



## ROYAL SPECTACLE: CEREMONIAL AND FESTIVITIES AT THE COURT OF FRANCE

27 March – 27 October 2014

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This exhibition marks the publication of the Books and Bindings catalogue, highlighting illustrated books published on the occasion of court festivities, celebrations and spectacles. Lavishly illustrated books, with engravings of the largest format, document the many extravagant festivities and ceremonies staged for the French court during the 17th and 18th centuries to mark the life cycle of births, marriages and deaths. Fanciful theatrical stage settings are the backdrop for richly costumed processions, equestrian tournaments, theatre performances, church ceremonies and spectacular firework displays. The books themselves are often bound in exquisite bindings intended for the royal family and aristocracy. While focusing on France, the exhibition also includes some comparative material from other European courts.



## CEREMONIAL AND FESTIVITIES AT THE COURT OF FRANCE: THE DEPARTMENT OF 'SMALL PLEASURES'



**spectacle (noun): a visually striking performance or display, from the Latin *spectaculum* meaning public show**

**spectacular (adjective): beautiful in a dramatic and eye-catching way**

Splendid ceremonies marking key moments in the lives of the royal family were truly spectacular, whether as entertainment or part of the formal arrangements and an opportunity to showcase the glory and power of the king.

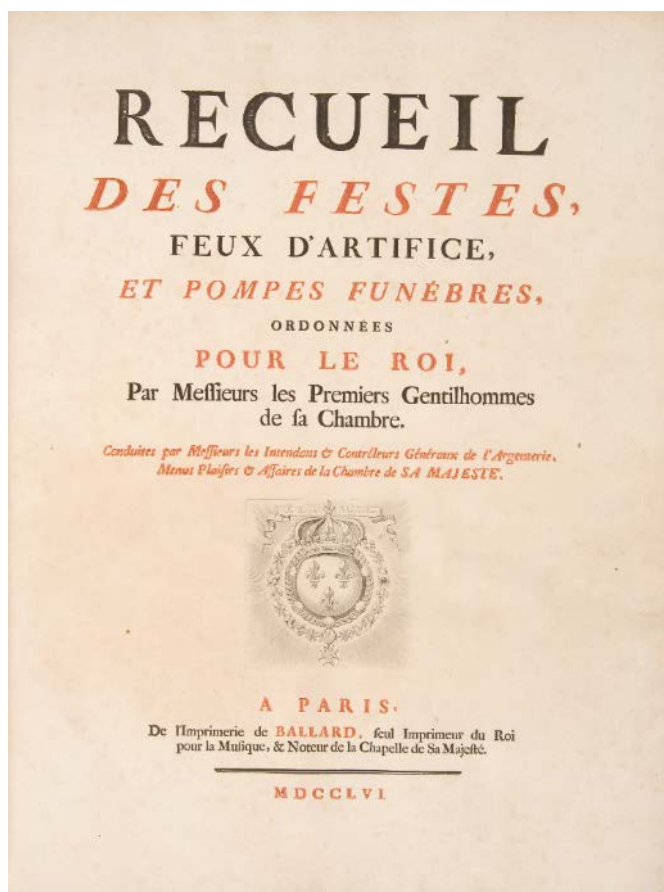
Many ceremonies were codified during the long reign of Louis XIV (1638-1715) thanks to a need to establish the legitimacy of the Bourbon line and his power to rule absolutely, following the civil wars between 1648 and 1653, known as the Fronde.

The Menus Plaisirs organized the events. This was the part of the department of the Royal Household called *Argenterie, menus plaisirs et affaires de la Chambre du roi* ('Silver, small pleasures and the Royal Chamber') that dealt with everything to do with the private, non-governing life of the king.

The department produced the extravagant temporary constructions which were, in effect, stage sets, as well as the costumes for performances and for the participants in mourning processions and coronations. At times, the dramatic, festive aspects seemed at odds with solemn occasions but it was noted that 'it was necessary to please the court, who allowed seriousness only with great difficulty.'

The position of chief designer to the Menus Plaisirs was held by significant artists or architects who established a certain style for each period or reign. They included Charles Le Brun, Jean Berain and Juste Aurèle Meissonnier. Their designs were carried out by numerous painters, sculptors and craftsmen.

Official records of the spectacles were produced by the engravers, printers and bookbinders of the *Cabinet du Roi*, also a part of the *Chambre du Roi*. This department was established during the early years of Louis XIV's reign specifically to glorify and market the public image of the king. Lavishly produced, with exquisite bindings and large-format illustrations, the books were also sent to foreign sovereigns to demonstrate the grandeur and superiority of the French court. When an event was organized by a city in honour of the king or royal family, the city would commission a publication on an equally sumptuous scale. Waddesdon has a particularly rich collection of both these types of books.



Top: View of the construction of the buildings and stage sets for the firework display celebrating the wedding of Louise Élisabeth of France, Louis XV's eldest daughter, to Don Felipe of Spain, at Versailles, August 1739; Charles-Nicolas Cochin (1715-1790), artist and engraver; from *Recueil des festes*, 1756.

Bottom: *Recueil des festes*, 1756, title page. The book contains 13 extremely large format engravings depicting royal weddings, performances, balls, firework displays and funerals organized by the department of the Menus Plaisirs.



## ROYAL ENTRANCES

On August 26, 1660 all Paris lined the route of Louis XIV's (1638 – 1715) entrance into the city with his new bride, Maria Teresa of Spain (1638 – 1683). It was the first chance to see the king since the Treaty of the Pyrenees (1659) ended over 20 years of war with Spain and contracted the marriage. The celebration arranged by the City of Paris was so lavish that the entry had to be postponed in order for everything to be made ready. It was to be the last royal triumphal entry into the city.

This richly illustrated book is the official publication commissioned by city officials. Over 80 other pamphlets were printed as guidebooks for spectators to interpret the complex symbolism. The aim was also 'to preserve a lasting record for foreigners who were not present and may never come to Paris.'

Seven triumphal arches directed the procession to its destination at the Louvre palace. Although the engravings depict them as stone constructions, in reality they were painted screens, simulating costly materials. In some cases, they were only painted on the side facing the royal couple.

The last arch was designed by the painter Charles Le Brun (1619 – 1690), whose symbolic representations of the king based on the glory of the Roman Empire and ancient mythology would define style for the next 30 years.

*L'Entrée triomphante de leurs majestez Louis XIV. Roy de France et de Navarre, et Marie Therese d'Autriche son epouse, dans la ville de Paris capital de leurs royaumes, au retour de la signature de la Paix Generale et de leur heureux mariage.*

*(The triumphant entrance of their majesties Louis XIV King of France and Navarre, and Marie Therese of Austria, his wife, into the city of Paris, capital of their kingdoms, returning after the signing of the General Peace and their happy marriage)*

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Text by Jean Tronçon (dates unknown)

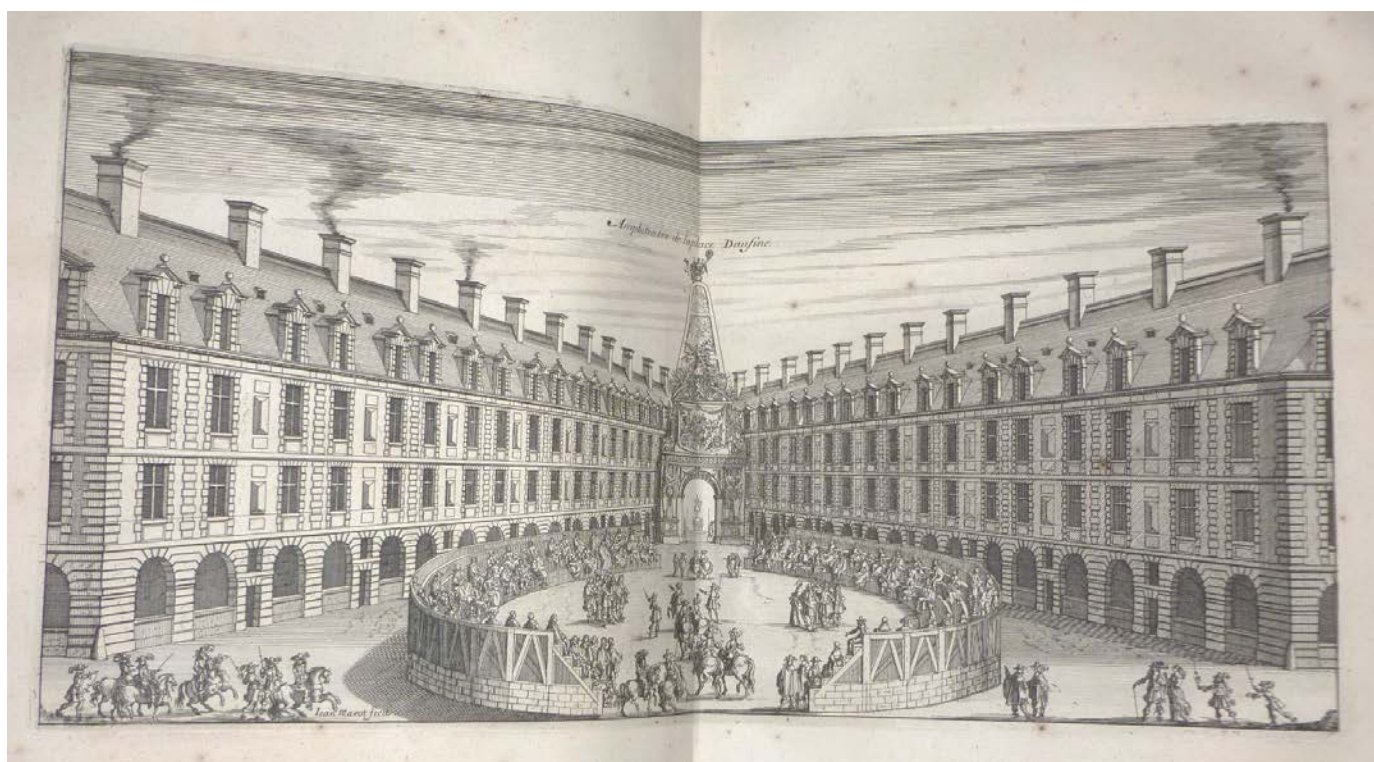
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Paris, 1662

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Accession number 3213

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### **The Amphitheatre erected in the place Dauphine**

*from L'Entrée triomphante de leurs majestez Louis XIV. Roy de France et de Navarre, et Marie Therese d'Autriche son epouse, dans la ville de Paris capital de leurs royaumes, au retour de la signature de la Paix Generale et de leur heureux mariage.*

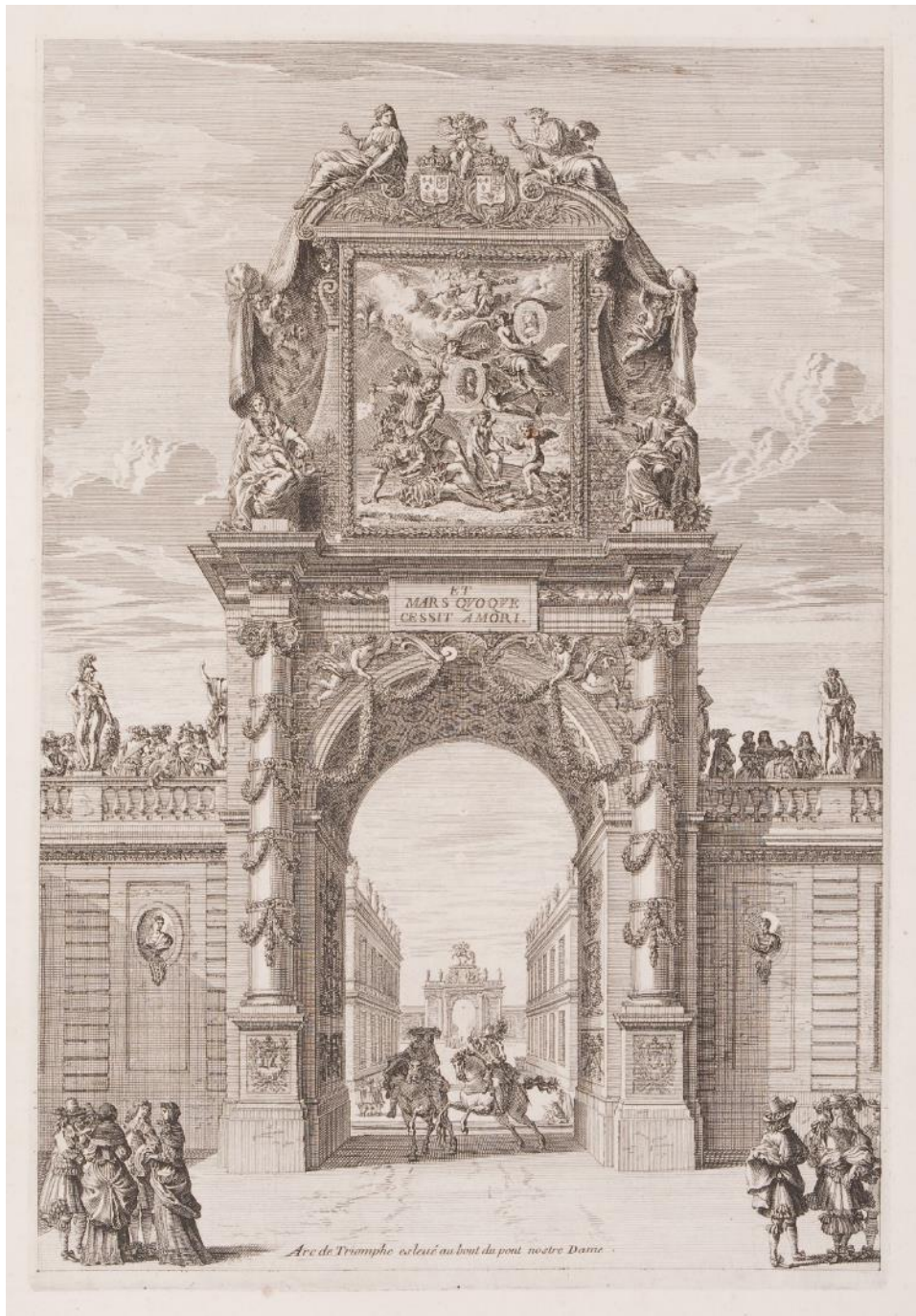
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Jean Marot (c. 1619-1679) engraver

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A carousel (see Carousels case) was to be performed in the amphitheatre erected in the place Dauphine on the Île de la Cité. The glimpse of the equestrian statue of Louis XIV's grandfather, Henri IV (1553 – 1610), founder of the Bourbon dynasty, and the Grande Galerie of the Louvre behind it, stress Louis XIV's legitimacy and the continuation of the dynasty despite the civil wars.





**Arc de Triomphe eslevé au bout du pont nostre Dame (Triumphal arch at the end of the Notre Dame Bridge**

*in L'Entrée triomphante de leurs majestez Louis XIV. Roy de France et de Navarre, et Marie Therese d'Autriche son epouse, dans la ville de Paris capital de leurs royaumes, au retour de la signature de la Paix Generale et de leur heureux mariage.*

Jean Marot (c. 1619-1679) engraver

Victory and peace were the central themes of the event. Louis XIV was celebrated as the invincible monarch and triumphant general who had achieved peace for his people. This was a reference not only to the Spanish war but also to his victory in the civil wars that ended in 1653. The indissoluble bond of marriage promised lasting peace between the two countries, but this proved to be short lived.

Love conquers War is the subject of this arch. Mars, the god of War, is beaten by Hymen, the god of Marriage. Two cherubs are breaking Mars's sword and trampling on his shield. Seated at the top, Cupid ties the arms of the two countries to his bow.

### EXTRAORDINARY MACHINES



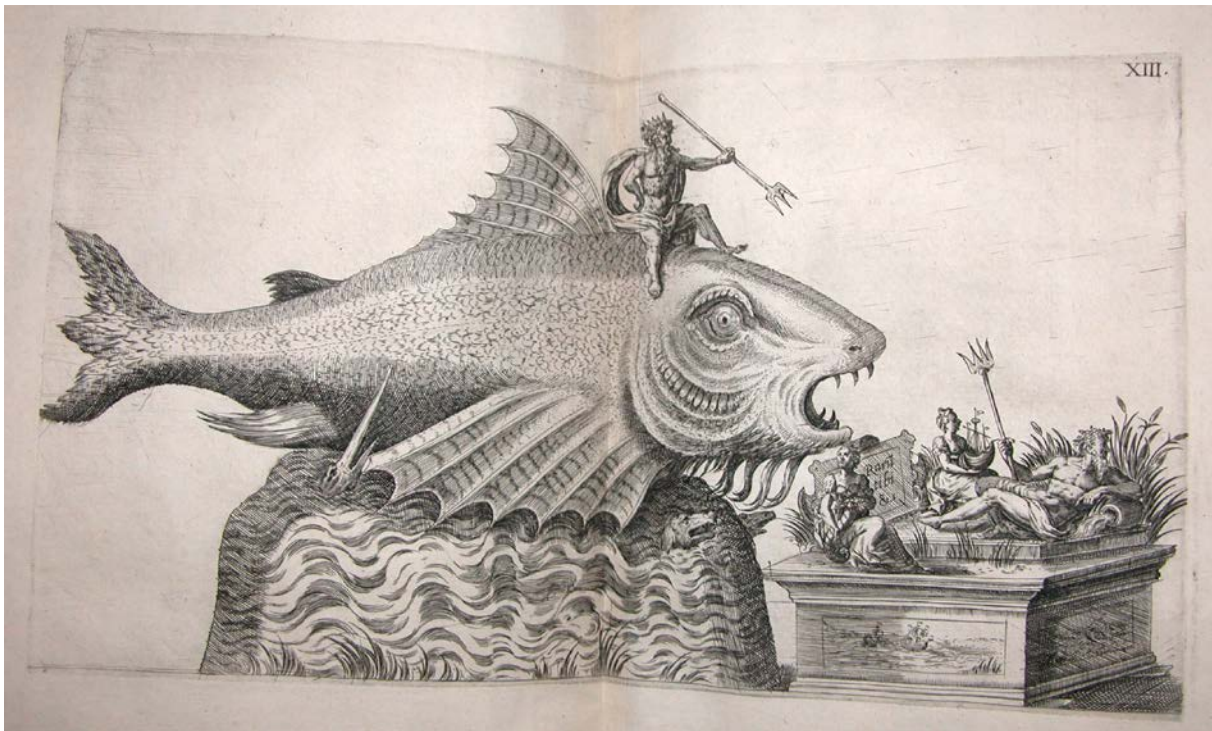
Carnival floats in Siena, *Prospetto della piazza di Siena*, 1717; The British Museum, London © The Trustees of the British Museum

To this day, floats are an essential part of parades and celebrations all over the world. These moving ephemeral monuments of pure fantasy, both entertaining and awe-inspiring, are designed to be seen by great numbers of people. Land and water floats, chariots and *machines* were just as popular from the 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, appearing in most festivals, including royal entrances, carousels, marriage festivities and even theatrical performances. The moving platforms were elaborately decorated to express the theme of the event; a perfect combination of ingenuity and fantasy. Often the decorations were allegorical or mythological and represented classical gods or fantastical creatures.

Amongst the most impressive types of float were the *machines*, (from the Italian '*macchine*'). More complex than regular floats and chariots, they had moving parts or would transform during the procession, revealing new decorations or characters. They were sometimes even equipped with fireworks.

Some chariots and floats were interactive, even carrying food and drink. Such was the case during the festivities given by the city of Paris for the wedding of the Dauphin in 1747. The chariot representing Bacchus carried barrels of wine for thirsty spectators while the chariot representing the city of Paris carried men handing out bread and other foods. Many of these moving vehicles are illustrated in great detail in a number of the festival books on display, images which are all the more precious now because the floats themselves do not survive.





**Float in the shape of a large fish, accompanied by Poseidon or a sea god** from *La joyeuse & magnifique entrée de Monseigneur Francoys, fils de France et frère unique du roy*

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attributed to Abraham de Bruyn (1540 – c. 1587)

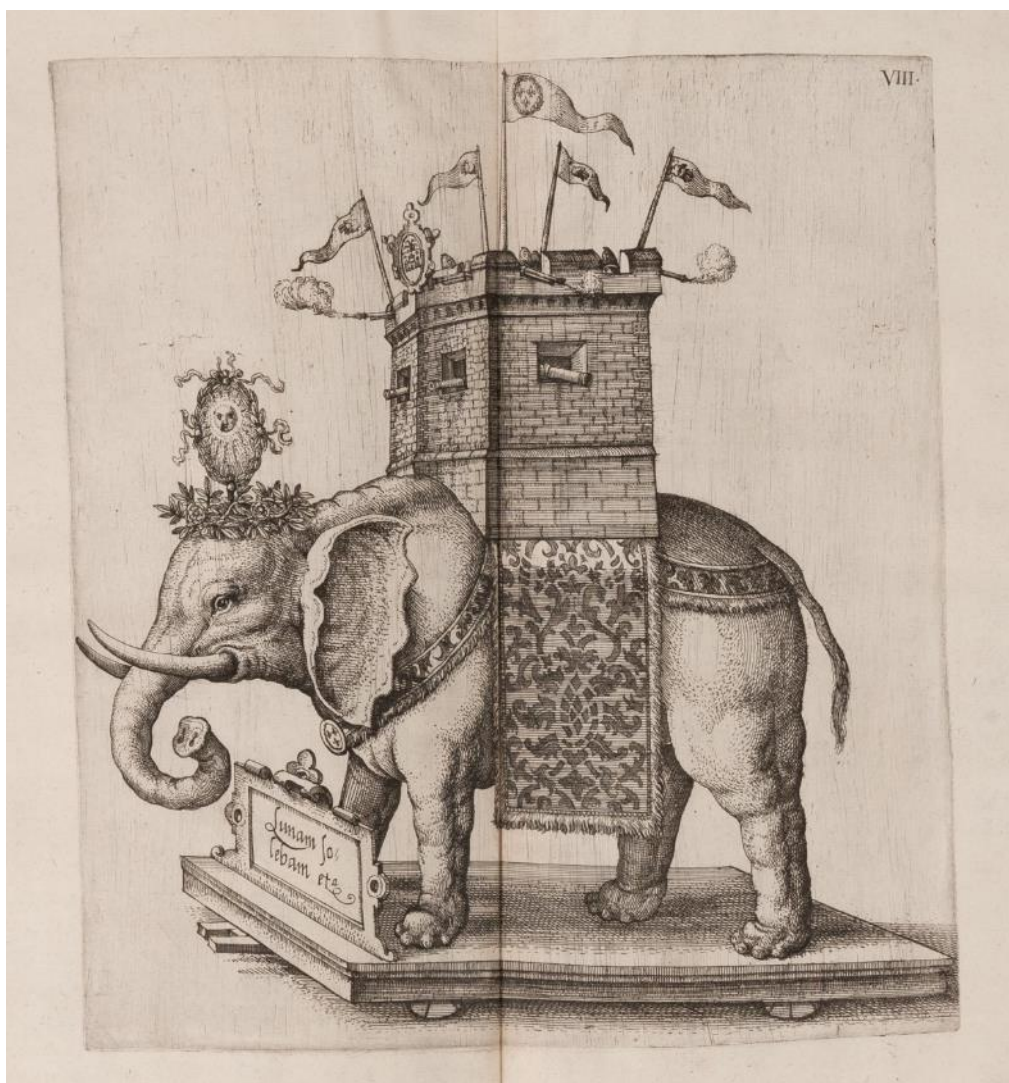
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Antwerp, 1582

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Accession number 3165

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**Float in the shape of an elephant** from *La joyeuse & magnifique entrée de Monseigneur Francoys, fils de France et frère unique du roy*

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attributed to Abraham de Bruyn (1540 – c. 1587)

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Antwerp, 1582

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Accession number 3165

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The duc d'Anjou (1554-1584) was the fifth son of Henri II (1519-1559) and Catherine de Médici (1519-1589). Highly ambitious, he led the protestant Flemish revolt against Philip II of Spain and was recognised as sovereign of the Low Countries in 1582. The entry was an important political ceremony, marking the handing over of autonomy to the Netherlands after the period of Spanish tyranny.





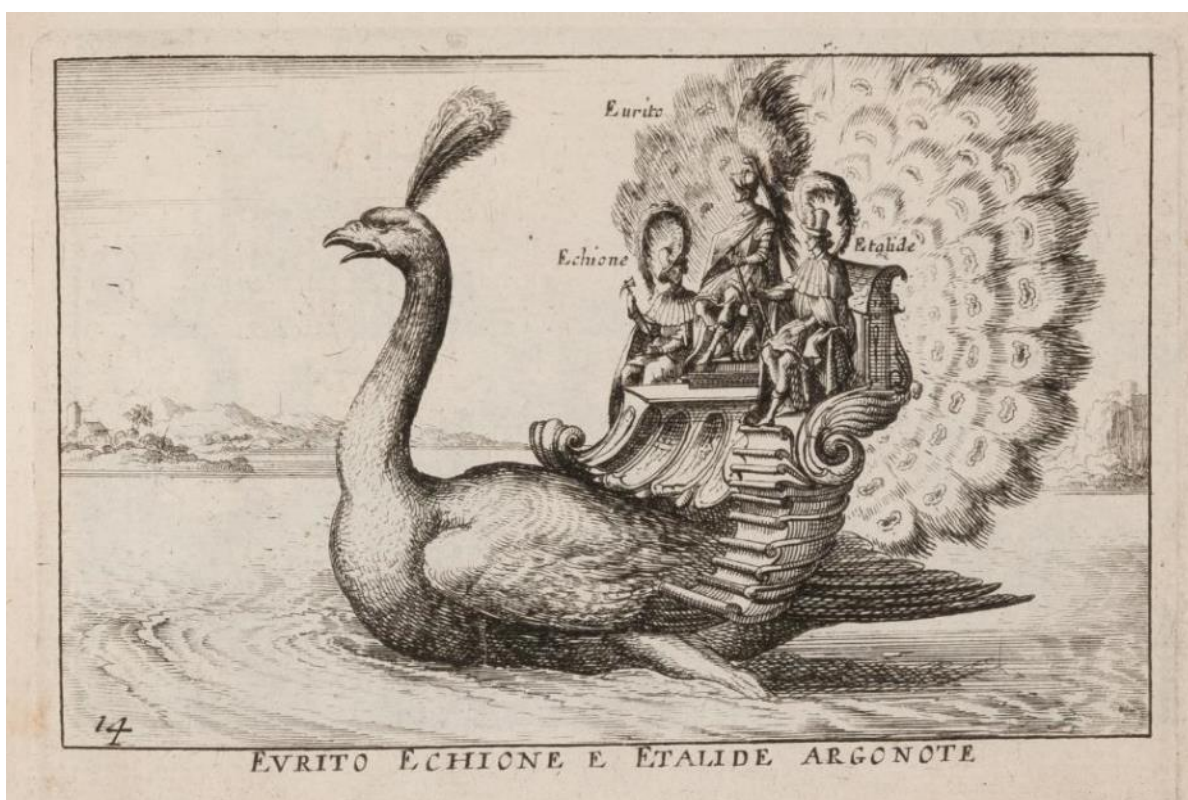
**IDMONE EA MOPSO ARGONOTI  
GUIDATI DA APOLLO (water float  
conducted by Apollo)**

*in Le Magnifique Carousel fait sur le fleuve  
de l'Arne a Florence, pour le mariage du  
grand Duc*

engraved by Nicolas François Bocquet  
(active 1691-1703, d. 1716), after Remigio  
Cantagallina (c 1582-1656), after Giulio  
Parigi (1571-1635)

Paris, 1664

Accession number 4558



**EVRITO ECHIONE E ETALIDE  
ARGONOTE (water float conducted by  
Eurito, Echione and Etalide)**

*in Le Magnifique Carousel fait sur le fleuve  
de l'Arne a Florence, pour le mariage du  
grand Duc*

engraved by Nicolas François Bocquet  
(active 1691-1703, d. 1716), after Remigio  
Cantagallina (c 1582-1656), after Giulio  
Parigi (1571-1635)

Paris, 1664

Accession number 4558

The floats depicted here in detail featured as part of the wedding celebrations for the Grand duc of Tuscany, Cosimo II de' Medici (1590-1621) and Archduchess Maria Maddalena of Austria (1589-1631) in Florence on the river Arno in 1608.





**Entrée de Monseigneur Henry de Lorraine (Entrée of Lord Henry of Lorraine)**

in *Combat à la barrière, fait en cour de Lorraine, en l'année 1627*

Designed and engraved by Jacques Callot (1592-1635)

Text by Henry Humbert (active early 17th century)

Nancy, 1627

Accession number 5004



**Entrée de son Altesse representant le Soleil (Entrance of his Highness representing the Sun)**

in *Combat à la barrière, fait en cour de Lorraine, en l'année 1627*

Designed and engraved by Jacques Callot (1592-1635)

Text by Henry Humbert (active early 17th century)

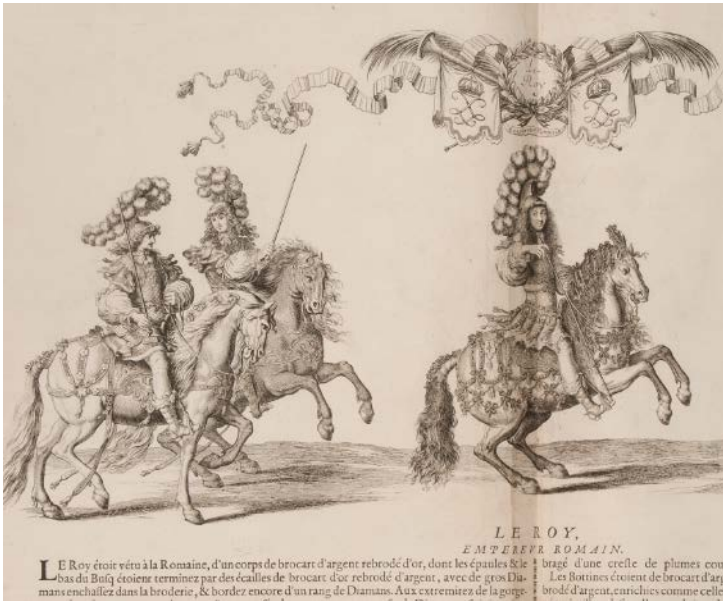
Nancy, 1627

Accession number 5004

This is the only edition of this rare *fête* book describing the festivities held in honour of the duchesse de Chevreuse, Marie de Rohan-Montabzon (1600-1679), one of the great beauties of the day and cousin to the duc de Lorraine, Charles IV. She took refuge at Nancy after the discovery of her plot against Cardinal Richelieu (1585-1642). Jacques Callot directed the pageant and designed the costumes of the *fête*.

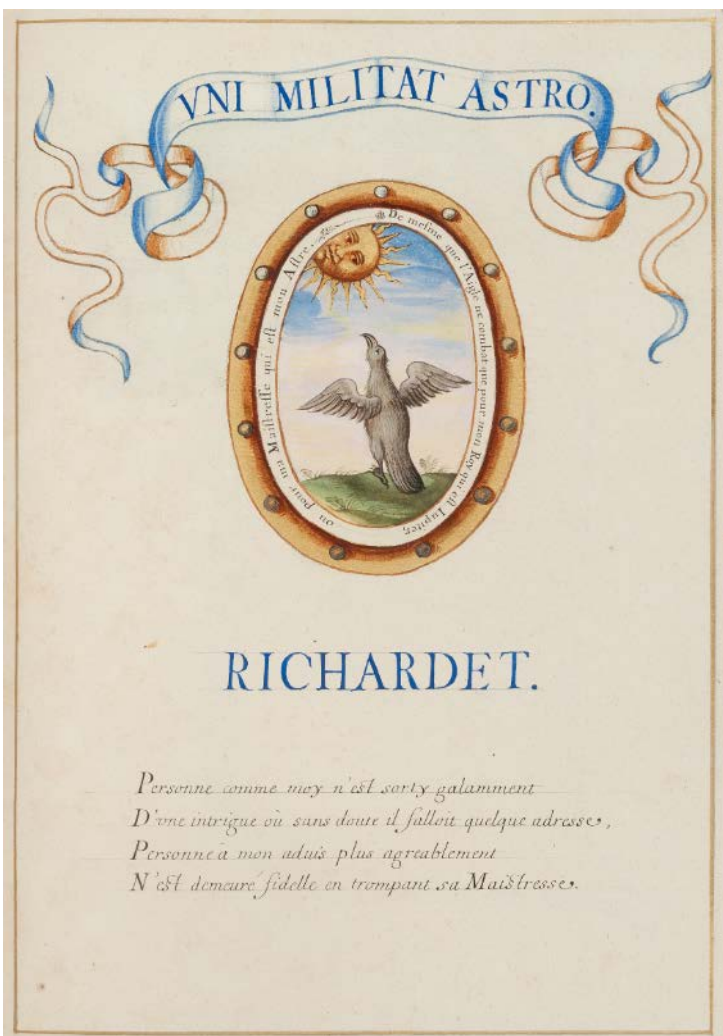


## CAROUSELS



A carousel in the 17<sup>th</sup> century did not refer to a fairground ride but to an equestrian display or tournament in which groups of riders, divided into quadrilles (troops) distinguished by their costumes, competed to spear a ring (*course de bague*) or to bring down a papier mâché head (*course de tête*) whilst at full gallop. These events were brought to Europe during the Moorish invasion of Spain in the 8<sup>th</sup> century, later establishing themselves in Italy and then France by the late 1500s. They were particularly popular at court after jousting tournaments were abolished when Henri II died of a wound he received in one in 1559.

Carousels reached their height of popularity in the 17<sup>th</sup> century during the reign of Louis XIV, after which they were no longer held. The king was a gifted horseman who enjoyed performing. The first and most impressive was held in Paris in 1662, to celebrate the birth of his heir. It was commemorated by the publication of a festival book, *Courses de Testes et de Bagues* (on display), lavishly illustrated with 104 plates and describing in detail the costumes of the riders and horses. It was published in both French and Latin, so it could be circulated outside France. Louis XIV was particularly proud of this publication and had his own copy hand coloured.

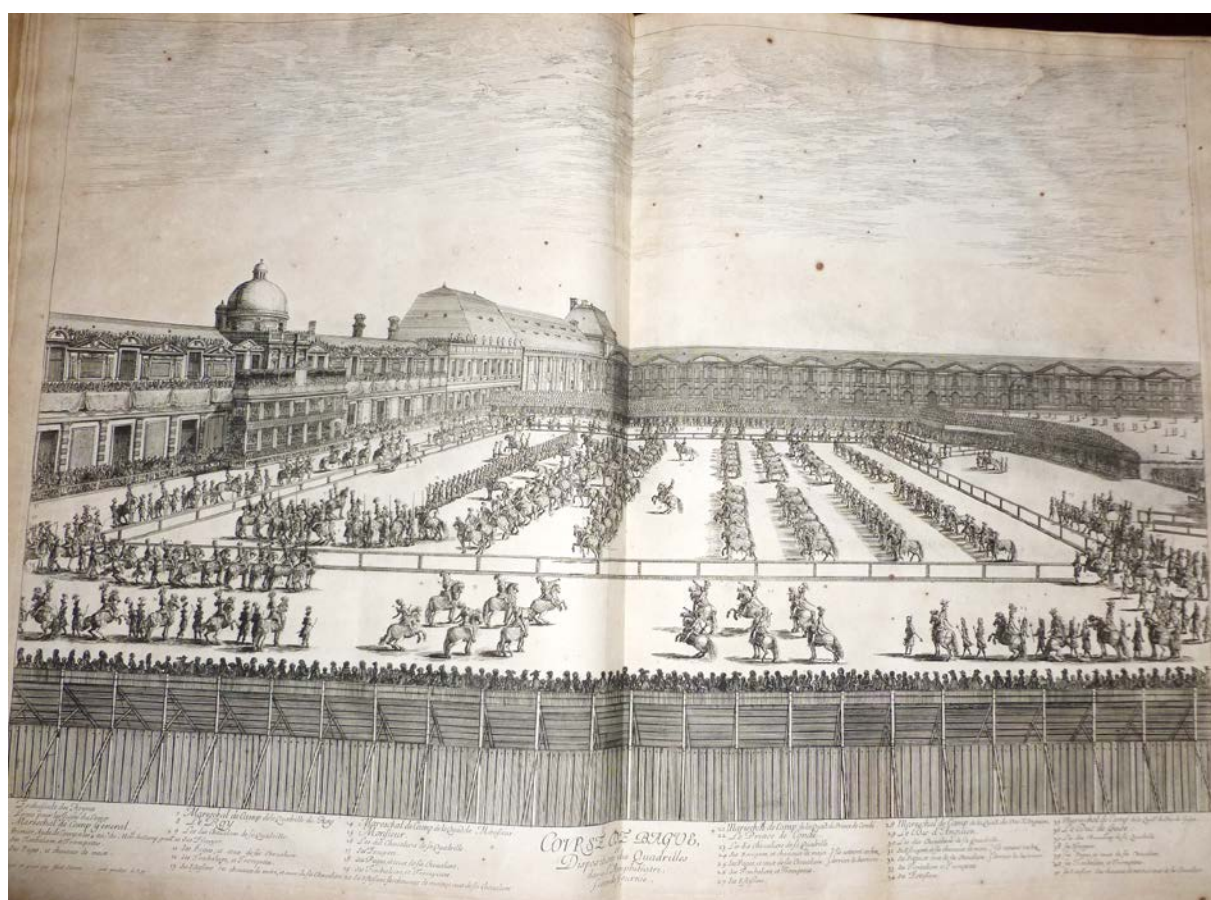


The hierarchy of the court was reflected in the riders chosen by the king for the quadrilles, while the decorations and costumes worn by the courtiers conveyed symbolic and heraldic meanings in line with the general theme of the event. Each courtier had a device (an emblem and a motto) that represented his character in the carousel. Louis XIV appeared as the head of the Roman quadrille, in the costume of a Roman emperor. His device was a sun and it was from this moment that the king adopted it as his universal emblem. His motto, *UT VIDI VICI* (As soon as I saw, I conquered) was very similar to Julius Caesar's *VENI, VIDI, VICI* (I came, I saw, I conquered).

Top: The king Louis XIV dressed as a Roman Emperor in *Courses de Testes et de Bague*, 1662

Bottom: The device for the marquis de Villequier, in the carousel performed at Versailles in 1664, as part of *Les Plaisirs de l'Isle enchantée*





**COURSE DE BAGUE (Race of the ring)**  
in *Courses de testes et de bague Faittes par  
le roy et par les princes et seigneurs de sa  
cour en l'année 1662*

Engraved by Israël Silvestre (1621-1691)

Text by Charles Perrault (1628-1703)

Paris, 1670

Accession number 3178



**Engraved title-page with the portrait  
bust of Louis XIV**  
from *Courses de testes et de bague Faittes  
par le roy et par les princes et seigneurs de sa  
cour en l'année 1662*

Engraved by Gilles Rousselet (1610-1686)

Text by Charles Perrault (1628-1703)

Paris, 1670

Accession number 3178

This publication celebrates and records the great equestrian tournament of Louis XIV's reign. The king and his chosen courtiers took part in the tournament as representatives of the different nations. Louis XIV played the role of a Roman emperor.





**Two horsemen**  
from *LES PLAISIRS DE L'ISLE ENCHANTEE*  
(manuscript)

Versailles, 1664-1669

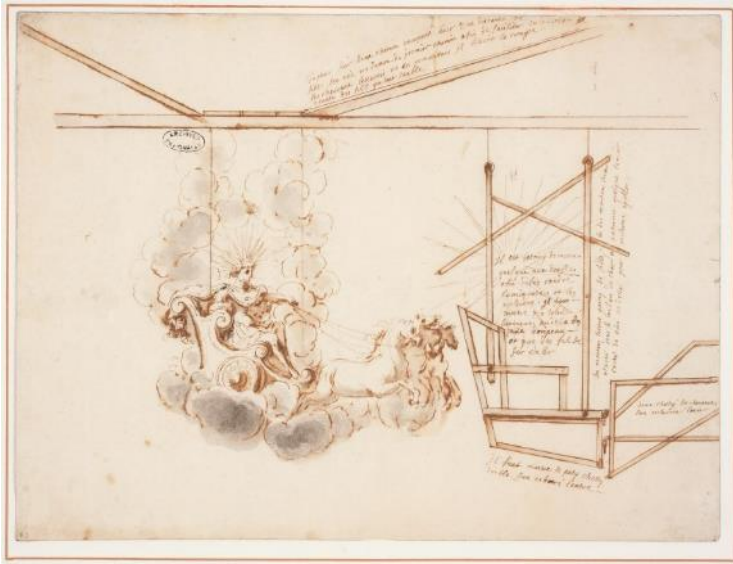
Accession number 3685

This manuscript volume beautifully records the festivities held at Versailles in 1664. These included theatrical performances, fireworks and a *course de bague*. The two horsemen illustrated here are probably Anne de Noailles (1615-1678), comte d'Ayen in 1663, Premier Capitaine des Gardes du Roi, appearing in the character of Ogier le Danois, and Henri-Jules de Bourbon (1643-1709), duc d'Enghien, called Monsieur le Prince, Grand Maître de France, as Roland.





## BALLET, OPERA AND THEATRE FOR THE FRENCH COURT



Ballet, opera and theatre performances often were part of the larger programme of festivities arranged to celebrate marriages and other events at court. Performance was also used to convey political messages.

As a young man, Louis XIV (1638-1715) often danced in ballets with his courtiers. Plots inspired by ancient mythology enabled the King to associate himself with the powers and attributes of the gods. During his performance in the *Ballet royal de la Nuit*, the King appeared as Apollo, god of the Sun. It established his image as the Sun King, an association that endured throughout his reign.

Louis XIII (1601-1643) died when Louis XIV was four years old. Civil war broke out as aristocratic factions tried to limit the young King's power. Once Louis XIV reached his majority and peace was declared, it was crucial that he establish his authority and focus attention on the king at the heart of government. His stage performances communicated this message to the court and to foreign rulers. As the Sun King, Louis represented the centre around which everything revolved, the '*roi absolu*'. When the political situation stabilized there was less need to assert his authority through performance and he last danced in a ballet in 1670.



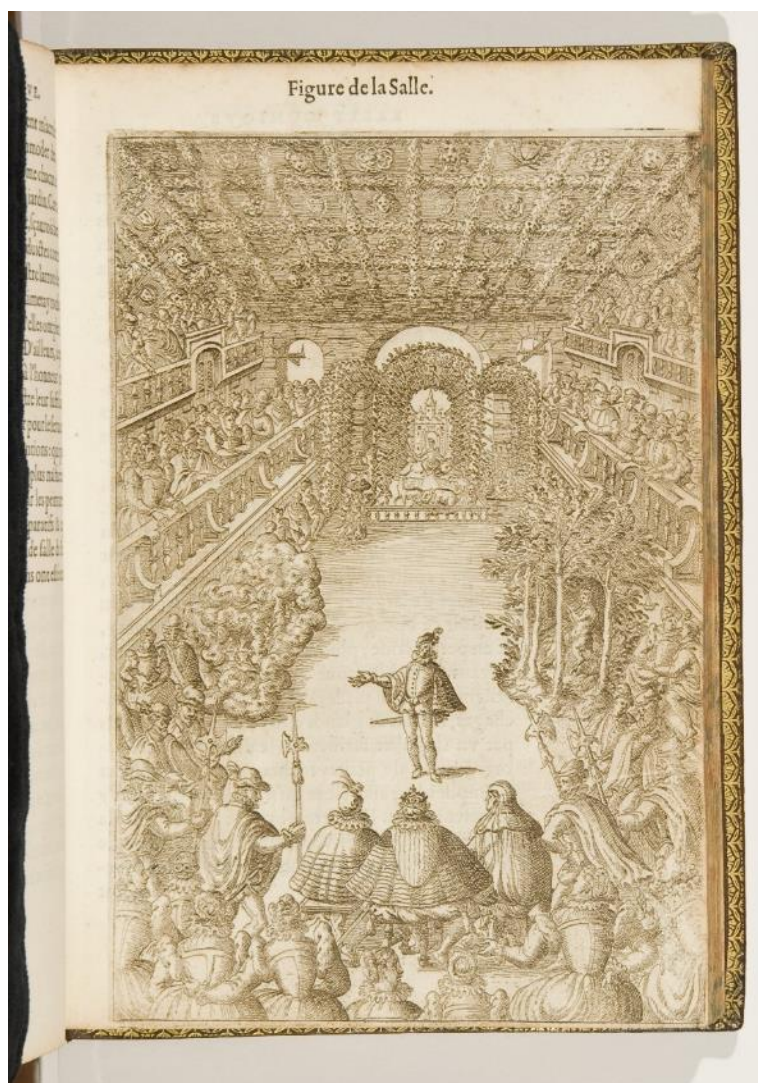
The later French kings did not have to resort to the stage in the same way as the young Louis XIV but the spectacle of performances continued to play a significant role in courtly life. The season began in the autumn at Fontainebleau and ended at Easter, with performances given by the Comédie-française, the Comédie-italienne and the Opéra .

**Top:** Jean Berain, design for the rigging system of Apollo's chariot, probably for *Aricie*, performed in Paris, 1697; Paris, Archives nationales

**Bottom:** The programme of performances held at the château of Fontainebleau in 1783

Many of the early court performances took place on temporary stages built in the gardens or in rooms of the palace. The late 17<sup>th</sup> century saw ground-breaking innovations in stage designs. Complex 'machines' – rigging systems, cloud machines and moveable backdrops - were used to create imaginary landscapes on the stage and even allowed performers to fly. Publications of the librettos or engravings commissioned to record these performances are often the only lasting elements of these experiences.





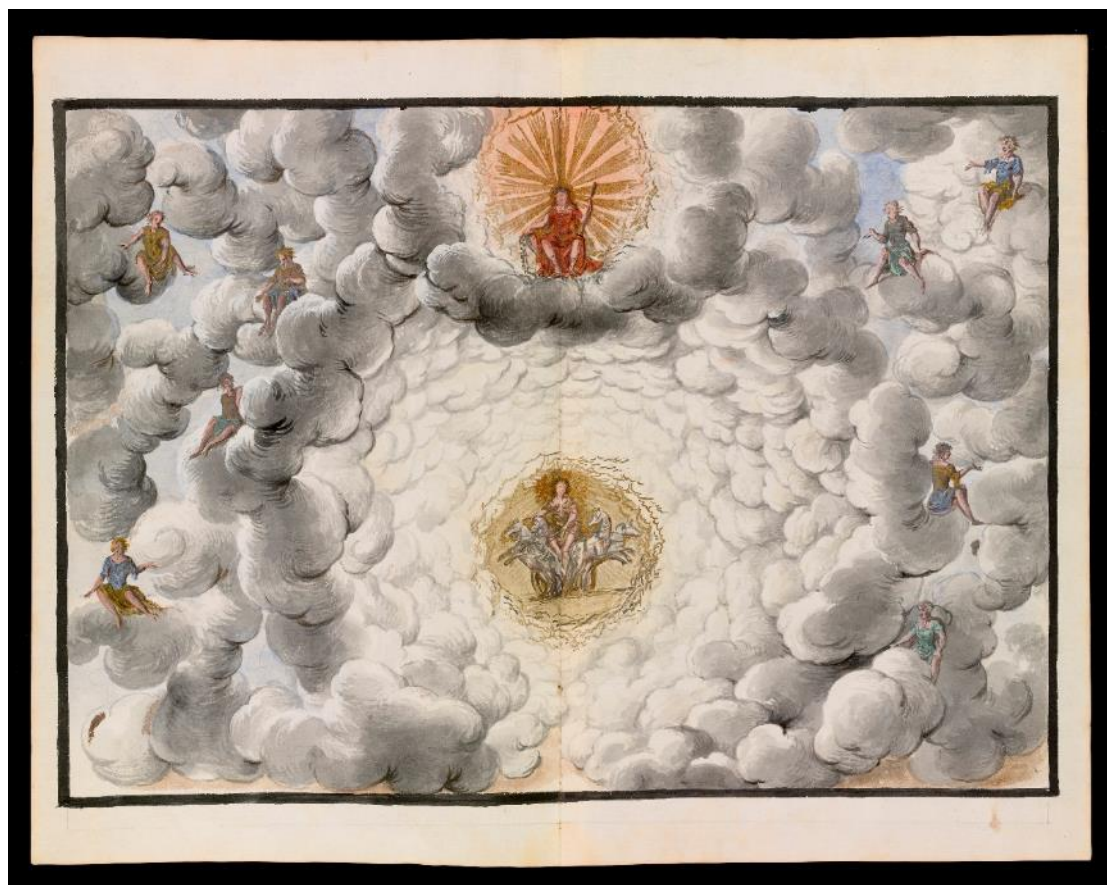
**Figure de la Salle (view of the room) in  
*Balet comique de la royne, faict aux  
nopces de Monsieur le duc de Joyeuse &  
madamoyselle de Vaudemont sa sœur***

Paris, 1528

attributed to Jacques Patin (c. 1540 –c.1610),  
text by Baltasar de Beaujoyeux (active c.  
1582)

Accession number 3685

The plate illustrates the opening scene in the ballet performed in the Grande Salle of the hôtel du Petit Bourbon to celebrate the wedding of Anne, duc de Joyeuse (c.1560 -1587), a favourite of Henri III (1551 - 1589), to his sister-in-law, Marguerite Vaudémont. The ballet praises the king's power and virtue for restoring peace and harmony to the kingdom. Binding with the arms of Louis XIV.



**Scenery design with Glory of the Sun,  
Fourth Watch, 10th Entrée in *Ballet  
royal de la nuit***

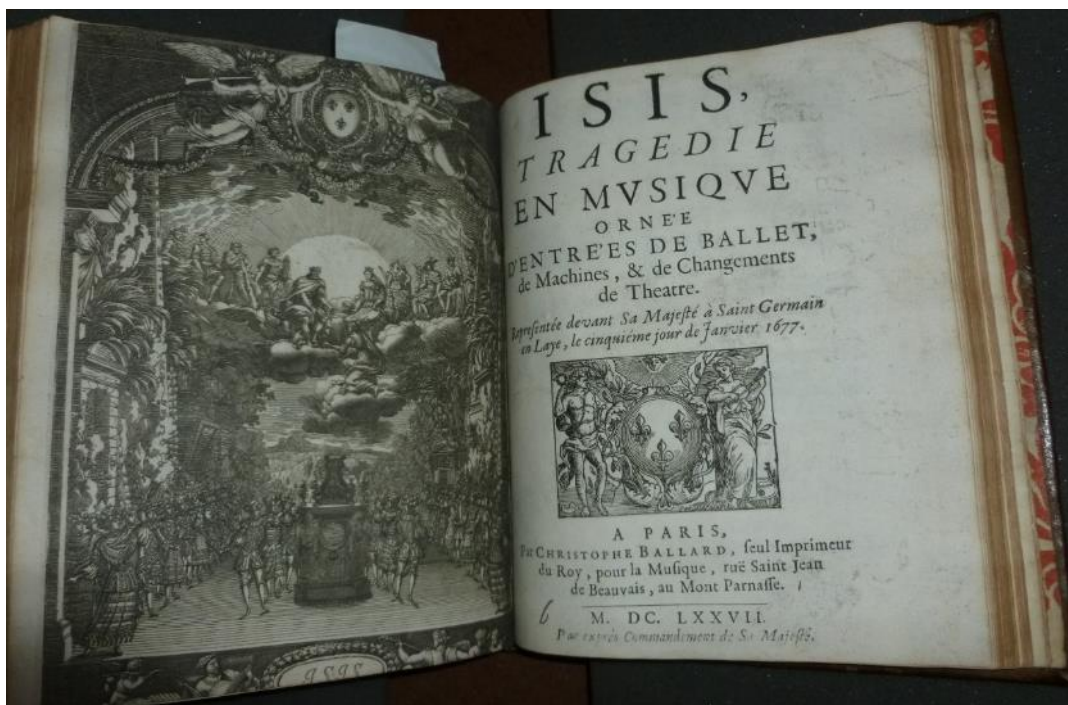
Paris, 1653

attributed to Henri Gissey (b. c 1621, d.  
1673), text by Isaac de Benserade (1612-  
1691)

Accession number 3666.3.129

The closing scene of the ballet, featuring a young Louis XIV appearing as the Sun-king, Apollo. In the middle of the clouds Apollo appears on his chariot, flanked by courtiers representing the king's virtues. The binding bears the arms of Louis Treslon-Cauchon, Called Hesselin (1602-1662), who as *Maître de la chambre aux deniers de la Maison du Roi*, was in charge of this *fête*.



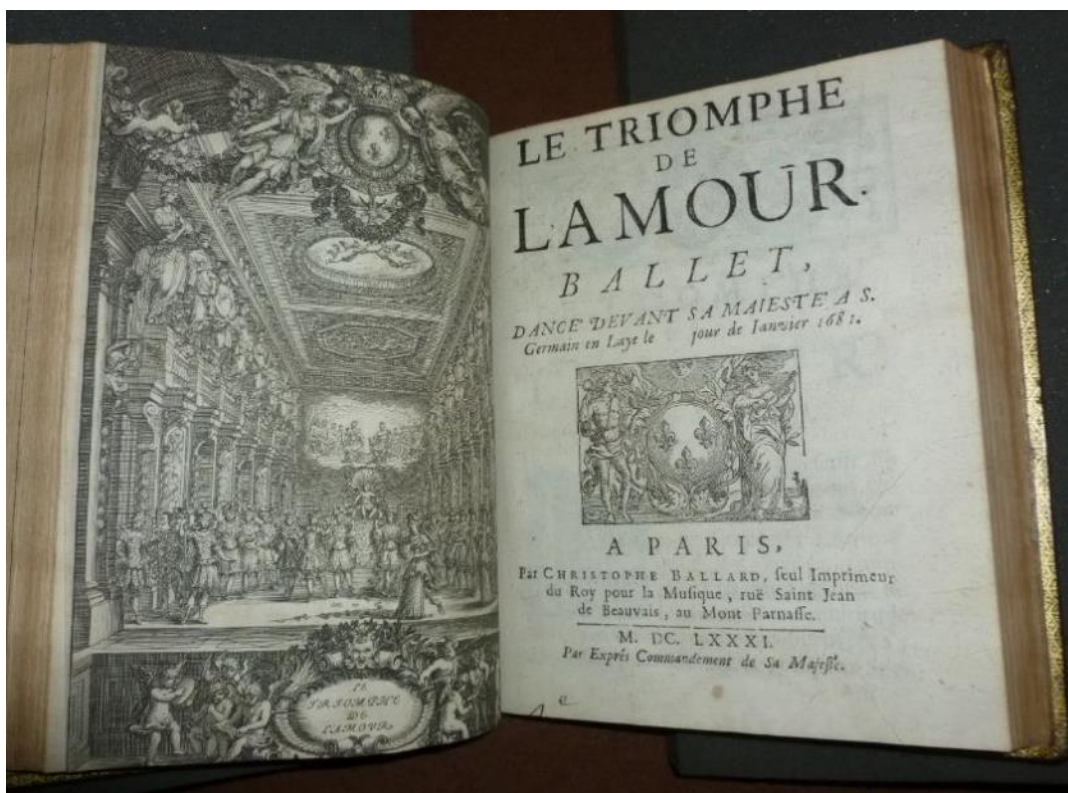


Frontispiece and title-page from *Isis, tragedie en musique*, bound in volume titled on spine *Operas du roi*

Paris, 1677

text by Philippe Quinault (1635-1688)

Accession number 3673

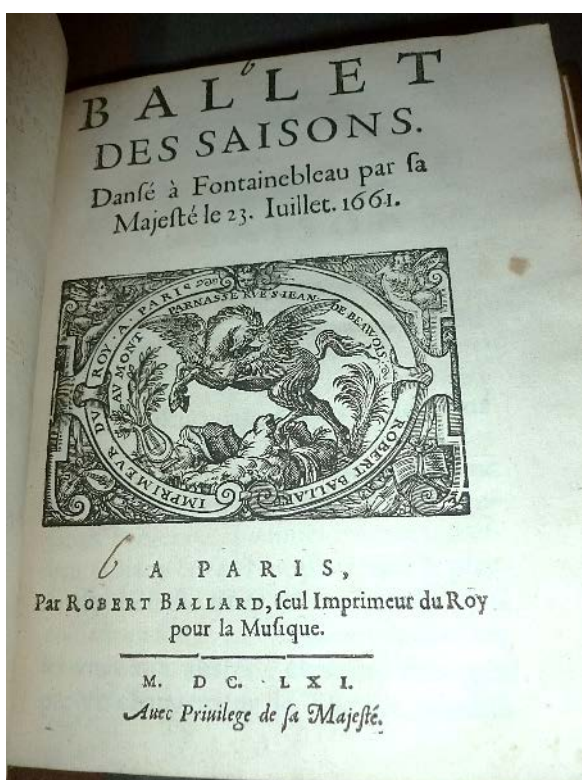


Frontispiece and title-page from *Le Triomphe de l'amour, ballet*, bound in volume titled on spine *Recueil d'opera*

Paris, 1681

text by Philippe Quinault (1635-1688) and Isaac de Benserade (1612-1691)

Accession number 5462



Title-page from *Ballet des saisons*, bound in volume titled on spine *Ballets du Roy*

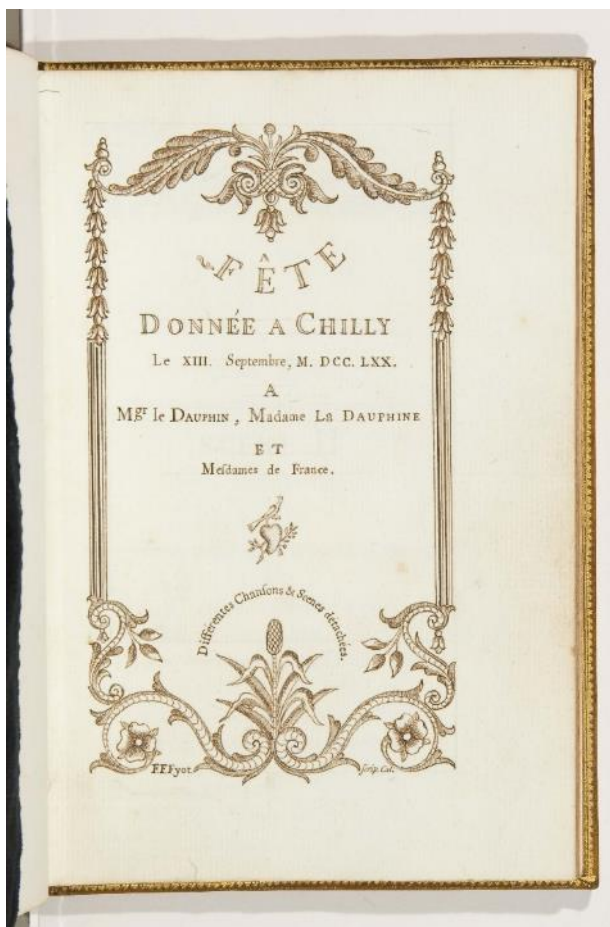
Paris, 1661

text by Isaac de Benserade (1612-1691)

Accession number 5463

Three volumes containing 30 libretti of ballets and operas, featuring music by Jean-Baptiste Lully (1632-1687), performed for the French royal court between 1655 and 1685. Librettos give a short summary of the plot with a sequence of scenes or entrees, along with some lyrics. These volumes belonged to Louis, le Grand Dauphin (1661-1611), eldest son of Louis XIV. Contemporary French binding with *semis* of fleurs-de-lis on sides and spines of all volumes and the arms of Louis XIV.





**Title-page for *Fête donnée à Chilly***

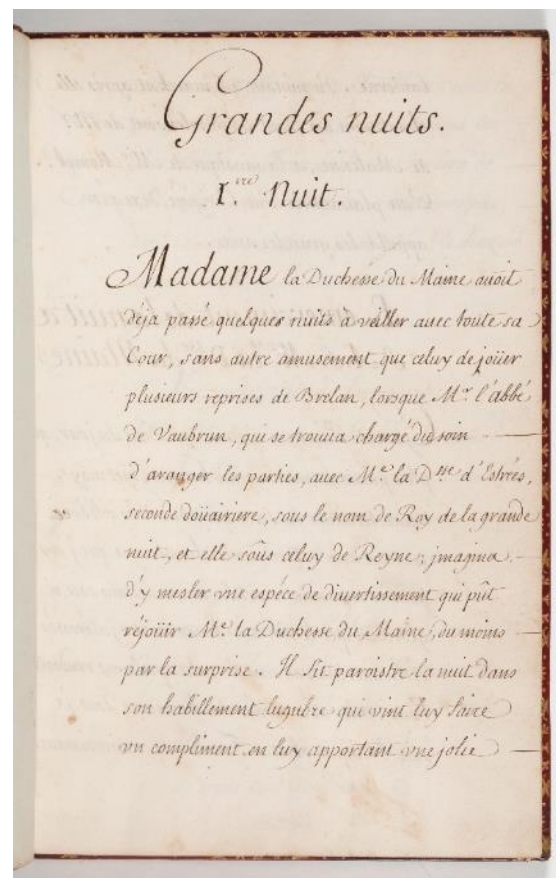
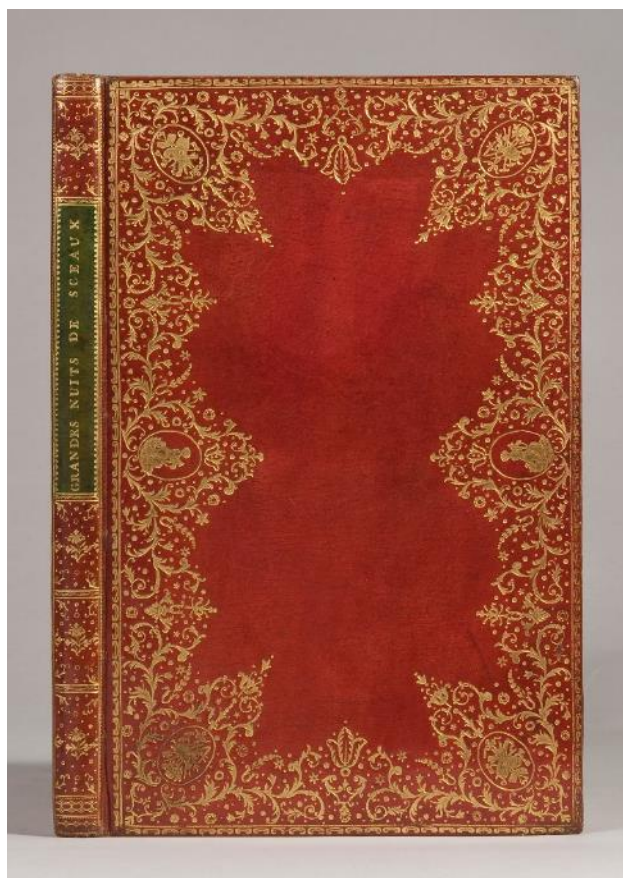
Paris, 1770

pen facsimile by F.F. Fyot (active 1770)

binding attributed to Nicolas Denis Derome, *le jeune* (1731-1790)

Accession number 905

This manuscript includes extracts from the theatrical performances held at Chilly by the duchesse de Mazarin (1735-1781) to celebrate the marriage of the Dauphin, future Louis XVI (1753-1793) and Marie-Antoinette (1755-1793). This copy is thought to have belonged to Marie-Antoinette, with the arms of the newlyweds on both covers.



***Grands nuits de Sceaux*, front cover and title-page**

1715, manuscript

binding by Nicolas Denis Derome, *le jeune* (1731-1790)

Accession number 3689

This beautifully bound manuscript describes the nocturnal performances organised by the duchesse de Maine, held fortnightly from the spring of 1714 to 1715 at the palace of Sceaux. The duchesse suffered from insomnia; the manuscript mentions that the performances began as a way to entertain herself during her sleepless nights.



## WEDDINGS



Royal marriages were arranged principally for dynastic reasons and to form political alliances. The Bourbon line nearly came to an end when it took Louis XIV's mother 23 years to produce an heir and the deaths of Louis XIV's son and grandson in quick succession caused great alarm.

There was, therefore, great cause to celebrate the marriage of the Dauphin to Maria Teresa Rafaela, Infanta of Spain in 1745, an event that also united the French and Spanish Bourbon branches. As the only son of Louis XV, it was imperative that he produce an heir. Sadly, his wife died a few days after giving birth to a daughter and no time was lost finding another bride. On the same day that the report of the first Dauphine's commemorative mass appeared in the newspaper, the engagement of the Dauphin to Marie-Josèphe of Saxony was announced.



In the days of very slow travel, it was impossible for the couple to meet before their wedding and marriages were not love matches. Instead, the bride was married by proxy at her own court, with a high-ranking minister or ambassador extraordinary standing in for the groom. Once she reached France, there was a benediction service in the chapel of Versailles or another of the royal palaces.

After that came several days of festivities including opera, theatre and ballet performances and balls; the entire façade of the palace was illuminated with hundreds of thousands of lanterns, and the event culminated in an extraordinary fireworks display.

While the Menus Plaisirs arranged and devised the celebrations at Versailles, the government of the City of Paris also commissioned events in honour of the royal couple. Not only was the city paying its respects to the royal family but it was an opportunity for the entire population to celebrate and be entertained. To record the event for posterity, the city commissioned luxurious books, illustrated with large-format engravings. Two of these are in the exhibition.

**Top:** Admission ticket for the dress ball held at Versailles on 9 February 1747 as part of the festivities for the wedding of the Dauphin and Marie-Josèphe de Saxe, signed by de Boneval, Director of the Menus Plaisirs; designed and engraved by Charles-Nicolas Cochin (1715-1790).

**Bottom:** Tented viewing boxes along the banks of the River Seine in Paris for the city officials, with public access on the embankment below, during the festivities for the marriage of Louis XV's daughter, Louise Élisabeth, in August 1739; from *Description des festes données par la ville de Paris, à l'occasion du mariage de madame Louise-Elisabeth de France*, 1740; engraved by Jacques-François Blondel (1705-1774), after Salley (dates unknown).





**DECORATION DE LA SALLE DE SPECTACLE**  
Construite dans le Manège couvert de la grande Ecurie, à Versailles, pour la représentation de la Princesse de Navarre, Comédie Balet, donnée a l'occasion du Mariage de Louis Dauphin de France avec Marie Therese Infante d'Espagne Le XXIII Fevrier MDCCXLV, in *Recueil des festes, feux d'artifice, et pompes funébres, ordonnées pour le roi, par Messieurs les Premiers Gentillhommes de sa Chambre. Conduites par Messieurs les Intendants & Contrôleurs Généraux de l'Argenterie, Menus Plaisirs & Affaires de la chambre de Sa Majesté*

Paris, 1756

Drawn and engraved by Charles-Nicolas Cochin the Younger (1715-1790)

Accession number 3176

The comedy-ballet, *The Princess of Navarre*, was commissioned specially from Voltaire (1694-1778), with music by Jean-Philippe Rameau (1683-1764), for the first night of the celebrations marking the wedding of the Dauphin of France to Marie Thérèse, Infanta of Spain. It was performed on 23 February, 1745 in the riding school of the Large Stables at Versailles which had been transformed into a theatre by the Menus Plaisirs. The Queen and King sit in the centre, on armchairs, while other high-ranking ladies are allowed only a stool according to Versailles protocol, as are the Dauphin and Dauphine. Most of the other spectators had to stand.





**DECORATION DU BAL PARÉ DONNÉ PAR LE ROY Le XXIV Fevrier MDCCXLV, a l'occasion du Mariage de Louis Dauphin de France avec Marie Theresse Infante d'Espagne dans la même Salle de spectacle construite au Manege couverte de la grande Ecurie à Versailles laquelle fut changée dans l'espace de 16. Heures dans cette nouvelle decoration au lieu de celle du Ballet qui'y avoit été représenté la Veille, inRecueil des festes, feux d'artifice, et pompes funébres, ordonnées pour le roi, par Messieurs les Premiers Gentilhommes de sa Chambre. Conduites par Messieurs les Intendants & Contrôleurs Généraux de l'Argenterie, Menus Plaisirs & Affaires de la chambre de Sa Majesté**

Paris, 1756

Drawn and engraved by Charles-Nicolas Cochin the Younger (1715-1790)

Accession number 3176

Another event in the marriage celebrations: the parade ball given by the King on 24 February 1745 in the same space in which the opera-ballet had been performed the night before. Mirrors now cover the walls, surrounded by palm fronds and painted trophies; the balconies have been removed and statues have been added. This was all achieved in 16 hours by the workers and craftsmen of the Menus Plaisirs. The engraving is one of 13 plates depicting various ceremonies organized by the Menus Plaisirs; four of them record this wedding and the subsequent funeral of the Dauphine the following year.





**Ceremonie du Mariage DE LOUIS DAUPHIN DE FRANCE AVEC MARIE THERESE INFANTE D'ESPAGNE dans la Chapelle du Château de Versailles le XXIII. Fevrier MDCCXLV, in *Recueil des festes, feux d'artifice, et pompes funébres, ordonnées pour le roi, par Messieurs les Premiers Gentillhommes de sa Chambre. Conduites par Messieurs les Intendants & Contrôleurs Généraux de l'Argenterie, Menus Plaisirs & Affaires de la chambre de Sa Majesté***

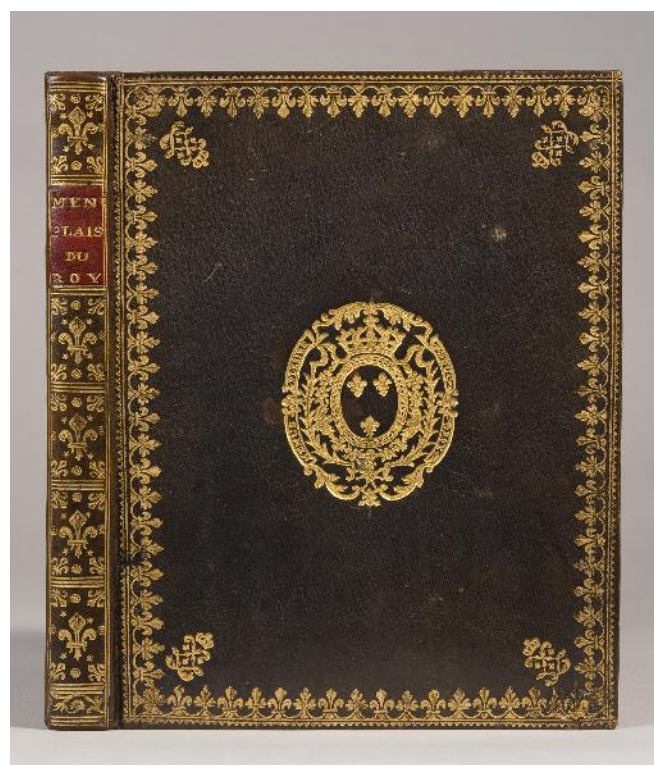
Paris, 1756

Drawn and engraved by Charles-Nicolas Cochin the Younger (1715-1790)

Accession number 3176

Several plates in this volume, like this one depicting the marriage service in the chapel at Versailles, record ceremonies that took place to celebrate the marriage of the Dauphin of France, Louis XV's only son, to Marie Thérèse, Infanta of Spain, in February 1745. Sadly, the Dauphine died the next year after giving birth to a daughter and her funeral is also illustrated. The extremely large format of the engravings allowed Cochin to fill the scenes with minute and fascinating details which are extremely informative regarding court life and the practice of the Menus Plaisirs.

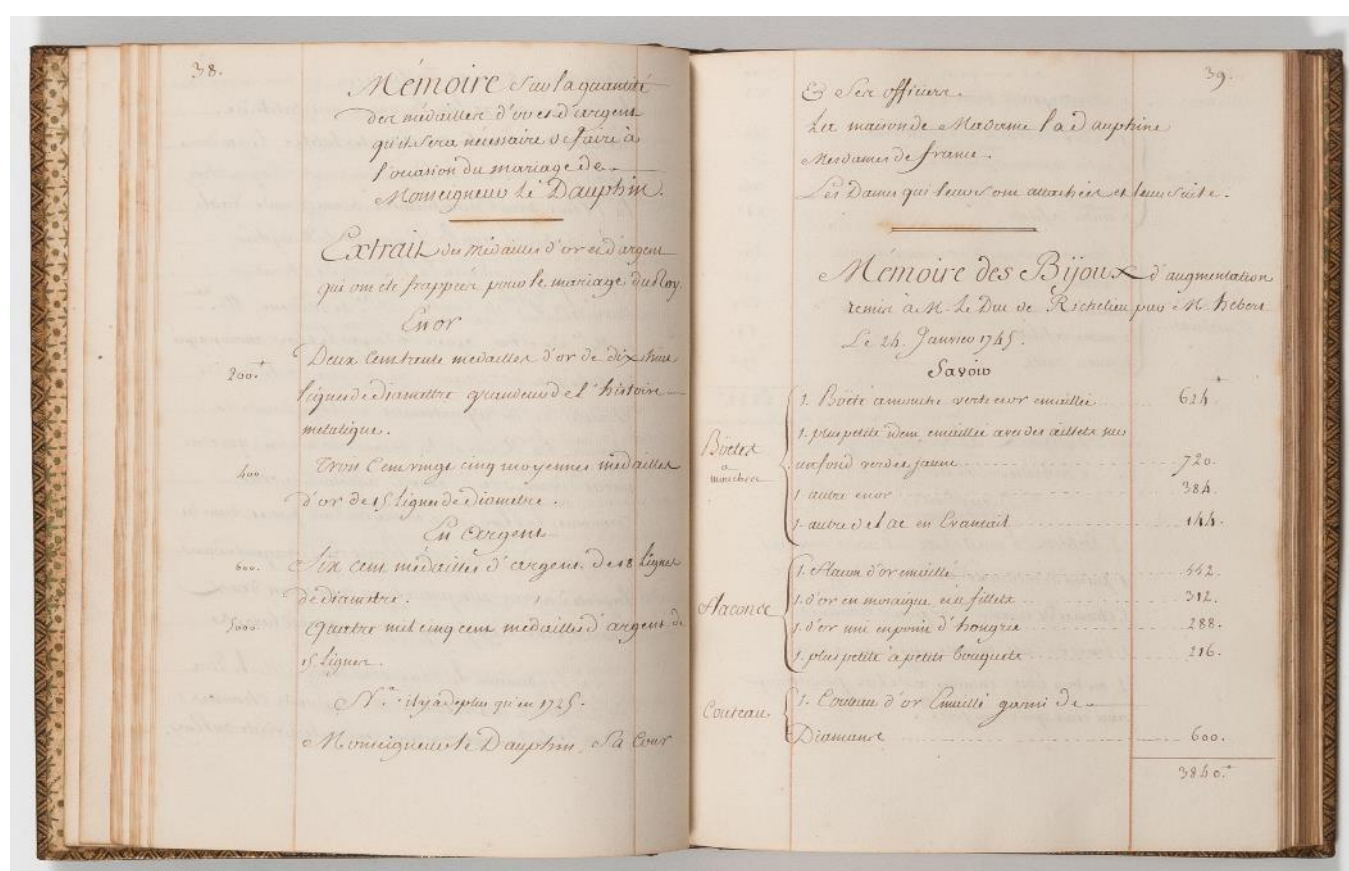




**Mémoire sur la quantité des médailles d'or et d'argent qu'il Sera nécessaire de faire à l'occasion du mariage de Monseigneur le Dauphin in *Receuil des Differens Memoires & Décisions Pour le Service du Roy***

c. 1745, manuscript

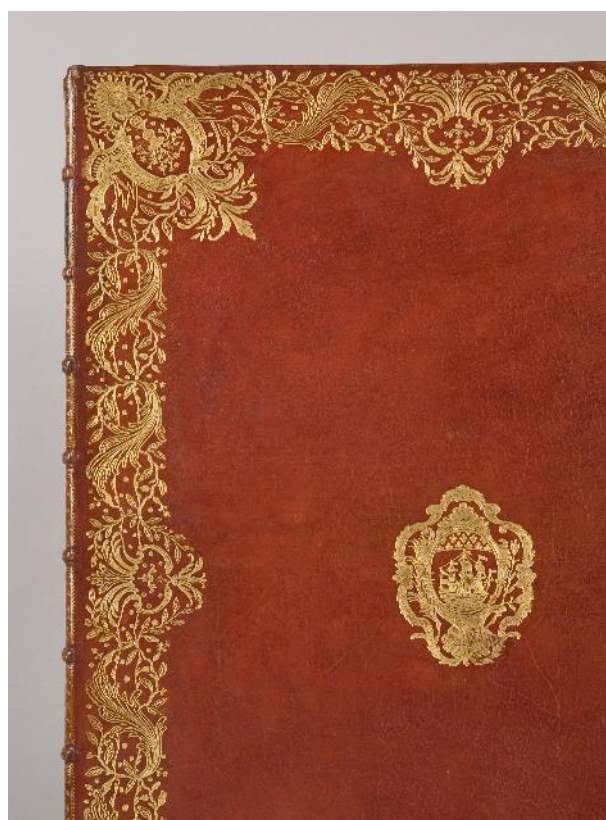
Accession number 4680



The volume is a hand-written compilation of court protocol, some recording the king's answer to certain questions, as well as accounts for services of the department of the *Argenterie*, *Menus Plaisirs et affaires de la Chambre du Roi*. It appears to have been compiled for the duc de Richelieu around 1745, in his capacity as First Gentleman of the Chamber in charge of the department.

The page lists the number of gold and silver medals to be minted to celebrate the marriage of the Dauphin in 1745 and who they are to be given to. There is also a list of toilet articles in gold, enamels and diamonds made for the Dauphine.





**VUE PERSPECTIVE DE LA PLACE LOUIS LE GRAND avec la representation de la marche des Chars et Cortège des gardes de la Ville le 13 Fevrier 1747. Jour du Mariage de MONSEIGNEUR LE DAUPHIN avec la PRINCESSE MARIE JOSEPHE DE SAXE, in Fête publique donnée par la ville de Paris a l'occasion du mariage de monseigneur le dauphin le 13 fevrier MDCCXLVI**

Paris, 1751

after Jacques-François Blondel (1705-1774)

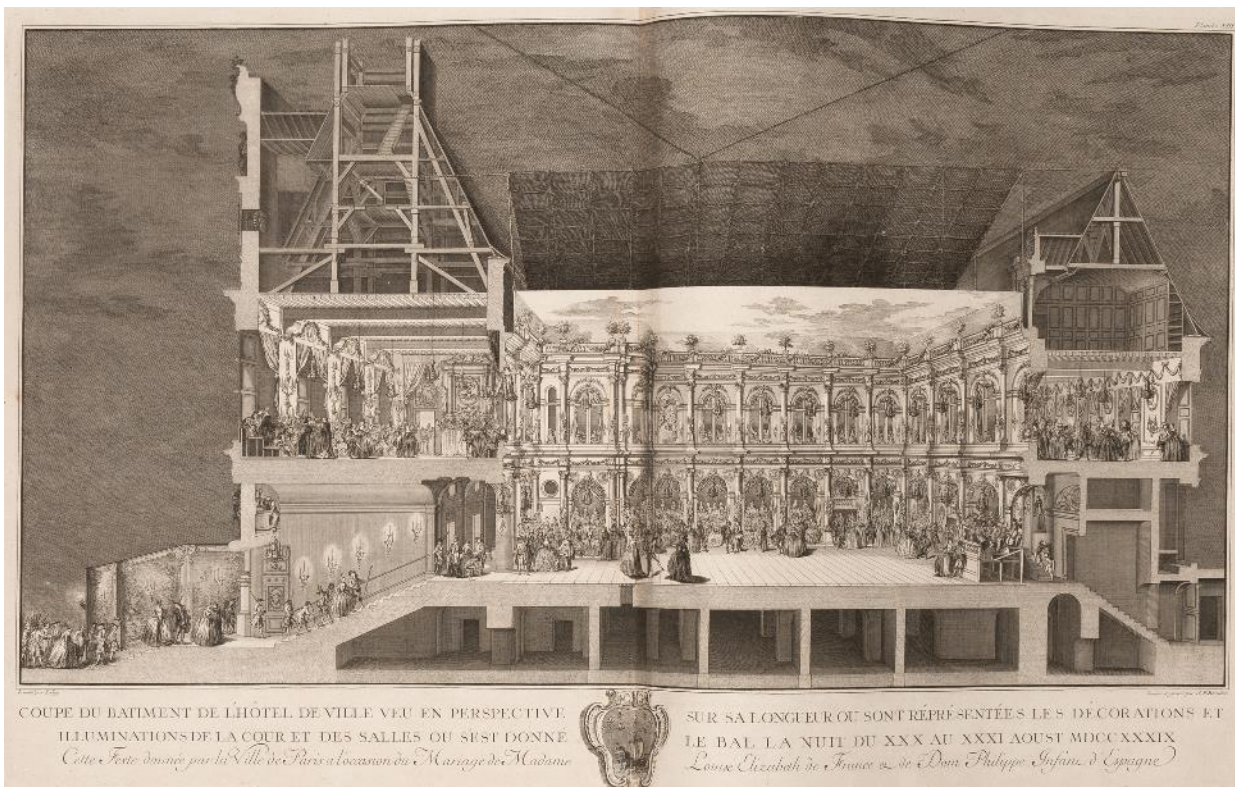
Contemporary French red morocco gilt binding with the arms of the city of Paris; bound by Antoine Michel Padeloup *le jeune* (1685-1758)

Accession number 3221



View of the procession of chariots and guardsmen in the Place Louis le Grand (today the Place Vendôme) during the celebrations commissioned by the city of Paris for the wedding of the Dauphin of France to Princess Marie-Josèphe of Saxony, on 13 February 1747. The chariot of Hymen (god of Marriage) is in the centre and the chariot of the city of Paris, in the shape of a ship, is on the right.





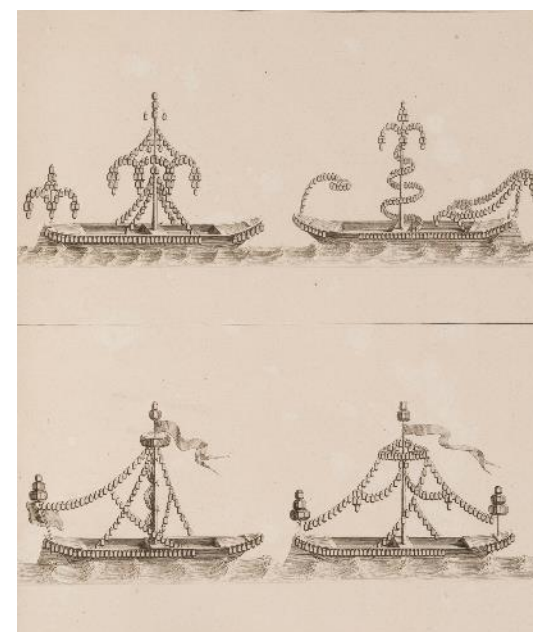
**Déscription des fêtes données par la ville de Paris à l'occasion du Mariage de Madame Louise-Élisabeth de France et de Dom Philippe, Infant et Grand Amiral d'Espagne les vingt-neuvième & trentième Août mil sept cent trente-neuf**

Paris, 1740

**Drawn and engraved by Jean-François Blondel (1683-1756)**

Contemporary French red morocco gilt binding with the arms of the city of Paris; bound by Antoine Michel Padeloup le jeune (1685-1758)

Accession number 3222



The wedding by proxy of Louis XV's eldest daughter Louise-Élisabeth (1727-1759) - known as Madame Première and the only one of his eight daughters to be married - to Don Filipo (1720-1765), fourth surviving son of the King of Spain, was celebrated at Versailles on 26 August 1739 and a few days later in Paris at festivities hosted by the city's merchants.

On the 29<sup>th</sup> an immense pageant, fireworks and illuminations took place on the river Seine facing the Louvre where a special viewing balcony had been built by Louis XV's architect, Ange-Jacques Gabriel (1698-1782). A floating pavilion holding 180 musicians was at the centre, around which a marine jousting tournament took place, followed by a parade of boats entirely covered in lanterns (right), which lined up on either bank. A spectacular sequence of firework displays was launched from a temporary temple constructed on the Pont Neuf, from boats on the river and eight sea monsters around the music pavilion (above). The display was designed by the Italian-born architect and stage designer Giovanni Niccolò Servandoni (1695-1766). Contemporary accounts claim that there were 500,000 spectators.

The following evening a masked ball for 14,000 was held at the City Hall which had been entirely transformed for the event (top). Its Gothic architecture was hidden behind scenery painted with columned arcades in multi-coloured marble. The building's courtyard became the principal ballroom, covered by a canvas canopy painted with a summer sky above painted balustrades supporting orange and rose trees. Fifty-five crystal chandeliers, 164 candelabra and 1700 lanterns brilliantly lit the spaces and refreshments were served from buffets in several places on the two floors (seen upper right on the engraving).





## CORONATIONS



French kings, from Louis I in 816 onwards, were always crowned in the cathedral of in Rheims, some 130 km from Paris in the province of Champagne. It was here that Clovis, first king of what would become modern France, was baptised into the Catholic faith by Saint Remi in 496. The king was anointed with holy oil from a vial (the *Sainte Ampoule*) said to have been delivered to the saint by a white dove. It is this act, the *Sacre*, and not the actual coronation, which is the critical part of the ceremony. It signifies the king's divine right to rule and his symbolic union with the Church, giving him god-like powers, such as the ability to heal by laying-on of hands.

On the day of the coronation, the king entered the cathedral wearing a coat of silver cloth and a black velvet hat adorned with plumes. For the ritual anointing, the first part of the ceremony, his coat was removed to reveal a red satin robe with slits, fastened by tasselled golden cords, in the places where the king would be anointed.



After this, the Grand Chamberlain clothed the king in a violet satin dalmatic, a robe similar to that worn by bishops. Just before the act of coronation, the violet velvet mantle of state, embroidered with gold fleurs-de-lis and lined entirely with ermine, was placed around the king's shoulders. Six lay and six ecclesiastical peers lined up on either side of the altar, from which the Bishop took the crown, and held it for a moment over the king's head. Then, while two of the peers supported it, the rest stretched out their right arms in a symbolic upholding of the crown.

Once crowned, with the sceptre in his right hand and the *main de justice* (the Hand of Justice, symbol of his absolute power to dispense the law) in his left, the king processed onto a platform over the choir. The doors of the cathedral were then opened to let the public in. Heralds showered them with gold and silver coins specially minted for the occasion.



A 16<sup>th</sup>-century crown was used for the ceremony and another, especially designed for each monarch, was worn for the festivities that followed. One of the most splendid was the crown made for Louis XV: an openwork design densely covered with some of the world's largest jewels, like the 140-carat perfectly clear diamond known as the 'Regent'. It was the only crown to survive the French Revolution, but without its stones. It is on show, with paste replicas, in the Louvre.

The *Menus Plaisirs* was, naturally, responsible for producing everything for the ceremony; from the crown, the coins to be distributed, the costumes, and for commissioning the official illustrated publication. The First Gentleman of the Chamber (*Premier Gentilhomme de la Chambre*), in whose charge was the *Menus Plaisirs*, had a costume remarkably similar to the king's.

**Top:** Third costume worn by the king during the coronation ceremony, from *Le Sacre et Couronnement de Louis XVI, Roi de France et de Navarre dans l'Église de Reims, le 11 Juin 1775*, Paris, 1775.

**Middle:** State portrait of Louis XVI, Antoine-François Callet (1741-1823), 1782. On display in the White Drawing Room on the first floor.

**Bottom:** Crown made for Louis XV's coronation in 1722.





**The King enthroned, in *La Pompeuse et Magnifique Cérémonie du Sacre du Roy Louis XIV Fait à Rheims le 7. Juin 1654. Représentée au Naturel par ordre de leurs Majestez***

Paris, 1655

Drawn and engraved by Jean Le Pautre (1618-1682)

French red morocco gilt binding, about 1770. Bound in the style of Nicolas Denis Derome (1731-1790)

Accession number 3215

The final one of only three magnificent plates illustrating the ceremony of *Sacre* and coronation of Louis XIV on 7 June 1654, when the King was 15 years old and had reached his majority. On either side of him, on the tribune placed over the entrance to the choir, are the six ecclesiastical and six lay Peers who had assisted in the ceremony. Tapestries partially disguise the interior of the Gothic cathedral in Reims, where all French kings were crowned. His mother and her ladies watch the ceremony from on a box on the left and the heralds are poised to open the gates to let the crowd in. The composition of the first engraving in the volume underlines the theatricality of the event.

Jean Le Pautre (1618-1682) created the engravings. He is particularly known for his designs for interiors and the decorative arts in the grandiose and sumptuous style of Louis XIV's reign. As author of over 2,000 engravings, he was instrumental in disseminating the style throughout Europe.





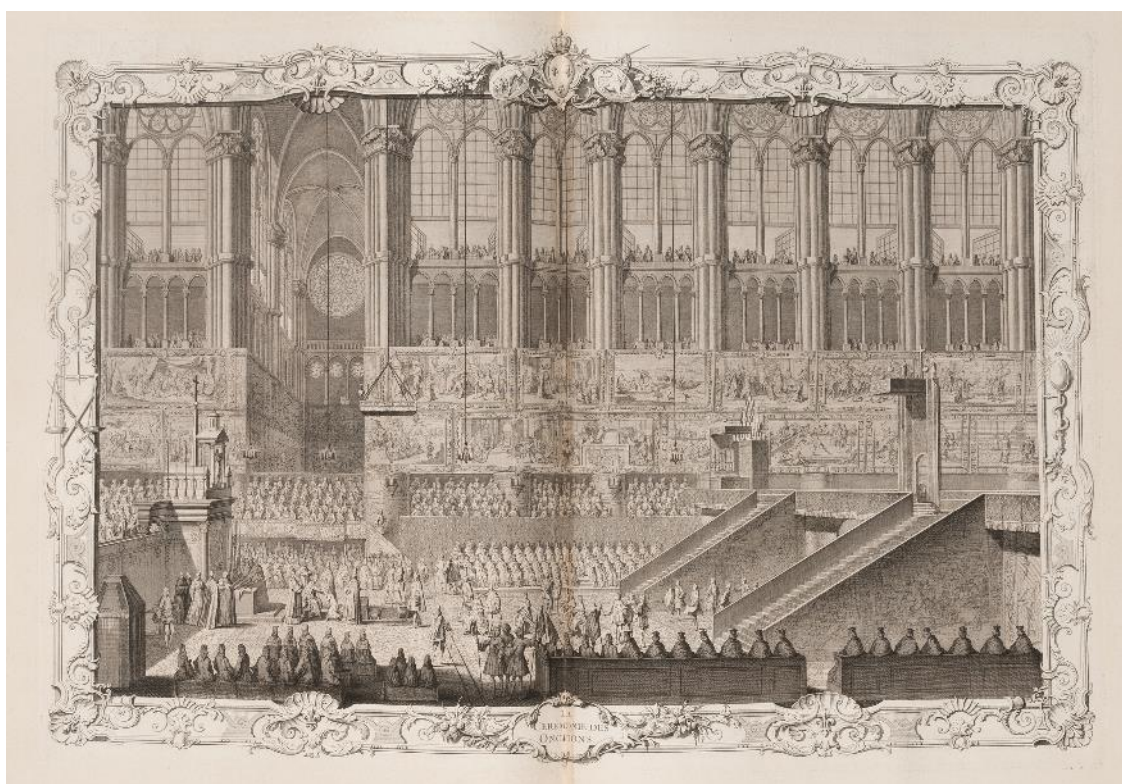
**La Cérémonie des Onctions (The Anointment Ceremony), in *Le Sacre de Louis XV, Roy de France & de Navarre, dans l'Eglise de Reims, Le Dimanche 25 Octobre, 1722***

Paris, 1731

Designed by Pierre Dulin (1669-1748), *Peintre ordinaire* to the King; Engraved by Charles-Nicolas Cochin the Elder (1698-1754)

Mid-18<sup>th</sup>-century French blue morocco gilt binding, bound by Antoine Michel Padeloup *le jeune* (1685-1758), with his ticket

Accession number 3218

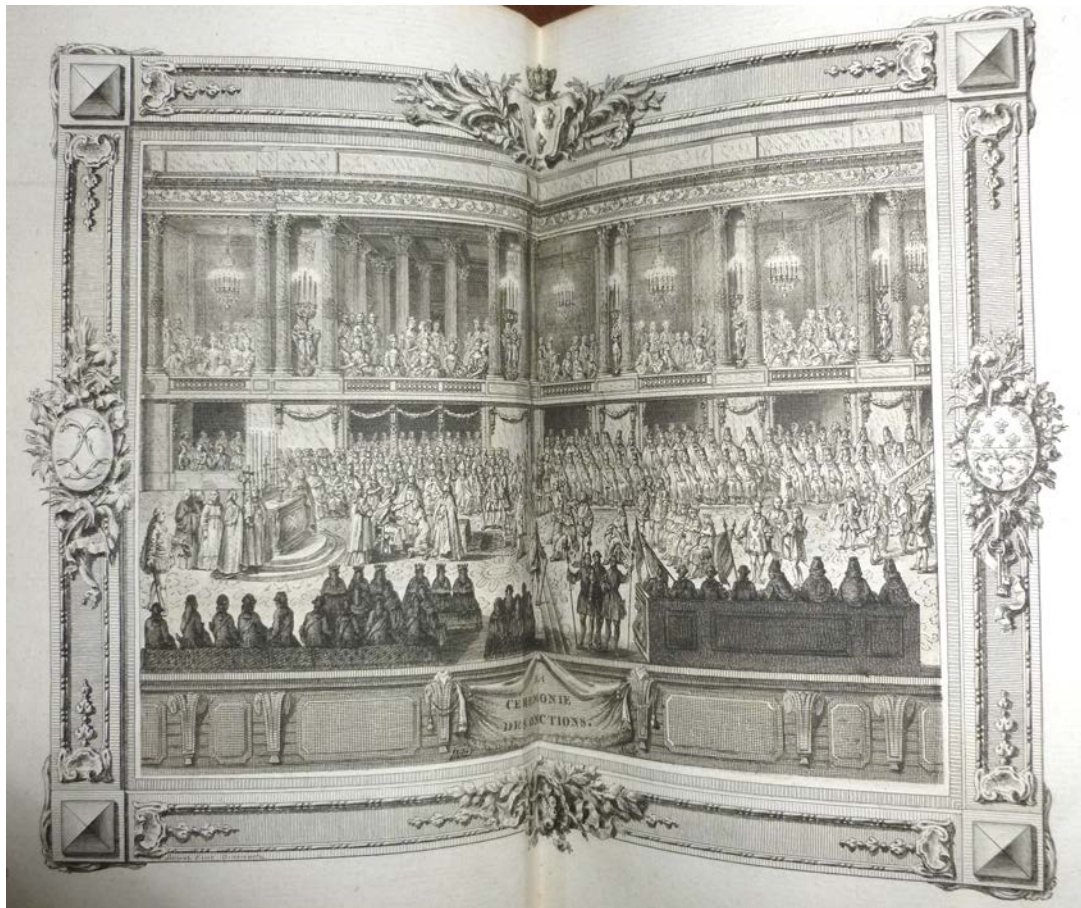


Louis XV (1710-1774) was crowned King of France and Navarre when he was a 12-year-old boy. This is clearly evident in the engravings of the ceremony such as the procession to the cathedral, detail (below). The route was lined by screens entirely covered with precious tapestries, that also prevented the population of the city from seeing the king until they were let into the church at the end of the ceremony.

This was the most lavish of all the coronation books, both in size and in execution. Both the text and the illustrations are engraved, involving more than 18 engravers. The borders to the text pages and the illustrations are particularly rich and inventive. With 46 plates, it is no wonder that it took nine years to complete the book.







**La Cérémonie des Onctions (The Anointment Ceremony), in *Le Sacre et Couronnement de Louis XVI, Roi de France et de Navarre dans l'Église de Reims, le 11 Juin 1775***

Paris, 1775

Text by Thomas-Jean, abbé Pichon (1731-1812) and Nicolas Gobet (1735?-1781?)

Engraved by Charles Emmanuel Patas (1744-1802)

Accession number 3220

While there is virtually no difference in how the cathedral was decorated for the coronations of Louis XIV in 1654 and that of Louis XV in 1722, the design for the coronation of Louis XVI in 1775 is remarkably different and reflects the prevalence of the neo-classical style at the time. Every attempt has been made to cover up the Gothic architecture by building a false façade within the church using columns with Corinthian capitals and introducing classical statues.

Of the three coronation books, this is the most modest. France was already in financial difficulties and the director of the Menus Plaisirs decided against commissioning a book, so it is a commercial venture by an engraver/publisher named Patas. As this man was unlikely to have attended the ceremony, it appears that he used the engravings from the book of Louis XV's coronation as a source. This is evident, for example, in the row of seated and standing figures at the bottom of the engraving which are identical in both books.





**View of the coronation of Louis XVI in  
the cathedral at Rheims**

1775

François-Joseph Bélanger (1744-1818)

Pen and ink on paper

Accession number 1111

Having trained as an architect, Bélanger began working as a draughtsman for the Menus Plaisirs in 1767. By 1775, he had become an *Inspecteur*. He made three drawings of the interior of the cathedral at the time of the ceremony, probably as a record for the Menus Plaisirs, although the architectural details were probably also copied by Patas. Unlike the engraved version, which ends with the entablature above the capitals, the drawing shows the stark contrast between the scenery installed for the event and the old-fashioned architecture above.



## ROYAL FUNERALS



Of all court ceremonies, funerals were the ultimate spectacle, a public event that was both lavish and impressive. It was also the only one of the three that marked the stages of life (birth, marriage, death) at which the wider population was present. From the middle of the seventeenth century, the French royal funeral was transformed from a sombre, religious ceremony into a theatrical spectacle of death.



A funeral involved two ceremonies: the entombment in the crypt of the royal basilica at St Denis, on the outskirts of Paris and a commemorative mass some time later in the city at the cathedral of Notre-Dame. Soon after embalming, the coffin was taken to St Denis in a procession of several thousand people representing the Household, the clergy, the civil institutions and the official mourners designated by the King. It began dramatically at sunset to arrive at the church at dawn and was led by hundreds of the poor, lighting the way with blazing torches.

It could be up to two months before the actual funeral took place. This gave the *Menus Plaisirs*, the department in the Royal Household responsible for ceremonies, time to build a church within the church, transforming the interior with spectacular structures and decorations. Seating was created in boxes placed above the side aisles and the entire construction was sometimes criticized as being more appropriate for an opera than for a solemn religious ceremony.

**Top:** The poor leading the procession at the commemorative mass for Louis II, Prince de Condé, 1687.

**Bottom:** Detail of viewing boxes at the commemorative mass for Polixene, Queen of Sardinia, Notre Dame, Paris, 1735.

As in theatre, light was used to dramatic effect. Thousands of candles (one of the costliest elements of the ceremony) were used in the church which was entirely covered in black velvet. The light was multiplied by the lavish use of gilding and the sparkle created by tens of thousands of gold fleurs-de-lis and silver teardrops attached to the cloth. Light also symbolized the hope of eternal life after the darkness of death, while skeletons served as a macabre reminder of the decay of the earthly body; only fame and the institution of the monarchy remain.



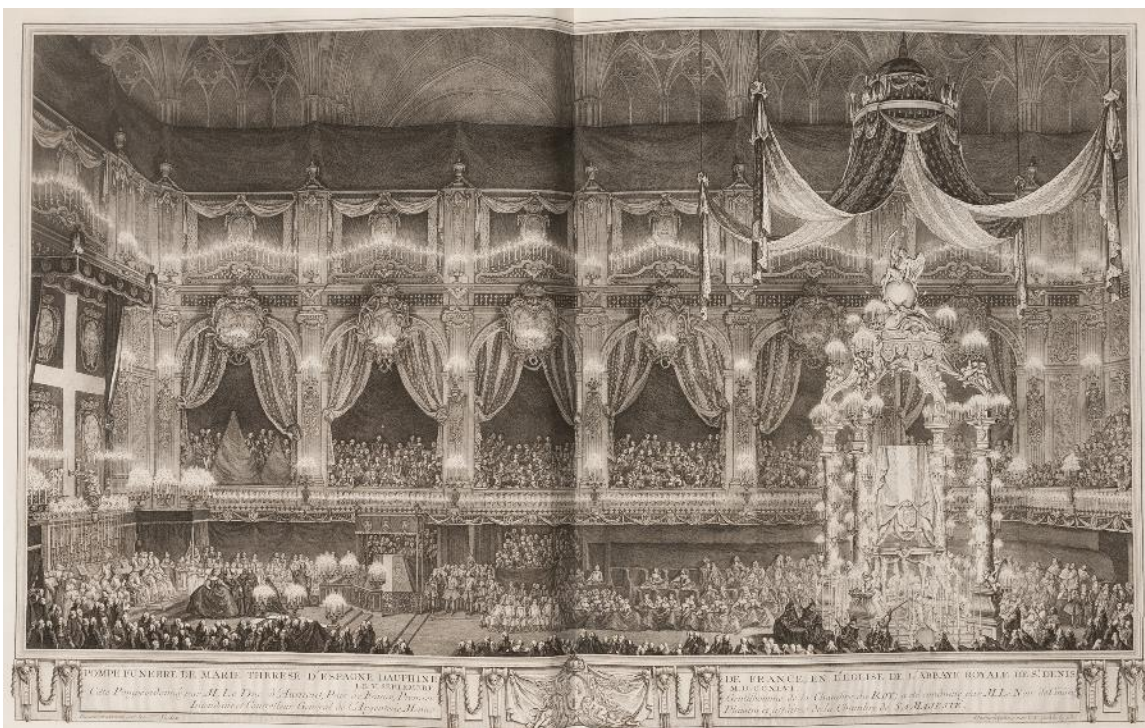


***La Reine Elevée au Ciel Par les Vertus,*  
(The Queen elevated to the heavens by  
her virtues)**

Paris, 1684

Accession number 2669.4.4

Louis XIV's wife, Maria Teresa of Spain, died in 1683 and this almanac for 1684 commemorates the event. Other former French monarchs await her entry into heaven. She was known for her virtues, especially her tolerance of her husband's continuous infidelity.



**Pompe funebre de Marie Therese  
d'Espagne Dauphine de France, en l'église  
de l'abbaye royale de S<sup>t</sup> Denis le V  
septembre MDCCXLVI  
(The funeral mass for Marie-Thérèse of  
Spain, Dauphine of France, at the royal  
abbey church of Saint-Denis on 5  
September 1746),  
in *Recueil des festes, feux d'artifice, et  
pompes funébre***

Paris, 1756

Designed and engraved by Charles-Nicolas  
Cochin, the Younger (1715–1790)

Accession number 3176

Light is the most spectacular aspect of the interior created by the brothers Sébastien-Antoine (1695 – 1754) and Paul-Ambroise (1702 – 1758) Slodtz for the *Menus Plaisirs*. Although the black and white print cannot show the multi-coloured marbles or the gold and silver decorations, the effect of the blazing light of more than 2,000 candles – particularly on the underside of the black velvet canopy over the catafalque – is striking.

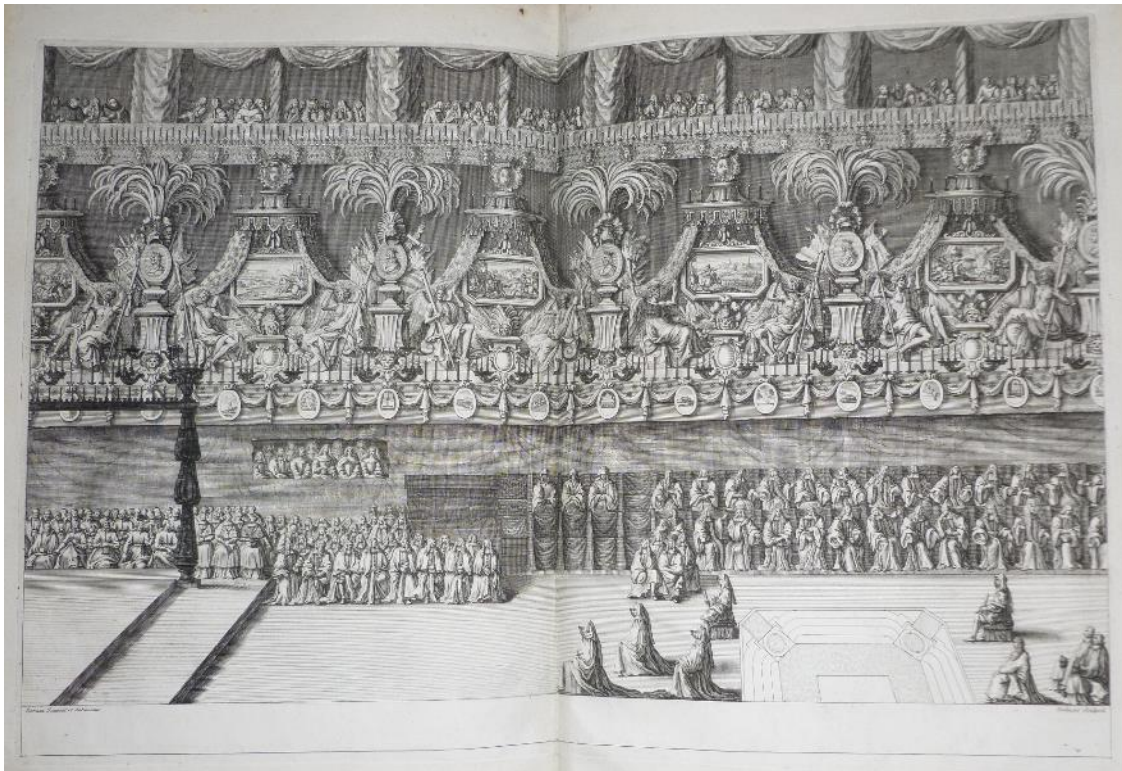
At the top, we glimpse the Gothic architecture of the church which has been completely transformed by the scenery, illustrating the concept of constructing a church within a church, with large theatre boxes constructed over the side aisles, complete with elaborate drapery.

The movement created by the undulating line of lights in the upper gallery and the spiral of lights on the columns is characteristic of the rococo, a style far-removed from Berain's Roman designs. François Boucher's chubby putti, the fashion of the moment, tumble down the columns and dome of the catafalque.

On the left, the Dauphine's sister-in-law, one of the three chief mourners, is shown in the process of making the Offertory and just to the right of that group is the Dauphine's real coffin, standing under a canopy at the top of the steps leading to the crypt.

There are striking similarities of design between the funeral of the Dauphine and the funeral *in absentia* for her father, Philip V of Spain, held a few months later in the cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris. This demonstrates how the settings very much reflected the prevalent stylistic trends and also the practice of the *Menus Plaisirs* to reuse elements from previous ceremonies.





**The commemorative funeral mass for Louis II de Bourbon, Prince de Condé: View of the south side of the choir of the cathedral of Notre-Dame, Paris (from a set of six), in *Recueil de divers mausolées ... Inventés, dessiné et executé par J. Berain***

Paris, c. 1708

Engraved by Jean Dolivar (1641-1692), After Jean Berain (1640-1711)

Accession number 3170

As France's national hero and the most successful general in its history, as well as the highest ranking Prince of the Blood Royal, it is not surprising that the commemorative mass for the prince de Condé (1621 – 1686) was one of the most costly of the period. Over 1,000 metres of black velvet was used – 95 metres alone for each of the drops for the canopy over the catafalque, strewn with gold fleurs-de-lis and silver tears. Medallion portraits of his ancestors were made of bronze and the story of his life was inscribed onto marble tablets.

The entire decorative scheme was based on the pomp and magnificence accorded to triumphant generals in ancient Rome, exemplified here by the laudatory palm fronds above Roman-style helmets, the elaborate trophies of arms taken from vanquished enemies and the row of devices representing his attributes, most of which were taken from Horace and Virgil. Most prominence is given to the 16 canopied tents displaying paintings of his most famous victories, with skeletal figures of death holding flaming torches while drawing back the drapery lined with ermine – a reference to the body perishing while fame is immortal.

Seated in the stands below are high members of the clergy, nearest the altar, representatives of civic institutions, the three main mourners (the prince's son, grandson and cousin) in traditional mourning habits and Dukes and peers to the right. Female members of his family and related members of the royal family sit incognito in the gallery inserted into the drapery. The outline of the catafalque is indicated at lower right but has been omitted from the engraving to allow for a complete depiction of the decoration. It appears in a separate print from this set.

A book describing the decoration in detail was published at the same time and essentially served as a guidebook for visitors to the church while also explaining the symbolic imagery and Latin inscriptions. An engraving of the catafalque by Berain demonstrates this sightseeing aspect of the event (detail below).







**POURTRAIT DU NOBLE CHARIOT DE  
MEMOIRE, fait par ordre de la  
Serinissime Isabelle Clare Eugenie  
Infante d'Espagne pour les funerailles  
du Serenissime et trepuissant Prince  
ALBERT VII. Archiduc d'Austrie, Duc de  
Bourgogne, Brabant &c. Representant  
les rares effects de la Liberalite dudict  
Prince, in  
*Pompa funebris optimi potentissimiq.  
principis Alberti Pii, Archiducis Austriae,  
Ducis Burg. Bra. &c.***

Brussels, 1623

Engraved by Cornelis Galle (1591-1650),  
After Jacques Francquart (1577-1651), Text by  
Erycius Puteanus (1574-1646)

Accession number 3166

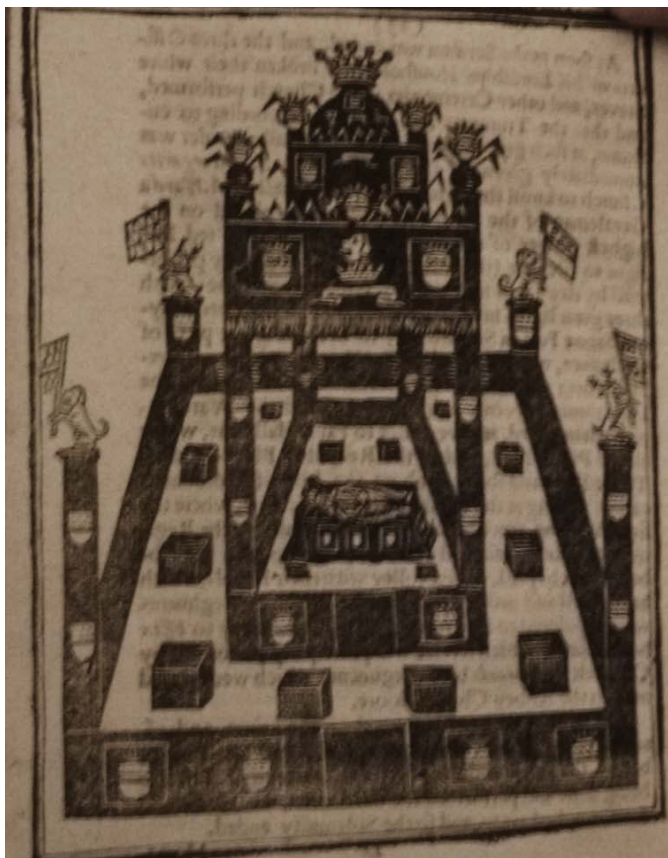
Albert VII, Archduke of Austria (1559-1621) was joint ruler of the Habsburg Netherlands with his wife, Isabella, Infanta of Spain (1566-1633). He died in July 1621 but the commemorative procession took place eight months later in Brussels. Most of the 64 plates illustrate the nearly 700 participants in the procession but the most spectacular of the engravings is this large fold-out showing the elaborate chariot on which his symbolic coffin was placed. It is shown from the side and the rear.

Rather like the triumphal chariots of generals in ancient Rome it pays tribute to his military life in the service of Spain against the Dutch Republic, England and France and bears the standards of all the lands over which the Austrian Habsburgs ruled. Elements of medieval pageantry, such as heralds bearing standards and leading the Archduke's horses, are combined with Renaissance references to Rome. Later on in the century, the association with ancient Rome would be adopted by Louis XIV and his style-makers.

The text was written in Latin, Spanish, French and Dutch, reflecting Albert's heritage and the province over which he ruled but also making it understandable throughout Europe. Just to the right of the coats of arms is a key linking patterns of lines and hatching to colours; one of the first instances of codifying the system of representing coats of arms.

This impressive and very rare book was republished twice in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.





*The true mannor and forme of the  
proceeding to the funeral of the right  
honourable Robert Earle of Essex and  
Ewe*

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London, 1646

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Accession number 4457

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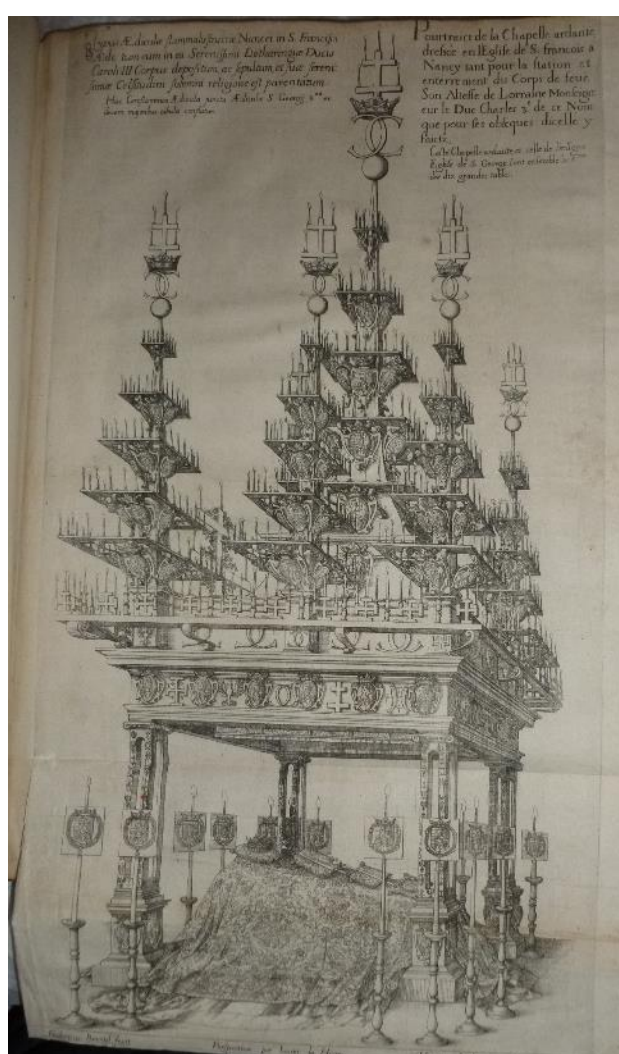
Robert Devereux, third Earl of Essex (1591-1646) had an impressive military career and is best known for his role as the first Chief Commander of the Parliamentary army (the Roundheads) against Charles I, although he was eventually overtaken and marginalized by Cromwell.

Nevertheless, his death in September 1646 resulted in a massive outpouring of public mourning. Parliament paid for most of the expenses of his funeral. His funeral procession from Essex house in London to Westminster Abbey was watched by most of London.

The print shows the effigy of the Earl (a mannequin dressed in his Parliamentary robes) displayed in the Abbey under a catafalque designed by the celebrated architect Inigo Jones (1573-1652). It remained in place until Charles II ordered its removal. His body, nevertheless, was not disturbed.

In comparison with the other books on this table, this woodcut appears extremely crude. Unlike the others, however, this was a commercial venture by a publisher with the product aimed at the man in the street and no intention of impressing a foreign court.





**Pourtraict de la Chapelle ardente dressée en l'Eglise de S. francois à Nancy tant pour la station et enterrement du Corps de feuë Son Altesse de Lorraine Monseigneur le Duc Charles 3.e de ce Nom que pour ses obseques dicelle y faitz, in *Dix grandes tables, contenant les pourtraictz des ceremonies, honneurs et pompe funèbres, faitz au corps de feu Sérénissime Prince Charles 3 du nom ...***

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Nancy, 1611

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Engraved by Friedrich Brentel (1580-1651),  
Lettering by Herman de Loye, Text by  
Claude de la Ruelle

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Accession number 3187

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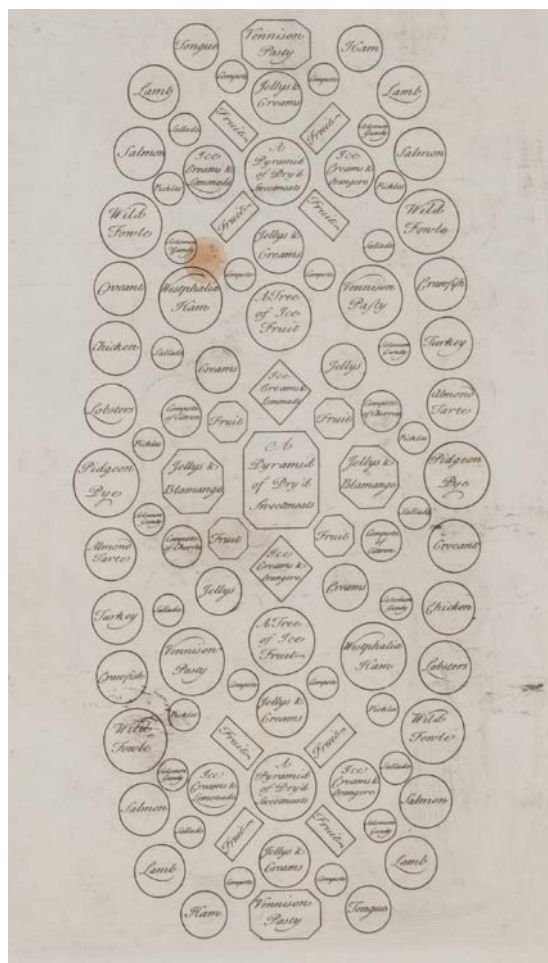
The funeral ceremonies for Charles III, duc de Lorraine (1543-1608) were marked by never before seen splendour on par with those of the French royal house.

This extremely rare book is made up of 10 large plates illustrating the rites observed during the 40 days between his death and his interment, with a wealth of informative detail about furnishings, costumes and interiors.

This engraving is the final one in the sequence, showing the *chapelle ardente*; a pyramidal structure under which the coffin, with the regalia on top of it, stood in the church where the entombment would take place. Its tapering spires are covered entirely with spikes for hundreds of candles, thus the name 'the blazing chapel'. Its form dates back to medieval structures erected as reliquaries for the bodies or bones of saints; a form that would be entirely transformed with the introduction of temple-like structures with domes and canopies later in the century.

There follow 48 plates depicting the elaborate procession with hundreds of participants. These were intended to be joined together to form a large picture that could be hung on a wall.

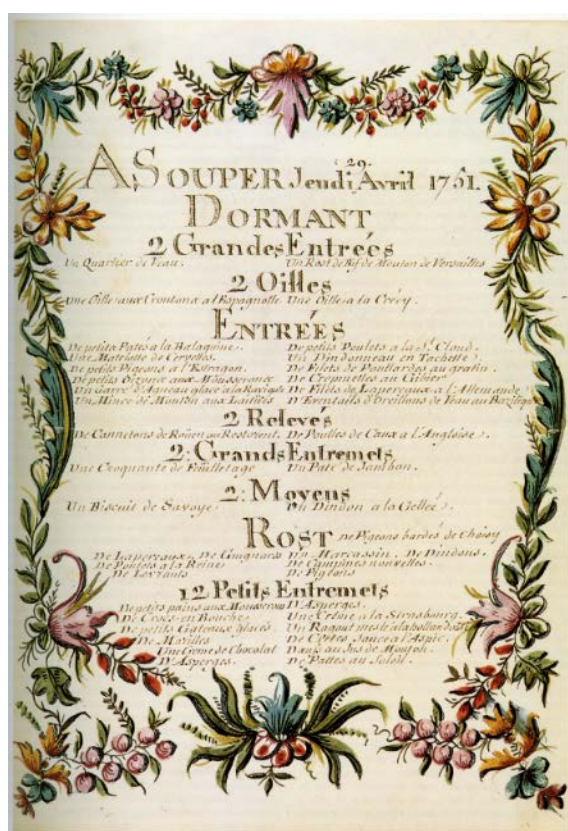




FRENCH DINING RITUALS, KNOWN AS *SERVICE À LA FRANÇAISE*, WERE THE MOST FASHIONABLE IN EUROPE AND WERE ADOPTED BY MOST OTHER COURTS.

Royal meals were a feast for the eyes with the appearance of the table as important as the quality of the food. Courtiers watched the king dining in public, alone at lunchtime (known as the *petit couvert*) and with the royal family at night at the *grand couvert*. Louis XV often preferred dinners in his private apartments, with a group of selected courtiers. These were known as the *petits soupers*. Meals usually consisted of three courses. The first course always had at least two soups or stews accompanied by *entrées* - substantial dishes of meat, poultry, game and fish. *Entremets*, literally 'between courses', followed which were lighter dishes such as ham, paté or eggs as well as sweet biscuits and cakes. Last came large roasts and salads.

All the dishes for each course were placed on the table at the same time, in carefully designed symmetrical arrangements. The diners helped themselves, which meant that each person had to have the same selection within reach. Drinks were kept separately on a sideboard and were served by footmen when called for.



Dessert was often a separate meal, sometimes in a different room, because the table was specially decorated beforehand. Small sculptures and vases of flowers stood on a mirrored surface, known as the *surtout*, which was also covered in coloured sand or sugar to resemble a formal garden. The practice originated in Italy in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, when the sculptures were made of sugar paste. By the 18<sup>th</sup> century more durable porcelain figures had taken over and the royal French porcelain factory at Sèvres introduced unglazed white figures (*biscuit*) that resembled miniature marble statues.

**Top:** Plan showing the symmetrical arrangement and repetition of dishes at the banquet for the Knights of Bath, 1725, from John Pine, *The Procession and Ceremonies Observed at the Time of the Installation of the Knights Companions of the Most Honourable Military Order of the Bath*, 1730. The dessert dishes (pyramids of dried sweetmeats, jellies and creams, and ice cream) are on the table at the same time as Westphalian ham and venison pasty. Most spectacular must have been the 'trees of iced fruits' – sherbet formed in lead moulds to resemble real fruit.  
**Bottom:** Dinner menu for Louis XV at the chateau of Choisy, 29 April 1751; three courses. (Château de Versailles, Vms 35)



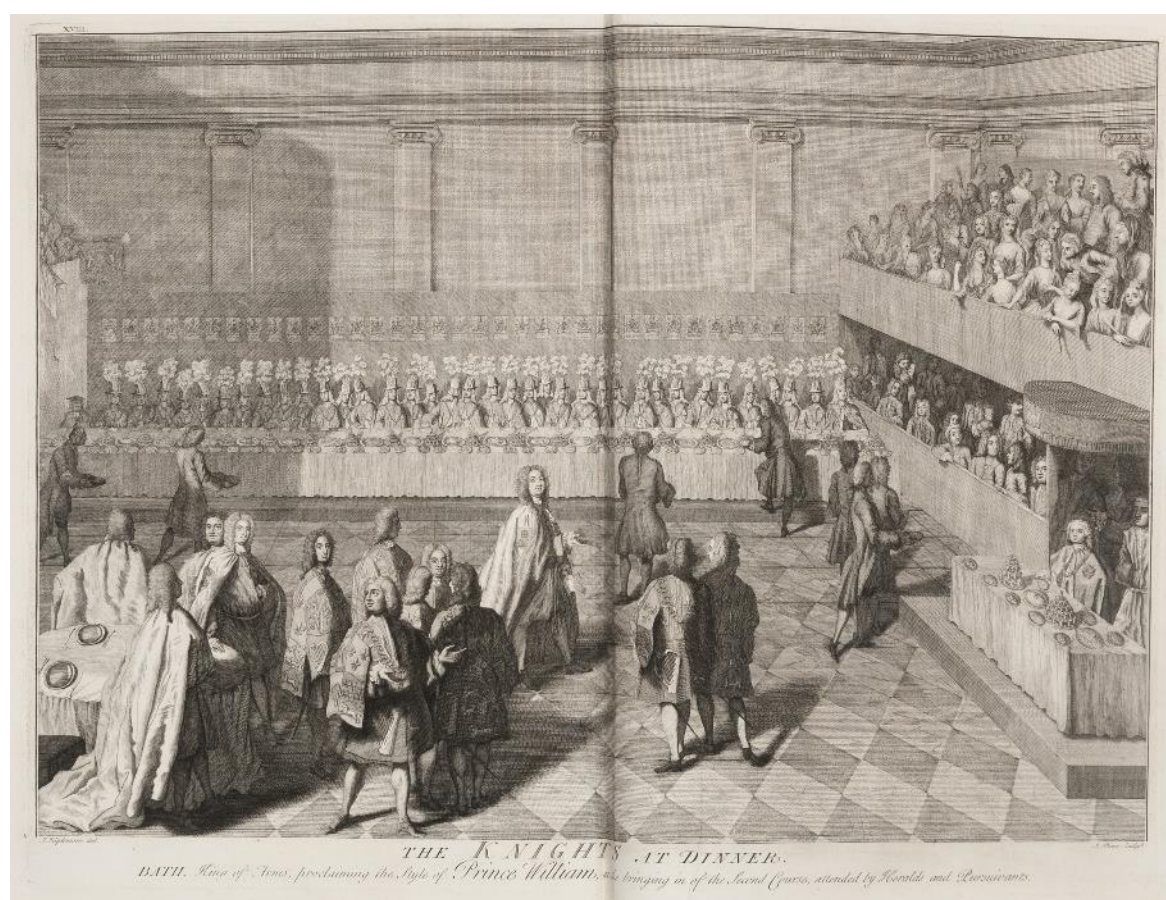


**A PROSPECT OF THE INSIDE OF WESTMINSTER HALL** Shewing how the KING and QUEEN, with the NOBILITY and others, did Sit at DINNER on the day of the CORONATION, 23 April 1685. *With the manner of Serving up the First Course of Hot Meat to their Majesties Table.*, in Francis Sanford (1630-1694), *The History of the Coronation of the Most High, Most Mighty, and Most Excellent Monarch, James II*

London, 1687

Accession number 4428

The scene, set in the vast expanse of Westminster Hall, shows the banquet following the coronation yet James II (1633-1701, r. 1685-1688) and Queen Mary (1658-1718) are lost in the distance while the image focuses on the table settings and large number of spectators. Their Majesties were served with 145 dishes arranged in the formal manner with a numbered plan corresponding to the list of dishes (reproduced on the wall panel). The text stressed the importance of the visual impact of the meal, noting that there was 'little vacancy between dishes which were sat upon stands of several heights, and all so equally mixed, that it made an extraordinary and good appearance'.



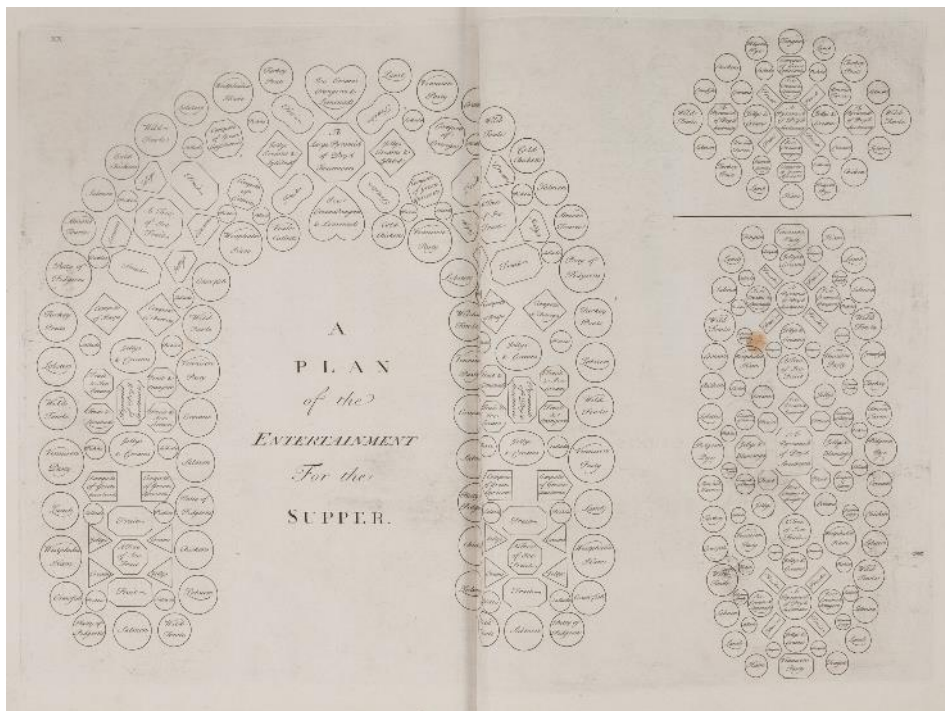
**The Knights at Dinner, Bath King of Arms, proclaiming the Style of Prince William, at the bringing in of the Second Course, attended by Heralds and Pursuivants, (Reproduction), and A Plan of the Entertainment for the Supper, in *The Procession and Ceremonies Observed at the Time of the Installation of the Knights Companions of the Most Honourable Military Order of the Bath***

London, 1730

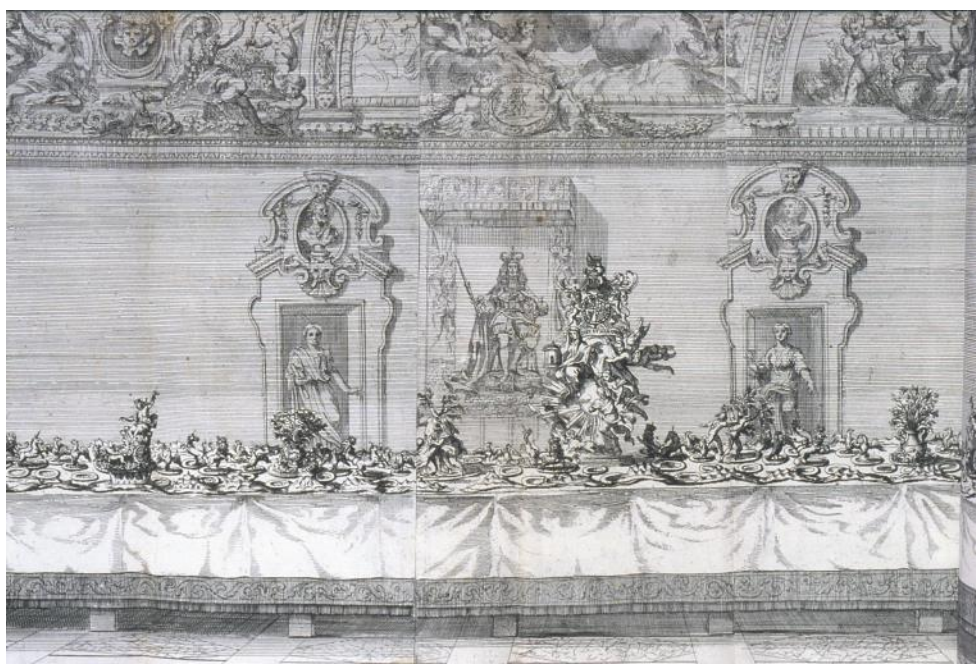
Engraved by John Pine (1690-1756), After Joseph Highmore (1692-1780)

Accession number 4227





As was customary, a feast followed the ceremony which took place in January 1725. There are engravings depicting the layout of the dishes on the table, which was 96 feet long and 3 feet 10 inches wide, and a numbered list of the dishes (218 in all). The banquet was called an 'entertainment', which was watched by the spectators in the viewing galleries.



**John Michael Wright (c. 1617-1694), *An account of his Excellence Roger Earl of Castlemaine's Embassy, from His Sacred Majesty James the II<sup>d</sup>. ... to His Holiness Innocent XI***

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London, 1688

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Accession number 3794

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James II (r. 1685-1688), a Roman Catholic British monarch, sent the Earl of Castlemaine on a special embassy to Pope Innocent XI in Rome, in an attempt to establish diplomatic relations in 1686. John Michael Wright, a painter and the author of the text and engravings, served as his steward.

The volume is one of the most important documents about dining in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, as it shows in great detail the table decoration, and is notable for its depiction and description of the sugar-paste sculptures. Originally Italian, and known as *trionfi*, they were assimilated into French dining protocol.

The figure groups, half life-size, stood down the middle of the eight foot wide table interspersed with vases of flowers. They were 'made of a kind of Sugar-Paste, but modelled, to the utmost skill of a Statuary; So that they are afterwards, sent as Presents to the greatest Ladies; and their use at Entertainments, is to gratifie the Eye, as the Meat, Musique, and Perfumes do the other senses.'





**Trionfi representing Cybele and Juno (above) and Daphne and Myrrha (below), from John Michael Wright (c. 1617-1694), *An account of his Excellence Roger Earl of Castlemaine's Embassy, from His Sacred Majesty James the II<sup>d</sup>. ... to His Holiness***

London, 1688

Accession number 3794



**Trionfi representing Moral Virtues (above) and Kingly Virtues: Peace and Justice and Valour and Victory (below), from John Michael Wright (c. 1617-1694), *An account of his Excellence Roger Earl of Castlemaine's Embassy, from His Sacred Majesty James the II<sup>d</sup>. ... to His Holiness***

London, 1688

Accession number 3794







**Fan leaf depicting Louis XV at table with his family**

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c. 1760

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bodycolour and black crayon on vellum

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Accession number 2095

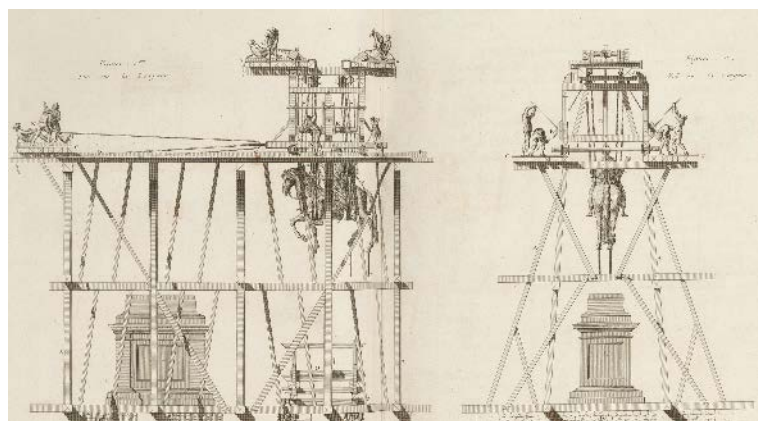
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It remains a mystery who this fan was intended for, with its depiction of the royal family enjoying dessert. The resemblance of the man in the centre, holding up his glass to be filled, to Louis XV is obvious while behind him is a painting of Louis XIV as Apollo. The Dauphin and Dauphine are to his right; he is holding out a tray of glazed pears to her. The next generation is represented by their three eldest sons.

Three large pyramids of fruit and sweetmeats stand on the table, each decorated with pieces of sugar-paste or porcelain sculpture; the central one bears the royal coat of arms. There appears to be a mixture of silver and porcelain dishes on the table; the large lobed tray just in front of the king is most likely to be from his service made by the royal Sèvres porcelain manufactory in 1753-55, with a turquoise-blue rim and flower decoration in the centre. A piece from the service is on display in the Razumovsky Room.



## MONUMENTS



The statue as a monument to a ruler is one of the most powerfully charged symbols of honour. In both scale and materials, they are made to last and to be seen. The sculptural portrait is a way of placing the physical image of the king firmly amongst his subjects, most often in important urban settings. A strong urban presence was particularly important once Louis XIV moved his court out of Paris to Versailles. These sculptural images are so effective that in times of political upheaval they are often the first symbols to be destroyed.

City officials commissioned sculptural portraits of the king either to win his favour or to thank him for beneficial acts. The erecting of a monumental sculpture of the king reaffirmed the city's commitment and devotion to the Crown.



French 17<sup>th</sup>- and 18<sup>th</sup>-century sculptural monuments were modelled on ancient Roman symbols of glory thus establishing continuity between France and the greatness of the Roman Empire. Kings were depicted in Roman armour or on horseback in the great tradition of the equestrian statue, often adorned with classical symbols of power or allegorical figures representing mild, just government and popular happiness. Latin inscriptions, thought of as a more appropriate and noble language than the vernacular French, identify and explain the subject.

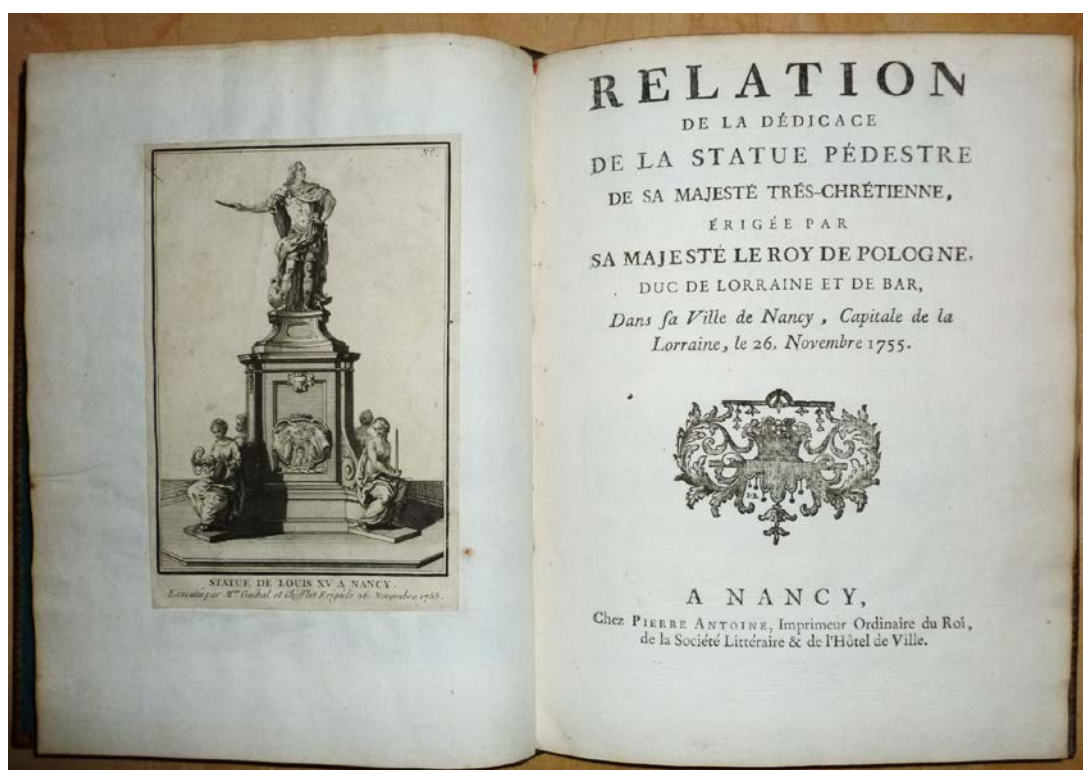
The glory of the monument was also enhanced by accompanying festivities and artistic and literary productions used to inaugurate and record the event. This extended its significance past the city walls and would impress other European courts.

First, a space was chosen and adapted to receive the statue, changing the urban landscape. The theme of the sculpture was decided on and a prominent sculptor chosen to make it. Various commemorative items, such as medals, coins, paintings and prints were issued when the statue was erected and the inauguration was the cause for great festivities and celebrations. These would continue for days and, in turn, be recorded in print, publications and other media.

Top: 'The elevation of the sculpture of Louis XV onto its pedestal in Paris, 1758 in Pierre Patte's *Monuments érigés en France à la gloire de Louis*

Bellow: Bronze of Louis XIV (1638-1715) on horseback, crowned by Victory on display in the Morning Room, 1690-1700





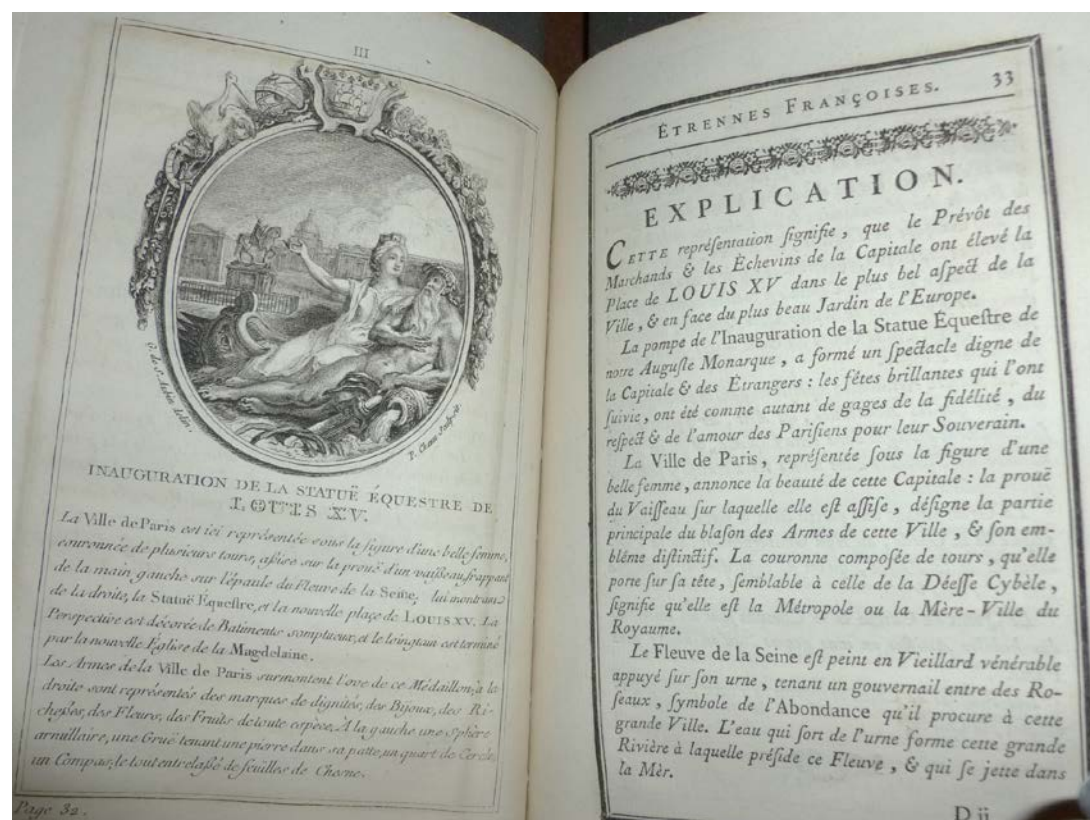
**STATUE DE LOUIS XV A NANCY (Statue of Louis XV in Nancy) and title-page from *Rélation de la dédicace de la statue pédestre de sa majesté le roy de Pologne, duc de Lorraine et de Bar, dans sa ville de Nancy, capitale de la Lorraine, le 26 Novembre 1755***

Nancy, 1755

bound with other texts relating to the celebrations of the raising of the statue of Louis XV

Accession number 5518

This sculpture of Louis XV was commissioned by Stanislaw I Leszczyński (1677-1766), King of Poland, Duke of Lorraine in Nancy in honour of the king of France. Louis XV had granted the Duchy of Lorraine to him, which would stay in his power until his death, when it would revert back to France. The binding is decorated with the arms of Stanislaw Leszczyński, suggesting that this was a presentation copy belonging to Stanislas himself.



**INAUGURATION DE LA STATUË ÉQUESTRE DE LOUIS XV (Inauguration of the equestrian statue of Louis XV) in *Epreuves françoises, dédiée à la ville de Paris***

Paris, 1766

engraved by P. Chenu (c. 1718 or 1730 – c. 1800); after Gabriel de Saint-Aubin (1724-1780) ; text by Jean-Raymond de Petity (c. 1715 – c. 1780)

Accession number 5498

This volume celebrates Louis XV's jubilee, by outlining the main events of his reign. It includes the erection of Edmé Bouchardon's (1698-1762) equestrian sculpture. The allegorical illustration accompanying this article, shows a beautiful female figure representing the city of Paris, pointing towards the sculpture as if to show it to the River Seine, depicted as an old man.





**Monument Erigé par la Ville de Reims  
(Monument erected by the city of  
Rheims) in *Description de la place Louis  
XV que l'on construit à Reims***

Paris, 1765

engraved by Pierre Etienne Moitte (1722-  
1780) ; after Charles-Nicolas Cochin (1715-  
1790) ; text by ; le sieur Le Gendre

Accession number 3209

The plates were drawn and engraved at the expense of the city of Rheims. The copies with the arms of the town, as here, are likely to have been for presentation. The square, now known as the Place Royale, contains Jean-Baptiste Pigalle's (1714-1785) statue of Louis XV (1761) with, at the base, figures representing Mild Government and Popular Happiness. The original statue was destroyed during the Revolution but replaced in 1818.



**Illustration of Bouchardon's equestrian  
statue of Louis XV formerly in the Place  
Louis XV in Paris (now the Place de la  
Concorde), for Pierre Patte's (1723-1814)  
*Monuments érigés en France à la gloire  
de Louis XV***

c. 1765

Martin Marvie (1713-1813)

pen and grey ink with grey washes ; traces of  
black chalk structure lines

Accession number 1852

This drawing along with four others in the collection were all commissioned to be engraved as plates to illustrate Pierre Patte's most celebrated publication, *Monuments* (1765), which describes and illustrates the major town-planning achievements of Louis XV's reign: the royal squares built in Paris and the provinces.





**CEREMONIES OBSERVÉES A PARIS  
POUR L'ERECTION DE LA STATUË  
EQUESTRE DE LOUIS LE GRAND**  
(Ceremonies observed in Paris for the  
erection of the equestrian statue of  
Louis-le-Grand)

Paris, 1700

Accession number 2669.4.12

Printed almanac celebrating the erection of the equestrian statue of Louis XIV in the place Louis-le-Grand (today the Place Vendôme) in Paris. The main vignette illustrates the sculpture with portraits of the city officials responsible for the commission and construction of the statue.



**RÉPRÉSENTATION DES JOUTES**  
(Representation of games and jousting)  
in *Représentation des fêtes données par  
la ville de Strasbourg pour la  
convalescence du roi*

Paris, 1745

Engraved by Jacques Philippe Le Bas (1707-  
1783) ; after Johann Martin Weiss (17 ??-  
1795 ?) ; bound by Antoine Michel Padeloup  
(1685-1758)

Accession number 3217

In August 1744, Louis XV was taken seriously ill in Metz. His eventual recovery was widely celebrated and earned him the title of Louis-le-Bien-Aimé (Louis the loved one) from the poet Vadé. The royal visit celebrated in this wonderfully illustrated book took place the following October, with six days of festivities, including tournaments, illuminations, fireworks and jousting on the river.



## FIREWORKS



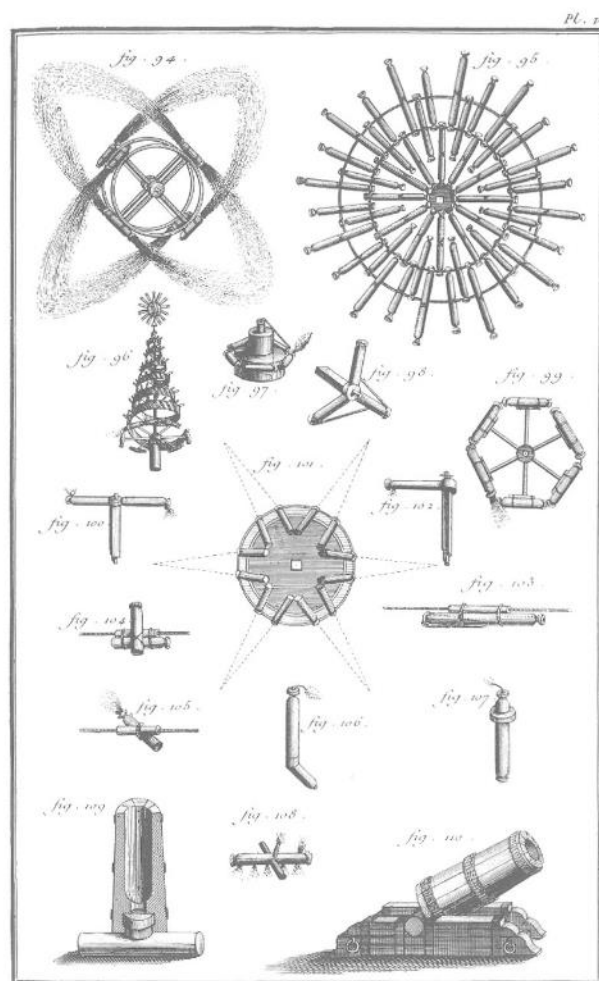
Fireworks were first invented in China in the third century, by mixing sulphur, charcoal and saltpeter (potassium nitrate). It was not until the 14<sup>th</sup> century that this technology arrived in Europe. One of the first occasions when it was used was for the celebrations after the election of Pope John XXIII in Rome in 1410.

The awe-inspiring spectacle of firework displays soon became an essential part of any celebration, often marking the culmination of an event. They were not only experienced in courtly settings but were often used in civic celebrations. Part of their appeal was their collective nature. A firework display opened up the spectacle to a vast number of people; an entire city could experience celebrations like never before.

The scientific processes behind the spectacles were of great interest to the learned during the Enlightenment of 18<sup>th</sup>-century Europe. In the beginning, firework displays were created by military engineers, with the same technology used for warfare. The notion that the wonder of the firework displays could be better appreciated by understanding their mechanics became an important idea and an impetus behind many of the 18<sup>th</sup>-century treatises written about fireworks.

Firework displays became increasingly theatrical throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> century in France. Ephemeral structures, known as 'machines' (from the Italian '*macchine*'), were built to stage the fireworks. These took the form of allegorical temples, decorated with figures, rock formations and architectural structures. Firework displays were given themes that reflected the larger programme of celebrations. These grand displays were important symbols of power and wealth.

The ephemeral quality of the structures and of the fireworks themselves was recorded in prints, paintings and drawings. Each of these visual documents reveals different aspects of the events, ranging from the technical mastery to the lived experience and their symbolic power. Fireworks remain to this day an important part of how we collectively celebrate our personal, civic or national joy.



*Artificier.*

Top: Louis-Nicolas Van Blarenberghe, Miniature painting of the 1763 Fête in the place Louis XV, in Paris, for the unveiling of the equestrian statue of Louis XV, 1763

Bellow: 'L'Artificier', plate 18 from *Encyclopédie, ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*, eds. Denis Diderot and Jean le Rond d'Alembert. University of Chicago: ARTFL Encyclopédie Project.





*Les Rejouissances Universelles sur l'heureuse Naissance de Monseigneur Duc de Bourgogne dans le chateau de Versailles le 6<sup>e</sup> jour d'aoust de l'année 1682, (The Universal Festivities for the birth of the Duc de Bourgogne in the palace of Versailles on August 6, 1682)*

Paris, 1683

Accession number 2669.4.3

Almanac for the year 1683, marking the birth of the duc de Bourgogne, Louis XIV's first grandson. Great celebrations were held as the birth ensured the continuation of the royal line.



*Representation du Feu d'artifice dressé autour de la Statue de l'Empereur Charles V. sur la grande place (Representation of the fireworks around the statue of the Emperor Charles V in the Grande Place) in Relation de l'inauguration solennelle de sa sacrée majesté imperiale et catholique Charles VI*

Ghent, 1719

Accession number 3188



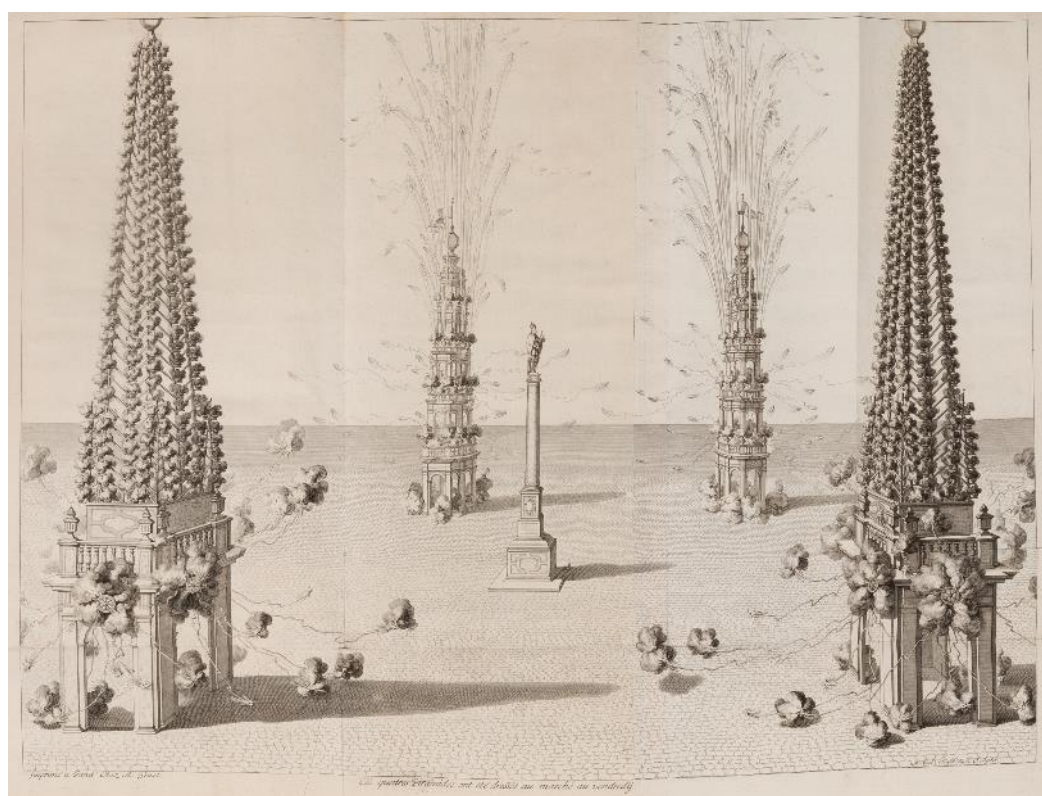
*Illuminations and fireworks in the background from Relation de l'inauguration solennelle de sa sacrée majesté imperiale et catholique Charles VI*

Ghent, 1719

Engraved by Jacobus Harrewyn (1660 – after 1732)

Accession number 3188





**Ces quatre pyramides ont été dressés au marché au Vendredy (These four pyramids were elevated in the Friday Market), from *Relation de l'inauguration solennelle de sa sacrée majesté imperiale et catholique Charles VI***

Ghent, 1719

Engraved by Michael Heylbrouck (1635-1733)

Accession number 3188

This publication contains the text and illustrations recording the city of Ghent welcoming the Holy Roman Emperor Charles VI of Austria (1685-1740) in 1717. The illuminations lasted for three nights with the grand finale of fireworks being launched from a set of pyramidal structures. These detailed illustrations provide insight into how such great effects were created and the man-power involved, showing the figures setting off the fireworks around the statue.

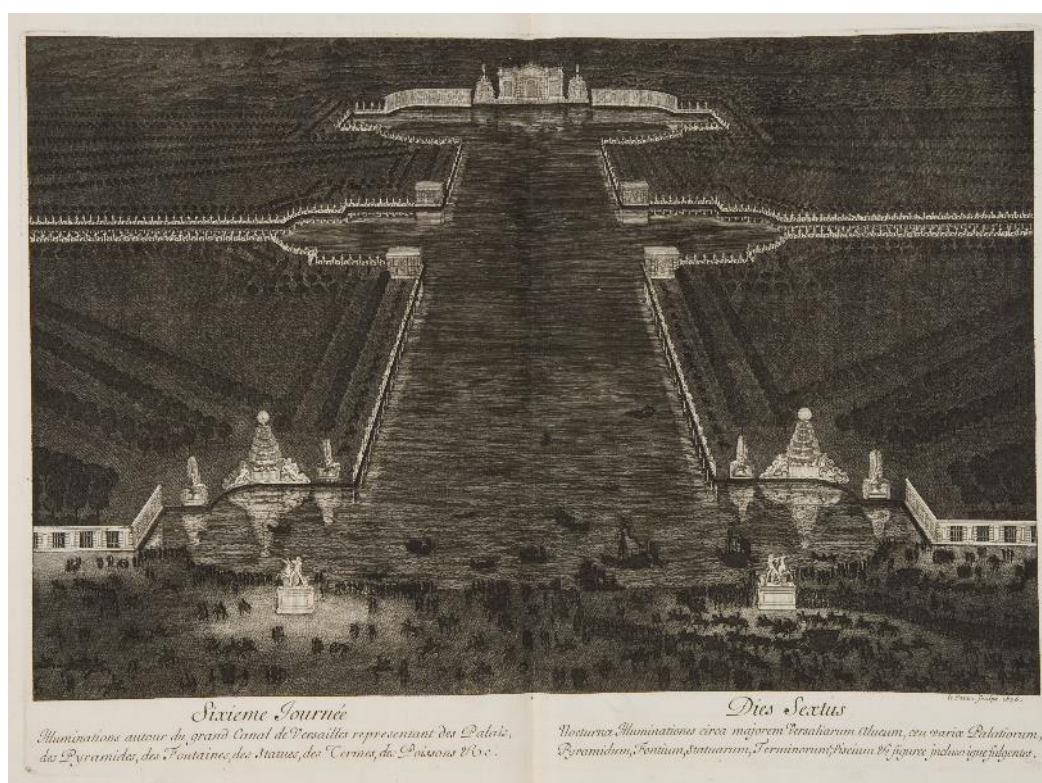


**Sixieme Journée: Illuminations autour du grand canal de Versailles (Sixth day : Illuminations around the grand canal at Versailles) in *Les divertissemens de Versailles donnez par le Roy à toute sa cour au retour de la conquête de la Franche-Comté***

Paris, 1676

engraved by Jean Le Pautre (1618-1682) ; text by André Félibien (1619-1695)

Accession number 3183



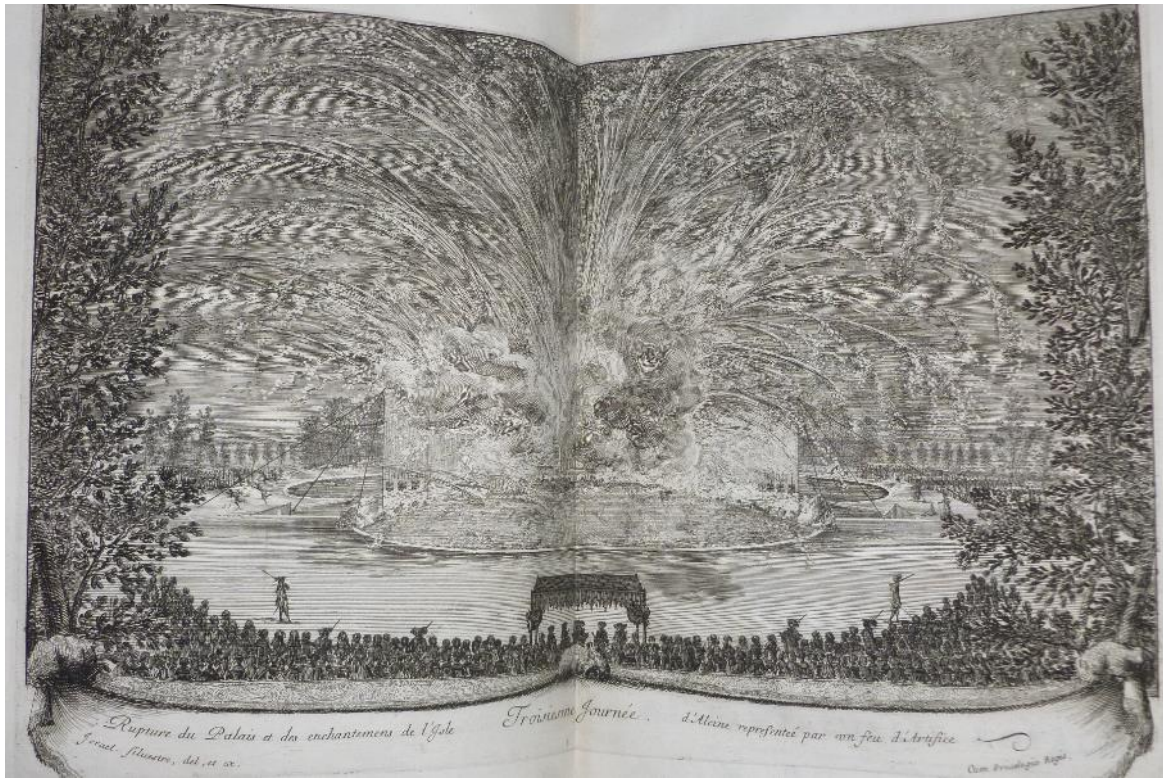
**Cinquième Journée : Feu d'artifice sur le Canal de Versailles (Fifth day : Fireworks on the canal at Versailles) from *Les divertissemens de Versailles donnez par le Roy à toute sa cour au retour de la conquête de la Franche-Comté***

Paris, 1676

engraved by Jean Le Pautre (1618-1682) ; text by André Félibien (1619-1695)

Accession number 3183





**Troisiesme Journée: Rupture du Palais et des enchantemens de l'Isle d'Alcine representée par un feu d'Artifice (Third day : Destruction of the palace and enchantements of the Island of Alcine represented by fireworks) in *Les divertissemens de Versailles donnez par le Roy à toute sa cour au retour de la conqueste de la Franche-Comté***

Paris, 1676

engraved by Israel Silvestre (1621-1691); text by André Félibien (1619-1695)

Accession number 3183

The illuminations and fireworks were part of a *fête* held at Versailles over the course of six nights to celebrate the French military victory and France's annexation of the Franche-Comté region. These were the last festivities held at Versailles during the reign of Louis XIV.