Quellenstudien zu
Jean-Baptiste Lully
L'œuvre de Lully:
Etudes des sources

Herausgegeben von
Jérôme de La Gorce und
Herbert Schneider

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Hommage à Lionel Sawkins
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A New Source for Lully’s music to Molière’s La Princesse d’Elide

Jean-Baptiste Molière’s La Princesse d’Elide served as the main theatrical entertainment of the second day of Les Plaisirs de l’Isle enchantée, the first and arguably the most brilliant of the royal divertissements given during the reign of Louis XIV. Jean-Baptiste Lully, recently appointed surintendant de la musique et compositeur de la chambre, composed the songs, dances, and choruses for Molière’s comédie-lyrique, as well as the orchestral music that accompanied the other events of the fête given during 7-13 May 1664. By all accounts La Princesse d’Elide was well received at court, and thereafter Molière and his company, the Troupe de Monsieur, were summoned to Fontainebleau that summer to repeat it. Seeking to capitalize on his court success, Molière brought the production to his public theater in Paris, where it was given 25 performances that fall; but afterwards, the company did not revive La Princesse d’Elide for nearly 30 years. In view of the enduring popularity of his other comédies-ballets given in Paris, it remains unclear why Molière decided to drop La Princesse d’Elide from repertory. To gain insight into this matter, this paper will begin with an examination of the place and function of La Princesse d’Elide within the context of the 1664 court fête, followed by a reconstruction of its afterlife in the public theater. The discovery of a hitherto unknown musical source will reveal how Lully’s original musical intermèdes were adapted in subsequent productions of this comédie-ballet. And finally, an analysis of the contemporaneous documentation relating to the first-run of La Princesse d’Elide at the Théâtre du Palais-Royal will allow us to speculate about why this court success was so rarely produced in the public theater during the 17th century.

The Court Première

In May of 1664, Louis XIV planned a grand divertissement at Versailles in honor of his new Queen, Marie-Thérèse, and of his mother, Anne of Austria. This took the form of an elaborate garden party, featuring an equestrian parade, a tournament, a banquet, a play and a ballet, and a fireworks display—all designed to show off the recently completed landscaped gardens by André Le Nôtre. As usual, Louis entrusted the Duc de Saint-Aignan, “Premier Gentilhomme de la Chambre”, with its overall organization and the coordination of the team of artists involved. This latter included the Italian stage designer Carlo Vigarni, the court poet Isaac Benserade and Président de Perigny (who contributed verses for the first and third day), the playwright Molière, and Jean-Baptiste Lully. The King wished that all its parts were to be planned “avec liaison & avec ordre, de sorte qu’elles ne pouvoient manquer de bien re saisir.”

Two aspects of Les Plaisirs de l’Isle enchantée in particular stand out: the high literary quality of its many and diverse events; and the kinship of the 1664 fête to another spectacle given a century earlier at the Valois court. The collaboration of the foremost artists, poets, and musicians of the day, the parades of mythological and allegorical characters, the nymphs and satyrs, the allusions to contemporary politics, the eulogies paid to the royal family, the sun devices, and the elaborate stage effects are only the more obvious resemblances between these two fêtes. However, there remain other important literary, musical, and political interconnections to be explored.

1 An earlier version of this paper was read in July of 1992 at the Fifth Biennial Conference on Baroque Music, University of Durham, where I first met Lionel Sawkins.

2 The main part of the entertainment was divided over the span of the first three days (May 7-9), and a continuation of these festivities followed during May 10-13. Published accounts of these festivities included: Les Plaisirs de l’Isle enchantée. Course de bagnes. Collation ornée de Machines, comédie méslée de danse et de musique, ballet du palais d’Alcine. Feu d’artifice, et d’autres fêtes galantes et magnifiques faites par le Roy à Versailles, le 7 mai 1664, et continuées plusieurs autres jours. Paris, R. Ballard, 1664 (repr. l’Imprimerie royale, 1673); and Relation des divertissements que le Roy a donné aux Reines dans le parc de Versailles, écrite à un gentilhomme qui est présentement hors de France. The author of the second account was Jacques Carpentier de Marigny, who also published it in his Œuvres en vers et en prose de Monsieur de Marigny, Paris: C. de Sercy, 1674, pp. 34-86. For discussion of the literary and musical sources, see Edmond Lemâtre, “Les sources des Plaisirs de l’Isle enchantée,” Revue de musicologie 79 (1991) 187-200.

3 François de Beausoir, duc de Saint-Aignan (1610-1679), was a lover of literature, a patron of Molière, and a member of the Académie Française; he was often placed in charge of arranging ballets at court.

4 Les Plaisirs de l’Isle enchantée: Course de bagnes, 4.
During ten days in February of 1564, Catherine de' Medici brought together representatives of the hostile Catholic and Protestant factions at Fontainebleau in an attempt to reconcile their differences. Like Les Plaisirs de l'Isle enchantée, the first day of the 1564 festivities began with tournaments and jousts, followed by a performance of the comedy La Belle Genèvre — a dramatization of Ariosto's Ginevra presented in the Italian manner, with intermedii between the acts. Pierre de Ronsard contributed many of the sung lyrics, which were set to music by Nicolas de la Grotte, organist and valet to Henri de Valois. On the following day three singing sirens predicted the future success of Charles IX in restoring peace to his strife-torn kingdom. A banquet given by the King's brother followed, and then a mock combat between six legendary Greek and Trojan heroes. The high point of the third day was a joie-mascarade, which allegorically depicted the conflict between the Huguenots and the Catholics. Six knights (portrayed by leaders of the Protestant faction) held six ladies in an enchanted castle guarded by some devils, a giant, and a dwarf. In the end, an army of Catholic knights led by Charles IX laid siege to the castle and delivered the captives.

A century later Louis XIV brought together six hundred invited guests at Versailles for another, politically motivated fête, Les Plaisirs de l'Isle enchantée — for which this time an episode from Ariosto's Orlando Furioso provided the unifying theme. In cantos VI and VII of the Italian epic, the sorceress Alcina (Alcine) imprisons Ruggiero (Roger) and his Christian knights on her enchanted island, where she makes them her lovers before transforming them into animals, rocks, trees, and fountains. The festivities of the first day began with an equestrian parade of Roger (portrayed by Louis XIV) and his companions, already under Alcina's magic spell. The sorceress had many pleasures in mind for her noble captives, and she called for a re-enactment of the Pythian games, the pan-Hellenic festival of musical, literary, and athletic contests dedicated to Apollo. Carlo Vigarani had been at work for two months constructing the mechanical devices and spectacular stage effects. He built a miniature version of Alcina's magic palace in the center of the Basin of Apollo (then called the Fountain of Swans), and filled it with fireworks for the climactic third day. Molière's actors and actresses played a central part in these festivities — and, in an unusual gesture of recognition, their names appear in the text printed along with those of the noble participants. During the first day the actors portrayed various allegorical and mythological figures when they appeared together with Louis XIV and his courtiers, who were "armés à la greque:" "La Grange portrayed Apollo,"

8 From his letters it is clear that Vigarani was more concerned with the pageantry of the first day's triumphal floats and machines and the enchantment of the third day's scenery, transformations, and final fireworks display than with his designs for Molière's comédie-galante. In a letter of 16 May 1664, he said merely that the second day of the fête a comedy interlaced with ballets and music was presented in a theater constructed especially for the occasion. See Gabriel Rouches (ed.), Inventaire des lettres et papiers manuscrits de Gaspare, Carlo et Lodovico Vigarani conservés aux Archives d'État de Modène, 1634-1684. Paris 1913, pp. 91-92.


10 Benserade's verses for Apollo revealed the King's intention of laying claim to the Spanish crown as the lawful inheritance of his wife. As part of the Peace of the Pyrenees ending the Franco-Spanish War in 1659, Marie-Thérèse had renounced her rights to the Spanish crown pending payment of a dowry of 500,000 écus that Spain had not paid. Louis XIV considered his wife to be heir to the Spanish crown, as legitimate owner of her mother's possessions in the Spanish Netherlands, where the right of devolution exists. The King subsequently backed up his claim to the Spanish crown with an invasion of the Spanish Netherlands and, ultimately, with the acquisition of the Spanish crown itself for his grandson in 1700. Ishamwood points out...
feet wide that was drawn by four horses and driven by Time – a decrepit figure with wings and a scythe who was played by M. Millet, the royal coachman. At Apollo’s feet sat the Four Ages of Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Iron (portrayed by Mlle de Brie, M. Hubert, Mlle Molière, and M. du Croisy). The Twelve Hours of the Day and the Twelve Signs of the Zodiac walked in two files alongside Apollo’s chariot, and were followed by the knights of Ariosto’s epic, portrayed by the French nobility bearing devices. Once these troops had entered the camp and taken their positions for the tournament, the Four Ages recited verses to Apollo in praise of the Queen. Then Roger and his knights staged a tournament, which featured the ancient tradition of running at the ring.

After night had fallen, Lully, dressed as Orpheus, conducted a band of 34 musicians, who played by candlelight for the ballet of the Signs of the Zodiac and the Four Seasons. The latter, mounted on a different animal from the King’s menagerie, followed in a grand procession: the beautiful Mlle du Pare, riding on a Spanish horse, portrayed Spring; her husband, riding on an elephant, was Summer; La Thorillière, representing Autumn, rode a camel; and Winter, played by M. Béjart, rode a bear. Each Season was accompanied by its own retinue: Spring by twelve gardeners, Summer by twelve reapers, Autumn by twelve vine-dressers, and Winter by twelve old men, nearly frozen to death. As Lully directed a piece of boats and flutes, Pan and Diana (played by Molière and Mlle Béjart) appeared on a float depicting a rock shaded by several trees, including a mechanical tree that lifted Pan and Diana into the air. After the Four Seasons, Diana, and Pan recited more eulogies to the Queen, a royal banquet was prepared by the controllers of the King’s household, who portrayed Abundance, Joy, Propriety, and Good Cheer. The company sat down at a semicircular table laden with flowers and food, while 36 fiddlers played on a small stage. While 200 wax flambeaux held by masked servants provided illumination, “tous les Chevaliers avec leurs Casques couverts de plumes de différentes couleurs, & leurs habits de la Course, estoient appuyez sur la Barrière; & ce grand nombre d’Officiers richement vestus, qui servoient, en augmentoient encore la beauté, & rendoient ce rond une chose enchantée.”

On the evening of the second day, Alcine rewarded Roger and his knights with a theatrical performance, La Princesse d’Elide. Molière’s comédie-héroïque served as a reflection of the court of Louis XIV, and his actors (who had portrayed mythological gods and allegorical figures during the first day) now became the mirror image of that magnificent assembly they were to entertain. Vigani had erected a temporary stage in the Bosquet des Dômes, a kind of salon created by hedges and thickets with curtains protecting the candles and torches from the wind, and the absence of a backdrop gave the audience an unobstructed view of Alcine’s magic island, which would figure in the dénouement of the third day. The best vantage point was reserved for the guests of honor: Philippe d’Orléans (the King’s brother) and his wife Henriette, Louis XIV and Marie-Thérèse, and the Queen-Mother, Anne of Austria. As we will see, the chivalric pageantry of the French court joined with Ariosto’s romance and Molière’s comédie-héroïque to explore the dual absorption of Louis XIV’s early reign: amour and gloire.

Molière’s main literary source was Augustin Moreto’s popular Spanish comedy El Desden con el desden (1654), a choice of subject made in deference to Anne of Austria and Marie-Thérèse, who both had connections to the Spanish throne. However, perhaps due to the earlier mention of the Pythian games in Les Plaisirs de l’Isle enchantée, Molière shifted the play’s setting from Barce-

12 Molière’s actors were also well rewarded for their participation in the three-day fête. According to the Registre de La Grange, they received 4000 livres from the King, and Molière received a royal stipend of 2000 livres for his play (Le Registre de La Grange 1659-1685, facs. ed. Bert Edward and Grace Philpott Young (Paris: Ed. Droz, 1947), 167-68. For the four repeat performances at Fontainebleau the company received an additional 3000 livres. Each actor’s full share amounted to the princely sum of 46 livres 10 sous.


14 Anne of Austria was sister to Philip IV of Spain, whose daughter was Marie-Thérèse. In fact, as Peter Burke points out, Louis’s aim was to surpass his father-in-law in his style of rule. “Versailles resembled the Buen Retiro in its conception – a palace on the outskirts of the capital – as well as in its decoration with paintings of royal victories. The Galerie des Glaces, on the other hand, followed – and surpassed – the example of the Sala de Espejos in the Alcázar. The daily rituals of Versailles, so much more formal than the court of Louis XIII, owe something to Spanish precedent.” See Peter Burke, The Fabrication of Louis XIV, New Haven 1992, pp. 182-83.
lona to Elis, a region in the Peloponnesse near Arcadia. Along with this change to a bucolic locale, Molière added numerous pastoral themes, commonplaces, and characters. The Princess of Elis is referred to here as ‘une autrè Diane’ who loves only the hunt and scorn her noble suitors. Prince Euryale of Ithaca, however, attracts her attention by feigning indifference to her charms, (hence the significance of Moreto’s title, ‘Disdain for Disdain’). In the tradition of Spanish comedies, musical intermèdes frame the five acts of La Princesse d’Elide: these pastoral interludes constitute a parallel, comic action, to the spoken play – until both the pastoral and heroic worlds finally converge in the sixth intermède, a ballet of singing and dancing ‘bergers et bergères héroïques’ accompanied by an orchestra of fauns playing flutes and violins.

Because Molière lacked time to complete the versification of his play, only the first act and part of the first scene of Act 2 is in verse, while the remainder was left in prose. 15 Julien Tierrot noted the lyric quality of Molière’s text, which he describes as ‘un poème d’opéra’. ‘Molière s’y révèle poète, poète tout de fantaisie, de libre grâce, faisant penser à Shakespeare…le Shakespeare du Songe d’une nuit d’été (avec son Thésée, due d’Athènes), ou du Soir des rois, ou des adorables rêves dans lesquels s’achève le Marchand de Venise.’ 16 The romantic atmosphere of Molière’s play thereby provided a thematic counterpart to the courtly spectacle inspired by Ariosto’s romance, and Prince Euryale’s victory over the Princess’s coldness foreshadows Roger’s triumph over Alcione’s magic powers on the third day of Les Plaisirs de l’Île enchantée. Molière’s play also held special meaning for its noble spectators – for, according to Marigny, it allowed ‘les dames avouèrent de bonne foi que l’on avait découvert dans la comédie le véritable moyen de les ramener à la raison, lorsqu’elles font les difficiles et les farouches.’

The first intermède serves as the prologue to the play, and thereby acts as a transition from the epic world of Ariosto’s romance to the Arcadian world of Molière’s comédie galante. Aurora, an allegorical representation of dawn, appears onstage to sing a récit that announces the main subject of the play.

Many interpreted its second verse as an exhortation to the royal mistress, Louise de la Vallière, who five months earlier had presented the King with their first child (‘Soupirez librement pour un amant fidèle! Et bravez ceux qui voudraient vous blâmer. / Un cœur tendre est aimable, et le nom de cruelle / N’est pas un nom à se faire estimer! Dans le temps où l’on est belle, / Rien n’est si beau que d’aimer’). Later in the first act, Arbate pays a compliment to Prince Euryale that seems meant for Louis XIV (‘…C’est une qualité que j’aime en un monarque:/ La tendresse de cœur est une grande marque;/ Et je crois que d’un prince on peut tout prêsumer;/ Dès qu’on voit que son âme est capable d’aimer.’). From the start, Molière thereby established a common link between Alcione’s magic love-bonds, the King’s capacity for love (reaching beyond the conventional bonds of marriage), and the central theme of the play – the Princess’s awakening to love. 17

The next scene presents an incident related to the early morning hunt preceding Act 1 of the play. This comic episode recalls the type of musical sketch (the lout) that frequently served as a prologue to contemporary Spanish comedies, and its burlesque character contrasts with the first part of the intermède both in musical style and language. 18 The second, third, and fourth intermèdes form a pastoral subplot parallel to the main action, whose the main character is the Princess’s fool, Moron – a character modeled upon the gracioso of Moreto’s comedy. Moron (played by Molière), the witty servant of the prosaic play, is out of place in this pastoral realm, and his comic misadventures will serve as a pretext to parody pastoral conventions and commonplaces (the satyr, the echo

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15 In the middle of Act 2, sc. 1 (Les Plaisirs de l’Île enchantée. Cours de baptes, 43), the reader is informed that ‘le dessin de l’Auteur est de traiter ainsi toute la Comédie; mais un commandement du Roy qui pressa cette affaire, l’obligea d’achever tout le reste en prose, & de passer légèrement sur plusieurs Scènes, qu’il aurait étendu davantage, s’il avait eu plus de loisir.’

16 La musique dans la comédie de Molière, Paris 1922, pp. 78-79.

17 Helen Parkes (‘Le Chant pastoral chez Molière’. Cahiers de l’Association internationale des études françaises 28 (1976), pp. 133-44 [136-37]) demonstrates how the lyrics of the first and last intermèdes establish a direct connection with the noble spectators, and an indirect one with the comedy. Aurora’s address to the ‘jeunes beautés’ of the court to embrace love while they are young and beautiful, is balanced by the final intermède of ‘bergers et bergères héroïques’, who assure them that sooner or later one must give in ‘aux doux charmes de l’Amour’. The comic ent’actes, on the other hand, establish a direct connection with the play,

18 The lout was usually either a comic monologue designed to gain the good will and the attention of the audience, or a short, humorous sketch without plot and involving several actors in the company. Like the entremesses cantados that separated the acts of the comedy, the lout could be sung in whole or in part. See Hugo Alpert Rennert, The Spanish Stage in the Time of Lope de Vega, New York 1909, pp. 285-91, and Léo Rouanet, Intermèdes espagnols (entremeses) du XVIIe siècle, Paris 1897, p. 2.
conversation, the *plainte*, the singing contest, and the suicide scene). The fifth and sixth *intermèdes* return to the chivalric world of Ariosto’s romance. In the musical finale, four “heroic” shepherds and two shepherdesses celebrate love in choral song (“Usez mieux, ô beautés fières”), while eight other shepherds and shepherdesses perform figured dance. Meanwhile, a mechanical tree bearing sixteen fauns emerges from beneath the stage. As the tree moves forward “par un enchaînement d’Alcine”, the faunes play flutes and violins, to which the harpsichords, theorboes, and strings of Lully’s orchestra respond antiphonally. According to Marigny, “tout cela fut exécuté avec tant d’ordre, que tout le monde avoua qu’il fallait que Lully, qui étoit l’inventeur de toute cette harmonie et de cette entrée si belle et galante, fût cent fois plus digne que la diablesse Alcine même.”

On the evening of the third day of *Les Plaisirs de l’Île enchantée*, the court assembled in front of the Basin of Apollo. Alcine’s palace stood on the center island, while on the two flanking islands were situated a string orchestra and a band of trumpets and drums. Seated on a dais facing the basin, the King and Queen heard a concert by Lully’s musicians and watched as the palace became illuminated. The trumpeters announced the entrance of Alcine (played by Mlle de Brie) riding on a mechanical sea monster, and followed by the nymphs Celia and Dirce (played by Mles de Brie and Molière) riding on mechanical whales. Arriving on the bank, Alcine and her followers recited verses in praise of the Queen-Mother. Then returning to the enchanted island, they prepared to defend their palace against Roger and his knights. Lully’s *Ballet du Palais d’Alcine* depicted this epic struggle in a succession of ballet entrées for dwarfs, giants, and Moors, culminating in a combat between six monsters and six knights. Alcine summoned some evil spirits to her aid, who leapt about in various gymnastic contortions and were joined by various demons; but she is unable to fend off Roger (danced by Pierre Beauchamps, standing in for Louis) and his knights, who conquer the island. With the help of Bradamant’s magic ring (given to him by Melissa), Roger breaks the spell of Alcine’s sorcery. Thus, on the allegorical level, Roger (Louis XIV) invested with supernatural power (divine authority) is able to deliver those knights (the nobility of France) who had once succumbed to enchantment (moral/political blight). In the end, Alcine’s magic palace is destroyed in a blaze of lightning, thunder, and pyrotechnics.

The Paris Performances

Later that summer, the Troupe de Monsieur repeated *La Princesse d’Elide* for the King and his court at Fontainebleau before they brought the production to the Théâtre du Palais-Royal. The actors closed their playhouse for the first week of November to prepare for its premiere. On 2 November, Jean Crosnier, the company’s set-decorator and factotum, received 30 *livres* reimbursement for petty expenses related to the rehearsals, and a carpenter named Maître Denis was given an advance of 22 *livres*. Then beginning 9 November 1664, six

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21 Their references to Anne of Austria’s steadfastness in the face of the “rebellious waves” were undoubtedly taken to be allusions to the civil troubles of the Fronde during the minority of Louis XIV. Indeed, the *Ballet du Palais d’Alcine* might be viewed as an allegorical depiction of the civil unrest of the past fifteen years, which Louis XIV’s personal rule brought to an end. But these verses also suggest a correlation between the Queen-mother and the nymphs, and so Roger’s victory over Alcine might as well be interpreted as the King’s liberation from the regency of Anne of Austria.

22 Margaret McGowan has shown this to be a recurring theme of the *ballet dramatique* of the late 16th and early 17th century. In the earlier *ballet dramatique* (Ballet de Monsieur de Vendome, 1630) Alcine represented the disorders of the state. “The ballet thus becomes the representation of the transfer of power from the hands of a sorceress, who by her excess has thrown everything into confusion, into those of a just and reasonable king who, victorious, will restore the order”; see L’Art du Ballet de Cour en France: 1581-1643, Paris 1963, p. 76. The figure of the powerful sorceress appears in numerous ballets and machine-plays prior to *Les Plaisirs de l’Île enchantée*. Amida in the Ballet de la Délivrance de Renaud (1617) and Act 5 of Quinault’s *La Comédie sans comédie* (1655); Circe in Davel’s *Les Travaux d’Ulysse* (1631), Boyer’s *Ulysse dans l’Île de Circe*, ou Euriloché joue l’oiseau (1648); and Medea in Pierre Corneille’s *La Taison d’or* (1660).

23 Schwartz believes that this payment might have been for constructing the mechanical tree used in the sixth *intermède*; see William Leonard Schwartz, “Light on Molière in 1664 from Le Second Registre de La Théâtrière”, *Publication of the Modern Language Association* (December 1938), pp. 1054-74 (at 1069).
months after its court premiere, *La Princesse d'Elide* opened in Paris for a run of 25 performances at the Théâtre du Palais-Royal (see Figure). 24 Although no livret or program survives, we know that *La Princesse d'Elide* was given with music and dance – for singers, dancers, and instrumentalists were engaged throughout its first run. Table 1 reproduces the entry for the première that was recorded in the *Second Registre de La Thorillière*, the account book kept by Molière's company for the 1664-65 theatrical season. 25 Here we see that several professional singers (*la musique*) performed in this production. 26 The payment of 25 livres suggests that five singers were engaged to cover the eight singing roles required by the *intermédia* – each singer receiving 5 livres wages per performance. Since the singers doubled on roles at the court première, we might speculate that the Paris performances adopted a similar distribution, with all the actors joining in the chorus of the sixth *intermédia*. 27 Twelve professional dancers were also hired, and provided with stage shoes and silk hose. Evidently, four satyrs performed in the final dance, since they were supplied with four pairs of silk hose. A payment of 110 livres is listed for a „M. des Brosses“ – probably Anthoine des Brosses, one of the professional dancers in *Les Plaisirs* de l'Isle enchantée* whom Molière may have hired as ballet master for his Paris production. 28 As verified by this account, the theater orchestra for *La Princesse d'Elide* consisted of 8 strings, 3 oboes, and „la musique sinfonie“ (probably referring to theorbe and harpsichord). 29 Moreover, a supplement was paid to the string players who played „ritournels“ – that is, preludes, interludes, and postludes which framed the vocal numbers.

Table 1: *Le Registre de La Thorillière*, entry for 9 November 1664

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Description</th>
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<td>soldat</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>semaine de crainier</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>feu</td>
<td>3 livres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vne affiche extraord*</td>
<td>4 livres 10 sols</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pour 8 violons</td>
<td>24 livres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pour 12 danseurs</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Pour la musique sinfonie doit</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pour les Escarpins des danseurs</td>
<td>36 livres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pour les Escarpins des musiciens</td>
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<td>Pour les 3 haubois</td>
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</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pour la musique</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>A M. des Brosses sur ce qu'on lay doit</td>
<td>110 livres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pour les bas de soye des danseurs, ... bon conte</td>
<td>66 livres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Croisnier pour frais</td>
<td>15 livres 10 sols</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Part – 22 livres

24 Molière's delay in presenting *La Princesse d'Elide* to the public may have been due to the numerous command performances given by the Troupe de Monsieur that summer, preparation for the première of Racine's *La Thébaïde*, and Molière's petitions to have the royal ban on Tartuffe lifted. But there may have been another reason for waiting until November – for Chappuzeau tells us that the winter season (from All Saint's Day until Lent) was the time traditionally reserved for the premières of heroic plays, while comedies usually premièred during the summer months; see Le Théâtre Français (1674), ed. Georges Monval, Paris 1875, pp. 69-70.

25 See Schwartz, „Light on Molière in 1664 from *Le Second Registre de La Thorillière*“, pp. 1054-75. As Schwartz points out (p. 1055), despite its attribution to La Thorillière many of the entries appear in the hand of André Hubert, who was made the company's treasurer when he entered Molière's company from the Théâtre du Marais in 1664.

26 The *Second Registre* confirms that this expense relates to singers when it appears listed later as *musique chanteurs* and as *chanteurs* in the entries for November 11, 14, 16, 18, 21, 23, 25, 28, 30, December 2, 5, 7, 9, 12, 14, and 16.

27 For instance, if the company followed the doubling of singing roles practiced at court (as revealed by the livret, *Les Plaisirs de l'Isle enchantée: Course de bagues*), then the soprano who sang as Auror in the first *intermédia* would have sung the role of Climène in the fifth *intermédia*, together with another paid singer to perform the role of Philis, the singing shepherd Ticris in the fourth *intermédia* would have doubled the part of the tenor dogkeeper of the first *intermédia*; and the the singing satyr of the third *intermédia* would have doubled as the bass-voice dogkeeper, with another paid singer playing the baritone dogkeeper.

28 Later on, Des Brosses would serve as ballet master for the Théâtre du Marais, for Perrin's Académies d'Opéra, and for Lully's Académie Royale de Musique.

29 The 1664 *livret* shows that Lully's court orchestra for the première of *La Princesse d'Elide* included six theorboes and harpsichords; see *Les Plaisirs de l'Isle enchantée: Course de bagues*, p. 79.
Figure: La Princesse d'Elide (First-Run Performances from 9 November to 4 January 1665)

Later entries in the Second Registre de La Thorillière list further expenses. On 11 November des Brosses was paid a second installment of 110 livres; the tailor Jean Baraillon received 44 livres; and M. Vagnart, who played a bear in the second intermède, received 55 livres. Evidently the company re-created the machine-effect in the sixth intermède of a tree miraculously emerging from beneath the stage, for the 7 December entry shows a payment made to the workers who operated it. On 9 December a 300 livres stipend was paid to "Monsieur Cambert". This most likely was Robert Cambert, maître de musique to the Queen-Mother, who may have served as music director and conductor for this production. Several questions, however, remain to be answered. Did Molière’s company use Lully’s music in these public performances? If so, how much of Lully’s score was actually performed, and did the Troupe de Monsieur make royalty payments to Lully?

A New Source for Lully’s Music

An 18th-century anthology of theater music found in the Bibliothèque-Musée de la Comédie-Française sheds light on some of these issues. Entitled Théâtre Français, Tome II, this manuscript score contains incidental music for plays dating from 1664 to 1734. While its provenance remains unknown, it would appear that the volume was assembled from performance scores – probably to serve as a repository for the company’s theater music. Contained therein is music for three of the comédies-ballets: La Princesse d’Elide and Monsieur de Pontoucagnac (both attributed to Lully), and Le Malade imaginaire (attributed to Charpentier). One might therefore conclude that Lully’s incidental music for La Princesse d’Elide was indeed performed in the public theater well into the 18th century.30

30 The question of royalties, however, remains unanswered, for a careful perusal of the company’s account books reveals no recorded payments made to Lully for the use of his music. Could it be that since Lully’s music for La Princesse d’Elide was commanded by the King (who paid Lully’s salary), the rightful owner of this music was therefore the King, and since after their participation in Les Plaisirs de l’Île enchantée the King took Molière’s actors into his protection (and they were henceforth known as the Troupe du Roy), they were then permitted to use the King’s music gratis in public performances at the Théâtre du Palais-Royal?
Table 2 lists in the left column the entries for *La Princesse d’Elide* in Herbert Schneider’s thematic catalogue, while the right column reproduces musical incipits taken from the version preserved in *Théâtre François, Tome II*. As we can see, this new manuscript source contains nearly all of Lully’s original music for the first four *intermèdes*, with some new vocal and instrumental numbers found in the fifth and sixth *intermèdes*. Moreover, this version evidently dates from some years after the public première – for in the fifth *intermède* the original „Dialogue de Climène et de Philius“ (LVW 22/20) has been replaced with one of Lully’s later songs („Si du triste récit“), borrowed from the *comédie-ballet*, *Le Sicilien* (1667). The sixth *intermède* in this version substitutes entirely new songs and dances for many of the original numbers, but retains the original choral finale („Nous aimons, ô beautés fières“).

So what might be the date of this version of *La Princesse d’Elide*, and what production does it represent? The vocal scoring (7 singing roles and chorus) suggests that the music predates Lully’s restrictions of April 1673, which imposed limitations of „deux voix et six violons ou joueurs d’instruments“ on all performances given in the public theater. Were we to speculate that the musical version in question stems from a time between 1667 (the date of *Le Sicilien*) and Lully’s 1673 restrictions, then it would seem plausible that it might have been performed in the summer of 1669 – when *La Princesse d’Elide* was repeated four times for the King and his court at Saint-Germain-en-Laye. According to account printed in the *Gazette*, these court performances featured new ballets; perhaps these new ballets were indeed those added to the fifth and sixth *intermèdes* in the present source. Furthermore, the ten new vocal and instrumental numbers found there (which appear in no other Lully source) might conceivably be newly discovered music by Lully.

But internal evidence found in this source argues against this hypothesis, and in favor of a much later date. While the title-page of the music gives credit to Lully, at least one number in the third *intermède* („Les satires de M’Quinault“) is by another composer. This might well be Jean-Baptiste Maurice Quinault (1687-1745), a composer, singer, and actor who composed incidental music for the *Comédie-Française* (1712-34). Furthermore, two of the new dances in the sixth *intermède* (the *forlane* and the *rigaudon*) became popular in France only toward the end of the 17th century. From the company’s theatrical registers we know that the *Comédie-Française* revived *La Princesse d’Elide* during its 1692-93 season – the first public revival by Molière’s former company since its 1664 première. Meanwhile, in October of 1692 the company gave a command performance for the King at Fontainebleau, where *La Princesse d’Elide* was seen „avec tous les orneiments qui en ont formé le spectacle dans sa nouvelle“. It would thus seem much more likely that most of the new numbers (perhaps with the exception of „Les satires de M’Quinault“) date from the time

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32 „Ondonnance portant defenses aux comediens de se servir dans leurs representations de plus de deux voix et six violons“, dated 22 April 1673; reproduced in Benoit, *Musiques de cour*, p. 41.
33 This *visite* is recorded in *Le Registre de La Grange*, 1:109 („Le Vendredi 23 Août la troupe est allée à S. Germain. On a joué 4 fois la princesse d’Elide dans la galerie du Chateauneuf. Le retour est esté le Dimanche. 15 Septembre“).
34 „Le 31, Leurs Majestez prirent, encore, le Divertissement de *La Princesse d’Elide*, accompagné de nouvelles Entrées de Ballet, dont la beauté charma toute la Cour, ainsi que les Changer, de Théatre, et les Concerts qui rendoient ce spectacle des plus magnifiques.“ (Gazette No. 106, „De Saint-Germain en Laye, le 6 Septembre 1669“).
36 Other incidental music by Quinault found in *Théâtre français, Tome II* includes: Roy’s *Les Céphsys* (1714), Legrand’s *Le Roy de Cocagne* (1718), Delaunay’s *Le Complaisant* (1733), and Dufoche’s *Le Triple Mariage* (1716); see John S. Powell, „The Musical Sources of the Bibliothèque-Musée de la Comédie-Française“, *Current Musicology* 41 (1986), pp. 7-45 (at pp. 23-24).
37 See the articles by Rebecca Harris-Warrick and Nathalie Lecomte on the *forlane* and by Marie-Françoise Bouchon and Rebecca Harris-Warrick on the *rigaudon* in Marcelle Benoit (ed.), *Dictionnaire de la musique en France aux XVIII et XIX siècles*, Paris 1992, pp. 614-15 and 297-98.
38 Surprisingly, the rival Hôtel de Bourgogne had mounted a production of *La Princesse d’Elide* on 12 July 1676, which is the only *comédie-ballet* by Molière known to have been performed there – according to François Colletet’s *Journal des axes* (quoted in Henry Carrington Lancaster [ed.], *Le Mémoire de Mahelot, Laurent et d’autres décorateurs de l’Hôtel de Bourgogne et de la Comédie-Française au XVIIIe siècle*, Paris 1920, p. 117). Outside of a bare listing of props (including that of the mechanical tree), no other details are given for this production.
of the 1692 Fontainebleau performances, which featured dances then in fashion. Therefore, while the majority of the music is unquestionably by Lully (and would need to be incorporated into a critical edition of La Princesse d’Elide), we must conclude that these added numbers in the fifth and sixth intermèdes are most likely by later composers.

**Conclusion**

What then may be surmised from the existing documentation with regard to La Princesse d’Elide and its afterlife on the public stage? Two pieces of evidence point to the 1664 production having won the approbation of Parisian theatergoers. First, it held the stage for a lengthy run of 25 performances at the Palais-Royal, given over two months—during which time Molière’s company performed no other play. And second, during this period the production maintained relatively consistent box-office returns. In all, La Princesse d’Elide brought in a total of 15,281 livres, with an average daily intake of 507 livres 15 sous. But for a clearer picture of its financial viability we must take into account production costs. The daily operating costs for simple plays without music or machine effects normally amounted to approximately 60 livres at this time. For La Princesse d’Elide, however, the music, dance, and scenic effects increased these costs by some 130 livres. Moreover, the company incurred additional expenses: the building of the sets; the wages paid to soldiers to maintain order and keep out gate-crashers, salary and reimbursements paid out to Crosnier, silk hose for the musicians and dancers, stipends paid to the music director and dancing master, and so forth. Clearly, the daily operating expenses of 180 livres (beyond the initial start-up costs of sets, stage machines, and costumes) made the comédie-ballet a risky venture—for the box-office receipts had to be well in excess of 200 livres before the actors could count their earnings. No doubt it was these high production costs that discouraged musical revivals of La Princesse d’Elide during Molière’s lifetime. Indeed, for the 1692 revival the company’s financial registers record payments made to 1 singer and 8 dancers, and the sum of the frais ordinaires and extraordinaires amounted to around 55 livres „tous compris“—or one-third of that of the première.

Nevertheless, in spite of its short life-span on the stage, La Princesse d’Elide marked a new direction for Molière. From 1664 on, he strove to find ingenious and unexpected ways to introduce music, dance, and spectacle into primarily spoken plays. The French scholar René Bréy remarked that in his first ten plays Molière used music and ballet only one time, in the next ten plays five times, and in the last ten plays seven times; „la progression est instructive“, he observed. But this progression was no doubt guided as much by financial as well as by artistic considerations. In time comédie-ballet would prove to be consistently profitable at the box office, and, by the early 1670s, Molière’s Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme, Psyché, and Le Malade imaginaire established the genre as the most financially successful form of musical theater before the creation of French opera.

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40 See Registre de La Grange, 1:70-72.
41 Chappuzeau estimates frais ordinaires to be „sixty livres, more or less“ for each production. See Samuel Chappuzeau, Le Théâtre François, p. 67.
42 It must have been discouraging to the actors when the gross box-office receipts of 233 livres for the fourteenth performance (9 December) were used to pay off remaining expenses for the production, and they received nothing of the night’s take; the next performance (12 December) grossed only 317 livres, and so each actor who warranted a full share received only 8 livres 15 sous for that night.
43 Molière, homme de théâtre, Paris 1954, p. 256.