ERIK SATIE'S BALLET *PARADE:* AN ARRANGEMENT FOR WOODWIND QUINTET AND PERCUSSION WITH HISTORICAL SUMMARY

A Written Document

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ABSTRACT

Erik Satie's ballet *Parade* was a historical collaboration between several of the leading artistic minds of the early twentieth century: Erik Satie, Jean Cocteau, Pablo Picasso, Léonide Massine, and Serge Diaghilev. Satie's writing for winds and percussion lends itself to an arrangement for woodwind quintet and percussion; an arrangement that keeps the spirit and essence of the work intact. This study includes a historical summary of the ballet *Parade* and an arrangement for woodwind quintet and percussion.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

"Tact in audacity consists in knowing how far we may go too far."¹ Jean Cocteau, poet, writer, and arts advocate, made this statement in his 1918 manifesto, The Cock and Harlequin. Cocteau, in collaboration with Erik Satie and Pablo Picasso, discovered "how far" to "go too far" in the circus-like ballet Parade-one of the most revolutionary works of the twentieth century. *Parade* incorporates elements of popular entertainment and uses extra-musical sounds, such as the typewriter, lottery wheel, and pistol, combining them with the art of ballet. Cocteau wrote the scenario for the one-act ballet and contracted the other artists. Satie wrote the score to the ballet, first in a piano four-hands version and then in full orchestration, while Picasso designed the curtain, set, and costumes. Later, Léonide Massine, a dancer with the Ballet Russes, was brought in as the choreographer. Serge Diaghilev's Ballet Russes premiered the ballet *Parade* on May 18, 1917. The program notes for the ballet were written by the poet Apollinaire. They became a manifesto of *l'esprit nouveau* or "the new spirit" which was taking hold in Paris during the early twentieth-century. Apollinaire described the ballet *Parade* as "surrealistic," and in doing so created a term which would develop into an important artistic school.

This project consists of an arrangement of *Parade* for woodwind quintet and percussion, and includes a historical analysis of the work. Satie's sparse, yet colorful style lends itself to an arrangement for woodwind quintet and percussion. Cocteau, in *The Cock and Harlequin*, states: "We may soon hope for an orchestra where there will be no caressing strings. Only a rich choir of wood, brass, and percussion."² Satie's

¹ Jean Cocteau, *A Call to Order*, trans. Rollo H. Myers (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1974), 7. ² Ibid., 22.

orchestration of *Parade* most often uses the strings to double the winds. The strings rarely have their own independent melodic lines. Satie's wind writing and Cocteau's extra-musical sounds express the essential color and mood of the work. Therefore, a woodwind quintet arrangement with percussion captures the spirit of the original composition.

For the arrangement of this work, I used the music writing software *Sibelius*. I prepared the transcription from Satie's full score and from his original piano four hands version. Both scores were revised and edited by Gilbert Delor and Ornella Volta in 1999 and are published by Salabert, Paris. The new piano score is of particular note in that it includes two restored numbers absent from prior publications. The reason for their absence, as determined by Satie scholar Ornella Volta, is that Satie had given Diaghilev the piano version of these numbers, and Diaghilev did not pass them along to the publisher.³

There is a history of disagreement among the collaborators regarding the extramusical sounds in *Parade*. Cocteau wanted all the sounds that he had included in his scenario and, in addition, felt the work would be incomplete without spoken lines, delivered through an onstage megaphone.⁴ Diaghilev, Satie, and Picasso were strongly opposed to the use of spoken word in ballet, believing the dialogue and extra-musical sounds to be inappropriate in a work of this kind. In the end, there was no dialogue and though some sounds were incorporated, many were not. In my arrangement of *Parade* the percussion parts are optional, allowing the performing group creativity, practicality

³ Roger Nichols, review of *Parade: Ballet réaliste en un tableau*, by Erik Satie. *Music and Letters* (February 2002): 181.

⁴ Léonide Massine, *My Life in Ballet*, ed. by Phyllis Hartroll and Robert Rubens (London: Macmillan, 1968): 102.

and flexibility. In addition, there are many possible substitutes for some of the unusual items such as the typewriter, pistol, lottery wheel, and tap dancing. The percussion parts for the quintet arrangement are not only optional, but also subject to interpretation. The "Percussion 1" part includes all of the unusual sounds in the score: high siren, "splashing sounds" or *flaques sonores*, lottery wheel, tap dancing, typewriter, pistol shots, steamboat siren, and *bouteillophone* (15 chromatically tuned bottles suspended from a frame) as well as an important xylophone solo. The "Percussion 2" part includes all of the more traditional instruments: timpani, snare drum, bass drum, tom-tom, tam-tam, cymbal, and triangle. The quintet may decide to perform with two percussionists covering both percussion parts, one percussionist covering only the unusual sounds in "Percussion 1," or they may choose to perform it with no percussion at all.

The music from *Parade* has been recorded and performed with and without the sounds, and both options are convincing. A performance without the sounds is in accordance with Satie, Picasso, and Diaghilev's point of view, while a performance that features the sounds, aligns more closely with Cocteau's original intentions. Either choice is a valid interpretation. The final project includes a woodwind quintet arrangement of Satie's orchestral score, including percussion, a recorded performance of the piece, and a written document with a historical analysis of the ballet.

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CHAPTER 2: POPULAR ENTERTAINMENT IN PARIS 1887-1917

The ballet *Parade* was inspired by the sights and sounds found in Parisian popular entertainment at the turn of the century. This period in French history is often referred to as *la belle époque* or "the good old days." *La belle époque* spanned the three decades prior to the outbreak of World War I in 1914. During these years of peace and prosperity, popular entertainment flourished. *Parade's* artists, Cocteau, Satie, and Picasso, all regularly attended the salon, café, cabaret, café-concert, music hall, circus, fair, and cinema. They drew their aesthetic inspiration from what they experienced as patrons of these establishments.

Salons and Cafés

Since the middle of the eighteenth century, the salon had been the main forum for artists, writers, and musicians to exchange ideas. The salon was held in the home of a member of the aristocracy. It was by invitation only and included dinner, drinks and a sharing of ideas. Napoleon's niece, Princesse Mathilde Boneparte hosted a particularly liberal salon into the early 1900's. Historian Roger Shattuck describes her salon in his book *The Banquet Years*: "Princesse Mathilde had learned an aristocratic ease which gave her the 'proper' presence for a salon. Her guests never felt like performing animals." In contrast, another Parisian aristocrat, Madame Aubernon "conducted her rival salon like a lion tamer."⁵ Madame Aubernon would determine the topic to be discussed at the salon and each guest was allowed, one at a time, to share with the group,

⁵ Roger Shattuck, *The Banquet Years: The Origins of the Avant-Garde in France 1885 to World War I* (New York: Vintage Press, 1967), 10.

their invitation to return depending on the quality of their performance. Madame Aubernon kept a small porcelain bell by her side and would ring it to maintain order.⁶

Gradually the salon was replaced by the café, a less censored and informal setting. The café offered artists an outlet for their ideas in a place where "anyone could enter and each man paid for his drink."⁷ It was the atmosphere of the café that helped France create its 'steady succession of artistic schools' including impressionism, the first artistic movement entirely organized in cafés.⁸

Cabaret

The cabaret evolved from salons and cafés and became an important meeting place for artists and intellectuals. Cabaret entertainment featured songs and poetry performed with wit, satire, and eccentric humor.⁹ *Le Chat Noir* was the first famous cabaret, founded in 1881 in the Butte of Montmartre by an unsuccessful painter named Rodolphe Salis. Salis promoted the artistic image of his cabaret with a Louis XIII style décor, waiters dressed in green academic garb inspired by the French Academy, and regular literary programs in the evening. A typical evening began with a boisterous chorus, sung by a group of poets and singers. The chorus was followed by individual performances by poets and songwriters. Each performer was introduced by a master-of-ceremonies, while Salis poured beer and the waiters served drinks. It was a noisy and informal atmosphere where audience members were free to interject jokes, puns, and commentary throughout the evening. The atmosphere of gaiety, audacity, satire and

⁶ Roger Shattuck, *The Banquet Years: The Origins of the Avant-Garde in France 1885 to World War I* (New York: Vintage Press, 1967), 10.

⁷₈ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Nancy Perloff, *Art and the Everyday: Popular Entertainment and the Circle of Erik Satie* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 21.

irony at *Le Chat Noir* was evident in the songs, poetry, and the weekly newspaper published by Salis.

In 1885, Le Chat Noir moved to a new location in Montmartre. Historian Roger Shattuck described the move as characteristically dramatic: "The rowdy crowd of the Chat Noir burst out its old quarters and paraded in costume through the streets with a mounted escort to occupy an entire building in the Rue Victor-Massé."¹⁰ In the new three-story venue, Salis built a small theatre for the performance of comic plays. The painter Henri Rivière took over the management of the theater and introduced his original concept of shadow plays. Shadow plays were short plays in which the action of cabaret songs was acted out using cardboard puppets behind an oilpaper screen. Rivière's simple shadow plays inspired the cabaret artists to write their own, and by 1886 it was common to see shadow plays in twenty to thirty tableaus, with scenery and music being performed alongside the traditional cabaret poetry and song.¹¹ A variety of themes were covered in the shadow plays at Le Chat Noir ranging from "burlesque comedy to historical epic and biblical legend."¹² Salis, who spoke over a keyboard accompaniment, narrated the plays. For the larger-scale shadow plays, there was a small orchestra and chorus with percussion sound effects added by Rivière. With the development of theater in cabaret, patrons now had to pay for their seats, instead of only paying for their drinks.

Le Chat Noir served as an inspiration for the development of other cabarets in Paris. As more cabarets were established, Montmartre became "the symbol of bohemian

¹⁰ Roger Shattuck, *The Banquet Years: The Origins of the Avant-Garde in France 1885 to World War I* (New York: Vintage Press, 1967), 23.

¹¹ Nancy Perloff, *Art and the Everyday: Popular Entertainment and the Circle of Erik Satie* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 22.

¹² Alan M. Gillmor, *Erik Satie* (Boston: G. K. Hall & Co., 1988), 58.

freedom in one of the freest cities on earth."¹³ In addition to the poets, musicians, and painters they attracted, cabarets were considered the fashionable place to go at night for the members of aristocracy and high society, even though the upper class were often the "disdainful objects of scornful antibourgeois tirades."¹⁴ An example of this was the sign that hung outside *Le Chat Noir*. It depicted a black cat, which represented Art, holding a goose, representing the Bourgeoisie, beneath one paw. Despite the antibourgeois atmosphere, cabarets remained popular with artists and high society alike well into the 1920's.¹⁵

Café-Concert

The café-concert was a venue for casual entertainment. In contrast to the cabaret's wit and satire, the café-concert featured songs with an "earthy, often obscene humour" in an informal atmosphere.¹⁶ The café concert catered to the lower and middle classes.

The early café-concert setting resembled that of a regular café, with chairs around tables in an informal arrangement, but by 1867 the chairs, complete with drink trays, were placed in rows. Despite the more formal arrangement, the atmosphere was still noisy and casual with patrons coming and going throughout the evening's entertainment. For this reason, it would have been difficult to require a flat entrance fee, although patrons were required to purchase a drink after each act for which they stayed.¹⁷

¹³ Roger Shattuck, *The Banquet Years: The Origins of the Avant-Garde in France 1885 to World War I* (New York: Vintage Press, 1967), 23.

¹⁴ Ibid., 57.

¹⁵ Nancy Perloff, *Art and the Everyday: Popular Entertainment and the Circle of Erik Satie* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 23.

¹⁶ Ibid., 25.

¹⁷ Ibid.

The French critic Jules Bertaut described the typical café-concert atmosphere in his 1927 book, *Les Belles Nuits de Paris*:

The café-concert and its coarse music played by a vulgar orchestra, the café concert and its unbreathable atmosphere of smoke clouds and stale smells of beer, the café concert and its lewd or obscene refrains taken up in chorus by the public...the café-concert and its musical comedy actresses and its mundane diseurs and its duet singers and its soldiers and its odors of gas, of oil, of cellar moisture, and of sweaty linen.¹⁸

Circus

Paris at the turn of the century was home to three permanent circuses: the *Nouveau Cirque*, the *Cirque Médrano*, and the *Cirque de Paris*. The circus provided a wide variety of entertainment to a diverse audience, including the lower, middle and upper classes. Circus acts were eclectic and varied, including the traditional acts, such as circus animals, juggling, magic, acrobats, and clowns, but also including operettas, pantomimes, and musical theater. In 1900, the headline act at the *Nouveau Cirque* was a musical play called *Les Indiens Sioux*, inspired by American cowboys and Indians. Not only was this musical play evidence of the influence of theater, but also of the influence of America.¹⁹ There was so much cross-fertilization between the various entertainment venues, that by 1917, café concert entertainers were incorporated into the typical circus program. It was not unusual to attend a circus and hear singers performing alongside clowns.²⁰

The *Nouveau Cirque* had a unique feature, which distinguished it from the other circuses in Paris—a track which could be transformed into a lake. This feature allowed

¹⁸ Jules Bertaut, *Les Belles Nuits de Paris* (Paris: Flammarion, 1927), 120; quoted in Nancy Perloff, *Art and the Everyday: Popular Entertainment and the Circle of Erik Satie* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 26.

^{26. &}lt;sup>19</sup> Nancy Perloff, *Art and the Everyday: Popular Entertainment and the Circle of Erik Satie* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 27.

²⁰ Ibid., 29.

the circus to program aquatic acts. Jean Cocteau recalled a childhood trip to the *Nouveau Cirque* in his *Paris Album: 1900-1914*:

The high spot of the program was the nautical tableau. I remember with poignant regret the way the water arrived. No cinematic subterfuge or trick will ever replace that marvelous moment. Bereft of its coconut matting, the green circus ring sank downward with a dull creaking sound. Little jets of water spurted up between the planks. As the ring became a pool, scenery grew up around it – water-lily leaves on which a tulle-clad dancer performed arabesques…horses and huntsmen diving into the water…²¹

Fair

The traveling fair was an annual event featuring entertainment, games, gambling and the sale of food and household items.²² Booths were set up along a street. Vendors sold their wares and entertainers performed in makeshift theaters. The gaming and exhibition booths were set up along a separate street. Popular gaming attractions included the lottery, roulette, and the shooting gallery. In the exhibition booths, customers paid a small fee to see a fortune-teller, a magic act, or a freak show.²³

In addition to the booths along the streets, every fair had its own traveling circus that was set up in a tent on the fairgrounds. The typical fairground circus included clowns, acrobats, and animals. Every afternoon, as a means of advertising the upcoming evenings' performance, several of the featured circus performers gathered on a small stage called a *parade* to perform excerpts from the circus program. This short performance, meant to entice the audience to pay for the full show, was also called a *parade*. According to Perloff, the *parade* was "accompanied by a brassy orchestra, and presided over by a master of ceremonies who cried intermittently, 'Stop the music!

²¹ Jean Cocteau, *Paris Album 1900-1914*, trans. Margaret Crosland (London: W.H. Allen & Co., 1987), 55-56.

²²Nancy Perloff, *Art and the Everyday: Popular Entertainment and the Circle of Erik Satie* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 29.

²³ Ibid., 30.

Ladies and gentlemen come near. Tonight there will be only a single grand evening of festival.' He went on to list each of the program's attractions, marvel at the modest price of the seats, and urge the spectators to hurry and purchase their tickets before it was too late."²⁴ This fairground preview of entertainment was the inspiration for the ballet *Parade*.

Music Hall

The music hall exceeded all other forms of entertainment in the scope of its offerings and its ability to absorb the influences of the other venues. The music hall grew out of the café concert, the two being nearly indistinguishable from one another in the early years of their history. In the 1860's when theater, dance, and circus acts began to be included in the café concert program, the music hall came into being. Music halls required larger auditoriums in order to contain the circus acts, featuring gymnasts, clowns, and animal trainers. Other acts common in the music hall were singers, stunt men, exotic dancers, classical dancers, contortionists, mime artists, and conjurors. Even the elite Ballet Russes appeared on music hall programs, sandwiched between magicians, comedians, and ventriloquists.²⁵ *Parade's* characters were all inspired by music hall acts.

The music hall's greater variety of entertainment was often more sophisticated in nature. In this venue, jazz and ragtime were first introduced to Parisian audiences. John Phillip Sousa's band performed in Parisian music halls in the early 1900's. American influences introduced in the music hall included the military march, cakewalks, Tin Pan Alley songs and cinema.

²⁴ Nancy Perloff, *Art and the Everyday: Popular Entertainment and the Circle of Erik Satie* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 31.

²⁵ Deborah Menaker Rothschild, *Picasso's 'Parade': From Street to Stage*. (London: Sotheby's Publications, 1991), 40.

Cinema

Cinema was first invented and introduced in Paris in 1895, by the French brothers Louis and Auguste Luminère. They transformed the Edison Kinetoscope of 1894, a oneperson viewing box, into the Luminère Cinématographe, a device that allowed many people to view a film at one time. The earliest films were based on everyday subject matter, with titles like *Workers Leaving the Factory* and *Men Playing Cards*. Cocteau was a regular member of the cinema audience in Paris during these early years and it is thought that the treatment of everyday subject matter in film may have been the inspiration for several of his projects, including the fairground scenario of *Parade*.²⁶ Erik Satie's final ballet, *Relâche*, contained a film as part of the action.

By 1897, fairgrounds were showing films as independent features. The fairground theaters evolved into venues with electrical lights and steam organs. The Olympia and the Folies-Bergère, in 1898, became the first music halls to present the Luminère Cinématographe as a part of their evening program. By 1900 music halls, café concerts, fairs and circuses were all featuring the new invention as a part of their program, often with the addition of orchestral accompaniment.²⁷

During the early 1900's, American films influenced French culture. The American serial became extremely popular. In a typical serial film, the storyline begins where it left off in the previous film and ends in the middle of a scene in which the hero or heroine is in a dangerous predicament, leaving the audience hanging until the next installment. Two of the most famous serials were *The Perils of Pauline* and *The Exploits*

²⁶ Nancy Perloff, *Art and the Everyday: Popular Entertainment and the Circle of Erik Satie* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 42.

²⁷ Ibid.

of Elaine, both of which were seen by Cocteau and became the inspiration for his character, The Little American Girl in *Parade*.²⁸

Charlie Chaplin films were another popular American cinema influence in Paris. Cocteau would often attend these films with his friend Darius Milhaud. Massine was familiar with Charlie Chaplin as well. The choreography of The Little American Girl was in part based on the comic antics of this popular American film star.

During these years of *la belle époque*, there was regular cross-fertilization between the various venues and artists. Music hall singers would perform at the circus, the ballet would perform at the music hall, and the cinema brought a reflection of America to France. It was in this environment that Jean Cocteau, Erik Satie, and Pablo Picasso, absorbed the sights and sounds of Paris in the early twentieth century. *Parade's* collaborating artists drew their inspiration from everyday entertainment and combined it with the art of ballet.

²⁸ Nancy Perloff, *Art and the Everyday: Popular Entertainment and the Circle of Erik Satie* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 43.

CHAPTER 3: JEAN COCTEAU (1889-1963)

As a young boy, Cocteau regularly attended the theater with his upper class family, but he quickly became fascinated with popular entertainment, often skipping his classes to attend music-hall matinees, the circus, and the cinema.²⁹ This fascination continued into his adulthood. In a letter to Francis Poulenc, dated September 2, 1918 Cocteau asked, "Are you familiar with the fair at Bordeaux and the camouflaged ships? Even better, the Spectacle Casino de Paris. Merry-go-rounds dizziness world upsidedown velvet mirrors and enamel-painted Louis XIV horses, which are rearing in a paradise of dentists and theatre loges."³⁰ Historian Nancy Perloff, author of *Art and the Everyday: Popular Entertainment and the Circle of Erik Satie*, suggests, "Cocteau was enchanted by an environment which crossed the bounds of individual milieux and dazzled the audience with its rapid succession of diverse images and its buoyant mood."³¹

Cocteau's first professional interaction in the world of music was with Serge Diaghilev and the Ballet Russes. The Russian ballet company came to Paris in 1909, taking Paris by storm, which made an impression on the young poet. Cocteau became its publicist, designing posters and writing newspaper articles for the company. Cocteau recalled his beginnings with the company in his journal:

The Ballet Russe of Serge de Diaghilev played its part in one of my crises. He splashed Paris with colors. The first time I attended one of his ballets (*Pavillon d' Armide* was being presented), I had a seat reserved by my family. It all took place far off behind the footlights, in that burning bush where the theatre flames for those who do not see behind the stage.

²⁹ Deborah Menaker Rothschild, *Picasso's 'Parade': From Street to Stage*. (London: Sotheby's Publications, 1991), 39.

³⁰ Francis Poulenc, *Correspondance 1915-1963*, complied by Hélène de Wendel (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1967), 19; quoted in Nancy Perloff, *Art and the Everyday: Popular Entertainment and the Circle of Erik Satie* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 19.

³¹ Nancy Perloff, *Art and the Everyday: Popular Entertainment and the Circle of Erik Satie* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 19.

I met Serge Diaghilev at the home of Madame Sert. Instantly I joined the company. From then on I saw Nijinsky only from backstage, or from the box in which, behind Madame Sert wearing a Persian feather, Diaghilev watched his dancers through a very small pair of mother-of-pearl opera glasses.³²

Cocteau's first artistic collaboration with Diaghilev was on a ballet entitled Le

Dieu bleu, which premiered in 1912. Cocteau's scenerio was based on two Siamese lovers who were engaged in a struggle with two evil priests. They were eventually saved by the Lotus Goddess and the Blue God, for whom the ballet was named. Despite the elaborate décor by Léon Bakst and the dancing by Nijinsky, the ballet was a failure. This was a huge disappointment to Cocteau who subsequently felt it imperative to impress Diaghilev and become more valuable to the ballet company. Léonide Massine recalls that Cocteau's suggestions "sometimes amused and sometimes irritated Diaghilev. But he was usually ready to listen to them, for he felt that Cocteau brought to the company a breath of *avant-garde* Paris."³³ Diaghilev, however, was impatient with Cocteau's constant need for approval and acceptance. Cocteau recalled:

One night in 1912....Diaghilev is walking home after a performance, his thick underlip sagging, his eyes bleary as Portuguese oysters, his tiny hat perched on his enormous head. Ahead, Nijinsky is sulking, his evening clothes bulging over his muscles. I was at the absurd age when one thinks oneself a poet, and I sensed in Diaghilev a polite resistance. I questioned him about this and he answered, 'Astound me! I'll wait for you to astound me!'³⁴

By Cocteau's own admission, this moment was a turning point in his life, although many years passed before Diaghilev's demand was met. Diaghilev was not one to be associated with failure, and the young Cocteau was a risk. Cocteau recalled, "I owe as do so many others, to that ogre, that sacred monster, to the desire to astound that Russian

³² Jean Cocteau, *The Journals of Jean Cocteau*, ed. and trans. by Wallance Fowlie (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1956), 50.

³³ Léonide Massine, *My Life in Ballet*, ed. by Phyllis Hartroll and Robert Rubens (London: Macmillan, 1968): 101.

³⁴ Francis Steegmuller, *Cocteau: A Biography* (Boston: Little Brown and Co., 1970), 83.

Prince to whom life was tolerable only to the extent to which he could summon up marvels."³⁵ Cocteau wrote: "Finally, in 1917, the opening night of Parade, I did astonish him."³⁶

 ³⁵ Francis Steegmuller, *Cocteau: A Biography* (Boston: Little Brown and Co., 1970), 82.
 ³⁶ Ibid., 83.

CHAPTER 4: PABLO PICASSO (1881-1973)

Spanish-born Pablo Picasso was an artist, more at home at cabarets and circuses than in the world of the elite ballet. In fact, before his work with the *Parade* team, he had never attended a ballet or designed a set or a costume. He had always preferred popular forms of entertainment, with his taste tending toward the "coarse and earthy," rather than the refined.³⁷

Picasso's formal studies began in Madrid, and his career was established in Paris, but for a short time in between, he lived in Barcelona. In Barcelona, Picasso was one of several bohemian artists to frequent *Els 4 gats*, The Four Cats café, which was modeled after *Le Chat Noir* in Montmartre. Members of the Spanish avant-garde met at *Els 4 gats* to exchange ideas and promote their art. Picasso first visited Paris in 1900 when one of his paintings was chosen for the 1900 International Exhibition. Between 1900 and 1904 he traveled from Barcelona to Paris frequently, becoming acquainted with Parisian artists and absorbing the culture of the city. In 1904, Picasso settled in Paris, the city which would influence his art through its culture, art, music, and theater.³⁸

In Paris, Picasso met a circle of friends which included poets Max Jacob and Guillaume Apollinaire. Apollinaire, who wrote reviews for the press, was one of the first to promote Picasso's work. As Picasso's work became well known, he attracted the attention of art dealers and collectors throughout the city, including the wealthy American writer Gertrude Stein, who was living in Paris at the time. Gertrude Stein recalled that Picasso and his friends "all met at least once a week at the Cirque Médrano

³⁷ Deborah Menaker Rothschild, *Picasso's 'Parade': From Street to Stage*. (London: Sotheby's Publications, 1991), 38.

³⁸ Buchholz, Elke Linda and Beate Zimmerman, *Pablo Picasso: Life and Work*, trans. by Christine Shuttleworth (Cologne: Könemann, 1999), 13.

and there they felt very flattered because they could be intimate with the clowns, the jugglers, the horses and their riders."³⁹ Fernande Olivier, Picasso's mistress in the early part of the century, reminisced,

On evenings when we went to the Médrano circus Picasso would spend all the time at the bar...He would stay there all evening...talking to the clowns. He enjoyed their oddness, their speech, their jokes...He admired them and he had real sympathy for them...I had never seen him laugh so happily as at the Médrano, he was like a child and quite unaware of the relative shallowness of the humour.⁴⁰

It was during these years, that Picasso became fascinated with a new theme: the world of traveling entertainers. The characters from the circus (acrobats, clowns, harlequins) became the subject of his art. His depiction of the everyday life of these people, behind the scenes as opposed to on the stage, suggests qualities of loneliness and melancholy.

It was through Apollinaire that Picasso met the painter Georges Braque with whom Picasso developed the idea of cubism. Cubism, one of the most important artistic developments of the twentieth century, was a complete break from tradition. Cubism "fragmented the visible world into the smallest particles, and then organized them anew."⁴¹ Cubism was an attempt by artists to "free themselves from the mere representation of nature, though without going so far as to create wholly abstract works."⁴²

Pablo Picasso and Jean Cocteau first became acquainted in December of 1915.

According to Cocteau biographer, Francis Steegmuller, Cocteau "fell under Picasso's

³⁹ Gertrude Stein, *Picasso: The Complete Writings*, ed. by Edward Burns (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970), 30.

⁴⁰ Fernande Olivier, *Picasso and His Friends*. trans. by Jane Miller (London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1964), 127.

⁴¹ Buchholz, Elke Linda and Beate Zimmerman, *Pablo Picasso: Life and Work*, trans. by Christine Shuttleworth (Cologne: Könemann, 1999), 33.

⁴² Ibid., 34.

spell and remained there for the rest of his days."⁴³ A short time after they had been introduced, Cocteau visited Picasso in his home. Knowing Picasso's fondness for the *commedia dell'arte*, he arrived wearing a Harlequin costume. Picasso was charmed by the gesture.⁴⁴ On 24 August 1916, Cocteau and Satie wrote to their friend Valentine Gross, "Picasso is doing *Parade* with us."⁴⁵

As the visual artist for *Parade*, he was able to elevate familiar popular entertainment acts from the circus and music hall into the lofty art of ballet. Léonide Massine reflected on Picasso's contributions to *Parade*: "The circus theme fired his imagination from the start, and for the front curtain he produced a superb tableau which entirely captured the sleazy charm and camaraderie of circus life."⁴⁶

⁴³ Francis Steegmuller, *Cocteau: A Biography* (Boston: Little Brown and Co., 1970), 137.

⁴⁴ Deborah Menaker Rothschild, *Picasso's 'Parade': From Street to Stage* (London: Sotheby's Publications, 1991), 45.

⁴⁵ Ornella Volta, *Satie As Seen Through His Letters*, trans. by Michael Bullock (London: Marion Boyars, 1989), 119.

⁴⁶ Léonide Massine, *My Life in Ballet*, ed. by Phyllis Hartroll and Robert Rubens (London: Macmillan, 1968): 106.

CHAPTER 5: ERIK SATIE (1866-1925)

The eccentric composer Erik Satie was the perfect candidate for Cocteau's project. Satie supported himself financially as a cabaret pianist at *Le Chat Noir* in Montmartre while at the same time composing serious art music. He absorbed the sounds of the cabaret and music-hall and, as a composer, incorporated them into his work.

Erik Satie's first encounters with the world of popular entertainment were a result of time spent with his paternal uncle Adrien, who was a "bachelor of unconventional habits and easy morals."⁴⁷ Adrien's life of leisure allowed him to attend performances of traveling circuses and acting troupes. As a young boy, Erik would join his uncle on these trips, and often would catch a glimpse of the action behind the scenes while his uncle flirted with the female performers after the show.⁴⁸

As a teenager, Erik studied at the Paris Conservatory, as a piano student of Émile Descombes, who described Erik as "gifted, but indolent," and "the laziest student in the Conservatory."⁴⁹ The Conservatory records of his piano exams contain descriptions such as "mediocre," "feeble," and "insignificant and laborious." In 1883, Erik audited a harmony class taught by Antoine Taudou, and it can be speculated that this was the beginning of his interest in composition since his earliest works date from this period. In 1885, Erik finally passed into the intermediate piano class where he began study with Georges Mathias, his stepmother's former teacher. Although his attendance improved, his exams continued to be unimpressive, with his teacher Mathias being most critical of

⁴⁷ Roger Shattuck, *The Banquet Years: The Origins of the Avant-Garde in France 1885 to World War I* (New York: Vintage Press, 1967), 115.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 116.

⁴⁹ Alan M. Gillmor, *Erik Satie* (Boston: G. K. Hall & Co., 1988), 10.

all: "Worthless."⁵⁰ Satie recalled that his harmony teacher encouraged him to pursue piano, while his piano teacher urged him to pursue composition. Satie's memory of the Conservatory was not favorable. He described it as a "vast, uncomfortable, and rather ugly building; a sort of penitentiary with no beauty on the inside, nor on the outside for that matter."⁵¹

Satie left the Conservatory in 1886 and began a year of voluntary military service. His service with the 33rd Infantry Regiment was cut short when he contracted a severe case of bronchitis after deliberately exposing himself to the winter cold. He convalesced for three months, during which time he read and composed. It was during this time that he began to sketch his famous *Gymnopédies*.

Although Satie's *Gymnopédies* were still several months from completion, he had already come up with the odd title and took great pleasure in it. When Satie moved to Montmartre in 1887 and began to frequent *Le Chat Noir* cabaret, he was introduced to the owner Salis as "Erik Satie, gymnopédiste!" to which Salis replied with a bow, "That is a most noble profession!"⁵² By 1888, Salis had offered Satie a job as the cabaret's second pianist. During his bohemian days in Montmartre, Satie was constantly exposed to the popular music idiom of his time and as a result he produced a large body of cabaret songs. In addition, he completed his famous *Gymnopédies*, and wrote the *Sarabandes*, and the *Gnossiennes* during this period.

In 1890 Satie met Joséphin Péladan, the High Priest of the Rosicrucian sect in France. He accepted a position as the official composer for the brotherhood and

⁵⁰ Alan M. Gillmor, *Erik Satie* (Boston: G. K. Hall & Co., 1988), 12.

⁵¹ Pierre-Daniel Templier, *Erik Satie*, trans. by Elena L. French and David S. French (Cambridge: The Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1969), 7.

⁵² Alan M. Gillmor, *Erik Satie* (Boston: G. K. Hall & Co., 1988), 59.

composed several pieces for the sect. Satie's works were performed publicly for the first time, and his name began to appear in the paper. Despite the publicity, Satie did not appreciate that his name was always mentioned in association with Péladan's and in 1892 he broke with the sect in a public letter to the editor of a local paper:

I am greatly surprised that I, a poor fellow who has no other thought than of his Art, continually have imposed upon Me the title of initiator in music of the disciples of Monsieur Joséphin Péladan. This causes me much grief and pain for if I am to be considered anyone's pupil I believe I can say that it is of no one else but Myself; moreover I also believe that Monsieur Péladan, for all his wide learning, could not make disciples , either in music or in painting or in anything else.⁵³

In 1891, Satie quarreled with Rudolph Salis and left *Le Chat Noir* to work as a pianist at the *Auberge du Clou*, another local cabaret. It is here that he met his lifelong friend, Claude Debussy. Satie wrote, "The minute I saw him I was drawn to him irresistibly, and I wished to live near him for ever. For thirty years I was fortunate enough to see my dream come true."⁵⁴ The feeling was mutual. A copy of Debussy's *Cinq Poèmes de Baudelaire* contains the dedication: "To Erik Satie, gentle medieval musician who turned up in our century for the joy of his good friend Claude A. Debussy."⁵⁵ The two artists exchanged ideas throughout the years of their relationship.

Satie moved to the Paris suburb of Arcueil-Cachan in 1898 and rented a small room over a café. This marked the being of "The Velvet Gentleman" period, a title that refers to his wardrobe of twelve identical gray velvet suits. He made the six-mile trip to Montmartre by foot every day, continuing to make his living as a cabaret pianist,

⁵³ Ornella Volta, *Satie As Seen Through His Letters*, trans. by Michael Bullock (London: Marion Boyars, 1989), 54.

⁵⁴ Pierre-Daniel Templier, *Erik Satie*, trans. by Elena L. French and David S. French (Cambridge: The Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1969), 16.

⁵⁵ Ornella Volta, *Satie As Seen Through His Letters*, trans. by Michael Bullock (London: Marion Boyars, 1989), 144.

accompanying singers and writing songs. His most prolific collaboration during these years was with the philosopher-turned-lyricist Vincent Hyspa. Together they toured the cabarets and private homes of Montmartre performing their cabaret songs.⁵⁶

In addition to the witty and satirical cabaret songs, Satie began to write music with an American flavor. Satie was among the first of the French composers to use the rhythms found in American Ragtime. The Ragtime was a type of music characterized by syncopated rhythms, which developed in America in the 1890's. The style was introduced to Parisian audiences in 1900 by the John Phillip Sousa band, which performed at the Universal Exposition. In addition, a new invention, the gramophone, contributed to the exchange of music across the Atlantic. Soon the new American style could be heard at any music hall. Satie's notebooks from this period contain many sketches that include the distinctive syncopated rhythms. This style would later be an inspiration for the "Steamboat Ragtime" in *Parade*.⁵⁷

Satie also composed serious art music in addition to his cabaret work. One significant piece was his *Trois Morceaux en forme de poire*, or *Three Pieces in the Shape of a Pear* for piano four-hands from 1903. The unusual title of this work was rumored to be Satie's response to a bit of friendly criticism he had received from his friend Claude Debussy. Conductor Vladimir Golschmann, recalled this conversation:

Once, after we had played *Morceaux en forme de poire*, I asked our hero....why he gave such a title *Pieces in the Shape of a Pear* to this ravishing music. He answered with a twinkle in his eyes: "You do know that I visited Debussy quite often; I admire him immensely and he seems to think much of whatever talent I may have. Nevertheless, one day when I showed him a piece I had just composed he remarked, 'Satie, you never had two greater admirers than Ravel and myself; many of your early works had an influence on our writing....You have some kind of genius, or you have genius, period. Now as a true friend, I may warn you that

⁵⁶ Alan M. Gillmor, *Erik Satie* (Boston: G. K. Hall & Co., 1988), 59.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 117.

from time to time there is in your art a certain lack of form...' All I did," added Satie, "was to write *Morceaux en forme de poire*. I brought them to Debussy who asked, 'Why such a title?' Why? Simply, *mon cher ami*, because you cannot criticize my *Pieces* in the shape of a pear. If they are *en forme de poire* they cannot be shapeless."⁵⁸

Trois Morceaux en forme de poire consists mainly of arrangements of cabaret melodies. The piece actually has seven parts, not three. The quirky title is characteristic of Satie's odd sense of humor, which often found its way into the names of his works.

This was a difficult period in Satie's life. In a letter to his brother Conrad he said, "I am tired of being so desperately sad; everything I attempt with timidity, fails with a boldness never before imagined."⁵⁹ His friend Debussy had achieved great success in the world of art music, while Satie continued to be considered simply a composer of cabaret and café concert songs.

At the age of forty, Satie enrolled in the Schola Cantorum in 1905 to develop his counterpoint skills. This was a courageous step for a man his age, but he told his brother Conrad, "I was tired of being reproached for an ignorance that I believed myself in truth to be guilty of, since competent people had pointed to it in my works."⁶⁰ Debussy warned him that, "it was too late to shed an old skin for a new one."⁶¹ To this Satie replied, "At worst, I will fail, and that will mean that I had nothing in me."⁶² In contrast to when Satie studied at the Paris Conservatory, he was a punctual and serious student at the Schola. One of his teachers, Albert Roussel recalled,

⁵⁸ Vladimir Golschmann, "Golschmann Remembers Erik Satie," *High Fidelity/Musical America 22,* August 1972, 11.

 ⁵⁹ Nigel Wilkins, ed. and trans. *The Writings of Erik Satie*, (London: Ernst Eulenburg Ltd., 1980), 211.
 ⁶⁰ Pierre-Daniel Templier, *Erik Satie*, trans. by Elena L. French and David S. French (Cambridge: The Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1969), 32.

⁶¹ Ibid., 27.

⁶² Ibid.

Satie was a professional musician. Those of his works that had already been printed clearly showed me that he had nothing to learn. I could not see what advantages he could derive from theoretical and academic studies. Nevertheless, he insisted. He became a very docile and assiduous student. He would punctually bring me the work I had assigned, carefully written out and adorned with notes in red ink. He was profoundly musical.⁶³

In 1908, Satie received a diploma in counterpoint from the Schola Cantorum.

By 1911, Satie's luck began to change. This was due in part to a rediscovery of Satie by the public, which was made possible by Debussy and Ravel, both of whom performed his works for a larger and more elite audience than Satie could have arranged on his own. Ravel performed Satie's *Sarabandes* at a concert of the *Société Indépendante Musicale*, which had been recently formed by Fauré.⁶⁴ Later the same year, Debussy conducted his own orchestrations of two of Satie's *Gymnopédies* at the Cercle Musical.⁶⁵ The positive reception of Satie's work surprised Debussy, which added strain to their friendship. Satie wrote to his brother Conrad, "Why won't he allow me just a very small place in his shadow?....I have no use for the sun."⁶⁶ Nevertheless, these concerts generated a new demand for Satie's work. Publishers began to print some of Satie's older works, and there was a new interest from critics and the progressive press. Satie was about to enter a period in his life that would bring him in contact with some of the most important artists of the twentieth century.

⁶³ Pierre-Daniel Templier, *Erik Satie*, trans. by Elena L. French and David S. French (Cambridge: The Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1969), 27.

⁶⁴ Roger Shattuck, *The Banquet Years: The Origins of the Avant-Garde in France 1885 to World War I* (New York: Vintage Press, 1967), 145.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 146.

⁶⁶ Ornella Volta, *Satie As Seen Through His Letters*, trans. by Michael Bullock (London: Marion Boyars, 1989), 147.

In 1916 Cocteau heard a performance of Satie's 1903 piano four hands *Trois Morceaux en forme de poire* and invited Satie to write incidental music for his circus-ballet *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, a project that never materialized, but which led to their collaboration on *Parade*. From this point on, Cocteau became Satie's biggest supporter, using his influence to secure him commissions, persuading virtuosos to perform his works, and writing about him, most notably in *The Cock and Harlequin*. Erik Satie finally rose to fame.

The influence of Satie has been far-reaching. Following the successful scandal of *Parade*, a group of young composers, later dubbed 'Les Six,' gathered around Satie. These composers who shared Satie's aesthetic included: Auric, Durey, Honegger, Tailleferre, Milhaud, and Poulenc. Darius Milhaud described Satie's influence on the group: "It was then that Erik Satie let us hear, intact and discovered afresh, enriched with a new simplicity and poverty, the voice which belongs to French music freed of every foreign influence."⁶⁷ Despite the role that Satie played in the formation of this famous group, he did not encourage his followers. Cocteau wrote, "The cult of Satie is difficult because one of Satie's charms is that he offers so little encouragement to deification."⁶⁸

In the midst of World War I and German influence, composers in France were actively in search of their own music style. Erik Satie, Jean Cocteau, and Les Six were active advocates of this. Much has been written about Satie's influence on Debussy. Satie told Debussy,

There is no need for the orchestra to grimace when a character comes on the stage. Do the trees in the scenery grimace? What we have to do is create a

⁶⁷ Roger Shattuck, *The Banquet Years: The Origins of the Avant-Garde in France 1885 to World War I* (New York: Vintage Press, 1967), 158.

⁶⁸ Jean Cocteau, A Call to Order, trans. Rollo H. Myers (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1974), 15.

musical scenery, a musical atmosphere in which characters move and talk. No 'couplets' - no 'Leitmotiv', but aim at creating a certain atmosphere.⁶⁹

Debussy admits that this conversation with Satie "determined the aesthetic of his opera *Pelléas et Mélisande*."⁷⁰ Satie also said,

I explained to Debussy the necessity for a Frenchman to disengage himself from the Wagnerian adventure, which does not correspond to our natural aspirations. And I pointed out to him that I am not anti-Wagner, but that it was necessary for us to have a music of our own--with no sauerkraut, if possible.⁷¹

In addition to influencing the music of his own time Satie, with Darius Milhaud,

was responsible for the development of *furniture music*, a forerunner to today's Muzak.

In 1920 they introduced the new concept at a concert featuring the works of Les Six. It

was played during the first intermission and the audience was told, "We urgently beg you

not to attach any importance to it and to act during intermission as if the music did not

exist...it hopes to contribute to life the way a casual conversation does, or a picture in a

gallery, or a chair in which one is or is not seated."⁷² Despite this announcement, when

the music started people returned to their seats. Satie told everyone to keep talking--

"Whatever you do, don't listen!"⁷³ Satie later wrote to Cocteau:

We want to establish a music designed to satisfy "useful" needs. Art has no place in such needs. Furniture music creates a vibration; it has no other goal; it fills the same role as light and heat-as *comfort* in every form....Furniture music for law offices, banks, etc. No marriage ceremony complete without furniture music....⁷⁴

⁶⁹ Rollo Myers, *Erik Satie* (London: Dennis Dobson Limited, 1948), 32.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Pierre-Daniel Templier, *Erik Satie*, trans. by Elena L. French and David S. French (Cambridge: The Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1969), 18.

⁷² Roger Shattuck, *The Banquet Years: The Origins of the Avant-Garde in France 1885 to World War I* (New York: Vintage Press, 1967), 27.

 $[\]frac{73}{73}$ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

For better and for worse, this concept of background music without artistic aspiration has permeated our society today. Ironically, some of Satie's more serious works are best known to the public because of their use as background music in modern day commercials.

Erik Satie's far-reaching influence extends well into modern times. Satie had a profound influence on the American composer John Cage (1912-1992). Cage felt that Satie was responsible for the "one new idea since Beethoven"--the use of controlled duration as a structural element.⁷⁵ Cage was influenced in particular by Satie's meditative work, *Vexations* (1893), a piano work which bears the instruction "if one wishes to play the piece 840 times in succession, it would be advisable to prepare oneself in advance, in the most profound silence, by a period of serious immobility."⁷⁶ Cage staged a complete performance of this work in New York in 1963. The eighteen hour and forty minute performance was entered into the *Guinness Book of Records*. Satie's *Vexations* had an enormous effect on experimental music, especially minimalism.

Historian and scholar Robert Orledge describes Satie and Cage:

Both composers had a mature insight into the importance of the seemingly trivial, and both assumed a veneer of impersonality beneath which lurked significant aesthetic and emotional issues. Both shared a desire to shock complacent middleclass listeners and an irreverent sense of humor, and it would also have appealed to Cage to focus on a French composer who few had taken seriously, though it was surely what Satie achieved in his compositions and eccentric writings that appealed to him more than his nationality.⁷⁷

⁷⁵ Robert Orledge, "Satie and America," American Music, Vol. 18, No. 1, Spring 2000, 95.

⁷⁶ Alan M. Gillmor, *Erik Satie* (Boston: G. K. Hall & Co., 1988), 102.

⁷⁷ Robert Orledge, "Satie and America," American Music, Vol. 18, No. 1, Spring 2000, 96.

Even Satie's earlier works predict the future. Composer and critic Charles Koechlin said, "the *Sarabandes* with their remarkable resolutions of chords of the ninth anticipated by fourteen years....those practiced by Debussy."⁷⁸

⁷⁸ Rollo Myers, *Erik Satie* (London: Dennis Dobson Limited, 1948), 19.

CHAPTER 6: THE GENESIS OF PARADE

The seminal idea for *Parade* can be traced to two projects that were attempted by Cocteau. The first project, a ballet called *David*, was to be a collaboration with Igor Stravinsky. Cocteau had attended the premiere of Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du printemps* in 1913. The shocking score and pagan scenario caused a riot in the theater. This first-hand experience with theater scandal helped Cocteau to understand what Diaghilev had meant by his demand to 'astonish him.' Cocteau attempted to interest Stravinsky in his new ballet entitled *David*. The ballet, based on the biblical character, was to be organized in three scenes, each representing an episode in David's life. Each scene would be performed in a circus sideshow inspired style. Cocteau described the set for *David* as follows:

On the stage, in front of a booth at a fair, an acrobat would be doing a come-on for DAVID, a spectacle intended to be given inside the booth. A clown, who is later transformed into a box (theatrical pastiche of the phonograph played at fairs -- modern form of the ancient mask), was to celebrate David's exploits though a loudspeaker and urge the public to enter the booth and see the show.⁷⁹

It is here in *David*, that it is possible to see the beginnings of an important theme for Cocteau, the idea of an 'external' show versus an 'internal' show, an idea which was developed further in *Parade*. Stravinsky abandoned the project in 1914. Diaghilev had discouraged the successful Stravinsky from getting involved with the young, inexperienced poet. Cocteau also abandoned the work, feeling that, without Stravinsky, *David* could not be realized.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Francis Steegmuller, *Cocteau: A Biography* (Boston: Little Brown and Co., 1970), 94.

⁸⁰ Deborah Menaker Rothschild, *Picasso's 'Parade': From Street to Stage*. (London: Sotheby's Publications, 1991), 44.

Cocteau's second project was in 1915—his modern circus version of Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream, a project that was intended to be performed at the Cirque Médrano and would feature the famous Fratellini clowns. The cubist painter Albert Gleizes was to provide the costume and set design and Edgard Varèse to conduct the orchestra.⁸¹ Cocteau originally planned to use Mendelssohn's incidental music to A Midsummer Night's Dream, but anti-German sentiment during the war led to a plan to replace the German music with music by five "French" composers: Satie, Schmitt, Stravinsky, Ravel, and Varèse. However, Satie was the only composer to fulfill the commission, producing five miniatures for circus orchestra entitled *Cing grimaces*.⁸² Satie's pieces were intended to alternate with one contribution each from the other composers in the following order: Satie-Schmitt-Satie-Ravel-Satie-Stravinsky-Satie-Varèse-Satie.⁸³ The circus version of A Midsummer Night's Dream was never completed. several reasons being given by the participating artists: the war, funding, and the professional actors' refusal to work with the clowns.⁸⁴ These two projects, with their circus format and the mixture of popular entertainment with a more serious dramatic art form anticipate Cocteau's scenario for Parade.

Although Cocteau and Satie were collaborators on the Shakespeare project, they had never actually met. In April of 1916, Cocteau attended a Satie-Ravel festival and for the first time heard Satie's music. He attended this festival with his friend Valentine Gross (later Valentine Hugo), an influential and well-connected member of Paris society and also a friend of Erik Satie's. Cocteau was particularly impressed with Satie's *Trois*

⁸¹ M. Gillmor, *Erik Satie* (Boston: G. K. Hall & Co., 1988), 190.

⁸² Steven Moore Whiting, *Satie The Bohemian: From Cabaret to Concert Hall* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 463.

⁸³ Ibid., 464.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 466.

Morceaux en forme de poire, a work featuring cabaret melodies. This incorporation of popular tunes in art music may have been what caught Cocteau's ear. In addition, Satie was considered a 'wild card' and could help in astonishing Diaghilev.⁸⁵ Cocteau's original idea was to combine his three-scene plan from *David* with Satie's *Trois Morceaux en forme de poire*. He asked for Valentine to put him in touch with Satie. Satie was interested in collaborating with Cocteau, but he was bored with this particular work and had no interest in recycling it. On 25 April 1916 Satie wrote to Valentine Gross, "I hope that the admirable Cocteau will not use any of my older works. Let's do something new, right?"⁸⁶ The same day he wrote a note to Cocteau praising him, "Valentine Gross tells me wonderful things. You are a man with Ideas. Bravo!"⁸⁷ This marked the beginning of their collaboration, with Valentine Gross as go-between.

When Cocteau learned that Satie was only interested in something new he began to put together ideas for a new fairground scenario. Cocteau wrote the definition of the title word "parade" on the cover of one of his notebooks. He found the definition in the *Dictionnaire Larousse*: "parade - A burlesque scene played at the door of a fairground theatre to attract customers."⁸⁸

Parade's basic scenario is simple: The action takes place on a Paris street outside a theater booth on a July Sunday afternoon. Three managers, or barkers, advertise the talents of the three acts: the Chinese conjurer, the little American girl and the Acrobats.

⁸⁵ Steven Moore Whiting, *Satie The Bohemian: From Cabaret to Concert Hall* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 467.

⁸⁶ Ornella Volta, *Satie As Seen Through His Letters*, trans. by Michael Bullock (London: Marion Boyars, 1989), 109.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 110.

Each act performs a portion of its routine for the audience, but fails to lure them inside for the real show. In the end, the managers and *Parade* performers collapse in despair.

CHAPTER 7: THE SCORE

In May of 1916 Satie began work on the *Parade* score. He wrote to Cocteau, "I received the manuscript. Stunning! I'm sorting out my ideas."⁸⁹ Initially he found Cocteau's free association style notes difficult to comprehend, but when Picasso joined the *Parade* team, Satie found his inspiration in the artist's ideas. Cocteau was unhappy with the developing relationship between Picasso and Satie. He wrote the following in a letter to Valentine Gross, dated 31 August 1916:

Make dear Satie understand, through the haze of apéritifs, that I do after all have some part in *Parade* and that he is not alone with Picasso...He hurts my feeling when he jumps up and down and shouts to Picasso: 'It's you I follow! You're my master!' He seems to be hearing for the first time things I've been telling him over and over. Does he hear my voice?"⁹⁰

In a letter from Satie to Gross dated 14 September 1916 Satie confides, "If you only knew how sad I am! *Parade* is changing, for the better, behind Cocteau's back! Picasso has ideas I like better than our Jean's! What a calamity! And I'm for Picasso! and Cocteau doesn't know it! What can I do?"⁹¹

One of the main differences between Cocteau and Picasso had to do with the character of the "barker." Cocteau's original scenario included one barker, an off-stage actor who would announce each character through an on-stage megaphone. Picasso wanted three separate Managers, one to introduce each act. In addition, Picasso, Satie, and Diaghilev were against Cocteau's idea of spoken dialogue. Massine recalled the conflict:

⁸⁹ Ornella Volta, *Satie As Seen Through His Letters*, trans. by Michael Bullock (London: Marion Boyars, 1989), 111.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 120.

⁹¹ Ibid., 121.

Cocteau told Diaghilev that he wanted to incorporate every possible form of popular entertainment. Diaghilev agreed until the moment came when Cocteau suggested that the managers be given lines which they would deliver through megaphones. This was going too far, even for Diaghilev, who pointed out that the spoken word was entirely out of place in ballet. Cocteau, however, insisted that in this case, the use of megaphones was perfectly valid and in tune with the cubist conception of the production.⁹²

In October of 1916, with *Parade* well under way, Cocteau, Satie, and Picasso met with Serge Diaghilev and Léonide Massine for the first time. Diaghilev approved of the project, and Massine was engaged to choreograph the ballet. Cocteau shared in a letter to Gross, "It seems to me that Serge likes our work and that he has very well understood the apparently simple way in which I have brought about the marriage of the musician and the painter. I gave them a hand in the middle....⁹³

From this point on, Satie made steady progress in composing the score. He completed the music to *Parade* in January of 1917 in the form of a score written for piano duet. The Ballets Russes was spending the winter in Rome, and Diaghilev invited the collaborators to join them there to complete the ballet. All, except for Satie, joined the troupe. Cocteau and Picasso stopped by Gertrude Stein's home on the way out of town. She recalled,

One day Picasso came in and with him and leaning on his shoulder was a slim elegant youth. It is Jean, announced Pablo, Jean Cocteau and we are leaving for Italy. Picasso had been excited at the prospect of doing the scenery for a Russian ballet, the music to be by Satie, the drama by Jean Cocteau. Everyone was at the war, life in Montparnasse was not very gay, Montrouge with even a faithful servant wasn't very lively, he too needed a change. He was very lively at the prospect of going to Rome. We all said goodbye and went our separate ways.⁹⁴

⁹² Léonide Massine, *My Life in Ballet*, ed. by Phyllis Hartroll and Robert Rubens (London: Macmillan, 1968): 102.

⁹³ Ornella Volta, *Satie As Seen Through His Letters*, trans. by Michael Bullock (London: Marion Boyars, 1989), 123.

⁹⁴ Gertrude Stein, *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* (New York: Vintage Books, 1990), 172.

Cocteau recalls fondly the time in Rome: "We created *Parade* in a Roman cellar which was called Cave Taglioni. We walked in the moonlight with ballerinas, and visited Naples and Pompeii."⁹⁵ It was on this trip that Picasso met the Russian ballerina, Olga Koklova, whom he married a year later. Satie remained in Paris to work on the orchestration, where he felt he would be free from distractions. He completed the orchestration on 8 May 1917, only ten days before the premiere.⁹⁶

The ballet *Parade* is made up of three main acts: The Chinese Conjuror, The Little American Girl, and The Acrobats. The central number, The Little American Girl, is the longest and the most complex. Near the middle of this act, Satie places the *Ragtime du paquebot* or "Steamboat Rag." Satie wrote this ragtime number using parts of Irving Berlin's tune *That Mysterious Rag*, in an effort to create an appropriate background for a girl from America to dance. Cocteau, familiar with Berlin, either did not realize that Satie had included this quote, or didn't mention it for fear of copyright problems. Satie disguised Berlin's tune well enough that no researcher had noticed its existence until 1961, when Joseph Machlis states in his book, *Introduction to Contemporary Music*, "The melody duplicates almost verbatim that of Irving Berlin's *That Mysterious Rag*."⁹⁷ (See Appendix A for a comparison)

Cocteau wrote directions into Satie's score for extra-musical sounds to accompany the entire ballet. Noises like these had never before been incorporated into a piece of art music, and their inclusion represented one of the most modern aspects of *Parade*, both in that it was a modern idea to include the noises, and that many of the noises were in fact

⁹⁵ Jean Cocteau, *The Journals of Jean Cocteau*, ed. and trans. by Wallance Fowlie (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1956), 100.

⁹⁶ Steven Moore Whiting, *Satie The Bohemian: From Cabaret to Concert Hall* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 470.

⁹⁷Joseph Machlis, *Introduction to Contemporary Music* (Scranton: W.W> Norton & Co., 1979), 215.

modern. Satie described his score as "a background for certain noises which Cocteau considers indispensable in order to fix the atmosphere of his characters."⁹⁸ Léonide Massine recalled that Cocteau,

...persuaded Satie to introduce into the score a number of realistic sound effects, such as the clicking of the typewriter, the wail of a ship's siren, and the droning of an aeroplane engine. All of these, Cocteau explained, were in the spirit of cubism, and helped to portray the feverish insanity of contemporary life.⁹⁹

All of these noises were to be combined with spoken dialogue to offer unification to *Parade*. Cocteau wanted the work to represent the look and feel of modern life. Cocteau wrote on the first page of Satie's final hand-written score: "The music for

 ⁹⁸ Jean Cocteau, A Call to Order, trans. Rollo H. Myers (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1974), 54.
 ⁹⁹ Léonide Massine, My Life in Ballet, ed. by Phyllis Hartroll and Robert Rubens (London: Macmillan, 1968): 102.

¹⁰⁰ Deborah Menaker Rothschild, *Picasso's 'Parade': From Street to Stage* (London: Sotheby's Publications, 1991), 89.

Parade is not presented as a work in itself but is designed to serve as a background for placing in relief the primary subject of sounds and scenic noises."¹⁰¹ Against Cocteau's wishes, however, his script and most of the extra-musical sounds were cut from the first performance in 1917. Although Diaghilev often embraced avant-garde elements of performance, he felt that certain classical standards should be adhered to. Massine wrote, "Diaghilev would not allow the megaphone, pointing out that the spoken word was entirely out of place in ballet."¹⁰² Many of the noises were cut as well, mainly for logistical reasons. Cocteau commented afterwards that *Parade* had been performed incomplete. Some of the noises, such as the typewriter, sirens, the lottery wheel, and the revolver shots, were included in later productions of the work. After one such performance on 19 June 1923, Satie wrote to Diaghilev, "I don't much like the 'noises' made by Jean. There's nothing to be done about that: we have before us a charming maniac."¹⁰³

The orchestra for *Parade* is the biggest orchestra that Satie ever wrote for. In addition to full strings, winds, and brass, there is a diverse percussion section that includes, in addition to the noisemakers, timpani, snare drum, tom-tom, bass drum, tambourine, cymbals, triangle, tam-tam, xylophone, and bouteillophone.

The Swiss born conductor Ernest Ansermet led the orchestra. Ansermet arranged for Cocteau's sounds to be replaced by musical instruments while the ballet was on tour. A letter from Ansermet to Diaghilev reveals some of the changes that were made:

¹⁰¹ Deborah Menaker Rothschild, *Picasso's 'Parade': From Street to Stage* (London: Sotheby's Publications, 1991), 88.

¹⁰² Léonide Massine, *My Life in Ballet*, ed. by Phyllis Hartroll and Robert Rubens (London: Macmillan, 1968): 103.

¹⁰³ Ornella Volta, *Satie As Seen Through His Letters*, trans. by Michael Bullock (London: Marion Boyars, 1989), 128.

For *Parade* you will manage the jangle in whatever way local facilities allow. In Madrid, I had the woodwinds and brasses take over for the typewriters, and I replaced the wheel of fortune with a rattle; 'squishy puddles' were achieved with cymbals and sponge-tipped drumsticks, and the bottle-phone became a combination of celesta and campanelli; organ pipes were replaced by a contra bassoon.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁴ Boris Kochno, *Diaghilev and The Ballets Russes*, trans. by Adrienne Foulke (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), 120.

CHAPTER 8: THE CHARACTERS

The characters in *Parade* were adopted directly from popular entertainment. The music hall, cinema, and circus often supported an anti-authoritarian message. In these forms of entertainment the hero is a member of the poor lower class who triumphs over authority. According to Deborah Rothschild, author of *Picasso's 'Parade': From Street to Stage*, the ballet exhibits its distaste of authority figures through the interpretation of the three managers who attempt to overshadow the artistry and creativity of the performers.¹⁰⁵ In contrast to the managers, each of the performers stands for a set of desirable characteristics: the conjuror stands for mystery and wisdom, the little girl for daring, optimism, resourcefulness, and courage, and the acrobats for imagination, inventiveness, and a soaring spirit.¹⁰⁶ However, Cocteau intended a hidden depth in these entertainers as well. He recalled:

A week later I returned to the front, leaving Satie with a bundle of notes and sketches which were to provide him the theme for the Chinaman, the little American Girl and the acrobat (there was then only one acrobat). These indications were not the least bit humorous. They emphasized, on the contrary, the prolongation of these characters on the other side of our show man's booth. The Chinaman could there torture missionaries, the little girl go down with the *Titanic*, and the acrobat win the confidences of the angels."¹⁰⁷

The Chinese Conjuror

The Chinese Conjurer is the star of the first act of *Parade*. No music hall or circus performance was complete without a magician. One of the most famous of the Chinese magicians was Ching Ling Foo who was born in Peking and emigrated to

¹⁰⁵ Deborah Menaker Rothschild, *Picasso's 'Parade': From Street to Stage* (London: Sotheby's Publications, 1991), 75.
¹⁰⁶ Ibid

¹⁰⁷ Jean Cocteau, *A Call to Order*, trans. Rollo H. Myers (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1974), 51.

America. He toured Europe and appeared in Paris in 1909. Ching Ling Foo's greatest rival was William Ellsworth Robinson, otherwise known as Ching Ling Soo. Ching Ling Soo copied everything about Ching Ling Foo, including his shaved forehead and costume. He even decorated his home with a Chinese decor and learned enough of the language to fool his interviewers. Foo challenged Soo to a duel to prove who was the better magician. Soo won and Foo returned to China leaving Soo the leading magician in Western Europe. Ching Ling Soo was a celebrity who was widely known in Paris at the time *Parade* premiered. The character of the Chinese conjuror is based on this famous magician.¹⁰⁸

Cocteau's plan was for each act to be introduced by an off-stage actor speaking through a megaphone. This idea was replaced with Picasso's vision of three silent managers. A copyist's score for *Parade*, located at The Frederich R. Koch Foundation in New York, includes Cocteau's intended text. The following was Cocteau's original plan for introducing the Chinese Conjuror:

A MAN WHO IS INFORMED IS WORTH TWO! If you want to become rich if you feel sick - if you have attacks of languor - ENTER TO SEE THE WISE CHINAMAN - missionaries - dentists - the plague - gold - gongs - pigs who eat little children - the emperor of China in his armchair. People who have not entered from the beginning of the show can enter to see the KING OF DRAMAS - the greatest success of laughter and of fright. The most beautiful theater in the world, the most beautiful stage in the world, the most beautiful footlights in the world. Beware Madame! Monsieur! Boredom is lying in wait for you! You are sleeping without being aware of it! Wake up! Enter! Everyone makes a play that he listens to, Enter to see a play about yourself!¹⁰⁹

Picasso's costume designs for *Parade* were modeled after the costumes worn by

the entertainers who were the inspiration for the characters in the ballet. The Chinese

¹⁰⁸ Deborah Menaker Rothschild, *Picasso's 'Parade': From Street to Stage* (London: Sotheby's Publications, 1991), 76.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

Conjurer's costume is considered by many to be one of the most beautiful costumes ever created for the Ballet Russes (See Appendix B). It became a symbol for the troupe and often used on the ballet troupe's advertisements. The costume was modeled after the costume worn by the Chinese magician Chung Ling Soo in his magic act. At the time, most Chinese magicians worn floor-length gowns, but Soo preferred the shorter tunic worn with calf-length pants. Soo's tunic colors were red and yellow, the colors of the flag of China, and decorated with celestial images. He wore a braided queue, a pointed cap, white stockings, and black slippers. Strikingly similar to Soo's costume, Picasso's design was a short yellow and red tunic decorated with designs that evoke images of the sun's rays and ocean waves. This was worn over calf-length pants in black and white with black slippers. The costume was completed with a multi-peaked hat and a queue.¹¹⁰

When *Parade* was premiered in London in 1919, Sir Roland Penrose was in the audience. He described the costume in his Picasso biography *Picasso-His Life and Work*: "The Chinese Conjuror wore a costume of brilliant yellow, orange, white and black with bold patterns symbolizing a rising sun eclipsed in wreaths of smoke: his headdress in the same colours looked like flames or petals of a flower."¹¹¹

Léonide Massine, *Parade's* choreographer who danced the role of the Chinese Conjuror recalled the choreography in his auto biography, *My Life in Ballet*:

A curtain was drawn, and in music-hall fashion a placard appeared announcing 'Number One.' This was the cue for my entrance as the Chinese Conjuror, whom I envisioned as a parody of the usual pseudo-oriental entertainer with endless tricks up his sleeve. Dressed in a mandarin jacket and floppy trousers, I marched stiffly round the stage jerking my head at each step. Then going to the center I bowed to the audience and began my act. I was at first unable to decide what sort of tricks this type of performer would do, but when I had demonstrated the

¹¹⁰ Deborah Menaker Rothschild, *Picasso's 'Parade': From Street to Stage* (London: Sotheby's Publications, 1991), 101.

¹¹¹Nesta MacDonald, *Diaghilev Observed* (New York: Dance Horizons, 1975), 236.

opening phases of my dance to Cocteau, he suggested that I should go through the motions of swallowing an egg. The idea appealed to me. With an elaborate flourish I pretended to produce an egg from my sleeve and put it in my mouth. When I had mimed the action of swallowing it, I stretched out my arms, slid my left leg sidewards till I was almost sitting down, and with my left hand pretended to pull the egg from the toe of my shoe. The whole thing took only a few minutes, but it had to be done with the most clearly defined movements and broad mime. When I had retrieved the egg, I leaped round the stage again, then paused, puckered up my lips and pretended to breathe out fire. One last march around the stage, a final deep bow, and I disappeared.¹¹²

The Little American Girl

The Little American Girl is a mixture of American cinema and Americaninfluenced music hall, both common in Paris during the first part of the century. Early film Westerns, cliffhanger serials, slapstick comedies, ragtime and cakewalk performers, and jazz were all immensely popular with the French public. Such productions, musical and otherwise, depicted America as a land of adventure and freedom.¹¹³

The character of the Little American Girl is based on the American film stars Pearl White and Mary Pickford. Pearl White was the star of two film serials that were very popular in France: *The Perils of Pauline* and *The Exploits of Elaine*. These movies, released between 1913 and 1916, each consisted of fifteen separate twenty-minute movies, each with the same basic story line. The movie would begin with the heroine in a hopeless situation from which she either escapes or is rescued, only to find herself in another predicament by the end. These movies were especially successful in France

¹¹² Léonide Massine, *My Life in Ballet*, ed. by Phyllis Hartroll and Robert Rubens (London: Macmillan, 1968): 103-104.

¹¹³ Deborah Menaker Rothschild, *Picasso's 'Parade': From Street to Stage* (London: Sotheby's Publications, 1991), 81.

during the war years.¹¹⁴ Cocteau and Picasso were fans of Pearl White, and Massine mentions her as an inspiration for the choreography of the Little American Girl.¹¹⁵

Mary Pickford's films *Poor Little Rich Girl* and *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm*, both released in 1917, were immensely popular with the French public. Pickford's image was that of "America's Sweetheart" in big bows and corkscrew curls. In a review of

Pickford's 1917 film A Romance of the Redwoods Vachel Lindsay wrote,

In the audience last night were at least seven maidens wearing the Mary Pickford curls...Girls wear them to the age of twenty-two. They wear them to the university classes, unless spoken to by the dean of women. Walk three blocks and note how, though no fashion magazines have endorsed it, Mary Pickford is imitated as was Queen Victoria in her youth."¹¹⁶

Mary Pickford was one of the top earning stars of cinema in the early days, the

Times reporting that she was making \$1,000,000 a year in 1917.¹¹⁷ In 1919 she joined

with Charlie Chaplin, Douglas Fairbanks, and D. W. Griffith to form United Artists. As

an actress she received rave reviews:

"She has a charm, a manner, an expression that is all her own. She seems to have the happy faculty of becoming for the time being the character which she is portraying. At no time does one ever gather the impression that she is acting. She is the epitome of naturalness....The sum and substance of it all is that Mary Pickford is unique, and irrespective of the strength or weakness of any picture in which she appears the fact that Mary Pickford appears in it makes it a good picture."¹¹⁸

Cocteau saw Mary Pickford not as a depiction of reality, but as an item of

curiosity and as a symbol of America as an exotic place:

¹¹⁴ Deborah Menaker Rothschild, *Picasso's 'Parade': From Street to Stage* (London: Sotheby's Publications, 1991), 81.

¹¹⁵ Léonide Massine, *My Life in Ballet*, ed. by Phyllis Hartroll and Robert Rubens (London: Macmillan, 1968): 104.

¹¹⁶ George C. Pratt, *Spellbound in Darkness: A History of Silent Film* (New York: Graphic Society Ltd., 1973), 231.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 229

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 230.

IT IS A CRIME to kill your own curiosity - what do you need to make a decision? ONE MINUTE! You will have a LIFE of regret if you don't take the opportunity! Are you dead? NO? Then you must LIVE! Make sure you get this idea through your head! A timid man is a DEAD man. Enter to learn about American life - the fears - short circuits - detectives - the Hudson - Ragtimes - factories - trains that derail - ocean liners that sink! I was pale, sulky, puny. I was poor, bald, alone. Then I became a négre rouge. Hesitate and you will lose. If you do not leave here healed! Demand the K!¹¹⁹

Cocteau's notes in Satie's score include a list of free association images that are a view of

America through Cocteau's eyes:

The Titanic...elevators - the sirens of Boulogne - submarine cables - tar - varnish - the machines of transatlantic steamers...The New York Herald - dynamos - airplanes...cinemas - the sheriff's daughter - Walt Whitman - the silence of stampedes - cowboys with leather and goat-skin chaps - the telegraph operator from Los Angeles who marries the detective in the end...the Sioux...Negros picking maize - jail - the beautiful Mrs. Astor, the declarations of the President Wilson, torpedo boat mines, the tango, gramophones, typewriter, Brooklyn bridge...Nick Carter - Helene Dodge - the Hudson and its docks - the Carolinas - my room on the seventeenth floor - panhandlers - advertising - Charlie Chaplin - Christopher Columbus - metal landscapes - the victims of the Lusitania...the isle of Mauritus - Paul et Virginie¹²⁰

The Little American Girl's costume, although sketched by Picasso in his

notebooks, was bought off the rack in a department store one day before the premiere.

The sketches all show a girl wearing a flounced skirt, pantaloons, and a large bow in her

hair. The purchased costume was a navy blue sailor coat, a pleated white skirt, and a

very large hair bow. The sailor inspired motif was a common fashion among young girls

at this time. Pearl White often wore a similar costume in her serial movies, *The Perils of*

Pauline, and The Exploits of Elaine.¹²¹

¹¹⁹ Deborah Menaker Rothschild, *Picasso's 'Parade': From Street to Stage* (London: Sotheby's Publications, 1991), 80.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 81.

¹²¹ Ibid., 124.

The choreography for the Little American Girl was described by Léonide

Massine:

Wearing a blazer and a short white skirt, she bounced on to the stage, crossing it in a succession of convulsive leaps, her arms swinging widely. She then did an imitation of the shuffling walk of Charlie Chaplin, followed by a sequence of mimed actions reminiscent of *The Perils of Pauline*—jumping on to a moving train, swimming across a river, having a running fight at pistol-point, and finally finding herself lost at sea in the tragic sinking of the *Titanic*. All of this was ingeniously danced and mimed by Maria Chabelska, who interpreted Satie's syncopated ragtime music with great charm and gusto, and brought the dance to a poignant conclusion when, thinking herself a child at the seaside, she ended up playing in the sand.¹²²

The Acrobats

The third and final act in *Parade* is that of the Acrobats. The acrobat was a

regularly featured performer at both the circus and the music hall in Paris. Cocteau

originally included only one acrobat, but Massine wanted to choreograph a duet in the

ballet, so one acrobat 'morphed' into two acrobats, one male and one female. Cocteau's

early notes for Satie hint at man's pursuit of a gravity-free state:

Médrano - Orion - two biplanes in the morning...the archangel Gabriel balancing himself on the edge of the window...the diver's lantern...Sodom and Gomorrah at the bottom of the sea...the meteorologist...the telescope...the parachutist who killed himself on the Eiffel Tower - the sadness of gravity - soles of lead - the sun - man slave of the sun.¹²³

Despite his mention of the Cirque Médrano, in the end Cocteau intended the

acrobats to be from the variety theater genre as opposed to the circus, with the intention

that there should be interaction between the performer and the audience - something that

was unheard of in ballet. Here the modern aspect of *Parade* is announced:

¹²² Léonide Massine, *My Life in Ballet*, ed. by Phyllis Hartroll and Robert Rubens (London: Macmillan, 1968): 104.

¹²³ Marianne Martin, "The Ballet *Parade*: A Dialogue between Cubism and Futurism," *Art Quarterly* Vol. 1, No. 2, 1978, 88.

Hurry up and run, get away from boredom! The most beautiful spectacle in the world. The past! The present! The future! A film of 50,000 metres! A great success of laughter and fright. THE MAN OFFERS a cure against all the affections of the heart, the brain, the spleen. This is the consequence of a wish! THE MODERN MAN is entering our world!¹²⁴

The acrobat costumes, covered with swirls of blue and white and decorated with stars, were modeled after the costumes commonly worn by acrobats in the circus and music hall. Stars, a symbol of the sky, were a common motif among professional acrobats of the day. Picasso had intended for the female costume to be a corseted bodice worn over star-covered trunks and tights, but later decided that the costume should be identical to the male costume. This new design had to be modified one more time when the female dancer refused to wear the suggestively tight costume. Diaghilev agreed that the costume was inappropriate and Picasso improvised a loose-fitting tee shirt and vest to be worn over the costume. The costume in this form has always appeared awkward, so when the Joffrey Ballet planned a revival of *Parade* Picasso gave his permission for the costume to once again be identical to the male costume.¹²⁵ Léonide Massine described the choreography for the two acrobats:

They advanced in a series of pirouettes and arabesques, and to give the illusion of a performer delicately poised on a tightrope I made Lopokova balance herself for a few seconds on Zverev's bent knee. This was followed by another flurry of pirouettes, after which Zverev lifted his partner and carried her off stage.¹²⁶

¹²⁴ Deborah Menaker Rothschild, *Picasso's 'Parade': From Street to Stage* (London: Sotheby's Publications, 1991), 85.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 124.

¹²⁶ Léonide Massine, *My Life in Ballet*, ed. by Phyllis Hartroll and Robert Rubens (London: Macmillan, 1968): 105.

The Managers

The three managers were considered to be the most cubist and therefore most shocking element of the ballet. They were envisioned by Cocteau and Picasso to be "unhuman or superhuman characters who would assume a false reality on the stage and reduce the real dancers to the stature of puppets."¹²⁷ Cocteau described them as "wild, uncultured, vulgar, and noisy" characters who would "injure whatever they praised."128 He called them "a sort of human scenery."¹²⁹

Two managers wore ten-foot costumes in a cubist design, while the third was a two-man horse modeled after the popular vaudeville act actually featuring a two-man horse. Due to the size and weight of the costumes, the choreography needed to be a slow motion combination of stomping, banging, and angular movements. The French and American manager's costumes were originally modeled after the sandwich-board men who walked the streets of Paris with advertising slogans on their backs. Massine describes these early sketches as "animated billboards suggesting the vulgarity of certain types of show-business promoters." ¹³⁰ Picasso made many preliminary sketches for the Managers. The early sandwich-board inspiration was transformed into a cubist interpretation: the faces combined frontal and profile views, and the costumes included elements of the scenery with realistic and abstract elements.¹³¹

The French Manager who introduces the Chinese Conjuror wears a black top hat, tie, and tails, and has a tree-lined Paris boulevard attached to his back. The obvious

¹²⁷ Jean Cocteau, A Call to Order, trans. Rollo H. Myers (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1974), 51. ¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Léonide Massine, My Life in Ballet, ed. by Phyllis Hartroll and Robert Rubens (London: Macmillan, 1968): 102.

¹³¹ Deborah Menaker Rothschild, Picasso's 'Parade': From Street to Stage (London: Sotheby's Publications, 1991), 133.

inspiration for this costume was the Master of Ceremonies in music halls, but can be seen as a parody of Diaghilev himself, complete with ballet baton in hand. This provided an inside joke for those who could recognize the caricature and knew that Diaghilev detested the music hall and variety theater.¹³² Massine wrote, "Diaghilev was irritated by the music hall acts. He clearly resented having his productions sandwiched between performing dogs and acrobats and clowns."¹³³ The French Manager "moved in a jerky, staccato manner to match Satie's opening phrases, stomping his feet and banging his walking stick on the floor to attract the attention of the crowd."¹³⁴

The American Manager who introduces the Little American Girl combines the typical American stereotypes of both the modern East Coast and the Wild West. The Manager is dressed in cowboy chaps, a cowcatcher, a bullet holster, and a skyscraper. He holds a megaphone and a placard that reads:

PA RA DE

The third Manager who introduces the Acrobats was at first intended to be a twoman horse, direct from vaudeville, with a papier-mâché manager on its back. When the papier-mâché manager fell off the horse during rehearsal, it was cut from the costume and Massine choreographed a dance for the horse alone, without musical accompaniment. The two-man horse routine was inspired by a local circus act: the Fratellini brothers at

¹³² Deborah Menaker Rothschild, *Picasso's 'Parade': From Street to Stage* (London: Sotheby's Publications, 1991), 171.

¹³³ Léonide Massine, *My Life in Ballet*, ed. by Phyllis Hartroll and Robert Rubens (London: Macmillan, 1968): 129.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 103.

the Cirque Médrano who performed their two-man horse skit regularly. The cubist design for the horse's head allowed the audience to see a duality in expression: when viewed from the front the horse appeared to be cross-eyed and comical and when viewed from the side, it had a menacing look to it.¹³⁵ Sir Roland Penrose described the Managers role in the final scene in the ballet:

As they stumped about the stage they complained to each other in their formidable language that the crowd was mistaking the preliminary parade for the real show...and for which no one had turned up. Finally their fruitless efforts brought them to a state of exhaustion and they collapsed on the stage, where they were found by the actors, who in turn also failed to entice an imaginary crowd inside...¹³⁶

¹³⁵ Deborah Menaker Rothschild, *Picasso's 'Parade': From Street to Stage* (London: Sotheby's Publications, 1991), 186.

¹³⁶ Nesta MacDonald, *Diaghilev Observed* (New York: Dance Horizons, 1975), 237.

CHAPTER 9: CURTAIN AND SET DESIGN

Picasso's curtain design for *Parade* is his largest work, measuring 10 x 17 meters (See Appendix C). It is a tempura on canvas representation of a circus tableau. On the right, seven characters surround a table for dining: Columbine and two harlequins, from the *commedia dell'arte* tradition, a toreador, a sailor, a Moor, and a woman. A dog lies at their feet. A large blue ball with white stars hints at the acrobat's costumes. On the left, a white mare with strap-on wings cares for her foal, while a winged woman stands on her back and reaches toward a red, white, and blue ladder with a monkey on top. In the background Mount Vesuvius and architectural ruins can be seen.¹³⁷ A red curtain frames the scene. This work was very romantic and old-fashioned in contrast to the cubism of the set, which was hidden from view by the curtain.

The set for *Parade* is a cubist view of a boulevard in Paris. Large buildings with huge dark windows tilt in different directions. The fairground booth, with a lyre on top and columns on either side, was in the center of the buildings. The colors were gray, ochre, and dull green.¹³⁸

The curtain and set in combination with Satie's score create an interesting contrast. Picasso's old style curtain was paired with Satie's old-style *Choral*, a fugue which takes a similarly conservative glance back in history. In contrast, when the curtain was raised, the audience saw a modern cubist set and heard circus-like music with modern sound effects, creating a juxtaposition of artistic and musical styles.

¹³⁷ Deborah Menaker Rothschild, *Picasso's 'Parade': From Street to Stage* (London: Sotheby's Publications, 1991), 209.

¹³⁸ Richard Buckle, *In Search of Diaghilev* (London: Sigwick and Jackson, 1955), 330.

CHAPTER 10: THE PREMIERE

On May 18, 1917 Parade opened at the Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris. The

audience was an eclectic mix of wealthy patrons, painters who had come to see Picasso's work, Satie's admirers (including Auric and Poulenc), and poets, including Guillaume Apollinaire and E.E. Cummings. On the day of the opening an article by Cocteau appeared in the newspaper *Excelsior*. In the article he explains his meaning of the ballet:

Our wish is that the public may consider *Parade* as a work which conceals poetry beneath the coarse outer skin of slapstick. Laughter is natural to Frenchmen: it is important to keep this in mind and not be afraid to laugh even at this most difficult time. Laughter is too Latin a weapon to be neglected. *Parade* brings together Erik Satie's first orchestral score, Pablo Picasso's first stage décor, Massine's first cubist choreography, and a poet's first attempt to express himself without words. It was appropriate...to do justice for the first time to the true meaning of 'realism' in theatrical terms...The elements ...in *Parade* create reality—which alone has the power to move us, well disguised though it might be.¹³⁹

The French poet and army officer Guillaume Apollinaire wrote the program notes for the ballet (see Appendix D). Apollinaire, with Picasso, had established the aesthetic principals of Cubism and was considered a leader in the European avant-garde. His program notes became a manifesto of *l'esprit nouveau*, or "the new spirit." Cocteau had called the ballet 'realistic.' Apollinaire took it one step further and described it as 'surrealistic,' thereby coining a term that would soon develop into an important artistic movement.

Definitions of *Parade* are blossoming everywhere, like the lilac bushes of this tardy spring....It is a scenic poem transposed by the innovative musician Erik Satie into astonishingly expressive music, so clear and simple that it seems to reflect the marvelously lucid spirit of France. The cubist painter Picasso and the most daring of today's choreographers, Léonide Massine, have here consummately achieved, for the first time, that alliance between painting and dance, between the plastic and mimetic arts, that is a herald of the more

¹³⁹ Francis Steegmuller, *Cocteau: A Biography* (Boston: Little Brown and Co., 1970), 183-184.

comprehensive art to come. There is nothing paradoxical about this. The Ancients, in whose lives music played such an important role, were totally unaware of harmony, which constitutes the very basis of modern music. This new alliance--I say new, because until now scenery and costumes were linked only by factitious bonds--has given rise, in *Parade*, to a kind of surrealism, which I consider to be the point of departure for a whole series of manifestations of the New Spirit that is making itself felt today and that will certainly appeal to our best minds. We may expect it to bring about profound changes in our arts and manners through universal joyfulness, for it is only natural, after all, that they keep pace with scientific and industrial progress.¹⁴⁰

The reception of the ballet as described by Cocteau is considered an exaggeration. Cocteau recalled, "They wanted to kill us. Women rushed at us armed with hat pins. We were saved by Apollinaire because his head was bandaged, he was in uniform and was therefore respected: he set himself in front of us like a rampart"¹⁴¹ In another account Cocteau said,

The piece lasted twenty minutes. After the curtain went down the audience was uproarious for fifteen, and finally fistfights broke out. I was crossing the theater with Apollinaire to join Picasso and Satie, who were waiting for us in a box, when a large lady singer recognized me. 'There's one of them!' she cried- she meant the authors. And she lunged at me, brandishing a hatpin, trying to put my eyes out.'¹⁴²

Cocteau said that he overheard an audience member say, "If I had known it was going to be so stupid I'd have brought the children."¹⁴³ In an article by Cocteau published in Vanity Fair magazine in September of 1917, Cocteau made his most dramatic claim: "I have heard the cry of a bayonet charge in Flanders, but it was nothing compared to what happened that night at the Châtelet Theatre."¹⁴⁴ These quotes from

¹⁴⁰Vassiliki Kolocotroni, Jane Goldman, and Olga Taxidou, editors, *Modernism: An Anthology of Sources and Documents* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 211.

¹⁴¹ Francis Steegmuller, *Cocteau: A Biography* (Boston: Little Brown and Co., 1970), 186.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 187.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

Cocteau should be viewed with the understanding that his goal with *Parade* was to astonish Diaghilev, and his role model was the scandal of Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*. A more balanced account of the ballet's opening night was written by Paul Morand, a diplomat and writer who was in the audience that afternoon:

Full house yesterday at the Châtelet for *Parade*. Canvas scenery in circus style by Picasso, pretty music by Satie, partly Rimsky, partly dance-hall. The Managers, cubist constructions, were surprising. The Little American Girl and the acrobatic dancers had charming costumes. Massine too, as the Chinese juggler. But Cocteau's idea of replacing the stereotyped movements of ballet with fragments of everyday behavior, and his stylized modern actions – starting up a motor car, taking a photograph, etc. – did not seem quite worked out. Much applause and a few whistles.¹⁴⁵

Massine's recollection of *Parade's* premiere was positive. He recalled:

My greatest thrill that season was the opening night of *Parade*. The production lived up to all our expectations...The audience appreciated the novelty of the theme, the wit of Satie's music, and the cubist setting and costumes. They seemed to find the whole ballet entertaining, and yet, judging by the reviews, they also caught the serious undertones and recognized the efforts we had made to synthesize the new art forms.¹⁴⁶

Although there may not have been a scandal on the day of the premiere, shortly

following the opening of *Parade*, Erik Satie created his own scandal. A Parisian music critic, Jean Poueigh, wrote a negative review of the ballet, calling *Parade* a "ballet that outrages French taste." It was not this review that offended Satie, so much as the fact that Poueigh had congratulated Satie and shook his hand following the opening performance. Satie sent him the following sequence of post cards:

¹⁴⁵ Richard Buckle, *In Search of Diaghilev* (London: Sigwick and Jackson, 1955), 331.

¹⁴⁶ Léonide Massine, *My Life in Ballet*, ed. by Phyllis Hartroll and Robert Rubens (London: Macmillan, 1968): 111.

Erik Satie to Jean Ploueigh

30 May 1917 ...What I know is that you are an ass-hole – and, if I dare say so – an unmusical 'ass-hole.' Above all, never again offer me your dirty hand... Erik Satie

Erik Satie to Monsieur Jean Poueigh Head Flop Chief Gourds and Turkey

3 June 1917

...You are not as dumb as I thought...Despite your bonehead air and your shortsightedness, you see things at a great distance...

Erik Satie

Erik Satie to Monsieur Fuckface Poueigh Famous Gourd and Composer for Nitwits

5 June 1917 ...Lousy ass-hole, this is from where I shit on you with all my force... Erik Satie

Satie was sued by Jean Poueigh for slander and despite testimony from Jean

Cocteau, Ricardo Viñes, and Guillaume Apollinaire, among others, he was sentenced to a

week in prison, a fine of a hundred francs, and a thousand francs in damages to Jean

Poueigh.¹⁴⁷

Diaghilev and the Ballet Russes performed Parade again in 1919, this time in

London. The critic reactions were strong. Regarding the score it was said,

On the musical side, the novelty piqued curiosity to no small extent. For the composer is Erik Satie, of whose eccentricities one has heard a great deal of in recent years... but whatever his gifts, Satie, to judge, at any rate, from a single hearing of *Parade*, has not found his true vocation as a composer of ballet.

¹⁴⁷ Ornella Volta, *Satie As Seen Through His Letters*, trans. by Michael Bullock (London: Marion Boyars, 1989), 151.

The critic Ernest Newman declared that if anyone but Diaghilev had put on the performance he would have "dismissed it as music-hall or pantomime." He went on the call Erik Satie a "feeble French joker in music...He fancies that he has been humorous when he sets up a couple of pages of inconsequent harmonies without bar-lines, and witty when he has printed a foolish little composition in red ink instead of black."¹⁴⁸

Diaghilev staged a Paris revival of *Parade* in December of 1920, with the ballet sharing a bill with Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*. Many of Cocteau's sound effects that were cut from the original were included in the revival. Cocteau wrote to Valentine Hugo, "Diaghilev is sweet as sugar and is letting me stage *Parade* as it always should have been staged."¹⁴⁹ Satie was once again frustrated with Cocteau and wrote to Hugo,

"...*Parade* goes on the 21st of this month. Cocteau is repeating his tiresome antics of 1917. He is being such a nuisance to Picasso and me that I feel quite knocked out. It's a mania with him. *Parade* is his alone. That's all right with me. But why didn't he do the sets and costumes and write the music, for this poor ballet?"¹⁵⁰

The revival was a great success, perhaps due in part to the fact that the names Cocteau, Satie, and Picasso were better recognized by 1920. Also, by 1920 cubism was less shocking than it had been in 1917. Cocteau wrote again to Hugo: "Let me tell you right away that *Parade* was a triumph."¹⁵¹ He later said,

There were twelve curtain calls, and Satie, Picasso and I had to appear in a box and bow. The same people who wanted to murder us in 1917 stood up and applauded in 1920. What had intervened? What made those conceited theatre-goers do a *volte-face* and admit their mistake so humbly?¹⁵²

¹⁴⁸ Nesta MacDonald, *Diaghilev Observed* (New York: Dance Horizons, 1975), 238.

¹⁴⁹ Francis Steegmuller, *Cocteau: A Biography* (Boston: Little Brown and Co., 1970), 261.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Ibid.

The ballet was performed again in 1920, this time in London. Sir Roland Penrose

described the reception of *Parade's* curtain, set and music:

There was a sigh of pleasure and relief...the curtain was a delightful composition in a style that was only indirectly cubist; it owed its inspiration rather to the popular art of the circus poster...The colors, mostly greens and reds, are reminiscent of the tender melancholy light in which the saltimbanques appeared ten years before...The delightful hopes offered by the drop curtain were to be shattered as the curtain rose. The music changed; sounds 'like an inspired village band' accompanied by the noise of dynamos, sirens, express trains, airplanes, typewriters and other outrageous dins broke on the ears of the startled audience...¹⁵³

¹⁵³ Nesta MacDonald, *Diaghilev Observed* (New York: Dance Horizons, 1975), 236.

CHAPTER 11: CONCLUSION

The ballet *Parade* draws from the modern world in which it was written and incorporates music hall, cinema, circus, ragtime, and modern sounds. It does not make use of elaborate sets and the storyline is not inspired by myth, fairy tale, or legend. It fuses high art with low art. *Parade* was the first of the modern ballets. Composer Darius Milhaud believed Satie was an important influence on French music and stated that "developments since 1900 owe the same debt to the *Gymnopédies* as those since 1920 owe to *Parade*."¹⁵⁴

Erik Satie inspired the next generation of composers, including *Les Six*, to move beyond impressionism and German influence to create what they would refer to as distinctly French music. Cocteau said in his 1918 *Cock and Harlequin*: "Enough of clouds, waves, aquariums, water-sprites, and nocturnal scents; what we need is a music of the earth, every-day music."¹⁵⁵ He and his fellow artists had done just that.

¹⁵⁴ Rollo H. Myers, *Erik Satie* (New York: Dover, 1968), 19.

¹⁵⁵ Jean Cocteau, *A Call to Order*, trans. Rollo H. Myers (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1974), 19.

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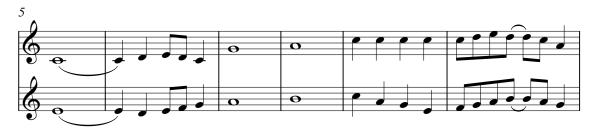
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APPENDIX A: BERLIN VS. SATIE

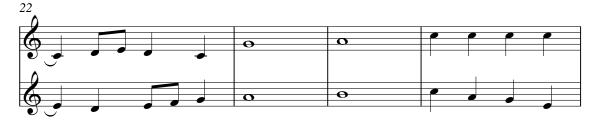
BERLIN VS. SATIE















APPENDIX B: CHINESE CONJUROR COSTUME



APPENDIX C: PICASSO'S RED CURTAIN

APPENDIX D: PROGRAM NOTES BY APOLLINAIRE

Definitions of *Parade* are blossoming everywhere, like the lilac bushes of this tardy spring...

It is a scenic poem transposed by the innovative musician Erik Satie into astonishingly expressive music, so clear and simple that it seems to reflect the marvelously lucid spirit of France.

The cubist painter Picasso and the most daring of today's choreographers, Léonide Massine, have here consummately achieved, for the first time, that alliance between painting and dance, between the plastic and mimetic arts, that is a herald of the more comprehensive art to come.

There is nothing paradoxical about this. The Ancients, in whose lives music played such an important role, were totally unaware of harmony, which constitutes the very basis of modern music.

This new alliance-I say new, because until now scenery and costumes were linked only by factitious bonds-has given rise, in *Parade*, to a kind of surrealism, which I consider to be the point of departure for a whole series of manifestations of the New Spirit that is making itself felt today and that will certainly appeal to our best minds. We may expect it to bring about profound changes in our arts and manners through universal joyfulness, for it is only natural, after all, that they keep pace with scientific and industrial progress.

Having broken with the choreographic tradition cherished by those who used to be known, in Russia, under the strange name 'balletomanes', Massine has been careful not to yield to the temptation of pantomime. He has produced something totally new-a marvelously appealing kind of dance, so true, so lyrical, so human, and so joyful that it would even be capable (if it were worth the trouble) of illuminating the terrible black sun of Dürer's *Melancholy*. Jean Cocteau has called this a realistic ballet. Picasso's cubist costumes and scenery bear witness to the realism of his art.

This realism-or this cubism, if you will-is the influence that has most stirred the arts over the past ten years.

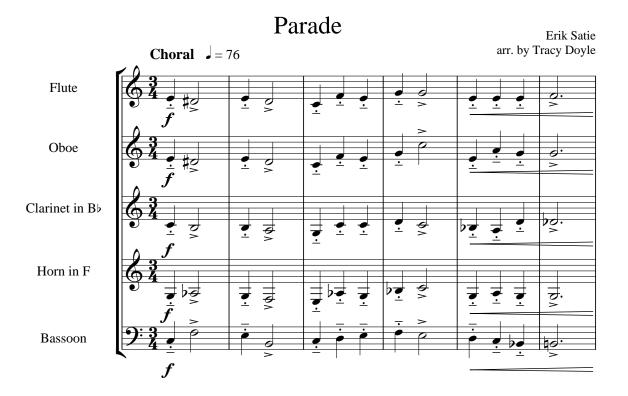
The costumes and scenery in *Parade* show clearly that its chief aim has been to draw the greatest possible amount of aesthetic emotion from objects. Attempts have often been made to return painting to its barest elements. In most of the Dutch painters, in Chardin, in the impressionists, one finds hardly anything but painting.

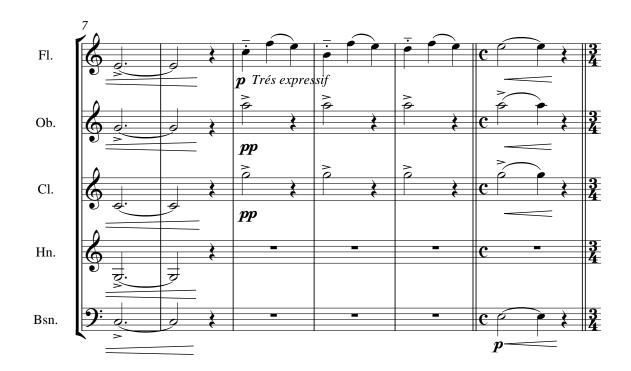
Picasso goes further than any of them. This is clearly evident in *Parade*, a work in which one's initial astonishment is soon replaced by admiration. Here the aim is, above all, to express reality. However, the motif is not reproduced but represented-more precisely, it is not represented but rather suggested by means of an analytic synthesis that embraces all the visible elements of an object and, if possible, something else as well: an integral schematization that aims to reconcile contradictions by deliberately renouncing any attempt to render the immediate appearance of an object. Massine has adapted himself astonishingly well to the discipline of Picasso's art. He has identified himself with it, and his art has become enriched with delightful inventions, such as the realistic steps of the horse in *Parade*, formed by two dancers, one of whom does the steps of the forelegs and the other those of the hind legs. The fantastic constructions representing the gigantic and surprising features of The Managers, far from presenting an obstacle to Massine's imagination, have, one might say, served to give it a liberating impetus.

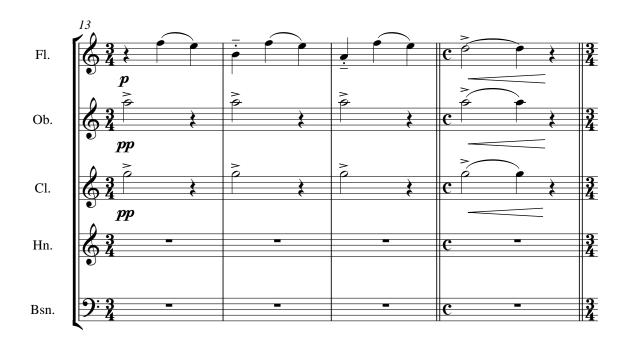
All in all, *Parade* will change the ideas of a great many spectators. They will be surprised, that is certain; but in a most agreeable way, and charmed as well; *Parade* will reveal to them all the gracefulness of the modern movements, a gracefulness they never suspected.

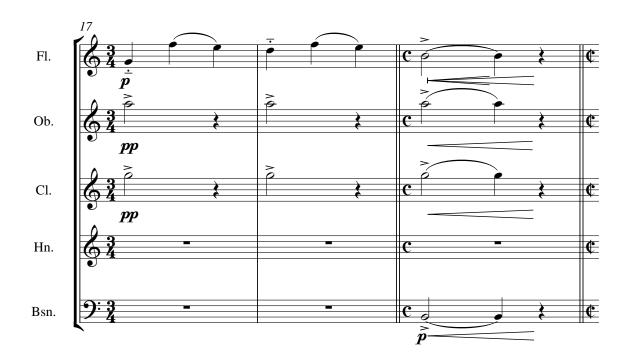
A magnificent vaudeville Chinaman will make their imaginations soar; the American Girl cranking up her imaginary car will express the magic of their daily lives, whose wordless rites are celebrated with exquisite and astonishing agility by the acrobatin blue and white tights.

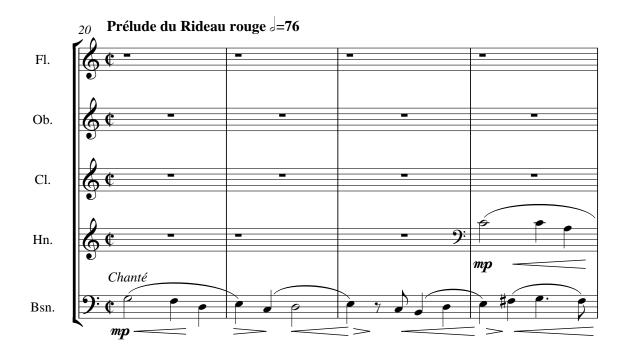
APPENDIX E: DOYLE ARRANGEMENT OF *PARADE* FOR WOODWIND QUINTET AND PERCUSSION





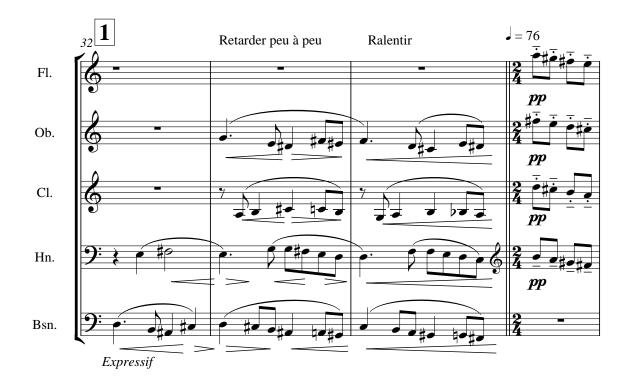




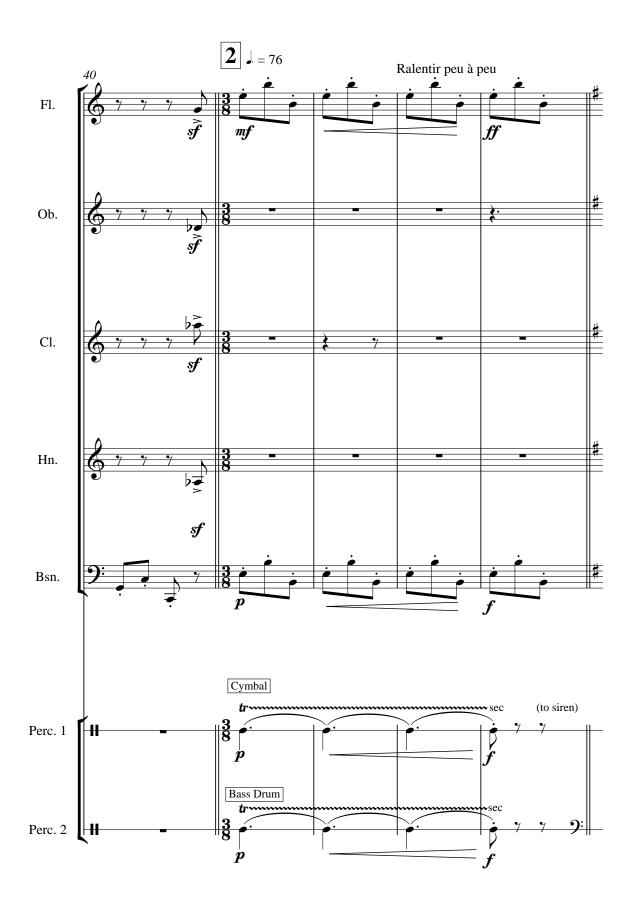


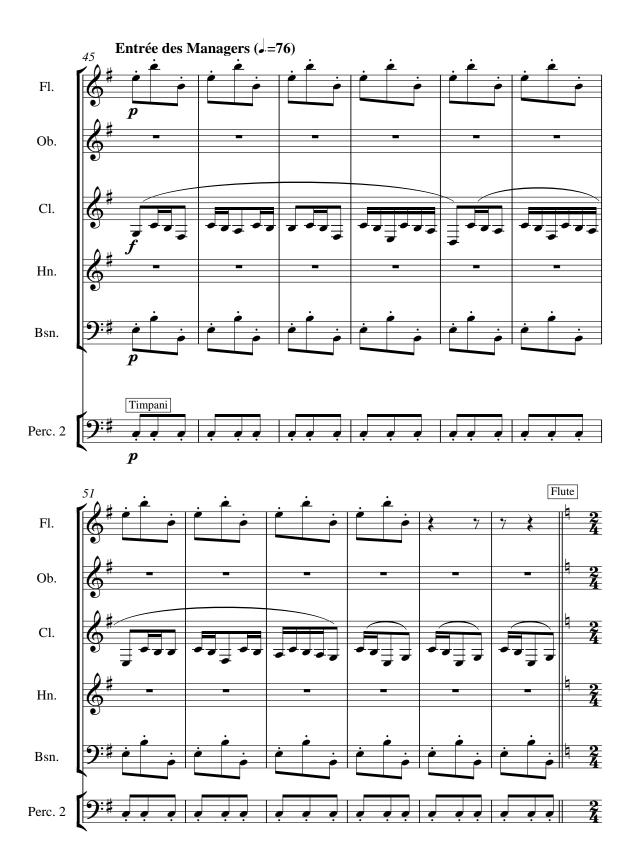






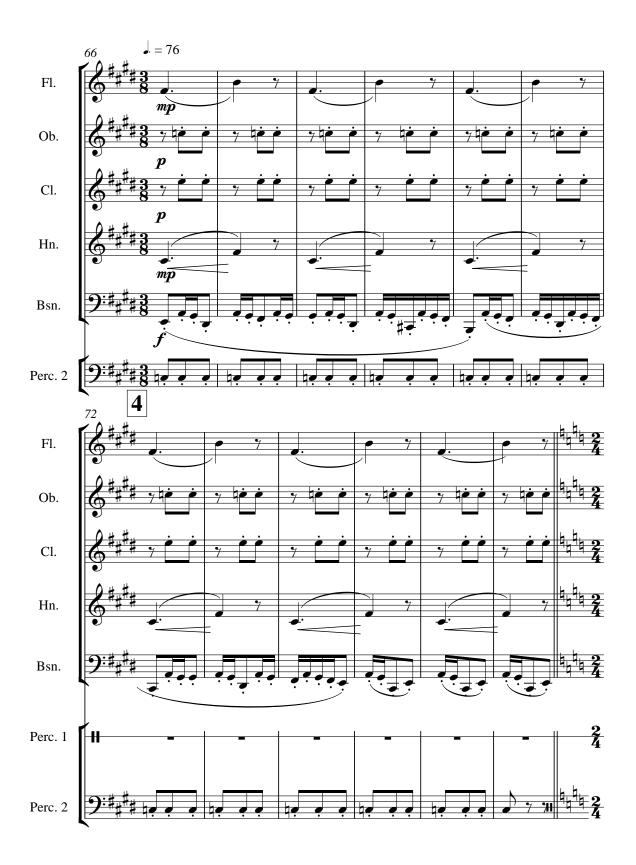


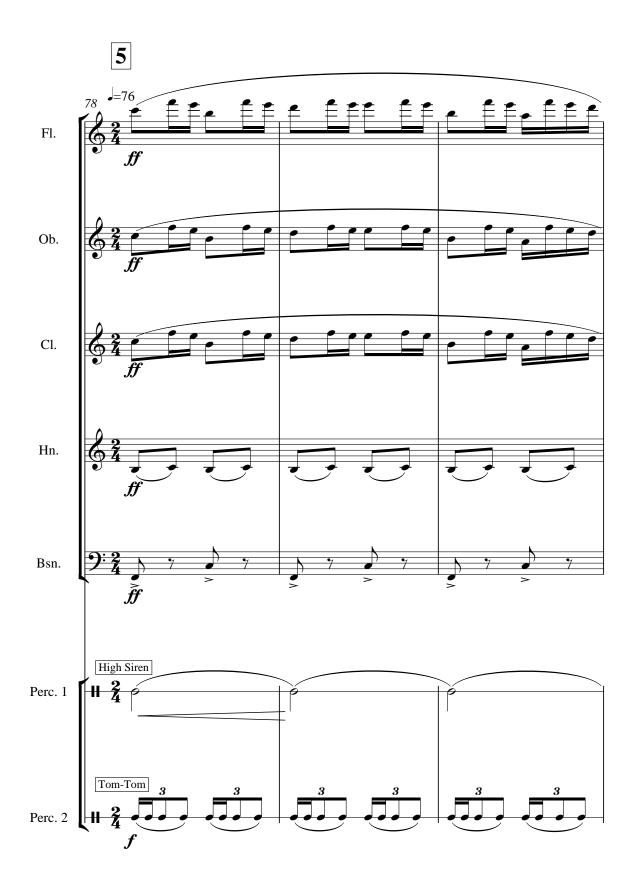


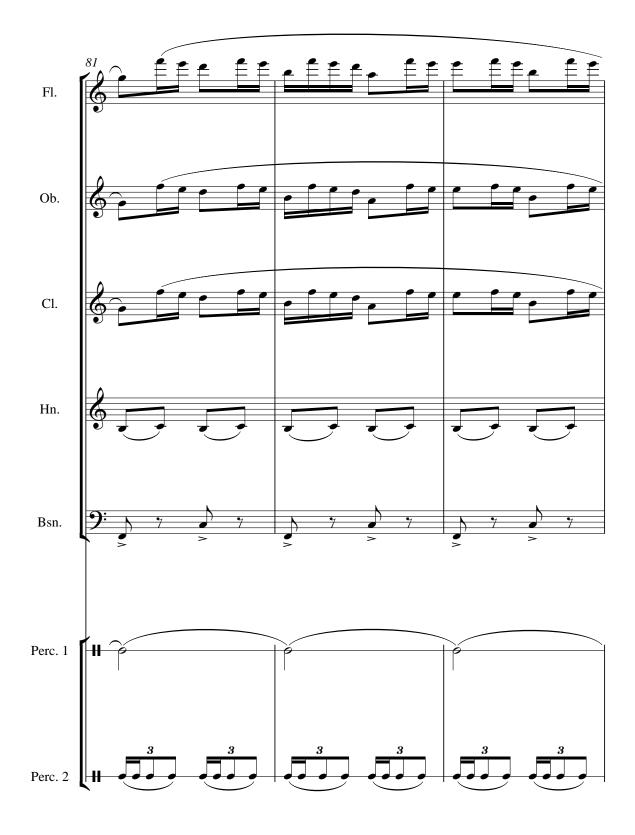


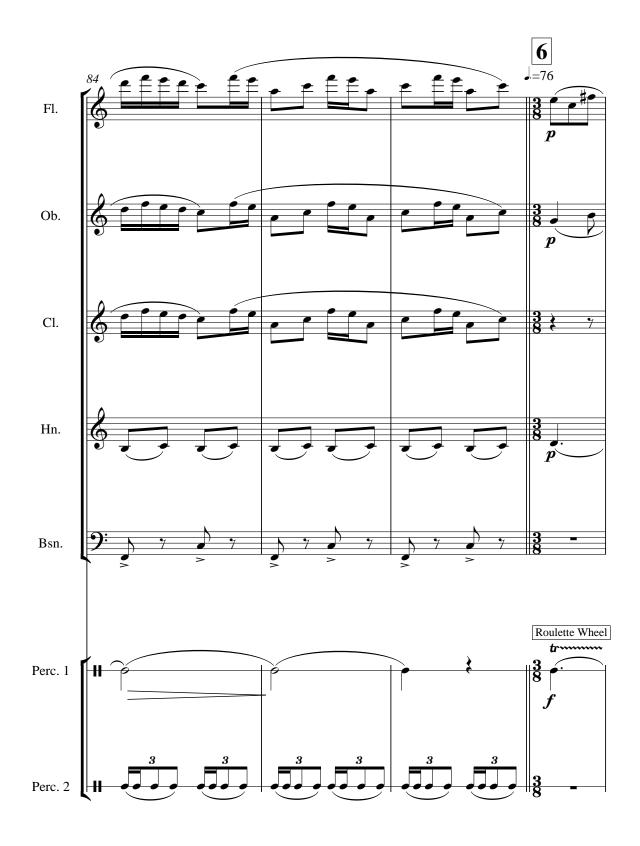


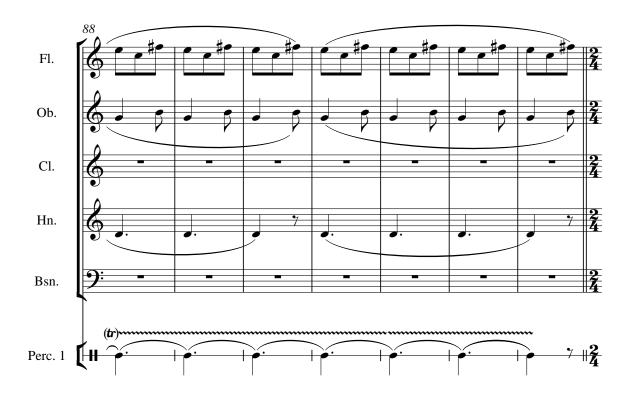






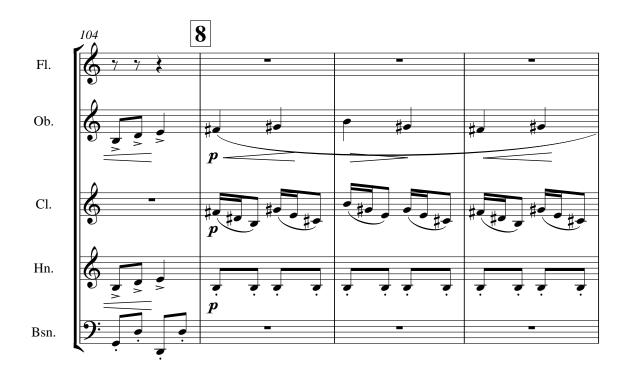


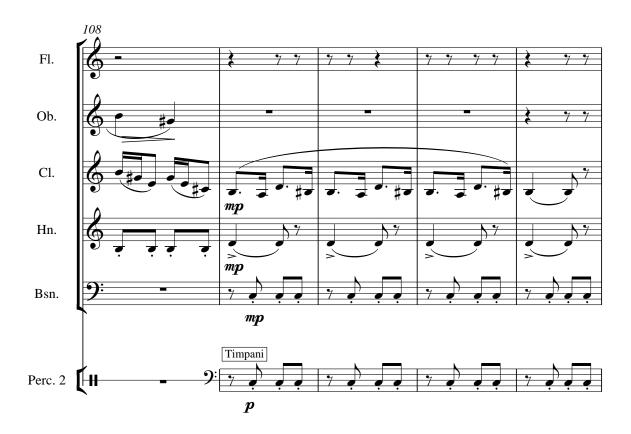


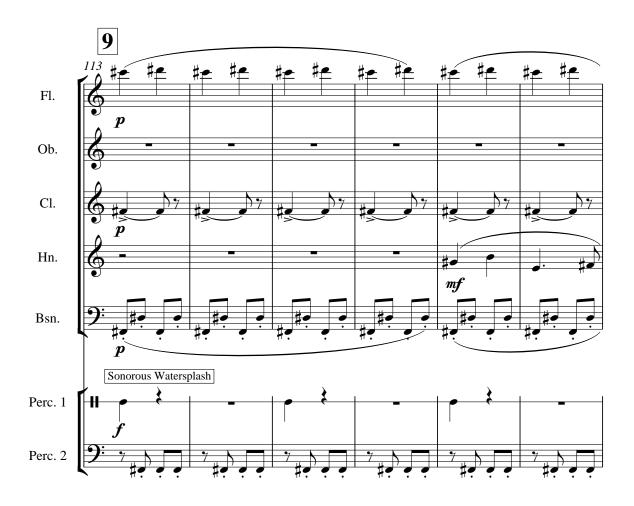






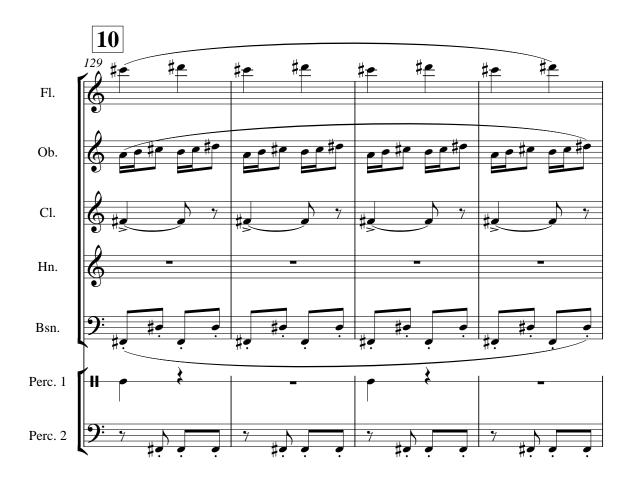


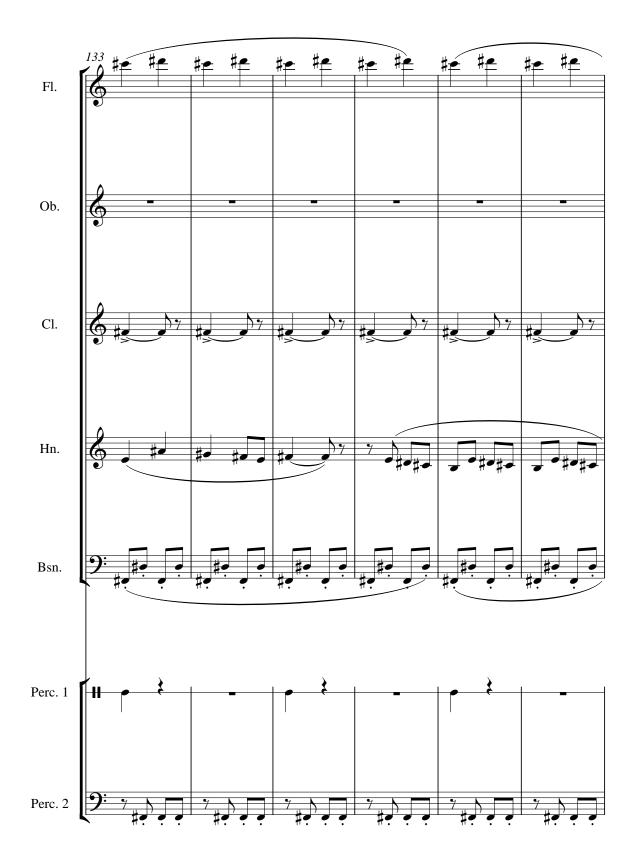


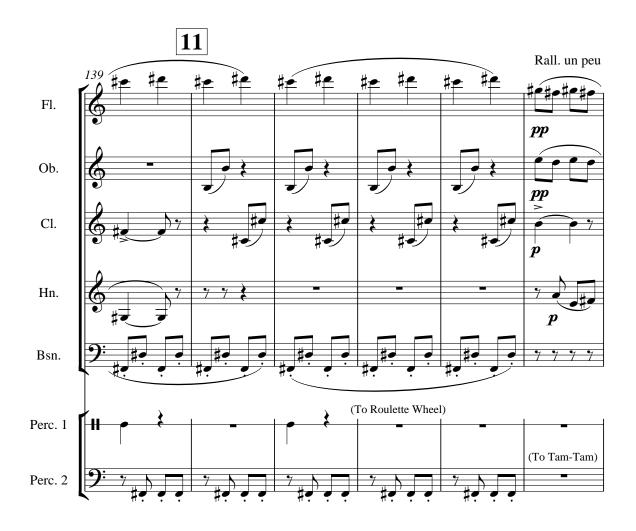


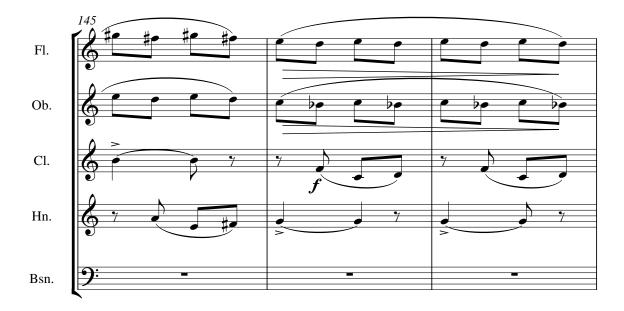


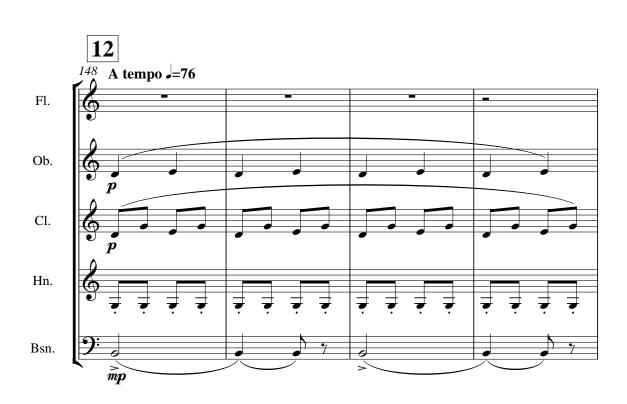


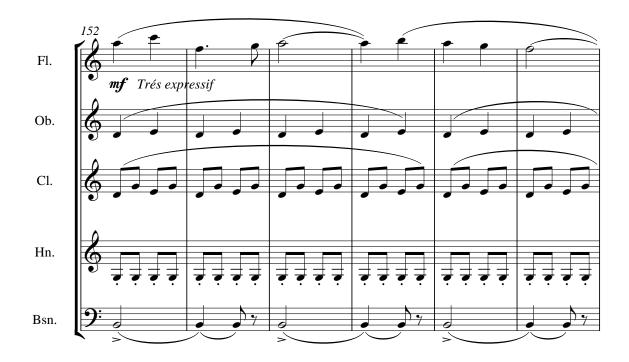


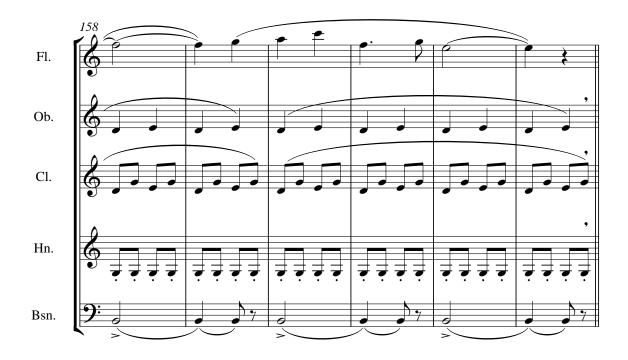


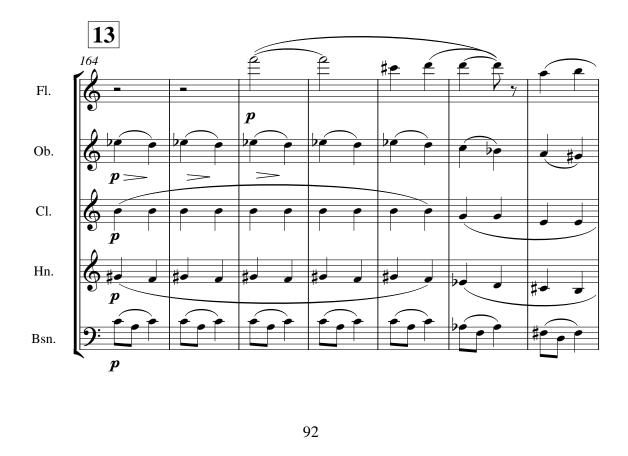


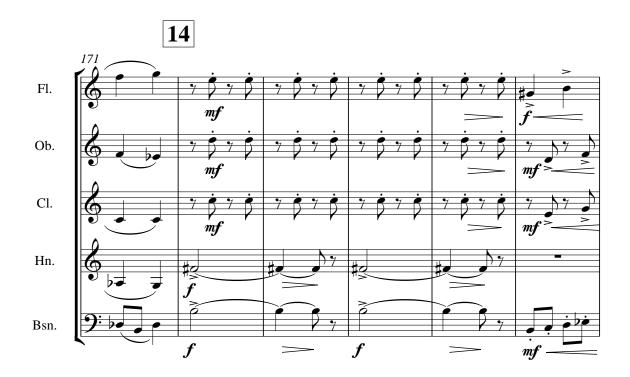




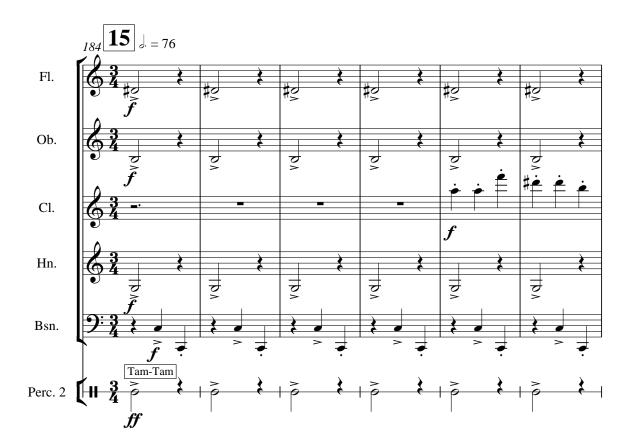




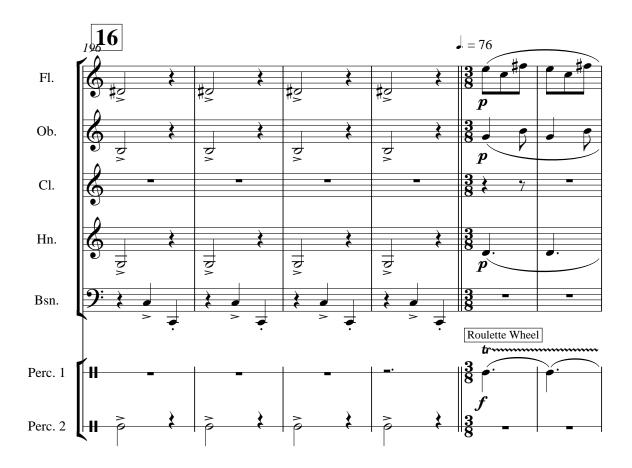


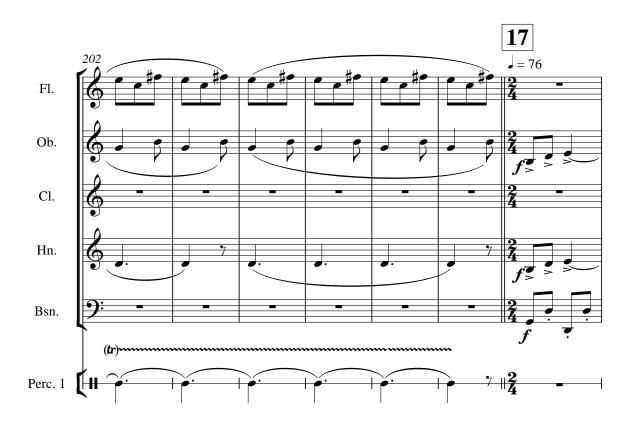


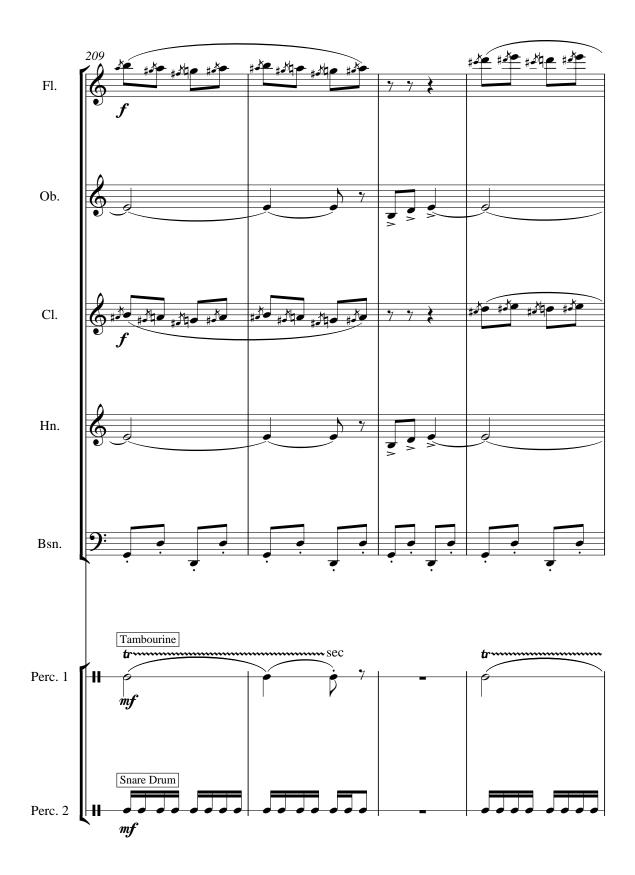


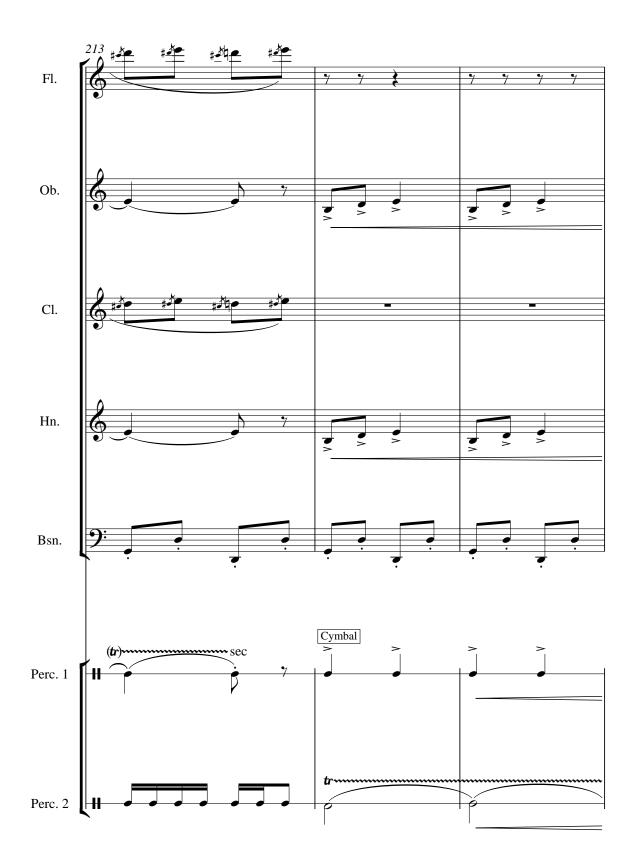




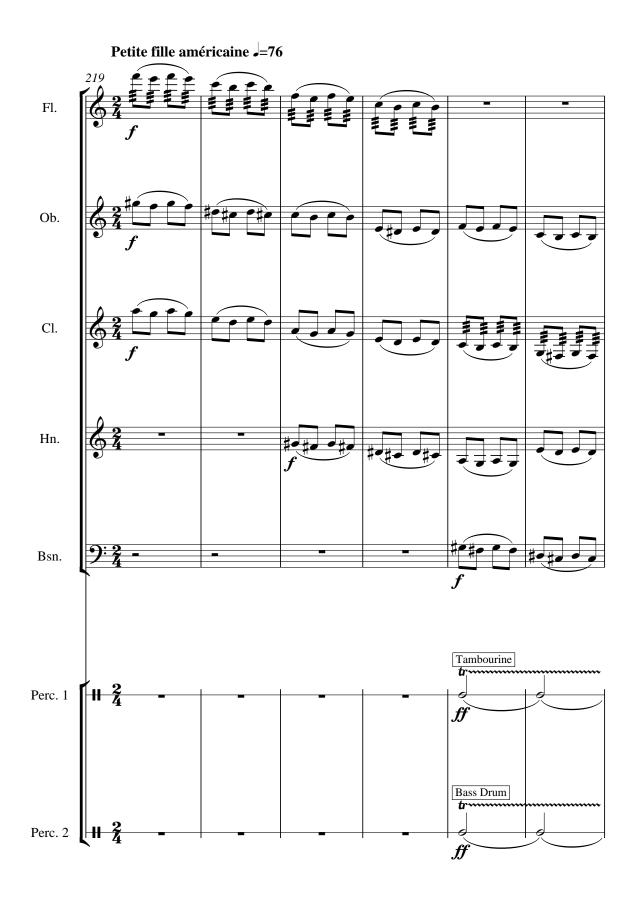








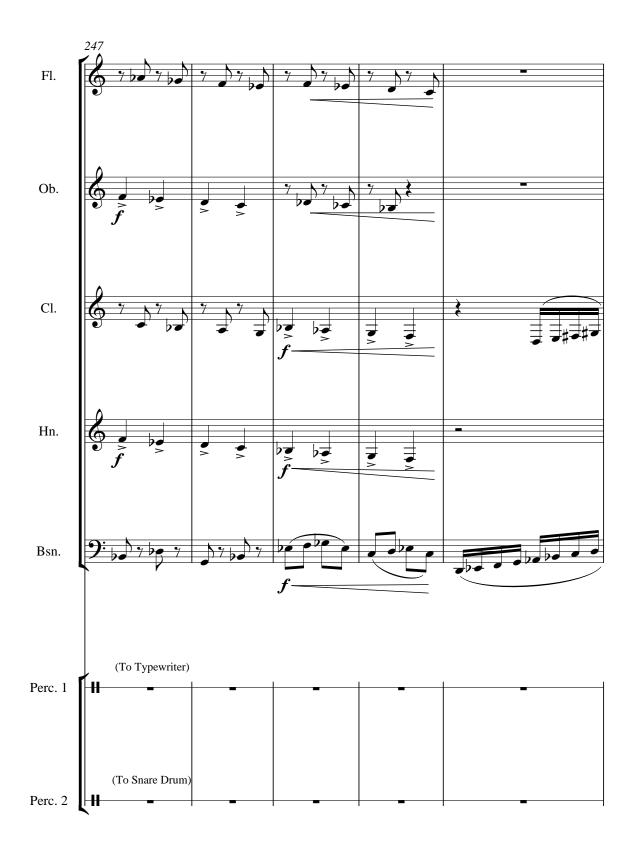
















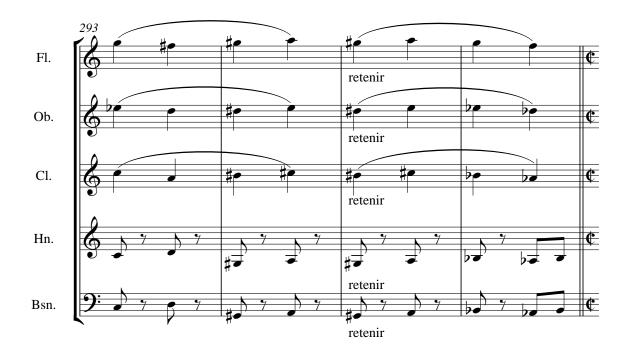






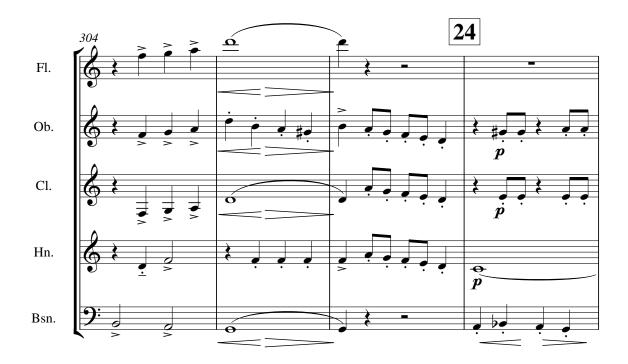










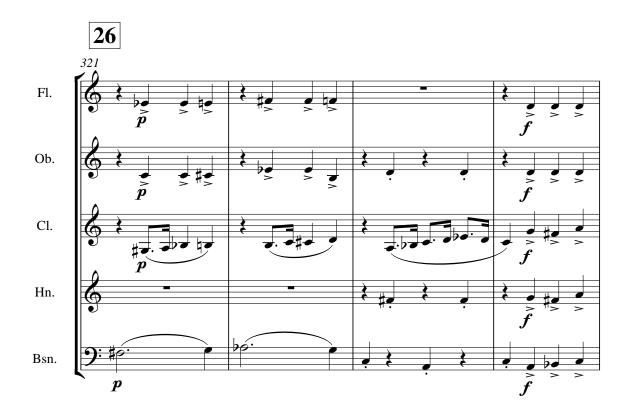


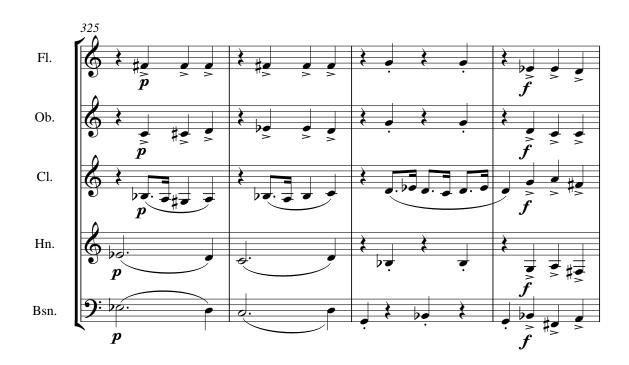






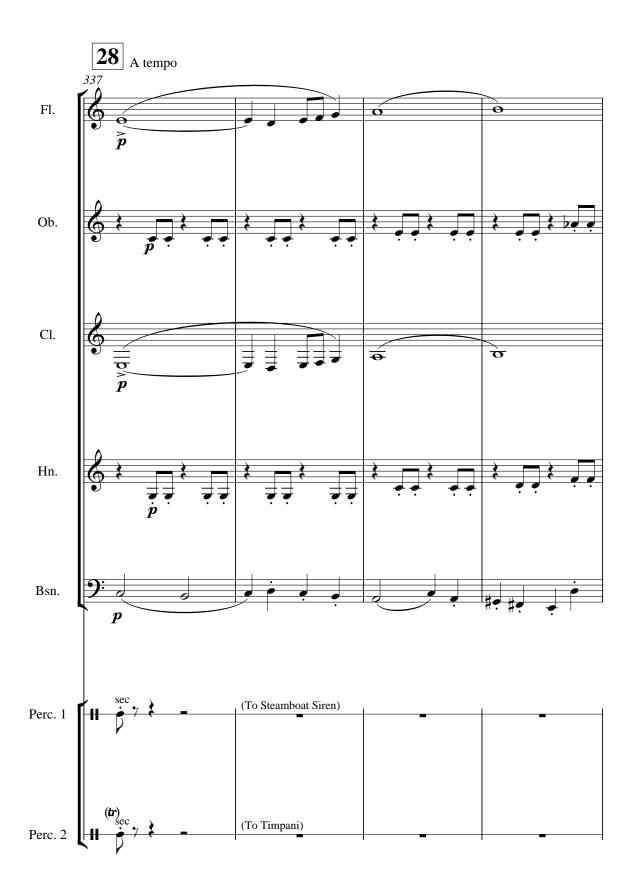






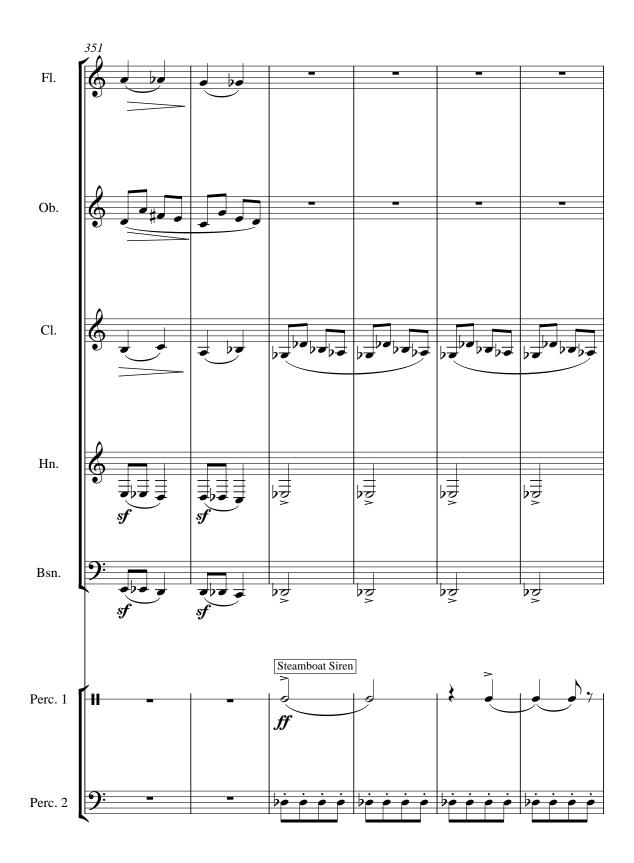


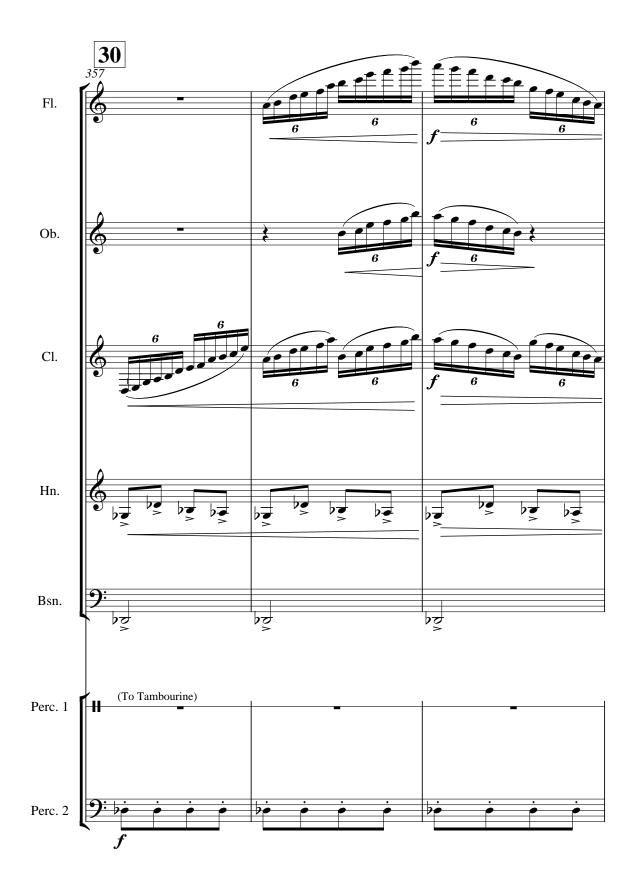


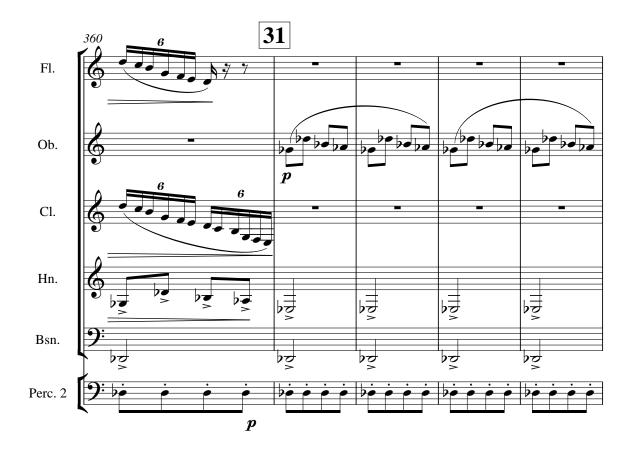






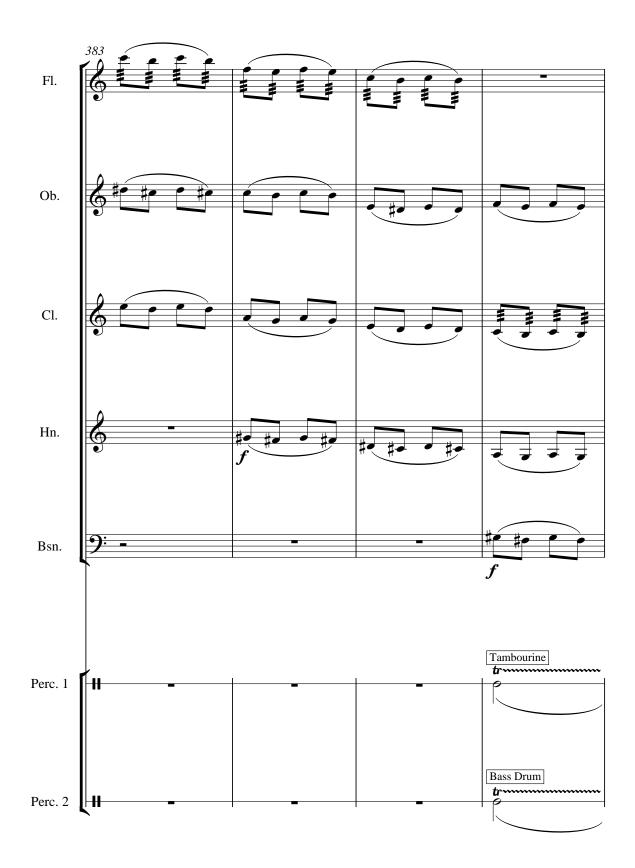












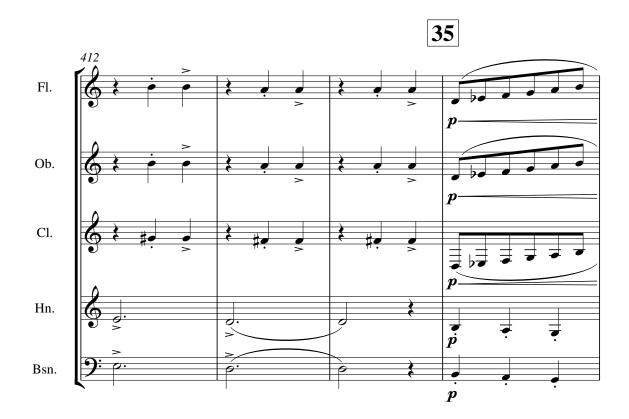


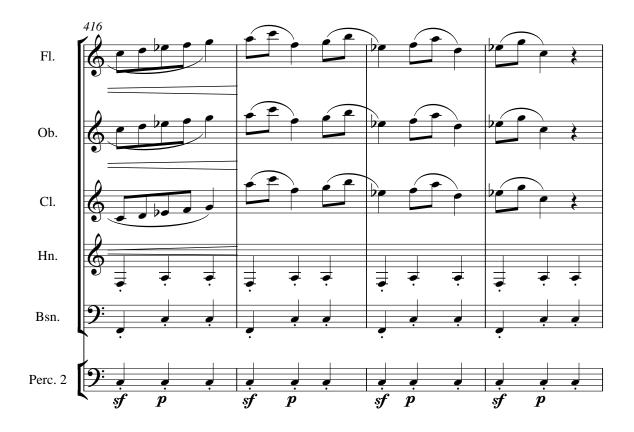




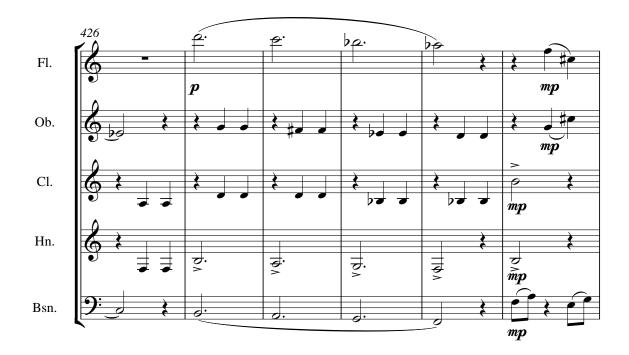








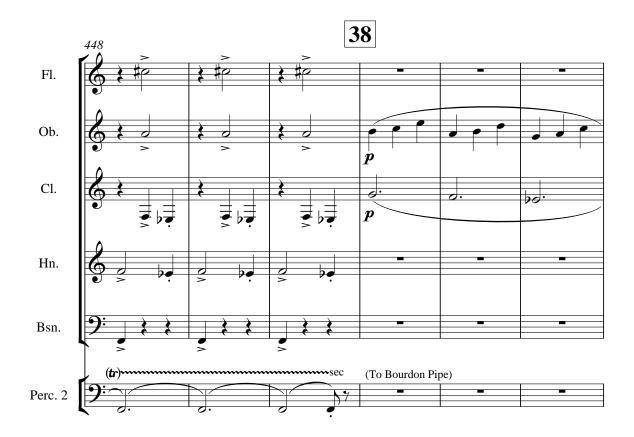


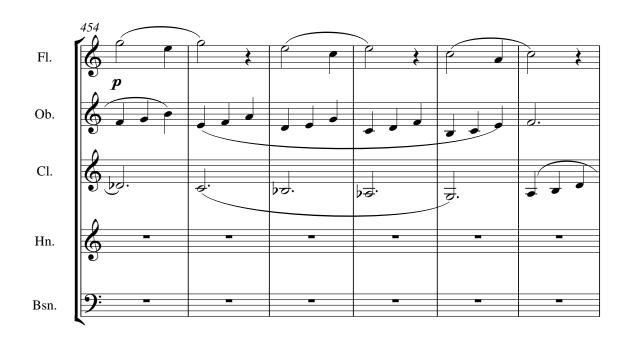


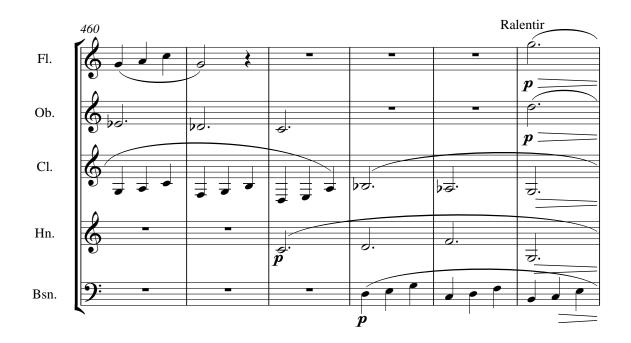




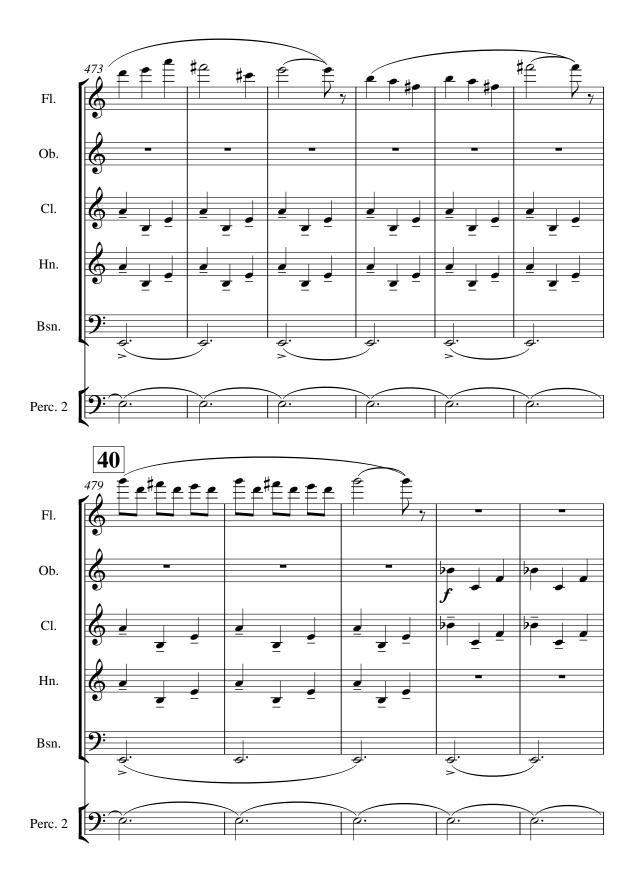






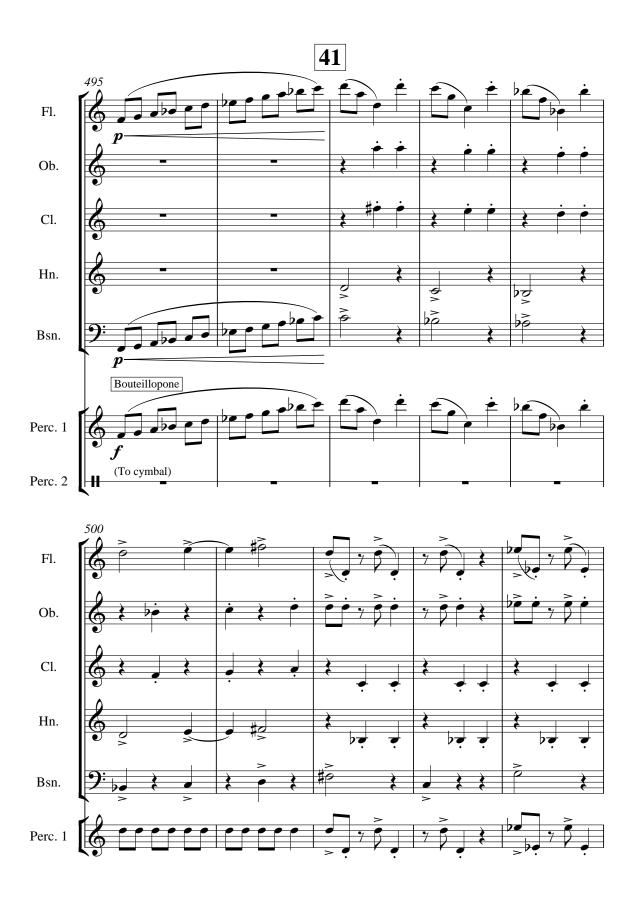


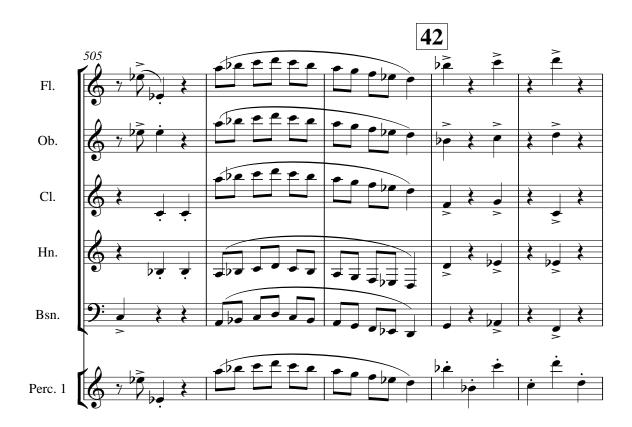




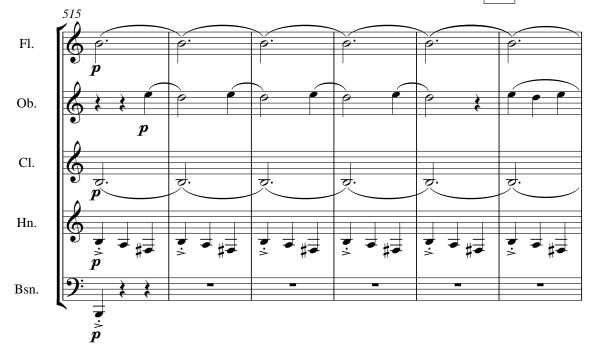


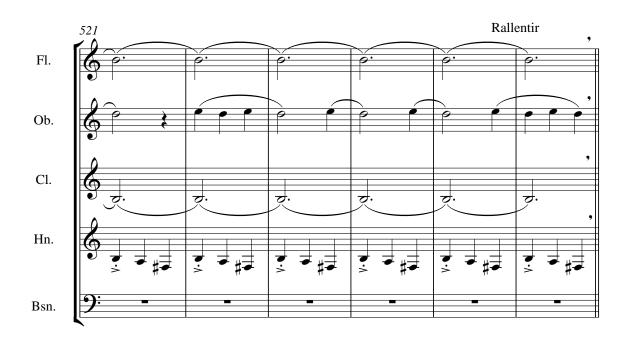
















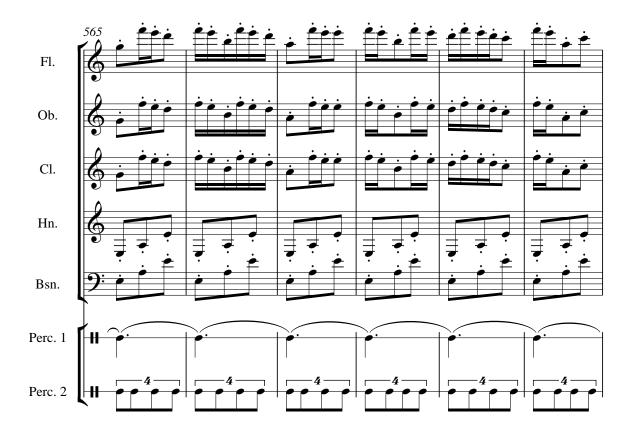


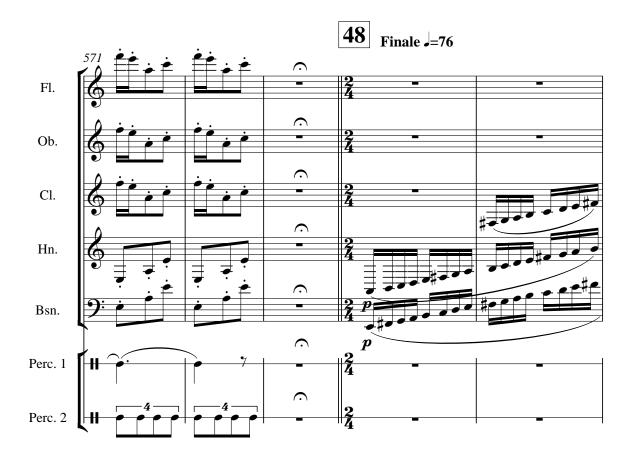


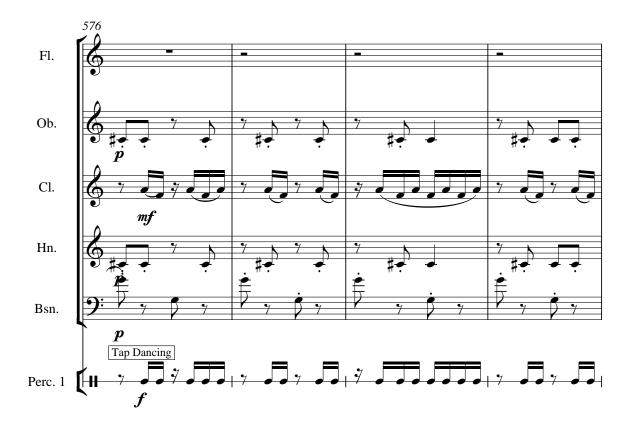






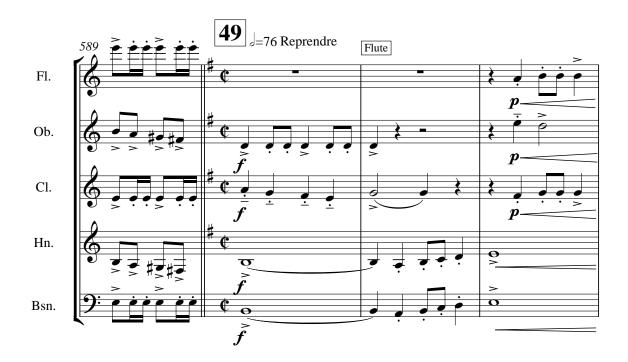




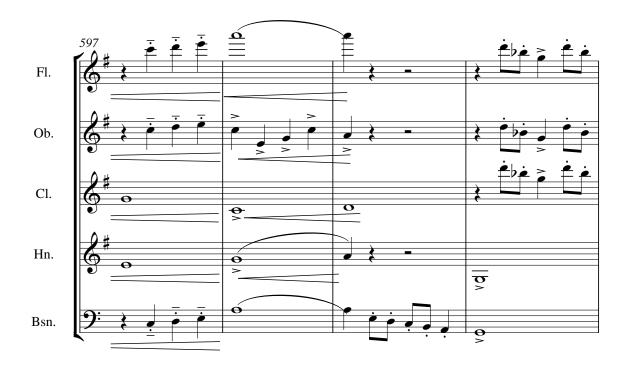








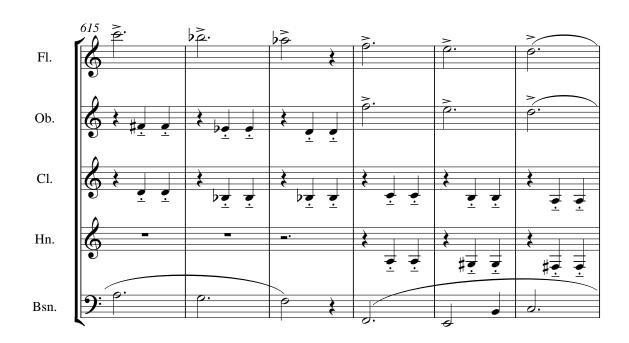


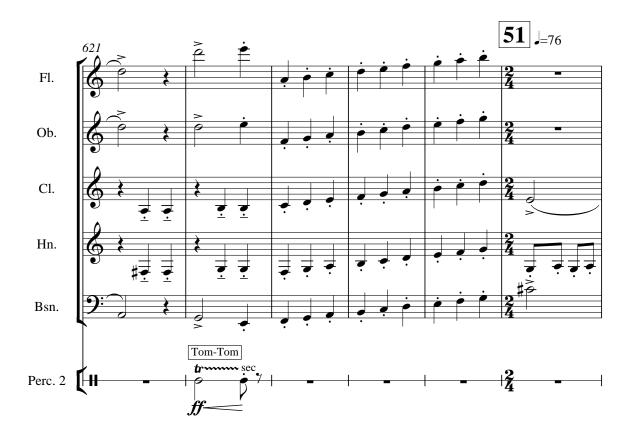






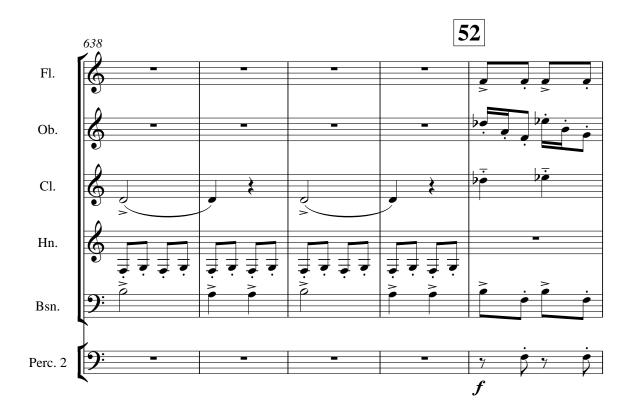


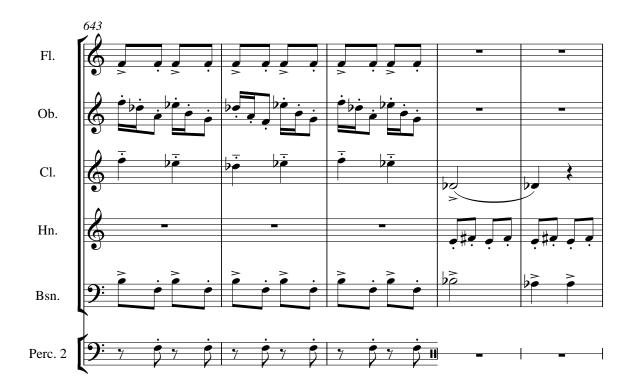


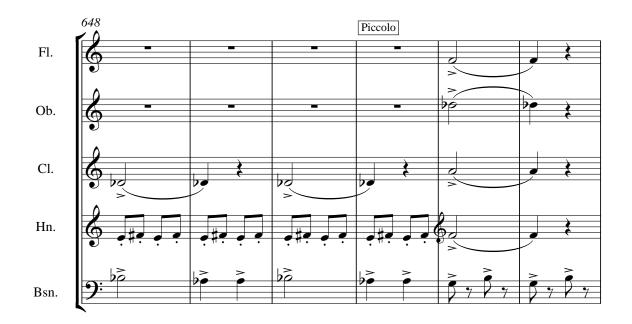








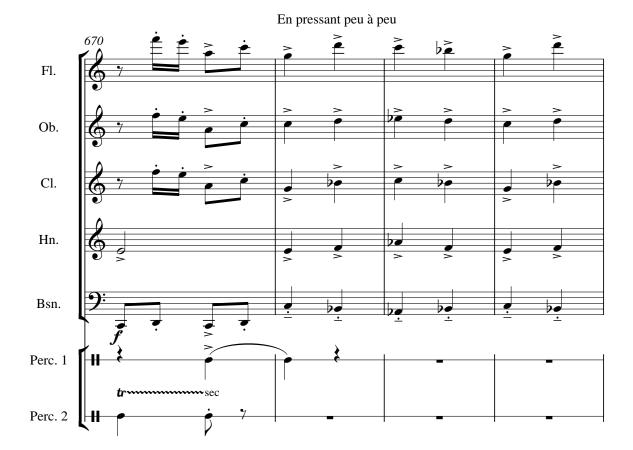






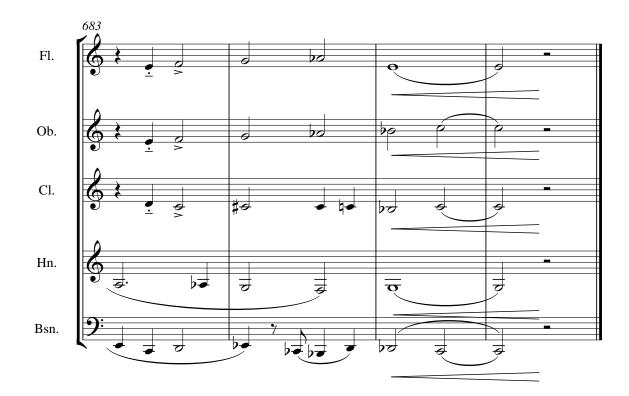












APPENDIX F: PERMISSIONS

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Reference : Dissertation on Satie/Cocteau/Picasso's ballet Parade, Louisiana State Univ., Baton Rouge.

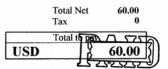
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VITA

Tracy Doyle received her bachelor's and master's degrees in music education from the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, Massachusetts and her doctor of musical arts degree from Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.