

2026-2027 Romance Languages Colloquium

Invitation: The Romance Languages Colloquium is a series of free, public events organized by the ROML GSO in the department. Its purpose is to share the academic work of our ROML community, foster awareness of our colleagues' research, and create opportunities for dialogue and collaboration around our scholarly production.

Details: Tuesday, October 13th, 2026, 5:00 PM, Gilbert Hall 360

Light refreshments will be served.

Program:

Gender, Voice and Power in Louise-Genviève Gillot de Saintonge's Didon (1693) and Circé (1694)

Abstract

This article explores the change in female representation onstage during the latter half of 17th-century France. Louise-Genviève Gillot de Saintonge occupies an interesting place in the literary and operatic space on late 17th-century France. She holds a cherished role of being the first woman to write a *tragédie en musique*, penning two operas *Didon* and *Circé* at a time when the world of the *mondain* was giving way to an increasing religious influence at the court of Louis XIV. Composing libretti in the shadows of Jean-Baptiste Lully and Philippe Quinault, and having her first opera, *Didon*, performed at the Académie Royale de Musique, allowed a woman's voice to be placed at the center of what had been a male dominated art form. Through her operas, Saintonge transforms and frequently subverts gendered expectations of classical dramaturgy. This paper examines how Saintonge's heroines demonstrate a turn towards a reframing of the female voice at the end of Louis XIV's reign through a reimagining of agency, desire and authority within the constraints of courtly culture.

Priscilla Scarpaci is a PhD student in French at UGA. She holds a Master's degree in French from Georgia State University, where her research delved into the diverse experiences of French-speaking communities in the United States, particularly in Louisiana and Maine. This background informs her current interest in exploring the cultural exchange between different artistic mediums and social contexts within French history, specifically 17th century opera. Current research interests include: 17th century French opera, literary influences in opera, French cultural history, audience reception of opera, women's influence in opera including the *précieuse* movement.