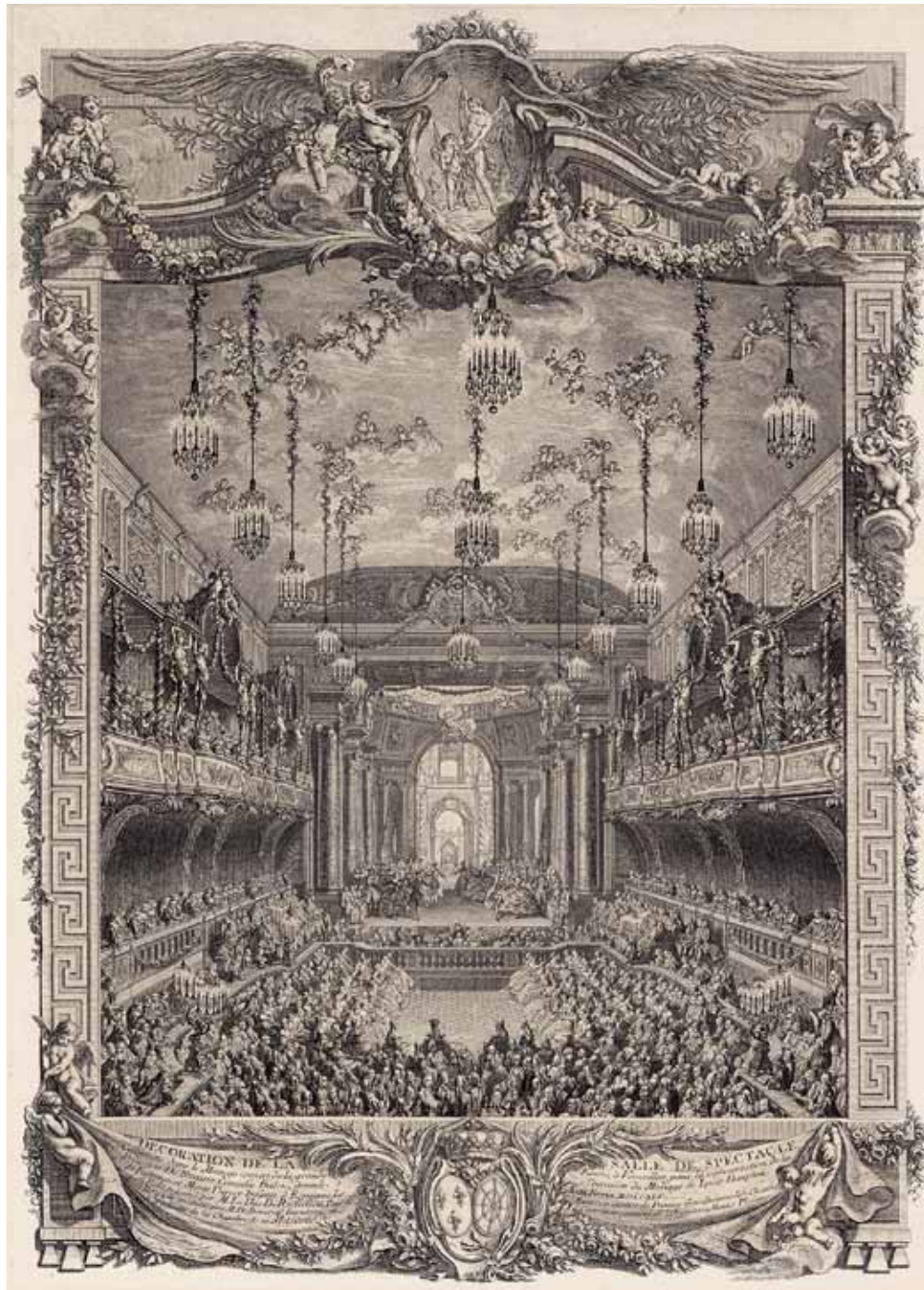
spectacle also included the costumes of the guests, social intrigue (shown in the many conversations taking place in the loges and the parterre), and the fantastic architecture replete with writhing nymphs, garlands of fresh flowers, and dazzling chandeliers. Cochin worked the large plate to all four corners. His mastery of depth and form created a layered landscape that can be read repeatedly, each time revealing a fresh detail. Few prints of this era can rival Cochin's depiction of the gallantry and elegance of the French court.

ESB

1. Voltaire, *La Princesse de Navarre: Comédie-ballet; feste donnée par le Roy en son château de Versailles, le mardi 23, février 1745* (Paris, 1745), pp. xiii, 69.
2. See Xavier Salmon, *Trésors cachés: Chefs d'oeuvres du cabinet d'arts graphiques du château de Versailles*, exh. cat., Musée des Beaux-Arts, Rouen (Paris, 2001), pp. 54–55.
3. Voltaire, *La Princesse de Navarre*, p. ix.

Ex coll.: [Maurice Rousseau, Paris, until 1960; sold to MMA]

References: Samuel Élie Rocheblave, *Charles-Nicolas Cochin: Graveur et dessinateur (1715–1790)* (Paris, 1927), p. 108, pl. xxxv; Marcel Roux, *Inventaire du fonds français: Graveurs du XVIII^e siècle*, vol. 5, Bibliothèque Nationale, Département des Estampes (Paris, 1946), pp. 53–54, no. 194; *Voltaire et l'Europe*, exh. cat., Bibliothèque Nationale de France and Hôtel de la Monnaie (Paris, 1994), pp. 72–73 (entry by Xavier Salmon), 73–74 (entry by Madeleine Pinault-Sørensen); Philippe Beaussant, *Les Plaisirs de Versailles: Théâtre & musique* (Paris, 2000), pp. 138, 424, 426, ill. p. 424; Xavier Salmon, *Trésors cachés: Chefs d'oeuvres du cabinet d'arts graphiques du château de Versailles*, exh. cat., Musée des Beaux-Arts, Rouen (Paris, 2001), p. 55, fig. 1



CHARLES-NICOLAS I COCHIN (FRENCH, 1688–1754)
AFTER CHARLES-NICOLAS II COCHIN (FRENCH, 1715–1790)

47. *Decoration for a Masked Ball Given by the King, 1746*

Etching with engraving, second state of two, platemark: 18 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 30 $\frac{5}{8}$ in.
(47.8 x 77.8 cm)

Inscribed: *DECORATION DU BAL MASQUE DONNÉ PAR LE ROI* (under the image)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1930 (30.22.34)

The royal wedding of the dauphin and the Spanish infanta Maria Teresa in February 1745 was celebrated at the French court at Versailles in a series of lively and sumptuous events. As *dessinateur* and *graveur* for the Menus-Plaisirs, Cochin was responsible for commemorating the festivities, which he did in four large prints, depicting the wedding ceremony, a performance of Voltaire's *Princesse de Navarre* (no. 46), and two balls. The masked ball held on the night of February 25, 1745, in the Hall of Mirrors was also known informally as the *bal des ifs*, after the clipped yew tree costumes of the king and his entourage. The dauphin and dauphine make their appearance as shepherd and shepherdess near the center of the composition, in a group bearing rakes and watering cans. The crowd also included large numbers of guests dressed as Turks (some with oversized heads), Chinese men, and costumes inspired by theater, such as the man dressed as a *commedia dell'arte* character at lower right.

It has long been held that it was at this ball that the young Madame d'Étiolles, later Madame de Pompadour, first made her appearance at court. On the basis of a pastel of a woman in a similar costume by Louis Vigée, it has been proposed that she may be the young woman with her back to the viewer in the center foreground, who is dressed as a pilgrim, with a staff and a shell-strewn cape,¹ although the identity of the sitter in Vigée's portrait as Pompadour has been challenged in recent scholarship.²

Based on a detailed full-scale drawing in the Musée du Louvre, Paris (inv. 25253), the design was engraved the following year by Cochin's father,

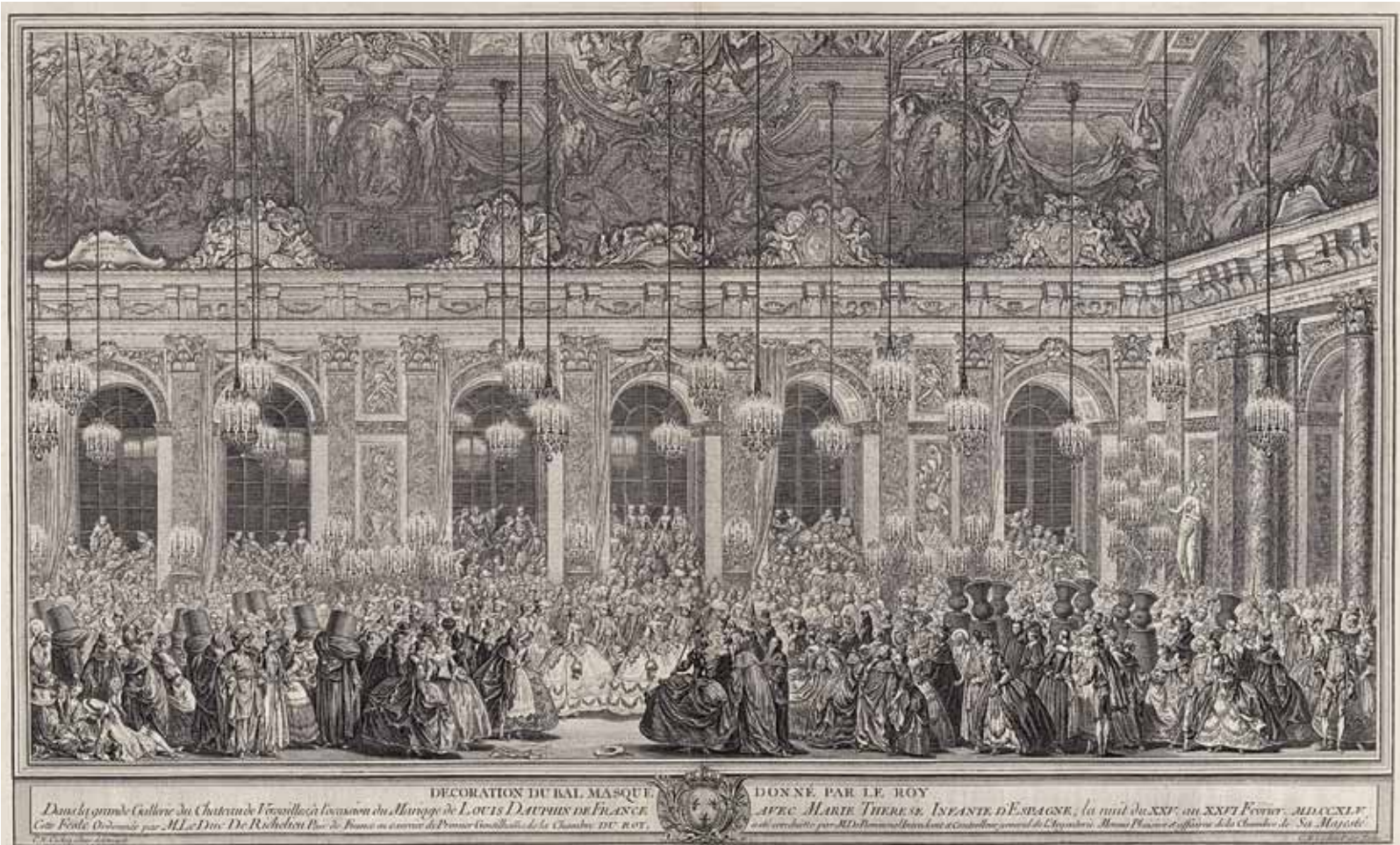
Charles-Nicolas Cochin I. Cochin *le fils* was also a proficient printmaker, but he must have been very busy and allowed his father to assist him. In the print even more than in the preparatory drawing, the late hour is emphasized. The ball began at midnight, and the chandeliers and mirrors created a glittering effect, illuminating the partygoers, throwing light onto the ornate ceiling, and casting multiple reflections in the blackened windows.

PS

1. Marcel Roux, *Inventaire du fonds français: Graveurs du XVIII^e siècle*, vol. 4, Bibliothèque Nationale, Département des Estampes (Paris, 1940), pp. 654–55; and Mary L. Myers in David P. Becker et al., *Regency to Empire: French Printmaking, 1715–1814*, exh. cat., Baltimore Museum of Art, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and Minneapolis Institute of Arts (Baltimore and Minneapolis, 1984), p. 104.
2. Xavier Salmon, *Madame de Pompadour et les arts*, exh. cat., Musée National des Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon, Kunsthalle der Hypo-Kulturstiftung, Munich, and National Gallery, London (Paris, 2002), pp. 508–9, fig. 2.

Ex coll.: [XVIII Century Shop, New York until 1930; sold to MMA]

References: Marcel Roux, *Inventaire du fonds français: Graveurs du XVIII^e siècle*, vol. 4, Bibliothèque Nationale, Département des Estampes (Paris, 1940), pp. 654–55, no. 309; Mary L. Myers in David P. Becker et al., *Regency to Empire: French Printmaking, 1715–1814*, exh. cat., Baltimore Museum of Art, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and Minneapolis Institute of Arts (Baltimore and Minneapolis, 1984), p. 104–5, no. 26, ill.



GABRIEL DE SAINT-AUBIN (FRENCH, 1724–1780)

48. *Les Fêtes vénitiennes*, ca. 1759

Watercolor and gouache over pen and brown and black ink over traces of graphite, 8 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 5 $\frac{15}{16}$ in. (20.5 x 15.1 cm)
Inscribed in brown ink: *De St. Aubin inv.* (lower left)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Robert Lehman Collection, 1975 (1975.1.702)

Danchet and Campra's celebrated *Fêtes vénitiennes*, first performed in 1710, combined singing and speaking parts with dancing roles.¹ The great Gabriel de Saint-Aubin scholar Émile Dacier was the first to associate this colored drawing with the "Entrée de l'Amour saltimbanque" ("Entrée of Cupid the Mountebank") that concludes the *Fêtes vénitiennes*. Set in a "public square" that customarily employed the scenery from the "Place Saint-Marc" of a prior entrée, the action here involves the arrival of Cupid wearing a street entertainer's finery (note the multiple necklaces) but carrying his telltale bow. He is accompanied by "Pleasures and Games" in various comic guises, including those of the commedia dell'arte. Cupid's mission is to distract Nérine, an officious and disapproving governess to a young Venetian lady named Léonore, so that she may be united with her lover Eraste, a young Frenchman disguised as a Spaniard. Here, we see Nérine and Cupid conversing at center stage. Harlequin sarcastically tips his cap to the governess. Léonore, looking doubtful about the outcome, stands at the right beside an attentive white-haired man (probably Filindo, "Chef des Saltimbanques," who is sympathetic to the couple's cause). Eraste is presumably the man seen from behind in the left foreground. In the background is a stage-within-a-stage, on which Cupid will perform. A detail not previously noted with reference to this drawing is that the character of Nérine was played by a man (M. Scellé in the 1759 production that is probably represented here) and Cupid by a woman (Mademoiselle Lemièrre in 1759). Saint-Aubin drives home the gender difference in his characterizations of the two performers.

Technically, this work is somewhat unusual for Saint-Aubin, betraying a certain heaviness in the application of opaque, rather saturated colors. While this might suggest an earlier date (the ballet had been performed in 1750), it could just as well be attributed to subsequent retouching. The stage-within-a-stage, with its freely drawn caryatids and allegorical crest (from which emerges a large syringe), recalls the artist's own background in the field of *fête décor* and set design.

K de B

1. Antoine Danchet and André Campra, *Les Fêtes vénitiennes: Ballet; représenté pour la première fois, par l'Académie Royale de Musique . . .* (Paris, 1759), pp. 35ff. The first performance was on June 17, 1710.

Ex coll.: ?Hippolyte Destailleur, Paris; A. Focqué, Paris (until 1906; his sale, Paris, May 4, 1906, no. 91, to Picard); Madame Paul Tuffier, Paris; Mr. and Mrs. Eliot Hodgkin (until 1963; their sale, Sotheby's, London, October 21, 1963, no. 135, to Seiferheld); Robert Lehman, New York (1963–d. 1975)

References: Émile Dacier, *Gabriel de Saint-Aubin: Peintre, dessinateur et graveur (1724–1780)* (Paris, 1929–31), vol. 1, pp. 46, 88, vol. 2, p. 131, no. 749, pl. xxviii; Victor Carlson, Ellen D'Oench, and Richard S. Field, *Prints and Drawings by Gabriel de Saint-Aubin, 1724–1780*, exh. cat., Davison Art Center, Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut, and Baltimore Museum of Art (Middletown, 1975), p. 76, no. 40, ill. p. 86; Mary Tavener Holmes and Donald Posner in *The Robert Lehman Collection*, vol. 7, *Fifteenth- to Eighteenth-Century European Drawings: Central Europe, the Netherlands, France, England*, by Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann et al. (New York, 1999), pp. 354–55, no. 128, colorpl.



GABRIEL DE SAINT-AUBIN (FRENCH 1724–1780)

49. *Vue de la Foire de Bezons*, 1750

Etching, third state of three, image: 4 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 6 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (12.5 x 15.5 cm);

sheet: 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 6 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (13.9 x 16.1 cm)

Inscribed: 1750/ *Gabriel de S' aubin pinx* (lower left);

VÛE DE LA FOIRE DE BESON. près paris (under the image)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Harris Brisbane Dick

Fund, 1917 (17.3.1122)

This is among Saint-Aubin's earliest etchings and depicts one of his favorite subjects, a public event that attracted all strata of Parisian society. The fair at Bezons, a small village a few miles to the northwest of Paris, took place once a year, on the first Sunday following the fête of Saint Fiacre (August 30). Fashionable city-dwellers would flock by carriage or horseback to be entertained by theatrical performances. The ebullient nature of the festivities is captured in Saint-Aubin's densely composed and densely worked composition. Spectators line the road and children scurry out of the way as ornate Rococo carriages approach, laden, even on their roofs, with actors in costume.

Saint-Aubin was a self-taught and experimental printmaker. He would typically begin by sketching the entire scene into the ground with his etching needle and then rework the plate several times, adding layers of hatching to create areas of tone and atmosphere. The Metropolitan's dark and velvety

impression is a later state than has been published previously, with additional shading added throughout, but especially to the ground and the sky. The word "pinx" after the signature typically indicates that the print is based on a painting, but in the case of Saint-Aubin, it more likely would have been a watercolor or a gouache rather than an oil painting. PS

Ex coll.: Harris Brisbane Dick (until d. 1917; his estate, 1917; sold to MMA)

References: Émile Dacier, *L'Oeuvre gravé de Gabriel de Saint-Aubin: Notice historique et catalogue raisonné* (Paris, 1914), pp. 47–48, no. 2, pl. 11; Émile Dacier, *Gabriel de Saint-Aubin: Peintre, dessinateur et graveur (1724–1780)* (Paris, 1929–31), vol. 1, p. 50, pl. XIV, vol. 2, pp. 103–4, no. 592; Victor Carlson, Ellen D'Oench, and Richard S. Field, *Prints and Drawings by Gabriel de Saint-Aubin, 1724–1780*, exh. cat., Davison Art Center, Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut, and Baltimore Museum of Art (Middletown, 1975), pp. 17, 22, 35, no. 3, ill. p. 41



VUE DE LA FOIRE DE BESON. près paris

PIERRE-FRANÇOIS BASAN (FRENCH, 1723–1797)
AFTER GABRIEL DE SAINT-AUBIN (FRENCH, 1724–1780)

50. *Le Carnaval du Parnasse*, 1761–62

Etching and engraving, second state of two, platemark: 12 $\frac{3}{16}$ x 14 $\frac{3}{16}$ in.

(31 x 36 cm); sheet: 14 $\frac{9}{16}$ x 18 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (37 x 46 cm)

Inscribed: *Ballet dansé au Théâtre de l'Opera dans le Carnaval du Parnasse. Acte I^{er}; G. De S^t Aubin Pinxit. F. Basin Sc.* (under the image)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, A. Hyatt Mayor Purchase Fund, Marjorie Phelps Starr Bequest, 1985 (1985.1072.2)

Here, we are provided with the opportunity to witness a specific scene in a specific ballet as it was staged at the Paris Opéra (Académie Royale de Musique). This engraving by Pierre-François Basan reproduces a colored drawing by Gabriel de Saint-Aubin formerly in the collection of Baron Maurice de Rothschild (present location unknown) that shows the final dance sequence in Act I of the *Carnaval du Parnasse*, a “heroic ballet” with singing and acting parts.¹ Mount Parnassus is the setting of Act I and the Hippocrene fountain, topped by the mythical winged horse Pegasus, is mentioned in the stage directions. Characters from the Comédie Française and the Comédie Italienne, as played by dancers from the Opéra, mingle in a comic procession advancing from left to right. Toward the end of the line is Pantalon escorting Columbine, with Harlequin and Crispin just behind. Leading the procession are Madame de Sottenville (from Molière’s 1668 comedy *George Dandin*) and the baron de la Crasse (the eponymous hero of Raymond Poisson’s 1662 comedy). At center stage, Thomas Diafoirus (from Molière’s 1673 play *Le Malade imaginaire*) and a soubrette execute a pas de deux.

The dance is observed by the ballet’s four main characters. At the far right are Momus, god of raillery, holding a fool’s-head rattle, and his love interest, Euterpe, muse of music and lyric poetry. Seated at the left are the shepherdess Licoris and her ardent suitor the god Apollo, disguised as a shepherd.² With sure storytelling instinct, Saint-Aubin draws our attention to the tête-à-tête between these two protagonists, to be continued as the focal action of Act II. Pairs of young lovers very similar to Apollo and Licoris can be found in several Saint-Aubin genre scenes of about 1760, one compelling indication that the artist is here portraying the revival of the ballet staged on May 22, 1759. Saint-Aubin’s fascination with the fêtes galantes of Watteau and their unique melding of everyday and theatrical experience reached its height in this period.

Basan, a personal friend of the Saint-Aubin family, was one of the few

engravers capable of capturing the artist’s intricate and animated style and exquisitely detailed costumes. *Le Carnaval du Parnasse* was published with a companion print after Saint-Aubin called *La Guinguette*, that is, the tavern, appearing in the first volume of Basan’s *Recueil de cent estampes de sujets agréables* (undated; vol. 2 published in 1762).³ Both prints were dedicated to the duc de La Vallière,⁴ director of Madame de Pompadour’s private theater. In this light, it is interesting to observe the trails of roses decorating Licoris’s gown.

K de B

1. Louis Fuzelier, *Le Carnaval du Parnasse: Ballet héroïque; représenté par l'Académie Royale de Musique* . . . (Paris, 1759), pp. 14ff. The words are by Louis Fuzelier, and the music by Jean-Joseph Cassanéa de Mondonville. The first performance was on September 23, 1749, just after the City of Paris had assumed direction of the Opéra.
2. Saint-Aubin’s lost drawing of the *Carnaval du Parnasse* shows Apollo in the clouds, studying the score. The artist may have added this allegory in preparing to exhibit the work at the Salon du Colisée of 1776.
3. The same volume included Basan’s engraved reproductions of Watteau’s *Love in the French Theater* (no. 7) and *Love in the Italian Theater* (no. 10).
4. Louis-César de La Baume-Le Blanc, duc de Vaujours, later duc de La Vallière, was a member of the military nobility and a celebrated book collector. In 1760, he published a complete collection of French ballets and operas. In 1749, Mondonville had dedicated his ballet to the marquise de Pompadour.

Ex coll.: [Paul Prouté (SA), Paris, until 1985; sold to MMA]

References: Émile Dacier, *Gabriel de Saint-Aubin: Peintre, dessinateur et graveur (1724–1780)* (Paris, 1929–31), vol. 1, pp. 40, 41, pl. VIII, vol. 2, pp. 130–31, nos. 747, 748; Marcel Roux, *Inventaire du fonds français: Graveurs du XVIII^e siècle*, vol. 2, Bibliothèque Nationale, Département des Estampes (Paris, 1933), p. 148, no. 267; Kim de Beaumont in Colin B. Bailey et al., *Gabriel de Saint-Aubin (1724–1780)*, exh. cat., Frick Collection, New York, and Musée du Louvre, Paris (New York, 2007), pp. 208–11, no. 49, fig. 3



G. De P. Anon
Paris.

*Ballet dansé au Théâtre de l'Opera,
Dedie, à Monseigneur, le Duc de la Valiere;
Brigadier de ses Armées, Gouverneur et Grand Sénéchal
de la Capitainerie Royale de la Province du Languedoc.*

A Paris, chez Bouché, Libraire.



dans le Carnaval du Parnasse). Acte 1^{er}

F. Bouché, Sc.

*Par ce Grand Fauconnier de France, Chevalier des Ordres du Roi,
de la Province de Bourbonnois et Capitaine des Chasses
Par son très humble et très obéissant serviteur, Bouché.*

sur St. Jacques.

JOHANN JOACHIM KÄNDLER (GERMAN, 1706–1775)
MEISSEN PORCELAIN FACTORY, GERMANY

51. *Harlequin with Goat-Shaped Bagpipes*, ca. 1736

Hard-paste porcelain, height: 5 $\frac{1}{16}$ in. (14.1 cm), unmarked
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, The Jack and Belle Linsky
Collection, 1982 (1982.60.316)

*H*arlequin-bagpipers belong to Meissen's most popular commedia dell'arte designs. In this early version, the figure sits on a rocky mound, his head turned to the right and his right leg extended away from the pedestal. Subsequent models were more compact, with both legs resting on the base and the bagpipes held closer to the body. The diversity of costumes and poses attests to the design's commercial success, which necessitated frequent renewals of worn-out molds. Each time, the model would be slightly altered, for example by exchanging a peaked hat for a tricorne. The costume patterns, color scheme, and facial details were left entirely to the decorator's imagination. The Metropolitan Museum's Harlequin sports a pointed blue hat, a gold-trimmed yellow jacket with a white ruff collar, purple-and-red-striped britches over green stockings, and purple shoes with golden buckles. This colorful outfit and mischievously smiling mask conform to the picturesque aesthetics of eighteenth-century theatrical figures.

Harlequin's bagpipes are made of a goat's hide complete with hooves, head, and horns. The instrument is clearly inspired by the Bohemian bock, featuring a single cylindrical chanter, small bellows, and a right-angled, extensible drone with two tubes connected by a sliding joint. While intact goatskins frequently served as bags, the head was replaced with a zoomorphically carved wooden stock. In the Meissen model, the exaggerated naturalism of the instrument amplifies the composition's grotesque character; it is difficult to resist the impression that Harlequin makes a live goat blow the chanter by squeezing its voluminous body with his left arm.

Despite their lowly associations, small bagpipes known as musettes became popular in aristocratic circles in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Bock ensembles were attached to the Saxon court, accompanying weddings, hunts, and festival processions, while nobles often disguised themselves as Tyrolean bagpipers at court masquerades. Meissen figures were another expression of that broad cultural vogue.

AKP



Ex coll.: Jack and Belle Linsky, New York

References: Clare Le Corbeiller in *The Jack and Belle Linsky Collection in The Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York, 1984), p. 262, no. 178, ill.; Alfred Ziffer in *Celebrating Kaendler: Meissen Porcelain Sculpture / Zum 300. Geburtstag Johann Joachim Kaendlers, 1706–1775: Porzellansulpturen aus Meissen*, dealer's cat., Angela Gräfin von Wallwitz (Munich, 2006), p. 35



JOHANN JOACHIM KÄNDLER (GERMAN, 1706–1775)
MEISSEN PORCELAIN FACTORY, GERMANY

52. *Two Opera Singers*, ca. 1744

Hard-paste porcelain, height: 9½ in. (21.1 cm)

Mark: crossed swords in underglaze blue

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of Irwin Untermyer,
1964 (64.101.56)

This figure group represents two opera singers engaged in a duet. Their identities as singers are reflected as much by their theatrical gestures as by their elaborate costumes. The group has been interpreted as depicting a duet from *Acis and Galatea* as performed by Madame de Pompadour and the prince de Rohan, an event known to have taken place in the theater of Versailles in 1749.¹ However, subsequent identification of a group corresponding to this model in the workbook of the Meissen modeler Kändler dating from March 1744—five years earlier—indicates the

impossibility of this interpretation.² Kändler's entry refers to the male singer's Roman outfit (*Römischen Habit*), and it is clear that his costume and plumed helmet were intended to identify him as a classical and hence heroic figure. His wide scalloped skirt was known as a *tonnelet* and was frequently worn by male singers and ballet dancers.

The popularity of porcelain figures depicting singers reflects the high status of opera at the Dresden court. A new opera house designed by the court architect Matthäus Daniel Pöppelmann had been built next to the Zwinger Palace in 1718–19, during the reign of Augustus the Strong, and its interior was remodeled in 1738 and again in 1747. The choice of opera singers—either specific (see no. 53) or generic, as in this group—for representation in the relatively new and highly valued medium of porcelain³ indicates the importance ascribed to this aspect of Dresden court culture.

JM

JOHANN JOACHIM KÄNDLER (GERMAN, 1706–1775)
MEISSEN PORCELAIN FACTORY, GERMANY

53. *Faustina Bordoni and Fox*, ca. 1744

Hard-paste porcelain, height: 6 in. (15.2 cm), unmarked
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of Irwin Untermyer,
1964 (64.101.125)

This figure group expresses on several levels the great popularity of opera in Dresden in the mid-eighteenth century. The renowned Italian mezzosoprano Faustina Bordoni is depicted in the act of singing, accompanied by a fox on a harpsichord. The precise painting of the sheet music on the harpsichord provides the name of the opera, *Antigono*, followed by the names of its composer, Johann Adolph Hasse, and its lead singer, S. (Giovanni) Bindi. The music is rendered in extraordinary detail, allowing one to read the lyrics, which refer to seduction, dignity, and revenge.

In 1730, Bordoni had married Hasse, who was a conductor, a prolific composer, and an accomplished harpsichordist. In the course of his career,

1. Yvonne Hackenbroch, *Meissen and Other Continental Porcelain, Faience and Enamel in the Irwin Untermyer Collection* (Cambridge, Mass., 1956), p. 35.
2. Ingelore Menzhausen, *In Porzellan verzaubert: Die Figuren Johann Joachim Kändlers in Meissen aus der Sammlung Pauls-Eisenbeiss Basel* (Basel, 1993), p. 117.
3. The formula for true or hard-paste porcelain was discovered in Europe in Dresden in 1708, which led to the founding of the Meissen factory in 1710.

Ex coll.: Irwin Untermyer, New York (by 1949–64)

References: Yvonne Hackenbroch, *Meissen and Other Continental Porcelain, Faience and Enamel in the Irwin Untermyer Collection* (Cambridge, Mass., 1956), pp. 35–36, pl. 29 (color), fig. 34; Yvonne Hackenbroch, "Kändler's Theatrical Figures," *Connoisseur* 196 (September 1977), p. 15, no. 5, ill.





Hasse composed numerous operas for the Dresden court, and Faustina figured prominently in many of them. The couple's celebrated status in the musical life of Dresden did not protect them, however, from the satiric wit of the great Meissen modeler Johann Joachim Kändler. In this composition, Kändler's inclusion of the fox at the harpsichord is a thinly disguised

reference to a certain Herr Fuchs (fox), with whom Faustina had a well-publicized love affair. It is notable that Kändler could assume that his intended audience for this porcelain group would understand the references to contemporary music and singers and would be familiar with the lives of Dresden's famous musical couple. JM

Ex coll.: Katherine Evelyn Bigham, Baroness Nairne, Bowood Calne, Wiltshire (until 1950; her sale, Sotheby's, London, November 10, 1950, no. 21, for £450 to Rosenberg & Co.); [Rosenberg & Co., from 1950]; Irwin Untermyer, New York (by 1952–64)

References: Yvonne Hackenbroch, "A Meissen Group Identified—in Judge Untermyer's Collection," *Connoisseur* 129 (April 1952), pp. 63–65, ill.; Yvonne

Hackenbroch, *Meissen and Other Continental Porcelain, Faience and Enamel in the Irwin Untermyer Collection* (Cambridge, Mass., 1956), pp. 110–12, pl. 35 (color), fig. 99; Cynthia Duval, *Figures from Life: Porcelain Sculpture from The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, ca. 1740–1780*, exh. cat., Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg, Florida, Dixon Gallery and Gardens, Memphis, and George R. Gardiner Museum of Ceramic Art, Toronto (St. Petersburg, 1992), pp. 56–57, no. 14, ill.

JOHANN JOACHIM KÄNDLER (GERMAN, 1706–1775)
MEISSEN PORCELAIN FACTORY, GERMANY

54. *The Masquerader*, ca. 1748

Hard-paste porcelain, height: 6½ in. (16.5 cm)

Mark: *K.H.C.* in black enamel

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of Irwin Untermyer, 1964 (64.101.69)

This model of a porcelain figure wearing a black tricorne hat, a white half mask, and a long robe trimmed with bows is commonly identified as the *Avvocato*, or lawyer, one of the secondary cast of characters comprising the *Comédie Italienne*. However, it has been pointed out recently that neither the costume nor the pose of this figure refers to the legal profession and that the figure should more accurately be called "The Masquerader."¹ His hat, mask, and cloak reflect a costume typically worn by both men and women in Venice during Carnival and at the masquerade balls popularized by the Carnival that were common throughout Europe by the mid-eighteenth century. The mask, usually made of papier mâché, granted the wearer anonymity, and the long robe, known as a domino, hid clothing that normally conveyed the wearer's social status. This effective disguise allowed for an escape from the etiquette that customarily governed social occasions.

As masked balls and performances of the *Comédie Italienne* were highly popular at the Dresden court, it is not surprising that porcelain figures representing these entertainments were produced by the Meissen factory in

sizable quantities. These figures were intended primarily as decoration for the dessert table, and they had their origins in the sugar sculptures of the two preceding centuries that also had been created to ornament the dining table. It is notable that this particular example of *The Masquerader* is marked on the base with the initials *K.H.C.*, for *Königliche Hof Conditorei*, indicating that it originally belonged to the Saxon Court Pantry, which organized both the food and decoration for the royal table. JM

1. Meredith Chilton, *Harlequin Unmasked: The Commedia dell'Arte and Porcelain Sculpture* (New Haven, 2001), p. 58.

Ex coll.: Augustus III; Sir Hugh Adair; R. W. M. Walker (until 1945; his posthumous sale, Christie's, London, July 25, 1945, no. 15, with companion model for £273); Irwin Untermyer, New York (by 1956–64)

Reference: Yvonne Hackenbroch, *Meissen and Other Continental Porcelain, Faience and Enamel in the Irwin Untermyer Collection* (Cambridge, Mass., 1956), p. 52, pl. 41, fig. 47a, and see also p. 53, pl. 41, fig. 47b (companion model)



JOHANN CHRISTOPH LUDWIG VON LÜCKE (GERMAN,
1703–1780)
HÖCHST POTTERY AND PORCELAIN FACTORY, GERMANY

55. *Bagolin*, ca. 1750–53

Hard-paste porcelain, height: 8¼ in. (21 cm)
Mark: *PI* (incised on underside of base)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, The Jack and Belle Linsky
Collection, 1982 (1982.60.223)

Bagolin belongs to a series of fifteen porcelains depicting commedia dell'arte characters on pedestals that were inspired by garden statues at the Schönborn Palace in Vienna. The series might have been executed for Johann Friedrich Karl von Ostein, the elector of Mainz (1743–63) and the patron of the Höchst manufacture, who was closely related to the Schönborns and often sojourned in their Viennese residence. In fact, the limited edition of these porcelain figures points to an exclusive private commission, which unfortunately remains undocumented.¹

The name *Bagolin* appears on the engraving by Johann Jacob Wolrab (Nürnberg, ca. 1720) that served as a model for this porcelain sculpture by Johann Christoph Ludwig von Lücke. *Bagolin* was not a popular theatrical character and appeared only sporadically on French stages. In the plays *Arlequin soldat et bagage*, performed by the Italian Comedians in 1673, and *Les Bagolins*, published at The Hague in 1705, he incarnated a vulgar and dim-witted suitor of a young lady, competing unsuccessfully with her lover Léandre. In 1718, Giorgio Maria Raparini listed *Bagolin* among dozens of *zanni*, or stock servant figures, from the commedia dell'arte. The inscription on Wolrab's print also refers to him as a servant, while the illustrated play *Amor vehementer quidem flagrans* . . . (1729) associates him specifically with Pantalone's household. There is no evidence that *Bagolin* was personified by a particular Italian comedian, as were *Mezzetin* or *Scaramouche*. In fact, in 1673, his part was played by the *Harlequin* Dominique Biancolelli.

Like its printed source, the present Höchst figure sports a guitar and wears generic servant garb: a loose beret, a thigh-length jacket with ruff collar, long pants, and a cape. The porcelain painter likened it to *Mezzetin* by covering the costume with multicolored vertical stripes. Exactly the same iconographic type appears under different names in eighteenth-century

visual sources, including *Mezzetin* and Jean Gurgulo. These inconsistencies show that the iconography and nomenclature of commedia dell'arte characters were subject to both artistic license and commercial considerations, such as the effort to maximize sales by diversifying as much as possible the market offering, be it prints or porcelain figures. AKP

1. Horst Reber, "The Höchst Figures from the Italian Comedy," in *Early European Porcelain and Faience as Collected by Kiyi and Edward Pflueger* (London, 1993), pp. 104–6.

Ex coll.: Jack and Belle Linsky, New York

Reference: Clare Le Corbeiller in *The Jack and Belle Linsky Collection in The Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York, 1984), pp. 276–77, no. 206, colorpl.

FRANZ ANTON BUSTELLI (GERMAN, D. 1763)
NYMPHENBURG PORCELAIN FACTORY, GERMANY

56. *Harlequine*, ca. 1760

Hard-paste porcelain, height: 8⅞ in. (21.9 cm)
Mark: impressed shield outlined in gold
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of R. Thornton
Wilson, in memory of Florence Ellsworth Wilson, 1950
(50.211.251)

This female figure from the commedia dell'arte has been published as *Columbine*,¹ the clever and promiscuous servant girl who was the most prominent of the female commedia dell'arte characters. However, the lozenge-patterned dress of the porcelain figure identifies her as *Harlequine*, the female equivalent of *Harlequin*, the ignorant yet cunning male servant customarily depicted wearing a mask and a lozenge-patterned suit. It has been suggested that *Harlequine* achieved popularity as a character primarily as a result of masquerade balls, which called for couples to have matching costumes.²

Harlequine is depicted carrying the slapstick that was the primary accessory of *Harlequin*, and her raised hand forms the gesture of *mano cornuta*, the classic reference in Italy to infidelity. The elongated, graceful, and expressive



pose of the figure is characteristic of the work of Franz Anton Bustelli, who, along with Kändler at Meissen, is considered one of the finest porcelain modelers of the eighteenth century. Bustelli created sixteen Italian Comedy figures in the years 1759–60, but it is likely that his Harlequin and matching Harlequin were modeled as early as 1757, thus representing his first efforts in this genre. Most of Bustelli's Comédie Italienne figures were created in pairs, with poses and gestures conceived as communication between the two characters, and the often somewhat exaggerated theatricality of an individual figure is explained when viewed with its mate.

The extent to which Bustelli's compositions were based on prints remains the subject of debate, but two eighteenth-century prints may have influenced the pose of his Harlequin. One is an etching by Watteau with additional engraved work by Charles Simonneau entitled *Les Habits sont italiens*, in which a woman dressed as Harlequin has her left hand on her hip, while her raised proper right hand touches her cap.³ The second print, which is even closer in pose and spirit to the porcelain figure, is an engraving by Georg Friedrich Schmidt after Nicolas Lancret's *Le Théâtre italien*.⁴ While this Harlequin has no slapstick, does not make the gesture for a cuckold, and wears a mask, she exhibits the same elegant dance-like pose suggesting movement that distinguishes Bustelli's porcelain figure. JM

1. Clare Le Corbeiller, "German Porcelain of the Eighteenth Century," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, n.s., 47, no. 4 (Spring 1990), pp. 46–47.
2. Meredith Chilton, *Harlequin Unmasked: The Commedia dell'Arte and Porcelain Sculpture* (New Haven, 2001), p. 71.
3. Victor I. Carlson in David P. Becker et al., *Regency to Empire: French Printmaking, 1715–1814*, exh. cat., Baltimore Museum of Art, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and Minneapolis Institute of Arts (Baltimore, 1984), pp. 48–49, no. 2, ill.
4. Ulrich Pietsch, *Die figürliche Meissner Porzellanplastik von Gottlieb Kirchner und Johann Joachim Kaendler: Bestandskatalog der Porzellansammlung Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden* (Munich, 2006), p. 74.

Ex coll.: Baron Heinrich Thyssen-Bornemisza; [Rosenberg & Stiebel, New York, sold to Wilson]; R. Thornton Wilson

References: Clare Le Corbeiller, "German Porcelain of the Eighteenth Century," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, n.s., 47, no. 4 (Spring 1990), pp. 46–47, colorpl.; Katharina Hantschmann and Alfred Ziffer, *Franz Anton Bustelli: Nymphenburger Porzellanfiguren des Rokoko; das Gesamtwerk*, ed. Renate Eickelmann, exh. cat., Bayerisches Nationalmuseum (Munich, 2004), pp. 467–68



LOUIS-NICOLAS VAN BLARENBERGHE (FRENCH, 1716–1794)

57. *The Fair at Bezons*, ca. 1774

Vellum, 2 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 3 in. (5.3 x 7.4 cm), set in the base of a gold box
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.1152)

There are six marks on the oval box, including the Paris mark for 1774–75, and the mark of Pierre-François Draï, a master in 1763, working to 1788. The top shows a delicate fête champêtre, signed and dated (at the bottom) *van Blarenberghe / 1774*: attended by revelers, a peasant couple, a young man with a violin and a young woman gathering flowers in her overskirt, stand in a country landscape under overarching trees hung with garlands of flowers and caged birds. The composition is elegantly shaped to fit the field. The scenes around the sides of the box are An Archery Match, A Youth Spurting Water from a Fountain, A Round Dance, and Couples on a Seesaw.

This object has no recorded history prior to the death in 1914 of Pierpont Morgan, and since then, the vignette on the base has been described as a country fair near a château. It seems likely that the miniature represents *The Fair at Bezons*, which was painted by Pater (no. 22) and Lancret and had been the subject of the reception piece submitted in 1725 to the Académie

Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture by François Octavien. In the foreground at the left, a happy crowd takes refreshment outside a victualler's tent. Behind this group, visitors arrive and depart in wagons, on horseback, and on foot along a diagonal path lined with booths, and still further back is a village with a church and several large buildings, and the wall and gate of an estate. At the right, a crier draws the interest of the passing crowd to an elaborate outdoor stage where Harlequin raises his bat and Pierrot engages the attentions of a lady.

KBB

Ex coll.: J. Pierpont Morgan (until d. 1914; his estate, 1914–17)

References: Graham Reynolds, with the assistance of Katharine Baetjer, *European Miniatures in The Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York, 1996), p. 101, no. 67, ills.; Monique Mailliet-Chassagne, *Une Dynastie de peintres lillois: Les Van Blarenberghe* (Paris, 2001), p. 153, colorpls. XIII, XXX; Monique Mailliet-Chassagne and Irène de Château-Thierry, *Catalogue raisonné des oeuvres des Van Blarenberghe, 1680–1826* (Lille, 2004), pp. 331–32, no. 3-654-1–6, ills., colorpls. following p. 372, and pp. 57, 247, 262, 297, 339, 373

LOUIS-NICOLAS VAN BLARENBERGHE (FRENCH, 1716–1794)
AND HENRI-JOSEPH VAN BLARENBERGHE (FRENCH, 1750–1812)

58. *A Puppet Show*, ca. 1779

Vellum, 1½ x 2¾ in. (3 x 6 cm), set in the base of a gold box
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of J. Pierpont
Morgan, 1917 (17.190.1130)

The box bears four marks, among them the Paris mark for 1778–79, and the mark of Joseph-Étienne Blérzy, a master in 1768, working to 1806. The sides and chamfered corners are decorated with plaques of translucent opalescent enamel resembling moss agate and with delicate branches in silhouette. Judging by the costumes, the miniatures, this one and that on the lid, *A Rope Dance*, are contemporaneous. Neither is signed, but the style is typical of the Van Blarenberghes in the late 1770s, the date of the box.



Seated to the left are a hunchbacked violinist and a cellist, while to the right, a family group, an elegant couple with small children, enters through a drawn-back curtain. The hall is hung with brightly painted curtains and lit by candles; the audience is seated on plank benches and on risers. A white-faced Pierrot in a traditional costume with a ruff and a hat calls attention to the performance of the marionettes, a dancing Punchinello, also in white but with a colorful plumed hat, and a female figure from whose skirts a tiny clown emerges to join his fellow acrobats.

In late eighteenth-century Paris, on the boulevard du Temple, there were theaters offering spectacles of various kinds involving actors, marionettes, tightrope walkers, jugglers, and animal acts. The most famous of these was presided over by Jean-Baptiste Nicolet, who was an actor and acrobat and the son of a puppet master. Nicolet's company and others competed with the Comédie Italienne. This vignette shows what such a place of entertainment must have looked like.

KBB

Ex coll.: J. Pierpont Morgan (until d. 1914; his estate, 1914–17)

References: Graham Reynolds, with the assistance of Katharine Baetjer, *European Miniatures in The Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York, 1996), pp. 100–101, no. 66, ills. and colorpl. 66; Monique Mailliet-Chassagne and Irène de Château-Thierry, *Catalogue raisonné des oeuvres des Van Blarenberghe, 1680–1826* (Lille, 2004), pp. 308–9, no. 3-561-1, 2, ills., colorpls. following p. 372, and pp. 57, 305, 307, 373

59. Violin “*The Francesca*”

Made by Antonio Stradivari (Italian, 1644–1737)

Cremona, Italy, 1694

Maple, spruce, overall length: 23 in. (58.4 cm), length of body: 14¼ in. (36.2 cm), width at lower bout: 8 in. (20.3 cm), rib height at lower bout: 1⅞ in. (3 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Bequest of Annie Bolton Matthews Bryant, 1933 (34.86.2a)

The French taste for Italian violins dates to the sixteenth century, when the court of Charles IX bought a set of Andrea Amati instruments, probably arranged by his mother, Catherine de Médicis. The violin was used by players at all levels of French society, from “*les musiciens ordinaires*,” as noted by Marin Mersenne in his *Harmonie universelle* (Paris, 1636), to the violin band known as the *vingt-quatre violons du Roi* (Twenty-four Violins of the King) that was established by King Louis XIII about 1630. The composer Jean-Baptiste Lully organized a second ensemble of sixteen violin-family instruments in 1656 called the *petits violons*. At all levels, the French used the violin for dance music.

Italian violins, or violins based on their models, remained the most valued of instruments even by the time of Louis XIV. However, in contrast to the modern view, it was the instruments of the Amati family, or those of the Austrian maker Jacob Stainer of Absam (who built in the style of Amati), that were most prized, even over the instruments of Louis’s contemporary Antonio Stradivari. This preference for the Amati-style violin would persist through most of the eighteenth century.

Stradivari was an innovative violin maker who experimented with several changes to the traditional violin form, including building instruments with thicker backs and tops, trying new outlines, and using flatter archings on the belly and back. These innovations gave the Stradivari violins a more powerful sound, which would suit them well for virtuoso soloists playing in large concert halls in the nineteenth century; however, they were not as useful for the chamber music and dance settings of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

“The Francesca” is one of Stradivari’s long pattern violins, a model he introduced about 1690, which was about five-sixteenths of an inch longer than those of his predecessors. By 1700, he had abandoned this model to



return to a more traditional outline. “The Francesca” was built in 1694 and has a two-piece back of sparingly flamed Alpine maple. Its belly (or top) is also two-piece and made from medium-grained Tyrolian spruce. The instrument has a yellow-brown varnish throughout. The label, pasted inside the instrument and visible through the f-holes, reads: *Antonius Stradiuarius Cremonensis / Faciebat Anno 1694*.

JKD

Ex coll.: M. Krone, Marseilles (bought in Paris, 1856); [Silvestre and Maucolet, Paris, sold in 1896]; [William E. Hill and Sons, London, 1896, sold to Collins]; Patrick A. Collins, Boston; his daughter, Marie Rose Collins (sold to Matthews); Mrs. William Matthews, Boston (from 1906); Annie Bolton Matthews Bryant (until 1934)

References: Emanuel Winternitz, "The Evolution of the Baroque Orchestra," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, n.s., 12, no. 9 (May 1954), p. 265, ill.; Emanuel Winternitz, *Musical Instruments of the Western World* (New York, 1966), pp. 184–86, colorpl.; Laurence Libin, "The 'Restored' Stradivari and Amati Violins of The Metropolitan Museum of Art," *Journal of the Violin Society of America* 4, no. 1 (Winter 1977–78), pp. 34–47, ill.

60. *Guitar*

Made by Giacomo (Jacob) Ertel (German, ca. 1646–1711)

Rome, Italy, late 17th century

Spruce, ebony, ivory, bone, fruitwood, mother-of-pearl, overall length: 35¹¹/₁₆ in. (90.7 cm), length of body: 17¹/₁₆ in. (43.3 cm), greatest width of body: 9¹/₂ in. (24.1 cm), greatest depth of body: 3¹¹/₁₆ in. (9.4 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Purchase, Rogers Fund, Mrs. Peter Nicholas, University of Chicago Club of New York, Mrs. Henry J. Heinz II and Lowell S. Smith and Sally Sanford Gifts, The Crosby Brown Collection of Musical Instruments, by exchange, and funds from various donors, 1984 (1984.225)

The great Italian guitar player Francesco Corbetta arrived in Paris in 1656, perhaps to serve as the teacher of the young Louis XIV. Corbetta's appearance, and the young king's interest, greatly heightened the prestige of the guitar. Such was the newfound popularity of the instrument that Jean-Baptiste Lully asked Corbetta to compose an interlude of guitar music for one of his ballets.

The earliest five-course guitars, known as baroque guitars, came to France in the seventeenth century from makers in Italy who, in addition to fine lutes and violins, also built guitars for the burgeoning market. Beautifully decorated examples such as this one by Giacomo (Jacob) Ertel were made for wealthy patrons and survive in relatively significant numbers.



Little is known of Ertel, except that he was originally from Germany and that he worked in Rome. It was a common occurrence in the seventeenth century for instrument makers to move from Germany, where there had been a long tradition of fine stringed instrument making, to Italian cities where there was a much greater demand for their work. The attribution of

this instrument is based on its similarity to a guitar signed by Ertel and located in the Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum, Innsbruck.

This impressive guitar features a relatively plain belly, punctuated by a wood and parchment rosette, which is a reproduction based on similar guitars of the time, a mustachioed bridge, and a large mother-of-pearl flower near the bottom edge. The front of the entire body, neck, and peg head is outlined with an inlaid edging of small mother-of-pearl diamonds. The same decoration is repeated, and doubled, around the rosette. Large mother-of-pearl ovals are inlaid on the front of the neck and peg box. Most striking

is the back of the body, neck, and sides, which have a checkerboard pattern made of hundreds of squares of bone, ebony, and fruitwood that are inlaid into an ebony veneer. JKD

Ex coll.: [W. E. Hill, London; sold to Bingham]; [Tony Bingham, London, after 1970–1984; sold to MMA]

References: Alexander Bellow, *The Illustrated History of the Guitar* (New York, 1970), p. 116, pl. LXXIII; Laurence Libin, “Giacomo Ertel, Italian (Rome), Guitar,” in *The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Notable Acquisitions, 1984–1985* (New York, 1985), p. 35, ills.

61. *Musette de cour*

France, ca. 1700

Leather, ivory, silk, wood, silver, iron, length of chanter with tenon: 10 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (25.7 cm), length of bourdon: 5 $\frac{1}{16}$ in. (14.5 cm), length of bellows: 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (20.9 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Clara Mertens Bequest, in memory of André Mertens, 2003 (2003.63a–d)

The musette de cour, or musette, is a type of bagpipe that was developed and used by the upper classes of French society in the seventeenth century and remained popular until the French Revolution. It is usually made with expensive materials such as brocade silks, silver, and ivory. The mouth-blown pipe used to fill the bag on a typical bagpipe was replaced by a bellows pumped under the arm in order to appeal to the refined sensibilities of the upper classes.

The musette was played at the French court by professional musicians who entertained the nobility. By the 1670s, it began appearing in the pastorals and chamber music of the court, most notably in the music of Jean-Baptiste Lully. Members of the nobility took up the musette as a hobby, and they desired instruments that were highly decorated and made of the finest materials.

The Museum’s example dates from about 1700 and is one of the most luxurious examples to survive. Its bellows, which are covered by colorful decorative papers, feed air into a silk bag decorated with white thread embroidery and gold trim, which despite being bleached by centuries of use, can still be faintly seen. The air pumps from the bag into both the bourdon, which provides the characteristic drone of the bagpipe, and the chanter, on which the performer plays the melody. The bourdon, in this case made of ebony, replaced the large drone pipe found on the peasant bagpipes and has four ivory sliders that allow the player to choose which and how many (one, two, or three at a time) of the double reeds inside sound. The musette has a double chanter made of ivory with a long pipe (*grand chalumeau*) with seven finger holes and five silver keys and a short pipe (*petit chalumeau*), which extends the range of the instrument to a full two octaves, with six silver keys and no finger holes. Both pipes are decorated with ebony studs. Although the instrument is unsigned, the ebony studs are similar to those found on other instruments by the maker Dupuis who worked in Paris around 1690.

JKD

Ex coll.: Jean Michel Renard, Paris (until 2003; sold to MMA)



62. Oboe

Made by Hendrik Richters (Flemish, 1683–1727)
Amsterdam, first quarter 18th century
Ebony, ivory, silver, overall length: 22½ in. (57.2 cm); diameter of bell:
2¾ in. (6 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of The University
Museum, University of Pennsylvania, 1953 (53.56.11)

The oboe (*hautbois*) was first built in France around the middle of the seventeenth century. The instrument appeared in the operas and ballets of Jean-Baptiste Lully and Robert Cambert at the French court in the 1650s¹ and was quickly adopted across the continent and in England by the end of the century.

This exquisite oboe was built in Amsterdam during the first quarter of the eighteenth century by Hendrik Richters, who shared a shop with his brother Fredrik. Approximately thirty instruments survive that have been attributed to one or the other of the Richters brothers, nearly all of them highly decorated. As in this example, the brothers often used ebony, an exotic and expensive hardwood, for the bodies of their instruments. A specialty of the Richters is the ornamental ivory work that decorates the bell rim, ferrules, and finial, accomplished with the use of a rose-engine lathe, an extremely expensive piece of equipment used only by the wealthiest of craftsmen who worked for rich patrons.

This example has three highly engraved silver keys—a large, swallow-tailed key in the middle that produced the C pitch and two smaller offset keys that produce an E-flat. This combination allowed players to use whichever hand they wanted on the top and bottom of the instrument. The engraving on the keys was probably done by a professional silver-smith or engraver from outside the Richters' shop. The swallow-tailed key

is engraved with the image of a dancing couple. The smaller offset keys feature, on the left, a man dancing with an oboe player below and on the right, a woman dancing with a fiddle player beneath.

Modern audiences regard the oboe primarily as an orchestral instrument, and certainly its use in the works of Lully and Cambert at the French court helped to drive its development. But its primary uses in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were in far more informal settings. The oboe became almost ubiquitous, playing an important role in military bands or paired with the fiddle, the musette, or the hurdy-gurdy providing music for a wedding, funeral, or other social occasion.

JKD

1. Gunther Joppig, *The Oboe and the Bassoon* (Portland, Ore., 1988), p. 54.

Ex coll.: ?Sarah Sagehorn Frishmuth, Philadelphia (until 1897); University Museum, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia (1897–1953; given to MMA)

References: Phillip T. Young, *The Look of Music: Rare Musical Instruments, 1500–1900*, exh. cat., Vancouver Centennial Museum (Vancouver, 1980), p. 82, no. 75, ill.; Cecil Adkins, "Oboes beyond Compare: The Instruments of Hendrik and Fredrik Richters," *Journal of the American Musical Instrument Society* 16 (1990), pp. 49, 58, 66, 68, 79, 95, 96, 98–100, 104, 105; Jeremy Montagu, "An Oboe by Hendrik Richters," *Galpin Society Journal* 43 (March 1990), pp. 124–34; Phillip T. Young, *4900 Historical Woodwind Instruments: An Inventory of 200 Makers in International Collections* (London, 1993), p. 107



63. *Transverse Flute*

Signed Garion

Paris, France, ca. 1720–40

Rosewood, ivory, silver, overall length: 25 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (65.8 cm), diameter of body at widest point: 1 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (3.5 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Purchase, Robert Alonzo Lehman Bequest, 2005 (2005.365)

Many instruments in Western music underwent profound change in the seventeenth century, largely occasioned by the integration of both wind and stringed instruments into a single ensemble—what we call an orchestra. A significant amount of this development occurred at the French court under King Louis XIV and especially through the direction of his chief musician, Jean-Baptiste Lully. Instruments also changed, as innovative makers experimented with ways to make them more reliable, efficient, and better in tune. The greatest changes happened to members of the woodwind family.

Two types of flutes were in use in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the recorder and the transverse flute. Of these, the word flute almost always referred to members of the recorder family, indicating their far greater usage at the time. Since the Middle Ages, the transverse flute had been associated with areas of the Holy Roman Empire, and as such it was often referred to in France as the *flute d'Allemagne* (German flute), a practice that continued through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.¹

In analyzing the music of the French court, Ardal Powell has located the debut of the transverse flute in the ballet *The Triumph of Love* (*Le Triomphe de l'Amour*) by Jean-Baptiste Lully, in 1681. Therein, the instrument has an obvious association with love and appears as a pair, playing the soprano

parts in an ensemble that also includes lower pitched recorders for a *Prélude pour l'Amour*.² Soon after, the transverse flute began to be used in a great variety of contexts, including both large court ensembles and small chamber groups.

Flutes from the period of the present example are exceedingly rare. This particular instrument has a typical rosewood, three-part body, including a long head joint with the embouchure hole (which the player blows across), a middle joint with six finger holes, and a foot joint with the single silver d-sharp/e-flat key. It is a fairly late example of the type, dating probably after 1720, by which time flutes were beginning to be made in four sections.

Each section of this flute is stamped with the name *GARION* above a small stamp of a dolphin. This maker is unknown except for one other similar flute in the municipal museum in Toulouse. JKD

1. Marin Mersenne, a scholar in many fields including mathematics, philosophy, and theology, authored *Harmonie universelle* (1636), an important treatise on music and musical instruments, in which he devoted an entire section to the German flute, describing its construction, range, and tablature.

2. Ardal Powell, *The Flute* (New Haven, 2002), p. 65.

Ex coll.: Jean Michel Renard, Paris (until 2005; sold to MMA)



Artist Biographies

ANDREAS ALTOMONTE (AUSTRIAN, 1699–1780)

Andreas was the son of Martino Altomonte (he also used the name Hohenberg) and the brother of Bartolomeo, both of whom trained in Rome and specialized in fresco painting. The family settled in Vienna around the time of Andreas's birth. From 1726 until 1728, Andreas studied drawing and engraving at the Akademie der Bildenden Künste. He became an assistant draftsman and theatrical designer at the Imperial Court in 1732 and in 1742 was appointed draftsman and architect (Hofzeichner und Hofarchitect) to Maria Theresa of Austria. Apparently, he designed the high altar for the church in Wehring before 1743, and, between 1751 and 1753, the porch of the Peterskirche, Vienna. Andreas worked extensively for Prince Josef Adam zu Schwarzenberg on the rebuilding and redecoration of his castle and estate at Český Krumlov (Krummau) in southern Bohemia, now the Czech Republic. The design projects upon which he was engaged include the winter riding school, built beginning in 1744, and the water works, 1749–65. He is associated as well with plans for refitting the Masquerade Hall, or Maškarní Sál, and rebuilding both the chapel, 1750–53, and the pleasure pavilion, 1755–57. Andreas Altomonte lived in Vienna all his life and occupied various official posts, including administrative director of the Porzellanmanufaktur, from 1755, and in 1759, Hof- und Feldingenieur in Wiener Neustadt. Although some drawings are known, no work by him as an easel painter or designer for the theater has been identified definitively.

KBB

JEAN I BERAIN (FRENCH, 1640–1711)

Jean I Berain came from a family of master gunsmiths who moved from Lorraine to Paris in the 1640s. He first made himself known as a designer and engraver of firearms decorations. In the early 1670s, Louis XIV's official painter Charles Le Brun entrusted Berain with designing grotesque stucco ornaments for the Apollo Gallery ceiling in the Musée du Louvre and with engraving the entire decoration. Berain subsequently received several prestigious appointments in the

royal administration of the arts: Draftsman of the Royal Chamber and Cabinet (from 1674), Designer of the King's Gardens (from 1677), official designer of stage-sets, machinery, and costumes for the Royal Academy of Music (from 1680), and Designer of the Royal Vessels (1687).

Berain produced countless ephemeral decorations and costumes for royal festivities—carousels, masquerades, banquets, and funerals—as well as for theater performances at the court and the Paris Opéra, for which he also provided libretto frontispieces. In addition, Berain worked as an interior decorator and furniture designer for prominent aristocratic patrons in France and abroad. He commanded a particularly rich and inventive ornamental vocabulary, combining arabesque and grotesque patterns, exotic elements, and intricate bandwork. In particular, he can be credited with the invention of singerie, a decorative mode featuring monkeys engaged in leisure activities. Engraved by Berain himself and his contemporaries, these designs had a lasting impact on the next generation of artist-ornamentalists.

AKP

LOUIS-NICOLAS VAN BLARENBERGHE (FRENCH, 1716–1794) AND HENRI-JOSEPH VAN BLARENBERGHE (FRENCH, 1750–1812)

The Van Blarenberghes were a family of Flemish painters who in 1668 became French nationals when Lille, where they lived, again became part of France. Louis-Nicolas was born there, trained in his father's atelier, and continued to work in Lille until 1751, when, after the death of his wife, he took his infant son Henri-Joseph to Paris. The boy probably studied topography and drafting at Jean-Baptiste Berthier's school for ingénieurs-géographes in Versailles. Between 1769 and 1778, father and son collaborated closely on miniatures for the French aristocracy and the crown. From 1769 on, Louis-Nicolas also worked in large scale, painting battle scenes and ports for Louis XV; in 1779, Henri-Joseph was appointed drawing master to the royal children and settled at Versailles. Their trajectory over two generations was rather like that of Watteau in a career cut

short. The *Van Blarenberghes* shared with him a similar formation, and their Flemish sensibilities were also grafted to the requirements of French patronage, elegance, and taste. Louis-Nicolas died at Fontainebleau during the Terror, while Henri-Joseph returned to Lille, where, in 1800, he became curator of the new state museum.

KBB

CHARLES-NICOLAS II COCHIN (FRENCH, 1715–1790)

Charles-Nicolas II Cochin was a printmaker, draftsman, theorist, and *Sécretaire Perpétuel* of the *Académie*, and was born into a prominent family of artists. His father, Charles-Nicolas I, an academician and printmaker, immortalized the canvases of such artists as *Watteau*, *François de Troy*, and *Charles Coypel*. His mother, *Louise-Magdeleine Hortemels*, was also an engraver. In 1732, he was appointed to work for the *Menus-Plaisirs du Roi*, an expansive government office that oversaw many tasks, including commissioning commemorative engravings of births, coronations, marriages, and funerals. Cochin was received into the *Académie* in 1751, soon after his return from a tour in Italy undertaken with the architect *Jacques-Germain Soufflot*, *Abbé Jean-Bernard Le Blanc*, and, most notably, *Abel-François Poisson de Vandières*, the brother of *Madame de Pompadour*, who would be appointed *Directeur des Bâtiments du Roi* and *marquis de Marigny*. Cochin eventually became a *Chevalier* of the Order of *Saint-Michel* and received virtually every important official commission available to a printmaker. His works include *Observations sur les antiquités de la ville d’Herculanum* (1754), in which he illustrated and described the excavations at *Herculaneum*, and a frontispiece for *Denis Diderot’s Encyclopédie* (1764). Cochin’s prints are characterized by a lightness of hand and an exhaustive attention to detail, which perhaps explains his preference for etching. He eventually fell from favor, like so many artists of his generation, because of his adherence to the *Rococo* style. (On Cochin, see *Christian Michel*, *Charles-Nicolas Cochin et l’art des Lumières* [Rome, 1993].)

ESB

CLAUDE GILLOT (FRENCH, 1673–1722)

Born in the town of *Langres* in eastern France, *Gillot* must have trained with his father, who was an embroiderer and painter of ornament, before coming to the French capital around 1690, when he entered the studio of *Jean-Baptiste Corneille*. He was approved (*agrégé*) by the *Académie Royale* in 1710 and received (*reçu*) as

a history painter five years later. Although some work in this vein survives, *Gillot* was most active as a draftsman and printmaker. He created designs for ornament and illustrations for works both sacred and profane. Most influential however were his *bacchanals* and theatrical scenes inspired by the *commedia dell’arte*, many of which were etched, either by his own hand or by collaborators.

It has not been possible to establish a definitive chronology for *Gillot’s oeuvre*, and scholars have tended to date the majority of his works to the first decade of the eighteenth century. It was during this period, probably about 1705–8, that *Gillot* took on his most famous pupil, *Watteau*. Although the duration of the apprenticeship was brief, it was seminal in transmitting to the younger artist *Gillot’s* passion for the burlesque charm of the *commedia dell’arte*. These characters and their elegant comportment would prove key elements in *Watteau’s* popularization of the *fête galante*.

Gillot’s style as a graphic artist was marked by a fluid, nervous quality of line—lively and unhesitating. He was comfortable in a range of media, from pen and ink, to red chalk, to a painterly use of sanguine wash or watercolor. Many of his drawings were conceived in series, intended to be published as *suites* of prints. He himself etched his strange and whimsical series of *Bacchanals* (*Feasts of Pan, Diana, Faunus, and Bacchus*), and his friend the *comte de Caylus* etched a *suite* after pen and ink drawings entitled *Scènes humoristiques*. *Gillot* also created several series of allegorical prints with satyrs as their protagonists and illustrated scenes from the comic theater.

PS

JACQUES DE LAJOÛE (FRENCH, 1686–1761)

Jacques de Lajoüe was *agrégé* by the *Académie* in 1721 as a painter of architectural landscapes. It is for his elaborate *rocaille* fantasies that he is best known today and that prompted *Jacques-François Blondel* in 1774 to designate him (intending no flattery) one of the “*trois premiers inventeurs du genre pittoresque*,” along with *Nicolas Pineau* and *Juste-Aurèle Meissonnier*. *Lajoüe* is the artist who brought the style into painting. His main interest and talent were in the creation of elaborate architectural fantasies within landscapes. *Jean Cailleux* gave a marvelous description of *Lajoüe’s* talent: “Original dans tout ce qui touchait à la pierre et aux arbres, aux bosquets et aux architectures, au point que je n’ai jamais retrouvé deux fois la même disposition d’escaliers, de rampes, de fontaines ou de statues.” (“Original in everything concerning rocks, trees, groves, and architecture, to the point that I have never found him to repeat twice the same stairs, ramps, fountains,

or statues”; Jean Cailleux, “Personnages de Watteau dans l’oeuvre de Lajoüe,” *Bulletin de la Société de l’Histoire de l’Art Français*, 1956 [pub. 1957], p. 110.) Although capable of fashioning figures for himself, Lajoüe frequently relied on types and poses developed by other artists, especially Watteau and the various painters of the *fête galante*. MTH

NICOLAS LANCRET (FRENCH, 1690–1743)

Nicolas Lancret was born in Paris, on January 22, 1690, and as far as we know, he never left. Ballot de Sovot, his biographer, said Lancret was from an “honest, middle-class” family, but his roots are working class: his father, Robert, was a coachman, and his mother, Marie-Catherine Planterose, was the daughter and sister of cobblers. The only artist in the immediate family was an older brother, François-Joseph, who was an engraver, and it is presumably he who arranged Nicolas’s earliest training. In preparation for an engraver’s career, Lancret was first put under the tutelage of a drawing master whose name is not recorded. It is significant that, however short-lived this engraver’s apprenticeship may have been, Lancret had this early exposure to printmaking. Prints after his work were to become a large and important part of his income and artistic production.

Initially, Lancret followed a path leading to history painting as a career. There is no indication in his early days, roughly 1700 to 1710, of an inclination toward genre. When he asked to be apprenticed to a painter, his parents placed him with the history painter Pierre Dulin (or d’Ulin). Georges Wildenstein, in his 1924 monograph, placed the lessons with the drawing master around 1703 and the entry into Dulin’s studio around 1707, and this must be reasonably close to the mark. By September 1708, Lancret was already enrolled in a course of study at the *Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture*, where he would remain a member for the rest of his life, eventually becoming a conseiller.

Our first indication of a shift in direction for Lancret was his entry into the studio of Claude Gillot. Ballot de Sovot and Dezallier d’Argenville both insisted that Lancret’s move to Gillot amounted to a serious exploration of genre painting in general and the genre of Watteau in particular, Dezallier further noting that the genre of Watteau was then “at the height of fashion,” and Watteau’s popularity was not widespread until around 1712. Whatever the initial reason might have been, the experience of working with Gillot and seeing pictures by Watteau was decisive for Lancret, who became a painter of genre almost exclusively. However, he was not a slavish imitator of Watteau, and his art had its own unique charac-

ter, especially as his career advanced and his confidence grew. His palette became much brighter, his figures more solid, and his compositions more classical and sturdy. He constantly grounded his scenes in contemporary life, both by the consistent depiction of fashionable details and by the introduction of real art objects, monuments, locations, and people. In addition, Lancret’s persistent admiration for themes of games, cycles, and conversation pieces enhances his narratives in ways that are quite distinct from those of Watteau. MTH

JOSEF LEDERER (CZECH, ACTIVE IN 1748)

The painter, born in Třeboň, trained at the *Vienna Akademie*. His only known work is the fresco decoration of the *Masquerade Hall* at *Český Krumlov*, signed Jos.Lederer and dated 1748. Reportedly, he painted 125 figures in 129 days, beginning that year in May. KBB

JEAN-BAPTISTE-JOSEPH PATER (FRENCH, 1695–1736)

Jean-Baptiste-Joseph Pater was a native of Valenciennes, which had been reunited with France less than twenty years before his birth. There he was apprenticed in 1706 to a local painter. Gersaint reported that Pater père sent his son to Paris at a young age to study with Watteau. Probably the two painters left Valenciennes together, late in 1709 or in 1710. After they separated, Pater, quite possibly because he was unable to make an adequate independent living, returned to his native town. In 1716, in Valenciennes, he fell afoul of the painters’ guild, of which he was not a member, although he was painting there and his father was selling his work. Tiring of the continuing dispute with the guild, in 1718, he again decamped for Paris, where he remained for the rest of his life. Pater was Watteau’s only pupil, and the two had much in common. From the Flemish cultural milieu that they shared, each moved to the capital, lived an unsettled and rather austere existence, matured late, and died young. In 1721, Watteau, ill, retired to Nogent and invited Pater to join him and learn all he knew. Pater went to Nogent, but his former teacher died within a month. Approved for admission to the *Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture* in 1725, Pater was received in 1728 as “peintre dans le talent particulier des fêtes galantes,” submitting as his reception piece *Soldiers Merrymaking* (*Réjouissance de soldats*) (*Musée du Louvre, Paris*). Although he was patronized by prominent Parisian collectors and favored by Frederick the Great of Prussia, Pater evidently feared poverty and failure. He

worked tirelessly, with ease and facility. Elegant gatherings that from time to time may include actors, dancers, musicians, or nudes constitute the most important theme of his oeuvre.

KBB

GABRIEL DE SAINT-AUBIN (FRENCH, 1724–1780)

Gabriel (or Gabriel-Jacques) de Saint-Aubin, son of an embroidery designer, was by far the most gifted artist in his large and noteworthy family. Having been trained by a copyist named Sarrazin—presumably the set designer Jean-Baptiste Sarrazin—Saint-Aubin initially collaborated with architects on elaborate fête drawings. By 1747, he had been appointed professor of figure drawing in Jacques-François Blondel’s recently founded École des Arts. Aspiring to become a history painter, Saint-Aubin participated in student competitions at the Académie Royale between 1750 and 1754, but he failed to win the coveted prize that would have earned him a scholarship to study at the French Academy in Rome and henceforth pursued a modest freelance career as a teacher, draftsman, and illustrator. Highly erudite, he enjoyed the company of writers, playwrights, and professors. In the 1760s, he illustrated Philippe de Prétot’s Spectacle de l’histoire romaine. He joined the Académie de Saint-Luc in 1774, in the capacity of a history painter. But Paris was destined to become the quintessential theme of his art—in a small number of genre paintings and painterly etchings, in finished drawings commemorating historic events, and in innumerable firsthand sketches. Later in life, he acquired a reputation for drawing “at all times and in all places” (see Jean-Baptiste-Pierre Le Brun, Almanach historique et raisonné des architectes, peintres, sculpteurs, graveurs, et cizeleurs . . . [Paris, 1777], p. 98), particularly at art exhibitions and auction houses. The tiny thumbnail drawings after works of art that he made in the margins of printed salon livrets and sale catalogues are an invaluable resource, together with his spectacular panoramic views of the salons of the Académie Royale.

K de B

GIOVANNI DOMENICO TIEPOLO (ITALIAN, VENETIAN, 1727–1804)

Domenico, also called Giandomenico, Tiepolo was the son of Cecilia Guardi, sister of the view painter Francesco Guardi, and of Giovanni Battista Tiepolo. He was trained in the workshop of his father, the most gifted illusionistic painter of the eighteenth century. At twenty, the young artist emerged as an independent figure with a cycle of fourteen works, the Stations of the Cross, for the Venetian church of San Polo, where they can still be seen, but for a quarter of a century, he was engaged principally as the elder Tiepolo’s assistant on his most important fresco commissions. With his father and his brother Lorenzo, Domenico was in Würzburg from 1750 to 1753, painting the extensive decorations of the Residenz for Prince-Bishop Karl Philipp von Greiffenklau; in 1762, the three left Venice for Spain, there to work on the ceilings of the royal palace in Madrid until 1770. Domenico had displayed his considerable gifts as an etcher in a series of variations on the subject of the Flight into Egypt, which were published while he was in Würzburg and dedicated to the prince-bishop. He was imaginative and a gifted caricaturist, observing the daily life of Venice and her mainland territories with buoyant humor and also with sympathy. Working with his father, Domenico decorated the Villa Valmarana ai Nani, near Vicenza, with paintings in the guesthouse, lively and closely observed pastoral subjects, chinoiserie, and scenes from the theater, one of which he signed and dated 1757. Later he focused increasingly on printmaking and drawing, completing hundreds of sheets in ink and wash devoted to subjects encompassing religion and mythology as well as contemporary life. He is perhaps best remembered for his studies of the commedia dell’arte figure Punchinello.

KBB

Abbreviated References

DACIER AND VUAFLART 1921–29

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