

## Drama and dance in *Le Ballet de la Nuit* 1653<sup>1</sup>

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### Introduction: the purpose and structure of *Nuit*

On the 23rd February 1653, the inveterate theatre-goer, Jean Loret, queued for three hours at the palace of Le Petit Bourbon and then sat through thirteen hours of the first performance of the *Ballet de la Nuit*. His later descriptions of the ballet show that he was deeply impressed by the perspective stage sets, the machines, costumes, dancing, and the sheer magic of the spectacle and drama that he witnessed: “You’d never seen the like of it before”, he later wrote, “the heavens, sea and earth, games, mirth, peace and war...now an attack, now rough combat; witches attending a sabbath, werewolves, dragons and monsters; galants, gossips, goddesses, blacksmiths, Christians and Turks, thieves; a fire, a fair, a ball, a ballet, a play; one saw such enchantments”<sup>2</sup>. The ballet was so successful that it was repeated seven times before 16th March, an unprecedented number of performances for a court ballet. Clearly it was more than just court spectacle. Why?

It has often been claimed that the *Ballet de la Nuit* celebrated Louis XIV’s coming of age<sup>3</sup> and the reassertion of royal authority after the defeat of the Fronde; thus the ballet was a glorification of a young king who saved France from civil war. But that argument has been challenged<sup>4</sup>, for even in 1653 there was still a strong threat of civil unrest from those sympathetic to the Fronde, led by Louis’ kinsman the Prince de Condé who was rather noticeably *not* at court that winter but in the provinces causing trouble which would rumble on for several more years. The *Ballet de la Nuit* was not a ballet celebrating peace, but part of Cardinal Mazarin’s careful strategy to build up the royal image (and thereby his own executive power), in an ongoing battle to strengthen the monarchy and secure the loyalty of important sections of the court. This in itself gave the *Ballet de la Nuit* its own underlying political drama which influenced many of the decisions about who performed in it and what they did.

The structure and form of the *Ballet de la Nuit*, the names of the performers and the roles they danced, derives mainly from three sources. First, the livret published by Ballard in 1653<sup>5</sup>; this included characters and cast lists for each entrée, but its main purpose was to publish Benserade’s *vers pour les personnages* (which were unspoken commentaries about the performers, intended to be read by the audience during or after the ballet). Second, the extant costume designs in Paris<sup>6</sup> and at Waddesdon (the latter in a presentation volume dedicated to the courtier Louis de Hesselin<sup>7</sup> who organised and danced in many court ballets for Louis XIV); and third, the manuscript copy of the score (containing much dance music and a small amount of vocal music) made in c.1690 by the royal music librarian, André Danican Philidor<sup>8</sup>.

None of these sources is complete, and all have their own problems of interpretation, but if looked at side by side they can tell us quite a lot about the production. No choreography survives<sup>9</sup>, but the livret and Philidor’s score include some stage directions, and Waddesdon’s volume of designs also includes scene changes and cues for special effects such as cloud machines.

The structure of the *Ballet de la Nuit* takes the form of four Watches of the night, lasting from six o'clock in the evening, until six o'clock the next morning when the sun rose (and official accounts of the ballet all made much of the appearance of the young king Louis at that point, as the Sun who brings in and controls the new day). Each Watch of three hours depicts a series of events and allegorical representations in vocal music and dance, during which elements of dramatic action appear as well as sequences of sheer spectacle.

### Classical definitions of drama and dance

Writers such as François Hédelin (the abbé d'Aubignac) and Pierre Corneille, writing during the 1650s<sup>10</sup>, defined the classical rules of drama as the unities of action, place and time, and the obligation of verisimilitude. These rules of classical drama can be compared with what the dance theorists of the time were writing, and applied to what was happening in the *Ballet de la Nuit*.

Unity of action demanded a logical progression of the plot, with one action leading to the next and the plot as a whole concluding at the end of the play, regardless of how many subplots or intrigues might have pushed it off course on the way. Unity of time demanded that the action must all take place within one revolution of the sun (either twelve or twenty-four hours); and unity of place demanded that all the action should occur in one geographical location, or at least in locations with some logical connection to each other.

At first sight many of the court ballets of the time seem to ignore these unities, and they look more like a series of unrelated divertissements. Yet something like the unities is discernible in the *Ballet de la Nuit*. Unity of time is certainly there: the ballet takes us through the twelve hours of the night. A sort of unity of action is there also, if we define it according to the dance writer St Hubert's rule in 1641 that a ballet should have a single theme running through the work, to which all others should be subordinate, and which should come to a clear conclusion at the end (in *Nuit* this is the passage of time towards daybreak and the splendour of sunrise). St Hubert also concurred with the dramatic theorists in saying that all the entrées in a ballet should be relevant, but here it has to be admitted that the *Ballet de la Nuit* stretches our modern credulity to the limit: what with witches and monsters, street scenes, fire alarms, crusading knights in battle, and a host of allegorical characters including Silence (who sings (!) a duet with Sleep), it was quite a night. St Hubert however reinforced his view of relevance by saying that the music and dancing in a ballet must be appropriate to the characters or action being portrayed; and this is exactly what we see in the designs, and in some of the music also, for the *Ballet de la Nuit*. Claude-François Menestrier's *Remarks on the Conduct of Ballets* published in 1658<sup>11</sup> directly compared ballet with tragic drama and noted that ballet, as well as depicting allegories and passions, could also relate fables and stories (*histoires*); in other words, some aspects of ballet could have storylines as a means of providing unity of action. Ten years later Michel de Pure was to reiterate all these ideas<sup>12</sup>, noting that ballet had much in common with dramatic poetry.

Unity of place is more difficult, and even Corneille preferred the more pragmatic custom of allowing scenery to change between acts. We shall never know to what extent the "scenes" in the Waddesdon book represented the actual stage sets used in the ballet<sup>13</sup>, but the existence of the list of scene changes and cues for machines suggests that something like these "scenes" probably appeared on stage as backcloths and sets.

The writers all agree that the notion of verisimilitude in drama and dance did not mean total accuracy, but rather a convincing impression of it. Costumes helped of course, and dancers had long carried appropriate props so that the audience could more easily identify them: both St Hubert and Michel de Pure have quite a lot to say on this, and it is clear from the *Nuit* costume designs that props formed an integral part of the characterisation. In general such props were confined to small ‘occupational’ props such as the blacksmiths’ anvils or the gypsies’ tambourines, which could be worked into the dances, or the knife-grinder’s barrow, which could be parked and danced round. The witches’ broomsticks were for rising up through trap doors or for flying (they have stage cues to that effect), but quite what happened to them while the witches danced is less clear<sup>14</sup>.

What of the actual dancing, given that no choreography survives? The abbé Dubos commented in 1719 that “sixty years ago [ie in the 1650s] fauns, shepherds, peasants, cyclops and tritons danced almost uniformly, but nowadays dance is divided into different characters”<sup>15</sup>. Yet Menestrier and de Pure back in the 1650s and 1660s were already insisting that the dance steps had to suit the characters being portrayed. Perhaps Dubos was actually thinking further back, to St Hubert in 1641 who had thought that characterisation through the steps was a good thing but rarely seen. If this is the case, then perhaps the *Ballet de la Nuit* was quite avant garde if it included what Dubos was later to call ‘imitative’ dancing (that is, characterisation and the expression of actions and feelings through movement) as well as ‘ordinary’ dancing (where the emphasis lay on the careful execution of steps and figures): and it does seem to have contained both, for parts of this ballet cry out for ‘imitative’ dance.

### Dancers in *Nuit*

The livret of the *Ballet de la Nuit* names 98 different performers in 153 different roles, and the Waddesdon designs include costumes for 117 of them, while other collections of costume designs in Paris add a few more. Up to a point, the cast lists confirm what we would expect in a court ballet: courtiers and professionals sharing the stage in many of the entrées. But there is more to it: some of the roles danced by courtiers, for example, clearly reflect the political makeup of the Court in 1653. Louis de Hesselin himself was a key figure, staunchly loyal to the young King and such a mastermind of court ballets that he is often, and wrongly, referred to as a sort of Master of the Revels<sup>16</sup>, when in fact he headed the public finance office: in the *Ballet de la Nuit* he appeared, quite aptly, as the Master of the Court of Miracles and as Jupiter. François de Beauvilliers, Comte de St Aignan, 1<sup>st</sup> Gentleman of the King’s Chamber, was another very loyal supporter of Louis XIV and appeared in many court ballets: in the *Ballet de la Nuit* he danced alongside the king as an Ardent Spirit, and also appeared as an astrologer and the Spirit of Valour<sup>17</sup>. James Stuart, Duke of York<sup>18</sup>, appeared first with George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, as Transient Patriots<sup>19</sup> (both were in exile from England), and in the final grand ballet as the Spirit of Honour (he had just returned from military success against the Fronde) alongside Buckingham’s Spirit of Peace<sup>20</sup>.

There were also some strong lines of social demarcation between roles deemed suitable for the aristocracy and roles better left to others. The young king Louis, for example, did *not* appear in 1653 as a beggar, a cripple, a peasant, a tradesman, or a monster<sup>21</sup>. Other royals were similarly confined to what was appropriate to their station: Monsieur, the king’s brother, for example, appeared as a Gallant, and as the Day Star heralding the rising of the sun. As for purely grotesque roles, the Marquis de Montglas was the only aristocratic Cyclops in

Vulcan's entourage, and also danced other grotesque roles (see Appendix 1), but otherwise such roles were taken by professionals. In the Witches Sabbath scene, for example, the Prince of Darkness was portrayed by the dancing-master Thomas Le Vacher, and his demons, dwarves, sorcerer and witches were all danced by professionals or the children of professionals.

So the danced roles in the *Ballet de la Nuit* were not quite as freely intermixed between courtiers and professionals as we might think. In fact the courtiers were outnumbered by the professionals at a ratio of almost 3 to 1<sup>22</sup>. The presence of so many professionals was perhaps more than just a reflection of the high proportion of 'imitative' dancing or grotesque entrées which required specialist skills, for the professionals danced every type of role; nor was it just a reflection of the king's growing awareness that, whereas dancing was something that *he* did very well, not all his courtiers were so gifted; but it was also a comment on the political makeup of the Court in 1653 as Mazarin and the courtiers eyed each other up in terms of future loyalties, and the professionals were brought in to make it all work smoothly.

In terms of what happened on stage, the drama in dance or stage movement seems to have operated in two distinct ways in the *Ballet de la Nuit*. First, there are scenes which are shaped by the principles and unities of classical drama; and second there are scenes which include cameo roles, convincing in themselves but forming no part of a larger dramatic context.

### **Scenes influenced by the classical principles of drama**

One part of the *Ballet de la Nuit* which seems to adhere quite closely to the dramatic principles of the three unities is the on-stage entertainment in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Watch. Apart from the appearance, almost at the end, of de Hesselin as Jupiter, the cast of this entertainment consists entirely of professionals; courtiers appear only as the on-stage audience. It opens with two pages arranging the benches and preparing the stage for a ball, before the arrival of the guests of honour, Roger and Bradamante, and other characters out of Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*. They are out of the past, so they are dressed in the style of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and at the ball they dance figured courantes, and branles "in the old style". Then they are entertained with a ballet, *Les Noces de Pelée et Thetis*, according to the classical legend: the nereid Thetis is pursued by Peleus, the mortal she is destined to marry. He captures her, but having been warned that she has the ability to assume different forms, he stays near while she changes into a rock, and then a sheet of flames (the stage cues mention gauzes at these points, to effect the transformations), until she agrees to marry him. He then rushes off to fetch the three Graces, who bring her wedding clothes. The scene switches (perhaps by using a series of curtains or shutters, as would have been the practice in England?) to Vulcan and four cyclops preparing to carry fire to the wedding, and then to a convivial group headed by Bacchus and Ceres bringing nectar and ambrosia for the wedding feast. On the way they meet Apollo who is trying to organise the music for the event. Finally the wedding feast is interrupted by the appearance of Discord, and all ends in confusion.

This is the cue for the beginning of the *comédie muette* (mimed play) *Amphitryon*. It takes as its model the text by Plautus as brought up to date by Jean Rotrou in 1638<sup>23</sup>. The plot, described in the livret, centres on muddled identities: Amphitryon and his servant Sosia (played by Lully<sup>24</sup>) go off to fight in the wars, and in their absence are impersonated by Jupiter and Mercury in order to woo Amphitryon's wife Alcmena (with whom Jupiter is in

love). She is duly deceived, and takes Jupiter-Amphitryon to her bed, while Mercury-Sosia stands guard outside the house. The real Sosia however returns and runs into his apparent double at the door of his own house. Then the real Amphitryon turns up, and the whole thing turns into slapstick farce as Ampitryon knocks on the door, Jupiter-Amphitryon looks out of the window and tells him to push off, Amphitryon in anger climbs in through the window, followed by Sosia and Mercury-Sosia who both rush the window together, at which point Alcmena's servant Bromia dashes out of the door, apparently seeing double, to go and fetch help. She comes back with the sea-faring Captain Blefaro, who can't tell which character is which, but in the end Mercury and Jupiter reveal themselves as gods and everyone calmly submits to Jupiter's right as a deity to seduce Alcmena<sup>25</sup>. In his 1974 edition of Plautus, James Mantinband dismisses the *Ballet de la Nuit*'s version of *Amphitryon*: "The old drama faded away to mere pantomime" he wrote, "fad and fashion trifling with the old dramatic material"<sup>26</sup>. But perhaps he missed the point that *Nuit* was a *ballet* – it consisted of music and a lot of dancing, but no speech. Music survives for every act of *Nuit*'s version of *Amphitryon*, and stage directions written onto the score suggest that at least some of the pantomime was set to that music. The livret's synopsis of the pantomime also reveals that it was reasonably faithful to Plautus's original, albeit transforming spoken drama into visual drama.

### **Imitative dances: cameo roles**

Turning to cameo roles in *Nuit*, there are several instances of much activity and powerful characterisation on stage which many in the audience would regard as 'dramatic'.

In the 1<sup>st</sup> Watch there is a late-night shopping scene with a very loose storyline but scope for many cameo roles. The livret describes the five linked entrées (7–11) as follows:

"The theatre changes, and two shops appear on either side of the stage, with shopkeepers. Two gallants and two coquettes arrive in a carriage, and climb down to buy gifts and trinkets; they dance and then, seeing that it is late, they go off again in their carriage...Four male and two female gypsies appear, and go from shop to shop telling fortunes...Two knife-grinders start to make their way home, pushing their barrows...The shops close, and the shopkeepers go off, dancing". By now it is dusk, so the episode ends with a dance by "Three lamp lighters...followed by four little lanterns".

Music exists in Philidor's transcribed score for all these entrées<sup>27</sup>, and from their changing metres and form they do seem to represent characterised dance. The unities of action, time and place are respected, and the costumes, props and vague storyline also ensure that visually these scenes would have made a pleasing play in dance.

Quite different is the Witches Sabbath in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Watch, which is part of a larger group of a dozen spectacular scenes with much action but no plot at all and little regard for the three unities. After the moon is suddenly blacked out (Entrée 4, a marvellous way to lower the stage lighting and introduce a *frisson* of lurking evil), flames spurt from the ground and the Prince of Darkness appears, riding on a goat, followed by eight demons on their way to a witches sabbath. Various monsters appear, followed by a magician (Beauchamp) and four winged witches who dance, and then fly. Six creatures, half men, half wolves, appear, and Benserade's verses here allude to the Fronde through these characters. Then the back of the

stage opens up to reveal a Witches Sabbath, while three Onlookers (played by the King, de Mollier and Beauchamp) watch from downstage, curious to see the event but distanced from it (Entrée 11). From their costumes, music, and place in the action, all the main characters seem well-defined cameo roles even though no narrative plot is being unfolded. By now the 3<sup>rd</sup> Watch is drawing to a close, and there must be some logical outcome to the scenes of evil and a return towards normality before the 4<sup>th</sup> Watch (sunrise) can begin. So we get two additional entrées (12 and 13) in which we are back in a town setting, with a house ablaze and people fleeing from the evils of fire. Two thieves enter, pretending to be fire-fighters, but they have come to loot the burning house; however, they are surprised by the Night Watch and taken into custody. Thus this very ‘dramatic’ part of the *Ballet de la Nuit* ends, with evil fading as law and order are restored.

## Conclusion

There seem to be three levels of ‘drama’ operating in the *Ballet de la Nuit*. First, classical theories of drama and their application to some types of dance, such as occur in the on-stage entertainment which ends Part 2 (a ball, and a ballet followed by a play before the on-stage audience). Second, a looser definition of drama in which characters and passions are reflected in dance and movement, such as occur in many of the cameo roles throughout this work. And third, an intrinsic political drama underlying all that happens in the *Ballet de la Nuit*, but which actually relates to the developing status of the young king and the political undercurrents at court, all as manipulated by Cardinal Mazarin to build the image of the Sun King as a powerful monarch who could not be ignored.

## Notes

- 1 This paper derives from work on the *Ballet de la Nuit* which sprang out of the Oxford Dance Symposium *Louis XIV and Dance: Waddesdon’s Source for Le Ballet de la Nuit*, held at Waddesdon Manor and New College Oxford on 21 April 2004; and it is hoped that the research thus generated will result in a published facsimile of the designs and some introductory essays. I am grateful to Lord Rothschild and the National Trust at Waddesdon for allowing access to their volume of designs, and for allowing me to illustrate the DHDS presentation with some of the images from that volume.
- 2 Author’s translation from the passage in Jean Loret’s *La muse historique* (1654) quoted in Silin, C. *Benserade and his Ballets de Cour*. Johns Hopkins, Baltimore, 1940, p.214.
- 3 He was fourteen in 1653. For more on the subject of coming of age and its implications in staged works, see Burden, M. Casting issues in the original production of Purcell’s *The Fairy Queen*. *Music & Letters*, 2003, 84 (4), pp. 596–607.
- 4 Most recently by the historian David Parrott in his paper given at the Oxford Dance Symposium 2004.
- 5 It exists in three different forms: the presentation volume printed as a gift to the courtier Louis de Hesselin (Waddesdon Manor, B1/16/6); the same text printed for public sale, with a less ornate title-page and lacking some of the preliminary pages (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Rés 1212); and Philidor’s manuscript copy of 1705 (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Rés F 520a). There are no significant differences between the three versions apart from the way each numbers the successive entrées.

- 6 Paris, Bibliothèque de l’Institut, ref. MS 1004, and Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, ref. Estampes, coll. Hennin, tome XLI; Waddesdon Manor, ref. B1/16/6. A few of the designs have been reprinted in Christout, M-C. *Le ballet de cour au XVIIe siècle*. Minkoff, Geneva, 1987, and Gruber, A. *The Ballet Royal de la Nuit: a masque at the court of Louis XIV*. *Apollo*, 1994, 139 (386), 34–40.
- 7 The wealthy and opulent Louis de Cauchon *dit* Hesselin, Maître de la Chambre aux Deniers. He is frequently referred to in secondary sources as Surintendant des Menus Plaisirs du Roi, although he never officially held that position. He did however organise several court entertainments during the minority of Louis XIV, and danced in six ballets de cour between 1653 and his death in 1662.
- 8 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Rés 501.
- 9 Only three dance types are specifically identified in the score and livret of *Nuit*. In the 5th Entrée of Part 2, which takes the form of an on-stage ball attended by characters from Ariosto’s *Orlando Furioso*, two dances referred to as ‘branles in the old style’, and ‘courantes figurées’ are noted. The third dance to be named, which ends the 6th and final Entrée of Part 2, is a Sarabande. The dances and dancers in *Nuit* are discussed in more detail in my paper for the Oxford Dance Symposium 2004.
- 10 François Hédelin’s *La pratique du théâtre* (1657 but in compilation since the 1640s), and Corneille’s three treatises ‘On the purpose and parts of a play’, ‘On tragedy and the means of treating it’, and ‘On the three Unities of action, time and place’ included in the collected edition of his plays published in 1660: see Sidnell, M. *Sources of dramatic theory: Plato to Congreve*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1991, ch.24 & 25.
- 11 Claude-François Menestrier’s *Remarques pour la conduite des ballets*, published at the end of *L’Autel de Lyon* (Lyons 1658), and reprinted in Christout, M-F. *Le ballet de cour de Louis XIV*. Picard, Paris, 1967, 221–226. Menestrier’s better-known treatise, *Des ballets anciens et modernes* (Paris 1682) did not appear until nearly 25 years later.
- 12 Michel de Pure, *Idée des spectacles anciens et nouveaux* (Paris 1668), particularly Book II chapter XI (pp. 209–306), a long chapter on ballet.
- 13 Similar “scenes” had already been published for the *Ballet des Fêtes de Bacchus* in 1651. Christout attributes them all to Henri de Gissey, although there are differences of opinion among scholars concerning the identity of the designer(s).
- 14 St Hubert’s complaint about dancers throwing away their props if they got in the way of the dancing may also be deliberately burlesqued at the end of Part 1, when the Cripples and Beggars are cured at the Court of Miracles and join in a ridiculous dance of celebration which, according to Jean Loret, brought the house down.
- 15 Jean-Baptiste Dubos, *Reflexions critiques sur la poésie et sur la peinture* (Paris, Mariette, 1719), I.493.
- 16 See above, n.7.
- 17 Canova-Green, M-C. *Benserade: ballets pour Louis XIV*. Société de Littératures Classiques, Toulouse, 1997) vol. 1; Buch, D. *Dance music from the ballets de cour 1574–1651*. Pendragon, Stuyvesant New York, 1994, p.18n. Another loyal courtier who was to appear in court ballets from 1654 to 1657 was François-Christophe, Duc d’Amville: in his 50s and a notorious womaniser, d’Amville danced the roles of a thieving Gipsy, Angelique, the Moon (lusting after Endymion), and the Spirit of Love in the *Ballet de la Nuit*. For his appearances in other court ballets see Canova-Green vol. 1.

- 18 Later king James II. He was a fine dancer, having been trained with his brother Charles in England before the Civil War by the French dancing-master Sebastian la Pierre.
- 19 The livret titled these roles as Transient Lovers, and the double meaning was probably deliberate.
- 20 Buckingham also danced elsewhere in *Nuit* as a Bandit and the Element of Fire.
- 21 Louis' most unorthodox role in *Nuit* seems to have been a Furious Man in dishevelled clothing: Part 4 entrée 2. For a list of Louis XIV's dancing roles in this and other ballets see Astier, R. Louis XIV "premier danseur". In: Rubin, D. (editor) *Sun King: the ascendancy of French culture in the reign of Louis XIV*. Associated University Presses, Mississauga Ontario, 1992, 99–101.
- 22 26 courtiers to 72 professionals (including the children). Some of the dancing-masters most heavily involved became founder-members of the Académie Royale de Danse in 1662 : les sieurs Des-Airs and Reynal (both dancing-masters to members of the royal family), Le Vacher, de Lorge, Picquet, and Queru. As such, they may have been responsible, along with Louis de Mollier and others, for much of the choreography in *Nuit*. There were also the important newcomers Jean-Baptiste Lully and Pierre Beauchamp.
- 23 Jean Rotrou's *Les Sosies* (Paris, 1638). Rotrou turned Plautus's original into a play in Alexandrine couplets, adhering to the three unities. It bears little resemblance to Molière's later version of the play (*Amphitryon*, 1668), which was the main source of Dryden's English translation, with music by Purcell, in 1690.
- 24 Amphitryon was played by Mons. Sainctot.
- 25 The outcome of which was the birth of Hercules. Philidor's later copy of the score seems to simplify the story, but perhaps the comic window routine was not performed to music, or not to any music that was in Philidor's hands by 1690, and so doesn't appear in his copy of the score. Philidor's score tends to raise more problems than it resolves, as the papers given both by Catherine Massip and Lionel Sawkins at the Oxford Dance Symposium 2004 observed.
- 26 Mantinband, J. & Passage, C. *Amphitryon: three plays in new verse translations*. University of North Carolina Press, Greensboro, 1974, p.125.
- 27 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Rés F 501, pp.14–20.

## Appendix 1: List of entrées and cast in *Le Ballet de la Nuit*

### Source: Isaac de Benserade, *Ballet de la Nuit* (Paris 1653)

*Note:* Names of courtiers are in *italic* type, names of professionals are in roman type.

#### Part One: 6–9 p.m.

1. Night in her chariot, followed by twelve Hours: récit, and four Hours dance. *The King, Genlis, Cabou, Beauchamp* (Hours). [The singer La Nuit is not identified].
2. Proteus and Monsters emerge from the sea. *Roquelaure* (Proteus).
3. Five Nereids. *Du Plessis, Du Fresnoy, Iacquier, Raynal, Desairs*.
4. Six Hunters rest for the night. *De Vivonne, Canaples, Mirepoix, Coquet, de Joyeuse, la Chappelle*.
5. Two Shepherds & two Shepherdesses return home. Baptiste [Lully], Feros; Queru, Mongé.
6. Bandits rob a Pedlar. *De Villequier* (Bandit captain); *Buckingham, d'Humieres, des Airs & le Vacher* (Bandits); Varin (Pedlar).
7. The theatre changes: shops with Shopkeepers and their wives. Two Gallants and two Coquettes arrive in a coach, buy trinkets and dance. *Monsieur & de Guiche* (Gallants); *de Villeroi & le petit Bonard* (Coquettes); Picot (Coachman); Turpin (Footman), Turpin's brother (Dog).
8. Four male and two female Gypsies come to tell fortunes. *De Joyeuse & d'Amuille, D'azy & St André; Verpré & Bruneau*.
9. Two Knife-grinders with their barrows, going home. Laleu, Hans.
10. Shops close, Shopkeepers and their wives go off dancing. Bontemps, Beauchamp, de Lorge, Lambert, St Fré, Parque (Shopkeepers); Geoffroy, Rodier (Wives); Bonnart (Parrot); Aubry (Dog); Charlot l'ainé (Small child); petit St Fré (Crow).
11. Three Lamp lighters & four Lanterns. Verbèc, du Pron, Regnault (Lamp lighters); Armenien, petit Charlot, petit du Manoir, Chaudron (Lanterns).
- 12,13 Two Bourgeois women accosted by two Footpads, two Soldiers appear to the rescue, a fight. *De Monglas & de Chambonnieres* (Women); *du Poix & Ourdault* (Footpads); Baptiste & la Mare (Soldiers).
14. Court of Miracles: Beggars and Cripples emerge fit to dance, and give a ridiculous serenade to the Master of the Court. *De Hesselin* (Master); Lerambert (Master's wife); Beaubrun (Valet); Bruneau (Crippled soldier); de Saintot (Servant); Geoffroy, du Moutier, Moliere [de Mollier], Laleu, de Lorge, Hans, Picot, Lambert (Cripples); Cabou, Beauchamp, Jacquier, Verbèc, *de Troye*, Baptiste (Beggars).

#### Part Two: 9 p.m. – midnight.

1. The three Fates, Sadness, and Old Age dance until Venus descends to chase them away. Fatouville, St Mory & Rodier; Mongé; Raynal.
2. Venus's récit. She brings on stage Games, Laughter, Hymen and the god Comus, to dance. [Venus is not identified]. *The King, de Mollier, St Fré, de Lorge*.
3. Two Pages prepare the room for a ball. Roger & Bradamante arrive and send for others [from Ariosto's *Orlando*]. Laleu fils, Bonnar (Pages); la Chappelle (Roger), Courtois (Bradamante), Varin (Esquire), *de Lorge le jeune* (Female Follower).

4. Ball, with ‘various sorts of dances, figured courantes and branles in the old style’. Cast as in 3, plus Lerambert (Wetnurse), de Louvigny (Roger’s son), *le Grand Maitre de l’Artillerie [La Meilleraye]* (Medor), *d’Aumille* (Angelique), *de Villequier* (Richardet), Bontemps (Guidon), le Vacher (Morphise), Des-Airs (Fleur d’Espine).
5. Onstage ballet *Les Nopces de Pelée et Thétis* to entertain the assembly. Has its own set of entries:-
  - 5.1 Thétis pursued by Pelée: she turns into an animal, a rock, and flames but Pelée pursues her; the three Graces dress her for wedding, Mercury arrives disguised as a Haberdasher, Pelée returns in wedding garb. Beaubrun (Thetis); Lambert (Peleus); la Mare, Grenerin, Baptiste (Graces); *de Troye* (Mercury).
  - 5.2 Vulcan & four Cyclops come to the wedding. Chambonnierre (Vulcan); *Monglas*, Ourdault, du Poix, Varin (Cyclops).
  - 5.3 Themis, Ganymede & Hebe, Bacchus & Ceres provide a banquet. St André Joyeuse; Laleu & Feros; le petit Le Comte & Raynal.
  - 5.4 Janus & two satyrs meet Apollo and the muses Clio, Euterpe & Erato, on their way to the wedding. Dazy (Janus); St Fré & Mongé (Satyrs); Queru (Apollo Violon); Regnault, du Pron & le Breuil (Muses).
  - 5.5 Discord comes to cause confusion. *De Troye*.
6. Mute play: *Amphitron*. Four entrées represent the four acts of the play [Benserade gives a synopsis]. Sainctot (Amphitron); Baptiste (Sosie); Geoffroy (Alcmene); *de Hesselin* (Jupiter); Bruneau (Mercury); Lerambert (Bromia); du Moutier (Blefaro). The play finishes with a Sarabande danced by a Spaniard and four small Espagnolles. Ribera & les petites de Mollier, Ribera, le Brun, de Verlu.

### Part Three: midnight – 3 a.m.

Récit by the Moon in her chariot, accompanied by stars which withdraw, admiring the beauties of Endymion.

1. Endymion. *De Joyeuse*.
2. The Moon, in love with Endymion, descends from the sky; they are concealed by a cloud. *D’Amuille*.
3. Astrologers Ptolomy & Zoroastre appear. *St Agnan* & le Vacher.
4. The sky is black. Four peasants enter, show apprehension, and consult the Astrologers. Hans, du Pron, petit le Comte, Lorge le jeune (Peasants).
5. Six Corybantes sound their cymbals, drums and tambourines to call the Moon back to the heavens. Cabou, St Fré, Picquet, Raynal, *de Monglas*, Verbec.
6. Eight nocturnal Spirits. *The King*, *St Agnan*, *de Villequier*, *de Guiche*, *de Genlis*, *de Mollier*, Beauchamp, Rodier.
7. The Devil & eight small Demons. Le Vacher (Devil); les deux Charlots, le petit Laleu, Bonnart, petit St Fré, Paquelon, Aubrey, du Manoir (Demons).
8. Four Dwarves emerge from shells and fly. Armenian, Boutelet, petit Des-Airs, Chaudron.
9. Magician and four ancient Sorceresses dance and rise into the air. Beauchamp (Magician); Picquet, de Lorge, Feros, Des-Airs (Sorceresses).
10. Six Wolf-men. Bontemps, Parque, *de Monglas*, Grenerin, la Mare, du Moutier.
11. Back of the stage opens and shows witches sabbath; three onlookers arrive to watch but it disappears. *The King*, *de Mollier*, Beauchamp (Onlookers).

12. A house on fire, inhabitants escape. *De Joyeuse*, Coquet, Courtois (Householders). Lerambert l'ainé (Monkey), [Lerambert] cadet (Cat).
13. 2 Thieves posing as firemen arrive but are captured by the Night Watch. Bontemps & la Chesnaye (Thieves); le Vacher, petit le Comte, Jacquier, Monger (Watchmen).

**Part Four: 3 a.m. – 6 a.m. when the sun rises.**

Récit: dialogue between Sleep and Silence, at the entrance to a cave of dreams.

1. Four Elements of fire, air, water, earth (representing human temperaments) bring dreams. *Buckingham* (Fire), du Fresnoy (Air), St Mory (Water), du Pron (Earth).
2. Choleric dream of the Furious. *The King*, *de Joyeuse*, *de Roquelaure*, Cabou, de Mollier, St Fré.
3. The same dream interpreted as Turkish and Christian crusaders in battle. *Grand Maitre d'Artillerie* (Turkish captain); *de Mirepoix* (Christian captain); Bontemps, *de Monglas*, le Breuil, le Comte, *de Troye* (Christians); Des-airs, Verpré, Bruneau, le Vacher (Turks).
4. Sanguine dream of Ixion & Juno. *De Genlis* & Varin.
5. Flegmatic dream of a Fearful man haunted by ghosts. De Saintot (Fearful man); Laleu & Jacquier (Ghosts).
6. Melancholic dream of Poet, Philosopher, and their wives. La Chappelle (Poet); Parque (Philosopher); Coquet & Fresnoy (Wives).
7. The same dream as Transient Lovers consulting the oracle. *York*, *Buckingham*, *de Vivonne*, *de Froulé*, *de Gramont*.
8. Three coiners. *Du Lude*, Verbèc, Beauchamp.
9. Six Blacksmiths begin work before dawn; the Day star appears. La Chesnaye, Lambert, du Moutier, le Vacher, de Lorge, Des-Airs (Blacksmiths); Monsieur (Day star).
10. Aurora in her chariot, with twelve Hours of the day and Dawn, sings a récit and departs as the Sun rises, followed by Spirits who perform a grand ballet. [Aurora not named]. *The King* (Rising Sun); Spirits: *York* (Honour), *de Joyeuse* (Grace), *Damuelle* (Love), *de St Agnan* (Valour), *de Crequy* (Victory), *de Vivonne* (Favour), *de Roquelaure* (Renown), *de Monglas* (Magnificence), *le Grand Maistre d'Artillerie* (Constancy), *de Villequier* (Prudence), *de Guiche* (Fidelity), *de Bouquincan* [*Buckingham*] (Peace), *de Genlis* (Justice), *de Villeroi* (Temperance), *du Plessis* (Knowledge), *de Gramont* (Clemency), *du Lude* (Eloquence), *de Canaple* (Secrecy), *d'Humieres* (Courtesy), *de Froulé* (Vigilance), *de Mirepoix* (Glory).

**End of the ballet.**

Jennifer Thorp