

## **PLATÉE**

Music by Jean-Philippe Rameau

Libretto by Jacques Autreau and Adrien-Joseph le Valois d'Orville

First Performed on March 31, 1745, in Versailles

### **Characters**

Platée (tenor)

King Citheron (baritone)

Jupiter (baritone)

Mercure (tenor)

La Folie (soprano)

Momus (baritone)

Thespis (tenor)

Thalie (soprano)

Amour (soprano)

Junon (mezzo-soprano)

Satyr (baritone)

Clarine (soprano)

Momus II (tenor)

Animals, scholars

Prologue - Ideas

Thespis is sleeping it off. A Satyr sings of drinking. Thespis wakes up and sings a love song to Bacchus. He then embarrasses everyone by exposing their infidelities. Thalie and Momus arrive and remind Thespis that the gods behave in the same way. Momus begins a story about Junon's jealousy of Jupiter. L'Amour interrupts and insists on being included. They sing of putting on a new kind of show.

### **Act I - Plans**

Citheron appeals to the gods to end the terrible weather. Mercure appears and tells him that the storms are caused by Jupiter and Junon's jealous quarrels. Mercure, sent by Jupiter, is looking for a way to teach Junon a lesson. Citheron suggests a prank: Let Jupiter pretend to propose to Platée, just to make Junon really jealous. Mercure goes up to tell Jupiter the clever plan. Enter Platée, who sings of the swamp. What a place to fall in love! And she's long loved Citheron. Clarine is unimpressed. The swamp creatures dance. Mercure announces to Platée that Jupiter will be down soon to woo her. She can't wait. Clarine sings the sun away. Rain dances. Mercure spots Iris leading the Aquilons, who come to clear the area for Jupiter's landing.

### **Act II - Metamorphoses**

Mercure has misdirected Junon, to delay her arrival. Jupiter and Momus come down in a cloud. Citheron and Mercure hide and watch. Platée is attracted to the cloud. Jupiter appears to her as an ass, an owl, and a man. He says he wants her. She is overwhelmed. Everyone laughs at her. Enter La Folie, who has stolen Apollon's lyre and is feeling musical. Diverse dances. A hymn to Marriage and to the coronation of Platée.

### **Act III - Return**

Junon can't find the cheating Jupiter and she's furious at Mercure. But he convinces her to hide in order to observe the wedding. A procession. Another procession. Everyone's invited but Platée doesn't see L'Amour. Mercure and Jupiter make a long dance longer. Platée has anxiety. Momus, disguised as L'Amour, shows up to officiate. He tells Platée how sad marriage can be. La Folie

makes fun of him. Dances in honor of Platée. Just as Jupiter is swearing his vow, Junon bursts in. She's shocked by Platée's looks. The joke is over. Jupiter and Junon make up. Platée is very angry and blames it all on Cithéron. The gods return to Olympus. Platée goes back home.