

# PRIMATICCIO AND COURT FESTIVALS

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PRIMATICCIO, pupil of Giulio Romano and disciple of Rosso, is now best remembered for his architectural and artistic work on the royal buildings of the Valois court, especially Fontainebleau, but his duties at court also included work for the court festivals and his activities in this sphere are documented by a series of festival designs which are extant. It is more than seventy years since Louis Dimier discovered in the National Museum, Stockholm, a group of costume designs for court festivals which he attributed to Primaticcio.<sup>1</sup> Since that date there has been no comprehensive study of the designs,<sup>2</sup> which have only been mentioned in connection with various exhibitions during the course of the years.<sup>3</sup> In 1956 Bengt Dahlbäck published two further drawings taken from a group of designs attributed by him to Primaticcio, extant in a volume of the Biblioteca Nazionale in Florence.<sup>4</sup> Present knowledge about the festival designs of Primaticcio derives almost entirely from the findings of Dimier,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. L. Dimier, "Några minnen i Stockholms Nationalmuseum från den gamla Fontainebleauskolan", *Ord och Bild*, 1899, pp. 594-601. The designs are fully described in L. Dimier, *Le Primatice, peintre, sculpteur et architecte des rois de France. Essai sur la vie et les ouvrages de cet artiste suivi d'un catalogue raisonné de ses dessins et de ses compositions gravées* (Paris, 1900), pp. 460-65. All references to the Stockholm designs are to the catalogue number of this work preceded by the letter D.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. A. Beijer, "XVI-XVIII century theatrical designs at the National Museum", *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, 6e. série, xxviii (1945), 213-36; P. Bjurström and B. Dahlbäck, "Témoignages sur l'éphémère", *L'Oeil*, xxiv (Noël 1956), 36-41; B. Dahlbäck, "Survivance de la tradition médiévale dans les fêtes françaises de la Renaissance. A propos de quelques costumes dessinés par Francesco Primaticcio", *Les fêtes de la Renaissance*, ed. J. Jacquot, i (1956), 397-404.

<sup>3</sup> The most important have been *Théâtre et fêtes à Paris, xvi<sup>e</sup> et xvii<sup>e</sup> siècles. Dessins du Musée National de Stockholm*, Musée Carnavalet, Paris, juin-juillet 1956 and *L'Ecole de Fontainebleau*, Grand Palais, 17 octobre 1972-15 janvier 1973.

<sup>4</sup> The designs form part of a volume in the Department of Manuscripts of the Biblioteca Nazionale, Florence, CB.3.53.11, fols. 44, 50-61, 73, 75-78. All

and little more is known now about these designs, which are an important iconographical source of the court festivals in France at the time of the Pléiade, than when Dimier discovered the Stockholm collection in 1899.

The greatest obscurity still reigns over the attribution of the designs of Primaticcio to particular festivals of the period in question. Dimier knew of the participation of Primaticcio in only two festivals, the entry of the Emperor Charles V into Fontainebleau in 1540,<sup>1</sup> and the entry of François II and Catherine de Médicis into Chenonceaux in 1560.<sup>2</sup> The evidence of these two festivities being insufficient to provide more than an incidental parallel with one of the drawings, Dimier concluded that the designs could not be attributed to known festivals. To obviate this problem he created a festival around the designs, which he called "La Mascarade de Stockholm", dated on the stylistic evidence of the designs to the latter part of the artist's career,

references to the designs in Florence are to the number of the following list preceded by the letter F.

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| 1. fol. 44. Two ladies in costume of Antiquity and Turk. | 11. fol. 59. Amadriade.                               |
| 2. fol. 50. Figure with wolf's head.                     | 12. fol. 60. Man holding staff with three disks.      |
| 3. fol. 51. Bearded man on horseback.                    | 13. fol. 61. Horoscope.                               |
| 4. fol. 52. Wild man on horseback.                       | 14. fol. 73. Jupiter.                                 |
| 5. fol. 53. Man in long, flowing costume.                | 15. fol. 75. Ornamental chariot.                      |
| 6. fol. 54. Fortuna.                                     | 16. fol. 76. Processional group of carnival figures.  |
| 7. fol. 55. Turk with outstretched arms.                 | 17. fol. 77. Three animal servants.                   |
| 8. fol. 56. Discordia.                                   | 18. fol. 78. Woodland servants : Fauno, Sylvano, Pan. |
| 9. fol. 57. Amadriade.                                   |   |
| 10. fol. 58. Perseus with Medusa's head.                 |   |

Dahlbäck's attribution is confirmed by the inscription on the design of Discordia (F 8), "Monseigneur de Troyes". Primaticcio was Abbé commendataire of Saint-Martin-ès-Aires at Troyes from February 1546. Cf. *Gallia Christiana*, XII, 583 ; E. E. Defer, *Histoire de l'abbaye de Saint-Martin-ès-Aires* (Troyes, 1875), pp. 66-71.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. G. Vasari, *Le vite de' piu eccellenti pittori, scultori e architettori*, ii (Florence, 1568), 211. Primaticcio was working in collaboration with Rosso for this entry.

<sup>2</sup> Primaticcio is referred to in the published account of the entry as having painted some of the decorations. Cf. *Les triomphes faitz à l'entrée de François II et de Marye Stuart au chasteau de Chenonceau, le . . . dernier jour de mars 1559*, ed. A. P. Golitsyn (Paris, 1857), p. 14.

1559–70.<sup>1</sup> The theory that one festival inspired all the extant designs is still perpetuated,<sup>2</sup> though it seems much more probable that the collection of designs in Stockholm and Florence does not represent a single court festival but rather fragments of numerous festivals of the period,<sup>3</sup> many of which may have gone unrecorded by the memorialists of the day, or ideas which the artist set down on paper but which never reached fruition in an actual festival.

It is clear that during his career in France Primaticcio was involved with the decorations for other festivals, apart from the two already mentioned. In 1549 Henri II celebrated his entry into the city of Paris, and this was preceded by great preparations under the artistic direction of Philibert de Lorme.<sup>4</sup> A tournament to celebrate the entry was announced, the cartels being published on the 1st April, which was to take place in front of the Hôtel de Graville in the Rue Saint-Antoine, opposite the Tournelles. Special preparations were made at the Hôtel de Graville for this tournament. A wooden structure was erected for a banqueting hall, and Primaticcio was entrusted with the supervision of the decorations inside.<sup>5</sup> The banquet and accompanying festivities took place here after the tournament and Primaticcio may have had a hand in these as well.

After the first civil war, which ended in 1563, Catherine de

<sup>1</sup> Dimier, op. cit. pp. 380–1, "Article XXXVI. La Mascarade de Stockholm entre 1559 et 1570". An earlier terminus a quo has been suggested in *L'Ecole de Fontainebleau*, nos. 187, 189, 193, based on the comparison between the autograph inscriptions of the artist on the designs with the handwriting of dated letters of the artist. This method would suggest a date as early as 1552 for some of the designs.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Dessins du Nationalmuseum de Stockholm*, Cabinet des Dessins, Musée du Louvre (Paris, 1970), p. 13.

<sup>3</sup> This was recognized in the catalogue of the exhibition *L'Ecole de Fontainebleau*, no. 187.

<sup>4</sup> On this entry cf. V. L. Saulnier, "Sebillet, Du Bellay, Ronsard: l'entrée de Henri II à Paris et la révolution poétique de 1549", *Les fêtes de la Renaissance*, i. 31–59.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Archives Nationales, Paris, Minutier Central, Etude XIX, liasse 178, Minutes of J. Trouvé and G. Payen, containing a Devis of the 17th May 1549 with Pierre Preaulx and Jehan Rondel, Maîtres peintres, giving the instruction "Bien aorner & décorer lesd. gran et petite salle, gallerye, portes . . . & outres choses que lesd. Seigneurs font fere en l'hostel de Graville à présent" with the marginal note "tout ainsi qu'il leur sera devisé par Monseigneur de St. Martin".

Médicis decided to make a long journey throughout France in order to be able to assess at first hand the state of affairs in the provinces, and to impress on the people the notion of monarchy by presenting her son Charles IX to them in person. The court prepared for this long journey at Fontainebleau in the spring of 1564, and the carnival days of this year were the occasion for festivals of unprecedented brilliance and splendour. The poet Ronsard was called in to write the incidental verses for the various tournaments and masquerades. Primaticcio, as is indicated by a reference in the *Comptes des bâtiments*, directed the artistic side of the celebrations :

Parties et sommes de deniers payez comptant par ledit maistre Jean Durant, présent trésorier, aux ouvriers besognans jour et nuict en toute diligence, tant les jours de festes qu'ouvrables, en ce lieu de Fontainebleau à faire grande quantité d'ouvrages de leurs mestiers pour le service du Roy, aux triumphe, tournois, comédies, mascarades, festins, et autres magnificences que ledit Seigneur a voulu et entendu faire en cedit lieu pendant les jours gras prochains, et ce, pendant la sepmaine commençans le dimanche 16e de janvier et finissant le samedy ensuivant 22e dudit mois 1563.

Somme toute de la despence faite à Fontainebleau, de l'ordonnance de maistre Francisque de Primadicis, de Boullongne, abbé de Saint Martin, tant aux peintres, doreurs, sculpteurs, mousleurs, que maçons, charpentiers, serruriers et manœuvres qui ont travaillé audit Fontainebleau. 23,190 liv. 1s. 4d.<sup>1</sup>

Our understanding of the artist's role in the organization depends to a certain extent on the meaning of the phrase "de l'ordonnance de" in the accounts, which may mean that the total payment only was authorized by Primaticcio or may imply that he had closer control on how the money was spent by giving artists and artisans exact instructions for their work.<sup>2</sup>

In isolation these two further examples of Primaticcio's involvement in court festivities do not help to explain the ways in which the artist took part in their organization. What they help to emphasize is the fact that Primaticcio may have been involved in a greater number of enterprises than documents at present suggest, and that it is not necessary to invent a special masquerade to justify the presence of the designs. The thematic

<sup>1</sup> L. Laborde, *Les comptes des bâtiments du Roi, 1528-71* (Paris, 1877-80), ii. 102. See also ii. 96 for the account of "la scène de la comédie que le Roy a fait dresser en la salle des antecailles".

<sup>2</sup> For the ambiguity of the phrase cf. Laborde, *op. cit.* ii. 50, 107.

and stylistic diversity of the designs must surely be an indication of aspects of various festival projects for which Primaticcio received commissions and not of one single festival. Vasari in his article on Primaticcio stresses the wide range of the artist's activities, and singles out this interest in court festivals :

[. . .] questo Abate di s. Martino, il quale è stato ne'suoi migliori anni in tutte le cose, che appartengono alle nostri arti eccellentissimo, & universale, poi che si è adoperato in servizio de'suoi Signori non solo nelle fabriche, pitture, e stucchi : ma ancora in molti apparati di feste, e mascherate con bellissime, e capricciose invenzioni.<sup>1</sup>

Such first hand evidence cannot be ignored, and the passage in question has little meaning, or would be extravagant exaggeration, if it referred merely to the two known festivities at Fontainebleau in 1540 when Primaticcio worked with Rosso, and at Chenonceaux in 1560. The evidence points to Primaticcio's being involved in numerous court festivities, the extent and number of which cannot be accurately estimated. One can suppose, however, that the artist would participate more readily during the reign of Charles IX when as Superintendent des Bâtiments he could take effective control of the artistic side, rather than when he was called in as part of the general labour force to execute small parts of the artistic decorations, as in 1540, 1549 and 1560.

The costume designs extant thus represent a part of the commissions Primaticcio received from the court to produce work for the court festivals. It is improbable that the artist would spend his time committing frivolous ideas for masquerades to paper, frivolous certainly when compared with the magnificent designs for the decorations of Fontainebleau, on which the artist has obviously lavished much care and craftsmanship. The art of this period was dependent on patronage, and it was because of commissions given by the Valois court that Primaticcio was engaged on his various artistic projects. Such a situation indicates that where a design exists, it is there in order to answer a specific requirement made of the artist.<sup>2</sup> The existence of such a commission does not preclude the possibility of the

<sup>1</sup> Vasari, op. cit. iii. 800-1.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. S. M. Newton, *Renaissance theatre costume and the sense of the historic past* (London, 1975), p. 207.

designs not being used. It is by no means unknown for festivities to be cancelled at the last minute at this time;<sup>1</sup> for example, Charles IX's entry into Paris in April 1561, and the festivities to celebrate the marriage of Marguerite de France with Emmanuel-Philibert de Savoie, which were cut short by Henri II's fatal accident in the tournament in front of the Hôtel des Tournelles. It has also been argued that had the designs been forwarded to tailors they could easily have been damaged in the course of the work needed to produce the garments, so that they would not be in the excellent state of preservation that we find them today.<sup>2</sup>

The manuscript inscriptions on some of the designs substantiate the theory that they were intended by the artist to be used. The inscriptions fall into two groups, those by the artist himself and those by other hands. The artist's inscriptions,<sup>3</sup> almost all of which indicate the name of the character represented, show at least that the artist was sketching particular figures and characters required by the demands of the festival. Some inscriptions by Primaticcio give no more than the identification of the character, such as the Amadriade (F 11, pl. I(a)), the woodland divinities Fauno, Sylvano and Pan (F 18) or Mercurio with his companion (D 203). In some cases the artist was careful to explain the symbolism of the design which could then be related to the context of the masquerade. Janus (D 195, pl. I(b)) illustrates peace and tranquillity, though the explanation of the symbolism of Saturn (D 198) has been lost through the design being cropped. In the design of the two heralds (D 211) the reference to the "gioco d'Agone" may be the name given to a particular event during a festival. Primaticcio also explains the complex mechanism of two designs. The inscription on the design of Fortuna (F 6, pl. II) points out that the arm carrying the sail is artificial—"Questa è la fortuna il brazo con che la tiene la vela è finto et para vero . . ."—while

<sup>1</sup> Suggested by Bjurström and Dahlbäck, *op. cit.* p. 36.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Newton, *op. cit.* pp. 24–25.

<sup>3</sup> These appear on F 1, F 6, F 8, F 11, F 13, F 16, F 17, F 18, D 189, D 194, D 195, D 198, D 203, D 205, D 206, D 209, D 210, D 211, D 212. Dimier guaranteed the authenticity of the designs because of the presence of Primaticcio's handwriting.

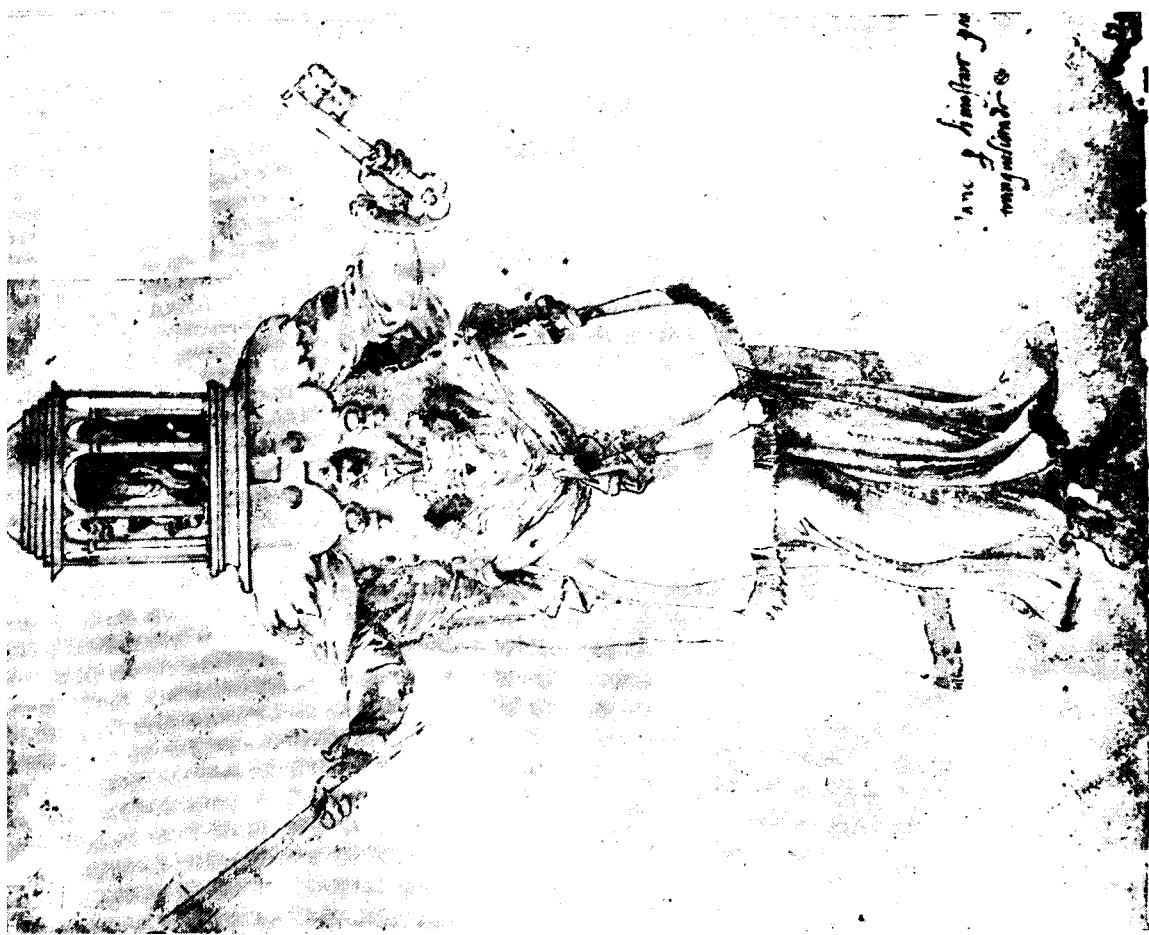


PLATE I(b). Janus.



PLATE I(a). Amadriade.



Queste e la fortuna  
il tempo di la sua  
la vita. Et tanto et per  
non et la sua mala  
la buona fortuna e la

PLATE II. Fortuna.





PLATE III. Juno's chariot.



PLATE IV. Animal servants.

Juno's chariot (D 212, pl. III) conceals the singers inside who presumably propelled the whole. In this way Primaticcio goes beyond simple identification of the characters to present a proper working model of projects to the organizer of the festivals.

More conclusive of the artist's intentions are the various indications for the costumiers on the designs. Primaticcio himself added notes describing the colours and the materials to be used on three designs, those of the processional group of carnival figures (F 16), of the three animal servants (F 17, pl. IV), and of the figure supporting a pedestal with a bow and arrow on her head (D 206). The detail on the design of the animal servants is particularly impressive, with the quantities of cloth for various parts of the costumes given by the artist himself, who obviously thought that this would help the tailors who were to make up the costumes. The inscriptions in French giving similar practical details are more interesting. These occur on the designs representing the Amadriades (F 9, F 11, pl. I(a)), the conquering hero (D 196), Apollo (D 197) and the lady riding the unicorn (D 200). They can be justified simply for the sake of clarity, for the French tailors employed may not have been able to understand the Italian used by Primaticcio, and the design of the processional group of carnival figures (F 16) in fact shows "toille dor" superimposed over "tela dor", presumably for this reason. Yet this is not necessarily the whole story as it has been seen that the artist did in fact produce designs with inscriptions for the costumiers in Italian without any translation or addition to help the French artisans. The handwriting on these designs may well be that of a court official taking down the instructions of the true organizer of the festival, to whom the design had been submitted for approval and who made the final choice of colours and materials for the costumes.

From this evidence we may well deduce that Primaticcio had a fairly subordinate role in the general organization of the festivals, and that the production was entrusted to a much higher-ranking person. This is not surprising in a period when Catherine de Médicis was keenly interested in fostering entertainment at court, and indeed included this in her policy of government, so that the nobility should have no opportunity

whatsoever of embarking on more dangerous enterprises which could threaten the stability of the monarchy :

[. . .] car j'ay ouy dire au Roy vostre grand-père qu'il falloit deux choses pour vivre en repos avec les François et qu'ils aimassent leur Roy : les tenir joyeux, et occuper à quelque exercice : pour cest effet, souvent il falloit combattre à cheval et à pied, courre la lance ; [. . .] car les François ont tant accoustumé, s'il n'est guerre, de s'exercer, que qui ne leur fait faire, ils s'emploient à autres choses plus dangereuses.<sup>1</sup>

For this reason Catherine de Médicis spared no expense in the provision of entertainment at court.<sup>2</sup> Though it was a matter of personal honour and reputation that the Queen Mother's festival should be the most brilliant, it was this very brilliance that attracted the nobles to the court where Catherine de Médicis could manipulate them as circumstances demanded. Even the distribution of the roles of each masquerade to the various clans and groupings was a powerful weapon to emphasize Catherine de Médicis' political opinions and intentions towards each group. At Fontainebleau in 1564, shortly after the first civil war, Condé and his followers who had fought against the crown were placed in an enchanted castle which was then attacked by the King and his knights.<sup>3</sup> In addition, certain elaborate festivals, such as those at Bayonne in 1565, were used for propaganda purposes, to show that France was greater and stronger than it really was by an extravagant expense and display of brilliance.<sup>4</sup>

Thus in many ways Catherine de Médicis herself was the presiding genius of the festivals. The Queen Mother is known to have inspired particular festivals. At Fontainebleau in 1564 she invented the King's tournament with the enchanted castle,<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Catherine de Médicis to Charles IX, 8th September 1563, *Lettres de Catherine de Médicis*, ed. H. de La Ferrière (Paris, 1880-97), ii. 92.

<sup>2</sup> Pierre de Bourdeilles, Seigneur de Brantôme, *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. L. Lalanne (Paris, 1864-82), vii. 369-70.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Brantôme, op. cit. v. 276-7. Later in 1572, for the Navarre wedding celebrations, Henri de Navarre and his Huguenot companions were driven down into Hell by Charles IX and his brothers in the first part of the Paradis d'Amour masquerade. Cf. S. Goulart, *Mémoires de l'estat de France sous Charles neufiesme* (Middelburg, 1576-8), i. 361-2.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Brantôme, op. cit. vii. 370.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *ibid* v. 277.

and she probably inspired the entertainments given by the Duc d'Orléans in honour of Charles IX and the rest of the court.<sup>1</sup> All the commentators note that she put on her own entertainment on the *Dimanche gras* of these festivities.<sup>2</sup> Brantôme is thus not exaggerating when he says that she was particularly inventive when it came to thinking of ideas for masquerades.<sup>3</sup> It is hardly conceivable that Catherine de Médicis herself assumed the responsibilities of a producer directly. She may have sketched the broad outlines of what was to happen, and from this basis the detailed organization would be entrusted to her close associates, such as the *Secrétaires d'Etat*,<sup>4</sup> while she herself continued to keep a watchful eye on what was in preparation. Her delegates would then be responsible for commissioning the music, poetry and costumes required for the entertainments and for bringing all the elements together beforehand and rehearsing aspects of the performance.

Identification of the designs is particularly difficult because of the very special nature of the costume design in the context of the organization of a festival. So many elements were involved that even if Primaticcio were the general organizer it would not be easy for him to keep a close watch on every detail.<sup>5</sup> The artistic element, though important, was nevertheless the background for the actors and performers in relation to the poetry

<sup>1</sup> Cf. "Mémoires de Messire Michel de Castelnau, Seigneur de Mauvissière et de Concressaut...", *Collection complète des mémoires relatifs à l'histoire de France*, ed. M. Petitot (Paris, 1819-26), xxxiii. 322.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Castelnau, op. cit. p. 323.

<sup>3</sup> Brantôme, op. cit. vii. 372-3:

Et nottez que toutes ces inventions ne venoient d'autre boutique ny d'autre esprit que de la reyne; car elle y estoit maistresse et fort inventive en toutes choses. Elle avoit cela que, quelques magnificences qui se fissent à la court, la sienne passoit toutes les autres. Aussi disoit-on qu'il n'y avoit que la reyne-mère pour faire quelque chose de beau.

<sup>4</sup> The *Secrétaire d'Etat* Florimond Robertet, Seigneur de Fresnes had a part in the organization of festivities in 1559 and 1563, and his notes on what was to take place are extant. Cf. Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, ms. fr. 15872, fol. 86, for notes on the celebrations for the marriage of Marguerite de France with Emmanuel-Philibert de Savoie, and ms. fr. 15881, fols. 329-30, for an undated entry into Chenonceaux (but dated April 1563 by N. M. Sutherland, *The French secretaries of state in the age of Catherine de Medici* (London, 1962), p. 136, n. 3).

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Dahlbäck, op. cit. p. 397.

and music which was to be used, and though we should not minimize its importance, for the visual element is perhaps the one which makes the most immediate impact, it must not be forgotten that the wishes of the true organizer of the festival as a whole would prevail over the artist's individual tastes.

A festival design has thus the special characteristic that it does not necessarily represent what was produced at the festival. One can imagine how details of the sketch could easily be changed. The symbolism might not fit in with the general pattern of the masquerade, or the tailor might take it upon himself to modify the colour and material, or even change the design of a costume if that made his own work easier. The spontaneity of the festivals would merely increase this effect, and the organizers of festivals frequently had to work under pressure of time. In 1558 when Jodelle was commissioned by the Hôtel de Ville to produce masquerades in connection with a banquet in honour of Henri II, he had four days to complete the masquerades and the result was chaotic.<sup>1</sup> An artist required to put on an entertainment at court at such short notice would naturally refer to his own stock of ideas in design and suitably adapt them for the occasion so that the audience would not be too conscious of the fact that they were looking at old material. The designs as we know them are but an indication of what was actually produced. The final result may not have differed to a great extent, on the other hand the design could have been changed considerably.<sup>2</sup> Primaticcio himself, writing on his own designs, expresses doubts as to their purpose in the context of the whole masquerade,<sup>3</sup> and so even the evidence of the designs must be viewed with as much caution as the sources available in texts.

With the available evidence it is possible to indicate how some of the designs of Primaticcio could have been utilized, though any identification remains purely hypothetical because

<sup>1</sup> Cf. E. Jodelle, *Le recueil des inscriptions, 1558 : a literary and iconographical exegesis* by V. E. Graham and W. M. Johnson (Toronto, 1972). See also E. Balmas, *Un poeta del rinascimento francese : Etienne Jodelle* (Florence, 1962), pp. 348-429.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Dahlbäck, *op. cit.* p. 398.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. D 211—"crederei che . . .", D 212—" . . . l'altro de Diana o Venere ".

the real inspiration of a design cannot be proved. The parallels between a design and a literary source can show that similar themes were used at much the same time, but in the final event the parallel must be made without any firm conclusions. The designs extant in Florence and Stockholm still represent a unique source for the study of the court festivals of sixteenth-century France, and comparisons made with the texts of the festivals can lessen the obscurity surrounding the designs.

The group of designs which proves beyond any doubt the close relationship between the collections in Florence and Stockholm are the figures used as servants for a banquet, the Amadriade (F 11, pl. I(a)), the animal servants (F 17, pl. IV), the woodland servants (F 18), the satyr (D 209) and Marte (D 210). The banquet followed by a ball was one of the principal types of entertainment at court and was traditionally the focal point for masquerades. These were often organized in relationship with the feast and provided entertainment either during or after the meal, such as Jodelle's ill-fated masquerade of 1558. On occasions, however, masked and costumed figures served the actual food, perhaps reciting verses in honour of those present. At a banquet given by the Cardinal de Lorraine in honour of Catherine de Médicis and Mary Stuart, the servants were dressed to represent six different nations—Italy, Rome, Venice, Greece, Germany and Spain—and after each had recited verses Amphion concluded by flattering Catherine de Médicis.<sup>1</sup> The Queen Mother's own festival on the Ile d'Aiguemeau during the Bayonne festivals of 1565 included a banquet where the servants were prominent courtiers dressed as shepherds and shepherdesses :

Et le Samedy vingttroisiesme iour dudict mois le Roy s'embarqua apres disner avec la troupe Espaignolle, pour aller soupper en l'Isle Daisguemeau, qui est une Isle ou il n'y a pas une maison. Et pour ceste cause la Royne y fist faire une belle fueillee, qui cousta un grand denier, et un festin au souper, auquel les

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Mellin de Saint-Gelais, "Au festin que le Cardinal de Lorraine fit aux Roynes, et le lendemain des nopces, un masque vestu en Amphion marchant devant les douze masques servans, vestus en six sortes de dix differentes nations, deux à deux, accompagnés de douze dames vestues de mesmes eux, arrivant près de la Royne, luy dit ce qui s'ensuit", *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. P. Blanchemain (Paris, 1873), i. 177-81.

grands Seigneurs & Dames portoient la viande, & estoient habillez en bergers & bergeres [...]<sup>1</sup>

During festivities to celebrate the King's entry into Chenonceaux, there was a picnic in the gardens where Catherine de Médicis' damoiselles served the food dressed in the regional costume of Picardy.<sup>2</sup>

Primaticcio's use of woodland deities coincides with a much-used theme in contemporary entries and masquerades. The Emperor Charles V was greeted by gods and goddesses of the forest at his entry into Fontainebleau in 1540,<sup>3</sup> and at Henri II's entry into Lyons in 1549 fauns and satyrs entertained the King with music at the Porte de Bourgneuf.<sup>4</sup> The procession for Charles IX's entry in Troyes into 1564 included a troupe of satyrs,<sup>5</sup> and in Béziers the following year a *tableau vivant* showed Diana chased by satyrs, to be rescued by the appearance of the King, the sight of whom drove the satyrs away.<sup>6</sup> The undated entry into Chenonceaux began with nymphs being attacked by satyrs who were attracted from the woods by their singing, but who were driven off by gallant knights :

L'entrée de Chenonceaulx qui se fit par une longue allée bordée de deux canaulx, d'où sortoyent des seraynes qui chantoyent ; ausquelles respondoient des nimpfes qui sortoyent du boys ; au son desquelles vindrent des satyres qui, les ayant ouyes, les voulurent ravyr ; au secours desquelles vindrent des Chevaliers errants qui les deffendirent [...]<sup>7</sup>

Woodland creatures appeared just as frequently in masquerades as in entries. Saint-Gelais in 1557 composed a masquerade for oreads and dryads,<sup>8</sup> Ronsard for the festivals at Fontainebleau

<sup>1</sup> A. Jouan, *Recueil & discours du voyage du roy Charles IX...* (Paris, 1566), fol. 48<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. "L'entrée du Roy à Chenonceaulx", Bibl. Nat. ms. fr. 15881, fol. 329<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. P. Dan, *Le trésor des merveilles de la maison royale de Fontainebleau* (Paris, 1642), p. 219.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. V. L. Saulnier, *Maurice Scève, ca. 1500-1560* (Paris, 1948-49), i. 346-7.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. T. Boutiot, *Histoire de la ville de Troyes et de la Champagne méridionale* (Troyes, 1870-80), iii. 572.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. P. Andoque, *Histoire du Languedoc avec l'estat des provinces voisines* (Béziers, 1648), p. 518.

<sup>7</sup> Bibl. Nat. ms. fr. 15881, fol. 329<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> "Le 21 décembre 1557, à Saint-Germain-en-Laye, deux nymphes de fontaines au Roy" (op. cit. i. 181-7).



in 1564 played on the legend of the fountain for one masquerade and used its nymph to praise Charles IX,<sup>1</sup> and Baif and Desportes, among others, wrote masquerade poems with similar themes.<sup>2</sup> At Catherine de Médicis' banquet on the Ile d'Aiguemeau at Bayonne in 1565, the banquet was followed by a ballet in which the musicians were satyrs and the dancers nymphs.<sup>3</sup> The theme was much used in court festivals and was exploited particularly when the natural surroundings of the masquerade lent themselves.

The tournament in its various forms was the other principal type of entertainment at court, and Primaticcio in his designs reflects this aspect of court festivals. The Knight of the Swan (D 192) belongs to this context, as the knight is presenting a cartel, visible in the small basket attached to the swan's neck, prior to the commencement of the tournament. The parallel between this design and the Clèves family has already been noted,<sup>4</sup> as has that with a poem by Ronsard, the *Cartel pour présenter au Roy*,<sup>5</sup> written for the festivities at Fontainebleau in 1564 for which Primaticcio certainly worked on the artistic side. This cartel was written for a combat of six knights led respectively by François de Clèves, Duc de Nevers, and François de Bourbon, Duc de Montpensier, either "... à la barriere/A coups de pique ou de lance guerriere " (ll. 39-40). As the group led by François de Clèves delivered the challenge in this festival, the design of Primaticcio fits the situation very closely. Ronsard

<sup>1</sup> "Pour la nymphe de la fontaine du logis de Monseigneur d'Orleans à Fontaine-bleau. Sonet au Roy", *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. P. Laumonier (Paris, 1912-75), xiii. 254-5. The masquerade is described in *Le recueil des triumphes & magnificences qui ont esté faictes au logis de Monseigneur le Duc Dorleans . . . le lundy gras dernièrement XIIIII. iour de Feburier* (Troyes, 1565), fol. B3<sup>r-v</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. J. A. de Baif, "Mascarade en la maison de ville à Paris. Les Nymphes", *Euvres en rime*, ed. C. Marty-Laveaux (Paris, 1881-90), iv. 261-2; P. Desportes, "Pour une masquarade de faunes", *Cartels et masquarades*, ed. V. E. Graham (Geneva, 1958), pp. 25-27.

<sup>3</sup> Marguerite de Valois, *Mémoires et lettres*, ed. M. F. Guessard (Paris, 1842), pp. 9-10.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Théâtre et fêtes à Paris*, no. 38; Bjurström and Dahlbäck, op. cit. p. 36; Dahlbäck, op. cit. pp. 400-1. On the Clèves family and the swan legend cf. G. Doutrepoint, "La légende du Chevalier au Cygne pendant le 16e. siècle", *Mélanges Lefranc* (Paris, 1936), pp. 26-36; *Jean Lemaire de Belges et la Renaissance* (Brussels, 1934), pp. 78-97.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *Oeuvres complètes*, xiii. 205-6.

is careful to mention the swan legend in his cartel, perhaps in order to explain, or rather to make quite clear to the audience, immediately, who the strange swan figure is delivering the cartel :

Ces Chevaliers yssus de bonne race,  
Et courageux d'une amoureuse audace,  
Ont pour leur guide un Prince de haut sang  
Dont les ayeux conduitz d'un Cigne blanc,  
Par longs combats & par guerres sans treves,  
Ont mis au Ciel l'illustre nom de Cleves.<sup>1</sup>

The warrior or captain (D 204) may also be presenting a cartel, or, if he is holding a captain's rod, the figure could have been used as one of the marshals for a tournament. The two heralds (D 211) whom Primaticcio thinks may begin the "gioco d'Agone"—"Crederei che questi dui Genij cominciassero la pompa del gioco d'Agone"—may well have been involved in part of a tournament. The Turkish servant too (F 5) could have been used to deliver a challenge from Turkish knights who were to take part in a tournament.

The importance of the Ottoman Empire for the politics of Western Europe inevitably led to the theme of the Turk being used in court festivals, and three other designs of Primaticcio showing the influence of Turkey (F 1, F 7, F 15) reflect a popular theme, or at least a taste for the exotic and unusual.<sup>2</sup> The Turk appeared in several tournaments, notably in the one held by Henri II in 1558 in the Rue Saint-Antoine where some of the riders were in Turkish costume,<sup>3</sup> and in a tournament held as part of the celebrations of the marriage of Henri de Navarre and Marguerite de Valois in 1572, Henri de Navarre and his

<sup>1</sup> Op. cit. l. 11-16. The design of the Knight of the Swan (D 192) has been attributed to Niccolò dell'Abbate. Cf. S. Béguin, *L'Ecole de Fontainebleau* (Paris, 1960), p. 139 n. 40. Dell'Abbate is known to have been working at Fontainebleau at the time of the festivals from references in the *Comptes des bâtiments* and the design may be a record of what happened in the festivals.

<sup>2</sup> On the Turks and their influence in France cf. C. D. Rouillard, *The Turk in French history, thought and literature, 1520-1660* (Paris, 1941); M. Paquot, *Les Etrangers dans les divertissements de la cour de Beaujoyeux à Molière, 1581-1673* (Brussels, 1932).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. H. Sauval, *Histoire et recherches des antiquités de la ville de Paris* (Paris, 1724), ii. 693.

men were dressed as Turks, wearing turbans.<sup>1</sup> Turks are represented in the "Valois" tapestries which are an image of the court festivals of the period, in the scenes depicting the assault of the island at Fontainebleau and the combat round the elephant.<sup>2</sup>

The use of Turks as an exotic element in the festivals is paralleled by the appearance of other nationalities. At the entry of Charles IX into Bordeaux in 1565, the procession included prisoners from twelve foreign nations, comprising, besides the Turks, Greeks, Arabs, Americans, Indians, Savages, Brazilians, Moors, Eutopians, Egyptians, Taprobanians, and Canary Islanders,<sup>3</sup> and a tournament at Bayonne in 1565 had groups of Trojans, Moors, Spaniards, Romans, Greeks and Albanians.<sup>4</sup> Primaticcio's design of the wild man on horseback (F 4) fits in with the pattern of strange, if not exotic, racial types, though the savage was developed as a theme in its own right in festivals.<sup>5</sup>

The lady on the unicorn (D 200) may also have been intended as an exotic figure for a tournament. What interests Primaticcio is the costume of the rider, and this would explain the somewhat careless execution of the unicorn. The costume, however, is not especially distinctive thematically, and would not be inappropriate for the tournament noted above at Bayonne in 1565, when there was a combat between "plusieurs chevaliers & Dames de diverses nations", the ladies in the tournament being in fact men in disguise wearing masks.<sup>6</sup> The design could perhaps represent an Amazon which was another popular

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Goulart, *op. cit.* i. 365.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. F. A. Yates, *The Valois tapestries* (London, 1959), plates I, VIII.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *L'entrée du Roy à Bordeaux, avecques les carmes latins qui leur ont esté presentez, & au Chancelier* (Paris, 1565), fol. A3<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Recueil des choses notables qui ont esté faites à Bayonne . . .* (Paris, 1566), fols. 8<sup>v</sup>-16<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> Henri II saw Brazilian natives work and entertain themselves in a forest during his entry into Rouen in 1550. Cf. *C'est la deduction du sumptueux ordre, plaisantz spectacles et magnifiques theatres dressés et exhibés par les citoiens de Rouen . . .* (Rouen 1551). The procession at Charles IX's entry into Troyes in 1564 included a band of savages. Cf. Boutiot, *op. cit.* iii. 572.

<sup>6</sup> Numerous accounts connected with the costumes for this particular tournament are extant, cf. Archives Nationales, Paris, KK 130, Comptes de l'Argenterie for 1565.

theme in the festivals. Amazons presented symbolic medallions to important court ladies in 1548 at the tournament following Catherine de Médicis' entry into Lyons, and it would not have been inappropriate for them to arrive on horseback.<sup>1</sup> At Bar-le-Duc during the court's stay there in 1565 a combat of Amazons preceded Ronsard's masquerade figuring the four elements and four planets.<sup>2</sup> During the festivities to celebrate the marriage of Henri de Navarre and Marguerite de Valois, the King and other courtiers were dressed as Amazons in the tournament with Henri de Navarre and his men dressed as Turks,<sup>3</sup> and records are extant of a Parisian costumier who had in his stock costumes not unsuitable for Amazons.<sup>4</sup> Dahlbäck, however, has suggested that Primaticcio's design is of an artificial figure, the rider supporting a hobby-horse concealed by the flowing drapery, and that it was intended for a sudden entry during a banquet, possibly for the presentation of a gift.<sup>5</sup> Such figures were indeed used in this kind of situation, as at the banquet following the marriage of François, Dauphin of France, and Mary Stuart in 1558, when the first masquerade consisted of twelve artificial horses leading a procession of pilgrims to honour the royal couple.<sup>6</sup>

It does not seem necessary to attach too much importance to the unicorn theme in relation to a female rider, as another design (D 188) portrays a warrior riding a unicorn where the representation of the unicorn is much more deliberate, and at Charles IX's entry into Troyes in 1564 a band of savages in the procession was led by their captain riding a unicorn.<sup>7</sup> The unicorn was

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Saint-Gelais, "Pour des Chevaliers, que des masques, vestus en Amazones, menoyent sur les rangs au tournoye de la Royne Catherine à son Entrée, 1548. Lesdites Amazones presenterent aux dames des escus d'or entaillés . . ." (op. cit. i. 162).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Archives départementales de Meurthe-et-Moselle*, B 1140, fol. 22<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Goulart, op. cit. i. 365.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. G. Wildenstein, "Un fournisseur d'habits de théâtre et de mascarades à Paris sous Henri III", *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance*, xxiii (1961), 99-106. The inventory also includes costumes for Turks, savages, peasants and shepherds.

<sup>5</sup> Dahlbäck, op. cit. pp. 399-400.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. *Discours du grand et magnifique triumphe faict au mariage de . . . François de Valois Roy Dauphin . . . & de . . . Marie d'Estreuart Roine d'Escoce* (Paris, 1558), fol. C<sup>r</sup>-v.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Boutiot, op. cit. iii. 372.

rich in symbolic associations, though because Primaticcio uses a male or female rider indifferently, the exotic, decorative element may have been more important to him as a costume designer than the symbolic implications.

The masquerades used in the court festivals were originally dependent either on the tournament or the banquet, but as the festivals developed so the use of masquerades became much more flexible. Some of Primaticcio's designs can be related to the type of masquerade where there is no obvious connection with a banquet or tournament. The design for Juno's chariot (D 212, pl. III) is probably part of a masquerade, and the long inscription by Primaticcio gives clear working instructions for the organizer of the festival. The musicians are sitting round the goddess, and singers are concealed inside by the drapery, presumably propelling the chariot as well.<sup>1</sup> It is not clear from the design what Juno is holding, and though this resembles a ring, it is certainly not closed. The symbolism of the chariot, bearing in mind the other goddesses and chariots in the same masquerade for which the designs are now lost, fits adequately as a means of flattering the court ladies of Henri II's court. Juno was a frequent comparison with Catherine de Médicis because of the numerous children she bore Henri II. Marguerite de France, the King's sister, was generally compared to Pallas/Minerva by the Pléiade poets because of her enlightened attitude as patron of the arts, and Diane de Poitiers, the King's mistress, was always portrayed as Diana. The prototype of such comparisons is the fresco in the Château de Tanlay and the use of the deities of Olympus to flatter the court of Henri II was widespread.<sup>2</sup> Hence a masquerade designed to flatter the important ladies at court, the three loved most by the King, could use such symbols as attested in this design, each goddess

<sup>1</sup> There is no reason to assume that the legs of the musicians visible are artificial, the men actually standing upright and so moving the chariot as they walk, as does Bjurström, *Dessins du Nationalmuseum de Stockholm*, p. 13. Not only does Primaticcio specifically state that there were other people concealed beneath, but such a hypothesis would result in the figures being out of proportion.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. C. Oulmont, "La fresque de la 'Tour de la Ligue' au château de Tanlay", *Revue de l'art*, lxiv (1933), 183-5.

descending from her chariot to present a symbolic gift to the lady represented. The ring given by Juno, if it is indeed a ring, would thus symbolize the institution of marriage rather than indicate that the design was used for celebrations in connection with a marriage.<sup>1</sup>

The theme of the three goddesses—Juno, Pallas and Venus—was used in the festivities at Fontainebleau in 1564, in the programme arranged for the then Duc d'Orléans, later Duc d'Anjou, to honour the court which took place on the 14th February. The morning was taken up with a spectacle on the canal in the park, and after the dinner the goddesses appeared led by Juno :

Après les tables levees vindrent les Trois deesses Juno Palas & Venus. Juno qui est la deesse des biens grandeurs & richesses presenta au Roy un Globe dor terrestre ou estoient tirees en esmail toutes les Provinces de la Terre & luy chanta ces six vers.

Heurnay.

C'est moy qui puis les Richesses donner  
C'est moy qui Roys & Empereurs couronne  
Aussi me plaist Charles vous couronner  
Et vous donner du Monde la Couronne  
Pour accomplir l'heur & divinite  
De trois fois trois dun nom & dignite.<sup>2</sup>

Pallas, representing war and the arts, presented gifts of these two attributes, and Venus offered Cupid as archer to protect the King and make himself loved by the people. The verses in question were sung, and so the goddesses figured in a musical context as in the design. At Bayonne the following year the theme of a goddess on a chariot was used in the context of a tournament. Two triumphal chariots entered the arena, one of Virtue with her attributes and accompanied by the nine muses, the other of Venus and Amor, and the two goddesses similarly stepped down from their seats to present gifts to the Queens, after which the tournament proceeded.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> As suggested by Bjurström, *Dessins du Nationalmuseum de Stockholm*, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> *Le recueil des triumphes & magnificences . . .* ut cit. fol. C2<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> For a detailed description of the two chariots cf. *Li grandissimi apparati e reali trionfi fatti per il re et regina di Franza nella citta di Baiona . . .* (Milan, 1565), fols. A3<sup>r</sup>–A4<sup>r</sup>. Details of the costumes of Virtue, Venus and their associates are to be found in the *Comptes de l'Argenterie* for 1565, Archives Nationales, KK 130, fols. 90–95.

The design depicting a figure seated and riding on the back of a turtle (D 202) has generally been interpreted as one of the three Fates carrying the distaff and spinning.<sup>1</sup> The Fates were used in masquerades, particularly in connection with festivities for the births and baptisms of royal or princely infants, because of their symbolic associations with life and death.<sup>2</sup> At the birth of Henri de Lorraine, son of Charles III, Duc de Lorraine and of Claude de France, an impromptu masquerade was performed. In this three court ladies took the roles of the three Graces, dancing a ballet and scattering flowers over the bed of the young mother, and one recited a poem praising the birth of the prince. These were followed by the three Fates armed with their traditional attributes, and they prophesied the destiny of the new-born prince.<sup>3</sup> Rémy Belleau, who composed the poetry for the masquerade, emphasized the ugliness of the Fates, while Primaticcio's design does not attempt to show the character in this way.<sup>4</sup> Baif, too, used the Fates in a baptism masquerade for the son of Philippe Hurault, Seigneur de Cheverny, and Saturn also appeared in the entertainment.<sup>5</sup> Primaticcio's design of Saturn (D 198) would be appropriate for such a masquerade, as the symbolism of the wings and the sickle clearly relates Saturn with Time.<sup>6</sup>

Births of royal princes not only gave rise to impromptu and relatively simple masquerades such as Belleau's for Henri de Lorraine, or another composed much earlier by Mellin de Saint-Gelais for the birth of one of Catherine de Médicis'

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Dimier, *op. cit.* p. 463.

<sup>2</sup> At Charles IX's entry into Tours, however, a figure on the Porte de la Riche claimed not to be one of the Fates but one of the silk spinners of the city. Cf. J. Cloppel, *La description de l'entrée du Treschrestien Roy Charles IX du nom, en sa ville de Tours* (Tours, 1565), fol. A3<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. R. Belleau, *La bergerie*, ed. D. Delacourcelle (Geneva, 1954), pp 100-9.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Belleau, *op. cit.* p. 106.

<sup>5</sup> "Chant, des trois parques et de Saturne, au baptesme de Henri Huraut premier fils de Monsieur de Cheverni chancelier de Monseigneur le duc d'Aniou parrein avec le Roy de Navarre et Madame de Lorraine" (*op. cit.* ii. 345-6).

<sup>6</sup> Cf. G. de Tervarent, *Attributs et symboles dans l'art profane, 1450-1600. Dictionnaire d'un langage perdu* (Geneva, 1958-9), col. 10, 164-5.

children,<sup>1</sup> but also inspired more elaborate festivities.<sup>2</sup> At the baptism of Elisabeth de Valois at Fontainebleau on the 2nd April 1545 there was a procession of fancy carnival figures :

Mais si ce festin fut exquis, l'issue n'en fut pas moins agreable par le Bal qui commença aussi tost ; où à diverses entrées parurent des hommes de figures prodigieuses ; puis des bestes furieuses, & estranges de toute sorte ; & en troisième lieu, divers oiseaux de rapine, Grifons, Aigles, Vautours, & autres semblables.<sup>3</sup>

Some of Primaticcio's more unusual designs can be understood in the context of such strange processions. Mention must be made of the group of carnival figures (F 16), and the sphinx (D 208), and even the Knight of the Swan (D 192) could have been used, just as well as the figure with a wolf's head (F 2),<sup>4</sup> if this latter design is not a symbol for a courtier's name, in the way that the Knight of the Swan is associated with the Clèves family.

The design representing the foolish or wise virgin (D 199) is interesting in its introduction of a Christian theme into the court festival. This was unusual as far as documents would now suggest for an entertainment that was essentially mythological and therefore pagan in content. One such entertainment took place at the English court in honour of the Constable Montmorency and François de Lorraine, Grand Prieur de France, who were returning from Scotland after escorting Mary Stuart back home in 1561 :

Ce fut lorsque, tournans d'Escosse M. le grand-prieur de France, de la maison de Lorraine, et luy [i.e. Montmorency], la reyne leur donna un soir à soupper, où après se fit un ballet de ses filles, qu'elle avoit ordonné et dressé, représentans les vierges de l'Evangile, desquelles les unes avoient leurs lampes allumées, et les autres n'avoient ny huile ny feu, et en demandoient. Ces lampes estoient d'argent, fort gentiment faictes et élaborées ; et les dames estoient très-belles,

<sup>1</sup> " Pour des masques de neuf filles de la Royne, aux couches de ladite dame, elles estans en trois bandes " (op. cit. i. 187-9).

<sup>2</sup> For the baptism of François, later François II, on the 10th February 1543, the celebrations included an attack against a fortress by galleys at Fontainebleau. Cf. Dan, op. cit. p. 223.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 228.

<sup>4</sup> Two other designs in the Florence series, and probably connected with Primaticcio's school, are very similar in conception. One depicts a figure with the paws and tail of a lion but with three dog's heads, and the other represents a long-beaked bird figure in a flowing tunic. Cf. CB.3.53.II, fols. 48, 49.



bien honnestes et bien apprises, qui prindrent nous autres François pour danser [...]¹

It is not impossible that the two nobles, impressed by their reception at the English court, recounted the masquerade which was subsequently revived in France.

Primaticcio introduced a further religious theme with the design of David holding Goliath's head (D 191). There has been some doubt over the interpretation of this design, and Hercules has been suggested as alternative.<sup>2</sup> The figure of Hercules appeared in masquerades,<sup>3</sup> and was extremely common as a symbol to flatter the monarch.<sup>4</sup> Comparison may be made with the design of Perseus with Medusa's head (F 10) where the theme of the hero killing a dreaded monster is essentially the same in the pagan and Christian context.

One of the designs of Primaticcio represents a man dressed as a peasant rowing a small ornamental boat (D 201). The boat is probably a float in disguise, as the prow is extended in a shaft which would be used to pull it, and the figure is clearly facing the wrong way were he expected to propel the boat by rowing. The boat, if this is the case, would be another version of the light type of chariot used by the conquering hero (D 196). Comparison may be made with a masquerade performed during the celebrations of the marriage of Henri de Navarre with Marguerite de Valois, the *Paradis d'Amour*, and performed on the 20th August 1572. The setting of the masquerade used Paradise at one side of the hall, and Hell at the other, separated by a river :

Le Paradis & l'enfer estoient divisez par une riviere qui estoit entre deux, dans laquelle y avoit une barque conduite par Charon nautonnier d'enfer.<sup>5</sup>

The design in question would be appropriate for such use, especially as Charon was customarily represented as a bearded old man, though there can be no question of Primaticcio having

<sup>1</sup> Brantôme, op. cit. iii. 290.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Dimier, op. cit. p. 461.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Ronsard, "Mascarade pour le Roy, habillé en Hercule, & Pluton devant luy : faite par stances", *Oeuvres complètes*, xv. 355-6.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. M. R. Jung, *Hercule dans la littérature française du xvi<sup>e</sup>. siècle : de l'Hercule courtois à l'Hercule baroque* (Geneva, 1966), especially pp. 159-79.

<sup>5</sup> Goulart, op. cit. i. 362.

anything to do with the organization of this masquerade as by this time he had died.

All the festivals required a decor of some description, whether this was the decorations in the banqueting hall or the props for the tournament, and some of the more curious designs by Primaticcio, such as the figure supporting a canopy (D 205), the column composition (D 207), and perhaps the figure supporting a pedestal with a bow and arrow on her head (D 206), can be explained in this way. The artist is known to have worked on this aspect of festivals and a few designs have thematic parallels with decorative elements in known festivals. The figure of Renommée used by Primaticcio (D 193) was a commonplace in all artistic activities of the age, and was constantly present for those at court in the sculptures placed on the façade of the Louvre by Pierre Lescot.<sup>1</sup> There is an obvious parallel between Primaticcio's design and the decorations for François II's entry into Chenonceaux where the artist was a part of the work force :

Contre la face dudict pont (qui si tost que sadicte maiesté en approcha, commença a se baisser) estoit une grande femme peinte en renommée (ouvrage comme lesdictes naïades et autres victoires dont parleray cy-après du seigneur de Saint Martin personnage en son art tres singulier) ailée et tymbrée d'ung cercle de laurier, qui tenoit en ses mains une grandissime table blanche en laquelle estoit escript en lettres fort longues et fort grosses ce vers :

Baissant le chief a ta seule grandeur.<sup>2</sup>

Primaticcio's design seems to indicate a decorative rather than a processional figure, as Renommée is standing on a pedestal, and though the figure is not shown holding a placard in place of the traditional attributes this does not necessarily invalidate the parallel.<sup>3</sup>

Janus, too, (D 195, pl. I(b)) was used for the decorative elements of festivals. The trophies being consumed by fire, together with Primaticcio's inscription, indicate that this figure

<sup>1</sup> Cf. W. M. Johnson and V. E. Graham, "Ronsard et la Renommée du Louvre", *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance*, xxx (1968), 7-17.

<sup>2</sup> *Les triomphes faictz à l'entrée de François II et de Marye Stuart au chasteau de Chenonceau* . . . ut cit. p. 14.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Dimier, op. cit. p. 381. Dimier does not consider the possibility of changes between the design stage and the finished decoration.

is used as a symbol of peace.<sup>1</sup> Mellin de Saint-Gelais used the motif of Janus on medallions presented to various court ladies at the tournament which accompanied the entry of Catherine de Médicis into Lyons in 1548.<sup>2</sup> The Janus theme also occurs in the decorations invented by Jodelle for the ill-fated masquerade in honour of Henri II which the poet undertook on behalf of the municipality of Paris in 1558. Jodelle had arranged for the panels around the room to be decorated with allegorical figures. The first one he describes, which was placed in a prominent position behind the King's table, represented Janus as an old man.<sup>3</sup> The parallel use of the Janus symbol at much the same time as Primaticcio's own design is interesting. It is not impossible that Jodelle, in the hasty elaboration of his masquerade, remembered a figure he had seen used not so long before at court, deeming it prudent to change various elements to avoid the accusation of plagiarism.<sup>4</sup> However, Janus was a popular figure after periods of war, and was to appear in the decorations for the entry of Charles IX into Rouen in 1563.<sup>5</sup>

Primaticcio's festival designs clearly fit into the pattern of sixteenth-century court festivals as they are known, and parallels existing between recorded festivals of the period to which the designs belong stylistically, 1559–70, and the designs themselves

<sup>1</sup> Though the design is cropped, the inscription can be completed so that it reads "Jano per dimostrare pac[e] tranquillitude". The breast-plate and weapons are being consumed by fire as they are no longer necessary in times of peace.

<sup>2</sup> "Pour des Chevaliers, que des masques, vestus en Amazones, menoyent sur les rangs au tournoye de la Royne Catherine à son Entrée, 1548. Lesdites Amazones presenterent aux dames des escus d'or entaillés, desquels le chef estoit une teste de Janus et le dedans une porte double, dont la moitié se pouvoit ouvrir, l'autre non. Au dessus, pour tymbre, y avoit deux chapeaux, l'un de peuplier, l'autre d'olivier, d'où pendoyent des branches, qui environnoyent l'escu en façon d'ordre, entrelacées d'un escriteau où il y avoit ce mot : *et Bello et Pace*" (op. cit. i. 162).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Jodelle, op. cit. p. 88.

<sup>4</sup> The links between Jodelle and Primaticcio are certain. Jodelle dedicated a poem to Madame de Primadis (*Oeuvres complètes*, ed. E. Balmas (Paris, 1965–8), i. 371). In addition Marie Morelet du Museau, daughter of Antoine Morelet du Museau, Secrétaire du Roi, was married to Jean Primaticcio, elder son of Raphael Primaticcio and hence the artist's nephew, while Marie's sister Philippe married Charles de la Mothe, friend of Jodelle and posthumous editor of the poet's *Oeuvres*.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *Entrée de Charles IX à Rouen au mois d'août 1563*, ed. P. Le Cacheux (Rouen, 1936), fol. iii<sup>r</sup>–v.

may hint at their utilization within a festival context, though the division into tournament or banquet masquerades cannot always be applied rigidly. Certain designs can contribute to no more than the atmosphere of the festivals, as there is no documentary evidence to corroborate what is portrayed in the designs. The procession of carnival figures (F 16) is a good example. Such figures may easily be imagined as having taken part in a festival of the period, but there is no description or other evidence of similar costumes. Such problems are raised by the design of the conquering hero (D 196), while the three designs associated with the “*pompa del gioco d'Agone*”, itself a mystery (D 189, D 203, D 211), could be some of the costumes for the characters of a play performed at court, as this was also popular for court entertainments. As is to be expected, mythology and symbolic personification are much in evidence, though the themes used by Primaticcio in this field are also poorly documented in contemporary festivals. The role of astrology cannot be dismissed, as the presence of Catherine de Médicis as inspiration and spectator of many of the masquerades would inevitably encourage allusions to the occult arts, and a detail such as the recurrence of a lion's head in several designs may have astrological implications. It is clear that the designs have a symbolism that is now lost. Such is the figure with a wolf's head (F 2) which may recall a family name, Horoscope (F 13), the figure supporting a strange canopy (D 205) and that holding a pedestal with a bow and arrow on her head (D 206), all of which remain completely enigmatic. The female figure with an elaborate head-dress (D 194) has been interpreted as Isis, but the design gives no justification for this and the symbolism remains a mystery. The two designs with obvious religious overtones, David holding Goliath's head (D 191) and the wise or foolish virgin (D 199), are equally striking for the same lack of evidence, as the festivals were predominantly mythological and pagan in theme during the period in question, and thus could give little place to religious characters, which were much more a part of medieval mysteries. A further aspect of the symbolism of the designs is the colouring of the costumes which is mentioned in the inscriptions. Each noble

family adopted particular colours in the festivals, and in this way the participants always appeared within an accepted and recognizable framework.

The festival designs of Primaticcio thus present a variety of problems concerning the court festival of the mid-sixteenth century in France, and emphasize the lack of co-ordination between sources extant. The designs nevertheless reflect the festival practices of the day. They present a considerable stylistic and thematic variation, which in all probability indicates that they were intended for a variety of festivals throughout the artist's career and not for one festival alone, as has hitherto been supposed. The artist's own position at court would favour the designs being used for masquerades much more than for royal entries. The exact identification of the designs is practically impossible but parallels between the theme of a design and the text of a recorded festival show how the design corresponds with contemporary patterns and how it might have been used within the organization of a festival. If nothing else, the parallels emphasize the essence of the sixteenth-century court festival, which was a close collaboration between poets, musicians and artists, and therefore the necessity of considering the designs in their proper context and not as independent works of art.