John S. Powell

Music and the self-fulfilling prophecy in Molière’s *Le mariage forcé*

1. Costume design for the *Première entrée*: ‘La Jalousie, les Chagrins, et les Soupçons’ (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Rothschild Collection 1460, cat.no.292). This pen and ink drawing, originally part of the extensive theatrical collection of M. de Soleinne, shows the costume of the dancing Chagrins, performed by Saint-André and Desbrosses (their names are faintly visible in the left margin) which incorporates marigolds (*fleurs de soucis*) in the head-dress and trim of yellow-brown ‘dead-leaf’ colour (*feuille-mort*).

2. ‘Musique grotesque’ from the *Ballet des fêtes de Bacchus* (1651) (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Est.Pd 74, L71). This pen and gouache drawing is from the workshop of Henry de Gissey. The caped performer wearing an animal head is playing an air grotesque announcing the *Entrée de Jeu*: his bowed monochord is perhaps a trumpet marine. Marie-Françoise Christout suggests that one of the three performers playing this air grotesque is Michel Lambert, Lully’s father-in-law: *Le ballet de cour au XVIIe siècle* (Geneva, 1987), p.79.

Early in 1664 Louis XIV asked Jean-Baptiste Molière and Jean-Baptiste Lully to create a court entertainment in which he and some of his courtiers could participate. The resulting comedy with *intermèdes*, entitled *Le mariage forcé* (‘The forced marriage’), became the second work that Molière called ‘a new genre for our stages.’ Once again Molière attempted to solve the technical and aesthetic problem of weaving music, dance and comedy into a unified fabric, and thereby ‘to make but a single thing of the ballet and the comedy.’ To this end the playwright combined different musical-theatrical styles and genres and, through the interworking of poetry, music and dance, introduced into *comédie-ballet* the play of multiple simultaneous meanings.

*Le mariage forcé* surpassed in musical diversity Molière’s first *comédie-ballet*, *Les fâcheux* (which had featured character dances). Lully’s music consisted of an *air de cour*, pantomimic dances, a scene with a singing magician, an instrumental ‘Charivari grotesque’ and a vocal ensemble (‘Concert espagnol’) sung by Spanish
court singers—intended for the queen mother, Anne of Austria. Molière marshalled these resources to develop further the central theme of his play, Scenes of music and dance grow out of the play's dramatic action; they revolve around the comic predicament of the protagonist, Sganarelle. Originally played by Molière himself, Sganarelle remains on stage throughout the play and the intermèdes. At the end of the musicians, dancers and actors all join him in the wedding celebration that serves as the work's musical finale.

The première took place at the Louvre on 29 January 1664, and marked the first official collaboration of 'les deux Baptistes' (as Madame de Sévigné called Lully and Molière). The royal family, delighted with Le mariage forcé, called for a repeat performance on 31 January, and the king's brother invited Molière's troupe to give it twice more in his wife's apartments at the Palais Royal. The Dutch mathematician Christian Huygens, who frequented court entertainments while in Paris, wrote about one of these performances:

Last Sunday I saw at the Louvre a little ballet that was danced in the salon of the Queen Mother; it is a very funny little comedy by Molière called Le mariage forcé, interspersed with ballet entrées and several musical solos performed by Mademoiselle Hilaire and Signora Anna. The King himself danced, and I believe that it is [being given] today for the 6th and last time.

The livret printed by Ballard contains the sung lyrics (except for those of the Spanish concert), the staging descriptions, a summary of the play's action, and a list of the musicians, dancers and nobility who participated in the entrées.

The similarity of the plot to a real-life incident no doubt contributed to its popularity. Philibert, the Comte de Grammont, had recently been banished from the court of Louis XIV for the attentions he paid to Louise de La Vallière, the king's mistress. Philibert went to England, where he became engaged to Elizabeth Hamilton, granddaughter of the Duke of Ormond; when at last he was summoned back to the French court, Philibert would have deserted Lady Hamilton—had it not been for the intervention of her two brothers. They caught up with Philibert at Dover, and persuaded him to marry her before returning to France. This was the perfect material for farce, and few courtiers would have overlooked the resemblances between the comic fates of Philibert and Sganarelle.

Soon after this series of court performances, Molière brought the production to his own theatre in Paris, the Théâtre du Palais Royal. Assisted by the choreographer Pierre Beauchamps, Molière gave it 12 performances beginning 15 February 1664 'avec le ballet et les ornements' before mounting production costs forced Molière to discontinue the first run. The company presented the comédie-ballet once more at court, and thereafter dropped it from their repertory. Four years passed before Molière revived Le mariage forcé—at which time he presented it as a one-act comedy shorn of its costly interludes of music and dance. That same year (1668) he published this revised, non-musical version that has since served as the source for all later editions of the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Act</th>
<th>Scene</th>
<th>Musical number</th>
<th>Key Performers</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/1</td>
<td>Ouverture</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>6-part strings, b.c. Sganarelle, Geronimo Sganarelle, Dorimène</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/ii</td>
<td>Ritournelle</td>
<td>g</td>
<td>3-part strings, b.c.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/ii</td>
<td>Récit de la Beauté</td>
<td>g</td>
<td>soprano, b.c.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/iii</td>
<td>Première entrée</td>
<td>g</td>
<td>6-part strings, b.c. 3 dancers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/iii</td>
<td>'La Jalouse, les Chagrin, et les Soupirs'</td>
<td>g</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/iii</td>
<td>Seconde entrée</td>
<td>g</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/iii</td>
<td>'Quatre Plaisants ou Gogniards'</td>
<td>g</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/i</td>
<td>Troisième entrée</td>
<td>g</td>
<td>6-part strings, b.c. 6 dancers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/ii</td>
<td>Premier Air: Deux Egyptiens et Quatre Egyptiennes</td>
<td>g</td>
<td>Sganarelle, 2 Egyptiennes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/ii</td>
<td>Second Air: Deux Egyptiens et Quatre Egyptiennes</td>
<td>g</td>
<td>6-part strings, b.c. 6 dancers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/ii</td>
<td>Récit d'un Magicien</td>
<td>g</td>
<td>Sganarelle, bass, b.c.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/iii</td>
<td>Quatrième entrée</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>4-part strings, b.c. 4 dancers Sganarelle, Alcantor Sganarelle, Lycant Sganarelle, Alcantor, Lycant, Dorimène</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/iii</td>
<td>Quatre Démones</td>
<td>g</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/i</td>
<td>Cinquième entrée</td>
<td>g</td>
<td>5-part strings, b.c. Maitre à danse Sganarelle, Geronimo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/ii</td>
<td>Premier Air</td>
<td>g</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/iii</td>
<td>Deuxième Air</td>
<td>g</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/iv</td>
<td>Sixième entrée</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>5-part strings, b.c. 7 singers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/ii</td>
<td>Ritournelle</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>2-part strings, b.c. 2 Espagnoles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/ii</td>
<td>Concert espagnol</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>2 parts, b.c. 2 Espagnoles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/ii</td>
<td>Menuet</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/iii</td>
<td>Septième entrée</td>
<td>g</td>
<td>5-part strings, b.c. 4 Galants, Dorimène</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/iii</td>
<td>Un Charniari grotesque</td>
<td>g</td>
<td>5-part strings, b.c. 4 Galants, Dorimène</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/iii</td>
<td>Deuxième Air</td>
<td>g</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/iii</td>
<td>Huitième entrée</td>
<td>g</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/iii</td>
<td>Cavalette</td>
<td>g</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/iii</td>
<td>Deuxième Air: Bournée</td>
<td>g</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
In converting the three-act comédie-ballet into a one-act spoken play, he changed some of his original text and added new material to replace the ballets and vocal music he had eliminated. Therefore, we can reconstruct to a large extent the original version of Le mariage forcé premiered in 1664 by (1) identifying and omitting the scenes added in 1668, (2) restoring the three-act comédie-ballet format with the help of the scene synopses published in the 1664 livret, and (3) reinstating Lully’s intermèdes.

Molière’s comedy presents the middle-aged bachelor Sganarelle and his concerns about marrying the young, frivolous Dorimène. On the one hand, he desires companionship and children; but on the other, he fears being made a cuckold. In his quest for advice on his dilemma, Sganarelle approaches his friend Géronimo, who advises him not to think of marriage (Act 1, scene 1). When Sganarelle responds with ‘and I tell you that I am determined to marry’, Géronimo realizes that Sganarelle does not wish his opinion, only his approval, and he gives it. Sganarelle then meets up with his betrothed, Dorimène, who informs him that their forthcoming marriage will finally free her from parental authority and provide her with the opportunity to pursue her own pleasures. Dorimène then leaves on a shopping spree, intending to send the bills to her future husband (Act 1, scene 2).

According to the 1664 livret, the first-act intermède then begins: Sganarelle is left alone, rather stunned; after this discourse he
complains of a heaviness weighing on his head, and going to a
corner of the stage to sleep he sees a woman in a dream . . .
who sings this solo.

This vision is Beauty personified (an idealization of his
fiancée Dorimène), who appears before Sganarelle and
advises him to choose someone worth suffering for:

If Love submits you to his inhuman laws,
choose to love someone you find attractive;
at least put on pleasant chains,
and if you must die, die a sweet death.
If the object of your sighs does not merit your troubles,
do not dally in Love's empire;
at least put on pleasant chains,
and if you must die, die a sweet death."

An allegorical ballet entrée of 'La Jalousie, les Chagrins,
et les Souçpons' reveals through dance-pantomime the
inner torments of the lover who ignores Beauty's advice. Another entrée of 'Quatre Plaisants ou Goguenards'
makes fun of the bachelor's foolishness, and perhaps conveys the notion that some people will not be inclined
to help Sganarelle's young bride honour her marriage
vows. Through song, allegory and figured expression,
Sganarelle's fate is prophesied, should he continue to
ignore the dictates of reason and common sense. Lully
set the dream sequence in the tonal world of G—a 5th
removed from the C major overtone. The 'Récit de la
Beauté' and the dances of 'La Jalousie, les Chagrins, et les
Souçpons' begin in G minor; a change to the parallel
major key for the dances of 'Quatre Plaisants ou Goguenards'
juxtaposes Sganarelle's tormented inner reality
(jealousy, chagrin and suspicion) with the way others
('jesters' or 'scoffers') outwardly perceive him. In this
manner, song, dance and mime serve to magnify Sganare-
relle's folly—while at the same time permitting the spec-
tator to derive pleasure from this comic paradox.

The Premier intermède ends abruptly as Géronimo
wakes Sganarelle. Realizing the potential significance of
dreams, Sganarelle muses, 'You know, dreams are like
mirrors; they can show us the future.' This perceptive
observation is uncharacteristic of Sganarelle who, iron-
ically, has ignored Géronimo's common-sense advice.

Next, Sganarelle seeks professional counsel from two
learned philosophers—one Aristotelian, the other Py-
rhonian—who quibble ad nauseam over points of
semantics. Pancrace, the Aristotelian, is in a rage because of
an argument he had concerning whether one should
say 'the shape' or 'the form' of a hat, and he interjects
erudite Latin expressions into his tirade (Act 2, scene 2). Unable to gain the first philosopher's attention, Sganare-
relle then approaches Marphurias—a sceptic who is
sure of nothing. Driven to distraction by the philo-
sopher's incertitude, Sganarelle physically attacks Mar-
phurias and then debates whether the beating in fact
ever happened (Act 2, scene 3).

Fed up with the prattle of the two pedants, Sganarelle
then comes upon a troupe of dancing gypsies, and he
asks two gypsy girls to tell his fortune. When questioned
whether or not he will become a cuckold, the gypsy girls
laught Sganarelle and avoid answering by singing and
dancing. After the gypsies leave, Sganarelle encounters
a magician. Here Molière underlines this juxtaposition
of the mundane with the supernatural by having the
magician sing his responses to Sganarelle's spoken ques-
tions. Thereupon the magician summons mute demons,
and tells Sganarelle (in song) that these demons will
answer with intelligible signs. When asked if he will be a
cuckold, the dancing demons pantomime horns. Unlike
the Premier intermède, whose dream sequence was a
product of Sganarelle's fantaisie, here supernatural
beings interact with Sganarelle in song and dance. The
meaning of their responses, however, becomes revealed
to the audience through music, metaphor and gesture—a language that Sganarelle clearly does not
comprehend.

While the opening scenes show Sganarelle seeking
advice from friends and specialists, the Premier inter-
mède represents Sganarelle's subliminal anxieties. As
Sganarelle now turns to the supernatural for reassur-
ance, we see how far he has become divorced from reality
and rational common sense. The G minor tonality
relates the occult world of the gypsies, magician
and demons to the inner world of Sganarelle's dreams. As in
the Premier intermède, a sudden shift of mode (from G
minor to Bb major) for the demons' pantomime under-
lines its figurative meaning (impending cuckoldry),
and gives Sganarelle the clearest indication so far of what the
future has in store for him.

Act 3 begins when Sganarelle, convinced of his mis-
take, goes to Dorimène's father, Alcantor, and tries to
call off the wedding. But her brother (Lycaone in the 1664
comédie-ballet, Alcidas in the 1668 non-musical version)
shows up to respond to Sganarelle's request. With exag-
gerated politeness he challenges Sganarelle to a duel. Sganarelle nervously refuses with equal politeness, and is
forced to endure a thrashing before submitting to his
marriage.

The finale to the comédie-ballet, a musical wedding
celebration, fulfills the predictions of the Premier inter-
mède (though still represented by the surreal world of
ballet). Sganarelle's friend Géronimo reappears to tell
him that the young people of the town have prepared a maskera
de for his wedding. Here Molière permits us a glimpse into Sgan
erelle’s future. A dancing master shows Sgan
erelle how to dance a sprightly courante (Cin
quèmè entrée), and his attempt at learning an athletic
dance best performed by a young man mirrors Sgan
erelle’s act of folly in marrying a bride half his age. In the
last ballet entrée, four gallants dance and flirt with Dor
imène, and together they show Sganarelle how a pas de
croq should be danced.

The featured entertainment at Sganarelle’s wedding is the
lost ‘Concert espagnol’, whose lyrics alone have been
preserved in the Philidor copy of the comédie-ballet.19
The first verse alludes to the moral blindness that has
proved to be Sganarelle’s undoing:

You have made me blind, Belisa,
But now I see well your harshness.
For your disdain is so apparent
That even the blind can see it.20

A minuet for two Spanish gentlemen and two Spanish
ladies follows, and these skilled performances given by
professional singers and dancers contrast with Sgan
erelle’s inability to conduct himself with wisdom and
deftness.21 The Spanish dances in C major and the ‘Con-
cert espagnol’ together with the C major overture, pro-
vide both a tonal framework and a point of social
reference to the aristocratic world of the French court.

By way of contrast, the G minor ‘Charivari grotesque’
is a burlesque travesty. Here, dream and allegory com-
bine with the surreal to develop the comic paradox. Sgan
arelle is not the natural husband for a young coquette,
and his repeated denial of this truth leads to inexorable
consequences. The performing arts support this pro-
gression toward a farcical denouement and Sganarelle’s transformation from the subject of a farce to the subject
of a ballet. The opening instrumental overture now
becomes transformed into a bizzare, presumably
cacophonous ensemble. The ‘Concert espagnol’ sings of
the consequences of ignoring Beauty’s advice (in the
Premier intermède);22 the premonitions figuratively
depicted earlier by ‘La Jalousie, les Chagrins, et les Soup
cons’ become fulfilled by the ‘Quatre Galants cajolant la
femme de Sganarelle’. Now Sganarelle has become part of
the dance—unwittingly playing the dupe in a gro
tesque celebration that underlines his departure from
the rational world.

Throughout the 1660s Lully and Molière continued to
develop comédie-ballet entertainments for the court, and
Molière afterwards presented them in musically reduced
versions at the Théâtre du Palais Royal. By 1672, how-
ever, Lully had decided that his own future lay in opera,
and he soon ended his collaboration with Molière.23
After their break-up, the ageing poet-musician Charles
Coypeau (known as Dassoucy), who had hopes of
renewing his prior association with Molière, approached
the playwright to offer his musical services.24 But instead
of Dassoucy, Molière chose the promising young
composer Marc-Antoine Charpentier (1643–1704), who
had recently returned from Rome and his studies with
Carissimi.25 In Charpentier, Molière found a colleague
who, though yet untried in the theatre, was the musical
equal of Lully. During the summer of 1672 Molière
started to revive earlier comédies-ballets, for which he
began to substitute new music (by Charpentier) and
lyrics for those originally set by Lully.

For the Parisian première of La Comtesse d’Escar
bagnas Molière revived Le mariage forcé—evidently as a
comédie-ballet—within-the-play. Molière took this
opportunity to replace the 1664 intermèdes with Char-
pentier’s new songs and dances—with new choreo-
graphy by Pierre Beauchamps, who had assisted in the
original 1664 performances at Molière’s theatre. This
production opened at the Théâtre du Palais Royal on 8
July 1672 for a run of 14 performances. La Grange docu-
mented this production in his Registre.

N.B. that Le Mariage forcé, which was played with La Comtesse
d’Escarbagnas, was accompanied with ornaments—for which
Monsieur Charpentier composed the music, Monsieur de
Beauchamps [choreographed] the ballets, Monsieur de Bar
ignon [designed] the costumes, and Monsieur de Villiers per-
formed in the music of the interludes.26

Monsieur de Villiers, a recent addition to Molière’s
troupe, was recruited partly for his ability to sing in
musical productions.27 The names of two other singers
(Forester, a tenor, and Le Roy, a bass) along with the
number of dancers and violinists are known to us,
thanks to a second register kept by the actor André
Hubert.28 Another entry in Hubert’s Registre indicates
that the role of the singing gypsy was sung by a young
girl named Mlle Turpin.29

At its 1672 court première La Comtesse d’Escarbagnas
served as a dramatic framework for Le ballet des bal
nets—a pastiche of the king’s favourite selections from other
comédies-ballets. In subsequent performances at the
Théâtre du Palais Royal, Molière combined La Com-
tesse d’Escarbagnas with other short comedies (Le mar
riage forcé, L’Amour médecin, or the lost farce Le fin
boudaud). A one-act play in nine scenes, La Comtesse
d’Escarbagnas focuses on the foolishness of a provincial
noblewoman who, after returning from a two-month
visit to Paris, is eager to associate with persons of quality. Anxious to imitate 'les grands airs de Versailles' and the intellectual pursuits of the highly refined précieuse society, the countess shows her lack of breeding by maltreating her servants, scorning provincial ways, and trusting in her beauty, youth and quality to enamour a young viscount. In fact, the viscount has come to court not the countess but Julie—her young protégée. The viscount has arranged an entertainment for Julie in the countess's home. Scenes 1 to 7 are preparatory to this entertainment, which is then twice interrupted by scenes 8 and 9; at the end of the play the characters again turn their attention to the remainder of the spectacle.

La Comtesse d'Estarcagnas and Le mariage forcé became affiliated by the common theme of the protagonist's misplaced affections. Had Le mariage forcé been performed after scenes 7, 8 and 9 in a three-act comédie-ballet format (an arrangement that seems likely) the progression of Sganarelle's dilemma would furnish an interesting counterpart to the developing love triangle between the countess, the viscount and Julie. Charpentier's new intermèdes—songs, vocal ensembles and dances—could be expected to add further resonance to the underlying themes common to the two plays.

Unfortunately, no livret exists from the 1672 performances, and so the exact order and placement of the musical numbers remain unknown. Table 2 lists the musical numbers in Charpentier's manuscript score. Common sense dictates where many of the numbers would occur within the context of spoken plays. The 'Ouverture de la Comtesse d'Estarcagnas' obviously precedes the first scene of the play. Likewise, the dance 'Les Marys' (The husbands') evidently precedes the presentation of Le mariage forcé—given that in Charpentier's manuscript the inscription 'intermèdes nouveaux du Mariage forcé a Molière' (new interludes for Le mariage forcé by Molière), but written in a later hand) heads the musical numbers following 'Les Marys'. Furthermore, the dance 'Le Songe' (The dream) clearly pertains to the dream sequence in the Premier intermède, just as 'Les Boemienes, Sarabande' (The gypsies, sarabande) belongs to the gypsy scene—wherever it might have occurred in the 1672 version. However, the ordering of the other vocal numbers and dances remains a matter for conjecture.

The question of Molière's authorship of the intermède lyrics for the 1672 revival has often been raised. Louis Moland first announced his discovery of these texts in Charpentier's musical manuscripts, and published them in his complete edition of Molière's works with the disclaimer, 'I would not dare take it upon myself to place the signature of Molière below these fragments, which, after all, are anonymous.' Eugene Despois and Paul Mesnard also included some of these texts among the poésies diverses attribuées in their subsequent edition of Molière's complete works. Both editions attribute the lyrics of the 'La la la la bonjour' trio to Charpentier on the basis of the inferior literary quality of the verse. Georges Couton alone is comfortable with crediting all of the intermèdes nouveaux lyrics to Molière: 'we do not see why he would have entrusted them to another, and, given the competency of these verses, nothing prevents us from attributing them to him.' At least one text, however, appears to stem from an earlier Molière-Lully collaboration. Molière's comédie-ballet Le bourgeois gentilhomme (1670) concluded with Le ballet des nations at its court premiere. Some lyrics found

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Table 2  Contents of Charpentier's autographs for La Comtesse d'Estarcagnas and Le mariage forcé

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Folio</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Text incipit</th>
<th>Key Forces</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>387-397</td>
<td>ouverture de la Comtesse d'Estarcagnas</td>
<td>F 4-part strings, b.c.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>397</td>
<td>Les marys</td>
<td>F 4-part strings, b.c.</td>
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<tr>
<td>398-400</td>
<td>Dialogue</td>
<td>F alto, tenor, b.c.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intermèdes nouveaux du mariage forcé à Molière [written in non-autograph hand]</td>
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<tr>
<td>408-409</td>
<td>trio grotesque au lieu lalalala bonjour</td>
<td>a alto, tenor, bass, b.c.</td>
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<tr>
<td>409</td>
<td>Menuet</td>
<td>d 4-part strings, b.c.</td>
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<tr>
<td>409-410</td>
<td>[untitled]</td>
<td>d alto, b.c.</td>
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<tr>
<td>410-411</td>
<td>[untitled]</td>
<td>d alto, b.c.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>411</td>
<td>gavotte</td>
<td>a 4-part strings, b.c.</td>
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<td>422-424</td>
<td>[untitled]</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>444-446</td>
<td>les grotesques</td>
<td>a alto, tenor, bass, b.c.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>446-448</td>
<td>[untitled]</td>
<td>d 4-part strings, b.c.</td>
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<tr>
<td>469</td>
<td>Le songe</td>
<td>C soprano, 4-part strings, b.c.</td>
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<tr>
<td>469-489</td>
<td>Les boemienne sarabande</td>
<td>'Les rossignols dans leurs tendres ramages'</td>
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</tbody>
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in the fifth *entredé de ballet* bear a resemblance to those of
the first strophe of 'Les Bohmiennes, Sarabande'.

Ah! qu'il fait beau dans ces Bocages
Ah! que le Ciel donne un beau jour!
Le Rossignol sous ces tendres feuillages
Chante aux Echos son doux retour;
Ce beau séjour, ces doux ramage,
Ce beau séjour nous invite à l'Amour.

(*Le ballet des nations*)

Les rossignols, dans leurs tendres ramage,
Du doux printemps annoncent le retour.
Tout refleurit, tout rit en ces bocages
Ah! belle iris, le beau temps! le beau jour!
Si tu voulois m'accorder ton amour!
Si tu voulois imiter leur amour!

('Les Bohmiennes, Sarabande')

'Les Bohmiennes, Sarabande' seems to adopt many features of the earlier text: the imagery, language and even individual words; the succession of end-rhymes, with their alternating feminine and masculine endings; the number of lines; and the parallelism of the final couplet. Surely we can imagine Molière writing under pressure and borrowing lyrics from his earlier ballet for use in this summer revival.

Eight years separated the two musical versions of *Le mariage forcé*, during which time Molière and Lully refined in their mature *comédies-ballets* the progression from spoken comedy toward a sung and danced finale. For the Molière scholar Louis Auld, these *comédies-ballets* expand through music and choreography the comic physicality of the play—a continuum which begins in farce and ends in dance. Might the second *comédie-ballet* version of *Le mariage forcé* incorporate any of these developments? And to what extent might Charpentier's *nouveaux intermèdes* reflect the tastes of the Parisian audience for whom they were composed?

As we have seen, Molière and Lully designed the 1664 version for a court première, where its audience included the royal family. As with earlier court ballets, *Le mariage forcé* was to allow for the king and his courtiers to dress up in costume and dance in some of the *entredé*. Elements of Lully's *intermèdes* stem from the musical and theatrical genres of court entertainments: the 'Récit de la Beauté' is an *air de cour*; the allegorical characters, gypsies, Spaniards and magician all derive from the genre of ballet de cour; even the representation of a 'Charivari grotesque', with its fantastical musicians and bizarre instruments, had been used previously in the 1651 *Ballet des fées de Bacchus* (see illus.2). The number of performers who participated in the première of *Le mar-

iage forcé* confirms this *ballet de cour* orientation: 25 dancers participated in ten separate dances, whereas eight singers appeared in only three vocal numbers.

When Molière and Charpentier revised *Le mariage forcé* for audiences at the Théâtre du Palais Royal they struck a more even balance between vocal music and ballet—five dances, five songs. Furthermore, the *intermèdes* they added were spiced with a more popular flavour, and featured bourgeois characters. Only the gypsies remained in the new version—for their fortune-telling scene with Sganarelle was integral to the play.

As we have seen, in the 1664 *Premier intermède* Molière and Lully used song and dance to represent Sganarelle's nuptial apprehensions. Charpentier's new dance of 1672, 'Le Songe' (The Dream), obviously was to have a dream-like if not nightmarish character, and probably further explored Sganarelle's fears through pantomime. The songs of Charpentier's *nouveaux intermèdes* articulate concerns that weigh heavily on Sganarelle's mind: marriage transforming wives into deceitful shrews ('Mon compère en bonne foi', 'Belbe ou laide il n'importe guère') who pose the ever-present threat of cuckoldry ('Ah, quelle extravagance extravagante'). For an urban, heterogeneous audience these vocal numbers would make an unambiguous connection with Sganarelle's situation. In particular, the 'Trio grotesque' ('Amants aux cheveux gris') addresses the folly of old men taking young wives:

Lovers with grey hair, 'tis no strange thing
That love subjects you to his laws.
For both young and old [lit. 'bearded'],
At any age love is good.
But if you want to set up house,
Do not turn to these young beauties:
You repulse them, you disgust them,
And far from them putting up with your foolishness,
You will soon have only horns in exchange.]

These lyrics also form a counterpoint to the advice Géronimo offers Sganarelle in the first scene of the play: . . . and I will tell you frankly and in friendship, since you have made me promise, that marriage is hardly for you. It is a thing that young people must ponder in depth before doing; but men of your age should not consider it at all; and if it is said that the greatest folly of all is to marry, I see nothing more inappropriate than to commit this folly in the time of life when we should be wiser.

The gypsies' dance-song ('Les Bohmiennes, Sarabande') counterbalances Géronimo's pessimism. Its lyrics depict the return of Spring and love in the pastoral world, where the nightingales herald Spring's return, Flora
barks in Zephyr’s kisses, and two shepherdesses (Iris and Sylvie) are entreated to follow nature’s example. In the world ruled by nature’s laws, love comes about in its proper season:

"Tis to transgress natural law
To let these moments pass by
That can be made so enchanting.
The season of Spring appears beautiful,
And our years are sprightly as she,
But one must intermingle the delights of love,
For without them the days will not be bright."

But these merry pursuits are for the young, and Sganarelle’s obsession with wedding a woman half his age offends both reason and nature. The gypsies’ dance-song provides morally correct examples of love in accord with nature. The polarity of these two visions is underlined by tonality: D minor, A minor and F major are the keys associated with songs of trickery and cuckoldry, while C major, by contrast, depicts nature’s harmony (see table 2 for the keys of individual numbers). By not heeding these premonitions and thereby disrupting the natural order, Sganarelle through his lack of raison invites imbalance into his life.11

Charpentier’s ‘La la la la bonjour’ trio manifests this imbalance on many levels. It pictures the surreal vision of a world peopled by commedia dell’arte caricatures, where dogs, cats, nightingales and jackasses sing in chorus, and where reason and harmony give way to folly and cacophony. Throughout the spoken play and the intermèdes language has undergone a gradual transformation from sense into nonsense. At the start of the play, Gérónimo offers Sganarelle clear, rational advice. The Aristotelian and Pyrrhonian philosophers he then consults engage in circular, syntactic arguments interspersed with Latin interjections. Later the gypsy fortune-tellers respond to Sganarelle’s inquiries by singing nonsense syllables (‘La, la, la, la’). Eventually language divests itself of meaning, and the polite but ironic speech of Dorimène’s brother belies his murderous intent. Now in the ‘La la la la bonjour’ trio language fully degenerates into animal calls and macaronic nonsense—eschewing sense for the purely musical qualities of language. Charpentier’s music parallels this departure from sanity and raison. As the three singers first ‘unsheath’ their voices, they deliberate upon what to perform and soon resolve to sing about nonsense—‘tout bruit forme melodie’:

Let us jumble together at random
Unruly verse,
Some long as elegiac verse.
Others with short feet.
No rhyme nor reason!
All is fine, whatever they say.
Any sound may form melody.
Tic toc, chic choc, nic toc, fric f roc.
Paint, glass, cut, jug.
Ab hoc et ab hac, ab hac et ab hoc.
Fran, fran, fran for Seigneur Gratian!
Frin, frin, frin for Seigneur Harlequin!
Fron, fron, fron for Seigneur Pantaloon!
Oh, the lovely concert, and the sweet harmony!

Oh, the lovely symphony!
How sweet it is, and how appealing!
Let’s join in the melody
Of cats, of dogs,
And of the nightingales of Arcadia.
Caw, caw, caw. Bow, wow, wow.
Meow, meow, meow. Bow, wow, wow.
Hec haw, hec haw, hec haw.
Oh, the lovely concert, and the sweet harmony!12

Quick changes of metre mimic this textual nonsense, while passages of cloying chromaticism musically parody the lines ‘Oh, the lovely concert, and the sweet harmony!’ (illus.4).13 Compared with the moral truism of ‘Les Boemienes, Sarabande’ (with its diatonic harmonies and regular dance metre), the ‘La la la la bonjour’ trio portrays conventions of reason, language and music set askew. The dance that follows, ‘Les Grotesques’, presumably carries this distortion into the realm of figured expression, and thus contributes to the surreal vision of a madcap world ‘sans rime et sans raison’. This musical débaûle would serve as a fitting entertainment for Sganarelle’s farcical wedding celebration.14

Charpentier’s burlesque intermèdes and Molière’s bourgeois farce prove to be a perfect marriage of music, dance and comedy. The comic action of Le mariage forcé has its basis in social reality—one in which the ageing protagonist, blinded by his obsession, endures situations of humiliation, violence and failure. Charpentier’s music and Beauchamps’s dances introduce an element of fantasy that alleviates the play’s more serious under-currents, while turning Sganarelle’s world upside-down. Gustave Michaut observes that reality and fantasy are not mutually exclusive in comédie-ballet: ‘one might say that ballet, dance and music liberated Molière’s comic vein and gave it wings.’15 While the vocal airs and dialogues make fun of cuckoldry and the pitfalls of marriage, the dances introduce the charm, lightness and irony of movement and gesture. Sganarelle’s matrimo-
nial anxieties thereby become farce, and his misfortunes are met with laughter. As Charles Mazouer points out, nothing should be taken seriously in the world of comédie-ballet: the fantasy, wit and surrealism of the musical intermèdes are needed to dissipate the physical threats, purge the anxieties, and exorcize the anguish of the protagonist." In *Le mariage forcé*, music, dance and laughter become a panacea for the ills brought on by human folly.

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According to the 1664 *livet* (see n.1 below), the *Première entrée* was danced by Sieurs Dolivet ("La Jalousie"), Saint-André, Des Brosses ("Les Chagrin"; illus.t), De Lorge and Le Chantrier ("Les Soupirs"); Hilaire Dupuis (Mlle Hylaire, sister-in-law of the singing teacher Michel Lambert, who was in turn Lully's father-in-law) sang the "Recit de la Beauté". The *Deuxième entrée* was danced by the Count d'Armaignac, d'Heureux, Beauchamps and Des-Airs le jeune ("Quatre Plaisants ou Goguenards"), Louis XIV et the Marquis de Villeroi danced the parts of two gypsies ("Deux Egyptiens") in the *Troisième entrée*, while the Marquis de Rassan, Raynal, Noblet and La Pierre danced in travesty as four female gypsy dancers ("Quatre Egyptiennes"). (As was customary in ballets of this time, female roles were performed by male dancers.) For the *Quatrième entrée* D'Estival sang the role of the Magician (while Pierre Beauchamps danced and pantomimed the part); the "Quatre Démons" were summoned were danced by D'Heureux, De Lorge, Des-Airs l'aîné and Le Mercier. The *Cinquième entrée* consisted of a "Concert Espagnol" sung by Signora Anna Bergerotti, Bordignon, Chiavelli, Jon, Agostini, Talavera and Angelo Michael. The *Sixième entrée* featured De Pile and Tartas ("Deux Espagnoles"). De la Lanne and Saint-André ("Deux Espagnoles"). The *Septième entrée* featured a "Charivari Grotesque" played by Lully, Balthasar, Vagnac, Bonnard, La Pierre, Descoutaud and the three Opterre (Hotette) brothers. The final *entrée* ("Huissier et dernière entrée") was danced by Le Duc, the Duc de Saint-Aignan and Beauchamps and Raynal ("Quatre Galants").

Molière announced the birth of this new theatrical invention in his
Avertissement à Les файлаux (1661), and labeled these two works (along with L'Amour méduse, 1660; Le Sélicen, 1667; and George Dundain, 1668) simply as 'comédie'. For other musical works he used the expression 'comédie mêlée de danse et de musique' (La Princesse d'Elide, 1644; Le malade imaginaire, 1673), 'comédie mêlée de musique et d'entremêle de ballet' (Les amours magnifiques, 1670), 'comédie-ballet' (Le bourgeois gentilhomme, 1670; Monseigneur de Pourguesauque, 1683) and 'tragédie-ballet' (Psyché, 1671).

Avertissement à Les файлаux:

'Anne was sister to Philip IV of Spain, and therefore had ties to both the Spanish crown and the Habsburgs. The musical 'Le mariage force, Le mariage force, is the music for this Spanish concert is missing from the existing sources for Le mariage force; its lyrics are preserved in the Philidor copy, also the most complete source for the piece. Le mariage force / Comédie et Ballet / ou son / 'Désert par sa Majesté le 29 / Jour de Janvier / 1664 / Recueilli par Philidor Lavastien en / 1690, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, Res. F12. Lully's music is collected and published in Oeuvres complètes de J.-B. Lully, ed. H. Priuères (Paris, 1930–39). Les Comédies-Ballets, 1. (1931).

'The troupe's secretary and chronicler, Charles Vallet de La Grange, noted in his Registre, 'le mille jour mandé 29° commençé au Louvre devant le Roi dans l'appartement bas de la Reine mère le mariage force Comédie Ballet. See the registre de La Grange, 1650–1685, reproduced in facsimile with an index and a note on the Grange and its part in the théâtre de Molière, ed. B. E. Young and G. P. Young, 2 vols. (Paris, 1967), i, p.64.

'Le lundi 4° le mille Ballet du mariage force chez Madame au palais Royal. Le registre de La Grange, i, p.64. Le Grange records that it was repeated on 9 February. 'Madame' was Henriette, sister to Charles II of England and wife to Philippe, le king's brother (known at court as 'Monsieur').

'Dimanche passé je vis au Louvre un petit ballet qui fut dansé dans le salon de la Reine Mere; c'est une petite comédie de Molière fort plaisante qui a nom le Mariage Forcé, entremêlée avec des entrées de ballet et quelques récits in Masseque desquels sont Mademoiselle Hilaire et La Signora Anna. Le Roi y dansa lui même et le croy que ce'est aujourd'hui pour la 6° et dernière fois.' Letter dated 8 February 1664, cited in P. Méline, Répertoire analytique des documents contemporains d'information et de critique concernant le Théâtre à Paris sous Louis XIV, 1669–1715 (Paris, 1934), p.122. Hughes' letter raises some interesting points that conflict with the known facts. For instance, we have no record of Molière's troupe performing Le mariage force at the Louvre on 3 February 1664, as Hughes states; moreover, we have seen that this was neither the sixth nor the last performance given for the royal family (see n.6 above). So which performance did Hughes attend?


This anecdote and the one concerning the Marquis de la Trouaise (see n.11 below) is cited in Thé dramatic works of Molière, trans. H. van Law (New York, 1880), i, p.22.

"La Grange listed in his Registre (i, pp.243–5) a daily expense of 199 livres for music and dance (in excess of the ordinary operating expenses of around 53 livres), as well as a payment of 590 livres of Pierre Beauchamps 'pour faire le ballet'. By comparing these payments with those recorded in a second Registre kept by the actor La Thorillière for the 1664–5 season (Ms. Archives de la Comédie-Française), we can deduce that Molière's troupe employed 12 violins, 9 dancers, 4 singers, 4 cloches and 2 tambours de basque for the interludes. Although the comédie-ballet was without doubt a popular success, these 'Frais extraordinaires' substantially reduced the profit margin and hence affected each actor's share of the house receipts. After the tenth performance (Friday, 7 March 1664), for instance, the total receipts amounted to only 200 livres, and each actor receiving a full share took home a meagre 2 livres 5 sols.

"On 13 May 1664, when Molière's troupe again performed Le mariage force, along with La Princesse d'Elide, Les файлаux and three acts of Tarasque, during the course of 'Les Plaisirs de l'île enchantée'—an extravagant seven-day fête given by Louis XIV in his newly remodelled gardens at Versailles. See Le mariage force, / comédie, par J. B. de Molieres, a Paris, chez Jean BROY, au Palais, / vis à vis la Porte de l'Eglise / de la Sainte Chapelle, a l'Image de St. Louis. / ed. de levant / avec privilegie de roi.

'Including Priuères's of the comédie-ballet; see n.11 above.

'The changes Molière made in 1668 to the play are as follows: Act 1, scenes 1 and 2 (1664 original version) correspond to scenes 1 and 2 (1668 revision); Act 2, scenes 1, 2, and 3 correspond to scenes 3, 4 (extended) and 5 (1668 revision); Act 3, scenes 1–3 (1664 original version) correspond to scenes 8–10 (1668 revision). The Act 2 interlude of 1664, in which Sganarelle meets up with a troupe of singing and dancing gypsy fortune-tellers, is revised as scene 6 of the 1668 comedy. The 1664 livret for the comédie-ballet describes one spoken scene (Act 3, scene 4) preserved neither in the Philidor copy (see n.4 above) nor in the 1668 published version (see n.11 above). In this scene Seigneur Germinon comes to celebrate with friends, and tells him that the young people of the town have prepared a masquerade to honour his marriage.

Much of the psychological ambiguity developed through the interplay of the performing arts was lost in this revision. In the 1664 comédie-ballet the songs and pantomimics of the interludes manifested Sganarelle's apprehensions and foreshadowed his fate by means of dream sequence, allegorical pantomime, prophecy and supernatural apparition. The audience, given only fleeting glimpses of Dorimène, were thus forced to view her through Sganarelle's fantasy. In the 1668 revision Molière added a scene (scene 7) in which Sganarelle overhears her fiancé and her lover 'en tête à tête' planning their future together after Sganarelle's death. Dorimène thus makes verbally clear her intentions by telling her lover that she is marrying Sganarelle only for his money, and expects him to die within six months. In the 1664 comédie-ballet Sganarelle remains suspicious to the end; in the 1668 revision he goes to the altar with his eyes wide open.

'Molière himself began living this role two years earlier when, at the age of 20, he married the 20-year-old Armande Béjart. Mlle de Montfleury, an actress from the rival Hôtel de Bourgogne who was jealous of the favour Louis XIV had shown Molière, attacked him personally; she accused Molière of incest—of having been Madeleine Béjart's lover (which was true), of fathering Armande Béjart in 1643 (this was unfounded), and then marrying his own daughter in 1664. Molière did not publicly deny the incest charge—yet the Béjart family records suggest that Armande was in fact Madeleine's sister, not her daughter. To quell the raging scandal (and perhaps to show his appreciation for Le mariage force), Louis XIV and Henriette (Molière's wife) stood as godparents by proxy to Molière's first child, christened Louis on 15 February 1664. That name-day coincided with the public premiere of Le mariage force.

"Curiously, the 'Récit de la Beauté' appears in Pierre Perrin's manuscript, Recueil de paroles de musique (Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, Ms. Fonds français 2208, 1687) among other lyrics by Perrin for the Ballet des fous. Roux; there it bears the title 'Récit pour un ballet du nom Chanté par Madame Hilaire, représentant la Beauté. To my knowledge, this coincidence has not hitherto been noticed—not even by the Molière scholar Louis Auld, who reproduces this text and other poetic works by Perrin in The lyric art of Pierre Perrin, founder of French opera (Hensleyville, PA, 1986), iii, p.91. Did Molière (or perhaps Lully) borrow Perrin's text for Le mariage force, or did Perrin fitch it from Molière?

"Molière revised this scene with the singing and dancing gypsy fortune-tellers and moved it to scene 6 in the 1668 comedy; see n.11 above.

'Tradition has it that Molière based this character on the Marquis de La Trouaise, who was always excessively polite and apogulous when killing an opponent in a duel; see The dramatic works of Molière, i, p.472.