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Singing of Sound and Silence: Symbolism, *Mélodie*, and Francophone Identity in the Fin-de-siècle

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Abstract

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By Cana F. McGhee

Framed by linguistic nationalist contexts during the fin-de-siècle, this project explores the relationship between the francophone Symbolist movement and vocal settings of Symbolist works. The opening chapter describes the French and Belgian linguistic nationalist climates throughout the nineteenth century, and the way literature contributes to dialogues about language use. The second chapter analyzes the Symbolist movement's emergence during a time of shifting linguistic ideologies. Ultimately positing that art song responds to similar language-minded concerns as Symbolist poetry, this chapter firstly discusses music's role in shaping Symbolist aesthetics, and then addresses the role of Symbolism in the development of French art song known as *mélodie*. In the third chapter, Frenchman Gabriel Fauré – admired salon composer, director of the Paris Conservatoire, and composer of *mélodie* – moves to the forefront. The chapter compares two of his song cycles, *La Bonne Chanson* (1894) and *La Chanson d'Eve* (1906), to highlight musical portrayals of sound and silence, and what these contrasts reveal about the role of singing and the human voice in personal and communal developments. Fauré's use of irony in these *mélodies* supports earlier assumptions about Symbolists' concerns about linguistic identity and language use. The concluding chapter steps into an international arena by employing archival materials from the Contemporary Art Archives in Brussels to elucidate Fauré's role in annual avant-garde expositions held from 1886-1914, expositions that he attended, and which regularly featured his music. In addition to addressing Fauré's positionality in the expositions, the chapter presents Belgian responses to displays of such artistic Frenchness and explores the artistic relationship between two francophone European counterparts. This chapter considers Fauré as a supporter of artistic communities outside of Paris, which demonstrates his participation in broader transnational discourse. Broadly, this thesis contributes to understanding the field of encounters between Symbolism, French-language vocal music, and linguistic nationalist politics. Analyzing the literary movement alongside the music of one of *mélodie*'s leading composers renews understandings of the ways in which linguistic values translate and transcribe themselves into other cultural artefacts.

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Chapter 1: Linguistic Nationalism chez les Francophones

Theorizing Linguistic Nationalism

Gabriel Fauré is arguably one of the most quintessential French composers of the late-nineteenth century. Considering that he spent a lifetime writing chamber music in Parisian salons, one could imagine how Fauré's output shaped the surrounding musical culture, strictly based on where his works were most often performed and how the success of his music contributed to his eventual leadership posts at the Paris Conservatoire. In these two respects, Fauré is an emblem of French music-making during the *fin-de-siècle* period in which he was most active. But aside from his teaching and service, there are other ways that Fauré's "Frenchness" was unique both in his time and in the present-day. I feel compelled to flesh out this lesser-told narrative by investigating how Fauré actively engaged in nationalistic trends other than merely through composing music symptomatic of his times. Describing and defining a composer's relationship to nationalist-related phenomena proves daunting. Certainly, this is true in Fauré's case because he wrote no treatises or manifestos outlining his views about music aesthetics, musical culture, teaching, or any other phenomenon related to music-making, which differs from many of his counterparts who wrote extensively on the subject (Hector Berlioz especially comes to mind); even his published correspondence does reveal much on these subjects. Because of this lack of concise versions of Fauré's direct perspective, one must instead rely on secondhand testimonies and retrospective glances at his career for these insights. This process thus walks along the fine line between a reading of the composer's intuitions and intentions from the insertion of one's own opinions within the historical narrative in question.

Investing over two years of study to a composer like Fauré means coming to terms with his responses to a century rife with political shifts and questions surrounding a burgeoning national identity. The project at hand seeks to elucidate Fauré's responses to linguistically-oriented nationalism, by way of his vocal music and the poetic movement with which it engages, which too addresses questions related to mastering elements of the French language. We will discover throughout the proceeding chapters that French-language vocal music, known more formally as *mélodie*, developed as a result of the evolving Symbolist literary and

poetic movement in France and Belgium, where the movement dominated during the second half of the nineteenth century. The goals of the poetic movement involved revolutionizing the use of written language and challenging trends in previous generations of French poetry. Written language is essentially a more concrete form of spoken language. Inscribing and exemplifying one's language values on paper and in print enable one to track these values over time because the physicality of writing is more permanent than the more fleeting utterances of everyday speech. Situating Fauré within the linguistically-minded discourse that a literary movement like Symbolism also addresses thus necessitates an investigation of linguistic nationalism – understanding nationalist identity through language – with respect to francophone Europe, as this opening chapter will present.

One can think of language as an intangible product of human existence in that spoken words cannot be captured between the fingertips, and written language on a page does not identically to the significance of spoken language. And even in reading words inscribed on a page, one mentally hears the sounds of these strings of letters in order to construct the semblance of meaning said words convey. Based on this idea, Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* serves as an appropriate starting point for exploring conceptions of linguistically-minded nationalist movements. Based on his title, one senses that his work is framed by the assertion that the humanly-created phenomenon of nationalism defines nations as imagined political communities, which themselves are imagined as “inherently limited and sovereign.”¹ Nineteenth century nationalist movements “arose historically when, and where, three fundamental cultural conceptions, all of great antiquity, lost their axiomatic grip on men's minds.” The three “cultural conceptions” were closely linked to religious beliefs that connected royalty to divine powers, and the royalty with these alleged connections were the ones to centralize societies around hierarchal, religiously-based relationships.² As these

¹ Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 1983, 6.

Anderson here also indicates that the use of “imagined” is a more descriptive alternative to invention, fabrication, and falsity. This acknowledges that “communities are distinguished not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined,” thereby giving power to the individual communities to define themselves on their own terms.

² Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 36. The three “cultural conceptions” are as follows: “The first of these was the idea that a particular script-language offered privileged access to ontological truth, precisely because it was an inseparable part of that truth... Second was the belief that society was naturally organized around and under high centres –

social systems began to fall, however, Anderson attributes their decline to the rise of print forms that disseminated materials in vernacular languages, rather than the sacred languages spoken by the religiously-affiliated royal powers: “In a word, the fall of Latin exemplified a larger process in which the sacred communities integrated by old sacred languages were gradually fragmented, pluralized, and territorialized.”³

Throughout his analysis of Western European nationalist movements, Anderson rarely strays from the belief that the destabilization of Latin’s reign contributed to the development of print forms written in vernacular languages that, hierarchically speaking, were situated somewhere between Latin and the spoken vernacular dialects. “Print-capitalism gave a new fixity to language” and an ability to track its development and document history for present and future generations.⁴ Not only does Anderson connect nationalism to the evolving relationships of peoples to their languages, but his emphasis upon the “fixity” of language indicates that written language in print forms played an especially crucial role in establishing senses of nationalism (more broadly) and linguistic nationalism (more specifically). Citing common exoticist literary trends in the nineteenth century that resulted from colonial expansion and technological developments that promoted such explorations, “discovery and conquest also caused a revolution in European ideas about language.”⁵ And simultaneously, the wider public was becoming increasingly literate and living in a world of diversifying commerce, industry, and communications which “created new impulses for vernacular linguistic unification”⁶ as mass groups of people began “discovering a new glory in the print elevation of languages they had humbly spoken all along.”⁷ As vernacular languages moved beyond the function of being a means of communication amongst members of a subset of a population living under one larger ruling entity, print-language presented the possibility of visualizing “the existence of thousands of thousands like themselves,” because they were (per Anderson) the first whole social class with some degree of literacy. Essentially, this

monarchs who were persons apart from other human beings and who ruled by some form of cosmological (divine) dispensation... Third was a conception of temporality in which cosmology and history were indistinguishable, the origins of the world and of men essentially identical. Combined, these ideas rooted human lives firmly in the very nature of things, giving certain meaning to the everyday fatalities of existence...”

³ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 19.

⁴ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 44-5.

⁵ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 70

⁶ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 77.

⁷ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 80.

means that bourgeoisie classes were the first classes “to achieve solidarities on an essentially imagined basis,” which certainly aligns with my own later discussions about the role of nineteenth century journalism in the spread of beliefs and changing conceptions of language use.⁸

Inasmuch as linguistic nationalism is an “imagined phenomenon,” there are several scenarios which support the intangible cultural factor of language as a form of identity, even with its physical representation in print forms. One of Anderson’s analogies is the example of someone reading a newspaper, an act which has two levels of “imagined worlds” wrapped up in it. The first concerns “the novelistic format of the newspaper,” which ensures that even when the headline changes day after day, one does not assume that the content or context of said headline also disappears.⁹ The second “lies in the relationship between the newspaper, as a form of book, and the market;” someone reading this “extreme form” of a book of wide popularity can observe “exact replicas of his own paper being consumed” by others, which constantly reinforces the idea that this imagined world is rooted in everyday life.¹⁰ Anderson goes on to say that nationalisms are similarly conceived as imagined phenomena that too have their origins in everyday existence. This similarity between the development of print-commodity and the development of national consciousness, coupled with the assumption that capitalist-driven print forms supported the spread of nationalist ideologies, supports the forthcoming discussions about the role of writers in shaping the dialogue about nationalism through language and written word. In short, “the convergence of capitalism and print technology on the...diversity of human language created the possibility of a new form of imagined community, which its basic morphology set the stage for the modern nation.”¹¹

The relationship of linguistic nationalistic ideology to print forms can begin the process of binding communities of people, which is perhaps the more predictable case as we will see in the examples of both France and Belgium in the nation-building projects. Additionally, the ideology itself could be considered a

⁸ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 77.

⁹ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 33. He uses Mali as an example of what could be in the headlines one day, but even if it is no longer in the headlines two days later, one does not believe that Mali itself has disappeared. This notion of a non-disappearing Mali exists in the imaginary, as a country we know exists but have never been too, seen, etc.

¹⁰ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 35-6.

¹¹ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 46.

community, as well. E.J. Hobsbawm contributes to Anderson's belief in linguistic nationalism as a type of imagined communal space by mentioning that "national languages are...almost always semi-artificial constructs" in that they are wrapped up in efforts to standardize "a multiplicity of actually spoken idioms."¹² This means that the idea of a "national language" is an artificial idea in service of some larger project, usually that of centralizing and standardizing multiple localized languages and dialects. Even though a linguistic analysis foregrounds his discussion about nationalism's origins, Hobsbawm argues that, except for a few cases in the nineteenth century, "language could hardly be a criterion of nationhood."¹³ His primary defense of this point is the historical precedent decisions related to language dominance often having been made at the level of elites or intellectuals rather than from the level of the greater majority who spoke the various vernacular languages. Statements such as the following reveal this perspective:

In fact, the mystical identification of nationality with a sort of platonic idea of the language, existing behind and above all its variant and imperfect versions, is much more characteristic of the ideological construction of nationalist intellectuals...than of the actual grassroots users of the idiom. It is a literary and not an existential concept.¹⁴

The identification of nation with language helps us to answer such questions [about the role of language use in politics], since linguistic nationalism essentially requires control of a state or at least the winning of official recognition for the language.¹⁵

Els Witte and Harry Van Velthoven engage with Anderson directly, and Hobsbawm peripherally, when offering the contradictory perspective that "national identity is not a fiction..., but a social fact which is unstable and variable, existing side by side with other collective feelings."¹⁶ This idea is further addressed during a discussion of the fact that after the outpouring of scholarship in "the words of Anderson, Gellner, Hobsbawm and others," one should delve beyond explanations of nationalism simply by saying that "the nation state, territory and language are interlinked."¹⁷ *Language and Politics: The Belgian Case Study in a Historical Perspective* outlines arguments for why language is so valuable in forming national identities, saying that during

¹² Hobsbawm, E.J. *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1992, 54.

¹³ Regarding his discussion of the origins of "nación" in the Dictionary of the Royal Spanish Academy, see pages 14-5. Quote is from Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*, 56; the rare cases he cites throughout are Germany and Italy.

¹⁴ Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*, 57.

¹⁵ Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*, 110. Material in brackets is my edit.

¹⁶ Witte, Els and Harry Van Velthoven. *Language and Politics: The Belgian Case Study in a Historical Perspective*. Brussels: VUB University Press, 1999, 9.

¹⁷ Witte and Van Velthoven, *Language and Politics*, 17

the nineteenth-century rise of the bourgeoisie and middle classes, lower social classes fought to become “assimilated in the national state” and this process involved “adopting the language of higher social groups,” which was “linked to social integration.”¹⁸ Throughout the discussion of linguistic reform in Witte’s native Belgium, one unsurprisingly sees that “the dominant language is generally also the language of the leading groups and of the socio-economic, political and cultural elites,” and these are the speakers who will strive to ensure their language’s dominance in social life.¹⁹ With this in mind, we are reminded of the moment in *Imagined Communities* when Anderson asserts that the literate bourgeoisie were among the first social classes to conceive of their social solidarity on the basis of imagination.²⁰

As related to class differences, differing levels of language dominance often reflect power discrepancies between social groups; this is a trend one can see over the course of French and Belgian histories with their linguistic identity. Over the course of the nineteenth century, France became increasingly centralized, and this centralized policy-making led to a process that reflected the fact that “political decisions made at the apex of power are relatively easy to transmit to the rest of society.”²¹ Applying this to processes of language reform, centralizing power in such a way that focuses upon formalized language practices means that language use can be a tool for controlling and uniting citizens. This striving for power can be understood by noticing the distinction (and thus relationship) between linguistic purism and linguistic prescriptivism, as follows:

While linguistic purism may be conceived of as mainly aiming at the averting and expulsion of ‘foreign words’..., prescriptivism feeds...on a number of attributes attached to language use and simultaneously caters to them. It therefore aims...at correction. And if the standard variety is equated with ‘the national language’, then abiding by the standard may – under certain circumstances – be interpreted as a symbol for national loyalty.²²

With this conceptual understanding in mind, purist and prescriptive language both support the process of searching for some objective “true” language or speech which represents more than just a physical or legal

¹⁸ Witte and Van Velthoven, *Language and Politics*, 10.

¹⁹ Witte and Van Velthoven, *Language and Politics*, 19-20.

²⁰ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 77.

²¹ Beer, William R. and James E. Jacob. *Language Policy and National Unity*. Totowa, NJ: Rowman & Allanheld, 1985, 6.

²² Schaefer, Ursula. “Linguistics, Ideology and the Discourse of Linguistic Nationalism: Some Preliminary Remarks.” In *Linguistics, Ideology and the Discourse of Linguistic Nationalism*, 1-36. Edited by Claudia Lange, Ursula Schaefer, and Göran Wolf. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang GmbH, 2010, 20.

stand-in for the nation. Purity with respect to language is typically seen as a negative quality, in that it signifies the absence of foreign elements; but Hans-Martin Gauger points out that “the ideal of purity” can have positive connotations, as in the case of “classical rhetoric where it meant that all the elements employed in a text must...be accepted by general use,” which allows for the inclusion of words borrowed from other languages.²³ As the phenomenon of linguistic purity relates to conceiving national identity, Hobsbawm puts forth that “philological nationalism” is essentially “the insistence on the linguistic purity of national vocabulary,” a trend of which speakers of lesser spoken-languages “which have not been the major carriers of culture, but wish to become suitable voices for...higher education and modern techno-economic communication” become more acutely aware.²⁴ What understandably happens in the process of centralizing territories and developing a corresponding national language is that smaller nationalities or other localized entities become absorbed into a macro-culture, and they either do not “recognize any irreconcilable differences...or [are] even reconciled to the loss of what could be adapted.”²⁵ As the following proceeding sections of this chapter will present, much of the secondary source information alludes to this process in France throughout the nineteenth-century, and also in Belgium to a different extent. France perhaps did this more “successfully” because a majority of the country eventually settled on speaking relatively the same kind of French, but Belgians were also more willing to make linguistic concessions on both sides of the linguistic divide (French- and Flemish-speakers).

Just as the preceding arguments have informed how nationalism can be shaped by linguistically-minded discourse, nationalism also shaped the development of linguistics as we know it today. The increased interest in literary exoticism that resulted from colonialism, as Anderson points out, led to the development of philology, “with its studies of comparative grammar, classification of languages into families, and reconstructions by scientific reasoning of ‘proto-languages’.”²⁶ Scholar Tom Shippey stretches the origins of

²³ Gauger, Hans-Martin. “Nationalism as a Factor in the Birth of Linguistics and in Linguistic Criticism.” In *Linguistics, Ideology and the Discourse of Linguistic Nationalism*, 117-132. Edited by Claudia Lange, Ursula Schaefer, and Göran Wolf. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang GmbH, 2010, 126.

²⁴ Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*, 56. His use of the term philological nationalism I think boils down to the fact that linguistics (as we use the term presently) was not yet conceived in the nineteenth century.

²⁵ Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*, 35.

²⁶ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 70.

comparative philology to an 1819 publication by Jacob Grimm called *Deutsche Grammatik*, which, despite its misleading title, “was much less concerned with modern German than with early forms of what would be considered eventually as ‘Germanic’ languages... Its orientation was in fact both historical and comparative.”²⁷ With Grimm’s text as his starting point, Shippey indicates that even though the scientific precision and objectivity of philological study gave the discipline its credibility, philologists gained popularity and prestige through the promotion of nationalist ideologies.²⁸ Again, this relationship is tied to print language and literacy in that the same scholars worked on compiling materials for grammars and dictionaries as those who were editing editions of medieval texts and national epics.²⁹ But looking at the beginning of the nineteenth century reveals to present-day onlookers that there was an interest in language as an object of study, which contrasted previous interests in language in subordination to or in conjunction with other interests (such as in classical and religious texts, philosophy, and anthropology).³⁰ Without this interest in language in itself, coupled with the rise of historical relativism, “linguistics could not have come into being.”³¹

Linguistic Nationalism in France

With this framework in mind, we may turn to an analysis of how this form of imagined community revealed itself in francophone Europe. Despite being relatively politically-centralized by this point, France was in a different position than many of its neighbors because its national consciousness arose after its boundaries were settled.³² As Pierre Sorlin points out: “*nationalisme*: the word belongs neither to basic French nor

²⁷ Shippey, Tom. “Philological Triumphs, Ideological Failures.” In *Linguistics, Ideology and the Discourse of Linguistic Nationalism*, 97-116. Edited by Claudia Lange, Ursula Schaefer, and Göran Wolf. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang GmbH, 2010, 97.

²⁸ Shippey, “Philological Triumphs,” 105.

²⁹ Shippey, “Philological Triumphs,” 112. In the case of Belgium, the early pioneers of the movement to put Flemish language and culture on an equal playing field of its French counterparts was undertaken by literary figures and philologists (see Witte and Van Velthoven, p. 70-1).

³⁰ Gauger, “Nationalism as a Factor in the Birth of Linguistics,” 118.

³¹ Gauger, “Nationalism as a Factor in the Birth of Linguistics,” 118-9. Per Gauger: historical relativism was the school of thought after eighteenth-century conceptions of history as “rational progress and a kind of progressive liberation of the human mind.” Historical relativism conceived of one comprehensive narrative across time and space. Relativism thus considers historical periods as needing to “be judged according to its own criteria,” rather than using one common vocabulary to discuss history.

³² Fenet, Alain. “Difference Rights and Language in France.” In *Language, Nation, and State*, 19-61. Edited by Tony Judt and Denis Lacorne. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004, 39. He makes this point with respect to political policy,

common vocabulary. It is a neologism uniquely intended for a technical (political) use.”³³ Since the now commonly-used term did not exist during the time that such identity conceptions and “imagined communities” were forming, this fact helps understand how French nationalism differs from that of much of the rest of its continental counterparts. Hobsbawm indicates that, even though the “France” of the French Revolutionary era did not consider language to be an important element of the forming modern nation, “French insistence on linguistic uniformity since the Revolution has indeed been marked.”³⁴ Many arguments are based on the fact that retrospective looks towards revolutionary-era France informed some rationales for imagining French (and francophone Belgian) nationalism through language. These processes were underway during the 16th century with the Villiers-Cotters Ordonnance (1539)³⁵ and the creation of the *Académie française* in 1635, both of which contributed to the elevation of French vernacular languages especially in the context of language as “an instrument of rule.”³⁶ Aptly summarized by Alain Fenet, these changes eventually were brought into the limelight during the 1789 Revolution, which “found good reason in its unifying and centralizing design to accelerate the ‘Frenchization’ process. The demise of regional languages, spoken or understood by the quasi totality of the population, went almost without saying since they were perceived as the medium of counterrevolutionary ideas.”³⁷

As French ruling powers shifted and amidst consistent small-scale territorial disputes throughout the nineteenth century, French citizens nevertheless went through the process of defining themselves as a developing nation. Around the 1830s, one can observe that the French language played a role in this discussion, especially after the July Revolution against the constitutional monarchy instated after Napoleon I’s reign. In 1830, a revolutionary group sought to establish a republic, but their efforts were thwarted by the

but the point about France being a geographical entity before determining its social underpinnings is the exception to “the rule,” so to speak, as Hobsbawm and Anderson both outline it.

³³ Sorlin, Pierre. “Words and Images of Nationhood.” In *Nationhood and Nationalism in France*, 74-88. Edited by Robert Tombs. London: Harper Collins Academic, 1991, 77. Hobsbawm raises similar concerns when addressing different linguistic groups’ appropriations of nationalist vocabulary to further the cause.

³⁴ Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*, 19-20. Hobsbawm further underlines this point by saying that merely speaking French did not make one “French;” rather it was the willingness to acquire the language that “was one of the conditions of full French citizenship (and therefore nationality) ...” (p. 21)

³⁵ This ordonnance discontinued the use of Latin in official court documents.

³⁶ Weber, Eugen. *Peasants into Frenchmen*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1976, 70.

³⁷ Fenet, “Difference Rights,” 27-8.

upper-class who ended up instating a new monarchy of a different royal lineage. These language discussions were highlighted again in the 1870s following France's defeat in the Franco-Prussian War. This loss to their German-speaking enemies parallels the previous attempt at achieving autonomy earlier in the century. After the Franco-Prussian War, during the years of the politically-charged atmosphere of the Paris Commune, there was a sense that contemporary French society felt increasingly more foreign, and that "conflicting...beliefs and values created concerns about the social stability of the French nation."³⁸ The defeat in the war heightened feelings of disconnectedness within France's borders and of disdain for German encroachment upon these borders. As this feeling of foreignness related to artistic and cultural movements of the era, French figures had long seen the Romantic movement as "essentially foreign – the domain of the Germans and the English," which is "as much a debate about national character and temperament..., [as about] literary values" represented by the movement.³⁹ The conflict between the two European powerhouses only highlighted this distinction further.

The Third Republic, created in 1870, promoted an emphasis on unity and centralization "especially in respect to educational practice and language," which appears to have emerged out of the need to combat feelings of social instability and insecurity.⁴⁰ The new republic implemented administrative measures that reinforced centralized law and instituted required schooling in French-only settings, which consequently "contributed to weakening the regional languages even further, almost to the point of total disappearance."⁴¹ As Weber points out, the 1870s and 80s saw immense progress in the spread of French in non-French-speaking areas, even though another generation would pass before that progress to fully settled.⁴² The seemingly logical conclusion is that reliance upon language was tied to attempts to understand the collective sense of French identity in the wake of revolutions and dynamic, shifting political movements. Losing the

³⁸ Emery, Elizabeth and Laura Morowitz. *Consuming the Past: The Medieval Revival in Fin-de-siècle France*. Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2003, 143.

³⁹ McGuinness, Patrick. *Poetry and Radical Politics in fin-de-siècle France*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2015, 195.

⁴⁰ Ellis, Katharine. *Interpreting the Musical Past: Early Music in Nineteenth-Century France*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005, 112.

⁴¹ Fenet, "Difference Rights," 28.

⁴² Weber, *Peasants*, 77. Also see p. 79: "As French speech and culture spread through southern towns and along the highways in the early nineteenth century, the language developed regional forms – mixtures of local terms camouflaged as French and of French words adapted to local usage and pronunciation."

Franco-Prussian War was an enormous stimulus for French creative life in that French citizens sought to show that their value system was based not on what was seen as a German mindset of economic power and subservience, but upon art and other creative endeavors, parts of which we will glimpse in the upcoming chapters.⁴³ And the use of French language reinforced the new social stratifications because the educated members of society (who primarily lived in cities) spoke French, thereby “adding still further to the growing gulf between city and village, and, in the city itself, contributing to a linguistic division between rich and poor.”⁴⁴

At this time, even though all soldiers were required to learn to read standard French, several generations and social standings of French people spoke a range of regional dialects. Through the mid-1860s, almost a quarter of the population did not speak what we would today identify as French, rather speaking dialects determined by one’s social standing and proximity to Paris.⁴⁵ The process of “purifying” the French language towards a more unified (Parisian) dialect, in the sense that one takes linguistic purism to mean “keeping ‘foreign elements’ out of the language,” seems to be informed by a fear of identity loss and wanting to protect something as close as possible to its original form.⁴⁶ There was also a functional purpose, in that linguistic unification aided the industrial development occurring as rural folk in search of work migrated to cities. Eventually, because local dialects were othered as the language of strangers (which “was part of their strangeness and their ridiculousness, something that was likely to be derided rather than admired”), learning French became a source of pride for those who were not born speaking French.⁴⁷ This divide slowed the spread and settling in of French in local, non-French speaking regions. This is in part because “local vocabulary was firmly rooted in local practice,” and local speakers retained this vocabulary alongside words from the French language related to technical innovations, modern-day inventions related to furniture,

⁴³ Faure, Michel and Vincent Vivès. *Histoire et poésie de la mélodie française*. Paris : CNRS Éditions, 2000, 110. Original : « Le fossé entre la bourgeoisie éclairée, les artistes et le peuple paraît définitivement infranchissable depuis l’incendie du musée du Louvre. Si 1870 marque un nouvel essor de l’art français, 1871 détermine les caractéristiques de ce nouvel art : il devient aristocratique... La France vaincue militairement vient de montrer qu’elle avait su conserver un système axiologique basé non pas comme le Reich sur le pouvoir économique et la servilité, mais sur l’art. »

⁴⁴ Weber, *Peasants*, 71.

⁴⁵ Bergeron, Katherine. *Voice Lessons: French Mélodie in the Belle Époque*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2010, 72-6. Also see p. 67 of Eugen Weber’s *Peasants into Frenchmen* for statistical verification of this information.

⁴⁶ Schaefer, “Discourse of Linguistic Nationalism,” 15.

⁴⁷ Weber, *Peasants*, 86-7.

clothing, and dwellings, new medical terminologies, and terms related to moral or intellectual life.⁴⁸ Thus, contrary to common thought today that France is authentically French and has always been as such, we see the persistence of vernacular tongues in France throughout the entirety of the nineteenth century and into the early twentieth century as well.

Conceiving of a unified or standardized language across the nation could be mapped onto the French situation as conceiving of an egalitarian bond between the people, even at the expense of removing the linguistic diversity present unto that point.⁴⁹ Because of the realization of language's connection to independence and autonomy, at later points throughout the nineteenth and twentieth century, the French language seemed to be a reminder of a golden age in French history when the modern conception of the country had just come into being (following the Revolution). Vincent Vivès indicates that the centralizing of French governmental and political power in tandem with a "linguistic cultural homogenization" is critical to understanding French nationhood, partially because France was one of the first European nations to establish an official language of diplomacy.⁵⁰ At a time when French national society was becoming more significant, more valuable, or even more influential than the various local-level societies, "national language was able to...override its local rivals" and serve as a tool to permit mutual levels of understanding and communication.⁵¹ This point is further underscored by William Beer's assertion that "the issue of language use was attendant upon the consolidation of the early state and was a clear element of revolutionary policy" at the birth of the French republic.⁵² The connection between "the physical reality of the mouth" producing language "could also speak to the national concerns of French education," in the 1800s when children's educations shifted towards consolidated language lessons, which, at least in the minds of more progressive

⁴⁸ Weber, *Peasants*, 91.

⁴⁹ Schaefer, "Discourse of Linguistic Nationalism," 5. Here Schaefer also points to her native Germany as a counter-example to France in that the same process of conceiving nation through language was "momentous for the Germans who, at that time, only formed a Sprachnation."

⁵⁰ Vivès, Vincent. « Musique vocale et culture française : Les affinités électives. » Dans *Parler, dire, chanter : Trois actes pour un même projet*, 49-59. Édité by George Durosoir. Paris : Presses de l'Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 2001, 52. This establishing of French as the official language of diplomatic matters occurred with the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia.

⁵¹ Weber, *Peasants*, 89.

⁵² Beer and Jacob, *Language Policy*, 14.

proponents, included poetry as part of the curriculum.⁵³ The culmination of these pre-revolutionary, revolutionary, and fin-de-siècle efforts contribute to a present-day belief that France “[attained] a high degree of national unity” in part due to its “hardened resistance to meaningful linguistic concessions.”⁵⁴

Crucially, as observed in the above discussion of Hobsbawm’s and Anderson’s works, questions surrounding the role of linguistic nationalism must also address the written form of the vernacular languages spoken in public spaces.⁵⁵ Part of this is related to the symbolic evocations of a language, often wrapped up in its literary use. In writing, “languages become more conscious exercises in social engineering in proportion as their symbolic significance prevails over their actual use.”⁵⁶ Precisely this is what happened with the French during the fin-de-siècle period in question. Through writing in what was becoming the standard national language, French nationals explored ways to relive and comprehend the past, a gesture which is equivalent to highlighting “what this past possesses in particular: what it has that is different from today.”⁵⁷ Written language aided in navigating the past through a nostalgic lens and the feeling of temporal foreignness with respect to former eras. During this mid-century time frame, we can see that French language and literature served as the guardians of *l’esprit français*, particularly when one considers that the French language took on a retroactive signification as a “voice of the people” during the infancy of France’s autonomy.⁵⁸ Weber points out the difficulty of shifting from teaching spoken French to establishing it as a written form, as well, saying that “the music of discourse” in official reports reflects this difficulty, as well:

⁵³ Bergeron’s p. 86-7. See *Voice Lessons*’ “Chapter 2: The Mother Tongue” for further details about language instruction, Paul Passy’s (founder of the International Phonetic Association) engagement with language reform, and the belief from Michel Bréal that poetry was the best way to teach students the language.

⁵⁴ Beer and Jacob, *Language Policy*, 14. Hobsbawm relatedly coins the term “philological nationalism, i.e. the insistence on the linguistic purity of the national vocabulary, which...is today inspiring a desperate French rearguard against the ravages of *franglais*” (the phenomenon of adding borrowed English words into the French vocabulary).

⁵⁵ Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*, 113. Also p. 52-3: “In other words, the actual or literal ‘mother tongue’, i.e. the idiom children learned from *illiterate* mothers and spoke for everyday use, was certainly not in any sense a ‘national language.’” The emphasis on illiterate has been added to demonstrate that the written word supports the process of linguistic nationalism.

⁵⁶ Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*, 112-3.

⁵⁷ Biget, Michelle. “Histoire Médiévale et Opéra au XIXe Siècle : un Moyen-Age de livre d’images.” In *Mittelalter und Mittelalterrezeption*, 257-72. Edited by Herbert Schneider. Hildesheim: Olms, 2005, 258. Original: « L’affirmation de l’individu, le sentiment poignant de solitude, conduisent à tenter de rompre avec la société et l’époque présentes : on se réfugie volontiers dans la Nature, dans le mythe ou le rêve, et surtout dans le temps révolu – l’Histoire. Dans cette perspective, faire revivre le passé équivaut à souligner ce que ce passé possède en particulier : ce qu’il a de différent d’avec l’aujourd’hui. »

⁵⁸ Vivès, « Musique vocale et culture française, » 52-4.

The music of discourse, once spare or lyrical, became coldly didactic, swollen with the terminology of administrative French. The very notion of language, like the term, refers to speech not writing; oral style has little in common with its literate neighbor. The rhythm of the phrase in the spoken language models the idea and its nuances – repetitive, melodic structures frame the fleeting thought, punctuated with sonorities, with striking images, with inflections of sound that convey inflections of meaning.⁵⁹

In reference to the writers addressed in the forthcoming chapters, the Symbolists of this period worked and wrote within this climate and were thus aware of the influence of the written word in shifting understandings of national consciousness, certainly as France (and Belgium) became more centralized and as an increasingly literate society gained access to printed works. As Gauger points out, “it is important to see that modern literature poses the problem of language...as an instrument of literature,” which is partially what separated Symbolist literature from its predecessors.⁶⁰ This connection of literature to solidifying linguistically-oriented nationalist trends is the umbrella under which most of this project lies. Symbolist writers in France took up their pens and made their command of evocative language their medium of choice. Symbolists aspired to strip language from a sense of absoluteness or concreteness to make it as evocative as possible, which is their solution to the linguistic questions being asked at the national level. This is what makes many Symbolist pieces so vague and even esoteric, since the genre developed during a time of the increasing prevalence of the French language in a country formerly populated with non-standardized regional dialects. As Chapter 2 will reveal, shifts in literary and poetic language that resulted from the linguistic consciousness figure intimately in the evolution of French vocal music (which sets that poetic material) throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Linguistic Nationalism in Belgium

Belgium’s capital city was an epicenter for both French and Belgian Symbolist writers, whose works lived in the atmosphere of changing notions of language use and reflected some changes occurring regarding the status of the French language in defining collective senses of identity. Gabriel Fauré, our central musical figure, visited Brussels to perform in annual concerts organized by a Brussels-based group that mostly

⁵⁹ Weber, *Peasants*, 91.

⁶⁰ Gauger, “Nationalism as a Factor in the Birth of Linguistics,” 125.

promoted Belgian avant-garde artists. Later portions of the project will elucidate more concretely what Fauré's specific contributions were to the musical soundscape of Brussels around the turn of the century, but for now, we remain focused upon broader explorations of national consciousness. Fauré's visits to Belgium are part of a larger degree of cultural exchange between Belgian and French artists, writers, and musicians which was made possible thanks to commonalities in language. This connection lends itself to a comparison between one approach to linguistic identity and another. Belgium must also be addressed in this narrative of linguistic nationalism, as its relationship to the French language bears some similarities with that of France, and because the literary and musical trends discussed in the ensuing chapters developed in Brussels and Paris concurrently.

Present-day Belgium is one of the few western European countries whose linguistic diversity between its two primary language groups has remained present since its declaration of sovereignty, even when the two languages were not legally equal. But the country's current bilingualism also resulted from a century of French dominance in public spaces and in political life, and Flemish-speakers' attempts at asserting their linguistic existence amidst this French dominance.⁶¹ While it would be tempting to assert that this privileging of French traces itself to the more recent period of French occupation throughout the 1800s, this trend is rooted even during Frankish occupation in the medieval era. A famous example of French suppression of Flanders residents and Dutch speakers led to the Battle of the Golden Spurs, wherein textile workers who resented French occupation killed Frenchmen whose identity was revealed based on the incorrect pronunciation of certain words. Even at this point, "the common people spoke Dutch dialects, while the urban patricians, who already preferred French, found their adopted language the language of political power."⁶² A later example would be during Spanish occupation of the lowlands in the seventeenth century. Under Louis XIV's reign, France captured the fortresses in Maastricht and Namur, and they sieged Brussels for 36 hours, which led to a

⁶¹ This divide between linguistic groups is also related to disagreements between protestants and Catholics, which Humes addresses at greater length in his history of Belgium.

⁶² Cook, Bernard A. *Belgium: A History*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2005, 13. Also worth noting that even though the national independence day is celebrated on July 21st, the Flemish people acknowledge July 11th as the Flemish national day, the day that the Battle of the Golden Spurs took place.

transference of the Spanish Netherlands to their Austrian relatives.⁶³ Belgium remained under Hapsburg rule until the 1790s when France absorbed Belgium as one of its “appendages.”⁶⁴ Considering France’s recent monarchy-free status, many Belgians believed that French occupation would lead to their own independence after centuries of being controlled by the western European powerhouses. The 1789 French Revolution inspired two unsuccessful attempts at revolt in separate Belgian cities, the failures of which forced each city’s leaders to join forces in seeking French aid.⁶⁵ Unsurprisingly, the French intervened because doing so allowed them to expand French territory to the Rhine and also provide the opportunity to seize the prized Dutch low territories as well.

The result of the 1789 Revolution was that Belgium became one of France’s appendages. When the French began occupying Belgium in the 1790s, they introduced comprehensive reforms which included anti-monarchical ideals of elevating the individual’s role in the social system.⁶⁶ As Witte says: “the decentralised class society was replaced by a single centralised state which ensured uniformity, equality and simplification.”⁶⁷ The French influence was nearly impossible to ignore because “the Francophone propertied professional class...organized the government...,wrote the constitution in French...and prescribed French as the language for parliamentary and judicial affairs.”⁶⁸ After attaining independence in 1830, a French-speaking elite still governed Belgian people “despite the linguistic frontier that divided the land” throughout several centuries of foreign rule.⁶⁹ Until this point, the linguistic divide had reflected the social divide between “a literate upper class and heterogenous mass of dialect-speaking groups,” similar to what had been occurring in France.⁷⁰ After all, French *refugies* lived in France, often working in spaces that elevated the prestige of French partially because of their acceptance into the French-speaking elite circles.⁷¹ It was understood that the best way to achieve the goal of establishing French as an “official” language was through education, and by reinforcing a

⁶³ Cook, *Belgium: A History*, 37-8.

⁶⁴ Cook, *Belgium: A History*, 49.

⁶⁵ Humes, Samuel. *Belgium: Long United, Long Divided*. London: Hurst and Company, 2014, 114-5.

⁶⁶ Humes, *Long United, Long Divided*, 118-9.

⁶⁷ Witte and Van Velthoven, *Language and Politics*, 56.

⁶⁸ Humes, *Long United, Long Divided*, 128.

⁶⁹ Humes, *Long United, Long Divided*, 3-4.

⁷⁰ Von Busekit, Astrid. “Nationalism versus Bilingualism.” In *Language, Nation, and State*, 105-32. Edited by Tony Judt and Denis Lacorne. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004, 108.

⁷¹ Witte and Van Velthoven, *Language and Politics*, 61.

need for “a standardized common language for communication,” which could guarantee that future societal elites would master and preserve “the language of this culture.”⁷² This focus on education by French elites was juxtaposed against a lack of Flemish-based education because francophones delegitimized Flemish to a mere “collection of dialects.”⁷³ During the time of centralization in France, Belgium too was establishing its sense of autonomy with heavy French-speaking influence and control. But because the French took part in Belgium’s quest for independence, French as a linguistic and cultural entity had similar associations with revolution the France of a few decades earlier.

The electoral, French-speaking elite class took it upon themselves to begin creating a uniform “Flemish” language for the purposes of disseminating and translating official documents, and those in power positions in Flanders aided in decisions related to spelling.⁷⁴ To counter French influence and in want of establishing Flemish as its equal linguistic counterpart, Flemish speakers began promoting the study of Flemish art and literature more intensely in the 1840s.⁷⁵ A crucial step in this process was the realization that Flanders was a geographical reality populated by Flemish people who saw themselves as part of an “imagined community,” in part due to the telling of stories in proto-nationalist tones addressed a mythologized past revolving around language – “the real soul of the people.”⁷⁶ The Flemish also saw that “language and nation are in a metonymic relationship,” and because of the association of French with social power and elevated status, Flemish-speakers began speaking French either out of elite-level social obligation or out of necessity for employment.⁷⁷ The Flemish movement was “deeply patriotic and respectful of the 1831 Constitution” by appealing to an article calling for “the freely chosen use of language;” this means that language freedom was embedded within the nascent mindset of national consciousness.⁷⁸ An 1859 response to Flemish activism resulted in a commission from the national ruling body that required Flemish provinces to be bilingual and

⁷² Witte and Van Velthoven, *Language and Politics*, 19-22.

⁷³ Cook, *Belgium: A History*, 81. Witte and Van Velthoven, however, point to the fact that in pre-independence Belgium, the king had made students in the Flemish region learn Dutch in primary school, and in secondary school, students had to spend equal amounts of time learning Dutch and French. See p. 58-60.

⁷⁴ Witte and Van Velthoven, *Language and Politics*, 68-71. This apparently “led to a spelling war between 1839-1844.”

⁷⁵ Cook, *Belgium: A History*, 82.

⁷⁶ Witte and Van Velthoven, *Language and Politics*, 71.

⁷⁷ Von Busekit, “Nationalism versus Bilingualism,” 106-8. Also see Witte and Van Velthoven p. 70.

⁷⁸ Von Busekit, “Nationalism versus Bilingualism,” 111.

gave Flanders residents the right to use both languages in public spaces. Walloons (French-speakers) apparently resisted the policy in their own societal spaces, but those working to elevate Flemish celebrated the commission because it meant that they had partially achieved the goal of legitimizing Flemish.⁷⁹

During the Franco-Prussian War, territories in Belgium were again pieces of the larger geo-political puzzle in Europe. In the late 1860s before the six-month long battle between France and Prussia between 1870 and 1871, France annexed the French-speaking portions of Belgium because they feared what was to be unification of Germany. Britain, too, felt uneasy about the potential power shift; so, they wanted to guarantee that Belgium would remain neutral during the conflict and initiated an agreement to which “France acceded in order to court the good will of Britain.”⁸⁰ As in France, Belgians modernized in many respects following the war, including by fortifying the military in case of another attack from the east (i.e. Prussia). Just as the years 1870-1 proved crucial in the developments of French language policies and the ensuing cultural products of said changes, 1873 saw the first official language laws in Belgium, which began changing the tides of Flemish fights for equality.⁸¹

Hobsbawm points out that the nationalist movements of the 1880s-1910s (i.e. after the Franco-Prussian War) differed from those of prior periods because of a sense that “any body of people considering themselves a ‘nation’ claimed the right to self-determination,” which led to a “multiplication of potential ‘unhistorical’ nations” that allowed individual ethnic and language groups to become “increasingly decisive” criteria of forming new national entities.⁸² Coinciding with this period, we see a heightened presence of Flemish-oriented political movements in public and governmental affairs. Hobsbawm claims that the nationalism in the decades preceding World War I differs for a few main reasons. This period saw the abandonment of the unspoken rule of “the threshold principle,” which dictated that a nation had to be of a certain size to claim “the right to self-determination.” Abandoning this idea meant that “ethnicity and

⁷⁹ Cook, *Belgium: A History*, 83. These concessions are also described in Von Busekit’s words as such: “initial reforms were appreciated as important political victories only by a small fraction of the population. Consequently, only when the movement began to grow did the Flemish population realize to what extent it had been submitted to injustices.”

⁸⁰ Cook, *Belgium: A History*, 77.

⁸¹ Witte and Van Velthoven outline some of the precedents for this linguistic policy from before 1830, much of which largely failed. See p. 58-63 for further insights.

⁸² Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*, 102.

language became central, increasingly decisive or even the only criteria of potential nationhood.”⁸³ While the Flemish were not necessarily fighting for nationhood, Hobsbawm’s principle of using language as a tool for self-determination can be applied to the Flemish movement. In the 1860s two strains of thought emerged and polarized the movement. One side (comprised of clergy and French-speaking progressives) believed that the label of “Flemish” could be weaponized to protect traditional values in the wake of modernization, while the liberal Flamings were opposed to “Frenchification” and believed that linguistic emancipation was “only possible on the basis of “Flemish,” as it was the language spoken uniquely by Belgian peoples.”⁸⁴ The Flemish movement ultimately did not achieve its goals of attaining equal status to that of the French a) because of a lack of actual parliamentary support, even though they were indebted to constitutional policy⁸⁵ and b) because they conceded to laws that supported regional bilingualism.⁸⁶ Flemish peoples accepted this concession since most were already bilingual, and bilingualism supported their image of Belgium as a nation of multi-lingual citizens.⁸⁷

These language-based divisions reflect a feeling of intimidation on the part of francophone Belgians in the presence of Belgian Dutch speakers. Because the “dominant language community is suspicious of generalized bilingualism and will not tolerate heterogeneity in its territory,” the creation of boundaries between linguistic regions results in a co-existence between monolingual states as opposed to a single multilingual nation.⁸⁸ Therefore, we see a counter-movement by French-speakers from and living in Wallonia arise in the last years of the nineteenth century. This movement, like its Flemish counterpart, also failed to attain its goals because it came along fifty years after the Flemish movement and was led by French-speaking elites rather than having emerged from the populace. French-speaking Walloons could also not make

⁸³ Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*, 102. The third reason he offers is that the political climate was shifting rightward.

⁸⁴ Witte and Van Velthoven, *Language and Politics*, 73-4.

⁸⁵ Witte and Van Velthoven, *Language and Politics*, 76. “Although the debates were sometimes rather emotional, their place on the political agenda remained limited. For the time being, there was still a lack of well-organised parliamentary pressure groups. The Flemish Movement was still mainly an extra-parliamentary movement (a number of organisations and press media) which tried to support its figureheads through public opinion.”

⁸⁶ Witte and Van Velthoven, *Language and Politics*, 76.

⁸⁷ Von Busekit, “Nationalism versus Bilingualism,” 112-3.

⁸⁸ Witte, *Language and Politics*, 27. Heterogeneity here is referring to bilingualism or the existence of two languages in the same space simultaneously. This is not the case in Belgium except in isolated spaces like Brussels or in some portions of present-day Flanders.

exclusive claims of being “the exclusive linguistic homeland” for French language in the same way the Flemish speakers could, which is precisely because France, of course, claimed such linguistic heritage.⁸⁹ Aside from the relative failure to attain absolute dominance in Belgian identity, both language-based socio-political movements have additional similarities. Firstly, both movements took advantage of the rise of print forms to precipitate their discourse, which perhaps aided the Walloon movement more than the Flemish because of the latter’s timing during a golden age in the circulation of print materials.⁹⁰

As an outsider observing Belgium, considering the idea of liminality is critical to understanding a nation whose history reflects both multilingual and multinational perspectives. Liminality can also be applied to French linguistic history, but to a lesser extent and in earlier periods of French history. For example, in some instances, the presence of multiple languages produced a lingua franca used throughout the country, which did not happen in Belgium because of “the presence of two linguistic groups...of roughly equal size.”⁹¹ Where the concept of liminal space can be applied to understanding Belgium is by considering that today’s multilingualism in the country dates back to previous centuries of back and forth between European neighbors with their own language backgrounds that left a mark on Belgian identity. Alternatively, in France, the French language became a de facto language, and establishing that linguistic precedent gradually erased the smaller linguistically-defined communities that spoke other vernacular tongues from existence. We saw that the French linguistic projects were supported by the rise of print media, and we will see that Symbolists obviously worked within the idiom of written language to suit their agenda of shifting poetic language. And the Flemish movement in Belgium was partially unsuccessful because of its lack of connection to powerful institutions and because it preceded an era of print dominance in Belgium. But in the cases of both France

⁸⁹ Von Busekit, “Nationalism versus Bilingualism,” 114-5. Also: “The confusion between Walloon identity and French-speaking Belgian identity as well as the difficulty to express an identity as forceful as the Flemish activist one, in a context wherein both linguistic communities were hardly comparable, undoubtedly hindered the emergence of a Walloon movement.” (115)

⁹⁰ Von Busekit, “Nationalism versus Bilingualism,” 115-6.

⁹¹ Beer and Jacob, *Language Policy*, 12. Beer and Jacob note that this lingua franca (de-facto) language is English nowadays, especially in regions of eastern Europe.

and Belgium, “it was mainly in the nineteenth century that the superior attractions of French sapped the cultural and literary activities without which a language cannot survive.”⁹²

Another difference between Belgium and France is the geographic divisions of regions within each country. During the nineteenth century, because of French efforts to consolidate and centralize governmental power, the French nation became a much more cohesive entity.⁹³ Meanwhile, the geographic separations within Belgium had almost always been along linguistic barriers, and the two main linguistic groups are equivalently sized in terms of number of speakers and sizes of the geographic regions in which each language is prominent.⁹⁴ Simply stated by Humes in his opening chapter, “despite its linguistic frontier that divided the land, a series of foreign rules progressively unified the country and centralized its governance.”⁹⁵ Belgium, the microcosm of European politics, still carried its multinational spirit across its development as a young nation, which was fueled by “a rising sense of national consciousness.”⁹⁶ In essence, the case of Belgium explores how language played a direct role in shaping the national identity. While its historical bilingualism complicates some of the assertions in this thesis, which posits the uniqueness of francophone linguistic nationalism in the fin-de-siècle, the similarities between linguistic nationalist projects in France and equivalent discussions among francophone Belgians are undeniably connected to one another.

Perhaps best phrased by Hobsbawm: “...the acquisition of national consciousness cannot be separated from the acquisition of other forms of social and political consciousness during this period: they all go together.”⁹⁷ With these linguistic developments and shifting ideas about the significance of language serving as background context, the second chapter will explore just how inseparable national consciousness is from other forms of socio-political and cultural awareness. This will be undertaken through an analysis of the origins of the Symbolist movement in francophone Europe alongside developments in the genre of French-language vocal music, known as *mélodie*. This relationship warrants analysis because the composers gave

⁹² Weber, *Peasants*, 81.

⁹³ This is ignoring the fact that, despite the image of centralization, several dialects of French were still spoken well into the 1860s.

⁹⁴ This is assuming for the moment that we set aside the 1% of German speakers in eastern Belgium.

⁹⁵ Humes, *Long United, Long Divided*, 3-4

⁹⁶ Humes, *Long United, Long Divided*, 127

⁹⁷ Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*, 130.

musical voice to a poetic genre which strove to find a new voice in response to shifting definitions related to the essence of being and speaking French. In “*Vibristes* of Words and Music,” we will be evaluating Symbolism’s and *mélodie*’s emergences within the atmosphere of linguistic nationalism and socio-political concerns related to the centralization and control of the French-language use in both France and Belgium. The second half of the thesis will delve into further detail regarding the rapport between text-writers and text-setters through a comparison of Fauré song cycles in Chapter 3, followed by a voyage in Chapter 4 to fin-de-siècle Brussels to glimpse *expositions* wherein Fauré’s music proved instrumental in the Belgian conception of avant-garde musicianship.

Chapter 2: *Vibristes* of Words and Music⁹⁸

Symbolism: Origins and Aesthetics

The Symbolist movement arose in the mid-nineteenth century and emerged out of the political climate of these linguistic polemics. Much of the scholarship agrees that the label for this movement is (ironically) rather vague, Bergeron writing that: “As the culmination of an ever more expansive literary history, symbolism had the potential...to mean everything and nothing at once.”⁹⁹ Nevertheless, the label adhered to the group of writers based on their aesthetic, and it has remained as the term for the poetic and literary movement since its inception.¹⁰⁰ As the name suggests, Symbolism is often categorized as a style movement whose poetic images revolve around allusions, gestures, and symbols often from nature or the non-human physical realm. Jessica Duchen summarizes Symbolism as a “subjective art of suggestion,” a process of “retreating into an introverted world,” which she (perhaps questionably) interprets as a reaction against the materialism and industrialization of the late nineteenth-century.¹⁰¹ The introverted tendency of the poetry mirrors France’s turn to its own language and history in its search for cohesive identity, an unintended consequence of which could be the fostering “an unhealthy obsession with the self...and an indifference to the modern world.”¹⁰² Symbolist poetry tended to seal itself off “more than any poetry before it,” despite the fact that their prose publications were “unexpectedly open” in terms of writers addressing their surroundings and engaging in the contemporary political scene.¹⁰³

⁹⁸ The title for this chapter is from terminology I found doing archival work in Brussels. An article in *Le Guide Musicale* described the collision of artists and musicians at the 1888 exposition as a collision between “vibristes de la palette” and “vibristes de la musique.” Upon discovering the term “vibristes,” which lacks an equivalent English translation (the closest of which I would say is “shakers,” I thought it fit nicely within the paradigm of this project: hence the introduction of my neologism “vibristes des mots.”

⁹⁹ Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, 123.

¹⁰⁰ There is evidence that several Symbolists at the time actually did not like the label being attached to their work. Bergeron cites Paul Valéry as having claimed the term as being “a bottomless pit.” She also cites an interview Verlaine gave wherein he essentially claimed ignorance about the Symbolist movement existing, let alone that he felt he was not part of the movement. Also see Rosemary Yeoland’s monograph p. 51 for an example of this discussion with respect to Camille Maclair.

¹⁰¹ Duchen, Jessica. *Gabriel Fauré*. London: Phaidon Press Unlimited, 2000, 129. While I do not really agree, I felt it necessary to include to show the confusion about what Symbolism is, when it started, what its concerns are, etc.

¹⁰² Donnellon, Dierdre. “French Music Since Berlioz: Issues and Debates.” In *French Music Since Berlioz*, 1-18. Edited by R. Langham Smith and Caroline Potter. Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2006, 5.

¹⁰³ McGuinness, *Poetry and Radical Politics*, 30.

In 1886, Jean Moréas published his famous manifesto entitled “Le Symbolisme,” wherein he sought to document the evolution of modern French literature. Despite its “fictive genealogy,” contemporary critics have tended to recycle the linear progression Moréas traces from Victor Hugo’s Romantic works through Decadence and Parnassianism, and positions Symbolism as the logical final step in this evolution.¹⁰⁴ He writes that: “we have already proposed the label of symbolism as the only one capable of reasonably designating the real tendency of the creative spirit in art.”¹⁰⁵ He also writes that: “Symbolism needs an archetypal and complex style: unpolluted words, firm periods to act as buttresses and alternate with others of undulating faintness, the significant pleonasm, the mysterious ellipsis . . . , every trope daring and multiform; lastly, good French – restored and modernized.”¹⁰⁶ Moréas’s essay commonly stands as the essay marking the beginning of the Symbolist movement and its aims “to reassert a sense of poetic autonomy” with respect to the literary movements in its ancestral lineage.¹⁰⁷ The actual beginning of the movement varies depending on whether or not one includes poets like Paul Verlaine and Charles Baudelaire, both of whom were more active in the 1860s and 70s. Current scholarship favors the inclusion of both figures as contributors to the movement. Historical events, like the Franco-Prussian War and World War I can also be convenient demarcations; but “such dating . . . excludes most of Verlaine’s most interesting poetry and all of Baudelaire’s.”¹⁰⁸ Rather than constructing a chronological timeline following Jean Moréas’s essay, the following section will present a survey of literature across the movement to present the kinds of aesthetics brewing in the Symbolist pot of thought during Fauré’s time, and present ideologies that contextualize later discussion of Fauré’s compositions that engage with several authors mentioned in this chapter.

But to return to the point about chronology with respect to Symbolism’s origins and departures, we must briefly reference the era of Decadent poetry and literature which preceded Symbolism.¹⁰⁹ French

¹⁰⁴ Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, 123.

¹⁰⁵ Original: « Nous avons déjà proposé la dénomination de symbolisme comme la seule capable de désigner raisonnablement la tendance actuelle de l’esprit créateur en art. »

¹⁰⁶ Weber, Eugen. *Paths to the Present: Aspects of European Thought from Romanticism to Existentialism*. New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1960, 206.

¹⁰⁷ McGuinness, *Poetry and Radical Politics*, 62-3.

¹⁰⁸ Porter, *Crisis of French Symbolism*, 15.

¹⁰⁹ Of note is a “transition period” between Decadence and Symbolism, which is coined as Parnassianism. For fear of getting too bogged down in theorizing what to include in the canon of Symbolism and repeating previous scholarly attempts to do so, I have set aside the discussion of Parnassianism for this project.

Decadence represented “a desire among poets and writers to create a language that could express and suggest feelings, as opposed to objective realities depicted by the predecessors.”¹¹⁰ This earlier movement is most strongly associated with Charles Baudelaire, who is often understood as among the first class of Symbolists and thus serves as a transition between old and new, so to speak. Symbolists differ from their decadent ancestors in the distinctions about the value and direction toward which poetry should focus, believing that the genre should be “an aesthetic end in itself,” rather than remaining beholden to some external aspiration, “something outside poetry.”¹¹¹ This is partially evident in the fact that Symbolists situate themselves in historical context, not through the use of “declining civilization, revolutions, and atrophying cultures, but in the discussion of etymology and literary tradition,” particularly in their prose theoretical texts.¹¹² As revealed in McGuinness’s analysis of “Le Symbolisme,” Symbolist poetic works invoke literary precedents in such a way that taps into a desire to take poetry “back to a place more autonomous and more ‘purely’ literary.”¹¹³ Despite this, McGuinness suggests that the more relevant debates “are not between radical and conservative...but between progressives who believe in the complete autonomy of art within a radical politics and those progressives who believe in reconciling art with politics.”¹¹⁴ Laurence Porter frames this as a crisis “that erupted when the Symbolists questioned the linguistic vehicle of poetry and the very act of communication,” and a crisis which persisted throughout the duration of the movement.¹¹⁵

Many of “the original symbolists were a mismatched group of poets from the 1890s, some now forgotten, many not even French.”¹¹⁶ Even though some of these poets originated from places outside of France, those who took part in the literary movement wrote in French, and the popularity and prominence of the literary movement remained in francophone Europe. With a handful of these “not even French” Symbolists hailing from present-day Switzerland (with Moréas having been born in Greece), a more sizeable group of Symbolist writers were Belgian. As addressed previously, the multi-linguistic and ethnic heritage of

¹¹⁰ Donnellon, “French Music Since Berlioz,” 5.

¹¹¹ McGuinness, *Poetry and Radical Politics*, 40.

¹¹² McGuinness, *Poetry and Radical Politics*, 62.

¹¹³ McGuinness, *Poetry and Radical Politics*, 62-3.

¹¹⁴ McGuinness, *Poetry and Radical Politics*, 128.

¹¹⁵ Porter, *Crisis of French Symbolism*, x.

¹¹⁶ Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, 123.

Belgian people leads to a conclusion that Belgium represents a cultural collision and some degree of hybrid identity. Many French natives, rather than excluding this ethnic community of francophone oddballs, were inclined to believe that these writers, including the likes of Maurice Maeterlinck and Charles Van Lerberghe, commanded the language just as well as French nationals.¹¹⁷ Interestingly, these writers appeared to be engaging in a commonly-seen trend of defining national identity by “claiming a language over a place, and doing so in order to include foreigners.”¹¹⁸ Per McGuinness:

Rarely is the location of a poem associated with a country, and even more rarely with France. Those places that do find their way into Symbolist poetry mostly do so either as mere décor...or in the form of indistinct ‘septentrional’ (northern, Germanic, Wagnerian) landscapes, such as the vague mythical regions of Pelléas and Mélisande.¹¹⁹

This is supported by the fact that so many French writers fled to Belgium during difficult times in France (or for exile), and Belgian-born writers flocked to France for training and for life in a thriving cultural locale.

While this example of blurred physical boundaries can be understood as a loss of some aspect of individualized identity, claiming common linguistic heritage over geographical place of origin reflects a sense of linguistic nationalism across national boundaries. Not only does this trend occur because of the shared language; it also validates a notion that language itself can establish a national identity. Through the common language, non-native French-speaking writers engaged in “attempts at definition of the aims of their poetic revolt,” Henri Peyre even adding that that they were equally as unclear as the French in doing so because of the nebulous, somewhat fragmented nature of the literary movement.¹²⁰ As we learned in above discussions about the formation of national identities, Anderson, Hobsbawm and others relate, either directly or otherwise, the prevalence of linguistic nationalism back to printed versions of written vernacular languages. So, the Symbolist prose publications, wider distribution of printed works, and exchange between the two

¹¹⁷ In the case of Maeterlinck, Dutch was his first language.

¹¹⁸ McGuinness, *Poetry and Radical Politics*, 215.

¹¹⁹ McGuinness, *Poetry and Radical Politics*, 212.

¹²⁰ Peyre, Henri. *What is Symbolism?* Translated by Emmett Parker. University of Alabama Press, 1980, 85. I say fragmented here because the Symbolist movement largely made its headway by way of smaller papers/publications and was not incredibly unified. On pages 2-3: “Symbolism, thanks to that absence of clearly formulated doctrine, retained in fact that variety and independence of each individual talent. It never became officially sanctioned and long held a place as a rebellious movement, and thus it was dear to nonconformist youth.”

predominant francophone nations in Europe reveal that Symbolists had their own vision of a collective identity, and shared linguistic heritage via written work was the means for creating this transnational identity.

The Belgian Symbolists, with their existence in a cultural liminal space with respect to France, embodied the quintessential Symbolist aesthetic of “fusions and doubles, about the in-between realms of language, thought, and perception.”¹²¹ Despite including Belgians in the literary community through their written works, many Belgians outside this literary context were perceived as foreign and therefore separate, in keeping with tensions between Belgians and French nationals early in Belgium’s independence. Even though many Belgian creative figures travelled to Paris to live, work, and even during periods of exile, the French were usually willing to consider their literary counterparts as linguistically skilled while resisting a full embrace of their Belgian brethren in other parts of their culture. This would lead one to believe that the French seemed tolerant of francophone Belgians because they were to some extent cut from the same cloth, especially considering that French-speaking Belgians were typically upper-level societal members.

On the other hand, however, some French writers used overtly racist rhetoric to ostracize the group of literary figures most similar to them.¹²² As a result, this racialized context of some Symbolist writings separated French people from the group of Europeans arguably most similar to them in comparison to their peers in the nation-building process. This act of willful separation is in keeping with the trend we saw earlier of the French (as in “from France”) turning inward to better understand their sense of self. This isolationism also results from linguistic purism, which seeks to keep “foreign elements” out of language, and which is “informed by some vague fear of identity loss.”¹²³ Introducing Belgians into the Symbolist canon could have thus introduced fears of losing the “purely French” essence of Symbolist works, and the racialized rhetoric could have been used to attack the “foreign elements” in the movement. Even though McGuinness addresses

¹²¹ McGuinness, *Poetry and Radical Politics*, 215.

¹²² See McGuinness, *Poetry and Radical Politics*, 212-26 for further insights. In addition to talking about the “racializing” of Belgian Symbolists, he raises several points related to the general role of place in Symbolist writings and suggests how the “German-ness” of some imagery reflects some of those tensions between French and Belgian writers. As we saw in Chapter 1, these closing decades of the nineteenth century coincide with the rising influence of the Flemish movement in the wake of French dominance, further illuminating the tensions during this period.

¹²³ Schaefer, “Discourse of Linguistic Nationalism,” 15. Schaefer pushes this point further by referencing Goran Wolf, who writes a chapter in the monograph to which Schaefer wrote the introduction. She offers that: “linguistic purism may be informed by the desire to enhance the status of a language vis-à-vis its more ‘refined’ neighboring languages. However, the step from purism to nationalism coupled with xenophobia may be a very short one.

this racialized trend, he does not fully attend to reasons why this would have occurred except to say that the French might have felt threatened by Belgium's hybrid ethnic and linguistic heritage. Because the French nation was beginning to succeed in achieving the goal of forming a unified linguistic standard, bilingualism and multilingualism was still very much present in Belgium as the young nation was becoming a viable national counterpart alongside other, more historically powerful European nations. Thus, what we had seen about an acceptance of the even cultural exchange between France and Belgium's capital cities was offset by the words of figures who saw Belgians as counterproductive to the project of building linguistic cohesion. Even though we now know that most francophones (i.e. elites) in Belgium were fighting for localized multilingualism in Flemish-speaking regions in addition to establishing French dominance, one can see here the unique tensions between French nationals, French-speaking Belgians, and minority Flemish speakers both from the standpoints of everyday communication and in the literary output as well.

Symbolist aesthetic values reveal an awareness of attempts at achieving linguistic purity, especially in the French national context. While removing the foreign elements of a language occurs in various linguistic settings, the Symbolists sought to find language "that renders the author's vision and that strives to communicate while evoking that vision, especially that of the poet." Through "a recasting of the means of expression, whether they be musical, pictorial, or especially linguistic and literary, that is through a renovation of vocabulary, syntax, of both verse and stanza forms, and by breaking with constricting rules," Symbolists believed they could arrive at a more purified poetic language.¹²⁴ Gauger alludes to the fact that seventeenth-century thought was deeply concerned with the notions of "la pureté" and "la clarté" (purity and clarity) of language, which eventually became "a positive hallmark of the French language" rather than a stylistic claim during that particular period.¹²⁵ Aspiring to create a more "transcendent" corpus of works, these writers "remained tied to the use of language, a system of conventions," which Porter points out as being antithetical

¹²⁴ Peyre, *What is Symbolism?*, 9-10.

¹²⁵ Gauger, "Nationalism as a Factor in the Birth of Linguistics," 126-7.

to the task of aspiring towards less concrete literary form.¹²⁶ All of that being said, Symbolist verse represents one of the first attempts to liberate French verse, a phenomenon best summarized by Henri Peyre:

This symbolist verse constituted the first concrete attempt to free French verse from syllabic count and to base rhythm on tonic stresses: no more imposed alternation of feminine and masculine rhymes, no more fixed stanzas... Some great poets have preferred to stay with traditional meter... Certain poets of this symbolist group... nonetheless returned, thanks to that freedom of verse, to the song poem and to a popular and sentimental lyricism... The enrichment brought to French poetry by this symbolist liberation has been incalculable. To undertake this task much courage was needed, not only to take by assault the old fortress of traditional verse, but to run the risks of facility, of lack of rigor and form, of clumsiness disagreeable to the ear, inherent in the polymorphous and autonomous verse that is, henceforth, French verse.¹²⁷

Using Music to Find Words: Symbolists Invoke Music

To create works that challenged poetic tradition, Symbolist writers believed that combining words and images in new ways imbued new levels meaning to a poem.¹²⁸ In general, many Symbolists were fascinated by what Peyre calls “an invasion of literature... by poetry, and even an invasion of the other arts (painting, music especially) by poetry.”¹²⁹ This “invasive” relationship that Peyre depicts between Symbolism and other genres emerges from the definition of the term “symbol” that he constructs, saying that:

The word *symbol* was to keep from its origins and the still unsure uses that had been made of it before the second half of the nineteenth century a few connotations that, succinctly enumerated, seem to be these: It is a sign that as such demands deciphering, an interpretation by whoever is exposed to it or is struck by it and who wishes to understand it and savor its mystery. The sign represents or evokes in a concrete manner what is innate within it, the thing signified and more or less hidden. The two meanings, one concrete and the other ulterior and perhaps more profound, are fused into a single entity in the symbol... Within the symbol there is therefore a polyvalence, a multiplicity of meanings, certain ones addressed to all, others to the initiated alone.¹³⁰

Based on the understanding of the term “symbolism,” one can extrapolate that Symbolism could be defined as a literary movement based on the double-sidedness between concrete realities and significations of said

¹²⁶ Porter, *Crisis of French Symbolism*, 9-11. With this assertion, we see the “crisis” that arises with the Symbolist movement, which Porter uses as the backbone for his work.

¹²⁷ Peyre, *What is Symbolism?*, 127.

¹²⁸ Richards, Katherine. “A View of the Chamber Music ‘Renaissance’ from Parnassus.” In *Regarding Fauré*. Edited by Tom Gordon. Philadelphia: Gordon and Breach Publishers, 1999, 85. This reflects Symbolist understandings of synesthesia, wherein various mediums of expression could communicate with one another because each system of expression ultimately refers to the same source inspiration.

¹²⁹ Peyre, *What is Symbolism?*, 91.

¹³⁰ Peyre, *What is Symbolism?*, 8.

reality. As a result, writers of the Symbolist style often used music as a symbol of their goal to liberate poetry: in other words, “a symbol of the poet’s newfound freedom.”¹³¹

Particularly, music was most useful “as an abstract and expressive form” to which Symbolist poetry could aspire, which is usually how music enters the poetry and Symbolist discussions about poetry.¹³² As a response to the belief that music “[had] been given its leading position as being more able to support the sensory experience,” Michael Lehmann observes during this time “a new consumption of poems” which were “more declaimed than read, more listened to than intellectually understood. They were poems to be listened to like a ‘music of syllables.’”¹³³ By projecting new levels of musicality on the process of enhancing poetic language, Symbolists became emblematic of their prose writings about desires to reshape French literary and poetic language. In other words, many of these poets wanted their poetic language to unfold as naturally as the most expressive and suggestive music did.

Joseph Acquisto asserts that the relationship between the Symbolists and their evocations of music proves essential to better understanding the Symbolist cause, saying that: “music is the vehicle through which these poets perform the release of poetry from its associations with Idealism” (as in the preceding Parnassian movement), and doing so brings them closer to making poetry a more “active and transformative” form of expression. From this, he emphasizes the Symbolist goal of “rewriting the conventions of poetry as well as commonplace assumptions...about the relationship of poetry and music.”¹³⁴ The suggestion here is that that these poets felt trapped by their associations with earlier forms, and music was juxtaposed against poetry in order for poetry to dissociate from those earlier preconceptions. Wrestling with these feelings was a process of mutual engagement between their prose, poetry, and discussions about music within these forms. Thus, “since music is the site of the intertextuality through which the Symbolist movement emerged, questions of [its] characterization...are inextricably linked to questions about the way the Symbolists defined poetry

¹³¹ Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, 126.

¹³² Revuluri, Sindhumanthi. “Sound and music in Proust: what the Symbolists heard.” In *Proust and the Arts*, 179-90. Edited by Christie McDonald and François Proulx. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015, 181.

¹³³ Lehmann, Michael. “How Should Music Care About Poetry? Parnasse and French Art Song around 1890.” In *Dzielo muzyczne i jego funkcje VI*, 105-116. Edited by Anna Nowak. Bydgoszcz, Poland: Wydawnictwo Uczelniane Akademii Muzycznej im F. Nowowiejskiego, 2010, 106-8.

¹³⁴ Acquisto, Joseph. *French Symbolist Poetry and the Idea of Music*. Hampshire, England: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2006, 6.

against music.”¹³⁵ Acquisto’s position regarding the necessity for understanding the relationship between music and poetic language is foundational for the discussion about the intersection of poetry and music in the nineteenth century.

Perhaps the easiest way to begin discussing the word-music relations in Symbolist poetics would be by addressing Wagner’s influence in Paris, and the consequences of having a musician dominate cultural life in the latter half of the nineteenth century. As Bergeron points out, “if the youth movement called symbolism had one unifying trait, it was the antiestablishment stance.”¹³⁶ French (as in France) *wagnérisme* peaked during “the artistic and cultural vanguard of Paris, from the 1860s to 1880s,” which includes the years of the Franco-Prussian War.¹³⁷ Even though the prevalence of *wagnérisme* for some exemplified the dominance of German-speaking world in cultural life, some writers felt uninhibited in designating themselves as “wagnérien” because doing so demonstrated their anti-establishment credentials they aligned with Wagner’s.¹³⁸ Relatedly, Dierdre Donnellon states that:

many French Wagnerites, such as Catulle Mendès, Edouard Dujardin and Villiers de L’Isle Adam, came from the French literary world, and the fanaticism with which they defended their idol was frequently inspired by the intensity and vividness of his music, which, to some extent, achieved the emotive and expressive qualities which they were often struggling to find in their own art.¹³⁹

In fact, those who were most receptive to Wagner were literary figures, many of whom were the first Symbolist writers, like Charles Baudelaire, Jules François Felix Fleury-Husson (who wrote under the nom-de-plume Champfleury), and Stéphane Mallarmé.¹⁴⁰ The first Wagner embracers and fanatics were “dissatisfied with the contemporary devaluation of poetic language,” which resulted from having a more engaged, musically-aware, and critical audience than in previous decades, in addition to Wagner’s influence on musical

¹³⁵ Acquisto, *Symbolist Poetry and the Idea of Music*, 3-6.

¹³⁶ Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, 124.

¹³⁷ Acquisto, *Symbolist Poetry and the Idea of Music*, 9.

¹³⁸ Singletary, Suzanne M. “Wagner versus Wagnerism: The Case of the Gesamtkunstwerk, or Will the Real Wagner Please Stand Up.” In *Imago Musicae*, v. 27/28 (2014-15), 151-74. Edited by Anne Leonard and Tim Shepard. Lucca, Italy: Libreria Musicale Italiana, 160.

¹³⁹ Donnellon, “French Music Since Berlioz,” 5. She also offers that because of Baudelaire’s being seen as one of the last Decadents and one of the first Symbolists, this trend of referring to Wagner extends into Decadence as well.

¹⁴⁰ Lees, Heath. *Mallarmé and Wagner: Music and Poetic Language*. Hampshire, England: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2007, 9.

discourse.¹⁴¹ Engaging with Wagner and Wagnerian aesthetics allowed Symbolists to assert their poetic goals of separating the genre from previous genres, as André Cœuroy indicates:

Symbolism had no need for Wagnerism to be what it was: it was enough to react, by the natural game of flux and reflux of ideas and sensibilities, against Parnassianism and rhetorical Romanticism... Wagnerism did not create the Symbolist climate. It simply came at the right time into an already hot musical climate. It limited itself to helping Symbolists more consciously take control of their “musicality.”¹⁴²

This relationship between Symbolists and Wagner manifests in the 1885 founding of the French periodical, the *Revue wagnérienne*. With several other periodical reviews in circulation throughout French-speaking Europe, this periodical was active during a golden age in French journalism. It should also be said that one of the primary modes of dissemination of Symbolist pieces was through “the proliferation of little reviews...[and] the great number of thin books of verse,” which resulted in a community of poets and the poetically-literate in France, the primary locale for Symbolist works.¹⁴³ Despite this, the *Revue* stood out because of its sole focus upon Wagner throughout the entirety of the journal’s lifetime; the *Revue* reviewed performances and discussed Wagner’s music to an extent, but the “stated purpose was to explore all cultural manifestations of Wagnerism and popularize his works in France.”¹⁴⁴

Hampton D. Morris also suggests that the journal should be given more credit for inaugurating the Symbolist movement due to the content of one of its first issues. In January of 1886, the opening article of “perhaps the most important issue of the *Revue wagnérienne*” consisted of eight sonnets, each of which was written by poets including Stéphane Mallarmé and Paul Verlaine, leading French writers of their time.¹⁴⁵ Aside from their thematic relevance to the review’s primary focus, the sonnets were “written in a boldly unorthodox

¹⁴¹ Quote from Lees, *Mallarmé and Wagner*, 59. The other background information also comes from Lees.

¹⁴² Cœuroy, André. *Wagner et l’esprit romantique*. Gallimard : Paris, 1965, 271. Original: « le symbolisme n’avait nul besoin du wagnérisme pour être ce qu’il fut : il lui suffisait de réagir, par le jeu naturel du flux et du reflux des idées et des sensibilités, contre le Parnasse et le romantisme rhéteur... Le wagnérisme n’a pas créé un climat symboliste. Il est simplement venu se placer à point nommé dans un climat musical déjà chaud qu’il a fait torride. Il s’est borné à aider les symbolistes à prendre plus nettement conscience de leur « musicalité ». » While this source is old, there is very little work that steps into the Belgian perspective of Wagner(ism), and his monograph touches it briefly.

¹⁴³ Peyre, *What is Symbolism?*, 97.

¹⁴⁴ Du Quenoy, Paul. *Wagner and the French Muse*. Academica Press: Palo Alto, CA, 2011, 78.

¹⁴⁵ Morris, D. Hampton. *A Descriptive Study of the Periodical Revue wagnérienne Concerning Richard Wagner*. Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2002, 32. See also p. 79: “...the *Revue wagnérienne*’s most significant single contribution was the publication of the eight Symbolist sonnets in January 1886. This date, rather than Jean Moréas’s manifesto in *Le Figaro*, should mark the official birth of Symbolism.” The manifesto in question was published in September of 1886, aptly titled *Le Symbolisme*, which was discussed in the previous section.

style.”¹⁴⁶ The theories presented and elaborated upon in the *Revue* “acted as a catalyst for the determination of a new poetical direction,” and these eight sonnets signified the beginning of a time wherein Symbolists could “do for poetry what Wagner had done for music.”¹⁴⁷ After this point, the *Revue* became increasingly dedicated to musical considerations of Wagner’s theories for individuals who had musicological rather than literary interests. But “Wagner’s role in French letters” can be seen in the fact that all the works for the lifetime of the journal had a Wagnerian connection.¹⁴⁸ In 1888, the journal ceased publication mostly because the editorial mission had shifted slightly from its original goals of publicizing and idolizing Wagner towards “a more literary format” of waxing philosophically about Wagnerian ideas.¹⁴⁹ Thus, the journal had become one of the most important publications for the developing Symbolist movement, where these writers could explore the potentials of their genre through the evocation of Wagner.¹⁵⁰

Generally, Symbolists tended to engage with Wagnerian aesthetics than with Wagner’s actual music. In the early 1860s during the first wave of wagnérisme in Paris, the discussion of music might as well have been equivalent to a discussion of Wagner’s music, or more precisely what Wagner claimed his music to be.¹⁵¹ Symbolists (especially “those whose musical quality in verse is the most praised”) tended not be well-versed in musical specificities, and across the board few had serious musical training.¹⁵² So, their poetics and prose reflected this lack of discrete technical knowledge, and they were forced to engage with Wagner the author-commentator rather than Wagner the music-drama composer.¹⁵³ The francophone poets who first embraced

¹⁴⁶ Morris, *Descriptive Study*, 10-1. While Morris merely presents a catalog of these poems, André Cœuroy reproduced several of these sonnets and poems in his monograph (see p. 255-267).

¹⁴⁷ Morris, *Descriptive Study*, 32

¹⁴⁸ Du Quenoy, *Wagner and the French Muse*, 81.

¹⁴⁹ Du Quenoy, *Wagner and the French Muse*, 81-8.

¹⁵⁰ While there is a wealth of literature about French responses to Wagnerism, there is no similar body of work for Belgian equivalents. References to Wagner occur in the shadows of scholarship written about the period, often as to lend credibility either to the scholar (marking that they know something about Wagner) or to assert a particular figure’s credibility as a musician, artist, or arts fanatic, as in the case of Octave Maus, who we will meet in Ch. 4.

¹⁵¹ Acquisto, *Symbolist Poetry and the Idea of Music*, 9.

¹⁵² Peyre, *What is Symbolism?*, 120. Other scholarship addresses this, as well. See p. 56-7 of Yeoland’s monograph, where she cites that while many Symbolists had learned to at least read music, Maclair never learned and thus had a unique relationship with the music evoked in his works. Lehmann similarly asserts that the Symbolist treatises on poetry used musical terms, which were often distorted and misinterpreted to serve their goals of defining their poetic genre. Also: see p. 108 of “How Should Music Care About Poetry?” and p. 77 of Porter’s *The Crisis of French Symbolism*.

¹⁵³ See p. 249 of *Wagner et l’esprit romantique*, where Cœuroy addresses this point. Just as Symbolists did not really know music very well, they were also removed from the original Wagnerian material. Ironically, I feel like this distance between the writer and their subject matter also plays into the aesthetic of Symbolist poetry with its oblique references and vague allusions that could be a byproduct of this distanced knowledge base in some cases.

Wagner perceived Wagner's abilities as pointing towards new directions in other artistic disciplines, which inspired shifts in their literary trends. To observe this from a more functional rather than aesthetic perspective, their investment with Wagner played into the growing popularity and accessibility of music, which was reducing the social demand for reading poetry. Scholar Paul du Quenoy writes that Wagnerism "became the ultimate status symbol" for Symbolist writers, adding a memory from André Gide, a contemporary to this fin-de-siècle *wagnérisme*, who said that "Wagner permitted a large number of snobs, literary people, and fools to think that they love music."¹⁵⁴ Thus, "Wagner" was a flashy signpost for Symbolists to use while asserting their artistic authority, while also signifying a kind of relevance to the individuals in the bourgeoisie social class who were reading their works and had access to Wagner-related artistic experiences, as well: i.e. a social class who too used Wagner as a status symbol. The literary-theoretical discourse intersects the inward-focusing reflective quality of the poetry with the building pressure to compete with music for higher social appreciation. This context reveals what Donnellon calls "a rarefied inner world of sensation [which] found a parallel in the all-encompassing world of Wagner's operas."¹⁵⁵

Evoking music in Symbolist poetry is therefore linked to Wagner's musical prowess itself in addition to the declining public favor of poetry as a genre. Because of a growing sense that writers could not compete with music for the prime level of cultural capital, this led poets to search for common ground between music and poetry, and to go further in exploring the implications of poetry *becoming* music.¹⁵⁶ While initially borne of feelings of inferiority amongst writers seeking to level the playing field with musicians, that discussion evolved into critical discourse about poetry and the degree to which it should or could transcend its shifting boundaries.¹⁵⁷ By calling upon a looming figure in musical life like Wagner, Symbolists insert their works into spaces where even musically-literate individuals would feel drawn to the content of the prose and the ways in which the poetry (and fiction works to an extent) draw upon the conceptual themes. Despite the rhetorical

¹⁵⁴ Du Quenoy, *Wagner and the French Muse*, 101.

¹⁵⁵ Donnellon, "French Music Since Berlioz," 5.

¹⁵⁶ Abbott, "Performing Poetry as Music," 185.

¹⁵⁷ Acquisto, *Symbolist Poetry and the Idea of Music*, 4.

collaboration of evoking music and demanding more musical poetry, the tension between word and music is frequently thematized in Symbolist works, as one will discover in several upcoming examples.

In his non-fiction prose, Baudelaire presents readers with another thematization of the recurring tension between written word and music, in his essay called *Richard Wagner et Tannhäuser à Paris*. Originally written in 1861 for the *Revue européenne*, the essay appeared in an 1886 edition of the *Revue wagnérienne*, the same year that saw the publication of the sonnets written in their “boldly unorthodox style.” This essay analyzes Wagner’s essay *Lettre sur la musique*, which is a condensed version of Wagner’s previous theoretical works that serves as a translation of his aesthetic to his French audiences.¹⁵⁸ Baudelaire states that his intentions for writing this essay emerged from the desire to more deeply understand his fascination with Wagner’s ability to transform cultural spheres within his writings and musical innovations. One can see the ways in which Baudelaire imbues his essay with a Gesamtkunstwerk-like sensibility by “conjoining colors, sights, smells, and sounds in an evocative pictorial language,”¹⁵⁹ which is a signature element of Baudelaire’s work. In several instances throughout the essay, Baudelaire alludes to the power of the Gesamtkunstwerk’s characteristic unification of artistic forms without ever using the specific term. Like Wagner, one notices that Baudelaire favors this form and states that Wagner’s conception of “dramatic art, that is to say, the coinciding of many art forms, [is] like an art of excellence, the most synthesized and the most perfect kind.”¹⁶⁰ Later, Baudelaire describes Wagner’s mastery at “[painting] space and depth both materially and spiritually” as if the product of an opium-induced reverie. The otherworldliness Baudelaire introduces heightens the “us versus them” tension he established towards the beginning of the essay when he says that he also wants valorize Wagner for French audiences and rectify some of the antagonistic rhetoric against the composer. Importantly, Baudelaire emphasizes that Wagner is the master of “the art of translation, by subtle gradations, of all that is

¹⁵⁸ Lees, *Mallarmé and Wagner*, 64.

¹⁵⁹ Singletary, “The Case of the Gesamtkunstwerk,” 151.

¹⁶⁰ Miner, Margaret. *Resonant Gaps: Between Baudelaire and Wagner*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1995, 170. Citations from Miner’s work within the range of p. 167-196 are citations from a reprinted version of the essay contained in *Resonant Gaps: Between Baudelaire and Wagner*. This essay is presented in French, and I have included the original translation throughout the ensuing analysis. Here, the original reads: « ...l’art dramatique, c’est-à-dire la réunion, la coïncidence de plusieurs arts, comme l’art par excellence, le plus synthétique et le plus parfait. »

excessive, immense, [and] ambitious in the spiritual man...”¹⁶¹ And Baudelaire, like Wagner, uses the terms ‘poetry’ and ‘music’ in ways that cause difficulty in finding clear boundaries between the two respective art forms, an effect addressed later in the proceeding discussion of *Richard Wagner et Tannhäuser à Paris*.¹⁶²

As Singletary notes in her re-reading, Baudelaire manipulates the concept of the Gesamtkunstwerk throughout his own essay. Even though he roots his discussion within an admiration and valorization of Wagner’s synthesized art form, Baudelaire demonstrates an obvious preference for the written word.¹⁶³ This preference can nevertheless be extrapolated from the original Wagnerian precedent, as seen in the following excerpt that Baudelaire includes:

The arrangement of rhythm and the ornamentation of rhyme are ways for the poet to ensure to [his] a verse, to [his] phrase, a captivating power like that of a charm, and is governed at the poet’s discretion by *le sentiment*. Essential to the poet, this tendency drives the poet to the limit of his art, a limit that closely touches music.¹⁶⁴

Preceding this citation, Baudelaire excluded several sentences from the original that attest to the activity of the poets, an omission which “highlight[s] the active, apparently self-sustaining power” of the poets’ language itself.¹⁶⁵ Baudelaire continues in his own words to assert the hypothetical monumental shift that would occur if a critic became a poet rather than the inverse (poets who become critics), and cites Wagner as the case study. He arrives at this point by asserting the impossibility for Wagner to have composed his operas after writing his theoretical writings, primarily because Wagner began composing and writing about music, concurrently “tout jeune.”¹⁶⁶ The analogy Baudelaire establishes is that, just as it is impossible for

¹⁶¹ Miner, *Resonant Gaps*, 173. Original: « Aucun musicien n’excelle comme Wagner à peindre l’espace et la profondeur, matériels et spirituels... Il possède l’art de traduire, par des gradations subtiles, tout ce qu’il y a d’excessif, d’immense, d’ambitieux dans l’homme spirituel et naturel. »

¹⁶² Acquisto, *Symbolist Poetry and the Idea of Music*, 14

¹⁶³ Singletary, “The Case of the Gesamtkunstwerk,” 158-9. The line that captures this the most for me is: “While advocating for Wagner, Baudelaire subtly reformulated and implicitly critiqued the composer’s model, transforming the Wagnerian Gesamtkunstwerk into a French poetics.”

¹⁶⁴ Miner, *Resonant Gaps*, 177. Original: « L’arrangement rythmique et l’ornement (presque musical) de la rime sont pour le poète des moyens d’assurer au vers, à la phrase, une puissance qui captive comme par un charme et gouverne à son gré le sentiment. Essentielle au poète, cette tendance le conduit jusqu’à la limite de son art... »

¹⁶⁵ Miner, *Resonant Gaps*, 71.

¹⁶⁶ Miner, *Resonant Gaps*, 178. Original: « D’autres veulent considérer Wagner comme un théoricien qui n’aurait produit des opéras que pour vérifier à posteriori la valeur de ses propres théories. Non-seulement ceci est parfaitement faux, puisque le maître a commencé tout jeune, comme on le sait, par produire des essais poétiques et musicaux d’une nature variée... »

Wagner the Theoretician to have created musical art, it is unlikely that a writer acting as a critic would be able to create poetic art. In fact, Baudelaire presents himself as being in an opposing position: “it would be prodigious that a critic could become a poet, and it is impossible that a poet does not contain a critic.”¹⁶⁷ As a poet himself, Baudelaire impresses upon readers that he is an acceptable authority on Wagnerian aesthetics. This works in tandem with the omission of a handful of lines to reveal Baudelaire’s sensitivity towards the power of language within the paradigm of art-creating, which leads us to insights about his vision of the intertwined relationship between writing and art-making.

Elsewhere in the essay, Baudelaire cites Wagner’s first love of theater and Wagner’s relatively late introduction to music, specifically that of Weber and Beethoven. Baudelaire writes that as “the years and his studies accumulated, it became impossible for [Wagner] to not think in a double manner, poetically and musically, to not glimpse the idea of two simultaneous forms, one of the two arts beginning its function there where the other stops at its limits.”¹⁶⁸ Heath Lees alludes to a similar closeness of the relationship between music and text by asserting that “for Wagner...gestures, musical textures and sound shapes were all to be conceived out of the dramatic poetry...”¹⁶⁹ Emphasizing Wagner’s interest in text-driven art forms supports Baudelaire’s commentary on the superiority of the written word, particularly when he describes “la parole écrite” as “the most favorable of the arts.”¹⁷⁰ So through Baudelaire, one can see Wagner as a literarily-minded artist from whom artistically-minded literary figures can draw inspiration for synthesizing art forms (which, in the case of the Symbolist poets, would be music and written word). Even though some of his vocabulary choices “remain in the French tradition of plastic arts,” Baudelaire attaches poetry to music via a

¹⁶⁷ Miner, *Resonant Gaps*, 179. Original: « Il serait prodigieux qu’un critique devint poète, et il est impossible qu’un poète ne contienne pas un critique. Le lecteur ne sera donc pas étonné que je considère le poète comme le meilleur de tous les critiques... La poésie a existé, s’est affirmé la première, et elle a engendré l’étude des règles. Telle est l’histoire incontestée du travail humain. Or, comme chacun est le diminutif de tout le monde, comme l’histoire d’un cerveau individuel représente en petit l’histoire du cerveau universel, il serait juste et naturel de supposer... que l’élaboration des pensées de Wagner a été analogue au travail de l’humanité. »

¹⁶⁸ Miner, *Resonant Gaps*, 174. Original: « ...les années et les études s’accumulant, il lui fut impossible de ne pas penser d’une manière double, poétiquement et musicalement, de ne pas entrevoir toute idée sous deux formes simultanées, l’un des deux arts commençant sa fonction là où s’arrêtent les limites de l’autre. »

¹⁶⁹ Lees, *Mallarmé and Wagner*, 38

¹⁷⁰ Miner, *Resonant Gaps*, 169. Original: « Dans la musique, comme dans la peinture et même dans la parole écrite qui est cependant le plus positif des arts, il y a toujours une lacune complétée par l’imagination de l’auditeur. »

physical sensory experience of colors and vast spaces.¹⁷¹ This type of relationship could also lead to the conclusion that, in addition to drawing inspiration to one another, poetry and music “are the double expression of the same creative necessity,” one of the essential aspects of *wagnérisme*.¹⁷² Baudelaire’s essay reveals how poetry and music are two among many arts which parallel one another as “they aspire with their very diverse means to a single world that surpasses them.”¹⁷³ Thus, Wagner’s sought-after total artwork is a springboard for Symbolists to conceive of poetry that is at least equivalent to music in terms of the direction to which it strives relative to other creative disciplines.

Within this desire to return poetry and literature to a higher social standing, the musicality for which Symbolists searched takes place under the guise of distilling language to its “concrete sensations” to achieve some sort of “phonetic reality.”¹⁷⁴ As one of these early Symbolists, Paul Verlaine wrote “Art poétique” as a call to action and evokes music in the process. “Verlaine was a character of extremes and paradoxes – complex, violent, and a heavy drinker, but also the author of sensitive and exquisitely turned poetry,” the musicality of which led so many composers in the fin-de-siècle to set his words to music.¹⁷⁵ Porter frames this poem as the endpoint in Verlaine’s journey through understanding his complex relationship with language, which results in various degrees of subversion that respond to a mistrust of language. Rather than concentrating on language’s seeming inability to fully conceive of and communicate a message, Verlaine focuses his mistrust of language “on the linguistic medium itself...by playfully (and of course figuratively) replacing human speakers with nonhuman ones,” human speech with nonhuman speech, and human-centric ideas with non-human ones.¹⁷⁶ In essence, Verlaine often aspires to undermine the power of words and replace them with something else, which is musicality.¹⁷⁷ Porter goes through several landmark works in the Verlaine oeuvre to track how he achieves this undermining of language, including spending a great amount of

¹⁷¹ Cœuroy, *Wagner et l'esprit romantique*, 203-4.

¹⁷² Cœuroy, *Wagner et l'esprit romantique*, 205.

¹⁷³ Peyre, *What is Symbolism?*, 125.

¹⁷⁴ Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, xi.

¹⁷⁵ Duchon, *Gabriel Fauré*, 96.

¹⁷⁶ Porter, *Crisis of French Symbolism*, 78-9.

¹⁷⁷ Porter, *Crisis of French Symbolism*, 81.

time with *Poèmes saturniens*, *Fêtes galantes*, and *Romance sans paroles*. He also includes *La Bonne Chanson*, to which we will turn in Chapter 3.

For the sake of brevity, I will briefly analyze “Art poétique,” as it is often held up in the secondary scholarship as the quintessential emblem of how Symbolists believed in music. Verlaine prescribes that poets and literary admirers should prefer nuance and “la musique avant toute chose,” which lends a tone of revolutionary fervor to this poem. It also establishes how the language and diction of the poem should be conveyed and thus what it represents. He connects these desires by saying in the final stanza that poetry should aspire to be “a winged thing... / scattered in the brisk morning wind,” thereby asserting the desire for poetry to eventually become as liberated as one of the most universal symbols of freedom: a bird. Linking poetically musical language to images of freedom is evidence of Vivès’s proposed relationships between language, literature, and the beginnings of France’s autonomy, and the relationship between language and freedom. Bergeron’s analysis also acknowledges this concept by claiming that the linkage of poetic art with a natural and freer voice demonstrates a desire to imbue poetic art with a new “unpretentious accent of the people,” rather than expressing a more oblique, even esoteric voice found in earlier generations of poetry.¹⁷⁸ But ironically, the free-ness to which Verlaine says one should aspire in poetic verse is not very present in the poem; this is in keeping with Verlaine’s technique about subverting the reader’s expectation in order to subvert the expectations of language. Even though vagueness and musicality are lauded as the highest poetic goals of “L’Art poétique,” the poem is filled with “verbal excess, for there is a fundamental paradox in specifying how to be allusive.”¹⁷⁹ This ironic gesture strongly reveals the inner conflict Verlaine has “between faith in poetry and disdain for it as a vehicle for aspirations,” because he leans into the formal element (which often separates poetry from prose-like genres) in order to assert freedom, liberation, allusiveness, subversion, and so forth. As we will see, *La Bonne Chanson* reveals this kind of conflict. The protagonist’s journey for the ultimate love can represent Verlaine’s own quest to find a replacement for an unreliable poetic language, and

¹⁷⁸ Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, 127-9.

¹⁷⁹ Porter, *Crisis of French Symbolism*, 82.

he does so through poetry. “He [still] wishes to write poetry, he has no other recourse than...to expatiate upon the topos of inexpressibility.”¹⁸⁰

To conclude this survey of music’s appearance in a few landmark Symbolist pieces, we turn to the work of Belgian Symbolist, Charles van Lerberghe, who embraces a similar revolutionary spirit in his 1904 prose poem *La Chanson d’Eve*. The first poem in the set, entitled “Paradis,” establishes the setting for a poetic narrative which “concerns the creation of the world...couched in a rather vague, pantheistic theology.”¹⁸¹ Van Lerberghe presents images during “le premier matin du monde,” wherein flowers awake confusedly from the night and the dawn of the new world is animated by sounds from the natural world. As Patrick Laude mentions, the significations of sound and silence are unified with the seemingly deafening quality of the new world, as seen by the fact that the natural world itself engages in the musical activities created by the swirling of leaves, birdsongs, and the “murmure immense” of rushing water.¹⁸²

“Paradis” (lignes 5-10)	“Paradise” (lines 5-10)
Tout s’y confond encore et tout s’y mêle, Frissons de feuilles, chants d’oiseaux, Glissements d’ailes, Sources qui sourdent, voix des airs, voix des eaux, Murmure immense, Et qui pourtant est du silence.	Everything there merges again and everything there mixes Rustles of leaves, bird songs Glidings of wings Deafening springs, voice of airs, voice of water, Immense murmuring And that yet [somehow] are silent/silence.

Following this presentation of the soundscape in the awakening Eden, Van Lerberghe introduces the “la jeune et divine Eve,” who is woken by God and asked to sing to all the created beings in God’s new realm, “un son pour les connaître.” Because of the vagueness of French direct object pronouns, this line could potentially have two slightly nuanced meanings, neither of which changes the guiding theme behind the line. On the one hand, it can be translated to mean that God wants Eve to sing a song that the created beings could recognize, which would imply a song from previous eras that is transferrable across time, as if this Eden is not actually the true beginning of the world as the opening lines of the poem suggest. On the other

¹⁸⁰ Porter, *Crisis of French Symbolism*, 78.

¹⁸¹ Gartside, Robert. *Interpreting the Songs of Gabriel Fauré*. Mt. Morris, New York: Leyerle Publications, 1996, 234.

¹⁸² Laude, Patrick. *L’Eden Entredit : Lecture de La chanson d’Eve de Charles van Lerberghe*. Peter Lang Publishing: New York, 1994, 6.

hand, God could be asking for a song that would allow Eve to more clearly identify the beings with which she coexists and thus personify her new world. In both instances, Van Lerberghe suggests that “le premier matin du monde” should be associated with “parole.” Her song “takes wing as soon as Eve opens her mouth,” and “through this image of sound in flight,” Van Lerberghe begins recounting and exploring the origins of language through song.¹⁸³

Continuing with a brief explication of “the apparent naturalness” of Eve’s singing, Bergeron offers:

She simply sings, struck with wonder at the purely sensual qualities of her words – the sound of her voice, the breath on her lips. This image, too, served to represent something about the ontological status of the poem for Van Lerberghe’s generation. Far from an abstract architectural plan, the poem was to be conceived, as Maclair explained, only ‘in the sound of its syllables.’ . . . Poetry thus became not a literary art but a performing art, and Eve herself its physical embodiment.¹⁸⁴

Assuming Eve embodies the nebulous shift in poetry and poetic voice, the reader sees even in this first poem Van Lerberghe’s conception of our worldly origins in relation to language, song and the human voice. The poem ends with Eden waiting at the edge of its seat “until the rising of the evening star” when Eve sings again after having been asleep in the later part of the day. In his version of the biblical creation story, it appears that Van Lerberghe establishes a world in which “la parole n’est pas seulement vibration sonore mais message essentiel des choses.”¹⁸⁵ This theme of oral performance being part of the process of discovery and self-understanding in Eden, as later poems in *La Chanson d’Eve* will present, validates the intimate relationship between Symbolism and *mélodie*, in addition to manifesting the changing nature of francophone poetry throughout the Symbolist era.

¹⁸³ Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, 12.

¹⁸⁴ Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, 13.

¹⁸⁵ Laude, *L’Eden Entredit*, 9.

Using Words to Find Music: *Mélodie's* Reliance upon Poetry

Just as “a modern history of French speech...unexpectedly converges...with a modern history of music,” the perspective can be reserved in order to observe the convergence between modern music-making and the literary works that inspired said musicianship.¹⁸⁶ In fact, in exploring possible methodologies for defining a Symbolist aesthetic based on an increased sense of “musicality,” Laurence Porter includes the fact that “late-nineteenth-century composers, Claude Debussy, Henri Du Parc, and Gabriel Fauré, through the magisterial achievements of their art songs, were mainly responsible...for giving Symbolists poets the reputation of being musicians.”¹⁸⁷ Perhaps his assertion is hyperbolic when considering the above investigation about Symbolist evocations of music within their ideological discourse. But composers’ use of Symbolist poetry nevertheless elevated the poetry of their contemporaries and contributed to the development of a new form of chamber music. In this section, we turn to music’s response to this poetry via art song (*mélodie*), which emerged concurrently with the Symbolist movement. Some of this discussion will be addressed more tangibly when discussing in the third and fourth chapters with Fauré as a case study for these engagements; this necessarily means that this section will remain more general.

Briefly, I will take a moment to point out specific dates that are important to the chronology of developments outlined in the remainder of this chapter. Michel Faure and Vincent Vivès, like Helen Abbott, settle on 1857, with the arrival of Baudelaire’s *Fleurs du Mal* as a historical moment which set forth in motion these interrelated developments of Symbolist poetry and French art song.¹⁸⁸ With the release of this contentious work of French poetry, Faure and Vivès cite this particular work (alongside *Madame Bovary* by Gustave Flaubert) as demonstrating that literature was becoming more centered upon its values and materials, and that gradually, “literature, especially poetry, was conceived as a discipline of existence aiming at the expression of quality of language.”¹⁸⁹ The years surrounding the Franco-Prussian

¹⁸⁶ Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, 114.

¹⁸⁷ Porter, *Crisis of French Symbolism*, 7.

¹⁸⁸ Faure and Vivès, *Histoire et poétique*, 101.

¹⁸⁹ Faure and Vivès, *Histoire et poétique*, 103-5. Those pages outline the preceding citation: « La perfection formelle et la beauté poétique sont conçues comme totalisation rigoureuse ; elles deviennent une exigence ontologique au prix d’un détournement du monde. La littérature devient centrée sur elle-même, sur ses valeurs et ses matériaux. Avec l’Art

War (1870-71) are also “two primordial years for the orientation of French *mélodie*.” The French loss in the war forced a reassessment of the military defenses against their German-speaking aggressors; but the loss also satisfied “the need for an autonomous art, [a] defender of a French specificity,” which accelerated the development of *mélodie* as a model for this autonomous French art form.¹⁹⁰

While this project primarily focuses on Belgian responses to art song settings of Symbolist poetry that were composed by French composers, it is worth mentioning that I took this approach because of the lack of scholarship related to the development of *mélodie* with respect to the Belgian Symbolist movement. If I had to put forth an assertion, however, it would be the following. Based on the closeness between Paris and Brussels (and France and Belgium more broadly, as we saw in Chapter 1), I believe these developments were occurring on a microcosmic scale with respect to Parisian precedents. The Symbolist movement began establishing a presence in Belgium slightly after its Parisian debut, and I would thus assume that *mélodie* composed by Belgian composers (of which there are very few well-known ones in the western canon) developed similarly. This subject, however, necessitates further inquiry to attain an actual sense of the word-music relations in Belgium, especially concerning the two nations’ differing conceptions of national and linguistic identities.

Belgian art historian Serge Goyen de Heusch describes the nineteenth century as having been a “rich era where musicians sang the poets of their times, [and] where writers and composers liked possessing the canvases of their contemporary impressionists and symbolists.”¹⁹¹ As if echoing his claims, Bergeron

pour l’Art puis le Parnasse, la littérature, notamment la poésie, est conçue comme discipline d’existence visant à l’expression d’une qualité de la langue. »

¹⁹⁰ Faure and Vivès, *Histoire et poétique*, 110-1. Original: « Le fossé entre la bourgeoisie éclairée, les artistes et le peuple paraît définitivement infranchissable depuis l’incendie du musée du Louvre. Si 1870 marque un nouvel essor de l’art français, 1871 détermine les caractéristiques de ce nouvel art... La France vaincue militairement vient de montrer qu’elle avait su conserver un système axiologique basé non pas comme le Reich sur le pouvoir économique et la servilité, mais sur l’art... 1870 et 1871 sont deux années primordiales pour l’orientation de la mélodie française. La nécessité d’un art autonome, défenseur d’une spécificité française, joue en faveur de l’élaboration de nouveaux discours esthétiques et accélère ainsi la structuration d’un modèle opératoire de la mélodie. »

¹⁹¹ Goyen de Heusch, Serge. « *L’imitation au voyage* » : *La Musique aux XX et à la Libre Esthétique*. Edition Fondation pour l’Art belge : Brussels, 1990, 6. Original: « Heureuse et riche époque où les musiciens chantaient les poètes de leur temps, où hommes de lettres et compositeurs aimaient posséder les toiles de leurs contemporains impressionnistes et symbolistes ! »

describes the years before and around 1900 as having experienced “a change in the face of French song, as composers renounced melody to catch the natural ‘accent’ of speech.”¹⁹² As she sees it, “with the discovery of great poetry – the moment when French composers found their Goethe,” the genre of *mélodie* reaches the peak of its evolution.¹⁹³ *Mélodie* emerged from a “lowbrow, popular, light *romance* with simple accompaniment and lyric melodic lines” and became something “more developed and highbrow” as *mélodie*.¹⁹⁴ Vincent Vivès points out that while the *romance* is the site of *mélodie*’s beginnings, “*mélodie* establishes its aesthetic autonomy simultaneously in a historic continuity and in a poetic rupture in the face of the *romance*, a genre which had developed musical characteristics and thus a recognizable rhetoric.”¹⁹⁵ Following this statement, Vivès documents the ways in which the *romance* developed as a form of troubadour song, to a text-based patriotic song that had a rapport with a present circumstances and reality, to a form of *romance* rooted in historicist metaphors, until reaching the *romance lyrique* which presented itself as “the enunciation of the feeling of an amorous history through a monologue form.”¹⁹⁶

A pseudonymous Symbolist in Mallarmé’s circle named Camille Mauclair wrote about *mélodie* by saying that it was “art’s logical conclusion,” and represented the highest possible art form. While this belief is rooted in a nationalistic trope that the greatest ideas throughout France’s history sprung from the French language, Mauclair acknowledged *mélodie* as indebted to literary developments which drew composers toward “better” poetry, while simultaneously enticing poets to explore more musical possibilities for their art form.¹⁹⁷ This latest form had begun developing in the 1830s according to Vivès, and eventually transformed into *mélodie* in the 1850s at the arrival of Baudelaire’s work in the literary world. Baudelaire’s significance to the

¹⁹² Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, 253

¹⁹³ Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, 7. The phrase “great poetry,” while seemingly hagiographic or hyperbolic, refers to Symbolist works, and when taken in context, her use of the phrase captures the attitudes of those contemporary to the movement and conveys the enthusiasm with which francophone musicians accepted the literary genre.

¹⁹⁴ Abbott, Helen. “Poetic Time and Space, or What Fauré Learns from Baudelaire.” In *Time and Space in Words and Music*. Edited by Mario Dunkel, Emily Petermann, and Burkhard Sauerwald. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2012, 138-9.

¹⁹⁵ Faure and Vivès, *Histoire et poétique*, 21. Original: « Il ne faut pas concevoir la *romance* comme une étape liminaire à la constitution de la *mélodie* française. La *mélodie* établit son autonomie esthétique à la fois dans une continuité historique et dans une rupture poétique face à la *romance*, genre qui avait développé des caractéristiques musicales ainsi qu’une rhétorique repérable. Les premières définitions que l’on trouve de la *romance* établissent un modèle qui restera pertinent jusque dans les années 1870. La *romance* est avant tout définie comme un texte poétique à structure narrative... »

¹⁹⁶ Faure and Vivès, *Histoire et poétique*, 23-5.

¹⁹⁷ Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, 10-1.

development of *mélodie* and its departure from the romance into something seemingly more sophisticated is because composers believed that there had been no contemporary poet before Baudelaire who was deemed adequate enough to be set to music.¹⁹⁸ Late-nineteenth century musicologist Louis Aguettant substantiates this by saying that, even though Fauré's facility with transforming poetic text into song is equivalent to the impact of Schumann's work with Goethe's poetry, Fauré's *mélodie* differs from his predecessor's *Lieder* because of its removal from its folk song roots because he was setting such modern poetry.¹⁹⁹ Michael Lehmann also supports this distinction by using more obvious rationale for distinguishing between "Art Song 'à la française'" and German *Lied*, in that the corpuses of the poetry differ thematically and linguistically, which therefore provides a challenge to uncover links between Schumann and Fauré.²⁰⁰

As stated previously, for French-speaking composers, the discovery of poetry from the Symbolist movement parallels the discovery in the German-speaking world of a Goethe-like body of works, a discovery which culminated in "the era of Gabriel Fauré" beginning in the late 1870s, when Fauré and his contemporaries began filling out the new musical genre partly in response to the nationalist-oriented trends at the end of the Franco-Prussian War.²⁰¹ As Abbott describes, "the nineteenth century in France was an especially fertile era for the development of word/music relations," which she partially attributes to the influence of German *Lieder* and Wagnerian opera that "had percolated through the French cultural scene."²⁰² This perceived transference of *mélodie* from German *Lied* provoked criticism precisely because the distinctly French art form had roots in one of the most Germanic of Romantic genres. Most succinctly, Katharine Ellis points out that the French were unable to escape the belief that their music was "ill-defined" and

¹⁹⁸ Abbott, "Poetic Time and Space," 147. She also mentions that despite Baudelaire's thorough engagement with Wagner, he is often considered "the least amenable of the nineteenth-century French poets when it comes to setting his poetry to music, as his texts are perceived as somehow difficult to set" (137). What follows is essentially a statement asserting that Baudelaire's works somehow contain all their own senses of musicality and that they would likely suffer if set to music. Abbott's work mainly focuses on Baudelaire, so this assertion about Baudelaire being unique should be taken with some degree of critique.

¹⁹⁹ Aguettant, *Les amitiés littéraires*, 72-3. Original: « Ces deux maîtres, nés pour la mélodie, sont des intimistes : voilà qui est entendu. Mais, ce point admis, tout diffère entre eux. Ni leurs âmes, ni leurs musiques n'ont le même timbre ; et l'un ne peut donner l'idée de l'autre. L'art de Schumann s'inspire du volkslied ; celui de Fauré est l'interprète raffiné d'une poésie fort distante de la chanson populaire. »

²⁰⁰ Lehmann, "Parnasse and the French Art Song," 107.

²⁰¹ Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, 7.

²⁰² Abbott, "Poetic Time and Space," 137. This also relates to previous discussion about poets feeling that their genre was inferior to that of musicians.

“consistently undervalued, first in favor of Italian styles and then...in favor of German ones.”²⁰³ Imbued in the essay, *La Religion de la Musique* by Camille Maclair, is a thinly-veiled political slant which posits that “the democratic music of the [Lied] was to be understood as a specifically French birthright,” having emerged as a transformation of the Germanic tradition and becoming authentically French through French means.²⁰⁴ The extent to which the music of francophone composers borrowed from other traditions was an issue addressed in many forms of nineteenth century musicianship in France. But this perceived hybridized character of French music as being an evolution of Germanic forms shows that the French were able to adopt and impose “an image of universality acquired solely from the national genius based on the exercise of subjectivity,” in contrast to a German habit of interpreting their cultural identity through “history, myths...[and] a particularity.”²⁰⁵ In any case, however, there is a nationalist-oriented slant to the development of both Symbolism and *mélodie* as Lehmann summarizes quite neatly:

The intention to expand a new production of an Art Song ‘à la française’ had to comply with the status of an ‘anti-Lied’ one. Even if the political goal could justify by itself an artistic strategy, the aesthetic situation of French Poetry at that time could not lead elsewhere but to that specific French identity. It would have been simply impossible for French composers to rewrite Schumann in French. The ‘Poésie du Parnasse’ was in the gusto of the day in France and it had nothing to do with the German style.²⁰⁶

With the advent of the Symbolist movement, poetry became an evocative artistic experience rather than an act of organizing words as expressers of meaning, as one could likely intuit in some of the above discussions of works in the canon of Symbolism. This art of stripping language “of its function as a meaning-carrier” allows poets to introduce more human elements to their poetry, as in some of Verlaine’s works, which, even though noticeably lack an obvious human figure, introduce “an unobtrusive presence that sounds much louder through the musical value of the poem.”²⁰⁷ This relationship between poet and craft also changes the role of the composer to the text being set. Due to the declamatory, musical-sounding nature of many Symbolist works, the composer in effect becomes a

²⁰³ Ellis, *Interpreting the Musical Past*, 251-2.

²⁰⁴ Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, 8-9.

²⁰⁵ Vivès, « Musique vocale et culture française, » 51. This statement is obviously biased, as Vivès is French-born.

²⁰⁶ Lehmann, “Parnasse and the French Art Song,” 107-8.

²⁰⁷ Lehmann, “Parnasse and the French Art Song,” 110.

kind of oral reader whose musical setting serves as another declamation of the poem “with a singing voice and a piano,” rather than merely acting as a device that alters the poem.²⁰⁸ As we will see in some of Fauré’s settings, he rarely uses blatant text-painting devices to emphasize important aspects of the particular poems, which somewhat reflects the dynamic between composers and their chosen poetry. By not overly embellishing the poetry, a lack of obvious text-painting allows poetic lines to remain somewhat autonomous as poetry, rather than surrendering completely to the mercy of the music.

Let us return to Anderson’s *Imagined Communities*. One of his central points about the formation of nationalist ideologies is that “bourgeoisies were the first classes to achieve solidarities on an essentially imagined basis,” in part because of the rise of print-language circulating among this newly-literate large social class.²⁰⁹ We can understand *mélodie* in a similar context, and borrow from Michel Faure and Vincent Vivès’s comprehensive history of the genre to bolster this assertion. The romance developed as troubadours roamed in a “decentralized space” between aristocratic realms, domains, and kingdoms; but the song form began changing further as it moved into salon spaces and into the homes of bourgeoisie families.²¹⁰ The emergence of bourgeoisie culture led to the development of a cultural time where “the arts discovered that they are in solidarity, [and] their association, their willingness of expression, their technical audacities comprised the musical event of the seasons.”²¹¹ While keeping in mind the image of poets aspiring towards the condition of music as a form of abstract expression (which thereby contributes to the trademark vagueness and evocativeness of the poetry), the Symbolist poetic project was validated by the fact that the music of *mélodie* was conceived “to place value upon poetic text” and permitted the composer to pay homage to the author’s poetic voice.²¹² This relationship between composer and poet, writer of music and writer of words, is possibly

²⁰⁸ Lehmann, “Parnasse and the French Art Song,” 110.

²⁰⁹ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 77.

²¹⁰ Faure and Vivès, *Histoire et poétique*, 32. The expression in quotes appears originally as “l’espace décentralisé.”

²¹¹ Faure and Vivès, *Histoire et poétique*, 44. Original: « Par ailleurs les genres musicaux évoluent, les arts découvrent qu’ils sont solidaires, leur association, leur volonté d’expression, leurs audaces techniques font l’événement musical des saisons. Napoléon travaillait non seulement à se tailler un empire à la mesure du monde connu, mais il en régentait toutes les activités. »

²¹² Faure and Vivès, *Histoire et poétique*, 56. Original: « Ce faisant, une des spécificités de la mélodie française apparaît : ce genre musical choisit de mettre en musique des textes littéraires de qualité. À la différence de la romance dont le timbre, préexistant aux mots contraignait la prosodie à s’accommoder de ses scansiones, la musique de la mélodie est conçue pour mettre en valeur le texte poétique. Le compositeur rend hommage à l’auteur, en général reconnu, qui sert de caution à sa musique. »

what leads to Bergeron's vision of *mélodie* as "a shining example of modern French civility, a song that was...completely 'literate.'"²¹³

In terms of the poets to which Fauré paid homage, Fauré's allegiances clearly reveal themselves when one looks at the writers whose texts he set to song. With a list including the names of well-known writers like Charles Baudelaire, Victor Hugo, Théophile Gautier, and Paul Verlaine, and lesser-known figures like Armand Silvestre and Albert Samain, one will see that almost all of Fauré's art songs are settings of contemporary, Symbolist works.²¹⁴ While working on the song cycle *Le Jardin clos* (poetry by Charles van Lerberghe), Fauré wrote to his wife in 1914 that he "finds nothing, alas! in today's French poets, nothing which calls for music," even though Symbolism was gradually falling out of fashion at the time around World War I.²¹⁵ Even in his later years, it is clear that Fauré was still deeply attracted to Symbolist pieces rather than works written near the dusk of Symbolism's prime. Duchén writes that, following his 1906 visit to Brussels, Fauré discovered Charles van Lerberghe's *La Chanson d'Eve*; and that this love stands in opposition to Fauré's attachment to the poet of *La Bonne Chanson*, Paul Verlaine. This is mostly a result of the differences in Verlaine and Van Lerberghe's styles, but Fauré's embracing of the latter's differing aesthetic demonstrates his ability to inhabit different poetic atmospheres. The departure from the character and structure of *La Bonne Chanson* found in the later song cycle indicates that van Lerberghe's poetry began to occupy the space in Fauré's creative imagination where Verlaine had once been, especially after Verlaine's death in 1896. The newer poems were "less structured, vaguer and subtle in both emotion and shape" and thus "offered Fauré a vehicle for his own development in the direction of freer structure and a more subtle and inward form of emotional expression."²¹⁶ Nevertheless, as seen in the upcoming analyses of Fauré songs, Gabriel Fauré emerges as a figure whose music embodies the fruitful relationship between word and music beginning around the 1870s and persisting into the early decades of the twentieth century. "With Fauré particularly, *mélodie* does not simply follow French poetry, but develops, highlights and mimics the ideologically consenting

²¹³ Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, 119.

²¹⁴ The exceptions to this are some of Fauré's earliest songs, which are settings of poetry by Victor Hugo.

²¹⁵ Jones, Barrie J. *Gabriel Fauré: A Life in Letters*. London: BT Batsford Ltd, 1989, 159.

²¹⁶ Duchén, *Gabriel Fauré*, 160

traits in a sublimatory movement as essentially belonging to art, culture and spirit... That's why one can say that, from the 1880s and around Fauré's [time], the history of *mélodie* is dependent upon of representations of French cultural identity, which was conceived under the order of language and literature."²¹⁷

²¹⁷ Faure and Vivès, *Histoire et poétique*, 128. Original: « Avec Fauré, tout particulièrement, la mélodie ne suit pas seulement la poésie française, mais développe, souligne et pastiche dans un mouvement sublimatoire les traits idéologiquement consentis comme relevant essentiellement de l'art, de la culture et de l'esprit français tels que les discours auctoriaux en ont établi le mythe. C'est pourquoi l'on peut dire qu'à partir des années 1880 et autour de Fauré, l'histoire de la mélodie est tributaire des représentations de l'identité culturelle française qui a été pensée sous l'ordre du langage et de la littérature. »

Chapter 3: Fauré's Silent Song Cycles

Influences and Career

In part because of his “dark eyes, swarthy skin and magnetic charm,” Gabriel Fauré would be haunted by various aspects of his non-Parisian-ness throughout his career, with several contemporaries unable to ignore his “attractively exotic origins.”²¹⁸ Born in 1845, Fauré was sent as a boy to Paris to study at the *École de musique classique et religieuse*, a boarding school known colloquially as the *École Niedermeyer* in honor of its founder. The primary goal of the school was to train future organists or choirmasters by teaching religious (i.e. Christian) music traditions.²¹⁹ The school required students to attend weekly choral workshops wherein the students primarily sang pre-Baroque counterpoint. As a student, Fauré took piano and organ lessons from Camille Saint-Saëns with whom he maintained a lifelong friendship. Due to the typically modal, chant-like quality of the works the *École* emphasized (i.e. works pre-dating the nineteenth century), Fauré’s adult tendency to manipulate modality likely originates from the childhood exposure to such devices. One of Fauré’s most well-known pieces, *Le Cantique de Jean Racine*, received first prize at the school’s annual 1865 composition competition. Jessica Duchon testifies that the piece represents a culmination of his studies, in that he blends the religiously-affiliated text and use of counterpoint with a musical quality best described as “an extraordinary mixture of purity and sensual beauty, which...continued to be a striking feature of his work,” a quality that evolves over the course of his long music career.²²⁰

Upon completing his studies at the *École Niedermeyer*, Fauré immediately began a career as an organist and composer. Though his first organ position after his graduation was at a cathedral in Rennes, and he held a position at Saint-Sulpice in Paris for three years thereafter, his most long-term organ position was at *Église de La Madeleine* beginning in 1874. Especially after the Franco-Prussian War, the French republic financially supported the *Opéra National*, *Opéra Comique* and the *Paris Conservatoire*. Precisely because of

²¹⁸ Duchon, *Gabriel Fauré*, 12. Interestingly, I would imagine that, during this historical period, his accent would have been quite obviously non-Parisian and that that would have been one of the contributing factors to early portrayals of him as “exotic.” This idea is largely unsubstantiated, but would make sense considering the difference between the accents of French speakers from northern versus southern regions.

²¹⁹ Duchon, *Gabriel Fauré*, 14.

²²⁰ Duchon, *Gabriel Fauré*, 15-6.

this subsidization, however, most composers of chamber music were forced to earn their living by teaching, performing, or writing music criticism. This limited state funding “made salons and private patronage essential to sustain interest in new music and its performance,” which helped them win valuable connections to financially stable intellectuals and upper-class citizens.²²¹ Figures like Camille Saint-Saëns, Gabriel Fauré and their contemporaries made their livings by composing for those involved in the salon network and by having their music played in these non-commercial settings.²²² This, in turn, helped centralize understandings of French music in the 1880s and 1890s, as it relegated chamber music to a mostly private system.²²³

Institutions like the Société Nationale de Musique (co-founded by Saint-Saëns, Fauré and others in 1871) and the later Société de musique internationale (founded in 1898) were founded to support instrumental music outside of salons and in concert venues.²²⁴ These institutions comprised salon-based musicians who wanted to allow progressive composers a space to “cultivate a cadre of supporters” who could advocate for new works at their public debuts.²²⁵ Fauré’s entry into the salon world is most likely attributed to his time spent under Saint-Saëns’s tutelage, as Saint-Saëns was known to invite students to his favorite salons so they could experience French repertoire outside of their religious-based studies at the École.²²⁶ The impact of salons on Fauré’s career is painstakingly obvious especially when noticing the lack of symphonic and operatic works in his oeuvre,²²⁷ which results in modern-day Fauré scholars deeming him the “quintessential salon composer.”²²⁸ With this in mind, as will be addressed more directly in Chapter 4, one sees why Fauré

²²¹ Ross, James. “Music in the French Salon.” In *French Music Since Berlioz*, 91-115. Edited by R. Langham Smith and Caroline Potter. Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2006, 92-3.

²²² Haine, « L’essor de sociétés, » 193. For literature about chamber music in France, see: Jeffrey Cooper’s *The Rise of Instrumental Music and Concert Series in Paris*; Timothy Jones’s and James Ross’s chapters in Smith and Potter’s *French Music Since Berlioz*; and *La musique de chambre en France de 1870-1918* by Serge Gut and Daniele Pistone.

²²³ Ross, “Music in the French Salon,” 92-3.

²²⁴ Cooper, *Rise of Instrumental Music*, 9. Another such organization is the Schola Cantorum founded in 1894, which sought to spread the teaching of musics from the Baroque era like Gluck, Rameau, and Couperin.

²²⁵ Ross, “Music in the French Salon,” 110.

²²⁶ Duchon, *Gabriel Fauré*, 20.

²²⁷ The most well-known of his published chamber works include 2 piano quartets; 2 piano quintets; almost 3 dozen solo piano pieces (Nocturnes, Barcarolles, and Preludes); and his vocal song cycles which include *La bonne Chanson*, *La Chanson d’Eve*, *Cinq Mélodies de Venise*, and *Le jardin clos*. Outside of chamber works, perhaps his incidental music for Maeterlinck’s *Pelléas et Mélisande* and his *Requiem* are among the most recognizable.

²²⁸ Ross, “Music in the French Salon,” 103.

would have engaged in spaces such as those which supported and elevated the chamber music tradition because that is the world in which Fauré lived.

In 1896 Fauré began teaching composition at the Paris Conservatoire.²²⁹ Writing to Saint-Saëns that year, Fauré was pleased to have received the composition position, saying at the prospect of teaching organ: “Never will I undertake to teach students who do not even know harmony how to improvise fugues.”²³⁰ Gail Hilson Woldu summarizes several accounts from Fauré’s former students who reported that his teaching demeanor was “unpretentious, cordial, pleasant toward students,” and that he “treated students in a friendly manner, like an older brother.”²³¹ Fauré later succeeded Theodore Dubois (fellow organist colleague at La Madeleine) as Director of the Paris Conservatoire in 1905. The circumstances involved several leadership changes, and even Fauré was surprised by the Conservatoire’s choice because he was not an educational product of the institution, a fact which had earlier barred him from entry to the Institut de France. But choosing Fauré was probably a “deliberate decision...to shake up the Conservatoire,”²³² “restore a sense of artistic purpose..., and deliver it from its long line of administrative functionaries.”²³³ Similarly, Caballero emphasizes that “social and institutional ambitions [having] played little role in Fauré’s preceding career” intensified the committee’s satisfaction of selecting Fauré as Director, because he had no institutional affiliations that would interfere with the work of the Conservatoire.²³⁴

As director, Fauré counteracted his usual quiet-mannered nature and was decisive about the reforms he made across the Conservatoire. He demanded changes which reflected his perception of a complete musical education, and they were primarily oriented towards providing students with a wider understanding of music. By Bergeron’s reading of Fauré’s accomplishments at the Conservatoire, she attributes much of his reforms to the “more intimate, more intelligent, more human art of singing” ushered in with the dawn

²²⁹ Fauré received the position after Théodore Dubois was promoted to be director, succeeding another famed organist in Ambroise Thomas. Composition teacher Jules Massenet had expected to be Thomas’s successor. He resigned after being passed over for Dubois, thereby leaving a hole in the composition faculty at the Conservatoire.

²³⁰ Jones and Nectoux, *A Life in Letters*, 57.

²³¹ Woldu, Gail Hilson. “Fauré at the Conservatoire.” In *Regarding Fauré*. Edited by Tom Gordon. Philadelphia: Gordon and Breach Publishers, 1999, 10-1.

²³² Duchon, *Gabriel Fauré*, 20.

²³³ Woldu, “Fauré at the Conservatoire,” 150.

²³⁴ Caballero, Carlo. *Fauré and French Musical Aesthetics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, 25.

mélodie.²³⁵ According to Jessica Duchen’s summary of his reforms at the Conservatoire, Fauré made music history courses mandatory for every student, including students studying composition and harmony. Students were encouraged to perform works outside the Parisian operatic tradition (perhaps one of the largest changes he initiated), and he sought contemporary composers to commission works for the institution. As performance instructors retired, Fauré’s replacements for these positions were often some of the best performers in the country, which Jessica Duchen claims as demonstrating Fauré’s emphasis upon artistry over technical mastery, which is debatable, considering the Fauré himself was quite the technician and master of his medium. Administratively, Fauré forbade certain professors from serving on juries of entrance exams and search committees to reduce bias during the recruitment process.²³⁶ All of these changes reflect Fauré’s vision about providing students with a diverse, well-rounded musical education and demonstrate the positive ways he applied his power to productive use.

After being named Director, Fauré’s position in musical life changed from one predominantly driven by composing and teaching into one of “public, even national notoriety,” yet he still maintained the “enduring personal modesty” for which he was known.²³⁷ During World War I, his output decreased as he worked to compile an edition of Schumann piano pieces, edit a volume of Bach organ works, and hold several charity concerts to support war efforts. Amidst feuds between the Société nationale de musique and Société de musique internationale, Fauré remained as a figurehead in both organizations and was able “to command the full respect of both reactionaries and progressives” in the two groups.²³⁸ Being essentially forced into retirement in 1920 due to his health, Fauré had to fight to receive retirement pensions because the length of his career had fallen two years short of the thirty-year minimum. That year, he was inducted into the Légion d’Honneur as a Grand Officier. He gave his final concert in 1921, and the year after would see several tribute concerts, including one at the Sorbonne which featured artists like Pablo Casals, Vincent d’Indy, and Henri Messager playing works from across his career.²³⁹ Shortly before his death in 1924, he received the

²³⁵ Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, 11.

²³⁶ Duchen, *Gabriel Fauré*, 154-7.

²³⁷ Caballero, *Fauré and French Musical Aesthetics*, 25.

²³⁸ Duchen, *Gabriel Fauré*, 188-90.

²³⁹ Duchen, *Gabriel Fauré*, 206-7.

highest honor in Légion d'Honneur (Grand Croix), an award rarely bestowed upon composers.²⁴⁰

Considering, however, his influence in Parisian classical musicianship, and his ability to have navigated the shifts in musical preferences in his eighty years, it seems fitting that Fauré should be one of few composers to have received such high honors at the end of his career.

General Aesthetic

Aside from his early works which display the tendencies of a young composer finding his footing, there is consistency in Fauré's compositional choices throughout his career, which Caballero defines as a form of Fauré's musical sincerity, otherwise known as "the translation of personality, or a personal sensibility."²⁴¹ Fauré's music possesses a straightforwardness and smoothly-flowing clarity of sound often described as *élan*. The original French literally translates as "momentum" or "impulse" and, in a musical context the term takes on a quality of shimmering energy. François Gervais points to the uniqueness of Fauré's sound by asserting that his harmonic language was an intimate fusion of his understandings of modal harmonies and tonality, which transferred to his vocal writing:

And his *mélodie*, always singing and living at the interior of the harmonic background, will always however be indissociable from that which constitutes some kind of emanation.²⁴²

Gervais reveals that Fauré's melodies (note the lack of "é") have their own lives within what can be a thickly-layered harmonic backdrop. Related to Verlaine's personification of language as a bird flying off to freedom in "Art poétique," the image of Fauré's vocal lines' resistance to being overshadowing by their harmonic surroundings (or even their resistance towards escaping from their harmonies) contributes to defining *élan* with respect to Fauré's aesthetic. At a later point in his work, Gervais asserts:

Fauré's *mélodie* does not have its own autonomous life. It is a question of harmony and remains indissociable from it. This fact is observed principally in his accompaniments, which

²⁴⁰ Duchon, *Gabriel Fauré*, 209.

²⁴¹ Caballero, *Fauré and French Musical Aesthetics*, 41. At a later point in the monograph, Caballero goes further to suggest that Fauré's sincerity fosters a sense of his originality. See p. 77-85.

²⁴² Gervais, François. « Etude comparée des langages harmoniques de Fauré et de Debussy. » *La Revue Musicale*, v. 272-3. Richard-Masse, Paris : 1971, 19. Original: « Et sa mélodie, toujours chantante et vivante à l'intérieur de la trame harmonique, sera cependant indissociable de celle-ci, dont elle constituera en quelque sorte une 'émanation'.

almost always conceal an undeniable melodic life which manifests itself in very diverse ways.²⁴³

This tension between existing within the larger framework of a piece while also maintaining independence demonstrates another manifestation of *élan* in Fauré's work that can be found in many of the songs analyzed in this chapter. To refine some of the broader aesthetic categories into which Fauré falls, one will discover that this *élan* contributes to two other distinctive qualities: his sincerity and reticence, references to which "pervaded French writings on music as constantly as ideas about decadence, impressionism, or the conflicting currents of the classical and the modern..."²⁴⁴ Per Caballero, sincerity concerns the ways in which a composer captures and externalizes their interior realm of experience.²⁴⁵ And per Bergeron, reticence describes the quality of a music being resistant to conforming to conventional music logic, which in Fauré's case is due to an inexplicably elusive quality in his work.²⁴⁶ I would add that reticence can refer to the freely-evolving structure throughout the duration of a Fauré *mélodie*, which resists explicit formal designations, as well (see below examples).²⁴⁷ Within French-speaking circles, his command of these elements and embodiment of these characteristics contributed to his being chosen to teach at and eventually reform the Conservatoire, in spite of his status as an outsider to the Conservatoire circle. Similarly, Fauré's capturing of the essence of sincerity in nineteenth-century francophone life and his alluring reticence contributed to his warm reception and support from Brussels. Despite his style not being overly "avant-garde," to loosely appropriate the term here, Fauré's resistance to contemporary trends plays a part in deciphering his significance with respect to the Brussels-based avant-garde expositions discussed in Chapter 4.

²⁴³ Gervais, « Etude comparée, » 73. Original: « ...la mélodie, chez Fauré, n'a pas de vie autonome. Elle est issue de l'harmonie et reste indissociable de celle-ci. Ce fait s'observe dans ses accompagnements, principalement, qui recèlent presque toujours une vie mélodique indéniable se manifestant de manières très diverses. » Also see p. 84-86 for further insights into Gervais's interpretation of Fauré's melodic writing.

²⁴⁴ Caballero, *Fauré and French Musical Aesthetics*, 11. Despite what can be a hagiographic analysis, Caballero provides detailed examples of the prevalence of these discussions during Fauré's lifetime and gives specific definitions of the terminology. I have forgone the inclusion of much of that discussion for fear of distracting from the task at hand.

²⁴⁵ Caballero, *Fauré and French Musical Aesthetics*, 12. Caballero also claims that Fauré was singled out as among the sincerest composers because of: his aloofness to present-day conventions, ability to prevent vanity or desire for personal gain from interfering with his art, and because his innovations acted in service of improving self-expression (p. 27). Certainly, this is one of those points in Caballero's work that can read as slightly exaggerated, but the first point is certainly sensed through even after listening casually to Fauré's works.

²⁴⁶ Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, viii. She carefully underlines the fact that this is not solely due to an overly progressive twisting of harmonic practices, even though Fauré does manipulate the practices of tonal harmonies.

²⁴⁷ See examples 2a and 2b of *La Bonne Chanson*.

Fauré's early influences include his keyboard teacher Camille Saint-Saëns and Polish-born pianist Frédéric Chopin.²⁴⁸ In an earlier project, I analyzed Fauré in the context of nineteenth century historicism and connected some aspects of Fauré's piano style to his early Chopinian influence. That previous work relates to this discussion of exploring the roots of Fauré's essential aesthetic qualities of sincerity and reticence. In his comparative study of Debussy and Fauré, Gervais indicates that Chopin: "by the character of his own aesthetic, inscribed the Germanic current of Romanticism at the margins. This aesthetic...preceded and announced those of Fauré and Debussy."²⁴⁹ Similarly, Fauré scholar Roy Howat remarks that Fauré's controlled, nimble keyboard work and flightiness of sound are clearly inspired by early Romantic composers like Mendelssohn, Schumann, and Saint-Saëns, but that his style quickly matured and accrued a rhythmic and harmonic language that "[shows] deeper affinities with...Chopin."²⁵⁰ Caballero further offers that leaving Fauré's piano music out of a discussion about his impact on classical music "is to omit that of one of the most important composers to sustain and transform the legacy of Chopin...into the twentieth century."²⁵¹

One similarity between Chopin and Fauré is the way in which they orchestrate melodic lines. Howat asserts that one of Chopin's musical legacies concerns Chopin's ability to open up possibilities for harmonic freedom over the course of a piece, freedom of movement within harmonic progressions, and that Chopin's manipulation of rhythmic elements promotes movement through seemingly disparate sections.²⁵² He also describes Chopin as being one of the first to begin composing solo piano works as a melody (i.e. song) with accompaniment, perhaps seen most clearly in the famous set of Preludes.²⁵³ These two aspects of Chopin's style are present in Fauré's piano writing, regardless of whether the piano accompanies a vocal or

²⁴⁸ Perhaps one of my favorite quotes about Fauré's student years comes from Camille Saint-Saëns: "Fauré could be an excellent organist when he wanted to be." Saint-Saëns foreshadows Fauré's later preferences for intimate chamber forms rather than the dominating presence of cathedral organs. Aside from perhaps boyish laziness, this statement also implies that young Gabriel already preferred to master a subtler instrument.

²⁴⁹ Gervais, « Etude comparée, » 11. Original: « ...par le caractère de son esthétique, s'inscrit en marge du courant romantique allemand. Cette esthétique...précède et annonce celles de Fauré et Debussy. »

²⁵⁰ Howat, Roy. "Chopin's influence on the fin de siècle and beyond," 250. Also see Duchén p. 106-7, where she asserts that Fauré's harmonic progressions reveal a conception of music horizontally and continuously in a way which mimics Chopin.

²⁵¹ Caballero, *Fauré and French Musical Aesthetics*, 8.

²⁵² Howat, "Chopin's influence," 246.

²⁵³ Howat, "Chopin's influence," 246-7. Also worth noting is that, while Chopin titled his own pieces with titles that indicated genres, Fauré's use of equivalent titles (like prelude, nocturne, and barcarolle) were used more arbitrarily.

instrumental line, or acts as a solo voice. A difference with Fauré is the presence of richer contrapuntal textures, wherein the upper line behaves like the “song,” two or three interior lines that interact more actively with one another, and often a bottommost bass voice.²⁵⁴ These delicately interwoven contrapuntal lines are typically shared between the left and right hands,²⁵⁵ or traded between the two hands, as in “La fleur qui va sur l’eau,” where the left-hand thematic material gradually migrates to the right hand as the piece develops.²⁵⁶ This ambidexterity and prominence of melodic and bass lines can also be attributed to his organ training, which also explains his facility with maneuvering between keys and re-tonicization in nearby key areas.²⁵⁷

Additionally, tempo fluctuation and rubato are points of contention surrounding the performance practices of both composers’ works. French singer Pauline Viardot trained with Chopin and Saint-Saëns and was known for performing many of the latter’s works in her salon. Saint-Saëns once said of Viardot that “she was in a position to give invaluable directions about the way in which Chopin’s music should be interpreted. . . . she taught me the secret of a true tempo rubato, for lack of which his music becomes disfigured.”²⁵⁸ By contrast, Fauré’s contemporaries described him as “a walking metronome,” and it has been claimed that abusing rubato while performing his works means that the pieces “immediately lose the aristocratic poise, the edge of finely shaded and understated sensibility that gives them their unique perfume.”²⁵⁹ Fauré similarly expressed distaste for excessive emotionality in music and favored a more subdued, controlled sound. To reconcile this preference with general Romantic-era trends of increasing musical expressivity, Fauré embeds rubato and accelerando within his music often by using augmentation and diminution to lengthen or shorten note values in a thematic line, which results in brief changes in character.

²⁵⁴ See, for example, Fauré’s “Après un rêve.” The accompaniment throughout this piece consists of a constant eighth note pulse in the right hand. Within these triads or four-note chords, Fauré alternates between static motion and stepwise motion in each line, thereby creating an intricate yet tightly-woven web of subtle counterpoint which supports the harmonic shifts suggested by the vocal line. See Example 1a of “Après un rêve.”

²⁵⁵ See Example 2a from *La Bonne Chanson* and Example 4a from *La Chanson d’Ève* for comparison.

²⁵⁶ See Example 2a in *Opus 85 no. 1*.

²⁵⁷ Howat, Roy. “Modernization: From Chabrier and Faure to Debussy and Ravel.” In *French Music Since Berlioz*, 197-221. Edited by R. Langham Smith and Caroline Potter. Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2006, 205. Howat supports this by clarifying that organ training involves working on improvisation within and towards other key areas.

²⁵⁸ Duchon, *Gabriel Fauré*, 36.

²⁵⁹ Duchon, *Gabriel Fauré*, 37. See “Les Berceaux,” the piano part of which contrasts the independent rocking motions of the left and right hands. Without a steady tempo, the piece would lose its lulling, gently swaying character which supports the imagery of the text. See any of the appendix examples under “Les Berceaux” to visualize this.

One example of this is in “Après un rêve,” wherein Fauré’s use of the repeated triplet swirling motion in the vocal line adds a liveliness to the singer’s emotion which contrasts the pulsing eighth notes in the accompaniment.²⁶⁰ Even though his mentor Saint-Saëns celebrated the rubato and “grandiose and exaggerated effects” of some music, Fauré’s aesthetic aligns with a classical-era notion that music should be played “with suppleness, but simply and in time,” which Howat denotes as being related to a Chopinian aesthetic.²⁶¹ Fauré’s Chopinism provides examples of his sincerity and reticence. Paradoxically, Fauré’s resistance to overly-contemporary stylistic innovation contributes to the veneration he received from his contemporaries, Caballero writing that “...in the minds of his contemporaries, Fauré’s indifference to stylistic vogues was one aspect of his sincerity.”²⁶² These delineating style traits were also the likely obstacles to his being elected be part of the Institut.²⁶³

Fauré’s appreciation for nuance also plays a large role in defining his aesthetic, especially considering the importance of nuance in Symbolism’s guiding principles. As James Sobaskie states, Fauré seemed “moved by the sensitive expression” of certain details, and encouraged students and performers to highlight the subtleties of texts in vocal works.²⁶⁴ This quality of nuance can be discussed with respect to Fauré’s dislike for dictating extreme tempo fluctuations in scores and for extreme fluctuation in the musician’s interpretation, as we explored through the idea of reticence. Rather than asking performers to change tempo with indications (like rubato or accelerando), he often employs more localized metrical changes to achieve the same aural effect of altered tempos. Fauré’s writing for voice seems uninhibited by metrically uneven syllabic patterns of Symbolist poetry, as one will hear in the forthcoming music examples. Take “J’ai presque peur, en vérité” in *La Bonne Chanson* as an example. Fauré sets “dans ce bonheur” with a triplet rhythm, which then repeats in

²⁶⁰ See “Après un rêve.” This excerpt provides two examples of that swirling figure triplet figure, the first time in descending motion (m. 3) and the second appearance in ascending motion (m. 7).

²⁶¹ Howat, “Chopin’s Influence,” 247.

²⁶² Caballero, *Fauré and French Musical Aesthetics*, 15-6

²⁶³ Caballero, *Fauré and French Musical Aesthetics*, 60. He nuances this by saying that “Fauré’s innovations, subtle as they were, were not so discreet either in their immediate impression upon the ear or in their vexing implications for tonal syntax as to escape the censure of official musicians,” who presumably had institutional connections. Also see p. 121-2 of Duchon, where she echoes similar sentiments regarding the esoteric vagueness of his style.

²⁶⁴ Sobaskie, James W. “Allusion in the Music of Gabriel Fauré.” In *Regarding Fauré*. Edited by Tom Gordon. Philadelphia: Gordon and Breach Publishers, 199, 163.

measures 61-2.²⁶⁵ After these moments of hemiola, Fauré returns to more dotted rhythmic syncopations. The poetry before these final lines are set quick quarter or eighth notes, and the closing lines of the song consist of long held-out high notes outlining primary harmonies. Thus, the brisk, text-laden melodic line is interrupted by these triplets which propel the singer towards the profound expression of “Que je vous aime, que je t’aime!” (That you love me, that I love you!). Fauré’s manipulation of rhythm is not wholly his own invention or even a complex technique, but this technique prevails across many genres of his work, thus making it a hallmark signature of his style. Because of the necessity for deeper understanding and a watchful eye upon the score, another level of nuance and an esoteric resistance to explanation presents itself.

“Fauré wrote a huge number of songs throughout his life,” which one can understand as having been a practical decision because vocal works were often easiest to have performed in the Parisian salons in which Fauré was invested.²⁶⁶ His practice writing for voice leads to testimonies that he was “a consummate master of this deceptively difficult medium,”²⁶⁷ which means that understanding Fauré’s place in the francophone classical music canon involves analyzing his vocal music. Furthermore, because so many scholars assert that he pioneered the practice of setting Symbolist poetry, analyzing Fauré’s vocal works mean engaging with the social, political, and cultural contexts of the source texts (as undertaken in the previous two chapters). The remainder of this chapter is dedicated to methodically moving through two of Fauré’s most well-known song cycles: *La Bonne Chanson* (poetry by Verlaine) and *La Chanson d’Eve* (poetry by Charles van Lerberghe). These two cycles are landmark works in Fauré’s career, and together they depict an evolution in his compositional style since nearly a decade separates the two works. One will find that both poets treat their poetic medium in contrasting ways, and Fauré responds to the differences in the poets’ aesthetics. One will also find that both cycles thematize tensions between song and silence, and Fauré’s settings of each lead to differing conclusions about how he might have understood the role of song within each set of poems. When one recalls that part of the Symbolist ethos involves around questions surrounding the musicality of language and often explores

²⁶⁵ See Example 4c of *La Bonne Chanson*.

²⁶⁶ Duchon, *Gabriel Fauré*, 52.

²⁶⁷ Duchon, *Gabriel Fauré*, 52.

the implications of silence in what they viewed as revolutionary poetry and literature, Fauré's direct engagement with these texts reveal a deep awareness and sensitivity towards the material and its broader aims. Through Fauré, one will sense how *mélodie* is intimately tied to its poetry, and further witness how the language-oriented questions that guided Symbolist thought are inseparable from their *mélodie* offspring.

La Bonne Chanson: Quest to be Heard

For much of the young to middle years of his career, Fauré identified with Paul Verlaine's works. Their interpersonal relationship was fostered by salon performer Winnaretta Singer, who owned several salons in Paris that Fauré frequented. As a testament to their rapport, Singer performed several of his works, and Fauré dedicated two song cycles to her in the 1880s. Fauré and Verlaine collaborated on a project in 1891 to celebrate the opening of a new wing in Singer's salon. As the two corresponded, Fauré looked at Verlaine's oeuvre to understand the writing style for which he was expected to compose. In a letter to Singer, Fauré carefully describes Verlaine as a "singular, strange, incomprehensible character" before going on to relentlessly critique the poet's alcohol abuse and poor financial management.²⁶⁸ The letters between Verlaine and Fauré from this period consist of Verlaine pleading for more money and time to generate usable content for their project. The lack of Fauré's responses to these pleas, at least in Nectoux's edition of Fauré correspondence, further suggests Fauré's growing frustration with Verlaine. Irritated by Verlaine's apparently unmanageable alcoholism, moodiness, and bouts of depression, Fauré continuously urged the Princesse de Polignac (Singer) to stop offering financial advances that only went towards supporting Verlaine's addiction rather than his creative endeavors. "Verlaine puts me in such despair: he does nothing, he always promises for

²⁶⁸ Nectoux, Jean-Michel. *Correspondance suivie de Lettres à Madame H. : Recueillies, présentées et annotées par Jean-Michel Nectoux.* (Paris : Librairie Arthème Fayard, 2015), 174. Full translation of Fauré's critique of Verlaine: « Quel singulier, étrange, incompréhensible personnage ! Comment une créature humaine, si merveilleusement douée, peut-elle se complaire dans ce perpétuel aller-et-retour entre la brasserie et l'hospice ! Où trouve-t-il la philosophie d'accepter, de trouver tout naturel de vivre dans cette fade odeur de maladies et de remèdes, lit à lit avec des *quelconques* qui doivent lui être de faible ressource pour causer, dans la malpropreté écœurante de ses draps et son linge, sous le pénible règlement qui ne lui permet de recevoir d'amicales visites que deux fois par semaine, qui lui interdit la lampe et la bougie et le tient dans le tremblement d'une veilleuse depuis le crépuscule jusqu'au jour ! »

the next day and the day after the next! And time passes, and I don't see any indication that this will end!"²⁶⁹ Despite his personal issues with working with Verlaine, Fauré cannot shake his attraction to Verlaine's poetry. Louis Aguetant notes that there is an affinity for delicateness, melancholy, and elegance in much of Verlaine's poetry with which Fauré likely identified.²⁷⁰

Instead of a proper collaborative work, what results are several settings of Verlaine's poetry, which include the cycles *Cinq Mélodies de Venise* (1891) and *La Bonne Chanson* (1894). Duchen indicates that Fauré's compositional responses to the writer's poetry "proved that he found this writer's work a powerful source of inspiration."²⁷¹ In 1923, Fauré wrote to his friend Roger-Ducasse that he had never written anything as easily as *La Bonne Chanson*, and that he was guided by a level of "spontaneous understanding" that he never quite captured in any future compositions.²⁷² This reveals that the poetry seemed to directly inform Fauré's compositional choices in the cycle, and it highlights the fact that *La Bonne Chanson* revealed "not only a different kind of originality but a new confidence within that originality."²⁷³ In the ensuing analysis of the song cycle, I am primarily choosing to address the texts that make rather overt references to song, music, or sound to support claims about Fauré's construction of sound worlds that reflect the revolutionary spirit of Symbolist poetry, especially in Verlaine's case since he is known for the musicality of his writing.

Thematically, the text from the opening song of the cycle, "Une Sainte en son auréole," is uncomplicated and accessible from both listening and performing standpoints. Written in ABAB rhyme scheme, this sixteen-line poem "amounts to little more than a list: a string of almost disconnected metaphors"

²⁶⁹ Nectoux, *Correspondance* (2015), 179. Original: « Verlaine me met au désespoir : il ne fait rien, il promet toujours pour le lendemain et le lendemain pour le jour suivant ! Et le temps passe et je n'entrevois pas le moindre indice qui puisse me faire espérer que cela aura une fin. J'ai usé, je vous assure, de tous les moyens : il n'en est aucun qui ait de l'action sur sa suprême indifférence. »

²⁷⁰ Aguetant, *Les amitiés littéraires*, 73. Original: « Le génie de la mélodie est encore intuition sympathique de la poésie, et faculté d'en transmettre les plus délicates vibrations. Fauré est en cela l'égal des maitres allemands. » (p. 73)

²⁷¹ Duchen, *Gabriel Fauré*, 95.

²⁷² Nectoux, *Correspondance* (2015), 553. Original: « En vous écoutant, vous et Suzanne Balguerie vendredi, dans mon réduit, je me convainquais que je n'ai rien écrit jamais aussi spontanément que *La Bonne Chanson*. Je puis, je dois ajouter que j'y été aidé par une spontanéité de compréhension au moins égale de la part de celle qui en est restée la plus émouvante interprète. »

²⁷³ Duchen, *Gabriel Fauré*, 105. She goes on with: "[the] full range of Fauré's virtuoso manipulations of the tiniest degrees of harmony and chromaticism began to emerge; an adventurousness of form to which he had always leaned...; and the strength of distinctive personality arising from his use of modal inflections and harmonies in combination with traditional tonality."

which straightforwardly depict the image of the beloved.²⁷⁴ The list of metaphors describes golden horn calls, noble ladies, and pearls; and “toutes ces choses” are heard “dans son nom Carlovingien.” The setting of the poem is therefore in the Carolingian era of towers, trumpet calls in the woods, and noble women depicted with their elusive charms. And any sounds mentioned in the poem all pay homage to the noble Carolingian era in French history, a time commonly seen as the beginning of the formation of present-day France.²⁷⁵

« Une sainte en son auréole »	“A saint enhaloed”
Une Sainte en son auréole, Une Châtelaine en sa tour, Tout ce que contient la parole Humaine de grâce et d'amour.	A saint in her halo Milady in a castle tower All that human words can express Of grace and of love
La note d'or que fait entendre Un cor dans le lointain des bois, Mariée à la fierté tendre Des nobles Dames d'autrefois ;	The golden note that makes heard A horn in the distant woods Wedded/Married to the tender pride Of noble ladies of earlier days.
Avec cela le charme insigne D'un frais sourire triomphant Éclos [de] ² candeurs de cygne Et des rougeurs de femme-enfant ;	With that the signal charm(ed) Of a fresh, triumphant smile Enclosed in the candors of a swan And the blushes of a woman-child.
Des aspects nacrés, blancs et roses, Un doux accord patricien : Je vois, j'entends toutes ces choses Dans son nom Carlovingien.	The aspects of pearls, white and pink, A sweet patrician accord. I see, I hear all these things In her Carolingian name.

To musically evoke earlier eras, Fauré sets this text by referencing the form of a romance. The poem is set to “a quaint triple-meter melody that recall[s] an ancient air, or a lied” which is also set to a pentatonic melody, remnants of which appear throughout.²⁷⁶ This can be seen in his accompaniment marked by the frequent usage of open, arpeggiated chord voicings between rather basic contrapuntal lines. Gartside points out in the preface to his analysis of this song that Fauré tended to favor poetry “in which the evocative character of the words was greater than their sonorous quality...”²⁷⁷ Even though this is seemingly

²⁷⁴ Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, 159.

²⁷⁵ The Carolingians reigned in the ninth century. Charlemagne was the most famous ruler from this period of French history, and he was crowned by the pope to try to revive the Holy Roman Empire. The main spoken language of the royals at this time was still Latin.

²⁷⁶ Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, 159. See example 1a of *La Bonne Chanson* samples.

²⁷⁷ Gartside, *Interpreting the Songs of Gabriel Fauré*, 24.

contradictory to the crux of the project at hand, this is an important aspect of Fauré's musicality. It is not that Fauré disregarded the sonorous quality of words. Rather, he wanted his songs to be musical and not poetic experiences, a concern which Gartside contrasts with Debussy's pursuit of perfection when it came to text-setting. Thus, Fauré demonstrates a valorization of musical content over ensuring the correctness or accuracy of text-setting.²⁷⁸ This preference promotes a natural unfolding of this song within the atmosphere of the poem, and it sets the tone for the rest of the work by establishing the "quaint," easy feeling of an "ancient air," to use Bergeron's words. Capturing the poetic content through the music rather than through more specific textual emphases in "Une Sainte en son auréole" points to Fauré's ability to infuse his music with the essence of a text, which thus gives voice to a poem haunted by the sound of the beloved's name.

Porter describes this set of poetry as part of Verlaine's aesthetic of subverting language due to his belief that words were not only "inadequate to treat transcendent subjects" but also unreliable as an expressive medium.²⁷⁹ On the whole, the poems in *La Bonne Chanson* depict the search for this "sainte en son auréole," this perfect woman, which is an allegory for "a transient episode" in Verlaine's creative life "during which love and language are glorified together."²⁸⁰ From poem to poem, the forms switch between various mixtures of rhyme schemes, lengths, stanza groupings, and hints of free verse. Along the journey, these inconsistencies reveal the protagonist's shifting moods, at first being overjoyed with beginning the journey and then becoming anxious or fearful of his emotions towards her.

The second song in the cycle, "Puisque l'aube grandit," lies in the nebulous region between these two emotions of joy and anxiety. Just like "Une sainte," the poem is a laundry list of wishes and hopes, but the mood differs from the Lied-like character of the cycle's opening number. The exhilaration that the listener will experience in other places of the cycle begins with this poem, and Fauré's embracing of the energetic

²⁷⁸ Gartside, *Interpreting the Songs of Gabriel Fauré*, 24.

²⁷⁹ Porter, *Crisis of French Symbolism*, 78.

²⁸⁰ Porter, *Crisis of French Symbolism*, 104.

mood is “a rare moment in [his] output.”²⁸¹ Fauré’s setting has several stanzas removed, as the original poem is twice as long and much wordier than the preceding poem.²⁸²

« Puisque l'aube grandit »	“Since day is breaking”
Puisque l'aube grandit, puisque voici l'aurore, Puisque, après m'avoir fui longtemps, l'espoir veut bien Revoler devers moi qui l'appelle et l'implore, Puisque tout ce bonheur veut bien être le mien,	Since day is breaking, since dawn is here, Since, after having long fled from me, hope may Fly back to me who calls to it and implores it, Since all this happiness will certainly be mine,
[...]	[...]
Je veux, guidé par vous, beaux yeux aux flammes douces, Par toi conduit, ô main où tremblera ma main, Marcher droit, que ce soit par des sentiers de mousses Ou que rocs et cailloux encomrent le chemin ;	I want, guided by you beautiful eyes to sweet flames, By you be driven, o! hand where my hand will tremble, To walk straight either through mossy paths Or with rocks and pebbles encumbering the path
[...]	[...]
Et comme, pour bercer les lenteurs de la route, Je chanterai des airs ingénus, je me dis Qu'elle m'écouterà sans déplaisir sans doute ; Et vraiment je ne veux pas d'autre Paradis.	And just like, as comfort during the tediousness of the journey/I will sing some innocent airs, I will tell myself That she will hear me without displeasure without doubt And truly I want no other Paradise.

The subject of Verlaine’s poem proclaims his excitement that, with the arrival of dawn and a new day, “hope may fly back” and bring the happiness of his beloved along with it. As the poem continues, the protagonist describes how this beloved has brought clarity to the world. Despite the happiness of seeing the dawn of this new day, the reader still intuitively feels a sense of nervous excitement, seen by the fact that the mere thought of touching hands with his lover and walking “through mossy paths” makes his own hands tremble (lines 17-20, which are seen here in what looks like the second stanza). In lines 25-8, the poem closes with the assertion that throughout the journey, as comfort, the protagonist will sing “des airs ingénus” (innocent airs) that he hopes “she will hear...without displeasure and without any doubt.” The use of “airs ingénus” seems to reference the Lied-like character of “Une Sainte en son auréole.” Inserting the singing of these ancient airs at the last moment in the poem reveals that sound (particularly singing) has value in this world in such that it is depicted by contrasts between lightness and darkness, and clarity and vagueness. Just as the imagery of

²⁸¹ Gartside, *Interpreting the Songs of Gabriel Fauré*, 181. He goes further to say that this song stands alone well, and can be extracted from the cycle to provide energy and excitement to a set of Fauré songs in a recital or concert setting.

²⁸² Fauré omitted full three stanzas, as indicated by the bracket following the first stanza. The second bracket is only one stanza’s worth.

“Une Sainte” was based on the sound of what is an old-fashioned name (since it presumably originates from the Carolingian era), the imagery in his poem culminates in the singing of short, humble songs in the face of confronting confusion or darkness. And the innocent newness of these *airs* plays into the personification of her as the image of pure perfection, “a saint in her halo.”

In shortening the length of “Puisque l’aube grandit,” Fauré also reduces some confusion created by Verlaine’s use of appositive phrases and constant self-interjections throughout. Even though he removes stanzas that capture the unique delusion of this poem, Fauré still captures that spirit musically. The piano texture of “Puisque l’aube grandit” begins with “incessantly changing semiquaver sextuplets, rolling between the hands and exploring every nook and cranny of harmonic well-being with implacable curiosity.”²⁸³ Once the vocal line enters in the second measure, it too possesses forward-moving energy generated by spiraling escape tones.²⁸⁴ The irregular rhythm of the vocal line starkly contrasts the predictability of “Une Sainte;” Gartside describes the singer in this second song as “[planing] over this accompaniment in marvelous sweeping curves in which Fauré combines all sorts of rhythmic variations.”²⁸⁵ However, the melodic and accompanimental energies calm upon reaching Verlaine’s closing stanza, where the “innocent airs” are introduced. To usher this in, Fauré gradually reduces the number of notes per beat by shifting from sextuplets, to sixteenth notes, to triplets (mm. 29-31), a gesture which gives the illusion of slowing down time.²⁸⁶ On the words “airs ingénus,” Fauré references the first song in the right hand of the accompaniment, an allusion which stands out because of its duple meter (rather than as one of the triplet subdivisions heard throughout the song), and the musical material sounds like a transposition of the vocal line at the end of “Une Sainte en son auréole.”²⁸⁷

Song 3, “La lune blanche,” is a stereotypical Symbolist poem describing the beauty of the moonlit night, and how the protagonist feels aligned with mysterious beauty of moonlight. For the sake of brevity, we

²⁸³Johnson, Graham. *Gabriel Fauré: The Songs and their Poets*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2009, 230.

²⁸⁴ See Example 2b of *La Bonne Chanson*.

²⁸⁵ Gartside, *Interpreting the Songs of Gabriel Fauré*, 181.

²⁸⁶ This device is another example of Fauré’s avoidance of marked tempo changes in his music, and instead favoring the approach of using rhythmic decelerando to achieve a similar effect.

²⁸⁷ See *La Bonne Chanson*, Example 1b and Example 2c for this comparison.

will leave the atmospheric quality of this poem aside and move forward in the cycle to “J’allais par des chemins perfides.” Returning to themes of weariness and nervousness, this fourth poem is written in stanzas of three lines that follow an ABA rhyme scheme, with the last stanza written in four lines of ABAB. At the dawn of this new day, our journeyer remarks that he has travelled “par les chemins perfides” (along treacherous paths) and looks for a sign of hope. Because it is just barely dawn, the world awakes from a silent state interrupted by the protagonist’s footsteps. Verlaine introduces an omniscient narrator into the poem, which would almost go unnoticed if not for his mixture of first and second person.²⁸⁸

« J’allais par des chemins perfides »	“I went along treacherous paths”
J’allais par les chemins perfides, Douloureusement incertain. Vos chères mains furent mes guides.	I went along treacherous paths, Harrowingly uncertain. Your dear hands were my guide.
Si pâle à l’horizon lointain Luisait un faible espoir d’aurore ; Votre regard fut le matin.	How pale on the distant horizon Shone a feeble hope of dawn Your glance was the morning!
Nul bruit, sinon son pas sonore, N’encourageait le voyageur. Votre voix me dit: "Marche encore!"	No sound, except his noisy footsteps Encouraged the traveler. Your voice said to me: “Keep walking!”
Mon coeur craintif, mon sombre coeur Pleurait, seul, sur la triste voie ; L’amour, délicieux vainqueur, Nous a réunis dans la joie.	My fearful heart, my somber heart Cried, alone, on the sad rode; Love, sweet victor, Has reunited us in joy!

The sound of his footsteps is only heard because of the woodland silence. In Fauré’s treatment of this line, the musical texture thins while the left hand travels in octaves with slurred staccatos as their articulation.²⁸⁹ Additionally, the voice of the beloved can be heard, and her voice intrudes the sparse sonic landscape of footsteps in a silent wooded refuge. After her voice encourages the protagonist to keep walking, Fauré places the footsteps motive in the right hand at a higher dynamic level and without spiccato articulations, to assert the newfound confidence of continuing the journey.²⁹⁰ Just as in “Une Sainte” and

²⁸⁸ Otherwise, the journeyer could be talking about himself, as if he were viewing his situation from a distance and having some sort of out-of-body experience.

²⁸⁹ See Example 3a. This is the footsteps motive that appears later in the song.

²⁹⁰ See Example 3b of *La Bonne Chanson*.

“Puisque l’aube grandit,” the heard quality of the beloved is the journey’s motivating force. “J’allais” concludes with the idea that love eventually shall reign victorious in this quest (lines 10-13).

Thus far the discussion of *La Bonne Chanson* has revolved around implications of sound and singing in the narrative; but the next song, “J’ai presque peur en vérité,” manipulates a linguistic uniqueness in French that appears in the final line of the poem.

« J’ai presque peur, en vérité »	“I am almost afraid, in truth”
<p>J’ai presque peur, en vérité Tant je sens ma vie enlacée A la radieuse pensée Qui m’a pris l’âme l’autre été,</p> <p>Tant votre image, à jamais chère, Habite en ce coeur tout à vous, [Mon]¹ coeur uniquement jaloux De vous aimer et de vous plaire ;</p> <p>Et je tremble, pardonnez-moi D’aussi franchement vous le dire, À penser qu’un mot, [un]² sourire De vous est désormais ma loi,</p> <p>Et qu’il vous suffirait d’un geste, D’une parole ou d’un clin d’oeil, Pour mettre tout mon être en deuil De son illusion céleste.</p> <p>Mais plutôt je ne veux vous voir, L’avenir dût-il m’être sombre Et fécond en peines sans nombre, Qu’à travers un immense espoir,</p> <p>Plongé dans ce bonheur suprême De me dire encore et toujours, En dépit des mornes retours, Que je vous aime, que je t’aime !</p>	<p>I am almost afraid, in truth, I feel (that) my life is tied To the radiant thought That took hold of my soul that other summer;</p> <p>So much (that) your image forever dear Inhabits this heart (which is) all yours, This/my uniquely jealous heart To love you and to please you;</p> <p>And I tremble, forgive me, For so frankly saying it to you, To think that a word, that smile From you is from now on my law,</p> <p>And that only a gesture would suffice, Only a word or the wink of an eye, To put all my being into mourning For its celestial illusion.</p> <p>But, rather, I want to see you, The future should it for me somber And rich in pains without number, Only through an immense hope;</p> <p>Plunged in this supreme happiness To myself to say again and always, In spite of mournful reversals of fortune, That I you love, that I thee love.</p>

As the title indicates, the protagonist now worries frantically over whether he is too much in love with this heard (but, as of yet, unseen) beloved (unseen to the reader, anyway). He remarks that he is so enraptured by the little things about her – “un mot, un sourire...un geste...une parole ou [un] clin d’oeil” – that he wonders if those small qualities merit his investment in the love affair. Again, the poem consists of interruptive appositive phrases, the use of which mirrors the protagonist’s internal confusion. As an example, see lines 9-

16 (third and fourth stanzas).²⁹¹ In the closing two stanzas, however, the protagonist's tone shifts from one of anxiety and insecurity to one of acceptance and even confidence. He alludes to the fact that he will see her at some point in the future, and even if this future is "somber / and rich in pains without number," his hope is that he will be able to say that she loves him and that he loves her. As Robert Gartside indicates, the switch from the "vous" to "tu" form in the last line is not to be ignored. Normally, one would expect to hear "je vous aime" as an expression of loving someone, but here, our protagonist is swept up in a moment of joy, which causes him to slip into the informal form of "je t'aime." He is so enveloped in this realization of his love for this beloved figure that he cannot help but slip into the more informal, personal expression of love.

The music displays this emotional moment in the poetry. In terms of his treatment of these lines, Fauré's shifts from E-minor to E-major and changes musical texture as well. Throughout the entire piece until measure 42, the accompanimental gestures consist of eighth notes played on off-beats, with the bass notes moving in half notes. Because these stanzas of poetry address the protagonist's anxiety, this compositional gesture personifies this mood quite nicely with its antsy and anticipatory nature.²⁹² But Fauré then moves to the parallel major and a more lyrical accompaniment, a move that matches the contrastive connotations of using the conjunction *Mais* in line 17. The right hand plays a version of the vocal line (and by extension the piano part that doubled it) that one heard at the opening lines of the song.²⁹³ He also appears sensitive to the change in pronoun usage.²⁹⁴ On "que je vous aime," the duration of the crescendo is shorter, and the range of notes sung on the word "aime" constitutes a fifth. But with the words "que je t'aime," the entrance begins on a timid pianissimo dynamic which lasts for a bar before crescendo-ing to its peak in measure 72. The range is wider, and the dynamic returns to a quieter level as the piano rolls the tonic harmonic beneath. The implication of the timid yet more dramatic writing on "que je t'aime" represents the suddenness of realizing that the protagonist *does* love this beloved, despite fears about her non-reciprocation.

²⁹¹ Note the use of the formal "vous" conjugation of pardonner rather than "tu."

²⁹² See Example 4a for sample of this accompanimental gesture and a slightly altered version in 4b.

²⁹³ See Example 4b.

²⁹⁴ See Example 4d for the score excerpt of the final line of poetry.

The protagonist reflects his newfound love through the pronoun change, and Fauré manipulates his music to reflect the significations between this pronoun shift, a signature element of the French language.

The sixth poem essentially overlays two poems with hyphens as the separative boundaries between the two. In the first, which exists outside of the hyphenation, the protagonist begs the “pale morning star” to shine bright enough upon him that his beloved can see him in her dreams. The second poem depicts “thousands of quails,” a lark, wheat fields, and a “sun of gold.” All the natural evocations in this poem have their own upbeat energies, especially by using words like “joy” and “gaily,” and by pleading with the morning star to shine “quickly, quickly” because the sunrise is almost upon the earth.

« Avant que tu ne t'en ailles »	“Before you go away”
Avant que tu ne t'en ailles, Pâle étoile du matin -- Mille cailles Chantent, chantent dans le thym. --	Before you go away, Pale morning star -- Thousands of quails Sing, sing the thyme ! –
Tourne devers le poète Dont les yeux sont pleins d'amour ; -- L'alouette Monte au ciel avec le jour. --	Turn towards the poet Whose eyes are full of love; -- The lark Climbs to the sky with the day. –
Tourne ton regard que noie L'aurore dans son azur ; -- Quelle joie Parmi les champs de blé mûr! --	Turn your gaze that drowns The dawn in its azure; -- What joy Amongst the fields of ripe wheat! –
[Puis] ¹ fais luire ma pensée Là-bas -- bien loin, oh, bien loin ! -- La rosée Gaïment brille sur le foin ! --	And make my thought shine There – far away, oh so far away! -- The dew, Gaily shines on the hay! –
Dans le doux rêve où s'agite Ma [mie] endormie encor... -- Vite, vite, Car voici le soleil d'or. --	In the sweet dream where stirs My beloved still sleeping... -- Quickly, quickly, For here is the sun of gold. –

Cleverly (or perhaps plucking low hanging fruit), Fauré plays with key areas and musical textures in the first two stanzas to personify the two overlaid poems. Beginning in D-flat for the lines “Avant que tu ne t'en ailles, / Pâle étoiles du matin,” Fauré uses A-flat in a leading tone modulation to A-major during the

second two lines of the first stanza.²⁹⁵ Similarly, he switches to a more animated accompaniment at the sounding of “mille caïlles.” The lilting quarter note texture in D-flat repeats for the first two lines of the second stanza, as do the spiky-sounding triplets thereafter, only this time its move to A-major has been thwarted in favor of ascending to B-major.²⁹⁶ Fauré continues alternating between different iterations of these two textures: a quarter note-driven pulse against twittering, scattered sixteenth-note material that aligns with the poem within the hyphens. Fauré also stretches the dynamics to their extremes, beginning with a hesitant pianissimo to beckon the morning star at dawn and ending the song with a forte F5 at the arrival of golden sunlight. Among the rangiest of songs in this cycle, and even across Fauré’s oeuvre in general, the song reaches its peak at a G-flat, as the protagonist cries “Là-bas -- bien loin, oh, bien loin!”

This poem is less about the singing quails or the lark’s call, and instead exemplifies the natural world as evoking the main character’s internal emotions. And it is less of a reflection, and more like the protagonist’s projection of his emotionality onto the surroundings. Across the cycle’s nine songs, one rarely witnesses the natural world responding, indicating having heard his pleas, or acknowledging his journey. What leads to this conclusion is because Fauré has the vocal line crescendo to its peak at the end of each stanza, during a poem wherein the protagonist evokes everyday natural miracles: the pleasantries of quails, ripe wheat, shining dew on the hay. Fauré’s setting transforms these pleasant observations into impassioned pleas that leave the protagonist breathless at each statement’s end, indicated by the need for piano interludes between stanzas. This poem reveals that the backdrop for this lover’s quest is the landscape, and that this landscape is not a character in itself. It is merely a place of exploration for the main character, and it passively holds the character’s projections of his wishes, frustrations, and excitements. This one-sided exchange directly contrasts with the role of nature in *La Chanson d’Eve*, as we will see in the forthcoming analysis of the cycle.

Following the seventh poem about a summer wedding, the eighth poem questions the meaning of being in love and to be physically with the one you love so dearly. Peppered by the rhetorical question and conversation-filler “N’est-ce pas?” (Is it not so?), the song is a dreamy state of inquiry. Again, Fauré only uses

²⁹⁵ See Appendix 5a of *La Bonne Chanson*.

²⁹⁶ See Appendix 5b of *La Bonne Chanson*.

about half of the original poetic text, since the poem feels like a rambling train of thought existing in the space of the question “is it not so?” and Fauré likely wanted to avoid belaboring the point with too long of a song. He set the stanzas that, coincidentally, have to do with being in the woods, which creates a microcosm of the larger cycle’s woodland setting.

« N'est-ce pas ? »	“Is it not so?”
N'est-ce pas? en dépit des sots et des méchants [...]	Is it not so? [...]
N'est-ce pas? nous irons gais et lents, dans la voie Modeste que nous montre en souriant l'Espoir, Peu soucieux qu'on nous ignore ou qu'on nous voie.	Is it not so? We will go, gaily and slowly, along the way The modest way that hope, while smiling, shows us, Little caring that others ignore us or that others see us
Isolés dans l'amour ainsi qu'en un bois noir, Nos deux coeurs, exhalant leur tendresse paisible, Seront deux rossignols qui chantent dans le soir.	Isolated in love as if in a black forest/woods Our two hearts, exhaling their peaceful tenderness, Will be two nightingales who sing in the evening.
[...]	[...]
Sans nous préoccuper de ce que nous destine Le Sort, nous marcherons pourtant du même pas, Et la main dans la main, avec l'âme enfantine.	Without preoccupying ourselves with what fate intends for us/The departure, we will walk however with the same step,/And hand-in-hand in childlike spirit.
De ceux qui s'aiment sans mélange, n'est-ce pas?	Of those who love undoubtedly, is it not so?

This train of thoughtful questioning is mirrored in Fauré’s setting as the music moves through “vividly imaginative harmonic colors” that flow between the consistent piano part “of one hand carrying long arched lines...while the other hand has a somewhat breathless rhythmic motif.”²⁹⁷ One instance of his evocation of sounds in this piece is his treatment of the mention of nightingales. Reminiscing upon the theme of birdsong referenced earlier the cycle,²⁹⁸ the nightingales in the black forest present an alternative to the earlier presentations of twittering birds at dawn. And here the birds are more personally connected to the protagonist rather than personifications of his surroundings. To emphasize this point musically, Fauré’s vocal

²⁹⁷ Gartside, *Interpreting the Songs of Gabriel Fauré*, 194-5.

²⁹⁸ “Puisque l’aube grandit,” and “Avant que tu ne t’en ailles” are other examples of the appearance of birdsong in the presence of morning-time or at the break of dawn.

line has the singer sustain the highest note of the song on the word “chantent” ([they] sing), before the line begins its descent.²⁹⁹

The cycle closes with “L’Hiver a cessé,” another example of a stereotypical Symbolist trope wherein winter evokes finality. My reading of this poem assumes a temporal distance from others in the cycle, in such that the protagonist and his beloved have been married (as posited in the seventh song in the set), and that she now rests in “the immutable azure” (likely a euphemism for death). Beginning with “Winter has ended: the light is warm / and dances,” the protagonist concludes that even the harshness of winter cannot quell his joy. This joy, of course, comes from having been with his beloved. The only textual alteration Fauré makes is his elimination of the second stanza, which directly refers to Paris. This change on Fauré’s part keeps the poem in its woodland setting of the Carolingian towers established in the first poem.

L’Hiver a cessé	Winter has ended
L’hiver a cessé : la lumière est tiède Et danse, du sol au firmament clair. Il faut que le coeur le plus triste cède À l’immense joie éparse dans l’air.	Winter has ended: the light is warm And dances, from the earth to the clear firmament, Even the very saddest heart must yield To the immense joy scattered in the air.
[...] ³⁰⁰	[...]
J’ai depuis un an le printemps dans l’âme Et le vert retour du doux floral, Ainsi qu’une flamme entoure une flamme, Met de l’idéal sur mon idéal.	I have had for a year springtime in my soul At the green return of the time of floral sweetness Just as a flame surrounds a flame, So the ideal is placed on my ideal.
Le ciel bleu prolonge, exhausse et couronne L’immuable azur où rit mon amour La saison est belle et ma part est bonne Et tous mes espoirs ont enfin leur tour.	The blue sky prolongs, heightens and crowns The immutable azure where my love laughs The season is beautiful and my share is good And all my hopes have their turn finally.
Que vienne l’été ! que viennent encore L’automne et l’hiver ! Et chaque saison Me sera charmante, ô Toi que décore Cette fantaisie et cette raison !	Let summer come! That again come Autumn and Winter! And every season Will be delightful to me, o Thou, decorated By this fantasy and this reason!

²⁹⁹ See Example 6a of *La Bonne Chanson*.

³⁰⁰ These brackets indicate a substantial portion of excerpted text that I have not included for the purposes of this analysis..

Fauré's opening motive takes on the character of falling snowflakes, but the texture of the accompaniment soon expands into a declamation from the singer that "L'hiver a cessé!" (Winter has ended!)³⁰¹ Beneath the singer's joyful proclamation, the piano continues its shimmering ostinato (evocative of springtime), which remains mostly rhythmically unchanged from measures 17 through 39. These sixteenth-note triplets gather momentum and build to the end of the piece, where the protagonist expresses that "every season will be delightful." Despite this gradual gathering of momentum, the music shifts rather suddenly at the end of measure 44 to an identical presentation of material from the opening of the second song, "Puisque l'aube grandit."³⁰² The material appears at the line "Et chaque saison / me sera charmante," and it has a similar declamatory quality as it had in the earlier song speaking of daybreak.³⁰³ In this respect, the two texts are similar. Following this thematic repetition, the piano texture settles into steady eighth notes, and the vocal line possesses less rhythmic energy and fewer strange interval leaps. With this steadying of the vocal line and accompaniment, the piece closes in the atmosphere of something akin to a state of dream-like reverie.

Despite the limited evocations of sound and human voice, Fauré's setting of *La Bonne Chanson* supports earlier claims related to his engagements with the Symbolist cause of redefining language use. Verlaine's poetry in this cycle consists of alternations in mood and rhyme schemes, and the contrasts he often draws relate to visual stimuli (primarily, lightness vs. darkness and sunlight vs. moonlight) which themselves reflect the protagonist's mental and emotional states (either one of clarity or one of confusion). Fauré does not use heavy-handed text-painting to convey these contrasts and instead favors alternating musical textures from song to song to emphasize tonal shifts over the course of the narrative. As the cycle progresses, the poems with themes of nervous energy or some degree of dazed confusion are set to active accompaniments, and the vocal lines are more rhythmically and melodically energetic, as well.³⁰⁴ Alternatively, the texts basking in placid moonlit glow and/or the texts that confirm the protagonist's emotions are accompanied by slower

³⁰¹ See Example 7a of *La Bonne Chanson*.

³⁰² See Example 7b from *La Bonne Chanson*.

³⁰³ See Example 7c of *La Bonne Chanson*.

³⁰⁴ The songs in this category are #2, #4, #5, and #9.

tempos and more lyrical, less rhythmic musical material.³⁰⁵ For the purposes of simplification, I have understood these separate categories as operating in a paradigm of sound versus its relative silence. Therefore, in Fauré's interpretation of Verlaine's poetry, shifts in the sonic landscape parallel the equivalent shifts in the poetry. Admittedly, this is not an entirely new compositional technique for composers. But as far as I know, this song cycle has not been discussed using this framework. In the context of using this cycle to understand the role of language in the development of vocal music, Fauré fills his sonic landscape with complex accompanimental figures, angular melodies, and unexpected harmonic shifts when the poem is more angst-ridden and coincidentally more filled with text. There is a correlation between noisier, busier music and the protagonist's desperation, a despair that is usually related to uncertainty of reaching his beloved; needing to feel her hand or hear her voice; or needing her to know that he is on his way to her.

This work begs the question of what "la bonne chanson" actually is. Despite the presence of sounds (usually bird songs) throughout, singing or any evocation of music only appears twice; and both references are early in the cycle.³⁰⁶ Additionally, Fauré does not present the listener with any singular melodic element that can be argued as "the good song," except perhaps for the obvious reappearance of "Puisque l'aube grandit" in the final song. Throughout, as Gartside points out, we hear traces of one song in other pieces (rather inconsistently and subconsciously).³⁰⁷ But just as the text is about a woman of whom one never forms a complete visual image, Fauré's musical setting is one with a song we never hear. The key to interpreting this cycle from a linguistic nationalist perspective lies in its title and in Fauré's setting of the first poem. One could argue that the song here is the sound of the woman's name which evokes images "des aspects nacrés, blancs et roses / un doux accord patricien," (of the aspects of pearls, white and pink / a sweet patrician accord) and which initiates the journey of the remaining eight poems. The placement of the references to song in this

³⁰⁵ The songs I place into this category are #3, #6, #7, and #8. You will see that the first song ("Une Sainte en son aureole") has been left out of either category. I have done so because its musical texture and function in the song cycle differs from the other eight in the set, as explained previously.

³⁰⁶ Just as the opening song is haunted by the sound of a Carolingian name, the set of poetry is also haunted by "voix" (voice). Throughout the set, "voix" usually is heard from a distance, and serves as motivation for the protagonist on his journey. At other points in the poetry, Verlaine writes "voie," which can either mean "path" or as a subjunctive form of the verb "voir" (to see). In effect, this haunting of "voix/voie/voie" can be traced throughout the poetry and lead one to an assumption that voice serves as a pathway. This could be further extrapolated in future work, but does work in tandem with my conclusion about what *La Bonne Chanson* represents.

³⁰⁷ Gartside, *Interpreting the Songs of Gabriel Fauré*, 188.

poem also support this theory. So “la bonne chanson” could be represented by what I interpret as a sing-able or song-like name.

An additional method for understanding what “la bonne chanson” would require a conceptual leap that is rooted in the previous analysis. As will be addressed at the close of this chapter, this song cycle thematizes lack, distance, and intangibility in various forms. The cycle lacks objective descriptions of how the journey progresses aside from the protagonist’s vision. The poetry addresses varying responses to the distance between the lover and the beloved. And the poetry is less about the natural world and more about the protagonist’s internal emotions projected onto external spaces. Rhetorically, the reader never quite obtains a clear image of the beloved as the emotional narrative unfolds. Inasmuch as the physical surroundings throughout the cycle are passive participants in Verlaine’s poetry, the natural world invokes within the main character a repetitive cycle of sensory responses, which range from anxiety to joy, confusion to clarity. The fact that the reader (and by extension the listener) receives such little validation that the protagonist even reaches his beloved leads me to consider the implications of the cycle of poems being a dream or retelling of a string of memories.³⁰⁸ Still assuming “Une Sainte en son auréole” is separate from the other songs in terms of its function, one could argue that the journey is not physical and is instead an internal, emotional exploration. “Une Sainte en son auréole” as its own song would represent a calling card that signals the stream of consciousness in the remaining poems. The end of the cycle, where he essentially declares that he can feel no more harshness of winter because of “cette fantaisie” (this fantasy) also calls into question the real-ness of the journey just witnessed. The line forces readers to inquire as to whether the previous songs comprised “this fantasy.” Was the journey real, or was the situation merely an imagining of this journey; or was the protagonist telling a made up fictional story? The liminality Verlaine presents in the closing poem addresses the lack of distinct, clear representations throughout the poem, which in turn aids in finding “la bonne chanson” in the cycle. With this interpretation in mind, we reach a similar conclusion as stated above.

³⁰⁸ In fact, the description of the wedding in the seventh song is narrated in the future tense, implying that it has not yet occurred. One can assume by the end of the cycle that said wedding may have occurred, but the reader never gets a clear indication as to whether the two have led a happy life before the beloved (and her laugh, as Verlaine highlights) has moved onto the celestial realm of the “immutable azure.”

Rather than the song-like “nom Carolingien” (which is unseen to the reader and unheard to the listener) acting as “la bonne chanson,” with this proposed interpretation of the work, “Une Sainte en son auréole” would be the song that the protagonist hears and which calls upon either the memory of a journey or some other intangible expression of the quest to find one’s lover.

But more profoundly, Fauré’s setting of the poem reveals further insights into trying to uncover the reasons for the naming of the cycle. An etymology for the word “chanson” reveals that its origins are from the era of troubadours, considered some of the earliest composers of vernacular song. “Une Sainte en son aureole” places the reader (and listener) in the setting that many see as the roots of modern-day France. So, the use of the word “chanson” is appropriate based on the insight that Verlaine establishes at the beginning, even the word “chanson” only appears in the title. I see this as a nationalist inflection in that Verlaine links the beginning of formalized song with French roots, and the playfulness of his poetic meter, rhyme patterns, and pacing reflect his embrace of a varied poetic voice in contemporary Symbolist works. Extending the legacy of the romance into that of *mélodie* played a role in Chapter 2, which explored the evolution of *mélodie* in parallel with the Symbolist movement. Thus, Verlaine places the reader in this quasi-medieval setting, and this early Fauré cycle marks a step in the evolution of both his *mélodie*, and the genre to which he contributed, as responses to the lineage between *la romance* with their more contemporary descendants.

Fauré worked on the cycle from 1893 through 1894, and it premiered during the month of its publication in April 1894. As Duchen points out, “reactions to it after this and its official public premiere at the Société Nationale de Musique were largely negative.”³⁰⁹ She provides little insights as to why, but we can turn to Gartside for possible answers as to why its initially poor reception. Marcel Proust was an open admirer of Fauré’s work, and even he agreed with “the young musicians” who were “unanimous in not liking La Bonne Chanson.”³¹⁰ Debussy and others apparently believed the cycle was “needlessly complicated,” especially in terms of key relationships between songs and the twisty chromaticism that arises throughout the cycle. “Unlike Schumann’s cycles, where the key relationships are very strong, going from tonic to dominant,

³⁰⁹ Duchen, *Gabriel Fauré*, 113.

³¹⁰ Gartside, *Interpreting the Songs of Gabriel Fauré*, 178. Title of the song cycle was not italicized in Gartside.

to relative minor or to relative major, etc, Fauré's are much more idiosyncratic."³¹¹ Perhaps this relates to the spontaneity of the piece's composition, as drawn from a letter Fauré sent to his friend Jean Roger-Ducasse in 1923. Perhaps there is also an element of Fauré being intentional and, to an extent, embracing the freneticism of Verlaine's character. In either case, the cycle at times feels clunky, and the songs often do not lead smoothly from one to the other. As I argue in the conclusory analysis of *La Bonne Chanson* in comparison with the next cycle in question (*La Chanson d'Eve*), this lack of strong cohesion in the musical setting of these poems reflects the one-sided relationship of the singer (here, the journeyman) to his world. As much as the cycle is about a quest for one's fated beloved, one can also read this as attempts to connect with the surrounding landscape. All the exclamations of joy, worry, sadness, and confusion which repeatedly go unconfirmed or receive no acknowledgement are essentially attempts at the protagonist to be heard. Without the beloved to hear and without confirmation from the void, is the singer really singing at all?

La Chanson d'Eve: Song as Discovery

As discussed in Chapter 2, *La Chanson d'Eve* borrows from the biblical creation story with Eve as the protagonist of the narrative, and told in a mixture of rhyming and free verse poetry. The song cycle portrays the dawn of creation in tandem with the primal sense of wonder through which Eve greets the living world. The story is structured around a series of repeated images of fountains, roses, and sunlight, whose significations change over the course of the narrative. These objects comprise a list of reasons why Eve is so inspired by her existence among God's newest creations in Eden. "Images of shifting light and water and wind flow through the poetry and likewise the music... Not insignificant is the glowing evocation in Van Lerberghe's poems of the garden, reflecting a crucial, timeless image which had its origins in Fauré's early childhood."³¹² While this comparison initially could come across as tinged with exaggerated biographical dramatism, there is some truth to it when remembering that among Fauré's favorite places to visit in his hometown of Pamiers was an old church with a beautiful garden, and a fountain at the center of town; both

³¹¹ Gartside, *Interpreting the Songs of Gabriel Fauré*, 177-8.

³¹² Duchon, *Gabriel Fauré*, 160.

are mystical locations that bear similar evocations in Van Lerberghe's work. Bergeron also adds that: "Fauré's song captures a similar aura of naturalness, the free-form verses declaimed rather than sung, uttered slowly and deliberately over an aimless chord progression that counts out the irregular phrases while following the vagaries of the line in the manner of a plainchant accompaniment."³¹³

As the longest song in the set, the opening song in the cycle "Paradis" is the most substantive in terms of its foregrounding of the atmospheric nature of the work and the relationship of sound, singing, and music in this new world. The opening four lines (starting with "c'est le premier matin du monde") are set using the most basic, fundamental of musical gestures: the open fifth. This gesture of perfect fifths or perfect fourths swirl around in the intro to the song cycle, as if to portray the feeling of settling into the atmosphere of Van Lerberghe's primal, burgeoning Eden. The opening line in measures 1-6 predominantly features the notes E and B, chord tones of the tonic e minor. What follows in the second line of the poem is a similar piano accompaniment, which ends in b-minor instead of e-minor. To mirror the confused exhalation of a flower in this scene, Fauré sets this text with identical contour in the vocal line with a few passing tones, especially with addition of C and C#. Lines 12-17 essentially repeat the previous line of poetry with a modification in the initial starting pitches before the accompaniment wanders from its comfortable, predictable open fifth pattern and descends chromatically to move from e minor to E major. To reinforce the world's awakening, Fauré repeats the material from the opening line on the words "Un jardin bleu s'épanouit" (literally, "a blue garden flourishes," implying that the sun has appeared and can usher in the day by making the sky blue again).³¹⁴

At this moment, the piano accompaniment opens along with the blue garden. After hearing mostly dotted whole notes in a slow 3/2 meter, Fauré enlivens the music with hemiola and a melodic upper right-hand melody. The twinkling right-hand sparkles with sunlight; the left-hand animates the "deafening springs" with its undulating countermelody. This animated musical material continues for almost three pages, as the

³¹³ Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, 22-3.

³¹⁴ See examples 1a and 1b of *La Chanson d'Ève* in Appendix 2.

poet lists off the sounds and noises of the budding world, which, as discussed in Chapter 1, are key to understanding Van Lerberghe's personification of Eden as a place defined and enlivened by its sounds.

« Paradis » (lignes 5-10)	"Paradise" (lines 5-10)
Tout s'y confond encore et tout s'y mêle, Frissons de feuilles, chants d'oiseaux, Glissements d'ailes, Sources qui sourdent, voix des airs, voix des eaux, Murmure immense, Et qui pourtant est du silence.	Everything there merges again and everything there mixes Rustles of leaves, bird songs Glidings of wings Deafening springs, voice of airs, voice of water, Immense murmuring And that yet [somehow] are silent/silence.

Fauré capitalizes on the importance of sound in Eden by choosing to set the word "murmure" at a forte dynamic, and on the highest note of the entire song: an E5 (m. 41). This assertion of life lends the sense that Eden (as a metaphor for a young Earth) refuses to be silent about its awakening, and the murmur acts as a triumphant babble. After leaving this high E by way of a leap down by a 7th, Fauré settles the vocal line into "du silence" by eventually returning to the e-minor material initially heard at the opening of the piece, and introduces the listener to its protagonist, Eve.³¹⁵

Eve's awakening means the re-presentation of the "noisy" piano accompaniment, this time mostly played in the treble clefs, perhaps mimicking the femininity of what the listener will later hear as Eve's voice itself. As Van Lerberghe inserts the voice of God into this budding world, Fauré sets God's words in recitative-like fashion, moving the melody primarily through an ascending chromatic scale. It should also be noted that the rhythm of each sub-phrase of God's words repeats itself: some version of a half-note followed by two or three notes of shorter value.³¹⁶

"Paradis" (Lignes 15-8)	God's words to Eve in Lines 15-8
Or, Dieu lui dit : "Va, fille humaine, Et donne à tous les êtres Que j'ai créés, une parole de tes lèvres, Un son pour les connaître."	So, God says to her: "Go, human girl, And give to all beings That I have created, a song from your lips, A sound to get to know them."

³¹⁵ See Example 1c of *La Chanson d'Eve*.

³¹⁶ See Example 1d of *La Chanson d'Eve*.

To signal the return of the animated thematic material, Fauré sounds the open fifth of E to B as Eve “[goes] off, docile to her Lord...giving to all things/A song, a sound from her flowery lips.” One could interpret an ambiguity in the next line of the poem, as to whether Van Lerberghe intended it as a description of to whom Eve sings, or whether the words “chose qui fuit, chose qui souffle, chose qui vole” were intended as Eve’s words in her song to Eden. Patrick Laude would likely argue for the latter due to the repetitive phrase structure of “chose qui..., chose qui,” which he describes as a kind of refrain as Eve gathers and assembles the lyrics for her song in front of God, for God’s earthly creations.³¹⁷ The bustling, busy piano accompaniment at this moment now features eighth notes in a bright 4/4-time signature indicate Fauré’s interpretation of the line to be the former of the two options.³¹⁸

« Paradis » (lignes 19-23)	“Paradise” (lines 19-23)
Et Eve s'en alla, docile à son seigneur, En son bosquet de roses, Donnant à toutes choses Une parole, un son de ses lèvres de fleur :	And Eve went off, docile to her Lord, In her rose garden, Giving to all things A song, a sound from her flowery lips:
Chose qui fuit, chose qui souffle, chose qui vole...	Thing which flees, thing which breathes, thing which flies...

This interpretation of the text is also substantiated by Fauré’s treatment of the closing lines of the poem. Seen below are the closing stanzas, detailing the way in which Eden returns to “un songe bleu” (a blue dream) after having awakened to the sight of “un bleu jardin” at the beginning of the day. The omniscient narrator of the scene describes this dusk scene with a sparse accompaniment underneath, playing a version reminiscent of the opening material now presented in shades of F minor rather than E-minor, even with the key signature still in E-major (m. 119-28).

« Paradis » (lignes 25-31)	“Paradise” (lines 25-31)
Au crépuscule, peu à peu, L'Eden s'endort et se dérobe Dans le silence d'un songe bleu.	At dusk, little by little, Eden goes to bed and disrobes In the silence of a blue dream.
La voix s'est tue, mais tout l'écoute encore,	The voice is silent, but everything still listens to it,

³¹⁷ Laude, *L'Eden Entredit*, 9. Laude never makes this point outright, but my reading of his work leads me to believe that he highlights this moment in the text as the moment where Eve begins singing, because of where the line appears in the text and how it is set with respect to its surrounding stanzas. He also emphasizes the activeness of these « choses » by asserting that: “tout est chose, élément à peine dégagé d'une substance encore une et indifférenciée, innommée que les verbes viennent strier de leur trait vivant. »

³¹⁸ See Example 1e of *La Chanson d'Eve*.

<p>Tout demeure en l'attente, Lorsqu'avec le lever de l'étoile du soir, Eve chante.</p>	<p>Everything stays on alert, For when with the rising of the evening star, Eve sings.</p>
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Van Lerberghe offers that even though Eve's voice becomes silent, everything in Eden stays alert for the moment when the world will be filled with song once again; this is another example of Van Lerberghe's definition of this world as seeking to be filled with sound, only this time the human voice. When Eve's human voice is lacking, there is a silence that longs to be filled. To depict the anxiously alert state of Eden, the right hand plays constant eighth notes with a simple melodic yet low bass-line.³¹⁹ This interlude brings the listener to the closing lines of the poem "Eve chante," sung on the E to B open fifth once more, thus signaling the final return of the flowering, melodic material. The earlier-discussed ambiguity of whether "chose qui fuit, chose qui souffle, chose qui vole" was intended to be the refrain of Eve's song is resolved by the fact that, on the words "Eve sings," Fauré presents the listener with the final sounding of the twinkling material. This gesture suggests to me that Eve's song is not necessarily worded, but is instead this tuneful, whistle-able melody that any passerby through Eden could hear. One could also argue for its resemblance to a bird song. Thus, this tune that one will have heard four times throughout the song has finally come to embody its intended role of Eve's song itself.³²⁰

But is it really Eve's song? What is curious about the poem is that the musical material at the end of the piece appears in the piano and not in the voice of the singer. This would suggest that, in this particular song, the listener never hears Eve sing, nor quite knows the content of the song God asks of her. Even the piano part which portrays the liveliness of the new world is not easily sung because of the octave jumps and the sort of angular melody Fauré constructs in the middle voice with half-notes. The re-sounding of the material on the words "Eve chante" is meant as a variant upon the three previous appearances; but this time, the listener is presented with an almost carefree, wispy quality that stays in the comfort of its tonic key rather than taking a harmonic deviation. The emergence of this "chanson d'Eve" from the musical texture that represents nature and its many sounds indicates to me that Fauré supports Van Lerberghe's embedding of

³¹⁹ See Example 1f of *La Chanson d'Eve*.

³²⁰ See Example 1g of *La Chanson d'Eve* samples.

human voice in a broader sonic landscape. While the poem began with nature sounds of rustling leaves, gliding birdwings, and deafening waters, “Paradis” closes with an elevation of “la parole” (human voice or song) in that sonic narrative. As Laude indicates:

Voice is thus the recognition/knowledge of one’s self through the mode of listening... If there is some poetic audacity to recognize that others see “the voice...born from a breath and from a dream,” it’s not doubt that the voice is not only a sonic vibration but an essential message of things.”³²¹

“Paradis” is about a burgeoning world full of sound and noise, but a world that feels incomplete without the presence of human vocality. Just as Symbolism called upon music to enrich its poetic goals, Fauré imbues a musicality to this excerpt of poetry that lacks the very song for which the whole prose-poem is named.

The next song in the cycle is “Prima verba,” which echoes the title of Van Lerberghe’s first chapter *Première Paroles*, from which many of the songs’ text originate.³²² In Van Lerberghe’s original order, this text appears after Fauré’s third song in the cycle. His reframing of the two poems in this way presents the first and second songs of the cycle as mirror images of one another. “Paradis” is told from the perspective of an omniscient narrator and features an interjection from God, while “Prima verba” is told from Eve’s perspective as the listener imagines her singing throughout Eden.³²³ This perspective switch marks the beginning of Eve’s singing (smartly neglected at the end of “Paradis”), whose voice the listener will hear throughout a majority of the remaining songs in the cycle. This interpretation allows one to understand that even though “Paradis” presents listeners with the prospect of singing without introducing a specific melody, the closing piano gesture transitions into a song cycle which does in fact feature several songs that Eve sings.

The song opens with a declaration of the unified spirit between Eden and Eve’s voice. Van Lerberghe continues to have Eve’s voice animate Eden, but this time, he has flipped the script and reveals

³²¹ Laude, *L’Eden Entredit*, 9. Material in quotes within the citation are borrowed from Van Lerberghe. Original translation: « La parole est donc connaissance de soi sur le mode de l’écoute... S’il y a quelque audace poétique a reconnaître que d’autres voient « la parole...née d’un souffle et d’un rêve, » c’est sans nul doute que la parole n’est pas seulement vibration sonore mais message essentiel des choses. »

³²² Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, 20-1.

³²³ Crucially, this switch from an omniscient voice to the more personal voice mirrors Fauré’s treatment of “Une Sainte en son auréole” in *La Bonne Chanson*, wherein the first song is distinct from the rest because it serves a more functional purpose in the cycle.

that Eve feels similarly interwoven with her surroundings. This setting on Fauré's part is the first song of many more wherein Eve describes her gratitude and awe at playing such an integral role in Eden:

« Prima verba »	"Prima verba"
Comme elle chante Dans ma voix, L'âme longtemps murmurante Des fontaines et des bois !	How it sings In my voice, The long murmuring soul Of fountains and forests!
Air limpide du paradis, Avec des grappes de rubis, Avec tes gerbes de lumière, Avec tes roses et tes fruits ;	Transparent air of paradise, With your clusters of rubies, With your sheaves of light, With your roses and your fruits;
Quelle merveille en nous à cette heure ! Des paroles depuis des âges endormies En des sons, en des fleurs, Sur mes lèvres enfin prennent vie.	What marvelousness around us at this hour! The words since the sleeping age, In the sounds, in the flowers, On my lips finally take life.
Depuis que mon souffle a dit leur chansons, Depuis que ma voix les a créées, Quel silence heureux et profond Naît de leurs âmes allégées !	Since my breath spoke their songs, Since my voice created them, What happy and profound silence Is born from their cheerful souls!

With that in mind, the text indicates that Eve understands the role of her voice in Eden and describes how she feels in being granted such a role. She acknowledges that the world has fallen into a “happy and profound silence” ever since she had begun singing, which I believe is a similar kind of silence Van Lerberghe articulates at the end of “Paradis.” Clearly self-aware, Eve embraces a steady, chant-like voice juxtaposed against a piano accompaniment that rarely strays from a quarter note pulse. Each line of poetry is set as an oscillatory line around a narrow range of notes before settling on its final pitch, a seen in measures 5-10 as the clearest example of this technique.³²⁴ Measures 5-10 set the second stanza of text, which mirrors the moment in “Paradis” where Eve collects things in Eden to which she can sing, best observed when Van Lerberghe writes: “chose qui fuit, chose qui souffle, chose qui vole.” The two lines are similar in that each is a partial enumeration of Eden’s bounties, and Fauré’s setting dramatizes the growing list by gradually increasing the dynamic level as the lines of text gather together at the peak of the song.

³²⁴ See Appendix 2a for *La Chanson d’Eve*.

The song settles into a reverent state of awe by returning to a quieter dynamic and lower part of the singer's range, almost to what would be a woman's speaking voice. This gesture concludes Eve's first song, wherein Fauré fashions a *mélodie* "without much melody at all" due to the free-form, easily sung nature of the verses and the aimless irregularity of the piano accompaniment underneath.³²⁵ Perhaps to accommodate the weight of the ideas in the last stanza, Fauré ends this song by "[placing] the rhythmic weight of the song... on its most ephemeral sound," which Bergeron views as a more extreme version of his ending in "Paradis." The final words of both songs are elongated, especially the mute e sound at the end of words "Eve chante" and "allégées."³²⁶ While I argue for the case that "Paradis" sets the stage for the interweaving of human singing with a natural soundscape, Bergeron asserts that silence and lack of speech play equal roles in this dialogue, offering that "in the elongated caress of the song's final, silent syllable, we hear 'singing' begin: right at the point where there is nothing more to say," but seemingly more to sing.³²⁷

« Roses ardentes »	"Ardent Roses"
Roses ardentes Dans l'immobile nuit, C'est en vous que je chante, Et que je suis.	Ardent roses In the immobile night, It is to you that I sing, And [you] that I am/follow.
En vous, étincelles, A la cime des bois, Que je suis éternelle, Et que je vois.	To you, sparkling ones, To the treetops, That I am eternal, And that I see.
O mer profonde, C'est en toi que mon sang Renait vague blonde, Et flot dansant	O profound sea, It is in you that my blood Reborn [in a] golden wave And dancing tide.
Et c'est en toi, force suprême, Soleil radieux, Que mon âme elle-même Atteint son dieu !	And it is in you, supreme force, Radiant sun, That my soul itself Reaches its god!

³²⁵ Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, 22-3.

³²⁶ Traditionally called a mute e because in spoken vernacular speech, these e's would not be pronounced. But in poetic and sung French, these concluding e vowels form a schwa sound when they appear either a) at the end of a line of verse or sentence, or b) if the proceeding word begins with a consonant. Otherwise, the mute e is ignored and elided into the syllable of the next word (certainly in the case of words starting with vowels).

³²⁷ Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, 24. See Appendix 2b for *La Chanson d'Eve* for the musical sample; the cadential gesture in "Paradis" can be found in Example 1e, for comparison's sake.

One will also find that at the end of “Prima verba,” Fauré changes from 4/4 to 3/2, presumably to allow the performer to begin feeling a triplet meter in anticipation of the next song, “Roses ardentes.” The content of this poem is fairly similar to that of “Prima verba,” in that Eve celebrates the joy of living in the presence of what God has created in Eden. Interestingly, Fauré sets this text against a piano accompaniment that uses a similar rhythmic gesture in *La Bonne Chanson*’s “J’ai presque peur, en vérité.” In the earlier song, the rhythm embodied the protagonist’s nervous excitement at being with his beloved. But in “Roses ardentes,” the same gesture still has a breathlessness, but it comes across more like a gentle heartbeat that accompanies a vocal line describing the beauty of a surreal, eternal love of life and God.³²⁸ The accompaniment of this song also references the “noisy” accompaniment from “Paradis.” Because of the strong aural presence of the second eighth note of each beat, the similarity of key signature, and the emergent countermelody in the left hand, these two songs are linked. As far as I can tell, the pitch classes of the bass voices in the two songs are never identical; and the legato articulation of “Paradis” is juxtaposed against the drier staccato approach in “Roses ardentes.” Nevertheless, the similarity of technique contrasts with that of “Prima verba” and seems to have been inspired by one of the sonic textures that demonstrates Fauré’s understanding of the role of singing in the newly developing Eden.

Another piece of evidence that reflects the similarity between the two songs concerns Fauré’s setting of the closing stanza of text. Throughout “Roses ardentes,” the vocal line stays within comfortable range and dynamic levels, certainly in the beginning which features a mostly stepwise melodic line. As the imagery expands from roses and treetops to the “mer profonde” and “soleil radiant,” Fauré introduces dynamic markings and wider interval ranges in the vocal part, all the while maintaining the palpitating heartbeat in the piano. Upon declaring that her soul “reaches its god” in the supreme force of the “radiant sun,” the piece reaches its climax at the highest note of the piece (m. 32). This moment of Eve’s heightened awareness of Paradise is emblematic of her “observing her own relationship to the objects she has just named.”³²⁹ We see that Eve imagines herself as taking part in the formation of Paradise, but we also see her acknowledging a

³²⁸ Gartside, *Interpreting the Songs of Gabriel Fauré*, 241.

³²⁹ Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, 27.

developing hierarchy in which not all things are of equal significance or importance. “Roses ardentes” does not spiral back to normalcy after reaching its peak, and instead cadences with an oscillation on the tonic harmony and a triumphant open fifth sung on the final words “Atteint son dieu!” This treatment of the closing line mirrors what the end of “Paradis” when the piece essentially just ends without a satisfying, all-encompassing gesture.³³⁰

This brings us to “Comme Dieu rayonne.” Emerging from the imagery of the “soleil radiant,” the poem is essentially a sigh of admiration about God’s glow:

« Comme Dieu rayonne »	“How God shines”
Comme Dieu rayonne aujourd’hui, Comme il exulte, comme il fleurit. Parmi ces roses et ces fruits !	How God shines today, How he exults, how he blossoms. Among these roses and these fruits!
Comme il murmure en cette fontaine ! Ah ! comme il chante en ces oiseaux... Qu’elle est suave son haleine Dans l’odorant printemps nouveau !	How he murmurs in this fountain! Ah! How he sings in these birds... How his breath is sweet In the fragrant new spring!
Comme il se baigne dans la lumière Avec amour, mon jeune dieu ! Toutes les choses de la terre Sont ses vêtements radieux.	How he bathes in the light With love, my young god! All these things of the earth Are his radiant clothes.

The capitalization of “Dieu” versus “dieu” is found in the original and in Fauré’s setting, and the distinction merits discussion. As we know, *La Chanson d’Eve* explores the intimacies between Eve, Eden, and God as creator. The difference in capitalization concerns the level of intimacy Eve imagines between herself and Eden’s creator. Laude argues for an erotic interpretation of this relationship that references the ancient Greek tradition, saying the following:

Moving from the capital letter in the first line... to the lowercase letter in the last stanza... works in the same way that the use of the possessive, an intimacy with the “divine” frees itself to the pleasure of the world. The luminous nudity of “Pan” pierces everywhere through the radiant clothing of nature... At the same time, we have the feeling that Pan-Dionysus substitutes the God of Genesis, that the emergence of god without capitalizations, in the diaphanous intimacy of love, consecrates an advancement increasingly in the direction of immanence, an exclusive immanence from a former world.³³¹

³³⁰ See Example 3a in *La Chanson d’Eve*. I also see this moment as being similar to the way Chopin ends many of his Preludes with rather sudden endings that essentially taper out of the texture from which they came and pulse on the tonic harmony for a while. (just another example of Chopin’s influence on Fauré’s style)

³³¹ Laude, *L’Eden Entredit*, 15-6. Original: « Le passage de la majuscule du premier vers... à la minuscule de la dernière strophe... va dans le même sens que l’usage du possessif, une intimité avec le « divin » se dégage de la

I largely agree with his interpretation of the shift in capitalization as reflecting a closer relationship between Eve and God, but I would add that it signifies a change in how Eve sees this relationship. God in “Paradis” descended into Eden and commanded Eve to sing, which is the same God at the beginning of “Comme Dieu rayonne.” But God becomes the “jeune dieu,” who lives among “toutes les choses de la terre” of Eden rather living separately or merely emerging from other earthly connections. Rather than being an inconsistency, this difference reflects Van Lerberghe’s suggestion of a duality in God’s existence: one aspect as an omniscient creator and another as dwelling among the created. This also mirrors the moment when Verlaine’s protagonist slips into the informal “tu” form at the end of “J’ai presque peur en vérité” when declaring his love for the beloved figure.

Crucially, Fauré reflects this multiplicity by referencing “Paradis” again. The first of which is the open-fifth motive that we heard at the very opening of the cycle, which appears twice in “Comme dieu rayonne.”³³² The second reference occurs in the second half of the song when Fauré presents the bubbling accompanimental section from “Paradis.” This piano part earlier reflected a synthesis of Eve’s singing and the sounds of the natural world. Arriving with the suddenness of an earth-shattering revelation in “Comme dieu rayonne,” it now carries additional meaning as reflecting the coexistence between Eve, her self-awareness of her role in Eden, Eden itself, and God’s duplicitous role in Eden. There is a joyfulness upon hearing familiar musical material, a joy of radiant sunlight and murmuring fountains, and the music re-situates the listener in Eden rather than the Eden of Eve’s perspective. Moving from C minor to C major, this rocking accompaniment “[erases] all memory of the antique style of the opening” in the same way that the change from Dieu to dieu reduces an omnipotent, omniscient God into an object, “a mere god...through the excitement” of this closing section.³³³ The final gesture to

jouissance du monde. La nudité lumineuse de « Pan » perce partout sous les « vêtements radieux » de la nature... En même temps, on a le sentiment que Pan-Dionysos se substitue au Dieu de la Genèse, que l’émergence du dieu sans majuscule, dans l’intimité diaphane de l’amour, consacre une avancée de plus en plus hardie dans la direction de l’immanence, d’une immanence exclusive de tout arrière-monde. »

³³² See Example 4b of *La Chanson d’Eve*. The intervallic relationship is the same as the upper-most right-hand notes of the opening measures of “Paradis.” Bergeron refers to this as the “Eden motive.”

³³³ Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, 27. See Example 4c of *La Chanson d’Eve*.

portraying this excitement is Fauré’s thwarting of the harmonic sequence established in measure 17. As seen in the bass contrapuntal line, measures 17-18 are in an F minor harmonic language, and measures 19-20 are in a D minor harmonic language. At the beginning of measure 21, one would expect to hear something in some version of B-flat to satisfy the progression that appears to obey the rule of the thirds. Instead Fauré follows a subdominant-dominant-tonic progression in C-major. At the cadence, Eve suggests the closing key signature on the word “radieux,” wherein she hints at the fifth of chord (G), skips over the tonic and soars effortlessly, joyously to the chordal third.³³⁴

The sensory overload of fountain murmurs, bird songs, shining sun, and fragrant springtime in “Comme Dieu rayonne” reaches its fruition in the swell of what I will heretofore be referring to as the Paradise motive (the noise-filled accompaniment), the shimmering ebullience of which percolates into the next song of the cycle “L’aube blanche.” Eve awakens to a white dawn with the sunrise beckoning her to waken and experience the beauty of the new day. Just as sunlight puts a glow on everything in this poem (and the previous, as well), Eve is also embedded within the poem. Van Lerberghe achieves this not only by using the first-person voice, but also through his repeated word choices like “éveille,” “rève,” and “soulève,” all of which contain some version of the sound of Eve’s name.

« L’aube blanche »	“The White Dawn”
L’aube blanche dit à mon rêve : Eveille-toi, le soleil luit. Mon âme écoute, et je soulève Un peu mes paupières vers lui.	The white dawn says to my dream: Wake up, the sun is shining. My soul listens and I rise A bit, my eyelids turned to it.
Un rayon de lumière touche La pâle fleur de mes yeux bleus ; Une flamme éveille ma bouche, Un souffle éveille mes cheveux.	A ray of light touches The pale flower of my blue eyes; A flame awakens my mouth, A breath awakens my hair.
Et mon âme, comme une rose Tremblante, lente, tout le jour, S’éveille à la beauté des choses, Comme mon cœur ³³⁵ à leur amour.	And my soul, like a rose Trembling slowly all day long, Awakens itself to the beauty of things, Like my heart to their love.

³³⁴ Also see Example 4b of *La Chanson d’Eve*.

³³⁵ Fauré changed “mon cœur” from its original iteration.

Fauré captures the ever-present shimmer of the sunshine by setting the entire poem to oscillating sixteenth notes in the right hand; in addition to representing sunlight, it also sounds like a variation upon the Paradise motive since the right hand moves constantly and begs for forward motion. Through his musical treatment of the second stanza, we learn that Eve was not fully awakened until this moment, when “a flame awakens [her] mouth.” This moment resolves in the “comfort of a simple chord with no dissonance, this time in E-major.”³³⁶ Shortly thereafter, Eve begins to sing a whole tone scalar passage that mirrors what the piano had played a few measures previously as she sings the words “un souffle éveille mes cheveux.” At this midpoint song in the cycle, Eve’s appropriation of the piano motive represents “a conscious appropriation of her own ‘song’ at this moment,” which signifies a turning point based in the imagery of her mouth coming alive at the sensation of fire. Considering the original narrative of Adam and Eve, and Eve having been tempted by the forbidden fruit, we begin seeing traces of how this version of Eve (at least in Fauré’s version, of course drawing upon Van Lerberghe) is tempted by the power of language and “seems to be thrilled with her first taste of it.”³³⁷ As if she had not had language before, one witness Eve’s gradual recognition of the power of her ability to sing. After this fiery awakening comes a satisfied sigh in Eve’s vocal line as she sings “comme mon âme à leur amour,” ending with the familiar open fifth gesture.

The shimmer of “L’Aube blanche” transforms into a song rife with text-painting in “Eau vivante,” a series of quickly-paced scalar motions to reflect the “living water” for which the song is named.³³⁸ As in “L’Aube blanche,” Fauré omits the last stanza of the poem, which I again attribute to his preference for brevity, particularly with respect to “Eau vivante” and its more free-verse construction in the original closing stanza. The omission (the entire last stanza, which has not been included in the table below), however, contains several ideas that refer to Eve’s relationship to water as it played out in “Roses

³³⁶ Gartside, *Interpreting the Songs of Gabriel Fauré*, 245. Also worth highlighting is the open fifth motive in the vocal line in measures 18-19. See Example 5a for this section that sets lines 7-8 of the poem.

³³⁷ Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, 32.

³³⁸ See Example 5a for a sample of this accompaniment, which remains constant for the entire song.

ardentes,” wherein we see Eve self-identifying with the simple and clear water. The moment I reference in “Roses ardentes” is also found below:

« Eau vivante »	“Lively Water”
Que tu es simple et claire, Eau vivante, Qui, du sein de la terre, Jaillis en ces bassin et chantes !	That you are simple and clear, Lively water, Which, from the bosom of the earth, Gushes forth into those pools and sings!
O fontaine divine et pure, Les plantes aspirent Ta liquide clarté ; La biche et la colombe en toi se désaltèrent.	O divine and pure fountain, The plants draw in Your clear liquid; The doe and the dove quench their thirst in you.
Et tu descends par des pentes douces Des fleurs et des mousses, Vers l’océan originel, Toi qui passes et vas, sans cesse, et jamais lasse De la terre à la mer et de la mer au ciel.	And you descend by sweet slopes Of flowers and mosses, Towards the original ocean, You who pass and go ceaselessly and never tiring From the land to the sea and from the sea to the sky.
Souvent, à l’heure où l’ombre te couvre. O source, je me penche sur toi, Et j’y laisse flotter mes cheveux et mes doigts, Que tu entraîne et entr’ouvres, Mais tu te caches, tu fuis en eux, Et c’est moi-même que je trouve En te cherchant, Nymphé aux yeux bleus.	Often, at the time when the shadow covers you, Oh source, I lean towards you, And I let my hair and fingers float there, That you mingle and enter in, But you hide yourself, you flee in them, And it’s me that I find In searching for you, blue-eyed Nymph.

« Roses ardentes » (lignes 9-12)	“Ardent Roses” (lines 9-12)
O mer profonde, C’est en toi que mon sang Renait vague blonde, Et flot dansant	Oh profound sea, It is in you that my blood Reborn [in a] golden wave And dancing tide.

I believe this conclusion I am emphasizing is present in the original order of *La Chanson d’Eve*, but to a lesser effect because of the sheer amount of text between these two poems as they appear in the original text. But looking at the two poems side by side reveal an evolution of Eve’s relationship to the water, especially considering the contrast of her having awoken at the sensation of fire in “L’Aube blanche.” To further support this more intimate connection, I draw upon Bergeron and Gartside, who both point out the change in pronoun usage as she addresses the water. In “Eau vivante,” Eve refers to water using the informal second person *tu*, whereas she used third person in “Prima Verba” and the formal second

person *vous* in “Roses ardentes.”³³⁹ We saw a similar transformation with the move from Dieu and dieu in the fourth song (“Comme Dieu rayonne”), and it demonstrates Eve’s vacillatory positionality in this world. The omitted verse of poetry in “Eau vivante” states that when Eve so desperately searches for water, she finds herself in its place and can never quite grasp the water between her fingertips. This moment of linking herself with the water is also hidden in the title of the song, with Eve’s name embedded in the symmetry of “eau vivante” with its beginning and ending e-vowels and internal v-sound.

Fauré’s omission maintains a consistent perspective with the picture of Eve as less equal to her surroundings. This trajectory began in “Paradis” wherein the *mélodie* was about a song the listener never fully heard. We see it again in the hyperbolic language Eve uses in “Roses ardentes” to describe the roses, the sea, and the radiant sun. And we see it in “L’aube blanche,” when Eve opens herself up “to the beauty of things,” as if she now exists separately from those things. Omitting the closing stanza makes Eve’s position less ambivalent, which in turn simplifies the re-telling of the story and reduces a long-windedness that can arise from so much oscillation between Eve’s shifting nuanced understandings and perspectives. The rolling water sound in the accompaniment also works with this assumption because Fauré compromises the austerity of the “noble” French *mélodie* (of which Eve has heretofore been representative) by juxtaposing it with a commonplace, self-explanatory musical gesture that demystifies the mysterious, atmospheric quality of her song. The vocal line in this song feels clumsier, with octave jumps and unpredictable harmonic motions, and the accompanying right-hand melodic line sounds like stones being thrown into the watery sonic landscape below. When combined, these two elements make “Eau vivante” distinct from the preceding songs; this shift in the quality of Eve’s song “reveals the threat to Eve’s own ennobled status as Queen of song” and foreshadows her demise in Eden.³⁴⁰

³³⁹ Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, 35.

³⁴⁰ Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, 38. She offers another layer in Fauré’s retelling of the narrative. The Eden theme is buried within the watery accompaniment, which makes it hard to hear “the figure that once stood for the silence and truth of Paradise.” As she says, “. . .this masking is precisely the point. We, like Eve. . .may be certain we can hear water in the piano’s streaming figures, but the tempting musical insight turns out to be our ultimate deception: the babbling brook is, in the end, merely babble.”

With “Eau vivante,” as the transition from Eve’s journey of self-discovery through her voice, the remaining four songs are a much-condensed version of the closing three sections of Van Lerberghe’s re-telling of the Creation story. The first six songs can be found found in the first part of *La Chanson d’Eve* called “Premières Paroles,” where much of Eve’s search for her identity and her place in Eden takes place. The seventh song, “Veilles-tu, ma senteur de soleil...” is the only poem from the third section (“La Tentation”) that Fauré sets in the work. The power that Eve gathered in the previous song fully reveals itself here. The imagery of the poem “replaces song with scent, exhaling with inhaling, chanter with sentir,” as Eve inquires as to the nature of the reciprocation in her relationship with God;³⁴¹

« Veilles-tu, ma senteur de soleil »	“Are you awake, my perfume of sunlight”
Veilles-tu, ma senteur de soleil Mon arôme d’abeilles blondes, Flottes-tu sur le monde, Mon doux parfum de miel ?	Are you awake, my perfume of sunlight My aroma of blonde bees, Do you float over the world, My sweet honey perfume?
La nuit, lorsque mes pas Dans le silence rôdent, M’annonces-tu, senteur de mes lilas, Et de mes roses chaudes ?	The night, when my footsteps In the silence roam, Do you announce me, perfume of my lilacs, And of my warm roses?
Suis-je comme une grappe de fruits Cachés dans les feuilles, Et que rien ne décèle, Mais qu’on odore dans la nuit ? ³⁴²	Am I like a cluster of fruits Hidden in the leaves, And that nothing reveals, But that one smells in the night?
Sait-il, à cette heure, Que j’entr’ouvre ma chevelure, Et qu’elle respire ; Le sent-il sur la terre ?	Does he know, at this hour, That I open up my hair/braid, And that it breathes; Does he sense it on earth?
Sent-il que j’étends les bras, Et que des lys de mes vallées Ma voix qu’il n’entend pas Est embaumée ?	Does he sense that I extend my arms, And that by the lilies in my valleys My voice that he doesn’t hear Is perfumed?

Whereas Eve’s singing was previously charming and intimately connected to her natural surroundings, here we see the progression of Eve becoming more obsessed and even drunken with her

³⁴¹ Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, 40.

³⁴² Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, on page 40: “The sense that Eve, in this new guise, has in effect become drunk with her own perfume is suggested by the neologism enclosed within the question: she coins the fanciful verb *odoror* by combining *adorer* (to adore) with *odorant* (smelling [of]) ...” This is certainly an instance where Van Lerberghe plays with homophones to capture the spirit of the ever-evolving relationship between Eve, singing, and God.

voice. Previously, Eve had aligned her voice with the charming images of sunshine and babbling brooks, but here she moves to more intoxicating and elusive metaphors of “doux parfum de miel,” “roses chaudes,” and a host of other flowers. The musical setting of the text carries over the tremolo-like accompaniment of “Eau vivante” with sexlet sixteenth notes; but rather than water, this gesture seems to draw upon the initial imagery of humming bees.³⁴³ But the combination of the tidily-arranged buzzing of the piano part,³⁴⁴ the virtuosity of the vocal range and the anxiety-ridden wordiness of the poem together highlight Eve’s progressive sense of desperation throughout “Veilles-tu.” The height of this desperation occurs near the end of piece in measure 53 where Eve proclaims an F-natural on the word “voix,” which is followed by a quieter descent towards A-natural as Eve unwillingly acknowledges that God does not hear (or smell) her voice after all (“Ma voix qu’il n’entend pas/est embaumée?”).³⁴⁵ That Eve’s voice is veiled in scents also reveals that her sense of self-awareness is reduced by the fact that she is no longer certain of her position relative to the god she once adored and who had given her the ability to sing. In earlier songs, Eve appeared to be satisfied with the sheer joy singing to Eden’s newly-created beings. She did not seem to need such direct gratification from God to continue singing; in other words, Eden was enough. But the shift in her perspective reveals that “the very idea of Eve’s voice, which had once formed her identity in Paradise, has been forgotten in favor of the headier experience” that employs the tantalizing olfactory senses, rather sound or singing, for joy and pleasure.³⁴⁶

In keeping with the theme of perfumes, “Dans un parfum de roses blanches” transitions effortlessly into the end of the cycle and of Eve’s presence in Eden. Fauré presents this text out of order (it is originally found in *Premières Paroles*). Its role in the first chapter similarly transitions between *Premières Paroles* and *La Tentation*. The poem essentially describes Eve’s impending death “dans un parfum de roses blanches,” and the extinguishing of her voice. Fauré’s placement of this text in the cycle clearly draws

³⁴³ See Example 7a. Also influential for this song is the frequency with which Eve sings straight sixteenth notes over the sexlets in the piano, which have a restless quality that often sounds like a mistake to me because of how strictly the accompaniment obeys its structure.

³⁴⁴ Gartside emphasizes the following point: “this song has a tightly constructed piano part, made up of sequences and repeated measures,” to logic of which is a rare moment in Fauré’s songs. As a result, “it tends to be overlooked, as performers [must] focus on the vocal line, which has its own, much less structured format.” (p. 250)

³⁴⁵ See Example 7b.

³⁴⁶ Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, 40. This aspect of forgetting appears in *Crépuscule*, as well.

upon the floral sensory experience in “Veilles-tu, ma senteur de soleil,” and it reinforces the fact that Eve’s obsession with the flowery scent of her voice would be her undoing. So even though this text appears out of order, the function is essentially still the same as Fauré moves from the single setting of a poem from *La Tentation* into the closing poems from *Crépuscule*.

« Dans un parfum de roses blanches »	“In a Perfume of White Roses”
<p>Dans un parfum de roses blanches Elle est assise et songe ; Et l’ombre est belle comme s’il s’y mirait un ange.</p> <p>L’ombre descend, le bosquet dort ;³⁴⁷ Entre ses feuilles et ses branches, Sur le paradis bleu s’ouvre un paradis d’or.</p> <p><i>Sur le rivage expire un dernier flot lointain.</i> Une voix qui chantait, tout à l’heure, murmure. Un murmure s’exhale en haleine, et s’éteint.</p> <p>Dans le silence il tombe des pétales...</p>	<p>In a perfume of white roses She sits and thinks/muses; At the shadow is beautiful as if it was mirroring an angel.</p> <p>The shadow descends, the grove sleeps; Between its leaves and branches, Over the blue paradise opens a golden paradise.</p> <p><i>On the shore a distant tide exhales/ expires</i> A voice singing awhile ago, murmurs. A murmur rises in a spell and is extinguished.</p> <p>In the silence, petals fall....</p>

Notice the silence mentioned throughout the poem and the sparseness in Fauré’s accompaniment. Told from the perspective of a figure who is neither Eve nor God, the poem extends beyond Eve’s conception of Eden and repositions the reader and listener towards images of “le paradis bleu.” The song opens with what sounds a bird twitter in the right hand while the left hand plods pensively in swirling alternations of half steps and whole steps.³⁴⁸ Speaking more generally, Gervais writes that Fauré’s basslines are treated very melodically and with the aural character of a cello, a testament which certainly holds true in “Dans un parfum.”³⁴⁹ These two textures rhythmically evoke the once noisy accompaniment presented in “Paradis,” and this pared-down version of the Paradise motive foreshadows the future of Eden’s soundtrack without Eve’s voice to fill the sonic texture. While the motive in “Paradis” repeated itself in alternation with contrasting sections of material, the motives in “Dans un parfum” repeat themselves in sequences, both in the vocal line and the accompaniment, which also

³⁴⁷ Fauré sets the word “l’ombre” rather than the original word choice of “le soir,” which I think mostly just in an effort to be consistent with the terminology to describe nightfall.

³⁴⁸ See Example 8a of *La Chanson d’Eve*.

³⁴⁹ Gervais, « Etude comparée, » 74.

relates to theorizing this accompaniment as more elemental and foundationally-based.³⁵⁰ Again, in this song, we hear another reference to the open-fifth motive in its original key area (E minor generally throughout the piece, as opposed to E major previously) from “Paradis” in measures 30-3 as the narrator speaks of “a murmur [rising] in a spell” before being silenced.³⁵¹ Rather than ending in this E key area, the open fifth resolves with E as the chordal third of C major, from which Fauré pivots to G major, with the final plodding motive occurring in the oscillation around middle C. Hearing this motive at the words “il tombe des pétales” transforms what was one the sound of bird twitters and thoughtful footsteps into the rather tragic image of falling white rose petals in the midst of Eden’s silence.

The cycle concludes with a pair of songs wherein Eve imagines the death that was pre-emptively explored in the previous song. Ending the cycle with death is intended to contrast with the birth of new life in “Paradis” and the earlier half of the cycle. Musically, the aptly-titled “Crépuscule” begins with material from “Paradis” to further highlight this contrast between dawn and dusk, beginning and ending. Whereas we have heard several examples of Fauré’s repetition of the Paradise motive³⁵², this particular material in “Crépuscule” has only returned sparingly and almost solely as open fifths. But the first measures of this ninth song present an exact repetition, as seen in Example 9a. Despite the similarities in intervallic relationships, the motive does feel different now. In part, this is because “le premier matin du monde” has become “ce soir.” The musical phrase is written a whole step lower than the cycle’s opening key, as if mirroring the sun’s descent; and as the phrase progresses, and as chordal texture expands, the listener hears the pull of Eden as it draws the sun to its horizon. The rhythm and contour of this two-bar phrase is constant throughout the song, almost acting as the thing that palpitates Eve’s heart, what she interprets as “ce son dans le silence.”

³⁵⁰ See Example 8b of *La Chanson d’Eve* for an example of this sequencing.

³⁵¹ See Example 8c for this sample.

³⁵² Just a reminder that this is the noisy accompaniment that represents nature. See Example 9a for this example.

« Crépuscule »	“Dusk”
Ce soir, à travers le bonheur, Qui donc soupire, qu’est-ce qui pleure ? Qu’est-ce qui vient palpiter sur mon cœur, Comme un oiseau blessé ?	This evening, through the happiness, Who sighs then, who is it who weeps? What is it that comes to palpitate my heart, Like an injured bird?
<i>Est-ce une plainte de la terre,</i> Est-ce une voix future, Une voix du passé ? J’écoute, jusqu’à la souffrance, Ce son dans le silence.	<i>Is it a complaint from the earth,</i> Is it a voice [of the] future, A voice of the past? I listen, until the point of suffering, [To] this sound in the silence.
Ile d’oubli, ô Paradis ! Quel cri déchire, cette nuit, Ta voix qui me berce ? Quel cri traverse Ta ceinture de fleurs, Et ton beau voile d’allégresse ?	Isle of forgetting, oh Paradise! What cry tears apart, this night, Your voice that rocks me? What cry traverses Your belt of flowers, And your beautiful veil of elation?

Eve reveals that she is disoriented while she asks the series of questions related to Eden’s sounds. Again, we see a linking of Eve’s emotional state and that of Eden, as well (assuming there is an equivalent of “emotional state” for an entire place). One way we see this is through the imagery of flowers (“Ta ceinture de fleurs”) that Van Lerberghe presents following texts that explored Eve’s self-seduction because of the floral qualities of her singing. Even though the belt of flowers in question belongs to Eden, this solidifies earlier perspectives about Eve’s self-awareness and her self-understanding as emerging from her connection to Eden. More broadly, in this song, Eve states the Eden is silent; yet she still hears a weeping, a sighing amidst this silence, which is the same scenario we encounter in “Paradis.” The clearest interpretation for uncovering the source of these noises for the reader and listener is that Eve is making them and “fails to perceive that it is, in fact, *her* song that pierces” this eve of darkness.³⁵³ Once again, Eve is filling Eden with sound just as she has in several of the previous songs, but this time she fails to realize that it is she who partially animates the space. Fauré captures the disorienting mixture of time and place Eve experiences here as she asks: “Is it a voice [of the] future, a voice of the past?” Most certainly the motive is a remnant of the past, yet it no longer evolves like it does

³⁵³ Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, 49. Eve’s disconnection from herself is further indicated by the line “Ile d’oubli, ô Paradis!” which I interpret as admission of the fact that she feels like she is on an island, isolated in a swarm of having forgotten who and where she is.

in “Paradis.” This short two-bar motive largely remains static and mostly unchanged for half of the piece. Because of its repetition and constancy, we seem to feel the delirium that Eve must have experienced at hearing herself experiment with her voice in the preceding six *mélodies*.³⁵⁴

At measure 25, Fauré alters the second half theme to change its contour from one of reaching ascent to one with an arched shape, giving the music an undulatory quality to match the increased motion in the piano that began ten measures previously.³⁵⁵ This change in contour leads to a change in the open-fifth gesture with which it is paired. Whereas we had heard several rising open fifths that mirrored the opening of the sky on Eden’s first day (“C’est le premier matin du monde, / Comme une fleur confuse exhale de la nuit, / ... Un jardin bleu s’épanouit.”), the open fifth now descends, first in m. 28 on the words “ta voix qui me berce.” Fauré hints at the rocking motion associated with the word “bercer” by having the phrase begin on an A which descends to a D, jump the octave and conclude on the A on which the phrase started. As the piece shifts from the parallel major, as if suggesting hopefulness, the vocal line hovers in the dominant harmony with most every line of text concluding on the note A.³⁵⁶ Eventually, the open fifth becomes an open fourth in on the word “allégresse” (elation). Sounding almost like a resigned sigh, the piano takes up a sequence of open fifths as the piece settles into its cadence.³⁵⁷

Fauré exploits this relationship between perfect fourths and fifths through his primary theme to demonstrate the shift in poetic tone as Eden has moved from its very first day to Eve’s final days. Interestingly, the 5-chord motive that dominates this entire piece that the listener hears as reminiscent of the first song is, in fact, the original setting as Bergeron points out. “Crépuscule” was completed in 1906,

³⁵⁴ The previous six songs being 2-7. The first and the eighth are from omniscient voices and I don’t consider these being examples of Eve’s *mélodie* voice.

³⁵⁵ See Example 9b in the Appendix. Bergeron labels this the “Eden cries” motive.

³⁵⁶ Bergeron has an interesting take on the significations of this shift from minor to major in this song, on p. 49-51: “The composer seems to stand in for Eve, performing the same sort of generous act that she proclaimed there: he lightens the expressive burden of her anguished *mélodie*, extracting a ‘deep and contented silence from it, just as she, fulfilling God’s command, unburdened the word through her song and turned expression into silence. By easing the pain of ‘Crépuscule’ in this way, Fauré produces a sense of the same muted ecstasy that would define Eve’s original, unheard song in his setting of ‘Paradis’...” I take umbrage with her assertion that Fauré inserts himself into the song in an attempt to save Eve because it does not seem in keeping with the rest of the cycle or with Fauré’s general technique. I do of course agree with that this song is a mirror to “Paradis” in the ways that I have said above and for the reason Bergeron includes here, as well.

³⁵⁷ See Example 9c of *La Chanson d’Eve*.

before “Paradis” had ever been composed, and this song is a setting of “Mélisande’s Song” from Fauré’s incidental music for Maeterlinck’s *Pelléas et Mélisande*. “Mélisande’s Song” was never performed in its intended form, and Fauré used the material instead in *La Chanson d’Eve* presumably because of a similarity in “nocturnal gloom” and “persistent doubt.” In any case, however, “the Eden theme that haunts the first measures of *La Chanson d’Eve* was born, in other words, in the darkness of ‘Crépuscule.’”³⁵⁸

The cycle ends with “O mort, poussière d’étoiles.” The listener is expected to hear this song as Eve’s final breaths as she longs for death. Calling upon the universe, she asks that death lift itself beneath her feet to be carried into nothingness. In Fauré’s setting, the second and third stanzas are swapped presumably because the evocation of stars in the first stanza establishes a starlit glow that Van Lerberghe delivers in the third stanza. With its steady, chordal piano accompaniment, Graham Johnson refers to this song as being both a trademark of the late Fauré and creates “a kind of musical vaporization.”³⁵⁹ The accompaniment begins in what should be a dependable D-flat major tonality before sliding into an enharmonic chord progression, “as if the bass line were responding directly to Eve’s command” to rise up under her feet.³⁶⁰ Eve’s song above this texture returns to a more chant-like singing voice, with the first five measures hovering around the tripled A-flat in the piano.³⁶¹ As opposed to God’s static recitations in “Paradis” which are declamatory, and as opposed to Eve’s chanting in “Prima Verba” which represented steadiness and self-assuredness, Eve’s singing here sounds more like resignation to her fated death. As we have seen previously throughout the cycle, Eve’s vocal range expands at the same moment that the imagery becomes more dynamic. She moves from singing major and minor seconds to singing full octaves that expose the singer’s timbres and range. This first descending octave appears in the middle of the line “Comme une flamme ivre de vent!” Eve begins the pattern again in measure 10, which

³⁵⁸ Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, 47.

³⁵⁹ Johnson, *The Songs and their Poets*, 320.

³⁶⁰ Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, 52. Gartside also points to the number of chordal fifths as contributing an “upward surge” to the music (see p. 256-7).

³⁶¹ Gartside, *Interpreting the Songs of Gabriel Fauré*, 257. See Example 10a under *La Chanson d’Eve*.

reaches its peak in measure 14. Here that octave descent mirrors the meaning of the French “aspire” as either inhale, intake, or aspirate (as in consonants).³⁶²

« O mort, poussière d'étoiles »	“Oh death, starry dust”
O mort, poussière d'étoiles, Lève-toi sous mes pas !	Oh death, dust of stars, Lift yourself beneath my steps!
Viens, ô douce vague qui brille Dans les ténèbres ; Emporte-moi dans ton néant !	Come, oh sweet vagueness that shines In the gloom. Carry me into your nothingness!
[Viens, souffle sombre où je vacille, Comme une flamme ivre de vent !]	[Come, somber breeze wherein I waver, Come like a wind-drunken flame!]
C'est en toi que je veux m'étendre, M'éteindre et me dissoudre, Mort, où mon âme aspire ! Dieu fort qu'elle attend Avec des chants et des rires d'amour.	It is in you that I want to stretch myself out, Extinguish myself and dissolve, Death, to which my soul aspires. [...]
Viens, brise-moi comme une fleur d'écume, Une fleur de soleil à la cime Des eaux [...]	Come, break me like a flower of spray, A flower of sunlight at the crest Of waters! [...]
Et comme d'une amphore d'or Un vin de flamme et d'arome divin, Epanche mon âme En ton abîme, pour qu'elle embaume La terre sombre et le souffle des morts.	And as from an amphore of gold A wine of flame and of divine aroma, Pour out my soul Into your abyss, so that it perfumes The somber earth and the breath of the dead.

Fauré's closing gesture in the left-hand accompaniment evokes the noisy material from “Paradis.” This motive lasts throughout the duration of the song and moves in a sequence of descending thirds.³⁶³ After Eve reaches the lowest note of the song, perhaps non-coincidentally on the word “abîme” (abyss), the piano returns to a D-flat minor harmony that has been noticeably absent for the last ten measures. At the return of the song's opening tonal center, Eve's voice at this point shifts from hovering around A-flat to hovering around the tendency tones in the key of D-flat: F and C. Singing of her desire to be poured into the abyss of death “pour qu'elle embaume / La terre sombre et les souffle des morts,” we see again that Eve is not too far removed from identifying with the idea of scent that she explored in

³⁶² Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, 51. See Example 10b of *La Chanson d'Eve* in Appendix 1 for the score.

³⁶³ See Example 10c of *La Chanson d'Eve*.

“Veilles-tu, ma senteur du soleil.” Her vocal line at this moment works with the piano to outline a major seventh chord, and this rapport between the two textures marks the return of the coexistence between Eve (the vocal line) and Eden (the accompaniment). After several songs depicting Eve’s gratefulness at having been part of Eden’s sonic world; and after several songs where Eve searches for her individuality apart from Eden; and after Eden increasing denial of her cries to be heard, Eve’s beckoning for death reunites her with Eden. Eventually the major seventh in Eve’s song disappears because of its dissonance, whereas at the cycle’s outset, that sound initially added color to her opening sounds and was one element of the “harmoniousness of her singing with the greater cosmic harmony of Eden.”³⁶⁴ As Gartside writes about the closing imperfect iii-I cadence, “Eve is dead but there is no feeling of dread or despair; on the contrary, there is a sense of serene acceptance.”³⁶⁵ Effectively, Fauré depicts a similar harmoniousness between Eden and Eve; though, one of the signature elements of Eve’s singing has been removed from the paradigm just as Eve’s physical self leaves Eden’s physical realm.

Song-less Songs and Melody-less *Mélodie*: Lessons in Silence

To preface the conclusory remarks of these analyses, I want to highlight the following passage from Bergeron’s work that, in addition to concisely summarizing the end of *La Chanson d’Eve*, transitions into the broader discussion about Symbolist aesthetics as translated through *mélodie*:

In the beginning, there was song, though Eve knew not how nor why. She did not think, she merely sang, thus producing a song with no intention – a song that expressed nothing more than the sound of her newly acquired language. Then came the temptation, the desire for melodious self-expression, that disturbed the natural order of things and separated Eve from her earlier, blissful state of unknowing. What is left for her to do? How can this supreme figure of melody right the wrong and restore the Edenic order? There is only one way. She demands to be put to death. And thus the final song of Fauré’s *La Chanson d’Eve* enacts the ultimate origin myth of modern French song. From this allegorical death...is born a new and very different form of expression: a *mélodie* without melody.³⁶⁶

Staying true to the circular connotation of “cycle,” Fauré’s *Chanson d’Eve* begins where it started: in the silence and stillness of the new natural world, begging the question of whether Eve’s story will be

³⁶⁴ Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, 56.

³⁶⁵ Gartside, *Interpreting the Songs of Gabriel Fauré*, 257.

³⁶⁶ Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, 51.

doomed to repeat itself throughout the remainder of history. *La Bonne Chanson* takes a similar trajectory, in terms of ending in the same mental headspace as its beginning, though the earlier cycle is understood through its physical personification of troubadour-like questing. Apart from these similarities, the two cycles share several features worth stating more concretely, certainly following the more detailed presentations of Fauré's engagement with Verlaine and Van Lerberghe's texts.

Firstly, both texts never have solidly fixed perspectives about the protagonists respective of their surroundings. As soon as things appear to solidify in the mind of Verlaine's journeyman or Van Lerberghe's Eve, their perspectives shift and take on an opposing character; increasingly, however, these shifts become more and more nuanced versions of this same dichotomy, which is certainly in keeping with the obliqueness and obscurity of Symbolist writings. This increased nuance in perspective shifts seem to bring both protagonists to an equilibrium because the extremes of their emotional expressions resolve states of resignation. Secondly, these perspective shifts occur within the context of a journey, but journeys of two different sorts. Verlaine's protagonist in *La Bonne Chanson* goes on a more physical journey through the woods, and from a male perspective. His journey is inspired by the sound of the beloved's name, and the motivation to continue on the journey in his weakest moments is attributed to the sound of his beloved's imagined voice, calling out from a distance. Van Lerberghe, on the other hand, embraces a mostly female narrative voice (at least in Fauré's choices of text) to tell the story of "la chanson d'Eve." As the title would indicate, Eve's singing plays a leading role in the development of Eden contributes to better understanding Eve, both of which are much more obvious allusions towards sound than seen in *La Bonne Chanson*.

Thirdly, these song cycles address absence, either of a person or of sound, if not both. In *La Bonne Chanson*, this is based on the fact that Verlaine never provides a full physical description of the beloved beyond the generic descriptions of purity and grace presented in "Une Sainte en son auréole," (which, as you'll remember, stands outside of the paradigm of the remainder of the cycle). Similarly, we never learn specifics about the protagonist in question except for the fact that his experiences are filtered through his natural, woodland environment in hopes that his beloved will hear his voice through the

wooded forests by which he is surrounded. Thus, this cycle is essentially about people we never meet, about a relationship status of which we are never fully certain, about the imagined voice of the beloved, and about a character whose voice falls on deaf ears. Musically, this can be seen in Fauré's treatment of common themes appearing throughout the cycle, of which he was unintentional or unaware, as Gartside indicated. The disconnected juxtapositions of songs in *La Bonne Chanson* reflect a disorientation one might experience while witnessing this uncertainty along this quest for a character the reader never encounters, and that arguably the main character never encounters either. So, to ground a narrative of uncertainty, Verlaine depicts the protagonist's external world and deploys descriptions of concrete images of objects in the sky, walking paths, and rustling leaves. And Fauré highlights the uncertainty through a rather non-cohesive musical setting with thematic references throughout that could either be referencing previous material, or not.³⁶⁷

Despite each poem in *La Bonne Chanson* having its own predictable rhyme schemes and syllabic patterns, and despite the work as a whole never venturing into free verse, Verlaine's poetry displays his protagonist's emotional range through an array of poetic structures "from eloquent alexandrines, to intimate, four-syllable whispers, to complex mixed meters, as if...attempting to represent the depth of his ardor through metrical sophistication."³⁶⁸ These constructions possess a playfulness with their language in terms of the sounds Verlaine uses in his end rhymes, and through the concrete images which almost read as distractions from the emotional subplot of the work. The scatter-brained, object-focused imagery of the poem's alternating states of clarity and confusion is reflected in a generalized disconnectedness in Fauré's musical setting, a setting of poetry less occupied with song or music, and more focused upon the role of sounds more concretely.³⁶⁹ The lack of clear characters, the absence of overt references to music in the content of the poetry, and the concrete imagery lead me to draw the conclusion that *La Bonne*

³⁶⁷ Examples of these common themes that one can find using the provided appendices include: the reference to birdsong in "Puisque l'aube grandit," "Avant que ne t'en ailles," and 8 "N'est-ce pas" (songs 2, 6, and 8, respectively); the quarter note motive that first appears in "Une Sainte en son auréole" and in other places throughout; and the motive from "Puisque l'aube grandit" that reappears later near the closing of "L'Hiver a cessé."

³⁶⁸ Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, 157.

³⁶⁹ I once again refer here to the 1923 letter Fauré wrote to Roger-Ducasse about how *La Bonne Chanson* was one of his most spontaneous compositions. The spontaneity I feel is also evident because of the disconnectedness between the songs in the cycle, and Fauré's "accidental" inclusion of common themes throughout the work.

Chanson is concerned with deciphering *what* to say rather than how. Rather than changing the way he expresses his feelings in each song or poem, the protagonist explores the various things worth saying that he hopes are also worth hearing. Each time, he does so by projecting his feelings onto his surroundings and taking inspiration from the natural landscape along the journey. This explains why there are two primary moods heard musically throughout the cycle (contentedness versus nervous anxiety) rather than several shades of musical tone that would convey legitimate attempts on the part of the protagonist to change the tone choice in his words.

Alternatively, the thematic material in *La Chanson d'Eve* is more cohesive, and the common themes between songs sound like more intentional derivations of one another, less like two thoughts bleeding into one another. This perhaps reflects Fauré's stylistic maturation, as "the poetry of Van Lerberghe... began to take the position in Fauré's creative world that had been occupied by Verlaine," but the cohesion also reflects the original narrative's construction and Fauré's text-setting choices within that narrative.³⁷⁰ Concerning the role of "absence" in this cycle, *La Chanson d'Eve* explores the implications of a world without sound or singing, and the possibility of having songs without "song" in them, which Fauré manipulates into a philosophical question about "*mélodie* without melody" or music more generally. Van Lerberghe's poetry of "Paradis" implies a song never heard, and much of the remainder of the cycle depicts Eve playing with her new singing voice. Each song in the cycle is a new song Eve sings, and each song is essentially Eve attempting to find her voice and experiment with its ability to capture what she sees as her world. As addressed earlier, this experimentation eventually develops into a self-obsessed intoxication with the miracle of her singing and leads to a search for inserting her personal self into the voice God has given her. Here, the forbidden fruit is the temptation of over-singing, so Van Lerberghe seems to suggest. The trajectory of the cycle posits that, rather than using voice to express thoughts purely out of self-interest, one should use a more objective voice, and in effect silence the extraneous noise. And *La Chanson d'Eve* is occupied with exploring the various ways of expression, the how of not only choosing one's words but using those words effectively.

³⁷⁰ Duchon, *Gabriel Fauré*, 160.

Even though the poems that Fauré sets in the cycle are “less structured, vaguer and subtler in both emotion and shape” than Verlaine’s poetry, these very facts offered Fauré more space to develop what had become his freer and more subtle form of musical expression.³⁷¹ But this newfound freedom allowed Fauré to engage with the poetry and offer further commentary about the ideas with which the poetry engages. What *La Chanson d’Eve* seems to address most poignantly and to a greater extent than *La Bonne Chanson* is the way that the subtlety of Symbolist works can point to larger relevant themes. The lattermost cycle is a love story, which is presumably applicable to anyone reading or hearing the poetry. And *La Bonne Chanson* operates within the realm of trying to understand what words to use in the face of a world that does not seem to listen or a world unable to hear. But *La Chanson d’Eve* is clearly further along in the journey to understand the role of language and sound in that it addresses the expression of one’s word choices. The cycle stretches into this more ethereal, philosophically questioning realm by bringing a higher power into the narrative and by giving each character (Eden, God, Eve, etc) its own voice. In addition to asserting the value of careful word choices, this cycle also posits that our surroundings themselves have a voice as well. In eliminating the excess clamor, in removing personal biases and self-absorption from speech, one can open oneself to hearing the broader sonic landscape and be reminded of a greater picture. While language is an important aspect of the developing idea of national identity, Van Lerberghe’s poetry is a reminder that human language is not the only aspect of what makes us who we are. *La Chanson d’Eve* reminds us that human sounds exist within the framework of a more layered language landscape.

³⁷¹ Duchon, *Gabriel Fauré*, 160.

Chapter 4: Manifesting Symbolism

Fauré discovered *La Chanson d'Eve*, among other Van Lerberghe works, during a trip to Brussels he made in 1906. At the invitation of the Brussels-based avant-garde art group called La Libre Ésthetique (formerly known as Les XX), the occasion was an exposition of so-called “forward-thinking” artists, musicians, and literary figures from mostly francophone Europe. Fauré had visited similar expositions in previous years, meaning that this particular trip to Brussels was not necessarily new. But after the previous chapter’s discussion of Fauré’s reserved demeanor and selective compositional aesthetic, one might ask how or why Fauré was perceived as aligning with values of international avant-garde groups. One’s initial impression of these expositions would be limited to occasional references in secondary sources, including Jessica Duchen’s biography of Fauré. But further questioning and investigation would uncover a rich history of Octave Maus, who used his art organizations in Brussels to lead the charge to elevate francophone creative figures from both Belgium and France. As the conclusion to the broader discussion of how *mélodie* engages with nationalist projects in the fin-de-siècle, this chapter will explore Fauré’s engagement in Maus’s artistic groups and how his music performed in this context figures into larger discussions about the relationship between Brussels and Paris. Organized mostly chronologically, this chapter will present several excerpts from primary sources obtained at the Archives de l’Art contemporain en Belgique (AACB, part of the Royal Museums of Fine Arts) and the Bibliothèque royale de Belgique. Images of newspaper articles and concert programs in consultation, when relevant and available, will be placed in the appendix under their corresponding footnote reference.³⁷²

Les XX and La Libre Ésthetique: Advocates for the Avant-garde

Les XX was officially founded in 1884 by Octave Maus and Edmond Picard. The two were young lawyers in Brussels, but both were invested in promoting the arts, as well; this shared love led to the creation of the revue and Symbolist publication called *L’art moderne* in 1881. The journal revue “detailed the domains it

³⁷² It should be said at the outset of this chapter that nearly all English translations of primary sources and those that come from Mme. Maus’s work are my own, and the original French is included in the footnote for reference.

attempted to approach: painting, sculpture, sketching, musique, furniture-building, fashion...It attempted to defend an 'original' art in all of its diversity, a 'national' art reflecting the proper characteristics of Belgium and a 'social' art opposed to 'l'Art pour l'Art' that others in the literary group *La Jeune Belgique* had proclaimed...³⁷³ The name for the group would come three years later when he scribbled twenty names on an invite list, individuals who were chosen "among already established artists, but whose art was independent and combative," as Maus's wife writes.³⁷⁴ For the most part, "the majority of Les XX [were] young...honest, and friends to ruckus, of the happy age where...the future belongs to you," as journalist Mécœnas writes in 1884.³⁷⁵ Founding members of the group at this time primarily included painters Fernand Khnopff, James Ensor, and Théo van Rysselberghe, among several other Belgian artists.³⁷⁶ When the group was initially founded, they simply had the goal of coming together to discuss and write about their favorite forward-thinking artists and writers, primarily. But Maus eventually proposed the organization of annual expositions according to a modernist perspective, expositions which would eventually host concerts in the same spaces; this indicates that, even though music had not always been present at these expositions, music had been part of Maus's vision of what the *expositions* should be.³⁷⁷ Therefore, members of Les XX sent personal invitations to artists, poets, and other cultural icons to come attend its annual month-long exhibition of concerts and lectures.³⁷⁸ Anyone who paid the entry fee could attend, but Goldman points to the fact that many individuals had personal connections to Maus and those in his cohort, which reveals the network he established by being a liaison between those close to him and other esteemed artists and musicians.³⁷⁹ Depending on whether or

³⁷³ Wangermée, Robert. « Préface. » In *Bruxelles : Convergence des arts (1880-1914)*. Edited by Malou Haine, Denis Laoureux, and Sandrine Thieffry. Paris: J. Vrin, 2013, 12. The phenomenon of "l'Art pour l'Art" dates back to Théophile Gautier. Precursory to the Symbolist movement, this idea crops up throughout the development of Symbolist literature as the century unfolds.

³⁷⁴ Maus, Madeleine Octave. *Trente années de lutte pour l'art, 1884-1914*. Brussels : Libraire L'Oiseau bleu, 1926, 17.

³⁷⁵ 17 fév. 1884. *La Chronique*. « L'exposition des XX. » Original translation : « La plupart des XX sont jeunes, a la vérité, et amis du tapage, en cet âge heureux où la vie s'ouvre souriante, où l'avenir vous appartient. »

³⁷⁶ Later members would include: Felicien Rops, Anna Boch (the only female member), Paul Signac, and Isidore Verheyden. For further details, the names of all members of Les XX and La Libre Esthétique are listed in the introductory information at the beginning of each chapter of Madeleine Maus's book.

³⁷⁷ Goyen de Heusch, « *L'invitation au voyage*, » 5.

³⁷⁸ Ross, "Music in the French Salon," 94.

³⁷⁹ Goldman, « Octave Maus et le groupe des XX : La rencontre des arts à la croisée des réseaux culturels. » In *Bruxelles : Convergences des arts (1880-1914)*, 345-56. Edited by Malou Haine, Denis Laoureux, and Sandrine Theiffry. Paris: J. Vrin, 2013, 353. Original: « Ces exemples montrent également à quel point Maus joue un rôle essentiel dans la mise

not one had materials in that year's expositions, guests would offer and attend concerts, recitals, curated art exhibits, and lectures which together fostered an intimate level of cultural exchange among French-speaking cultural figures like: Rodin, Matisse, Van Gogh, Saint-Saëns, Vincent d'Indy, and numerous others.

The very first *exposition* took place on February 2nd, 1884 in the Palais des Beaux-Arts, which was originally built in 1880 with the intention of gathering several artistic disciplines into one space. Both then and presently, the space is home to a theater, exhibition hall, cinema, and concert hall where the National Orchestra of Belgium performs. At this point, Les XX's *exposition* was primarily conceived of as a space that allowed artists to display their work. In an untitled article featured in the *Courier de Bruxelles*, the author comments on the curation of the art exhibits as being "very beautiful [and] very artistic," saying that Les XX had crafted an artistic experience that produced a "more personal and more vibrant" curiosity within observers.³⁸⁰ Mme. Maus also attests to the well-planned layout of the exhibits with perfectly aligned picture frames, and that their concern for aesthetics gave the salons of Les XX "une élégance sobre et nette" (an understated and neat elegance).³⁸¹ This appears to be part of what made Les XX unique in Belgium, in addition to the fact that, at the time of the group's origin, their choice of paintings that rejected "traditional and artificial tradition points to *un caractère évolutif*."³⁸² An 1885 article published in *Le Nord* offers the following perspective, which both describes the nature of the expositions and unabashedly praises it:

Since [the beginning], almost daily, in the Brussels press and the provincial press, the Exposition of Les XX has been the object of extensive and serious criticism, which is a testament to the importance place that these young Belgian painters have played in art... The impression that the Exposition of Les XX is, on the whole, most encouraging.³⁸³

en contact de ses proches avec les artistes. Il est donc peu étonnant de voir que les amateurs d'œuvres des XX soient tous liés d'une manière ou d'une autre à Maus... »

³⁸⁰ 07 fév. 1886, *Courier de Bruxelles*, no author or title listed. Original: « de l'avis générale, l'exposition est très belle, très artistique, et les intransigeants eux-mêmes ont pour la plupart fait des envois captivants la curiosité... C'est moins académique, mais plus personnel et plus vibrant. »

³⁸¹ Maus, *Trente années*, 18.

³⁸² Maus, *Trente années*, 18-9.

³⁸³ 14 fév. 1885 dans *Le Nord*, "L'Exposition des XX, » écrit par J.N. I am not sure what the initials stand for, but this is how the author appeared in the article. Original: « Depuis lors, presque quotidiennement, dans la presse de Bruxelles et la presse de province, l'Exposition des XX a été l'objet de critiques étendues, sérieuses, qui témoignent de la place importante que les jeunes peintres belges ont su se faire dans l'art... L'impression que laisse l'Exposition des XX est, au total, des plus encourageantes. »

Alternatively, almost a week later, we encounter a much more negative and dubious perspective of Les XX's activities, in *La Chronique*. Playing on the spoken name of the group, Les Vingt (The Twenty): “*vingtistes*, last year, they are only eighteen-ists this year... The Salon des Vingt is no longer anything revolutionary.”³⁸⁴ In later reviews from the 1890s, other writers highlight this difference between the number of people coordinating the expositions from year to year and used that as a point of departure for their critiques.

We know, based on the members of the group and on early press commentaries, plastic art forms were important contributions to supporting Les XX's cause; but what about music? As Madeleine Octave Maus writes: “To organize modern music concerts at Les XX in parallel with exposed artworks, and in the same Salon, ah! a wonderful undertaking!”³⁸⁵ The nature of these expositions, beginning in 1886, was inherently interdisciplinary, wherein musicians had music performed in the same spaces that displayed contemporary artworks beginning. Interestingly, during this first year of concerts sponsored by Les XX, one author wrote the following after the exposition had taken place: “The annual exhibition of Les XX has become the noisiest event of the Brussels artistic year; the word ‘noisy’ is decidedly the only one that fits...”³⁸⁶ This article then reveals a skepticism and negative critique of Les XX's ventures at this early stage in their tenure, saying that the group represents “le parti extrême en art, l'école des excessifs et des irreconciliables” (the extreme party in art, the school of the excessive and the irreconcilable). And the article does not really go into detail about the musical experience a visitor would have had while attending the exposition that year. What I find most intriguing is the use of the sonic adjective to personify his skepticism of Les XX, coincidentally during the first year that held concerts that would eventually hold equal status as the corpus of artworks and literary works that shaped the experience of visiting Brussels in February or March every year.

³⁸⁴ 20 fév. 1885. “Les XX, IV” in *La Chronique*. Written by Mécœnas. Original: « vingtistes, l'an dernier, ils ne sont que dix-huitistes cette année... [Le] Salon des Vingt ne présent plus rien de révolutionnaire. »

³⁸⁵ Maus, *Trente années*, 74. Original: « Organiser aux XX des concerts de musique moderne parallèlement aux œuvres exposées, et dans le Salon même, ah! la belle entreprise! »

³⁸⁶ 07 fév. 1886, *Chronique Artistique*, “Exposition des XX à Bruxelles. » No author listed. Original: « L'exhibition annuelle des XX est devenue l'évènement le plus bruyant de l'année artistique bruxellois ; le mot ‘bruyant’ est décidément le seul qui convienne. » See Example 1 of Appendix 2.

The first three expositions were held at the Palais des Beaux-Arts, and in 1887 the group moved their *expositions* to the Museum of Modern Art, which today is part of the consortium of the Royal Museums of Fine Arts in the arts-district of Brussels. While the expositions took place in the main area of what is currently the Great Masters Museum, some scholars have indicated that music may have been the backbone of the expositions after all. Goldman offers that Maus decided to include musicians because “music was an essential element of bourgeoisie culture at the time” and incorporating music would attract an upper-level crowd which could provide additional financial support.³⁸⁷ She states that, in addition to having set up a system of pledges of 10 Francs, wherein those who donated more would receive “a reserved place to the concert and special gallery access,” holding concerts promoted the formation of an aristocratic class that could “serve as the lifeblood of the XX’s public.”³⁸⁸

Further observations reveal that the *manifestations musicales* augmented not only the reception of Les XX and La Libre Ésthetique, but also the social impact of the salon culture.³⁸⁹ Paris was certainly larger and had a more well-established musical life, but the model for classical music-making in Brussels bore similarities to the equivalent performance genres in their francophone counterpart city. In « L’essor de sociétés de musique en Belgique dans la seconde moitié du XIXe siècle, » Malou Haine presents a catalog and loose chronology of the development of chamber music societies and other organizations in Brussels that arose in the middle of the nineteenth century. These early groups sought to serve similar functions as groups like the Parisian societies in which Saint-Saëns and Fauré thrived. Of these, she includes le Cercle des XX, which was another colloquialism for Les XX.³⁹⁰ At the turn of the century, the exchange between Belgium and France had never been closer than during the period of intense activity of Schola Cantorum (Vincent d’Indy’s group

³⁸⁷ Goldman, « Octave Maus et le groupe des XX, » 356. Original: « La musique étant un élément essentiel de la culture bourgeoisie de l’époque... »

³⁸⁸ Goldman, « Octave Maus et le groupe des XX, » 355 Original: « Ce qui est intéressant, c’est que ces abonnements donnaient également accès au vernissage privé. Ainsi ce public qui possédait différents privilèges – une place réservée au concert et l’accès au vernissage – pouvait se distinguer du public général du salon. Grace aux concerts, une forme d’aristocratie pouvait donc se former au sein du public des XX. » (p. 355)

³⁸⁹ Goldman, « Octave Maus et le groupe des XX, » 356.

³⁹⁰ Haine, 199. Another name for the group is Les Vingt, and sometimes the members are referred to as “vingtistes.” I can see no precise reason for why some writers use Les XX vs. Les Vingt, but I have done my best throughout to transcribe whatever the writer’s choice of terminology.

in Paris) and *La Libre Ésthetique*, and that Maus used music as a means of highlighting the multi-artistic affinities between the two countries reflects this.³⁹¹

Coupled with these more practical explications of garnering financial support, the group also had an ideological underpinning for including music in the expositions. For example, we can begin by turning to an 1888 article in *Le Guide Musicale*. This particular article asserts that Les XX “love harmony” and “offer the hospitality of their salon to the brazenness of modern music” to a public whose good will chooses to be interested in “these New attempts” on the part of Les XX.³⁹² In his book about the relationship of music to Octave Maus’s endeavors, art historian Serge Goyen de Heusch suggests that music was not only present but had an elevated status, a belief woven throughout his monograph. In comparison with French equivalent expositions, he writes: “Rarely was France familiar with such a fruitful osmosis between these two modes of expression. Once again, in Brussels, Les XX and then *La Libre Ésthetique*...were at the heart of regularly making heard the vocal works which celebrated these new marriages between French poets and composers of the new school.”³⁹³ This synthesis is echoed in an earlier portion of his work, with:

As if justifying itself by an apparent synchronicity, the parallel between musicians and painters admits itself as a bit artificial: the art of sounds and that of pictorial representation obey different sensory and structural imperatives, even though they meet one another on common ground – the art of literature – by the setting of music, or the plastic of representation, of a significant literary theme of the era.³⁹⁴

³⁹¹ Goyen de Heusch, « *L’invitation au voyage*, » 77. Original: « Jamais échanges ne furent si étroits entre la Belgique et la France qu’en cette période d’intenses activités de la Schola Cantorum et de *La Libre Ésthetique*. C’est ce que rappelait encore Octave Maus en 1901, soulignant les affinités multi-artistiques entre les deux pays voisins. »

³⁹² 09 fev. 1888, *Le Guide Musicale*. Original: « Le XX ne s’occupent pas uniquement de peinture, ils aiment l’harmonie et ils ont raison d’offrir aux hardiesses de la musique moderne l’hospitalité de leur Salon et la bienveillance de leur public décide à s’intéresser aux tentatives Nouvelles. » Worth noting is the fact that, while Les XX did not officially have their own designated salon space, the term is being used generally to describe a more metaphorical kind of space inhabited by the artists in question. See Example 7 of Appendix 2.

³⁹³ Goyen de Heusch, « *L’invitation au voyage*, » 83. Original: « Rarement la France connut une si féconde osmose entre ces deux moyens d’expression. Une fois encore, à Bruxelles, les associations des XX puis de *La LE*..., eurent à cœur de faire entendre régulièrement les œuvres vocales qui célébraient alors ces noces nouvelles entre poètes français et compositeurs de la nouvelle école musicale. »

³⁹⁴ Goyen de Heusch, « *L’invitation au voyage*, » 7. Original: « S’il se justifie par une évidente synchronicité, ce parallélisme entre musiciens et peintres s’avère quelque peu artificiel : l’art des sons et celui de la représentation picturale obéissent à des impératifs sensoriels et structurels différents, quand bien même ils se rencontreraient sur un terrain commun – celui de la littérature – par la mise en musique, ou la représentation plastique, d’un thème littéraire significatif de l’époque. »

Reflected in the above assertions and highlighted repeatedly elsewhere is the uniqueness of these expositions because of their ability to weave together all the art forms. If this feels reminiscent of the Gesamtkunstwerk that had inspired Baudelaire and so many other Symbolist writers of the period, one would not be too far off the mark in making this assumption. James Ross indicates that the “sophisticated interconnection between salons, journals and music is illuminated” by the second wave of wagnérisme in 1880s-90s-era France and Belgium. Les XX’s Salon, a more public version of a typically intimate musical experience, “acted as a base on which Wagner’s ideas and works” could flourish, just as the more standard salons throughout Paris and Brussels did.³⁹⁵ Maus and Picard both identified as *wagnéristes*, both of them having been members of the Belgian chapter of *Association wagnérienne* which helped gather funds for the construction and maintenance of the Bayreuth theater.³⁹⁶ As the years moved forward, Wangermée points out that the journal (*L’Art Moderne*) which had begun as a tribune to the Wagnerian movement, had become “the main diffusive organ of French musical modernism” because of the collective efforts of integrating art forms under the guise of a seemingly Wagnerian tendency.³⁹⁷

In the above citation from Goyen de Heusch, he states that he perceives an artificiality between the relationship people often intuit between music and paintings because of differences in their creation and how audiences go about interpreting these two forms of artistic media differently. But I also interpret this as a subtle critique against individuals who, upon observing a work of art or having a musical experience, merely gloss over more profound similarities beyond surface-level aesthetic commonalities: i.e. the similarities that are themselves rooted in “a significant literary theme of the era.”³⁹⁸ Thus, the crucial notion is the lattermost statement concerning the idea that music and the plastic arts intersect in literature, and that literary ideas serve as anchor points for fostering inspiration in both creative disciplines. As Mecœnas wrote in 1884 as a critique against passive observers, “peu leur importent la poésie et le sentiment qui, mieux que le cadre, jettent des rayons d’or autour du tableau » (few care about poetry and sentiment which, better than a frame, toss golden

³⁹⁵ Ross, “Music in the French Salon,” 97. By “more standard,” I mean salons in their expected definition of being in the homes of wealthier individuals, rather than the *exposition* experience of Les XX and La Libre Ésthetique.

³⁹⁶ Wangermée. Robert, « Préface, » 11.

³⁹⁷ Wangermée, « Préface, » 15.

³⁹⁸ Goyen de Heusch, « *L’invitation au voyage*, » 7.

rays around the canvas).³⁹⁹ Perhaps this belief undermines earlier assertions about music being the backbone for the expositions, but the fact that both disciplines can be understood as having the same function for the *expositions* is perhaps the main reason for including the expositions within this project. Operating on this assumption that music and plastic arts borrow their inspiration from and relate to one another through literature, one sees how this general concept has been mapped onto the broader discussion about the role of Symbolist literature in linguistic nationalist dialogues, and why music, too, has a voice in that discussion.

Among the most instrumental in helping Maus incorporate musical performances, Vincent d'Indy and Eugene Ysaÿe are on this list. Madeleine Maus addresses the fact that one could easily see the shared views between Maus and d'Indy in terms of their tastes and demeanors, as gleaned from her reading of their correspondence from the 1880s onward.⁴⁰⁰ In fact, d'Indy is one of the figures involved with Les XX who brought “the *mélodies* of Gabriel Fauré, the chamber music of César Franck..., the works of ‘the young French school’ and plenty of others” to Brussels for the first time.⁴⁰¹ One might remember that d'Indy led the Schola Cantorum de Paris in 1894, a group that was intended to be an alternative to the Paris Conservatoire and elevated the study of music ranging from pre-Baroque to early classical periods. D'Indy was well connected within Parisian music-making, and also had a large crop of students who would later be included in concerts (including Erik Satie and several members of the 20th century group of composing rebels, Les Six). Ysaÿe, as a native Belgian, proved valuable because of his youthful enthusiasm (the likes of which Fauré and others attest) which certainly contributed to the spirit of the group.⁴⁰² Ysaÿe also had a string quartet with whom he regularly performed, which provided Maus with easy opportunities to program chamber works for any combination of strings.

³⁹⁹ 17 fév. 1884. La Chronique. « L'exposition des XX, I. » Written by Mécœnas. Full original version: “Peu leur importent la poésie et le sentiment qui, mieux que le cadre, jettent des rayons d'or autour du tableau. Peu leur importe surtout cette émotion ne venant ni de l'œil, ni des doigts, mais du cœur lui-même, et qui distingue l'artiste de l'artisan.” This article also critiques Les XX for being “artisans” rather than “artists” because they are attempting to profit and make a profession out of displaying other people's artworks. Despite this, I have included Mécœnas's words for their relevance to the question of the role of literature in shaping artistic thought.

⁴⁰⁰ Maus, *Trente années*, 74-5. She includes excerpts of their shared correspondence on p. 78-9.

⁴⁰¹ Wangermée, “Préface,” 14.

⁴⁰² See Duchon, *Gabriel Fauré*, 159-60 for a description of Ysaÿe's temperament with respect to Fauré.

Interestingly, because the expositions were designed to represent and flaunt artistic and literary creations that the group deemed as avant-garde or modern, the works displayed at the *expositions* and the individuals who attended all represented various intersections of an international community, primarily of French-speakers. The journalism during the first few years of expositions frequently highlights conflicting sentiments about the presence of French nationals in the Brussels city limits, many of which are negatively critical.⁴⁰³ In the opening chapter, we encountered a few concrete examples from throughout Belgium's complicated history and love-hate relationship between the French. In the context of the artistic realm, many of the negative sentiments stemmed from an animosity towards Paris because some felt like Belgian-born artists forced themselves to flock to Paris. For example, in an 1884 article written by Emile Verhaeren (interestingly, the person to whom Van Lerberghe dedicated *La Chanson d'Ève*) shortly after the group's founding, one can feel a frustration with the fact that Belgian "painters [were] ignored beyond the border." Within this frustration at having Belgian talent spending much of their time in Paris, Verhaeren makes a call for inviting them back with open arms and a sense of hospitality when they return home to Belgium. This excerpt in full is included below:

Our painters are ignored beyond the border; the best go to Paris and are made known only thanks to some species of French naturalization. We need to esteem them as Belgians, to invite them as Belgians, with the same grace that they give hospitality to strangers in their homeland.⁴⁰⁴

Relatedly, an 1885 article expresses a coming to terms with the fact that Paris was "the only city center where, outside of the art and those adept at it, there exists a rudimentary artistic education." This author depicts the situation as if there is no alternative for young Belgian artists other than traveling to Paris to practice their craft, to live, and to work.⁴⁰⁵ An 1894 article from *La Revue des Flandres* relays yet again a similar statement,

⁴⁰³ Admittedly, the volume of materials I gathered and have maintained for my records is less than I would prefer. But the ensuing citations related to the discussion of the French-Belgian relationship offer direct commentaries on the subject, which is why they are the only ones I've documented. This relationship is also primarily being discussed from the Belgian perspective.

⁴⁰⁴ 10 fév. 1884, *National belge*, « La Lutte pour l'art. » Written Emile Verhaeren. Original: « Nos peintres sont ignorés au-delà de la frontière ; les meilleurs s'en vont à Paris et ne se font connaître que grâce à une espèce de la naturalisation française. Il faut qu'on les estime comme Belges, qu'on les invite comme Belges, avec la même grâce qu'ils mettent à donner chez eux l'hospitalité aux étrangers. »

⁴⁰⁵ 02 fév. 1885. *Étoile belge*, « L'exposition des XX, I, » écrit par Max Sulzberger. Original: « Paris est le seul centre ou, en dehors de l'art et ses adeptes, il existe une éducation artistique rudimentaire. De là, l'importance pour les jeunes talents de n'importe quelle provenance d'être consacrés à Paris. »

saying that the exposition that year “[gathered] a large number of impressionist works, more Belgian than foreign,” but goes on to lament the fact that the Belgian public seemingly has little appreciation for its own impressionist artists.⁴⁰⁶ Though these comments circulating in the press before these *expositions* became a featured element of the winter season, one can intuit that an additional reason for the founding of Les XX was to provide a space for talented, forward-thinking Belgian creative icons to present their work for their fellow Belgians.

With that goal in mind, Les XX walked the line between supporting only Belgian avant-garde figures and supporting avant-garde works in a broader sense, the latter of which I see as being the most overarching guiding principle of Les XX’s mission. In several places throughout his work, Goyen de Heusch points to the groups’ ability to navigate this complexity of representing their own national artistic talents while simultaneously celebrating works created by those from outside Belgian borders, especially near the turn of the century. Even though Belgians expressed disdain for their young artists moving to Paris to train, live, and work for a time, the favor was returned in the form of Parisians who felt “a very particular [kind of] enthusiasm” in Brussels which inspired them to visit the city to create new works.⁴⁰⁷ Additionally, in an earlier discussion of the group’s preoccupation with “sticking to the most innovative creations,” he asserts that alongside revealing works by Claude Debussy and Maurice Ravel, both of whom living at this point in a Parisian atmosphere wherein Fauré was still active, Les XX and La Libre Esthétique never forgot “les acteurs belges de ce renouveau.”⁴⁰⁸

⁴⁰⁶ Mars 1894, *La Revue des Flandres*, « L’art en Belgique. » Written by Paul de Sadeleer. Original: « Le Salon de La Libre-Esthétique, qu’organise chaque année avec tant de compétence, M. Octave Maus, le distingue directeur de L’Art Moderne, réunit en grand nombre d’œuvres d’impressionnistes, tant belges qu’étrangers. Ces œuvres ne manquent pas de mérites – loin de là, -- mais il faut bien constater que le public, en général du moins, apprécie peu ce genre. » See Example 2 in Appendix.

⁴⁰⁷ Goyen de Heusch, « *L’invitation au voyage*, » 29. Worth noting is the fact that he discusses composers in this context because of the nature of the larger monograph exploring the role of music at the expositions. Original: « Pourtant la capitale belge ne peut concurrencer Paris, mais il y a, de l’avis même des compositeurs français qui viennent y créer leurs œuvres, une chaleur, un enthousiasme très particulier... Bruxelles acquiert davantage, dans le domaine de la musique aussi, cette qualité qu’on lui reconnaît aujourd’hui, de devenir, selon l’expression consacrée, « un carrefour de l’Europe ». »

⁴⁰⁸ Goyen de Heusch, « *L’invitation au voyage*, » 6. Original: « D’année en année, on put suivre l’évolution de cette féconde école dont bien des noms restent aujourd’hui encore trop méconnus... Sans cesse préoccupée de « coller » aux créations les plus novatrices, La LE révéla ainsi les figures majeures de l’impressionnisme musical comme Debussy et Ravel, sans jamais oublier les acteurs belges de ce renouveau. »

As the decades progressed, one can see a shift towards increasingly negative criticisms against Les XX for including so many French artistic figures, especially around the time of the group's name change to La Libre Ésthetique in 1894. From 1884 until 1893, there had been around twenty core members of the organization who invited certain guests; this core group of twenty members remained relatively constant, with a few who rotated in and out of the group occasionally, which resulted, sometimes, in an imbalance between invited guests versus "les vingtistes" themselves. Through an 1893 article in *La Fédération Artistique*, one can see how this imbalance could be problematic for an artistic group whose *expositions* claim to emphasize bringing forward-thinking artists, largely from the francophone European tradition, into Brussels. My reading of this article, written at the critical point of transition for the organization, leads me to believe that one reason why Les XX underwent the change was in part due to critiques such as the one seen below:

In reality this salon is not that of Les XX, but that of the 'invited artists' who are represented there... Les XX lost itself in this ensemble. The rest of these XX were fifteen – since there are some regrettable absences, that of Fernand Khnopff especially. And among the most serious of the fifteen, the most interesting, the most artistic, in total are French.⁴⁰⁹

Another article from 1894 raises similar critiques, saying that "Brussels will never be anything but an intellectual neighbor of Paris" which has resulted from what the author calls "a sympathetic curiosity...to foreign art."⁴¹⁰ The article by Jean Ajalbert begins in a tone of bitterness towards the way Brussels's artistic heritage has come to be defined as a subsidiary of Parisian artistic life, and also that Brussels is partly to blame for this seemingly subservient relationship. With literary figures as the primary examples, he gives La Libre Ésthetique a back-handed compliment, thanking them for having highlighted the issue of Belgium being an "earthly purgatory" for France's second-rate talents.⁴¹¹ By the end of this opinion piece, and through an

⁴⁰⁹ 05 mars 1893. *La Fédération Artistique*, « Le Salon des XX. » Written by Edmond Louis. « En réalité ce salon n'est pas celui des XX, mais celui des 'artistes invités' qui y figurent... Les XX se perdus dans cet ensemble. Du reste ces XX en sont quinze – car il y a des abstentions regrettables celle de Fernand Khnopff notamment. Et parmi les quinze les plus sérieux, les plus intéressants, les plus artistes en somme, sont des Français. » See Example 3 of Appendix.

⁴¹⁰ 06 mars 1894. *Gil Blas*, « Aimons les belges. » Written by Jean Ajalbert. Original: « La curiosité sympathique des Belges aux arts étrangers, en se portant sur les essais les plus divers, avec ces salons éclectiques, de tendances les plus diverses, avec ces revues inquiètes et chercheuses ouvertes..., la curiosité des Belges transformait Bruxelles en un laboratoire pour ainsi dire des idées nouvelles : leur capitale est devenue comme le centre de l'internationalisme intellectuel. » See Example 4 of Appendix 2.

⁴¹¹ 06 mars 1894. *Gil Blas*, « Aimons les belges. » Written by Jean Ajalbert. Original: « Mais en matière d'art, le rôle de la Belgique ne se limite pas ainsi étroitement à n'être qu'une sorte de purgatoire terrestre pour les demi-dieux qui ne connurent pas les paradis de la grosse vente ou de fracassante célébrité... ; d'ailleurs, réciproquement, Paris ne se

invocation of Baudelaire, Ajalbert transform his feelings of resentment into ones respect for his Belgian brethren, saying: “Love the Belgians... Love them, even if they don’t produce anything.”⁴¹²

Les XX voted to dissolve in the spring of 1893. Shortly thereafter, a new organization emerged with a slightly different membership, but which maintained the same values. If Les XX had initially been conceived as an organized group of artists with shared tastes, La Libre Ésthetique was not comprised of artists at all, instead made up of amateurs who were associated with one another because of their “common desire to patron exhibits of new art, Belgian or foreign, of the most diverse tendencies.”⁴¹³ An article from 1894, aptly entitled “La Libre Ésthetique,” described that Maus’s new group would “invite painters [and] chosen sculptors in Belgium and abroad from among those who affirm a personality and orient themselves towards new horizons,” and also “even request musicians” who wanted their music heard and to have the “resources at their disposal that [la Libre Ésthetique] can provide.”⁴¹⁴ After the previous decade of Les XX, the description of the new organization seems clearer than that of its predecessor, and even though the stated mission broadened, La Libre Ésthetique seemed to embrace what Les XX had started to become. As an article from 1906 (albeit somewhat after the debut of La Libre Ésthetique) reveals, the group has diversified its interests and aims, while still maintaining its original spirit to celebrate newer, forward-thinking artistic figures: “In changing the program, La Libre Ésthetique has not changed its character. It...still rests all the same towards the avant-garde.”⁴¹⁵ In embracing art of “diverse tendencies,” Mme. Maus indicates that La

montra point ingrat et ne chicana pas sur le talent des Camille Lemonnier, des Rodenbach, des Verhaeren, des Maeterlinck et de beaucoup d’autres... » Ellipses at the end is included in the original.

⁴¹² 06 mars 1894. *Gil Blas*, « Aimons les belges. » Written by Jean Ajalbert. Original: « Aimons les Belges: voici que, grâce à eux, l’humanité peut s’enrichir d’acquêts multiples. Aimons-les, même s’ils ne produisent pas. Baudelaire reconnaissait que, dans ce pays sans vignes, les caves étaient renommées, approvisionnées des vins les plus fameux, des crus les plus rares... »

⁴¹³ Maus, *Trente années*, 161.

⁴¹⁴ 1894, “La Libre Ésthetique.” No author or journal title listed. Original: « La Libre Esthetique invitera donc tous les ans des peintres, des sculpteurs choisis en Belgique et a l’étranger parmi ceux qui affirment une personnalité et s’orientent vers des horizons neufs... La Libre Esthetique priera de même les musiciens appartenant aux écoles d’art nouvelles de faire entendre leurs œuvres et mettra...à leur disposition les ressources dont elle disposera. » See Example 5 of Appendix.

⁴¹⁵ 01 ou 04 mars 1906. *Le Soir*, « Les Petites Expositions. » Author was not listed, and the script of the date was difficult to read, hence the listing of 01 and 04. Original: « En changeant de programme, la Libre Ésthetique n’a pas changé de caractère. Elle ouvre ses portes maintenant à l’enseignement du passé, mais elle reste tout de même à l’avant-garde. »

Libre Ésthetique displayed more pieces of applied arts including sculpture and the like, and that “the art of the book [was] very abundantly represented” during the 1894 exposition.

Twenty-two years after the first exposition of Les XX, *L'indépendance belge* published an article in 1906 documenting the delivery of artworks in anticipation of the exposition that year, while attesting to Octave Maus's range of genres and styles in his personal collection, which both reflects the goals of his expositions and reflects the way the expositions likely affected what he collected throughout his life:

In such an intimate manner, without pomp and solemnity, even without speech, on Saturday afternoon, the delivery of works of art collected by Octave Maus to the Municipal Museum of Ixelles took place. In the whole set, one can easily study the evolution of theories inaugurated a quarter of a century ago by the French master luminists and from which came the whole modernist movement.⁴¹⁶

The author concludes the article by stating that once the nearly one hundred individual works, which include mostly drawings and paintings, are placed in the new room that is about to be built exclusively for their display, one will be able to experience these works for him or herself.⁴¹⁷ This article is typical of the majority of those I have found at the museum archives; it catalogs works either intended to be displayed or that one could have seen at the exposition, all in an attempt to demonstrate how diverse Maus's taste appeared to be and celebrate his ability to shamelessly put those works on display for the city and its invited guests. I read this as partially nationalistic in that one of the stated goals of Maus's career was to elevate and represent Belgian artists, and these newspaper authors for the most part responded positively to Maus's endeavors. This positive affirmation is, in turn what could have contributed to Maus's desire to continue coordinating these expositions and exhibitions of avant-garde creations for thirty years.

At the outbreak of World War II in 1914, *La Libre Ésthetique* was forced to suspend its activities. As the expositions of Les XX and *La Libre Ésthetique* had become annual highlights for many in the Brussels area, Goldman saying that Les XX “realized a dearly beloved concept at the cultural level during the era: the

⁴¹⁶ 4 fév. 1906. *L'indépendance belge*. No author listed. Original: « De manière tout intime, sans appareil et sans solennité, voire sans discours, a eu lieu, samedi après-midi, la remise des œuvres d'art recueillies par le comité Octave Maus, au Musée communal d'Ixelles... En tout ensemble d'ouvrages on peut donc aisément étudier l'évolution des théories inaugurées il y a un quart de siècle par les maîtres luministes français et d'où est sorti tout le mouvement moderniste. »

⁴¹⁷ Original: « Quand ces œuvres diverses auront été placées en belle lumière, dans la nouvelle salle qu'on va construire spécialement à leur intention, il sera possible de les admirer comme il convient et de les place au préalable avec un ordonnance plus étudiée et plus logique. »

union of the arts.”⁴¹⁸ These large-scale exhibitions were “linked intimately to French and Belgian Symbolist movements” and “showed how art and music could coexist to their common benefit” during these annual month-long exhibitions.⁴¹⁹ We see that these activities played impactful roles in facilitating exchange between salon culture, journalism, fine arts and music because of Maus’ personal interests and his abilities as an organizer and coordinator. Both *Les XX* and *La Libre Ésthetique* manifested a form of modernity that was indebted to the convergence of different artistic disciplines.⁴²⁰ The interdisciplinary nature of these expositions demonstrates that Maus and his artistic society serves as a compelling example for the “dynamic of cultural convergence” between literature and its resulting responses (i.e. musical works and artworks) in a wider context, especially during the contentious time of shifting understandings of the language used to produce said literary artifacts.⁴²¹

Fauré as a Symbol

Even though Fauré visited the expositions only a handful of times, because he was so cherished, *Les XX* and *La Libre Ésthetique* did not allow more than a year to pass between performances of Fauré’s music and held several concerts exclusively dedicated to his works.⁴²² Much of his oeuvre that was performed were vocal and chamber works, all of which are included in an appendix of Serge Goyen de Heusch’s monograph. Madeleine Octave Maus’s documentation of her husband’s activities also includes this information, in addition to a wealth of samples from his correspondence and images from M. Maus’s collection. I fortunately obtained copies of several concert programs from the AACB (included in Appendix 2) and consulted two different editions of Mme. Maus’s work in efforts to re-create some of the ensuing images of the expositions

⁴¹⁸ Goldman, « Octave Maus et le groupe des XX, » 356. Original: « Le Groupe des XX a joué un rôle très important dans cette dynamique de convergence culturelle. En proposant des concerts et des conférences dans des salles d’expositions, le salon des XX concrétisait un concept cher au milieu culturel de l’époque : l’union des arts. »

⁴¹⁹ Ross, 94. Ross also uses the term “Gesamtkunstwerk” (the Wagnerian concept of the “total artwork,” which at its most literal level translates as a synthesis of several art forms) to describe the nature of their annual exhibitions, most literally because concerts were often held in the same spaces as the impressionist or Symbolist paintings. But more figuratively, these expositions represented a collision and celebration of several art forms simultaneously.

⁴²⁰ Wangermée, “Préface,” 13. Original: « ...Les XX et La Libre Ésthetique n’ont jamais voulu défendre un style ou une tendance ; ils ont manifesté leur modernité en faisant converger les différentes disciplines artistiques au profit, à chaque étape, du réalisme puis successivement de l’impressionnisme, du néo-impressionnisme et du symbolisme. »

⁴²¹ Goldman, « Octave Maus et le groupe des XX, » 356.

⁴²² Goyen de Heusch, « *L’invitation au voyage*, » 87-8.

during the years Fauré attended or featured prominently on the concert programs during certain years. The years have been chosen for several reasons, the primary one being that they were either years that Fauré attended and/or performed, or years when his music was featured prominently and notably on the concert programs that year. One will find that Fauré played a role throughout the lifetime of the *expositions*, considering that his music was highlighted at beginning and ending landmarks in the groups' legacy. So, the remainder of this section will be a roadmap through “thirty years of the fight for art” through explorations of Fauré’s views on the city and the overall signification of his music.⁴²³

Fauré’s first trip to Brussels, according to correspondence, was in 1888 for the third annual *exposition*. What makes 1888 unique was the fact that music and literature were officially woven into the fabric of the artistic spectacles for the first time, despite having had smaller concerts of one or two pieces in previous years. Fauré was invited to attend by a young violinist friend Eugène Ysaÿe, who was perhaps “Fauré’s greatest admirer and supporter in Belgium.”⁴²⁴ Throughout the entire first weekend of events, Fauré’s music was programmed at some point on each day. The inaugural concert on February 7th, whose program can be found as Example 8 in Appendix 2, included with two Fauré pieces: his piano *Impromptu* and *Élegie* for cello, both of which are briefly mentioned in van Ryn’s 1888 article. All the music performed on the program that afternoon was French, with much of the repertoire having been written by Fauré and his contemporary and sometimes competitor, Vincent d’Indy. Ten days later, Les XX hosted a “deuxième matinée” featuring instrumental works by Robert Schumann, Domenico Scarlatti, and J.S. Bach, followed by a second half of “musique espagnole.”⁴²⁵

A few weekends later, “the gentle French organist...went on...to experience the privilege of a “Vingtiste” concert exclusively dedicated to his works.”⁴²⁶ Fauré had been in communication with Maus in

⁴²³ The phrase in quotes references the title of Madeleine Octave Maus’s book.

⁴²⁴ Jones and Nectoux, *A Life in Letters*, 92.

⁴²⁵ Maus, *Trente années*, 62-3.

⁴²⁶ Goyen de Heusch, « *L’invitation au voyage*, » 27-8. « Deux pièces de Fauré complétaient cette séance inaugurale de 1888, mais le doux organiste français, ancien élevé de Saint-Saëns, allait connaître quelques jours plus tard le privilège d’un concert « vingtistes » exclusivement consacré à ses œuvres, lui-même tenant la partie de piano. »

late February to work out the details of when he could make it to the city and to discuss whether or not Fauré had any recommendations for repertoire.⁴²⁷ Fauré sent a first edition copy of “Après un rêve” and “Au bord de l’eau,” in addition to providing a list of seven other individual songs which included: “Les Berceaux,” “Le Secret,” “Aurore,” and “Les Roses d’Ispahan.” Fauré wrote to Maus in February of 1888, essentially saying that because he was unfamiliar with the singer that the group would hire for the concert, he could only be so helpful in terms of making suggestions for what to program:

It seems difficult, not knowing the voice and the artistic temperament of your young singer, to indicate to her the *mélodies* that would surely suit her. I can only pray to first examine the *mélodies* that I pointed out to you above; [when I come] Friday we could definitely choose four or five of them by mutual agreement. Thus, in the draft program which I am sending to you and which you will have the kindness to modify, if you think it necessary, I have only indicated the plan which the *mélodies* might occupy.⁴²⁸

In Fauré’s response, we see the degree of collaboration Maus seems to have offered in the planning of the concert, both on the front end and on the back end. Per Les XX’s request, Fauré was the accompanist for the occasion, and Alphonse van Ryn, writer for *La Fédération Artistique*, described the overall playing style that afternoon in such a way that aligns with to what critics often praised about Fauré’s work and performance tendency: “This music has a special characteristic, it is as scientific as possible, but it is not incoherent to the point of making us doubt the sincerity of who wrote it.”⁴²⁹ Madeleine Maus describes Fauré’s visit as being part of an “incredible enchantment of initial contact with an unknown musical France and that represented before us two men, so handsome, so ardent, so fine.”⁴³⁰ So Octave Maus’s first attempt at imbuing his *expositions* with music seemed to be a success,

⁴²⁷ Nectoux, Jean-Michel. *Correspondance suivie de Lettres à Madame H. : Recueillies, présentées et annotées par Jean-Michel Nectoux.* (Paris : Librairie Arthème Fayard, 2015), 140-1.

⁴²⁸ Nectoux, Jean-Michel, *Correspondance*, 2015, 142. Original: « Il me parait bien difficile, ne connaissant pas la voix et le tempéramment artistique de votre jeune chanteuse, de lui indiquer les mélodies qui lui conviendraient sûrement. Je ne puis que la prier d’examiner d’abord les mélodies que je vous signale plus haut ; vendredi nous pourrions en choisir définitivement quatre ou cinq d’un commun accord. C’est ainsi que dans le projet de programme que je vous envoie et que vous aurez la bonté de modifier, si vous le jugez nécessaire, j’ai seulement indiqué le plan que pourraient occuper les mélodies. » The spelling of *tempéramment* (as opposed to *tempérament*) appears here as it does in Nectoux’s transcription.

⁴²⁹ 02 fév. 1888, *La Fédération Artistique*, « Matinée musicale des XX. » Written by Alphonse van Ryn. Original: « Cette musique a sa caractéristique spéciale, elle est aussi scientifique que possible mais elle n’est pas incohérente au point de nous faire douter de la sincérité de ceux qui l’ont écrite. » See Appendix 2, Example 6.

⁴³⁰ Maus, *Trente années*, 78.

leading one writer to say that they left the concert “with satisfaction of an afternoon spent in the company of real musicians and artists, a rare thing in Brussels.”⁴³¹

Fauré returned to Brussels to accompany a concert in late February 1889, a concert that opened with Fauré’s *Second Piano Quartet* and featured several excerpts from choral works that were conducted by Vincent d’Indy that day. A copy of this program is provided in Appendix 2 as Example 9. As one can see, Fauré had one solo vocal work performed that day, a piece called “Au cimetière” with poetry by Jean Richepin. When Fauré finished the work in 1888, he wrote Comtesse Greffulhe (a well-known Parisian salon owner, to whom Fauré was close) that he had finished “trois nouvelles Mélodies très gaies!!” which would eventually comprise his Op. 51.⁴³² Based on the mere two months between Fauré writing this letter and the exposition in 1889, “Au cimetière” and the chorus from Act 5 of *Caligula*, also on the program that year, had their Brussels premieres at the exposition in February, if not their public debut in Brussels rather than Paris.⁴³³ According to Mme Maus in her recounting of that year’s events, both d’Indy and Fauré “rejoiced like schoolboys at the prospect of the second voyage to Brussels, where the improviser/orchestrator of these concerts in a museum awaits with a joyous impatience.”⁴³⁴ Presumably, Fauré returned this year after the previous year’s successes, and also at the prospect of being accompany some of his relatively new works as they were heard for the first time by Belgian ears. I, however, cannot be completely certain about Fauré’s reaction or experience at the 1889 *exposition*, as there is very little published correspondence from the months before or after February 1889 in which Fauré would have possibly addressed his visit to Brussels.

Between 1890 and 1902, Fauré does not appear to have attended the expositions, based on the lack of correspondence from Brussels and the fact that his name is not listed as a performer on any of Madeleine Maus’s transcriptions of concert programs from the range of years in question. In 1890, Les XX put on a

⁴³¹ 9 fév. 1888. *Le Guide Musical*. No author listed. Original: « Et nous sommes sortis de là avec la satisfaction d’une après-midi passée en compagnie de vrais musiciens et de vrais artistes, chose assez rare à Bruxelles. » See Example 7 of Appendix 2.

⁴³² Nectoux, *Correspondance* 2015, 148. Letter 102.

⁴³³ In the same letter referenced immediately prior, Fauré says that he has just sent his excerpt of *Caligula* off to the editor, and hopes that Greffulhe gets to receive the first copy very soon.

⁴³⁴ Maus, *Trente années*, 90. Original: « D’Indy et Fauré se réjouissent comme des écoliers à la perspective du second voyage vers ce Bruxelles où les attend avec une joyeuse impatience l’improvisateur de ces concerts dans un musée... »

concert featuring works debuting for the first time in Brussels at the exposition, such as Fauré's "La fée aux chansons," a musical setting of poetry by Frenchman Armand Silvestre.⁴³⁵ Looking at a comprehensive listing of Fauré's vocal works, one will note that Silvestre is perhaps the second-most common poet whose poetry Fauré set to music during the 1870s-80s.⁴³⁶ First published in 1883, this early vocal work is the second of two songs in a set featuring Silvestre's poetry. "La fée aux chansons" is about a grass-dwelling fairy teaching birds to sing songs she has written for them. The birds do not seem to have learned the fairy's songs, despite the violent imagery of her punishing the birds by whipping their wings with grass blades, and the song ends with the fairy counting down the days by writing new songs for the next spring season. The song is quite short and not terribly prophetic in its message, instead telling a quick version of the story of tune-less birds.

Throughout, the left hand for the most part doubles the vocal line, or at least moves with the vocal line at the same metric pace when the two are not moving in similar motion. The right hand alternatively has the skittish triplet material that contrasts with the more lyrical quality of the vocal line. Taken together, we can hear the vocal line as the tune the fairy wants to teach the birds, while the right-hand accompaniment represents "les notes fausses" that the birds sing instead.

Despite the non-reflective quality of this work in relation to *La Chanson d'Ève*, this text of this poem touches on the notion of humans imbuing their sound upon the natural world just as the later van Lerberghe piece would do. The optimistic turn at the end of the poem, about composing new songs for the next springtime season, concludes musically with an embracing of the twittering bird material this time in a lower register of the piano, which indicates the fairy succumbing unto what the birds feel inclined to do instead of singing her lyrical airs, romances, and melodies. Here, too, humanity and nature convalesce, and Fauré allows the musical material to reflect this subsuming of human reality into what the birds deem natural. The prevalence of teaching in this poem seems appropriately metaphoric for Fauré's eventual role in contributing to the genre of *mélodie*, a genre often praised, at least in Fauré's case, for letting the poetry sing for itself. The

⁴³⁵ The program for this concert is included in the appendix as Example 10.

⁴³⁶ Counting the individual songs included in the two Verlaine song cycles, Fauré set 17 individual poems by Verlaine. Fauré composed 12 songs that were settings of Silvestre's work, making Silvestre the second-most common poet in Fauré's oeuvre, certainly during Fauré's younger years.

fact that Les XX also gave this piece its Brussels debut at their exposition can be read as a metaphor for the group's emphasis on showing and teaching others about the creative world around them, with the obvious symbolism of "le prochain Printemps" reminding visitors of the annual nature of the events, usually near the beginning of the spring season at the end of February or early March.⁴³⁷

During the decade-long time frame when Fauré was not in Brussels, one reason for his absence could be attributed to his increasing professional responsibilities at the Conservatoire, his first position as a professor of composition having begun in 1896. Before or after the years in question, Fauré had vocal works performed in: 1892 (4 settings of Verlaine poetry),⁴³⁸ 1893 ("Larmes" by Jean Richepin and "Clair de lune" by Verlaine),⁴³⁹ 1896 ("La Lune blanche luit dans les bois" from *La Bonne Chanson*),⁴⁴⁰ and in 1901 (a little-known *Fantasy* for flute and piano), which featured Octave Maus playing piano on that particular concert.⁴⁴¹ Worth noting as well is that once concerts resumed in 1901, the title of the concert series changed and was listed as offering "musique nouvelle." Previously, concerts were referred to as "auditions d'œuvres musicales" (performances of musical works) during the earlier years of Les XX, or "concerts d'œuvres modernes" (concerts of modern works) during the 1892 exposition. Thus, an additional explanation for his absence is that, during the 1898-1900 *expositions*, no concerts were held. Madelaine Maus points out that 1898 was a particularly difficult year to organize because of the "number and of the diversity of objects to receive, clear out, unpack and arrange, catalog," which might explain the lack of attention paid to scheduling concerts.⁴⁴² These years in question coincide with the rise of Impressionist works that everyone would have wanted to see, so *La Libre Ésthetique* may have devoted more of their energy towards supporting those efforts.

The 1903 exposition was the tenth anniversary of *La Libre Ésthetique*, and as such, Maus's journal publication *L'Art Moderne* published a catalog of the painting displays, musical shows, and conferences that

⁴³⁷ An example of the two contrasting musical textures in this song can be found in the musical appendix.

⁴³⁸ See Appendix 2 Example 11.

⁴³⁹ See Example 12 of Appendix 2.

⁴⁴⁰ See Appendix 2, Example 13.

⁴⁴¹ Since Maus is listed after the other performer, and since the piece is titled as being for "flute and piano," I am assuming that Maus was the pianist and a M. Vandekerkhove was the flautist."

⁴⁴² Maus, *Trente années*, 230. Original: « C'est une des expositions, parmi celles où les arts appliqués eurent une grande part, dont l'organisation fut le plus compliquée, en raison du nombre et de la diversité des objets à recevoir, dédouaner, débarrasser et pointer, cataloguer. »

had taken place during the first decade of the group's existence.⁴⁴³ And since it was the ten-year anniversary, Maus sought to display as much of the newest, most contemporary art as possible, and held four concerts which, when taken together, featured numerous francophone composers and performers. Octave Maus gave a talk during the final week of expositions called "L'humour en musique" which featured live musical examples from works by Handel, Grétry, and Schumann. 1903 was one of the biggest years in terms of the amount of Fauré's music that was performed, and this is even more significant considering that it was an anniversary for the group.⁴⁴⁴ As Madelaine Maus points out: "One cannot help but remember the first performance in Brussels of two Fauré *mélodies* of incomparable poetry, "Accompagnement" and "Soir," sung by Stéphane Austin, [the] profoundly musical young baritone..."⁴⁴⁵ In addition to those two songs, Fauré had two additional *mélodies* performed as part of a Fauré set. Taking place on March 5th, the set began with "Chant d'automne" (1879), a setting of a poem from Baudelaire's *Fleurs du mal*. From the long piano introduction, one can hear the influence of early-Romantic pianists like Chopin and Schumann. But we begin to catch glimpses of Fauré's early methods of manipulating strophic and through-composed forms when the setting of the second stanza mirrors the opening lines of poetry before departing into its own musical material. Similar to *La Chanson d'Eve*, the "chant" is never directly mentioned in the poem, which leads the reader to understand the entire poem as a song dedicated to the season of autumn as a symbolic transition between life and death (summer and winter). To follow were three settings of poetry by Albert Samain, a French poet born on the border between France and Belgium: "Soir" (published in 1896), "Accompagnement" (published in 1903), and "Pleurs d'or, duo" (1896). Samain was another Symbolist poet with whom Fauré maintained contact, and also a relationship that resulted from a failed attempt at a collaborative project.⁴⁴⁶ Just as with

⁴⁴³ Maus, *Trente années*, 291. Original: « De même qu'en 1893 pour les dix années d'existence des XX, *l'Art Moderne* publie en 1903 le relevé de toutes les manifestations plastiques, graphiques, musicales, et de toutes les conférences, qui ont eu lieu pendant le premier déennat de la Libre Esthétique. »

⁴⁴⁴ See Appendix 2, Example 14.

⁴⁴⁵ Maus, *Trente années*, 304. Original: « On ne peut que rappeler la première audition à Bruxelles de deux mélodies de Fauré incomparables de poésie, Accompagnement et Soir, chantées par Stéphane Austin, jeune baryton profondément musicien, à la diction subtile... »

⁴⁴⁶ Johnson, *The Songs and Their Poets*, 253. The work was supposed to be called *La Tentation de Bouddha*, and Johnson suggests that the project fell apart because Fauré decided against pursuing the theatrical project.

Verlaine a few years prior, Fauré showed great fascination with Samain's work, indicated by the handful of settings of the latter's work throughout the 1890s.

The Samain songs are some of the least-performed works in Fauré's oeuvre, often falling to the wayside in favor of songs excerpted from his song cycles or whose texts are settings of more well-known poets. But Fauré's settings of Samain's writing, based on this sampling of works performed in 1903, are also more difficult to perform in that they are harmonically and sonically less intuitive and more complex than his settings of Verlaine or even *La Chanson d'Ève*, which would be completed several years later. In "Accompagnement," for example, the piano part includes six-lets, several meter changes, and constantly shifting key centers. Samain's poetry, too, shifts rhyme schemes, line lengths, and is wordier than the previous examples we analyzed.⁴⁴⁷ Fauré's setting of the work, as previous examples would suggest as being a trend, steps into the character of the song and presents listeners with dizzying key changes and an unpredictable, motion-filled vocal line.⁴⁴⁸ Of the other two Samain texts represented in the set, "Pleurs d'or" is a duet for baritone and (mezzo) soprano. This lyrical *mélodie* has a steady rolling triplet accompaniment that reminds listeners of the *Cantique de Jean Racine* for which young Gabriel won a composition prize as a student. Additionally, this material suggests flowing water "in a state of suspension," which, coupled with syncopated quarter notes in the right hand, create a dripping effect. Originally titled "Larmes," (Tears), the poem plays with the dual-translation of the word as "tears" or "cries" (as in shouts) and thus presents images of teardrops, dewdrops, tolling bells, and "larmes de cors entendues / dans les grands bois douloureux" ([painful] horn calls heard / in the forest [...]). The dripping motive in the piano can be taken to represent both sets of images (watery and otherwise). Johnson points out that one can hear in this lover's duet "a voluptuous sensuality...that is not often encountered in Fauré."⁴⁴⁹ This results from the intimacy of the vocal lines that frequently move in thirds and rarely stray further than an octave apart, and the gently undulating

⁴⁴⁷ The poets I have in mind here are both Verlaine and Baudelaire, who have very tightly constructed poems that each, within itself, possess a logical kind of structure into which the reader can settle. "Accompagnement" moves between stanza lengths, syllable counts per line, and rhyme schemes, and when I read this poem for the first time, I felt incredibly disoriented by both the mysterious analogy Samain makes between love and an "oar on the waters," and the poetic structure of the work.

⁴⁴⁸ See Appendix 1 and the examples under Op. 85 for samples of the busy-ness of "Accompagnement."

⁴⁴⁹ Johnson, *The Songs and their Poets*, 260.

harmonies beneath them. The performance of these relatively new *mélodies* in Fauré's oeuvre is equivalent to what was occurring in Paris, in that many of Fauré's works debuted in salon-like spaces. But as previous insights have shown, these salons by Les XX and La Libre Ésthetique were less focused on music than on representing a unified front across artistic genres, and the public attending these salon-like expositions and concerts likely had this contextualized vision in mind when hearing these vocal works during their first Belgian performance.

Two years later, in 1905, Eugene Ysaÿe wrote to Fauré and spoke of the joy at the prospect of having Fauré grace Brussels with his presence once again, and congratulated his “dear old friend” on his recent appointment to director at the Paris Conservatoire. Based on correspondence with his wife, Fauré stayed in Belgium for a week in March of 1906, wherein he found his time split between rehearsals, meetings with people about “manners concerning the Paris Conservatoire.”⁴⁵⁰ On the 19th of that month, he rehearsed the piano quintet at Ysaÿe's brother's house during the day, followed by a rehearsal of the *Requiem* slated for performance the next evening. Fauré also attended rehearsals of two piano quartets he had been asked to perform for the Ghent Conservatoire over the upcoming weekend. In his next letter to Marie Fauré from March 23rd, he does not share his feelings about the performance of the *Requiem*, and instead discusses the logistic hassles of Ysaÿe's late-night return from Antwerp the day before which disrupted the rhythm of the Friday rehearsal. The biggest of the “many annoyances” was that Mme. Ysaÿe had the “silly idea of inviting in other people” during lunch, thereby pushing back the rehearsal start time because of having to wait for people to leave the house. But once the rehearsal began, the ensemble “remained glued to [the quintet]” for three hours “without a break!”⁴⁵¹ This clearly excites Fauré, and his tone in this letter shifts from frustrated to overjoyed at having been praised by Ysaÿe for writing a youthful-sounding piano quintet, “more obviously free from all seeking after effect: music, pure and simple.”⁴⁵² So the aging Fauré was kept busy executing directorial duties as a rehearsal leader and by indulging Ghent in their requested performance, which itself was couched as a business meeting the with Ghent Conservatory's director.

⁴⁵⁰ Jones and Nectoux, *A Life in Letters*, 121.

⁴⁵¹ Jones and Nectoux, *A Life in Letters*, 121.

⁴⁵² Jones and Nectoux, *A Life in Letters*, 121.

Based on the busy nature of Fauré's schedule, we get a glimpse of the degree to which La Libre Ésthetique had begun expanding their musical offerings, as the *expositions* continued year after year. Keeping with a trend that had been going on since the turn of the century, the 1906 exposition featured four concerts in the month of March with one scheduled per week. Fauré accompanied the March 20th concert which included the following works: a set of two pieces for cello (*Romance* and *Papillon*), an excerpt from the four-hand piano suite called *Dolly*, and a set of three vocal works ("Dans le forêt de septembre," "La Fleur qui va sur l'eau..." and "Mandoline").⁴⁵³ These three songs were not published as a comprehensive set, but the first two, with poetry written by Catulle Mendès, were published in the same opus in 1902.

"Dans la forêt de septembre" is a somber meditation on death and human melancholies, through the use of an extended metaphor of forest that intuits its own death during the winter season. Perhaps the most musical gesture of the poem is the fact that Mendès says that: "L'antique forêt douloureuse / S'accorde à nos mélancolies" (the ancient forest, sad, attunes itself to our melancholies). Otherwise, Mendès's imagery consists of haunting scenes of "pines clawing at the abyss," empty bird-nests perched on broken branches, and the ominous brushing by of a reddening birch leaf. Like in *La Bonne Chanson*, we see Mendès obviously projecting fears "de l'exil que la vie explore" (of the exile for which life implores) onto the woodland setting whose only mentioned sound is the muffled rumble of branches in the opening line of poetry. In terms of Fauré's setting of the text, the song is the hollow-sounding key of G-flat major, and is overall incredibly restrained; the vocal line hangs in the singer's lower register, and similarly lives in the mid to lower registers of the piano. The main musical element that comprises most of the vocal line is a two-bar phrase ascent by a small interval (usually less than a perfect fourth) which finishes in a descent by a step.⁴⁵⁴ This gesture is paired with only one line of poetry almost every time, and it makes the song sound like a series of inhales and exhales (conveniently enough for the singer) that seem to slow and diminuendo near the end of the song, likely to signal the beginning of winter at the sight of the forest's "first dead leaf."⁴⁵⁵

⁴⁵³ Maus, *Trente années*, 353-4. I have changed the titles of the songs from the italicized form and put them in quotations to suit modern-day convention

⁴⁵⁴ See Appendix 1, Example 1a of *Opus 85*.

⁴⁵⁵ See Appendix 1, Example 1b for how Fauré achieves this effect.

“La fleur qui va sur l’eau” brings the reader and listener into an oceanic setting, as it narrates the story of a woman whose beauty (in the form of a rose) was stolen by the sea.⁴⁵⁶ The poem is structured in 4-line stanzas, each line quite short in length in an ABAB rhyme scheme. The shortness of each line of poetry lends to the musical setting a nervousness and fear, which Fauré pairs with triadic arpeggiations throughout the entire piece. The piece opens with undulating waves and B- and E-minor harmonies in the accompaniment, as the sixteenth notes rise from the depths of low octave Bs.⁴⁵⁷ Just after the halfway point of the poem, Fauré moves from the jumpy, tumultuous wave-like texture (created by the sixteenth-note rhythm) to a rocking wave-like motion. At this point in the narrative, the violence of stealing the rose from “La Belle” settles into a long sentence which reads as follows:

« La fleur qui va sur l’eau » (lignes 21-32)	“The flower that moves on the water” (lines 21-32)
Et l'embrun, la Houle Depuis cette nuit, Les brisants où croule Un sauvage bruit, L'alcyon, la voile, L'hirondelle autour; Et l'ombre et l'étoile Se meurent d'amour, Et l'aurore éclore Sur le gouffre clair Pour la seule rose De toute la mer!	And the spray, the Surge Since that night, The breakers that crash with A savage noise, The halcyon, the sail, The swallow[s] all around, And the shadow and the star Die of love, And the dawn breaks On the bright abyss For the only rose Of all the sea!

Every element of the seascape – the spray, the surge, the sails, the various types of birds, has come to fall in love with the flower now floating on the sea surface, acting as “a buoy / for the butterflies” (lines 19-20). The rocking motion of eighth notes in the accompaniment seems to symbolize the loving embrace of the sea, as if gently caressing the flower. Notably, the piece stays in the minor key in which it began; this gesture on Fauré’s part indicates that he ruminates more on the fact that “La Belle” is now without her flower, rather than the fact that flower is protected and loved by the sea.

⁴⁵⁶ The Rose could also be a euphemism for her sexual purity; all connotations work in this case.

⁴⁵⁷ See Appendix 1, Example 2a of *Opus 85*.

Excerpted from the cycle *Cinq Mélodies de Vénise*, “Mandoline” is an earlier setting of Verlaine poetry. The poem originally is part of a lengthy set called *Fêtes galantes*, in reference to Baroque-era balls held in the outdoors made popular in a category of painting championed by French painter Antoine Watteau. *Fêtes galantes* as a whole stands as an example of “Verlaine’s sense of the absurdity of language” in that, throughout the set,:

...he attacks the notion that language is the proud, unmatched achievement of humanity. He deprives humans of speech and bestows it on nonhuman entities. By means of cacophony, he further assails the assumption that what is poetic is what is harmonious.⁴⁵⁸

Verlaine presents the scene of chattering women exchanging “insipid conversation / underneath the singing branches.” As Porter writes, “while the trees sing, the promiscuous multiplicity of the human messages voids them of meaning... The characters...have no function other than these idle diversions.”⁴⁵⁹ The accompaniment takes on this plucky, playful, gossipy quality that the poem embodies, by playing quick successions of staccato eighth- and sixteenth-note groupings in alternation.⁴⁶⁰ The vocal line, too, is playful, and there is a moment where Fauré highlights the back-and-forth between the women by having the piano echo a portion of the vocal line.⁴⁶¹ Just as the poem presents Verlaine’s skepticism of language (as posited briefly in Chapter 2), the musical content of the song pokes fun at the courtly tradition of holding these outdoor festivals wherein royals dressed in their ballgowns and sat around gossiping in the warm sunshine. As Verlaine writes:

« Mandoline »	“Mandoline”
Leurs courtes vestes de soie, Leurs longues robes à queues, Leur élégance, leur joie Et leurs molles ombres bleues,	Their short jackets of silk, Their long dresses with trains, Their elegance, their joy And their soft blue shadows,
Tourbillonnent dans l'extase D'une lune rose et grise, Et la mandoline jase Parmi les frissons de brise.	Tumble in the ecstasy Of a moon pink and gray, And the mandolin chatters Amongst the shimmers of the breeze.

⁴⁵⁸ Porter, *Crisis of French Symbolism*, 92.

⁴⁵⁹ Porter, *Crisis of French Symbolism*, 98.

⁴⁶⁰ See Example a under “Mandoline” in Appendix 1.

⁴⁶¹ See Example b under “Mandoline” in Appendix 1.

Fauré's accompaniment suggests the light quality of a harpsichord, and the brief moments of melisma in the vocal line also suggest an earlier kind of virtuosic vocal performance. Why else would Fauré repeat the opening stanza about the exchange between “the giver of serenades” and “the beautiful listeners”? Doing so of course emphasizes the influence of singing, song-like communication, and the chatter of a mandolin at these events. While there is not much information about the programming choices that year, one can see why this song would have been a good fit for the Brussels *expositions*; it is fun and light-hearted, and highlights the centrality of musical and vocal performance in social settings.

The 1906 trip is the same visit wherein Fauré was introduced to Charles van Lerberghe; the trip inspired the setting of *La Chanson d'Eve* that would eventually be completed in 1910. Oddly, songs from this cycle were never performed at the Salon de La Libre Ésthetique. In the years between 1906 and 1913, La Libre Ésthetique began programming younger composers like Claude Debussy and Maurice Ravel, in addition to well-known regulars like Charles Bordes,⁴⁶² Ernest Chausson, and of course d'Indy, who had been involved with the avant-garde groups since their beginnings. In what would be the second to last year before the group's dismantling, Fauré's music still made a statement during the milestone year even though his declining health most likely rendered him unable to attend. Maus and his cohort programmed the entirety of *La Bonne Chanson* (rather than *La Chanson d'Eve*), which is listed in Mme. Maus's transcription as having been the “première audition intégrale” (first full hearing) on that fateful April afternoon.⁴⁶³ After such a long stretch of time without Fauré's music filling the museum corridors during an exposition, it seems significant in the lives of Les XX, La Libre Ésthetique, and Fauré himself to have the entirety of his most famous song cycle performed. With Maus on the piano, programming this cycle is a gesture that ties together the lives of Belgian enthusiasts of the avant-garde and a French composer whose austerity and aloofness mystified contemporaries and present-day scholars alike. One will remember that Fauré was among the few whom

⁴⁶² The 1910 exposition held a concert dedicated to Charles Bordes and Isaac Albeniz. Madeleine Maus says that:

« L'intimité de la Libre Ésthetique, où leurs œuvres avaient été exécutées au fur et à mesure de leur création, et où elles furent réentendues avec une émotion admirative, convenait à cette commémoration. » (“The intimacy of La Libre Ésthetique, where their works had been executed as and when they were created, and where they were re-heard with admiring emotion, suited this commemoration.”)

⁴⁶³ I unfortunately don't have a copy of this program for the appendix; instead, see p. 451 in *Trente années de lutte pour l'art*.

Maus selected to attend and perform during the first year of *expositions* that included concerts in 1888. Thus, programming this cycle pays homage to the origins of the tradition to weave music into the multi-disciplinary fabric Maus had begun envisioning nearly thirty years earlier. But the gesture is also important for Fauré in that the humble church organist had grown into the role of a sophisticated salon composer and conservatory director, and the Brussels exposition puts this evolution on display.

Conclusion

As is the case with many endeavors, this project began with a handful of central questions, the answers to which have unearthed several other inquiries. As set forth in the opening chapters, the main curiosities revolved around the relationship between Symbolist poetry and *mélodie* in the nineteenth century and how Fauré might figure into said relationship. The journey to answer these questions led me through a canon of theoretical scholarship about Symbolist poetry, its goals, and the various ways Symbolists aspired (or didn't) to the aesthetic conditions of music, song, and sound. This journey led me along a winding path lined with close to one hundred individual vocal works, each possessing their own character but each also exemplifying the quintessentially French genre of *mélodie* for Fauré would come to be known for pioneering. And these two meandering journeys were each a separate path of the fork in the road which emerged from politics surrounding the use of French in the nineteenth century and the degree to which language supported the formation of the modern French and Belgian nations, where so many Symbolists had their origins. The journey, in essence, has been a series of uncovering origin stories.

But the scholarly journey to answer these questions also led to a personal voyage overseas, which was my first time embarking into a foreign country without connections beyond the one I had with a librarian. The trip was inspired by brief mentions to Octave Maus in secondary sources covering background information about the broader Fauré narrative (especially Jessica Duchén's biography). Upon further consideration, it became important to gain a deeper understanding of the relationship between the two men and what Fauré's music would have meant, how it might have been heard in locales other than the salons in Paris from which he received a fair portion of income and performance opportunities. Importantly, Brussels began to emerge as a site of intertextuality that merited further exploration in the context of faurélienne aesthetics and the lasting impacts of Fauré's works within this nationalist-oriented conversation, and in international contexts, as well. The previous cataloging and analysis of these *expositions* was necessary and relevant for this project, not only because of their connection to Fauré, but because doing so explored another manifestation of the intertwined relationship between art, music, and literature that seemed to be

percolating in other settings as well. And hopefully one comes away with further questions that were offshoots of the ones we encountered at the fork in the road.

One of these questions might concern the meaning of having *mélodie* performed in spaces (beautifully resonant spaces, at that), in art museums that also witnessed poetry recitations and lectures on contemporary artistic endeavors. One cannot help but visualize the possibility of spoken words mingling in the air during the performance of art song and other chamber musics. In the second and third chapters, we explored the tension between sound and silence that Symbolist poetry explores and with which composers of *mélodie* thus engaged and manipulated to their benefit. In the physical manifestation that brings together poetry, music, and the plastic arts into a consolidated time and place, it is not surprising that this tension plays out as well. One ponders the relative silence of the museum spaces for eleven months out of the year compared to the bustle and energy surrounding the annual *expositions*. Aside from being fascinating in themselves as a fixture of avant-garde creative life at the fin-de-siècle, the *expositions* of Les XX and La Libre Ésthetique represent thought-provoking examples of how the relationship between music and poetry can manifest in a form beyond that of words on a page or as part of a musical score.

Secondly, another might be the following: even though these *expositions* took place consistently for three decades, how are we to understand these events as permanent fixtures in Brussels cultural life that only lasted for up to a month at a time each year? Perhaps this question steps into the realm of addressing soundscapes and what it means that these soundscapes, sonic landscapes, and artistic landscapes are permanent (at least between the years of 1886-1914) while also being temporary with respect to the calendar year. Of course, these *expositions* are not isolated within in a vacuum; the late nineteenth century was the prime time for large-scale artistic and musical exhibitions, festivals, and fairs across Europe. The activities of these Brussels-based artistic networks thus participate in a chorus of other displays that promoted and celebrated various art forms with diverse agendas, including nationalist, exoticist, traditionalist, and avant-garde, among other qualifiers. On one hand, the *expositions* are merely another face in this crowd. On the other, they are a concentrated month-long endeavor aimed at highlighting new works created throughout the year in French-speaking parts of Europe. The result is a *mélange* of French-speakers descending upon the capital of a

multilingual nation to admire and survey the field of works created, written, and composed by their linguistic brethren. The expositions of Les XX and La Libre Ésthetique take part in forming a circle in the general sense of the word as creating community of creators and connoisseurs, but also in the literal sense of effectively being the end of old artistic seasons and ushering in new ones. And not only does music take part in this cyclical exchange of artistic ideas, but the common language served as the initial jumping-off point for facilitating these activities.

Tangentially related to the notion of common linguistic heritage, the last of these questions I can briefly address concerns Brussels as the site of engagement for those artistic disciplines, and what Fauré represents in this international or transnational context. The previous analysis should have suggested that very few composers received such steady representation at these *expositions* as Fauré. Vincent d'Indy is perhaps the French composer whose works were performed most frequently (in terms of the volume of works performed), but even then, based on my reading of the programs, Fauré was performed more regularly and consistently. Fauré differs because his compositional voice was a near constant presence throughout the thirty-year duration of the expositions. Aside from the 1913 exposition, almost every other year (especially from 1888-1903) featured a small handful of new works or beloved favorites from the Fauré oeuvre. The possible reason for the drop-off in the presence of his music likely is related to the fact that up-and-coming composers like Ravel and Debussy were being brought into the fold, and Fauré would have been less likely to be able to attend due to his responsibilities at the Conservatoire and his older age which was making him less physically mobile. It is easy to overlook this constant presence Fauré maintained at the *expositions*, either when he was physically in the city at the time or in the periphery when only his music shaped the sonic landscape during those few weekends in February. Fauré may not have been the most important musical voice in Brussels at the time, but Fauré's voice being present so consistently reveals a Belgian attraction to his work. This attraction encourages one to consider what it means to have a composer of Fauré's status in France be emblematic of what Maus and his cohort perceived as avant-garde during the fin-de-siècle.

As Caballero offers, Fauré's compositional style throughout his career was "too reckless for a traditionalist and not reckless enough for a revolutionary."⁴⁶⁴ Perhaps this is an overstatement. But it is true that Fauré could not be argued as a traditionalist because of his later advancements especially in terms of his manipulation of harmony; and he could not quite be labeled as a revolutionary, for his roots lay in traditionalist training at the *École Niedermeyer* and in the church. This liminal identity between traditional musical idioms and ideologies, yet still supportive of progressive musicians and contemporary music-making partially made Fauré a bit of an outsider to the *Conservatoire*, in addition to his non-conservatory training and non-Parisian birth.⁴⁶⁵ Yet, Fauré ascended the ranks to be at the summit of the institution charged with preparing a nation of future performers, composers, and music educators. His musical aesthetic was repeatedly cited as being uniquely his own, as we saw in various testimonies in the preceding pages. My intuition leads to an understanding that this, too, is another element of Fauré's avant-garde-ness: the fact that he did not seem to be trying to push musical boundaries to their limits, and seemed to make tweaks within the compositional idioms he knew the best and to which he repeatedly turned. These two concepts contribute to the mystique surrounding his work and suggests the attraction on the part of Belgian avant-garde artistic groups *Les XX* and *La Libre Esthétique*. Since Belgium could also be classified as lying outside conventional boundaries in several contexts, it comes as little surprise that Belgians with their hybrid ethnic, linguistic, and cultural heritage would find some kind of affinity with a musician whose vocal works were championed as ideal standards of *mélodie* despite an aesthetic and overall demeanor that would suggest otherwise. Fauré embodies the avant-garde, which at its essence is merely the act of looking forward, to "before-see" if we were to directly translate. As an educator, Fauré looked to improve the end-product of a conservatory education. As a composer, one can see how the subtle shifts in Fauré's compositional voice over time led to an aesthetic that became more challenging both to perform and listen to. There always seemed to be some part of Fauré that was anticipating what might have come, a looking to the future; rather than attempts at

⁴⁶⁴ Caballero, *Fauré and French Musical Aesthetics*, 8.

⁴⁶⁵ I refer you to the early portion of Chapter 2. In the biographical section, I cite his "exotic" non-Parisian birthplace and the fact that he did not receive a musical education from the conservatory the way many of his peers had done as reasons for the initial hesitation in choosing Fauré for his leadership position at the *Conservatoire*.

shaping said future, Fauré seemed to be looking forward to adequately prepare his students and his compositional voice to hold up in the face of whatever was to come.

With the understanding that these responses reveal a lack of complete answers to the secondary questions and demonstrate the potential for further inquiry, I nevertheless see this project as having contributed further insights regarding the collision of differing national identity politics between two developing francophone locales in late-nineteenth-century Europe. This project has also contributed to a dirge in scholarship about Fauré's relationship to nationalist-oriented trends, despite the trope that Fauré sought to maintain neutrality and avoid commenting on such activities. I also like to believe that this work sheds light about engagement with the *expositions* of Les XX and La Libre Ésthetique. But at its core this project has explored three manners of understanding the intertwined relationship between poetry and music in the French-speaking corners of Europe. The first of which concerned the co-evolution of the two genres of Symbolism and *mélodie*, members of each side borrowing ideologies from the other to strengthen their respective crafts. The second of which used Gabriel Fauré as a case study for what this relationship reveals about a segment of francophone identity during this time frame. And the third of which explored a more physical manifestation of the relationship between an amorphous poetic genre (both in terms of those contributing to the movement and the content of the poetry) and the musical settings of said works. At the very least, these three manners reveal the presence of a magnetized relationship between two creative disciplines: music and literature. In the context of the Symbolist ideals related to challenging literary boundaries, this relationship illuminates the importance of words, language, and human sound in defining, shaping, and informing varying degrees of identity (individual, regional, national, and even international). This has been a lesson in understanding that words matter, and music matters. But when conjoined, the addition of music seems to add nuance to the message of the poetry, begging the listener to listen more purposefully to what it has to say. This is true in the wordiness and even noisiness of Verlaine and Samain poetry, and in the evocative ephemeral imagery of Van Lerberghe. Just as Symbolism oscillates between states of sound (or song) and silence and posits the necessity for this oscillation, perhaps the most resonant thoughts of this project lie not in which questions have been answered but in which have yet to receive responses.

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Appendix 1: Musical Examples

La Bonne Chanson

Example 1: "Une Sainte en son auréole"

a) mm. 1-9

Allegretto con moto. $\text{♩} = 198$ *dolce*

U - ne

p

Sainte en son au - ré - o - le, U - ne cha - te - laine en sa

b) mm. 70-82

nom Car - lo - vin - gi - en.

p dolce

Example 2: "Puisque l'aube grandit"

a) mm. 1-3; demonstrates the sharing of the single line between the two hands. I am using this as an example of sharing contrapuntal lines rather than a trading-off of contrapuntal material since the figure in question is a quickly-moving sextuplet, and because this gesture continues throughout the entire song.

Allegro. ♩ = 112.

p *e* *cresc.*

Puis - que l'aube gran - dit, puis - que voi - ci l'auro -

con anima

b) mm. 6-9: note the usage of escape tones in the vocal line which help propel it to the peak of the crescendo in measure 9.

cresc.

bien Re - vo - ler de - vers moi qui l'ap - pelle et l'im -

cresc.

-plo - - re

mf

c) mm. 34-7

-rai des airs in-gé-nus,

sempre dolce
Je me dis qu'el-le m'é-

Example 3 : “J’allais par des chemins perfides”

a) mm. 28-33; note that the LH sounds especially like belabored footsteps since the slurred staccatos occur on beats 2 and 3

mf
Nul bruit, si-non son pas so-no -

cresc.
Nen-cou-ra-geait le voy-a-geur, Vo-tre voix

p

cresc.

b) mm. 36-9: repetition of the footsteps motive in the right hand

sempre f
-co - - re!

Example 4: "J'ai presque peur, en vérité"

a) mm. 1-7: sample of the "anxious" piano accompaniment heard throughout the song

Allegro molto. $\text{♩} = 152.$ *p*

J'ai presque peur, — en vé-ri-

pp

-té Tant je sens ma vie en-la - cé - e à la ra-di-eu-se pen-

b) mm. 40-7; right hand playing the vocal line heard at the beginning of the piece, which you can see in Example 4a for comparison's sake

dim. *p*

son il - lu - si - on ce - les - - - - te!

dim. *p* *dolce* *senza rall.* *sempre p*

Mais, plutôt, je ne veux vous voir, — l'a - ve - nir dût - il m'être

c) mm.56-63

-gé dans ce bon-heur su - prê - me
de me dire en-co-re et tou - jours En dé - pit des mor - nes re-

d) mm.64-77: closing lines of the poem and of the song “que je vous aime, que je t’aime!”

-lours que je vous ai -
me, que je t'ai -
me!

Example 5: "Avant que tu ne t'en ailles"

a) mm.1-8 : opening quarter-note texture

Quasi Adagio. $\text{♩} = 68$ *pp*

A - vant que tu ne t'en ail - les pâle é -

pp

Allegro moderato. $\text{♩} = 96$

- toi - le du ma - tin

b) mm.19-24: 16th-note texture; this is the version of the material that appears in B-major, on the second repetition

Allegro moderato. $\text{♩} = 96$

- mour

pp

p *cresc.*

La - lou - et - te mon - te au ciel a - vec le

Example 6: "N'est-ce pas?"

a) mm. 31-9

Se - ront deux ros - si - gnols qui chan - tent dans le

pp *poco cresc.* *f*

Example 7: "L'Hiver a cessé"

a) mm. 9-11

L'hi - ver a cessé

mf *f* *ppp*

b) mm.45-8: material that mirrors “Puisque l’aube grandit”

cha - que sai - son me se - ra char - man -

- - - - - tu,

The musical score consists of two systems. The first system shows a vocal line in G major with lyrics "cha - que sai - son me se - ra char - man -" and a piano accompaniment with a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes. The second system continues the vocal line with a fermata over the word "tu," and the piano accompaniment with a more complex rhythmic pattern. The piano part includes dynamic markings like *mf* and *f*, and articulation marks like asterisks.

c) mm.49-59: concluding measures of the cycle

piu lento *Andante moderato.*

mf *espr.* *p*

ô 3 Toi que dé-co - re Cet - te fan-tai

dolcissimo

Listesso tempo. *dimin.*

- si - e et cet - - - te rai - son!

The musical score is divided into two systems. The first system starts with a tempo change from *piu lento* to *Andante moderato*. It features a vocal line with lyrics "ô 3 Toi que dé-co - re Cet - te fan-tai" and a piano accompaniment. The piano part includes dynamic markings like *mf*, *espr.*, and *p*, and a *dolcissimo* marking. The second system continues the vocal line with lyrics "- si - e et cet - - - te rai - son!" and the piano accompaniment. The tempo is marked *Listesso tempo.* and *dimin.* The piano part includes dynamic markings like *f* and *p*.

A musical score for a piece titled "Paradis". It features a vocal line in the upper staff and a piano accompaniment in the lower staves. The key signature is one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 9/8. The piano part includes markings for *pp* (pianissimo) and *Red.* (Reduction) with asterisks. The vocal line begins with a *pp* marking.

La Chanson d'Eve

Example 1: "Paradis"

a) mm.1-15: use of the open fifths to evoke primacy

Andante molto mod^{to}
mp

C'est le premier ma - tin du mon - de,

Andante molto mod^{to} (♩ = 69)
p

Com - me u - ne fleur con - fu - se ex - ha - lé - e dans la nuit,

sempre p

poco cresc.

Au souf - fle nou - veau qui se lè - ve des on - des,

A musical score for "La Chanson d'Eve" in 3/4 time, key of D major. It consists of three systems of vocal and piano parts. The first system includes the tempo marking *Andante molto mod^{to}* and dynamic *mp*. The second system includes the tempo marking *Andante molto mod^{to} (♩ = 69)* and dynamic *p*. The third system includes the tempo marking *poco cresc.*. The piano accompaniment features prominent open fifths in the right hand, particularly in the first system.

b) mm.17-25: note the shift in musical texture in m. 22

The image displays two systems of musical notation. The first system (measures 17-25) features a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins with a whole note rest in measure 17, followed by the lyrics "Un jar.din bleu s'é-pa-nou -" starting in measure 18. The piano accompaniment starts in measure 17 with a half note chord. Performance markings include "poco a poco cresc." above the piano part in measure 18 and "p" (piano) above the piano part in measure 22. The second system (measures 26-30) continues the vocal line with a whole note rest in measure 26, followed by the lyric "- it." in measure 27. The piano accompaniment continues with a half note chord in measure 26, followed by a melodic line in measure 27 marked "cantando e mf". The piano part concludes with a triplet of eighth notes in measure 30. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 4/4.

c) mm. 52-63

poco rit. a Tempo dolce e tranquillo
 dolce
 Ou - vrant à la clar - té ses doux et va - gues
 yeux, La jeu - ne et di - vi - ne E - ve s'est é - veil - lée de
 cresc.

d) mm. 78-89

dit: 'Va, fille hu - mai - ne, Et don - ne à tous les

é - tres Que j'ai cré - és, u - ne pa - ro - le de tes lè - vres, Un

son pour les con - nai - tre."

poco *a poco* *cresc.*

mf *mf sempre*

e) mm. 94-99: sample of Fauré's alternate piano accompaniment

Più mosso

- gneur, En son bosquet de ro - ses,

Più mosso (♩=104)

mp

Don - -

f) mm. 129-34

Andante *mp*

La voix s'est tu - e, mais tout l'é - cou - te en -

Andante (♩=69)

p

- co - re, Tout de - meure en l'at - ten - te, Lors-qu'a -

g) mm.135-42: Eve's song in the piano accompaniment

dolce

- vec le lever de l'étoi - le du soir, E - ve chan - te.

dolce

poco rit.

Example 2: "Prima verba"

a) mm.5-10; note the repetitive structure of the swirls at the beginning of each prepositional phrase beginning with "avec tes..." This gesture occurs throughout the entire vocal line of the song, wherein each line of poetry seems to swirl around itself before moving organically to a new direction.

The musical score consists of three systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and the time signature is common time (C).

System 1: The vocal line begins with the instruction *sempre dolce*. The lyrics are "Air lim - pi - - de du pa - ra - dis, A -". The piano accompaniment is marked *sempre p* and features a swirling pattern in the right hand and sustained chords in the left hand.

System 2: The vocal line is marked *poco a poco cresc.*. The lyrics are "- vec tes grap - pes de ru - bis, A - vec tes ger - - bes de lu - miè - - re, A -". The piano accompaniment is also marked *poco a poco cresc.* and continues the swirling pattern in the right hand.

System 3: The vocal line begins with a forte dynamic *f*. The lyrics are "- ves tes ro - - ses et tes fruits. Quel - le mer -". The piano accompaniment is marked *f* and *sempre*, with the swirling pattern in the right hand and sustained chords in the left hand.

b) mm.18-21: closing cadence, with the extension of the mute e on “allégées”

es, Quel silence heureux et profond Nait de leurs âmes allégées.

p *poco rit.*

- gé - - - es!

a Tempo

Example 3: "Roses ardentes"

a) mm. 28-37: climax of the song, followed by its sudden resolution.

poco a poco cresc. f

cest en toi, for - ce su - præ - me, So - leil ra - di - eux,

sempre

Que mon âme el - le - mè - me

sempre

f

At - teint son dieu!

f m.g. p

*Red. **

Example 4: "Comme Dieu Rayonne"

a) mm.3-8; emblematic of Fauré's interweaving of contrapuntal lines between two hands of accompaniment

Dieu ra.yon - - ne aujourd'hui, *cresc.* Comme il ex.ul - te, comme il fleu.

The first system of the musical score shows the vocal line and the piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in a treble clef with a key signature of two flats and a 3/4 time signature. The piano accompaniment is in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The lyrics are: "Dieu ra.yon - - ne aujourd'hui, *cresc.* Comme il ex.ul - te, comme il fleu."

- rit par - mi ces ro - ses et ces fruits!

The second system continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "- rit par - mi ces ro - ses et ces fruits!". The piano accompaniment features a triplet in the right hand.

Comme il murmure en cet - te fon - tai - ne!

The third system concludes the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "Comme il murmure en cet - te fon - tai - ne!". The piano accompaniment features a triplet in the right hand.

b) mm. 1-2 (top staff) and mm. 13-4 (bottom staff). The motive in question begins on the downbeat of measure 1 and the second beat of measure 13; in both instances, one should track the uppermost notes of the right-hand accompaniment.

Quasi adagio *p*

Quasi adagio ($\text{♩} = 56$) Com - me

- rant prin - temps nou - veau!

c) mm.17-25

bai - gne dans la lumie - - re A - vec amour,

mon jeune dieu! *sempre f*

Tou - tes les cho - ses de la

sempre f

ter - re Sont ses vé - tements ra - di -
- eux.

Example 5: "L'aube blanche"

a) mm. 15-20

bleus. U - ne flamme é - veil - le ma -
bou - che, Un souf - fle é - veil - le mes -
- veu - x. Et mon â - me, comme u - ne

Example 6: "Eau vivante"

a) mm.1-4

Allegretto moderato *p*

Allegretto moderato ($\text{♩} = 76$) *p e legato*

Que tu es sim - pleet

clai - - - - re, Eau vi - van - - - te,

Example 7: "Veilles-tu, ma senteur de soleil"

a) mm.1-5; fluttering bee accompaniment

Allegretto con moto *p*

Allegretto con moto ($\text{♩} = 84$) *p*

Veil - les - tu, _____

_____ ma senteur de so - leil, Mon a - rò - me d'a.beil - les

b) mm. 52-9: climax of the piece, featuring the high F-natural in m. 53 on the word "voix"

The musical score consists of four systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The key signature is G major (one sharp) and the time signature is 4/4.

- System 1 (mm. 52-53):** The vocal line begins with a half note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4. The piano accompaniment starts with a *sempre* marking and a *f* dynamic. The lyrics are "Ma voix".
- System 2 (mm. 54-55):** The vocal line continues with a half note C5, followed by a quarter note B4, and a quarter note A4. The piano accompaniment continues with a *mf* dynamic. The lyrics are "qu'il n'en tend pas".
- System 3 (mm. 56-57):** The vocal line has a half note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4. The piano accompaniment has a *dim.* marking and a *p* dynamic. The lyrics are "Est embau mé".
- System 4 (mm. 58-59):** The vocal line has a half note G4, followed by a quarter rest, and a quarter note A4. The piano accompaniment has a *pp* dynamic. The lyrics are "e?".

Example 8: "Dans un parfum de roses blanches"

a) mm. 1-5

The musical score for measures 1-5 is presented in two systems. The first system shows the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 2/4 time signature. It begins with a whole rest, followed by the word "Dans" on a dotted quarter note. The tempo is marked "Andantino" and the dynamics "dolce". The piano accompaniment is in grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with a tempo marking of "Andantino (♩ = 72)". It features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The second system continues the vocal line with the lyrics "un par - fum de ro - ses blan - ches, Elle est as - si -". The piano accompaniment continues with the same rhythmic pattern.

b) mm.10-16; particularly pay attention to the left hand. The accompaniment in measures 10-12 is identical to the first three measures of the piece. Measures 12-14 and 15-16 are sequences in the left hand. Also, throughout, you can hear that an emergent middle voice in the right hand that plays its own countermelody in duet with the bottom notes of the left hand.

The musical score for measures 10-16 is presented in three systems. The first system shows the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 2/4 time signature. It begins with the lyrics "mi - rait un an - ge...". The piano accompaniment is in grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The second system continues the vocal line with the lyrics "L'om - bre des - cend,". The piano accompaniment continues with the same rhythmic pattern. The third system continues the vocal line with the lyrics "Le bos - quet dort;". The piano accompaniment continues with the same rhythmic pattern.

c) mm.30-33: descending open fifth in vocal line

s'ex - ha - - - le en ha - lei - - - ne et s'é

Example 9: "Crépuscule"

a) mm.1-6; compare the first two measure with 1-6 of "Paradis" (Example 1a).

Adagio non troppo

Adagio non troppo ($\text{♩} = 72$)

p

Ce

sempre p

soir, — à travers le bon - heur, Qui donc sou - pi - - re, — qu'est - ce qui

b) mm.25-28

Quel cri dé - chi - - re, dans la nuit, —

c) mm. 36-41

- tu - - - - re de fleurs, Et

ten beau voi - - - le d'al.lé - gres - - - se?

p
pp

Example 10: "O mort, poussière d'étoiles"

a) mm. 1-4

Andante molto mod^{to} *p*

O mort, poussière d'étoiles,

Andante molto mod^{to} (♩ = 63) *p*

Lève-toi sous mes pas! Viens, ô douce vague qui

poco cresc.

b) mm. 9-15

f flamme invisible de vent! *p* C'est en toi que je veux m'é-

- tendre, M'éteindre et me dis-soudre, *cresc.* Mort

où mon âme as - pi - - rel Viens, - bri-se-moi comme u - ne

cresc. *f*

c) mm. 18-21

Et comme d'une am-pho - - re d'or Un vin de flamme et d'a-ro - me di -

p

- vin, - É - pan - che mon â - - - - me en ton a - bi - - - me,

sempre p

d) mm. 22-26

Pour qu'elle embau - - me La ter - - re som - - bre
et le souf - - fle des morts.

Opus 85

Example 1: "Dans la forêt de septembre"

a) mm.4-9; example of the inhale-exhale motive that defines this *mélodie*

- li - es, Trones so-no-res que lû - ge creu - se, L'an -
ti-que fo-rêt dou-lou - reu - se S'ac - cor - de à nos mé-lan - co -

b) mm.48-54: In the closing measures, Fauré lessens the syncopations of the vocal line and reduces the accompaniment to a series of arpeggiating triads. These two in tandem give the musical effect of slowing down as the music is stripped down to its base elements.

el - - le, Me fait l'au-mô - ne fra-ter -

- nel - le De sa pre - miè - re feuil - le

moi - - te!

Example 2: "La fleur qui va sur l'eau"

a) mm. 2-5; here we see the 16th note motive predominantly in the left hand, which over the course of the piece gradually moves towards the right hand, as shown in the next excerpt from m. 25-8

mezzo *p*
Sur la mer... voi -
lé - e D'un brouillard a - mer... La Bel -
sempre p
cresc.

b) mm. 25-8

... sen est jou - é - e. Dans ses noirs sil - lons; C'est
u - ne bou - é - e Pour les pa - pil - lons
mezzo p
cresc.

Example 3: "Accompagnement"

a) mm. 9-14; example of the variety of rhythmic elements in both the accompaniment and the vocal line

noir, Le grand lac par-fu - mé bril - le comme un mi -

- roir. Ma ra - me tom - - be et se re -

- lè - - ve, Ma bar - que glis - - se - dans le

cresc.

cresc.

f

sempre

f

p

f

p

dim.

f

p

f

p

b) mm. 25-9; example of the use of six-lets in the accompaniment

p *p dolce*
 - mès. Là - bas la
tranquille e dolce
p
sempre dolce
 lu - ne é-cou - te, ac-cou - dé - e au co - teau, Le si-len - ce qu'ex

“Après un rêve”

a) mm. 1-7

Andantino. *dolce*
 Dans un som - meil que charmaït ton i -
 (Poésie Toscane) Le - ra - ti se che lu lu - na' de -
Andantino.
pp
 - ma - ge Je rêvais le bon - heur ardent mi - ra -
 - ra - ta Le - ra da - gli occhi miei tan - to dor - mi -

“Les Berceaux”

a) mm.30-7; especially note the two different rocking gestures in the left and right hands

Two systems of musical notation for the piece "Les Berceaux". The first system shows the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in a treble clef with a key signature of three flats and a common time signature. The lyrics are: "- tains — ber - ceaux, Par là - me des loïn-". The piano accompaniment is in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with a key signature of three flats and a common time signature. The right hand features a rocking gesture with eighth notes, and the left hand features a similar rocking gesture with eighth notes. Dynamics include *p* (piano) and *pp* (pianissimo). The second system continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "- tains — ber - ceaux." The piano accompaniment continues with the same rocking gestures.

“La Fée aux chansons”

a) mm. 1-10

Two systems of musical notation for the piece "La Fée aux chansons". The first system shows the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The tempo is marked "Allegretto vivo. ♩ = 160." and the dynamics are *p leggiero*. The key signature is two sharps (D major) and the time signature is 2/4. The lyrics are: "Il é -". The piano accompaniment is in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with a key signature of two sharps and a 2/4 time signature. The right hand features a rocking gesture with eighth notes, and the left hand features a similar rocking gesture with eighth notes. Dynamics include *p leggiero e legato*. The second system continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "- tait u - ne Fé - e D'her - be fol - le coif - fé - e, Qui cou - rait les buis -". The piano accompaniment continues with the same rocking gestures.

b) mm. 110-125: to display the “embracing” of the birds’ natural singing tendency to “twitter” rather than “sing,” based on the fact that the right-hand motive moves into a lower register

The image displays three systems of musical notation. The first system features a vocal line in the upper staff with the lyrics "chain Prin - temps!" and a piano accompaniment in the lower staves. The piano part begins with a forte dynamic (*f*) and a tempo marking of *a tempo*. The second system continues the piano accompaniment, showing a shift in dynamics to piano (*p*) and the use of accents. The third system concludes the piano accompaniment with various chordal textures and articulations.

“Mandoline”

a) mm. 1-4

Allegretto moderato. ($\text{♩} = 84$)

dolce

Les don-neurs de sé-ré-na-des

b) mm.7-10; musical echo takes place in m. 9-10

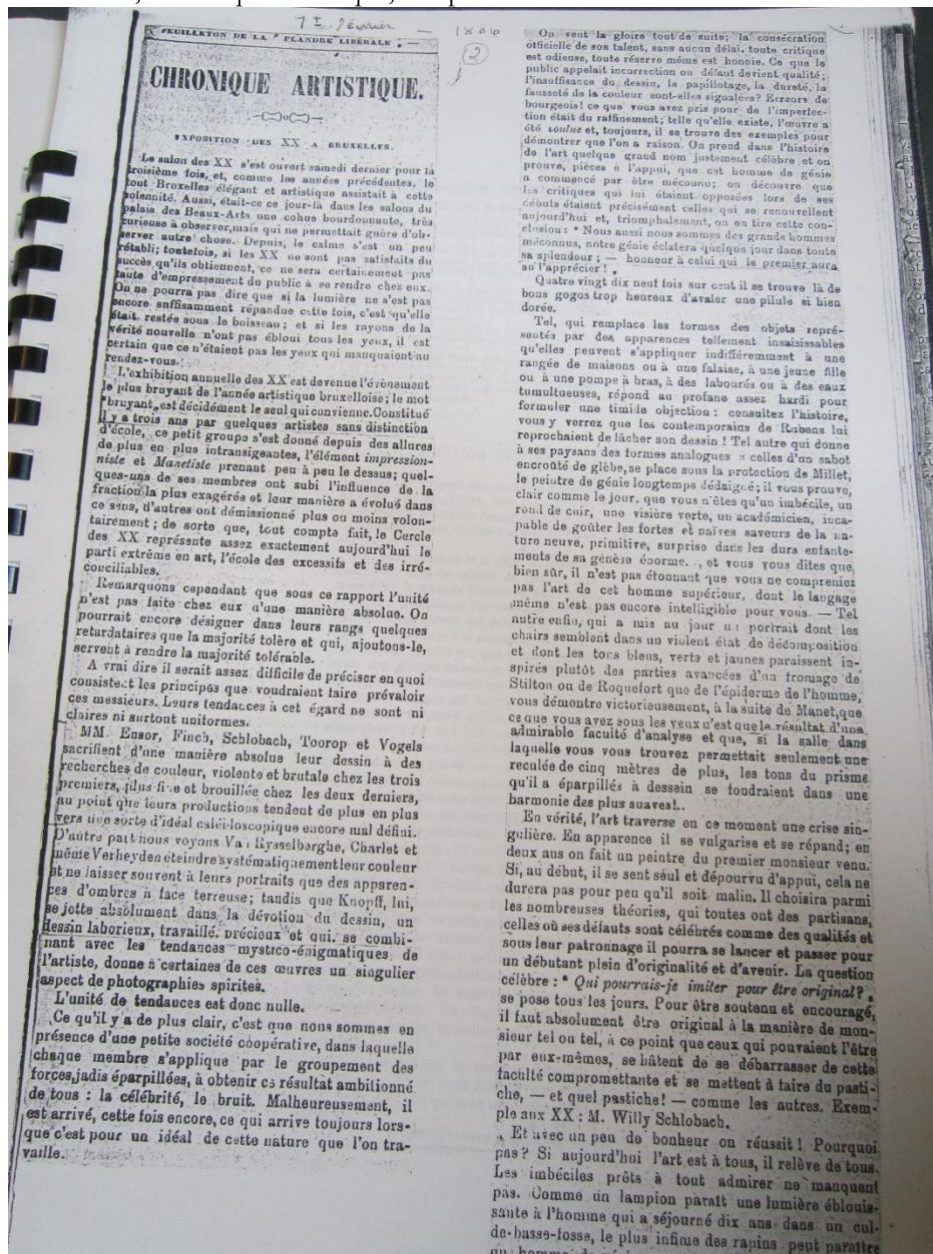
-chan-gent des pro-pos fa-des, Sous les ra-mu-res chan-

-teu-ses

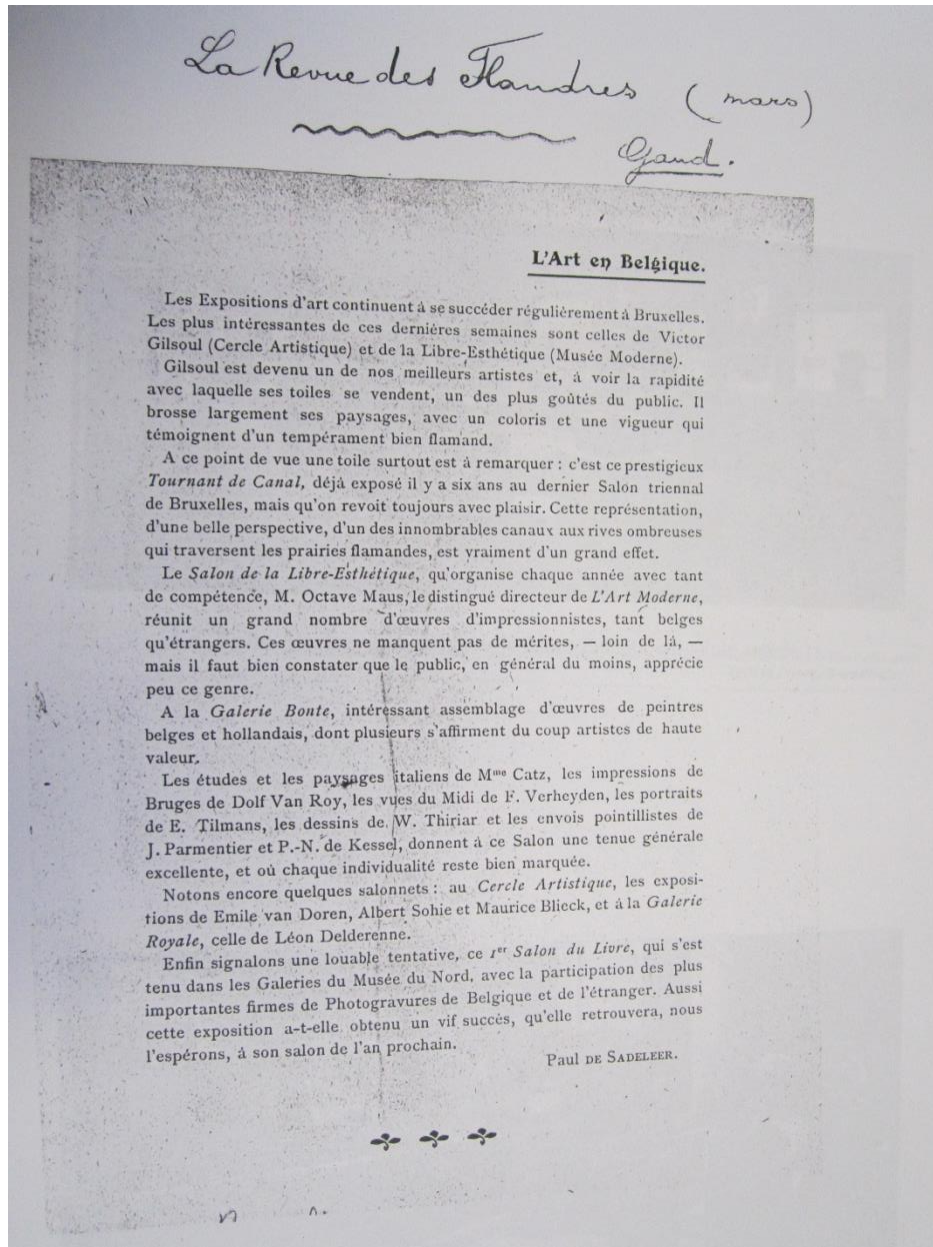
APPENDIX 2: Images from the Archives

Per my agreement with the Contemporary Art Archives in Brussels, I did not need express copyright permissions use the images of the scanned newspapers, and did need permission for the concert programs found in later samples of this appendix (which are labeled with the appropriate copyright information).

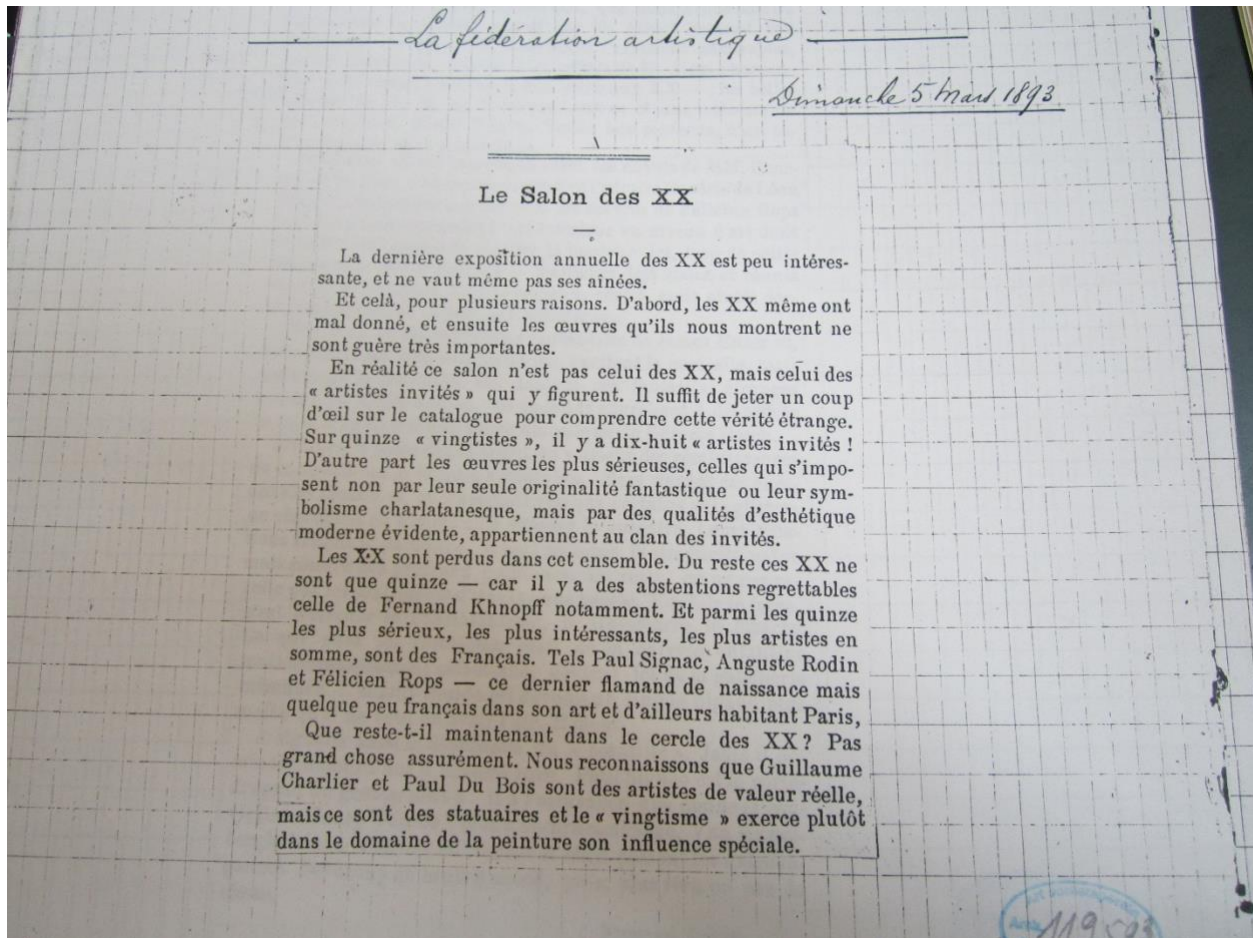
Example 1 : 07 fév. 1886, Chronique Artistique, "Exposition des XX à Bruxelles. »



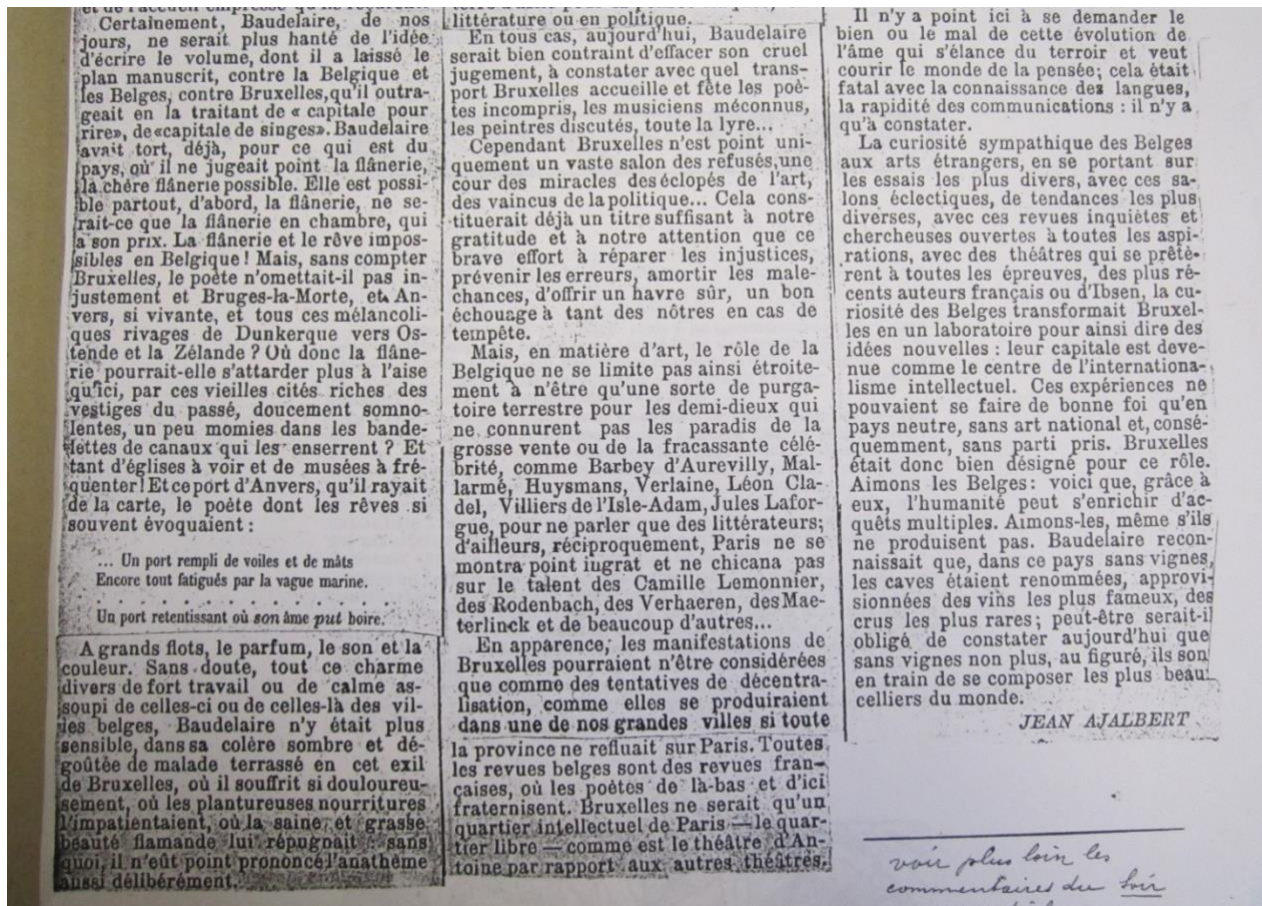
Exemple 2 : Mars 1894, *La Revue des Flandres*, « L'art en Belgique. » Written by Paul de Sadeleer.



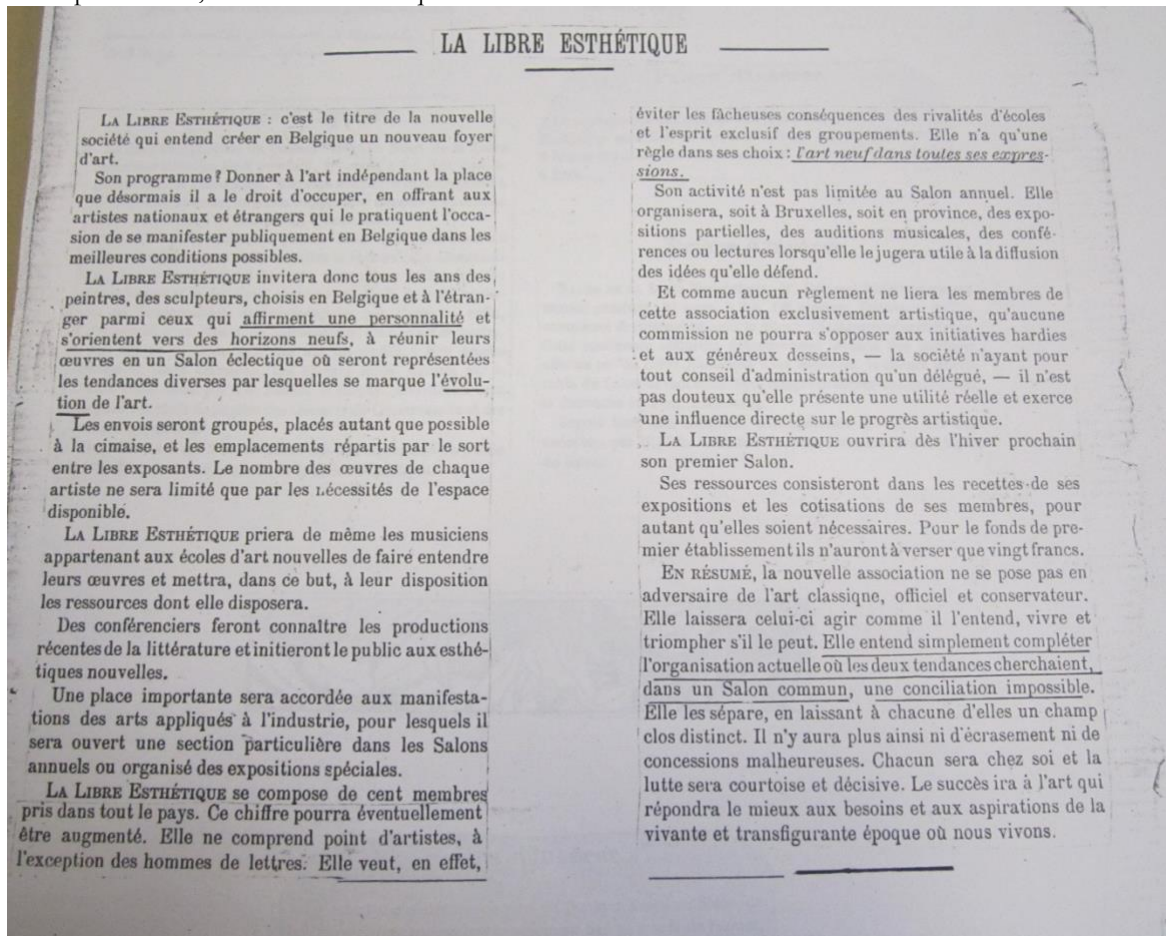
Example 3 : 05 mars 1893. La Fédération Artistique, « Le Salon des XX. » Written by Edmond Louis. This article is actually a few columns longer, but I have included only the portion which includes the citation.



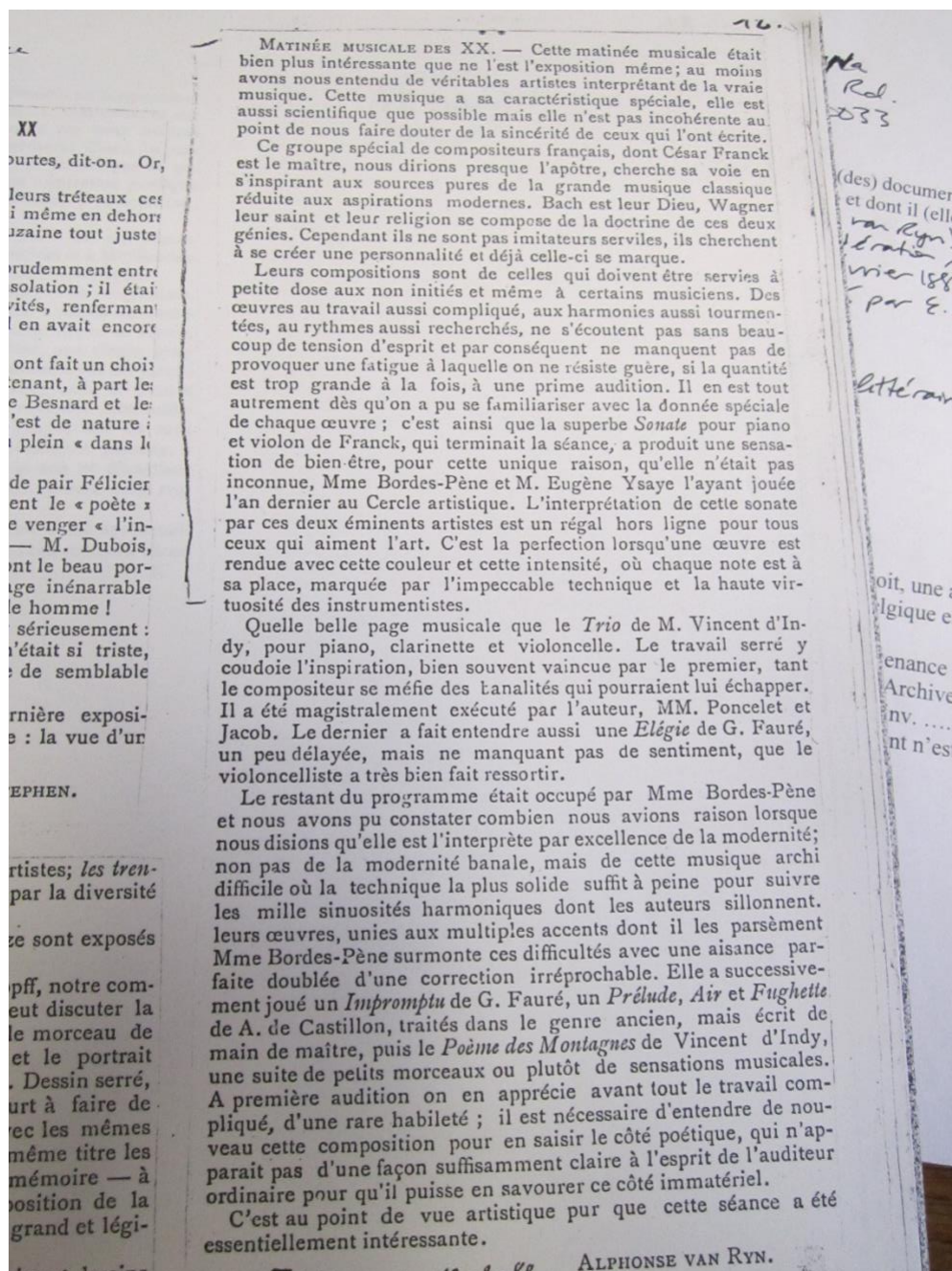
Exemple 4 : 06 mars 1894. Gil Blas, « Aimons les belges. » Written by Jean Aljabert.



Example 5: 1894, "La Libre Esthétique."



Exemple 6: 02 fév. 1888, *La Fédération Artistique*, « Matinée musicale des XX » écrit par Alphonse van Ryn.



Example 7 : 9 fév. 1888. Le Guide Musical. No author listed.

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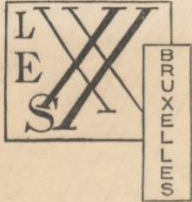
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Le Guide musical
9 Février 1888

BRUXELLES

Très vivant, très entreprenant ce petit groupe des XX dont les salons annuels après avoir fait jeter des cris de paon à toute la gent peinturlurante, commencent à impressionner singulièrement les amateurs et donnent sérieusement à réfléchir aux artistes. Le XX ne s'occupent pas uniquement de peinture, ils aiment l'harmonie et ils ont raison d'offrir aux hardiesses de la musique moderne l'hospitalité de leur Salon et la bienveillance de leur public décidé à s'intéresser aux tentatives nouvelles. Vibristes de la palette et vibristes de l'harmonie sont faits pour se prêter mutuellement assistance et se compléter les uns par les autres. C'est ainsi que mardi, pour leur première matinée musicale, les XX avaient invité M. Vincent d'Indy, le plus avancé des jeunes musiciens de l'école française. Vous rappelez-vous dans le tableau des wagnériens de Fantin-Latour, exposé à Bruxelles l'année dernière, ce jeune homme debout dans un coin, le front proéminent, l'œil profond, un peu rêveur, un souvenir lointain de la physionomie de Berlioz, mais avec plus de douceur et moins d'amertume ? C'est lui, c'est l'auteur de la *Cloche*, couronné par la ville de Paris. Un wagnérien s'il en fut ! Il ne se contente pas d'aller à Bayreuth comme les autres en chemin de fer, il y va à pied, en pèlerin. Le délicieux poème symphonique de *Sauge fleurie* que vous avez entendu l'année dernière aux Concerts populaires, vous a donné une idée de l'extraordinaire maîtrise orchestrale où il est arrivé. Laissez faire : vous finirez par reconnaître à ce jeune maître le don unique, la faculté maîtresse dans l'art : la poésie. Quoique vous n'entendiez rien aux choses de la facture artistique, ô dillettantes, la nouveauté des formes vous frappe tout d'abord et vous cherchez l'idée sans la trouver. Cela viendra ! Pour M. d'Indy comme pour tous les grands maîtres, d'abord méconnus et vilipendés. Croyez-en les artistes qui vous disent que c'est merveilleux.

Example 8: Concert program from the inaugural concert of Les XX in 1888. Copyright Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium (Archives of Contemporary Art in Belgium), Brussels, henceforth referred to as: © RMFAB (AACB), Brussels.



PREMIÈRE MATINÉE
MARDI 7 FÉVRIER 1888

PROGRAMME

I. **Trio** pour clarinette, violoncelle et piano . VINCENT D'INDY.
 1. Ouverture.
 2. Divertissement.
 3. Chant élégiaque.
 4. Final.
 MM. Poncelet, Jacob et Vincent d'Indy.

II. **A. Impromptu** G. FAURÉ.
B. Prélude, air et fughette A. DECASTILLON.
 (Extraits de la « Suite dans le style ancien »).
 M^{me} Bordes-Pène.

III. **Élégie** pour violoncelle G. FAURÉ.
 M. Jacob.

IV. **Poème des Montagnes** VINCENT D'INDY.
Harmonie.
 1. **Le Chant des bruyères.**
 Le Chant des bruyères. — Brouillard. — Weber. — La Bien-aimée. —
 Lointain.
 2. **Danses rythmiques.**
 Danse. — Valse grotesque. — La Bien-aimée. — Danse.
 3. **Plein air.**
 Promenade. — Hêtres et pins. — La Bien-aimée. — Calme. —
 Coup de vent. — A deux. — Amour.
Harmonie. — Souvenir.
 M^{me} Bordes-Pène.

V **Sonate** pour piano et violon C. FRANCK.
 1. Allegretto ben moderato.
 2. Allegro.
 3. Recitativo-fantasia.
 4. Allegretto poco mosso.
 M^{me} Bordes-Pène et M. E. Ysaye.

PIANO PLEYEL 1888

Example 9: 1889 concert program. © RMFAB (AACB), Brussels.



DEUXIÈME AUDITION d'Œuvres Musicales

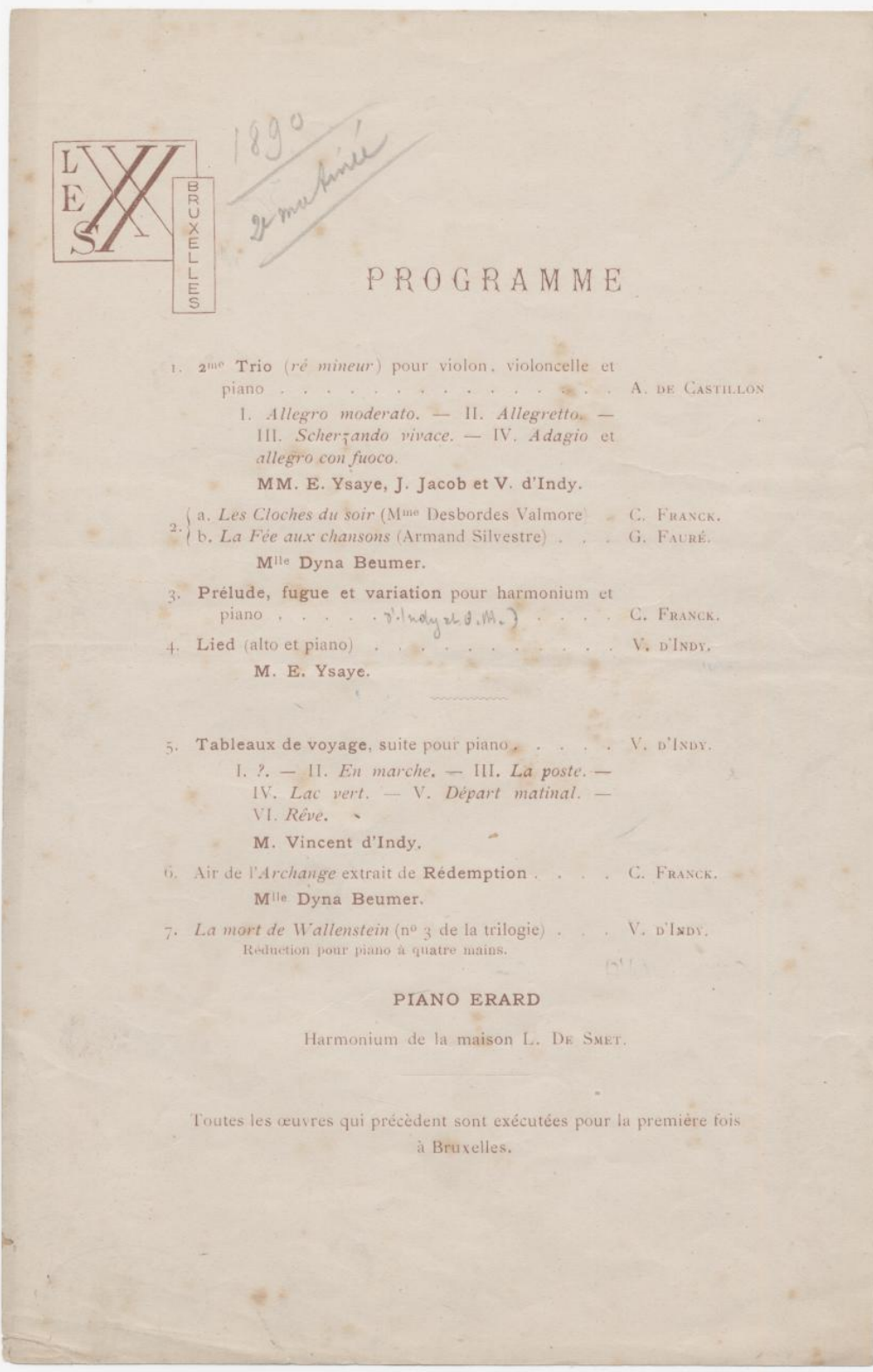
LUNDI 25 FÉVRIER 1889

1. 2^e Quatuor pour piano, violon, alto et violoncelle GABRIEL FAURÉ.
 I. *Allegro molto modto.*
 II. *Allegro molto.*
 III. *Adagio non troppo.*
 IV. *Finale.*
 MM. G. Fauré, Eugène Ysaye, Van Hout et Joseph Jacob.
2. Au Cimetière (J. Richepin) GABRIEL FAURÉ.
 La Vague et la Cloche (F. Coppée) HENRI DUPARC.
 M. Henri Seguin.
3. Le Ruisseau, chœur pour voix de femmes avec solo GABRIEL FAURÉ.
 Madrigal, chœur à 4 voix »
4. Fantaisie pour hautbois sur des thèmes populaires
 français VINCENT D'INDY.
 M. Guillaume Guidé.
5. Tristesse CHARLES BORDES.
6. La Chevauchée du Cid, scène hispano-mauresque pour
 baryton et chœur (R. de Bonnières) VINCENT D'INDY.
 M. Henri Seguin et les chœurs.
7. Chœurs du 5^e acte de Caligula (A. Dumas) GABRIEL FAURÉ.

PIANO ERARD

Les chœurs, composés de jeunes filles et de jeunes gens des classes de chant
 du Conservatoire, seront dirigés
 par M. VINCENT D'INDY et accompagnés par M. GABRIEL FAURÉ.

Example 10: 1890 concert program. © RMFAB (AACB), Brussels.



Example 11: Program from 1892. © RMFAB (AACB), Brussels.



3^{me} CONCERT

D'OEUVRES MODERNES

Vendredi 4 mars 1892, à 2 1/2 heures

PROGRAMME

1. Quintette (inédit) pour piano, deux violons, alto et violoncelle C. CHEVILLARD.
 I. *Introduction et Allegro*. II. *Mouvement de marche*.
 III. *Très vite*. IV. *Vite*.
 MM. C. Chevillard, E. Ysaye, Crickboom, Van Hout et Jacob.
 Première audition à Bruxelles.
2. Invocation, poème en musique A. MAGNARD.
 M^{lle} Cécile Thévenet.
 Première audition.
3. Puisqu'ici bas toute âme (V. Hugo), chœur pour voix de femmes G. FAURÉ.
 Première audition à Bruxelles.
4. Concert (inédit) pour piano, trois violons, alto et violoncelle E. CHAUSSON.
 I. *Décidé*. II. *Sicilienne*. III. *Grave*. IV. *Très animé*.
 MM. Auguste Pierret, E. Ysaye, Crickboom, Biermasz, Van Hout et Jacob.
 Première audition.
5. Quatre poèmes de P. Verlaine G. FAURÉ.
 a. *Mandoline*.
 b. *En sourdine*.
 c. *A Clymène*.
 d. *C'est l'Extase*.
 M^{lle} Cécile Thévenet.
 Première audition.
6. Renouveau (Baif), chœur pour voix de femmes J. TIERSOT.
 Première audition à Bruxelles.

PIANO PLEYEL

Example 12: Program from 1893. © RMFAB (AACB), Brussels.



Deuxième Concert

DU

QUATUOR YSAÏE

Mardi 28 février 1893, à 2 heures

1. Quatuor pour piano, violon, alto et violoncelle VINCENT D'INDY.

I. *Allegro non troppo.*

II. *Ballade.*

III. *Allegro vivo.*

MM. V. d'Indy, E. Ysaye, Van Hout et Jacob.

2. Après la mort (G. Trarieux) } P. DE BRÉVILLE.
Harmonie du soir (Ch. Baudelaire) }

Première audition à Bruxelles.

M^{lle} Michaux.

3. Mélancolie } E. CHABRIER.
Scherzo-valse }

Première audition à Bruxelles.

M. V. d'Indy.

4. Larmes (J. Richepin). } G. FAURÉ.
Clair de lune (P. Verlaine) }

Première audition à Bruxelles.

M^{lle} Michaux.

5. Quintette pour piano, 2 violons, alto et violoncelle. A. DE CASTILLON.

I. *Allegro.*

II. *Scherzo.*


III. *Adagio et final.*

Première audition à Bruxelles.

MM. V. d'Indy, E. Ysaye, Schorg, Van Hout et Jacob.

PIANO ERARD

Example 13: Program from 1896. © RMFAB (AACB), Brussels.



SALON DE LA LIBRE ESTHÉTIQUE

Mercredi 15 avril 1896, à 8 h. 1/2.

QUATRIÈME CONCERT

donné dans la salle de la
MAISON D'ART
par
MM. E. Ysaye, A. Marchot, L. Van Hout et J. Jacob
avec le concours de
M^{lle} Marie Weiler, cantatrice, de **M. Théo Ysaye**, pianiste
et d'une fraction du
Quatuor d'orchestre de la Société Symphonique


PROGRAMME

1. **Quatuor à cordes en sol mineur.** . . . J. GUY ROPARTZ.
I. *Lent. Modérément animé.* — II. *Vif.* —
III. *Assez lent.* — IV. *Vif et animé.*
(Première audition).
MM. E. Ysaye, A. Marchot, L. Van Hout, J. Jacob.
2. a) *Extase* (Jean Lahor) } **H. DUPARC.**
b) *Sérénade florentine* (Jean Lahor) . }
(Première audition).
M^{lle} Marie Weiler.
3. **Adagio** (op. 3) inédit pour Quatuor d'or-
chestre **G. LEKEU.**
..... *Les fleurs pâles du Souvenir.*
G. VANOR.
(Première audition).
4. a) *La lune blanche luit dans les bois* (P. Ver-
laine) **G. FAURÉ.**
b) *La Cigale* (Leconte de Lisle) **E. CHAUSSON.**
(Première audition).
M^{lle} Marie Weiler.
5. **Sonate** (inédite) pour piano et violon . . . **M. CRICKBOOM.**
A. *Modérément animé.* — B. *Assez lent.* — C. *Lent;*
très vif et passionné.
(Première audition).
MM. Théo et Eugène Ysaye.

PIANO ÉRARD

Example 14: Program from 1903. © RMFAB (AACB), Brussels.

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SALON DE LA LIBRE ESTHÉTIQUE

**Quatre auditions
de musique nouvelle**

les jeudis 5, 12, 19 et 26 mars, à 2 h. 1/2 précises
avec le concours de

M. Vincent d'Indy; MM. Henri Seguin et Stéphane Austin, barytons;
M^{lles} Elisabeth Delhez et Jeanne Weyrich, cantatrices;
M^{lle} Blanche Selva,
MM. Emile Bosquet, Ricardo Vinès et Théo Ysaye, pianistes;
M. Guillaume Guidé, professeur de haubois au Conservatoire;
du **QUATUOR ZIMMER**
(MM. A. Zimmer, F. Doehaerd, N. Lejeune et E. Doehaerd);
de MM. Th. Anthoni, Hannon, Guilmot, Mahy, Boogaerts, Trinconi,
etc. etc.

PREMIER CONCERT
Jeudi 5 mars, à 2 h. 1/2 1903

PROGRAMME

1. Trio en ré mineur (op. 1) pour piano, violon et violoncelle.	VICTOR VREULS.
<i>I. Impétueux. — II. Modérément lent. — III. Simple et calme.</i>	
MM. E. Bosquet, A. Zimmer et E. Doehaerd.	
2. <i>Le Ruisseau</i> , poème pour chant et piano	BLANCHE LUCAS.
M ^{lle} Elisabeth Delhez.	
3. a) <i>Chant d'automne</i> (CH. BAUDELAIRE)	GABRIEL FAURÉ.
b) <i>Soir</i> (A. SAMAIN)	
c) <i>Accompagnement</i> (A. SAMAIN)	
d) <i>Pleurs d'or</i> , duo (A. SAMAIN).	
M. Stéphane Austin. M ^{lle} Elisabeth Delhez et M. Stéphane Austin.	
4. Quelques danses, pour piano.	ERNEST CHAUSSON.
<i>I. Dédicace. — Sarabande. — II. Pavane. — III. Forlane.</i>	
M. Émile Bosquet.	
5. a) <i>La Vie antérieure</i> (CH. BAUDELAIRE)	HENRI DUPARC.
b) <i>Sur un Vieil air</i> (P. VERLAINE).	CHARLES BORDES.
c) <i>En rêve</i> (G. VICAIRE)	RENÉ DE CASTÉRA.
M ^{lle} Elisabeth Delhez.	
6. a) <i>Impromptu (la bémol)</i>	GABRIEL FAURÉ.
b) <i>Études en tierces chromatiques</i> (op. 111)	CAMILLE SAINT-SAËNS.
M. Emile Bosquet.	

PIANO ÉRARD

M. VINCENT D'INDY fera **mardi prochain, 10 mars, à 2 h. 1/2**, une conférence sur « La Suite instrumentale ». Les exemples, tirés de l'Œuvre de D. Scarlatti, de Rameau et de J.-S. Bach, seront interprétés par M^{lle} BLANCHE SELVA.

Le deuxième concert d'œuvres nouvelles aura lieu **jeudi prochain, 12 mars**, à la même heure, avec le concours de M. VINCENT D'INDY, de M^{lles} BLANCHE SELVA et J. WEYRICH, de M. G. GUIDÉ, du QUATUOR ZIMMER et de MM. TH. ANTHONI, HANNON, GUILMOT, MAHY, BOOGAERTS et TRINCONI.