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Jean-Philippe Rameau

LES INDES GALANTES

Opéra-Ballet en un prologue et quatre actes

Livret de Louis Fuzelier

représenté pour la première fois à Paris le 23 août 1735

SOLISTES

PROLOGUE

Hébé
Bellone
L'Amour

Claron McFadden, *soprano*
Jérôme Corréas, *baryton*
Isabelle Poulenard, *soprano*

1^e ENTRÉE - LE TURC GÉNÉREUX

Osman
Émilie
Valère

Nicolas Rivenq, *basse*
Miriam Ruggeri, *soprano*
Howard Crook, *ténor*

2^e ENTRÉE - LES INCAS DU PÉROU

Huascar
Phani
Don Carlos

Bernard Delétré, *basse*
Isabelle Poulenard, *soprano*
Jean-Paul Fouchécourt, *ténor*

3^e ENTRÉE - LES FLEURS, FÊTE PERSANE

Tacmas
Ali
Zaïre
Fatime

Jean-Paul Fouchécourt, *ténor*
Jérôme Corréas, *baryton*
Sandrine Piau, *soprano*
Noémi Rime, *soprano*

4^e ENTRÉE - LES SAUVAGES

Adario
Damon
Don Alvar
Zima

Nicolas Rivenq, *baryton*
Howard Crook, *ténor*
Bernard Delétré, *basse*
Claron McFadden, *soprano*

CHŒURS

Sopranos
Sylvie Colas
Caroline de Corbiac
Emmanuelle Gal
Christiane Lagny-Detrez
Béatrice Malleret
Isabelle Martin
Anne Mopin
Anne Pichard
Anne-Marie Tauzin

Hautes-contre

Joël Clément
Édouard Denoyelle
Bernard Loonen
Brian Parsons

Ténors

Alain Brumeau
Christophe Le Paludier
Niall Morris
François Piolino
Jean-Marie Puissant

Basses

François Bazola
Philippe Choquet
Jean-François Gay
Marcos Loureiro de Sa
Jean-Claude Sarragosse
Paul Willenbrock

ORCHESTRE

Violons
Myriam Gevers

Makoto Akatsu
Bernadette Charbonnier
Roberto Crisafulli
Odile Édouard
Catherine Girard
Nicola Hayston
Simon Heyerick
Thérèse Kipfer
Michiyo Kondo
Paul Lindenauer
Kevin Mallon
Guya Martinini
Martha Moore
Michèle Sauvé
Isabel Serrano

Altos

Ruth Weber
Frédéric Gondot
Ariëtte Kasbergen
Anne Weber
Peter Whiskin
Galina Zinchenko

Basses

Élisabeth Matiffa
Emmanuel Balssa
Paul Carlioz
Bruno Cocset
Dominique Dujardin
Alain Gervreau
Michel Murgier

Contrebasses

Vincent Charbonnier
Richard Myron

Hautbois

Michel Henry
Geoffrey Burgess
Michael Dupree
Claire Michèle

Musettes

Jean-Christophe Maillard
Jean-Pierre Van Hees

Flûtes & petites flûtes

Marc Hantaï
Serge Saïtta

Bassons

Claude Wassmer
Philippe Miqueu

Trompettes

Susan Williams
Maarten Van Weverwijk

Percussions

Marie-Ange Petit

CONTINUO

Clavecin

Christophe Rousset

Basse

Bruno Cocset

direction

WILLIAM CHRISTIE

CD 1 (HMC 901367)

PROLOGUE

1	Ouverture	4'20
2	Scène 1 Air "Vous, qui d'Hébé"	3'45
3	Scène 2 Entrée des 4 nations	2'25
4	Air "Amants sûrs de plaire"	3'24
5	Air grave pour les Polonais	1'54
6	Menuets I & II	2'12
7	Air et Chœur "Musettes, résonnez" Musette en rondeau	3'38
8	Scène 3 Air "La Gloire vous appelle"	2'16
9	Air pour les deux guerriers portants des drapeaux	1'41
10	Air pour les amants qui suivent Bellone Chœur "Vous nous abandonnez"	1'36
11	Scène 4 Hébé et sa suite	4'52
	Scène 5 L'Amour et sa suite, Hébé Air "Pour remplacer les cœurs" Air "Ranimez vos flambeaux"	
12	Air pour les Amours	1'01
13	Duo et Chœur "Traversez les plus vastes mers"	3'52

PREMIÈRE ENTRÉE • LE TURC GÉNÉREUX

14	Scène 1 Émilie, Osman Air "Il faut que l'Amour s'envole"	6'44
	Scène 2 Émilie	
15	Air "Vaste empire des mers" Chœur des Matelots "Ciel ! de plus d'une mort"	4'27
16	Émilie "D'infortunés captifs"	3'16
	Scène 3 Émilie, Valère	
17	Scène 4 Émilie, Valère, Osman	3'49
	Scène 5 Valère, Émilie	
18	Scène 6 Émilie, Valère, Provençaux, Esclaves africains Marche Duo et Chœur "Volez, Zéphyrus"	5'27
19	Air pour les esclaves africains	2'20
20	Ariette "Hâtez-vous"	2'17
21	Ariette "Régnez, Amours"	3'11
22	Rigaudons I & II	2'18
23	Tambourins I & II Émilie et Chœur "Partez"	2'15

CD 2 (HMC 901368)

DEUXIÈME ENTRÉE • LES INCAS DU PÉROU

1	Scène 1	Phani, Carlos	4'11
2	Scène 2	Air "Viens, Hymen"	3'11
3	Scène 3	Phani, Huascar	4'11
	Scène 4	Huascar	
	Scène 5	Fête du Soleil	
4		Air "Soleil, on a détruit"	2'19
5		Prélude pour l'adoration du Soleil	1'29
6		Air et Chœur "Brillant Soleil"	3'28
7		Air des Incas	1'28
8		Air et Chœur "Clair flambeau"	3'52
9		Loure en rondeau	1'31
10		Air "Permettez, astre"	1'52
11		1ère Gavotte. 2 ^{ème} Gavotte en rondeau	1'58
12		Tremblement de terre Chœur "Dans les abîmes"	1'58
13	Scène 6	Huascar, Phani Air "Ici, je vois partout"	5'52

Scène 7	Phani, Huascar, Carlos Trio "Pour jamais"	
Scène 8	Les mêmes. "La flamme se rallume"	

TROISIÈME ENTRÉE • LES FLEURS, FÊTE PERSANE

14	Scène 1	Tacmas, Ali Air "L'objet à qui je rends les armes"	5'01
	Scène 2	Tacmas, Zaïre	
15	Scène 3	Zaïre. Air "Amour, quand du destin"	4'18
16	Scène 4	Zaïre, Tacmas Duo "Doit-on aimer"	8'55
	Scène 5	Tacmas, Zaïre, Fatime	
	Scène 6	Fatime, Tacmas Air "Dans ces jardins"	
	Scène 7	Fatime, Tacmas, Ali, Zaïre Air "Deviez-vous vous méprendre"	
17		Quatuor "Tendre Amour"	2'23
18	Scène 8	Marche pour la fête des fleurs Chœur "Dans le sein de Thétis"	4'35
19		Air "L'éclat des roses"	0'59
20		Air et Chœur "Triomphez, agréables fleurs"	2'35
21		Airs pour les Persans I & II	2'34
22		Air "Papillon inconstant"	3'45

CD 3 (HMC 901369)

1	Ballet des Fleurs Airs pour les Fleurs I & II Gavotte en rondeau Orage Air pour Borée	5'21
2	Airs pour Zéphire I & II Air pour les Fleurs Gavotte	6'53

NOUVELLE ENTRÉE • LES SAUVAGES

3	Scène 1 Adario Air "Rivaux de mes exploits"	2'58
4	Scène 2 Damon, Don Alvar, Adario Air "L'inconstance ne doit blesser"	3'41
	Scène 3 Zima, Damon, Don Alvar, Adario Air "Nous suivons sur nos bords"	
5	Air "La terre, les cieux et les mers" Air "Le cœur change à son gré"	2'21
6	Air "L'habitant des bords de la Seine" Scène 4 Zima, Damon, Don Alvar, Adario	2'40

7	Prélude, qui annonce la fête Scène 5 Adario, Zima	2'02
8	Air "Sur nos bords l'amour vole" Duo "Hymen, viens nous unir"	3'03
9	Scène 6 Air et Chœur "Bannissons les tristes alarmes"	2'31
10	Danse du Grand Calumet de la Paix (Danse des Sauvages)	2'01
11	Duo et Chœur "Forêts paisibles"	2'31
12	1 ^{er} Menuet pour les Guerriers et les Amazones 2 ^{ème} Menuet Gavotte	1'46
13	Prélude Air "Régnez, Plaisirs et Jeux"	3'16
14	Chaconne	5'51

LES INDES GALANTES

Sylvie Bouissou

After the death of Lully the "tragédie en musique" became jaded and exhausted, too often entangled in the silliness of its librettos and floundering in a maze of facile music and an excessive overabundance of dances. Parallel with the demise of the moribund "tragédie en musique", the "opéra-ballet" came into existence. This was a mixed genre, a sort of resurgence of the "ballet de cour", the principal innovations of which were, on the one hand, a plot disembarassed of mythology and the "Merveilleux" to the advantage of exoticism and topicality, and, on the other, a structure of three or four self-contained acts linked together by a general, more or less vague theme, but conforming to the demands of a rational, unswerving logic in this Cartesian century. The linking thread of *Les Indes galantes* derives from the eighteenth century notion of the exotic, i.e. the sense of the remote, the unknown, of journeys to distant countries, without any concern for realism and even less for geographic accuracy, the scenes of the action of these Indies being laid in Turkey, Peru, Persia and North America.

Since the creation of the "opéra-ballet" by Pic and Colasse with *Les Saisons* (1695) and Campra with *L'Europe galante* (1697), both the public and professional artists enthusiastically welcomed a genre that was less exalted and more popular than the "tragédie". This success is explained by several factors : the first is a commercial one. The fact that it consisted of self-contained acts made it possible for the publishers to sell them separately, thereby increasing their sales. Moreover, in the eyes of the directors of the programmes, the "opéra-ballet" had an advantage over operas with a single coherent plot, since it lent itself to the grouping together of several acts by different composers in

"fragments", a somewhat unscrupulous manipulation as regards stylistic homogeneity, but one that was always greatly enjoyed by the public. The second factor is a psychological one. The "opéra-ballet" contains characters that are more human than mythological, and permits the mixing of genres, a touchstone for success prohibited in the tragedy. In addition, the separate plot of each act requires less concentration on the part of the spectator, prefiguring by almost two centuries the slow but sure advance of the era of the video-clip.

When *Les Indes galantes* was first performed in 1735 it was, therefore, part of a tradition that was already forty years old. Nevertheless, as he had done in 1733 with his first "tragédie en musique", *Hippolyte et Aricie*, Rameau renewed the genre of the "opéra-ballet", but did so in a subterranean manner, from the inside. The complex accompaniments, the vocal and instrumental performance, the harmonic refinements, the innovations in timbre and the architectural concept of the opera, everything that had provoked the *Hippolyte et Aricie* scandal, are here renewed in the mounting of four tableaux that seem to summarize the whole range of musical dramaturgy in actions treated successively as a drama (*Le Turc généreux*), a tragedy (*Les Incas du Pérou*), a bucolic (*Les Fleurs*), and a comedy (*Les Sauvages*).

A libretto without gods and without enchanters...

Louis Fuzelier's libretto reflects the fascination that remote and especially unknown countries exercised on the period, and strives to demonstrate that Love rules over all nations. The author prided himself on the exclusion of the Gods and of Enchanters, if one is to believe the preface he wrote for the publication of the libretto, and it reflects the concern of the intellectuals of the "Siècle des Lumières" to aspire to a certain form of "rational realism". The libretto was subjected to a certain amount of negative criticism at the period, the principal grievances being, as usual, improbability, the lack of dramatic interest, and the poor quality of the verse, aggravated by the impropriety of the unacceptable disguise of Tacmas as a woman... The authors lost no time in redressing this licentious audacity.

The Prologue treats of the perpetual combat between Pleasure and War, in which Love becomes not only the arbitrator but also the victor in the succeeding *entrées*: the love of the young Valère and the fair Emilie succeeds in vanquishing the stubbornness of Osman, the "generous" Turk; the amorous passion of Don Carlos and Phani suffers a number of setbacks because of Huascar's love for Phani, an embarrassing weakness in a high-priest of the Incas; in *Les Fleurs* the effete persiflage of the four heroes upholds their reciprocal attractions for one another; and the theme of the noble savage, transposed into the feminine in the character of Zima, bestows the advantage on Adario over the too flighty affections of the Frenchman and the over-possessive passion of the Spaniard.

The work was a considerable success both in Rameau's lifetime and after his death; between 1735 and 1773 it was played at the Royal Academy of Music in Paris no fewer than three hundred and twenty times, either in full or in part. Originally the opera consisted of only the first two *entrées*. Very soon after the first performance the authors added *Les Fleurs* and then *Les Sauvages*. The publication of *Les Indes galantes* calls for a few observations. It was never published in its entirety, but only in the form of "Concerts", consisting of the dances, the airs, the vocal ensembles and choruses, systematically omitting all the recitatives. Only the added *entrée*, *Les Sauvages*, was printed entire. Rameau, who was by nature a perfectionist and extremely exacting, was only too eager to revise the work, which exists in more than fifteen different versions, which renders the task of musicologists and performers in re-assembling the score extremely difficult.

Les Indes galantes, or the treatise on musical dramaturgy

Even though it remains faithful to the Lullian mould (slow-lively in fugato) in its broad outlines, the Overture is a new departure in the enlarged compass of its thematic material and its trenchant rhythm. As usual, the Prologue is weaker in a musical sense than the *entrées*, in spite of a number of fine pages of virtuosity ("Vous qui d'Hébé suivez les lois". Hebe's air), picturesqueness (the air and musette, Scene 2) and vigour (*Air of the two Poles* and *Air for two warriors bearing banners*, Scene 3).

Le Turc généreux opens with an astonishing *ritournelle* written in an *à l'allemande* fugal style. In this first *entrée* Rameau offers us a dramatic act worthy of a "tragédie en musique" in his manner, i.e. a sudden plunge into the musical drama with its unfurling of agitated passions, ending with a welter of dances and ariettas. The storm scene, an extended descriptive *symphonie*, filled with tense tremolos and runs in the high register of the flutes, which is so characteristic of Rameau's orchestration, against which the voice of Emilie and then the syllabic sailors' chorus are heard, is a passage of exceptional effectiveness. The influence of the Italian style is shown in the introduction of the ariettas, so decried by some because of their lack of dramatic justification, and appreciated by others because of their gratuitous virtuosity. Mention may be made of Valère's arietta, "Hâtez-vous de vous embarquer" and that of Emilie, "Régnez, Amour", in which the variegated writing for the violins, the vocalises and the character of the vocal handling clearly betray their Italian model.

In the second *entrée*, *Les Incas du Pérou*, Rameau explores a more dramatic and violent range of colours than in the first *entrée*. The stage directions, describing an arid mountain and the crater of a volcano formed of scorched rocks and covered in cinders, anticipate the psychological landscape to come. The act is constructed like a miniature "tragédie en musique", but this time in the Lullian mode, i.e. according to a musical-dramatic scheme that gradually grows in tension and interest, beginning rather feebly and ending like a whiplash. The Lullian technique is so perfectly mastered that it borders on parody. The atmosphere of the first scenes is somewhat uneven, almost laborious, in spite of Phani's air, "Viens Hymen", accompanied by two instrumental parts in the treble (flute and violin), which endows it with a suspended expression sometimes lacking in body but certainly not in charm. The inconsistency of the first scenes gives all the more breadth and solemn warmth to the *Festival of the Sun*, which is introduced by a *Prélude pour l'adoration du Soleil*, a passage of remarkable novelty in its total avoidance of any foreseeable or redundant element. As for Huascar's air, it alone would suffice to prove Rameau's mastery of polyphony and orchestration in a rather calm scene. By virtue of the law of contrasts, the

musical texture, calm, harmonious, rich in tone-colours (*Loure en rondeau*), betrays nothing that would lead one to anticipate the Earthquake scene (Scene 5), a sublime exploitation of the deep registers of the strings, almost hammered and rent, as in Bartók a century and a half later. The intervention of the soloists in Scenes 6 and 7 attenuates the atmosphere of the earthquake in the exploitation of a broken, ragged texture of the strings irately clinging to percussive repeated notes, until the incredible engulfing of the Inca High-Priest in the flaming abyss. After having heard these scenes is it still possible to accredit Gluck with the invention of the accompanied recitative? Can we remain convinced that Mozart alone in the 18th century was the master of *divergentes* forms – the contradictory forms in which the protagonists express their disagreement, after having heard the trio, “Pour jamais l’amour nous engage”? And, finally, can one continue to compare Rameau to a spinner of pretty pieces of music without any dramatic connexion, and not see him as a cathedral builder after hearing these two hundred and fifty bars conceived as a solid block hewn according to the purest rules of musical dramaturgy?

Due to the mediocrity of its scenario, the *entrée*, *Les Fleurs*, was changed more frequently than the others. In its pastoral cast, this *entrée* takes the place of the big *divertissement*, more of a ballet than an opera, in the work as a whole. Rameau forgets the “tragédie” and lets himself be guided by the charms of the dance, the seductiveness of the pastiche and the supremacy of the music over dramatic probability. The result is a somewhat rambling *entrée*, but one that is filled with fine things, a characteristic certainly due to the composer himself. The work contains so many dances that it would be difficult to choose among them, unless it were the *Entrée of the Incas* and that of the *Persians*, with their themes dislocated by leaps of the intervals of the octave and the tenth. We should also mention the pastiche, Fatima’s air, “Papillon inconstant”, a bravura air *à la française* inspired by Italy, but with a more sustained dramatic tone than its counterpart. As regards pure music obeying no rules but those of beauty, we may mention the quartet of Zaïre, Fatima, Ali and Tacmas. “Tendre amour”, exceptional not only in its musical quality, but also in its rarity.

The last *entrée*, *Les Sauvages*, belongs to the comic genre. There is nothing pathetic and even less tragic here, but lighthearted inconstancy, grace and humour. Fuzelier’s well-drawn characters give Rameau the opportunity of opposing Zimas’s two wooers by giving each of them a specific colour: fickleness to Damon (“L’inconstance ne doit blesser” or “La terre, les cieux ou la mer”), and jealousy, “machismo” to Alvar (“L’habitant des bords de la Seine”). On the other hand, Adario, the young man chosen by the fair Zima, is all tenderness spiced with emotion in the duo, “Hymen, viens nous unir”. In the domain of the dance, mention should be made of the dance of the Savages, taken from the *Nouvelles pièces de clavecin* (1728), and the final *Chaconne*, with its two hundred bars of melodic and rhythmic inventiveness and the elaboration of its orchestration, which surpasses all earlier attempts in the domain.

Besides the novelty of his musical language and his skilful orchestration, besides his inventive fire and his genius in the handling of contrasts, Rameau brings to *Les Indes galantes* an original dramatic concept in his exploration of a stylistic pluralism in theatrical rhetoric. Could this not be an ideal, and finally mastered, definition of the *opéra-ballet*?

Translation James O. Wootton