

**Problematic Images: Some Pitfalls Associated with the use of Iconography in
Seventeenth-century French Theatre History**

By Jan Clarke

It is a curious fact that the study of theatre iconography, much like feminism, appears to have taken place in waves occurring at roughly nine-year intervals (the late 1990s, the late 2000s), with a remarkable synchronicity across national borders. Indeed, Christopher Balme, writing in 1997, refers to a "second wave," to which he presumably belongs, during which "theatre iconography has established its own canon of . . . problematic documents."¹ What, then, might be the purpose of the present essay, appearing as it does some nine years after the last (third) wave? It is certainly not the case that theatre scholars need to be put on guard against the prevalence of problematic images: almost everyone who has ever written on the topic has included some form of salutary warning, from Lyckle De Vries, who wrote in 1999 that "[p]otential iconographers of the performing arts . . . should realize that hardly any image can be taken at face value," making "our discipline as challenging as it is risky," to Guy Spielmann, who exclaims with ironic exasperation that "the field of theatre iconography has raised such doubts concerning the nature of its corpus and the validity of its methods that we could arrive at the paradoxical conclusion that we should almost never rely on the informational value of images."² It does, however, seem to me that those areas of early modern theatre history research to which iconographical methodology has been applied have been somewhat limited, inevitably reflecting the research interests of its early practitioners: Dutch theatre, the *commedia dell'arte*, portraits of English actors, the French eighteenth-century. It also appears (for obvious reasons and with some exceptions) that Anglophone and Francophone scholars have only a limited acquaintance with each other's work, but inevitably, my own field of seventeenth-century French theatre has many of its own problematic images, some well-known, others less so.

The value of visual images as a source of evidence in the field of seventeenth-century French theatre history has, in fact, been much debated in recent years. To give just one example, in 1978, Roger Herzel published an article where he used the engravings from early editions of Molière's plays to determine their original staging that was considered seminal by the majority of Molière scholars of that time.³ However, in 2013, Philippe Cornuaille defended his doctoral thesis written under the supervision of Georges Forestier that was severely critical of Herzel's theories and their evidential base.⁴ In the published version of his thesis, Cornuaille writes that "images can be deceptive and it is very risky to depend on illustrations of performances to draw conclusions as categorical as those of Roger Herzel."⁵ Yet, in that same year, David G. Muller, a student of Herzel's, published two articles reasserting his master's credibility.⁶ How then are we, as theatre historians, to position ourselves on such slippery terrain, and what credibility should we accord images that are so seductive in their promise, while proving to be not only ambiguous but controversial? The aims of this essay are, therefore, to bring some seventeenth-century French problematic images and the questions they raise to the attention of a wider public, situate them in relation to previous and ongoing conversations within the discipline, and discuss the particular challenges they present. It begins with a brief survey of the development of the study of theatre iconography, followed by a discussion of a single emblematic image. The remainder of the essay is divided into three parts, covering the areas of theatre architecture, frontispieces, and special effects; the first two are of particular relevance to French seventeenth-century theatre history and the last has been little explored. I conclude with some general thoughts on new problems relating to the use of iconography produced, in part, by the fact that technologies of dissemination have developed while publication practices have to a large extent remained unchanged.

Development of a Discipline

Discussion of the contribution to be made by the use of visual images in the field of theatre history is scarcely new, and useful summaries of the development of what would come to be known as iconographical research have been provided by Catherine Guillot and, more fully, by Maria Inès Aliverti, who traces the evolution of the discipline from the 1960s onwards.⁷ Guillot identifies two networks of researchers operating in the 1990s: one funded by the Fondation Européenne des Sciences in Strasbourg comprising Cesare Molinari, Robert Erenstein, Laurence Senelick, Christopher Balme, Inès Aliverti, Peg Katritzky, and Martine de Rougemont, and the other led by Martine de Rougemont based at the Université de Paris III, to which Guillot herself belonged. These teams began to publish their results from the end of the decade onwards, most notably in a special issue of *Theatre Research International* in 1997, and in two co-authored volumes: *Picturing Performance* (1999) and *European Theatre Iconography* (2002).⁸ This is not to say that other scholars were not working in the field, and the seminar of the French Centre Nationale de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) entitled "Histoire de l'Art et de l'Iconographie" that operated throughout 1992 is also worthy of note.

The methodological approach adopted by these researchers was for the most part derived from art history. Indeed, Sara Mamone, in the published output deriving from the CNRS seminar, describes theatre history itself as some kind of off-shoot: "a new discipline, resulting from the debates between art historians" that has "no defined, specific and immediately recognisable object of study"--an assertion with which those of us who were already active as theatre historians may beg to differ.⁹ This approach has, though, been persistent. Thus, Nuria Aragonès instructed in 2008 that "a methodology appropriate for art history must be used and an exchange between the two disciplines is necessary," before she proceeded to outline an approach with regard to the collection of data and the confrontation of the image with textual evidence that is to all intents and purposes identical to that posited by Peg Katritzky over a decade earlier.¹⁰ However, some scholars have since questioned this

supposedly fundamental symbiosis, most notably Guy Spielmann in an article published, somewhat ironically, in the same year as that of Aragonès:

Art history, the methodological contribution of which cannot be ignored, is rarely concerned with the performative context and, what is more, neglects those images that are less prestigious, notably frontispieces and the frequently anonymous engravings on almanacs. This is why even those researchers who were careful about comparison and comprehension of artistic movements rejected the primacy of such interpretative schemas as Panofsky's "iconological scale."¹¹

One might add that the art history approach has also tended to neglect other forms of visual representation, such as sketches or doodles (the views of the Hôtel de Bourgogne stage and auditorium sketched by Sir James Thornhill during a visit to Paris in 1717 springs particularly to mind), or even the maps and architects' plans and drawings that have been used to such great effect by John Golder and Pannill Camp.¹² Indeed, iconography theoreticians (with the possible exception of Martine de Rougemont) seem largely to have bypassed topics such as architecture and scenography, and it is striking that these were explicitly excluded from the *Select Bibliography of Theatrical Iconography* compiled by Balme and Senelick in 1995. This omission Aliverti attributes to a desire not to step on the toes of other disciplines.¹³

In his highly influential article, Balme distinguishes the practices of "[e]arly theatre scholars" who were "on the lookout for illustrative material for their various accounts," but who "did not for the most part problematize what they were doing," from "genuine theatre iconographical researchers" who "point out the problematic relationship of much pictorial material to its putative theatrical reality."¹⁴ Hence his "referential dilemma": "[d]o such pictures index a 'theatrical reality,' an actual performance, or are they the product of iconographical codes, largely divorced from theatrical practice?"¹⁵ Spielmann, however,

proposes an additional "generic model" to be applied to the use of iconography in the study of "a type of show produced in a particular place, by a certain troupe, in a given period."¹⁶ He also raises the topic of the relationship of the image to the "fiction":

Beyond questions regarding the form, function and meaning of the images, our investigations come up against the difficulty of determining if the image represents a particular performance, reflects a performative situation that cannot be either localised or dated with precision, or refers to the fiction that the text or the performance is manifesting concretely. . . . By eliminating the predominance of one composition over another, we focus on the multiple relationships that can be envisaged as existing between an abstract dramatic fiction and its various possible actualisations: linguistic (the text), pictorial (the image), scenic (the performance).¹⁷

Such considerations are particularly relevant with regard to early modern French theatre iconography, where the study of frontispieces has played an increasingly important part.¹⁸ Thus, Michael Hawcroft deplores the fact that these are sometimes included in modern critical editions more as decorative objects than as subjects for investigation,¹⁹ thereby prefiguring David Wiles's related criticism of the choice of the "sumptuous" over the illuminating in terms of theatre book illustration.²⁰ Hawcroft goes on to outline the various approaches previously adopted with regard to frontispieces, before proposing his own where, without going quite as far as Spielmann as regards performance, he explores the complex web that binds reader, text, image, and fiction, thereby nuancing the somewhat simplistic statements one sometimes finds to the effect that the illustration of tragedy favored "scenes that occurred off stage, accounts of combats, the evocation of monsters and massacres," while that of comedy was more concrete in its depiction of "stage business, *lazzi* or [visual] gags."²¹ It should be noted, however, that Hawcroft's article features in a collected volume on the relationship of theatre to publishing, and it is true to say that in France at least, the text

continues to reign supreme, or at least has done so until comparatively recently, with one or two notable exceptions--one thinks of Jérôme de La Gorce or, more recently, Philippe Cornuaille.²² In order to illustrate the many ambiguities a visual image on a theatrical topic can present, I will begin by considering one particularly well-known example of the genre.

A Case Study: The Verity of Verio?

The painting known as "Les Farceurs français et italiens depuis 60 ans et plus peints en 1670" (see Figure 1), attributed to the Italian artist Verio, which is amongst the most frequently reproduced in all seventeenth-century French theatre history, features sixteen celebrated comic actors on a stage that is depicted with what appears to be a high level of realism. The décor represents the street scene that is such a feature of farce, presumably by means of angle flats and a backcloth, since Phillipin is shown above the stage leaning on the balustrade of a practicable balcony. Also visible are six chandeliers suspended above the stage and the flames of the footlights. And yet, as the title suggests, the actors shown belonged to different eras and different companies, ranging from long dead French farce actors (Gaultier Garguille, Gros Guillaume, Turlupin, Guillot Gorju, Jodelet), via the *tipi fissi* of the *commedia dell'arte* (the Captain Matamore, Arlequin, the Doctor, Polichinelle (Puncinella), Pantalone, Scaramouche, Brighella, Trivelin) to one such French "type," Phillipin. Indeed, of the sixteen actors shown, only Molière (shown in the costume of Arnolphe from *Le Misanthrope*)²³ and Raymond Poisson (depicted as Crispin) would have been "alive" and operating under their own names in 1670, and it is significant that they alone are labeled as such here.²⁴ Moreover, as Renzo Guardenti has shown, many of the different "portraits" have been incorporated from well-known, earlier depictions.²⁵ Floating above the stage are the arms of Louis XIV, who only acceded to the throne in 1643, when at least three of the actors shown in the painting were already dead, and a banner identifies the space as the "Théâtre Royal." We might suppose this to refer to the Hôtel de Bourgogne, since the troupe

performing there was known as the Troupe Royale, as opposed to Molière's troupe, which was latterly known as the Troupe du Roi. However, the majority of the comedians shown would never have performed there, and Guardenti has demonstrated the close relations that existed between the artist and the members of the French and Italian troupes (of Molière and Tiberio Fiorilli) that shared the Palais Royal, which would strongly suggest that if a real theatre is depicted it is the latter.²⁶

<Insert Figure 1 here><Caption: Figure 1: French and Italian farce actors of the last 60 years or more painted in 1670. Oil on canvas, Verio (fl.1670) (attr. to). Comédie-Française, Paris, France. Courtesy of Bridgeman Images.>

What then are we to make of this painting as a source of documentary evidence? Do its composite nature and fundamental ambiguities nullify what it might contribute to the study of scenic design, for example, or even stage lighting? When approaching such problematic evidence, the crucial thing, clearly, as previous generations of scholars have taught us, is first to determine what is "true" (or at least verifiable by reference to other media) and what is not, at the same time as carefully considering the motivations governing an image's composition and the context within which it was produced. And, of course, it is above all important to be accurate, since otherwise, in the words of Peg Katritzky, our images "can make only a very limited contribution to our knowledge of the performing arts."²⁷ We should not, then, follow the example of Jean-Baptiste Vaisman, who writes of this painting that it was conceived of in homage to Louis XIV, who had united the four "royal" troupes,²⁸ but offers no supporting evidence and is, moreover, factually incorrect, since the Comédie-Française brought together just three troupes (the Hôtel de Bourgogne, the Marais, and Molière's company), and this only in 1680--ten years after the painting's apparent date of composition.

Architecture

One aspect of seventeenth-century French theatre history where documentary (and especially visual) evidence is perhaps most scarce concerns the design and dimensions of theatre buildings, including auditoria. In October 1660, Molière and his troupe were happily performing by permission of the King, Louis XIV, in a theatre in the Petit-Bourbon palace when they were told the building was about to be demolished to make way for the new Louvre colonnade.²⁹ Throwing themselves on their royal master's mercy, they were allowed to transfer to the Palais-Royal, previously known as the Palais-Cardinal, and constructed by Richelieu to stage Italian opera.³⁰ This hall is shown in a picture and an engraving. The painting (see Figure 2), by Juste d'Egmont, is entitled "Presentation of the Ballet de la Prospérité et des Armes de la France," and shows the royal family (Louis XIII, Anne of Austria, the young Louis XIV) and a Cardinal (presumably Richelieu, although a case has recently been made for Mazarin)³¹ seated in the center of the auditorium and discussing the show, while members of the court look on from the side balconies. An inverted and adapted engraving of this scene by Michel van Lochom, in which the King's brother, Gaston d'Orléans, has replaced the Cardinal, is also well known under the title "Le Soir."³²

<Insert Figure 2 here.><Caption><Figure 2: "Presentation of the *Ballet de la Prospérité et des Armes de la France*" (Musée des arts décoratifs), Paris in 1641 (oil on canvas), Saint-Igny, Jean de (1595-1649). Bibliotheque des Arts Decoratifs, Paris, France. Archives Charmet. Courtesy of Bridgeman Images.>

What makes this image problematic is that the chairs of the royal party are placed on a flat floor corresponding to the standing area positioned in front of the stage and between the boxes in a public theatre that was known as the *parterre* (and even these were often gently

sloping).³³ And yet we know from the contemporary account of Henri Sauval (published posthumously) that the area between the balconies at the Palais-Royal was entirely filled by:

27 stone steps that rise up gradually and imperceptibly On each of these steps [the architect Lemercier] has had constructed a long succession of wooden benches that, only covering two thirds of the width of each step, leave room for the spectators to place their feet.³⁴

Where, then, are the steps in the *Juste d'Egmont* painting and where are the benches? The answer can only be that the artist has chosen to omit them in the interests of the composition of his work, since its primary focus is neither the stage nor the auditorium but the royal party.³⁵ This is, then, an excellent example of the phenomenon identified by Lyckle de Vries whereby "[w]hat seems to be a reliable rendering of an aspect of reality, even a theatrical reality, may have been changed and manipulated by the artist for aesthetic reasons or with the purpose of enhancing the meaning of his composition."³⁶

In the 1990s, Christa Williford attempted to model this iteration of the Palais-Royal.³⁷ One of the difficulties she encountered was precisely that of situating her royal party in an auditorium she knew to be stepped. Her solution was to introduce a dais, thereby following the instructions of Sabbatini in his sixteenth-century manual on stage and theatre design,³⁸ and the more concrete example of the Drottningholm court theatre.³⁹ One might, though, question this decision, which results in a curious hybrid for which there is no basis in fact and which can, to some, only be misleading.⁴⁰ Indeed, given that *Juste d'Egmont* has chosen for whatever reason to reproduce the *parterre* of a public theatre, his painting is an enigma and should be respected as such. And yet in other ways the *d'Egmont* painting is remarkably accurate: the side balconies resemble those we know to have been present at the time of Richelieu, and the performance shown on the stage has been identified as a scene from the

"Ballet de la Prospérité des Armes de la France."⁴¹ It serves then as an illustration of a point made by Martine de Rougemont, namely that the "true" and the "false" can happily co-exist within a single image.⁴² Such anomalies can occur, therefore, either as a product of the objectives of the artist in creating the work, or on account of prevalent artistic conventions that may cause some elements to be privileged over others, and the researcher must be both informed and vigilant in order to discern them.

This brings me to another concern when considering the architectural aspects of theatre engravings, namely that of scale. We know from documents relating to later renovation work carried out by Molière that the Palais-Cardinal stage was roughly ten meters wide, to which this image would seem to correspond.⁴³ The *Juste d'Egmont* painting is often erroneously attributed to Jean de Saint Igny,⁴⁴ and is also sometimes described as depicting a performance of *Mirame* by Desmarets de Saint-Sorlin,⁴⁵ which was the play with which Richelieu inaugurated his new theatre. This special event was commemorated by a series of engravings, one of which can be seen in Figure 3, where the proportions of the stage have been distorted to create an impression of enormous size and consequent grandeur. This is particularly evident when we compare the size of the actors shown in Figures 2 and 3. Such exaggeration in the depiction of theatrical stages and décors was widespread,⁴⁶ and is in many ways the visual equivalent of a phenomenon that is equally common in print media, as for example when the marquis de Saint-Maurice described the finale of the court performance of Molière's *Psyché*:

we stayed there five hours I have never seen anything better executed or more magnificent and these are things that can not be done elsewhere on account of the number of professional dancers, there being seventy who dance together in the final *entrée*. Also marvellous is the number of violinists, [other] instrumentalists and [singers] of whom there are more than 300, all magnificently dressed. The auditorium

is superb, specifically done; the stage is spacious and marvellously decorated; the machines and scene changes are magnificent and operated smoothly, thanks to [the stage designer] Vigarani who covered himself in glory on this occasion; but as for the last scene, it is quite simply the most astonishing that could be seen, because all at once in an instant more than 300 people are to be seen suspended, either in clouds or in a *gloire*, all performing the most beautiful symphony in the world, with violins, theorbos, lutes, harpsichords, oboes, flutes, trumpets, and cymbals.⁴⁷

<Insert Figure 3 here.><Caption>< Figure 3: Engraving of Act V of *Mirame* (Bibliothèque nationale de France). 1641 (engraving). Private Collection. Courtesy of Bridgeman Images.>

This play was given for the first time in Paris at Molière's Palais-Royal theatre in 1671, at which time potential spectators were assured by the gazeteer Robinet that the production was on precisely the same scale and with the same spectacle as it had enjoyed before the King:

. . . leaving aside all flattery,

[At the Palais-Royal], just as at the Tuileries,

It has the same decorations,

The same brilliance, the same attractions,

The airs, the choruses, the symphony,

Without the least cacophony,

They are here just as they were there.

You will also see

The various changes of scene,
 That it is difficult to imagine;
 The seas, the gardens, the wildernesses,
 The palaces, the skies, the underworld,
 The same gods, the same goddesses,
 With either blonde or brunette tresses.
 You will also see all the flights,
 The aerial acrobatics,
 The machines and the *entrées* [*de ballet*],
 That there were so admired.⁴⁸

And yet, despite these elaborate assurances, we know from the record in the account book of the actor La Grange that the company employed only sixteen dancers, seven singers, twelve instrumentalists, eight *assistants* [actors in walk on roles], and two acrobats on this production.⁴⁹

La Fontaine highlights this discrepancy between anticipation and experience in a poem dedicated to M. de Niert, where he describes his reactions to the popular spectacular genre known as the machine play:

When I hear the whistle, I never find

The scene change as quick as I had expected:

The most beautiful chariot can be blocked by its counterbalance;

A god hangs on a cord and cries out for the stage machinist,

Bits of a forest remain in the sea,

Or half of a heaven in the middle of hell.⁵⁰

This is all the more reason, then, as our predecessors have noted, to be judicious in the evaluation of what we read and see and painstaking in the confrontation of different forms of evidence.

A final note on scale concerns that of the objects themselves and of their reproduction, particularly in book form. For, as Wiles reminds us, "[w]hen photographic images are scaled up or scaled down in order to be reproduced as documents of theatre history, they are stripped of their initial material context in a printed volume or beaux arts frame."⁵¹ And, while we have already noted the decorative use of images to add value to a book (both in the early modern and more recently), it is also sadly sometimes the case that financial or spatial constraints result in the inclusion of illustrations that are to all intents and purposes useless for discussions of detail. Moreover, while, as Spielmann notes, new technologies have made more images available for research,⁵² albeit somewhat haphazardly, their reproduction is expensive for both scholar and publisher; and the ever-practical Martine de Rougemont lamented in 2005 that the question of ownership of images had delayed the establishment of effective image banks and thereby the development of the discipline by some years.⁵³

Frontispieces

Frontispieces are undoubtedly the most frustrating of all examples of theatre iconography--not least because they seem to promise so much.⁵⁴ For example, the frontispiece to the 1661 edition of Molière's *École des maris*,⁵⁵ shows the planks and nails of the stage floor and the chandeliers above it, while that of Boulanger Le Chalussay's *Élomire*

hypocondre (1669),⁵⁶ which purports to depict Scaramouche teaching Molière to act, even shows the audience in the *parterre*. But can we for all that trust them as representing a theatrical reality? Did Scaramouche and Molière ever perform together in front of a paying public or, perhaps more pertinently, did an audience ever have the opportunity to observe them rehearse? Is it not the case, rather, that these details have been included by the artist merely to emphasize the theatrical nature of the image's subject matter?

The most controversial of all such images in the French seventeenth century are undoubtedly the early frontispieces to *Tartuffe*, debated by Herzel, Cornuaille, Muller, and many more.⁵⁷ There are two of these, corresponding to the editions of 1667 and 1673,⁵⁸ and the edition of Molière's works published in 1682.⁵⁹ In each of these, Orgon is seen coming out from under a table, where he has been hidden by his wife, Elmire, so that she can provide him with evidence that Tartuffe, the supposedly devout person he has invited into his home, has been trying to seduce her. However, as Hawcroft was probably the first to point out, this scene does not actually occur in the play. Rather, Elmire, frustrated at Orgon's failure to emerge despite her frantically coughing to alert him, sends Tartuffe to check that the coast is clear and it is only then that Orgon shows himself. Hawcroft terms this a "discontinuity" between text and image; Cornuaille talks of the "imposture of the image" and uses this example to discredit Herzel's thesis;⁶⁰ while Sophia Khadraoui and Sandrine Simeon go further, declaring that the 1682 engraving, which features the play's subtitle, *L'Imposteur*, thereby draws attention to its own ambiguous nature.⁶¹ David Muller, on the other hand, challenges Hawcroft's argument and tries, somewhat unconvincingly, to make the image match a later point in the play.⁶² He is correct, though, in his assertion that another, less well-known, version of the scene, in which Orgon appears to go for Tartuffe's throat, brings important additional evidence.⁶³ Above all, though, it seems to me that theatre frontispieces are often interesting precisely on account of this possible disjunction between text and image,

and both Guillot and Hawcroft have highlighted their ability to be both analeptic and proleptic in that they can illustrate simultaneously multiple different moments from the narrative of the play.⁶⁴

As with the *Juste d'Egmont* picture of the Palais Cardinal, the *Tartuffe* frontispieces are all the more troubling in that so many of their details appear quite startlingly accurate. Thus, if Cornuaille ridicules Herzel's description of the décor as visibly consisting of a backcloth and angle flats, he agrees with Françoise Siguret that the paper displayed on the table is the contract by which the besotted Orgon has made over his property to Tartuffe, thereby disinheriting his son, and on which so much of the latter part of the plot revolves.⁶⁵ Perhaps more contentiously, Muller connects the candles depicted in the image with the "flambeaux" mentioned in the contemporary props list for the play.⁶⁶ And the debate rumbles on, with Cornuaille introducing a new piece of evidence in the form of a face screen (*écran*) showing Orgon peeping out from under the table while remaining beneath it,⁶⁷ and Hawcroft going so far as to call Herzel's conclusions with regard to the implications of the décor for entrances and exits--that these occurred upstage and downstage of the angle flats rather than through practicable doors--"étonnantes" (astonishing).⁶⁸ It is, indeed, true that doors are only shown clearly in one of the four *Tartuffe* illustrations under discussion. However, is it expecting too much of a frontispiece that it should provide precise documentary evidence regarding décor, when this can only be partially shown (it is, of course, self-evident that the shape of a frontispiece in no way corresponds to that of a stage), and when the artist's main focus is clearly the characters at the center (literally and figuratively) of his image? And if that is the case, should we not be cautious (as Cornuaille has suggested) in extrapolating too much information from it?

Special Effects

Finally, I will discuss a series of pictures that illustrate a production by the troupe that succeeded that of Molière, following his death, and which performed in the Hôtel Guénégaud in Paris from 1673 to 1680.⁶⁹ This production, *La Devineresse* by Thomas Corneille and Donneau De Visé, was commissioned by the actors to capitalize on the scandal surrounding the arrest and eventual execution of the one of the chief protagonists in the Affair of the Poisons that was rocking French society at that time.⁷⁰ Mme Voisin, was a fortune teller, but also an abortionist and poisoner catering to aristocrats and bourgeois alike, who, amongst other unsavory practices, hit on the device of predicting a husband's death and then selling her client a powder that was guaranteed to make it happen.⁷¹ The investigation revealed a network of such people operating in Paris. The authors were, therefore, able to claim a social utility for their work in that it served to put people on guard against such practices:

we had as our aim to show that all those who meddle in fortune telling are taking advantage of the ease with which weak-minded people believe them. You must look to see if the subject has been treated correctly so as to highlight their tricks; and if this comedy has revealed them, we can say that it has had the effect required by Horace, which is to instruct while entertaining.⁷²

The tricks used by fortune tellers to deceive their clients were consequently at the very heart of the show: "[a]s for the spectacle, it has not been included to allow for the appearance of ornaments, but as being absolutely necessary, since most fortune tellers used basins of water, mirrors and other things of this kind to deceive the public."⁷³

Of course, many of those devices deployed by the company as part of its production were identical to those employed throughout the ages by magicians and others to entertain the public at the same time as deceiving them. Indeed, "sleight" as in "sleight of hand" has as one of its meanings "[t]he use of dexterity or cunning, especially so as to deceive" (*OED*).⁷⁴ *La*

Devineresse had, therefore, to perform a similarly curious balancing act: entertaining the public by means of its devices, while at the same time revealing them to be devices, but without showing how the trick was done, which would have spoilt the audience's enjoyment.

In order to arouse public interest, an illustrated almanac or calendar was published for the year 1680 showing scenes from the new work (see Figure 4).⁷⁵ This object is, therefore, at a further remove from the event it describes than would be, say, the frontispiece to a printed edition, which at least has a direct relation to the text, and would have "circulated in an autonomous fashion," to borrow a phrase from Nathalie Rizzoni's description of eighteenth-century theatrical face screens.⁷⁶ As such, the relationship of the images it includes to the "reality" of the theatrical event is potentially still more problematic.

<Insert Figure 4 here.><Caption>< Figure 4: *La Comédie de la devineresse: Almanac pour l'an bessextil (The Comedy of the Soothsayer)*, engraving from a 1680 almanac. Private Collection. Courtesy of Bridgeman Images.>

In seventeenth-century France, plays were not usually published until after their first run had ended, since during this time they remained by custom the property of the company that had invested in their staging. *La Devineresse* was, in fact, published in February 1680, shortly before the end of the unusually long first run of the play (from 19 November 1679 to 10 March 1680). The almanac illustrations would, therefore, have been available to people who both had and had not seen the play. Consequently, they had to occupy a similar middle ground to the play itself: they had to incite potential audience members to attend, provide a reminder of a pleasant experience for those reading after the event, or an indicative illustration for those unable to be present. They also had to show the tricks, but without giving too much away. In this, they provide an interesting counterpoint to the dialogue and stage directions, where in some cases slightly more is explained, but most often frustratingly little.⁷⁷ This is, in part, the product of the plot. A Marquis is in love with a beautiful Countess, but is

himself desired by a woman who engages the fortuneteller, Mme Jobin, to assist her. Mme Jobin tells the credulous Countess that if she marries the Marquis it will lead to his death. This leads to a form of contest whereby the Marquis seeks to disabuse her in the face of multiple examples of Mme Jobin's supposed "powers." The audience, which naturally sides with the Marquis, know that all her demonstrations are fakes, but they have to be sufficiently convincing in order for the Countess to be taken in.

The fundamental question concerns the utility of these images as indicators of theatrical practice, which is for the most part somewhat frustrating. In some cases, the illustration does not seek to maintain the illusion regarding the trick. For example, in the engraving that depicts Act I, scene 15, the fortuneteller reveals to a client the location of a pair of lost pistols by means of a bowl of water. The audience, of course, cannot see what the client is deemed to see in the bowl. But, a mirror and a "zigzag" above the stage show how the image is supposedly created, thereby enhancing the impression of deception. A more extreme example of this phenomenon occurs in Act I, scene 12, when another client is given a "fairy" sword that will allow him to defeat any enemy, because the audience is aware that the person who provokes him to a fight and is instantly overcome is one of the fortuneteller's confederates. And yet another scene (Act II, scene 13) employs the age-old "mirror trick," whereby a woman sees her lover, supposedly many miles away, receive a letter and write her a reply that immediately drops down from above the stage. The very familiarity of the device would have confirmed the members of the audience in their awareness of the deception. Other images illustrate a trick, but without revealing how it was effected, as in Act II, scene 11, when the fortune teller amazes a client by causing a "swelling" to pass from one of her confederates to another. And in an image illustrating Act V, scene 4, in which a client is made to address a talking head, the illusion is reinforced by the fact that the empty area beneath the table is clearly visible.

In fact, in my view, only one of the entire set of illustrations is able to provide anything more than a very descriptive overview of the production. This relates to Act IV, scene 9, in which the fortuneteller entices a male client by the sight of a procession of women who glide across the stage accompanied by indicative attributes. A stage direction indicates a blackout (and this at a time when it is generally thought only rudimentary lighting effects were possible),⁷⁸ and the illustration shows a quite sophisticated set up, with the fortuneteller and her client standing in shadow downstage, while the women pass across a brightly lit upstage area revealed by the opening of a shutter, and possibly behind a gauze.⁷⁹

My aim in this essay has been threefold: to add some specifically French seventeenth-century examples to the catalogue of "problematic" images alluded to by Balme, to use these to illustrate some of the pitfalls identified by previous scholars of theatre iconography, and to demonstrate how the discipline has evolved in certain areas. In many ways little has changed since those pioneers mentioned here established the parameters of the discipline. We must still imperatively remain aware of the various contexts in which theatrical images of all types were made, as well as of the objectives of their creators and the prevailing representational modes (and their implications). For, as Robert Erenstein succinctly put it, "[v]isual artists produce work for their contemporaries, not for future theatre historians."⁸⁰ We must similarly continue to collect evidence of all types and be scrupulous in the confrontation of our images with it, so as not to consider them in a vacuum.

And yet, for all that, the twenty-first-century theatre scholar (or student) inhabits a very different world, where relevant images are increasingly available, thanks to numerous (and very welcome) digitization projects, including those of libraries and museums, or more popular tools such as Google or Wikimedia Commons. But this prevalence can bring its own complications. For example, images are all too frequently "googled" and used to decorate PowerPoint presentations by teachers and students alike without being subject to the

necessary scrutiny, particularly as regards the teasing out of the component elements and the evaluation of their relative significance or specific historical context. Indeed, it sometimes appears that a multiplicity of different, and frequently divergent, images is being used almost as a substitute for analysis. Moreover, the easy accessibility of visual documents on the internet can provoke a certain distortion, with some images being reproduced *ad nauseam*, while others (unavailable electronically) remaining comparatively unknown.

When it comes to publishing, however, the matter is quite different. A plethora of images may be tantalizingly available on the web, but their purchase and the obtaining of the necessary "rights" is still an expensive and fraught process, rendered still more complicated by the fact that it is not always easy to determine to whom an image found on the internet belongs or how the owner can be contacted. Little wonder then that agencies should have moved in to make a considerable profit from supposedly simplifying the process. And it remains the case that many academic publications do not have the resources to publish images in either the quantity or the quality required. This is a particular cause for concern with regard to "future proofing" one's work, since a strategy frequently employed is to provide links to online versions, the permanence of which cannot be guaranteed, and evolutions in technology can soon render other solutions obsolete.⁸¹ The "theft" of published images is also sadly quite common, and it is a strangely shocking experience to see one's own drawing reproduced in someone else's volume without permission.⁸² I doubt for all that any of us would wish to return to the days when works of art and other iconographic materials (or for that matter books and articles) could only be consulted *in situ*, but at the same time fervently hope that twenty-first-century solutions will soon be found to many of these twenty-first-century problems.

The fundamental question that remains, of course, is one of language. With the best will in the world, we cannot all master each other's tongues, and so much scholarship and,

indeed, many sources will inevitably remain closed to us. One might have thought that iconography would, by its very nature, transcend this problem, and that could, indeed, be the case as far as the images themselves are concerned. But it is ultimately futile to consider images independently of their context, and this inevitably has national and, therefore, linguistic implications. Certain organizations are currently in the process of taking steps to facilitate the exchange of scholarship across these boundaries,⁸³ but it is hard to see how this can impact on the wider dissemination of source material, and in any case the use of English as an academic *lingua franca* is not unproblematic. Given that the teaching of languages in schools and universities is in decline worldwide, it is, therefore, hard to envisage a solution to this conundrum, whereby images (and other forms of information) are available globally to people who are not necessarily equipped to understand them.

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¹ Christopher B. Balme, "Interpreting the Pictorial Record: Theatre Iconography and the Referential Dilemma," *Theatre Research International* 22, no. 3 (1997): 190-201, quote on 190.

² Lyckle De Vries, "Iconography and Iconology in Art History: Panofsky's *Prescriptive* Definitions and Some Art-Historical Responses to Them," in *Picturing Performance: The Iconography of the Performing Arts in Concept and Practice*, ed. Thomas F. Heck (Rochester, NY: Rochester University Press, 1999), 42-64, quote on 47; Guy Spielmann, "Problématique de l'iconographie des spectacles sous l'Ancien Régime: le cas des frontispices du *Théâtre de la foire* (1721-37)," *Revue d'histoire du théâtre* 60, no. 237 (2008), 77-86, quote on 78.

³ Roger Herzog, "The Décor of Molière's Stage: The Testimony of Brissart and Chauveau," *PMLA* 93, no. 5 (1978), 925-54.

⁴ Philippe Cornuaille, "Les Décors de Molière 1658-1674," (Phd diss., Université Paris-Sorbonne, 2013).

⁵ Philippe Cornuaille, *Les Décors de Molière* (Paris: Presses de l'Université Paris-Sorbonne, 2015), 8.

⁶ David G. Muller, "Theatrical Iconography, *Jeu de Scène*, and Recognizing the 'Table Scene(s)' in Molière's *Tartuffe*," *Seventeenth-Century French Studies* 35, no. 1 (2013): 54-68; David G. Muller, "Pourquoi sous cette table?: More Candlelight on Molière's *Tartuffe*," *Comparative Drama* 47, no. 2 (2013), 167-200.

⁷ Catherine Guillot, "La Recherche en iconographie théâtrale aujourd'hui: quelques réflexions sur l'utilisation de l'image du livre du XVII^e siècle," in *French 'Classical' Theatre Today: Teaching, Research, Performance*, ed. Philip Tomlinson (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2001), 101-16; Maria Inès Aliverti, "Chercheurs d'images," in *Iconographie théâtrale et genres dramatiques: mélanges offerts à Martine de Rougemont*, ed. Gilles Declercq and Jean de Guardia (Paris: Presses Sorbonne Nouvelle, 2008), 17-38. See Martine de Rougemont's own account of these early days: "Situation de l'iconographie théâtrale," in *Le Théâtre au plus près: Pour André Veinstein*, ed. Jean-Marie Thomasseau (Saint-Denis: Presses universitaires de Vincennes,

2005), 168-82, where she pays tribute to Tom Lawrenson and his *The French Stage and Playhouse in the XVIIth Century: A Study in the Advent of the Italian Order* (New York: AMS Press, 1986 [1957]), as well as to my own erstwhile collaborator, Barry Russell, and our Salford Protocol Pilot Project, which would go on to form the basis of the CESAR image databank, following Barry's untimely death.

⁸ Thomas F. Heck, ed., *Picturing Performance: the Iconography of the Performing Arts in Concept and Practice* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 1999); Christopher B. Balme, Robert L. Erenstein, Cesare Molinari, Maria Chiara Barbieri, and Sandra Pietrini, eds, *European Theatre Iconography: Proceedings of the European Science Foundation Network* (Rome: Bulzoni, 2002).

⁹ Sara Mamone, "Arte et spettacolo: la partita seza fine," in *Iconographie et arts du spectacle: Actes du Séminaire CNRS, Paris, 1992*, ed. Jérôme de La Gorce (Paris: Klincksieck, 1996), 59-115, quote on 91. All translations are my own.

¹⁰ Nuria Aragonès, "La Foire Saint-Germain représentée: images, pièges et fausses pistes," in *Iconographie théâtrale et genres dramatiques: mélanges offerts à Martine de Rougemont*, ed. Gilles Declercq and Jean de Guardia (Paris: Presses Sorbonne Nouvelle, 2008), 39-54; M. A. Katritzky, "Performing-Arts Iconography: Traditions, Techniques and Trends," in *Picturing Performance: the Iconography of the Performing Arts in Concept and Practice*, ed. Thomas F. Heck (Rochester, NY: Rochester University Press, 1999), 68-90.

¹¹ Spielmann, "Problématique de l'iconographie des spectacles," 78.

¹² Graham Barlow, "The Hôtel de Bourgogne according to Sir James Thornhill," *Theatre Research International* 1, no. 2 (1976): 86-98; John Golder, "The Hôtel de Bourgogne in 1760: Some Previously Unpublished Drawings by Louis-Alexandre Girault," *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 32, no. 4 (2009), 455-91; Pannill Camp, *The First Frame: Theatre Space in Enlightenment France* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

¹³ Aliverti, "Chercheurs d'images," 33-34.

¹⁴ Balme, "Interpreting the Pictorial Record," 190.

¹⁵ Ibid., 190-91.

¹⁶ Spielmann, "Problématique de l'iconographie des spectacles," 79.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ See, for example, the work of Catherine Guillot, notably "Les Frontispices de pièces de théâtre publiées dans la première moitié du XVII^e siècle: pour une distinction des genres," in *Iconographie théâtrale et genres dramatiques: Mélanges offerts à Martine de Rougemont*, ed. Gilles Declercq and Jean de Guardia (Paris: Presses Sorbonne Nouvelle, 2008), 55-64; and "Les Éditions illustrées d'œuvres dramatiques groupées ou composites, publiées en France dans la première moitié du XVII^e siècle," in *Le Parnasse du théâtre: Les recueils d'œuvres complètes de théâtre au XVII^e siècle*, ed. Georges Forestier, Edric Caldicott, and Claude Bourqui (Paris: Presses Paris Sorbonne, 2007), 151-74.

¹⁹ Michael Hawcroft, "Le Théâtre français du XVII^e siècle et le livre illustré," in *Du spectateur au lecteur: Imprimer la scène aux XVI^e et XVII^e siècles*, ed. Larry F. Norman, Philippe Desan, and Richard Strier (Paris: Sorbonne-Université de Paris Sorbonne, 2008), 317-48.

²⁰ David Wiles, "Seeing is Believing: The Historian's Use of Images," in *Representing the Past: Essays in Performance Historiography*, ed. Charlotte M. Canning and Thomas Postlewait (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2010), 215-39.

²¹ Martine de Rougemont, "Images des théâtres au XVIII^e siècle," *Revue d'histoire du théâtre* 60, no. 237 (2008): 67-76, quote on 67.

²² See, in particular, of Jérôme de La Gorce, *Féeries d'opéra: Décors, machines et costumes en France, 1645-1765* (Paris: Patrimoine, 1997), and his catalogue for the exhibition he curated, *Dans l'atelier des Menus Plaisirs du roi: Spectacles, fêtes et cérémonies aux XVII^e et*

XVIII^e siècles (Paris: Artlys, 2011). See also Cornuaille's study of *Les Décors de Molière*, for an especially convincing exercise in the juxtaposition of visual and textual evidence.

²³ Gilles Chazal and Agathe Sanjuan, *La Comédie-Française s'expose au Petit-Palais* (Paris: Actes-Sud, 2011), image on 55.

²⁴ Catherine Guillot, "Portraits d'acteurs (XVII^e siècle-début XIX^e siècle)," *Revue d'histoire du théâtre* 60, no. 237 (2008): 87-96. It is possible to identify certain of the Italian actors shown here, notably Tiberio Fiorilli (Scaramouche) and Domenico Biancolelli (Arlequin). The identity of others might be determined from an analysis of company membership, for example in Virginia Scott, *The Commedia dell'Arte in Paris, 1644-1697* (Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 1990). However, there is nothing to indicate that the artist has not spanned the decades in bringing together his Italian subjects in the same way as he has done for the French.

²⁵ Renzo Guardenti, "The Iconography of the Commedia dell'arte: Figurative Recurrences and the Organisation of the Repertory," in *European Theatre Iconography: Proceedings of the European Science Foundation Network*, ed Christopher B. Balme, Robert L. Erenstein, Cesare Molinari, Maria Chiara Barbieri, and Sandra Pietrini, eds, (Rome: Bulzoni, 2002), 197-206. Guardenti also reveals the existence of a second version of this painting in which the same characters (with the exception of Philippin) in the same poses are placed in the setting of a paneled room, which could equally well represent a stage set.

²⁶ There were in 1670, just three theatres operating in Paris: the Hôtel de Bourgogne, the Marais Theatre, and the Palais-Royal, shared by Molière's troupe and that of Fiorilli. Following Molière's death, the Italians and the French transferred to the Guénégaud Theatre. This became the first home of the Comédie-Française in 1680, thanks to the merger there of the Guénégaud and Hôtel de Bourgogne companies. It was at this point that the Italians were ordered to transfer to the Hôtel de Bourgogne, which became the first Comédie-Italienne.

²⁷ Katritzky, "Performing-Arts Iconography," 84.

²⁸ Chazal and Sanjuan, *La Comédie-Française s'expose au Petit-Palais*, 55.

²⁹ Charles Varlet dit La Grange, *Registre*, ed. B. E. Young and G. P. Young, 2 vols (Paris, Droz, 1947), vol. 1, 25-29.

³⁰ See Timothy C. Murray, "Richelieu's Theater: The Mirror of a Prince," *Renaissance Drama* 8 (1977), 275-98.

³¹ Cornuaille, *Les Décors de Molière*, 82.

³² See "Grande salle du Palais-Cardinal c1642 engraving 'Le Soir' by van Lochun," *Wikimedia Commons*, available at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Grande_salle_du_Palais-Cardinal_c1642_engraving_Le_Soir_by_van_Lochun_-_Holsboer_1933_plate6.jpg.

³³ On seventeenth-century French theatre design, see Sophie Wilma Deierkauf-Holsboer, *L'Histoire de la mise en scène dans le théâtre français à Paris de 1600 à 1673* (Paris: Nizet, 1960); Lawrenson, *The French Stage and Playhouse*; W. L. Wiley, *The Early Public Theatre in France* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960); Jan Clarke, *The Guénégaud Theatre in Paris (1673-1680). Volume One: Founding, Design and Production I* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 1998), 57-117. That Molière intended there to be a sloping *parterre* when he later adapted the Palais-Cardinal (now known as the Palais-Royal) for his company's use is known from the contract drawn up with the workmen responsible for its installation; see Madeleine Jurgens and Elizabeth Maxfield-Miller, *Cent ans de recherches sur Molière: Sur sa famille et sur les comédiens de sa troupe* (Paris: SEVPEN, 1963), 351-55.

³⁴ Henri Sauval, *Histoire et recherches des antiquités de la ville de Paris*, 3 vols (Paris: Moette, 1724), vol. 2, 162. It was, in fact, common in this period for private theatres to be constructed without *parterres*. This was also the case for the Salle des Machines in the Tuileries and for the Guénégaud Theatre in its first iteration as an opera house (see Clarke, *Guénégaud I*, 72-74). According to T. E. Lawrenson (Lawrenson, *The French Stage and*

Playhouse, 230), this was in order to permit a “collective” seating arrangement, but a study of the engravings depicting the Salle des Machines together with their keys (Henri Lagrave, *Le Théâtre et le public à Paris de 1715 à 1750* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1972), Figure 16 and 91-94) suggests that it was more probably a case of eliminating the bourgeois who would have habitually occupied the *parterre*, while at the same time segregating the remaining categories of audience member.

³⁵ See Gaston H. Hall, *Comedy in Context: Essays on Molière* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1984), 41, and Cornuaille, *Les Décors de Molière*, 82.

³⁶ De Vries, "Iconography and Iconology," 47.

³⁷ Williford discusses the decisions she took in modeling this space in "Computer Modelling Classical French Theatre Spaces: Three Reconstructions," in *French 'Classical' Theatre Today: Teaching, Research, Performance*, ed. Philip Tomlinson (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2001), 155-64. This does not, however, include her model of the Palais-Cardinal auditorium, which can be found at Christa Williford, *Playhouses of the 17th-Century Paris*, 2006, available at <http://people.brynmawr.edu/cwillifo/pscp/cardinal.htm>.

³⁸ Nicola Sabbattini, *Pratique pour fabriquer scènes et machines de théâtre* (Neuchâtel: Ides et Calendes, 1994 [1638]), 55-56.

³⁹ On the Drottningholm court theatre, see Willmar Sauter and David Wiles, *The Theatre of Drottningholm--Then and Now: Performance Between the 18th and 21st Centuries* (Stockholm: Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis, 2014).

⁴⁰ In 2005, Martine de Rougemont expressed horror at the idea of images having been "treated" by means of computer technology. Rougemont, "Situation de l'iconographie théâtrale," 171.

⁴¹ H. Gaston Hall, *Richelieu's Desmarets and the Century of Louis XIV* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 132.

⁴² See, for example, Rougemont, "Situation de l'iconographie théâtrale," 176.

⁴³ On Molière's adaptation of the Palais-Royal theatre, see Jan Clarke, "Les Théâtres de Molière à Paris," *Le Nouveau Moliériste* 2, (1995): 247-72, and Cornuaille, *Les Décors de Molière*, 74-104. Cornuaille proposes a rather larger total width for the stage of 6.7 meters, although his sources are unclear.

⁴⁴ See, for example, "Représentation théâtrale au Palais Royal avec Louis XIII, Anne d'Autriche et Richelieu," *Wikimedia Commons*, available at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Représentation_théâtrale_au_Palais_Royal_avec_Louis_XIII,_Anne_d%27Autriche_et_Richelieu_-_Conseil_d%27État.jpg.

⁴⁵ See, for example, Jean Stoff, "Mirame ou Richelieu Dramaturge," *Histoire et Géographie, Littérature et autres arts*, June 26, 2012, available at <https://biblioweb.hypotheses.org/11857>.

⁴⁶ A similar phenomenon occurs regarding the Salle du Petit-Bourbon, which is shown in two distinctly dissimilar engravings: one illustrating the performance there of the *Ballet comique de la reine* in 1582, and the other showing the opening of the Estates General in 1614. Both of these can be viewed via the image bank of the Bibliothèque nationale de France available at <http://visualiseur.bnf.fr/Visualiseur?Destination=Daguerre&O=7842522&E=JPEG&NavigationSimpliffee=ok&typeFonds=noir> and [http://visualiseur.bnf.fr/Visualiseur? Destination=Daguerre&O=22069880&E=JPEG&NavigationSimpliffee=ok&typeFonds=noir](http://visualiseur.bnf.fr/Visualiseur?Destination=Daguerre&O=22069880&E=JPEG&NavigationSimpliffee=ok&typeFonds=noir).

⁴⁷ Saint-Maurice, *Lettres sur la cour de Louis XIV*, vol. 2, 14-15 in Molière, *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. Georges Couton, 2 vols (Paris: Gallimard, 1971), vol. 2, 795. A *gloire* was a machine, usually in the form of an arrangement of clouds or a palace, which was used to allow for the appearance of divinities above the stage. Sometimes these were suspended, but where the facilities permitted, they could also be positioned on an upper stage level.

⁴⁸ William Brooks, ed., *Le Théâtre et l'opéra vus par les gazetiers Robinet et Laurent (1670-1678)* (Paris: Papers on French Seventeenth Century Literature, 1993), 82.

⁴⁹ La Grange, *Registre*, vol. 1, 126.

⁵⁰ Jean de La Fontaine, *Oeuvres diverses* (Paris: Gallimard, 1968), 617. The whistle was used by the stage machinists to coordinate the efforts of the stagehands.

⁵¹ Wiles, "Seeing is Believing," 235. Wiles also makes some very interesting points regarding the representation of a three-dimensional object, whether theatre or stage, in two dimensions, that are particularly relevant to sketches. Unfortunately, space considerations do not allow me to explore these here.

⁵² Spielmann, "Problématique de l'iconographie des spectacles," 77.

⁵³ Rougemont, "Situation de l'iconographie théâtrale," 74.

⁵⁴ The chief scholar working on seventeenth-century theatre frontispieces is Catherine Guillot, whose thesis was written under the direction of Martine de Rougemont: Catherine Guillot, "Histoire et poétique de l'image du théâtre en France (1600-1651): Contribution à l'histoire de l'illustration," (PhD diss., Université de Paris III, 2003). See also her many articles, including those mentioned in this essay.

⁵⁵ See "L'Ecole des maris," *Banque d'images*, available at <http://images.bnf.fr/jsp/index.jsp?destination=afficherListeCliches.jsp&origine=rechercherListeCliches.jsp&contexte=resultatRechercheSimple>.

⁵⁶ See "Scaramouche ([Tiberio Fiorilli](#)) teaching Élomire ([Molière](#)) his student, frontispiece to *Le Boulanger de Chalussay's attack on Molière*," *Wikimedia Commons*, available at [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Scaramouche_et_Elomire_-_delcampe\(dot\)net.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Scaramouche_et_Elomire_-_delcampe(dot)net.jpg).

⁵⁷ In addition to the works previously cited, see Françoise Siguret, "L'image ou l'imposture: Analyse d'une gravure illustrant *Le Tartuffe*," *Revue d'histoire du théâtre* 36, no. 144 (1984): 362-69; G. Donald Jackson, "Les Frontispices des éditions de Molière parues au XVII^e siècle:

Stéréotypes et expressivité," *Papers in French Seventeenth-Century Literature* 14, no. 26 (1987): 37-59; Michael Hawcroft, "Seventeenth-Century French Theatre and its Illustrations: Five Types of Discontinuity," *Seventeenth-Century French Studies* 24, no. 1 (2002), 87-105; Michael Hawcroft, "Le Théâtre français du XVII^e siècle et le livre illustré"; Sophia Khadraoui and Sandrine Simeon, "Une imposture peut en cacher une autre: un frontispice de *Tartuffe* démasqué," *Cahiers du dix-septième* 13, no. 2 (2011): 160-83; Michael Hawcroft, "Mise en scène et mise en page du *Tartuffe* de Molière: Décor, entrées et sorties, et division en scènes," *Papers in French Seventeenth-Century Literature*, 43, no. 85 (2016): 139-55. See also Abby Zanger's two studies of Molière's frontispieces: "Betwixt and Between Print and Performance: A New Approach to Studying Molière's Body at/of Work," in *French 'Classical' Theatre Today: Teaching, Research, Performance*, ed. Philip Tomlinson (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2001), 117-38, and the more fully illustrated "On the Threshold of Print and Performance: How Prints Mattered to Bodies of/at work in Molière's Theatre," *Word and Image* 17 (2001): 25-41.

⁵⁸ *Banque d'images*, available at <http://images.bnf.fr/jsp/index.jsp?destination=afficherListeCliches.jsp&origine=rechercherListeCliches.jsp&contexte=resultatRechercheSimple>.

⁵⁹ "Frontispice du *Tartuffe* par Pierre Brissart (1682)," *Wikimedia Commons*, available at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tartuffe_Brissart_Sauve.jpg.

⁶⁰ Hawcroft, "Seventeenth-Century French Theatre and its Illustrations," 89-91; Cornuaille, *Les Décors de Molière*, 11-14.

⁶¹ Khadraoui and Simeon, "Une imposture peut en cacher une autre."

⁶² Muller, "Theatrical Iconography, *Jeu de Scène*," 67.

⁶³ Ibid., p. 62; see "L'posteur ou Le Tartuffe," *Getty Images*, available at <http://media.gettyimages.com/photos/imposteur-ou-le-tartuffe-of-moliere-illustration-bnf-picture-id56204035>.

⁶⁴ Guillot, "La Recherche en iconographie théâtrale aujourd'hui"; Hawcroft, "Le Théâtre français du XVII^e siècle et le livre illustré."

⁶⁵ Cornuaille, *Les Décors de Molière*, 12-13.

⁶⁶ Muller, "Pourquoi sous cette table?," 175.

⁶⁷ Cornuaille, *Les Décors de Molière*, Figure 60 and 150-56.

⁶⁸ Hawcroft, "Mise en scène et mise en page," 142.

⁶⁹ On the Guénégaud Theatre, see Clarke, *Guénégaud I*; also Jan Clarke, *The Guénégaud Theatre in Paris (1673-1680). Volume Two: The Accounts Season by Season* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 2001), and *The Guénégaud Theatre in Paris (1673-1680). Volume Three: The Demise of the Machine Play* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 2007).

⁷⁰ Jan Clarke, "La Devineresse and the *Affaire des poisons*," *Seventeenth-Century French Studies* 28, no. 1 (2006), 221-34.

⁷¹ See Anne Somerset, *The Affair of the Poisons: Murder, Infanticide and Satanism at the Court of Louis XIV* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 2003).

⁷² Thomas Corneille and Jean Donneau De Visé, *La Devineresse, ou les faux enchantements*, ed. Julia Prest (London: The Modern Humanities Research Association, 2007), 30-31.

⁷³ Ibid., 32.

⁷⁴ The depiction of "magic" tricks was a key feature of a number of the works performed by the Italian *commedia dell'arte* troupe with which the French actors shared the Guénégaud Theatre. See Clarke, *Guénégaud III*, 172-88, and Scott, *The Commedia dell'Arte in Paris*. The

inclusion of such effects in *La Devineresse* may well, therefore, indicate a desire on the part of the French to imitate these highly successful and popular productions.

⁷⁵ Elfrieda T. Dubois, David W. Maskell, and P. J. Yarrow, "L'Almanach de *La Devineresse*," *Revue d'histoire du théâtre* 32, no. 127 (1980), 216-19. This image can also be consulted on the BnF image data bank: *Banque d'images*, available at <http://visualiseur.bnf.fr/Visualiseur?Destination=Daguerre&O=7884608&E=JPEG&NavigationSimplifiee=ok&typeFonds=noir>.

⁷⁶ Nathalie Rizzoni, "De la scène à l'écran: *Les Petits Comédiens* de Charles-François Pannard," in *Iconographie théâtrale et genres dramatiques: Mélanges offerts à Martine de Rougemont*, ed. Gilles Declercq and Jean de Guardia (Paris: Presses Sorbonne Nouvelle, 2008), 65-95. In this context, it is interesting to note Philippe Cornuaille's recent identification of two face screens that also show scenes copied from the *Devineresse* almanac: see Philippe Cornuaille, "L'Écran de *La Devineresse*, ou le miroir déformant de l'Affaire des Poisons," *Nouvelles de l'Estampe*, no. 258 (2017), 4-22. The BnF also possesses a curious volume (*Arts du spectacle*, 8-RF-2760) in which images from the almanac have been cut up and pasted onto blank pages interspersed throughout the text (Thomas Corneille, *La Devineresse* (Paris: C. Blageart, 1680), but this may have been done at a later date and does not necessarily indicate the existence of an illustrated edition. I am grateful to Philippe Cornuaille for his advice on this matter.

⁷⁷ A similar phenomenon is noted by Guy Spielmann in his analysis of the frontispiece to the fairground play *Le Monde renversé*, where the text indicates that objects are lowered from the flies, thereby implying a mechanical effect, whereas the frontispiece merely shows them floating in the air, thereby emphasizing the fiction. Spielmann, "Problématique de l'iconographie des spectacles," 82.

⁷⁸ I have argued on a number of occasions that this is a misrepresentation; see, for example, Jan Clarke, "Illuminating the Guénégaud Stage: Some Seventeenth-Century Lighting Effects," *French Studies* 53, no. 1 (1999), 1-15, and "L'Eclairage," in *La Représentation théâtrale en France au XVIIe siècle*, ed. Pierre Pasquier and Anne Surgers (Paris: Armand Colin, 2011). See also Michael Hawcroft, "New Light on Candles on the Seventeenth-Century French Stage," *French Studies* 68, no. 2 (2014): 180-92. Indeed, I believe the Guénégaud company turned increasingly to lighting effects as a source of spectacle following the imposition of restrictions on the use of stage music designed to favor Lully's Opera, since more traditional effects were dependent on music to cover the noise of the stage machinery.

⁷⁹ Cornuaille expresses the view that a mirror was also used to create this effect (Cornuaille, "L'Écran de La Devineresse," 10) but there is no evidence of this in either text or image.

⁸⁰ Robert L. Erenstein, "Theatre Iconography: An Introduction," *Theatre Research International* 22, no. 3 (1997), 185-89, quote on 186.

⁸¹ The volume published by Balme, Erenstein, and Molinari in 2002 entitled *Iconographie et arts du spectacle* was ground-breaking in that it was accompanied by a CD containing all the images to which reference was made in the work, which can now only be used by those with access to a PC CD player.

⁸² For example, in my first volume on the Guénégaud Theatre, I included a hand-drawn rudimentary ground plan based on the evidence I had adduced from the account books (Clarke, *Guénégaud I*, 282). This was reproduced without permission by Charles Mazouer in *Le Théâtre français de l'âge classique. II: L'apogée du classicisme* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2010), as Figure 7, and then published online as part of the Comédie-Française Registers Project documentation, for which publication permission was granted retrospectively. See "Hôtel Guénégaud, 1680-1689," *Comédie-Française Registers Project*, available at <http://cfregisters.org/en/scholarly-resources/paris-playhouses/hôtel-guénégaud>.

⁸³ The International Federation for Theatre Research has introduced subventions for the publication of key articles in English translations and is also investigating methods of facilitating the simultaneous translation of conference presentations in other languages.