

The Petite Commande of 1664: Burlesque in the Gardens of Versailles

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It was Pierre Francastel who christened the most famous program of sculpture in the history of Versailles: the Grande Commande of 1674.¹ The program consisted of twenty-four statues and was planned for the Parterre d'Eau, a square puzzle of basins that lay on the terrace in front of the main western facade for about ten years. The puzzle itself was designed by André Le Nôtre or Charles Le Brun, or by the two artists working together, but the two dozen statues were designed by Le Brun alone. They break down into six quartets: the *Elements*, the *Seasons*, the *Parts of the Day*, the *Parts of the World*, the *Temperaments of Man*, and the *Poems*. The Grande Commande of 1674 was not the first program of statues in the gardens of Versailles, although it certainly was the largest and most elaborate from an iconographic point of view. This essay is dedicated to an earlier program there. It was launched in 1664, ten years before the Grande Commande. It consisted of eight statues, one-third the number of the later commission. It was carried out by two sculptors, not twenty-four or more. It called for the use of stone, not marble. It stood in a low, rather remote spot in the northern half of the gardens, far from the elevated stage of the château. This more modest program appealed to the playful and even somewhat ribald inclinations of the court at this hour, a far cry from the serious cosmological interests of a later hour. It casts a fresh light on the youthful world of Louis XIV, who in 1664 was just twenty-six years old. I will call it the Petite Commande in grateful acknowledgment of Francastel.

Versailles in 1664 was a modest country house to which the king went with his closest friends to ride and hunt. The Petite Commande, a suite of statues of satyrs and hamadryads, embodied the rustic character of the place (Figs. 5–12). The statues have always been appreciated for their rusticity, joie de vivre, and swagger, but little else. That they constituted a unified program has never before been proposed. That they entertained the king and his court with their erotic and often comical behavior has never before been commented on. That they challenged a certain enlightened class of viewers by engaging them in clever intellectual games has never before been considered. Masquerade and parody are at the heart of the Petite Commande. When it arrived there, it had the northern half of the gardens to itself, and it left a lasting impression on the region. It differs radically from the Apollo program in the western zone, which followed it by one or two years (Figs. 26, 27). It poses a bold challenge to some of our oldest assumptions about the meanings and purposes of the gardens. The end result is a new and very different Versailles.

The Rondeau, Also Known as the Grand Rondeau

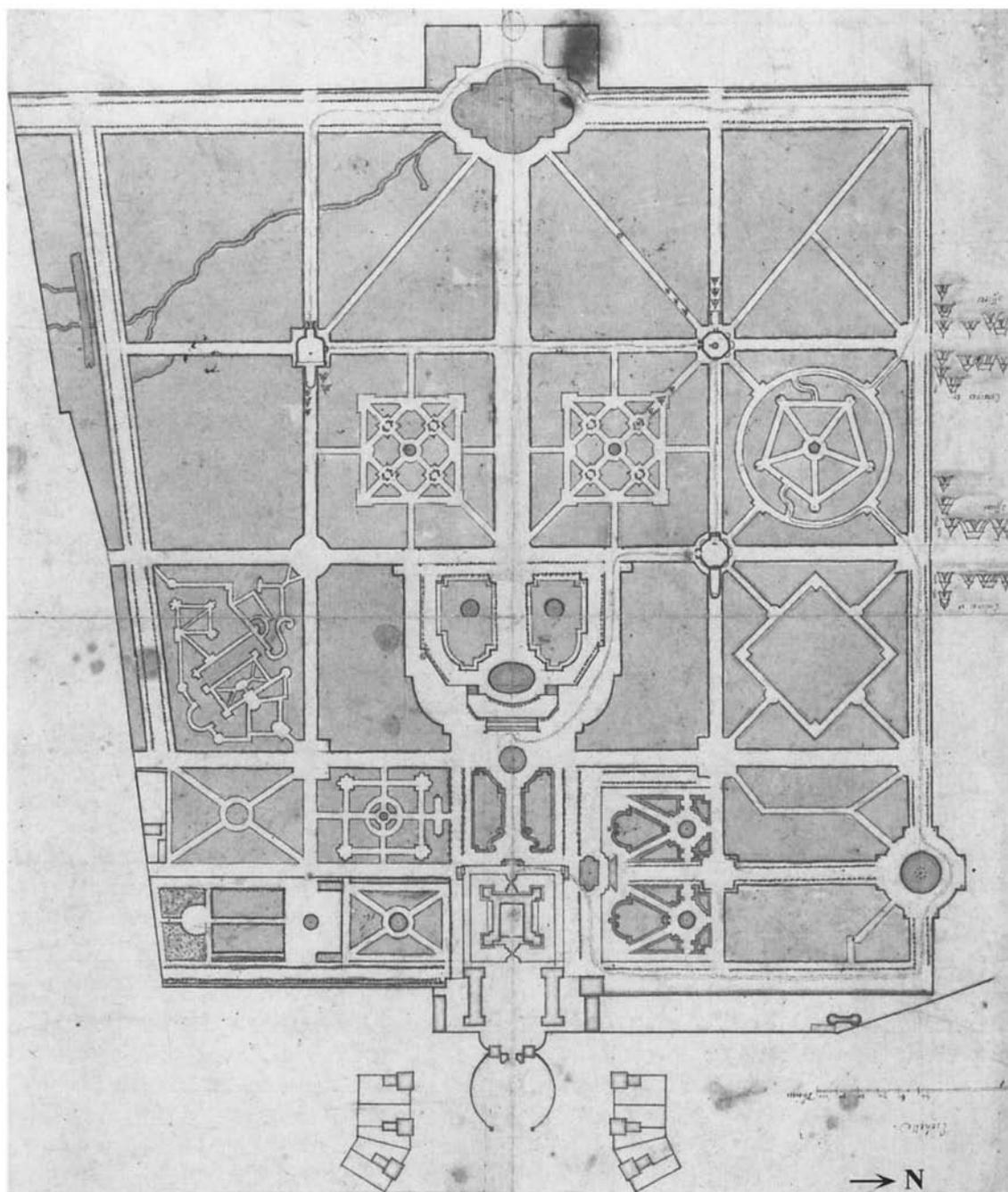
Beginning in the first half of 1664, Le Nôtre thoroughly revised the northern zone of the gardens of Versailles, doubling its size by moving the axis from the center of the facade to the corner and by formalizing the compartments of land to

the west (Figs. 1, 2, both showing the expanded zone four years later). We know the northern end of the axis as the Allée d'Eau. The upper half of the zone, which is divided into two identical halves, is known to us today as the Parterre du Nord (Fig. 2). The axis terminates in a round pool, known in the sources as "le rondeau" and sometimes "le grand rondeau."² The wall in back of it takes a series of ninety-degree turns as it travels along, leaving two niches in the middle and another to either side (Fig. 1). The woods on the pool's southern side have four right-angled niches of their own, balancing those in the wall. On July 17, 1664, during the construction of the wall, Le Nôtre informed the king by memo that he was erecting an iron gate, some seventy feet long, in the middle of it.³ Along with his text he sent a drawing in his own hand (Fig. 3).⁴ The dotted line represents the new gate.⁵ With a scattering of lines in the bottom half of the sheet he acknowledged the new axial pathway and the transverse pathways that branch off it; together they form a T pattern. On the border of the space he sketched the eight right-angled niches of which we have just spoken. They are paired, two at the end of the axial pathway, two at the end of each transverse pathway, and two at the new gate. These niches would house the Petite Commande.

The Four Rustic Couples

The commission for the eight sculptures went in equal shares to Louis Lerambert and Philippe de Buyster. We know from the royal account books that the sculptors were chiseling away at their seven-foot stone statues in September 1664 and that they installed them in the niches of the Rondeau in the first few months of 1666 (App. 1). Owing to later revisions in the gardens, the statues remained at the Rondeau for only twelve years before being moved to the Fontaine d'Apollon at the end of the western axis. Fifteen years later they were moved again, this time to the gardens of the Palais-Royal in Paris. The statues were withdrawn from public view shortly before the Revolution, the last that anyone has seen of them (App. 2). It was during their period of exile from the Rondeau that Guillet de Saint-Georges, the historiographer of the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture, penned his very informed accounts of the statues (App. 3).

The statues were still standing at the Rondeau when Jean Le Pautre and François Chauveau engraved them in the early to mid-1670s (Figs. 5–12). The prints were published in the *Cabinet du Roi*, a series of folio volumes with illustrations of the artistic and scientific triumphs of the reign. Inscriptions in both French and Latin were composed by the Petite Académie, a committee of savants that advised the Bâtiments du Roi on matters of allegory and erudition. A painter, possibly Adam-François Van der Meulen or a member of his studio, represented four statues in situ in 1674 (Fig. 4).⁶ It postdates the birth of the Petite Commande by ten years and its arrival

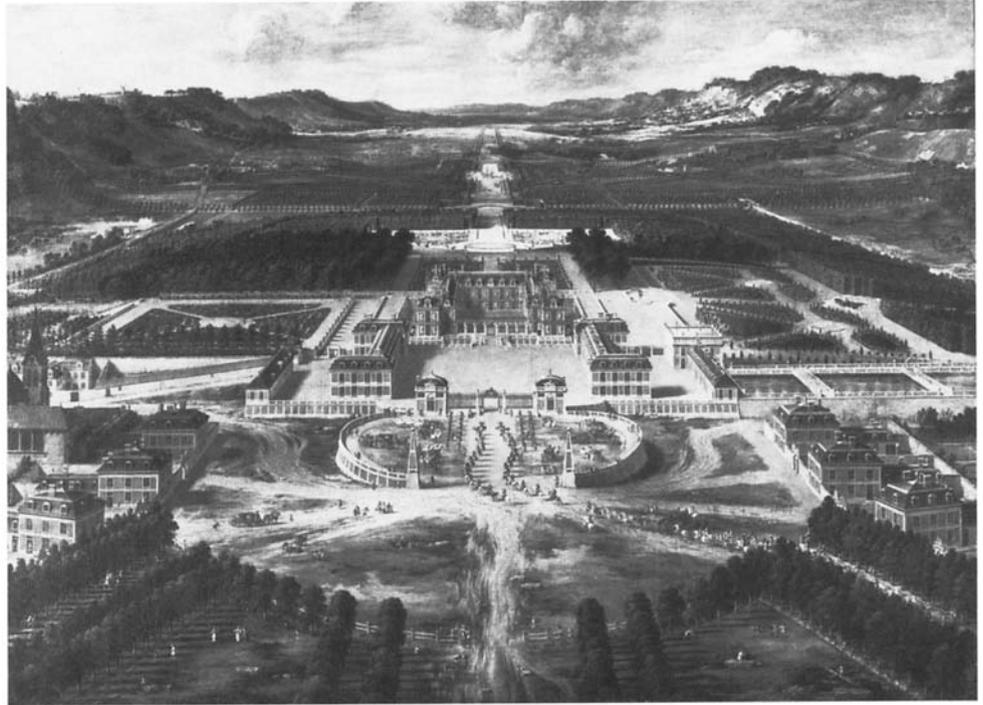


1 Plan of Versailles, 1668. BNP, Cab. des Est., Va 78f, vol. 1

at the Rondeau by eight. In those intervening years the northern zone of the gardens had taken on a different face with the addition of the Fontaine de la Sirène, on the terrace outside the chateau;⁷ the Fontaines des Couronnes, one in each half of the Parterre du Nord;⁸ the Fontaine de la Pyramide, on the flat landing at the end of the Parterre du Nord (Fig. 30);⁹ the Bain de Diane, in the retaining wall below it (Fig. 28);¹⁰ and the Fontaines d'Enfants, on the slopes of the Allée d'Eau (Fig. 29).¹¹ These works were executed in the later 1660s, in plenty of time for Van der Meulen to put them into his background. In his foreground we see the Fontaine du Dragon, a later addition to the Rondeau.¹² The original world of the Petite Commande had none of these spectacles. It was a quiet, deserted place, a backwater.

The statues in the center of Van der Meulen's view are both by Buyster, the *Joueuse de tambour, accompagné d'un petit satyre*

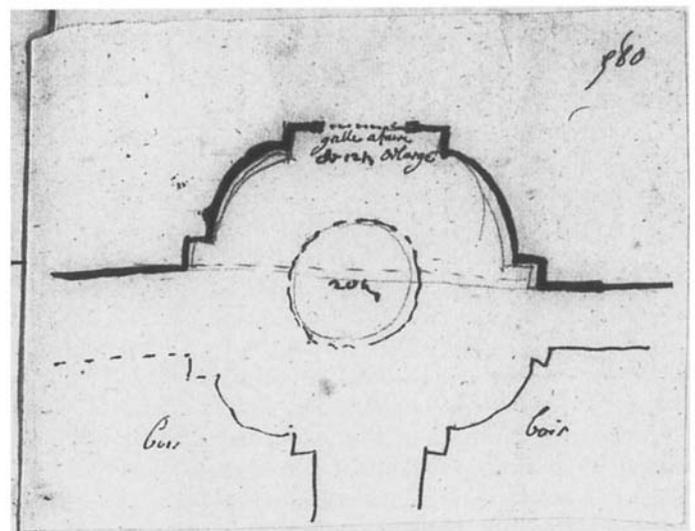
(Fig. 5) and the *Satyre, accompagné d'un petit satyre* (Fig. 6), eyeing one another from their niches on either side of the Allée d'Eau; they are partners. Also there, along the left edge, is Lerambert's *Joueuse de tambour, avec un petit amour auprès d'elle* (Fig. 8) and, along the right edge, Lerambert's *Satyre [Pan]* (Fig. 11). These two statues are coupled *not* to one another but rather to statues outside the frame, both by the same Lerambert. It is here that the printmakers come to our rescue: the *Faune* (Fig. 7) is coupled to the *Joueuse de tambour avec amour* (Fig. 8). Standing together at the new gate, and again outside Van der Meulen's view, are Buyster's *Nymphe tenant une couronne de chesne [Flore]* (Fig. 9) and Buyster's *Satyre tenant une grappe de raisin* (Fig. 10). Along the right edge of the painting is Lerambert's *Satyre [Pan]* (Fig. 11), the partner of Lerambert's *Danseuse* (Fig. 12).¹³ The painting is proof that Le Pautre and Chauveau represented the statues



2 Pierre Patel, perspective view of the château and gardens of Versailles, oil painting, 1668. Versailles, Musée de Versailles, inv. no. 765 (photo: RMN)

in their proper directions, and also that they fabricated the landscapes around them. The paired statues are of opposite sexes. They face one another through space, and their pedestals are angled correspondingly. In one case, Le Pautre ran his landscape and cloud patterns from print to print, more or less proving that the statues pictured there were partners (Figs. 7, 8). That the learned men of the Petite Académie were sensitive to the four pairings is borne out by their French inscriptions, which are mutually worded.¹⁴ That the statues were paired at the Rondeau is one of the cornerstones of the Petite Commande.¹⁵ I offer a reconstruction (Fig. 13).

Van der Meulen will be our cicerone as we tour the Rondeau, starting with Buyster's statues at the foot of the Allée d'Eau and proceeding counterclockwise (Fig. 4). It seems that we have happened on a masquerade party in progress. The tambourinist on our left (Fig. 5) is wearing a dress borrowed from Raphael's *Lucretia*, that is, from Marcantonio Raimondi's engraving of Raphael's lost drawing of that heroine (Fig. 14).¹⁶ Like Lucretia, she rests one foot on a stone block. Not content with one impersonation, she also poses in the style of Raphael's *Galatea* in the Villa Farnesina, a figure known in France through prints by Marcantonio and Hendrik Goltzius (Fig. 15).¹⁷ At the Farnesina, the panel to the left of Galatea is occupied by Sebastiano del Piombo's *Polyphemus*, the one-eyed mountain man, who sits there staring at his beloved.¹⁸ If Galatea gyrates away from her distasteful suitor, the nymph at Versailles does just the opposite: she seduces an attractive and highly available young satyr standing nearby (Fig. 6).¹⁹ Le Pautre presented the satyr in strict profile, leering at his lover with a single eye; no other figure in the Petite Commande is angled to this extreme by the engraver. His powerful torso would do Glycon or Michelangelo proud. In one hand he grips a goat horn, and with the other he lifts a swath of drapery over his privates, only bluffing modesty. Satyrs are not known to wear clothes, or



3 André Le Nôtre, the Rondeau, Versailles, pen drawing, 1664. BNP, Dép. des Mss., Mél. Colbert 122, fol. 580r

even to carry any, unless, that is, they are putting on airs or wooing a nymph with false propriety. He braces himself against a stump, one of the most conspicuous props of high art since antiquity. His dizzy little friend impersonates the satyr in Michelangelo's *Drunken Bacchus* (Fig. 16).²⁰ Buyster made no effort to hide his art historical sources; on the contrary, it seems that he wanted to put them on open display.

The tambourine player in Lerambert's first couple (Fig. 8) has all the majesty of the *Cesi Juno* (Fig. 17).²¹ She aims her show-stealing right arm at the faun (Fig. 7), who strokes his bearded chin, surely an erotic gesture on his part.²² It goes without saying that she merely pretends to be put off by his foolish antics; the hand that repudiates is the same hand that



4 Attributed to Adam-François Van der Meulen, the northern zone of Versailles, oil painting, 1674. Paris, private collection (from Marie, *Naissance de Versailles*, vol. 1, pl. XLIII)

gathers and lifts the chiton to reveal the full length and shape of the leg.²³ She is dressed in nothing more than a chiton, unlike Juno, who wears a himation over hers. One sleeve has slipped from her shoulder, the other is about to. In her left hand, enticingly half-hidden from the faun's view, is the merry instrument. It says in the inscription that her winged companion is Amour. He plays the castanet.²⁴ There was a shortage of room on the plinth, so Lerambert simply added two small platforms for the feet that extend beyond it.

The faun is masquerading as Michelangelo's *David* (Fig. 18).²⁵ Significantly, Le Pautre portrayed him at an angle that corresponds to the primary view of the Renaissance statue. His tree trunk is massive next to David's, and he uses it to his full drunken advantage. His weight-bearing leg is aligned with his active arm, a corruption of the laws of classical *contrapposto*, destabilizing him to the extent of the *Drunken Bacchus* (Fig. 16). If we trust Le Pautre, the figure was covered by a vine, but both Simon Thomassin, who engraved the figure in 1689, and Gabriel de Saint-Aubin, who drew it in 1774, record him in a state of total dishabille (Fig. 19).²⁶ No doubt it was Le Pautre who supplied the vegetation, possibly for reasons of decorum, possibly for reasons that go to the core of the *Petite Commande*; we will revisit the problem later on.²⁷ Saint-Aubin in particular had no reason to distort the facts; a "clothed" faun would have been completely alien to his conceit. On the pedestal he wrote: "20 may 1774 a 8 heures et demi." A lady sits quietly beside it, waiting for, or more likely, longing for, a rendezvous. Behind her looms a tall, rounded arcade, a variation of the Colonnade at Ver-

sailles; standing inside it is a variation of François Girardon's *Rape of Proserpina by Pluto*, represented from the rear.²⁸ On the two-dimensional page she seems to be viewing the abduction or daydreaming of it. The naked faun, a witness to both scenes, weighs the situation. To the left, a term raises a finger to his lips in mock discretion.

We are standing at the northern rim of the Rondeau, facing Le Nôtre's new gate. To our left is one of Buyster's nymphs (Fig. 9), trying for all the world to impersonate the *Farnese Flora* in Rome (Fig. 20).²⁹ In our period of interest, that ten-foot ancient statue was thought to represent not only Flora the goddess of spring and flowers but also Flora the illustrious Roman courtesan.³⁰ André Félibien, the historiographer of the *Bâtiments du Roi*, summed up the prevailing view of Flora in his book on the king's collection of antiquities. In the course of his commentary on another, smaller marble statue of Flora, then standing at the Tuileries in Paris, he spoke of the more acclaimed work in Rome.

The garland and the flowers that this figure holds are a good indication that it is the goddess Flora who was supposed to be represented. It is known that Flora was a famous courtesan who left her fortune to the people of Rome and who set aside some sum of deniers for the celebration of certain games that were called Florals; in recognition of this the Romans made this courtesan a deity, to whom they attributed the power to make plants flower. To hide from posterity what she had been during her life, they pretended after her death that she was the



5 Philippe de Buyster, *Une joueuse de tambour, accompagné d'un petit satyre*, engraving by François Chauveau, 1675. BNP, Cab. des Est., Va 78f, vol. 5

wife of Zephyr, the gentlest and most pleasant of winds. They built a temple for her on the Quirinale Hill, and put up several statues to her. One of them, which is crowned with flowers, can be seen in Rome at the Farnese Palace [Fig. 20]. It is of white marble, and much more animated with clothing than this one [in Paris], whose costume is a grayish marble.³¹

The *Farnese Flora*'s chief claim to fame has always been her clinging, transparent dress, and Buyster reproduced it almost line for line in his own statue, even where it crosses the navel. Thomassin went so far as to write "Flore" at the bottom of his engraving of Buyster's statue (Fig. 21).³² The *Farnese Flora* was known to Buyster's generation through casts and copies and through François Perrier's *Segmenta* of 1638, an anthology of engraved views of the most admired statues in Italy (Fig. 22).³³ One indication of Buyster's debt to Perrier is that the neckline of the nymph's gown descends from her right shoulder to her left.³⁴ He extended her toes an inch over the edge of the plinth, a curiosity that is found in Perrier's print but not in the ancient marble. The column in back of her is absent in both the print and the ancient marble. He also parted company with the *Farnese Flora* by exchanging her wreath and fillet for oak crowns, a reminder that his figure

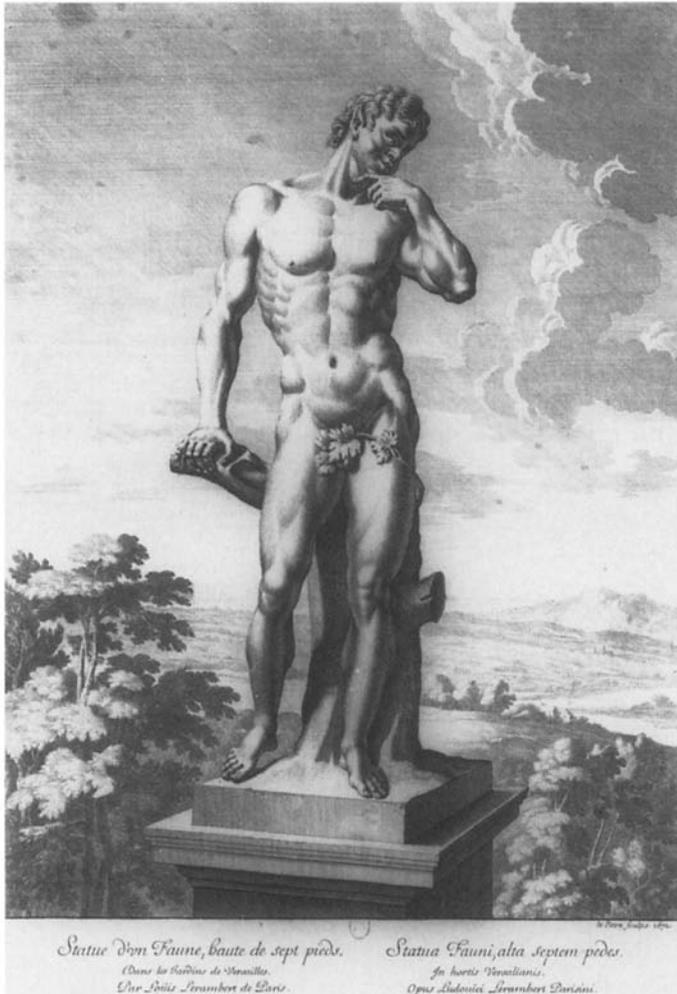


6 Buyster, *Un satyre, accompagné d'un petit satyre*, engraving by Jean Le Pautre, 1675. BNP, Cab. des Est., Va 78f, vol. 5

stood against the thick woods of Versailles. Most important, Buyster turned the nymph's head to full profile, allowing her to make eye contact with the horned satyr (Fig. 10). Their byplay leaves little to the viewer's imagination. She mails her invitation with a dropped sleeve and a lifted dress; he replies with his grapes and pipes, his private parts in poor disguise. A panther's skin lies on a stump behind the satyr.³⁵

One of the most memorable tours of the gardens was held on July 18, 1668, to celebrate the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle (Fig. 1). It began with the king and queen leading their court to the Grand Parterre in front of the main western facade, and then to the Parterre du Nord (Fig. 2).³⁶ From here they walked to the east, toward but not into the Grotte de Thétis (Fig. 26), and then to the north, along the border of the grounds. At the end of this long, straight stretch they had nowhere to turn but west, into the Rondeau, the home of the Petite Commande. Entering it, they passed between Larambert's first couple (Figs. 7, 8). Their path led them in front of Buyster's second couple (Figs. 9, 10) and between Larambert's second couple (Figs. 11, 12), on their way out. Then to the Bosquet de l'Étoile for a collation.

The satyr holds a long cowherd's horn in his hands (Fig. 11). A box lies at his hooves. Like Buyster's first satyr, who resides next to him in the southwest corner of the retreat



7 Lerambert, *Un faune*, engraving by Jean Le Pautre, 1672. BNP, Cab. des Est., Va 78f, vol. 5

(Fig. 6), he crosses his legs to the outside, away from his female partner. His robe has come undone in the process, exposing his caprine lower half. According to Guillet, this is Pan, a specific deity, but his mates are just ordinary nameless personifications. If he is the oldest member of the troupe, he is also the most forlorn and weather-beaten. His contours are beginning to sag, his muscles to loosen and droop. He has the exhausted physique of the *Dying Seneca*, the prototype of the once virile old man (Fig. 23).³⁷ However, Lerambert has posed him not after the *Seneca* but after the three-foot *Faun with Pipes* (Fig. 24), one of the treasures of the Villa Borghese in Rome, where the *Seneca* also happened to stand.³⁸ It is another essay in reversals: stiff old age for elegant youth, tall for short, hairy goat legs for glistening human legs, shrill cow horn for melodic flute.

Thomassin is alone among his contemporaries in calling Lerambert's figure "a satyr who dances."³⁹ Guillet said that he holds a cow horn, not that he dances, but of course he could easily be doing both. The same Guillet reported that his partner (Fig. 12) is "a hamadryad who dances." Both Chauveau and Thomassin call her a "dancer."⁴⁰ No disagreement there, for this is a rustic Terpsichore of superior grace. Are they both dancing, or has a serenade just now ended? Is she curtsying here, acknowledging the horn player's fine mu-



8 Lerambert, *Une joueuse de tambour, avec un petit amour auprès d'elle*, engraving by Jean Le Pautre, 1672. BNP, Cab. des Est., Va 78f, vol. 5

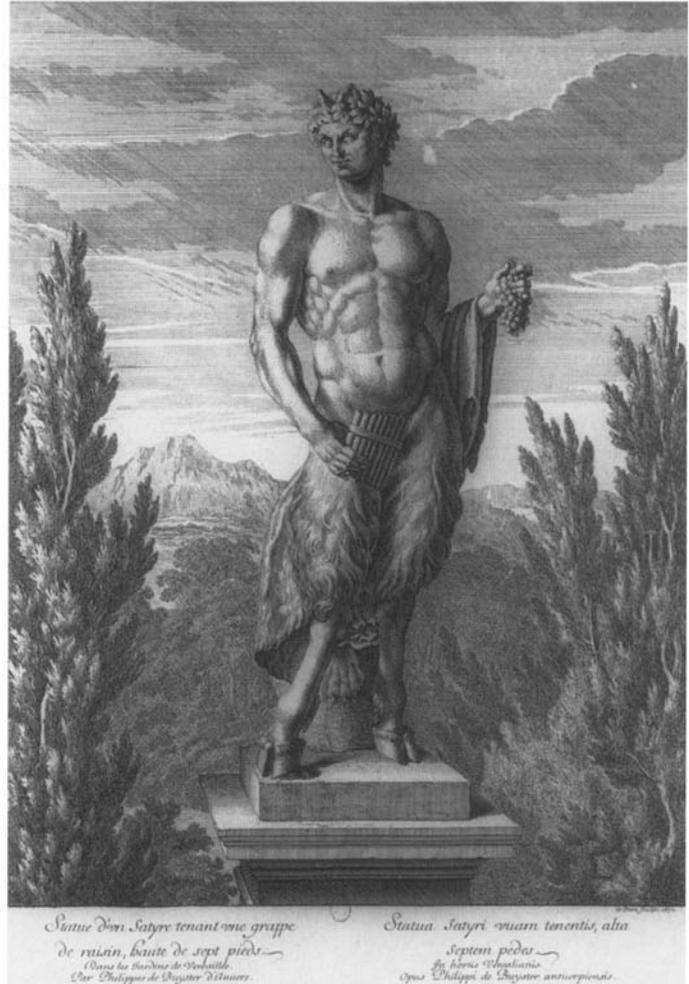
sic?⁴¹ Their communications are open to more than one reading. In the *Mythologie*, the 1627 French edition of Natale Conti's book, it is said that Pan loved to excite the nymphs with his music:

And even Plato in certain verses says that the nymphs took a singular pleasure in hearing him play the flageolet, gathering around him and dancing playfully, that is to say, the hydriads or aquatic nymphs, and the hamadryads, the forest nymphs. The Ancients also named him the Chief or Captain of the Nymphs, in the pursuit of whom he was incessantly and excessively lascivious and lewd, so much so that they were barely able to escape from the traps that he set for them.⁴²

Betsy Rosasco has argued that Lerambert's model for the *Danseuse* was the *Dancing Faun* in Florence.⁴³ Two versions of it, both unearthed in Rome in the 1630s, were bought by Cardinal Mazarin and sent to Paris (Fig. 25). At Mazarin's death in 1661 they passed to the king. Gian Lorenzo Bernini was struck by their beauty on two occasions in 1665, according to his guide, Paul Fréart de Chantelou, who spoke of them as "the two *Fauns* who dance."⁴⁴ Félibien knew both statues very well and devoted space to them in his monograph



9 Buyster, *Une nymphe tenant une couronne de chesne [Flore]*, engraving by Jean Le Pautre, 1672. BNP, Cab. des Est., Va 78f, vol. 5



10 Buyster, *Un satyre tenant une grappe de raisin*, engraving by Jean Le Pautre, 1672. BNP, Cab. des Est., Va 78f, vol. 5

on the royal collection of ancient sculptures.⁴⁵ He began his first account by introducing Faune, the king of the Latins, the inventor of plowing, the father of lesser fauns, satyrs, pans, and silvans. Shepherds of the field worshiped Faune's offspring as demigods and looked on them as their guardians. Although fauns usually have the legs of a goat, he said, there are instances where they look no different from average humans but for their tails and pointed ears. In their proportions they resemble country folk more than heroes. Félibien noticed that one dancer holds a flute (Fig. 25) and the other a pair of cymbals, the instrument of bacchic revelry. Lera- bert, picking and choosing from the ancient attributes, gave the woodwind to his male figure and the sporting pose to his female figure. He planted a few anatomical clues in the folds of the dress and the bark patterns of the tree.⁴⁶

The Mechanics of the Program

The legal contracts for the Petite Comande are lost or destroyed, at great cost to the researcher. Who conceptualized the program? From whom did the sculptors take their orders? Did they work from another artist's drawings or models? Were they their own masters? Under what conditions did they carry out their assignments? Three contemporary case studies will alert us to the possibilities.

The first case involves not Versailles but the Tuileries in Paris. At the heart of it is a four-page memo by Charles Perrault, poet, courtier, author of the fairy tales, charter member of the Petite Académie, chief assistant to Jean-Baptiste Colbert, who in 1664 had become the *surintendant* of the Bâtiments du Roi. In his memo, which he wrote in 1666, Perrault outlined a program of eighteen statues of royal virtues for the dome of the Tuileries.⁴⁷ Perrault said in his *Mémoires* that Colbert had established the Petite Académie in 1663 in order to hear from a panel of experts on

an infinite number of things having to do with buildings, where it is necessary to have wit, and which for the most part cannot be done well without a knowledge of how they were done by the ancients, and also to make descriptions of the monuments and other remarkable things that would be done, which would merit being sent to foreign lands and being left for posterity.⁴⁸

Institutionally, the Petite Académie was an arm of the Bâtiments du Roi.⁴⁹ Beginning in February 1663, the council met every Tuesday and Friday in the privacy of Colbert's library to discuss a long agenda of initiatives in the royal arts: paintings, statues, tapestries, medals, panegyrics in prose and verse,



11 Lerambert, *Un satyre* [Pan], engraving by Jean Le Pautre, 1672. BNP, Cab. des Est., Va 78f, vol. 5



12 Lerambert, *Une danseuse*, engraving by François Chauveau, 1675. BNP, Cab. des Est., Va 78f, vol. 5

legends, and the like. Perrault's memo is ironclad proof that he authored the Tuileries program in 1666. It is packed solid with allegorical language, except for these two extraordinary final paragraphs:

It is easy to see that all of these figures can have beautiful attributes, all of which can be varied differently; this will be done in the models that the sculptors will make.

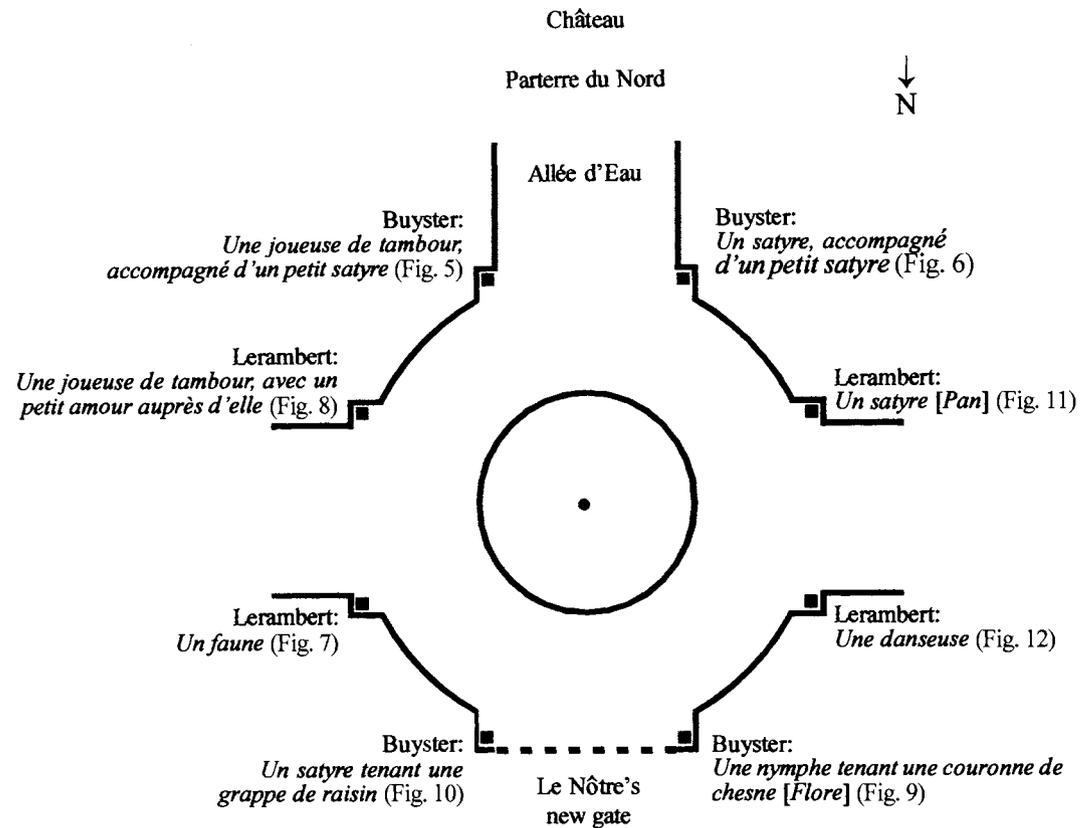
If it's thought that there may be too many women, there are many Virtues that can be represented as figures of men. We will also be able to give the sculptors a number of opportunities to satisfy their fancy and genius, for which it is necessary to have very great respect.⁵⁰

Perrault was under no illusion that his memo constituted the last word on the matter; it is nothing more than a working draft. He anticipates, indeed, he seems to welcome, a conference with his colleagues on the subject of male representation in the cast. He also accords wide latitude to the sculptors in choosing and arranging their attributes.⁵¹

Perrault's tribute to his sculptors has the ring of personal acquaintanceship, even though he did not name them in his memo. Other sources tell us who they are: Thibaut Poissant and Philippe de Buyster, flush from his success in the Petite Commande. Poissant presided over the court facade by carv-

ing six of the eight statues there; the remaining two went to colleagues. Buyster took charge of the garden facade: of the ten statues there he appropriated six for himself and left the rest to colleagues, one of whom was Louis Lerambert, his ex-partner at the Rondeau. Now for an unexpected wrinkle: Buyster, quite apart from his own negotiations with the Bâtiments du Roi, subcontracted a fledgling sculptor, Michel de La Perdrix, to carve four of the six statues for him.⁵² La Perdrix agreed to respect Buyster's models, that is to say, models that had already been screened by the Petite Académie in order for the process to have advanced this far. What remains obscure is the premodel stage. Typically, a sculptor in the 1660s was beholden to an artist of higher authority, such as Charles Le Brun or Charles Errard, who supplied the preliminary drawings. There is evidence in the archives that Le Brun designed the *stucchi* for three rooms in the Tuileries in the spring and summer of 1666.⁵³ François Girardon, Thomas Regnaudin, and Jean-Baptiste Tuby, along with our friend Lerambert, carried them out. This is Le Brun the *premier peintre du roi*, the *directeur* of the Gobelins, the *chancelier*, as well as one of the *recteurs* of the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture—the most powerful figure on the artistic stage of France. That he designed the statues for the Tuileries is more than a strong possibility.

Our second detour also leads to Paris, to the Galerie



13 Reconstruction of the Petite Commande of 1664 (author)

d'Apollon of the Louvre. This time the sources are silent on Charles Perrault and the Petite Académie, but that silence falls short of denying them a formative role in the sculptural program of the room; we simply lack the evidence to conclude one way or the other. Le Brun's role here is securely documented. On May 3, 1663, Girardon and Regnaudin, together with the brothers Gaspard and Balthazar Marsy, agreed to conduct themselves "according to the design and model and under the direction of M. Le Brun, Premier Peintre du Roi, to commence work on said pieces the day after tomorrow and to continue without interruption with a sufficient number of workers in order to present said works finished and perfect within the next coming year."⁵⁴ More than six dozen figures took part in this celebration of Apollo, the king's new alter ego. Each sculptor took a quarter share of the *stucchi*, still a huge job, and this is undoubtedly why the four of them were permitted to subcontract "a sufficient number of workers" on the side.

This brings us to our third case study, the Grotte de Thétis at Versailles (Fig. 26). Here we will cross paths for the first time with Claude Perrault, older brother of Charles, medical doctor, natural scientist, architect, theorist, translator of Vitruvius, author of programs for Versailles. We have no reason to doubt Charles when he asserts in his *Mémoires* that the invention of the Grotte de Thétis was his and his alone. His preamble reads, "I gave the plan for the Grotto of Versailles, which is of my invention."⁵⁵ Sixteen sixty-five is the year of his idea. The Apollo who retires to a cool underwater place at day's end, he writes, is a stand-in for Louis XIV, who rests at Versailles after laboring for mankind (compare Fig. 27, which shows Apollo/Louis XIV emerging from the water at dawn to repeat his deeds).⁵⁶ Remembering the sea creatures who tend to Apollo and his horses, Charles continues:

I told my thought to my brother the physician [Claude], who made a design of it, which was carried out exactly, to wit: Apollo in the large central niche, where the nymphs of Thetis wash and bathe him, and in the two side niches he represented the four horses of the Sun, two in each niche, who are being groomed by tritons. M. Le Brun, when the King had approved this design, drew it in full scale and gave it to be carried out, almost without changing a thing, to the Sieurs Girardon and Regnaudin for the central group, and to the Sieurs Gaspard [and Balthazar] Marsy and [Gilles] Guérin for the two side groups, where the horses are being groomed by tritons [Fig. 26].⁵⁷

He ends his discussion by crediting Claude with the designs of all the ornaments there, including the other figures, rock work, floor patterns, and portals.⁵⁸ This was the second time that Charles put his recollections of the Grotte de Thétis on paper. In 1693, some seven years before he wrote his *Mémoires*, he put together a manuscript to accompany two volumes of drawings by Claude. The manuscript is long gone, but thanks to Jean-François Blondel, who saw it in the 1700s, we have indirect access to parts of it. In a book of his own, Blondel talks of seeing some drawings of the Grotte in the Perrault manuscript:

See also, in the first volume of Perrault's manuscript, page 157, the designs that he [Claude] had provided for this Grotto in 1667 [*sic*]. Charles Perrault reports in this manuscript that his brother's project was not executed because he had imagined a design without example. For this reason, he says, it should have been preferred. It was of colossal figures that would have been of white marble, surfaced in part in *rocailles*, which would have made them



14 Raphael, *Lucretia*, engraving by Marcantonio after a lost drawing. BNP, Cab. des Est., Eb 5 Rés. BTE 9

appear to be of a single piece. The interior of this Grotto was magnificent. Le Brun, Charles Perrault always says, had only arranged the groups of figures executed by Girardon & Regnaudin. . . .⁵⁹

Blondel, still echoing Charles, ends by saying that Claude designed the entire Grotte, including the vault and floor, and that his drawings are there in the manuscript.⁶⁰ The most searching attempt to reconcile these two scenarios was made in 1961 by Liliane Lange.⁶¹ She concluded from our information on Charles and Claude Perrault that the Petite Académie was the governing body behind the programs. What matters for us is that Claude was the leading designer in both scenarios and that Le Brun was a follower in both, Claude's shadow. However, that Le Brun carried out Claude's winning design "almost without changing a thing" is a material concession by Charles; to that extent there is still room in his account for Le Brun's creative involvement. Indeed, beginning with Claude Nivelon's biography at the end of the seventeenth century, there has been wide agreement among

historians that Le Brun did design the Apollo groups.⁶² Lange presented an airtight case in favor of the idea. All the same, it is arguable that he simply coordinated and formalized what Claude had sketched in general terms.

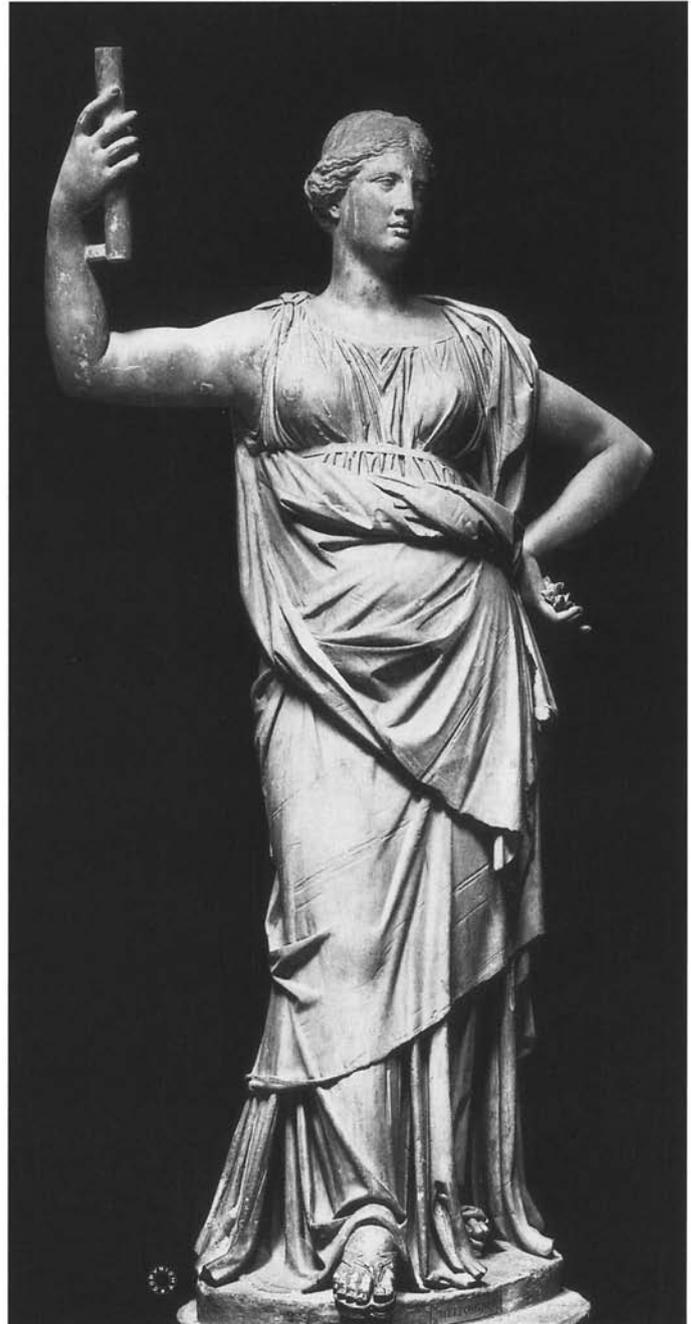
No two of the case studies are alike, and there is no reason to suppose that the Petite Commande was conducted along a specific line, either; there was no sacred routine for the production of royal sculpture in the 1660s. Surely our program had quirks to it, just as the case studies had quirks of their own; just as surely it had one or more procedural features in common with them. The Petite Commande, as I see it, matured something like this: in the summer of 1664, it dawned on someone in or associated with the Petite Académie that a series of statues would work well at the Rondeau. The task is assigned to a seated member, à la Charles Perrault at the Tuileries, or to a trusted outsider, à la Claude Perrault at the Grotte de Thétis. The assignee lays his proposal on the table at one of the committee's semiweekly meetings, introducing it with a well-crafted memo, à la Perrault's memo for the Tuileries. The memo is debated and amended and finally approved. The preliminary drawings come next. Le Brun, unquestionably the designer at the Galerie d'Apollon and arguably the designer at the Tuileries, rushes to mind. A hasty idea? What about Claude Perrault, the first designer at the Grotte? Now for the three-dimensional stages: Lerambert and Buyster prepare their small-scale models, venting their



15 Raphael, *Galatea*, engraving by Hendrik Goltzius after the fresco in the Villa Farnesina, Rome. BNP, Cab. des Est., Ec 37



16 Michelangelo, *Drunken Bacchus*. Florence, Museo Nazionale de Bargello (photo: Alinari/Art Resource, NY)



17 *Cesi Juno*, Roman copy of 2nd-century Greek original. Rome, Museo Capitolino (photo: Alinari/Art Resource, NY)

“fancy” and “genius” in the process, à la the Tuileries. Colbert, once he is satisfied with the plan, brings it to the king for his approbation. The sculptors advance to their blocks of stone. Four greater-than-life-size statues will put a burden on any sculptor, but he always has the convenient option of hiring a subcontractor to help out, à la Buyster and La Perdrix at the Tuileries.

The Perraults Elsewhere in the Gardens

An unidentified author, writing the history of the Petite Académie in 1694, marveled at the art of Versailles, which had by then become the official seat of the court and government: “All the designs for the paintings that adorn the apartments of Versailles were made by this company. The

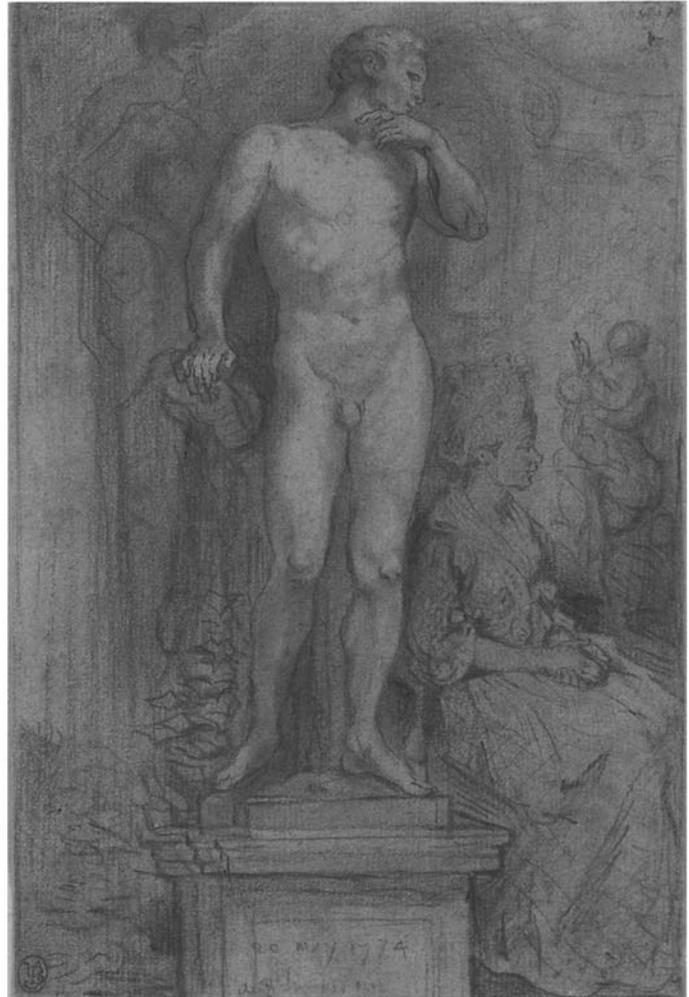
designs for the fountains and statues were considered and agreed upon there, and nothing was done in the Bâtiments that was not discussed in the Petite Académie.”⁶³ This is a provocative claim because the records of the deliberations at the Petite Académie have disappeared. But one does expect the savants to assert the authority that Colbert had bestowed on them in February 1663. Charles Perrault, who had become Colbert’s chief deputy at the Bâtiments du Roi in 1664, was the bridge between the agency and the gardens.⁶⁴ He was everywhere at Versailles, inspecting the work yards, drafting memos, serving as liaison to the on-site officials who reported to him on the minutiae of the day.⁶⁵ He knew it intimately. In the 1670s he toyed with the idea of writing a poetic appreciation of the fountains there.⁶⁶ He conceptualized the Grotte,



18 Michelangelo, *David*. Florence, Gallerie dell'Accademia (photo: Alinari/Art Resource, NY)

that is certain, and it is highly probable that the Labyrinthe of 1665 was another one of his inventions.⁶⁷

The provocative claim of 1694 is acceptable for much of the 1660s if we think of Claude Perrault as an adviser to the Petite Académie, a kind of adjunct member, even though he never sat on it officially. Charles says that Claude “was ordered” to design some large vases for the gardens, and that two of them were turned over to Girardon for execution.⁶⁸ More than anyplace else it was the northern zone that profited from Claude’s many creations. Charles claims the design of the Bain de Diane for Claude, conceding that Girardon’s relief is superior to the design (Fig. 28).⁶⁹ The design of the Allée d’Eau is likewise attributed by Charles to his brother,



19 Gabriel de Saint-Aubin, *The Rendez-Vous in a Park*, crayon and pen drawing of the *Faune* by Louis Lercambert, 1774. Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art, Rosenwald Collection, B-22305 (photo: © Board of Trustees, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.)

not once but twice (Figs. 4, 29). The passage from his *Mémoires* includes an intriguing throwaway line:

Design of the Allée d’Eau at Versailles. —My brother [Claude] also made the design for the Allée d’Eau, which was carried out entirely. *At that time, the King left the commissioning of everything to M. Colbert, and M. Colbert relied on us for the invention of most of the designs that had to be made.* But the ladies of the court, having noticed that the King took great pleasure in it, wanted to take part themselves by giving some [designs] from their side to pleasantly amuse the King. Mme de Montespan gave the design for the Bosquet du Marais, where a bronze tree spouts water from all of its white iron leaves, and reeds of the same material also spout water from all sides.⁷⁰

In his lost manuscript he again limited Le Brun’s role to that of an arranger. Here is Blondel’s synopsis, which includes another tantalizing line:

Several people attribute the design of this cascade [the Bain de Diane] and the Allée d’Eau to Le Brun; however,

one finds the designs for them on page 165, etc., in the first volume of Claude Perrault's manuscript, which Charles, his brother, claims were carried out, and where he says that Le Brun only presided over the arrangement of the figures, in such a way that *Claude Perrault, according to his brother, appears to have had a share in the decoration of several of the fountains and bosquets of Versailles*, which would prove that not only was he a good architect, judging from the peristyle of the Louvre and other buildings that we have attributed to him in the preceding volumes, but also that he excelled in the arts of taste.⁷¹

What are we to make of Blondel's cryptic remark that Claude had a hand in shaping "several" other fountains and retreats in the gardens? Charles said in his lost manuscript that one of these sites was the Arc de Triomphe, to the east of the Allée d'Eau. Blondel, unable to find Claude's drawings where Charles said they were supposed to be, was highly skeptical of



20 *Farnese Flora*, Roman copy of 4th-century Greek original. Naples, Museo Nazionale (photo: Alinari/Art Resource, NY)

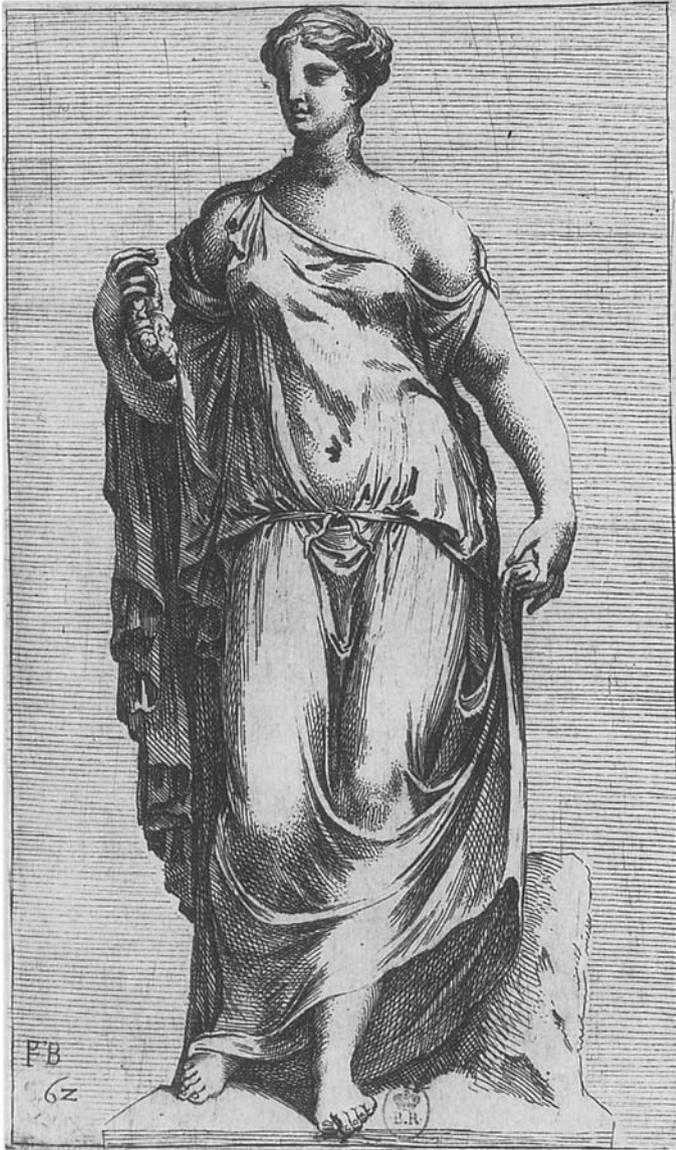


21 Simon Thomassin, engraving of the *Une nymphe tenant une couronne de chesne [Flora]* by Philippe de Buyster, 1689, from his *Recueil des figures*, Paris, 1694, pl. 122 (image reversed). BNP, Cab. des Est., Va 78f, vol. 5

the claim.⁷² The case of the Arc de Triomphe is still unsolved, but there are at least two points worth considering. First, Blondel's failure to find the drawings is by itself insufficient cause to deny the attribution to Claude. And second, the retreat lies deep in the northern zone, close to Claude's many certifiable works there. Another neighbor, the Fontaine de la Pyramide by Girardon, is also short on documentation (Fig. 30). Gerold Weber has argued, conclusively in my opinion, that its design belongs to Claude Perrault.⁷³ Blondel's cryptic remark hits home. The hint that Claude was engaged elsewhere in the gardens of Versailles should be motivation enough for us to search for him there.

The Perraults and Burlesque

At the beginning of his *Mémoires*, Charles Perrault talks of his tumultuous last year of school. He was fifteen or sixteen years old at the time. A strong debater, Charles was invited by his philosophy teacher to defend a thesis in an open forum, but



22 François Perrier, engraving of the *Farnese Flora*, from his *Segmenta nobilium signorum et statuarum*, Rome, 1638 (image reversed). BNP, Cab. des Est., Fb 18

his parents vetoed the idea as useless and too expensive. For that crime he was barred by his teacher from participating in later debates, the worst punishment of all: "I was bold enough to tell him that my arguments were better than those of the Irish students whom he had invited, because mine were new and theirs were old and worn out."⁷⁴ An argument broke out and he left the classroom, never to return. A friend, Beaurain, picked up his books and left with Charles. For the next three or four years they studied together on their own. They read most of the Bible and most of Tertullian, they read Jean de la Serre's and Enrico Davila's histories of France, they translated and excerpted Virgil, Horace, Nepos Cornelius, and Tacitus, among other ancients. At the end of those enlightening years . . .

Translation of the sixth book of the *Aeneid*, in burlesque. —The burlesque came into fashion at that time. M. Beaurain, who knew that I wrote verse but was unable to do it himself, wanted us to translate the sixth book of

the *Aeneid* into burlesque verse. One day when we were working on it, and were still only at the beginning, we started to laugh so loudly at the silly things that we were putting into our work that my brother, the one who later became a doctor of the Sorbonne [Nicolas], and whose room was next to mine, came in to see what we were laughing at. We told him, and since he was still only a student, he sat down to work with us and helped a great deal. My brother the physician [Claude], who learned how we were amusing ourselves, joined in; he did even more on his own, in his leisure time, than all of us together. In this way the translation of the sixth book of the *Aeneid* was completed, and after I had copied it out as neatly as I could, he [Claude] made two very beautiful illustrations in China ink. This manuscript is on the shelf where only books by family members are kept.⁷⁵

It was 1648, making Charles twenty years old and Claude thirty-five. This was their first attempt at burlesque, then the rage in France. The genre had been introduced in French verse by Antoine-Girard de Saint-Amant in the 1620s and 1630s and taken up after him by Gilles Ménage. The golden age of burlesque was 1643 to 1653. Saint-Amant's *La Rome ridicule* appeared at the beginning of that span, as did Paul



23 *Dying Seneca*, Roman copy of a Hellenistic original. Paris, Musée du Louvre (photo: RMN)



24 *Faun with Pipes*, Roman copy of a 4th-century Greek original. Musée du Louvre (photo: RMN)

Scarron's *Recueil de quelques vers burlesques* and *Typhon*, the first burlesque epic. In 1648, the year of the Perraults' hilarious debut, Charles d'Assouci published his *Jugement de Paris* and Scarron the first part of his *Virgile travesti*. The Latin poem was the butt of Antoine Furetière's *Énéide travestie, livre quatriésme* from 1649, Georges de Brébeuf's *Énéide de Virgile en vers burlesques, livre septiesme* from 1650, and Henri de Loménie de Brienne's *Virgile goguenard ou le douziésme livre de l'Énéide travesty (puique travesty y a)* from 1652. And that is only a short list of the assaults on Virgil.⁷⁶

In 1651, at the peak of the literary frenzy, Charles took a law degree at Orléans and began pleading cases in the courts of Paris. Claude, who had earned his doctorate in 1642, joined the medical faculty of the Université de Paris, advancing to professor of physiology in 1651 and to professor of pathology in 1653. It is said in the archives of the Faculté de Médecine that the dignitaries who heard Claude's inaugural



25 *Dancing Faun*, engraving by Claude Mellan after a Roman copy of a Hellenistic original. BNP, Cab. des Est., Aa 11

lecture on January 11, 1653, "were carried away in admiration for his eloquence and uncommon manner."⁷⁷ The date is illuminating: It was in 1653, even as he was enchanting the officials with his smooth delivery, that Claude conspired with his brothers and their friend Beaurain to do another burlesque epic, *Les murs de Troye*. Their caper was fondly remembered by Charles in his *Mémoires*:

The *Walls of Troy*. —This work [the "translation" of the *Aeneid*, book 6] inspired us to do the *Walls of Troy, or On the Origin of the Burlesque*, of which the first book was a collaboration and has been published [1653], and the second is only a manuscript and was composed entirely by my brother the physician [Claude]. The ridiculous is pushed a little too far in these *Walls of Troy*, but there are some very excellent passages. And the overall subject is very good, because it is very ingenious to say that Apollo, the son of Jupiter, invented *la grande poésie*, since this poetry is known as the language of the gods, and that he invented rustic or pastoral poetry because he had been a shepherd in the kingdom of Admetus, and that he dreamed up burlesque while building the walls of Troy with Neptune; and that it was in the workshops of the masons and all sorts of laborers that he learned all the trivial expressions that enter into the composition of burlesque.

All that these imaginings lacked in order to be esteemed



26 Grotte de Thétis, interior (destroyed), engraving by Jean Le Pautre, 1676. BNP, Cab. des Est., Va 78f, vol. 1



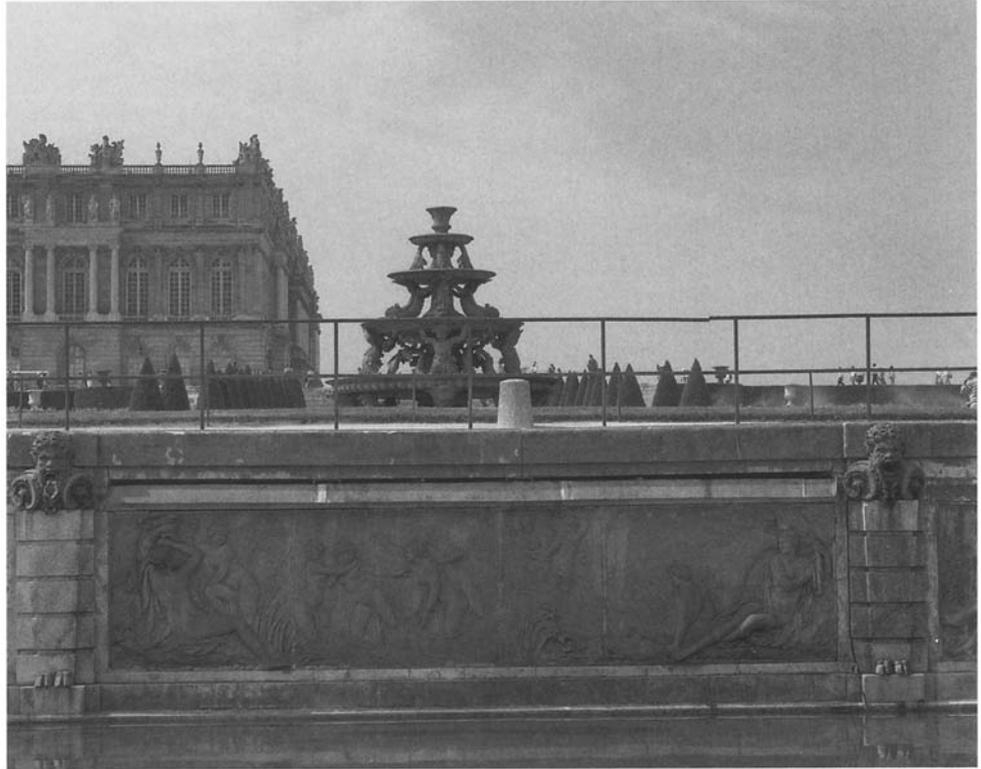
27 Fontaine d'Apollon, engraving by Louis de Chastillon, 1683. BNP, Cab. des Est., Va 423, vol. 1

by the savants was being ancient. There are two verses in the sixth [book] of the *Aeneid* that have been much admired: they are in the place where Virgil says that the heroes retain the same habits in the Elysian Fields that they had during their lives. The translation says that there one might see Tydaeus the coachman

Who, holding the shade of a broom,
Swept out the shade of a coach.

Cyrano [de Bergerac] was so delighted to see that the chariots were only shades, just the same as those who were in charge of them, that he insisted upon making our acquaintance. This idea came from the doctor of the Sorbonne [Nicolas].⁷⁸

The word *burlesque* is Italian in origin, sixteenth century, and translates into “ridicule” or “mockery.” It is a literary genre of a hundred heads, but essentially it aims to poke fun at lofty material in either of two ways. One way is to take a revered classic, such as the *Aeneid*, the *Iliad*, or the *Metamorphoses*, and spoof it, put slang or clichés in the mouths of gods and heroes, stage the old events in a modern city or countryside, and so on. The other approach is to bless a lowly subject, such as the life and times of a clockmaker, with the grandeur and solemnity of an epic. Either way it is the jarring incongruity that brings both surprise and pleasure to the reader. In the third volume of his *Parallèle des anciens et des modernes*, which he wrote in 1692, toward the end of his life, Charles framed it in those terms:



28 François Girardon, Bain de Diane, Allée d'Eau, Versailles, lead, and Nicolas Legendre, satyrs, bronze (photo: RMN)

Burlesque, which is a type of ridicule, consists of the incongruity between the idea that one gives of a thing and its true idea, just as the rational consists of the congruity of these two ideas. The incongruity is made in two ways, one by speaking basely about the most elevated things, and the other by speaking magnificently about the basest things.⁷⁹

Little if anything is off-limits to burlesque. Misspellings, crazy rhymes, vulgarities, trivia, childish grammar, small talk, puns—these are some of the honored features. Burlesque is the voice of irreverence, low humor, plain silliness. What, according to the Perraults, does a *pied gris* (a peasant dusty from the road) see on entering the big city?

De même qu'un jeune pied gris
Dans le Marché Neuf, à Paris,
Voyant passer les douze apôtres,
Qui vont les uns après les autres,
S' imagine être dans les cieux
Et n'a pas trop de ses deux yeux. . . .⁸⁰

(Just as a young peasant / At the Marché Neuf in Paris, / Seeing the twelve Apostles pass by, / Going one after the other, / Imagines he is in the heavens / And cannot take in enough with his two eyes. . . .)

One thing it is not: for all the so-called *bas* representations in burlesque, it is not a popular genre. It is written for the very people whose rarefied tastes are under attack.⁸¹ If the reader fails to recognize the rules and fashions that are being flouted, the point of the exercise is lost. Charles said that their burlesque fantasies needed more age “in order to be esteemed by the savants.” Although spite and slander are not foreign to the genre, most authors of burlesque had



29 Lerambert, Fontaine d'Enfant, Allée d'Eau, Versailles, engraving by Jean Le Pautre, 1673. BNP, Cab. des Est., Va 78f, vol. 3



30 Girardon, Fontaine de la Pyramide, Parterre du Nord, Versailles, lead (photo: RMN)

no agenda other than inducing laughter in the informed reader.⁸² Exaggerated irony was often a part of it, as in the first book of the Perraults', *Murs de Troie*, where they declare that beauty in burlesque is inversely proportionate to the silliness of the words:

Mon oncle je ne vous puis dire
 Combien ma Requeste a fait rire
 Tant le Roy, que ceux du Conseil;
 Combien ce stile nompareil
 D'expliquer les plus belles choses
 En les retenant presque encloses
 Sous des termes vils & grossiers,
 A ravy tous ces Conseillers,
 Et combien ces esprits sublimes
 Au travers de mes sottes rimes
 Découvrant mon raisonnement,
 Ont reçu de contentement.
 Ils disoient que dedans ce stile
 Une conception subtile
 Ne perdoit rien de sa beauté,
 Et qu'un discours moins ajusté
 La faisoit briller davantage,
 Ainsi qu'on voit un beau visage
 Ne vous parestre pas plus lait,
 Pour estre sous un Bavolet. . . .⁸³

(My uncle I cannot tell you / How my request made
 laugh / The King as much as those on the Council; / How

much this unparalleled style / Of expressing the most
 beautiful things / By keeping them nearly enclosed /
 Within the vile and coarse terms, / Delighted all these
 Councillors, / And how much these sublime minds /
 Through my silly rhymes / Discovering my reasoning /
 Received contentment. / They said that within this style /
 A subtle concept / Lost none of its beauty, / And that a
 discourse less tidy / Made it shine more, / In the same way
 that a beautiful face being seen / Does not appear more
 ugly, / By being under a bonnet. . . .)

It was the crowning irony for Claude to ridicule his own
 ridicule of ancient myth by penning these words in the
 margins of his *Murs de Troie*, book 2: "Birth of a Monster
 called Burlesque."⁸⁴ His Monster is a parody of the Python,
 the hideous serpent born in the slime of the Deucalion flood,
 as recounted by Ovid in the *Metamorphoses* (1.434–47):

En ce lieu dans des eaux croupies
 Sous les platres et les orties,
 Et parmy les décombremens
 Des ruines des vieux bastimens,
 Se forme de leur pourriture
 Un monstre d'etrange nature,
 Qui dans peu fera repentir
 Phebus de l'avoir fait nourrir.
 Sa voix sera basse et vulgaire
 Sa langue epaisse et fort grossiere:
 Sur la terre il ira rempant
 Comme un miserable serpent,
 Ne se plaisant que dans lordure,
 Son extravagante figure
 Etonnera tout l'univers
 De ses caracteres divers:
 Tantost sa figure ironique
 Meslée avec l'hyperbolique
 Choquera le peuple ignorant
 Tantost comme un loup devorant
 Il cherchera par tout à mordre,
 Et causera bien du desordre
 Par le poison pernicieux
 Qu'il ira vomir en tous lieux.
 Souvent en forme de satire
 Il fera tout crever de rire,
 Plus souvent froid comme un glaçon
 Il viendra donner le frisson.
 Alors de son haleine infecte
 On verra meint et meint insecte
 S'eclorre dessus des papiers,
 Qui rongera tous les lauriers.
 Or cette aventure menace
 Tout le Royaume de Parnasse,
 Car par cette corruption
 Des poètes la nation
 Sera tellement avilie,
 Qu'on fera passer pour folie
 Ce nom celebre et glorieux
 Qui les rendoit egaux aux Dieux.⁸⁵

(In this place of stagnant waters / Under plaster debris
 and nettles, / And amongst the rubble / Of the ruins of

old buildings, / Is forming itself from their rot / A monster of strange nature, / Who soon will make repent / Phoebus for having fed it. / Its voice will be low and coarse / Its tongue thick and very vulgar: / On the earth it will go crawling / As a vile serpent, / Finding pleasure only in filth, / Its brazen appearance / Will astonish the entire universe / With its diverse features: / Sometimes its ironic countenance / Mixed with the hyperbolic / Will shock uneducated people / Sometimes as a ravaging wolf / It will seek everywhere to bite, / And will cause much disorder / By the pernicious poison / That it is going to vomit everywhere. / Often in the form of satire / It will make everyone burst from laughing, / More often cold as a block of ice / It will bring shivers. / Then from its foul breath / Will be seen many, many an insect / Hatch on top of the papers, / Who will eat away at all the laurels. / This matter threatens / The whole kingdom of Parnassus, / For through this corruption / Of the poets the nation / Will be so greatly debased, / That one will take for folly / This famous and glorious name / That made them equal to the gods.)

Authors of burlesque usually avoided the high ethical road of the satirist, who ridicules a folly or fashion in the hope of eradicating it. Not Claude Perrault, who declared in the preface to book 2 of his *Murs de Troye* that “this poem is a satire against the poetry of the Ancients, or rather, against that of the Moderns who pretend to imitate the Ancients.”⁸⁶ Pierre de Ronsard was a particularly guilty offender in Claude’s eyes.⁸⁷ Charles said in his *Mémoires* that he himself was already preaching a modernist gospel as a teenager in school, objecting to the tired ideas of his Irish classmates. This was almost forty-five years before he stood at the frontlines of the Quarrel of the Ancients and the Moderns in the Académie Française in the 1680s.

A Rustic Vaudeville

The Petite Commande of 1664 is a burlesque in three dimensions. I submit that the Perrault brothers were the wits behind it, although in which one of their two brilliant minds it was hatched will likely never be known. Any attempt to credit Claude or Charles with a specific idea will likely end in failure. Once the clever associations began tumbling out, I suspect, it was Claude who took the leadership. We have seen that Charles paved the way for Claude on two occasions, first by venturing with Beaurain into the field of burlesque poetry, and later by formulating the Apollo program of the Grotte de Thétis; both times, Claude took Charles’s initiative and carried it through to his own sterling finish. Claude also programmed a number of works apart from Charles, such as the Allée d’Eau and the Bain de Diane and possibly the Arc de Triomphe. Among his multiple talents, Claude was an accomplished draftsman, and so I am inclined to give the initial drawings to him.⁸⁸ The stylistic unity of the Petite Commande presupposes a single master designer. Charles Le Brun is missing from my picture of this program.⁸⁹

Masquerading the satyrs and hamadryads as famous characters in the history of art is the primary burlesque idea of the Petite Commande. The viewer is thrown into a state of enjoyable wonder by what Charles Perrault calls “the incongru-

ity between the idea that one gives of a thing and its true idea.” It depends to a large extent on the viewer’s ability to identify the work under attack, and to a lesser extent on his approval of the attack. Is the model a worthy or deserving target of prankish imitation? Is the imitation a worthy opponent of the lofty model? A tambourinist (Fig. 5) excites a satyr (Fig. 6) with her suggestive music, a parody of the drama by Raphael and Sebastiano on the walls of the Farnesina (Fig. 15); the cub impersonates a character of his own age by Michelangelo (Fig. 16). One of the nymphs (Fig. 9) is the rustic reincarnation of a deified Roman courtesan by the name of Flora (Fig. 20). The role model for the other tambourine player (Fig. 8) is the majestic, easily agitated Juno (Fig. 17); her partner (Fig. 7), tricked by the wine, plays the part of Michelangelo’s most vaunted creation (Fig. 18). Anatomically, Pan (Fig. 11) resembles the *Dying Seneca* (Fig. 23), but in his casual cross-legged pose he emulates the *Faun with Pipes* (Fig. 24); his partner (Fig. 12) imitates the light footwork of some ancient male dancers (Fig. 25). All obviously and deliberately so. Recognition is the indispensable first step in any burlesque, the springboard to more distant or obscure associations.

A handful of examples will do. First, there is no denying that Lerambert’s *Faune* (Fig. 7) is a parody of the great *David* (Fig. 18). Incongruities abound: a risqué touch to the beard instead of a sling in the hand; a wily (and fully visible) nymph in place of a fearsome (but invisible) giant; a state of drunken double vision instead of ferocious concentration. He makes a mockery of David’s magnificent *contrapposto*. The tree trunk has become a useful crutch for the inebriate. By lampooning the Renaissance statue, of course, the *Faune* also lampoons the Old Testament hero himself, the second king of Israel, who as a young man was often smitten by feminine beauty. By extension, and in the spirit of high burlesque, the object of his lust becomes one of his conquests, say, Bathsheba (Fig. 8). Then we remember that she is masquerading as the *Cesi Juno* (Fig. 17), and just that quickly he becomes a parody of Jupiter, no wallflower either; indeed, he has the look of mock contrition, and well he should, his wife having discovered him in one of his many outrageous disguises.

It was routine for authors of burlesque to spice up their epics with tidbits from the local scene. In 1662, two years before the birth of the Petite Commande, Roland Fréart de Chambray issued his *Idée de la perfection de la peinture*, a fierce polemic that glorified Raphael for his mastery of the rules of painting and his decorum, and vilified Michelangelo for his extravagance and vulgarity and ignorance of the rules. If Raphael’s figures have a noble and poetic beauty to them, he writes, in Michelangelo’s we usually see “a rustic and heavy ponderousness; and if grace was one of the chief talents of the former, the latter seems to have taken it upon himself to appear rough and unpleasant through an affected hardness in his manner of drawing, muscular and furrowed in the contours of the figures, and by the extravagant contortions into which he twists his figures indiscriminately.”⁹⁰ The Ancients would be outraged, he said, at the sight of all those indecent body parts in the *Last Judgment*.⁹¹ Irresistible bait for the authors of the Petite Commande? Was it to irritate the pious and small-minded that Lerambert staged his groggy faun in full frontal nudity, à la Michelangelo’s colossus? By



31 Annibale Carracci, *Hercules and Iole*, engraving by Carlo Cesio after the fresco in the Galleria Farnese. BNP, Cab. des Est., Ab 24 pet. fol.

giving some cover to the pseudo-David, Le Pautre turned his print of 1672 into a double burlesque, a burlesque burlesque (Fig. 7). This is one of the most persevering vines in the history of art, a two- or three-foot creeper on assignment to protect the faun's false modesty.

No burlesque is complete without an assortment of silly details, and the two foot-sized platforms that keep the *joueuse de tambour* and the *petit amour* from toppling to the ground are a case in point (Fig. 8). It is a little joke at the expense of the many ancient figures with toes draped over the edges of their plinths, including the *Laocoön*, the *Ludovisi Mars*, the *Silenus with the Infant Bacchus*, several of the *Niobides*, and the *Cesi Juno* (Fig. 17), Lerambert's model in this work.⁹² Just as silly are the stumps that rise naturally from their plinths to support Lerambert's *Faune* (Fig. 7), *Satyre* (Fig. 11), and *Danseuse* (Fig. 12) and one of Buyster's *Satyres* (Fig. 6). It is less a parody of the ancient stumps and trunks, which stand on their plinths like columns on their stylobates (Figs. 20, 25), than it is a jab at Michelangelo's skimpy trees, which seem to have roots in the rocky soil (Figs. 16, 18).⁹³ The faun's stump, like David's, is multibranching, but it must be five or six times larger.

Lerambert's musician holds a Basque tambourine, Guillet said (Fig. 8). Marin Mersenne, the foremost music theorist of the time, said that such a drum will produce a pleasant sound when shaken or beaten and that bells can be attached to the rim if more noise is desired.⁹⁴ In the hands of Lerambert, however, the tambourine is more than a sound maker, it is also an emblem of *voluptas* (sensual pleasure), following the lead of Annibale Carracci, who famously included one in his scene of Hercules and Iole on the vault of the Galleria

Farnese in Rome.⁹⁵ Out of infatuation for Iole, the queen of Maeonia, even the mighty dragon-slayer is humbled by Love, surrendering his club and lion's skin and taking up feminine pastimes. Nicolas Mignard had engraved the Farnesian image in 1637.⁹⁶ Carlo Cesio engraved it again for his *Argomento della Galleria Farnese* of 1657, on the eve of our Petite Commande (Fig. 31).⁹⁷ In age, physique, and roguish behavior, Lerambert's Amour is strikingly close to Carracci's. The Amours aim their outstretched arms at their less-than-heroic male victims, a shared gesture that goes a long way toward proving the influence.⁹⁸ G.-P. Bellori, in an introduction to Cesio's book, said that Hercules "sits playing the tambourine, wrapped in a feminine way in the golden cloak of his lover Iole, who teaches him how to move his hand; she leans on the club and wears around her hips the lion's skin. Amour laughs and points to Hercules, following, in part, [Torquato] Tasso's description."⁹⁹ Here he invokes the *Gerusalemme liberata*, where it is twice said that Amour watched the hero's downfall with childish delight (canto 6.92, canto 16.3). In the latter canto, it is a beautiful carving of the fallen Hercules that Tasso describes, a work of art, which widens the range of our burlesque conceit that much further.¹⁰⁰ Claude knew the epic almost from memory. In the margins of his *Murs de Troye*, book 2, he wrote some random notes, one of which, alongside his story of the birth of Burlesque, is familiar to us. Elsewhere, in detailing a month-long drought that delayed the wall builders, Claude wrote, "Imitation of the description of a drought in Tasso, book 2 of the book [sic]."¹⁰¹ A few lines earlier, again in the margins, he listed two classics, Diodorus Siculus's *Bibliotheca historica* and Saint Augustine's *Cité de Dieu*, for their stories of devastating droughts in history.¹⁰² His Trojan drought is a burlesque in three disguises at once. Piling one scholarly association on top of another is a favored Claudian strategy. That the figures in the Petite Commande have disguised themselves as two or even three characters from myth and history is typical of his methods.

Buyster's *Joueuse de tambour*, at the foot of the Allée d'Eau, is our next focus (Fig. 5). Another representative of *voluptas* (compare Fig. 8), she plays the noisy variety with bells. But for now we need to return to the figure on whom she is modeled, the *Galatea* (Fig. 15). This was not the first time that her lovely corkscrew pose had appeared in Raphael's oeuvre. It had been rehearsed a short time earlier in a now lost drawing of Lucretia, who rested a foot on the foundation of her tomb in token of her honorable death (Fig. 14). On that precedent the pose was then repeated by one of the philosophers in the left corner of the *School of Athens*, who plants his foot on a stone block in token of his eternal search for the truth.¹⁰³ Gradually the block came to be affiliated with the virtues of History, and that is where it appears in Cesare Ripa's *Icomologia* at the turn of the sixteenth century. For Jean Baudouin, the translator and editor of the first French edition of 1644, History is one of man's worthiest companions (compare Fig. 32, a woodcut joined to his text):

Her figure almost resembles an angel's, due to the large wings that are attached to her shoulders. And although she looks backward, she does not however cease writing in a large book that Saturn supports, and rests her left foot on a square stone.

History, who makes a profession of writing down, in an orderly fashion, what takes place in the world, is portrayed with wings, to show that she is going to make public everywhere the diverse events with an unbelievable speed.

To this end she turns her eyes backward, because she works for posterity through her descriptions of past things, in order to perpetuate the memory of them. For, as Petrarch says:

She subdues the years, and her writings are such,
That through them she makes men immortal.

That is why she leans on the shoulders of Saturn, because she pronounces a just account of Time, over whom she is victorious. In a word, this is the mistress of life, the light of memory, the spirit of actions, and the upholder of truth. For she must never allow herself to be corrupted by lies, nor by her own interests, but say exactly what is, without applying any gloss to this unaffected sincerity, for which her white dress is the symbol.¹⁰⁴

Turning back to Buyster's tambourinist, it is a notable fact that she, too, touches her foot to a stone block—not her left one, as Ripa has it, but her right. No longer an emblem of man's noble efforts to preserve his heritage, the block is here simply a support for the nymph's leg at play, a launching pad from which she advertises her appealing forms to her suitor. What a revelation to the planners of the Petite Commande: Raphael's Galatea, who speeds in one direction while looking in the other, is the sister of Ripa's about-faced History, who writes in her volume but turns away from it in order to serve posterity. It was a short step from that revelation to the next: Why not invert the whole mythographic tradition and apply it to a seductress from the forest? Turn History's every virtue upside down? Instant gratification, so much for the hard-earned lessons of the past. Public flirtation, so much for the selfless and often lonely search for historical truth. The inviting shoulder, so much for the majestic wings. The impolite tambourine, so much for the bound book. The tipsy satyr cub, so much for old Saturn, the usual occupant of that spot in the compositions. Ripa called on the wisdom of Petrarch, who said of History that she is capable of immortalizing the efforts of man. Not so in the burlesque world of the Rondeau, where the tambourinist carries on as if there were no tomorrow even though her plinth and pedestal are chipping away. It is a spoof of the ever-popular twin themes of *vanitas* and *memento mori*. Chauveau got into the spirit of the game in 1675 when he signed and dated his engraving above the chipped pedestal rather than on the frame.¹⁰⁵

The base of a Corinthian column peeks out from behind the gown of Buyster's *Nymph* tenant une couronne de chesne (Fig. 9), our would-be *Flora* (Fig. 20). This bashful little ornament is a reminder that the good senators of Rome had once erected a temple on the Quirinale Hill in honor of their favorite courtesan, the civic-minded *Flora*.¹⁰⁶ The idea is taken up by the richly rusticated arch in Le Pautre's background. But is there even more to it, in a burlesque sense? We have it from Ripa that the column is an attribute of Con-

stancy, which he defines as

the firm resolution to resist the sufferings of the body, and to show as much virtue as is required, so as not to allow



32 Jacques de Bie, *Histoire*, woodcut from Cesare Ripa, *Iconologie*, Paris, 1644. BNP, Salle de Travail, Z 515

oneself to be overcome by the anxieties of the mind or the passions of the soul or by the reversals of Fortune. She rests her hand on a column to strengthen her position, following the proverb: "That which is well-supported, rarely falls." In effect, being constant is nothing other than showing oneself to be firm and steadfast in all matters that push the understanding to some resolution.¹⁰⁷

This *Flora* is firm and steadfast all right, in her pursuit of life's fleeting pleasures. The column is an architectural reply to the stone block lying under the foot of Buyster's other fun-loving nymph, the tambourinist, across the pool (Fig. 5).

Another target of the Petite Commande are the popular entertainments of the day, the theater of the commedia dell'arte and the musicians, dancers, and comedians who played in carnivals and fairs. Our woodland deities are striking the poses and performing the roles of art history's most recognizable figures, Galatea, David, Juno, *Flora*, and so on, and to that extent they are stock characters; the behavior of each character is predictable and suitable to his or her basic nature. So it is with Pan (Fig. 11), who passes for both the *Dying Seneca* (Fig. 23) and the *Faun with Pipes* (Fig. 24). At the same time, however, he seems to have more than a little of Callot's Pantaloon in him (Fig. 33).¹⁰⁸ The two graybeards address their pleas to a much younger ladylove, bending staunchly forward to do it.¹⁰⁹ Callot also left a mark on the choreography of the Petite Commande. It was in the early 1620s, following his return to Nancy from twelve years in Italy, that he produced his *Balli di Sfessania*, a work consisting



33 Jacques Callot, *Pantaloon*, etching. BNP, Cab. des Est., Ed 25 Rés.

of a frontispiece and twenty-three pages of paired figures. These figures, as Donald Posner has shown, are not standard players from the commedia dell'arte, although some of them, such as Metzetin, Scaramuccia, and Scapino, have namesakes in the impromptu theater.¹¹⁰ Rather, they are fair or carnival performers, most of whom are dancing the high-spirited *moresca*, a form of which was known in Naples as the *sfessania*. Thus Callot's choice of title. Callot was equally familiar with a second Neapolitan song and dance, the "Lucia Canazza," in which a supposedly dead woman of that name is brought back to life by the animations of the dancers. At times the *sfessania* and the "Lucia" were combined in a single dance, at others they seem to have been performed separately.¹¹¹ The figures in the *Balli* are dancing the *sfessania* to the music of the "Lucia." Women appear on five of Callot's pages: Riciulina dances to Metzetin's lute; Fracischina dances to her own tambourine, in gleeful harmony with Gian Farina; Lucia, not to be confused with Lucia Canazza, keeps Trastullo at arm's length; Lauinia stands up to Capitan Cernimonia and his indecent hat; and Lucretia warns Pulliciniello, in so many amusing and ambiguous ways, to hold his hat someplace else (Fig. 34). There is no need to insist that the authors of the Petite Commande were familiar with the lyrics to this or that Neapolitan song or with the many popular traditions that come together in Callot's *Balli*, although such knowledge, in



34 Callot, *Pulliciniello and Lucretia*, etching from the *Balli di Sfessania*. BNP, Cab. des Est., Ed 25 Rés.

their literary culture, should surprise no one. It is a much easier thing to propose that they were familiar with the *Balli* and enjoyed what they saw there, the work of one of the great masters of sexual innuendo. Of his five heroines, it is the bemused Lucia, the aloof Lauinia, and the invincible Lucretia who prefigure the strong and self-reliant nymphs of the Petite Commande. That they cavort with the satyrs in a deep and distant corner of the gardens of Versailles is altogether fitting. Only in such rustic isolation would Pan's partner think of dancing so freely, or exposing so much limb, or bowing so openly, so invitingly (Fig. 12). The male population of the court was bound to get an erotic tickle there.

The object lying near Pan has one, possibly two, holes in front, a row of vertical openings on the side, and a hinged lid (Fig. 11). A musical instrument? I am baffled by this box, but certainly it offered one or more burlesque clues to the sharp viewer. Chauveau staged a bacchanal in back of the dancer and armed the figures with tambourines and flutes (Fig. 12). A wall runs along the right side of his view, in the place where a real one bordered the gardens at that time (Fig. 1). It supports a row of vases and looks to be in good condition, unlike the dancer's plinth and pedestal, both of which are badly chipped, a reprise of the *memento mori* and *vanitas* themes (compare Fig. 5). Pierre de Nolhac has called attention to the Poussinesque spirit of these landscapes by Le Pautre and Chauveau, a point well taken.¹¹² Even so, it is Callot as much if not more than Poussin who represents the connecting link to the past. Not only in his *Balli* and *Three Pantaloons* but also in his *Capricci* and elsewhere in his vast oeuvre, the leading figure or figures stand in the front and fill the rectangular field from top to bottom; they seem taller for the crowds of tiny spectators that line up in horizontal rows in the middle ground, at leg level. Both of our printmakers have privileged the statues of the Petite Commande in this manner, but it was Chauveau alone who added Callot-like vignettes to his views (Figs. 5, 12).¹¹³

The third volume of Charles Perrault's *Parallèle des anciens et des modernes* appeared in 1692, a long time after Nicolas Boileau, his archrival in the debate over the relative merits of

the Ancients and the Moderns, had published a burlesque poem titled *Le lutrin*, most of it in 1674, the rest in 1683. Charles was thus able to compare it with Scarron's *Virgile travesti*, which had been issued between 1648 and 1653, the years of his own indulgence in burlesque. These two poems, according to Charles, approach the genre from opposite points of view. The *Virgile travesti* is the paragon of the older form of burlesque in France, he says, the form in which an epic subject is debased by trivial and irreverent touches of every kind. Scarron's shameless pen spares nothing, not even the sack of Troy or Dido's suicide. In this approach, Charles argues, the ridiculous is on the outside while the serious is on the inside. In his *Lutrin*, by contrast, Boileau takes an ordinary and insignificant event, the feud between a prelate and a chanter over the installation of a lectern in the church choir, and treats it in the heroic mode. Here the roles are reversed: the ridiculous is on the inside, the serious on the outside.¹¹⁴ Charles prefers Scarron's method to Boileau's, for this reason: if Scarron dresses a princess in the clothes of a simple villager, he writes, Boileau's villager wears the clothes of a princess, and

... as a princess is more pleasing with a bonnet than a village woman with a crown, in the same way, grave, serious things hidden under common, light-hearted expressions give more pleasure than trivial, commonplace things under pompous, well-polished expressions. When Dido speaks like a *petite bourgeoise*, I have more joy in seeing her pain, her despair, her queenly quality through the pleasantries that are used to express them, because the attention ends up with something that is worthy of it, than when hearing a *petite bourgeoise* who speaks like Dido, because basically this *bourgeoise* says nothing but impertinences that do not merit the attention that one gives them and that leave a flat and unpleasant aftertaste.¹¹⁵

Perrault was more than happy to congratulate Boileau for the invention of this new brand of burlesque since it only went to validate his thesis favoring the modern era of poets.¹¹⁶ The irony is that Boileau's mock-heroic method, as he applied it in his *Lutrin* of 1674–83, had already been tested in a charade from 1664, the Petite Commande. Here, a lowly rural group of satyrs and nymphs has the unqualified nerve to impersonate the canon's most revered members; they wear their clothes, they imitate their gestures and poses, they give uninhibited rein to their erotic desires. To the extent that it debunks the notion of pompous high art, the Petite Commande has an element of the traditional approach in it as well; the ridicule is outside, the seriousness is inside. That, for Perrault, is the essence of Scarron's burlesque.

Le Nôtre

I argued at the beginning that Le Nôtre had provided for the Petite Commande in his plans for the Rondeau in 1664. When the statues were forced out by the lengthening of the northern axis, the Bâtiments du Roi found a visible new home for them near the Apollo fountain; there is reason to think that the couples were kept together, an expression of respect for their history.¹¹⁷ Nor did Le Nôtre abandon the statues after their departure for Paris; quite the contrary, he

made first-class accommodations for them in his most recent creation there, the gardens of the Palais-Royal (App. 2).

There is much else in his biography to suggest that he was an eager participant in the campaign by the Bâtiments du Roi to turn his Rondeau into a rustic vaudeville. Le Nôtre was a man of legendary wit, audacity, and good cheer, and no one enjoyed his conversation more than Louis XIV. We are told by his nephew, Claude Desgotz, that he gave bear hugs not only to his king but also to Innocent XI in Rome, outbursts of true happiness on his part offending no one.¹¹⁸ Martin Lister said that Le Nôtre liked to tease the king with his collection of medals, especially the slanderous ones, such as his fearless sense of humor: "*Sire, voyla une, qu'est bien contre nous!*" as though the Matter pleased him, and he was glad to find it to shew it the King."¹¹⁹ Ordered by the king to assess Jules Hardouin-Mansart's Colonnade, which he detested, he spat out the immortal lines: "Well! Sire, what do you want me to say to you? You have turned a mason into a gardener (referring to Mansart); he has given you a sample of his craft.' The King was silent, and everyone smiled. . . ."¹²⁰ A public snub of the *premier architecte* no less.

His visual wit was no less contagious than his verbal. Louis de Bachaumont, two generations younger than Le Nôtre, recalled his childhood visits to the old man's apartment at Versailles: "I saw M. Le Nôtre drawing and creating all the time; with an inexplicable speed, things appeared before my eyes through a kind of magic. . . . He amused himself by sketching grotesque figures in the style of Callot. It was his way of drawing figures. Good Lord his figures delighted me with their usually laughable positions and with such pleasure and zeal. . . ."¹²¹ Caricature, a form of portraiture, is not unrelated to the art of grotesque. It begins with the artist's desire to poke fun at a specific, well-deserving individual. He studies the total form, he dissects it, isolates one or more telling features and exaggerates them to some degree at least; finally, he reassembles the parts, creating a coherent whole, the victim's identity still intact. Surprisingly, the genre had not yet caught on in France when Lerambert and Buyster were hired to carry out the Petite Commande in 1664. In his journal for August 19, 1665, Chantelou recalls a conversation that he had overheard while Bernini was carving his bust of the king:

M. de Créqui came up to whisper something to the King, and the Cavaliere [Bernini] said with a smile: "These gentlemen have the King to themselves all day long and they won't leave him to me even for half an hour. I have a good mind to make a caricature [*le portrait chargé*] of one of them." No one understood him. I explained to the King that these were portraits bringing out the ugly and the ridiculous. The Abbé Buti added that the Cavaliere excelled in this sort of portrait and that an example should be shown to His Majesty. Someone suggested one of a lady, but the Cavaliere answered, "There was no need to burden the ladies except at night."¹²²

It seems that only Chantelou and Abbé Buti among the gentlemen in the room had heard of *le portrait chargé*. Just as remarkable is that Bernini was prepared to use his pencil as a weapon to bare a person's imperfections in public. The

king was humored by Bernini's expert application of it. One of his victims was the good abbé himself, a court gadfly and the author of musical comedies, by all estimates a man begging for comic publicity. On September 10, 1665, during a sitting for his bust, the king got up to check on the likeness:

Then, someone having mentioned a caricature [*le portrait chargé*], the Cavaliere said that he had made one of the Abbé Buti, which he looked for to show it to His Majesty, but not finding it, he asked for a pencil and some paper and redid it in three strokes in front of the King, who took pleasure in seeing it, as did Monsieur and the others, as much those who had come in as those who were at the door.¹²³

The Petite Commande had more in common with the art of caricature than the courtiers might have imagined in 1665. To make the point, the *Faune* will speak for the others (Fig. 7). A member of the canon, the *David*, is selected for comic ridicule, not only for the enormous fame of the statue but also for the outstanding list of love affairs by the biblical hero (Fig. 18); it had to meet those basic requirements to begin with. Next, the telling features of the model are distorted to the limit of recognition: the uplifted arm, the penetrating eyes, the triumphant nudity, the undersized tree. The burden of proof shifts at this point to the viewer, who is called on, first, to identify the model under attack and, second, to find as many clever incongruities as possible.

This *Faune* and the rest of the Petite Commande were in production in 1664, a full year before the earliest public demonstrations of the art of caricature in Paris in 1665. Lerambert and Buyster were already practicing an offhand form of caricature in their statues, one difference being that they directed their barbs at familiar historical and legendary figures, as represented in famous works of art, rather than at living people in society. Clearly, the public debut of *le portrait chargé* in 1665 was a factor in the favorable reception of the statues in 1666, the year of their arrival in the gardens.

Le Nôtre's coat of arms is nothing if not a burlesque of heraldic traditions. To the king's offer of a proper insignia, he replied that he already had one with three snails crowning a head of cabbage. "Sire, he added, could I forget my spade? How dear must it be? Isn't it to it that I owe the kindnesses with which Your Majesty honors me?"¹²⁴ Tallemand des Réaux said that Le Nôtre designed a coat of arms on which, in place of the customary helmet, he put a white cabbage with its leaves hanging down like feathers.¹²⁵ In the end he settled for a variation of the snail motif.¹²⁶ Le Nôtre delighted in all forms of playful irreverence. It would be odd and out of character if the Petite Commande were not one of them.

The Sculptors

Charles Perrault ended his memo of 1666 by noting his "very great respect" for the sculptors of the Tuileries program. The recipients of his warm tribute were Philippe de Buyster and Thibaut Poissant, who teamed up to decorate the dome there with statues; they were joined by a small group of colleagues, including Louis Lerambert. The first two artists belonged to an older generation, Buyster having been born in 1595 and Poissant in 1605. Lerambert was born in 1620. Of the three,

only Poissant had spent time in Rome, becoming a friend and later a steady correspondent of Poussin's. Buyster and Lerambert, for reasons of their own, chose not to cross the Alps, yet it was they who carried out the burlesque assault on the ancient and Italian canons in 1664. Their personalities were ideally suited to the task at hand.

Philippe de Buyster, a native of Antwerp, arrived in Paris about 1620. He worked his way onto the royal payroll in 1632 and took up spacious quarters at the Tuileries. Buyster was a member of the Maîtrise from 1622 until that guild merged with the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture in February 1651. Later in that year he became a professor, but his responsibilities were hopelessly ill-suited to his nature. In December 1653, he was reprimanded by his peers and fined for neglect of duty; many subsequent warnings went unheeded. In January 1655, his membership was revoked outright. The disciplinary actions had no adverse effect on Buyster's career, however. In 1654, he was allowed to build an atelier in the Tuileries gardens, and two years later he attached a house to it.¹²⁷ He returned to the halls of the Académie Royale in May 1663 in response to Colbert's new statutes, one of which denied the benefits of royal patronage to nonmembers. It was only because he rejoined the academy in 1663 that Buyster was eligible for work at Versailles in 1664 and the Tuileries in 1666. On January 4, 1665, in a good-will gesture to his colleagues, he donated "a terra-cotta satyr, eighteen *pouces* tall, who held in one hand a bunch of grapes and in the other the type of flute with several pipes that the ancients called *syrinx*."¹²⁸ What he had given to the academy was a model of his *Satyre tenant une grappe de raisin* (Fig. 10).¹²⁹

In readmitting Buyster to their ranks in 1663, the academicians chose to live with a "loose cannon" in exchange for his services to the king. Buyster was by all accounts a volatile spirit. Guillet says that he was once involved in a brawl in the streets of Paris in which a man lost his life, and that it took the influence of his old master, Jacques Sarazin, to protect him from the arm of the law.¹³⁰ Through it all he flourished at the Tuileries. At the birth of the Petite Commande in 1664, Buyster was nearly seventy years old, but in no way did his age or condition stop him from carving two supremely brash satyrs (Figs. 6, 10). He gave to them the fire of his temperament, and it was on their merit that he earned the commission for the *Satiric Poem*, a member of the Grande Commande of 1674. He was a crusty seventy-nine at the time.¹³¹

At his father's death in 1637, Louis Lerambert became the official custodian of the king's collection of ancient statues at the Louvre and the Tuileries. He lived right there, at the site of his duties, for many years. Guillet tells us that Le Brun and Le Nôtre met Lerambert in Simon Vouet's studio and that they always regarded him as one of their best friends. Guillet devoted a long paragraph to Lerambert's magical personality, which seems to have owed much to his father's position at court. He became a courtier himself, a rare privilege for an artist, and was admired by everyone for his handsome looks, his easygoing manner, his sharp mind, his quick, witty repartee, and his gifts as a draftsman, poet, dancer, composer of musical airs, and librettist.¹³² Lerambert lived at the right place at the right time, Guillet said, because the festive world of the young Louis XIV drew out the many graceful sides of his personality. I know of no other "sculpteur ordinaire du

Roy" who held the social credentials to participate in the *fêtes galantes* at Versailles in 1664 and 1668.

Between 1664 and his death in 1670, the Bâtiments du Roi rewarded Lerambert with more work in the gardens than any other member of the team. I count more than twenty-five individual pieces by his hand. That the Bâtiments continued to send certain kinds of commissions to Lerambert after he concluded his half share of the Petite Commande, commissions calling for satyrs, nymphs, dancers, and musicians, is a sure indication that his four statues were hits from the beginning.¹³³ Guillet said that "these figures have been prized by all the connoisseurs." More than that, "his genius distinguished him from all his rivals"¹³⁴—a remark by Guillet that effectively drops Buyster into the class of inferiors. After listing Buyster's statues without a word of commentary in 1690, Guillet was quick to praise Lerambert's "remarkable" figures in 1693. The comte de Caylus agreed with Guillet, stating in the 1740s that Buyster's statues, though some of them were not bad, suffered from their proximity to Lerambert's.¹³⁵ What did the connoisseurs see in these statues? In his eulogy, Guillet speaks repeatedly of Lerambert's figures as living, breathing things, not just as statues. Their expressions are vivid, natural, and always appropriate to the subject at hand. Their contours are noble and always diverse, depending on the subject's character. If we trust the engravers, it was Lerambert more than Buyster who put lively, natural expressions on their faces. The pictorial effects of his statuary must have dazzled the discriminating viewer of the 1660s. There is nothing in Buyster's oeuvre to equal the thin leaves, the fluttering sleeves, and the rippling skirt of the *Danseuse* (Fig. 12), or the long-shafted horn of the *Satyre* (Fig. 11). The mission facing Buyster in his *Nymph tenant une couronne de chesne* was to feign a transparent gown (Fig. 9), à la the *Farnese Flora* (Fig. 20), but even on his home turf he was outclassed by Lerambert, who put a still more convincing see-through gown on his *Joueuse de tambour* (Fig. 8), even though his model, the *Cesi Juno*, was amply garbed (Fig. 17). Guillet said that Lerambert had written a light verse to go with each of his statues; it is unclear why, in the end, his poetry was omitted. He signed them instead, an honor in itself, a legacy "to his glory."¹³⁶ The first signatures in the gardens of Versailles were Lerambert's.

Lerambert, like Buyster, had to join the Académie Royale in order to qualify for work at Versailles. This he did in March 1663. It was in the same year that he mysteriously lost his curatorial job at the Tuileries, causing him deep sorrow, but he overcame it by dedicating himself to his art and his academic duties.¹³⁷ In July 1664, he presented a terra-cotta bust of Mazarin to his associates there. He taught at the academy in November 1664 and again in November 1665 and still somehow managed to produce his four tall statues.¹³⁸ Lerambert died at the peak of his career in 1670, aged fifty. A model of the *Danseuse* is represented in the background of a posthumous portrait of the sculptor.¹³⁹

Reassessing the Dragon

On May 7, 1664, Louis XIV and his six hundred guests gathered at Versailles for a week of entertainments, called the Fête of the Enchanted Isle. The festival was dedicated to the king's mother, Anne d'Autriche, and to his wife of four years,

Marie-Thérèse, but it was a secret to no one that his favorite, Mlle Louise de La Vallière, was the true guest of honor. The main event was a reenactment of Ariosto's *Orlando furioso*, featuring Ruggiero (played by the king) and his knights (played by his courtiers), prisoners on the enchanted island of the sorceress Alcine. To amuse themselves on their first day, the captives held a tilting match in the gardens, and following that they attended a ballet and a collation. On their second evening they met for the premiere of Molière's comic ballet *La princesse d'Élide*. The *Ballet du Palais d'Alcine* was performed for them on their third day. The prisoners were delivered from their three-day spell at the final curtain when Melissa slipped a magic ring onto Ruggiero's finger. The pageant ended with the disintegration of Alcine's palace in a spectacular burst of fireworks. For the remainder of the week the king's guests were treated to a nonstop program of races, jousts, and lotteries, a tour of the Ménagerie, and the premieres of three plays by Molière, *Les fâcheux*, *Le mariage forcé*, and the first version of *Tartuffe*.

The southern zone was perfectly groomed for the occasion.¹⁴⁰ So was the western zone, the site of the first three days of entertainments.¹⁴¹ Only the northern zone was in a state of transition at that moment.¹⁴² As for Lerambert and Buyster, they were already hard at work on their stone blocks in September 1664. But no sculptor starts overnight on four seven-foot stone statues. How much time do we allot for the deliberations by the Petite Académie and the preparations by the sculptors? If I have it right, that the eight statues of the Petite Commande and the eight niches of the Rondeau were conceived together, then it was certainly by July 1664 that the union took place; that is the month in which Le Nôtre sent his niche-filled drawing of the Rondeau to the king (Fig. 3). No matter, the bottom line is that the Petite Commande was conceived in the happy aftermath of the fête.

If interest in burlesque was fading in the 1660s, why did the Bâtiments du Roi go against the trend and turn the Rondeau into such a stage in 1664?¹⁴³ A part of the answer is that the conceit was both an amusement and a challenging test for a segment of the king's court, leading to hours of refined conversation. Charles Perrault claimed that he and his co-authors had written their *Murs de Troie* for an audience of savants. In his *Parallèle* he said that a lot of very poor burlesque poetry had been written in imitation of Scarron's *Virgile travesti*, giving the whole genre a bad name, but that the original book was admired by "le galant homme" and "le beau monde."¹⁴⁴ Such was the preferred audience of the Petite Commande. Who but the *cognoscenti*, the enlightened few, had the cultural agility to walk their way through the maze of visual and literary associations without giving up or getting lost? They needed no outside help, nor did they want any. The joy of discovery was one of their rewards, or, as the Perraults said of the "Councillors" who opened their *Murs de Troie* not knowing what to expect: "And how much these sublime minds / Through my silly rhymes / Discovering my reasoning / Received contentment." This, in my opinion, is why the burlesque core of the program is nowhere mentioned in contemporary writings. For an author in-the-know to announce the mystery in print, or even to hint at the existence of one, would have been to disclose it before the search got started. Sieur Combes, a guidebook author, came

nervously close to giving it away in 1681 when he wrote of the figures that “they are satyrs and bacchantes from the company of Bacchus; *they are made to entertain*, and to decorate this large basin [the Fontaine d’Apollon, their second home, Fig. 27].”¹⁴⁵ *Entertain* whom? Guillet answered it when he said of Lerambert’s two couples (Figs. 7, 8; 11, 12) that “these figures have been prized by all the connoisseurs.” Prized for their expert workmanship and lively, natural expressions, as we have argued, but also for their many intelligent and *entertaining* inside jokes. I am reminded of the visual riddles that were making the rounds in Jesuit universities in France at this time, the so-called painted enigmas.¹⁴⁶ The Petite Commande lays strong claim to being a product of Liberal Artists, and it coincides with the growing efforts by the painters and sculptors of the Académie Royale in the 1660s to gain acceptance for their profession as the equal of poetry and history.¹⁴⁷

Another point is that the burlesque mode had never before been attempted in large-scale sculpture, in France or anyplace else, as far as I know. Novelty, the public exhibition of the latest miracles in the nation’s art and science, was always a force at Versailles, but even novelty had limits, as Claude Perrault discovered when his daring plan for the Grotte de Thétis was rejected by higher authorities. Predictably, Charles rushed to his brother’s defense, asserting that he had imagined a design “without example” and that it was superior to the other proposals for that reason alone. What the Petite Commande had to offer, in addition to novelty, was an endless supply of burlesque wit. Charles said that the king “took great pleasure” in touring the northern zone, the spine of which is the Allée d’Eau with the Fontaines d’Enfants (Fig. 4).¹⁴⁸ It is interesting to recall that Buyster’s figures on the southern side of the Rondeau were both joined by infant satyrs, the only one of the four rustic couples to be so joined (Figs. 5, 6); they thus bridge the programs of the Rondeau and the Allée d’Eau.¹⁴⁹ The pastimes of the children on the Allée d’Eau, playing flutes, tambourines, and pipes (Fig. 29), playing affectionate games, and dancing, are the pastimes of the satyrs and hamadryads.¹⁵⁰ It was the Petite Commande that ushered in the genial mode.¹⁵¹

How does the Fontaine du Dragon fit into this tradition (Fig. 4)? A single jet of water had risen from the center of the Rondeau since 1664, and it remained the lone attraction there until the statues of the Petite Commande arrived in the early days of 1666. At some point in the spring or summer of 1666, the Bâtiments du Roi decided to fill the round pool with an elaborate scenic fountain. The king and queen and their court saw the fountain at play on the night of July 18, 1668, inspiring Félibien to write the following:

After His and Her Majesty had toured the Grand Parterre, they descended into the Parterre de Gazon [the Parterre du Nord], which is on the side of the Grotte. After considering the fountains there [the future Couronnes], they stopped specifically to look at the one that is at the bottom of the Petit Parc, on the side of the pump. In the center of his pool there is a bronze [*sic*] dragon, which pierced by an arrow seems to vomit blood through its mouth, sending into the air a bubbling mass of water that falls back like rain and covers the whole pool.

Around this dragon there are four small Amours on swans (each of which has a large jet) who swim toward the border as if to run away. The two Amours that are turned toward the dragon hide their faces with their hands so as not to see him; all the signs of fear are clearly expressed on their faces. The other two, more daring because the monster is not turned toward them, attack him with their weapons. There are bronze [*sic*] dolphins between the Amours that shoot bubbling masses of water from their open mouths.¹⁵²

It is hard to find a simpler or more straightforward description of a work of art. If the fountain had any hidden messages in it, Félibien refused to acknowledge them. Despite his silence, and despite the uniform silence of the many other panegyrists, journalists, and commentators of the day, there has been a tendency by students of Versailles to read the Dragon fountain as an allegory of the Fronde, the civil disturbances that shook France during the minority of Louis XIV, from 1648 to 1652. That is only the first half of the argument: if the Dragon alludes to the suppression of the Frondeurs, so it goes, then the Fontaine de Latone on the western axis does the same.¹⁵³ In an earlier study, I endorsed both halves of the argument, but now, in light of our findings here, I believe that it is time to put them aside.¹⁵⁴

Félibien described the monster as a dragon, no doubt on the basis of the beast’s long legs and even longer wings, but that was only his method of identifying the Python in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* (1.434–47); both names are found in period sources.¹⁵⁵ Apollo’s victory over the Python had been an allegory for all seasons in the pre-Fronde era; few subjects had such elasticity. It served the Bourbon cause to use it in 1617 to slander Louis XIII’s rival, Concino Concini, the maréchal d’Ancre.¹⁵⁶ French editors of the *Metamorphoses* used it often during the century to explain the phenomenon of heat overcoming fog, moisture, and contagion in the atmosphere.¹⁵⁷ The legend was applied at the Huguenots’ expense in the later 1640s.¹⁵⁸ After the uprisings of 1648–52, the Frondeurs became the next unfortunate victims of the analogy. In Isaac de Benserade’s ballet of 1654, *Les Noces de Pelée et de Thétis*, Apollo (acted by the king) kills the Python (equated in the lyrics with the Fronde):

More brilliant and better fashioned than all the Gods
together,
Earth and Sky have nothing resembling me;
My brow is crowned with immortal rays:
Amorous of the beauties of a single Victory
I hasten unceasingly after Glory,
And I do not hasten after Daphne.

I have vanquished that Python who devastated the
World,
That terrible Serpent whom Hell and the Fronde,
Had seasoned with a dangerous venom:
The Revolt, in one word, can no longer harm me;
And I preferred to destroy it,
Than to hasten after Daphne.¹⁵⁹

The allegory is clearly spelled out. It is a victory twice won by the king: as his authority prevails over his foes, so his restraint and self-control prevail over his passions.

Does it follow that all subsequent Pythons in the post-Fronde period were pressed into identical service? Joseph Werner, a Swiss painter who circulated in Le Brun's orbit at the time, shows the king standing in Apollonian triumph over the dead Python in a miniature from about 1663–64, and even if I am not prepared to refute the Fronde thesis in his case, I find nothing to confirm it either.¹⁶⁰ On May 7, 1664, the first day of the Fête of the Enchanted Isle, the chariot that brought Apollo to the Allée Royale was covered with delightful reliefs of “[t]he celestial monsters, the serpent Python, Daphne, Hyacinth, and other figures who are associated with Apollo, along with Atlas carrying a globe of the world.”¹⁶¹ A “political” Python in this instance? The question mark has to remain. Apollo and the Python appear together on two bronze vases that have stood along the southern terrace of the château from very early on.¹⁶²

Domestic political history was far from the king's mind when he and his court met on six occasions in the summer of 1674 to celebrate the reconquest of the Franche-Comté, the one real French military success of that year, the third year of the Dutch War. On July 19, 1674, Molière's last play, *Le malade imaginaire*, was performed on a temporary stage in front of the Grotte de Thétis. Félibien said in his festival book that Hercules and the Hydra were represented in one of the framing piers and Apollo and the Python in the other; the king's military arms filled the pediment.¹⁶³ In Le Brun's illuminations at the Fontaine d'Apollon on the night of August 18, 1674, a dragon lay half crushed under the weight of a tall obelisk with a sun perched on top of it; in the relief on the pedestal the king led his army across a river.¹⁶⁴ Félibien, after declaring that each object had a symbolic or mysterious meaning to it, added, “By the obelisk and the Sun, one means to indicate the Glory of the King, all shining in light and solidly established above his enemies, and in spite of Envy, which is represented by the Dragon.”¹⁶⁵ Allusions to the king's current foes abroad or to twenty-five-year-old events at home?¹⁶⁶

The Python is again a controversial figure for his role along the main western axis of the gardens. Although, in the end, nothing came of it, there was a time in the early 1670s when Le Brun put long thought into the embellishment of the retaining wall there. The plan was to populate it with characters from the legend of Latona, the same Latona who faced the wall from her position in the center of the oval basin a short distance away. Le Brun drafted at least two proposals for the wall's central niche. In one of them, the Python, resembling a dragon more than a serpent, is flanked by Rage and Jealousy, sent by Juno to torment Latona; in the other, a full-fledged Dragon rises from the death and devastation of the Deluge, his birthplace.¹⁶⁷ As for Le Brun's motives here, Nivelon, his biographer, said not a word. We also have a drawing by Le Brun, followed by Louis de Chastillon's engraving, of a “Fontaine de la Victoire d'Apollon sur le Serpent Python.”¹⁶⁸ The proposal went unrealized. The 1670s is a reasonable date for it and the gardens a virtually certain destination. The allegory is as elusive here as elsewhere.

In only one instance at Versailles do we have unshakable proof that the Python was a substitute for the rebels of

1648–52: a tiny scene above the cornice of the Escalier des Ambassadeurs, painted on Le Brun's designs at some point between 1674 and 1680. It was explained in the *Mercure Galant* for September 1680: “[His Majesty] put an end to the civil wars and prevented the secret rebellions that enemies wanted to instigate in France. These rebellions are depicted by the serpent Python . . . because he takes his origin solely from the crude impurities of the earth, and was pierced virtually at birth by the arrows of Apollo, who in this subject represents the person of the King.”¹⁶⁹ The Fronde thesis rests on these words from 1680 and the ballet lyrics from 1654, a quarter century apart. The advocates of the thesis apply it first to the Dragon and Latona fountains from the late 1660s, and then to the proposed groups for the retaining wall from the early 1670s.

By the logic of the Fronde thesis, the allegory is told more than ten times in fifteen years at Versailles alone.¹⁷⁰ And all of these alleged appearances taking place during a period, more than a decade after the hostilities had ended, when the political climate in Paris was calm and no one worried over a recurrence. Even the most influential advocate of the thesis, Nathan Whitman, concedes this point.¹⁷¹

It is certainly true that some dragons personified the Frondeurs, but not all dragons.¹⁷² Conversely, the Frondeurs were sometimes personified by nondragons. In a painting by an unknown artist from about 1652, a young Louis XIV sits triumphantly in front of the forge, Jupiter's thunderbolts in hand; the caption implies that the royal victory over the rebels is a fait accompli.¹⁷³ In 1654, the city councillors of Paris hired Gilles Guérin to carve a marble group for the courtyard of the Hôtel de Ville in which the king stands over a figure of Discord; we have Guillet's word for it that this piece was a reminder of the recent seditions there.¹⁷⁴

The Fronde thesis fails to account for the changing iconographic fashions at Versailles. It assumes that a subject, once it is represented there, holds the same allegorical value for all earlier and later editions, a risky assumption at best. The ceiling of the Escalier des Ambassadeurs is typical of the arts of the later 1670s, which sought to redefine the king's image by focusing on his person, on his many successes, and on France. It glorifies his leadership to date, and in that vein it anticipates the royal program on the vault of the Galerie des Glaces. If the Dragon and Latona are removed from consideration, I know of no contemporary material of this kind in the fountains and retreats of Versailles in the 1660s or very early 1670s.¹⁷⁵

The advocates of the Fronde thesis are not troubled by the silence of Félibien and his contemporaries. Nathan Whitman, with a reference to Félibien's “dry” account of the court's visit to the Rondeau on the night of July 18, 1668, imagines the following scenario: “It is like a ritual. The victorious king, the living Apollo, stands silently with his court contemplating the dying dragon. No elucidation is given beyond the dry description; none was needed.”¹⁷⁶ For Robert Berger, an ardent supporter of Whitman, the king and his court and all of his authors were exercising a “code of silence” so as not to heighten the tensions, the less said the better.¹⁷⁷ But the author of the article in the semiofficial *Mercure Galant* was bound by no such code in 1680, declaring in plain French that the Python stood for the Fronde and that the king did

well to crush it. I see a less convoluted scenario: far from observing a “code of silence” at the Dragon fountain, the king and his entourage quite simply had nothing to say politically or historically; the Dragon as a dire warning did not enter into their understanding of it.

The Fronde thesis, so far as the gardens are concerned, makes no allowance for the location of works of art there. It wants to embrace the Dragon and Latona fountains alike, even though they reside on different axes and in different zones.¹⁷⁸ To accept it for the Dragon is to say that the planners flip-flopped in their attitude toward iconography and disregarded the ethos of the northern zone in the early years: first, by introducing a light burlesque mood with the Petite Commande in 1664; second, by sounding a stern political warning with the Dragon in 1666, all but souring the current mood; and third, by reinstating the convivial mood of 1664 with the decorations of the Allée d’Eau, the Bain de Diane, the Crown and the Pyramid fountains, and the Bosquet du Marais, all from the late 1660s and early 1670s.¹⁷⁹ Not one of them, before or after the Dragon, is remotely didactic.¹⁸⁰ For the thesis to succeed at the Dragon fountain, the monster is forced into playing the improbable role of an outsider who spoils not one but two traditions, the local tradition of the Rondeau and also the wider tradition of the northern zone.¹⁸¹ The thesis flies in the face of Perrault’s remark that the king “took great pleasure” in visiting this part of his domain. It runs counter to Félibien’s official guidebook of 1674, where it is said that nothing was ever added to Versailles without consideration for where it was going and what was already there.¹⁸²

It seems that we have been taking the Dragon fountain much too seriously. We do the Dragon a disservice by isolating him from his close neighbors, the satyrs and hamadryads of the Petite Commande. It might be rewarding to look for him in the wild world of burlesque.¹⁸³

Appendix 1

The Payments to Lerambert and Buyster

The Petite Commande debuts in the *Comptes des Bâtiments du Roi* with this payment to Louis Lerambert:

[September 25, 1664]: a Lerambert sculpteur a compte des figures de pierre quil doit faire au chast[eau] de Versailles . . . 400 [livres].¹⁸⁴

It was customary for artists to sign a receipt whenever a payment arrived from the Bâtiments du Roi, and in this case, by miracle, Lerambert’s autograph has survived:

[September 30, 1664] En la presence des notaires soubz^{nez} Louis Lerambert Sculpteur ordinaire du Roy dem^t aux Thuilleries confesse avoir receu de Noble homme Anthoine le Menestrel Con^{er} du Roy trésorier général des bastimens de Sa Majesté la somme de quatre cens livres a luy ordonnes sur estant moins des figures de pierre de sept piedz de hault quil fait pour servir dans le petit parc de Versailles. De laquelle somme de quatre cens livres ledit s^f Lerambert se contente et quitte led sieur le Menestrel et sur ce avec prome[sse] ob[servanc]e et renonc[ement] . . . fait et passé en l’estude lan

gbj soixante quatre dernier septembre. [signed] Lerambert [sic] [and two others].¹⁸⁵

Uniform seven-foot statues, not for the château, but for the gardens outside it. This new data, in turn, brings another innocent-looking entry in the *Comptes des Bâtiments du Roi* into play. It applies to Philippe de Buyster and bears an identical date as the payment to Lerambert:

[September 25, 1664]: a Bister [sic] sculpteur a compte des ouvrages quil fait à Versailles . . . 200 [livres].¹⁸⁶

One or the other sculptor was paid in May and again in July 1665, always in imprecise language, for “ses ouvrages” or “a compte des figures quil fait a Versailles,” and so on.¹⁸⁷ Later payments were sent in December 1665, and it is in one of these that the accountants, for the first time, reveal just how many statues are involved:

[December 4, 1665]: a Philippe Buister sculpteur a compte des quatre figures quil fait pour Versailles . . . 300 [livres].¹⁸⁸

Their destination is finally mentioned in this entry from the beginning of 1666:

[January 29, 1666]: a Louis Lerambert pour parfait paiement de 4 figures de pierre quil a faites et posees au tour du grand rondeau de Versailles . . . 200 [livres].¹⁸⁹

And, a few months later, in this payment to Buyster:

[April 24, 1666]: a Philippe Buister sculpteur pour son parfait paiement de 4 figures quil a faites au tour du grand rondeau de Versailles . . . 400 [livres].¹⁹⁰

Lerambert and Buyster carved eight statues, four each, over the course of a year and a half.

A key question remains: Were the statues conceived in one piece with the setting? It is true that the *Comptes des Bâtiments du Roi* is less than candid on this matter, withholding a mention of the Rondeau until January 1666, but this delay, long as it is, reveals more about the tight-lipped methods of the king’s accountants than the destination of the Petite Commande. The royal ledgers for the 1660s are notoriously vague, as we have already discovered in Lerambert’s initial payment, which speaks of “le chasteau de Versailles” when his receipt of payment, written just five days later, speaks of “le petit parc de Versailles.” It is also true that the niches in Le Nôtre’s drawing of July 17, 1664, are empty, that is, they contain no dots or marks indicating that statues stood there (Fig. 3). But his drawing has to be appreciated for what it is, the visual equivalent of his memo to the king and nothing more. Le Nôtre had two concerns in the memo, and thus two in the drawing: the first was the wall, which he rendered in thick, dark lines of ink; the second was the gate, which he described with words as well as a dotted line. The lower half of his drawing, which falls outside the range of his memo, is rendered in weak and rather careless movements of the pen; it was only for comparison with the gate, for example, that he bothered to record the diameter of the pool. Finally, there is the matter of default. If the eight statues were not intended for the niches of the Rondeau, then where? We have shown that the statues, like the niches, were conceived in pairs. Nowhere else in the gardens were four coordinated pairs of niches ready and waiting to receive four coordinated pairs of statues. That Le Nôtre designed the niches for the Petite Commande is next to certain.

Appendix 2

The Peregrinations of the Petite Commande

We know from the *Comptes des Bâtiments du Roi* that Lerambert's four statues were standing in their niches at the Rondeau by January 1666 and Buyster's four by April (App. 1). Confirmation is found in one of the plans of about 1666, where two tiny dots, signifying statues, are visible in the niches on the northern side.¹⁹¹ Eight dots, the full complement, are visible in the plans of 1668 (Fig. 1).¹⁹² Most of the telltale dots are again in their proper places in the plans of 1674.¹⁹³ Van der Meulen represented half of the Petite Commande in the middle ground of his painting of 1674 (Fig. 4).¹⁹⁴ In Israël Silvestre's wide-angled view from 1674, the upper bodies of five of our statues are visible over the top of the new gate.¹⁹⁵ Two members of the cast appear in Silvestre's axial view of 1676, although he reversed them.¹⁹⁶

When the Bassin de Neptune was excavated to the north of the Rondeau in 1678, the statues were transported to the end of the western axis and arranged at points around the Fontaine d'Apollon. They appear there, in the form of dots, in two plans from the early 1680s.¹⁹⁷ Sieur Combes saw them there in 1681.¹⁹⁸ Louis de Chastillon included two of them in the background of his engraving of the Apollo fountain from 1683 (Fig. 27).¹⁹⁹ The eight statues were standing there for Thomassin to engrave them separately in 1689 (Fig. 21).²⁰⁰

If the Petite Commande stood at the Rondeau for twelve years, from 1666 to 1678, it stood at the Fontaine d'Apollon for just fifteen, from 1678 to 1693, at which time it was presented by the king to his brother Philippe, the duc d'Orléans. Philippe promptly moved the statues to the Palais-Royal, his new residence in Paris.²⁰¹ Le Nôtre, who designed the gardens, put them on prominent display around one of the new pools, and there they stood for nearly forty years. The gardens of the Palais-Royal were remodeled in 1730 by Claude Desgotz, Le Nôtre's nephew, who continued to find a place for the nomadic figures. Gabriel de Saint-Aubin took the time to draw at least two of them in 1774 (Fig. 19).²⁰² The statues were withdrawn in 1782.²⁰³

Appendix 3

The Descriptions by Guillet de Saint-Georges

The inaugural year of the Petite Commande is 1664—not 1665, the one that always appears in the literature. There are two reasons for the ongoing misconception: first, an oversight by the editor of the *Comptes des Bâtiments du Roi*, Jules Guiffrey, which leaves the impression that Lerambert and Buyster got to work on their statues in 1665 (App. 1), and second, Guillet de Saint-Georges's eulogies, both of which include a reference to 1665. One of Guillet's duties as historiographer of the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture was to chronicle the lives of the king's major artists following their deaths. The statues had already been relocated at the Fontaine d'Apollon when he read his tribute to Buyster on October 7, 1690:

Notre sculpteur [Buyster] eut beaucoup de part aux ouvrages de Versailles. Dans le jardin, proche de la fontaine d'Apollon, sur les angles des palissades qui s'y terminent, on voit huit figures de pierre, chacune haute de sept pieds, qui furent faites en 1665. Quatre de ces figures ont de M. Buyster, et de ces quatre il y en a deux qui représentent des Satyres [Figs. 6, 10], et deux qui représentent des Hamadryades ou nymphes des bois et des eaux [Figs. 5, 9]. Les quatre autres figures sont de M. Lerambert. . . .²⁰⁴

Guillet waited until March 7, 1693, before discussing Lerambert's share. By then, the Petite Commande was standing in Paris.

Ce fut en 1665 qu'il [Lerambert] fit pour Versailles quatre figures remarquables: l'une représente le dieu Pan, qui tient un cornet à bouquin [Fig. 11]; la seconde, une Hamadryade qui danse [Fig. 12]; la troisième, une Nymphé avec un tambour de basque [Fig. 8]; et la quatrième, un Faune ou dieu des forêts [Fig. 7]. Il avoit composé des vers enjoués, qui devoient être écrits au bas de chaque figure; mais on s'est contenté d'y mettre son nom, et on l'a pu faire à sa gloire, puisqu'en effet ces figures ont été estimées de tous les connoisseurs. Elles ont été longtemps à Versailles posées autour du bassin d'Apollon; mais, depuis un mois, elles ont été portées au jardin du Palais-Royal et posées autour d'un des nouveaux bassin où M. le Nautre [Le Nôtre] fait présentement travailler.²⁰⁵

Guillet compressed the sculptors' activity into a single year, 1665, although we know now that they were already busy on multiple seven-foot statues in September 1664. They applied the finishing touches to them in the early part of 1666. It served Guillet's biographical purposes to record the one solid year in which they focused their energies on this commission and no other.

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Notes

My greatest debt of gratitude is to Françoise de La Moureyre, for her kindness and generosity in answering my many questions and sharing the results of her own research on Lerambert and Buyster. Henriette Dumuis tracked down a number of obscure documents in Paris and transcribed them on my behalf; to her I am deeply grateful. Thanks also go to Jane Fleeson for her expert assistance with the translations and her enthusiastic interest in the project from the beginning. Perry Chapman, Lory Frankel, and Guy Walton made very helpful comments on an early draft. Unless otherwise indicated, translations are mine.

1. Pierre Francastel, *La Sculpture de Versailles* (Paris: Albert Morancé, 1930), 103, 111, 113, 133, 137, 141.

2. It is the name that Madeleine de Scudéry applied to the pool in her *Promenade de Versailles* (Paris: Claude Barbin, 1669), 70.

3. Le Nôstre, BNP, Département des Mss., Mél. Colbert 122, fol. 579v. This passage was published by Alfred Marie, "Le plan de Versailles conservé à la Bibliothèque de l'Institut," *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de l'Art Français*, 1945–46: 14–15; the full letter was later included by Marie in "Sur quelques dessins d'André Le Nôstre," *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de l'Art Français* (1947): 23–24. The gate was gilded in 1665 (CBR, vol. 1 [1881], col. 80). It appears on the right side of Israël Silvestre's 1674 view from the north (BNP, Cabinet des Estampes, Va 423, vol. 1). See Guy Walton, *Louis XIV's Versailles* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 72, fig. 36, for a reproduction of it.

4. BNP, Dép. des Mss., Mél. Colbert 122, fol. 580r. It has been reproduced lately by Marie, vol. 1, pl. x (top); and by Hazlehurst, 377, pl. 287.

5. Under it he scribbled "grille à faire de 12 th[oises] de large." Inside the pool he wrote "20 th[oises]." In the blocks of land framing the axis he wrote "bois." One *toise* equals six *pieds*, or 1.949 meters.

6. Published by Marie, vol. 1, pl. XLIII. I have not seen the picture, nor have I been able to verify Marie's statement that it hangs in a private collection in Paris and dates from 1674, although there is no reason to question either claim. It is not listed in "Mémoire de tout ce que François Van der Meulen a peint et dessiné pour le service de Sa Majesté depuis le 1er avril 1664," as published by Jules Guiffrey, "Van der Meulen," *Nouvelles Archives de l'Art Français* 1 (1879): 123–27. Nor is it listed in the *inventaire après décès* of Van der Meulen or in those of his successors. I am grateful to Isabelle Richefort for information on these archival papers (letter to the author, Sept. 17, 1999). Richefort tends to doubt Van der Meulen's authorship of the picture while still leaving open the possibility that he designed it. I will, for convenience, call it a work by Van der Meulen.

7. For the Siren fountain, a work by Gaspard and Balthazar Marsy from 1666–67, see Weber, 105, 280–81; and Souchal et al., vol. 3, 41, no. 15.

8. Étienne Le Hongre and Jean-Baptiste Tuby conducted the earliest phase of work on the Crown fountains toward the end of the 1660s; the fountains were slightly revised later on. See Weber, 110–11, 205–6, 281; and Souchal et al., vol. 2, 308, nos. 23, 24, vol. 3, 335, nos. 16, 17.

9. It was carried out by François Girardon. See Weber, 108–10, 281–82; and Souchal et al., vol. 2, 30, no. 21.

10. Also by Girardon. See Weber, 108–10, 282; and Souchal et al., vol. 2, 30, no. 22, 237, no. 23, 248, no. 6, 308, no. 27, vol. 3, 7, no. 21.

11. They are the work of Louis Lerambert, Pierre Le Gros I, and Étienne Le Hongre. See Weber, 10–13, 108–10, 282–83; and Souchal et al., vol. 2, 247, no. 4, 308, no. 25, 394, no. 20.

12. By the Marsy brothers, from 1666–67. See Weber, 105–9, 118–19, 283; and Souchal et al., vol. 3, 42, no. 16. What we see there today is an oversize replica from the 1880s.

13. Nolhac, 98, was the first writer to notice that the *Satyre* is wrongly attributed to Buyster in the caption to Le Pautre's engraving (Fig. 11).

14. There is one exception, the wording under Lerambert's first couple (Figs. 7, 8). The savants wanted to distinguish Lerambert's tambourinist from Buyster's, and also to acknowledge Lerambert's infant love, so they wrote a longer inscription for this statue than for the companion. I will use the French titles as we move along.

15. Invariably, even in the most recent literature on Versailles, the prints are mismatched on the page. Marie, vol. 1, 89, and in captions to pls. XLIII, XLIV, erred in saying that the program had only four statues in it.

16. See *Raphael dans les collections françaises*, exh. cat., Galeries Nationales du Grand Palais, Paris, 1983–84, 328, cat. no. 4; Wendy Stedman Sheard, *Antiquity in the Renaissance*, exh. cat., Smith College Museum of Art, Northampton, Mass., 1978, cat. no. 102; and Innis H. Shoemaker et al., *The Engravings of*

Marcantonio Raimondi, exh. cat., Spencer Museum of Art, Lawrence, Kans., 1981, 94, cat. no. 20.

17. For the fresco, see Luitpold Dussler, *Raphael* (London: Phaidon, 1971), 99. For the prints after it, see Shoemaker et al. (as in n. 16), 122, cat. no. 33; and W. L. Strauss, *Hendrik Goltzius 1558–1617: The Complete Etchings and Woodcuts* (New York: Abaris Books, 1977), vol. 2, 514, no. 288.

18. See Michael Hirst, *Sebastiano del Piombo* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), 32–37.

19. Thomassin, pl. 81, put a little smile on her face and a bracelet on her upper arm, two touches that are missing in Chauveau's print. He also has the drapery sliding off her shoulder, which brings her closer in this respect to Raphael's *Lucretia* and *Galatea*.

20. See Charles de Tolnay, *Michelangelo* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), vol. 1, 142, no. iv. Thomassin, pl. 80, differs from Le Pautre in that the adult satyr in his engraving has no horn in his hand. He also put a broader grin on the satyr's face.

21. See Haskell and Penny, 242, no. 51. That it was thought in these years to represent Juno is proven by an inventory of Aug. 28, 1673, as published by Auguste Castan, "Les premières installations de l'Académie de France à Rome d'après le plus ancien inventaire du mobilier et des travaux de cette institution," *Réunion des Sociétés des Beaux-Arts des Départements* 13 (1889): 109.

22. For Thomassin, index, the gesture defines the figure: "Satyre, qui tient son menton. . ."

23. She is smiling in Le Pautre's print and also in Thomassin's, pl. 82.

24. Thomassin, pl. 82, shows the instrument more clearly than Le Pautre and drives the point home in his index: "Bacchante & un petit enfant qui joué des castagnettes. . ." The child's arm is more raised and curved in Thomassin's print than it is in Le Pautre's.

25. See de Tolnay (as in n. 20), vol. 1, 145, no. v.

26. Thomassin, pl. 115. For Saint-Aubin's drawing, see Betsy Rosasco, "Notes on Two Gabriel de Saint-Aubin Drawings and the Statues They Depict," in *Studies in the History of Art* (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1980), vol. 9, 51–57. It is preserved in the National Gallery of Art, Rosenwald Collection, B-22305. Exposed private parts are rare in the art of Versailles in the 1660s and 1670s. There was a campaign in the 1680s to equip the offending figures with leaves, and it is likely that the *Faune* was one of the recipients, at least temporarily, before the return of more liberal moods; see CBR, vol. 2 (1887), col. 1116; vol. 3 (1891), col. 249, for the leafing program.

27. Or, of course, for several reasons at once. The *Cabinet du Roi* was distributed in foreign lands and intended for the edification of posterity, and as such it insisted on suitable imagery.

28. It stood in the center of the Colonnade from the 1690s into the 1900s. A copy stands there today, the original having been moved to the Grand Écurie. Why the rear view? Did Saint-Aubin mean to suggest, à la Watteau, that the woman's desires will go unsatisfied?

29. For the ancient statue, see Haskell and Penny, 217, no. 41.

30. See Julius Held, "Flora, Goddess and Courtesan," in *De Artibus Opuscula XL: Essays in Honor of Erwin Panofsky*, ed. Millard Meiss (New York: New York University Press, 1961), vol. 1, 208–10.

31. André Félibien, *Tableaux du Cabinet du Roy, Statuës et bustes antiques des Maisons royales* (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1677), vol. 1, 16, no. xi.

32. Thomassin, pl. 122. In his index he calls her "Flore tenant en sa main une Couronne de fleurs. . ."

33. François Perrier, *Segmenta nobilium signorum et statuarum* (Rome, 1638), pl. 62. The plates vary in direction from volume to volume.

34. It is obvious from the way in which he contoured the arms of his engraved figure (Fig. 9) that Le Pautre owed a debt of his own to Perrier (cf. Fig. 22).

35. An old drawing of the *Satyre* has recently come to light (BNP, Cab. des Est., Réserve, B1, fol. 3). It looks less like a preparatory sketch by Buyster's own hand and more like an academic study from the next century. The drawn figure has greater poise and spontaneity than does the engraved one. The draftsman has chosen a novel viewpoint, a touch to the right and lower than Le Pautre's. Only the index finger protrudes across the pipes in the drawing. There is less smirk, though still a trace of amusement, on the satyr's lips. On the whole, the images are remarkably alike, which tends to raise the credibility of the engravings by Le Pautre and Chauveau. My gratitude to Françoise de La Moureyre for sharing her discovery of it.

36. Félibien, 200ff. On their way through the Parterre du Nord they stopped to look at the jets in the twin pools, the future homes of the Couronnes. The Siren fountain, lying on the terrace, was the only fully figured work in the upper part of the gardens at that moment.

37. See Haskell and Penny, 303, no. 76. Charles Le Brun spoke of it in his Nov. 1667 lecture on Nicolas Poussin's *Manna*, a summary of which we owe to André Félibien, *Conférences de l'Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture pendant l'année 1667* (Paris: Chez Frédéric Léonard, 1668), 87–88.

38. See Haskell and Penny, 212, no. 38. Perrier included it in his *Segmenta* (as in n. 33), pl. 48.

39. Thomassin, pl. 114, and again in his index.

40. *Ibid.*, pl. 124, and in the index.

41. Thomassin has the heel of one foot resting atop the other, more curtsy-like than Chauveau's figure. She lifts both sides of her dress in Thomassin's angle of things.

42. Natale Conti, *Mythologie, ou explication des fables*, trans. Jean de Montl-

yard, rev. and ed. Jean Baudouin (Paris: Pierre Chevalier, 1627; reprint, New York: Garland, 1976), vol. 1, 434.

43. Rosasco (as in n. 26), 57 n. 13.

44. Chantelou, 116 (Aug. 23), 214 (Oct. 8). See Haskell and Penny, 205, no.

34. Lerambert was preoccupied with the Petite Commande in 1665.

45. Félibien (as in n. 31), vol. 1, 17, nos. xiv, xv.

46. None of these clues was lost on Saint-Aubin a century later. See Rosasco (as in n. 26), 53, fig. 2, for a photograph. Lerambert seems to have gotten the idea from the knot-covered tree trunk beside the *Dancing Faun* (Fig. 25).

47. See Geneviève Bresc-Bautier, "Iconologie de l'état monarchique: La statuaire du dôme central des Tuileries (1666-1668)," *La Revue du Louvre et des Musées de France* 37, no. 1 (1987): 31-38.

48. Perrault, 1909, 134-35. Henceforth, with some variations, I will borrow the translations from Jeanne Morgan Zarucchi, *Charles Perrault: Memoirs of My Life* (Columbia, Mo.: University of Missouri Press, 1989).

49. The most comprehensive study of the Petite Académie is Joseph Jacquot, *Médailles et jetons de Louis XIV d'après le manuscrit de Londres add. 31.908* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1968), vol. 1, esp. I-LXXXIII.

50. See Bresc-Bautier (as in n. 47), 38.

51. Most of the attributes were taken straight from Cesare Ripa, *Iconologie, ou explication nouvelle de plusieurs images, emblemes, et autres figures. . .*, trans. and ed. Jean Baudouin (Paris: Chez Mathieu Guillemot, 1644; reprint, New York: Garland, 1976), but as Bresc-Bautier (as in n. 47), 34-35, points out, Perrault and his sculptors were quick to invent their own solutions when the need arose.

52. The document was published by Pierre Chaleix, *Philippe de Buyster* (Paris: A. et J. Picard, 1967), 157-58. La Perdrix got 650 livres from Buyster, that is, about 150 livres per statue and the rest for a heraldic device, although the exact amounts are not spelled out in the contract. Buyster received 400 livres per statue from the Bâtiments du Roi, including those that he signed over to La Perdrix. It says in the contract that Buyster will provide the stone; even so, he made a tidy profit. I am assuming that Poissant did some subcontracting of his own here.

53. See Nicolas Sainte Fare Garnot, *Le décor des Tuileries sous le règne de Louis XIV* (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1988), 55-56, 91-92. There is no evidence that Perrault or anyone else at the Petite Académie had a hand in planning these ornaments. Le Brun and Colbert seem to have done it themselves while conferring at St-Germain-en-Laye.

54. Archives Nationales, Paris (ANP), O¹ 1669⁸. The architect Louis Le Vau also played a supervisory role here. See Souchal et al., vol. 2, 21, no. 12, vol. 3, 35, no. 9, 243, no. 14.

55. Perrault, 1909, 108-9.

56. For an inventory of early references to the conceit, see Berger, 20-24.

57. Perrault, 1909, 109-10.

58. *Ibid.*, 110. His use of the word "figures" in the first sentence is puzzling, but he probably refers to the tritons and nereids in relief on the interior walls.

59. Jean François Blondel, *Architecture française*, vol. 4 (Paris: Charles-Antoine Jombert, 1756), 107 n. x. The manuscript went up in the flames of the Commune of 1871.

60. *Ibid.*

61. Liliane Lange, "La grotte de Thétis et le premier Versailles de Louis XIV," *Art de France* 1 (1961): 138-42.

62. Claude Nivelon, "Vie de Charles Le Brun & description détaillée de ses ouvrages," ca. 1698, BNP, Dép. des Mss., ms fr. 12987, fol. 260, quoted in Marie, vol. 1, 159.

63. See Jacquot (as in n. 49), xci.

64. Charles says in his *Mémoires* that he became a clerk to his brother Pierre, the *receveur général des finances* of Paris, in 1654. The work demanded little of him, and he spent much of the next ten years reading books from an excellent library that Pierre had bought from the estate of Germain Habert, the abbé de Cérési, one of the founders of the Académie Française. He also wrote poems in these years. He joined the Petite Académie in 1663 and the Bâtiments du Roi in 1664.

65. See Paul Bonnefon, "Charles Perrault commis de Colbert et l'administration des arts sous Louis XIV," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 40 (1908): 198-214, 340-52, 426-33. Charles's contact at Versailles in the 1660s was Louis Petit, the *contrôleur général des bâtiments* there.

66. See Charles Perrault, "Lettre à Monsieur Bontemps, Conseiller, premier Valet de Chambre du Roy, et Intendant du Chasteau, Parc & Menagerie de Versailles" (1673), in *Recueil de divers ouvrages en prose et en vers* (Paris: Jean-Baptiste Coignard, 1675), 6-7. See Thomas F. Hedin, "Versailles and the *Mercur* Galant: the Promenade of the Siamese Ambassadors," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 119 (1992): 171 nn. 65, 67.

67. Charles takes no credit in his *Mémoires* for the Labyrinthe, but he did write two extensive texts on it in the 1670s: "Le Labyrinthe de Versailles" (1675), in *Recueil de divers ouvrages* (as in n. 66), 234-72; and *Labyrinthe de Versailles* (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1677).

68. Perrault, 1909, 111.

69. *Ibid.*, 112.

70. *Ibid.*, 110-11 (emphasis added). The Bosquet du Marais was built at the beginning of the 1670s. Perrault said in 1673 that it surpassed all the other fountains for "the merit of the invention" (as in n. 66), 6. He is alone in attributing that "invention" to Mme de Montespan, the king's mistress. A painting of the Marais is reproduced in Hazlehurst, 92, pl. 62.

71. Blondel (as in n. 59), 103 n. n (emphasis added). A *bosquet* in this sense is a grove of trees with an open space or network of paths inside it.

72. *Ibid.*, 104 n. r. In his letter of 1673 (as in n. 66), 6-7, and again in his *Parallèle*, 1688, 247-52, Perrault spoke of the beauties of the northern zone, the Arc de Triomphe among them. For a history of this *bosquet*, see Weber, 131-34, 291-92; and idem, "Ein Kaskadenprojekt für Versailles: Zur Frage J. H. Mansart—A. Le Nôtre," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 37 (1974): 255-56.

73. See Weber, 108-10, 281-82, for a full discussion of the problem. For Weber, 109, the ways in which the figural parts of the Pyramid fountain, the Bain de Diane, and the fountains of the Allée d'Eau are subordinated to an "architectonic scaffolding" is evidence of their common paternity, that is, the Perraults. Moreover, the rusticity of these fountains is reminiscent of the Perraults' earlier work at the Grotte de Thétis.

74. Perrault, 1909, 20.

75. *Ibid.*, 22. Their "translation" of book 6 of the *Aeneid* was published by Bonnefon, 1901, 110-42. Claude's two drawings are not known to exist.

76. For an excellent historical sketch of the genre, see Francis Bar, *Le genre burlesque en France au XVIII^e siècle* (Paris: Artrey, 1960). It is known that the king read Scarron's *Le roman comique* when he was a young man.

77. See Wolfgang Herrmann, *The Theory of Claude Perrault* (London: A. Zwemmer, 1973), 3-4.

78. Perrault, 1909, 22-23. For the couplet that delighted Cyrano, see Bonnefon, 1901, 128.

79. Perrault, 1692, 296.

80. Here I quote from Bonnefon, 1901, 115.

81. Perrault, 1692, 295, has one of his interlocutors, the "Président," praise the genre for its appeal to the upper echelons. Perrault's "Président" is a narrow-minded defender of the Ancients in their battle with the Moderns.

82. *Ibid.*, 294, where the "Chevalier" comments on Scarron's humor. The "Chevalier" always ends up siding with the "Abbé," that is, Perrault, spokesman for the Moderns.

83. I have retained the orthography and punctuation of the original text. Charles Perrault, in collaboration with Claude and Nicolas Perrault and Beaurain, *Les murs de Troye, ou L'origine du burlesque* (Paris: Chez Louis Chamhoudry, 1653), 13-14.

84. Bonnefon, 1900, 469 n. 2, transcribed the marginalia in this way: "Naissance d'une monstre appelée Burlesque." My examination of it resulted in the following: "naissance d'un Monstre appelée Burlesque" (BAP ms. 2956, fol. 44). One way or the other Claude has mangled the grammar, but if he did it for burlesque reasons we have no way of telling.

85. BAP ms. 2956, fols. 44-45. Cf. Bonnefon, 1900, 469-70, for a modern rendering.

86. See Bonnefon, 1900, 451.

87. For Claude's attack on Ronsard, see *ibid.*, 451-56.

88. For a sampling of Claude's figural art, see Antoine Picon, *Claude Perrault, 1613-1688, ou la curiosité d'un classique* (Paris: Picard, 1988), 26, pls. 13-15. With these drawings Claude illustrated a poem from 1637 by one Corneillau, *Le voiage de Viry par le Sr C. Reveu, corrigé et augmenté par l'auteur en cette seconde édition* (London, British Museum ms Add. 20087).

89. Le Brun received no credit for the Petite Commande from Guillet or Nivelon, his principal biographers. No drawings by his hand have been linked to it. It was in these months that Le Brun was grooming his team of the future, but at venues other than Versailles: the *stucchi* for the Galerie d'Apollon of the Louvre, 1663-64 (Girardon, the Marsy brothers, Regnaudin), and the *Months* for the Jardin du Tibre at Fontainebleau, 1664-65 (those four artists plus Tuby and Poissant). It was to them, and to Gilles Guérin and Gérard Van Obstal, that Le Brun entrusted the works on the western axis (Figs. 26, 27).

90. Roland Fréart de Chambray, *Idée de la perfection de la peinture* (Le Mans: Jacques Ysambart, 1662), 65-66. For the translation I have gone mostly to Anthony Blunt, "The Legend of Raphael in Italy and France," *Italian Studies* 13 (1958): 8.

91. See Fréart de Chambray (as in n. 90), 71.

92. Claude Perrault seems to have been fascinated by the mechanics of the standing figure. In one of his drawings for Corneillau's *Voyage de Viry* he surrounded the main character with figures in two- and three-dimensional art, including: Daphne, whose legs have gone to root; a performer ambulating on short stilts; Giambologna's striding or flying *Mercury*; and a deity raising his right arm while balancing improbably on his right leg, his two left limbs amputated. See Picon (as in n. 88), 26, pl. 14.

93. An ancient-style trunk is found in Buyster's other *Satyre* (Fig. 10) and probably in Lerambert's *Joueuse de tambour* (Fig. 8).

94. Marin Mersenne, *Harmonie universelle, contenant la théorie et la pratique de la musique* (Paris: Sébastien Cramoisy, 1636-37), vol. 2, 53-54.

95. See John Rupert Martin, *The Farnese Gallery* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), 91, who points out that Annibale had earlier used the tambourine as an attribute of *voluptas* in his *Hercules at the Crossroads* in the Camerino Farnese.

96. See Antoine Schnapper, *Mignard d'Avignon (1606-1668)*, exh. cat., Palais des Papes, Avignon, 1979, 18, 31, 158-60, cat. nos. G2-G10; and idem, "Après l'exposition Nicolas Mignard," *Revue de l'Art* 52 (1981): 34, 36, fig. 19.

97. Carlo Cesio, *Argomento della Galeria Farnese dipinta da Annibale Carracci: Disegnata & intagliata da Carlo Cesio* (Rome: Vitale Mascardi, 1657), pl. 5.

98. The child at Versailles plays the castanet, a percussion instrument that

produces a very agreeable sound in dances, according to Mersenne (as in n. 94), vol. 2, 47–48.

99. G.-P. Bellori, introduction to Cesio (as in n. 97), 5–6.

100. For Carracci's debt to the canto, see Charles Dempsey, "Et nos cedamus Amori: Observations on the Farnese Gallery," *Art Bulletin* 50 (1968): 369; idem, *Annibale Carracci: The Farnese Gallery, Rome* (New York: George Braziller, 1995), 68.

101. Claude Perrault, BAP ms 2956, fol. 14: "Imitation de la description d'une sécheresse dans le Tasse. liv. 2. de la livre." Cf. Bonnefon, 1900, 460 n. 2. Tasso told the story of the drought in canto 13, and not, as Claude said, in canto 2.

102. Claude Perrault, BAP ms 2956, fol. 14: "Diodor. l. 3. St Augustin fait mention de ce miracle, qui fut une pluie qu'on estimait avoir été obtenue du ciel par Aeacus dans une grande sécheresse. l.2 de la *Cité de Dieu*." Cf. Bonnefon, 1900, 460 n. 1.

103. One did not have to travel to Rome to know the fresco. Fréart, working from Giorgio Ghisi's print of 1550, gave twenty-five pages of his *Idée* to it (as in n. 90), 92–116. See *Raphael dans les collections françaises* (as in n. 16), 379, cat. no. 70; Suzanne Boorsch et al., *The Engravings of Giorgio Ghisi*, exh. cat., Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1985, 61, cat. no. II; and Jeremy Wood, "Cannibalized Prints and Early Art History: Vasari, Bellori and Fréart de Chambray on Raphael," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 51 (1988): 210–20.

104. See Ripa (as in n. 51), vol. 1, 88. In some of Ripa's early Italian editions (including *Iconologia*. . . [Padua: D. Pasquardi, 1611], 234), History writes her memories on an oval shield resting on Saturn's back. The woodcut in the 1611 edition, contrary to the text there, shows History writing in an open book. For an analysis, see L. D. Ettlinger, "The Pictorial Source of Ripa's 'Historia,'" *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 13 (1950): 322–23.

105. I find no other prints in the *Cabinet du Roi* with the heavily scarred architecture of our Figs. 5 and 12, or even the lightly scarred architecture of our Figs. 7 and 11, leading me to conclude that the chips were carved by Lerambert and Buyster at the beginning and were not the inventions of the printmakers.

106. We have read Félibien to that effect (see n. 31 above). The column is also a takeoff on the tree trunk in the *Farnese Flora*. Thomassin, pl. 122, overlooked the column.

107. Ripa (as in n. 51), vol. 1, 42–43. Jacques de Bic's woodcut precedes the text. Constancy was one of the allegories at the Tuileries, and Charles Perrault's definition of it is largely borrowed from Ripa. See Bresc-Bautier (as in n. 47), 38, for his memo of 1666.

108. See Paulette Choné, Daniel Ternois et al., *Jacques Callot 1592–1635*, exh. cat., Musée Historique Lorrain, Nancy, 1992, 215, cat. no. 136. Callot's figure goes back to the late 1610s.

109. If Lerambert's Pan owes something to Callot's *Pantaloone*, so, I would like to propose, Antoine Watteau's *Mezzetin* in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, owes as much or more to Le Pautre's engraving of the Pan. Pan and Mezzetin are truly kindred spirits, in their gestures, in their spatial fields, and in their pathetic pleas to loves outside the frame; their worlds are botanically very similar. There is no doubt that the engraving, along with the rest of the *Cabinet du Roi*, was in the collection of Watteau's friend and patron Pierre Crozat. The Pan stood at the Palais-Royal in Watteau's day, but he seems to have been touched by the sad and desolate figure as pictured by Le Pautre.

110. Donald Posner, "Jacques Callot and the Dances Called *Sfessania*," *Art Bulletin* 59 (1977): 203–16. See also Choné et al. (as in n. 108), 215, cat. nos. 137–70.

111. Three stanzas from "Lucia" were incorporated into a popular poem of about 1615 by G. C. Cortese that tells of her return to the joys of life and love. Posner (as in n. 110), 205–6, has discovered the secret to Callot's frontispiece in these lyrics.

112. Nollac, 98.

113. One of the backdrops, by Chauveau, resembles a theatrical stage (Fig. 5). Chauveau had done the frontispiece and eight illustrations for Scarron's *Virgile travesti* in the years leading up to his work on the Petite Commande in 1675. His idea of Aeneas fleeing from the flames of Troy is a parody of Raphael's *Fire in the Borgo* in the Vatican apartments.

114. Perrault, 1692, 296–97. Boileau said much the same thing in the foreword to his *Lutrin*. See the *Oeuvres complètes de Boileau*, ed. A. Ch. Gidel (Paris: Garnier Frères, 1872), vol. 2, 405.

115. Perrault, 1692, 297–98.

116. *Ibid.*, 298.

117. I arrived at this conclusion by comparing Louis de Chastillon's view of the Apollo fountain from 1683 (Fig. 27) and the garden-wide plans from the early 1680s (see n. 197 below). Lerambert's *Satyre* (Fig. 11) is pictured by Chastillon in the southwest corner of the basin, that is, the corner closest to the Ménagerie; that spot is marked on the plan by a dot, and it is paired with a dot that almost certainly represents the home of his *Danseuse* (Fig. 12). Lerambert's *Joueuse de tambour, avec un petit amour auprès d'elle* (Fig. 8) is pictured in the southeast corner of the basin, that is, the corner facing the Isle Royale; there is a dot for it on the plan and another alongside it for his *Faune* (Fig. 7). The last two couples, both by Buyster, are represented by dots in the northern corners, but which couple went where is uncertain. Each individual

couple was kept intact, so it seems, but the orientation of the four couples vis-à-vis one another was not (cf. our reconstruction of the Rondeau, Fig. 13).

118. Claude Desgotz, "Abrégé de la vie d'André Le Nôtre," in *Continuation des mémoires de littérature et d'histoire*, ed. P. N. Desmolets (Paris, 1730), vol. 9, 466–67.

119. Martin Lister, *A Journey to Paris in the Year 1698* (London: Jacob Tonson, 1698; reprint, New York: Arno Press, 1971), 37.

120. As told in 1700 by the duc de Saint-Simon, *Mémoires de Saint-Simon*, ed. A. de Boislisle (Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1890), vol. 7, 193. See Thomas F. Hedin, "Le Nôtre to Mansart: Transition in the Gardens of Versailles," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 130 (1997): 245–47, 293.

121. Louis de Bachaumont, BAP ms 3505, fol. 25, a copy of which I owe to the diligent efforts of Henriette Dumuis in Paris. Parts of it were included in Edmond and Jules de Goncourt, *Portraits intimes du dix-huitième siècle* (Paris: Ernest Flammarion, 1856), vol. 1, 63–64. Hazlehurst, 9, pl. 2, reproduces a sheet with two caricatures or grotesques by Le Nôtre.

122. Chantelou, 106. Parts of this translation as well as the next one are taken from Chantelou, *Diary of the Cavaliere Bernini's Visit to France*, ed. Anthony Blunt, trans. Margery Corbett (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 129.

123. Chantelou, 151; idem (as in n. 122), 187–88.

124. The quip was recorded by Desgotz (as in n. 118), 470.

125. Tallement des Réaux, *Les historiettes de Tallement des Réaux* (Paris: Librairie Garnier Frères, n.d.), vol. 8, 67–68.

126. For the final product, see *Le grand armorial de France (1696)*, BNP, Dép. des Mss., ms couleur 43 [Paris 1], 185, or Microfilm ICR 190, 185. It is reproduced in color in Stéphane Pincas, *Versailles: The History of the Gardens and Their Sculpture*, trans. Fiona Cowell (London: Thames and Hudson, 1996), 35. See also Hazlehurst, 7.

127. For his accommodations there, see A. L. Lacordaire, "Brevets accordés par les rois Henri IV, Louis XIII, Louis XIV et Louis XV," *Archives de l'Art Français* 5 (1853–55): 221–25, nos. I–IV. After 1666, he lived and worked in the shadows of his own statuary on the western facade!

128. Guillet de Saint-Georges, "Buyster," 284. The gift was recorded on Jan. 4, 1665, in A. de Montaiglon, ed., *Procès-Verbaux de l'Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture: 1648–1792* (Paris: J. Baur, 1875; reprint, Paris: F. de Nobele, n.d.), vol. 1, 274. Henri Testelin, the secretary, listed the gift as "a model representing a God Pan." Buyster's rocky career at the Académie Royale, from 1651 through 1666, is detailed in *ibid.*, vol. 1, 53, 73, 87, 90, 93, 94, 96, 98, 227, 229, 274, 300, 304, 315.

129. That Buyster presented his model in the first week of 1665, less than three and a half months after he had received his first payment, leads me to think that the *Satyre tenant une grappe de raisin* was one of his very first priorities (App. 1). The timing of his gift is one more confirmation that the Petite Commande originated in 1664, not in 1665.

130. Guillet de Saint-Georges, "Buyster," 283. Buyster was lucky that Sarazin had strong connections to François Sublet de Noyers, *secrétaire d'état* under Cardinal Richelieu.

131. With that statue, according to Guillet de Saint-Georges, "Buyster," 289, Buyster retired. Philippe Vignon portrayed the indomitable Fleming shortly before his death in 1688 (Musée de Versailles, inv. no. 5861). For a reproduction, see Thierry Bajou, *La peinture à Versailles: XVIIe siècle* (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1998), 211.

132. Guillet de Saint-Georges, "Lerambert," 330–31.

133. For the collation at the Étoile on the night of July 18, 1668, Lerambert made a straw-filled mannequin of Pan and another four of rustic dancers (Fig. 1, where they are indicated at the ends of the radial paths). Félibien, 206, said that Pan presided over the event and that he and his cohorts took pleasure in mixing with the king and the lovely court. The conceit is a by-product of the Petite Commande. Lerambert joined Le Hongre, Jacques Houzeau, and Van Obstal making the decorations for that night's dinner, the so-called Fête de la Feuillée (CBR, vol. 1, cols. 302, 303). Some of the figures there were vintage Lerambert, such as the two tall rustic musicians at the entrance, but it is not known who fashioned them (see Félibien, 230–49). See also Souchal et al., vol. 2, 130, no. 20, 306, no. 18, 394, no. 18.

134. Guillet de Saint-Georges, "Lerambert," 330.

135. Comte de Caylus, BNP, Cab. des Est., Yb 18. Cf. an editorial addendum to Guillet de Saint-Georges, "Lerambert," 288 n. 1. The author of that note was unfamiliar with the statues' provenance.

136. Finding a record of Lerambert's verses would be a major coup. A.-N. Dézallier d'Argenville, *Vies des fameux sculpteurs depuis la renaissance des arts, avec la description de leurs ouvrages* (Paris: De Bure, 1787), vol. 2, 176, who had access to Guillet's eulogy and other manuscripts at the Académie Royale, seems to say that Lerambert withdrew his verses voluntarily. Perrault, 1909, 39–40, speaks with such effusive pride of his sixteen legends for the tapestries of the *Elements* (1664) and his nine legends for the tapestries of the *Seasons* (1666) that I have to wonder if he and his associates in the Petite Académie vetoed the use of Lerambert's poetry, compensating him for his loss by allowing his signatures. Guillet says nothing of verses or signatures on Buyster's statues. Lerambert's life was the subject of reflections by the comte de Caylus and Charles-Antoine Coypel in 1750; see Montaiglon (as in n. 128), vol. 6, 191–95.

137. Guillet de Saint-Georges, "Lerambert," 333.

138. For Lerambert's academic life through 1666, see Montaiglon (as in n. 128), vol. 1, 219, 230, 261, 270, 292, 293, 300, 304.

139. Musée de Versailles, inv. no. 3518. Alexis-Simon Belle's portrait of 1703-4 is illustrated in Bajou (as in n. 131), 289.

140. A set of twelve terms by Louis Lerambert was partially in situ in the Jardin-à-Fleurs, to the south of the château, in Feb. 1664 (BNP, Dép. des Mss., Mél. Colbert 311, fol. 142r); the set consisted of six pairs of gods and goddesses. Most of the thirteen two-headed terms by Jacques Houzeau that supported an iron fence between the château and the Jardin-à-Fleurs were there as well (fol. 142r); they appear in Pierre Patel's view from 1668 (Fig. 2). In June 1664, a month after the fête, Michel Anguier was paid for six terms for an unspecified location at Versailles (fol. 143v); like Lerambert's terms, Anguier's consisted of gods and goddesses and were paired up. Le Pautre engraved the terms by Lerambert and Anguier in 1674, attributing the entire lot to the former; see Souchal et al., vol. 2, 392, for illustrations. Thibaut Poissant was rewarded for eight tall terms of gods and goddesses in Sept. 1664, destination unknown (fol. 144r).

141. The tilting match was held at the entrance to the Allée Royale, the major avenue to the west. *La princesse d'Élide* was staged halfway down the Allée Royale, and the *Ballet du Palais d'Alcine* was performed at the end of it, in front of what is now the Fontaine d'Apollon.

142. Courtiers who wandered astray were liable to cake their high-heeled shoes in thick mud. For landscaping in the Parterre du Nord we have payments ranging from Sept. 1664 to Dec. 1665 (CBR, vol. 1, cols. 25, 83).

143. Boileau (as in n. 114), vol. 2, 292 n. 2, in an annotation to his *L'art poétique* of 1683, said that the burlesque style went into decline about 1660 after being extremely popular in the earlier part of the century.

144. Perrault, 1692, 292.

145. Sieur Combes, *Explication historique de ce qu'il y a de plus remarquable dans la maison royale de Versailles, et en celle de Monsieur à Saint Cloud* (Paris: C. Nego, 1681), 103. "Sieur Combes" is the nom de plume of Laurent Morellet.

146. See Jennifer Montagu, "The Painted Enigma and French Seventeenth-Century Art," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 31 (1968): 307-35; and, recently, Betsy Rosasco, "Masquerade and Enigma at the Court of Louis XIV," *Art Journal* 48, no. 2 (1989): 144-49. For the importance of courtly games, see Jean-Marie Apostolides, *Le roi-machine* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1981), 55-58.

147. The literature on this topic is huge. For recent bibliography, see Louis A. Olivier, "The Case for the Fine Arts in Seventeenth-Century France," *Australian Journal of French Studies* 16 (1979): 377-88; and Donald Posner, "Concerning the 'Mechanical' Parts of Painting and the Artistic Culture of Seventeenth-Century France," *Art Bulletin* 75 (1993): 583-98.

148. See n. 70 above for our earlier debt to this passage. It was for the king's pleasure that Mme de Montespan imagined the Marais, a short walk to the west and south of the Allée d'Eau.

149. If I am right, that Claude Perrault was behind the Petite Commande, either alone or in partnership with Charles, then it opens up the possibility that he had already developed some long-term plans for this region in 1664. The Fontaines d'Enfants were begun, on Claude's initiative, shortly thereafter. Buyster's statues, with their infant satyrs, anticipate them.

150. For Lerambert it was an ideal commission: children dancing around a tree trunk; children playing the syrinx, flute, and tambourine (Fig. 29); and infant terms holding hands. Each group was cast twice in lead, and the twins still stand in pairs on either side of the median (Fig. 4). Guillet, "Lerambert," 333-34, admired their expressions, contours, and compositions.

151. Francastel (as in n. 1), chap. 1, says that sculptors at Versailles in the early 1660s were simply "collaborators" of Le Nôtre; up until then, it was gardening, and to a lesser extent architecture, that had dominated the scene. He explains that the "alliance" between sculpture and gardening posed some new aesthetic problems for French artists and that their first testing ground was Vaux-le-Vicomte, then Versailles. The terms that were erected to the south of the château in the middle 1660s were the products of an "ephemeral alliance" between those two arts. The statues of the Rondeau take it to the next level by announcing the emancipation of sculpture from the gardener's art. Francastel's discussion of the rustic quality of this early Versailles is eloquent. I am persuaded by every word of his analysis thus far, except where he assumes, with Nohac, 96 n. 1, that our eight statues stood from the beginning at the Apollo fountain. But he also advances a number of ideas that I cannot accept owing to the unusual circumstances of the Petite Commande. For example, he argues that it is impossible to speak of "an art of Versailles" in the early cycles of terms and statues because they lack originality and are unrepresentative of the artists' talents. I see it the other way around: never were Lerambert and Buyster more in their element, nor more original, than here. Francastel denies any ancient influences at all, arguing instead that the sculptors looked to Italian ceilings, and especially to cameos by the Carracci and their school, for their themes as well as for the silhouettes of their figures; he concedes, however, that their vivacity is entirely French. By my count, at least half of the Petite Commande is premised on the ancient canon, for good burlesque reasons. He says that the sculptors ignored the art of drapery and failed to situate their figures effectively in space. I have attempted to show that the draperies are carefully arranged and that no two of them are alike, again for burlesque reasons. Francastel finds nothing more in these statues than a fitting rusticity. It is not so much that he is wrong in his claims as that he has

misframed the issues. The Petite Commande must be judged by the eccentric standards of the burlesque mode.

152. Félibien, 200-201. Cf. the same Félibien, who repeated himself, though more economically, in his *Description sommaire du chateau de Versailles* (1674), in *Recueil de descriptions de peintures et d'autres ouvrages faits pour le Roy* (Paris: Sébastien Mabre-Cramoisy, 1689; reprint, Geneva: Minkoff Reprint, 1973), 307. A certain Dame Jourdain wrote a purely descriptive account of the Dragon in a private manuscript (BAP ms 2546, fols. 69-70). It is dated Jan. 3, 1695.

153. See, above all, Nathan T. Whitman, "Myth and Politics: Versailles and the Fountain of Latona," in *Louis XIV and the Craft of Kingship*, ed. John C. Rule (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1969), 286-301. Whitman's thesis is accepted by Weber, 118-20; idem, "Charles Le Brun's 'Recueil de divers desseins de fontaines,'" *Münchener Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst* 32 (1981): 172-73; and by Berger, 10-12, 24-28; idem, "Tourists during the Reign of the Sun King: Access to the Louvre and Versailles and the Anatomy of Guide-books and Other Printed Aids," in *Paris: Center of Artistic Enlightenment*, ed. George Mauner et al. (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania University Press, 1988), 135-37.

154. Thomas F. Hedin, *The Sculpture of Gaspard and Balthazard Marsy* (Columbia, Mo.: University of Missouri Press, 1983), 39-40, 52-53.

155. I do not agree with Berger that the monster's name is significant (1988 [as in 153], 135-36).

156. See Jean Babelon and Joseph Jacquot, *Histoire de Paris d'après les médailles de la renaissance au XXe siècle* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale de France, 1951), 81, no. 59; and Françoise Bardon, *Le portrait mythologique à la cour de France sous Henri IV et Louis XIII* (Paris: A. et J. Picard, 1974), 40-41, 131-32, 170, 217-18, 246-47, pls. xviii, xviii.

157. The most influential edition was *Les Métamorphoses d'Ovide . . .*, trans. Nicolas Renouard (Paris: Veuve Langelier, 1619), 21-22, and, under new pagination at the end, 22, chap. 10. Jean Matheus, the illustrator, drew a hybrid monster, four-legged, winged, serpent-tailed, and scaled, crouching low on the ground and striking out with his long tongue. Renouard calls him both Python and Dragon. Pierre du Ryer, a post-Fronde translator of the *Métamorphoses* (Paris: Chez Antoine de Sommerville, 1660), 30-32, followed Renouard in relating the Python to the dissipation of all those pests and maladies that had come into the world with the putrefaction of the earth and air. Cf. also the 1627 edition of Conti's *Mythologie* (as in n. 42), vol. 1, 345-46, for the "atmospheric" Python.

158. See Jacques Thuillier et al., *Vouet*, exh. cat., Galeries Nationales du Grand Palais, Paris, 1990-91, 475, cat. no. 136. For helpful bibliographies on these pre-Fronde applications of the Pythian theme, see Berger, 86 nn. 46-52.

159. *Le ballet des Noces de Pelée et de Thétis, comédie italienne en musique, entre-meslée d'un ballet sur le mesme sujet, dansé par Sa Majesté* (Paris, 1654), 6. I owe the translation to Berger, 11.

160. Musée de Versailles, inv. no. 6927 (2). See Jürgen Glaesemer, *Joseph Werner: 1637-1710* (Munich: Prestel, 1974), 21-23; *Collections de Louis XIV: Dessins, albums, manuscrits*, exh. cat., Orangerie des Tuileries, Paris, 1977, 237, cat. no. 225; and Berger, 12, 26, for whom the Fronde allegory is a given. It is illustrated in all three books.

161. *Les plaisirs de l'isle enchantée* (Paris: Sébastien Mabre-Cramoisy, 1674), 11, a book that has been attributed by some to André Félibien and by others to Charles Perrault.

162. The vases go back to 1665-66. There are twenty-six of them altogether, fourteen in a row along the parapet bordering the terrace of the château on the northern side, and another twelve in a complementary row on the southern side. But, as each model was cast twice, there are only thirteen individual designs. Claude Ballin seems to have designed twelve (twenty-four vases) and François Anguier one (two). See Marie, vol. 1, 80-81, for some of Ballin's drawings; and Souchal et al., vol. 2, 233, no. 16, vol. 3, 6, no. 15, 330, no. 7, for the sculptors and casters.

163. André Félibien, *Les divertissemens de Versailles donnez par le Roy à toute sa Cour, au retour de la Conquête de la Franche-Comté, en l'année 1674* (1674), in Félibien (as in n. 152), 406-7.

164. *Ibid.*, 432-33.

165. *Ibid.*, 435-36.

166. For the role of external politics, see Marie-Christine Moime, *Les fêtes à la cour du Roi Soleil, 1653-1715* (Paris: Fernand Lanore, 1984), 132-39, esp. 135; and Peter Burke, *The Fabrication of Louis XIV* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 78.

167. Nivelon (as in n. 62), in Marie, vol. 1, 160-61.

168. Or so Chastillon labeled it. For the drawing, which is kept in the Louvre, Cabinet des Arts Graphiques, inv. no. 30 052, see Lydia Beauvais, *Inventaire général des dessins, école française: Charles Le Brun, 1619-1690* (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 2000), vol. 2, 704, no. 2450. For the engraving after it, see "Recueil de divers Desseins de Fontaines Et de Frises Maritimes Inventez et designez par Monsieur Le Brun . . ." BNP, Cab. des Est., Da 39a, fol. 5; and the discussion by Weber, 1981 (as in n. 153), 170.

169. *Mercurie Galant*, Sept. 1680, pt. 2, 309-11. Étienne Baudet's engraving of this scene is reproduced in Robert W. Berger, *Versailles: The Château of Louis XIV* (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1985), fig. 52. Nivelon (as in n. 62), in Marie, vol. 2, 270, based his account on the *Mercurie's*, repeating the Fronde theme clearly and simply.

170. Besides those previously cited, I know of three related images at

Versailles: the water games in the subterranean grotto of the Pavillon at the Ménagerie, which took the form of "des dragons" (see Petit's report to Colbert from Apr. 28, 1666, as published by Pierre de Nolhac, *La création de Versailles* [Versailles: L. Bernard, 1901], 56, 214 n. 6); the ceiling of the Salle Octogone, inside the château, a work from 1674–75 (see Combes [as in n. 145], 22–23); and Jean Cotelle the Younger's painting of Apollo slaying the Dragon, ca. 1688–90, in which the event takes place in front of the Dragon fountain itself (Musée de Versailles, inv. no. 770; reproduced in Hazlehurst, 138, pl. 108). The first two works are not extant.

171. Whitman (as in n. 153), 295.

172. Pierre du Ryer, in his translation and commentary on the *Métamorphoses* (as in n. 157), 30–32, interpreted the legend in atmospheric terms although the Fronde had taken place ten years earlier. Benserade, who in 1654 had equated the Python and the Frondeurs, offered this post-Fronde interpretation of the legend in his *Métamorphoses d'Ovide en rondeaux*. . . . (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1676), 20–21: "Aux jeunes gens la gloire est nécessaire, / Il faut aller à ce but ordinaire, / Et s'avancer vers un giste si bon, / Pour acquérir d'autant plus de renom / Ne rien laisser de ce qu'on trouve à faire. / Sur le chemin" (Glory is necessary to young men, / One must usually go to this end, / Engaging in such a soundly fatal knockout, / To win all the more renown / Leave nothing that one finds to do. / Along the way).

173. Musée de Versailles, inv. no. 8073. For discussions, see Berger, 10–11; and Bajou (as in n. 131), 68.

174. "Gilles Guérin" (1691), in *Mémoires inédits sur la vie et les ouvrages des membres de l'Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture*, ed. L. Dussieux et al. (Paris: Dumoulin, 1854; reprint, Paris: F. de Nobele, 1968), vol. 1, 264. The king wears a Herculean lion's skin on his head. It is illustrated in Berger, fig. 8.

175. The Dutch War of 1672–78 was a decisive factor in the iconographic turnabout. The Escalier des Ambassadeurs seems to have led the way (begun 1674), followed closely in the gardens by the Bosquet de la Renommée (begun 1675), the Bosquet de l'Arc de Triomphe (revisions begun 1676), and possibly the Bosquet de l'Encelade (begun 1675). The pedimental groups above the Cour de Marbre (begun 1679) and the groups to either side of the Grille Dorée (begun 1680) soon fell in line.

176. Whitman (as in n. 153), 297. We do not know that the courtiers stood in grim and silent contemplation of the Dragon on the night of July 18, 1668. Félibien says no such thing in his book. To be sure, there was the normal expectation of etiquette in the royal presence.

177. Berger (as in n. 153), 135–37.

178. There are, for Francaestel (as in n. 1), 22, two essential principles at work in the earliest sculptures: first, "a decorative sentiment," as he calls it, which embraces the Crown and the Pyramid fountains, the Bain de Diane, the Allée d'Eau, and the Dragon fountain along the north-south axis; and second, "the legend of the sun," which embraces the sculptures of the Grotte de Thétis, the Latona and Lizard fountains, and the Apollo fountain along the east-west axis. Félibien's discussion of the statues and reliefs on the three garden facades is a helpful guide here (as in n. 152), 293–99.

179. Le Nôtre added two cheerful retreats to the area in the early 1670s: the Pavillon d'Eau, to the east of the Allée d'Eau, consisting of four vases in the corners of the woods and five dolphins in a centralized basin, and the Berceau d'Eau, on the other side of the Allée d'Eau, featuring a water tunnel and several arrangements of porcelain vases. The Pavillon d'Eau was reworked in stages, beginning in 1676, and soon became the Arc de Triomphe. The Berceau d'Eau was replaced by the Trois Fontaines in 1677.

180. The Couronnes, with their plumes of water rising from metal crowns, can be said to advance a general dynastic idea on the northern side. Two pairs of vases on this side have light emblematic value as well: the lion-handled vases with sun faces on their necks and medallions of historical figures on their bodies, and the cupid-handled vases with coats of arms of France and Navarre on their bodies. The Arc de Triomphe became more politically charged as the 1670s came to a close.

181. No one has promoted the "political" Dragon more zealously than Édouard Guillou, *Versailles, le palais du soleil* (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1963), 51–54. He stresses, and in my view seriously misinterprets, the fountain's northern site. Whitman (as in n. 153), 296, not without a curious hesitation, took the idea almost as far as Guillou: "The immemorial association of the north with water and darkness, with evil and irrationality, still prevailed at Versailles, albeit, I suspect, somewhat tongue in cheek. Hence the presence here of the dragon, along with the grotto of Thetis. . . ." (emphasis added).

182. Félibien (as in n. 152), 279.

183. Since no two readers (or viewers) bring the same cultural baggage to their experiences of it, burlesque is a widely open-ended genre. It is wide enough to include the likes of Claude Denis, the chief hydraulic engineer at Versailles for thirty years, who saw in the Dragon fountain an allegory of the Huguenot defeat at La Chapelle in the 1640s! See his *Explication de toutes les grottes, rochers et fontaines du chasteau royal de Versailles, maison du soleil, et de la Ménagerie: En vers héroïques*, ca. 1674–75, BNP, Cab. des Mss., ms fr. 2348, fols. 17v–18r; published by Marcel Raynal, "Le manuscrit de C. Denis, fontainier de Louis XIV, à Versailles," *Versailles* 38 (1970): 10. Accordingly, the events of the Fronde might have popped into the minds of 17th-century Frenchmen standing before the Dragon, but not in the form of a humorless admonition.

184. BNP, Dép. des Mss., Mél. Colbert 311, fol 144v. In a second set of ledgers, this imprecise entry is rendered even more imprecisely: "a Lerambert

sculpteur a compte des figures de pierre . . . 400 [livres]" (BNP, Dép. des Mss., ms fr. 14108, fol. 50v).

185. BNP, Dép. des Mss., Chambre des Comptes, Quittances et pièces diverses, ms fr. 26231 (240), no. 3907. It was published by Ulysse Robert, "Quittances de peintres, sculpteurs et architectes français, 1535–1711," *Nouvelles Archives de l'Art Français* (1876): 40, no. LXXIII, but with an erroneous date of Sept. 3, 1664. Obviously, the receipt of payment (Sept. 30) has to postdate the delivery of said payment (Sept. 25). A modern archivist has scribbled "1664–30 7bre" in the upper left corner of the slip.

186. BNP, Mél. Colbert 311 (as in n. 184), fol. 144r. Guiffrey published this entry in CBR, vol. 1, col. 22, without tying it to Buyster's other entries for the Petite Commande. But Nolhac, 95–96, on a shrewd hunch, saw a connection there.

187. BNP, Dép. des Mss., Mél. Colbert 312, fols. 68v, 69r, 69v (Lerambert), 69r, 28v [sic] (Buyster).

188. *Ibid.*, fol. 70v. A payment of 400 livres to Buyster on the same day speaks of "des figures" without specifying how many (fol. 70r). A payment of 200 livres to Lerambert on Dec. 26, 1665, also speaks of "des figures" without indicating the number (fol. 71r).

189. *Ibid.*, fol. 83v. A *parfait payement* is the final installment to an artist for a work, and it usually reveals, though not in this case, how much he earned altogether. If an artist was paid in two or more installments for a given job, Guiffrey conserved space by publishing only the bookend dates, the number of payments, and the sum total. Here is his one and only entry for Lerambert's activity in the Petite Commande: "22 may 1665–29 janvier 1666: à Louis Lerambert, sculpteur, pour les quatre figures de pierre qu'il a faites et posées autour du grand rondeau (5 p.) . . . 1400 livres" (CBR, vol. 1, col. 79). Notably lacking here is a payment of 400 livres to Lerambert on the Sept. 25, 1664 (see n. 184 above). What Guiffrey did with that payment was to combine it with four unrelated payments to Lerambert for a set of terms: "16 février–25 septembre [1664]: à Louis Lerambert, sculpteur, pour prix de douze termes de pierre dure faits dans le jardin à fleurs (ou jardin du Roi) de Versailles (5 p.) . . . 2200 [livres]" (CBR, vol. 1, cols. 20–21) (emphasis added). Thus, we have to subtract those 400 livres from the 2,200 livres for the terms and add them to the 1,400 livres for the statues of the Petite Commande. This raises the sculptor's receipts for the Petite Commande to 1,800 livres, or 450 livres per statue.

190. BNP, Mél. Colbert 312 (as in n. 187), fol. 84r. Here is how Guiffrey handled the payments to Buyster: "22 may 1665–24 avril 1666: à Philippe Buyster, sculpteur, pour les quatre figures qu'il a faites autour du grand rondeau de Versailles (4 p.) . . . 1300 livres" (CBR, vol. 1, col. 79). The total here is wrong because Guiffrey failed to factor in the 200 livres that had been delivered to Buyster on Sept. 25, 1664; he published that entry by itself, as if it had no relevance to the Petite Commande (see n. 186 above). Combining the two sums will elevate Buyster's total receipts to 1,500 livres, still 300 livres shy of Lerambert's 1,800. However, the entry of July 4, 1665, is imprecisely worded: "a Buyster sculpteur a compte des ouvrages de sculpture quil fait tant au palais des Thuilleries qu'à Versailles . . . 700 [livres]" (Mél. Colbert 312, fol. 28v). There is every likelihood that 300 of those 700 livres were earmarked for his work on the Petite Commande and that he earned a grand total of 1,800 livres, equaling Lerambert's total.

191. See Weber, 270, 3a.

192. *Ibid.*, 270, nos. 4a, 4b, 4c. I again count eight dots on a plan from about 1669–70, for which see *ibid.*, 270, no. 5.

193. *Ibid.*, 270, no. 6. The simple plan in Félibien's *Description sommaire* of 1674 is dotless (*ibid.*, 270, no. 7).

194. See n. 6 above.

195. See n. 3 above.

196. BNP, Cab. des Est., Va 423, vol. 1. Hazlehurst, 90, pl. 61, illustrates it. I cannot explain the reversal. The figures are represented in their proper directions by Silvestre, so we cannot blame it on the printing process. Perhaps he copied the engraved figures by Chauveau (Fig. 5) and Le Pautre (Fig. 6) and inadvertently put them in the wrong niches. A less likely explanation is that the Bâtiments du Roi elected to rearrange the statues in their final years at the Rondeau. I am unable to trace the "estampe non terminée" of the Allée d'Eau that is reproduced in Nolhac (as in n. 170), 125.

197. See Weber, 270, nos. 10, 11.

198. Sieur Combes (as in n. 145), 103. Combes attributed the entire set of statues to Lerambert.

199. BNP, Cab. des Est., Va 423, vol. 1.

200. Thomassin, pls. 80, 81, 82, 114, 115, 122, 124, 128, all in reverse. Thomassin drew the statues at Versailles in 1689, but his bound book of engravings did not appear for another five years. The statues were there for Guillet to describe in 1690 (App. 3).

201. Four white marble terms were erected at the corners of the Fontaine d'Apollon in the late 1680s or early 1690s, upstaging the Petite Commande; they are indicated in a plan from Oct. 30, 1692 (ANP, Versement d'Architecture, album 63, no. 45). See CBR, vol. 3, col. 855, for a payment on Feb. 8, 1693, to Sieur Fossier, a wagoner, for transporting them from Versailles to Paris. Guillet mentioned the move a month later (App. 3).

202. Rosasco (as in n. 26), vol. 9, 51–57, with bibliography. Saint-Aubin's drawing of the *Danseuse* is kept in a private collection in Paris and is reproduced in Rosasco's article.

203. For the Parisian history of the program, see Victor Champier and

G.-Roger Santoz, *Le Palais-Royal d'après des documents inédits (1629–1900)* (Paris: Société de Propagation des Livres d'Art, 1900), vol. 1, 175ff. They reproduce a post-1730 painting of the gardens in which five or six of our statues appear to be standing together in pairs (vol. 1, 345).

204. Guillet de Saint-Georges, "Buyster," 288.

205. Guillet de Saint-Georges, "Lerambert," 333. Guillet's mention of the Bassin d'Apollon (in his Lerambert tribute) and the Fontaine d'Apollon (in his Buyster tribute) led Nolhac, 96 n. 1, to the mistaken idea that the statues stood around that body of water from the beginning. Chastillon's view of the basin only reinforced the error (Fig. 27).