Marianne Tråvén

THE INVENTORY OF GUSTAV III AS A SOURCE FOR THE WORK OF THE COSTUME WORKSHOP OF THE ROYAL OPERA IN STOCKHOLM BETWEEN 1773 AND 1792

The Swedish King Gustav III, also known as the 'theatre king', founded the Swedish Opera Company in 1773. The early productions of the Swedish Opera, between 1773 and 1782, were played at the so called 'Bollhuset', a sports house with a tennis court by the castle quickly refurbished to house Gustav III's pet project. It had been used for theatrical performances since the end of the seventeenth century, mostly by foreign companies.[1] No records of where the costume or scenery workshops were housed during the period 1773 to 1792 have survived, and very few records other than regulations of the depot manager and the tailors' duties and a few remaining contracts tell us of the daily work of the costume workshop. Although the Royal Opera House today holds a collection of over 100 items from the eighteenth century, few, if any, have come out of the costume workshop of the Opera House.[2] How can we learn anything about what was created in the theatre's costume workshop? At the death of Gustav III in 1792, a thorough inventory of all his possessions was drawn up, in which part of the costumes from the Opera House were listed. They were, to a great extent, paid for by Gustav himself. Unfortunately for us, since the costumes were part of Gustav's personal assets, no receipts had to be saved for revision or taxation, and therefore we know very little of what was bought and for what purposes. The lists from the inventory in appendix C however,[3] together with a few corresponding lists from the Opera House, and the few remaining costume books of the Opera,[4] give us a sense of both what materials were at hand in the workshop and what costumes were used at the opera. Combined with the lists of the inventory of the royal book collection in

[1] A list of these companies can be found in FREDRIK. A. DAHLGREN, *Förteckning öfver Svenska skådespel uppförda på Stockholms theatrar 1737-1863 och Kongl. Theatrarnes personal 1773-1863*, Stockholm, Norstedt & Söner, 1866, pp. 571-578.

[2] A frock coat from the eighteenth century labeled 'Aline' can be linked to the performance of this opera in 1776, as well as a pair of Turkish slippers that possibly belong to the same opera, and a skirt that is made up with different colored bands of silk and sequins that may have come from the workshop. See BÖRJE EDH, *46 Historier om kostymer ur Kungliga Operans gömmor – från Gustav III:s Harlekin till Grünewalds regnbågsmantel*, Stockholm, Informationsförlaget, 1998, pp. 10-11.

[3] The original manuscript inventory is held at the National Archive at Marieberg in Stockholm (henceforth S-Sr), K 50. A manuscript copy is held at the Royal Library in Stockholm (henceforth S-Sk). Unfortunately this later copy presents some lacunae compared to the original and the list of earlier discarded clothes from *Thetis and Pelée* is missing.

[4] The Royal Opera Archive, (henceforth S-So), F3 CA 1-2.

Appendix E, these documents help us understand what inspired Gustav III when working with the opera and the royal festivities.

THE INVENTORY

In March 1792 Gustav III was murdered at a masqued ball at the very Opera House that he had built in 1782 to house the Swedish Opera. It took another two weeks before he died from his injuries. The inventory of the royal assets was drawn up soon afterwards. It meticulously records the inventories of all the castles, pecuniary assets and, of course, debts. I shall return later to the debts, since they give us an overview of what services were bought outside of the Opera House. It is clear that theatre costumes were stored in at least three different places: at the castle, at the Opera House, and at the old arsenal, the palace 'Makalös'.[5]

The costumes at the castle seem to have been used for court festivities and for the amusement of the court. Among these are a great number of national costumes. The costumes at the arsenal were not in use, either because they were not part of the performances staged at the time, or because they had been discarded. The rest of the costumes listed seem to have been held at the Opera House. This had space for the workshops within the house, something that must have been impossible at 'Bollhuset', where public spaces and dressing rooms for the singers were squeezed in at both sides of the building.[6] (Possibly the smaller of the two ball houses contained work space before 1725, when it was purchased by the Finnish parish in Stockholm and further on used as a church, a function it still fills today.) We can now examine the lists of the opera house and the arsenal, leaving the more private costumes aside.

The man who compiled the inventory was very thorough, and since material was in a sense often worth more than the costumes, all the contents of the workshop are listed at the beginning of the inventory. The list contains fabrics, materials and accessories that had not yet found their way into costumes. It gives a fascinating insight into the kind of fabrics used, the colors preferred, and also a view of the hierarchy used when designing costumes for the opera.

In the list of textiles, quality, amount, and worth were noted. There were canvases of three qualities, a thinner one (probably used for simpler clothes and linings), a thicker fabric used for painting scenery, and a special canvas for drapes. There was also colored linen, and shiny linen as well as some linen to use when ironing. Cotton was used to some extent, but could not rival linen, since the latter was produced within the country. The regulations of 1786 specifically stated that as much as possible should be bought within the country. Sumptuary restrictions for materials not produced in the country posed a continuous threat to theatre productions during the eighteenth century,

[5] Some of the costumes listed in the inventory were also housed at the castle Gripsholm. S-Sr, K 50.

[6] A plan of Stora Bollhuset can be found in NILS PERSONNE, *Svenska Teatern: några anteckningar*, Stockholm, Norstedt & Söner, 1913, vol. I, p. 93.

and the theatre management sought to relieve itself of import restrictions and taxes by pleading to the king.[7]

Silk, or half silk, was preferred for making finer clothes. The lists of quality, mostly atlas and taffeta, and color give a tantalizing view of how these clothes must have looked on stage. However, one must remember that a name of a color, unless it is checked against remaining material or, for that matter, painted pictures, is feeble evidence. Here the sample books delivered to the office of Commerce, in the city of Stockholm in 1751, containing, in different books, samples of woolen cloth, cotton and silk from all the merchants and manufacturers in Stockholm are a great help in understanding both quality and color. These are today held at the State Archive at Marieberg.[8]

Pehr Hilleström (1732-1816), a Swedish artist who started his career by weaving tapestries before becoming a painter, is today considered one of the most interesting painters of this period. Apart from domestic situations and scenery he also painted a series of pictures from different theatre productions. These pictures give some insight into how different costumes might have been used in connection with the scenery, even if we have to account for a certain amount of artistic license.[9]

In the inventory there was also atlas silk, gauze, schir (a very thin cloth of gold or silver), gold and silver ribbons, silk in different colors, embroideries, with and without sequins and stones to apply on clothes, Camlott, Escenilles, Etamine, Flannel, Flor, Folium, Fringe etc. On the next page we find woolen cloth, Nankin, Nettle, Rask, Satin Camelhair, Satin wool, Schallons, more Schir, in both gold and silver. Another page lists stone agraffs, taffeta, and cloth *brosché* in gold and silver, gold and silver cloth, ditto cotton, , and coarse weave to use as backing for thinner material. At the end of the list, a small note was made of newer, later additions, for instance many rolls of silk atlas in different colors, such as, Rose, Chair, Grey, *Mort d'or*, dark *Gris de lin*, White, Violet, Cerise, *Carmoise*, *Brunefort*, Blue, *Verd de Brume*, *Giroffle* and striped. Each cloth has been measured in *aln* (a Swedish measure of ca 59 cm). *Etamin*, a loosely woven woolen cloth used for coats, was supplied in the colors «Isabelle, Green, Blue, White, Gris de Lin, Yellow, Black, Carmoise, Chair, Grey, Rose».

Among the smaller items listed are lace, buttons, sequins, stones, pearls, plumes, and tassels in both gold and silver. The embroideries were made with gold *paillon* (a thin leaf of metal used for gilding) on red and white atlas. There were also embroideries with sequins and stones in gold and silver, as well as loose sequins and stones, and embroideries of silver and red *paillon* on blue atlas. Silver *cannetille* (a fine silver or gold thread in spirals) and sequins and stones for embroidery, either oval or round. The list ends with gold and silver

[7] In the Royal Opera Archive, several such letters can be found for cloth and lace as well as make-up among the letters of the management. See for instance the merchant Granbom's request to be allowed to import gold and silver for lace making. S-So, *Teaterdirektionens korrespondens*, I, 1771-1813, p. 45.

[8] S-Sr, Kommerskollegium, Kammararkivet, Vävnadsprover 1751, Årsberättelser, Fabriker.

[9] See for instance the painting of a scene in the opera *Zemir and Azor* in NILS PERSONNE, *Svenska Teatern*, cit., vol. I, p. 141.

fringe and tassels and *bomoil*. The last item was an olive oil made from the last pressing, used for leather crafts and lighting.

The workshop also had a supply of accessories such as hats, stockings in both silk and cotton, and of course make-up. This was mostly imported from France, as we can see from the repeated pleas of the opera director to be allowed to import such goods without, or with reduced taxes.[10] The collective value of the work shop goods was set to 14,223.10.10 *Riksdaler,* a substantial amount of money. It is obvious that the lists note the goods as they were placed in the workshop, something that also gives food for thought on how the workshop was organized.

THE COSTUMES

The inventories of the Royal Opera repository of costumes are detailed, listing colors, materials, and accessories. The performances are listed separately in alphabetical order, operas first, followed by ballets. Some contain costumes for the whole cast, some only a few items. For example, the list shows that the costumes of *Thetis and Pelée*, the inaugural opera of 1773, were discarded before 1813. The Opera House closed in 1806 and was not fully operating again until 1813, when a new inventory of its costume assets was made. In this list, today in the Royal Opera Archive, the *Thetis* costumes were noted as housed at the Arsenal, and labeled as discarded. Both lists clearly describe the same costumes with small deviations, and also give some insight into how costumes were shifted between performances. For instance, the costumes for four female and four male roles (possibly chorus) were borrowed from the cast of *Andromache*, and eight costumes for priests were borrowed from the cast of *Atys*. This indicates that the lists used for the inventories were earlier costume list used for performances, rather than made for the inventory.

Gustav's involvement in the productions was such that he decided the materials as well as the colors of the costumes. He constantly made lists to send to his director about decisions taken in relation to the opera.

> Decorations, costumes, machinery, ballets, everything was and is supervised, drawn, prescribed and beautified by his [Gustav III's] brilliant imagination. The texts and the music are also subjected to his scrutiny, much to their own advantage.[11]

Even when at war, he could not refrain from sending letters and lists to the opera management controlling their daily work. One such list pertaining to the costumes of *Thetis* can be found in the Uppsala University Library's Gustavian collection. Here Gustav has noted on a single sheet of paper how he wanted the

[10] S-So, *Teaterdirektionens korrespondens*, I, 1771-1813; see for instance letters of June 25, 1799, p. 339; June 4, 1804, p. 439, and June 8, 1804, p. 443, both dealing with the import of foreign goods.

[11] Letter from the French Embassy secretary d'Aguila, after the premiere of *Thetis and Pelée* in 1773, quoted in NILS PERSONNE, *Svenska Teatern*, cit., vol. I, p. 104

costumes in *Thetis and Pelée* to look like, even though, unfortunately, his handwriting s not easy to decipher.[12] The costume for the role of Venus reads: «habit tafte Couleur de Roze garnie de fleurs de Genes d'argent» (a rose colored taffeta dress decorated with silver flowers). Gustav found inspiration for the costumes in his well-stocked library, which we can also reconstruct from the inventory.

THE INVENTORY OF THE LIBRARY

The complete inventory of the book collection lists 13.650 volumes at the Stockholm castle (worth ca 10,534 Riksdaler), and 2.395 volumes at Haga (worth ca 2419 Riksdaler). Many of these books portray national costumes as perceived at the time, costumes that could easily be schematized as theatre costumes. Such costumes were used both on stage and at the court festivities. The «Habit of the grand Signior», for example, comes from *A collection of the Dresses of Different Nations, Antient and Modern. Particularly Old English Dresses* published in London by Thomas Jeffreys in 1757, and part of Gustav's collection, now in the Music and Theatre Archive and Library in Stockholm (See figure 1).

In 1777 Gustav celebrated his mother's birthday by giving a divertissement called *The Carnival in Venice*, after a play by Regnard (1699). It called for Venetian costumes as well as Bohemian and Turkish garb. He may have found the inspiration for these in a book by Duglioni, *Habiti d'huomini et Donne Veneziane, trionfi feste et Ceremonie publiche* (published in Venice 1610).[13] Some of these costumes can be traced to the depot at the castle.

Gustav's library also contained numerous theatre books belonging to different categories. For instance, we find Nicolò Sabbatini's book on stage machinery, *Pratica di fabricare scene e machine ne' teatri*, published in Ravenna in 1638, as well as books on the organization of theatrical performances in Paris, for instance N. E. Framery's *De l'organisation des Spectacles de Paris* published in 1790. He found ample examples of costumes for the subject of *Iphigenie uti Auliden,* performed in Stockholm 1778-1779 in André Lens, *Le costume, ou essai sur les habillemens et les usages de plusierus peuples de l'antiquité*, published in Liège in 1776. Many of the costume books in the library were published in the seventeenth century, and it is easy to spot later additions, like the above book by Lens. This gives an opportunity to investigate what Gustav III bought, or was given, and thus to evaluate his sources of information. The book by Lens certainly had an impact on the costume reforms in antique dress that were performed from 1786 and discussed below.

The king also collected prints, costume plates and scenery for the theatre, like Giacomo Torelli's *Scene e machine preparate alle Nozze di Teti, balletto reale, representato nella sala del Piccolo Borbone [14 di aprile 1654] et da Giacomo Torelli inventore [...]*. Some of these he probably bought from the chancellor Carl Gustaf

[12] Carolina Rediviva (Uppsala), Gustavian coll., Vol. F412, no 26, *Habits pour L'Opera de Tetis et Pelee*.

[13] S-Sr, K51, Litt. E. I have chosen to retain titles as they appear in the inventory even though they do not always correspond to the original titles of the texts.

Tessin in 1757. The collections of Tessin do in fact form the basis of the National Museum's theatre collections, and many of these prints and drawings are still in existence, for instance works by Berain and Desprez. One of Berainthe Elder's prints were for instance used as a model for a scene in *Thetis and Pelée* in 1773, and other seventeenth century prints can be traced as inspiration for other scenes in the opera.[14]

Even if Gustav had access to books showing both historical and national costumes, what was presented on the stage was still an interpretation seen from the cultural and social horizon of his time. The costumes for *Thetis and Pelée* for instance were made in a baroque/rococo style that for some of the foreign diplomats attending the performance in 1773 already seemed antiquated.

> The music is delightful and moving, and the Swedish language beautifully adapted to it, since even though it is mixed with German words, the pronunciation is not distasteful […] the dancers used *paniers* and masques like they used to do at the opera in Paris.[15]

Inspiration for these costumes came from drawings by Berain, Martin and Bouquet. In 1786 this changed and the costumes for the revival of Gluck's opera *Orpheus* were conceived in the neoclassic style used on the continent. These costumes can be compared with the earlier costumes for the same opera in 1773, clearly still in the rococo style.[16]

But let us return to the costumes of *Thetis and Pelée* in the inventory and let us follow the trail of the costume of Venus through the sources. From contemporary costume drawings by Martin and Boquet we can see that the image of Venus was often clad in white, green and pink, adorned with garlands of roses and leaves, very much in the style advocated by Gustav in his initial draft: «habit tafte Couleur de Roze garnie de fleurs de Genes d'argent» (Rose coloured taffeta dress, decorated with silver flowers).[17] The drawing of a Venus costume is still in the opera archive's costume book for this period but shows a pure white dress with garlands of flowers, the figure clearly inspired by Bouquet. (See figure 2)

The gods and goddesses were part of a chorus in act five at the end of the opera. In Gustav's draft the costumes of Venus and Amor were made to match, Amor being described as: «habit semblable de celle de Venus» (a dress

[14] MARIE-CHRISTINE SKUNCKE, *Gustaviansk teater*, in *Ny svensk teaterhistoria: Teater före 1800*, 3 vols., ed. Sven Åke Heed, Stockholm, Gidlunds Förlag, 2007, vol. I, p. 191.

[15] Letter by the French Embassy secretary d'Aguila, 1773, quoted in NILS PERSONNE, *Svenska Teatern*, vol. I, p. 104-105.

[16] MARIE-CHRISTINE SKUNCKE, *Gustaviansk teater*, cit., pp. 197-198.

[17] The French word 'fleur de gene[t]' probably refers to the flower *genista tinctoria* that was often cultivated for its yellow flowers. See for instance JOHAN LECHE, *Förtekning öfver de raraste Växter i Skåne*, in *Kongliga Swenska Wetenskapsacademiens Handlingar*, Stockholm, 1744. Gustav's own drafts are written in French, and I have kept the original wording for the benefit of the reader, adding an English translation. The lists of the inventory are written in semi-Swedish and since the wording here will benefit few of my readers I have chosen to translate them directly without giving the original text.

resembling the one for Venus). The costume of Amor in the inventory reads: «Pink bodice and pantalones fixed to the bodice, wings, Tonlé[18] and coat of blue atlas decorated with flower garlands, a stone-ceinture [belt] and head bandeau of black atlas decorated with stones […]». We may therefore assume that at least the colour-scheme in the original production was approximately the same for Venus. In the inventory, however, the description of the costume of Venus reads: «A white chemise is lent from the actresses together with a flower garland. Venus' coat is borrowed from the play Birger Jarl from the Dramatic Depot». What happened to Gustav's intentions and the initial idea of kinship between the costumes of Venus and Amor?

Thetis and Pelée was a popular opera. Premiered on 18 January 1773, it originally had five acts, later reduced to three, and its performance lasted about five hours to perform. Gustav based it on a text by Bernard le Bovier de Fontenelle (1689), and entrusted the composition of the music to the Italian music director of the Stockholm opera, Francesco Uttini. The text was translated into Swedish and adapted by Johan Wellander. It gave ample room for new sets and machinery. Gustav indulged in furies dancing with torches, flying deities, and numerous changes of scenery. In addition to the singers, there were 27 dancers and 47 choristers on stage.[19] The opera was played well into the 1790s, but somewhere on the way the costume of Venus must have been changed. Indeed, there is another list in the inventory that might give us a clue. A page that lists the discarded clothes housed at the Arsenal in 1792 includes items from the original performance of *Thetis* in 1773. Among these items we find three costumes (without indication of the role), one of which might be the missing costume for Venus: «A bergère costume with a skirt of silver cloth, the bodice and drapery of red silk sarge, coat of white silk sarge, green taffeta lining», or «costume with a rose colored taffeta skirt, bodice and drapery in blue taffeta dressed with gauze, white silk sarge bands and decoration […]», or «costume of rose red taffeta, decorated with brown and blue taffeta and flowers». It is clear that sometime between 1773 and 1792, possibly at the reworking of the opera in 1775 or 1791, the dress was changed for the chemise. Possibly the change had to do with the fact that the part of Venus belonged to the chorus. In case the original dress was destroyed, or did not fit a new singer, a simpler solution could have been found for such a minor role. The singer who deliberately destroyed a costume was fined 1 RD, not enough to replace a costume that in its original form probably cost about 40 Riksdaler.[20]

However, there could be other reasons for the change. In Gustav's library there were also a few volumes of the French theatre book *Costumes et Annales*

[18] A *tonnelet* (French for little barrel or keg) was the skirt of the *Habit à la Romain* used on stage. It was stiff and wired, and usually of brocade or some other heavy material. Four such costumes have been preserved at the theater museum in Stockholm, all of them originally from eighteenth-century France.

[19] MARIE-CHRISTINE SKUNCKE, *Gustaviansk teater*, cit., p. 192; NILS PERSONNE, *Svenska Teatern*, cit., vol. I, pp. 90-112.

[20] See the 1786 regulations, p. 162. S-So, *Teaterdirektionens korrespondens*, I, 1771-1813. The estimate of forty Riksdaler was based on the value of other similar costumes in the inventory.

des Grands Théatres de Paris en Figures au Lavis et Coloriée, published in Paris by M. de Charnois in 1789. The separate parts were published earlier than the collected essays and images, starting in 1786. The work consists of six leather bound volumes (Vol. 1-2, 5-8, Vol. 3-4 are missing), bearing the royal arms, now in the collections of the Music and Theatre Library in Stockholm. In volume no. 4 there is an image of Mademoiselle Renaud Cadette in the role of Venus in *Les Tris Déesses Rivales*. She is portrayed in a simple white chemise with a green underskirt with a white border. The dress is ornamented with rose garlands and she wears a striped green see-through cloak and a white bonnet with a rose spray, and an apple in her hand. (See figure 3)

The dress gives food for thought. Did Gustav take inspiration from such images to reform the dress of Venus in the 1790s, or were the changes merely made for financial reasons Probably it was an array of reasons that led to the simpler dress of Venus, but changing ideals were certainly one of them. In the 1780s the chemise dress was popularized by the French Queen Marie Antoinette who wanted a more informal dress for leisurely country pursuits. The image in the book reflects this trend and that Gustav, who was certainly interested in fashion, should have missed such a reference is unlikely. The change of dress therefore probably took place in the 1790s. The reference in the inventory to the dramatic depot suggests that it was replaced after 1787 when the dramatic theatre was parted from the opera,[21] under the management of the royal librarian Adolf Fredrik Ristell. It was still housed at Bollhuset, but Ristell had a costume depot of his own.[22]

The comments on loans of costumes from other plays gives a vivid insight into performance practice and also makes it possible to investigate costume conventions. The role of Venus (and a costume for her) was also present in the opera ballet *Adonis*.[23] The description of this costume in the list reads: «a dress of dotted blue atlas, cap and trousers of ditto, ornamented with gold braid and fringes, borrowed from Silvie».[24] This is a completely different costume with a different color scheme, emphasizing the color blue instead of red or pink, more like the Amor costume above. The fact that it was borrowed from another performance tells us that a certain view of her costume could be adapted within existing conventions. There are several such loans within the list, telling us that this was a list used for the actual performance rather than for the inventory. Furthermore, the costumes in the lists were fewer than those described, since standard costumes for chorus or ballet were often used for more than one production.

[21] See a small note from Armfeldt to Edelcrantz in S-Sk, *Letters to Clewberg*, I.

[22] ERIK NÄSLUND et al., *Kungliga Dramatiska Teatern 1788-1988*, Stockholm, Bra Bok, 1988, p. 11.

[23] The opera ballet *Adonis* in one act by Thomas Christian Walther to a text by Pierre Joseph Bernard and choreography by Louis Gallodier was premiered at Bollhuset on 5 February 1776. KLAS RALF, *Kungliga Teatern i Stockholm: Repertoar 1773-1973: Opera, operett, sångspel. Balett*, Stockholm, Kungliga Operan, 1974, p. 9.

[24] The opera *Sylvie* in three acts by Henri Montan Berton and Jean Claude Trial to a text by Pierre Laujon after Torquato Tasso's *Aminta*, was premiered at Bollhuset on 13 July 1774. KLAS RALF, *Kungliga Teatern i Stockholm*, cit., p. 9.

In the opera *Orpheus* the character of Amor was dressed in a costume of «couleur de chair [c]armosin» (rose red) and blue atlas with wings made out of goose quills, carrying the usual accessories of bow and arrows.[25] A comparison with the description of the costumes in *Silvie* reveals, in fact, three dresses: a costume for Amor of rose colored atlas with trousers and coat of white atlas, ornamented with silver lace. Another costume for a male Amor was designed with half the bodice, the arms and half the tonnelet of red taffeta, the other half overlaid with *schir* (a thin see-through cloth), and ornamented with white taffeta, silver lace, flowers and sequins. A pair of trousers in red taffeta was worn with it. A third costume for a female Amor was made out of red taffeta, the bodice covered with gauze and ornamented with silver lace,[26] gauze and flowers. The skirt of red taffeta was ornamented in the same manner. A drapery of thin linen ornamented in the same manner was worn to the dress. The dress mentioned in the list of Adonis is not presented here.

From this short investigation we can see that the convention for Venus and Amor was to use blue, rose or red colors for the costumes. The only white garments are the coat and trousers for Amor in *Silvie*. The change from the conventional color scheme therefore gains significance. In the Royal opera archive there is another costume drawing that might bear a connection to the opera *Thetis and Pelée*. It is a drawing, once again in the style of Boquet, of the god Neptune. The similarity to the drawing of Venus makes it probable that they were conceived at the same time. Although most of the libretto faithfully follows Fontenelle, the role of Neptune was redesigned, making it into an enlightened sovereign who renounced his claims on Thetis in the eye of love. In Gustav's version it was Neptune who saved Pelée from torture and brought him back to Thetis. The list of discarded clothes from the opera archive reads for Neptune:

> Chair bodice and Pantaloons, coat of green Etamine covered with silver gauze decorated with leaves and flowers around it. Tonlé of ditto as coat. A Ceinture [belt] on the tonlé of gold and silver embroideries on green atlas, white "svan boje"[27] for under sweater. A cap of paper decorated with sequins and painted with green leaves. Chair baboucher [oriental slippers] with green lacurer [bands].

Neptune's trident (referred to as a 'fork' in the Swedish original!) was listed below the clothes. The costume cost 40 Riksdaler.[28] (See figure 4)

[25] The opera *Orpheus och Eurydike* in three acts by Christoph Willibald Gluck to a text by Ranieri de' Calzabigi was premiered at Bollhuset on 25 November 1773 in a Swedish translation. KLAS RALF, *Kungliga Teatern i Stockholm*, cit., p. 9.

[26] This is my supposition since a piece of the margin is missing. The rest of the description makes it probable that the bodice would correspond with the skirt. S-Sr, K 50-51.

[27] *Svan-Boje* was a thick soft cotton cloth used for under garments. In this case it was probably white. *Svenska Akademiens ordbok* (SAOB): B3718; Stockholm: 1918.

[28] S-So, D6C, copy of the inventory after Gustav III, *1792*, S-Sr, K 50-52. See S-Sr, K 50, *Inventarium På de uti Kongl Theatrenes Magaziner befintliga Kläder, samt persedlar, med därpå utsatta Wärden*.

The figure in the opera archive looks nothing of the sort. It has no tonnelet in the classic sense but a draped skirt originating from the cloak, and though the color scheme is decidedly green and white, the form does not adhere to the description. The clearly striped green coat of see-through material (here labeled as 'schir'), can be found further down in the list for the costume of a triton. A belt cannot be detected in the picture, but the hat, helmet or bandeau, with green and white plumes, is certainly decorated with green leaves. The figure is only half dressed, showing chest and legs. The chair bodice of the description was probably a flesh colored body suit used to mimic the skin, and may not show in the drawing, but was added for the comfort of the singer. *Thetis* was premiered in January and the Bollhus theatre was known to be very cold and drafty. The white sleeves could refer to the under garment mentioned in the list, as well as the garlands of green leaves. Unfortunately the original list by Gustav III gives no clue as to the relationship between drawing and costume. It simply states: «il faut un habit tout acuss[ée]», a special dress. The dress of Neptune as a representative of the enlightened monarch had to be something very special, and in the list of the inventory the estimated worth reflect this. The costume of Neptune was indeed unique and like the costumes above was used for more than one production. For instance, in the prologue to *Amphitrion* the costume for Neptune and his followers were taken from *Thetis and Pelée*. There is no other costume for Neptune in the inventory, thereby making comparison impossible, and in the discarded list from the inventory there is no costume resembling, neither the one described in the list, nor the costume drawing in the opera archive. It would therefore seem as, although the costume for Venus was changed, the costume for Neptune was not. It survived intact from the premiere in 1773 to the inventory in 1792.

THE DEBTS

Last, but not least, we shall take a look at the king's debts, listed at the end of the inventory. They give ample proof that many articles used on stage were in fact manufactured outside of the walls of the Opera House. There is a special list naming all the artisans who, after the king's death, claimed money pertaining to the expenses for the production of opera. The claims were paid from the royal funds, that is, the debts were considered as Gustav's personal debts. Among the claimants we find for instance the Deputy Judge von Aken (82:32),[29] and the bankers Averhoff & von Scheven (423:25.1),[30] the wine

[29] This could be Franz Joachim von Aken (1738-1798), assessor and apothecary from Örebro. The family initially came from Rostock. The father, Franz Michael, was court apothecary and court physician. His son inherited the company in 1772. Franz Joachim invented a fire extinguishing substance, and possibly this was what he sold to the Opera House. Theatres were often plagued by fire in the eighteenth century.

[30] Johan Peter Averhoff (1723-1809) founded an exchange bureau in Hamburg in 1750 and started a bank together with Ernst Friedrich van Scheven 1760 in the same city. It was one of the most successful banking houses in Europe. Their services were used to secure money for incoming performers.

merchant Bacquiat (426.2), the pharmacist Gillberg,[31] as well as the glazier Börtzell[32] and the silk merchant Ek. Artisans who worked for the Opera House are missing from the list. There are no tailors, sets designers, wig makers, dressers or stage workers. The full list reads as follows (the numbers within parenthesis indicate the amount of money owned in Riksdaler):

Deputy judge von Aken (82:32)
Bankers Averhoff & von Scheven (423:25.1)
Wine merchant Bacquiat (426.2)
Trinket seller Helena Bauman (208.8)
Sheet metal worker Bauman (258.41)
Actor Björkman (17:18)
Manufacturer Benckert (2,707:34)
Glazier Börtzell (130,25.8)
Timber merchant Brockman (18)
Braid manufacturer Carrand (478:16)
Linen draper Cedermark (2,885.5.2)
Silk merchant Ek (4,418:33.8)
Wholesale dealer Feiff (2,864:44.11)
Wholesale dealer Falck (486.37.4)
Music copyist Ficker (47:32)
Pharmacist Gillberg (447:26.9)
Hat decorator Granbom (195.1)
Wholesale dealer Hasselgren (128)
Carpenter Hallmén (6.30)
Sword owner Heman (2.32)
Rope maker Hoffman (49:27)
Iron monger Hoffstedt (115:34.8)
Block maker Ji[ä]ger (13.16)
Glove maker Jisotz[?] (28.16)
Wine merchant Koschell (215.9)
Instrument maker Kraft (447:40)
Court writer Kuhleau (42.20)
Linen draper Lampa & Lind (224:41.3)
Gold beater Lewent (269.41.4)
Weight master Lindblom (5.40)
Cobbler Lundquist (792.16.4)
Stocking manufacturer Malzer (1144:40)
Rental coachman Nyman (1125.29)
Goldsmith Oldenburg (28.34)
Girdle maker Renner (63:16)
Cobbler Romberg (172.8.8)

[31] Märta Helena Reenstierna talks in her diary of a pharmacist named (P. A.) Gillberg, 6 maj 1808. SIGURD E. ERIXON, «Årstadagboken: Journaler från åren 1793-1839», Part 1, Stockholm, Generalstabens litogr. anstalts förlag, 1946, p. 488.

[32] The Burtzell family came to Stockholm from Lübeck in 1640. This is David Börtzell (1722-1798), glazier in Stockholm from 1756 and later also alderman. His son Johann Abraham Börtzell (1763-1850), secretary of state and vice president of the national judicial board for public lands and funds, was knighted in 1810.

Brush maker E. Thun (11)
Spice merchant Wettling (487:33.9)
Silk merchant Wiberg (195.18.4)
Model maker Åberg (80)
Sheet metal worker Öhman (14:8)

In the list, the director of the Opera House, Edelcrantz, comments that he has used the money he was given from the king as well as a part of the actors wages to repay the debts. He reclaimed the money. The sum of the Opera House's debt was 30528:39:2 Riksdaler, but is later given as 21946:44:11 Riksdaler, so possibly a part had already been paid. The inventory also lists the receipts and the payments, giving us (in some cases, but not always) a chance to look into the amount and quality of goods purchased. One of these more detailed lists comes from the silk merchant Ek, who produced two bills for his services in 1791-1792. It is clear that he had delivered cloth more or less the whole year without receiving any compensation, and the first bill, of four and a half pages, lists purchases till September 1791, while the second, of nearly four pages, lists purchases from October 1791 to February 1792. The fact that he could continue to deliver such amounts of silk suggests that it was a solid business. The opera company bought silk taffeta and atlas in a variety of colors, as well as linen from him. In the end, the receipt shows that Ek was given 3208.6 Riksdaler, about a thousand less than the value of his goods.

CONCLUSIONS

The work of the costume workshop can be deduced from the inventory in four different ways. The lists of the materials used in the work room gives a good indication of the different qualities of cloth used for costumes, the colors preferred, and the trimmings and accessories that went into theatre costumes of this period. Equally interesting is what is not found in these lists, possibly because it was too trivial or cheap to be listed, or because it was simply not part of the materials that were used in the workshop. The list of creditors could help us understand what was bought from artisans who worked outside of the Opera House, a list that can be augmented by using the letters of the management and the pleas to the king to lift the embargo on certain products or relieve the Opera House of charges and taxes on luxury goods. Overall, these lists give an interesting insight into the materials used at the time.

The lists of clothes for the different performances add to this knowledge, offering an overview of the result, telling us how costumes were fashioned, what color combinations were usual or unusual, the hierarchy between characters through the use of diverse types of cloth and color-schemes that were used to link characters. It also makes it possible to compare the Swedish costumes to similar lists of foreign theatre costumes, widening the context of costume making. These lists can then be checked against contemporary theatre images, such as those in the opera archive, bearing in mind that we have to account for the artistic license, and that paintings, in this sense, are feeble

evidence. Since Gustav III was in many ways controlling his Opera House down to the 'last button', the lists of his book collection also give us a clue as to what inspired the costumes and what foreign books or prints might have been used to spark his imagination.

Last, but not least, the list of the debts of the Opera Company also shows who worked for the Opera outside the House, what material was delivered, and at what cost. In some sense a great part of Stockholm's population took part in the opera adventure of Gustav III, as artisans, retailers, employees, artists, viewers and critics. Through the inventory we can take a peek behind the stage curtain and perhaps reconstruct part of the process that created these theatre costumes.

Figure 1. «Habit of the Grand Seignior or Emperor of the Turks in 1700» from *A collection of the Dresses of Different Nations, Antient and Modern*, London, Thomas Jeffreys, 1757. Published by permission of The Music and Theatre Archive and Library in Stockholm.

Figure 2. Drawing of 'Venus' from a costume book in the Royal Opera Archive in Stockholm [S-So, F3 CA 1]. Published by permission.

Figure 3. Image of 'Venus' in *Costumes et Annales des Grands Théatres de Paris En Figures au Lavis et Coloriée*, Paris, M. de Charnois, 1789. Published by permission of The Music and Theatre Archive and Library in Stockholm.

Figure 4. Drawing of 'Neptune' from a costume book in the Royal Opera Archive in Stockholm [S-So, F3 CA 1]. Published by permission.