

Le Médecins Malgré Lui

Le Médecin Malgré Lui in France

So far we have tracked Moliere's play across the three continents of Europe (**Eastern** and **Western**) and America (**Latin** and **North**). It has also been produced in Asia and Australasia, and one can at least imagine its appeal in some of the diverse cultures of sub-Saharan Africa, though in Antarctica its main utility might well be as an inventive means of keeping warm. But in the absence of any bottom-warmings to show you from those parts of the world, it's now time to bring it home and present a small collection of *fessées françaises* from recent times.

2007

We begin with an open-air performance in modern dress at Augny that was just an extract – the first two scenes of the play – as part of a Moliere anthology. This is the moment when the passing Robert interrupts Martine's whacking:



Robert is the one on the right – I wonder if he's checking to see how red her bottom is!

2008

Here's another modern-dress staging at the Garage Moderne in Bacalan, north of Bordeaux:

And a production at the International Visual Theater in Paris, with comedian Ludovic Ducasse as Sganarelle and Delphine Leleu across his knee:



They not only starred in the production but also co-directed it together!

2010

The play was produced at the Theatre du Gymnase, Paris, and whatever the limitations of the spanking, at least Sganarelle does it after he has lost the carpet-beater!

As it happens, this wasn't the first time the Gymnase stage had been graced by a spanking scene: there was a much better one there 57 years earlier! But maybe that's for another time...

2011

The play entered the repertory of the Theatre de l'Eventail, an Orleans company that uses traditional staging methods, which is why they're performing in masks.





Don't be deceived by the soundtrack: they're also using a traditional 'slap-stick'. Everything else is good acting!

The production later went to the Theatre Clavel in Paris in 2013, and there was some more noisy bottom-whacking:



2012

A trailer for the production at the Comédie Saint-Michel; the spanking is not up to much, but there's a nice moment when Martine is swearing vengeance, and inadvertently sits down...

2014

It's not completely clear where this last one comes from: it could be Italy or Switzerland rather than France, but it is being performed in French. But inadequate contextual information aside, the presence of a chair at stage center bodes well for the spanking, even if the fact that it's a plastic stackable model doesn't do much for the production's period authenticity...