

group participated in the festivities celebrating the return of King Henri III from Poland, while in 1580, it presented *Pastourelle de Noël*, a satire (59–60). This first section also provides an intriguing examination of the Burgundian language featured in the Mère Folle's repertoire. The extent of this bilingualism is what is striking—the number of theatrical pieces written in Burgundian is roughly the same as that of pieces written in French (69–70).

The second section of the volume provides the reader with noteworthy information on manuscript BnF fr. 24039. The manuscript, consisting of some sixty folio pages, is made up of nine notebooks that likely circulated separately as actors' copies before being combined into one volume (75). In section three, Valcke outlines the orthographical and grammatical features of the manuscript, providing useful guidelines to facilitate reading comprehension (79).

The fourth section features six theatrical works of the Mère Folle of Dijon, with an accompanying introduction by Valcke for each play. *Asnerie* is a piece whose date of publication has spurred much academic debate (87). Valcke herself dates the work to 1576 (89). Thematically, the play highlights the links between the Mère Folle and the youth-abbeys of France (89). Also included in this section is the *Complainte de Diane*, a mythological work likely composed between 1576 and 1578 (125). *La comédie du ris* (1620) is a vicious satire of the vices of the people of Dijon, attacking in particular women who are excessively preoccupied with their *toilettes* (makeup and grooming), young spendthrifts, jealous men, and dishonest merchants (190–191). Other plays included in this section are *Pastourelle de Noël* (1580), *La comédie des mécontents* (1580) and *Jeu joué au lieu de Dijon par l'Infanterie le douzieme juing 1583* (1583).

BENEDETTA LAMANNA
DEPARTMENT OF ITALIAN STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

Van der Haute, Guilhem. *La Chapelle des Pénitents blancs de Montpellier. Trésors d'art.* Montpellier: Confrérie des Pénitents blancs de Montpellier, 2009. Pp. [12]. ISBN 978-2-917212-12-7 (paperback). n.p.

This short, folio-sized booklet documents the artworks to be found in the chapel of the Confraternity of the White Penitents in Montpellier, France. Published as a fund-raiser to subsidize needed renovations, the richly illustrated booklet provides a chronology of work done on the chapel,

starting with its erection in the twelfth century and ending with the installation of French Restoration-era pews from the church of Lacaune (Tarn) to replace the incongruous pews from the 1960s.

In the course of this chronological gallop, we are informed that the chapel is first mentioned in 1228 and described as an annex to the church of Notre-Dame-des-Tables. It is enlarged and embellished in 1379. The Confraternity of the White Penitents takes possession of the chapel probably in 1518. A few years later, in 1568, during the French Wars of Religion the chapel is destroyed by the Huguenots (only the facade and walls are left standing), the grounds are turned into a cemetery, and the confraternity is dispossessed of it. Half a century later, the bishop of Montpellier returns the ruins to the confraternity and reconstruction begins (1623). Work proceeds so well that in 1632, King Louis XIII and his wife Anne of Austria, on a visit to Montpellier, hear mass in the newly reconstructed chapel. Building and expansion continue throughout the seventeenth century and the confraternity prospers, but the outbreak of the French Revolution brings a sudden stop to everything. The chapel is declared a *bien national* and sold to a local citizen, Étienne Cairoche (1793). Although the confraternity is suppressed, some of its members continue to meet secretly to pray and carry out their devotions. In 1801, while still officially suppressed, the confraternity is able to rent the chapel and use it for its prayers. They buy it back in 1804 and immediately begin restoration work on it. They continue such work throughout the nineteenth century up to 1876. In 1995 the building and artworks in the chapel are deemed to be of such significance that they are officially listed among the “Monuments historiques” of France. (unnumb. p. 2)

The confraternity itself traces its origins to about 1230 in the context of the Franciscan Third Order. It operates fairly unofficially until 1517 when it becomes the “Compagnie des pénitents blancs du benoist Saint Esprit”. Under this new name it continues to gather both men and women in prayer and works of mercy. A year later it acquires the Chapel next to the church of Notre-Dame-des-Tables and from then on (except for the two hiatuses mentioned above caused by the Huguenot and French Revolution) it will use the chapel as its own, regular devotional space.

Among the artworks to be found in the chapel are works by local sculptors Antoine Subreulle (1638–1712) and his son-in-law André Coula (Montpellier, ca. 1617–1692). The richly painted and carved wooden ceiling was commissioned in two stages, in 1647 and then 1671–91, thanks to the generosity of several confraternity members. It contains three different cycles: one of the four Evangelists, one of the birth and childhood of Christ, and one of the Passion. Some of these panels on the ceiling are attributed to local painters Paul Pezet (d. 1687) and his son

Guillaume Pezet (1649–95), both of whom were confraternity members, Simon Raoux, Antoine Ranc, and Henri Verdier (1665–1721). Many of the panels are strongly influenced by the works of major contemporary artists such as Annibale Carracci and Nicolas Poussin. The side walls of the chapel were decorated in 1697–1706 on a design by yet another confraternity member, Paris-born Augustin-Charles d'Aviler (1653–1701). The choir stalls where members sit during services date from 1785–1912. This is the third set of stalls and incorporates some sculptural elements from the previous stalls. The chapel's elegant front door dates from 1747.

Though brief and to the point, the descriptions and the photographs that accompany them illustrate the strong artistic drive that, over the centuries, inspired confraternity brothers and sisters to beautify their oratory and chapel. The contributions of many local artists, most of them still unidentified, many of them active members of the confraternity, to the various beautification projects undertaken by the confraternity point to the close connections the sodality had with the local community of sculptors, painters, and architects.

KONRAD EISENBICHLER

VICTORIA COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO