

## A public view of a private space: the bedroom of the duc de Choiseul in Paris

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The collections and the interiors of the duc de Choiseul prior to his disgrace in 1770 are well known through the famous 'Choiseul box' and the engraved catalogue of his painting collection prior to its sale in 1772. The less well known portrait by Adélaïde Labille-Guiard, painted in the last year of his life, gives us a glimpse into his surroundings after his return to Paris. The information provided by this pictorial document is both confirmed and enhanced by the inventories made at the time of his death. The poor state of preservation of the inventory made immediately after the duke's death<sup>1</sup> presents considerable difficulties in gleaning information, yet nevertheless provides some significant information regarding the Paris *hôtel* as well as the château de Chanteloup. This sumptuous estate near Tours, no longer in existence, has recently been the object of thorough study resulting in a particularly successful exhibition.<sup>2</sup>

To these documents must be added the preliminary inventory known as the *scellés*,<sup>3</sup> which is most valuable regarding the *hôtel* on the rue Neuve Grange-Batelière to where the duke and duchess moved in 1782. This was made immediately following the duke's death in order to seal the *hôtel* and its apartments in preparation for the final inventory. There are also other documents which have received relatively little attention. They include the list of acquisitions made by the royal Garde-meuble de la Couronne at several public sales of Choiseul's estate for which there were no printed catalogues.<sup>4</sup> There is also a ledger of accounts for 1782-1783,<sup>5</sup> as well as notices in the *Affiches, annonces et avis divers* which may prove to be quite useful. The object with which this study begins, the portrait of the duc de Choiseul by Adélaïde Labille-Guiard, which has recently enriched the collections at Waddesdon Manor, has prompted a partial summary of the aforementioned sources, which will be further studied in a later publication.<sup>6</sup>

### The portrait of the duc de Choiseul by Adélaïde Labille-Guiard

The portrait depicts the duc de Choiseul in the year of his death, in the intimate surroundings of his bedchamber (**fig. 1**). Unlike earlier portraits, it is not a depiction of the power of a minister. His pose and his clothing are modest and much attention is devoted to the details of his daily life.<sup>7</sup> The various connections between the documents and the painting that will be presented in this study will show how faithfully and in minute detail Adélaïde Labille-Guiard reproduced the objects with which the duke chose to surround himself in the portrait, with a few minor exceptions. The simplicity of the portrait is deceptive as, even after his fall, the duc de Choiseul-Amboise continued to enjoy an extraordinary notoriety, his lifestyle remained very impressive and the quality of his entourage made his *hôtel* one of the most elegant in Paris.

Étienne-François de Stainville, ambitious aristocrat, began his career in the military, made a very good marriage, and pursued a diplomatic career before becoming one of the principal personalities in the kingdom for a period of over ten years. In 1750 he married Louise-Honorine Crozat du Châtel, daughter of Louis-François Crozat,<sup>8</sup> was made duc de Choiseul and Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1758 and was showered with honours up until the moment of his disgrace in 1770. Forced into exile at the château de Chanteloup, and having lost the considerable revenues of his various appointments, he was obliged to sell his wonderful painting collection in 1772. Abandoning the idea of ever returning to politics yet intending to retain the lifestyle of a *grand seigneur*, he focused on developing his finances with the support of his extremely wealthy friend, the banker Jean-Joseph de Laborde (1724-1794). Together they embarked on ambitious real estate projects developing financial arrangements of great scope which resulted in the parcelling into lots of an entire Parisian neighbourhood encompassing, in place of the *hôtel* Crozat and its immense garden, the present streets Saint-Marc, d'Amboise, Grétry, Marivaux and Favart and including the Opéra comique (later reconstructed).<sup>9</sup>

fig. 1: *The duc de Choiseul*, Adélaïde Labille-Guiard, 1786. Waddesdon, The Rothschild Collection



### The residence on the rue de la Neuve Grange-Batelière

The sumptuous *hôtel* on the rue Neuve Grange-Batelière had several well-known owners. Designed by the architect Antoine-Mathieu Le Carpentier (1709-1773)<sup>10</sup> and completed in 1757 for the financier Étienne Michel Bouret (1709-1777), it was sold in 1761 to Jean-Joseph de Laborde. He, in turn, sold it in 1770 to the fermier-général Laurent Grimod de La Reynière, who occupied it until 1778 before moving to a *hôtel* (no longer extant) on the rue de la Bonne-Morue (now rue Boissy d'Anglas), on the place Louis XV (now the place de la Concorde). The duc and duchesse de Choiseul purchased the *hôtel* on 19 February 1782<sup>11</sup> from the architect Jacques-Jean Thévenin and his wife who, with Pierre Poncet (a contractor for the Bâtiments du roi) and his wife, had owned it for four years. The purchase price was one million *livres* including, most notably, the interior fixtures and furnishings as well as an indemnity due to the duchesse de Bourbon, its tenant. Later the *hôtel* would be sold in *an* XIV (1807) to the merchant Antoine-Thibaut Baudouin (1759-1814) and in 1812 to the French government. Between 1785 and 1820 the building was rented out several times, most notably to the king in 1786 for a period of nine years, during which it became the residence of the Minister of War, the comte de la Tour du Pin.<sup>12</sup> From the end of the eighteenth century it housed a large shop selling new and antique furniture, owned by Baudouin.<sup>13</sup>

The entrance to the *hôtel* was on the rue Neuve Grange-Batelière, the part which is now the rue Drouot, through the third courtyard entrance on the left as seen from the present boulevard Montmartre.<sup>14</sup> Situated on the corner of the present rue Rossini (previously the cul de sac of the rue de la Grange-Batelière, afterwards known as the rue Pinon), the *hôtel* itself was preceded by a courtyard which was semi-circular on the side towards the street. On the left side was the main staircase facing a passage which led into the small courtyard on the right (fig. 2). The building comprised a partially sunken basement and two storeys. The apartments of the duke and duchess were on the first floor with a second floor in the mansard roof housing various other apartments. On the other side of the building to the courtyard, the rooms led directly from the first floor via two terraces to a lawn bordered by avenues of lime trees on either side. The garden extended to the present rue Le Peletier, including also the present rue Chauchat.

The floor plan of the first floor is quite easy to reconstruct (fig. 3). At the time of Grimod de La Reynière, two vast rooms were located in the centre of the building: the large salon, or drawing room, facing the garden and the dining room facing the courtyard. These two rooms were of similar size; the salon measured 38 *pieds* in length by 28 in width and height,<sup>15</sup> that is, over twelve by nine metres. These unusual proportions are corroborated by the measurements given for the mirrors in the description of the interior decoration in 1778.<sup>16</sup> The immense vaulted ceiling was hidden on the garden façade behind the mansard roof of the second floor.<sup>17</sup> This architectural device allowed for a uniform appearance of the first floor on the façade, while retaining the extraordinary proportions of this room on the interior. A laudatory description of the large salon, then in the residence of Grimod de La Reynière, can be found in the *Almanach Dauphin* of 1777. The editor admired the overall harmony of the room, in particular the talents of the painter Charles-Louis Clérissieu (1721-1820), who La Reynière commissioned to decorate the room in 1773, writing of the renovation: '*il a su tellement les*

*changer, en ôtant les ornements de mauvais goût qui les couvraient et en substituant d'autres de meilleur choix, qu'il est impossible de s'apercevoir, sans être prévenu qu'il s'agit d'une restauration.*'



In 1820, the *hôtel* was incorporated into the adjoining new building of the Opéra, constructed on the rue Le Peletier. The large salon, vaulted in the Italian style, is depicted in a watercolour by Eugène Lami of around 1840 (fig. 4). It had become the 'foyer de la danse de l'Opéra'. The grooved pilasters surmounted by Corinthian capitals which are described several times as 'painted in grey' in eighteenth-century documents are easily recognizable. The Opéra building was demolished in 1873 by a fire, which spared the former *hôtel* Choiseul, as can be seen in a photograph taken by Louis-Amedée Mante shortly afterwards (fig. 5). It was finally demolished shortly thereafter and replaced by the present buildings.

fig. 2: Courtyard of the *hôtel* on the rue Neuve Grange-Batelière, as it appeared in the 19th century, with the entrance to the main staircase on the left. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France

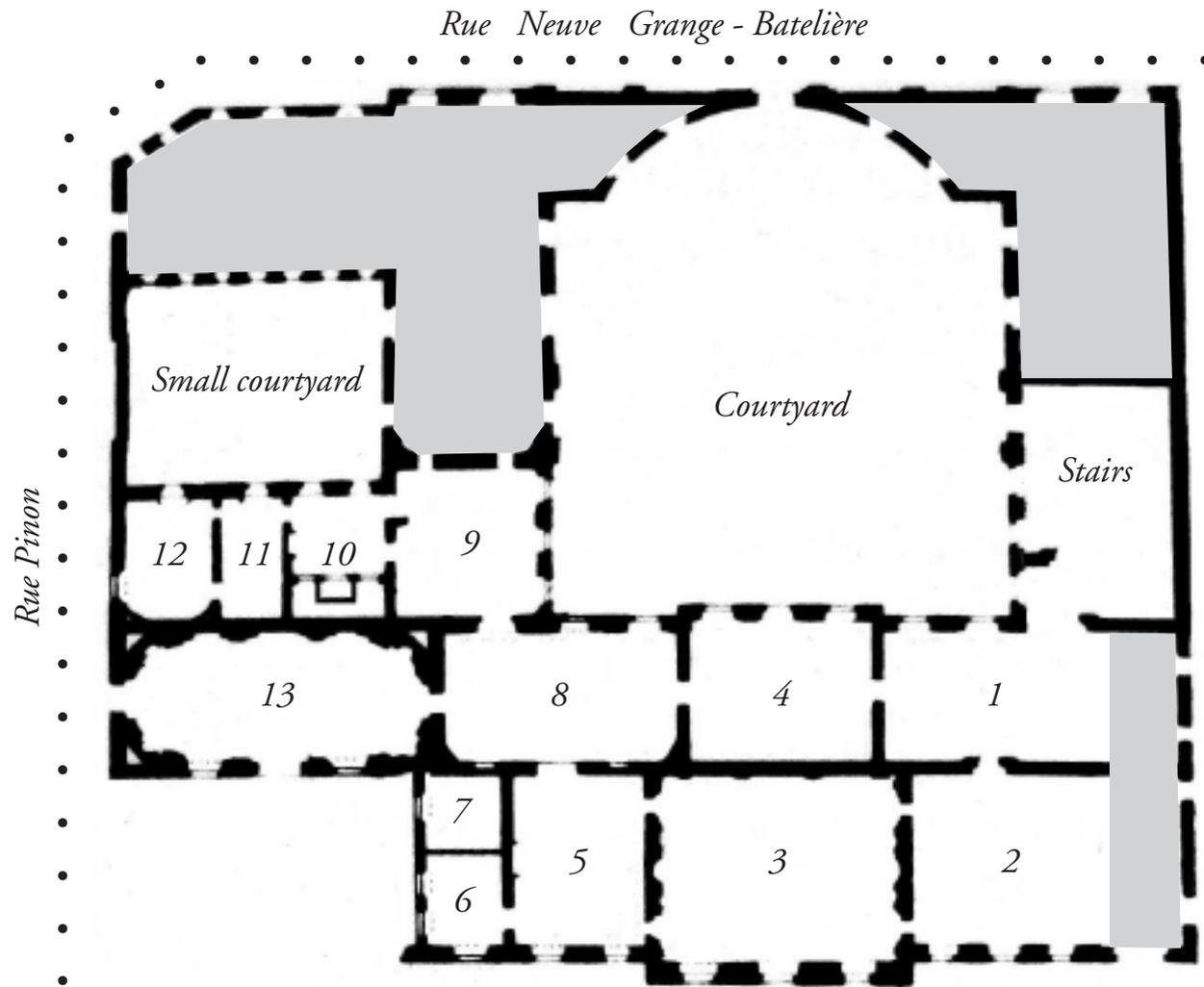


fig. 3: Plan of the first floor of Choiseul's hôtel showing the layout of the principal apartments.

- 1 Première antichambre
- 2 Deuxième antichambre
- 3 Salle à manger
- 4 Salon de musique
- 5 Salon de la duchesse
- 6 Chambre de la duchesse
- 7 Cabinet
- 8 Salon du duc
- 9 Antichambre
- 10 Chambre du duc
- 11 Première cabinet
- 12 Cabinet de travail
- 13 Galerie

In Choiseul's time, this large salon facing the garden was used as the dining room. The original chimneypiece was removed by La Reynière when he moved. The state of the room at that time is well documented: 'la cheminée en marbre du grand salon, à charge de faire replacer l'ancienne.'<sup>18</sup> Two doors were placed symmetrically on each of the short sides of the dining room.<sup>19</sup> Marble tables with mirrors in three sections above them were located in the spaces between the doors. Three windows opening onto the garden were hung with white *gros de Tours* fabric edged in gold trim and faced three false windows, made of mirror, on the opposite wall. A five-sided lantern lit the room along with eight three-branch candelabra positioned on gilt-wood gueridons.<sup>20</sup> In addition, there were nine screens, of which three were in Gobelins tapestry.

The duke's apartments (see floor plan), parallel to the gallery, were accessed via an antechamber opening onto the large courtyard.<sup>21</sup> The four windows of the apartment had views onto the small courtyard. The apartment was composed of a bedchamber (the subject of this study) in which an alcove faced two windows, a first *cabinet* with a single window, a second cabinet, called the '*cabinet de travail*' with one window onto the small courtyard and one on the rue Pinon (now the rue Rossini).



fig. 4: The 'Foyer de la danse de l'Opéra' by Eugène Lami, around 1840. The immense height of the former dining room had been subdivided horizontally and the tops of the Corinthian pilasters can be seen. Private collection, courtesy of Galerie Talabardon et Gautier, Paris



fig. 5: Photograph Louis-Amédée Mante, taken after the fire of October 1873 that destroyed the Opéra. The three large windows of Choiseul's former dining room, which opened onto the garden, dominate the façade. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France

### The textile furnishings

In the portrait the bedroom of the duke is depicted with its winter *meuble*<sup>22</sup> of blue damask trimmed with gold braid. The artist has probably chosen not to paint the motifs on the damask in order to simplify the background and give prominence to the portrait itself. Nevertheless, the gold braid and the gilded frames of the silk wall hangings, as described in the *scellés*, are clearly visible. The curtains for the bedroom's two windows were in a simpler fabric of *gros de Tours* with a blue border, also trimmed with gold braid. The bed, a *lit à la Polonoise*, was placed in the alcove facing the windows that can be seen on the floorplan.

Identifying which of the beds bought by the Garde-meuble might have been the one in the duke's bedchamber is not easy. This is rendered doubly complicated as not only are they not uniformly described in the inventories but beds, chair covers, hangings and curtains brought from the château de Chanteloup were included in the Paris sales.<sup>23</sup> In Paris, the *meubles* of the bedchambers of both the duke and the duchess were of blue damask with gold trim. The *scellés* inventory makes the distinction between the bed of the duke (*à la Polonoise*)<sup>24</sup> and that of the duchess (*à la Romaine*), although the distinguishing features of the latter vary according to the source consulted. According to Jean-François Bimont,<sup>25</sup> it describes a bed placed parallel to the wall, which accords with the positioning of a bed in the alcove in the duke's room.

The illustrations to the *Encyclopédie*, however, demonstrate that it is a bed of the *lit à la Polonoise* shape, but surmounted by a domed canopy slightly smaller than the length of the bed, providing a slender profile with elegant movement to the draping of the canopy, while *à la Polonoise* beds had larger canopies resulting in less curvature of the drapes. The invoice of the joiner Jean-Baptiste Lebas, dating from the early 1780s, for a '*lit à la Polonoise* with its *impériale* [canopy] *à la Romaine*'<sup>26</sup> for Paris, supports this last definition while nevertheless posing certain questions.

A summary of purchases by the Garde-meuble de la Couronne at sales without catalogues, dated 10 June 1786, mentions a bed and hangings, complete with gold braid and gilded frames (for the wall hangings) for the considerable price of 15,000 *livres*. The sale price is largely due to the gold braid, but also demonstrates that the textiles must have been relatively new. The next item in the list, four window curtains in *gros de Tours* with a gold border, made a price of 1,300 *livres*. The registered entry into the Garde-meuble of these pieces provides a more complete description: '*Un meuble complet de damas bleu galonné de franges en or composé d'un lit à la Romaine à un chevet Impérial en dôme les pentes en 10 parties l'Impérial en trois parties, quatre bonnes-grâce deux grands rideaux doublés de gros de Tours, 1 chantourné, 2 embrasses et glands par rideaux, 11 nœuds en galon d'or et 24 glands, un panache de 40 plumes et 1 aigrette/3 pièces de tapisserie dud. damas galonnées en or de 3 aunes ¼ de haut, le lit de 15 pieds de haut adjugé avec les bordures de tapisserie sculptée et doré blanc et or ainsi que la couchette et le couronnement du lit/Quatre parties de rideaux de gros de Tours bleu pour croisées de deux lez chacun sur 4 aunes et demie de haut bordés de molets d'or avec embrasses en cordellerie et glands.*'<sup>27</sup>

This description seems to be for the large '*lit à la Romaine*'<sup>28</sup> of the duchess in the Paris house. The exorbitant price it achieved in the sale makes it one of the most luxurious items from the Choiseul residence. The mention of the number of window curtains, however, suggests the bed belonged to the duke. Nevertheless, two other elements argue in favour of it being that of the duchess. The *scellés* describes the furniture as '*sculpté et rechampy*' which would exclude the bed of the duke, as does the mention of '*deux chevets*'. This very richly appointed bed, bought by the Crown, seems to have come from the bedchamber of the duchesse de Choiseul in Paris.

The question of the summer hangings is even more difficult to resolve. The Garde-meuble de la Couronne also bought an important *meuble* made of embroidered *basin*, similar to the one that can be seen on the Choiseul box. The number of window curtains, however, corresponds to the duke's bedchamber at Chanteloup. Among the other items bought at the same time were the complete furnishings in straw-coloured painted *Pekin*<sup>29</sup> which were destined for use at Versailles,<sup>30</sup> a *meuble* in green and white damask,<sup>31</sup> two *meubles* in *perse* including a large bed 13 *pieds* high (around 4.20 m).<sup>32</sup> These last seem more appropriate for a country residence, also richly furnished. Mention should also be made of the pieces of new textiles which were among the items purchased by the Garde-meuble.

In the portrait, the duc de Choiseul is seated at a small marquetry desk of a style typical of the production of Simon Oeben, the cabinet-maker to the duke, probably at the back of the room to the right of his bed and in front of the chimneypiece whose mirror frame can just be seen. The desk is practically identical to the one at Dalmeny House, Scotland, with the exception of the gilt bronzes on the legs, which do not exist on the painting. An important point, however, requires some explanation. The painting by Labille-Guiard shows what appears to be a sliding screen of green textile attached to the rear of the desk, which is absent on the example at Dalmeny House (**fig. 6**). The screen is mentioned in an invoice of Simon Oeben dated 1785: '*pour avoir remis à neuf la table à écrire de M le duc et y avoir mis un écran neuf....15 [livres]*,'<sup>33</sup> a restoration perfectly justified for a piece of furniture dating from around 1765-1770. This model of desk could have been conceived with a screen from the start as there are traces of its position under the back rail of the desk. Such traces are also detectable on another writing desk of similar form but without the curved drawer fronts, in the collection of the Victoria & Albert Museum.<sup>34</sup> A third desk, this time with a superstructure, bears the stamp of Simon Oeben.<sup>35</sup> In the *scellés* the desk in the duc de Choiseul's bedchamber is described as '*une table en bureau de bois de rose garnie de ses fontes dorées d'or moulu*', and as '*un petit bureau de bois de rose*' in the inventory after death.

fig. 6: Writing desk, attributed to Simon Oeben, 1765-1770. Dalmeny House, Scotland.



fig. 7: Armchair, gilt wood, stamped by Jean-François Thuillier. Paris, Musée Nissim de Camondo

The central part of the table-top, that used for writing, was probably originally covered in green velvet on which stood an inkstand in red lacquer that can be seen in the portrait. The inkstand, as well as the wall light and the clock remain difficult to identify with certainty. It is, nevertheless, interesting to note the presence of four two-branch wall lights (in the inventories) and that the model in the portrait is identical to those found at the Residenz in Munich<sup>36</sup> and that the clock, with the name of the clockmaker Frédéric Duval, is similar to the work of the bronzemaker Robert Osmond. The same connection with the work of Robert Osmond can be made with two existing clocks, marked 'Frédéric Duval à Paris,' pointing to a continued collaboration between the two craftsmen.<sup>37</sup>

The duc de Choiseul is seated in a '*fauteuil de bureau en canne couvert de maroquin vert*.'<sup>38</sup> As both inventories mention the green leather upholstery, the blue leather upholstery seen in the portrait must be artistic licence on the part of the artist.<sup>39</sup> The armchair, today in the collection of the musée Nissim de Camondo in Paris,<sup>40</sup> is marked with the stamp of the joiner Jean-François Thuillier, who achieved the status of master joiner in 1752 (**fig. 7**).

A careful examination demonstrates a perfect accord between the one in the portrait and the one in the Camondo museum. Even the most minor detail is precisely rendered, leaving little doubt that it is the chair in the portrait, bar the existence of another identical armchair. Today it is differently upholstered and covered in black leather. The recently discovered stamp reinforces this identification because of the close connections between Thuillier and the Oeben brothers, as already mentioned by Salverte.<sup>41</sup> Another document relating to the creditors of Jean-François Oeben and his wife also makes mention of Jean-François Thuillier.<sup>42</sup>

'Un petit guéridon de bois des Indes à tablette de pareil bois et à tablette de porcelaine fond blanc à fleurs avec balustrade à deux bobèches de cuivre doré d'or moulu' is also listed in the inventory as being in the bedchamber. It is a type of *guéridon* made by Martin Carlin and marketed by the *marchand-mercier* Simon-Philippe Poirier around 1775-1780, of which at least four examples are known.<sup>43</sup> It is interesting to note in this respect that the duc de Choiseul's accounts for 1782-1783 mention a debt of 8,000 *livres* to Poirier - evidence of relatively important deliveries during that period.<sup>44</sup>

Also probably bought from Poirier was lot number 214 of the auction held on 18 December 1786: 'une jolie table avec dessus de porphyre, sur son pied dessiné en lyre, entablement à panneaux renfoncés, avec ornements de draperie et fils de corde en bronze doré.' This table is easily recognizable in the inventory after death of the duke. Although its present whereabouts remain unknown, an old photograph shows it, as described, noting that it is stamped by Martin Carlin (fig. 8).<sup>45</sup> The quality of the photograph makes it impossible to verify the material of the table top. The bedchamber's chest of drawers was described as 'à dessus de marbre en bois de rose à cinq tiroirs garni de ses bronzes dorés d'or moulu.'<sup>46</sup> The inventories also mention 'six fauteuils en cabriolet de bois doré à carreaux de damas bleu galonné d'or.' The floor of the room was covered in a 'tapis de moquette.'<sup>47</sup>



fig. 8: Ebony table with gilt-bronze mounts, stamped by Martin Carlin. Private collection

A large painting by Hubert Robert, described simply as 'un tableau représentant un pont de Robert peint sur toile dans son cadre de bois sculpté',<sup>48</sup> hung in the bedroom. It was probably lot number 15 of the sale held on 18 December 1786: 'Un tableau du plus grand effet et du ton de couleur le plus riche; il représente un pont de pierre formé d'une grande arche, sous lequel sont plusieurs jeunes blanchisseuses occupées à laver du linge: du côté droit, sur le pont, se trouve un groupe de fabriques pittoresques, et de la construction la plus ingénieuse. Il est terminé dans le haut par différents berceaux de vignes qui ajoutent à l'agrément de cette belle composition.'<sup>49</sup> The painting can be linked to a sum of 600 *livres* paid 'au sieur Robert pour le prix d'un tableau par lui fourni à M. le duc suivant la quittance du 18 avril.'<sup>50</sup> Two marble sculptures mentioned in the inventory<sup>51</sup> must be lot number 167 of the sale: 'Deux petites figures de femmes agréablement composées; elles sont toutes deux assises, l'une caressant un oiseau, l'autre pleurant la mort du sien.' They are similar to works by the Broche brothers, Jean-Baptiste Ignace and Joseph.<sup>52</sup>

The close coincidence in dates between the portrait of the duc de Choiseul and the various inventories made after his death on 8 May 1785 provides a rare opportunity in the difficult exercise of identifying the furniture and works of art. It is exceptional to be able to compare contemporary manuscript documents, however incomplete, with the faithful pictorial representation of an eighteenth-century interior. The combined sources provide a new iconographic commentary on this portrait, as well as the beginnings of an analysis of the newly inhabited apartments of the duc and duchesse de Choiseul in their residence on the rue Neuve Grange-Batelière. The portrait, in any case, has created the ideal pretext for a thorough examination of the bedchamber of the duc de Choiseul. The study of his Paris collections at the end of his life will become more coherent when the subject is examined in its entirety.

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<sup>1</sup> Archives nationales (hereafter AN), Minutier central des notaires (hereafter MCN), étude LXXXIV/615, Inventory after the death of the duc de Choiseul begun on 8 June 1785.

<sup>2</sup> *Chanteloup: Un moment de grâce autour du duc de Choiseul*, exh. cat., Musée des Beaux-Arts, Tours, 2007.

<sup>3</sup> AN, Y 12814, Inventory made at the time of affixing the seals, begun 8 May 1785. Unlike the formal inventory after death, it does not include valuations and the contents of cupboards, chests of drawers and so forth are not itemized.

<sup>4</sup> AN, O<sup>1</sup> 3536, dated 27 June 1786 and AN O<sup>1</sup> 3288, dated 28 June 1786 (reference kindly provided by Christian Baulez). The *Affiches, annonces et avis divers*

list at least 20 sales relating to the estate of the duc de Choiseul in 1785 and 1786, some lasting several days, and all held at the *hôtel* on the rue de la Neuve Grange-Batelière.

<sup>5</sup> AN, AB XIX 3952

<sup>6</sup> It will encompass the totality of the apartments of the duke and duchess in Paris.

<sup>7</sup> Unlike his portrait by Louis-Michel Van Loo painted in 1763 (Xavier Salmon, 'L'image de soi. Portraits du clan Choiseul,' in *Chanteloup*, op. cit., 2007, pp. 186-211) which would become the official image of Louis XV's minister.

<sup>8</sup> Louis-François Crozat (1691-1750), marquis du Châtel, inherited the enormous fortune of his uncle, Pierre Crozat (1661-1740) in 1740.

<sup>9</sup> This included both blocks of flats and private townhouses. The accounts for 1782-1783 precisely record the income and expenses regarding this project. The duc de Choiseul's annual budget amounted to a colossal seven million *livres* for that year.

<sup>10</sup> Vincent Droguet, 'A-M Le Carpentier un architecte en sympathie avec les

sculpteurs,' in *Augustin Pajou et ses contemporains*, Actes du colloque, musée du Louvre, Paris, 1999, pp. 191-222.

<sup>11</sup> Their moving-in date was to be 1 January 1783.

<sup>12</sup> Father-in-law of Henriette-Lucy Dillon, marquise de La Tour du Pin, who recounts in her memoirs her stay at the hôtel Choiseul in 1789 and 1790 when it was the residence of the Minister of War (*Mémoires de la marquise de La Tour du Pin, journal d'une femme de cinquante ans, 1778-1815*, Paris, 1989, p. 98).

<sup>13</sup> An ebony desk attributed to Joseph Baumhauer, from the collections of the Earl of Malmesbury, which was purchased in Paris around 1796, was for a long time said to have belonged to the duc de Choiseul, when, in fact, it was only bought in the former hôtel de Choiseul, which had become a saleroom (former collection of Lady Baillie, Sotheby's, London, 13 December 1974, lot 274; then Sotheby's, Monaco 14-15 June 1981, lot 144; then Safra collection, Sotheby's, New-York 3 November 2005, lot 120).

<sup>14</sup> The first *hôtel* on the left was that of Béatrix de Choiseul-Stainville, duchesse de Gramont (1730-1794), the duc de Choiseul's sister, leased from Jean-Joseph de Laborde for the duration of her life.

<sup>15</sup> *Almanach Dauphin*, 1777, cited by L. Courajod, *Livre-Journal de Lazare Duvaux*, Paris, 1965, vol. 1, pp. CCCI-CCCI.

<sup>16</sup> Deed of sale by de La Reynière to Thévenin and Poncet on 2 April 1778, AN, MCN, *étude* XVIII/790 (reference kindly provided by Patrick Leperlier).

<sup>17</sup> Bibliothèque de l'Opéra, Paris, illustrated in Droguet, *op.cit.*, fig. 6, p. 217.

<sup>18</sup> The *Almanach Dauphin* provides more information describing: 'la cheminée qu'on y voit est d'un marbre précieux, revêtu de bronze, dont l'application est très bien entendue'. This beautiful chimneypiece with bronzes probably made by Jean-Claude-Thomas Duplessis, the favoured bronzemaker of La Reynière, was most probably reused in his *hôtel* on the rue Boissy d'Anglas.

<sup>19</sup> Oddly, only three overdoors, painted on canvas, are described in the *scellés*.

<sup>20</sup> J.P. Samoyault and A. Lefébure, *Meubles entrés sous le premier Empire, catalogue du musée national du château de Fontainebleau*, Paris, 2004, pp. 328-329.

<sup>21</sup> The room preceding the antechamber, situated next to the dining room, was nevertheless designated 'salon du duc' in the *scellés*.

<sup>22</sup> The term *meuble* refers to the textile furnishings of a suite of furniture for a

particular room, encompassing the bed and wall hangings, bed cover, upholstered furniture and, often, a fire screen.

<sup>23</sup> Among the purchases made by the Garde-meuble de la Couronne are: 'un meuble de basin blanc brodé en soie composé d'un lit à la Polonoise, bois, ferrures et roulettes et deux dossiers garnis, les étoffes dud. lit composées de quatre rideaux en 8 parties de toile de coton avec bordure de basin brodé doublé de taffetas blanc, la courtpointe doublée de taffetas, 4 dossiers de couchette, 8 pentes, deux impériales, les embrasses à rideaux et deux glands avec tresse, le coucher composé d'un sommier (...), une tapisserie de basin brodé en cinq pièces ensembles de 33 pieds de cours sur 10 pieds de haut, les étoffes de basin brodé pour couvrir 6 fauteuils et une bergère (...), 6 rideaux de croisée du même meuble 2 lez chacun de toile de coton encadré de bordure de basin brodé sur 3 au et ½ de haut' bought for 2,800 *livres*, corresponding most probably to the summer furnishings of the duke's bedchamber at Chanteloup. This *meuble* was possibly purchased by Choiseul at the sale of the marquis de Menars begun on 18 March 1782 (accounts for 1782-1783, expenses of 22 May 1782). The more common furniture was sold at Chanteloup itself, as a

posterior notice in the *Affiches, annonces et avis divers* of August 1786 confirms. The two chests of drawers bearing the inventory stamps for Fontainebleau (number 976, sale Rouen, *étude* Fournier, March 1990, then galerie Étienne Levy, Paris, then Sotheby's, Monaco 26-27 February 1992, lot 220; and number 974, sale Paris, 12 December 1992, lot 68, then Christie's, London, 12 June 1997, lot 120), which also bear Chanteloup inventory numbers, must have been transported to Paris where they were sold to the Garde-meuble de la Couronne, which bought nine examples at the Paris Choiseul sales (costing between 192 and 660 *livres*). It is interesting to note that the chest of drawers sold in 1992 also bears the inscription 'de La Chapelle,' the name of the master of the hunt at Chanteloup.

<sup>24</sup> 'Un lit à la Polonoise composé d'une couchette, ferrures, deux chevets, sommier de crin, deux matelas de traversin remplis de plume et une couverture de coton, les rideaux dudit lit et la tenture de ladite chambre de damas bleu galonné d'or et encadrée de baguettes dorées' as described in the *scellés*.

<sup>25</sup> Bimont, *Principes de l'art du tapissier*, Paris, 1770, p. 34.

<sup>26</sup> Invoice of Jean-Baptiste Lebas dated January 1785, A.D. Vesoul, *fonds privé* (stating its installation in the rue Beauregard).

<sup>27</sup> AN O<sup>1</sup> 3288 F<sup>140</sup> (reference supplied by Christian Baulez).

<sup>28</sup> Its height was 4.87 cm.

<sup>29</sup> Probably different from that of the duchess at Chanteloup where the bed is described as 'à la duchesse' and not 'à la Polonoise' as with this one. It could also describe the summer *meuble* of the duke in Paris.

<sup>30</sup> See note 27.

<sup>31</sup> Probably that of madame de Brionne, Choiseul's mistress; we also know of the chest of drawers from the same room at Chanteloup. The *meuble* was sold for 3,803 *livres* along with a day-bed, one *bergère*, six *fauteuils*, a *tabouret*, and four chairs, all in gilt wood.

<sup>32</sup> Sold for 5,600 *livres* with the wall hangings for the room which could possibly correspond, if one adds the six *fauteuils* in gilt wood sold further on for 381 *livres*, to the summer *meuble* of the duke in Paris.

<sup>33</sup> Invoice of Simon Oeben, 1785. A.D. Vesoul, *fonds privé*.

<sup>34</sup> Jones Collection, inv. 1099-1882, illustrated in Alexandre Pradère, *Les ébénistes français de Louis XIV à la Révolution*, Paris, 1989, p. 266, fig. 285.

<sup>35</sup> Christie's, London, 23 June 1988, lot 133, then Sotheby's, Paris, 29 June 2004, lot 79, then Sotheby's, Paris, 20 October 2005, lot 184.

<sup>36</sup> Hans Ottomeyer and Peter Pröschel, *Vergoldete Bronzen*, vol. 1, p. 186, ill. 3.9.1.

<sup>37</sup> Sale Paris, *étude* Beussant et Lefevre, 23 October 2006, lot 196 and another clock previously at Galerie Jacques Nèves, Brussels which can be seen on the website www.horloger.net.

<sup>38</sup> As described in the *scellés*.

<sup>39</sup> The other desk armchairs listed were also all upholstered in green morocco. '[S]ièges de maroquin vert' were sold at the *hôtel* on 4 and 5 December 1786 (*Affiches, annonces et avis divers*).

<sup>40</sup> Inv. 67. Interestingly the desk armchair of Claude-Étienne Michard, also at the musée Nissim de Camondo (inv. 199) and from the Jacques Doucet sale (Paris, 7-8 June 1912, lot 288) is compared in the catalogue to the one in a portrait of the duc de Choiseul by Alexandre Roslin. The armchair was bought by Moïse de Camondo from the antique dealer Francis Guéraul, on 20 April 1917, as coming from the collections of the banker

Sigismond Bardac, whose collections were sold in Paris on 10 May 1920.

<sup>41</sup> François de Salverte, *Les ébénistes du XVIIIe siècle*, Paris, 1923, p. 304, note 14: *scellés* of Jean-François Oeben.

<sup>42</sup> Archives Seine D<sup>4</sup>B<sup>6</sup> carton 75 dossier 4971, 10 January 1780, document mentioned by Rosemarie Stratmann-Döhler, *Jean-François Oeben*, Paris, 2002, p. 146, note 99.

<sup>43</sup> Former Lagerfeld collection, sale Christie's, Paris, 29 April 2000, lot 319; Waddesdon Manor, illustrated in Geoffrey de Bellaigue, *The James A. de Rothschild at Waddesdon Manor: Furniture, Clocks and Gilt bronzes*, vol. 1, Fribourg, 1974, p. 379, cat. 77; Philadelphia Museum of Art, inv. 1939-41-14 and inv. 1939-41-15.

<sup>44</sup> Articles number 27 and 157 of the accounts register for 1782-1783.

<sup>45</sup> Patrick Leperlier files.

<sup>46</sup> The inventory made after the death of Choiseul describes it as of 'bois de satiné à anneaux de cuivre dorés d'or moulu', valued at 200 *livres*.

<sup>47</sup> The *Affiches, annonces et avis divers* of 21 November 1786 announce the sale of seven Savonnerie carpets whose dimensions range from 14 by 8 *pieds* (4.50 m by 2.50 m) and 20 by 18 *pieds* (6.40 m by 5.80 m), the first of these most likely for an alcove and the second for a salon. None of these were bought for the Garde-meuble de la Couronne. The accounts for 1782-1783 mention the purchase of a Savonnerie carpet at the sale of the marquis de Ménars (with a *meuble* of *basin brodé*) for a total of 8,265 *livres*.

<sup>48</sup> Inventory after the death of the duc de Choiseul.

<sup>49</sup> Joseph Baillio, in a letter to the author of 19 May 2009, refers to a painting of the same subject in the sale of Sigismond Bardac, 10 May 1920, lot 32.

<sup>50</sup> Accounts for 1782-1783, article 115.

<sup>51</sup> The *scellés* describe them as 'deux figures de marbre blanc'.

<sup>52</sup> The connection to the Broche brothers was verbally suggested by Christian Baulez. In the Briard sale of 7 January 1778, lot 32 was 'deux femmes nues [de marbre blanc], elles sont assises, l'une tient un oiseau mort, et l'autre des roses dans une draperie. Les deux morceaux par le même [Broche], sont d'un mérite égale au précédent. Ils portent 8 pouces 6 lignes sur socles pareils et du même choix.' Sold for 245 *livres*.