

## DANCE AND DRAMA IN FRENCH BAROQUE OPERA

Since its inception, French opera has embraced dance, yet all too often operatic dancing is treated as mere decoration. *Dance and Drama in French Baroque Opera* exposes the multiple and meaningful roles dance has played, starting from Jean-Baptiste Lully's first opera in 1672. It counters prevailing notions in operatic historiography that dance was parenthetical and presents compelling evidence that the *divertissement* – present in every act of every opera – is essential to understanding the work. The book considers the operas of Lully – his lighter works as well as his tragedies – and the 46-year period between the death of Lully and the arrival of Rameau, when influences from the *commedia dell'arte* and other theatres began to inflect French operatic practices. It explores the intersections of musical, textual, choreographic, and staging practices at a complex institution – the Académie Royale de Musique – which upheld as a fundamental aesthetic principle the integration of dance into opera.

REBECCA HARRIS-WARRICK is Professor of Music at Cornell University in Ithaca, NY. She has published widely on French baroque music and dance, with excursions into nineteenth-century opera, and has prepared critical editions of ballets by Lully and of Donizetti's opera, *La Favorite*. Much of her scholarly work has been informed by her interests in performance; she has studied early dance and performed as a baroque flutist. She serves on the editorial boards for *Les Œuvres complètes de Jean-Baptiste Lully* and the *Journal of the Society for Seventeenth-Century Music*. Her research has been supported by fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Mellon Foundation, and the Guggenheim Foundation.

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Dance and Drama in French Baroque Opera: A History

*Rebecca Harris-Warrick*

# Dance and Drama in French Baroque Opera

## A History

*Rebecca Harris-Warrick*



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*For Ron  
my partner on the dance floor and in life*

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transformation. I hope that this book repays some of my debts to the dancers and musicians whose performances have enriched it.

This book could not have been written without the ongoing support of my family, particularly of my parents, who led me to love opera, and of my husband Ron, an extraordinary neurobiologist who learned – and even taught – baroque dance at my side and who has been steadfast in his encouragement ever since.



## NOTES TO THE TEXT

All translations are mine, unless noted otherwise. Quotations from French, of titles and citations, have been modernized and the spelling of proper names standardized.

Music examples are transcribed into modern notation, but retain their original time and key signatures. In most examples of orchestral music only the treble and bass lines have been transcribed. Trio textures, however, adhere to the sources.

In this book, the word “score” refers to a musical score; the term is not applied to dance notations.

I have published some of the observations made in this book in earlier versions. These are generally identified in the relevant chapters; see also the Bibliography.

Appendix 3 is online at [www.cambridge.org/9781107137890](http://www.cambridge.org/9781107137890)

## ABBREVIATIONS

ARM	Académie Royale de Musique
B.C.	basse continue
BnF	Bibliothèque nationale de France
FL	Francine Lancelot, <i>La Belle Dance: Catalogue raisonné fait en l'an 1995</i> (Paris: Van Dieren Éditeur, 1996).
HW&M	Rebecca Harris-Warrick and Carol G. Marsh, <i>Musical Theatre at the Court of Louis XIV: Le Mariage de la Grosse Cathos</i> (Cambridge University Press, 1994).
LLC	Carl B. Schmidt, <i>The Livrets of Jean-Baptiste Lully's Tragédies Lyriques: A Catalogue Raisonné</i> (New York: Performers' Editions, 1995).
LMC	Meredith Ellis Little and Carol G. Marsh, <i>La Danse Noble: An Inventory of Dances and Sources</i> (Williamstown, MA: Broude Bros., 1992).
LWV	Herbert Schneider, <i>Chronologisch-thematisches Verzeichnis sämtlicher Werke von Jean-Baptiste Lully</i> (Tutzing: Hans Schneider, 1981).
MF	<i>Mercure de France</i>
NGO	<i>New Grove Dictionary of Opera</i>
PG	partition générale (full score)
PR	partition réduite (reduced score)

Library Sigla adhere to those given in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*.