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Louise Hollandine and the Art of Arachnean Critique

Lindsay Ann Reid

Louise Hollandine (1622-1709), granddaughter to Britain's King James I (1566-1625) and "scion of the most staunchly Protestant branch of the Stuart dynasty" was born in The Hague.¹ It was in this city that her parents, Frederick V, Elector Palatine and short-lived King of Bohemia (1596-1632) and Elizabeth Stuart (1596-1662), dwelt in exile following their flight from Prague in 1620.² When Louise Hollandine is now remembered at all, it is usually for her intrepid social and religious transformation in the late 1650s from Protestant princess to runaway Catholic nun and eventual Abbess of Maubuisson in Paris.³ Yet she was also an artist, as we are reminded by a youthful self-portrait in which the princess meaningfully presents herself with a mahlstick in hand (fig. 1). Having received her childhood education primarily at her family's *Prinsenhof*, or nursery palace, in Leiden, Louise Hollandine is reputed to have begun drawing lessons at the age of six. Later, along with a number of her many siblings, she advanced her studies under the tutelage of Gerard van Honthorst (1590-1656).⁴ As the *Memoirs* of her younger sister Sophia of Hanover (1630-1714) detail, Louise Hollandine "completely devoted herself to painting" in her youth, and "so great was her talent that she could capture peoples' likeness without them having to sit for her."⁵ What is more, as a second self-portrait indicates, she continued these artistic pursuits even after taking the veil (fig. 2).

[Insert Figure 1. Louise Hollandine, *Self Portrait*, c. 1640-1655, oil on panel, Collection RKD-Netherlands Institute for Art History, The Hague.]

[Insert Figure 2. Louise Hollandine, *Self Portrait of Louise Hollandine Palatine as Benedictine Nun*, c. 1659-1709, oil on canvas, Collection RKD-Netherlands Institute for Art History, The Hague.]

Although relatively few extant works can be definitively attributed to her, Louise Hollandine's reputation amongst her own contemporaries as an artist of considerable talent is flatteringly memorialized in "Princesse Löysa Drawing," the text of which I reproduce in full at the close of this chapter.⁶ Penned by Richard Lovelace (1617–1657)—"one of the most traditionally cavalier of cavalier poets" and a figure much celebrated as a "handsome lover, courageous warrior, and consummate lyricist"—this poem was first printed in *Lucasta* of 1649, though it may well have been composed several years prior to that date.⁷ This little-remarked 53-line paean to Louise Hollandine's artistic skill is an Ovidian aficionado's delight.⁸ It reworks, in surprising and nuanced ways, the mythological weaving contest between Arachne and Minerva from Book 6 of the ancient Roman *Metamorphoses*, an episode that has been regularly hailed as one of "the most substantial examples of Ovid's treatment of artistic creation and reception."⁹

"Princesse Löysa Drawing" frames Louise Hollandine in neo-Arachnean terms as a creator among women and a seemingly proto-feminist critic of classical tradition. Lovelace's descriptions of the mythological images issuing from "bright *Löysa's* pencils" in this early modern text owe much to Ovid's anterior portrayal of Arachne's artwork (which, in turn, takes as its subject "caelestia crimina," or heavenly crimes, involving acts of coercion, deception, and violence perpetrated by the oversexed pantheon of Olympian deities).¹⁰ My ensuing consideration of this English poem and its relationship to Louise Hollandine's known Ovidian paintings, *The Daughters of Cecrops* (fig. 3) and *Vertumnus and Pomona* (fig. 4), falls into four parts. I first establish something of the broader social contexts in which both

Louise Hollandine and Lovelace operated. In so doing, I raise the tantalizing possibility that the poet may have based “Princesse Löysa Drawing” on actual, real-life encounters with the Princess Palatine and/or her work—a connection that would add undeniable piquancy to his ekphrastic depiction of her Ovidiana. My second section turns to a more detailed analysis of Lovelace’s classical intertextuality, exploring how material from the *Metamorphoses* is appropriated and reworked in “Princesse Löysa Drawing.” I subsequently call attention to the problem of disentangling art from ekphrasis and the hermeneutic tendencies of the historical Louise Hollandine from Lovelace’s literary conceits. Finally, I juxtapose Lovelace’s depiction of Louise Hollandine’s artistry with an analysis of the two aforementioned mythological *portraits historiés* painted by the princess herself, querying the degree to which Lovelace’s fictionalization aligns with the character of this amateur artist’s known Ovidian pieces.

[Insert Figure 3. Louise Hollandine, *Portrait of Three Women as the Daughters of Cecrops Finding the Serpent-shaped Erichthonius*, c.1635–1709, oil on canvas, Collection RKD-Netherlands Institute for Art History, The Hague.]

[Insert Figure 4. Mary Hotchkiss after Louise Hollandine, *Called the Prince of Denmark and Elizabeth, Viscountess Mordaunt, as Vertumnus and Pomona, but more probably Henry, 1st Viscount Mordaunt and Miss Taylor*, oil on canvas, © National Trust / Peter Muhly.]

Historical Contexts

As Nadine Akkerman has shown, the Bohemian exile court into which Louise Hollandine was born rapidly “transformed the Hague into a rich cultural capital,” and the princess’s

family sustained a “friendly rivalry” with the neighboring court of Orange that found “expression in masques, ballets, musical performances, art, tilting, and tournaments.”¹¹ It was amongst a “heady mixture of artists and scholars at the crossroads of learned Europe,” then, that Louise Hollandine cultivated her intellectual and aesthetic sensibilities.¹² The scholarship of Elizabeth Alice Honig has helped to provide color for the more particular environment in which Louise Hollandine must have learned to draw and paint. Although Judith Leyster (1609-1669) remains the best known of the era’s Dutch women artists, the widely recognized “milieu of professional artistic production” in which Leyster operated existed alongside a vibrant and remarkably populous “second world” of so-called amateur production that engaged numerous other women. This “elite milieu [was] comprised of often highly educated, highly cultivated families,” including Louise Hollandine’s own, “whose members’ social status was often the inverse of their products’ current cultural status.”¹³

Figures like Louise Hollandine’s famed teacher van Honthorst stood at the sometimes hazy intersection between the production of amateur and professional Dutch art in the seventeenth century. After making a name for himself in Rome between approximately 1616 and 1620 (where he developed his distinctive Caravaggesque techniques and was dubbed “Gherardo della Notte”), this Utrecht native returned to the Netherlands and quickly began attracting the attention of both local and international patrons and collectors. His growing popularity was such by the late 1620s that van Honthorst was invited to England by Louise Hollandine’s uncle, Charles I (1600-1649), where he produced *King Charles I and His Wife Queen Henrietta Maria as Apollo and Diana* (1628). Van Honthorst was subsequently engaged by the British monarch to paint *The King and Queen of Bohemia and Their Children* (1630).¹⁴ This was not the only time that members of the Bohemian exile court would serve as van Honthorst’s subjects: in addition to a multitude of single portraits featuring Louise Hollandine, her parents, and her siblings, van Honthorst also executed further group portraits

of the family, as exemplified by *The Four Eldest Children of the Queen of Bohemia* (1631) and *The Triumph of the Winter Queen* (1636). Along with receiving such prestigious commissions, van Honthorst was a teacher. By the mid-1630s, he was operating large studios in both Utrecht and The Hague where many professional pupils trained, and he also provided instruction to numerous amateur artists. As C.H. Collins Barker put it, his “position as a drawing master to the royal ladies is well known,” and Louise Hollandine “seems to have been one of the most successful of his pupils.”¹⁵ Two centuries later, their relationship would be recollected, and perhaps somewhat romanticized, by Hendrik Jacobus Scholten (1824-1907) in *Gerard van Honthorst Showing the Drawings of His Pupil Louise of Bohemia to Amalia van Solms* (fig. 5).

[Insert Figure 5. Hendrik Jacobus Scholten, *Gerard van Honthorst Showing the Drawings of His Pupil Louise of Bohemia to Amalia van Solms*, 1854, oil on panel, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.]

Though English, Lovelace’s own personal connections with the Low Countries appear to have been manifold. His Kentish father, Sir William Lovelace the Younger (1584-1627), had, as was noted in a petition of 1629, “served about thirty yeares in y^e warres” prior to his death in the Siege of Grol (i.e. Groenlo).¹⁶ That William Lovelace’s wife and young family may have accompanied him during his continental military exploits is suggested by a reference in his widow’s will, in which she bequeathed to her eldest son Richard her “beste suite of diaper, which [she] made in the Low Countries.”¹⁷ C.H. Wilkinson has even ventured the possibility that the poet may have been born in Holland rather than his family’s native Kent.¹⁸ Later in life, after receiving an MA from Gloucester Hall, Oxford in 1636, Lovelace is said to have “retired in great splendor to the Court,” where he was “taken into the favour” of

George Goring (1608-1657).¹⁹ Rising to the rank of Captain, he went on to pursue a military career under Goring's influence (and sometimes direct command), which seems to have repeatedly placed him back in Holland during the 1640s.

In "A Register of Friends" (c. 1675), Thomas Stanley (1625-1678), a relation of Lovelace's and patron to numerous cavalier poets, remarked of his cousin's continental military service that "During our Civill Wars" the "boldly-Loyall" Lovelace had been largely "confin'd to peace" yet was "Expos'd to Forrein Wars, when ours did cease."²⁰ Others amongst Lovelace's contemporaries made more definitive references to his Dutch affiliations. An anonymously published poem of 1659 entitled "An Elegy, Sacred to the Memory of My Late Honoured Friend, Collonell Richard Lovelace" declares, for instance, that "*Holland and France* have known his nobler parts, / And found him excellent in Arms, and Arts."²¹ And a piece by John Tatham (fl. 1632–1664) written sometime prior to 1645 and later printed in *Ostella* (1650), is pertinently titled "Upon my Noble Friend, Richard Lovelace Esquire, His Being in Holland."²² We can assume with reasonable confidence that Lovelace spent some of this time in The Hague, where he may well have come into the orbit of the unmarried, 20-something (and as-yet-still-Protestant) Louise Hollandine, as well as her extensive family.

That Lovelace would have rubbed elbows with members of the Bohemian exile court during the 1640s comes as little surprise, given his pedigree and personal connections. He seems to have had social ties to the court of Elizabeth Stuart's brother Charles I dating back to his youth. A 1631 warrant in the Public Record Office documents the teenaged Lovelace's honorary appointment as "A Gent Wayter extraordinary" to the British monarch.²³ And in *Athenae Oxonienses* (1692), Anthony à Wood (1632-1695) reported that an intervention by one of the ladies of Charles I's wife Henrietta Maria (1609-1669) may have facilitated Lovelace's precociously early receipt of his MA degree:

In 1636 when the King and Queen were for some days entertained at *Oxon*, he was, at the request of a great Lady belonging to the Queen, made to the Archb. of *Cant.* then

Chancellor of the University, actually created, among other persons of quality, Master of Arts, tho but of about two years standing.²⁴

Furthermore, Lovelace's own associate and mentor Goring, who spent much of the 1630s in The Low Countries (sometimes fighting alongside Louise Hollandine's brother Rupert), is said to have known the Princess Palatine "throughout her teen years" and, in fact, to have "engaged in some form of flirtation" with her.²⁵

The seventeenth century has been aptly described as "pre-eminently an age of portraiture, both in literature and the visual arts," and it is worth observing that "Princesse Löysa Drawing" was neither Lovelace's sole commemoration of a member of Charles I's royal family, nor was it the only early modern English poem to feature Louise Hollandine as its subject.²⁶ Indeed, there are several roughly contemporaneous literary pieces with which "Princesse Löysa Drawing" might be productively compared and contrasted. A poem by Lovelace included in the multi-authored collection *Musarum Oxoniensium Charisteria pro Serenissima Regina Maria* (1639), for instance, laments the "new-borne Funerall" of Louise Hollandine's cousin Catherine, the daughter of Charles I and Henrietta Maria who lived for a single day.²⁷ Furthermore, Sophia of Hanover's *Memoirs* recall that James Harrington (1611-1677) once "compose[d] verses comparing her [sister] to an artist who, angry at being unable to paint the lather on a horse, hurls the brush at the canvas and, by this lucky stroke, achieves a perfect rendering of the horse's frothy coat," and, at the century's close, Jane Barker (1652-1732) addressed a more sober if similarly flattering poem to Louise Hollandine (who was, by then, the longstanding Abbess of Maubuisson).²⁸ Moreover, the concerns with the *paragone* underpinning Lovelace's "Princesse Löysa Drawing" resonate with a number of other pieces in the cavalier poet's canon. We might consider, for example, "Upon the Curtaine of Lucasta's Picture, It Was Thus Wrought" or the two ekphrastic poems that Lovelace addressed to Peter Lely (1618-1680), a Dutch transplant who made a significant impact upon English visual culture in the mid-seventeenth-century: "To My Worthy Friend Mr. Peter

Lilly: On that Excellent Picture of His Majesty, and the Duke of Yorke, Drawne by Him at Hampton-Court” (a piece first published along with “Princesse Löysa Drawing” in *Lucasta* of 1649) and “Peinture: A Panegyrick to the Best Picture of Friendship Mr. Pet. Lilly” (which appeared a decade later in Lovelace’s *Posthume Poems* of 1659).

[Insert Figure 6. Gerard van Honthorst, *Meleager and Atalanta*. c. 1625-1655, chalk drawing, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.]

Of particular interest for this discussion is Lovelace’s “To My Worthy Friend Mr. Peter Lilly,” which takes as its subject Lely’s *Double Portrait of Charles I and James, Duke of York* (1647). This has been called “one of the best-known seventeenth-century poems on a work of art” and, perhaps even the first “close *ekphrastic* analysis of a painting” in English literary tradition.²⁹ Significantly, as Claire Pace has noted, it is also “one of the few poems” of the era “devoted to a specific portrait which does more than refer to that portrait in the most general of terms.”³⁰ Admittedly—and in contrast with the clear and traceable relationship between Lely’s *Double Portrait of Charles I and James, Duke of York* and Lovelace’s literary response to this painting—there is no *specific* set of known Ovidian drawings by Louise Hollandine that directly corresponds to the pictures ekphrastically described by the poet in “Princesse Löysa Drawing.” If such drawings by the Princess Palatine did exist, however, they might have looked something like her teacher van Honthorst’s sketch of another Ovidian tale, that of *Meleager and Atalanta* from *Metamorphoses* 8 (fig. 6). As J. Richard Judson reminds us, Louise Hollandine’s prolific mentor, though perhaps more often associated today with Caravaggesque techniques and genre scenes, “was famous during the seventeenth century for his mythological and historical paintings.”³¹ And, although her own work seems to have tended more towards portraits of

family members and other aristocratic friends and acquaintances, Louise Hollandine is known to have likewise dabbled in mythological subjects. I would therefore propose that, as in Lovelace's better-known poem on Lely's painting, the remarkable sense of iconographical specificity in "Princesse Löysa Drawing" adds weight to the supposition that the latter piece may well have been analogously inspired by the cavalier poet's encounters with his subject's artwork.

Ovid's Arachne and Lovelace's Louise Hollandine

Leaving aside, for the moment, the historical conceivability that Louise Hollandine crossed paths with the debonair and virtuosic Lovelace during the 1640s and that the poet's work may in some way document her artistic output, "Princesse Löysa Drawing" is also a deeply allusive literary piece: its many mythological references rely upon audiences' recognition of Arachne and Minerva's mythological weaving contest as intertext.³² It is therefore worth recounting the outlines of Lovelace's Ovidian model, the *locus classicus* for this tale. Book 6 of the *Metamorphoses* opens with the Maeonian weaver Arachne, famed throughout Lydia for her artistic skill, attracting the attention of Pallas, or Minerva, patron goddess of the craft. Though Ovid's narrator avers "scires a Pallade doctam" ("you could know that Pallas had taught her"), Arachne denies it.³³ In fact, the Maeonian woman responds to such suggestions by defiantly calling upon Minerva to compete with her. The ensuing artistic contest between goddess and mortal is described in detail by Ovid's narrator as each weaves an iconographically weighty tapestry. Upon completion, we are told of Arachne's art: "Non illud Pallas, non illud carpere Livor / possit opus" ("not Pallas, nor Envy himself, could find a flaw in that work").³⁴ Despite—or perhaps because of—the technical perfection of what one commentator describes as Arachne's "surpassingly beautiful but strategically ill-advised"

tapestry, Minerva resorts to violence.³⁵ The goddess exercises her godly prerogative by beating Arachne over the head with a weaving shuttle and violently rends the artwork of her bold competitor. The Maeonian woman responds to these twinned assaults upon her person and textile by attempting to hang herself—a suicide ultimately prevented by Minerva, who, allegedly overcome by pity, transforms Arachne into a spider.

Contemporary critics of Ovid's poem have inconclusively grappled with the question of who emerges as the victor at the end of the Arachne and Minerva episode. Whereas Andrew Feldherr suggests that the weaving competition "ends in a draw," others, such as Douglas Lateiner, have been more insistent that, in fact, "Arachne wins the contest, although she loses her life."³⁶ Ovid's narrator, it has often been argued, subtly "*implies* [Arachne's] success."³⁷ Notably, the most frequently cited of the "many compelling reasons for deducing that Ovid was on Arachne's side" is the poem's lengthy ekphrastic description of her artwork.³⁸ William S. Anderson's influential assessments of Arachne's and Minerva's respective textiles have definitively shaped readings of *Metamorphoses* 6 over the past fifty years. Minerva's tapestry is, in Anderson's estimation, meant to be understood as "a perfect piece of Classicistic art, structurally balanced and thematically grandiose, in support of the established order":

In the center of twelve gods, six on either side, Jupiter presides over a dispute between Minerva and Neptune. First, Neptune performs a miracle in order to establish his claim upon Athens. Then, Minerva brings out of the earth the olive. We may reasonably assume that, just as the judging gods are symmetrically arranged around Jupiter, so the disputants are disposed on either side of the center. To complete the symmetry, Minerva wove for each corner an admonitory panel to show what happened to others who challenged gods; and then she framed the whole in a border of olive leaves.³⁹

Anderson contrastingly describes Arachne's output as "a swirl of divine figures in unedifying situations, one god after another gratifying his lust for a human woman." Remarking that "[t]here is no apparent structure to the tapestry, which consists of nine affairs of Jupiter, six of Neptune, four of Apollo, and one each of Liber and Saturn," he submits that Ovid's

juxtaposition of Minerva's and Arachne's textiles creates "a cumulative effect, much as Baroque paintings do by contrast with neatly arranged masterpieces of Raphael."⁴⁰

Derivative, neo-Andersonian evaluations permeate the scholarly literature on this Ovidian tale, and critics have often made the further move of reading Arachne's tapestry as *mise en abyme*, thereby directly aligning the Maeonian weaver's visual aesthetic with Ovid's own poetics. It is, after all, the creative potential of chaos itself upon which both the *Metamorphoses* and Arachne's epitome are founded. Lateiner, for example, opposes Minerva's "balanced, stiff and symmetrical scheme" with the "swirling lack of formal structure and [...] fluidity" of "Arachne's masterpiece [that] reminds one of Ovid's poem," and Leonard Barkan similarly argues:

In contrast to the discrete classicism of Minerva's tapestry, Arachne piles stories helter-skelter together [...] so that they flow in a seamless mass, joined not by the logic of cause and effect or of morality but by the thread of metamorphosis itself. It requires no great leap of the imagination to see in Arachne's tapestry all the elements of Ovid's own poetic form in the *Metamorphoses*, which is, after all, a poem that eschews a clear narrative structure and rather creates a finely woven fabric of stories related via transformation.⁴¹

It is not only the aforementioned stylistic analogies noted by Lateiner, Barkan, and others that have fuelled the current critical consensus regarding Arachne's Ovidianism (or, alternatively put, Ovid's own Arachnean bent). Rather, it is also their shared subject matter. Many of the same stories taken up by Arachne are recounted elsewhere in Ovid's poem, therefore drawing audiences' attention, as one critic has put it, to "where the warp of this myth intersects with the weft" of other tales in the *Metamorphoses*.⁴²

The tale of Arachne and Minerva's strife in *Metamorphoses* 6 is not simply a tale of artistic rivalry or a goddess's struggle for reverence. Rather, it is also deeply concerned with the lopsided power dynamics and the sinister sexual politics of mythological tradition. In response to Minerva's textile, which emphasizes the goddess's own prior conquests as well as the unfortunate fates of presumptuous mortals, Arachne's weaving conversely represents an

eddy of twenty-one mythological rape scenes. The divine justice championed in Minerva's design is thus queried and destabilized in Arachne's composition. Gods including Jove, Neptune, Apollo, Bacchus, and Saturn are shown predatorily abducting and violating woman after woman. It is little wonder that Arachne's critique of the male deities through a chaotic grouping—one that highlights their systematic exploitation of female bodies and implicit stifling of female creativity, voices, and viewpoints—has been identified as a potentially subversive “countercultural account.”⁴³ Such assessments also square nicely with dominant readings of Ovid himself as “a comic innovator of glittering flippancy” and a poet who often invoked gendered perspectives to “deflat[e], dynamit[e], and generally outrag[e] the accepted ideas, ideals, and heroes of his day.”⁴⁴

Patricia J. Johnson has used the term “performative ekphrasis” to describe how the weaving contest in *Metamorphoses* 6 combines “a detailed representation of the conditions of artistic performance [...] with descriptions of the art produced under those conditions.” Such performative descriptions, she argues, function “in essence as [...] double narrative[s], comprising an ekphrastically described artwork and a narrative of the moment and circumstances of its creation.”⁴⁵ This same emphasis on representing *process* as well as *product* infuses Lovelace's derivative “Princesse Löysa Drawing,” which likewise “encourages consideration of the conditions under which art comes into being in the world.”⁴⁶ Replicating the actions of Arachne, the Princess Palatine in “Princesse Löysa Drawing” is depicted in the act of provocatively translating the mythological tales of literary tradition into a new, specifically visual medium. And, like Arachne before her, Lovelace's Louise Hollandine is overtly posited as a reworker of *Ovidian* mythography: her subjects include Echo and Narcissus (*Metamorphoses* 3), Pan and Syrinx (*Metamorphoses* 1), Ariadne and Theseus (*Metamorphoses* 8), Iphis and Anaxerete (*Metamorphoses* 14), Apollo and

Leucothoë (*Metamorphoses* 4), Apollo and Daphne (*Metamorphoses* 1), and Venus and Adonis (*Metamorphoses* 10).

Whereas the classical conflict evoked in Lovelace's early modern poem centered on Arachne's clash with Minerva, a new set of contestants vie for hermeneutic—and, by extension, narrative—authority in "Princesse Löysa Drawing." The palpably Arachnean Louise Hollandine (who, at first glance, seems, like her Ovidian antecedent, to be "*Minerva* in Epitomy") is here pitted against the "winged wagge" Cupid (whom she also resembles) and her "pencills" juxtaposed with this god's lust-inducing "darts."⁴⁷ Moreover, unlike the competition of *Metamorphoses* 6, whose winner remains provocatively ambiguous, there is a clear victor in Lovelace's derivative contest. Louise Hollandine's artistic skill is ultimately able to "enliveth more / Beauties, then [Cupid's arrows] destroy'd before."⁴⁸ Even Venus, the contest's internal arbiter, must admit that her own son looks "Uselesse" and his efforts decidedly "vaine" in contrast to the dominant Princess Palatine with her commanding creative capabilities.⁴⁹ In a declaration of Louise Hollandine's obvious victory, Lovelace's Venus thus "Unedge[s] all [Cupid's] Arrowes" and "riv[es] the Wood" of her son's bow "in two" in a move that perceptibly echoes Minerva's decision to viciously rip apart her rival's tapestry at the end of the corresponding Ovidian episode.⁵⁰

As in *Metamorphoses* 6, the Princess Palatine's Ovidian artwork in Lovelace's poem seem calculated to emphasize the ways in which Cupid's "fond Artillerie" has, in fact, traditionally caused more devastation than love.⁵¹ And yet, instead of merely commenting upon this fact, the seemingly—and perhaps superficially—empowered female artist in "Princesse Löysa Drawing" is depicted expanding the purview of Arachnean critique. Like Arachne, Lovelace's princess samples from and rewrites the *Metamorphoses* in miniature via her visual artwork. But whereas Louise Hollandine's mythological antecedent pointedly offered a meta-critique of classical tradition's erotic economy via a relatively straightforward

“exposé of Olympian misconduct,” Lovelace’s artist takes an alternative tack by restoring some of the *Metamorphoses*’ best-known victims of romantic misadventure and/or sexual exploitation “to li[f]e, and love.”⁵² She is thus depicted not only accenting or censoriously underlining what has been called “the pattern of violation-revenge-violation” at the heart of Ovid’s poem, but also attempting to revise this pattern by repositioning formerly tragic Ovidian characters within a new vista of amatory satisfaction and fulfilment.⁵³

Poetic Portraiture and Questions of Agency

Along with other mythological weavers of classical tradition, including Penelope, Helen, and Philomela, Arachne (who, arguably, launches antiquity’s most incisive condemnation of mythological gender politics) has often been appropriated as an emblem for women’s (re)writing. Her tale has been regularly invoked by twentieth- and twenty-first-century feminist scholars interested in exploring “woman’s elevation of her safe, feminine, domestic craft—weaving—into art as a new means of resistance,” as Patricia Klindienst Joplin famously put it, with the “woman artist [...] us[ing] her loom to tell stories we are never allowed to hear unless they are mediated by men.”⁵⁴ This includes, most notably, Nancy K. Miller’s reading of Arachne’s story “as a possible parable [...] of a feminist poetics.”⁵⁵ Rather surprisingly, a roughly analogous interpretation appears to underpin Lovelace’s seventeenth-century poem.

The central conceits in “Princesse Löysa Drawing” seem, at least on one level, to anticipate with some prescience more recent readings of Arachne’s tapestry that render it a site of “feminocentric protest,” a “challenge to [...] patriarchal institution[s],” and a “self-reflexive, internal commentar[y] on the authority of representation.”⁵⁶ Despite her obvious parallels with Arachne, the artist in this poem abjures the Maeonian woman’s signature

aesthetic of “helter-skelter” chaos: the tidy (and, counter-intuitively, perhaps even Minerva-like) sense of order that she purportedly brings to the *Metamorphoses*’ characters is used by Lovelace to help signal his female subject’s clear victory over Cupid and the classical inheritances he represents. Echo, for instance, is said to avoid her “distrest” Ovidian fate as disembodied voice in the Princess Palatine’s art.⁵⁷ Resuming her “lively” and “wanton” female form, the nymph is instead shown setting off on a hunting expedition with her now-willing paramour Narcissus.⁵⁸ Similarly, Syrinx is saved by Louise Hollandine’s “pencills” from her reedy Ovidian transformation. Under the amateur artist’s command, she “run[s] fast / to *Pans* imbraces”—in reversal of direction, though with the very same “haste” that “Shee fled” the unwanted advances of that same deity in *Metamorphoses* 1.⁵⁹ Analogous revisions are at work in other Ovidian tales, as well: Leucothoë is fortuitously “untombe[d]” by Apollo, thus sparing her from post-mortem botanical transformation; Ariadne, here freed from her astronomical associations with the Corona Borealis, is happily “ravish’t” by her “return’d” lover Theseus; a distinctly un-arboreal Daphne “Knowes [...] no bayes but round her haire”; Iphis “Hangs no where now, but on” the pliant and decidedly non-stony “neck” of Anaxarete; and, far from turning into a flower, the famously reluctant Adonis “now offer[s]” to Venus “those joyes with voice and hand, / Which first he could not understand.”⁶⁰

There is an appeal to the notion that the historical Louise Hollandine may have been something of a neo-Arachne, using her finely honed talents and laudable “pencills” to launch a proto-feminist assault on the brutal power dynamics and excoriable sexual politics of classical tradition. It is an image of female authority and resistance that achieves particular potency given that, as the recent work of Carol Pal and others has demonstrated, the Bohemian exile court in the Netherlands—a creatively fertile locus where “courtiers, ministers, scholars, artists, princes, princesses, diplomats, ministers, and refugees met and mingled”—is known to have provided an atmosphere particularly “conducive to *women’s*

intellectual careers.”⁶¹ Indeed, following Frederick’s death in 1632, it became “essentially a female-directed space.”⁶² As one visitor to The Hague, Samuel Sorbière, described it, in the era that Louise Hollandine came of age the “Court of the Queen of Bohemia was that of the Graces, who numbered no less than four, since her Majesty had four daughters, around whom everyone in society [...] would gather every day, to pay homage to the wit and beauty of these Princesses.”⁶³ This description of the exile court resonates almost too felicitously with the observations of more recent scholars that Arachne likewise sits at “the center of a community of women” in *Metamorphoses* 6.⁶⁴ After all, as Sarah Annes Brown reminds us, in this Ovidian tale

Minerva narrates the story to the Muses, who have just told her how they beat their rivals, the Pierides, in a rather similar storytelling contest. Minerva and Arachne are both female, and so is their audience of nymphs. This textual community of artistic women is an important part of the story’s reception.⁶⁵

This vision of Arachne, not unlike the historical Louise Hollandine, as a creative figure “embedded within a network of female artists and connoisseurs” is one that found frequent realization in the visual arts of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe.⁶⁶ In addition to paintings such as Diego Velázquez’s *The Spinners, or the Fable of Arachne* (c. 1657) or Rubens’s surviving oil sketch for the now-lost *Pallas and Arachne* (c. 1636), numerous early modern illustrated editions of the *Metamorphoses* likewise activated the Roman poem’s narrative emphasis on the circle of women surrounding Arachne. In such a gynocentric sphere, the mortal weaver’s loom itself—though the potential site of incisive patriarchal critique—can, as Joplin suggests, be seen as representing a female-brokered “communitas, or peace [...] in which it is possible for pleasure to be nonappropriative and nonviolent.”⁶⁷

Nonetheless, it has also been proposed that “the theme of [Arachne’s] work as a weaver [...] supplied [Ovid] with a double opportunity: to expose the undignified sexual exploits of the male gods and to compose verbal tapestries himself—that is, to write skillful ekphrases of textile skill.”⁶⁸ I now want to slightly complicate the reading of the early modern

English poem that I have presented thus far by postulating that much the same could be said about “Princesse Löysa Drawing” and the “double opportunity” that using Louise Hollandine as a subject afforded Lovelace to construct “skillful ekphrases” of a possibly fanciful nature. I am here referring to the repercussions of Clara Shaw Hardy’s observation that, in *Metamorphoses* 6, “the ephrastic form calls the audience’s attention to the fact that it is not the weavers, but the [Ovidian] narrator, who gives us our view of the two tapestries: while we can indeed think of Minerva and Arachne as narrators, we must acknowledge the secondary level at which their narrating operates.”⁶⁹ Related—and thorny—issues of narrative authority and agency inevitably arise to trouble any analysis of Lovelace’s poetic portrait of Louise Hollandine.

It is worth noting that the central conceits of “Princesse Löysa Drawing” were not entirely unprecedented in English literary tradition. The classically inspired *Campapse* (1584) of John Lyly (1554-1606) for example, contains an extended allusion to Ovid’s Arachne episode that likewise hinges upon fictive female critique. In Act 3, scene 3 of this Elizabethan play, Alexander the Great’s love interest Campapse visits the studio of Apelles, who has been commissioned to paint her portrait. She finds it full of mythological paintings whose “subjects—Leda, Alcmena, Danaë, Europa and Antiopa—are taken from [...] the sixth book of the *Metamorphoses*,” as Michael Pincombe observes.⁷⁰ Given that Apelles’s pictures conspicuously recreate the same episodes of divine rape featured in Arachne’s anterior classical tapestry, the female Campapse’s assessments of their *caelestia crimina* are laden with intertextual meaning:

<i>Campapse.</i>	What are these pictures?
<i>Apelles.</i>	This is Leda, whom Jove deceived in likeness of a swan.
<i>Campapse.</i>	A fair woman, but a foul deceit.
<i>Apelles.</i>	This is Alcmena, unto whom Jupiter came in shape of Amphytriton, her husband, and begat Hercules.
<i>Campapse.</i>	A famous son, but an infamous fact.
<i>Apelles.</i>	He might do it, because he was a god.
<i>Campapse.</i>	Nay, therefore it was evil done, because he was a god.

- Apelles.* This is Danae, into whose prison Jupiter drizzled a golden shower, and obtained his desire.
- Campapse.* What gold can make one yield to desire?
- Apelles.* This is Europa, whom Jupiter ravished; this, Antiopa.
- Campapse.* Were all the gods like this Jupiter?⁷¹

In Lyly's play, Campapse's censorious reaction upon viewing Apelles' Arachnean paintings—in which she sees “foul deceit,” “infamous fact[s],” and “evil done”—reproduces the Maeonian weaver's implicit critique of the gods' violent eroticism in *Metamorphoses* 6. And, though she is positioned here as audience for rather than maker of these artefacts, Campapse's gendered response to the Olympian sexual economy would seem to both echo that of Ovid's Arachne and anticipate that of Louise Hollandine in Lovelace's later poem.

Furthermore, the compulsion attributed to the inscribed artist in “Princesse Löysa Drawing” to not only critique but also correct the tales of classical tradition is not unique within early modern English literary culture, either. In fact, something remarkably similar transpires in Act 2, scene 2 of *The Maid's Tragedy* (c. 1610), a dramatic work co-written by Francis Beaumont (c. 1585-1616) and John Fletcher (1579-1625). Here, the recently jilted Aspatia inspects a “piece of needlework” depicting Ariadne's mythological desertion that has been “wrought” by her maid Antiphilia.⁷² Proclaiming the piece's “colors are not dull and pale enough,” Aspatia advises that the “much mistaken” Antiphilia to start over.⁷³ The tale, Beaumont and Fletcher's heroine believes, ought to have said that Theseus's “keel was split, / Or his masts spent, or some kind rock or other / Met with his vessel.”⁷⁴ Certainly, Aspatia insists, it “should ha'been so.”⁷⁵ It is thus that Aspatia instructs Antiphilia to “work a quicksand / And over it a shallow smiling water / [...] and then a [personified] Fear” to interfere with the homeward journey of Ariadne's “cozening” and unfaithful lover, Theseus.⁷⁶ What is more, Aspatia summarily dismisses Antiphilia's anxiety that these punitive additions will “wrong the story.”⁷⁷ How could they when the story had long been “wronged by wanton [male] poets”—including, most notably, Ovid himself?⁷⁸

The very existence of analogues for Louise Hollandine's countercultural acts of critique and revision in earlier English works like *Campasse* or *The Maid's Tragedy* potentially calls the authenticity of Lovelace's poetic portrait of the princess into question. After all, the purportedly female voices in these other English works were constructed by male dramatists for performance by male actors. By extension, where does literary conceit end and portraiture begin in "Princesse Löysa Drawing"? Does it make a difference if the alter-Arachne in Lovelace's poem is an identifiable historical woman rather than a fictional character? Should the innovative and corrective aesthetics attributed to the Princess Palatine by Lovelace be properly understood as the female visual artist's or the imaginative male poet's? And, if the latter, does Lovelace's ekphrastic portrayal of Louise Hollandine's supposed opinions—however proto-feminist their veneer—possibly divest her of agency rather than representing the perspective of an empowered historical woman? Does the poem instead participate in the more widely discussed, appropriative "ventriloquism [...] of the feminine voice" in literature that may, in fact, "contribut[e] to a larger cultural silencing of women," as Elizabeth D. Harvey has argued?⁷⁹

Louise Hollandine's Ovidianism

In the case of Louise Hollandine, the true tenor of the historical princess's own critical "voice" is at least partially recoverable in the form of her existing visual artwork, which includes two undated paintings based on episodes from the *Metamorphoses*. The first of these paintings, *The Daughters of Cecrops* (fig. 3), depicts a tale from Book 2 of Ovid's poem. Louise Hollandine's work shows Herse, Aglauros, and Pandrosus, the three virginal daughters of the Athenian king Cecrops, in the act of discovering Erichthonius. Using both hands to brazenly lift the lid off of the infant's basket, Aglauros coolly leans in to get a better view; meanwhile, the more visibly agitated figures of Herse and Pandrosus seem to be

backing away from the monstrous, golden-ringed child rising up towards them. The current whereabouts and status of Louise Hollandine's second Ovidian painting, *Vertumnus and Pomona*, which takes as its subject a tale from *Metamorphoses* 10, are unknown. However, what is presumed to be a copy of this piece attributed to the otherwise unknown artist Mary Hotchkiss (fig. 4) now hangs at Castle Ward in County Down, Northern Ireland. It depicts a man and woman—one of whom may be one of the children of John Mordaunt, First Earl of Peterborough (1599-1643)—in the guise of these minor Italian gods. With his dark cape slipping off to reveal a vibrant red tunic, the seated Vertumnus grasps at a decidedly unenthusiastic looking Pomona with his left arm, as if to physically prevent her from escaping. In the final section of this chapter, I turn my attention to these two *portraits historiques* to ask what Louise Hollandine's paintings might reveal about the true character of this historical woman's Ovidianism.

Aneta Georgievska-Shine has recently (perhaps mis-) characterized the tale of the Cecropides as one “rarely commented on in writing and even more seldom represented in painting,” yet it was twice treated by Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640) in both a painting of 1616 and later work of c. 1632-33 that now survives only in fragmentary form.⁸⁰ Jacob Jordaens (1593-1678), too, would twice paint the Cecropides, while Jacob de Backer (c. 1555-1585), Jasper van der Lanen (1585-1634), Moses van Uyttenbroeck (c. 1600-1646), Paulus Bor (c. 1601-1669), Willem van Herp the Elder (c. 1614-1677), and Hendrick Heerschop (1626-1690) likewise produced paintings on this subject.⁸¹ Ovid's tale of Erichthonius, the literary version upon which all of these aforementioned paintings are at least partially founded, is remarkably brief. In *Metamorphoses* 2, the three daughters of Cecrops are tasked by Minerva with safeguarding a box. Herse, Aglauros, and Pandrosus are expressly instructed by the goddess not to investigate the container's contents. Though Pandrosus and Herse are inclined to follow Minerva's directive, Aglauros cannot resist taking

a peek. Upon opening the box, the Cecropides find an infant boy with a serpent stretched out beside him.

While Ovid's treatment of Erichthonius's discovery is itself succinct, this tale (like so many other mythological episodes in the *Metamorphoses*) is positioned within an interlocking set of interferential narratives. Earlier in Book 2, Apollo's pet raven had learned of the infidelity of his master's lover Coronis. Intercepted by a crow *en route* to inform Apollo of Coronis's amatory indiscretion, the raven is advised against tattling by this fellow bird. The crow, Cornix, proceeds to regale the raven with an exemplary story to illustrate her point: that is, the tale of the Cecropides and Erichthonius. Cornix reveals that, hidden in a nearby tree, she bore witness to the Cecropides' transgression and promptly reported it back to Minerva. She was not duly rewarded for delivering this incriminatory information, however. Rather, Minerva turned her wrath back upon Cornix, and the crow predicts much the same fate for Apollo's raven should he disclose Coronis's infraction. Though it is Cornix's punishment that we hear of first, Ovid's Cecropides do not ultimately escape unscathed, either—it appears that their divine reprimand is merely deferred. Ovid's poem returns to the triad of disobedient Athenian sisters when, later in Book 2, the beautiful Herse catches the eye of Mercury. Smitten, the god attempts to visit her under cover of night but is intercepted by Aglauros. Upon learning of Mercury's desire for her sister, Aglauros initially agrees to aid the love-struck deity—provided that he richly compensates her. Privy to this exchange, Minerva is once again irked and resolves to discipline Aglauros for her serial acts of misbehavior. When Mercury attempts to access Herse, her sister, now artificially infected with envy, reneges on their former agreement and is summarily turned to stone. Meanwhile, apparently forgetting about his lust for Herse, Mercury disappears back into the heavens. As one commentator remarks, the apparent “alteration of Mercury's purpose from love to vengeance” at this closing point in the narrative marks it as “the logical continuation” of the

earlier discovery of Erichthonius: “[t]he imperatives of Minerva’s old vengeance compete with Mercury’s love and eventually transform a mutable god into an avenger.”⁸²

Like other seventeenth-century paintings inspired by this same tale, Louise Hollandine’s *The Daughters of Cecrops* focuses on the circle of women surrounding Erichthonius’s basket at the moment of his initial discovery. One of the distinguishing features of the Princess Palatine’s reinterpretation of the Cecropides’ tale (and one that sets it apart from depictions by her male contemporaries), however, is her decision to render one of Aglauros’s sisters looking not at the figure of Erichthonius, who glowers directly at *her*, but instead—almost sheepishly, as if caught in the act of violating a divine edict—directly out at the viewer. This economy of gazes heightens our sense that the Cecropides are trapped here in a double moment of discovery: simultaneous to their own detection of and by the monstrous infant is one sister’s vital recognition that the group has been externally observed uncovering their charge. The woman’s outward look also implicates the painting’s viewers in this scene, placing us squarely in the subject position of Ovid’s tattletale Cornix, who beheld the sisters’ trespass from a nearby perch. What is more, the woman’s arresting stare anticipates the central role that sight—both *seeing* and *being seen*—play in Ovid’s narrative of the Cecropides’ punishment. It is, after all, Mercury’s chance spotting of Herse that will subsequently incite his lust and set Aglauros’s retribution narrative in motion.⁸³ In short, *The Daughters of Cecrops* is an Ovidian painting that overtly highlights issues of sight and voyeurism, transgression and power inequity via its presentation of these central female subjects. The overall effect of these intertextually resonant gazes in Louise Hollandine’s depiction of Erichthonius’s discovery—a painting in which we presciently sense the foreboding and punitive forces of divine retribution being set into motion—is thus decidedly unsettling. Notably, its palpable gestures towards the inevitable tragedy to come also stand in

marked contrast to the pat correctives and happy reversals of mythological tradition attributed to the neo-Arachnean artist in Lovelace's poem.

The tale from *Metamorphoses* 14 evoked in Louise Hollandine's second Ovidian painting, *Vertumnus and Pomona*, focuses on a much-desired female figure. In an episode that has been called the Roman poem's "culminating narrative of amorous chase," Pomona, who is all too aware she has attracted the unsolicited attention of a bevy of male deities, immures herself in a garden.⁸⁴ The rustic god Vertumnus, her most determined admirer, is nonetheless determined to access her. He assumes a series of covers, appearing at her gate in the successive forms of a reaper, a soldier, a fisherman, a gardener, and, eventually, an old woman. It is in this final, female guise that Vertumnus gains entry to the garden and, still operating under transvestite cover, unsuccessfully attempts to woo Pomona using verbal means. Frustrated and explicitly prepared to resort to violence to achieve his goal, Vertumnus finally resumes his own shape.⁸⁵ Perhaps surprisingly, Pomona is seemingly dazzled by this revelation and promptly acquiesces to the demands of her persistent wooer. Seventeenth-century renditions of this Ovidian episode, including paintings by Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617), Domenico Fetti (1589-1624), and Nicolaes Maes (1634-1693), tend either to depict Pomona interacting with Vertumnus in his final disguise as an old woman or (as in the case of a 1638 painting by Jordaens based on Rubens's 1636 oil sketch of the subject) to show the rustic god wooing Pomona in his own male form. While maintaining the "typical emphasis on Vertumnus's capacity for dissimulation" apparent in many of these other works, Louise Hollandine's painting does something in between, for Vertumnus is portrayed at the precise moment of his figurative transformation.⁸⁶

Scholarly interpretations of Ovid's Pomona and Vertumnus tale have been dramatically polarized. In one of the twentieth century's first sustained readings of this episode, David J. Littlefield described this "narrative of Vertumnus's ingenious and patient

wooing of fair Pomona” as “attractive.”⁸⁷ And W.R. Johnson—though he paired his analysis with the caveat that “not a few feminists will not accept this version”—was insistent that the narrative “represents [...] perhaps the only romantic comedy in [Ovid’s] entire poem” rather than “another macho-stud sentimentalization of what happens on a date-rape (the pattern begun by Apollo’s ‘pursuit’ of Daphne and there after subjected to intricate variations throughout much of the [*Metamorphoses*]).”⁸⁸ Making the semantic distinction that, whereas “Jupiter and Sol and Apollo are in lust, Vertumnus is in love,” Johnson argued:

He does not [...] rape her when he has the opportunity that his “competitors” have vainly tried to find. Perhaps he was shy, had a sudden failure of nerve that caused him (again and again) not to take immediate advantage of his luck? Or perhaps, as his next “move” may suggest, he is not trying to “get” her, not trying to seduce her even. He is trying to win her by wooing her. That is to say, he is trying to persuade her, not merely that he loves her, but that he is worthy of her, worthy of her love.⁸⁹

Other critics have been far less certain about the purity of Vertumnus’s motives and defensibility of his actions. K. Sara Myers, for instance, observes that, while the tale “ends on this theme of (evidently) mutual attraction, thus reversing with its ‘happy’ ending the [*Metamorphoses*] amatory norm,” we are faced with the possibility that Pomona has simply “learned well the lesson of the amatory pattern of the *Metamorphoses* and has chosen submission over transformation or death.”⁹⁰ And Roxanne Gentilcore has been even more forceful in her argument that, rather than standing in contrast to the rapacious eroticism that permeates much of Ovid’s work, the “dominant presence of deception, of metamorphosis as a means of persuasion, of images of violation, and of the threat of violence” in *Metamorphoses* 14 “encourages us to read this tale [...] as a contribution to the theme of love as a destructive force” that runs throughout the *Metamorphoses* more broadly.⁹¹

As known via Hotchkiss’s copy, the details of Louise Hollandine’s composition suggest that the Princess Palatine’s own reading of *Metamorphoses* 14 shares more with the wary assessments of male predation and female vulnerability offered by Myers and Gentilcore than with Littlefield’s or Johnson’s unproblematized glosses of the episode as

light comic romance. Louise Hollandine's Vertumnus appears to have just removed his mask—an old woman's visage, its empty, disturbingly hollow eyes staring directly out at us—from his own face, and its ambiguous presence in the painting underscores troubling themes of dissimulation and erotic deception.⁹² What is more, Pomona's body language as she leans away from Vertumnus indicates that she is preparing for flight. Our sense that she has been unpleasantly startled by the revelation of her wooer's male identity is enhanced by the presence of a fruit basket lying at her feet. Pomona seems to have dropped this container abruptly; its contents tumble out onto the ground before her. In *Metamorphoses* 14, Ovid draws attention to the etymological connection between Pomona's name and the *pomae*, or apples, of her cultivated orchard, creating a verbal and symbolic analogy between them, and this equivalence plays into Louise Hollandine's reconception of the scene.⁹³ The spilled fruit rolling in Vertumnus's direction stresses the sheer surprise of Pomona at detecting the unwelcome presence of a male interloper in her garden. It also provocatively anticipates the way in which she, too, will be magnetically pulled—unintentionally and quite possibly unwillingly—into Vertumnus's physical sphere. There is little sense of “ingenious and patient wooing” here. Rather, as in Louise Hollandine's equally disconcerting painting of the Cecropides, we are made acutely aware of the fact that we are bearing witness to a female subject's decisive manipulation by divine forces beyond her own immediate control.

In the end, although the precise relationship between Lovelace's ekphrastic poem and Louise Hollandine's real-life artistry remains unresolved and likely unresolvable, one cannot help but observe that the Princess Palatine's surviving Ovidian paintings feel rather far removed from the felicitous, orderly resolutions that she is fictively portrayed appending to the tragic tales of Echo, Syrinx, Ariadne, Iphis, Leucothoë, Daphne, and Adonis in “Princesse Löysa Drawing.” And yet—while his central poetic conceits possibly owe more to the literary traditions that likewise inspired Lyly's censorious, female-voiced appraisal of Ovidian lust or

Beaumont and Fletcher's depiction of Aspatia's romantic correctives than to documentary encounters with the princess's real-life visual reinterpretations of Ovidiana—Lovelace's basic impulse to position Louise Hollandine as an alter-Arachne feels apt. The Ovidian scenes in her surviving *portraits historiés* may not neatly square with those pert acts of artistic sanitization attributed to the fictionalized Louise Hollandine in "Princesse Löysa Drawing," but they *do* position their creator as a critic of mythological tradition's power inequities and, more particularly, its recurrent victimization of women. Rather than a harmonious revision of mythological tradition, then, we sense a deepening—perhaps even a darkening—of Arachne's critical perspective in Louise Hollandine's work. In both her painting of the Cecropides and her painting of Pomona and Vertumnus, this is a perspective that is, in fact, more *classically* Arachnean than the happily-ever-after brand of revisionism attributed to the princess by Lovelace. In Louise Hollandine's Ovidian artwork, as in Arachne's of *Metamorphoses* 6, divine justice takes on a consistently menacing flavor, while godly passions and threats of attendant violence loom all too large.

The Poem

I here reproduce "Princesse Löysa Drawing" in full, as it runs from sigs. C1r-C2r in Lovelace's *Lucasta* of 1649.

Princesse LÖYSA drawing.

I Saw a little Diety,
Minerva in Epitomy,
Whom *Venus* at first blush, surpris'd,
Tooke for her winged wagge disguis'd;
But viewing then whereas she made
Not a distrest, but lively shade

1

Of *Eccho*, whom he had betrayd,
 Now wanton, and ith' coole oth' Sunne
 With her delight a hunting gone;
 And thousands more, whom he had slaine, 10
 To live, and love, belov'd againe:
 Ah this is true Divinity!
 I will un-God that Toye cri'd she?
 Then markt she *Syrinx* running fast
 To *Pans* imbraces, with the haste
 Shee fled him once, whose reede-pipe rent,
 He finds now a *new Instrument*.
Theseus return'd, invokes the Ayre
 And windes, then wafts his faire;
 Whilst *Ariadne* ravish't stood 20
 Halfe in his armes, halfe in the flood.
 Proud *Anaxerete* doth fall
 At *Iphis* feete, who smiles of all:
 And he (whilst she his curles doth deck)
 Hangs no where now, but on her neck.
 Heere *Phæbus* with a beame untombes
 Long-hid *Leucothoë*, and dombes
 Her Father there; *Daphne* the faire
 Knowes now no bayes but round her haire;
 And to *Apollo* and his Sons 30
 Who pay him their due Orisons,
 Bequeaths her Lawrell-robe, that flame
 Contemnes, Thunder and evill Fame.
 There kneel'd *Adonis* fresh as spring,
 Gaye as his youth, now offering
 Her selfe those joyes with voice and hand,
 Which first he could not understand.
 Transfixed *Venus* stood amas'd,
 Full of the Boye and Love, she gaz'd;
 And in imbraces seemed more 40
 Sencelesse and cold, then he before.
 Uselesse Childe! In vaine (said she)
 You beare that fond Artillerie:
 See heere a Pow'r above the slow
 Weake execution of thy bow.
 So said, she riv'd the Wood in two,
 Unedged all his Arrowes too,
 And with the string their feathers bound
 To that part whence we have our wound.
 See, see! the darts by which we burn'd 50
 Are bright *Löysa's* pencills turn'd;
 With which she now enliveth more
 Beauties, then they destroy'd before.

Captions

- Figure 1. Louise Hollandine, *Self Portrait*, c. 1640-1655, oil on panel, Collection RKD-Netherlands Institute for Art History, The Hague.
- Figure 2. Louise Hollandine, *Self Portrait of Louise Hollandine Palatine as Benedictine Nun*, c. 1659-1709, oil on canvas, Collection RKD-Netherlands Institute for Art History, The Hague.
- Figure 3. Louise Hollandine, *Portrait of Three Women as the Daughters of Cecrops Finding the Serpent-shaped Erichthonius*, c.1635–1709, oil on canvas, Collection RKD-Netherlands Institute for Art History, The Hague.
- Figure 4. Mary Hotchkiss after Louise Hollandine, *Called the Prince of Denmark and Elizabeth, Viscountess Mordaunt, as Vertumnus and Pomona, but more probably Henry, 1st Viscount Mordaunt and Miss Taylor*, oil on canvas, © National Trust / Peter Muhly.
- Figure 5. Hendrik Jacobus Scholten, *Gerard van Honthorst Showing the Drawings of His Pupil Louise of Bohemia to Amalia van Solms*, 1854, oil on panel, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.
- Figure 6. Gerard van Honthorst, *Meleager and Atalanta*. c. 1625-1655, chalk drawing, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

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¹ MacKenzie, "Jane Barker," 64.

² For a succinct overview of the Bohemian exile court's existence in The Hague, see Keblusek, "Bohemian Court."

³ See, for example, Broomhall and Van Gent, "Converted Relationships," 659-63 and Broomhall and Van Gent, "Queen of Bohemia's Daughter."

⁴ For Louise Hollandine's biographical details, I have relied primarily on: Kerstjens, "Princely Painter"; Rohr, "Peint par Madame"; and Keblusek, "Bohemian Court," 50-53. Earlier accounts of Louise Hollandine's life include: Spilbeeck, "Louise Hollandine"; Depping, "La Princesse"; Butler, *Short Account*, 24-28; Costello, *Memoirs*, II, 139-41; Nolan, *Irish Dames*, 118-21; and Wendland, "Pfalzgraf Eduard."

⁵ Hanover, *Memoirs*, 23, 43.

⁶ For a comprehensive list of works attributed to Louise Hollandine, see Rohr, "Peint par Madame," 155-60. Here and throughout this essay I have silently regularized capitalization, orthography, and italicization in early modern titles.

⁷ Loxley, "Poetry, Portraiture," 355; McDowell, *Poetry and Allegiance*, 115. Although Lovelace's *Lucasta* was not licensed for publication until early 1648, it has been argued that "[w]e have good reason to assume a *terminus ad quem* of the final months of 1647" for the work, meaning that "Princesse Löysa Drawing" was in all likelihood written prior to this date: McDowell, *Poetry and Allegiance*, 114. For further speculations on the timeline of *Lucasta*'s publication (and socio-political

backdrop), see Robertson, *Censorship and Conflict*, 70-99. Lovelace's charm and good looks attracted much early modern commentary. At the close of the seventeenth century, Wood reported that Lovelace had been "the most amiable and beautiful person that ever eye beheld, a person also of innate modesty, virtue and courtly deportment, which made him [...] much admired and adored": *Athenae Oxonienses*, sig. L1^r.

⁸ "Princesse Löysa Drawing" has been regularly bypassed in 20th- and 21st-century century scholarship. To wit, one of the most sustained analyses that it has generated in the past 150 years or so is Alice Meynell's fleeting assessment of 1897 that Lovelace's "daunting" literary conceits render the poem a "very maze" with "little paths of verse and fancy turn[ing] in upon one another": Meynell, *Flower of the Mind*, 339. Another brief discussion (with the poem posited as a statement on "the transforming powers of art") can be found in Farmer, *Poets and the Visual*, 55. However, Farmer misreads the poem's mythological plot: as my subsequent analysis clarifies, his summative claim that the inscribed Louise Hollandine's "inventive recasting of [...] Ovidian tales puts Venus' nose quite out of joint" is not strictly true.

⁹ Johnson, *Ovid before Exile*, 6.

¹⁰ Lovelace, *Lucasta*, sig. C2^r (line 51); Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 6.131. My citations of "Princesse Löysa Drawing" refer both to *Lucasta* (by signature) and to the transcription provided at this chapter's end (by line number).

¹¹ Akkerman, *Correspondence*, 48. For a more detailed expansion of this assessment, see Akkerman, *Courtly Rivals*.

¹² Pal, *Republic of Women*, 35.

¹³ Honig, "Art of Being," 31.

¹⁴ On van Honthorst's connection with Charles I, see Millar, "Charles I, Honthorst," 36-39.

¹⁵ Barker, *Lely and the Stuart*, I, 60-61. Van Honthorst's artistic tutelage of various women is treated by Labordus, who includes some discussion of Louise Hollandine: "Gerard van Honthorst," 81-84. For the outlines of van Honthorst's biography, I have relied primarily on: Judson and Ekkart, *Gerrit*

van Honthorst, 1-46; Judson, *Gerrit van Honthorst*; Brown, *Utrecht Painters*, 62; and Bok, “Biographies,” 382-83.

¹⁶ Qtd. in Wilkinson, *Poems*, xvi.

¹⁷ Qtd. in Wilkinson, *Poems*, xiii.

¹⁸ Wilkinson, *Poems*, xiii.

¹⁹ Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses*, sig. L1^r.

²⁰ I cite “A Register of Friends” from the transcription provided in Osborn, “Thomas Stanley’s,” 136. For the broader context of Stanley’s poem, see this source as well as Revard, “Thomas Stanley.” Stanley’s comments should not be taken to mean that Lovelace was unaffected by the English political upheavals of the 1640s. Indeed, he rather famously spent two separate stints imprisoned in England during this decade. However, the character and extent of his Royalism has been queried by contemporary scholars, most notably in Hammond, “Richard Lovelace.”

²¹ Lovelace, *Posthume Poems*, sig. I4^r.

²² Tatham, *Ostella*, sig. M1^v. Evidence for the pre-1645 date of this latter poem’s composition is supplied in Wilkinson, *Poems*, xliii.

²³ Berry and Timings, “Lovelace at Court,” 396.

²⁴ Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses*, sig. L1^r.

²⁵ Memegalos, *George Goring*, 102. For this claim, see also Morrah, *Prince Rupert*, 102.

²⁶ Pace, “Delineated Lives,” 1.

²⁷ *Musarum Oxoniensium Charisteria*, sig. bb1^r. This elegiac tribute to Louise Hollandine’s infant cousin was later reprinted in *Lucasta* (where it directly follows “Princesse Löysa Drawing”): sigs. C2^v-C4^r.

²⁸ Hanover, *Memoirs*, 43-44. On Barker’s poem, see MacKenzie, “Jane Barker.”

²⁹ Farmer, *Poets and the Visual*, 57.

³⁰ Pace, “Delineated Lives,” 12. For the relationship between Lely’s *Double Portrait of Charles I and James, Duke of York* and Lovelace’s “To My Worthy Friend Mr. Peter Lilly,” see: Loxley, “Poetry,

Portraiture,” 360-66; Potter, *Secret Rites*, 65-71; Farmer, *Poets and the Visual*, 57-58; and Anselment, “Clouded Majesty.” On the painting, see also Harris, “Ambivalent Image.”

³¹ Judson, *Gerrit van Honthorst*, v.

³² The narrative of Arachne and Minerva seems to have held a particular fascination for Lovelace, who would later rework it to different ends in another of his poems entitled “The Toad and Spyder”: Lovelace, *Posthume Poems*, sigs. D5^r-D8^v.

³³ Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 6.23.

³⁴ Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 6.129-30.

³⁵ Johnson, *Ovid before Exile*, 7.

³⁶ Feldherr, *Playing Gods*, 60; Lateiner, “Mythic and Non-Mythic,” 16.

³⁷ Fantham, *Ovid’s Metamorphoses*, 54 (emphasis my own).

³⁸ Brown, *Ovid*, 108.

³⁹ Anderson, Review of *Ovid*, 103.

⁴⁰ Anderson, Review of *Ovid*, 103.

⁴¹ Lateiner, “Mythic and Non-Mythic,” 15; Barkan, *Gods Made Flesh*, 4.

⁴² Brown, “Arachne’s Web,” 121.

⁴³ Miller, “Arachnologies,” 273.

⁴⁴ Lateiner, “Mythic and Non-Mythic,” 1.

⁴⁵ Johnson, *Ovid before Exile*, 27.

⁴⁶ Johnson, *Ovid before Exile*, 28-29.

⁴⁷ Lovelace, *Lucasta*, sigs. C1^r, C2^r (lines 2, 4, 51, 50).

⁴⁸ Lovelace, *Lucasta*, sig. C2^r (lines 52-53).

⁴⁹ Lovelace, *Lucasta*, sig. C2^r (line 42).

⁵⁰ Lovelace, *Lucasta*, sig. C2^r (lines 46-47).

⁵¹ Lovelace, *Lucasta*, sig. C2^r (line 43).

⁵² Oliensis, “Power of Image-Makers,” 287; Lovelace, *Lucasta*, sig. C1^r. (line 11).

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- ⁵³ Joplin, "Voice of the Shuttle," 45. We may sense here an extension of wider-spread rhetorical conventions concerning patronage in seventeenth-century English literary culture: relevant examples exist in which a patron is flatteringly presented as having a special personal capacity to improve upon the flaws or shortcomings of inherited tradition. See, for example, "To Mrs Magdalen Herbert: Of St Mary Magdalen": Donne, *Complete Poems*, 489. I am grateful to Erin A. McCarthy for this reference.
- ⁵⁴ Joplin, "Voice of the Shuttle," 26, 51.
- ⁵⁵ Miller, "Arachnologies," 272. See also Kruger, *Weaving the Word*, 53-86.
- ⁵⁶ Miller, "Arachnologies," 273, 272; Kruger, *Weaving the Word*, 58.
- ⁵⁷ Lovelace, *Lucasta*, sig. C1^r (line 6).
- ⁵⁸ Lovelace, *Lucasta*, sig. C1^r (lines 6, 8).
- ⁵⁹ Lovelace, *Lucasta*, sigs. C1^r-C1^v (lines 14-16).
- ⁶⁰ Lovelace, *Lucasta*, sigs. C1^v-C2^r (lines 26, 20, 18, 29, 25, 35-37).
- ⁶¹ Pal, *Republic of Women*, 25, 36 (emphasis my own).
- ⁶² Pal, *Republic of Women*, 36.
- ⁶³ Qtd. in Pal, *Republic of Women*, 36.
- ⁶⁴ Joplin, "Voice of the Shuttle," 48.
- ⁶⁵ Brown, *Ovid*, 117-18
- ⁶⁶ Brown, *Ovid*, 117.
- ⁶⁷ Joplin, "Voice of the Shuttle," 48.
- ⁶⁸ Jones and Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing*, 96.
- ⁶⁹ Hardy, "Ecphrasis," 142.
- ⁷⁰ Pincombe, *Plays of John Lyly*, 43.
- ⁷¹ Lyly, *Campasse*, 3.3.9-24.
- ⁷² Beaumont and Fletcher, *Maid's Tragedy*, 2.2.40.
- ⁷³ Beaumont and Fletcher, *Maid's Tragedy*, 2.2.62-63.
- ⁷⁴ Beaumont and Fletcher, *Maid's Tragedy*, 2.2.46-48.
- ⁷⁵ Beaumont and Fletcher, *Maid's Tragedy*, 2.2.49.

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- ⁷⁶ Beaumont and Fletcher, *Maid's Tragedy*, 2.2.54-56.
- ⁷⁷ Beaumont and Fletcher, *Maid's Tragedy*, 2.2.58.
- ⁷⁸ Beaumont and Fletcher, *Maid's Tragedy*, 2.2.59.
- ⁷⁹ Harvey, *Ventriloquized Voices*, 12.
- ⁸⁰ Georgievska-Shine, "From Ovid's Cecrops," 58. On Rubens's paintings of the Cecropides and their particular debts to Ovid, see Held, "Daughters of Cecrops."
- ⁸¹ On the iconography of the Cecropides in Renaissance visual culture, see Stechow, "Finding of Erichthonius."
- ⁸² Wheeler, *Narrative Dynamics*, 50. The many intra-connections between the discovery of Erichthonius episode and transformation of Aglauros episode in *Metamorphoses* 2 are treated by Keith, *Play of Fictions*, 117-23.
- ⁸³ Ovid's poem makes such links explicit by reminding us, when Aglauros first encounters Mercury near the end of *Metamorphoses* 2, that this daughter of Cecrops "adspicit hunc oculis isdem, quibus abdita nuper / viderat [...] flavae secreta Minervae" ("looked at him with the same covetous eyes with which she had lately peeped at the secret of the golden-haired Minerva"): Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 2.748-49.
- ⁸⁴ Georgievska-Shine and Silver, *Rubens, Velázquez*, 74.
- ⁸⁵ For Vertumnus's willingness to use force, if necessary, see Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 14.770.
- ⁸⁶ Georgievska-Shine and Silver, *Rubens, Velázquez*, 76.
- ⁸⁷ Littlefield, "Pomona and Vertumnus," 465.
- ⁸⁸ Johnson, "Vertumnus in Love," 370, 372.
- ⁸⁹ Johnson, "Vertumnus in Love," 368, 361.
- ⁹⁰ Myers, "*Ultimus Ardor*," 243.
- ⁹¹ Gentilcore, "Landscape of Desire," 110.
- ⁹² On masks as both symbols of deceit and symbols of antiquity in Renaissance visual culture, see Barasch, "Masks," 82-85.
- ⁹³ For this etymological note, see Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 14.626.