

# Reflections on the *Ballet des Porcelaines*: Between intention and impact

Meredith Martin and Elisa Cazzato

## Part I: Scenario and intention (Meredith Martin)

In 1739, at a château outside of Paris, a group of French aristocrats staged a ballet pantomime known as the *Ballet des Porcelaines* or *The Teapot Prince*. Written by the comte de Caylus, with music by Nicolas-Racot de Grandval, and based on a fairytale, it tells the story of an Asian sorcerer who rules a ‘blue island’ and transforms trespassers into porcelain. A prince gets stranded on the island and is turned into a teapot, and a princess has to rescue her lover by seducing the sorcerer, stealing his wand and breaking the spell. On the one hand a standard Orientalist fable, the ballet can also be read as an allegory for the intense European desire to know and possess the secrets of making porcelain, a quasi-magical substance that China had been producing for centuries. Though it would inspire later ballets featuring sleeping beauties and porcelain princesses, the *Ballet des Porcelaines* is virtually unknown and—until recently—had not been performed for nearly 300 years.

Starting in Fall 2020, I teamed up with Phil Chan, a Chinese-American choreographer and co-founder of the advocacy organisation Final Bow for Yellowface, to revive this lost gem and update it for contemporary, multiracial audiences. By reimagining the ballet with a team of artists of mostly Asian descent, we aimed to consider the significance of historical dance for the present as well as to communicate the profound sense of mystery and desire that porcelain held in the past. This essay discusses our experiences in creating and presenting our new version of the ballet from 2021 to 2022 at venues throughout the US and Europe, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the University of Chicago, Princeton University, Waddesdon Manor and Brighton Royal Pavilion in the UK, and the Museo di Capodimonte and Palazzo Grassi in Italy. Borrowing terms used by Phil in his 2020 book *Final Bow for Yellowface: Dancing between Intention and Impact*, it focuses not only on our *intentions* regarding public engagement, but also on the ballet’s reception or *impact* in these varied cultural and institutional settings.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Phil Chan, *Final Bow for Yellowface: Dancing between Intention and Impact* (Brooklyn: Yellow Peril Press, 2020). For more on the ballet’s historical context as well as our process of reimagining and performing it, see *Reimagining the Ballet des Porcelaines: A Tale of Magic, Desire, and Exotic Entanglement*, ed. Meredith Martin (London: Harvey Miller Publishers, 2022), which contains essays by myself, Chan and many of the artists and curators involved in the production.



**Figure 1: 'Nodding' pagod with moveable neck and hands, c. 1760.**

Source: Meissen manufactory, hard-paste porcelain, 21.6 cm height. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, The Jack and Belle Linsky Collection, 1982 (1982.60.235).

'Desire', or seduction, are not words that today's audiences tend to associate with porcelain. And yet this material, known as 'white gold', was fiercely coveted among eighteenth-century European elites like Augustus the Strong, ruler of Saxony, who had a self-proclaimed porcelain 'sickness'. The porcelain manufactory he founded at Meissen outside of Dresden in 1710 was the first European producer of true (hard-paste) porcelain, and, during the eighteenth century, it competed with Asian exports and with rival European manufactories like Sèvres for artistic and commercial dominance. The political, economic and cross-cultural dimensions of porcelain are fascinating. As an art historian specialising in early modern European art as well as French encounters with Asia, I have long tried to convey that fascination to students and to a broader public—although I have grown disenchanted with trying to do so through the usual scholarly channels. Thus when I first heard about the existence of this lost ballet, I became obsessed with the idea of reviving it. To my mind, it seemed an ideal vehicle for communicating the captivating, fraught history of porcelain in an accessible and meaningful way.

However, I faced several immediate hurdles. First, only the ballet's libretto and musical score survived, in a box in the archives of the national library in Paris, and there was almost no information about its original costumes, sets or choreography. Given my own lack of expertise in dance, I needed someone who could help me reimagine this work from the ground up, and who could also confront its problematic Orientalist subtext—such as the fact that, in the original fairytale, the prince and princess triumph over the Asian sorcerer by turning him into a 'pagod'. Pagods were Chinese or Chinese-inspired porcelain figurines that were highly popular among eighteenth-century European collectors, but they also carried demeaning, racialised associations that resembled those of Chinese characters in European dance (see Figures 1 and 2).<sup>2</sup>

2 Meredith Martin, 'Once upon a Time at the Château de Morville: Commerce, Colonialism, and *Chinoiserie* in the *Ballet des Porcelaines*', in *Reimagining the Ballet des Porcelaines*, 15–53.



**Figure 2: Jean II Bérain (attr.), pagod costume from *Habits de masquerade*, c. 1725.**

Source: Pen, ink and watercolor, 39.3 x 26.6 cm. Kupferstich-Kabinett, Dresden, Ca 102/24. © Kupferstich-Kabinett, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden. Photograph by Andreas Diesend.



**Figure 3: The original cast of the *Ballet des Porcelaines* at the Cultural Services of the French Embassy/Villa Albertine headquarters at the Payne Whitney Mansion in New York City.**

Source: Photograph by Joe Carrotta.

As I muddled over these issues, I had the great fortune to meet Phil Chan, whose work is devoted to eliminating offensive stereotypes of Asians in ballet in addition to promoting Asian creative talent.<sup>3</sup> In our first meeting as collaborators we decided to recast the Asian sorcerer and turn him into a mad European porcelain collector on the model of Augustus the Strong, and to have dancers of Asian descent perform the roles of the prince and princess (Figure 3). (In our original cast, the prince and princess were danced by New York City Ballet soloists Daniel Applebaum and Georgina Pazcoguin, while Broadway actor Tyler Hanes was our sorcerer.) We did this not so much to invert the power dynamics of the original story as to make audiences think about the demeaning, one-dimensional ways that foreign ‘others’ have been portrayed in European ballet and to depict Asian characters with nuance, agency and humanity—a shift that seems especially pertinent for our present moment, given the recent uptick in anti-Asian racism and violence in the US and elsewhere.

In addition to these casting changes, we engaged the Korean-American designer Harriet Jung to create porcelain-inspired costumes for our three dancers, as well as Kakiemon-esque robes for our baroque musicians, who performed onstage and served as our porcelain ‘island’ or set (Figure 4). With the help of our baroque dance specialist, Patricia Beaman,

<sup>3</sup> In addition to *Final Bow for Yellowface*, see Phil Chan, ‘My Porcelain Sickness’, in *Reimagining the Ballet des Porcelaines*, 54–69; Chan, *Banishing Orientalism: Dancing between Exotic and Familiar* (Brooklyn: Yellow Peril Press, 2022).

and Xin Ying, a principal dancer with the Martha Graham Company, Phil choreographed the ballet to combine baroque movement with classical Chinese dance inspired by his own training and background. Lastly, we had the Filipino-American composer Sugar Vendil add some contemporary music to the baroque score, both to amplify its emotional power and to mimic the sounds of porcelain tinkling, shattering and crunching underfoot. Phil has likened our creative concept to *kintsugi*, a Japanese technique for repairing broken ceramics by mending them with gold or lacquer to highlight their flaws and make them stronger at the point of breakage. For me, it is a perfect metaphor—not only does this ballet come to us in fragments, but also it often feels like we live in a broken world. Our intention is to celebrate the lost historical fragments and imperfections of this work by making them stronger and hopefully more beautiful with our modern additions.



**Figure 4: Harriet Jung, sketch for the musicians' robes for the *Ballet des Porcelaines*, 2021.**

Source: Image courtesy of Harriet Jung.

## Part II: Performance and impact in the US and UK (Meredith Martin)

From the beginning, Phil and I wanted to perform the ballet in unconventional settings: in museums with celebrated porcelain collections, and in universities whose educational and civic initiatives matched our own. Phil was excited by the possibility of choreographing the ballet in a modular, site-specific way that (like porcelain) would look and resonate differently in each new physical and cultural locale. We were delighted that most of the venues we approached responded with enthusiasm, and we were thrilled to have our world premiere take place in December 2021 in the sculpture galleries of the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Figure 5). On that occasion, we served as the opening night entertainment for the museum's blockbuster *Inspiring Walt Disney* exhibition, which examined the influence of eighteenth-century decorative arts on Disney animation and set design—notably on films like *Beauty and the Beast*, which is based on a fairytale published one year after the *Ballet des Porcelaines* that was part of the same literary milieu.<sup>4</sup> With hundreds of people attending the exhibition's opening and chatting amid sips of champagne (as the ballet's eighteenth-century audience would likely have done), our message may have gotten a bit lost amid the festivities, but we were given a later opportunity to discuss our approach at a scholarly event organised by the show's curator, Wolf Burchard.

For our performances at The University of Chicago and Princeton University in March 2022, we were able to introduce and contextualise the ballet prior to each performance, and we also participated in panels that invited other scholars and artists to respond to the work and share their expertise. We felt that this programming greatly enhanced the overall impact, not least because the participants added their own take or 'spin' on the project so that it continued to expand. At Chicago, we collaborated with Judith Zeitlin, a specialist in Ming-Qing literature and performance whose work explores related themes of animation and transformation in the Chinese context. She was instrumental in having the Center for East Asian Studies sponsor and promote our production—which enjoyed standing-room-only crowds for both performances—and in persuading the art historian Wu Hung to curate a related exhibition at the Smart Museum of Art entitled *Porcelain: Material and Storytelling*. Phil and I had not realised the extent to which the ballet's themes resonated both with early modern Chinese literature and with the work of contemporary Asian artists like Yeesoonyung and Geng Xue, both of whom were represented in the museum show (Figure 6).<sup>5</sup>

4 Martin, 'Once upon a Time', 16, 23.

5 Judith T. Zeitlin, 'Chinese Fantasies of Porcelain on the Cusp between Life and Death', in *Reimagining the Ballet des Porcelaines*, 136–40.



**Figure 5: The prince and sorcerer during the premiere of the *Ballet des Porcelaines* in The Carroll and Milton Petrie European Sculpture Court at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 6 December 2021.**

Source: Photograph by Joe Carrotta.



**Figure 6: Yeesookyung, *Translated Vase Special Edition of Napoli #1 and #2*, 2019.**

Source: Eighteenth century porcelain shards of the Museo di Capodimonte, plaster, polystyrene, epoxy, 24k gold leaf. Image courtesy of the Museo e Real Bosco di Capodimonte, Napoli.

At Princeton, we were fortunate to collaborate with Wendy Heller, chair of the Music Department and a leading scholar of baroque music, who is completing a book about Ovidian metamorphosis in early modern Italian opera. It was her idea to expand our original five-person ensemble of musicians—a harpsichordist, two violinists, a viola da gamba and a theorbo player—and include a larger group of student players from Princeton’s Early Music program. Wendy also organised a performance (one of four we did at Princeton) for local high school students in connection with Trenton Arts at Princeton, followed by a lively Q&A between the students and our creative team (Figure 7). Although it had already been our vision to target different audiences (and therefore broaden our impact) with multiple performances at each site, the Trenton Arts civic engagement initiative fit in perfectly with our goals. Lastly, with the help of Christine Jones, who translated the libretto into English for our book about the production; Andrea Immel, curator of the Cotsen Children’s Library; and Elisabeth Rouget, a doctoral candidate in music, we assembled a presentation of rare books, porcelain figures and other materials relevant to the *Ballet des Porcelaines*. As at Chicago, the Princeton performances were free and open to the public—provided they registered in advance online and followed COVID protocols—and comprised both members of the university community and local residents.

In June 2022, we embarked on a European ‘tour’ of 16 performances at four venues: two in the UK and two in Italy. (We were originally also meant to perform at the Sèvres national ceramics museum outside of Paris, but those performances had to be cancelled for budget reasons, so we organised a colloque and a screening of the ballet at the Institut national d’histoire de l’art (INHA) instead.) At Waddesdon Manor north of London, decorative arts curator Mia Jackson hosted us onsite and oversaw all four performances, which took place outdoors (during a massive heat wave!) on a stage set up between the manor’s garden façade and parterre (Figure 8). Of all of our venues, Waddesdon was probably closest to the ballet’s original eighteenth-century production, which was staged outdoors in the gardens of the château de Morville.<sup>6</sup> Mia also arranged for local schoolchildren to attend a movement workshop taught by Phil followed by a performance, while another key collaborator, the French literary scholar Kate Tunstall, organised a symposium at Oxford that brought academics together with artists such as Hannah Lim, Matt Smith and Edmund de Waal. The symposium participants were asked to attend the ballet and discuss how it resonated with their work, and they all added important new insights to the project and its cultural politics. Kate additionally helped procure funding from TORCH (The Oxford Research Centre in the Humanities) to enable the baroque ensemble Instruments of Time & Truth to perform at Waddesdon (due to our limited budget, we employed local musicians at many of our venues). While at Waddesdon, one of several gorgeous photographs of the production taken by Paul Quezada-Neiman appeared in the ‘News in Pictures’ section of the London *Times*, which may have helped amplify public interest.

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<sup>6</sup> Martin, ‘Once Upon a Time’.





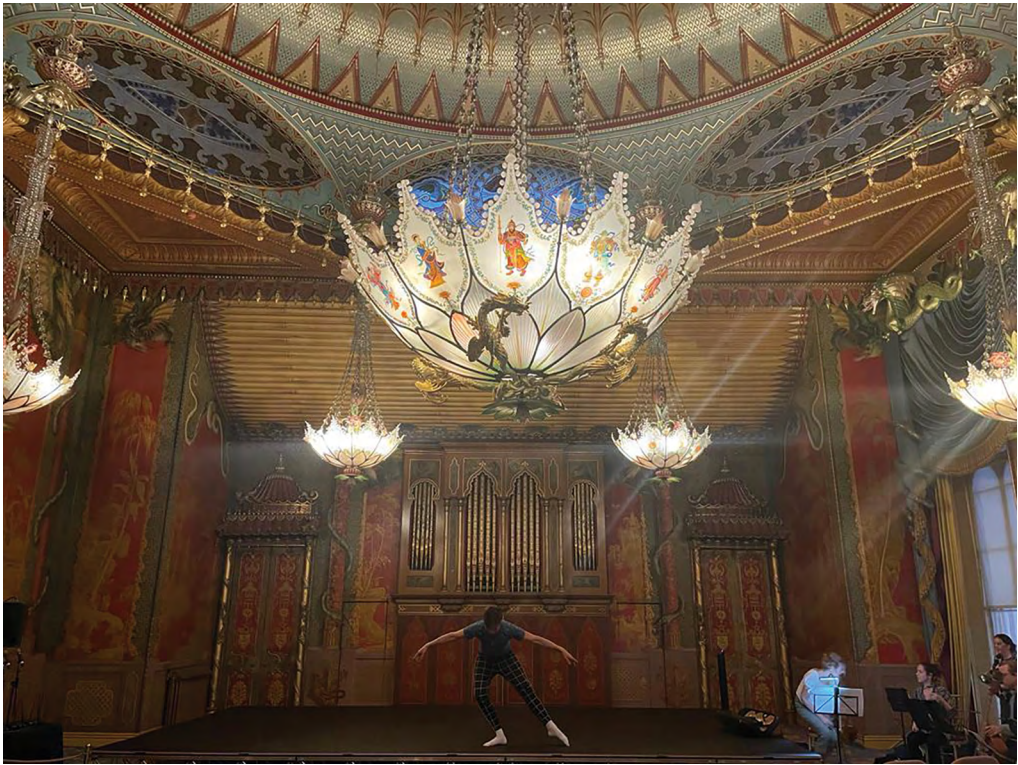
**Figure 7: The sorcerer and princess during the performance for Trenton Arts at Princeton, Lewis Center for the Arts, Princeton University, 19 March 2022.**

Source: Photograph by Lou Chen.



**Figure 8: The cast of the *Ballet des Porcelaines* in front of the garden façade of Waddesdon Manor (with the temporary stage in the background), June 2022.**

Source: Photograph by Paul Quezada-Neiman / Alamy.



**Figure 9: Phil Chan during rehearsal in the music room of the Royal Pavilion, Brighton, June 2022.**

Source: Photograph by Meredith Martin.

Next, we travelled south to Brighton to perform in the Music Room of the Royal Pavilion, an over-the-top Orientalist confection built for George IV (1762–1830; r. 1820–1830) in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, at the same time that Britain was increasing its imperial hold over China and the Indian subcontinent. Royal Pavilion curator Alexandra Loske and business development manager Charlotte Desjarlais devised an evening program that began with short talks by Alexandra and myself, followed by a tour of the pavilion, a glass of fizz and a performance with a Q&A. The program allowed audiences to immerse themselves fully in the history of the building, its collections and *chinoiserie* décor, and to think about how the ballet engaged with its setting (Figure 9). We were gratified to hear from Hedley Swain, CEO of the Royal Pavilion & Museums Trust, that our production would serve as an inspiration and a launching point for new diversity initiatives that he was planning to implement, and we also enjoyed meeting with UK-based curators who came to Brighton to see the ballet and were thinking along similar lines. Additionally, one of the greatest highlights of our entire ballet tour was having Lizzie Deane, Brighton's marvellous mayor, attend a performance and invite us to an unforgettable tea the next day.

I will let Elisa Cazzato tell you about our subsequent performances in Italy, but I wanted to end by saying that while we were organising our European tour, Phil arranged for the *Ballet des Porcelaines* to enter the repertory of the Oakland Ballet company. Oakland will

continue to perform it at museums and universities but also at middle and high schools throughout the Bay Area, which has a high percentage of Asian-American students and has witnessed tragic escalation in anti-Asian racism since the pandemic. In September 2022, the Oakland cast—Lawrence Chen as the prince, Karina Eimon as the princess and Logan Martin as the sorcerer—and artistic director Graham Lustig travelled to Minnesota to perform at Carleton College (where Phil was visiting faculty) and to the Boston area to perform at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and the Peabody Essex Museum (PEM) in Salem. At MIT, professors Kristel Smentek and Jeff Ravel organised a series of compelling panels that included the participation of the Oakland dancers, who, like Phil, spoke movingly of their own experiences with anti-Asian attacks during COVID. At PEM, curator and associate director Karina Corrigan and her team arranged performances for school kids as well as museum guests who were there to see her co-curated exhibition on early photography in China, whose themes of power and perspective resonated strongly with our production.

In closing, I want to return to the issue of impact and ask how we might measure it. On the one hand, we thankfully succeeded in persuading our wish list of venues to host the ballet, and, for the most part, we enjoyed robust, diverse audiences and an enthusiastic press response. Impact, however, is obviously much more than this, and, as Phil writes in his beautiful essay for our book, what we wanted most out of the production was for audiences to *feel* something—we hoped to use this lost eighteenth-century ‘divertissement’ to communicate something meaningful (even if ugly, uncomfortable or violent) about the current state of our world and the ways we relate to each other. We were gratified to discover that this historical artifact, despite being hidden in a box for three centuries, still had ‘life’ in that sense and could elicit such a strong emotional response: one that, during the performances, was often felt as an energy shift or heat in the room, particularly during the scenes when the sorcerer transforms the prince into a teapot or when he disrobes the princess.

One of the many lessons I learned from this project is that impact can often be enhanced simply by letting go: by trusting one’s collaborators (and the public), acknowledging one’s limits, and allowing other people and perspectives to take over so that a project can continue to change and grow. Impact, like dance, is constantly evolving, and it can be measured as much by future potential as by present success. I feel like our next chapter performing in the ‘sweaty high school gyms of the Bay Area’ (to borrow another phrase from Phil) has terrific potential, and I can’t wait to see what the outcome might be.

### **Part III: Performance and impact in Italy (Elisa Cazzato)**

I had the great chance to be involved with this fascinating dance production thanks to a Marie Curie Global Fellowship, a generous grant I was awarded from the European Commission in 2020. The *Ballet des Porcelaines* perfectly matched with the timing and needs of my fellowship, which required engagement in interdisciplinary research and training beyond

academia.<sup>7</sup> Through my funding I could travel on tour with the production to understand, and learn, the many practical needs required in making a show, and I was also able to serve as the production's costume manager. Being Italian, it was certainly of great interest to me to witness how the performance was staged and received in my own cultural context.

The Italian tour, which took place in late June 2023, premiered in Naples as part of the Campania Teatro Festival. The performances were hosted in the Museo e Real Bosco di Capodimonte, a palace built in the eighteenth century by Carlo di Borbone (King Charles III of Spain, 1716–1788) to host his art collection. Annexed to the palace, the king and his queen, Maria Amalia of Saxony (who was the granddaughter of Augustus the Strong), also established the region's first porcelain manufactory, Capodimonte, whose wares are distinguished by their delicate soft-paste surface and glossy sheen. One of the most precious artworks produced by the Capodimonte factory is the rococo and chinoiserie style *Salottino di porcellana*, a porcelain room made for Maria Amalia and originally located at the Villa Reale at Portici (Figure 10). (The room was moved to the Capodimonte palace at the beginning of the nineteenth century.) In Naples, the ballet's début was preceded by two study days hosted by the Capodimonte and organised by Meredith Martin, Francesca Santamaria and Sarah Kozłowski, associate director of the Edith O'Donnell Institute of Art History and director of the Centro per la Storia dell'Arte e dell'Architettura delle Città Portuali 'La Capraia', which is affiliated with Capodimonte. The discussion focused on the history of porcelain rooms in a global context (Europe, Persia and Africa's Swahili Coast), with a focus on materiality, display and circulation practices. Speakers included Prita Meier from New York University, Julia Weber (director of the Porzellansammlung in Dresden), Paola Giusti, curator of the decorative arts collections in Capodimonte, and Angela Carola-Perrotti, currently in charge of the rearrangement of a new porcelain room in the same museum.

At Capodimonte, the production fit perfectly with its location for two reasons. First, because of the historical connection to its setting, since the ballet was performed in the Salone delle feste, the eighteenth-century ballroom of the palace located between Maria Amalia's porcelain Salottino and the Gallerie delle Porcellane, the rooms housing the museum's permanent porcelain collections. Second, because the contemporary reimagining of the performance matched the vision of modernisation that the museum's former director Sylvain Bellenger had adopted since his arrival in 2015. Bellenger, who has extensive curatorial experience in Europe and the US (including the INHA in Paris and the Art Institute of Chicago), pushed the museum towards change, in part by exhibiting contemporary art together with old masters inside an historic location. One example that serves as a kind of precedent to the *Ballet des Porcelaines* is the 2020 exhibition *Whisper Only to You* by South Korean artist Yeesoookyung (Seoul, b. 1963), whose artworks are created from broken pieces of porcelain using the kintsugi technique, and who was also featured at the University of Chicago's Smart Museum show (see Figure 6).<sup>8</sup>

7 My participation in the *Ballet des Porcelaines* was funded by my research project SPECTACLE. My project received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation program under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Grant Agreement no. 893106.

8 Yeesoookyung, *Whisper Only to You*, from an idea of Sylvain Bellenger and Andrea Viliani with Sabrina Rastrelli, Museo di Capodimonte (12 October 2019–13 January 2020), curated by Sabrina Rastelli, Paola Giusti and Maria Rosaria Sansone.



**Figure 10: Georgina Pazcoguin as the princess in the *Salottino di porcellana*, Museo di Capodimonte, June 2022.**

Source: Photograph by Phil Chan.

In terms of the ballet's original music, there was a novelty introduced by the musicians of the Ensemble Barocco di Napoli, who performed at both Italian locations and had Phil Chan choreograph an entrance procession for them. The musicians opted to substitute one of the two violins in the production's five-instrument ensemble with a baroque recorder and flute, a choice that gave the music an added sense of fairytale and enchantment. Starting with the

premiere in Naples, the entire Italian tour was filmed by the French director Alain Fleischer, head of Le Fresnoy Studio National des Arts Contemporains, who has made a film of the Italian performances that will enable many more audiences around the world to experience this work. At Capodimonte, all four of the performances sold out and, despite the heat (and lack of air conditioning), the audience seemed charmed both by the dancers, who recited their opening lines in Italian, and by the production in general—one audience member, in fact, became upset and started complaining when her fellow attendees began clapping before the music had finished.

The second Italian venue was Palazzo Grassi, built in the eighteenth century by Giorgio Massari as the residential palace of the Grassi family, with a white marble façade that faces the Canal Grande in Venice. The building was completely renovated in 2005, when the French entrepreneur François Pinault acquired it to display his collection of modern and contemporary art. As at the Capodimonte Museum, this site was also an ideal setting for this reimagined production. At Palazzo Grassi, the historic elements of the building are enhanced by its rich contemporary collection—not unlike the way in which the contemporary ‘kintsugi’ additions of the *Ballet des Porcelaines* give new light and richness to the original background of the story (Figure 11). In Venice, the support of the director Bruno Racine was a key aspect of the ballet’s success and resulted from a productive collaboration between the two Italian institutions (Capodimonte and Palazzo Grassi). As a former director of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Racine could perfectly understand the significance of discovering an unknown manuscript (in his own former institution), but as a director of a contemporary art collection, he also understood how the past needed to be put in dialogue with the present.



**Figure 11: Performance of the *Ballet des Porcelaines* at the Palazzo Grassi, June 2022.**

Source: © Palazzo Grassi, Pinault Collection. Photograph by Andrea Avezzù.

Ultimately the ballet was well received in both Italian venues. As part of the Campania Festival, the performances in Naples required attendees to obtain a ticket (which only cost a few euros), while in Venice participation was free with advance online registration. All the performances were attended by a very broad audience of locals, foreigners (June is a big tourist month), young people and seniors. The Italian tour, perhaps more than any of the other performance sites, received extensive media coverage in both national and regional magazines and media channels—nearly 20 print articles in total, as well as a TV spot—including the Italian leading business magazine *Il Sole 24 Ore* and a review in the online academic journal *Drammaturgia*. The press reported positively on the innovative reinterpretation of this eighteenth-century *divertissement* and noted its explicit social message.

However, this social message, although mentioned in every article, seemed only to be whispered between the lines, as if to postpone a conversation that Italy has not been in a rush to have. As highlighted in a recent publication, Italians are taught from an early age to avoid using the word ‘race’, since it is considered an ‘ugly’, inappropriate term in our linguistic culture.<sup>9</sup> But, by avoiding this word, we have also become accustomed to sidestepping the possibility of engaging in any educational dialogue on the topic.<sup>10</sup> In the country where opera was born, and where the arts continue to play a major role, any possible change in performance is frequently associated with the risk of cancel culture. This tends to generate feelings of fear and postpones any productive discussion until a major incident occurs, as in the 2022 *querelles* over the staging of *Aida* at the Arena di Verona, with the American soprano Angel Blue withdrawing from the production in protest over Anna Netrebko and other cast members performing in blackface. In the Italian context, the reimagined *Ballet des Porcelaines* was not only a charming fairytale production but also a first and exceptional step that will hopefully open up a constructive dialogue that seems long overdue.

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9 Ann Morning and Marcello Manieri, *An Ugly Word: Rethinking Race in Italy and the United States* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2022).

10 During 2019–20, the Théâtre de l’Opéra in Paris filed a diversity statement pledging to no longer perform in blackface or yellowface, citing Phil Chan’s organisation Final Bow for Yellowface as a factor in its decision. No similar action has so far been taken in Italy.

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