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THE MINIATURES OF JEAN LOUIS FAESCH AND THEIR PRINTED VERSIONS. A THEATRICAL PAPER MUSEUM*

Foreword

My aim here is to provide a schematic presentation of the work of the Swiss miniaturist Jean Louis Faesch (1738/9-1778). The contents are a reworking of a paper which I gave at the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities and Social Sciences (NIAS) in Wassenaar, in the framework of the Second Conference organized by the Network on Theatre Iconography (21-25 July 1999), funded by the European Science Foundation.¹ On that occasion I attempted to furnish an overview of the work of Faesch, whose theatrical vignettes, which depict French and English actors in stage costumes and poses, constitute an extremely important iconographic corpus, well known to all scholars of eighteenth-century theatre, but at the time – and largely still – relatively unexplored.²

I had already dealt with the subject of small sets of theatrical images, especially those of Faesch, in previous contributions, drawn by all the interesting methodological and philological issues which they raise in the field of visual records of theatre.³ Over the years I have continued to nurture my interest in this modest, but highly ingenious artist, and to gather a considerable body of information and documentation on his life and work.

Where not expressly indicated, the images which accompany this essay are drawn from volumes housed in the library of the Dipartimento di Storia delle Arti at the

* Translated by Peter Mark Eaton, Università di Pisa.

¹ Maria Ines Aliverti, 'The Miniatures of Jean-Louis Faesch and their Printed Versions: A Pattern for a Theatre in Images' (July, 1999), unpublished paper. Only a selection of the papers given at the three conferences were published in the proceedings *European Theatre Iconography: Proceedings of the European Science Foundation Network (1998-2000)*, ed. by Christopher Balme, Robert Erenstein and Cesare Molinari, Roma, Bulzoni, 2002.

² To indicate the works of Faesch – watercolour miniatures (generally indicated as *gouaches*), drawings, engravings (etchings), or printed illustrations – I will use the terms *miniatures* and *vignettes* in a general sense. For details on the drawing and engraving techniques, see Sections 4 and 7 in the present essay.

³ Maria Ines Aliverti, *Il ritratto d'attore nel Settecento francese e inglese*, Pisa, ETS, 1986, pp. 127-133; Maria Ines Aliverti, 'Major Portraits and Minor Series in Eighteenth-Century Theatrical Portraiture', key-note lecture given at the Symposium on Theatre-Iconography (Netherlands Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences, Wassenaar, 11-15 June 1995), *Theatre Research International*, 22, no. 3 (Autumn, 1997), pp. 234-254, plates 33-45. In October 1996, I was enabled to study Faesch's drawings kept at the Harvard University Theatre Collection Cambridge, Mass., thanks to a support of the Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche in Rome (CNR AI 92.01780.08).

Università di Pisa and from my own personal collection, and have been catalogued by me in the *Dionysos* digital archive on theatre iconography.⁴

Although not published, the paper I gave in Wassenaar attained a certain degree of diffusion thanks to the detailed handout which I distributed in typescript form. However, precisely because it was heard only by a small audience, it has not managed to bring wider attention to the work of Faesch, and in particular on the “dual personality” – that of Faesch and/or Whirsker – generally referred to in connection with the miniatures and the relative printed vignettes attributed to them. Thus, although the miniatures continue to be appreciated,⁵ as do the printed versions, in the curious libretti that contain them, these, too, the object of antiquarian interest, knowledge of Faesch seems, with rare exceptions, to have made little progress. These delightful pictures continue to be used without being carefully studied or evaluated in terms of their documentary value.⁶

Invited on 2 April 2008 by my colleagues Lorenzo Mango and Claudio Vicentini to give a lecture to the students of the postgraduate course at the Università di Napoli “L’Orientale” (Dipartimento di Studi Letterari e Linguistici dell’Europa), I took the opportunity to dust off my paper on Faesch, which seemed to me to be still far from obsolete. I am therefore extremely grateful to my colleagues in Naples, and in particular to Claudio Vicentini, for having invited me to publish this material on Faesch.

I would also like to thank the colleagues, curators and scholars who over the years have given me suggestions and help in my study of these images, and who may appreciate the publication of this work: Robert Erenstein, Odile Faliu, Renzo Guardenti, Noëlle Guibert, Joël Huthwohl, Claire Lloyd-Jacob, Cesare Molinari, Martine de Rougemont, Colette Scherer, and Laurence Senelick. The librarians of the Civica Raccolta Bertarelli in Milan, the Bibliothèque-Musée de la Comédie Française and the Harvard University Theatre Collection in Cambridge, Mass., were extremely helpful when I was studying gouaches by Faesch housed in their collections: to them all I express my sincere gratitude. Geoffrey Ashton and John Cavanagh, to whom theatre iconography is so especially indebted, are no longer with us. I always remember their prompt response when I asked for their advice and expertise. The Libreria Gonnelli in Florence allowed me to consult a precious copy of the *Album Dramatique* in its possession.

Without the collaboration of the Library, and the Photographic and Digital Labs of the Dipartimento di Storia delle Arti of the Università di Pisa this work would not

⁴ *Dionysos Archivio di iconografia teatrale/Theatre Iconography Archive*, directed by Cesare Molinari and Renzo Guardenti, DVD, (Corazzano) Pisa, Titivillus, 2006. The records concerning the series of printed vignettes drawn by Faesch include the *Métamorphoses*, the *Dramatic Characters* and *Les Souvenirs et les regrets*.

⁵ And continue to appear, albeit rarely, on the art market.

⁶ One exception is the recent contribution by Joël Huthwohl, director of the Département des Arts du Spectacle of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, ‘Les costumes des Lumières: la collection de miniatures de Fesch et Whirsker de la Comédie-Française’, *Art et usages du costume de scène. Proceedings of the Conference, Nancy-Metz, March 2006*, ed. by Anne Verdier, Olivier Goetz, Didier Doumergue, Dijon, Lampsaque, 2007, to which I will refer many times in these pages. Huthwohl is the first scholar to have attempted a systematic analysis of the corpus of *gouaches* of the Comédie Française from the point of view of theatrical costume.

have been possible; I owe to all the staff (Silvana Agueci, Elisabetta Soldati, Valerio Sironi, Elda Chiericoni, and Federico Bianchi) my most grateful acknowledgements.

I am finally indebted to Peter Mark Eaton for his attentive collaboration as the translator of this essay, and to my student Emanuele De Luca for his help in regard to Faesch's vignettes concerning the actors of the Comédie Italienne and the Opéra Comique.

I would be extremely pleased if this contribution led to the creation of a complete and updated catalogue of Faesch's miniatures, with a full critical commentary. This undertaking should involve the curators of the collections housed in museums and libraries, and would require the collaboration of scholars from various fields: historians of theatre and theatrical costume, experts in drawing techniques. The catalogue would also benefit from the inclusion of chemical analyses of the materials used by Faesch and those who followed him, as well as the digital reproduction of all the images housed in accessible public and private collections. Compared to when I began this work, developments in digital reproduction have greatly facilitated the task of comparing images, due to both higher definition and detail and lower costs. The conditions are thus ideal for the production of a definitive catalogue.

I do not intend here to attempt a critical analysis of single images, or to enter into detail about them, but to present in an orderly fashion the information that will allow us to paint more exactly the artistic contribution of Jean Louis Faesch, placing him in the theatrical context of the period from 1765 to 1778. I have therefore to some extent maintained the form of the original handout, with the relative lists of works which it contained, since I consider them still to be of use to scholars.

The various sections that follow deal with the main themes relevant to the presentation of Faesch's work:

1. *Whirsker and/or Faesch*: on the dual attribution of the vignettes
2. *Faesch and His Work between 1765 and 1778*
3. *The Eighteenth-Century Printed Editions*
4. *Delineavit ad vivum*: on Faesch's technique and the collections of miniatures
5. *The Vieil Amateur's Collection*: on the subsequent editions of the vignettes
6. *The Nineteenth-Century Printed Editions*
7. *The Album in the Harvard University Theatre Collection*

Sections 3 and 6 contain the bibliographical data regarding the printed books and the lists of Faesch's vignettes included in them: readers should therefore refer to these sections for the bibliographical details of the works cited elsewhere in this presentation.

I will be happy to share opinions and further documentation with other scholars, who can contact me at my e-mail addresses.

1. Whirsker and/or Faesch

When Johann Ludwig Wernhard Faesch,⁷ a miniaturist painter from Basle, died on 20 May 1778, not long after reaching his thirty-ninth birthday, in a modest apartment on Rue du Four in the popular Faubourg Saint-Marcel quarter, it cannot be said that he had been living a life of comfort and ease: neither his high social origins,⁸ nor the commercial success of his vignettes seem to have ensured him any

⁷ In general I have adopted the French version of his first name, *Jean Louis*, by which the artist became known. As a standard spelling of his surname I have used *Faesch* (*Fäsch*), and not *de Faesch*. The surname of the family from Basel is also common with other spellings, dictated by different pronunciations or spelling systems: *Fesch* or *de Fesch* (frequently seen is the name of another, more famous member of the family: Cardinal Fesch, a relative of Napoleon's mother and a great collector), *Fasch*, *Fache*, *Foesch*, *Foesh*, *Fösch*, *Fish*, *Väsch* etc. sometimes accompanied in French by the specification *de Basle*. Here (and in the subsequent note) are listed the biographical reference works I have consulted: 'Faesch, Johann Ludwig', in Hans Rudolf Füssli, *Allgemeines Künstlerlexicon*, 2 vols., Zürich, Orell, Füssli und Compagnie, 1779-1806, II (1806), pp. 338-339: this is the earliest reference work to mention Faesch; 'Fäsch, Johann Ludwig', in Ernst Lembergerer, *Meisterminiaturen aus Fünf Jahrhunderten*, Stuttgart, Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1911, p. 34: Faesch is recorded as a painter of miniatures on ivory and watercolour miniatures on vellum; 'Fäsch, Johann Ludwig', in Carl Brun *Schweizerisches Künstler-Lexicon*, 4 vols., Frauenfeld, Huber, 1905-1917, II (1905), p. 436: the author only mentions the success of Faesch's miniatures in London and in Paris. Both Lembergerer and Brun give a wrong date for Faesch's birth: Basel c.1750; 'Fesch', in J. J. Foster, *A Dictionary of Painters of Miniatures (1525-1850): With Some Account of Exhibitions, Collections, Sales etc., Pertaining to Them*, ed. by Ethel M. Foster, London, Philip Allan, 1926, p. 110; 'Faesch, Johann Ludwig Wernhard', in Leo R. Schidlof, *La miniature en Europe aux 16ème, 17ème, 18ème et 19ème siècles*, 4 vols., Graz, Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1964, I, p. 254; 'Faesch, Johann Ludwig Wernhard', in Daphne Foskett, *A Dictionary of British Miniature Painters*, 2 vols., London, Faber and Faber, 1972, I, p. 266; 'Faesch, Johann Ludwig Wernhard', in Harry Blättel, *International Dictionary: Miniature Painters, Porcelain Painters Silhouettists*, München, Arts and Antiques Ed. Munich, 1992, pp. 338-339: Faesch is recorded as a painter of miniatures on ivory, medallions, watercolour miniatures on vellum; Emmanuel Bénézit, *Dictionnaire critique et documentaire des peintres, sculpteurs, dessinateurs et graveurs de tous les temps et de tous les pays*, ed. by Jacques Busse, 14 vols., Paris, Gründ, 1999, V, p. 255, listing the artist under *Fache*, concisely writes: 'Actif à Paris à la fin du XVIIIe siècle. Français. Peintre miniaturiste'; Renate Treydel, 'Faesch, Johann Ludwig Wernhard', in *Allgemeines Künstler-Lexicon*, München-Leipzig, Saur, XXXVI (2003), p. 192.

⁸ The Faesch belonged to the old bourgeoisie of Basel. Settled there at the beginning of the fifteenth century, they plied their trade as gold- and silversmiths over the course of many generations. See C. Brun, *Schweizerisches Künstler-Lexicon*, IV, *Supplement: A-Z* (1917), pp. 141-143. However, various members of the family distinguished themselves both in other artistic professions as master builders, civil and military engineers and architects, and in the liberal professions, in particular as jurists, or in the scientific or military fields. In the seventeenth century one member of the family, Remigius (Romey, Ruman) Faesch (1595-1667), created a famous collection of antiquities and rarities, whose direction was traditionally entrusted to a man of the law from the family (see *Das Museum Faesch: Ein Basler Kunst- und Raritätensammlung aus dem 17. Jahrhundert*, ed. by Remigius Sebastian Faesch and André Salvisberg, Basel, C. Merian, 2005). On the family and its prominent members see 'Faesch, famille de Bâle', in *Biographie universelle ancienne et moderne*, ed. by Louis Gabriel Michaud and others, 45 vols., Paris, Madame C. DesplacesM. Michaud; Leipzig, F. A. Brockhaus, 1854-1865, XIII (1855), pp. 320-321; 'Faesch' in *Dictionnaire Historique et Biographique de la Suisse*, ed. by Victor Attinger and others, 8 vols., Neuchâtel, Administration du dictionnaire historique et biographique de la Suisse, 1921-1934, III (1926), pp. 48-49. On members of the family who were craftsmen, artists or architects, see *Allgemeines Künstler-Lexicon*, XXXVI, pp. 191-195. No indication is given about Johann Ludwig's direct relatives. The document quoted below states that Johann Ludwig's brother was 'Georges Faesch', in 1778 captain in the service of H. M. the King George III. I cannot positively affirm if this 'Georges' is the same person as the Georg Rudolph Faesch (1712-1787) who translated various works of military art; from French into German: *Grundsätze und Regeln der Kriegs-Kunst* by the Marquis de Puységur, Leipzig, 1753; *Einfälle über die Kriegskunst* by the Count Maurice of Saxony, Leipzig and Frankfurt, 1757. And from German into French: *Instruction militaire du roi de Prusse pour ses généraux, traduite de l'allemand par M.*

sort of wealth. What he had put aside in his career as an amateur artist, undertaken after abandoning his law studies in favour of the theatre, or the little he had not squandered, had been sold off towards the end of his life in order to cover his needs during the six long months of illness that had led to his death.⁹ Among the objects left in the apartment on Rue du Four, listed summarily by the commissioner of the Châtelet, charged with sealing the apartment, we find several modest souvenirs of the artist's stay in London: eleven English prints without glass, another twenty-one framed prints, and a small round medallion depicting King George III.

Jean-Louis Wernhard Faesch, a painter of miniatures, was born in Basel, Switzerland, where most of his heirs lived. He died at the age of 39 on Wednesday 20 May 1778, at around three o'clock in the morning, in an apartment on the second floor of a house on Rue du Four, owned by *sieur* Boitte, a haberdasher, after an illness of six months, during which he had been reduced to handing over his watch and most of his wardrobe to a local pawnbroker's. The commissioner Antoine-Bernard Léger, charged with sealing the apartment, listed the furnishing in loco: a geographical atlas, a plaster bust depicting a woman, in its glass case, on a sculpted and gilded wooden stand, eleven English prints without glass, another twenty-one framed prints, and a small round medallion depicting the King of England. The notices of protest from shopkeepers or servants are not worthy of note. The heirs, the brothers and sisters of the deceased, were six: Georges Faesch, a captain in the service of the British Majesty; Rose Faesch, widow of Jean-Rodolphe Thourneisen, doctor and professor of law; Anne-Elisabeth, Marguerite and Anne-Marie Faesch, unmarried, resident in Basel with their sister Rose and with Jean-Jacques de Barry, shopkeeper, son of the late Esther Faesch and of Jean de Bary, the latter an heir in representation of his mother. Pierre-Henri Paulmier, a notary in Paris, was charged with making the inventory by Rodolphe Schorndorff, citizen of Paris, appointed as proxy by the heirs.¹⁰

Faesch, lieutenant-colonel dans les troupes saxonnes, Francfort et Leipsic [possibly printed in Paris], 1761, that he also edited in a new German edition in 1770. Following Michaud, Georg Rudolph was the son of Johann Rudolph Faesch (1680-1749; Michaud records 1742 as the year of his death), a prominent military engineer and author of dissertations on fortifications. Considering the generation gap it is probable that 'Georges' and Jean Louis Faesch were both sons of Georg Rudolph, and grandchildren of Johann Rudolph.

⁹ Faesch initially began to study law, but gave up in order to develop his talent as an amateur artist.

¹⁰ 'Jean Louis Wernhard Faesch, peintre en miniature, était originaire de Bâle, en Suisse, où vivaient la plupart de ses héritiers. Il meurt, âgé d'un peu plus de trente-neuf ans, le mercredi, 20 mai 1778, sur les trois heures du matin, dans un appartement au second étage d'une maison de la rue du Four, appartenant au s. Boitte, marchand Mercier, après une maladie de six mois, pendant laquelle il avait été réduit à engager à des fripiers du voisinage sa montre et la plus grande partie de sa garde-robe. Le commissaire Antoine Bernard Léger, chargé de procéder à l'opposition des scellés, signale dans le mobilier en évidence: un atlas géographique, un buste en plâtre représentant une femme, dans sa cage de verre, sur un pied de bois sculpté doré, onze estampes anglaises sans verre, vingt et une autres estampes encadrées, un petit médaillon rond représentant le roi d'Angleterre. Les oppositions des fournisseurs ou gens de service ne méritent pas d'être notées. Les héritiers, frères et soeurs du défunt, sont au nombre de six: Georges Faesch, capitaine au service de S. M. Britannique; Rose Faesch, veuve de Jean-Rodolphe Thourneisen, docteur et professeur en droit; Anne-Elisabeth, Marguerite et Anne-Marie Faesch, non mariées, demeurant à Bâle avec leur soeur Rose et avec Jean-Jacques de Barry, négociant, fils de feu dame Esther Faesch et de Jean de Bary, ce dernier héritier par représentation de sa mère. Pierre-Henri Paulmier, notaire à Paris, est chargé de faire l'inventaire par Rodolphe Schorndorff, bourgeois de Paris, porteur de la procuration des héritiers faite en son nom'. Jules Guiffrey, *Scellés et inventaires d'artistes français du XVIIe et du XVIIIe siècle*, 3 vols., Paris, Charavay, 1884-1886, III, 1771-1790 (1886), pp. 98-99 (Arch. Nat., Y 14341, 'Fonds des commissaires du Châtelet: procès-verbaux de scellés').

That year was marked by the death of Voltaire, and shortly before by that of Lekain, who had been Faesch's great sponsor, while the beginning of 1779 saw the death of Garrick. Their end brought to a complete close the historical phase of the theatrical reform during the Enlightenment, of which the young Swiss ex-patriot had been a curious and talented artistic witness.¹¹ This phase had reached its highest point precisely in the 1760s, characterized by a strong harmony of reforming purpose in Paris and in London, especially with regard to the art of the actor, and had culminated almost symbolically in Garrick's *grand tour* (1763-1765) and in the closer contacts between the two theatrical worlds created by the English actor's stay in Paris. It was during these years, and on this exceptional occasion, that the story of our vignettes begins.

As we have seen, the first aspect to be clarified regards the dual identity of Whirsker and/or Faesch. In repertories and in works of history and criticism, in fact, the name Whirsker has always been recorded as a real name, corresponding to a figure different from that of Faesch: an artist considered to have preceded Faesch in the invention of small theatrical portraits, with whom Faesch was subsequently associated in some way, or whom he somehow replaced.

This conviction arose from the fact that the title-pages of the two Parisian editions of *Les Métamorphoses de Melpomene et de Thalie ou Caracteres dramatiques des Comédies Française et Italienne*, undated [though c.1770] and 1782, both bore the words: *dessiné d'après nature par Whirsker*, thus making reference to an author whose identity, real or fictional, was still to be established. It was not identified, however, and the name Whirsker remained as the real name of the author of these vignettes, confirmed in the nineteenth-century editions of the set, the *Album dramatique* (1820) and *Les Souvenirs et les regrets du Vieil Amateur* (1829 and 1861) to which we will return,¹² in the repertories of nineteenth- and twentieth-century bibliophily and bibliography of costume,¹³ in bound collections of miniatures,¹⁴ and finally accepted in what, before the advent of large electronic bibliographic databases, were the main tools of bibliographical reference, that is the printed catalogues of the major libraries.¹⁵

¹¹ Lekain died on 8 February 1778, just when Voltaire returned to Paris, where shortly afterwards the man who was considered at the time to be the greatest playwright also passed away (30 May). Garrick died on 20 January 1779; he had retired from the stage in 1776.

¹² See below and Sections 5 and 6.

¹³ Jacques Charles Brunet, *Manuel du libraire et de l'amateur des livres*, 6 vols., Paris, Firmin Didot, 1860-1865, III (1862), p. 1677, no. 9666: Whirsker, *Les Métamorphoses*, Londres 1772; and no. 9667: Whirsker, *Caractères dramatiques*, Londres 1772. Henri Cohen, *Guide de l'amateur de livres à gravures du XVIIe siècle*, ed. revised and enlarged by Seymour de Ricci, Paris, Librairie de la Roquette, 1912, p. 1066: Whirsker, *Les Métamorphoses*, Paris [c.1770], and *Les Métamorphoses*, Londres 1772. René Colas, *Bibliographie générale du costume et de la mode*, Paris, Librairie René Colas, 1933, pp. 1102-1103, no. 3073: Whirsker, *Les Métamorphoses*, Paris [c.1770]; and no. 3074: *Les Métamorphoses*, Londres 1772; Hilaire and Meyer Hiler, *Bibliography of Costume: A Dictionary Catalog of about Eight Thousand Books and Periodicals*, ed. by Helen Grant Cushing, New York, The H. W. Wilson Company, 1939, p. 898: Whirsker, *Les Métamorphoses*, Paris [c.1770], and *Les Métamorphoses*, Londres 1772.

¹⁴ See for instance: *Petit Album, Acteurs et Actrices*, Bibliothèque Musée de la Comédie Française, no. acq. A. 96-0003; ex libris: *Archivio y Biblioteca de Penard Fernandez*, nineteenth-century binding in calf, leaves 10.3x10-10.3 cm. contents: 48 gouaches (of two different sizes). Ms. note on the first leaf: *dessiné par Whirsker 1780*.

¹⁵ For example the *National Union Catalog, pre-1956 Imprints* (T792.0944) lists *Les Métamorphoses* under 'Whirsker, fl. 18th cent.', and under 'Faesch, Jean Louis, 1697 [sic]-1778'. With the addition of the note: 'Generally considered the work of Whirsker and Jean Louis Faesch'.

Scholars have always used these images, from the nineteenth century onwards, referring to Whirsker alone or to Whirsker and Faesch.

The main culprit for the survival of this ambiguous identity was, it must be said, the anonymous author of *Les Souvenirs et les regrets*, Antoine Vincent Arnault,¹⁶ who in the first of the fictional letters that make up his collection of memories about the actors of the Ancien Régime, addressed to an equally anonymous nephew, writes as follows on the subject of the vignettes: ‘Wirsker [sic!], the author of these gouaches, reproduces with spiritual precision the physiognomy, the bearing, and the character of his originals, in the roles in which they excelled, and in the situations in which they aroused most enthusiasm’.¹⁷ In the same publication, in the ‘Avis de l’Éditeur’, the name of Faesch is also introduced, thus doubling the authorship of the vignettes: ‘A word on Foëch and Whirsker, after whose drawings almost all the small figures in this collection were engraved. They were not artists of the first order; they contented themselves with painting actors on vellum; but they were very skilled’.¹⁸ While in the course of the work, on the subject of a badly-made reproduction, the identity of the artist shifted once again, settling on the real, historically identifiable figure of Faesch: ‘If the engravers who have produced the little drawings in this volume have not reproduced accurately the features of the same actor in different roles, the fault lies with them, and not with the painter. This artist whose name was Foëch, also signed himself as Fesch’.¹⁹

The person who, as we will see, gathered together the recollections in *Les Souvenirs et les regrets*, and published them with prints of many vignettes by Faesch and perhaps by some anonymous later artist, was thus rather uncertain on the subject, or at least was not interested in making the attribution less ambiguous.

It is my belief that *Whirsker* is simply an anglicised nickname assumed by or attributed to the Swiss artist on his artistic debut, perhaps the typographer’s mistaken transcription of *Whisker*, which could well have indicated the moustache worn by the

¹⁶ Quérard lists the work under *Vieil Amateur Dramatique*, and attributes it to Antoine François [sic!] Arnault, de l’Académie Française (cf. Joseph Marie Quérard, *Supercheries littéraires dévoilées*, 3 vols., Paris, Maisonneuve & Larose, 1964, III, p. 947). Quérard records two editions of *Les Souvenirs et les regrets*: ‘Paris, Ch. Froment, Neveu, 1829, 2 vols. gr. in-18, ornés de 36 portraits en pied. Cet ouvrage a été réimprimé chez Lemerre, à Paris, en 1861, gr. in-8, édition soignée qui contient une cinquantaine de figures costumées’. See Section 5 for Arnault and Section 6 for the nineteenth-century printed collections of Faesch’s miniatures.

¹⁷ ‘Wirsker [sic!], auteur de ces gouaches, y a reproduit avec l’exactitude la plus spirituelle la physionomie, le maintien, le caractère de ses originaux, dans les rôles où ils ont excellé, et dans les situations où ils excitaient le plus d’enthousiasme. Mes gravures en sont une fidèle copie’. *Première Lettre* (1821), in [Antoine Vincent Arnault], *Les Souvenirs et les regrets* (1861), p. 4. Here and in the subsequent quotations I indicate the page numbers from the 1861 edition at my disposal; text and pagination are the same in the 1829 edition.

¹⁸ ‘Un mot sur Foëch et Whirsker, d’après les dessins desquels ont été gravées presque toutes les petites figures insérées dans ce recueil. Ce n’étaient pas des artistes d’un ordre supérieur; ils se bornaient à peindre des acteurs sur vélin; mais ils étaient fort habiles’. ‘Avis de l’Éditeur’, in [A. V. Arnault], *Les Souvenirs et les regrets* (1861), pp. vi-vii.

¹⁹ ‘Si les graveurs qui ont rendu les petits dessins qui sont dans ce volume, n’ont pas reproduit avec une parfaite identité les traits d’un même acteur dans des rôles divers, la faute doit leur en être imputée, et non à notre peintre. Cet artiste dont le nom était Foëch, signait aussi Fesch’. [A. V. Arnault], *Les Souvenirs et les regrets* (1861), p. 217.

young Faesch.²⁰ Having fallen by the mid-1760s from his status as a comfortably-off bourgeois, and anxious to conceal his connections with the world of actors, Faesch may well have used a pseudonym for his public debut as a theatrical draughtsman. The fact remains that while there are some records, albeit rare, of Faesch's life and activity during this period,²¹ the same cannot be said of Whirsker, who, apart from the title-page of *Les Métamorphoses* in the first and second Parisian editions (1770 and 1782), does not appear elsewhere during the same period or in relation to similar artistic works. *Whirsker* may seem a strange nickname for a Swiss artist who had emigrated to Paris, except that when he made his first appearance, in around 1770, in the first book of vignettes, Faesch's relations with the English world were already well established.

2. Jean Louis Faesch and His Work between 1765 and 1778

In the period in which David Garrick stayed in Paris (winter 1764-1765) during his *grand tour* in Italy, Germany and France (from September 1763 to April 1765), the great English actor, as we know, had prolonged contact with French intellectual and theatrical circles. It is not that he could not have kept abroad of the life of the theatre in Paris in other ways. His wide competence as a theatre manager and his long-standing friendship with the impresario Jean Monnet would certainly have sufficed to keep him informed about the French stage. In Paris, however, Garrick not only entered into direct relations with the great actors he had never previously met in person, but also, as we know, established himself as a true star and as a model of the actor's art, something which had not happened during his first stay in Paris in May and June of 1751, when only a few perceptive, well-informed people had noted his remarkable talents.²² The time was undoubtedly riper, above all to appreciate what was the essence of Garrick's art, that is what at the time was understood as *jeu muet* or *pantomime*, not considered so much as the visual illustration of the spoken word, but as the dimension *par excellence* of the actor's performance and the essence of an art that was largely still to be constructed, according to the criteria of modern performance and in the "natural" style suited to the bourgeois theatre.

The earliest record of Faesch's activity as a miniaturist dates precisely to the time of Garrick's stay in Paris. During this stay Garrick received a gift from the fellow

²⁰ Moustaches were worn at the time by military people (by soldiers, and not by officers). I notice that Jean Louis's brother and probable other relatives had embraced the military career, moving from the native Basel. It is not unlikely that a young law student eager of escaping a bourgeois context had been involved in the last campaigns of the 'Seven Years War', before settling in Paris in the mid-Sixties.

²¹ Faesch's signature is recorded on various gouaches. See, for instance, Bibliothèque Musée de la Comédie Française, *Grand Album Rouge* I 478: *Fesch del. or d. 1776*, on gouaches nos. 8, 30, 33; British Museum, Department of Prints and Drawings, 1931-5-9-250 and 255: *Fesch pinx*; H.M. Queen Elisabeth II The Royal Collection Windsor Castle; no.13609: *Fesch pinxt*; The Harvard University Theatre Collection, Cambridge, Mass., THE B Ms Thr 645, on six gouaches from a collection of 35 once assembled in five small albums, at present removed from binding: *Fesch pinx* or *Fesch p*. A series of prints from Faesch's drawings, inscribed: *De Fesch delin.t*, was published as separate plates in 1773 by Jefferys and Faden, in London (see below and Section 3). As an interesting series of Faesch's original gouaches (*French Dramatic Characters*, some items dated 1768 or 1769), sold at Agnew & Sons, London, 16th March-15th April 1976, does not bring Faesch's signature, one may suppose that Faesch begun to sign his gouaches starting from his successful activity in London.

²² See Maria Ines Aliverti, *Poesia fuggitiva sugli attori nell'età di Voltaire*, Roma, Bulzoni, 1992, pp. 225-238.

actors at the Comédie Française with whom he had made friends (Lekain and Préville): a collection of *gouaches* depicting the main actors of the Comédie in their most successful roles.²³ The catalogue of Garrick's collection of books drawn up at the time of their sale in 1823 includes three volumes of miniatures with the title: *Desseins de Différens Habits de costume du Theatre François in colours drawn by J.L.Faesch*, (Paris) 1765.²⁴ The date would suggest that these were the gouaches given to Garrick during his stay, probably gathered together in bound volumes. However, since the volumes have been lost we cannot rule out the possibility that Garrick himself added to the set other miniatures acquired later in his life, and then had his whole collection bound using the 1765 title-page.

What was the purpose of this gift? Undoubtedly to pay homage to the illustrious guest, whose love of portraits was well known, and also to offer him a sort of *theatrical paper museum* that would conserve the memory of the main actors of the two greatest French theatres or, if we prefer, a 'little theatrical Pantheon', exalting the professional dignity of which Garrick himself was an enlightened prophet.²⁵ Probably, however, there was also the idea that entering Garrick's large private library on the ground floor of his house in Southampton Street, in the study where in the morning he received visitors and dealt with his business, was a bit like entering the heart of the theatrical life of the English capital. Monnet, 'the theatrical free-lance and adventurer',²⁶ who was also his factotum in Paris, was well aware of this, since the many objects he procured for the Garricks,²⁷ often included drawings, engravings and books for the collection that the actor intended to bequeath for public use. We must also bear in mind the fact that the careful reproduction of costumes that was characteristic of Faesch's miniatures was intended to provide a repertory of models from which to draw inspiration, perhaps of greater interest in an English context than the repertory of gestures and poses that the miniatures depicted with equal care.²⁸ It is no coincidence that the title of the collection presented to Garrick spoke

²³ Not only of the Comédie Française, but also of the other two comic theatres, the Comédie Italienne and the Opéra Comique, which had merged in 1762, as can easily be deduced from the fact that actors from these two theatres that Garrick admired (see Bertinazzi or Mme Favart) are present in the sets of prints. As Huthwohl remarks in his article, *Les costumes des Lumières* (p. 91), Lekain should have possessed 17 gouaches by Faesch, today in the collections of the Bibliothèque-Musée de la Comédie Française, already listed by Georges Monval in his catalogue *Les Collections de la Comédie-Française. Catalogue historique et raisonné*, Paris, Société de propagation des livres d'art, 1897, nos. 204-210, no. 407 and nos. 428-435.

²⁴ See entry no. 660 in *A Catalogue of the Library, Splendid Books of Prints, Poetical and Historical Tracts, of David Garrick, Esq.*, London, Saunders, 1823. On the subject of Garrick's library and its destiny, see Helen R. Smith, *Garrick as a Book Collector*, in *David Garrick 1717-1779: A Brief Account*, (exh. cat., London, The King's Library, 30 November 1979-11 May 1980), London, The British Library, 1979, pp. 60-64; George W. Stone and George M. Kahrl, *David Garrick: A Critical Biography*, London, Feffer & Simons, 1979, pp. 165-199. On Garrick's interests in costuming, see *ibid.*, pp. 329-331. Stone and Kahrl quote the three volumes of the *Desseins de Différens Habits* without referring them to Faesch.

²⁵ This is how the Vieil Amateur defines the collection at the beginning of his eleventh letter. See [A. V. Arnault], *Les Souvenirs et les regrets* (1861), p. 97.

²⁶ Frank A. Hedgcock, *A Cosmopolitan Actor: David Garrick and His French Friends* (1912), New York, Benjamin Blom, 1969, p. 354. See chapter 6, dedicated to Jean Monnet (pp. 371-402).

²⁷ David Garrick and his wife Eva Maria Veigel (1724-1822).

²⁸ On Garrick's negative opinion of the uniform French *politesse* and of the artificial style of declamation used at the Comédie Française, from which neither Lekain nor Mlle Clairon, who retired in 1765, differed substantially, much has been said. Just as we know that Garrick esteemed more

of *habits de costume*. On other occasions Monnet procured for Garrick drawings of costumes by Louis-René Boquet and drawings illustrating solutions of theatrical presentation and methods of stage lighting.²⁹ Moreover, both David and Eva-Maria, like other English members of the *beau monde*, considered Paris the capital of fashion and often ordered items of clothing and accessories from the French capital: one famous example is the black “French suit” that Garrick wore in the role of Hamlet.

In any case it is certain that Garrick, aware as he was of the importance of portraits and in general of theatrical images, very much appreciated the gift and did not forgo the opportunity to acquire other miniatures that the young artist, anxious to please the great actor, sent him with great solicitude. It was once again the peerless Monnet who assumed the task of dispatching this further gift through a London merchant. It was announced by a letter from Faesch, dated Paris 16 February 1766, in which he thanked Garrick for the interest shown in his work and listed the framed miniatures he was sending: *Préville, Brizard, Lekain, Auger, Mme Préville, Mme Favart as La Vieille*. In exchange Faesch asked for an engraved portrait of Garrick, like one of the many that the English actor had distributed during his *grand tour*. He also promised to visit London in September or October of that year.

Sir, the honour you have done to my works by deeming them worthy of attention has convinced me to present you with a small further gift which Mr. Monnet has agreed to have brought to you. I take the liberty, Sir, of sending you some others that are missing from the collection that I made for you. I flatter myself that you will do me the grace to accept this small gift, or rather to agree to an exchange that I dare to propose: what I would like to receive in return is an engraved portrait of you. It would be so flattering for me, as well as the pleasure of owning the portrait of an illustrious man, to have the privilege of receiving it directly from him, that I am unable to resist the temptation of asking for it. I hoped, Sir, to enjoy the pleasure of seeing you in London this spring, and of adding my applause to that of England, but I have heard from Mr. Lekain that you will be at the spa in Bath, and will not be spending the summer in London: I have postponed my journey to the month of September or October, since the honour of seeing you and of being near you is the only thing that can make my stay in England interesting. The person who will deliver these small paintings is Mr. Kuff, a shopkeeper established in London. You may give the print to him, if you grant me the grace that I dare to ask from you. The portraits I am sending are: Mr. Préville, Mr. Brizard, Mr. Lekain, Mr. Anger [sic], Madame Préville, and Madame Favart in *La Vieille*, a role she played with the most brilliant success. I hope, Sir, that these small paintings will afford you as much pleasure as I feel in giving them to you. Please be so good as to accept them, as well as the assurances of the distinguished consideration with which I have the honour of being your most humble and obedient servant, J.-L. Faesch.

[P.S.] Mr. Préville, whom I told that I would have the honour of writing to you, sends his sincere compliments.³⁰

highly the style of a comic actor such as Préville or that of the Italiens, in that they were more versatile and based on a model of *jeu naturel*.

²⁹ See letters of Monnet to Garrick dated 31 July 1765, 9 December 1766 and 17 December 1766 in David Garrick, *The Private Correspondence of David Garrick with the most celebrated persons of his time*, ed. by James Boaden, 2 vols., London, Colburn and Bentley, 1831-1832, II (1832), p. 446, p. 499 and p. 500.

³⁰ Paris, ce 16 Février, 1766. Monsieur, l'honneur que vous avez fait à mes ouvrages, de les juger dignes de quelque attention, m'a engagé à vous en présenter un petit supplément que Mr. Monnet s'est chargé de vous faire parvenir. Je prends la liberté, Monsieur, de vous en envoyer encore quelques uns, qui manquent à la collection que j'ai vous ai faite. Je me flatte que vous me ferez la grâce d'accepter ce petit cadeau, ou plutôt de consentir à un troc que j'ose vous proposer: c'est de votre portrait en estampe que je souhaiterois en échange. Il seroit si flatteur pour moi, de joindre au plaisir que me

It is quite likely that Faesch had initially intended to visit London together with Lekain, who arrived there in the second half of March, with the aim – unfulfilled due to a mishap – of seeing Garrick act in his theatre. In this case the presence of Faesch may have meant that Lekain intended to keep a visual record of Garrick and his actors at work in their theatre, the Drury Lane.³¹

However, Faesch did not go to London during the course of 1766, although Lekain's plan was in some way realized just over two years later, as we can deduce from a letter addressed by Lekain to Garrick on 18 May 1768, in which he introduces Faesch, now heading for London, and reminds his English colleague of the artist's past services.

Paris, 18 May 1766. To announce one's self to you, dear Garrick, with the title of a man of talent, is it not perchance equal to bringing with one the strongest and best founded recommendation? It is thus under these auspices that *a worthy Swiss, whom you already know due to a number of miniatures that you liked*, presents himself to you to beg you to promise him admission to your theatre, so that he may freely see you and bring back to us the likeness of a man who serves as a model to all those who practise his art; a small theft that I make with all my heart, and for which I beg you not to be angry. You see, my dear Garrick, that the intentions of my Swiss friend are pure: and that while on one hand they offend your modesty a little, on the other hand it is right that the public and my friends should see you in a living portrait, when both are deprived of the pleasure of hearing you.

I am too aware of the affable manner in which you welcome foreigners to believe that you will not receive with kindness *an honest and faithful Swiss, who knows the celebrated Garrick only by fame*, and who is dying to meet him in person. Please be so kind, therefore, as to agree to his desires, my dear friend, and to receive from him the assurances of the most profound esteem in which he holds your person and your talents, *although he has barely had the honour of meeting you*. At this moment I feel envy for

feroit le portrait d'un homme illustre, l'avantage de le tenir de lui-même, que je ne sçaurois résister au désir de vous le demander. J'espérois, Monsieur, de jouir ce printems du plaisir de vous voir à Londres, et de joindre mes applaudissemens à ceux de l'Angleterre; mais j'ai appris de Mr. Le Kain, que vous preniez les eaux de Bath, et que vous ne passeriez pas l'été à Londres: j'ai remis le voyage au mois de Septembre, ou d'Octobre: l'honneur de vous voir, et de vous approcher étant la seule chose qui puisse rendre le séjour de l'Angleterre intéressant pour moi. La personne qui vous remettra les petits tableaux est Mr. Kuff, négociant établi à Londres. C'est aussi à lui, que vous pourriez remettre votre estampe, si vous m'accordez la grâce que j'ose vous demander. Les portraits que je vous envoie, sont Mr. Préville, Mr. Brisard, Mr. Lekain, Mr. Anger [sic], Madame Préville, et Madame Favart en *Vieille*, rôle qu'elle a joué avec le succès le plus brillant. Je souhaite, Monsieur, que ces petits tableaux vous fassent autant de plaisir que j'en ai à vous les présenter. Daignez les agréer, aussi bien que les assurances de la considération distinguée avec laquelle j'ai l'honneur d'être, Monsieur, votre très-humble et très-obéissant serviteur, J.-L. Faesch. [P.S.] Mr. Préville, à qui j'ai dit que j'aurois l'honneur de vous écrire, vous fait mille complimens. David Garrick, *The Private Correspondence of David Garrick*, II, p. 466. Works concerning Monnet, as his autobiography up to 1760 ca. (Jean Monnet, *Mémoires de Jean Monnet directeur du Théâtre de la Foire*, ed. by Henri D'Alméras, Paris, Louis Michaud, n.d.) and his biography by Arthur Heulhard (*Jean Monnet: Vie et aventures d'un entrepreneur de spectacles*, Paris, A. Lemerre, 1884) do not mention Monnet's contact with Faesch. *La Vieille* is the role created by Madame Favart in *La Fée Urgèle* ou *Ce qui plaît au Dames* (1765), a *comédie mêlée d'ariettes* in four acts by Charles Simon Favart after Voltaire, and set to music by Egidio Duni.

³¹ See F. A. Hedgcock, *A Cosmopolitan Actor: David Garrick and His French Friends*, pp. 250-255. Some of Garrick's letters to Lekain, including those relating to Lekain's stay in London in 1766 and reasons for his failure to meet the English actor, are published in Henri Louis Lekain, *Mémoires de Henri-Louis Lekain, publiés par son fils aîné; suivis d'une correspondance (inédite) de Voltaire, Garrick, Colardeau, Lebrun, etc.*, Paris, ColnetDebrayMongié, 1801, pp. 275-281.

the fate of this man, since he is crossing the Strait of Dover to honour you and to meet a great man³²

It seems to me that there can be no doubt that the *worthy Swiss* sent to the Drury Lane to portray Garrick and his actors was our Faesch. On this occasion, when introducing Faesch, Lekain indicates that Garrick and the young artist did not know each other well: Faesch had not entered into direct relations with Garrick when his gouaches were presented to the English actor, or perhaps Lekain was not aware of subsequent relations and of the personal gift that the artist had sent to Garrick. In May and June of 1768, Faesch was probably in London for the first time: he was, in fact, mentioned briefly in the *post scriptum* of a letter of compliments written by Garrick to Lekain, from which we can deduce that the Swiss miniaturist was now in cordial relations with the great English actor. In my opinion this is the message with which Garrick accompanied Faesch's departure from England after Lekain had introduced the artist to him.³³

³² 'Paris, ce 18 Mai, 1766. S'annoncer à vous, Mon cher Garrick, avec le titre d'un homme à talents, n'est-ce pas porter avec soi la recommandation la plus forte, et la mieux fondée? C'est donc sous ces auspices qu'un très bon Suisse, et *que vous connaissez déjà par des miniatures qui vous ont fait plaisirs*, se présente à vous, pour vous supplier de lui promettre l'entrée de votre théâtre, afin qu'il soit libre de vous y voir, et de nous rapporter ici la ressemblance d'un homme qui sert de modèle à tous ceux qui professent son art; c'est un petit vol que je vous ferai moi de tout mon cœur, et duquel je vous prie de n'être point fâché. Vous voyez, mon cher Garrick, que les intentions de mon Suisse sont pures: que si d'un côté elles choquent un peu vôtre modestie, de l'autre, il est juste que le public et vos amis <vous> voient dans un portrait vivant, quand l'un et l'autre sont privés du plaisir de vous entendre./Je suis trop instruit par moi-même de la manière honnête dont vous accueillez les étrangers, pour croire que vous ne recevrez pas avec bonté *un Helvétique franc et loyal, qui ne connaît le célèbre Garrick que de réputation*, et qui meurt d'envie de le connaître plus particulièrement. Daignez donc vous rendre à ses désirs, mon cher ami, et recevoir par lui les assurances de la plus profonde estime qu'il a pour vôtre personne et pour vos talents, quoiqu'il n'ait que faiblement l'honneur de vous connaître. J'envie dans ce moment le sort de cet honnête homme, car il franchit le pas de Calais pour honorer et connaître un grand homme' (italics added). David Garrick, *The Private Correspondence of David Garrick*, II, pp. 537-538.

³³ 'Mon cher Le Kain. Mille et Mille remerciemens pour votre lettre très affectionnée. Si la Connoissance de la Langue françoise voudroit me permettre de vous dire, surtout des choses obligeantes, que vous me dites et que je pense sur votre Compte, Je ne serai pas réduit a vous Ecrire seulement quatre lignes comme Je fait – Je suis a vous de tout mon Coeur Votre Ami et tres hum.e Serviteur D. Garrick [post-script:] Notre ami Mons.r Fesch vous dira le reste'. *The Letters of David Garrick*, ed. by David M. Little and George M. Kahrl, 3 vols., London, Oxford University Press, 1963, II, letter 442, pp. 552-553. Both the manuscript and the printed source are acknowledged as follows in the editorial note to this letter: 'BM [British Museum, no inventory number]; François Talma, *Mémoires de Henri Louis Lekain*, Paris, 1801, p. 275'. The attribution to Talma of the *Mémoires* (1801) is erroneous. The French actor was the author of the *Réflexions* which served as a preface to the 1825 edition of the *Mémoires* (see Section 5, note 130). As no post-script referring to Faesch is quoted in the printed version of the letter in the *Mémoires* (1801), I argue that Little and Kahrl draw here upon the manuscript source. The date attributed to the letter is *Jan.r 31e [1767]*, since Little and Kahrl believe that Faesch had gone to London in the Autumn of 1766, as was planned, and had stayed until January. According to Hedgcock (*A Cosmopolitan Actor: David Garrick and His French Friends*, p. 247) the date of this message should be *June 31st. [1765]*. In my opinion the date is certainly later than May 1768, since Faesch had not met Garrick before that time, as Lekain himself testifies. The possible date could therefore be *June 31e[1768]*, which also seems to correspond more logically to the chronology of the prints of the vignettes, as we will see below. It would therefore place Faesch's first visit to London in May and June of 1768.

In the following years the Swiss miniaturist continued to travel back and forth between London and Paris, as is shown by a number of letters that present him in the role of go-between between artists on the two sides of the Channel.

At the end of 1769 or the beginning of 1770, Faesch was preparing once more to set off for London, again with a letter of introduction from Lekain, addressed on this occasion to the painter Michel Vincent Brandouin, as we may deduce from the artist's reply, dated *Chelsea, 30th January 1770*: 'You can count on the fact that if, in my position, I could be of any help to him, you have given him rights over me that I would be happy to fulfil'.³⁴

At the end of 1769 the first libretto of engravings by Faesch, *Les Métamorphoses de Melpomène et de Thalie*, had already been published in Paris.³⁵ The set of 23 vignettes, showing the Comédie Française and the Comédie Italienne (and the Opéra Comique), is not dated, but the *terminus post quem* is the performance of *Le Déserteur*, a *drame lyrique* by Sedaine with music by Monsigny, presented at the Théâtre Italien on 6 March 1769 to great acclaim. The publication, a relatively costly venture, was undertaken, at least according to the title-page, by several people, who were also involved in the selling of the libretto: the *Auteur* at the address Rue St. Honoré, Megré a printer just setting out in the business who signs himself as M[à]tre Vitrier (master glass-maker), with a workshop in Rue St. Jacques, a Blaizot active in Versailles, and the Cabinet Littéraire of Rue Satory.³⁶ All these were undoubtedly minor publishers, and the last two occasionally associated in another publishing initiative: an undated portrait of Queen Marie-Antoinette.³⁷ In addition and separately, in the years concerned by the issue of *Les Métamorphoses*, Blaizot and the Cabinet Littéraire published musical scores for dancing entertainments (various scores of *contre-danses*); more rarely, in the subsequent years, they also printed theatrical texts.³⁸ The unknown printmaker was, however, not a beginner, and the quality of the etching is higher than that of the identical set produced in London. We must also ask ourselves the meaning of the term *Auteur*, in a libretto whose only text is the captions of the images (the names of the actors and theatres, the title of the pièce, and the line or lines spoken in the scene depicted). It does not seem to be the artist, indicated on the title-page by the name *Whirsker*, which I believe to be a pseudonym. Nor are the other three marginal printers involved likely to have provided some kind of authorship. Who, then, was the author of this first set of prints? Are we to believe it was Lekain? Behind the judicious selection, which boasts of an 'Author at the address Rue St. Honoré', there is undoubtedly the hand of a true

³⁴ 'Vous pouvez compter que si dans ma position je pouvais lui être de quelque utilité vous lui avez donné sur moi des droits que je me féliciterais de remplir'. Sylvie Chevalley (ed.), *La Comédie-Française 1680-1980*, (exh. cat., Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, 23 April-27 July 1980), Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, 1980, p. 70. Here again, the inventory number of the manuscript source is not provided.

³⁵ I am inclined to believe that the libretto was printed towards the end of 1769, since the English edition of 1770 is certainly later, and should be linked to Faesch's visit.

³⁶ Megré *M.tre Vitrier, rue St. Jacques*, publisher and print seller; he apparently took his first steps with the portraits in this period, which he printed together with Borée, he, too, in rue Saint-Jacques, *vis-à-vis de la rue du Plâtre*. In 1776, still at this address, he continued his business. See Maxime Préaud and others, *Dictionnaire des éditeurs d'estampes à Paris sous l'Ancien Régime*, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, 1987.

³⁷ Engraved by Louis Jacques Cathelin (1738-1804) after Jean Martial Frédon (1711?-1795); advertised in the *Mercur de France*, in April 1775.

³⁸ I notice *Le Prodiges récompensé, comédie mêlée d'ariettes* by François Felix Nogaret, published by Blaizot in 1774, and an anonymous tragedy *Spartacus*, published by the *Cabinet Littéraire* in 1783.

connoisseur. It is worth considering that at the end of January 1770 the Comédiens Français left their old and glorious theatre, located in rue des Fossés-Saint-Germain and inaugurated in 1689, for a new temporary settlement in the Salle des Machines at the Tuileries Palace, then accessible from rue Saint-Honoré, as the rue de Rivoli did not exist at the time. Shall we suppose that a collective author (the Comédiens) is concealed behind this undeclared authorship? In this case *Les Métamorphoses* may have been intended as a memorial book of the troupe at a turning point in their collective identity. The title, by the way, points to a transforming process that involved both the two institutional societies of actors: the Comédiens Français and the Comédiens Italiens, the latter having merged in 1762 with Favart's troupe of the Opéra Comique.

Immediately afterwards, during Faesch's visit, the first English edition of *Les Métamorphoses* was published in London: *The Metamorphoses of Melpomene and Thalia*, London [c.1770], together with the first edition of *Dramatic Characters*, with a dedication from the publisher Robert Sayer³⁹ to David Garrick, and with a double title-page, French and English, which stated the date of authorization for publication as 15 January 1770.⁴⁰ In this case, too, the vignettes were printed anonymously and they had been issued separately between October and December 1769. The patronage of Garrick, implicitly testified by the dedication, was undoubtedly important to the initiative, which, in the selection of the English images, was clearly linked to the theatrical conversation pieces of Wilson and, in particular, of Zoffany. Leaving aside for the moment the problems related to the paternity of these vignettes, it will suffice to note the chronology of the editions: first edition of *Les Métamorphoses* in Autumn 1769, Faesch's departure for England at the end of 1769, perhaps bearing the book to present to Garrick, the plan to print it in England (the permit was issued in mid-January 1770), perhaps on the spur of the moment, perhaps agreed between Lekain and Garrick, replacing a project of 1766-1768 which it had not been possible to realize. However, the solution adopted – to draw the English vignettes from the conversation pieces – as well as the fact that the French set seems to have been re-engraved in London, would seem to suggest that the initiative was not planned in detail, but adapted very quickly when the opportunity arose. Sayer, the enterprising publisher and friend of Zoffany, who took on the expense of the

³⁹ Robert Sayer (1725-1794) ran the largest print publishing business in eighteenth-century London located in Fleet Street (in the years 1770-1773: *Robert Sayer at the Golden Buck in Fleet Street*; *Robert Sayer, N° 53 Fleet Street*; *Rob.t Sayer & Co. Fleet Street. London*). He published and re-published prints after major paintings and a multitude of lesser plates, copies and piracies. Around 1770 Robert Sayer and John Smith printer (N° 35 Cheapside) joined to produce theatrical prints. In 1774 Sayer took a former apprentice, John Bennett, into partnership. General catalogues were issued in 1766 (*Robert Sayer's New and Enlarged Catalogue For the Year M.DCC.LXVI*), in 1775 (*Sayer and Bennett's Enlarged Catalogue of New and Valuable Prints, in Sets, or Single*, reprinted by The Holland Press, London, 1970) and in 1786 (untraced). See Antony Griffiths, 'A Checklist of Catalogues of British Print Publishers c.1650-1830', *Print Quarterly*, 1 (1984), 4-22; Christopher Lennox-Boyd, *Theatre in the Age of Garrick: English Mezzotints from the Collection of the Honorable Christopher Lennox-Boyd*, (exh. cat., London, Courtauld Institute Galleries, 1994), London, Ch. Lennox-Boyd, 1994, p. xi. An advertisement by Sayer related to 'The Dramatic Characters of the English, French, and Italian Stages' appeared in *The Morning Chronicle* (11 February 1774), see Ch. Lennox-Boyd, *Theatre in the Age of Garrick*, p. 60 and p. 62 (note 2).

⁴⁰ This first edition of *Dramatic Characters* with two engraved title pages (one in French and one in English) and a letter-press table of contents, containing a first set of 24 plates is rare. More frequently I found issues of the second edition in which the number was increased by 14 new plates, or more.

publication together with John Smith, later republished the two sets: *Les Métamorphoses de Melpomène et de Thalie*, London 1772;⁴¹ *Dramatic Characters*, London 1772-3.⁴² Besides the referred evidences, it may be interesting to consider the publication dates of the fourteen prints separately issued by Sayer and thereafter bound together with the first set, to be sold as the second book of the *Dramatic Characters*: 13 September 1770; 30 October and 20 December 1771; 21[?] January, 20 March, 20 May, 20 Nov. 1772; 5 Jan. 1773. These dates could coincide with Faesch's sojourn in the English capital.

Other printers and publishers were attracted by the success of the theatrical vignettes: a set of separate engravings which bore the signature of Faesch (*De Fesch delin.t*) and dates of publication in May and November 1773 were issued by Jefferys & Faden:⁴³ this set is, moreover, the only one to indicate systematically both the name of the artist, Faesch, and the names of the engravers Charles Grignion (1716-1810) and James Basire (1730-1802). Of superior quality to Sayer's set, it was, however, never gathered together in a small volume. It was probably the result of the direct initiative of the artist, who had travelled to London once again in 1773. A letter from Garrick to Ducis, probably written according to Little and Kahrl in 1773, but dated only *21st January*, would seem to confirm Faesch's presence in London.⁴⁴

In *Sayer and Bennett's Enlarged Catalogue* of 1775, Jean Louis Faesch and Charles Grignion are respectively attested as the designer and the etcher of the vignettes bound in the little volumes sold by the two booksellers.⁴⁵ This means that after 1772-

⁴¹ Inscribed: *as the Act directs, 1st Sept.r 1772*.

⁴² See the bibliography of these editions, Section 3.

⁴³ Inscribed: *De Fesch delin.t*, and published as separate plates in 1773 by *Jefferys and Faden, Corner of St. Martins Lane Charing Cross*, recorded in Section 3. Thomas Jefferys, or Jeffreys (c. 1719-1771), was cartographer, bookseller and publisher at the address of Corner of St. Martin's Lane from 1753. As author and publisher he produced a costume book in 4 vols.: *A collection of the dresses of different nations, ancient and modern*, London, 1757-1772. This expertise explains his involvement in Faesch's work. William Faden was printer in London, at the addresses: 1) Wine Office Court, Fleet Street; 2) near Shoe Lane, 1749-1767. He issued various periodical publications. His printing was good and the characters were excellent. Actually this set proves of a superior quality than that produced by Smith & Sayer. See Henry Robert Plomer, *A Dictionary of the printers and booksellers who were at work in England from 1726 to 1775*, [Oxford], Bibliographical Society-Oxford University Press, 1932, pp. 87-88 (*Faden*), p. 139 (spelling: *Jeffreys*).

⁴⁴ *The Letters of David Garrick*, II, letter 741, p. 852: 'Monsieur. Je viens d'apprendre de Mons.r Feshe, qu'il part pour Paris, demain matin – et Je ne voudrais pas le laisser partir sans vous faire par cette Occasion mes remerciements – Vous m'avez flatté infiniment en m'envoyant votre ouvrage'. Little and Kahrl suppose that the 'ouvrage' referred to here is *Roméo et Juliette* produced in Paris (Salle des Machines in the Tuileries Palace) on 27 July 1772. The text was published in 1772 and sent by Ducis to Garrick as announced in a letter of 15 September 1772. Nevertheless it is worth noting that epistolary contacts between Garrick and Ducis had begun in the first half of 1769 and various letters are missing. We cannot rule out completely the possibility that the work in question was *Hamlet*, Ducis's only other Shakespearian text, previously printed and published by Gogué at the beginning of January 1770. See John Golder, *Shakespeare for the Age of Reason: The Earliest Stage Adaptations of Jean-François Ducis*, Oxford, The Voltaire Foundation, 1992, p. 52. The work was certainly sent to Garrick, with whom Ducis had corresponded on the subject. This letter could therefore coincide with Faesch's visit in January 1770.

⁴⁵ The 1775 *Sayer and Bennett's Enlarged Catalogue of New and Valuable Prints, in Sets, or Single* (pp. 108-109) lists two editions of Faesch's prints collected in volumes: (1) *Dramatic Characters, or Forty different Portraits of Mr. Garrick, and other capital Actors, in principal Scenes, Tragic as Well as Comic, represented on the English Theatres, mostly from original drawings of De Fish, and beautifully engraved by Charles Grignion, in one neat Pocket Volume, price 10 s. 6 d., neatly coloured, 11.1s.*; (2) *Dramatic Characters of the French and Italian Theatres,*

1773 the fame of these little prints was at its peak, and that the more widely known Grignon was happy to see his name linked to that of an unknown Swiss. Nevertheless, even if no other engraver is mentioned in Sayer and Bennet's *Catalogue* entries, considering the poor quality of the anonymous prints initially edited by Sayer and Smith, we have to be cautious about this attribution of all the prints to Grignon, which is likely to be due to commercial purposes.

During these years Faesch continued to produce and sell his miniatures. Georg Christoph Lichtenberg attests to the diffusion and success of Faesch's miniatures and Sayer's 'small pictures' in the letters written during his stay in the English capital.⁴⁶

It is therefore quite plausible that Faesch continued to visit London at least until the end of 1775, or even that he preferably settled there, drawn by the profits ensured by the market in theatrical images, which was growing much faster than in France. His final return to Paris must have come in around 1775. The 1775-1776 theatre season was the last of the great Garrick, his protector. Business may also have begun to fall off, due to the competition created by the lively market and the enterprising spirit of new publishers, the most important of whom was the energetic John Bell. In 1773 Bell began to publish his numerous popular and well-publicized theatrical editions, and in 1775, undoubtedly inspired by the success of Faesch's vignettes, he launched the third edition of the 'acting' *Shakespeare* (*Shakespeare's Plays*, 1775-1778), followed immediately by *Bell's British Theatre* (1776-1781), in which the plays were accompanied by portraits of actors in costume and stage poses. In these series, right from the beginning, Bell also employed Charles Grignon, the French engraver who had worked on Faesch's vignettes.⁴⁷

Bell's tendency to monopolize this popular market, well described by Burnim and Highfill Jr. in their monograph on the theatrical production of the highly successful publisher, can, I believe, be taken as one of the causes, perhaps not the only one, of Faesch's retirement from the promising English market. It would not be hazardous to surmise that Grignon's new commitments, especially in the years 1775 and 1776 when Bell's illustrated theatrical series were launched, must have deprived Faesch of

consisting of Forty-five Portraits of the most capital Actors, in the principal Scenes of these Theatres, chiefly from original drawings of De Fish, and beautifully engraved by Mr. Grignon, in one neat Pocket Volume, price 10 s. 6 d., neatly coloured, 1l. 1s.

⁴⁶ Letter from London on 30 November 1775. See *Lichtenberg's Visit to England as described in His Letters and Diaries*, ed. by Margaret L. Mare and W. H. Quarrel, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1938, p. 25. Another passage (in a letter from London on 29 January 1775) is referred to by John Cavanagh to Faesch's gouaches. See [John P. Cavanagh], *The Drama Delineated: A Source Collection of Original Drawings of the French 18th Century Stage*, Collection 2/81, Mottisfont Abbey (Romsey), Motley Books, [1981], a ten-page cyclostyled typescript: title page, pages [1]-4 numbered + five pages [5-9] not numbered. Lichtenberg, a passionate theatre-goer and an acute observer of playing actors, had apparently purchased some of these miniatures representing Garrick as Abel Drugger.

⁴⁷ On the employment of this great engraver by Bell, I refer to the information gathered in the excellent monograph of Kalman A. Burnim and Philip H. Highfill Jr., *John Bell, Patron of English Theatrical Portraiture: A Catalog of the Theatrical Portraits in His Editions of Bell's Shakespeare and Bell's British Theatre*, Carbondale and Edwardsville, Southern Illinois University Press, 1998. As underlined by Burnim, the third edition of the 'acting' *Shakespeare* (36 plays) relied heavily on the work of Charles Grignon (p. 21), who contributed 16 plates 'and probably he contributed a number of the fifteen plays with no engraver's name inscribed' (p. 25). Grignon was also the principal engraver of another series published by Bell (*Bell's Poets*) which began in 1776. In *Bell's British Theatre* (1776-1781), Grignon's involvement was more limited, since the engraving of most of the plates was entrusted to James Thorntwaite (active 1770-1797).

an irreplaceable partner. Of French origin, Grignion could certainly have had a closer partnership with the Swiss artist. It is not unlikely that it was an astute and deliberate move on Bell's part to steal Grignion from his competitors. In fact the catalogue of Bell's theatrical illustrations drawn up by Burnim and Highfill Jr. shown that most of the plates made by Grignion (17 out of 23) were published in the last few months of 1775 and the first few months of 1776. Although it is merely a hypothesis, it may well be that Faesch left London at the end of summer of 1775.⁴⁸

In any case the fashion for small pictures of actors spread quickly, and we still find images in the style of Faesch published in London towards the end of the 1770s and in the 1780s by J. Wenman and by Laurie and Whittle.⁴⁹ While in Paris the plates of *Les Métamorphoses de Melpomène et de Thalie* were engraved and published again by Campions Frères in 1782, four years after Faesch's death.

3. *The Eighteenth-Century Printed Editions*

The following bibliography is intended as a first attempt to list the different eighteenth-century original editions of Faesch's printed vignettes. I have not had the opportunity to examine personally all the copies recorded here, and I thus limit myself to drawing up the following list as a bibliographical material to be improved. In general the task is arduous: with regard to the rare extant volumes kept in public or private collections, in fact, it is extremely difficult to identify the imprint in its original form. The very concept of original imprint is not applicable to this sort of booklet containing collected sets of prints. Apart from the two French editions of *Les Métamorphoses* (c.1770 and 1782), in England prints after Faesch were issued separately before being assembled and published in a single volume. Moreover the success of Faesch's vignettes probably led the publishers to produce further different issues of the same "edition", varying available title-pages, adding extra tables of contents or some extra plates. On their part collectors have contributed to the confusion, as the French and the English series are frequently bound together with added extra plates.

It is worth considering that none of the extant collected sets of *Dramatic Characters* correspond to the sets described in the 1775 edition of *Sayer and Bennett's Enlarged Catalogue of New and Valuable Prints, in Sets, or Single*.⁵⁰

1. *Les Métamorphoses de Melpomene et de Thalie ou Caracteres dramatiques des Comédies Française et Italienne*, A Paris, Chez l'Auteur rue St. Honoré, et chez Megré M.tre Vitrier, rue St. Jacques, vis-à-vis [sic] celle du Platre, à Versailles chez Blaizot,

⁴⁸ The above mentioned (note 21) three gouaches signed by Faesch in the Bibliothèque Musée de la Comédie Française, *Grand Album Rouge* I 478 (recent binding), are dated 1776: no. 8, *Le Joueur*, no. 30, *Gengiskan/ dans l'Orphelin de la Chine*, no. 33, *La Leçon d'Armes/ dans le Bourgeois gentilhomme*.

⁴⁹ *Laurie and Whittle, 53 Fleet Street, London* (1802). Robert Laurie was Robert Sayer's apprentice until 1777, and then set up his own business for some years. By 1788 he he was working once again with Sayer, and after Sayer's retirement he ran his print publishing business in association with James Whittle until 1812. A general catalogue was issued in 1795 (*Laurie and Whittle's Catalogue of new and interesting prints*). See P. H. Muir, 'The Rolling Press in Georgian Times: The Firm of Laurie and Whittle', *Connoisseur*, no. 116 (1945), 92-97; Ch. Lennox-Boyd, *Theatre in the Age of Garrick*, p. xi and pp. 77-78.

⁵⁰ See note 45. Even though Faesch's printed vignettes are actually *etchings*, *engravings* and *engraved* are used hereafter as general terms for all intaglio prints.

au Cabinet Litteraire rue Satory. Dessiné d'après nature, par Whirsker, n.d. [end 1769-early1770].

Reference copy: Private collection, Pisa; see Catalogue of the Librairie du Spectacle Garnier Arnoul, Paris, no. 50 (1996), entry no. 145.

Description: [2] leaves: engraved title-page; 1 engraved table of contents (*Liste des caractères*); 23 engraved plates numbered 1-23.

Eighteenth-century binding in pasteboard; handwritten on the spine: *Caractères dramatiques*;⁵¹ leaves: 19.2x13.7 cm.; platemarks 9.4-11.1x9.3-16.3 cm.

Note: a copy with hand-coloured title-page and plates is housed in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France – Arts du spectacle: 8-RIC-65, electronic reproduction (IFN- 6407537) accessible from the digital library Gallica <http://gallica.bnf.fr>.

Another coloured copy is present in the Harvard University Library Theatre Collection TS-370.100.30.

Liste des caractères:⁵²

Comédie Française

1. M.r Bellecour : le Marquis dans *le Retour imprevu*
2. Mad.lle Drouin : la Meunière dans *les Trois Cousines*
3. M.r Bellecour : le Joueur dans *le Joueur*
4. M.r Prévile : Boniface Chrétien dans *le Mercure galant*
5. M.r Molé : Le Marquis dans *le Dissipateur*
6. M.r Prévile : M.r Pincé dans *le Tambour nocturne*
7. M.rs Prévile et Auger : Maîtres Sangsue et Brigandeu dans *le Mercure galant*
8. Mad.lle Clairon : Electre dans *la tragédie du même nom*
9. M.r. Molé : Egiste dans *Méropé*
10. Mad.lle Duménil : Athalie dans *la tragédie du même nom*
11. M.r Molé : Egiste dans *Méropé*
12. M.rs Brisart et Molé : le Marquis et Darviane dans *Mélanide*
13. M.r le Kain et Madem.le Sainval : Radamiste et Zenobie
14. M.rs le Kain et Brisart : Mahomet et Zopire dans *Mahomet*
15. M.r le Kain et Madem.le Duménil : Ninias et Sémiramis dans *Sémiramis*

*Comédie Italienne*⁵³

16. Mad.lle Favart: la Vieille dans *la Fée Urgele*, Acte III
17. M.r Laruelle : Colas dans *les deux Chasseurs*****
18. Mad.lle Laruelle : Isabelle dans *Isabelle et Gertrude*
19. M.r Suier : le Soldat magicien

⁵¹ I could examine another identical copy of this rare first edition at the Civica Raccolta delle Stampe Achille Bertarelli, in Milan (shelfmark: Cost. vol. J. 1).

⁵² The list of plates is transcribed here as in the original, p. [2]. I have only inserted a semicolon, instead of a comma, separating the proper name of the actor from the name of the character *he* or *she* represents in the vignette. The title *mademoiselle* was used in the Ancien Regime also for married actresses.

⁵³ In 1762 the Comédie Italienne and the Opéra Comique combined to form a single institution. In *Les Métamorphoses* the name *Comédie Italienne* refers to both the theatres.

20. M.r *Caillot* : Western dans *Tom Jones*
21. M.r *Carlin*: Arlequin Soldat dans *Arlequin Statue, Enfant &c.*
22. M.rs *Laruelle et Caillot* : Mathurin et Pierre le Roux dans *Rose et Colas*
23. *Trial et Clerval* : Bertrand et Monteauciel dans *le Deserteur*

The Plays:⁵⁴

Arlequin feint astrologue, enfant, statue, perroquet [...] (CI 1716, 1763-66)
Athalie (Racine), CF 1690-91→
Le Deserteur (Sedaine-Monsigny), CI 1769
Les Deux chasseurs.(Anseaume-Duni), CI 1763
Le Dissipateur (Destouches), CF 1736, 1753-88
Électre (Crébillon), CF 1708, 1761-70
La Fée Urgèle ou Ce qui plaît aux dames (Favart-Duni), CI 1765
Isabelle et Gertrude (Favart-Gretry), CI 1766-67
Le Joueur (Regnard), CF 1696→
Mabomet (Voltaire), CF 1742, 1768
Mélanide (La Chaussée), CF 1741→
Le Mercure galant (2) (Boursault), CF 1683, 1753-93
Mérope (Voltaire), CF 1743, 1760-70
Oedipe (Voltaire), CF 1718, 1761-68
Radamiste et Zénobie (Crébillon), CF 1711→
Le Retour imprévu (Regnard), CF 1700→
Rose et Colas (Sedaine-Monsigny), CI 1764
Sémiramis (Voltaire), CF 1748, 1759→
Le Soldat magicien (Anseaume-Philidor), CI 1760
Le Tambour nocturne (Destouches), CF 1736, 1762-78
Tom Jones (Poinsinet-Philidor), CI 1765
Les Trois Cousines (Dancourt, CF 1700→)

Genres: tragedy (7); comedy (5); *comédie larmoyante* (1); *comédie anglaise* (1); farce (1); *opéra-comique* and *comédie mêlée d'ariettes* (6); *opéra-comique larmoyant* or *drame mêlé de musique* (1).

⁵⁴ The plays are listed in alphabetical order. I have indicated the year in which they were written and the periods in which they were performed regularly, and in which Faesch was present in Paris.

Players:⁵⁵

Comédie Française

Dumesnil, Marie Françoise Marchand *called* Mlle (1737-1776): 1c 1s
 Drouin, Françoise Marie Jeanne Elisabeth Gaultier *called* Mme (1742-1780): 1s
 Clairon, Claire Josephe Hippolyte Lérés de La Tude *called* Mlle (1743-1765-66):
 1s
 Lekain, Henri Louis Cain *called* Le Kain *or* (1750-1778): 3c
 Bellecour, Jean Claude Gilles Colson *called* (1750-1778): 3s
 Préville, Pierre Louis Du Bus *called* (1753-1786): 2s, 1c
 Brizard, Jean Baptiste Britard *called* (1757-1786): 2c
 Molé, François René (1754-1802): 2s 1c
 Augé, François (1763-1782): 1c
 Saint-Val aînée, Marie Pauline Christine Alziari de Roquefort *called* Mlle (1766-
 1779): 1c

Comédie Italienne:

Carlin, Carlo Antonio Bertinazzi *called* (1741-1783): 1s
 Caillot, Joseph (1760-1772): 1s, 1c
 Clairval, Jean Baptiste Guignard *called* (1762-1792): 1c
 Favart, Marie Justine Benoîte Cabaret de Ronceray *called* Mme (1752-1771):
 1s
 Laruette, Jean Louis La Ruette *called* (1752-1778): 1s,1c
 Laruette, Marie-Thérèse Villette *called* Mlle (1762-1771c.): 1s
 Suier: 1s
 Trial, Antoine (1764-1795): 1c

2. *The Metamorphoses of Melpomene and Thalia, or, Dramatic characters of the French and Italian Comedies*, London, Printed for Robert Sayer, [1770?], 2 p., 30 plates (part fold.), 15 cm. Added title-page in French: *Les Métamorphoses de Melpomène et de Thalie*. Bound with the first edition of *Dramatic Characters*, London, 1770.

⁵⁵ The dates refer to the first engagement in one of the three prestigious theatres considered here (Comédie Française, Comédie Italienne, Opéra Comique) and to the retirement or death of each actor. The number of vignettes in which an actor or actress appear is indicated after the colon. The abbreviations: s (single); c (couple), indicate whether they are depicted singly or in couples. There are 16 vignettes depicting single actors, and 7 depicting couples. For the Comédie Française (CF) see Émile Campardon, *Les Comédiens du Roi de la troupe française pendant les deux derniers siècles* (Paris, 1880), 2 vols., Genève, Slatkine Reprints, 1970; *La troupe des sociétaires de la Comédie-Française de 1680 à 1994*, *Les trésors de la Comédie-Française: La Comédie-Française au-delà du rideau*, (exh. cat., Paris, Comédie Française, October-December 1994), ed by Noëlle Guibert, Paris, Martial, 1994, pp. 171-181. The Comédie Italienne and the Opéra Comique are both indicated as CI, even if the engagement of an actor or actress took place before the merging of the two theatres. For the actors, especially the principal singers, see Émile Campardon, *Les spectacles de la Foire: théâtres, acteurs, sauteurs et danseurs de corde [...] depuis 1595 jusqu'à 1791* (Paris, 1877), 2 vols., Genève, Slatkine Reprints, 1970; Émile Campardon, *Les Comédiens du Roi de la troupe italienne pendant les deux derniers siècles* (Paris, 1880); *Enciclopedia dello Spettacolo*, ed. by Silvio D'Amico, 9 vols., Roma, Le Maschere, 1954-[c.1962]. See also the database 'Cesar: Calendrier électronique des spectacles sous l'Ancien Régime et sous la Révolution' accessible at <http://www.cesar.org.uk>.

As quoted in *The National Union Catalog Pre-1956 Imprints*: NM 0485762
NNC DFo

3. *Les Métamorphoses de Melpomene et de Thalie ou Caracteres dramatiques des Comédies Francaise & Italienne*, A Londres, Chez Robert Sayer, N° 53, Fleet-Street. Publié suivant l'Acte du Parlement, le 1er Août 1772.

Reference copy: BNF Estampes, Tb 25 in-4°.

Description: [2] leaves: black and red engraved title page, table of contents (*Liste des Caracteres*); [23] engraved plates.

Eighteenth-century red calf and gilt binding; leaves 13.2x10.6 cm.; platemarks 9.4-10x7.9-9.3 cm.; plates 12, 13, 14, 15 are folded (leaves: 13.2x22 cm.; platemarks: 9.4-9.7x15 cm.); etchings coloured by hand.

The 23 vignettes are those of *Les Métamorphoses* Paris [c.1770], but have been re-engraved; many of the plates lack captions (1 to 8; 15 to 21; 23). In all of them the date is inscribed: *as the Act directs, 1st Sept.r 1772*.

Note:

Electronic reproduction (IFN-6407536) accessible from the digital library Gallica <http://gallica.bnf.fr>.

A copy in the Harvard Theatre Collection (TS 370.100.31), contains the set of *Les Métamorphoses*, 31 plates from *Dramatic characters*, with imprint of Smith & Sayer (1769-1772) and 4 with imprint of Jefferys & Faden signed by *De Fesch*.

4. *Les Métamorphoses de Melpomene et de Thalie, ou caractères dramatiques des comédies françoise et italienne, dessiné d'après nature par Whirsker*, Paris, Campions Frères, 1782.

The same as the 1772 edition, but re-engraved (as quoted by [John P. Cavanagh], *The Drama Delineated*).

5. *Dramatic Characters, or Different Portraits of the English Stage*, London, Printed for Robt. Sayer and Jno. Smith, 15 Jany. 1770.

Reference copy: New York Public Library, MVER [RBS] 97-341.

[4] leaves: title-page; added title-page in French: *Caracteres dramatiques ou portraits divers du théâtre anglois*; dedication signed *Jno. Smith*; table of *Contents*; 24 engraved plates, 15 cm. As I have not examined this copy, I quote here from the catalogue of the New York Public Library. This imprint could correspond to the first English edition of *Dramatic Characters* containing the original series of 24 vignettes without additions.

Note

A similar issue (original from University of Texas; English Short Title Catalog, N65933), contains [8] leaves; 24 engraved plates. Electronic reproduction Farmington Hills, Mich., Cengage Gale, 2010. Available via the World Wide Web. Access limited by licensing agreements.

6. *Dramatic Characters, or Different Portraits of the English Stage in the Days of Garrick &c.*, Printed for Rob.t Sayer & Co. Fleet Street, London, [1773].

Reference copy: British Library, 11795 ee 41.

[4] leaves: engraved title-page, dedication: *To David Garrick Esq* by Rob.t Sayer, two leaves of letter-press table of *The Contents* (p. [3] lists plates 1-24; p. [4] lists plates 25-38); 40 engraved plates 1-24; 25-38 dated between September 1770 and January 1773 + 3 extra plates from a set signed *De Fesch Delin.t C. Grignion Sculp.t* published by Jefferys and Faden in 1773: [22 bis], [24bis], [39] + 1 extra plate [40] published by Laurie & Whittle, 1802 + 3 appended engraved portraits of Garrick.

Engravings coloured by hand. Leaves 13.6x11 cm.; platemarks 9-9.5x7-8 cm.

Note

Other copies of comparable issues of this edition are housed in various libraries.

British Museum Prints and Drawings Department, 208.a.13 1983.U.2382 (1-40): containing 40 engraved plates; the watermark of plates [39] and [40] shows the date 1814. Bodleian Library of Oxford, M.adds. 123 f. 11. In this case, too, there are two extra plates, [39], identical to [40] in the British Library copy, and [40] different and with no indication of the date or the publisher. Engravings coloured by hand.

In other copies, also comparable to this edition, the title-pages are combined in various ways. The copy in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Département des Estampes, with only the French title-page of 1770, also presents several variants in the sequence of the prints. BNF Estampes, Tb 26 in-4°: *Caracteres Dramatiques, ou Portraits Divers du Théâtre Anglois*, A Londres, chez Robert Sayer, N° 53 Fleet Street, et Jean Smith, N° 35 Cheapside, Publié suivant l'acte du Parlement, le 15 Janvier 1770. In this case, too, plates 1-24 belong to the first series and are numbered; of the following unnumbered plates the thirty-third is missing.

Examples of this edition with a set of 38 plates are housed in the Harvard University Library: Thr.410.19A ex libris Robert Gould Shaw (with the same title-page as the copy in the British Library); Thr.410.19B ex libris Frederick Burgess (with the same title-page as the copy in the BNF); TS 997.70 Dramatic Collection of Daniel Paine Griswold with a double French and English title-page.

List of plates 1 to 24, issued in 1769⁵⁶

1. Mr. Garrick *in ye character of* S.r Jn Brute *in ye Provoked Wife Act 5. scene 2d [...]*
2. Mr. Garrick *in the same Act 4. Scene 1t*
3. Mrs. Barry & Mr. Garrick *in ye Characters of* Donna Violante & Don Felix *in ye Wonder*
4. Mr. Garrick *in the Character of* Abel-Drugger *in the Alchymist*
5. Mr. Garrick *in the Character of* Hamlet
6. Mr. Garrick *in the Character of* King Lear
7. Mr. Garrick *in the Character of* Macbeth

⁵⁶ As listed in the table of *Contents*.

8. Mrs. Yates *in the Character of* Lady Macbeth
9. Mr. Macklin *in the Character of* Shylock *in ye Merchant of Venice*
10. Mr. Clarke *in the Character of* Anthonio *in the same*
11. Mr. Shuter *in the Character of* Justice Woodcock *in Love in a Village*
12. Mr. Beard *in the Character of* Hawthorn *in the same*
13. Mr. Dunstall *in the Character of* Hodge *in D[itt]o*
14. Mrs. Clive *in the Character of* Mrs. Heidelberg
15. Mr. Weston *in the Character of* Dr. Last *in ye Devil upon two Sticks*
16. Mr. Moody *in the Character of* Simon *in Harlequins Invasion*
17. Mr. Foot *in the Character of* the Devil upon two Sticks
18. Mr. Foot *in the Character of* Mrs. Cole *in the Minor*
19. Mr. Foot *in the Character of* the Doctor *in the Devil upon two Sticks*
20. Mr. Powel *in the Character of* Lovewell *in the Clandestine Marriage*
21. Mr. Dibden *in ye Character of* Mungo *in the Celebrated Opera of ye Padlock*
22. Mr. King *in the Character of* Lord Ogleby *in the Clandestine Marriage*
23. Mr. Powel *in the Character of* Cyrus
24. Mrs. Yates *in the Character of* Mandane *in Cyrus*

Plays:⁵⁷

Drury Lane (DL) Covent Garden (CG) Haymarket (HM)

The Alchemist (B. Jonson, 1610), DL (1)
The Clandestine Marriage (D. Garrick-G. Colman, 1766), DL Oct 1769 (3)
Cyrus (J. Hoole, 1768), CG (2)
The Devil upon two Sticks (S. Foote, 1768), HM 30 May 1768 (3)
Hamlet (Shakespeare) DL, (1)
Harlequin's Invasion (D. Garrick, 1759), DL (1)
King Lear (Shakespeare-Tate-D. Garrick, 1756), DL (1)
Love in a Village (I. Bickerstaff-Th. Arne and others, 1762), CG 1766-67 (3)
Macbeth (Shakespeare), DL CG (2)
The Merchant of Venice (Shakespeare), CG (2)
The Minor (S. Foote, 1760), HM (1)
The Padlock (I. Bickerstaff-Ch. Dibdin, 1768), DL Oct 1768 (1)
The Provoked Wife (J. Vanbrugh, 1697), DL (2)
The Wonder (Mrs. Centlivre, 1714), DL (1)

Genres: tragedy (5); comedy (6); pantomime (1); comic *opera-pasticcio* (1); *opéra-comique* or musical farce (1).

⁵⁷ The dates of the performances are generally omitted for plays regularly staged. See for more accurate details *The London Stage, 1660-1800: A Calendar of Plays, Entertainments & Afterpieces together with Casts, Box-receipts and Contemporary Comment, Compiled from the Playbills, Newspapers and Theatrical Diaries of the Period*, 11 vols., Carbondale, Southern Illinois University Press, 1973-1993.

Players:⁵⁸

Ann Barry (1734-1801) (1c) plate 3
 John Beard (1716-1791) last appearance as *Hawthorn*: CG 9 April 1767; (1s) plate 12
 Matthew Clarke (fl. 1755-1783) (1s) plate 10
 Catherine Clive (1711-1785) (1s) retired in 1769; plate 14
 Charles Dibdin (1745-1814) (1s) plate 21
 John Dunstall (d. 1778) (1s) plate 13
 Samuel Foote (1720-1777) (3s) plates 17 to 19
 David Garrick (1717-1779) (7: 6s 1c) plates 1 to 7
 Thomas King (1730-1805) (1s) plate 22
 Charles Macklin (1699-1797) (1s) plate 9
 John Moody (1727-1812) (1s) plate 16
 William Powell (1735-1769) (2s) died in 1769; plates 20 and 23
 Edward Shuter (1728?-1776) (1s) plate 11
 Thomas Weston (1737-1776) (1s) plate 15
 Mary Ann Yates (1728-1787) (2s) plates 8 and 24

Single: s (23); Couple: c (1)

Plates bearing the date 1769: 2, 3, 5 (*16 Oct.*), 6 (*10 Oct.*), 7, 8, 9 (*1 Oct.*), 10 (*20 Dec.*), 11 (*20 Dic.*), 12 (*20 Dic.*), 13 (*20 Dic.*), 14, 16, 17 (*1 Oct.*), 20 (*1 Oct.*), 22, 23, 24.

List of plates 25 to 38, issued from 1770 to 1773: added in the [1773] edition

25. Mr. Weston *and* Mr. Garrick *in the Characters of* Scrub *and* Archer, *in the Stratagem*
26. Mr. Reddish *in the Character of* Posthumus, *in Cymbeline*
27. Mr. Garrick *in the Character of* Sir John Brute, *Act 5th*
28. Mr. Woodward *in the Character of* Razor, *in the Upholsterer*
29. Mr. Garrick *in the Character of* Lord Chalkstone *in Lethe*
30. Mr. Powell *in the Character of* Posthumus, *in Cymbeline*
31. Mr. Barry *in the Character of* Hotspur, *in the First Part of Henry IVth*
32. Mrs. Bellamy *in the Character of* Clarinda, *in the Suspicious Husband*
33. Mr. Smith *in the Character of* Jachimo, *in Cymbeline*
34. Mr. Garrick *in the Character of* King Richard III.d.
35. Mrs. Abington *in the Character of* Estifania, *in Rule e Wife and Have a Wife*
36. Mrs. Barry *in the Character of* Rosalind, *in As you Like It*
37. Mr. Garrick *in the Character of* Lusignan, *in Zara, Act 2d*
38. Miss Pope *in the Character of* Doll Snip, *in Harlequin's Invasion*

⁵⁸ The dates between parentheses refer to the birth and death of the players. See *A Biographical Dictionary of Actors, Actresses, Musicians, Dancers, Managers, & other Stage Personnel in London 1660-1800*, ed. by Philip H. Highfill, Kalman A. Burnim, Edward A. Longhans, 16 vols., Carbondale & Edwardsville, Southern Illinois University Press, 1973-1993.

Plays:

As you Like It (Shakespeare), DL 1767-1772 (1)
The Beaux' Stratagem (G. Farquhar, 1707), DL (1)
Cymbeline (Shakespeare-Garrick), CG (Powell from 1767; Smith) DL (Powell 1763 to 1767; Reddish: from 1767) (3)
Harlequin's Invasion (D. Garrick, 1759), DL (1)
Henry IV (Shakespeare), CG (1)
Lethe (D. Garrick, 1740 and 1756), DL 1766 (1)
The Provoked Wife (J. Vanbrugh, 1697), DL (1)
Richard III (Shakespeare-Cibber), DL (1)
Rule a Wife and Have a Wife (F. Beaumont and J. Fletcher, 1624), 1769-70 (1)
The Suspicious Husband (B. Hoadley, 1747), (1)
The Tragedy of Zara (A. Hill, 1736, from the tragedy by Voltaire), (1)
The Upholsterer (A. Murphy, 1758), DL (1)

Players:

Frances Abington (1737-1815) (1s) plate 35
Anne Barry (1734-1801) (1s) plate 36
Spranger Barry (1717?-1777) (1s) plate 31
George-Ann Bellamy (1731?-1788) (1s) plate 32
David Garrick (1717-1779) (5: 4s 1c) plates 25, 27, 29, 34, 37
Jane Pope (1742-1818) (1s) plate 38
William Powell (1735-1769) died in 1769; (1s) plate 30
Samuel Reddish (1735-1785) (1s) plate 26
Thomas Weston (1737-1776) (1c) plate 25
Henry Woodward (1714-1777) (1s) plate 28
William Smith (1730-1819) (1s) CG moved to DL in 1774-5; plate 33

Single: s (23); Couple: c (2)

Plates bearing the date 1770: 37 (13 Sept.)

Plates bearing the date 1771: 25 (20 Dec.); 26 (30 Oct); 34 (20 Dec.); 35 (20 Dec.)

Plates bearing the date 1772: 27 (2? Jan.); 28 (20 March); 36 (20 May.); 38 (20 Nov.)

Plates bearing the date 1773: 33 (5 Jan.)

Engravings issued as separate plates in 1773 by *Jefferys and Faden* Corner of *St. Martins Lane* *Charing Cross*. Some of them bear the mention: *From the Collection of the R.t Hon.ble Lord Vic.t Russborough*. Most of them are signed by Faesch.

Engravings inscribed: *Published as the Act directs 1er May 1773:*

Mrs Abington *in the Character of Mrs. Ford in the Merry Wives of Windsor*, De Fesch delin.t-C.Grignion sculp.t

Mr. Bourette:⁵⁹ Flamand, *dans Turcaret, Comédie Française*, De Fesch [delin.t et sculp.t
 Mr. Carlin: Arlequin *sortant de la mer dans Le Prince de Salerne Comédie Italienne*, [De Fesch]
 Mr. Carlin: Arlequin *en deuil de son maître dans le Viellard amoureux Comédie Italienne*, De Fesch delin.t-C.Grignion sculp.t
 Mlle Dumesnil: Merope *dans la Comédie [sic] Française du même nom*, De Fesch delin.t-C.Grignion sculp.t
 Mr. Garrick *in the Character of Archer in Beaux Stratagem*, De Fesch delin.t-C.Grignion sculp.t
 [Garrick *unidentified Character* (Sir John Brute?) dark suit and tricorne], De Fesch delin.t-C.Grignion sculp.t
 Mr. King, *in the Character of Lord Ogleby, in the Clandestine Marriage*, De Fesch delin.t-Js Basire sculp.t
 Me Laruette et Mr Clairval: Catau et Lucas *dans Julie*⁶⁰ Act 2d *Comédie Italienne*, De Fesch delin.t-C.Grignion sculp.t
 Mr Laruette: Mr. Tue, *dans On ne s'avis [sic] jamais de tout*⁶¹ *Comédie Italienne*, De Fesch delin.t-C.Grignion sculp.t
 Mr. Le Kain: Orosmane *dans Zayre Comédie Française [...]*, De Fesch delin.t-C.Grignion sculp.t
 Mr. Preville: Antoine *dans le Philosophe sans le Sçavoir. Comédie Française*, De Fesch delin.t-Js Basire sculp.t

Engraving issued in a different date (*Published as the Act directs, Nov.r 16 1773*):

Mrs. Yates, *in the Character of Mandane in Cyrus*, De Fesch del. -C.Grignion sculp.t

4. *Delineavit ad vivum*

What we know about Faesch's vignettes – the artist's familiarity with the world of the theatre, his links with Lekain and Garrick, and the status of these patrons – is certainly enough to suggest that these delightful miniatures and the engravings made from them are also important as visual records. In his essay on the collection of gouaches of the Comédie Française, Huthwohl provides several examples of their faithfulness, at least with regard to theatre costumes.⁶² The title of the collection given to Garrick also leads us to believe that one of the aims of the miniatures was precisely to show the costumes of the French actors, and in particular the first steps towards the use of historical costumes, albeit with all the limitations that must have

⁵⁹ Claude Antoine Bouret or Bourette (1732-1783) made his debut at the Comédie Française on 2 December 1762 as Turcaret in the comedy of the same name by Lesage. But he also performed the role of Turcaret's valet, Flamand, which proved one of his most accomplished comic interpretations.

⁶⁰ *Comédie à ariettes* in three acts by Monvel et Dezède staged at the Hotel de Bourgogne in September 1772.

⁶¹ A successful vaudeville in one act (*On ne s'avis jamais de tout*), by Sedaine et Monsigny (1761) staged in April 1769 at the Hotel de Bourgogne.

⁶² See J. Huthwohl, 'Les costumes des Lumières: la collection de miniatures de Fesch et Whirsker de la Comédie-Française'.

accompanied this development at the Comédie, before the neo-classical climate that coincided with the revolutionary reform introduced by Talma.

That Garrick was interested in looking towards France is not surprising, since English practices in the use of historical costumes were rather peculiar, and generally not dictated by a vision coherent with the play being staged. As a stage director Garrick was certainly aware of the needs of unity of representation: with regard to scenery and decorations; however, in stage costuming he seems not to have strayed far from current practices.⁶³ In England, for the performance of tragedies or historical dramas strictly historical costume was only used for Henry VIII, on the basis of the image created by Holbein, which Hogarth, too, had followed. For other kings, even for those who had reigned in the Middle Ages, like Richard III, costumes inspired by the Renaissance were used. For Shakespearean comedy actors would wear fanciful variations of the so-called Van Dyck costume. Otherwise contemporary dress prevailed, albeit in keeping with the play being performed, such as the famous black French suit worn by Garrick when interpreting the character of Hamlet. Possibly Garrick gave more attention to matters of costume in relation to historical accuracy after his continental tour, in relation to the eminence that scenery and decorations assumed at Drury Lane starting from the theatrical season 1765-1766.⁶⁴ Stone and Kahrl seem to agree with this opinion.⁶⁵ Nevertheless it is a matter of fact that Garrick was aware of the importance of historical accuracy even if he persisted, in some cases, in using anachronistic costumes. His connoisseurship in this field is attested by the titles of some volumes on historical costume housed in his library.⁶⁶

In general, however, the costumes of French actors and actresses depicted by Faesch seem to show that an attempt had been made to achieve appropriateness and historical accuracy in stage costuming, at least as the eighteenth century visualized it. I am not referring only to the more “revolutionary” costumes, such as that of *Clairon as Electra*, with a realistic display of the mourning and the chains of the imprisoned princess, and the abolition of the great farthingale. I am also referring to the systematic introduction, undoubtedly extremely appropriate for the times, of decorations and accessories that evoked “past times” or “exotic countries”, and that were certainly perceived by the audience as historical representations: Greek-key decorations for Hellenic princesses, fringes, animal skins or striped cloths for Oriental costumes, headdresses, shoes, weapons of various types, and whatever else might suggest far-off times and places.

⁶³ On Garrick’s limited interest in the historical appropriateness of stage costuming, see Kalman A. Burnim, *David Garrick Director*, Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh Press, 1961, pp. 76-77. Stage tradition must undoubtedly have played a part in this choice, more than economic reasons, in that costume expenditures in Garrick’s theatre were in any case quite high.

⁶⁴ ‘When Garrick returned to London much impressed by some of the achievements of scenographic splendor which he had viewed in Paris, a new impetus was given to Drury Lane’s scenic activities. [...] By 1770 scenery had indeed assumed an eminence which it had never previously enjoyed at Drury Lane’. Ibid., pp.70-71.

⁶⁵ G. W. Stone and G. M. Kahrl, *David Garrick: A Critical Biography*, pp. 329-331.

⁶⁶ *A Collection of the Dresses of Different Nations, Ancient and Modern. Particularly Old English Dresses*, 4 vols., London, Thomas Jefferys, 1757-1772.

To modern eyes these costumes might seem extravagant or even ridiculous, but at the time they must have been extremely important, due precisely to the coherent attempt to render specific historical contexts.⁶⁷

Although important, these observations do not fully exhaust the question of the documentary value of the vignettes. This depends, in fact, not only on the faithfulness of the costumes depicted to the originals, but also on aspects related to the interpretation of the actors, rendered explicit in the choice of a precise moment of the performance, in the lines, which are often indicated, in the movements and the gestures of the speakers, in their expressions, rendered with individual detail, and finally in the spatial and proxemic relations. Although essential – they are, after all, only actors in costume performing in an empty space – these images reflect a precise aim to record the *jeu* of the actor.

How? And, first of all, how and why did they become established, these little representations of the stage? What examples inspired Faesch, and perhaps also Lekain, who might have been his first patron together with Preville and Monnet? What method was used, at least initially, to portray the actors?

Almost all these images present silhouettes in profile; one might happily say all of them, in fact, for even in the rare cases in which the bodies are shown in slight three-quarter profile, the faces are always drawn in full profile. There are at least two reasons behind this choice, aesthetic and technical: that is the theatrical quality and the faithfulness of the “shot”, to use a photographic term that will prove to be highly appropriate for the case in question.

The tradition of costume figures does not seem to provide relevant precedents in this respect: in fact these almost always presented their fictional costumed performers frontally. Representation in profile is not equally important for costumes, unless it is deemed necessary to highlight various aspects: the volume or the additional elements of cloth, the relationship between the outfit and the body and the gesture of the actor at a precise moment, the distance between one actor and another, considering the size of their costumes. This was also the opinion of Claude Gillot, who drew two impressionistic sketches of Baron as he performed with another actor: in this case, too, which in my opinion shows a significant change in the way of observing the actor on stage, the artist seems to favour full profile.⁶⁸ Representation in profile also undoubtedly highlighted the need for actors to be completely absorbed in the scene they were performing, both alone and in dialogue with a fellow actor, without all the “distractions” or pleasant “digressions” that theatrical anecdotes narrate and that the eighteenth-century treatises on the reform of the theatre look on with scorn, at times vaguely tinged (as in the case of the *Paradoxe*)

⁶⁷ The reference here is to the attention Lekain paid to theatrical costume. ‘Non moins familiarisé avec le dessin qu’avec les lettres, Lekain traçait lui-même ses costumes, conformément aux renseignements qu’il devait à ses recherches. C’est lui qui a établi dans cet important accessoire une vérité qu’avant lui on ne connaissait pas, et qu’il ne modifiait que pour lui donner plus de dignité. C’est lui qui substitua à la friperie burlesque, dont les héros de l’antiquité s’affublaient sur notre théâtre, des habits appropriés aux temps et aux mœurs auxquels appartenait l’action représentée’. [A. V. Arnault], *Les Souvenirs et les regrets* (1861), pp. 20-21.

⁶⁸ The two drawings in red chalk (sanguine), attributed to Claude Gillot; represent scenes from Racine’s *Athalie* (British Museum, 1937, 3.22.1) and from Corneille’s *Horace* (London, Private Collection). See Denis Sutton, ‘On two drawings by Claude Gillot’, *The Burlington Magazine*, 96, no. 614 (May, 1954); M. I. Aliverti, *Il ritratto d’attore*, pp. 103-105.

with a degree of astonished admiration for the sang-froid of certain star actors. Showing actors frontally in a semi-circle or arranged ‘en brochette’ – the expression used by Martine de Rougemont – did not have exactly the same significance.⁶⁹

Absorption in the performance thus appears to be an important feature of these gouaches, behind which once again we can see the innovative professional quality of certain actors with a different tradition of *jeu*: Lekain, Clairon or Preville at the Comédie Française, Bertinazzi at the Comédie Italienne, or Mme Favart at the Opéra Comique.

What was the best way of drawing actors as they performed? The expression *delineavit ad vivum* may in fact mean many things with regard to the “method” of portraiture, and on this point it is worth going a little further than previous discussions of these vignettes. Gillot certainly drew sketches of actors on the stage, and all his corpus of drawings displays a remarkable ability to capture movements and gestures, and even the very spirit of the scene, its fleeting significance. But did Faesch possess this ability? Family tradition undoubtedly led him, at least partly, towards art, but that of goldsmiths and miniaturists, craftsmen and artists specialized in fine detail. Just as his first patron, Lekain – it should be remembered – was also the son of a goldsmith. Faesch, we may conclude, did not possess the artistic gifts that would make it possible for him to capture the spirit of his subjects, something that probably came naturally to Gillot.

If we bear in mind the fact that Lekain and his colleagues wanted to offer Garrick the most complete and faithful record of the costumes and the *jeu* of the Français and Italiens, it would seem to follow that at least some of these actors were willing to pose in order to allow the artist to capture every detail. The use of an optical instrument seems quite likely, and the need to capture the brightness of colours as a significant aspect of the images might point to a refined instrument: that is, the sorts of portable camera obscuras, easy to use, that were becoming popular during these years.

The eighteenth century witnessed the growing success of optical recreations, both the camera obscura for reproducing views of various types, peep shows and *lanternes magiques* for the purpose of entertainment.⁷⁰ Their popularity spread far beyond the professional ambit of landscape painters or the travelling shows of the *colporteurs*. Instructions and manuals for the construction and use of optical machines were available to the curious and to amateurs. In the third volume of the *Encyclopédie* (1753), under the entry ‘Chambre obscure’ or ‘Chambre close’, the workings and construction of a portable camera obscura were explained in detail.⁷¹ 1769-1770 saw

⁶⁹ M. de Rougemont used this term speaking in a seminar, à propos of a theatrical painting by Nicolas Lancret, known today only from the engraving by Nicolas-Gabriel Dupuis, which represents Grandval, Quinault-Dufresne, Mlle Labatte and Mlle Quinault La Cadette, in their respective characters from the play *Le Glorieux*, by Destouches. Lancret’s composition, usually referred to the third act of the comedy (scene 3), shows the four players standing in a salon with architectural decoration (possibly a stage set), frozen in their elegant attitude in front of the beholder.

⁷⁰ With regard to this great diffusion, see Laurent Mannoni, *Le grand art de la lumière et de l’ombre*, Paris, Nathan, 1995, pp. 88-133. On the difference between *boîtes d’optique* (peep shows), used especially in private homes for entertainment, and *lanternes magiques* in the professional itinerant shows of the *colporteurs*, see in particular pp. 88-91.

⁷¹ ‘Chambre obscure ou Chambre close’ in Denis Diderot and Jean Baptiste Le Rond d’Alembert (eds.), *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences des Arts et des Métiers*, Paris, Briasson; David; Le Breton; Durand, 1751-80, III (1753), pp. 62-63. See also ‘Construction d’une chambre obscure

the publication in Paris of the four volumes of the *Nouvelles récréations physiques et mathématiques* by Monsieur Guyot of the Société littéraire et militaire of Besançon, the second volume of which was entirely devoted to optical recreations and gave instructions both on the instruments and on how to produce and paint transparencies.⁷²

In drawing-rooms, too, show-boxes used for viewing drawings and engravings were extremely popular. Theatrical views were composed of perspective sets with or without characters. The transparencies were mounted in the show-box: thanks to the optical device the whole scene was visible with a depth of field that enhanced its realism. The taste for theatrical *vues d'optique* thus created a way of looking at the scene and the actors that was imaginary, iconic and removed from the material conditions of performance. We must therefore take account of this cultural context, which saw reproduction play a growing role in the diffusion of visual spectacle, in order to grasp fully the significance of Faesch's miniatures.

Faesch's miniatures, probably painted using a camera obscura, were also destined to be viewed in a show-box.⁷³ The vellum used by Faesch as support for drawing, sometimes oiled to secure its transparency, the density of the pigments, and the outlines marked in Chinese ink to highlight the pattern of colours, suggest that these gouaches, or at least many of them, were born as *enluminures d'optique*, for which special paint mixtures were selected.⁷⁴

However, in order to reach well-founded hypotheses on Faesch's procedure and his possible use of optical instruments, we must ask whether he had foreseen right from the beginning, that is from 1765, the possibility of producing multiple copies of the same vignette, something which does not seem unlikely, at least within certain limits. It seems improbable, in fact, that the actors who agreed to be portrayed would not have wanted a copy of the miniatures for themselves. We know that Lekain possessed some, and the same is undoubtedly true of the others. However, it does not necessarily follow that the idea of "serial" production, or of having the vignettes engraved, came right at the beginning. It is no coincidence, in fact, that they were actually engraved several years later: the first edition of *Les Métamorphoses* was published at the end of 1769, several years after Garrick's stay in Paris, which, as we

portative' on p. 63. This portable camera was told to be of a great usefulness for amateur artists who intended to draw from life with right proportions and precision of details: 'Par le moyen de cet instrument, [...] quelqu'un qui ne sait pas le dessein pourra néanmoins dessiner les objets avec la dernière justesse et la dernière exactitude; et celui qui sait dessiner ou même peindre pourra encore par ce même moyen se perfectionner dans son art'. Two sorts of portable cameras, with lenses mounted horizontally or vertically, whose construction was explained in detail in the above mentioned entry, were after illustrated in the 'Recueil de planches', *ibid.*, IV (1767), *Optique* (figg. 17-18).

⁷² Edme Gilles Guyot, *Nouvelles récréations physiques et mathématiques*, 4 vols., Paris, Gueffier, 1769-1770.

⁷³ For details see below and Section 7.

⁷⁴ An advertisement cited by Mannoni, regarding precisely the commerce by Guyot of this sort of special paint: 'Guyot vend en 1769 des "couleurs en tablettes au nombre de vingt, propres pour ces sortes d'enluminures d'optique": bleu de Prusse, gomme-gutte (jaune), carmin, vert d'eau, vert de vessie (vert clair), indigo, safran, bistre, pierre de fiel (jaune sale), encre "de la Chine", laque de Venise (rouge), "amer" de bœuf ou de carpe ("sert pour faciliter les couleurs à s'étendre lorsque le papier est gras"), alun (sel pour imbiber les estampes)' (*italics added*). L. Mannoni, *Le grand art de la lumière et de l'ombre*, p. 91. Only chemical analysis could confirm whether Faesch's paints include these components, although several of them, such as Prussian blue and Chinese ink, are recognizable to the eye.

have seen, coincided with Faesch's debut. During these years the Swiss artist certainly executed various miniatures of French actors in Paris, and *Les Métamorphoses* themselves contain vignettes produced after 1765. In this respect a complete catalogue of the existing gouaches will provide further information, though still limited, as the miniatures are rarely dated and the performance of the *pièces* cannot always be pinned down to a particular year. In fact successful productions, those which would be most suitable for the vignettes, were performed for more than one season. The possibility of making the same drawing more than once in a relatively short time was certainly not new, and various methods of transferring his compositions from one surface to another could be employed by Faesch, both in view of copying a miniature or of etching a drawing on a copper plate: pounce, offset, counterproof, stylus, etc. However, my impression is that the number of copies produced during these years was still rather small, reserved for a limited market.

It was only in London, in contact with the lively English market for engravings, and perhaps on Garrick's advice, that the idea of the serial production of these images was implemented, to be continued in Paris, too, from 1769 onwards. When Faesch arrived in London the painting genre of *theatrical conversation pieces* was at its peak, thanks partly to the extraordinary patronage of David Garrick. In the early 1760s the great actor had met the German painter Johann Zoffany (1733-1810), who he had found to be capable of producing theatrical pictures of great artistic quality, and had immediately adopted as his "official painter". Zoffany's technique, superior to that of his employer and master Benjamin Wilson, one of the first to develop the genre, allowed him to depict with remarkable definition all the details of the scene set, and the costumes, positions, gestures and expressions of the actors. Aiming at rendering clear and faithful images, Zoffany must have reconstructed the scene in

posing sessions with the actors⁷⁵ and quite probably made use of a camera obscura to frame the whole scene and focus on the details.⁷⁶

If Faesch already had a portable camera obscura at his disposal when he made his first miniatures of actors between 1765 and 1768, his expertise in optical devices could have improved during the period of his journeys to London (1768-1775/early 1776), both through his contacts with Garrick's circles and because the market for optical devices in London was particularly thriving.⁷⁷ Here Faesch could have discovered more refined systems of camera obscura such as the advanced version that the enterprising English instrument maker William Storer (1750-1799) patented in June 1778, but that he had begun to experiment in the preceding years: it was called – thanks to the patents obtained by the inventor – the 'Royal Delineator'. The camera obscura designed by Storer can be considered, due to its portability and its technical superiority, to be the true ancestor of the photographic camera. This optical apparatus produced images of remarkable clarity, without the need to capture the subject in daylight, and was thus suited to posing indoors. Storer's optical box could, in fact, even be used in a candle-lit room.

⁷⁵ On the method used by Zoffany to paint the actors there is some uncertainty of opinion. Helen R. Smith makes the following hypothesis about the way the studio sessions were organized: 'Although Zoffany's paintings were composed in the studio and the figures probably painted one by one as the actors had time to pose in costume, they suggest, at their most successful, the vivid interactions of an actual performance' (H. R. Smith, *David Garrick 1717-1779: A Brief Account*, p. 53). I agree with Smith with regard to the way the actors posed in the studio. She does not, however, make any mention of the possible use by Zoffany of optical instruments. Since we possess a few painted sketches by Zoffany, we can state that he certainly did not exclude the sketching phase. This does not contrast, however, with the fact that he drew the actors as they posed with the help of the camera obscura, probably executing both the group of actors and each actor individually, and then placed the figures in a scenic setting based on the original theatrical setting, perhaps enriched with details of his own invention. This solution seems to me more likely than settings reconstructed in the studio. This explains the discords that Mary Webster, the author of an important monograph on Zoffany, observes: 'The figures appear forced in their liveliness as of an actor performing a piece of stage business, and at times the setting does not fuse with them, either from faults of perspective and proportion or from excessive concentration on detail', Mary Webster, *Johann Zoffany 1733-1810*, (exh. cat., London, National Portrait Gallery, 14 January-27 March 1977), London, NPG, 1977, p. 10. These discords, which Webster is unable to explain, can, however, be explained very well if we surmise that Zoffany used a procedure similar to that of Faesch. It is highly unlikely, however, that Zoffany drew inspiration directly from theatrical performance. The first theatrical conversation piece painted by Zoffany for Garrick is *David Garrick in 'The Farmer's Return'* (Biddick Hall, Lord Lambton Collection), exhibited at the Society of Artists in April 1762. In this case the short lapse of time between the premiere of Garrick's interlude (20 March) and the exhibition of the painting confirms that the work must have been painted during the rehearsal of the pièce, in order to enable the rapid publicity that Garrick sought.

⁷⁶ The use of the camera obscura was widespread among painters of the time. Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723-1792), who was among the first supporters of William Storer's 'Royal Delineator', also used one. As did another painter, who had emigrated from Paris to London in 1771, Philip Jacques de Loutherbourg (1740-1812), who was also introduced to David Garrick by Monnet and immediately employed by the actor and stage director as scene painter at the Drury Lane. In strict association with his innovative practice of set design, Loutherbourg carried out pioneering experiments, such as the famous *Eidophusikon*, a multimedia optical show staged in a miniature playhouse which opened on 26 February 1781 in Lisle Street, now Leicester Square.

⁷⁷ In London, even more than in Paris, there was a proliferation of optical shops and workshops. See L. Mannoni, *Le grand art*, pp. 132-133.

External objects – whether they were landscapes, buildings, plants, flowers, figures or portraits – were reflected by a system of three lenses and a reflex mirror onto a horizontal transparent screen on which the support (paper, vellum, canvas) could be arranged to outline the drawing from life.⁷⁸ The same system could be used to copy a print or a drawing.⁷⁹ The advertisements and demonstrations of the ‘Royal Delineator’ in the newspapers of the time are very significant. They include advertisements by local artists who used the device created by Storer: a certain Mrs. Adams, for example, used it to produce *miniature pictures on vellum* just like those of Faesch. Storer’s box was also employed very soon by amateur draughtsmen and by artists. Sir Horace Walpole described it enthusiastically in a letter to Henry Seymour Conway dated 16 September 1777: ‘a new sort of camera obscura for drawing the portraits of persons, or prospects, or insides of room, and does not depend on the sun or anything’. Even if greatly embarrassed with dealing with the new device (‘The misfortune is, that there is a vast deal of machinery and putting together, and I am the worse person living for managing it’), Walpole writes enthusiastically: ‘Sir Joshua Reynolds and West have each got one; and the duke of Northumberland is so charmed with the invention, that I dare say he can talk upon and explain it till I should understand ten times less of the matter than I do’.⁸⁰

The reference to Northumberland is extremely interesting in this context. In fact among the miniatures engraved for the *Dramatic Characters*, certainly among the first to be made by Faesch in England, are several which bear the words: *Done from the original picture of the same size in the possession of Her Grace the Duchess of Northumberland*.⁸¹ This indication, which undoubtedly gave the small vignettes a certain prestige, also testifies to a direct relationship between Faesch and the nobleman, a devotee of optical science, and not coincidentally one of Canaletto’s most important patrons in

⁷⁸ The apparatus includes a pair of front lenses of around 10x13/13.5 cm., arranged vertically: the first on the front of the device, which can be obscured by a sliding wooden panel; the second interchangeable, and framed in wood, to be used for ‘Portraits and near objects’; the view passed through the front lens and was reflected by a sloping reflex mirror in a horizontal lens (c.15x20.5 cm.), placed on the upper part of the box, which gives a bright overall image. The draughtsman can copy this image by laying the support (paper, vellum, cloth), made suitable for drawing, on the transparent glass placed over the horizontal lens to protect it. The device has a strut to push the lens forward. See L. Mannoni, *Le mouvement continué. Catalogue illustré de la collection des appareils de la Cinémathèque française*, Paris, Cinémathèque française-Musée du Cinéma; Milano, Mazzotta, 1996, pp. 134-135, no. 163; Peter de Clercq, ‘William Storer, an inventive and enterprising optician in late 18th-century London’, *Bulletin of the Scientific Instrument Society*, no. 98, 28-40, available on the website www.sis.org.uk/pdf/clercqappendices.pdf, accessed in September 2010. Some of Storer’s optical boxes are reproduced on the website <http://www.scienceandsociety.co.uk>, accessed in September 2010.

⁷⁹ This can be inferred from an advertisement in the *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, 23 August 1783. A full list of the patents for Storer’s Dealineator and the advertisements, published as ‘Appendices’ to Peter de Clercq’s essay ‘William Storer, an inventive and enterprising optician in late 18th-century London’. A similar system could also have been used by Faesch, even some years earlier, to execute the copies of the vignettes of the *Métamorphoses* or of the original miniatures, in order to engrave the plates for the English edition.

⁸⁰ *Horace Walpole’s Correspondence*, ed. by W. S. Lewis, L. E. Troide, E. M. Martz, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1974, p. 293. J. J. Foster gives notice that ‘a collection of 15 small drawings [possibly by Faesch] of celebrated English and French comedians, was among the miniatures belonging to Horace Walpole and sold at Strawberry Hill’ (J. J. Foster, *Dictionary of Painters of Miniatures 1525-1850*, p. 110).

⁸¹ See the list in Section 3.

England.⁸² Like Garrick, the Duke and Duchess of Northumberland may well have been aware of the experimental character of these small images, and Faesch may even have met the Duke precisely because of their common interest in this type of instrument. Almost all the prints drawn from the miniatures in the collection of the Duchess of Northumberland share the peculiarity that they can be related to original creations by Faesch, and may thus be the fruit of representations *ad vivum* made by the artist, rather than being drawn, like others, after the theatrical conversation pieces of the painters linked to Garrick.⁸³ On this point, too, however, some clarification is necessary.

The reliance of the first sets of *Dramatic Characters* (1770 and 1772-3) on the theatrical conversation pieces is ascertained by the high proportion of Faesch's vignettes that were drawn directly or indirectly from works of this type, in particular from Zoffany and Wilson. Faesch, as we know, portrayed his actors alone or in pairs, or more rarely in groups of three, though always without any element of the set, restricting himself, when necessary, to one or two significant accessories. In this case, too, he followed the same strategy, isolating the actors from the scenes depicted in the paintings.

Robert Sayer, who in 1770 published the first set of *Dramatic Characters* (24), augmented in 1772-3 (24+14 new vignettes), was at the same time monopolizing the market in engravings from the theatrical conversation pieces of Wilson and Zoffany. Sayer 'astutely purchased copper-plates including a large share of those by James McArdell and presumably acquired 'a one-third share of the Finlayson-Zoffany

⁸² Hugh Percy, First Duke of Northumberland, (c.1714-1786), was an eminent patron of the arts and sciences. The duke and duchess, Elisabeth Seymour, daughter of the Seventh Duke of Somerset, were the patrons of the brothers James and Robert Adam, architects from whom they commissioned important restoration work on their homes (in particular Syon House, Middlesex, 1762-1769). David Garrick, too, had strong links with the 'Cari Adelphi' (dear Adelpheis), James and Robert Adam. The actor and manager entrusted them with the work at the villa in Hampton (Middlesex) and at the Drury Lane (1775-1776). Garrick was among the first to purchase a house in the residential buildings in Adelphi Terrace, designed by Robert Adam (1768-1772), where he moved as early as 1772. The relations between Lord Percy and Garrick, which have never been investigated, were undoubtedly intensified by their common membership of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufacture and Commerce. In this context the duke and the actor-manager joined forces in the promotion and funding of the 'British Cast-Plate Glass Manufactory' established in Lancashire in 1773.

⁸³ *Mr. Garrick as Sir John Brute in 'The Provok'd Wife'* (*Dramatic Characters*, hereafter D.C. no. 2) is the only print drawn after a miniature in the Northumberland collection that was taken directly from Zoffany's theatrical conversation piece. *Mr. Garrick in the character of Macbeth* (D.C. no. 7), and *Mrs. Yates in the character of Lady Macbeth* (D.C. no. 8), although they can be related to Zoffany's famous painting, *Garrick and Mrs. Pritchard in 'Macbeth'* (1768), are independent works. The same is also true of *Mr. Moody in the character of Simon in 'Harlequin's Invasion'* (D.C. no. 16), which does, however, present some of the features of the portrait of another actor painted by Zoffany (*Thomas Knight as Roger in 'The Ghost'*). In the vignette *Mr. King in the character of Lord Ogleby in the 'Clandestine marriage'* (D.C. no. 22), the actor is depicted in a different pose both from the portrait (*Thomas King as Lord Ogleby*, Collection of the Hon. Evan Charteris) and from Zoffany's theatrical conversation piece (*Thomas King as Lord Ogleby and Mrs. Baddeley as Fanny Stirling in 'The Clandestine Marriage'*, 1769-1770). Other vignettes in the Northumberland collection, *Mrs Barry and Mr. Garrick in the characters of Donna Violante and don Felix in the 'Wonder'* (D.C. no. 2); *Mrs. Clive in the character of Mrs. Heidelberg* (D.C. no. 14); *Mr. Powell in the character of Cyrus* (D.C. no. 23); and *Mr. Barry in the character of Hotspur in the 1st part of Henry IVth* (D.C. no. 31), seem, on the other hand, to be completely independent works. For a more detailed list of the conversations pieces related directly or indirectly to the *Dramatic Characters*, see below.

theatre plates'.⁸⁴ The links between Sayer and Zoffany are also proven by the fact that in 1770 the artist made a portrait of Sayer's thirteen-year-old son, *Master James Sayer*.⁸⁵

The following is a list of the theatrical conversation pieces and related mezzotints which several vignettes of the first and second sets of *Dramatic Characters* were directly drawn after, or which they are related to, as they represent the same characters:⁸⁶ twenty-four vignettes dated between October and December 1769, published in 1770, and fourteen vignettes dated between September 1770 and January 1773.⁸⁷

Zoffany's theatrical conversation pieces after which vignettes in the first set are drawn:

- (D.C. no. 2): Johann Zoffany, *David Garrick as Sir John Brute in 'The Provok'd Wife'*, 1763-5, Wolverhampton Art Gallery, exh. S.A. 1765; there is also a study for the central figure of Garrick, Shakespeare Memorial National Theatre Trust;⁸⁸ mezzotint engraved by John Finlayson, publ. 1 Nov. 1768, exh. S.A. in May 1769; the plate was later acquired by Sayer c.1774
- (D.C. nos. 9, 10) Johann Zoffany, *Macklin as Shylock and Clarke as Antonio in 'The Merchant of Venice'*, c.1768, London, Tate Gallery; and other paintings reputedly by Zoffany of *Macklin as Shylock*, c.1769
- (D.C. nos. 11, 12, 13) Johann Zoffany, *Shuter as Justice Woodcock, Beard as Hawthorn and Dunstall as Hodge in 'Love in a Village'*, 1766-7, Detroit Institute of Art, exh. S.A. 1767; last performance of Beard as *Hawthorn*: 9 April 1768; mezzotint engraved by John Finlayson, publ. 1 March 1768, exh. S.A. in May 1768; the plate was later acquired by Sayer c.1774

Zoffany's theatrical conversation pieces which characters in the vignettes of the first set are related to, but not directly drawn after:

- (D.C. nos. 7, 8) Johann Zoffany, *David Garrick and Mrs. Pritchard in 'Macbeth'*, 1768, two versions: Baroda Museum, India (original version); London, The Garrick Club, no. 253; Zoffany's painting was made to celebrate Mrs. Pritchard's farewell benefit on 25 April 1768; mezzotint

⁸⁴ Ch. Lennox-Boyd, *Theatre: the Age of Garrick*, p. xi. See also, about Sayer's unscrupulous management, Carol Wax, *The Mezzotint: History and Technique*, London, Thames and Hudson, 1990, pp. 42-43.

⁸⁵ Johann Zoffany, *Master James Sayer*, canvas 89x68.5 cm., dated 1770, now in a private collection. See M. Webster, *Johann Zoffany 1733-1810*, no. 60, p. 52. The portrait was engraved in mezzotint by Richard Houston and published by Robert Sayer.

⁸⁶ For the mezzotints, I especially draw on Ch. Lennox-Boyd's catalogue, *Theatre: the Age of Garrick*.

⁸⁷ For the full list of eighteenth-century engraved plates after Faesch see Section 3. The following abbreviations are used: D.C.: *Dramatic Characters*, S.A.: Society of Artists; R.A.: Royal Academy; exh.: *exhibited*; publ.: *published*. I omit here details on technique (oil on canvas) and measurements of the paintings.

⁸⁸ See *The Georgian Playhouse: Actors, Artists, Audiences and Architecture 1730-1830*, (exh. cat., London, Hayward Gallery, 21 August-12 October 1975), ed. by Iain Mackintosh assisted by Geoffrey Ashton, London, Arts Council of Great Britain, 1975, n. pag., no. 28.

(after the Baroda version of the painting) engraved by Valentine Green, publ. by John Boydell 30 March 1776.; *D.C.* no. 7 features Garrick in the ‘dagger soliloquy’ before Duncan’s murder (*Macbeth* II, 1), when the horrified Macbeth brandishes the daggers; *D.C.* no. 8 features a different actress, Mrs. Yates, in the same acting moment as Mrs. Pritchard in the theatrical conversation pieces (*Macbeth* II, 2), when Lady Macbeth with daggers in hand is about to enter Duncan’s chamber to perform the deed; the costumes are different in the paintings and in the vignettes but the performers are similarly clad in fashionable contemporary garbs⁸⁹

- (*D.C.* nos. 15, 17, 19) Johann Zoffany, *Thomas Weston as Doctor Last and Samuel Foote as The Devil in ‘The Devil upon two sticks’*, c.1768-9, Castle Howard, Simon Howard Collection, exh. S.A. 1769; mezzotint engraved by John Finlayson, publ. 30 Nov. 1769; the plate was later acquired by Sayer c.1774
- (*D.C.* no. 16) *Thomas Knight [?] as Farmer Harrow/or as Roger in ‘The Ghost’*, c.1795-1796, London, The Garrick Club, no. 411, exh. R.A. 1796.⁹⁰ Faesch’s vignette represents another actor, John Moody, in a different character (Simon in *Harlequin’s Invasion*, a musical farce by David Garrick, 1759) and costume; nevertheless the attitude and position are the same and both the actors hold an identical pitchfork. Actually the character of Roger in the play adapted by an anonymous author after Mrs. Centlivre’s *The Man’s Bewitched* (1709) was performed by Moody at Drury Lane on 10 April 1769. Knight played the same role at Covent Garden in 1795-1796, when Zoffany’s interest in theatrical painting was over. It is not unlikely that the artist, featuring this portrait, had retrieved some old theatrical impression
- (*D.C.* no. 22) Johann Zoffany, *Thomas King as Lord Ogleby and Mrs. Baddeley as Fanny Stirling and Baddeley as Canton in ‘The Clandestine Marriage’*, c.1769-70, London, The Garrick Club no. 23; mezzotint engraved by Richard Earlom, published by Sayer in 1772. The isolated character of *Thomas King as Lord Ogleby* is also represented by Zoffany in a portrait (Collection of the Hon. Evan E. Charteris)
- (*D.C.* no. 4) Johann Zoffany, *Garrick as Abel Drugger with Burton as Subtle and Palmer as Face in ‘The Alchemist’*, c.1769-70, Castle Howard, Simon Howard Collection; exh. R.A. 1770; see also two studies for *Garrick as Abel Drugger*, Oxford, The Ashmolean Museum; mezzotint engraved by John Dixon, pub. 12 January 1771; the plate was acquired by Sayer c.1776

⁸⁹ Garrick’s version of the play restored most of the original. For the long scene which opened second act consisting of the dagger speech, the after murder dialogue, and the discovery of the deed, see K. A. Burnim, *David Garrick Director*, pp. 111-116.

⁹⁰ Geoffrey Ashton, *Pictures in the Garrick Club: A Catalogue of Paintings, Drawings, Watercolours and Sculpture*, ed. by Kalman A. Burnim and Andrew Wilton, London, Garrick Club, 1997. The inventory numbers of this and of the other paintings housed in the Garrick Club, cited below, refer to Ashton’s catalogue.

Zoffany's theatrical conversation pieces after which vignettes in the second set are drawn:

- (D.C. no. 28) Johann Zoffany, *Henry Woodward as Razor in 'The Upholsterer'*, original untraced; a copy by Samuel De Wilde after J. Zoffany, *Henry Woodward as Razor*, London, The Garrick Club, no. 852 is limited to head and shoulders: they seem consistent with Woodward's features and expression in the vignette
- (D.C. no. 29) Johann Zoffany, *David Garrick as Lord Chalkstone in Lethe*, 1766, The City Museums and Art Gallery, Birmingham; exh. S.A. 1766: two versions from the painted scene. The one in The Garrick Club, no. 250, is undoubtedly more similar to Faesch's vignette in that the actor is represented in isolation
- (D.C. no. 30) Johann Zoffany, *William Powell as Posthumus in 'Cymbeline'*, c.1764, Private Collection⁹¹
- (D.C. no. 36) Johann Zoffany, *Thomas King as Touchstone [and Mr. Barry as Rosalind] in 'As you Like it'*, generally dated between 1767 and 1772, London, The Garrick Club no. 401. Zoffany's existing painting only features the character of Touchstone. Nevertheless, 'during the cleaning of Zoffany's painting in 1976, an arm appeared on the left side of the picture showing that it has been cut down from the size of his usual theatrical conversation pieces. Touchstone [Thomas King] is addressing Rosalind [Mrs. Barry], and it must be her hand that was revealed'.⁹² It is highly probable that Mrs. Barry's figure in the missing half of the picture was identical to DC 36 (reversed). Thomas King, formerly pictured as Lord Ogleby in the first set of printed vignettes, does not appear as Touchstone in the *Dramatic Characters*

Theatrical conversation pieces by other painters after which vignettes in the two sets are drawn:

- (D.C. no. 5) Benjamin Wilson, *Mr. Garrick in Hamlet*, original untraced, mezzotint engraved by James McArdell after B. Wilson, 1754; the plate was acquired by Sayer after McArdell's death in 1765 (see Sayer's catalogue 1775)
- (D.C. no. 6) Benjamin Wilson, *Mr. Garrick in the Character of King Lear*, original untraced, mezzotint engraved by James McArdell after B. Wilson, 1761; the plate was acquired by Sayer after McArdell's death in 1765 (see Sayer's catalogue 1775)
- (D.C. no. 26) Robert Edge Pine, *Reddish in the Character of Posthumus in Cymbeline*, exh. S.A. 1768, original untraced, mezzotint engraved by

⁹¹ 'This is the finer of two versions of the same subject [...] In the other version (Christie's 20 June 1975, Lot 89) Powell is shown without a sword though the material has been painted to suggest that one should be there'. *The Georgian Playhouse*, no. 26

⁹² G. Ashton, *Pictures in the Garrick Club*, p. 223.

Valentine Green, pub. 19 November 1771 (and re-published by Boydell in the same year)⁹³

Theatrical conversation pieces by other painters to which characters in the vignettes of the first set are related:

- (D.C. no. 34) Nathaniel Dance, *David Garrick as King Richard III*, Stratford upon Avon, Town Council, exh. R.A. 1771; various copies extant; mezzotint engraved by John Dixon, published by Boydell 28 April 1772. The costume of King Richard in plate 34, is similar with slight differences

The fact that many of the vignettes are related to Zoffany's theatrical paintings is not surprising, for the choice undoubtedly met several needs. At the same time we can reasonably surmise that the two artists, both native German speakers, had met through Garrick, whose wife Eva Maria, originally a dancer from Vienna, undoubtedly encouraged the great actor's patronage of artists of her native culture and language. The question of the dependence of these vignettes on Zoffany or on the other theatrical conversation pieces is often dealt with rather summarily. It is taken for granted, in fact, that Faesch was not autonomous as a "portraitist" of actors, and that he limited himself to adapting works by other artists. Shearer West is astonished by his 'originality' rather than by the contrary, that is by his dependence on the theatrical conversations pieces.

The Sayer's designer, de Fesch, took certain liberties with his representations. Rather than delineating a whole scene he broke up the painting into individual engravings. A work such as *Love in a Village* appeared not as a scene, but as three separate engravings of Shuter [D.C. no. 11], Beard [D.C. no. 12] and Dunstall [D.C. no. 13] in their respective characters from the play. Other borrowings from Zoffany included the portrait of Powell as Posthumus [D.C. no. 26] and Garrick as Sir John Brute in *The Provok'd Wife* [D.C. no. 9]. Strangely enough, although de Fesch included separate plates of Foote [D.C. no. 19] and Weston [D.C. no. 15] as The Devil and Dr. Last, these are not copies of Zoffany's painting [*Thomas Weston as Dr. Last and Samuel Foote as The Doctor/The Devil in The Devil upon Two Sticks*, 1768-1769, Castle Howard, Simon Howard Collection] but rather original designs. Why de Fesch copied some Zoffany works and not others is a mystery.⁹⁴

For some plates Faesch restricted himself to "copying" accurately the actors in the poses shown in the theatrical conversation pieces. This is the case of the vignettes drawn after the conversation pieces of Wilson (Garrick in *King Lear* and Garrick in *Hamlet*), of Pine (*Reddish as Posthumus*), and of several vignettes drawn after Zoffany. However, several theatrical conversations of Zoffany and that of Pine, from which the vignettes produced in the period 1768-1769 derived, are contemporaneous with

⁹³ Ch. Lennox-Boyd, *Theatre: The Age of Garrick*, pp. 71-73, no. 30.

⁹⁴ Shearer West, *The Image of the Actor*, London, Pinter Publishers, 1991, pp. 46-48. Here West, without altering it much, reproduces the opinion of Raymond Mander and Joe Mitchenson (*The Artist and the Theatre*, London, Heinemann, 1955), according to whom Faesch limited himself to drawing the actors after the theatrical conversation pieces of Wilson and Zoffany. John P. Cavanagh was, rightly, of the opposite opinion: on this point see Section 7.

Faesch's vignette, as is Dance's portrait of *Garrick as Richard III*, exhibited in 1771 (see *D.C.* no. 34). We may wonder whether the painters and Faesch sometimes shared the same posing sessions, making experiments with the camera obscura.⁹⁵ Faesch may also have used an optical box to make rapid copies of the characters of the conversation pieces that Zoffany had executed in the preceding years, like the character of Garrick in *The Provok'd Wife* (*D.C.* no. 2).

Equally significant are the occasions on which Faesch does not restrict himself to copying directly from Zoffany or from other portraitists, when the characters differ in their positions and in the details of their costumes. See the two vignettes of *Garrick as Sir John Brute* of 1769 (*D.C.* no.1) and of January 1772 (*D.C.* no. 27), *Thomas King as Lord Ogleby* (*D.C.* no. 22) of September 1769,⁹⁶ and also *Garrick as Richard III* (*D.C.* no. 34). Moreover, in the vast production of Faesch's gouaches and drawings there are various other images which are completely original compared to the theatrical conversation pieces.⁹⁷ We must assume, therefore, that in these cases the actors posed for Faesch.

It is evident, however, that Faesch's debut in England was related to the diffusion and the success of the theatrical conversation pieces, both in painted and engraved form. As well as by the question of time (the rapidity of execution of the copies), this choice was undoubtedly motivated by Sayer's marketing strategy. The publisher exploited the fame of the works (theatrical conversation pieces, theatrical portraits or large-scale engravings) present in the exhibitions of the Society of Artists and then of the Royal Academy, or even promoted their production by publishing the small engravings together with the large ones whose copper plates he had purchased.⁹⁸ By putting together quality plates and popular plates, he could thus target a wide and varied public. There is no doubt that a great synergy was created in these years between actors, artists, painters, engravers and publishers which was of great benefit to the market in theatrical images. It is in this context that we should evaluate the relationship between Faesch and Zoffany, before concluding that the work of the former was a slavish derivation from the conversation pieces of the latter. It is no coincidence that Bell would enter this market in a forceful manner, replacing Sayer, he, too, with a diversified strategy that targeted the widest possible public. Bell's operation, however, remained firmly anchored in the illustration of plays. His more decidedly illustrative vignettes do not appear to be drawn *ad vivum*, but composed on the basis of a compendium of poses and gestures drawn from the 'handbook' of acting.⁹⁹ This would explain a certain repetition of gestures and the schematic nature

⁹⁵ Zoffany left London for Florence in the Summer of 1772.

⁹⁶ Of which there is also a version in the set published by Jefferys and Faden. See the list in Section 3.

⁹⁷ For the Harvard Album of tracings see Section 7.

⁹⁸ The Instrument of Foundation of the Royal Academy (12 December 1768) which established the union of three existing associations of artists (Fee Society of Artists, Incorporated Society of Artists of Great Britain, St. Martin's Lane Academy) didn't include the engravers in the new association. But soon after engravers were accepted as associates. See Sidney C. Hutchinson, *The History of the Royal Academy 1768-1968*, London, Chapman and Hall, 1968, pp. 44-45.

⁹⁹ This is to be intended as K. A. Burnim and Ph. H. Highfill Jr. have remarked a propos of Bell's pictures: 'costumes and the action shown or implied [...] were in most instances "compiled" by the artist from his store of artistic training and theatrical observation. [...] he shared certain basic assumptions with both actor and audience. Tradition, familiarity with acting practices, and dogma laid down in contemporary educational theory and theatrical criticism guided the painter's hand. He knew almost instinctively how to depict the gesture or stance suggested by the line from the text that would

of the poses: a sort of compromise between the figurative fiction of classical illustration and a style of portraiture aimed at capturing the individual traits of each actor. With regard to costumes, too, Bell's illustrations do not appear to be inspired by the criterion of faithfulness.

The Parisian and English editions of Faesch's vignettes thus reflect two sides of the production of theatrical images: one based more on demonstrative and reforming intentions, the other more concerned with market strategies, both those of Garrick's initiatives in his uncontested role as an image-maker, and those which depended on the lively commerce of the London publishers.

The two aspects would inevitably be destined for confrontation, which the mass production of theatrical images in the following centuries would sometimes manage to combine like two sides of the same coin.

5. *The Vieil Amateur's Collection*

Antoine Vincent Arnault (1766-1834) played a decisive role in the diffusion of Faesch's vignettes during the nineteenth century and in the establishment of his fame, with the editions of the *Album dramatique* (1820) and of *Les Souvenirs et les regrets* (1829 and 1861), printed in Paris in anonymous form. Until recently his varied career as an intellectual and writer had not been studied in detail. Now, thanks to a monograph and to a new edition of his memoirs, much more is known about his life and work.¹⁰⁰

Arnault, who belonged to a family of court officials, began to frequent the world of the theatre towards the end of 1783, and acquired considerable fame as a playwright during the period of the Revolution, with the performance of his first tragedy, *Marius à Minturnes* (1791), one of the most successful *pièces à l'antique* of neo-classical theatre. The classically-inspired works written during the revolution, particularly *Marius à Minturnes* and the *acte lyrique Horatius Cocclès* (1794), brought him a halo of patriotism that helped him get through these difficult times unscathed. Although remaining a firm realist, he frequented a circle of friends whose opinions were far from compatible, and was a close friend of Talma.¹⁰¹ The house of the actor, a patriot and a republican, was, in fact, frequented by men of various political

be engraved beneath the portrait. Within pretty narrow limits, the "rules" dictated that the same gesture would be made in similar dramatic circumstances or in illustrating the same dramatic "points" (K. A. Burnim and Ph. H. Highfill Jr., *John Bell Patron of British Theatrical Portraiture*, p. 24). In fact, even for the roles that were played in the same period when Bell's vignettes were produced, the artists were not drawing from the life, and very seldom we have the impression that a lively expression or attitude is conveyed in these pictures.

¹⁰⁰ Raymond Trousson, *Antoine-Vincent Arnault (1766-1834): Un homme de lettres entre classicisme et romantisme*, Paris, H. Champion, 2004; Antoine Vincent Arnault, *Souvenirs d'un sexagénaire*, ed. by Raymond Trousson, Paris, H. Champion, 2003. Arnault's wide output as a playwright included both the major genres (tragedies, historical plays, comedies) and the minor genres (*opéra-comique* and *vaudeville*). He also wrote dramatic and poetic texts of various kinds for musical compositions (Méhul, Cherubini, Spontini, etc.), and was the author of around 140 verse *Fables*. See the monograph cited above for an analysis of his whole output as a dramatist and poet.

¹⁰¹ On their friendship during the Terreur see R. Trousson, *Antoine-Vincent Arnault (1766-1834)*, p.75.

leanings.¹⁰² Delivering the eulogy at the actor's funeral in October 1826, Arnault recalled the friendship that bound the two theatre-lovers whose opinions were so different, not to say opposite, but who had both been linked with Bonaparte:

Our friendship, born in the early days of the Revolution, developed despite it. At that time I thought that nothing of the old order should be changed, while he thought that everything should change. The reasonable opinion lay halfway, and experience and reflection would lead us to it. As we waited for the change in our thoughts to develop, our enthusiasm for an art in which each of us sought distinction in different ways, and in which he would find glory, helped to bring us closer again.¹⁰³

During the Directory Arnault had entered into close friendship with Lucien and with Napoleon Bonaparte, becoming a supporter and a witness of the rise of the young general. Before the coup of 18 *Brumaire*, in September 1799, he was elected a member of the Institute de France, and shortly afterwards, when Lucien became *Ministre de l'Intérieur*, he was appointed head of the third division of the ministry, which dealt with public education, libraries, theatres, monuments and national holidays; he remained in this post for nine years. This implied not only a direct, continuous relationship with the world of the theatre, but also access to the intellectual output of the time, as well as to the bibliographical and documentary resources that he was called on to manage.¹⁰⁴ During his time at the ministry *Arnault* also played the role of official bard of the court, until his growing public success was halted brutally by the fall of Bonaparte on 6 April 1814.

Following these events Arnault tried, with little enthusiasm and to little effect, to regain the favour of Louis XVIII, whose secretary he had been as a young man. Still essentially a faithful Bonapartist, he gave his unreserved support during the Hundred Days, which he paid for, on the restoration of the Bourbon king, with banishment and the loss of his position at the Institute.

After the tumultuous première of his tragedy *Germanicus* at the Théâtre Français, suspected of Bonapartist references, his exile became even harsher, marked by continual police persecution.¹⁰⁵ A campaign in his support, also backed by the Académie Française, managed to improve his conditions and finally to obtain an end to his exile. In December 1819 Arnault was thus able to return to Paris, where he resumed his career as a playwright. He had to wait longer, however, to regain his

¹⁰² Arnault himself, in his funeral speech for Talma, observed that: 'La porte de sa maison ne se ferma jamais aux supplians: aussi les héros des partis les plus opposés se rencontrèrent-ils plus d'une fois dans ce refuge' (Antoine Vincent Arnault, 'Discours prononcés sur la tombe de Talma, par M. Lafont, sociétaires du Théâtre-Français, et MM. Arnault et Jouy', in M. Moreau, *Mémoires historiques et littéraires sur F.-J. Talma*, Paris, Ponthieu; Delaunay, 1826, p. 100).

¹⁰³ 'Notre amitié, qui date des premiers temps de la Révolution, se forma en dépit d'elle. Je pensais alors que rien ne devait être changé à l'ordre ancien; il pensait, lui, qu'il y fallait tout changer. L'opinion raisonnable était entre [nos] deux opinions, et c'est à elle que l'expérience et la réflexion devaient nous ramener. En attendant le changement qui devait s'opérer dans notre pensée, notre enthousiasme pour un art où nous cherchions chacun une illustration différente, et où il devait trouver la gloire, hâta notre rapprochement'. *Ibid.*, pp. 98-99.

¹⁰⁴ On this part of his life, see chaps. 8 and 9 in R. Trousson, *Antoine-Vincent Arnault (1766-1834)*, pp. 139-170.

¹⁰⁵ The première took place on 22 March 1817, with an "all-star" cast: Talma as 'Germanicus', Saint-Prix as 'Piso', Desmousseaux as 'Séjan', Mlle Duschesnois as 'Agrippina', and Mlle George as her rival 'Plancina'.

place among the “forty immortals”: in 1829 he was restored to his position at the Académie, and in 1833 he was elected “secrétaire perpétuel”.

Times had changed, however, while Arnault had remained firmly anchored to his classical roots. After the death of Talma, whose exceptional personality and talent had sustained the faltering neo-classical tragedies, including those of Arnault, and who had brought new life to the traditional repertory, imbuing it with the power of the new romantic spirit, the crisis emerged fully. The great actor had been the true protagonist of the revolutionary and post-revolutionary stage, and his death finally broke the peculiar and still partly direct link with the classical school of acting, developed and practised before him by the great actors of the eighteenth century, especially Lekain and Clairon. Arnault emphasized in his memoirs Talma’s extraordinary and perfect talent as an aesthetic synthesis of the qualities of the best actors who had preceded him upon the scene of the Théâtre Français in the last years of the Old Regime:

Merging all talents in his own, he had managed to develop the most perfect talent that can be imagined, combining his personal energy with the pathos of Brizard, the nobility of Dufresne, the profundity of Lekain, and the sensibility of Monvel, modified by his own qualities.¹⁰⁶

The Romantic generation was conquering the theatres.¹⁰⁷ Even the last stronghold, the Comédie Française, would soon capitulate, in 1829, the very year in which the flop of *Pertinax ou les Prétoriens* on 27 May marked the end of Arnault’s career as a playwright and of his long association with the Théâtre Français.¹⁰⁸

I have expatiated upon the salient details of the life of Arnault because they allow us to contextualize the publication of Faesch’s vignettes, used to illustrate Arnault’s theatrical recollections of the Ancien Régime. The first publication of Arnault’s *Souvenirs*, with which Faesch’s vignettes may be associated, is a two-volume edition, issued in 1819 and attributed by Barbier to Antoine Vincent Arnault de l’Académie-Française: ‘*Souvenirs et Regrets du Vieil amateur dramatique, ou Lettres d’un oncle à son neveu sur l’ancien Théâtre-Français [...]*, Paris, Ch. Froment, 1819, 2 vols., in 12, avec figures’.¹⁰⁹ Even if I have found no trace of this edition, there is in principle no reason to argue that Barbier’s record is erroneous.

¹⁰⁶ ‘Fondant tous les talents dans le sien, il était parvenu à se faire du pathétique de Brizard, de la noblesse de Dufresne, de la profondeur de Lekain, et de la sensibilité de Monvel, alliés à sa propre énergie, et modifiés par les facultés qui lui étaient propres, le talent le plus parfait qu’on puisse imaginer’. Antoine Vincent Arnault, *Souvenirs d’un sexagénaire*, ed. by R. Trousson, p. 316.

¹⁰⁷ See Albert Le Roy, *L’Aube du Théâtre romantique*, Paris, P. Ollendorff, 1904; Florence Naugrette, *Le théâtre romantique: Histoire, écriture, mise en scène*, Paris, Seuil, 2001, particularly pp. 50-72 and pp. 189-196, concerning the transition from the *théâtre historique* to the *drame romantique*.

¹⁰⁸ For *Pertinax* see R. Trousson, *Antoine-Vincent Arnault (1766-1834)*, pp. 294-299. After this flop, Arnault devoted himself more intensely to his activity as a journalist, which he had also practised during his exile in order to survive.

¹⁰⁹ *Dictionnaire des ouvrages anonymes*, ed. by Antoine Alexandre Barbier, Joseph Marie Quérard, Paul Billard 4 vols., Paris, P. Daffis, 1872-1879, IV, p. 553.

An *Album dramatique*,¹¹⁰ bearing on the title-page the date 1820, is supposed to have been issued in 1861 by Alphonse Leclère together with the last eighteenth-century edition of *Les Souvenirs et les regrets*.¹¹¹ As the title-page states, this *Album* is a simple collection of *gravures coloriées, représentant en pied, d'après les miniatures originales, faites d'après nature, de Foëch de Basle et de Whirsker, ces différents acteurs dans les rôles où ils ont excellé*.¹¹² The list of actors, also mentioned in the title-page, is the same as that found later on the title-page of *Les Souvenirs et les regrets*, and the selection of engravings is also the same. The term *Souvenirs* appears in this edition, too, though in the subtitle (*Souvenirs de l'ancien Théâtre Français*), associated in this case with the visual records alone. Both the untraced edition of 1819 and the later edition erroneously ascribed to 1820 suggest that some publishing initiative took place in the first years after the playwright's return from exile. It was probably a simple *Album* of printed portraits of French actors whose publication was abandoned, presumably after very few issued copies. This initiative was implicitly resumed in 1861 by the publisher Leclère who put together an *Album* which presented an identical series of portraits. The date of the first letter in *Les Souvenirs et les regrets*, 3 February 1821, suggests that after this first initiative Arnault turned to the idea of associating written *Souvenirs* to the previously collected iconography of eighteenth-century actors.

The first traceable edition of *Les Souvenirs et les regrets* (1829) bears witness to the long gestation of the work.¹¹³ It came in the crucial year of Arnault's retirement from the theatre and his restoration to the Académie. In the years before and after 1830, the old poet also devoted himself to the editing and publication of his complete works¹¹⁴ and to the completion of his memoirs, to which he gave a title in keeping with theatrical recollections: *Souvenirs d'un sexagénaire*,¹¹⁵ where the term *Souvenirs* is intended to maintain a distance from the intimacy of *Confessions* at the time the great model for memoir-writing.¹¹⁶

Les Souvenirs et les regrets du Vieil amateur dramatique, ou Lettres d'un oncle à son neveu sur l'ancien Théâtre-Français was conceived on Arnault's return to France after exile, thus coinciding with the resumption of direct contact with Parisian theatrical circles, and was then published only when the author had abandoned the theatre and all ambitions of further success. In *Les Souvenirs et les regrets* the engravings after Faesch's

¹¹⁰ [Antoine Vincent Arnault], *Album dramatique. Souvenirs de l'Ancien Théâtre Français depuis Bellecour, Lekain, Brizard, Prévillle, Armand, Auger, Fenlie, Paulin, Belmont, Grandval; MMes Dumesnil, Clairon, Les deux Sainval, Prévillle, Hus, Doligny, Bellecour, Fannier, jusqu'à Molé, Larive, Monvel, Vanbove, Fleury, Désessart, Dazincour, Dugazon; MMes Raucourt, Vestris, Contat, Olivier. Gravures coloriées. Représentant en pied, d'après les miniatures originales, faites d'après nature, de Foëch de Basle et de Whirsker, ces différents acteurs dans les rôles où ils ont excellé*, Paris, n. pub., 1820. For the contents see Section 6.

¹¹¹ See Georges Vicaire, *Manuel de l'amateur de livres du XIXe siècle (1801-1893)*, 8 vols., Paris, Librairie A. Rouquette, 1894-1920, I (1894), p. 96. Vicaire does not record any edition of *Les Souvenirs et les regrets* issued in 1819.

¹¹² The actors are quoted in the title-page (see below, note 118). For the bibliographical details see Section 6.

¹¹³ Trousson's bibliography fails to mention *Les Souvenirs et les regrets*, with the exception of a fleeting note. See R. Trousson, *Antoine-Vincent Arnault (1766-1834)*, p. 302. For bibliographical details and illustrative contents of these editions, see Section 6.

¹¹⁴ Antoine Vincent Arnault, *Oeuvres*, 8 vols., Paris, Bossange, 1824-1827.

¹¹⁵ Antoine Vincent Arnault, *Souvenirs d'un sexagénaire*, 4 vols., Paris, Duféy, 1833.

¹¹⁶ Arnault's *Souvenirs d'un sexagénaire* were written between 1826 (the year of Talma's death) and 1832. See R. Trousson, *Antoine-Vincent Arnault (1766-1834)*, pp. 310-316.

miniatures illustrate the series of thirty-three *Lettres sur l'Ancien Théâtre* devoted to the artistic medallions of thirty-five actors from the Comédie-Française active between 1760 and 1786.¹¹⁷ Actors of the Ancien Régime, therefore, only a few of whom were still on stage in the revolutionary and post-revolutionary period.¹¹⁸

The *Vieil Amateur* expresses a fundamentalist and traditionalist position, upholding the monarchist theatrical institution. He limits himself deliberately to analyzing the activity of the actors only up to 1786, and openly attacks those actors who, after the revolutionary law that liberated the theatres (13 January 1791), left the Comédie Française (which took the name of Théâtre de la Nation) to form the secessionist troupe of the Théâtre Français de la Rue de Richelieu, which supported the republican cause. Thus he does not spare from criticism Madame Vestris,¹¹⁹ Monvel,¹²⁰ or Dugazon.¹²¹

The choice of 1786 as the final year of these theatrical memoirs is justified explicitly by the *Vieil Amateur* in the *Première Lettre* after the end of the generation of actors most dear to him.¹²² However, we are bound to suspect that the date was chosen deliberately by Arnault to avoid speaking ill of his friend Talma, who debuted with success at the Comédie Française in 1787, and whom he would have had to criticize, at least for the sake of consistency, as a star of the secessionist troupe.

Compared to the interests originally expressed by Faesch, Lekain and Garrick, the selection, however wide, favoured the Français. Nevertheless it is significant that the collection of plates (in the 1829 and 1861 editions) also include seven outside the text with engravings of actors from the Théâtre Italien and the Opéra Comique. Arnault thus intended to render justice to a side of Faesch's output that regarded the actors who were rivals of the Français, a side that Arnault knew well.

In 1829, even an old, nostalgic writer like Arnault was obliged to use some kind of filter when speaking about a theatrical world so remote, and especially so different,

¹¹⁷ L'auteur de ces lettres prend l'histoire du Théâtre Français vers 1760, et la conduit jusqu'en 1786. 'Avis de l'Éditeur', in [A. V. Arnault], *Les Souvenirs et les regrets* (1861), p. vi.

¹¹⁸ Here, for the actors and actresses concerned by the *Vieil Amateur's* letters, the dates of their first engagement and of their retirement or death are listed in brackets: Bellecour (1750-1778), Lekain (1750-1778), Préville (1753-1786), Brizard (1757-1786), Clairon (1743-1765-66), Dumesnil (1737-1776), Molé (1754-1802), Armand (1723-1765), Larive (1770-1778), Augé (1763-1782), Feulie (1764-1774), Saint-Val aînée (1766-1779), Saint Val cadette (1772-1792), Monvel (1770-1806), Mlle Hus (1751-1780), Mme Vestris (1768-1803), Mlle Raucourt (1772-1815), Mlle Contat aînée (1776-1809), Mlle Doligny (1763-1783), Mlle Olivier (1780-1787), Désessarts (1772-1793), Bonneval (1741-1773), Vanhove (1777-1803), Fleury (1774-1818), Dugazon (1746-1809), Dazincourt (1776-1809), Mme Bellecour (1750-1778), Mlle Fannier (1764-1786), Mme Préville (1753-1786), Mme Drouin (1742-1780), Paulin (1741-1770), Bellemont (1765-1801), Saint-Prix (1782-1818), Saint-Phal (1782-1824), Grandval (1729-1768). See 'La troupe des sociétaires de la Comédie-Française de 1680 à 1994', pp. 171-181.

¹¹⁹ See [A. V. Arnault], *Les Souvenirs et les regrets* (1861), pp. 140-141. Vestris was among the "rouges" (Talma, Mme Vestris, Dugazon, Mlle Desgarcins, Grandménéil, Mlle Simon, and Mlle Cange) who formed the first troupe of the Théâtre Français de la Rue de Richelieu. See Marvin Carlson, *Le théâtre de la Révolution française*, Paris, Gallimard, 1970, p. 100.

¹²⁰ See [A. V. Arnault], *Les Souvenirs et les regrets* (1861), p. 126. In 1781, in consequence of some private troubles, Monvel left Paris for Stockholm to be engaged in the royal troupe of King Gustav III of Sweden. After his return to France, in 1791 he joined the troupe of the Théâtre Français de la Rue de Richelieu.

¹²¹ See *ibid.*, p. 182.

¹²² 'En 1786, Brizard et Préville quittèrent le théâtre. Cette année-là, je me retirai dans la terre que j'habite, et d'où je suis rarement sorti depuis'. [A. V. Arnault], *Première Lettre* (1821), in *ibid.*, p. 3.

from what was currently happening on the Parisian stage. In this sense *Souvenirs* allowed him to place that theatrical world in the temporal framework of memory, bathed in continuing admiration, and only secondarily indicated as a model, with the aim of handing down to future generations the “flower” of tradition, a “flower” that the Revolution had certainly not left intact. The work undoubtedly reconciled many of the political contradictions experienced by the author: the Bonapartist Arnault could not assume a reactionary, negationist attitude towards the Revolution; the Arnault who needed to ingratiate himself with the Bourbon king and who had been, and still was, a champion of classicism and a purist upholder of the tradition of the Théâtre Français, could in good faith idealize the theatre of the past, though keeping it in the past. The generational device on which the work is founded is thus rather complicated, in that it implies the simultaneous presence of three identities, in some way three generations of spectators, with the evident aim of reconciling past, present and future. The first identity is that of the anonymous author of the letters, the *Vieil Amateur*, who informs us in the first one (dated *De..., près de la Ferté-sous-Jouarre, le 3 février 1821*) that he was born around 1748 and frequented the Parisian theatre as a passionate theatregoer until 1786. The second identity is that of the *Amateur's* Nephew whose instruction the letters are intended for. Whether the *Vieil Amateur* was fictional or real, he should not in principle be identified with the third identity, that of the anonymous *Littérateur* who undertakes the task of editing the letters. In the introductory ‘Avis de l’Éditeur’, a difference is stated between ‘the *author* of these letters’ and ‘a *man of letters* who has followed theatre in particular for forty years, and who has also written various dramatic works, including half of a *comédie en vaudeville*, <and who> has agreed to help us in the preparation of this edition, and to add the clarifications in the notes’.¹²³ With the complicity of his publisher, Arnault attributes the letters to others, in order to fill the chronological gap between his biography as a spectator (he was born in 1766, and only became an assiduous witness of the Parisian stage at the end of 1783) and the actors described in the recollections.¹²⁴ The generational device also implies the possibility of detaching himself from the retrospective ideology of the *Vieil Amateur*, sometimes inserting critical commentaries in the notes and attributing them to the Nephew.¹²⁵

He had necessarily made use of the memories of other people, that is of discerning theatre-goers from the previous generation: more or less that of his father, who was born in 1740 and died in 1776, and was thus an almost exact contemporary of Faesch. Certainly his sources were varied and between them a role was undoubtedly played by the fascinating personality of Monsieur de La Porte, the old *souffleur* of Lekain and the living depository of the great actor’s memory:

M de la Porte enjoyed a certain esteem at the Théâtre Français; he deserved it, not only because he had prompted Lekain, but also because he had been the confidant of the

¹²³ ‘*l’auteur* de ces lettres’ and ‘un *littérateur* qui s’est occupé spécialement de théâtre pendant quarante ans, et qui même a composé plusieurs ouvrages dramatiques, et entre autres la moitié d’un vaudeville <et qui> a bien voulu nous aider dans l’exécution de cette édition, et l’élucider par des notes’. ‘Avis de l’Éditeur’, in *ibid.*, pp.v-viii.

¹²⁴ 1786 was truly the year of coming-of-age for Arnault, who married and thus escaped from the guardianship of his widowed mother. See R. Trousson, *Antoine-Vincent Arnault (1766-1834)*, p. 20.

¹²⁵ See for instance [A. V. Arnault], *Les Souvenirs et les regrets* (1861), p. 15 (note 2), p. 126 (note 1), and p. 214 (note 1).

theories of this great actor, because he was the depositary of all those traditions which, in the theatre, have the force of law. And also because, irrespective of his long experience of all things concerning the stage, he had a good deal of common sense.¹²⁶

This man ‘who represented both the age of Louis XIV and of Louis XV’ and who was blessed with a profound knowledge in theatre matters had been of great help to Arnault in the early part of his career, when the young author had submitted to his experienced readership the tragedy of *Marius à Minturnes*. It is likely that Arnault drew on him for a great deal of information and details on the art of the actors belonging to the previous generation.

As for the years between 1786 and 1820, a new series of recollections was planned, as these new *Souvenirs* were announced in the ‘Avis de l’Éditeur’:

The author of these letters takes up the history of French theatre around 1760, and leads it up to 1786. The gap between that age and our own is considerable; but everything leads us to believe that it has been filled, and that the nephew has brought to completion what the uncle had left to be done. We are searching for his letters, determined to publish them as soon as we have them all in our hands.¹²⁷

But this new work never appeared.¹²⁸

The passage of generations is a decisive factor in the development of theatrical culture, for both actors and audiences, even more so when what we are dealing with is not texts that survive their authors and the generations that have seen their birth, but actors whose art, even when it reaches perfection, is by nature ephemeral. The ephemeral character of the art of acting was felt particularly intensely by the generation of eighteenth-century actors who fought for and played a decisive role in the recognition of the artistic status of their profession. Both the publication of memoirs and the widespread use of portraiture, made possible by the development of cheap engravings and the success of theatrical illustrations (see the case of the publisher Bell) gave actors a means to survive in the memory of future generations.

As Pierre Frantz recalled in the preface to Talma’s *Réflexions sur Lekain et sur l’art théâtral*, the great actor, more than any of his predecessors, with the notable exception

¹²⁶ ‘M de la Porte jouissait au Théâtre Français d’une certaine considération; il y avait droit, non seulement parce qu’il avait soufflé Lekain, mais encore parce qu’il avait été le confident des théories de ce grand acteur, parce qu’il était dépositaire de toutes ces traditions qui, au théâtre, ont force de loi. Et aussi parce qu’indépendamment d’une longue expérience de tout ce qui concerne la scène, il avait beaucoup de bon sens’. [A. V. Arnault], *Souvenirs d’un sexagénaire*, p. 156. On de La Porte see the entire passage on pp. 155-156.

¹²⁷ L’auteur de ces lettres prend l’histoire du théâtre français vers 1760, et la conduit jusqu’en 1786. La lacune de cette dernière époque à celle où nous sommes est grande; mais tout nous porte à croire qu’elle ait été remplie, et que ce que l’oncle laissait à faire a été achevé par son neveu. Nous sommes à la recherche des lettres de celui-ci, résolu de les publier dès que nous les posséderons toutes’. ‘Avis de l’Éditeur’, in [A. V. Arnault], *Les Souvenirs et les regrets* (1861), pp.vi-vii. These new memoirs, which were intended to prove the talent of contemporary actors, are also announced in the final note (*ibid.*, p. 214).

¹²⁸ As Barbier informs us: ‘On avait annoncé, comme devant y faire suite, les *Souvenirs et Jouissances d’un jeune auteur dramatique*. Cet ouvrage n’a point paru’. Antoine-Alexandre Barbier, Joseph-Marie Quérard, Paul Billard (eds.), *Dictionnaire des ouvrages anonymes*, IV, 553.

of Garrick, 'he was aware of the contrast between his immense glory, a powerful appeal acknowledged by all, and the ephemeral nature of his work'.¹²⁹

Talma's *Réflexions*, issued a year before the great actor's death, are an artistic testament and at the same time an opportunity to take stock of a dramatic art, understood as the indivisible union of dramaturgy and acting (as *déclamation*), which was coming to an end.¹³⁰ Too often, in fact, when speaking of the eighteenth-century reform of acting (as *jeu*) there is a tendency to forget that the introduction of *jeu naturel* and of pantomime had by no means undermined the ancient ability to hear the specific and original musicality of the alexandrine couplet. Actors like Lekain and Clairon – albeit with different vocal qualities – managed, in fact, to reconcile the innovative practice of movement, gesture and expression with the ancient and refined art of declamation: for them *parler la tragédie* did not mean abandoning the implicit rules of classical versification. Talma's reflections were destined to serve as a preface to the *Mémoires* of Lekain in a series of *Mémoires sur l'art dramatique* published by Ledoux and Ponthieu. His work does not consist of an account of the succession or legacies of different generations, but of reflections on the long period of Ancien Régime theatre – the triumph of declamation, of *bienséances* and etiquette – and on the more recent passage from the mid-eighteenth century to the Romantic Age. In the practice of theatre this passage was marked by the gradual abandonment of declamation, structurally suited to classical tragedy, and by the development of acting based on the interpretation of the character and on the principle of individual, pathetic and natural expression. Talma considered Lekain to have been the true founder of this phase, just as he considered himself to be the actor who had brought it to a conclusion before handing over the stage to the Romantics, who would forever loosen the ancient ties with tradition.¹³¹

There is no doubt that the theatrical climate that formed the background to Arnault's *Les Souvenirs et les regrets* and Talma's *Réflexions sur Lekain* was the same: the authors, men who lived through difficult, tumultuous times, were aware that they were witnessing an epoch-making decline that would inevitably affect theatrical practice. Each, however, responded in his own style. Presenting Talma as an incarnation of the terrible force of the Revolution, Châteaubriand had written: 'He had no idea of the gentleman, he didn't know our old society'.¹³² Talma, too, saw Lekain as a simple plebeian, like him the son of a craftsman, a man of talent

¹²⁹ 'fut sensible au contraste entre la gloire immense qui était la sienne, un pouvoir de fascination que tout le monde lui reconnut, et l'évanescence de son œuvre'. François Joseph Talma, *Réflexions sur Lekain et sur l'art théâtral*, ed. by Pierre Frantz, Paris, Desjonquères, 2002, p. 7.

¹³⁰ [Henri Louis Lekain], *Mémoires de Lekain, précédés de Réflexions sur cet acteur, et sur l'art théâtral, par M. Talma*, Paris, Etienne Ledoux, 1825. Talma was engaged in the composition of the *Réflexions* from 1824, as attested by some preparatory notes. See Alan Freer, 'Talma and Diderot's Paradox on Acting', *Diderot Studies*, no. 8 (1966), pp. 41-42.

¹³¹ In general the prevalent interpretation of Talma as a revolutionary actor, focused on bodily expression, and an enemy of artificial declamation, detracts attention from his complex relationship with tradition. On Talma as the 'first organic representative of bourgeois theatre', see Roberto Alonge, 'Un attore per la rivoluzione: François Joseph Talma', *Lo spettacolo nella Rivoluzione Francese. Proceedings of the International Conference, Milano, 4-6 May 1989*, Roma, Bulzoni, 1989, pp. 63-84.

¹³² 'Il ne savait pas le gentilhomme; il ne connaissait pas notre ancienne société'. François René de Chateaubriand, *Mémoires d'Outre-tombe*, XIII, 9 ('Année de ma vie 1802, Talma'), ed. by Maurice Levailant and Georges Moulinier, 2 vols., Paris, Gallimard, 2010, I, p. 458.

indifferent to conventions and, above all, a genius without masters.¹³³ What interested him about Lekain was precisely the process of construction of a new art of acting. Arnault, on the other hand, considered the actors of that generation as the exponents of a long-established tradition of acting, still fully in keeping, albeit with some innovations, with the musical essence of classical verse. In this sense the *Première Lettre* of the *Les Souvenirs et les regrets* is significant:

still enamoured of the theatre, I re-read all the pièces that I can no longer see again, and since the declamation of our great actors still resounds in my memory, since I have kept in it all the modulations of their delivery, and I seem still to hear them when I read the masterpieces of our great authors, and also to see them in my studio where I am surrounded by their full-length portraits, it is precisely thanks to these illusions that I seem not so much to be reading as witnessing a performance.¹³⁴

This time, too, the truth probably lay somewhere in the middle: with regard to the more distant history of the theatre, at least, both men were right, and both belonged, and felt that they belonged, to the past.

It would be nice to think that Arnault and Talma considered Faesch's miniatures together, and that the project of publishing the *Souvenirs*, illustrated by Faesch's vignettes, had been discussed in one of their many meetings. Although there is no evidence to support it, the hypothesis may be useful. Both men were collectors, and above all both were aware of the power of images. Arnault, as we can deduce from the citation above, was deeply convinced that images did not have a merely commemorative and/or illustrative function, in support of the text, but conveyed a series of meanings that the text alone could not express. It is no coincidence that he chose to have his biography of Napoleon illustrated by the greatest artists of the age, thus contributing to the development of the image of Napoleon that was so important in Romantic and post-Romantic theatre.¹³⁵ For Talma, as we know, and as he himself says in his *Réflexions*, the creation of figurative meanings was an integral part of the work of the actor, which in this sense is no different from that of the painter or the sculptor.¹³⁶ In the formula of theatre as a 'course of living history',

¹³³ See F. J. Talma, *Réflexions sur Lekain*, pp. 28-30.

¹³⁴ 'toujours passionné pour le théâtre, je relis les pièces que je ne peux plus revoir; et comme la déclamation de nos grands acteurs retentit encore dans ma mémoire, comme j'ai retenu toutes les modulations de leur débit, et que je crois les entendre quand je lis les chefs d'œuvre de nos grands maîtres, et même les voir dans le cabinet où je suis entouré de leur portraits en pied; grâce à ces illusions, ce n'est pas une lecture que je fais, c'est à une représentation que j'assiste'. [A. V. Arnault], *Première Lettre* (1821), in *Les Souvenirs et les regrets* (1861), p. 4.

¹³⁵ Antoine Vincent Arnault, *Vie politique et militaire de Napoléon [...] Ouvrage orné de planches lithographiées, d'après les dessins originaux des premiers peintres de l'école française, imprimées par C. Motte*, 2 vols., Paris, E. Babeuf, 1822-1826, large in-folio. On the importance of lithography and of the popular press for the military genre picture of the Napoleonic wars, see Martin Meisel, *Realisations: Narrative, Pictorial, and theatrical arts in Nineteenth-Century England*, Princeton N. J., Princeton University Press, 1983, pp. 207-210.

¹³⁶ Talma knew the *Paradoxe* in its first version, the *Observations sur Garrick*, originally written for the *Correspondance Littéraire* (October and November 1770) and which already contained the essential part of Diderot's thesis. The actor owned the volumes of the *Correspondance Littéraire*, issued in print in 1812 and 1813: the catalogue of his library specifically lists the five volumes covering the years 1770-1782. Shortly after he could presumably have had access to a manuscript version of the *Paradoxe*, probably the copy now in the 'Fonds Vandeul' in Paris, or another similar copy circulating in Paris before the treatise came into print. In the *Réflexions sur Lekain*, although not quoting directly passages from any

Talma understood not only the historicist principle of figurative coherence – the principle, that is, which led first of all to his important reform of theatrical costume – but also the effect that the visual quality of the performance had on the spectator’s imagination.¹³⁷ A complex series of meanings which is undoubtedly encapsulated by his other explanatory formula: ‘I became a painter in my own way’.¹³⁸

Both in the guise of the *Vieil Amateur*¹³⁹ and in that of the *Éditeur*,¹⁴⁰ Arnault states that he appreciates Faesch’s tiny images for their accuracy, and that he attributes to them a documentary value. He intended to offer the engravings drawn after the miniatures in his collection as a sort of *theatrical paper museum*, an indispensable visual complement to his recollections. Although couched in a familiar tone, which Arnault perhaps believed to be more suited to theatrical memories, it is a historiographical work, not dissimilar, in its method of composition through the combination of text and images, to his undertaking as the historian of the Napoleonic age.

6. The Nineteenth-Century Printed Editions

[Antoine Vincent ARNAULT]

Souvenirs et Regrets du Vieil amateur dramatique, ou Lettres d'un oncle à son neveu sur l'ancien Théâtre-Français, Par Antoine-Vincent Arnault de l'Académie-Française, 2 vols., Paris, Ch. Froment, 1819, in-12, avec figures. *Dictionnaire des ouvrages anonymes*, ed. by Antoine Alexandre Barbier, Joseph Marie Quérard, Paul Billard, 4 vols., Paris, P. Daffis, 1872-1879, IV, p. 553.

Untraced.

[Antoine Vincent ARNAULT]

Album dramatique. Souvenirs de l'Ancien Théâtre Français depuis Bellecour, Lekain, Brizard, Prévillo, Armand, Auger, Fenlie, Paulin, Belmont, Grandval; MMes Dumesnil, Clairon, Les deux Sainval, Prévillo, Hus, Doligny, Bellecour, Fannier, jusqu'à Molé, Larive, Monvel, Vanbove, Fleury, Désessart, Dazincour, Dugazon; MMes Raucourt, Vestris, Contat, Olivier. Gravures coloriées. Représentant en pied, d'après les miniatures originales, faites d'après nature, de Foëch de

version of the *Paradoxe*, Talma shows great familiarity with Diderot’s theses. On Diderot’s treatise as a source of the *Réflexions sur Lekain*, both in relation to manuscripts and to the published version of Talma’s theoretical work, and for the importance of eighteenth-century theories of acting in Talma’s reflections, see A. Freer, ‘Talma and Diderot’s Paradoxe on Acting’, pp. 23-76. Mara Fazio does not dwell upon the significance of the *Réflexions*, dealing with them as with an occasional text (Mara Fazio, *François Joseph Talma, primo divo. Teatro e storia fra Rivoluzione, Impero e Restaurazione*, Milano, Leonardo Arte, 1999, pp. 325-327).

¹³⁷ F. J. Talma, *Réflexions sur Lekain*, p. 36.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

¹³⁹ ‘N’avez-vous pas vu ces portraits? Ils ne sont pas de dimension héroïque: à Lilliput même ils passeraient pour des miniatures. Gravés d’après des gouaches de la plus petite proportion, ils sont néanmoins de la plus singulière ressemblance [...] Mes gravures en sont une fidèle copie. Cette collection devrait se trouver chez tous les amateurs du théâtre: elle en complète l’histoire. Comme j’en possède deux exemplaires, je veux vous en envoyer un; j’y joins une notice explicative de chaque estampe: notice courte, mais suffisante pour vous faire connaître la nature du talent de l’acteur qu’on voit représenté’. [A. V. Arnault], *Les Souvenirs et les regrets* (1861), p.4.

¹⁴⁰ ‘Dessinés avec un esprit tout particulier, ces portraits reproduisent, non-seulement les traits, mais les habitudes de leurs modèles: ils ressemblent de la tête aux pieds. Comme ils sont fort estimés, et qu’ils sont fort rares, c’est déjà bien mériter des amateurs du théâtre que de leur en offrir la collection’. ‘Avis de l’Éditeur’, in *ibid.*, p. vii.

Basle et de Whirsker, ces différents acteurs dans les rôles où ils ont excellé, Paris 1820. Possibly issued in 1861 by Alphonse Leclère.

Reference copy : BNF Département des Arts du Spectacle, Album 8-RIC-5.

Description: Nineteenth century half morocco binding, 8vo, 22.3 cm.: title-page, [49] plates coloured by hand. No list of plates [*Corbeil, typogr. et stér. de Creté*]. In the list of plates below the speeches of actors inscribed at the bottom of most of the vignettes are omitted. Names of actors and titles of plays are in their original spelling.

List of plates

1. Voltaire/Zopire [and] Lekain/Mahomet – *Mahomet* (II, 6)
2. Bellecour/Le Marquis – *Le Retour imprévu* (sc. 22)
3. Bellecour/Valère – *Le Joueur* (IV, 13)
4. Préville/Hector [and] Bellecour/Valère – *Le Joueur* (IV, 13)
5. Bellecour/Philoctete – *Oedipe* (II, 4)
6. Brisart/Zopire [and] Le Kain/Mahomet – *Mahomet* (II, 5)
7. *Préville dans trois rôles différens*: Figaro, L'abbé Beaugénie, Sosie
8. Armand/Merlin [and] Préville/La Rissolle – *Le Mercure galant* (IV, 7)
9. Bellecour/Le Marquis [and] Préville/Mr. Pincé – *Le Tambour nocturne* (IV, 7)
10. Molé/Oronte [and] Préville/Boniface Chrétien – *Le Mercure galant* (III, 7)
11. Molé/Damis [and] Préville/Eraste – *L'Anglomane* (sc. 2)
12. Brisart/Le Marquis [and] Molé/Darviane – *Mélanide* (V, 2)
13. M.elle Raucourt/Idamé [and] Brisard/Zamti – *L'Orphelin de la Chine* (V, 5)
14. Molé/Almaviva [and] Melle Olivier/Chérubin [and] Melle Contat/Susanne – *Le Mariage de Figaro* (I, 9)
15. Brisart/Argire [and] Melle Clairon/Aménaïde [and] Mme Grandval/Fanie – *Tancrede* (IV, 6)
16. Melle Clairon/Electre – *Electre* [III, 2]
17. Melle Doligny/Rosine [and] Bellecour/Le Comte [and] Desesarts/Le Docteur – *Le Barbier de Séville* (II, 14)
18. Bonneval/Bernard [and] Auger/Lolive – *Le Tuteur* (sc. 10)
19. Vanhove/Agamennon – *Iphigénie* (IV, 6) [and] Vanhove/Auguste, *Cinna* (V, 1)
20. Fleury/St. Fonds – *Ecole des Pères* (III, 10) [and] Desessarts/Lisimon – *Le Glorieux* (III, 10)
21. Préville/Charlot [and] Dugazon/Lépine – *Le Mari retrouvé* (sc. 10)
22. Melle Fanier/Jacqueline – *Le Médecin malgré lui* (III, 3) [and] Paulin/Géronte – *Le Retour imprévu* (sc. 20)
23. Mme Préville/La Présidente [and] Grandval/Damis – *Le Mariage fait et rompu* (III, 2)
24. Melle Drouin/La Meunière [and] Bonneval/Le Bailli – *Les Trois cousines* (II, 1)
25. Melle Drouin/La Meunière – *Les Trois cousines* [II, 1]
26. *Le Pauvre diable*, Voltaire, *Satire*
27. no inscription [Carlin/Arlequin soldat – *Arlequin feint astrologue, enfant, statue, perroquet (...)*]

28. Mr. Caillot/Western – *Tom Jones*
29. Mr. Suier/Le Soldat Magicien
30. Mr. Laruette/Colas – *Les Deux chasseurs*
31. no inscription [Mrs Trial/Bertrand, Clerval/Monteauciel – *Le Deserteur*]
32. Mrs. Laruette/Mathurin [and] Caillot/Pierre Le Roux – *Rose et Colas*
33. no inscription [Legros/Orphée and a Fury – *Orphée et Euridice* (II, ‘Air des Furies’)]
34. Melle Dumesnil/Clytemnestre [and] Melle Clairon/Electre – *Oreste* (IV, 8)
35. Brizart/Joad [and] Melle Dumesnil/Athalie – *Athalie* (V, 5)
36. Melle Dumesnil/Athalie – *Athalie* [II, 5]
37. Brizart/Narbas [and] Melle Dumesnil/Mérope [and] Molé/Egiste – *Mérope* (III, 4)
38. Molé/Egiste – *Mérope* (IV, 4)
39. Préville/Rustaut [and] Molé/Le Marquis – *Le Galant Coureur* (sc. 18)
40. no inscription
41. Armand/Mr. de Verdac [and] Bellecour/Ariste [and] Dauberval/Desquivas – *Le Procureur arbitre* (sc. 6)
42. Larive/Philoctete – [*Oedipe* (II, 4)]
43. Préville/Maître Sangsue [and] Auger/Maître Brigandeu – *Le Mercure galant* (III, 6)
44. Feulie/Crispin en Crispinette [and] Bellemont/Robert – *Les Amazones modernes*, no indication of scene
45. Melle Sainval a[în]é/Zénobie [and] Lekain/Rhadamiste – *Rhadamiste et Zénobie* (III, 5)
46. Melle Sainval cadette/Andromaque [and] Molé/Pirrhous – *Andromaque* (I, 4)
47. Feulie/Crispin [and] Monvel/Valère – *Les Rendez-vous* (sc. 17)
48. Mme Bellecour/Nérine [and] Bourret/Pourceaugnac [and] Melle Hus/Lucette – *Pourceaugnac* (II, 9)
49. Lekain/Ninias [and] Mme Vestris/Azéma – *Sémiramis* (V, 6)

[Antoine Vincent ARNAULT]

Les Souvenirs et les regrets du vieil amateur dramatique, ou Lettres d'un oncle à son neveu sur l'ancien Théâtre Français, depuis Bellecour, Lekain, Brizard, Préville, Armand, Auger, Feulie, Paulin, Belmont, Grandval; MMes Dumesnil, Clairon, les deux Sainval, Préville, Hus, Doligny, Bellecour, Fannier, jusqu' à Molé, Larive, Monvel, Vanbove, Fleury, Désessart, Dazincour, Dugazon; MMes Raucourt, Vestris, Contat, Ollivier. Ouvrage orné de gravures coloriées, représentant en pied, d'après les miniatures originales, faites d'après nature, de Foëch de Basle et de Whirsker, ces différens acteurs dans les rôles où ils ont excellé, Paris, Charles Froment Libraire, quai des Augustins, n° 37. Nepveu Libraire, passage des Panoramas, n° 26, 1829.

Reference copy: BNF Imprimés Yf 1736, 12mo, 17.1 cm., 216 p., [36] plates coloured by hand.

List of plates. Speeches of actors are omitted. Names of actors and titles of plays are in their original spelling.

1. Voltaire/Zopire [and] Lekain/Mahomet – *Mahomet* (II, 6), frontispiece

2. Bellecour/Le Marquis – *Le Retour imprévu* (sc. 22)
3. Préville/Hector [and] Bellecour/Valère – *Le Joueur* (IV, 13)
4. Bellecour/Philoctete – *Oedipe*
5. Brisart/Zopire [and] Le Kain/Mahomet – *Mahomet* (II, 5)
6. *Préville dans trois rôles differens*: Figaro, L'abbé Beaugénie, Sosie
7. Molé/Oronte [and] Préville/Boniface Chrétien – *Le Mercure galant* (III, 7)
8. [Armand ou Feulie]/Merlin [and] Préville/La Rissolle – *Le Mercure galant* (IV, 7)
9. Bellecour/Le Marquis [and] Préville/Mr. Pincé – *Le Tambour nocturne* (IV, 7)
10. Brisart/Le Marquis [and] Molé/Darviane – *Mélanide* (V, 2)
11. Brizart/Argire [and] Melle Clairon/Aménaïde [and] Mme Grandval/Fanie – *Tancrede* (IV, 6)
12. Melle Dumesnil/Clytemnestre [and] Melle Clairon/Electre – *Oreste* (IV, 8)
13. Brizart/Joad [and] Melle Dumesnil/Athalie – *Athalie* (V, 5)
14. Brizart/Narbas [and] Melle Dumesnil/Méropé [and] Molé/Egiste – *Méropé* (III, 4)
15. Molé/Damis [and] Préville/Eraste – *L'Anglomane* (sc. 2)
16. Préville/Rustaut [and] Molé/Le Marquis – *Le Galant Coureur* (sc. 18)
17. Armand/Mr. de Verdac [and] Bellecour/Ariste [and] Dauberval/Desquivas – *Le Procureur arbitre* (sc. 6)
18. Larive/Philoctete, no indication of play, act and scene
19. Préville/Maître Sangsue [and] Auger/Maître Brigandean – *Le Mercure galant* (III, 6)
20. Feulie/Crispin en Crispinette [and] Bellemont/Robert – *Les Amazones modernes*, no indication of scene
21. Melle Sainval a[în]é/Zénobie [and] Lekain/Rhadamiste – *Rhadamiste et Zénobie*, (III, 5)
22. Melle Sainval cadette/Andromaque [and] Molé/Pirthus – *Andromaque* (I, 4)
23. Feulie/Crispin [and] Monvel/Valère – *Les Rendez-vous* (sc. 17)
24. Mme Bellecour/Nérine [and] Bourret/Pourceaugnac [and] Melle Hus/Lucette – *Pourceaugnac* (II, 9)
25. Lekain/Ninias [and] Mme Vestris/Azéma – *Sémiramis* (V, 6)
26. Melle Raucourt/Idamé [and] Brisard/Zamti – *L'Orphelin de la Chine* (V, 5)
27. Molé/Almaviva [and] Melle Olivier/Chérubin [and] Melle Contat/Susanne – *Le Mariage de Figaro* (I, 9)
28. Melle Doligny/Rosine [and] Bellecour/Le Comte [and] Desesarts/Le Docteur – *Le Barbier de Séville* (II, 14)
29. Bonneval/Bernard [and] Auger/Lolive – *Le Tuteur* (sc. 10)
30. Vanhove/Agamennon – *Iphigénie* (IV, 6) [and] Vanhove/Auguste, *Cinna* (V, 1)
31. Fleury/St. Fonds – *Ecole des Pères* (III, 10) [and] Desessarts/Lisimon – *Le Glorieux* (III, 10)
32. Préville/Charlot [and] Dugazon/Lépine – *Le Mari retrouvé* (sc. 10)
33. Melle Fanie/Jacqueline – *Le Médecin malgré lui* (III, 3) [and] Paulin/Géronte – *Le Retour imprévu* (sc. 20)
34. Melle Drouin/La Meunière [and] Bonneval/Le Bailli – *Les Trois cousines* (II, 1)

35. Mme Prévile/La Présidente [and] Grandval/Damis – *Le Mariage fait et rompu* (III, 2)
36. *Le Pauvre diable*, gravé d'après un dessin de M. Thomas

[Antoine Vincent ARNAULT]

Les Souvenirs et les regrets du vieil amateur dramatique ou Lettres d'un oncle à son neveu sur l'ancien Théâtre Français depuis Bellecour, Lekain, Brizard, Prévile, Armand, Auger, Feulie, Paulin, Belmont, Grandval; mesdames Dumesnil, Clairon, les deux Sainval, Prévile, Hus, Doligny, Bellecour, Fannier, jusqu' à Molé, Larive, Monvel, Vanhove, Fleury, Désessart, Dazincour, Dugazon; mesdames Raucourt, Vestris, Contat, Ollivier. Ouvrage orné de gravures coloriées, représentant en pied, d'après les miniatures originales faites d'après nature, de Foëch de Basle et de Wbirskeer, ces différens acteurs dans les rôles où ils ont excellé, Paris, Librairie de Alphonse Leclère, rue Vaugirard 15, 1861; [Paris, Imprimerie de Ch. Lahure et Cie rue de Fleurus, 9, et de l'Ouest, 21].

Reference copy: Biblioteca di Storia delle Arti – Università di Pisa: R 139. Here reproduced (figures 1-49).

Nineteenth century half morocco binding, 220 p., mm. 19.6 cm., 49 coloured plates comprising the 36 illustrations of the original 1829 edition, and 13 additional illustrations, of which 7 are appended at the end as extra plates. The actual sequence of the vignettes does not correspond, either in number or order, to the 36 items listed on pp. 217-219 ('Indication du placement des gravures').

I have also consulted the following similar copies of the 1861 edition, containing 49 plates:

BNF Imprimés Yf 11685; Comédie Française (three copies): CF I 1556; E.P. 2 (ex libris Pasteur); IV.G. 2.1861 ARN.

A copy in the Harvard Theatre Collection: TS 237.73.5 (purchased 1952 Chase Fund). It contains three engraved plates for each illustration: an etching on paper, an etching on card coloured by hand, an etching on paper coloured by hand; three gouaches at the beginning: 'Ninias and Azéma in *Sémiramis*' (Lekain and Mme Vestris), 10.2x12 cm.; 'Alzire and Zamore in *Alzire*' (Mlle Sainval and Lekain), 98x12 cm.; 'Athamare and Obeïde in *Les Scythes*' (Lekain and Mlle Sainval aînée), 10x11.8 cm.

The following list of plates and the corresponding illustrations refer to the copy in the Biblioteca di Storia delle Arti – Università di Pisa (copyright: Biblioteca di Storia delle Arti; digital reproduction: Dipartimento di Storia delle Arti).

Vignettes already featured in the first edition of *Les Métamorphoses* [c.1770] are marked with an asterisk. Speeches of actors are omitted. Names of actors and titles of plays are in their original spelling.

See this list also for some indispensable indications concerning single vignettes which also occurred in preceding editions.

1. Voltaire/Zopire [and] Lekain/Mahomet – *Mahomet* (II, 6)

2. * Bellecour/Valère – *Le Joueur* (IV, 13)
3. * Bellecour/Philoctète – *Oedipe* (II, 4)
4. * Bellecour/Le Marquis – *Le Retour imprévu* (sc. 22)
5. * Prévile/Hector [and] Bellecour/Valère – *Le Joueur* (IV, 13)
6. * Brisart/Zopire [and] Le Kain/Mahomet – *Mahomet* (II, 5)
7. *Prévile dans trois rôles differens*: Figaro, L'abbé Beaugénie, Sosie
8. Molé/Oronte [and] * Prévile/Boniface Chrétien – *Le Mercure galant* (III, 7)¹⁴¹
9. Armand/Merlin [and] Prévile/La Rissolle – *Le Mercure galant* (IV, 7)
10. Bellecour/Le Marquis [and] Prévile/Mr. Pincé – *Le Tambour nocturne* (IV, 7)
11. * Brisart/Le Marquis [and] Molé/Darviane – *Mélanide* (V, 2)¹⁴²
12. Brizart/Argire [and] Melle Clairon/Aménaïde [and] Mme Grandval/Fanie – *Tancrede* (IV, 6)
13. Melle Dumesnil/Clytemnestre [and] Melle Clairon/Electre – *Oreste* (IV, 8)
14. * Melle Clairon/Electre – *Electre* [III, 2]
15. Brizart/Joad [and] Melle Dumesnil/Athalie – *Athalie* (V, 5)
16. * Melle Dumesnil/Athalie – *Athalie* [II, 5]
17. Brizart/Narbas [and] Melle Dumesnil/Mérope [and] Molé/Egiste – *Mérope* (III, 4)
18. Molé/Damis [and] Prévile/Eraste – *L'Anglomane* (sc. 2)
19. Prévile/Rustaut [and] Molé/Le Marquis – *Le Galant Coureur* (sc. 18)
20. * Molé/Egiste – *Mérope* (IV, 4)
21. Armand/Mr. de Verdac [and] Bellecour/Ariste [and] Dauberval/Desquivas – *Le Procureur arbitre* (sc. 6)
22. Larive/Philoctète, no indication of play, act and scene¹⁴³
23. * Prévile/Maître Sangsue [and] Auger/Maître Brigandean – *Le Mercure galant* (III, 6)
24. Feulie/Crispin en Crispinette [and] Bellemont/Robert – *Les Amazones modernes*, no indication of scene
25. * Melle Sainval a[îné]e/Zénobie [and] Lekain/Rhadamiste – *Rhadamiste et Zénobie* (III, 5)¹⁴⁴
26. Melle Sainval cadette/Andromaque [and] Molé/Pirrus – *Andromaque* (I, 4)
27. Feulie/Crispin [and] Monvel/Valère – *Les Rendez-vous* (sc. 17)
28. Mme Bellecour/Nérine [and] Bourret/Pourceaugnac [and] Melle Hus/Lucette – *Pourceaugnac* (II, 9)
29. Lekain/Ninias [and] Mme Vestris/Azéma – *Sémiramis* (V, 6)
30. Melle Raucourt/Idamé [and] Brisard/Zamti – *L'Orphelin de la Chine* (V, 5)
31. Molé/Almaviva [and] Melle Olivier/Chérubin [and] Melle Contat/Susanne – *Le Mariage de Figaro* (I, 9)¹⁴⁵

¹⁴¹ *Les Métamorphoses* [c.1770], plate no. 4, only features the character of Prévile as Boniface Chrétien.

¹⁴² The distance between the two actors is here considerably reduced if compared to the same vignette in *Les Métamorphoses* [c.1770], plate no. 12.

¹⁴³ The lines in the vignette are from from La Harpe's *Philoctète* (I, 4): Jean Maudit called Larive (1747-1827) interpreted the role of the tragic hero for the first time in 1784. The original vignette cannot be attributed to Faesch.

¹⁴⁴ The distance between the two actors is here considerably reduced if compared to the same vignette in *Les Métamorphoses* [c.1770], plate no. 13.

¹⁴⁵ This cast features in the staging of the comedy by Beaumarchais at the Théâtre de l'Odéon in 1784. The original vignette cannot be attributed to Faesch.

32. Melle Doligny/Rosine [and] Bellecour/Le Comte [and] Desesarts/Le Docteur – *Le Barbier de Séville* (II, 14)
33. Bonneval/Bernard [and] Auger/Lolive – *Le Tuteur* (sc. 10)
34. Vanhove/Agamemnon – *Iphigénie* (IV, 6) [and] Vanhove/Auguste, *Cinna* (V, 1)¹⁴⁶
35. Fleury/St. Fonds – *Ecole des Pères* (III, 10) [and] Desessarts/Lisimon – *Le Glorieux* (III, 10)
36. Préville/Charlot [and] Dugazon/Lépine – *Le Mari retrouvé* (sc. 10)
37. no inscription¹⁴⁷
38. Melle Fanier/Jacqueline – *Le Médecin malgré lui* (III, 3) [and] Paulin/Géronte – *Le Retour imprévu* (sc. 20)
39. Mme Préville/La Présidente [and] Grandval/Damis – *Le Mariage fait et rompu* (III, 2)
40. Melle Drouin/La Meunière [and] Bonneval/Le Bailli – *Les Trois cousines* (II, 1)
41. Melle Drouin/La Meunière – *Les Trois cousines* [II, 1]
42. *Le Pauvre diable*, Voltaire, *Satire*
43. no inscription [Legros/Orphée and a Fury – *Ophée et Euridice* (II, ‘Air des Furies’)]
44. * Mr. Caillot/Western – *Tom Jones*
45. * Mr. Laruette/Colas – *Les Deux chasseurs*
46. no inscription [* Mrs Trial/Bertrand, Clerval/Monteauciel – *Le Déserteur*]
47. no inscription [* Carlin/Arlequin soldat – *Arlequin feint astrologue, enfant, statue, perroquet (...)*]
48. * Mr. Suier/Le Soldat Magicien
49. * Mrs. Laruette/Mathurin [and] Caillot/Pierre Le Roux – *Rose et Colas*

7. The Album in the Harvard University Theatre Collection

In 1980 the Harvard University Library purchased an important portfolio album attributed to Jean Louis Faesch,¹⁴⁸ containing 363 drawings, from the collector and bookseller John P. Cavanagh;¹⁴⁹ each drawing is tipped onto a blank card, then stuck onto a page; at the time when I was able to study the drawings, they were not

¹⁴⁶ Charles-Joseph Vanhove (1739-1803) made his debut at the Comédie Française on 2 July 1777, and became *sociétaire* in 1779. It is highly unlikely that Faesch is the author of the original vignette.

¹⁴⁷ The vignette features an actor and an actress in tragic characters. Even though this vignette is placed in front of the first page of Mme Bellecour’s biographical portrait, it is unlikely that she is represented in this scene, as she was principally a comic actress.

¹⁴⁸ Harvard Theatre Collection, MS Thr 643; Standard title: *Jean Louis Faesch Portraits of the French Stage*, portfolio album, 61x43 cm., cloth binding, late nineteenth century, 61 folios numbered 1-61, h. 58,8 cm. Two sorts of watermark, both ascribable to a leading Dutch paper producer active from 1784: 1) VAN GELDER ZONEN 2) A crown-topped escutcheon displaying a *lys de France* and the monogram VGZ inscribed below. The trade-mark Van Gelder Zonen was adopted in 1845. In the following notes this collection will be referred to as *Portraits of the French Stage*.

¹⁴⁹ The present on-line resource catalogue of the Harvard Libraries (HOLLIS Classic) points out that ‘some [drawings] are now lost’. Their number is recorded as ‘over 330’.

numbered individually.¹⁵⁰ They are almost all pen and ink tracings, nine are outlined with a pointed tool, seventeen with a pointed tool and traces of mica;¹⁵¹ three are washed with grey wash.¹⁵² The supports vary: in most cases a very thin paper which was oiled and thus rendered translucent (*papiers huilés*), though a small number of supports have been differently processed: similar to *feuilles-gélatines*¹⁵³ and to *papiers vernis*.¹⁵⁴ These techniques can already be found in a few rare drawings in the collection of the Comédie Française.¹⁵⁵ The *papiers huilés* have become oxidized over time, and present a yellowish or orange tinge of varying intensity which alter their quality, at least partially. They are, therefore, extremely fragile works, some of which require restoration. Due to this fragility reproduction was almost impossible at the time when I was able to examine them.

The canvas binding of the album dates to the late nineteenth century.¹⁵⁶ On the back it bears a label which is partially illegible: *[Alb]um [Fran]çais*. On the inside front cover is a manuscript title in pen: *Calques de Costumes du Théâtre Français de l'Opera et de l'Opera Comique XVIIIe siècle d'après les gouaches de Foëch. 20 Mars 1894*. Glued under the title is the cutting of an unspecified sale catalogue, which I have still not been able to identify, referring to the *Album* itself: *3 [or 8]. Costumes des théâtres français anglais et italiens. Collection d'environ 350 calques du siècle dernier/Ces calques ont été pris sur les miniatures de Foëch de Bâle et Wirsker; plusieurs de ces miniatures ont été déjà reproduites dans les Métamorphoses de Melpomène et de Thalie, ainsi que dans les Souvenirs et regrets d'un Vieil Amateur, mais plusieurs sont inédites. Réunion importante au point de vue du costume au théâtre au XVIIIe siècle.*

John P. Cavanagh was a great expert and a fine scholar. His remarkable theatre collection was sold by Sotheby's in London in an auction held on 20 July 1993,¹⁵⁷ and iconographical research can now benefit from the extensive specialized bibliography which he wrote together with Sidney Jackson Jowers.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁰ When I inspected the album, 9 drawings (on pp. 1, 5, 7, 12, 27, 28, 45 and 50) were detached but complete in envelopes fixed to their original position.

¹⁵¹ As recorded by Cavanagh in [John P. Cavanagh], *The Drama Delineated*.

¹⁵² I have found them on p. 12 (2) and p. 17 (1).

¹⁵³ 15 *feuilles-gélatines* found on pp. 20 (1), 22 (1), 23 (1), 26 (3), 27 (4), 45 (3), 46 (2). On this method see Jacques Nicolas Paillot de Montabert, *Traité complet de la peinture*, 9 vols., Paris, Bossange Père, 1829, IX, p. 627.

¹⁵⁴ 8 *papiers vernis* found on pp. 22 (1), 23 (4), 25 (1), 47 (2). This definition is probably inappropriate for these sheets. They consist in a support thickened and darkened by a greasy pigment onto which, by heating, a sheet of transparent paper has been stuck. A stylus has been employed to draw the composition. When illuminated from below the impressed lines may be visible. These sheets are likely to have been used for transferring. On the traditional method of *papiers vernis* see *ibid.*, IX, pp. 625-627.

¹⁵⁵ The so-called *Album de calques* contains a set of 18 *papiers huilés* (Bibliothèque Musée de la Comédie Française). The *papiers huilés* are stuck onto blank cards: 9 of them bearing at the bottom the inscription *Calque d'un[e] gouache de Foëch*; three of them are inscribed *T.S.p.* In this case, too, notes on the theatre, the names of the actors and the roles, not entirely homogeneous, appear both on the cards and on the *papiers huilés* themselves.

¹⁵⁶ Inside the plate a label bears the inscription: *Papeterie du Commerce, 34 rue de Bourdonnais Paris. Fabrique de Registres Théodore Antoine. Impressions à gravures et fournitures des bureaux [...]*.

¹⁵⁷ See the sale catalogue *Books, Prints and Drawings from the Cavanagh Theatre Collection*, London, Sotheby's, 1993, sale no. 93264.

¹⁵⁸ Sidney Jackson Jowers and John P. Cavanagh (eds.), *Theatrical costume, masks, make-up and wigs: a bibliography and iconography*, London, Routledge, 2000. For his publishing house Motley Press, specialized in Drama and Theatre Studies, Cavanagh founded and directed the *Motley Bibliographies*.

Presenting the *Album* in a typescript, which I have already had occasion to cite in these pages, Cavanagh showed that he was well aware of the value of the collection devoted to French Theatre, and more in general of the drawings of Faesch:

The significance of these drawings is of great interest, and they represent a major discovery in the documentation of the French Theatre. They also add considerably to our knowledge of the eighteenth-century English Theatre, since they establish the source of many contemporary paintings and engravings of the Georgian Stage. They form a large part of the surviving work of an artist, who can fairly be claimed to be the first consistently to depict stage action from a performance in progress.¹⁵⁹

Cavanagh was thus the first, after Antoine Vincent Arnault, to grasp the importance of Faesch's work as a whole for the iconography of eighteenth-century theatre, also in relation to 'the origins and development of the concept of accurate portrayal of stage productions'. In fact although Faesch's original miniatures, like the engravings drawn after them, had been much used and cited, they had only been dealt with systematically in museum catalogues or in the iconographic appendices of monographic studies devoted to individual actors.

However, as we can deduce from the passage above, Cavanagh had his own ideas regarding this *Source collection*, ideas which I can only partially share, as can be seen in the previous sections.

With the fact that the collection now in the Harvard Library is 'the largest surviving archive' of the work of Faesch we can undoubtedly concur, just as it is clear, from the number of images, that it constitutes 'a unique record of the French theatre of the period'. Although extensive, the collections of Faesch's miniatures in the Musée Bibliothèque of the Comédie Française cannot boast such a large number of representations of scenes depicting actors alone or in pairs, or sometimes three or four actors together in the same composition. Although vignettes by Faesch are found in many other public collections in Europe and North America, and the Harvard Theatre Collection itself possesses many such series, the variety of images they contain is undoubtedly inferior compared to this rich corpus of drawings.¹⁶⁰ Many of the drawings, in fact, do not correspond to any of the existing or traceable miniatures. Of particular importance is the set of drawings regarding the Opéra and the Opéra Comique and the Comédie Italienne, which considerably extend the field of the known iconography. It is worth underlining, however, that the collection was formed in France and that it regards only Parisian theatre, with the sole exception, of little significance and entirely casual, of two drawings related to the English theatre.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁹ [John. P. Cavanagh], *The Drama Delineated*, p. [1].

¹⁶⁰ The Harvard Theatre Collection houses various series of engravings and the following series of miniatures: 27 miniatures on vellum, THE B MS Thr 641; 14 miniatures on paper or vellum, THE B MS Thr 644; 35 miniatures on vellum, THE B MS Thr 645: these miniature drawings were bound in five charming and very well preserved leather bindings, each containing 7 items; unfortunately removed during the cataloguing process; *Caractères dramatiques* (1770), containing an extra series of 9 miniatures on vellum THE B MS Thr 410.20; *Les Métamorphoses* (1772), THE B MS Thr 410.21, containing an extra series of three miniatures on vellum; *Les Souvenirs et les regrets* (1861), TS 237 73.5: the plates are present in three states (in black, coloured, and coloured on china paper); three original miniatures on vellum are bound in at front.

¹⁶¹ *David Garrick as Abel Druggier in 'The Alchemist'* (p. 45) and *Thomas Weston as Dr. Last in 'The Devil upon Two Sticks'* (p. 47).

It is not my intention here to attempt an analytical description of the drawings in the *Album*, since my original inventory is not detailed enough, but I would like to focus, through several examples, on the questions most relevant to the nature and significance of the drawings and to what they can tell us about Faesch's method.

Cavanagh set out from a mistaken idea of the method employed by Faesch to draw the scenes, and this point of view partly conditioned his interpretation of the collection. He believed, in fact, that the drawings were the result of the direct reproduction of the actors on stage.¹⁶² According to Cavanagh, Faesch drew 'sketches from the life in the theatre', which he then copied and refined, producing the *working drawings* contained in the Harvard *Album*, full-fledged prototypes used both to trace copies to be painted in gouache, thus creating his miniatures, and to provide the drawings for engravings.

An important point to be stressed about these drawings is that they represent an earlier stage in the preparation of what has hitherto been regarded as an 'original Faesch' than has been so far recorded. Faesch's work has been previously thought of as a series of exquisitely painted gouaches. However, it would clearly be impractical to produce such finished work in the theatre. There must be an earlier form, from which the gouache is derived. The drawings in this collection are the source of the gouaches. Since the drawings, although in line, are nevertheless themselves very finished, there was doubtless still earlier work in the form of quickly made and spirited sketches. These are unlikely to have survived. When they were translated into the finished line drawing, they had served their purpose. The final drawings then could be used either for engravings or for the gouaches.¹⁶³

With regard to the process used for copying, Cavanagh thought, albeit in a very general manner, that Faesch might have made use of an unspecified optical instrument.¹⁶⁴

Cavanagh did not, therefore, explore the question of the optical means of capturing and reproducing images, the portable camera obscuras mentioned in Section 4, which Faesch certainly employed in Paris, and very probably during his stay in London. Cavanagh's error derives from an ideological prejudice, and in some ways also from an error of historical perspective. He rightly opposed the scholars who assumed rather generally that Faesch had engraved *after* Zoffany and Wilson.¹⁶⁵ He was aware of the originality of Faesch's art, both due to the fact that many of the existing miniatures did not correspond to *theatrical conversation pieces*, and above all because the drawings in the Harvard *Album* 'often represent an actor in several different stances in the same role, akin to moving pictures'. However, in his opinion this originality stemmed from the difference between Faesch's method and the studio approach later codified by modern stage photography in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The first error is thus to judge Faesch on the basis of a method

¹⁶² Cavanagh's hypothesis was accepted by the curators of the Harvard University Library, who specify in the biographical note of the *Album* that: 'Faesch is the first artist to be said with certainty to have drawn his subjects directly from actual performance'.

¹⁶³ [John P. Cavanagh], *The Drama Delineated*, p. 3.

¹⁶⁴ According to Cavanagh the drawing, made on oiled paper or with an engraved tool 'was placed on a sheet of glass illuminated from beneath, probably by an angled mirror like a microscope stage, and a piece of thin vellum placed over it. Experiment shows that under these conditions the drawing appears to be made on the translucent vellum' (*ibid.*, Appendix III).

¹⁶⁵ See Section 4, note 94.

of capturing images that we now rightly consider to be long outdated, but that at the time was absolutely in the vanguard in its use of the new optical instruments. The second error stems from a limited conception of theatrical iconography: that the more an image is the direct reproduction of performance, the more it is reliable and valuable to the historian. In other words, it is a record, and not a recreation. Direct reproduction from life, comparable to live filming in the modern world, is thus of greater documentary value than an image reconstructed in the studio. Fortunately the experience of the relations between video and theatre in recent years has made us aware of the creative character of all reproduction, in a wide spectrum of approaches that range from reproduction that can only ingenuously be defined ‘pure and simple’ to full-fledged creative video productions related to the live performance.

Returning to the period in which we are interested, the second half of the eighteenth century, we must therefore consider the contributions of Faesch, Zoffany and other painters of the period not so much and not only in terms of the documentary value of their work with regard to performance, although this is undoubtedly very important, but in terms of the way of producing this “documentation”, which implies a new way of looking at the actor and reveals the adoption of a completely new framework of perception. Cavanagh’s observation, that ‘the only records of value in theatre research are drawings taken directly from actual performance, or paintings and engravings derived from these drawings without further modification than the medium demands’, appears to be restrictive and outdated if we take a wider iconological approach. The medium, in fact, is at least as important as the object represented, and has in itself a documentary value in the framework of the visual culture to which theatre, too, belongs.

Both Faesch and Zoffany were aware of their innovative approach to the theatrical image, albeit in the diversity of the purpose and quality of their works: on one hand miniatures, which could portray the actor in various roles, or even in various moments of the same role, thanks to the speed with which they could be executed; and on the other hand paintings, in which a refined pictorial technique served to capture every detail of the physiognomy, pose, gesture and costume of the actors. In some way the two artists were complementary. Both satisfied two essential aspects of the recording of the actor’s work, exactly as the reformers of the eighteenth-century stage, especially Garrick and Lekain, understood it. This need was consistent with the requirement for the objective and ‘scientific’ description of acting that underpinned all the treatises on the art of the actor written during the period. And it is certainly no coincidence that Faesch’s miniatures were appreciated by a man of science such as Lichtenberg, whose descriptions of the movements, gestures, expressions and costumes of the principal actors on the contemporary London stage are still astonishing in their vivid observation, precision and realism.

While we have clear proof of the originality of Faesch’s art, we should avoid falling into the misapprehension, as Cavanagh did, that the painters copied from Faesch:

When all the collections, variants, and paintings are compared, it appears likely that the painters used Faesch’s work as a basis for their canvases, as a modern painter may use photographs. The difficulty in the way of establishing this clearly in every case is the lack of dates that can be safely attached either to paintings or engravings. The provenance of paintings is often very hazy, and it is known from correspondence that

the drawings used for the Fesch engravings were prepared long before the engravings were published.¹⁶⁶

In actual fact, although still incomplete, the chronology of Faesch's engraved and printed work and that of his journeys show that the Swiss miniaturist and the painters of theatrical conversation pieces could quite easily have copied from and influenced each other in turn.

The atmosphere of innovation – both in relation to performance itself and to its visual record – which Garrick helped to develop, explains much more than the rather vain attempt to place in order of importance the artists who probably met at Drury Lane, who may have worked in close contact with each other, and who very probably found themselves side by side in Adelphi Terrace or in the fine villa in Hampton on the Thames, chatting in German with Mrs. Garrick as they took tea.¹⁶⁷

The important Harvard *Album* itself would seem to provide significant information about Faesch's method. From my current knowledge I am unable to make any hypotheses about the formation of the Album, except that from the watermarks of the sheets it would not seem to date further back than the middle of the nineteenth century. I had initially supposed that the collection might have been made by the dramatist Antoine Vincent Arnault, who as we know had planned to follow his *Souvenirs* of the Théâtre Français with a similar volume on the Théâtre Italien with its partner the Opéra Comique and the Grand Opéra. The complex programme of illustration undoubtedly required the collection of a large number of Faesch's vignettes: Faesch's *working drawings*, which had been preserved by a collector (Arnault himself?), certainly facilitated the work of the engraver who had to copy them. I have unfortunately not been able to carry out research I had intended to do for this study at the Institut de France, whose library is closed to the public, and therefore do not know whether it houses documents related to any collections that Arnault may have made. However, the hypothesis that the collection of drawings today in the Harvard Theatre Collection may have passed through his hands can certainly not be ruled out, since the cards that support the tracings may only have been attached to the sheets of the *Album* at a later date, and not by the person who had gathered them together and kept them during the first half of the nineteenth century, and this first collector may well have been Arnault. Apparently, on the basis of a first survey, the Harvard *Album* does not contain vignettes illustrating scenes from theatrical pieces staged after 1778: but as inscriptions on some vignettes are missing or, more rarely, erroneous, it is impossible to be absolutely certain.

Cavanagh's idea that these tracings (or most of them) are the 'original working papers' of Faesch conflicts with the manuscript note cited above, dated 1894, which states that the *Album* consists of *Calques de Costumes du Théâtre Français de l'Opéra et de l'Opéra Comique XVIIIe siècle d'après les gouaches de Föëch*. I believe, however, that many of the drawings, at least, are those originally produced by Faesch. At the end of the nineteenth century they may easily have been mistaken for "tracings after...", since the paper supports that were used to trace a drawing from the image reflected on the horizontal glass of a portable camera obscura and those that usually served to

¹⁶⁶ [John P. Cavanagh], *The Drama Delineated*, p. 3.

¹⁶⁷ A conversation piece by Zoffany (1762, Biddick Hall, Lord Lambton Collection) portrays Mr. and Mrs. David Garrick taking tea with several guests at the villa in Hampton.

transfer originals drawings could have been the same. As I stated in Section 4, I believe that Faesch's *working drawings*, misguidedly called tracings, were actually obtained from the image of the actors in pose reflected on the plate of the portable camera obscura. This image was so well illuminated that it could be outlined easily and quickly on the translucent paper supports obtained using various methods. The finishing of the drawings in pen and ink was done later. In turn, these traced drawings served as prototypes to be copied onto thin sheets of vellum and coloured with watercolour and gouache. Final miniatures could be reproduced in many copies with the same system of tracing. For this second phase Faesch did not use traditional tracing techniques, such as *papier-calque*¹⁶⁸ or *calque au poncis*.¹⁶⁹ He could easily have employed his optical instrument for transferring his drawings: it should be remembered, in fact, that portable camera obscuras could also serve to copy drawings.¹⁷⁰ Although incomplete, the hypothesis put forward by Cavanagh can undoubtedly be confirmed. In order to copy the *working drawings*, it was therefore sufficient to work with pencil, and traces of pencil can, in fact, be observed in various miniatures, while the use of pointed tools and of mica employed in traditional tracing techniques rarely appears on the supports, and this could well be the trace of later copying procedures rather than those carried out by Faesch. However, a full picture of the production and reproduction techniques related to the *working drawings* and the miniatures would require more research, and goes beyond the purposes of the present study.

It is, however, worth making a few observations about how the collection came to be formed. Linked to the individual drawings, although not in regular fashion, there are three types of written notes: the ones in pen at the top of the drawings themselves might be original; the ones in pen at the bottom of the cards seem to belong to the same hand that wrote the title of the *Album* and are presumably thus the work of the collector who put it together in the nineteenth century; finally, in pencil, the same hand sometimes added names and notes about characters, about which the collector was not entirely certain. In some cases these notes provide information that conflicts both with what is written on the drawings and with respect to the captions of the vignettes printed in *Les Souvenirs et les regrets*. It is clear, therefore, that these notes should be evaluated carefully. In particular, for example, the letter *W* in pencil appears on some cards on pages 39 to 43 of the *Album*, and in one case the name *Wirscher*, on p. 42, could be attributed to the later hand which may have intended to indicate that these drawings had been reproduced in *Les Métamorphoses*.

¹⁶⁸ On the procedure used to obtain the *papier-calque* (tracing paper), see J. N. Pailot de Montabert, *Traité complet de la peinture*, IX, pp. 624-625.

¹⁶⁹ On *poncing* as a method of transferring a design from one surface to another, see *ibid.*, IX, pp. 628-629 and Paul Goldman, *Looking at Prints, Drawings and Watercolours. A Guide to Technical Terms*, London, The British Museum; Malibu, The J. Paul Getty Museum, 1988, p. 49. Small prick-holes are made in the paper along the lines, and dust is pounced or rubbed through these holes, leaving a dotted outline of the design on the surface beneath. Very rarely dotted outlines are detectable on Faesch's drawings: they may be the result of secondary procedures of transferring.

¹⁷⁰ Where the translucent supports could be used for the double task of shooting and transferring, the *papiers vernis* were exclusively employed for transferring (see note 154).

There are also some interesting disparities or inconsistencies: disparities in the dimensions of the subjects portrayed,¹⁷¹ quite substantial in such small proportions, or in the distances between the characters, compared to the images in the prints, especially with respect to the sequence of illustrations in *Les Souvenirs et les regrets*.¹⁷² Close comparison between original drawing (as seen in the Harvard *Album*), a gouache and an engraving of the same subject, when all three are extant, shows that the outlines match exactly; differences may lie in the distances between characters and in the details of costumes and accessories. Other inconsistencies regard the scenes and the characters: some drawings in the *Album* present groups of characters which are assembled differently in the plates of the *Les Souvenirs et les regrets*.¹⁷³

The assemblage concerning the drawings themselves is also interesting: some of them are conceived in sequence, since, as we have seen, they portray the actor or actors in different moments of the same scene. Sometimes drawings of characters in isolation, presented as single portraits, are then put together in scenes with other characters. The same system is used by Zoffany in the cases in which he presents the individual portraits of an actor depicted in a theatrical conversation piece in a scene with other actors. Another type of assemblage also seen in the original suite of *Les Métamorphoses*, as well as in *Les Souvenirs et les regrets*, is the combination on the same sheet of various representations of the same actor, portrayed in different roles. Some of the unfinished drawings contained in the *Album* may have been intended to be used in composite arrangements or to be completed in various ways in the painted versions.

These observations, which undoubtedly require further investigation, show the degree of complexity of the production of images created *ad vivum*, and also show how the optical tools used to capture them facilitate reproduction by means of tracing as well as manipulation by means of assemblage.

These aspects should not be perceived in a negative sense. The documentary quality of Faesch's vignettes can, in fact, be read both in terms of the reality of the performance from which they derive, and in this case they should be evaluated in the framework of an accurate examination, and in terms of the visual and theatrical culture that made them valid. In other words, they are not only a record of something, but also testimonies of the way in which actors regarded themselves and in which artists and the public regarded actors and their unusual powers of representation.

I do not claim, of course, to have exhausted here the subject of Faesch or of the Harvard *Album*, which undoubtedly deserves much more careful study than I was able to carry out in the few days I spent in Boston. I hope, however, that this contribution will serve to stimulate a more thorough study of this pioneer, artistically modest, perhaps, but blessed with undoubted experimental invention. Faesch, in fact, is more a forerunner of theatrical photography than all the small sets that imitated

¹⁷¹ The sizes of the sheets are different. Compositions with two characters or more, measure ca. 9.5x12 cm.; measures of single character compositions can vary in height from 8.5 to 9 cm. and in width from. 5 to 6.5 cm. The size of the characters is adapted in proportion.

¹⁷² The format adopted for *Les Souvenirs et les regrets* required a reduction in the distances between the characters, so that the vignette could easily fit onto the page. Variations in the distances can also be noted if we compare the vignettes in *Les Souvenirs et les regrets* with the same images printed in *Les Métamorphoses*.

¹⁷³ For instance the characters represented in compositions on p. 44.

him and that followed the tradition of the illustration of books on the theatre without really looking at the performance and at the actors with fresh eyes.