

Eaux-de-vie: Esprit de la Fleur et du Fruit, Illustrated by Raoul Dufy

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Discussion of a Rare Book

Eaux-de-vie: Esprit de la Fleur et du Fruit, Illustrated by Raoul Dufy

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1. Foreword

The 20th-century French painter Raoul Dufy (1877–1953) known for paintings characterized by vivid colors and unrestrained brushwork, and a wide variety of textiles, produced numerous illustrated books as well. He made woodblock print illustrations for the book of poems *Le Bestiaire ou Cortège d'Orphée*¹ (published 1911) by Guillaume Apollinaire (1880–1918), lithographs for Stéphane Mallarmés (1842–1898) book of poems *Madrigaux*² (published 1920), and etchings for the novel *La Belle-Enfant*³ (published 1930) by Eugène Montfort (1877–1936), showing great versatility in terms of media used.⁴ His illustrations were also featured in magazines such as *Le Mot*⁵ and *Almanach des Lettres et des Arts*.^{6,7}

From the dawn of his painting career until the end of his life, he was involved in producing more than 50 illustrated books,⁸ of which this article introduces one published the year after his death, *Eaux-de-vie: Esprit de la Fleur et du Fruit* (“Water of Life: Spirit of Flower and Fruit,” referred to below as *Eaux-de-vie* or as “the book.”) It was published in 1954 in Paris by Bernard Klein. Newly acquired by the museum in 2018, the book has not been discussed in detail in research publications and exhibition catalogues on the history of French illustrated books, nor in the literature on books illustrated by Dufy in particular,⁹ and much remains unclear about the context and the processes of execution. Under these circumstances, this article will first present an overview of this book, then summarize information that offers clues to its background and enumerate areas requiring future research.

2. Contents and Illustrations

The book's text was written by the French historian René Héron de Villefosse (1903–1985), with a preface by the French poet Georges Duhamel (1884–1966) and illustrations by Dufy. It was published in a limited edition of 300, and the copy in the museum's collection is numbered 169. After the preface by Duhamel, which discusses alcoholic beverages from around the world, including Japan, and spirits distilled from various fruits, the ensuing four chapters are titled “Esprit de la Fleur et du Fruit (Spirit of Flower and Fruit),” “Eaux de Feu (Strong Liquor),” “Huiles Parfumées (Perfumed Oils),” and “L'Alcool et les Muses (Alcohol and Muses).” The illustrations consist of a cover, a frontispiece, 11 illustration plates, and five decorative drawings at the beginning of each section, made with the techniques of pochoir (a stencil process for making colored prints or adding

color to a printed key illustration) and etching. The table of contents and the positions of the illustrations are as follows:

- Cover illustration: *Les Fruits de la Terre (Fruits of the Land)* ... fig. 1
Frontispiece plate: *Portrait de L'Artiste (Portrait of the Artist)* ... fig. 2
p. 11–19 “Préface (Preface)”
p. 11 Decorative drawing: *Le Paradis de la Nature (Paradise of Nature)* ... fig. 3
Illustration plate 1: *Le Moulin de la Galette (d'après Renoir) (Le Moulin de la Galette (After Renoir))* ... fig. 4
p. 23–27 “Esprit de la Fleur et du Fruit (Spirit of Flower and Fruit)”
p. 23 Decorative drawing: *Vendanges en Cours (Grape Harvest in Process)* ... fig. 5
Illustration plate 2: *Folles Fleurs du Printemps (Luxuriant Spring Flowers)* ... fig. 6
p. 31–46 “Eaux de Feu (Strong Liquor)”
p. 31 Decorative drawing: *Batteuse dans les Blés (Thresher in the Wheat Field)* ... fig. 7
Illustration plate 3: *Vignes D'Automne (Autumn Vineyard)* ... fig. 8
Illustration plate 4: *Pêches et Cerises au Rouge Décor (Peaches and Cherries with Red Décor)* ... fig. 9
Illustration plate 5: *Poires et Pot Blanc sur la Nappe Eroissée (Pears and White Pot on a Wrinkled Cloth)* ... fig. 10
Illustration plate 6: *L'Heure des Toasts (Time to Toast)* ... fig. 11
p. 49–63 “Huiles Parfumées (Perfumed Oils)”
p. 49 Decorative drawing: *Couchés dans le Foin (Lying in the Hay)* ... fig. 12
Illustration plate 7: *Les Monts Odorants (Aromatic Mountains)* ... fig. 13
Illustration plate 8: *Fruits Vermeils au Cadre Doré (Golden Fruits in Front of Golden Picture Frame)* ... fig. 14
Illustration plate 9: *Forêt Vierge D'Herbes et de Simples (Primeval Forest of Herbs and Medical Plants)* ... fig. 15
Illustration plate 10: *Enivrantes Corolles (Intoxicating Corollas)* ... fig. 16
p. 67–70 “L'Alcool et les Muses (Alcohol and Muses)”
p. 67 Decorative drawing: *Le Repos de L'Artiste (Rest of the Artist)* ... fig. 17
Illustration plate 11: *Les Grâces Épanouies (Graces in Bloom)* ... fig. 18

The *Eaux-de-vie* in the book's French title literally means “water of life,” but it is also a term referring to distilled liquors such as brandy. As the title implies, the book explores the topic of spirits (distilled liquors) from various perspectives. While citing

the names of spirits produced in various areas of France, such as cognac, it discusses a wide range of topics such as historical books on spirits, the history of their development, prominent producers, quality ratings, ingredients, and fruits and herbs for flavor. The book also touches on anecdotes about production of spirits at various sites and relationships between writers, artists, and liquor, showcasing the erudition of the author Villefosse.

The illustrations, it should be noted, do not always correspond to the text. While the subjects depicted are related to spirits, including fruit, flowers, and people drinking in groups, there is no iconography related directly to the content on the page, or descriptive illustrations that complement the text. Investigation of whether each illustration was included in the artist's catalogue raisonné¹⁰ revealed that six plates in the book are very similar to the works included in the catalogue raisonné of watercolors, gouaches and pastels. The six works are all the collections of the Musée d'Art Moderne de Paris.¹¹ Also, a work entitled *Réception*, listed as No. 578 in the catalogue raisonné of drawings,¹² is identical in composition to illustration plate 6, *Time to Toast* (fig. 11), and the book "Eaux-de-vie" is listed on the bibliography of the work, indicating that the image was reproduced in it. Thus it is considered possible that illustrations similar to the works in the Musée d'Art Moderne de Paris collection and the other illustrations in the book were also reproduced from existing works. This is all the more credible as the book was published after Dufy's death. Another illustrated book entitled *Vacances Forcées*¹³ (published 1956), published after Dufy's death, similarly made use of reproductions of existing watercolors. This is an illustrated book in which original works selected by Dufy's friend the poet Roland Dorcelès (1885–1973) were reproduced by the printer Jacques Beltrand (1874–1977). Because of these cases, we must take into account the possibility not only that the illustrations in *Eaux-de-vie* are prints of existing watercolors, gouache, and drawings, but also that the works were not selected by Dufy during his lifetime at the author Villefosse's request, but rather by the author himself.

In light of the above-described relationships with previous works, all or most of the plates produced with the pochoir technique appear to be based on watercolor sketches. Dufy moved from his hometown of Le Havre to Paris in 1900 and was influenced by the Impressionist painters when he first enrolled in *École des Beaux-Arts*, then aligned himself with the Fauvists around 1905, and began producing works influenced by Paul Cézanne (1839–1906) and the Cubists starting around 1909.¹⁴ He worked prolifically in watercolor from the 1920s onward, aiming to capture objects in motion and fleeting impressions with a swift touch.¹⁵ The advantage of watercolor, which allows for light brushstrokes, also influenced his handling of oil paint, and evidently even in oils his approach to painting shifted from Fauvism's thick application of colors to a lighter, freely and thinly brushed style.¹⁶ Through such freewheeling experimentation, Dufy in the 1920s and 1930s established his own distinctive painting style, characterized by positioning of colors independently of drawn lines and stylization of shapes.¹⁷

In the pochoir works in the book, too, areas of color spread freely without being bound by contour lines, and cheerful, vigorous brushstrokes and vivid colors indicate that these are based on works produced from the 1930s onward. The above-mentioned six watercolors in the Musée d'Art Moderne de Paris

collection, which can be shown to be related to the illustrations, were produced between the late 1930s and circa 1950. Another feature of the book's plates is the great diversity of Dufy's use of line. For example, in illustration plate 11, *The Graces in Bloom* (fig. 18), the upper bodies of the female figures employ the technique of hatching called "hachure", with areas of shadow rendered using parallel lines; the houses and buildings in the background are depicted with straight, swiftly applied lines; and the branches extending from the left and upper right of the picture are represented with thick, soft curves, while the leaves on the lower right are expressed with repeated, symbolic triangle and distorted square motifs.¹⁸ In contrast to the wide, voluminous outlines of the human figures, the lines used to depict the fruit at their feet are sketchy and airy. The book's plates can rightfully be called exemplary of the era when Dufy developed his own unique painting style and gained command of a wide variety of line drawing techniques.

3. Clues to Context of Execution

For what purpose was the book written, and why was Dufy requested to provide illustrations? No documentation clarifying this has yet been found, but in this article I would like to summarize several clues that have come to light.

First, as to the book's author, Villefosse was an archaeologist who obtained his degree in archivist-paleographer from *École Nationale des Chartes* in 1926 and also a historian, writing many books on the history of France, especially that of Paris. Furthermore, He passed an examination for museum specialists in 1930 and went on to serve as a curator involved in organizing exhibitions at the Petit Palais, Musée des Beaux-Arts de la Ville de Paris, at the Musée de l'Île-de-France in Parc de Sceaux on the outskirts of Paris, and at the Musée Carnavalet in the 3rd arrondissement of Paris.¹⁹ The context in which he requested illustrations from Dufy is unknown, and it also remains to be verified whether this request was even made while Dufy was still living, but in light of his professional background as a curator, it is not hard to imagine that he had a considerable network of contacts among artists who were his contemporaries. Such a network can be inferred from other illustrated books he authored. In addition to the book under discussion, Villefosse was the author of three other illustrated texts: *La Rivière Enchantée*²⁰ (published in 1951), which describes the Paris cityscape and features illustrations by Fujita Tsuguharu (1886–1968); *À Travers nos Vignes*²¹ (published in 1956), illustrated with idyllic depictions of vineyards by Maurice Briançon; and *L'Épopée Bohémienne*²² (published in 1959), a memorial homage to Moïse Kisling (1891–1953) illustrated with vivid color prints by Kisling. All of these books were published by Bernard Klein in Paris. These publications are evidence of Villefosse's interactions with artists of his era, especially those of the *École de Paris*.

Secondly, it is worthy of note that there are three illustrated books which have often been cited in sales records as the *Trilogie sur les Alcools* or "liquor trilogy": *Vins, Fleurs et Flammes*²³ published in 1952, also by Bernard Klein in Paris; the aforementioned *À Travers nos Vignes*; and the book under discussion (*Eaux-de-vie*).²⁴ *Vins, Fleurs et Flammes* is an illustrated book of paeans to wine by contributors including the poet

Max Jacob (1876–1944), with illustrations by artists of the École de Paris, while *À Travers nos Vignes* is, as mentioned earlier, an illustrated book on the topic of vineyards. No definitive material has been found to indicate whether *Eaux-de-vie* was planned as part of a series, or a series of books on similar subjects simply happened to be published at the same time. However, the fact that other illustrated books relating to liquor were published before and after this book is worth noting in terms of the context of the creation of the book.

As to historical reasons for the consecutive publications of liquor-related publications: this book and the related books in the 1950s, it was an eventful era for the French culture of wine and alcohol beverage consumption in general. Against the historical backdrop of its use in Christian masses, France developed a rich culture of wine over many centuries, but it had fallen on hard times in the early 20th century due to the prevalence of diseases afflicting vineyards in the 19th century, and due to poor economic conditions caused by the subsequent World War and the Great Depression, and saturation of the market with poor-quality wine was an increasingly severe problem. To address this, the government rigorously controlled the quality of wines and aimed to build their brand identity through laws such as controls on place of origin, thereby improving French wine's quality.²⁵ Meanwhile, French wine producers and sellers sought to upgrade its image to a high-quality and sophisticated one through bottling practices and through creative labels and advertisements. Among these promotional efforts, there were cases of wine dealers commissioning artists to produce booklets and using the power of art to improve public perception of wine. Among these was the illustrated book *Mon Docteur le Vin*²⁶ (published in 1936), produced by the long-established French wine merchant Nicolas for distribution to its important customers, and in fact Dufy was hired to do the illustrations. This picture book encourages purchase of wine by enumerating its physical and mental health benefits, and the ambience of Dufy's vividly colored depictions of stylish urban life must have been ideal for wine sellers seeking to give their product a more refined image.²⁷ While it is not known whether this was a direct motivation for the production of *Eaux-de-vie*, the fact that the book was published at a time when the culture of wine was flourishing due to national-level initiatives and the industry's efforts, and that the influence of this campaign extended to artists, should surely be considered an important factor when exploring the significance of this book's publication.

4. In Closing

This article has endeavored to clarify several issues that require future study in order to elucidate the environment surrounding the production of this book, in view of the author Villefosse's literary activities and network of contacts, the existence of a "liquor trilogy" of illustrated books including this book, and the context of the time when this series was published. The first area of focus is to trace Villefosse's thought process and explore his motivation for writing this book by investigating his other writings and related materials. The second is to research the Dufy's works that were evidently the sources for reproductions among the illustrations, and it is to be hoped that eliciting the

relationships between the book and these works will provide a clearer picture of the process of making the book. Third, there is a need to investigate archival materials related to Dufy and the publisher Bernard Klein and determine whether there are any records that shed light on the book's production. I intend to make further efforts, by examining surviving materials, to determine whether the illustrations were selected by Dufy himself, and whether the three books sometimes referred to as the "liquor trilogy" were really intended as a series. And finally, a future research challenge is to take a deeper look at trends in the culture of wine and liquor in 20th-century France, the historical period and context in which the book was produced and consumed, and to analyze relationships with economy and artistic activities, and the roles of publishing industry of the time.

(Librarian, Artizon Museum, Ishibashi Foundation)
(Translated by Christopher Stephens)

Notes

1. Guillaume Apollinaire, illustrations by Raoul Dufy, *Le Bestiaire ou Cortège d'Orphée*, Deplanche, 1911.
2. Stéphane Mallarmé, illustrations by Raoul Dufy, *Madrigaux*, Éditions de la Sirène, 1920.
3. Eugène Montfort, illustrations by Raoul Dufy, *La Belle-Enfant, ou L'Amour à Quarante Ans*, A. Vollard, 1930.
4. Dora Perez-Tibi, "Raoul Dufy: The Illustrated Book" in *Raoul Dufy 1877–1953*, Arts Council of Great Britain, 1983, pp. 116–124; Dora Perez-Tibi, "Raoul Dufy et le Livre" in *Raoul Dufy*, Réunion des musées nationaux, 1999, pp. 212–221; David Bland, "Twentieth Century France" in *A History of Book Illustration: the Illuminated Manuscript and the Printed Book*, University of California Press, 1969, pp. 329–360.
5. Direction by Paul Iribe, *Le Mot*, 20 vols., 1914–1915.
6. *Almanach des Lettres et des Arts*, Martine, 1917.
7. "Dufy, Raoul, Benezit Dictionary of Artists" in *Oxford Art Online*, published Oct. 31, 2011. URL: <https://doi.org/10.1093/benz/9780199773787.article.B00055058>. Accessed Oct. 3, 2020.
8. Pierre Mornand, "Raoul Dufy" in *Vingt-Deux Artistes du Livre*, Le Courrier Graphique, 1948, p. 298; Jacques Lassaing, translated by James Emmons, "Chief Illustrated Books" in *Dufy (Taste of Our Time)*, Skira, 1954, p. 110; "Dufy ni yoru sashiebon risuto (List of Books Illustrated by Dufy)" in *Dufy kaiko ten (Retrospective Exhibition Catalogue)*, The National Museum of Western Art, Tokyo, 1967, no page number.

9. In researching the history of French illustrated books and books illustrated by Dufy in particular, reference was made to the following exhibition catalogues and books, in addition to the books cited above in Notes 4 and 8.
- Exhibition catalogues:
- Bibliothèque Municipale (Nice), *Exposition du Livre Illustré Contemporain, 1900–1950*, Pierotti, no date of publication.
 - Preface by Bernard Blatter, *Les Peintres et le Livre au XX^e Siècle*, Musée Jenisch, 1979.
 - François Chapon, *Le Peintre et le Livre : l'Âge d'Or du Livre Illustré en France, 1870–1970*, Flammarion, 1987.
 - Jean-Paul Laroche, *Les Livres Illustrés par Raoul Dufy du Fonds Michel Chomarat de la Bibliothèque Municipale de Lyon*, Michel Chomarat, 1999
 - Musée d'Art Moderne de Paris, *Raoul Dufy : Le Plaisir*, Paris-Musées, 2008.
 - Musée Marmottan Monet, *Raoul et Jean Dufy : Complicité et Rupture*, Hazan, 2011.
 - Ed. Aichi Prefectural Museum of Art, et al., *Dufy ten : Rétrospective Raoul Dufy (Exhibition: Rétrospective Raoul Dufy)*, The Chunichi Shimbun, 2014.
 - Olivier Le Bihan, et al., *Dufy : Le Bonheur de Vivre*, Palais Lumière, 2017.
- Books:
- Preface by Claude Roger-Marx, *Anthologie du Livre Illustré par les Peintres et Sculpteurs de l'École de Paris*, Albert Skira, 1946.
 - W. J. Strachan, *The Artist and the Book in France: the 20th Century Livre d'Artiste*, Peter Owen, 1969.
 - Nicolas Rauch, *Les Peintres et le Livre Constituant un Essai de Bibliographie des Livres Illustrés, de Gravures Originales par les Peintres et les Sculpteurs de 1867 à 1957*, Alan Wofsy fine arts, 1991.
10. Fanny Guillon-Laffaille, *Raoul Dufy : Catalogue Raisonné des Aquarelles, Gouaches et Pastels*, L. Carré, 1981–1982, 2 vols.
11. The following are the illustration plates similar to the collections of the Musée d'Art Moderne de Paris, with their raisonné numbers (CR no.) in the catalogue cited in Note 10:
- Frontispiece plate, *Portrait de l'Artiste: Autoportrait*, c. 1935, Museum inventory no. AMD 776, CR no. 1734.
 - Illustration plate 1, *Le Moulin de la Galette (d'après Renoir): Le Moulin de la Galette*, 1939, Museum inventory no. AMD 791, CR no. 1985.
 - Illustration plate 2, *Folles Fleurs du Printemps: Fleurs des Champs*, c. 1950, Museum inventory no. AMD 785, CR no. 1360.
 - Illustration plate 4, *Pêches et Cerises au Rouge Décor: Coupe de Fruits*, c. 1948, Museum inventory no. AMD 787, CR no. 1466.
 - Illustration plate 10, *Enivrantes Corolles: Bouquet Champêtre*, 1953, Museum inventory no. AMD 786, CR no. 1358.
 - Illustration plate 11, *Les Grâces Épanouies: La Seine, l'Oise et la Marne*, 1938, Museum inventory no. AMD 778, CR no. 1957.
12. Maurice Laffaille and Fanny Guillon-Laffaille, *Raoul Dufy : Catalogue Raisonné des Dessins*, Vol. 1, Marval, Galerie Fanny Guillon-Laffaille, 1991, p. 236.
13. Roland Dorgelès, illustrations by Raoul Dufy, *Vacances Forcées*, Éditions Vialetay, 1956.
14. "Dufy, Raoul, Benezit Dictionary of Artists," op. cit.
15. "Dufy, Raoul, Benezit Dictionary of Artists," op. cit.
16. Alfred Werner, translated by Ogura Tadao, *Raoul Dufy*, Bijutsu Shuppan-sha, 1972, p. 140.
17. Dora Pérez-Tibi, "Dufy, Raoul, Grove Art Online" in *Oxford Art Online*, published: Oct. 31, 2011. URL: <https://doi.org/10.1093/gao/9781884446054.article.T023961>. Accessed: 03-10-2020.
18. With regard to Dufy's use of line, reference was made to the following:
- Aoki Tadasu, "Dufy sen hyogen mamejiten: arabesuku kara ziguzakgu made (A Small Encyclopedia of Dufy's Line: from Arabesques to Zig-zags)" in *Dufy ten Pompidou Center shozo (Dufy : Exposition Conçue et Réalisée par le Centre Pompidou, Musée National d'Art Moderne)*, The Yomiuri Shimbun, 2001, pp. 142–148.
19. Jean-Pierre Babelon, "René Héron de Villefosse (1903–1985)" in *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes*, Vol. 144, No. 2, Jul.–Dec. 1986, pp. 442–443. URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/42959244>. Accessed: Sep. 5, 2020.
20. René Héron de Villefosse, Illustrations by Fujita Tsuguharu, *La Rivière Enchantée*, Bernard Klein, 1951.
21. René Héron de Villefosse, Illustrations de Maurice Brianchon, *À Travers nos Vignes*, Bernard Klein, 1956.
22. René Héron de Villefosse, Illustrations de Moise Kisling, *L'Épopée Bohémienne*, Bernard Klein, 1959.
23. Max Jacob, et al., Illustrations by Maurice Brianchon, et al., *Vins, Fleurs et Flammes*, Bernard Klein, 1952.
24. The following are examples of sales catalogues:
- Lot n°501 [Collectif] Héron de Villefosse, René: [Trilogie sur les Alcools]. AuctionArt rémy le fur & associés, no date of publication. URL: <http://www.auctionartparis.com/ventes-aux-encheres-359/2016-05-20-bandes-dessinees-illustres-modernes/79546-collectif-heron-de-villefosse-rene-trilogie-sur-les-alcools>. Accessed: Sep. 3, 2020.
 - Alde, *Bibliothèque oenologique Bernard Chwartz: Vente aux Enchères Publiques les Lundis 11 et Mardi 12 Avril 2011 à 14 h*. Alde, no date of publication. p. 140. URL: <http://catalogue.drouot.com/pdf/alde/livres/11&12042011/ALDE-11&12042011-bd.pdf?id=9735&cp=8>. Accessed: Sep. 3, 2020.
25. With regard to the history of wine in France, reference was made to the following books:
- Yamamoto Hiroshi, *Wain ga kataru furansu no rekishi (The History of France as Told by French Wine)*, Hakusuisha Publishing, 2003.
 - Maeda Takuma, *Budoshu no senryaku: wain wa ikani sekai wo sekken suruka (Oenological Strategy: How Wine is Taking Over the World)*, Toyo Keizai, 2010.
 - Yamamoto Hiroshi, *Wain no sekaishi (A World History of Wine)*, Nikkei Business Publications, 2018.
26. Gaston Derys, watercolors by Raoul Dufy, *Mon Docteur le Vin*, Draeger Frères, 1936.
27. With regard to *Mon Docteur le Vin*, an outline and historical context are provided in the following reproduced, translated English version.
- Gaston Derys, watercolors by Raoul Dufy, introduction by Paul Lukacs, translated by Benjamin Ivry, *Mon Docteur le Vin*, Yale University Press, 2006.

List of illustrations (pp. 62–68)

Raoul DUFY, Illustration for "Eaux-de-vie : Esprit de la Fleur et du Fruit" (Text by René Héron de Villefosse), Published in 1954
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- fig. 1— *Les Fruits de la Terre*, Etching
- fig. 2— *Portrait de L'Artiste*, Pochoir
- fig. 3— *Le Paradis de la Nature*, Etching
- fig. 4— *Le Moulin de la Galette (d'après Renoir)*, Pochoir
- fig. 5— *Vendanges en Cours*, Etching
- fig. 6— *Folles Fleurs du Printemps*, Pochoir
- fig. 7— *Batteuse dans les Blés*, Etching
- fig. 8— *Vignes D'Automne*, Pochoir
- fig. 9— *Pêches et Cerises au Rouge Décor*, Pochoir
- fig. 10— *Poires et Pot Blanc sur la Nappe Froissée*, Pochoir
- fig. 11— *L'Heure des Toasts*, Etching
- fig. 12— *Couchés dans le Foin*, Etching
- fig. 13— *Les Monts Odorants*, Pochoir
- fig. 14— *Fruits Vermeils au Cadre Doré*, Pochoir
- fig. 15— *Forêt Vierge D'Herbes et de Simples*, Pochoir
- fig. 16— *Enivrantes Corolles*, Pochoir
- fig. 17— *Le Repos de L'Artiste*, Etching
- fig. 18— *Les Grâces Épanouies*, Pochoir