

## A Sociology of the Apaches: 'Sacred Battalion' for *Pelléas*

JANN PASLER

28 April 1902

It was like any other day. One left one's apartment, one's head still buzzing with the nothingness of daily affairs, saddened by female betrayals (who cares?), crushed by wounds of friendship (so cruel). Crossing the swarming boulevard, one entered a theatre full of the babbling gossips who attend afternoon dress rehearsals. High-necked dresses, drab jackets, pince-nez and bald heads always seemed the same. Someone was selling programs with a plot summary of the new opera we'd all come to see, Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande*. But people reading it were laughing, some calling it *Pédéraste et Médisante* [*Pederast and Slanderer*]. Why, I asked myself? The only performance of Maeterlinck's play almost ten years ago by the Théâtre de l'Oeuvre was practically a dramatic rite. Maeterlinckophilia has become a religion and more intolerant than any other cult has ever been ... Critics told us in advance that we were not capable of understanding Maeterlinck's genius and, if we wouldn't admire without understanding, we were simple idiots. Well! I think I understood *Pelléas* quite well!

But now Maeterlinck is acting like a perfect fool. Only two weeks ago he wrote to *Le Figaro* disassociating himself from the work because Debussy made 'arbitrary and absurd cuts that rendered the work incomprehensible.' We know he was upset because the composer refused to cast his full-voiced girlfriend as Mélisande. All this even though he gave Debussy carte blanche with the work 10 years ago. Was it Maeterlinck who wrote this absurd parody of the libretto? Who knows? There was also some talk about how difficult Debussy's music was supposed to be – evidently the musicians had a devil of a time in rehearsals; Debussy had hired an inexperienced neighbour to copy parts and they were full of errors.

Once in the Opéra-comique, the audience finally quieted down. After a prelude in 'subdued tones' (I'm alluding not, of course, to my personal impressions, but to those expressed by the majority of the public already resolutely forewarned), the curtain went up. A plaintive recitative arose resembling the faltering speech

of a precocious child, and a charm emerged from the enchanted forest. Who was this blond Mélisande in tears next to the fountain? Who was this tough huntsman? No one knew. The continuing recitative led us to the sombre chateau ... All of a sudden, I heard two spectators behind me whispering. The one, who had only just arrived, asked the other:

- Well, how is it?
- It's vague.
- Yes, just as I supposed. And to think that it's so nice out today!

The curtain went down. Moderate reception. Applause from several invited guests plus excessive, rowdy clapping by the Debussysts.

I had to leave for a while but when I returned in the second act, the audience was in a state of delight. Poor Mélisande couldn't answer without causing a crescendo of laughter. 'Je ne suis pas heureuse.' Ah, very funny, her English [sic] accent. The guy behind me late arriving no longer regretted having come. 'This is worth it!' he exclaimed, 'We're having as much as fun as with Feydeau!' One could hardly hear any music. And the scene with petit Yniold at the window spying on the couple for the jealous husband! Some were shouting 'petit guignol' [little clown]. But why all this disruption? Certainly there were a few awkward things in the story that lent themselves to parody. But, Genevieve! Golaud! We have already seen these people in *Genevieve de Brabant!* And it's clear that the subject is none other than that of the love of Paolo Malatesta and Francesca da Rimini which Dante rendered famous in his *Divine Comedy*. Moreover, recently we had the pleasure of seeing *Francesca da Rimini* represented at the Sarah Bernhardt Theatre.

During the last intermission, I took refuge in an obscure corner. I tired of the cries, 'monotone psalmody', 'absolute lack of any power', 'nothingness'. People were proclaiming a total absence of the holy trinity – melody, rhythm, and harmony – as if rhythm, melody and harmony were independent of the artistic creator's individuality and not the most intimate expression of his creativity. To tell the truth, the poetic conception and musical realization of this lyric drama differed too much from what the public was accustomed to as musical theatre. As an artistic manifestation, the theatre in our time is at least an anachronism. It implies a preconditioned and perfect communion of sensitivities almost impossible outside the popular and unanimous faith of an undisputed religion ... Today, for a true work of art, contact with the masses is almost a profanation.



**Figure 9.1** Literary Critic

Of course, these words are not, could not be my own, though I am responsible for an occasional connective.<sup>1</sup> They were written by theatre and music critics who attended the dress rehearsal and first performance of Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande*: Willy (alias Henry Gautier-Villars), Jean Marnold, Pierre Lalo, Debussy's friend René Peter, and 'Un monsieur de l'orchestre' who wrote for *Le Figaro*, among others. The scandal caused by the opera is clear from their reactions. Surprise, laughter, and hostility characterized the initial public reception of *Pelléas*, but there was no intervention by the police or any interruption of the music during the dress rehearsal. In order that the first performance two days later go more smoothly, however, Debussy agreed to several changes in his work – the omission of the scene with Yniold and the sheep and, at the demand of the undersecretary of state for fine arts, four bars in the scene in which Yniold spies on Pelléas and Melisande, thereby deleting any reference to their proximity to the bed. (The former cut was reinstated for the performance of 30 October 1902, the latter not until the Geneva production in 1983.)

Debussy's problems did not end after these changes. The first performance was still not well received – the laughter continued – and the work itself was in danger of being cancelled by the departure of its conductor André Messager, who had to leave after the fourth performance because of a commitment at Covent Garden. (His replacement, the choral director Henri Busser, was hardly an experienced conductor.) For any work to stay in a theatre's repertory, it needed to appeal to snobs and be in demand. The development of such an audience not only assured the work's success, but also turned *Pelléas* into an event of significant social and cultural importance.<sup>2</sup>

Pierre Veber, author of the novel *Chez les Snobs* (1896), defined snobs as those who follow the latest fashion, who want to understand everything or at least seem to, who only value the rare and the precious. These *chercheurs de l'inédit* (seekers of the novel), the *bourgeois gentilhommes* of aesthetics, sometimes fall into the extravagant and scorn all tradition. Snobs were responsible for public opinion and everyone either made fun of them or revered them. Jean Lorrain called the particular snobs who attended Debussy's opera 'Pelléastres', and he described them in a novel with that name. According to him, many came from the Théâtre de l'oeuvre premieres where Maeterlinck's play was given. These aesthetes (dandys who loved their mothers, composed Greek verse, and were good musicians) together with their mistresses (beautiful, useless, concerned about intellectuality, and scornful of the masses) turned *Pelléas* into a religion and the Salle Favart took on the atmosphere of a sanctuary. By 1903, this group outnumbered the boulevard types, the Wagnerians, the professors of harmony, the reactionary musicians, and the conventional opera subscribers, all of whom Pierre Lalo described as the first

<sup>1</sup> This collage opened my paper, 'A Sociology of the Apaches: "Sacred Battalion" for *Pelléas*' at the National Meeting of the American Musicological Society, Philadelphia (27 October 1984).

<sup>2</sup> See Jann Pasler, 'Pelléas and Power: Forces behind the Reception of Debussy's Opera,' *19th Century Music*, 10/3 (Spring 1987): 243–64.

enemies of the work. And as Debussy's reputation grew, these same snobs helped make Debussy's music fashionable, especially among women.

Such a public, paying high prices to sit on the main floor and in the first tier of boxes, did not always comprehend what they heard. The young composer/critic Emile Vuillermoz considered their response a kind of 'hallucination' and called for another public 'worthy of it'.<sup>3</sup> This he found in the roof-top seats, the 'paradis – young students, young painters, writers keenly interested in music', and a few young composers. During the first few weeks of its performances, these advocates congealed into a 'sacred battalion':

fifty young people, the fifty red shirts of this new battle of Hernani, who were like fighting cocks, ready to assail any philistines who might be tempted to lack respect for the work of art. Their devotion was not useless ... for the incomprehension and irony of the majority of the public would have rendered the exploitation of the work impossible if this 'sacred battalion' had not come to each and every performance during long months to insure there were police in the hall and to keep an atmosphere of infectious enthusiasm up until the moment when the opera could, without danger, pursue its career alone.<sup>4</sup>

René Peter recalls that 'each of us, the young people, in shaking friends' hands during the intermissions, felt that he was defending something other than a work by one of us; each of us had the impression of fighting for himself'.<sup>5</sup>

To defend the opera against its adversaries and allow time for its innovations to penetrate, this 'sacred battalion' organized their operations on three fronts. First, although a small minority, they constituted a solid block, returning night after night to the same seats for the 'cause' as much as for the music. The young violinist and future conductor Désiré-Emile Inghelbrecht remembers that, to be at each performance, he had to find someone to replace him in his orchestra and 'those who really could not scrape together the five francs ... came when the theatre let out, eager to hear how the performance had gone'.<sup>6</sup> Second, they immobilized the opposition with their enthusiasm. Vuillermoz, 'in the first row, surrounded by a party of staff-officers that seemed to become more imposing with each act', looked upon them as 'troops marshalled' to keep order in the

<sup>3</sup> Emile Vuillermoz, 'La Musique,' *La Revue dorée* (August 1902): 180.

<sup>4</sup> 'cinquante jeunes gens – les cinquante « gilets- rouges » de cette nouvelle bataille d'Hernani – étaient là, comme des coqs de combat, prêts à assaillir les Béotiens qui seraient tentés de manquer de respect au chef-d'œuvre. Leur dévouement ne fut pas inutile ... mais l'incompréhension et l'ironie de la majorité du public auraient rendu l'exploitation de l'ouvrage impossible si ce bataillon sacré n'était pas venu, à chaque représentation, pendant de longs mois, assurer la police de la salle et y entretenir un climat d'enthousiasme communicatif jusqu'au moment où la pièce put, sans danger, poursuivre seule sa carrière.' Emile Vuillermoz, *Histoire de la musique* (Paris, 1973), pp. 378–9.

<sup>5</sup> 'Chacun de nous, les jeunes, en serrant les mains amies pendant les entr'actes, sentait qu'il défendait autre chose que l'oeuvre d'un des nôtres; chacun de nous avait l'impression de combattre pour soi-même.' René Peter, *Claude Debussy* (Paris, 1944), p. 181.

<sup>6</sup> 'Ceux qui n'avaient absolument pas pu trouver chez eux les vingt sous nécessaires ... venaient à la sortie se faire raconter comment ça avait marché.' D.E. Inghelbrecht, *Mouvement contraire* (Paris, 1947), p. 275.

theatre.<sup>7</sup> Inghelbrecht and the poet Léon-Paul Fargue recount how they ‘battled vigorously’ against the ‘army of dolts’.<sup>8</sup> Third, they campaigned for converts. All felt compelled to bring along someone new. The future Opéra choral conductor Marcel Chadeigne brought Inghelbrecht for the first time. After performances, Inghelbrecht remembers, ‘we met at each other’s homes and we played it over again for ourselves, some of us at the piano, some singing ...’<sup>9</sup>

One night, after leaving a performance and walking up the rue de Rome towards Paul Sordes’s studio, this rowdy group who didn’t miss one of the first 24 performances of *Pelléas* ran into a newspaper boy selling *L’Intransigeant*. ‘Attention les Apaches!’ he cried. The expression amused not only Vuillermoz, Inghelbrecht, Chadeigne, and Fargue, but also the composers Maurice Ravel, Maurice Delage, Paul Ladmirault, and Déodat de Sévérac, the poet/composer Tristan Klingsor (Léon Leclère), the pastel painter and amateur pianist Sordes, the decorative artists Edouard Bénédictus and Emile-Alain Séguéy, the critic/Russian music expert Michel-Dimitri Calvocoressi, and the pianist Ricardo Viñes. These friends decided to keep ‘Apaches’ as a nickname for their circle.<sup>10</sup>



Figure 9.2 Klingsor

In 1976, thanks to François Lesure (and a relative of Maurice Delage, who had just brought the proofs of Stravinsky’s *Petrushka* to him for the Bibliothèque nationale [BN]), I was introduced to this little-known group of music enthusiasts while working on my dissertation. With Lesure’s generosity in providing me with contact information on contributors to the BN’s Ravel exhibition in 1975,

<sup>7</sup> Vuillermoz, in ‘La Bataille de Pelléas,’ in *Pelléas et Mélisande, L’Avant-scène* 9 (March–April 1977): 23.

<sup>8</sup> Germaine and D.E. Inghelbrecht, *Claude Debussy* (Paris, 1953), p. 158; Léon-Paul Fargue, *Refuges* (Paris, 1942), p. 194.

<sup>9</sup> ‘on se réunissait les uns chez les autres et on se le jouait, les uns au piano, les autres chantant ...’ Inghelbrecht, *Mouvement contraire*, p. 275.

<sup>10</sup> Delage, Fargue, Viñes, and Klingsor agree they were jostled by a newspaper vendor on the rue de Rome. According to Delage, ‘the word delighted Viñes who then launched “Apaches” into eternity’ (‘le mot enchanta Viñes qui lança ce jour-là l’Apaches dans l’Eternité’). See his ‘Les premiers amis de Ravel,’ *Ravel par quelques-uns de ses familiers* (Paris, 1939), p. 99. For discussion on three possible immediate sources for this nickname – the Native American people, a Belleville street gang discussed in the press from early January through spring 1902, and artistic anarchists wanting to revolutionize art – see my ‘La Schola Cantorum et les Apaches: L’enjeu du pouvoir artistique ou Sévérac médiateur et critique,’ in *La Musique: du théorique au politique* ed. Joel-Marie Fauquet (Paris, 1990), pp. 318–23.

over the span of a decade I conducted over thirty interviews with close family members and friends of these Apaches and consulted a wealth of documents in private collections. It is always difficult to understand the private world of friends, especially the Apaches, who were unknown to the public and whistled the theme from Borodin's second symphony to gather members after a concert.<sup>11</sup> Whereas the world of public institutions is recorded in documents and commented upon in the press, one has to glean the content of private gatherings and the nature of personal relationships from diaries, correspondence, memoirs, and the products of collaborations. The Apaches thus presented a fascinating challenge to understand the role such a group might have played in the musical world of Paris.

As with other artistic coteries, the Apaches came together gradually, between 1902 and 1903. Most were about the same age, with Ravel and Viñes born in 1875, Fargue and Chadeigne in 1876, Calvocoressi and Ladmirault in 1877, Vuillermoz and Bénédictus in 1878, and Maurice Delage in 1879. Ravel, Schmitt, Ladmirault, and Vuillermoz knew one another from Gabriel Fauré's composition class at the Conservatoire. Inghelbrecht and Chadeigne shared the harmony class, Ravel and Viñes Charles de Beriot's piano class. Viñes and Ravel had been friends since they met in 1888. Calvocoressi had known Ravel since 1898. Séverac met Viñes in 1900 and joined the Apaches in April 1902.<sup>12</sup> The artists may have met at the École des beaux-arts or in Salon exhibitions.<sup>13</sup> The lithographer/engraver Léon Pivet perhaps knew Viñes from the Nabi painters with which they both associated, or through Maurice Denis, whom both befriended.<sup>14</sup> A friend of Vuillermoz, Edmond Maurat, remembers a precedent for the Apaches: every week in 1901 Vuillermoz hosted musician friends, Ladmirault and Inghelbrecht among them.<sup>15</sup> On 22 January 1903, Viñes's diary first refers to Sordes, a friend of Ravel, at whose studio (39, rue Dulong, a few blocks from Debussy's) they soon began to meet.<sup>16</sup> That spring there are references to Fargue, Sordes, and Séguy, and to an evening at Sordes' with Inghelbrecht, Séguy, and Ravel. The group also spent

<sup>11</sup> Borodin's music was in their ears in spring 1904. Viñes heard his Second Symphony on 3 January and performed a piano transcription of his First Symphony for the group at Sordes's house on 16 January. According to Calvocoressi, Ravel chose this tune to bring them together. See Malou Haine, 'Cipa Godebski et les Apaches', *Revue belge de musicologie* 60 (forthcoming, 2007). I am grateful to Malou Haine for having read my text and shared her own before publication.

<sup>12</sup> Pierre Guillot, ed. *Ecrits sur la musique* (Liège, 1993), p. 27.

<sup>13</sup> In 'Cipa Godebski et les Apaches', Haine suggests that those who would become Apache artists began to gather in the 1890s just as the future Apache musicians began to meet.

<sup>14</sup> Fargue called Pivet 'the man who, with Maurice Denis, has done so much to revive colour lithography'. André Beucler, *Poet of Paris* (London, 1955), p. 100.

<sup>15</sup> Edmond Maurat, *Souvenirs musicaux et littéraires*, ed. Louis Roux (Saint-Etienne, 1977), p. 20.

<sup>16</sup> All citations from Viñes's diary are from the unpublished manuscript translated from the Spanish into French, Nina Gubisch Collection, Paris. Michel Duchesneau is currently preparing a French translation of Viñes's *Journal complet (1887–1915)* for the Presses de l'Université de Montréal. It is also discussed in Gubisch's unpublished dissertation, 'Mémoire de musicologie du Conservatoire national supérieur de Paris', extracts from which may be found in her 'Le journal inédit de Ricardo Vines', *Revue internationale de musique française* 1/2 (June 1980) : 154–248.

evenings at Chadeigne's, Ségu'y's, and Calvocoressi's apartments, where they also 'made music and discussed it'.

Viñes first mentions 'the whole band, Ravel, Fargue ... until 2 AM' on 19 September 1903. After they attended the reprise of *Pelléas*, on 7 November he tells how Tristan Klingsor and Paul Ladmiraault joined them. In December Fargue brought along Maurice Delage, who apparently developed a passion for music only after hearing *Pelléas*.<sup>17</sup> By 16 January 1904 the group had become, in Viñes's words, 'very large and included many new people'. They also met at the apartment of the engineer Pierre Haour, who helped Fargue publish his first works. There on 15 February 1904 they made a recording of *Jeux d'eau* and, as a joke, a parody of Fargue's *Nocturnes*. On Thursday, 24 March, 'all the band' gathered at Delage's for the first time and laughed a lot at Ravel and Delage's parody of *Pelléas et Mélisande*. Delage already sensed a touching 'spirit of unity' among them.

In early spring 1904, the group adopted its name, the Apaches, around the same time as Delage rented a 'wigwam', a small detached wooden dwelling in a garden near Auteuil at 3, rue de Civry. They reached it by taking the little beltway train from the Gare Saint-Lazare.<sup>18</sup> Delage was the perfect host: amiable, well-off from his father's shoe-polish factories, generous, and extremely musical; he studied composition privately with Ravel. There, able to play music all night long, the Apaches gathered on Saturday nights beginning on 2 April. Some say these evenings were inspired by Fauré's composition class at the Conservatoire, where lessons 'often turned into conversations about artistic problems rather than professional analysis of student works'.<sup>19</sup> In 1905, after sharing his *Oiseaux tristes* (which, at first, only Viñes seemed to appreciate), Ravel dedicated the five movements of *Miroirs* to his Apache friends: Viñes, Fargue, Calvocoressi, Sordes, and Delage.

Eventually the group grew to include the composer Florent Schmitt, the percussionist Charles Sordes, the Opéra's set-designer Georges Mouveau, Partington y de Carcer, and the Norwegian law student Magnus Synnestvedt, whose mother was French. After 1907 there was also the Opéra chaplain/literature professor Abbé Léonce Petit (who joined just after Ravel's mother died in 1907), Manuel de Falla (introduced by Viñes), occasionally Albeniz and André Caplet, Lucien Garban (who worked for Durand), Félix Augustin (who helped execute Mouveau's designs), and the aviator Marcel Tabuteau. Intrigued with the new music coming out of Russia, they were the first in Paris to welcome Igor Stravinsky,

<sup>17</sup> M.D. Calvocoressi, *Musicians Gallery* (London, 1933), p. 61.

<sup>18</sup> In an interview with the author (Sept. 1985), Roger Haour, son of Apache Pierre Haour, proposed that 'Apache' also referred to the Greek letters **(INSERT AT TYPESETTING STAGE)** which meant 'at H's place' or 'Haour's place.' The entries in Viñes's diary show that beginning on 15 February 1904 the group also met occasionally on Tuesdays chez Haour.

<sup>19</sup> Alfredo Casella, *Music in My Time*, trans. Spencer Norton (Norman, OK, 1955), p. 59.

who became the last new member to join, in 1910.<sup>20</sup> According to Viñes's diary, although Apaches also frequented the homes of Jean Marnold, the Godebskis, Bénédictus, Laloy, and Morland, members apparently used their nickname specifically to refer to those who regularly assembled at Delage's wigwam.

### Intimate Exchanges

Viñes's diary documents what transpired in the private enclave of Apache meetings and the interests that brought them together. Most often, they gathered to share what they were working on – whether finished pieces, rough drafts, or fragments. The diary gives a chronology of what the composers gave Viñes to work on, when he began to study works, and when he played them for the group. Some were performed for the Apaches as works in progress, but were never completed. On 18 April 1905, for example, Viñes notes that Séverac played excerpts from a beautiful *Élégie sur la mort de Gauguin* that he never published. The encouragement they offered to one another undoubtedly served as an important stimulus.

As Fargue recalls, the Apaches shared many tastes – 'Chinese art, Mallarmé, Verlaine, and Rimbaud, Cézanne and Van Gogh, Rameau and Chopin, Whistler and Valéry, Debussy and the Russians'.<sup>21</sup> First and foremost was the music of Debussy. The composer kept his distance from the group, never attending an Apache gathering. However, Fargue had met Debussy through Pierre Louÿs in 1895 and saw him occasionally. Séverac met him in 1899. Ravel, who made four-hand transcriptions of his *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* and a two-piano one of *Nocturnes*, went several times to his apartment with Viñes. Viñes saw him most often through a working relationship that began in 1901. According to Viñes's diary, Debussy was impressed by the sonority of his playing. On 11 January 1902, Debussy told him it was 'impossible to play better' than him.<sup>22</sup> Thereafter he saw Debussy regularly. His diary documents when he played Debussy's music for him, and which works, as well as the Ravel pieces he shared with Debussy (on 3 February 1906, for example, he played both *Images* and *Miroirs*). It also notes what Debussy he played for the Apaches, including the four-hand transcriptions of Debussy's music he played with Ravel such as *La Mer* on 16 October 1905 and the Quartet on 13 June 1906. With this intense inter-generational collaboration through Viñes, it should be no surprise that the group was sometimes thought of as 'Debussyistes', and that the public might focus on similarities in the music of

<sup>20</sup> See Maurice Delage, 'Les premiers amis', pp. 97–113, my 'Stravinsky and the Apaches', *Musical Times* (June 1982): 403–7, and my entries on Delage, Florent Schmitt, and the Apaches in the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd edition. Despite what has been asserted elsewhere (such as at [www.artsalive.ca/en/mus/greatcomposers/ravel.html](http://www.artsalive.ca/en/mus/greatcomposers/ravel.html)), I have found no reference to Erik Satie, Jean Cocteau, André Gide, Paul Valéry, Nijinsky, or Diaghilev being members of the Apaches.

<sup>21</sup> 'l'art chinois, Mallarmé et Verlaine, Rimbaud ... Cézanne et Van Gogh, Rameau et Chopin, Whistler et Valéry, les Russes et Debussy'. Léon-Paul Fargue, *Maurice Ravel* (Paris, 1949), p. 57.

<sup>22</sup> Cited in Viñes's diary, 11 January 1902.



Debussy and Ravel. Still, there were important differences in attitudes towards form and language between the two, and Ravel's *Jeux d'eau* predates some of Debussy's exploitation of similar pianistic timbres. When, with his *Histoires naturelles*, Ravel was denounced as a Debussy imitator, the Apaches leapt to his defence.<sup>23</sup>

Second only to Debussy among the group's interests was their passion for Russian music. Besides working on numerous Debussy and Ravel premieres and giving performances of others' work at the Société nationale – 'out of friendship' if not necessarily love for the music (11 June 1908) – Viñes and other Apaches spent considerable time listening to and performing Russian music. Viñes had visited Russia in 1900. For him, Russia and his native Spain were like 'two sisters for the depth of sentiment' in their music (5 November 1901). Performing this music frequently for friends allowed him to develop interpretations before he played works in public. Such performances also provided friends with opportunities to compare French and Russian music, perhaps implanting seeds of influence on Apache composers, especially Ravel. From October 1902 through June 1903, for example, Viñes performed numerous times Balakirev's *Islamey* and Ravel's *Jeux d'eau*, two virtuosic works that play with the boundaries between timbre and rhythm. The Apaches also got to know Russian orchestral music through four-hand transcriptions. Viñes and Ravel performed them repeatedly alongside French music. On 7 November 1903, for example, the group could compare Russian and French notions of musical exoticism in the juxtaposition of Glazunov's *Fantaisie orientale* with Ravel's song cycle, *Shéhérazade*, the latter six months before its public premiere. On 16 January 1904 they heard a transcription of Borodin's First Symphony between Debussy's *Estampes* (which Viñes had recently premiered) and Séverac's *Le Chant de la terre*. Later that July Viñes and Ravel played a transcription of Rimsky's *Shéhérazade* alongside the *Estampes*, *Islamey*, and Chopin's sixth Etude. Such performances undoubtedly encouraged discussions about what the French could learn from the Russians, and created a sympathetic, knowledgeable base upon which Diaghilev and Stravinsky could later draw.

Third, poetry and Symbolist ideas fascinated the Apaches. In 1893 Ravel introduced Viñes to Baudelaire's *Les Fleurs du mal*, and in 1896 to Maeterlinck's *Serres chaudes* and Rimbaud's poetry. In London in 1895 Viñes purchased a copy of Bertrand's *Gaspard* for Ravel, who found it 'very rare'. In April 1901 Viñes initiated a project to translate Baudelaire's poems into Spanish; he later arranged some translations of Edgar Allan Poe, an interest he shared with Ravel and Calvocoressi. In the next two years, he read monographs by Gustave Kahn and Léon Bloy. The two poets in the group, Klingsor and Fargue, a disciple of Mallarmé, shared their poems at Apache gatherings and were open to collaborations. Klingsor, a poet-composer, was particularly focused on music-text relationships and sought to apply the laws of harmony and counterpoint to the rules of prosody. Very careful with its 'accents, silences, and syncopations', he composed free verse

<sup>23</sup> Calvocoressi, *Musicians Gallery*, p. 67.

while walking. On 7 November 1903 he read aloud his poems from *Shéhérazade* while Ravel, who in 1899 had begun an opera inspired by Rimsky-Korsakov's music, performed the Klingsor poems he set to music. This allowed listeners to compare the two versions. In his reading of 'Asie', for example, Klingsor lowered his voice three times in repeating its opening word, while Ravel set the word in an ascending direction. As Klingsor observed, Ravel, a 'servant of the poet', wanted to 'exalt the inflections ... and all the possibilities of the text without subjugating it'.<sup>24</sup> Klingsor's love for La Fontaine and Kipling may have influenced Delage to set their texts to music. Fargue, who dedicated his *Nocturnes* to Viñes and twice read these poems aloud to the group in December 1903, drew the Apaches' attention to the poetry of everyday life and prose. His work may have encouraged Ravel's experimentation with language in his *Histoires naturelles*, which Ravel both sang and played for them on 12 April 1907. Séverac too wrote poetry (for his *Le Chant de la terre*, for example), and Viñes composed sonnets, which he read to the Apaches.

Fourth, many Apaches felt drawn to the visual arts. According to Viñes's diary, it was through literature that he and Ravel became interested in painting in the late 1890s. Ravel was a great admirer of Odilon Redon, and introduced Redon to Viñes in 1896. Viñes and Redon, who shared an interest in theosophy and the occult with Sordes, frequently attended concerts in 1901. Maurice Denis introduced Viñes to other painters. In January 1901 he met Pissaro and a Van Gogh exhibition organizer, and the following month he met Bonnard. In June and November 1901 he went to Picasso's home, where he was 'terrified by the enormous talent' of the young painter and impressed by the 'variety of his palette', perhaps an influence on his own concept of musical colour.<sup>25</sup> In November 1902 he visited Redon's home with Vuillard and Denis. This wide exposure to painting made him think about Turner when he was working on Debussy's *Pour le piano*, to which the composer responded 'that before composing them, he had spent a long time in the room with the Turners in London'.<sup>26</sup> In 1904 Viñes also went twice to an exhibition of Japanese art – another fascination of many Apaches – and in 1905 to one on Gauguin, a possible stimulus for Séverac's *Elégie*. Perhaps in part because his father and uncle were painters, Ravel too was sensitive to painting, and made some lovely drawings, as did Fargue. The presence of poets, painters, set-designers, and a lithographer among the Apaches made interdisciplinary exchange typical of their meetings. It is unfortunate that Viñes noted little detail of what they discussed.

<sup>24</sup> 'serviteur du poète ... exalter les inflexions ... [et] toutes les possibilités du mot, mais non le subjuguer'. Tristan Klingsor, 'L'Epoque Ravel,' *Ravel par quelques-uns de ses familiers*, p. 132.

<sup>25</sup> 'émerveillé ... de l'énorme talent', 'quelle variété dans sa palette', Viñes's diary, 23 June 1901. He also visited Picasso that November.

<sup>26</sup> 'Avant de les composer, il avait passer un long moment dans la sale des Turner à Londres.' Viñes's diary, 4 July 1901.

### Public Advocacy

While Apache gatherings were essentially private meetings of a group of friends to share and support one another's deepest artistic passions, they served other functions as well: familiarizing members with new works before they reached the public and formulating a compelling aesthetic explanation. This was important since, with *Pelléas*, the Apaches had seen how easily a work of value could be misunderstood and discredited in the press. Several Apaches took on the challenge of music criticism, seeking to promote better public understanding of the music they loved and the musicians they admired. Klingsor wrote for *La Vogue*, Séverac and Calvocoressi for *La Renaissance latine*, Ladmiraault and Calvocoressi for *Courrier musical*, Synnestvedt for a Norwegian journal, Schmitt and Vuillermoz for various newspapers such as *La France* and *Le temps*.

Vuillermoz, a music critic and composer who lived at 29 rue Lépici (Montmartre), perhaps best understood the potential power of their association and their ideas. Maurat called him the 'great High Priest of the new orthodoxy'.<sup>27</sup> His early criticism appeared in the small journal *Messidor*, where he reviewed Parisian concerts. In 1901 he published this 'Chronique musicale' in epistolary form, in this case an imagined correspondence between two German students: 'Hans Burger à son ami Ludwig Holstein, élève au Conservatoire de Weimar'. Many critics at the time used pseudonyms and invented creative ways to distinguish their reviews from those of others (consider Debussy's Monsieur Croche, modelled on Paul Valéry's Monsieur Teste). Vuillermoz used Hans to speak to his readers in the familiar form, 'tu', perhaps wanting to gain their confidence and express his personal tastes. In Hans's voice he vaunts his musical training to defend himself from the attack of incompetence levelled at most critics of the time. In irreverent attacks on the major composers, he promotes Fauré and his 'Impressionist music' as the 'most perfect expression of contemporary art'.<sup>28</sup> Debussy is the 'adorable decadent' next to the 'Impressionist genius' of Fauré. In this journal and its successor, *La Revue dorée*, in which he wrote through 1903, he formed his critical voice and developed a theory of musical Impressionism. Under such pseudonyms as Gabriel Darcy, Claude Bonvin, André Lang, André Berge, and E.V., he later occasionally wrote for and under the name of the popular critic Willy. As music was becoming increasingly complex, Vuillermoz served as musical adviser to Willy on technical matters. Willy, who called him his 'musical secretary', praised him for his 'bold taste' and 'clear judgement'. By 1905 the Apache was writing under his own name for the prestigious *Courrier musical* and *Mercure musical*, and in 1912 became editor of the *Bulletin français de la société indépendante de musique* (SIM).

<sup>27</sup> Maurat, *Souvenirs*, pp. 20–21.

<sup>28</sup> 'HANS' [Emile Vuillermoz], 'Chronique musicale: Hans Burger à son ami Ludwig Holstein, élève au Conservatoire de Weimar,' *Messidor* 1 (January 1901): 36–9.

Vuillermoz's confrontational style – Delage once called him 'our combat musician'<sup>29</sup> – is responsible for much of what we know about the avant-garde of this period, even if some of what he writes is exaggerated and his later histories are full of strategic manipulation.<sup>30</sup> The targets of his criticism ranged from the 'Pelléastre' snobs to French composers whose music he found too conservative (e.g. Camille Saint-Saëns and Vincent d'Indy). When the taste for Debussy began to divide salons and incite attacks and counterattacks, in a fictional conversation with a pretty female snob over a cup of tea he compared the treatment of Achille Debussy to the persecution of Alfred Dreyfus. Here again he distinguished between Debussytes 'with huge ties, long hair, and Spanish capes' from those who knew Debussy before he became famous, including the unnamed 'we others' – 'precious friendships that one should keep as secrets'<sup>31</sup> (an oblique reference perhaps to Viñes, Ravel, and Fargue).

Perched where he was, Vuillermoz gave important public support to the Apaches on three issues: not only the reception of *Pelléas et Mélisande*, but also the scandal surrounding Ravel's exclusion from the final round of the Prix de Rome competition in 1905 and the founding of a new concert organization, the Société musicale indépendante (SMI), in 1909. In 1905, his connections helped create a press scandal about Ravel, resulting in perhaps more publicity than Ravel would have enjoyed in winning the prize. Then, when the Société nationale (SN), under the direction of d'Indy and his disciples, refused to program Delage's *Conté par la mer* – a work the Apaches considered to be 'very, very musical',<sup>32</sup> Vuillermoz and other Apaches led the effort to create the rival SMI.<sup>33</sup> As Viñes put it in his diary a week later, after the organizational meeting of 22 January 1909, 'we are simply going to render blow for blow'. In defending Ravel and the SMI, Vuillermoz led the charge against Vincent d'Indy and his Schola Cantorum in a harsh article, full of exaggerations.<sup>34</sup> He claimed to have an 'impassioned mission' to defend Fauré, Debussy, and Ravel by clarifying their 'still unformulated gospel' and 'preparing a way for them through the hostile crowd'.<sup>35</sup> With his tactics of attack

<sup>29</sup> Delage, 'Les premiers amis', p. 98.

<sup>30</sup> In my article, 'Bleu-horizon and Beyond: The Politics of *L'Initiation à la Musique* (1935)', first presented at the conference *Nation, Myth, and Reality in the 1930s* (Royal Holloway, University of London, 24 October 1998), I examine how Vuillermoz, in his *Histoire de la musique* (1949) and elsewhere, used unconditional assertions to claim authority, elevating some composers and denigrating others as he rewrote history to promote a certain agenda.

<sup>31</sup> Vuillermoz contrasts the 'debussyte' who 'ira rejoindre les grosses cravates, les longs cheveux et les capes espagnoles' with "'nous autres" il est des amitiés précieuses qu'il faut garder comme des secrets'. Emile Vuillermoz, 'Une tasse de thé', *Mercure musical* 15 November 1905, pp. 508–9.

<sup>32</sup> Cited in Viñes's diary, 15 January 1909.

<sup>33</sup> In a letter of 22 April 1910 to Vuillermoz, Ravel, calling him the 'protector of our little chapel', explained: 'It is especially to you and Mathot that we owe this triumph'. Harry Ransom Humanities Institute, Austin, TX.

<sup>34</sup> Emile Vuillermoz, 'La Schola et le Conservatoire', *Mercure de France* 20 (16 September 1909): 234–43.

<sup>35</sup> Emile Vuillermoz, *Gabriel Fauré*, trans. Kenneth Schapin (London, 1969), p. 22.

and exclusion, Vuillermoz helped to unify and protect Apaches members, and began the process of canonizing this ‘trinity’ of composers – a musical analogue to Mallarmé, Verlaine, and Rimbaud – a mission he continued after the war.<sup>36</sup>

Discussion about ‘petites chapelles’ and Vuillermoz’s contributions has given the impression that such a group embraced a clear position in the ideological battles of the times. However, as I attempted to define the group in applying analytical tools inspired by Howard Becker and Pierre Bourdieu, I was forced to come to grips with striking similarities between the Apaches and other ‘sects’, especially the Schola Cantorum.<sup>37</sup> Even if the Apaches were unified in their defence and promotion of Debussy, one should not assume similarity, consistency, or homogeneity in their other attitudes. And with some coming from the Schola and others from the Conservatoire, Apaches represented a spectrum of political, social, religious, and musical differences. While Séverac, son of a baron, was a land-owning Catholic from the South, Fargue and Ravel, whose fathers were engineers, were anticlerical urbanites who sympathized with anarchists.<sup>38</sup> If one compares the subtle and very French music of Ravel with the assertive and German-influenced music of Florent Schmitt (who admired the music of Richard Strauss), it is clear that even its Conservatoire graduates had varied tastes. Parisian musicians were less divided according to their backgrounds and training than we’ve been led to believe. Apache members, as diverse as they were, took part in a complex web of highly interconnected relationships and many of the networks of cooperation underlying the musical world of Paris. They enjoyed the benefits of meetings and collaborations without being constrained by an ideology. This suggests that, at least among the young, social, economic, and political differences did not interfere with musical friendships, and that in the private contexts in which composers conceived and created their music, musicians – who may have held different views on Dreyfus or the musical ‘gospel’ they espoused – often worked together.

Five Apaches who had associations with the Schola complicate the notion that these two ‘chapels’, the Apaches and the Scholists, were uniformly adversarial: the poet/composer Klingsor, the composers Séverac and Ladmirault, the critic Calvocressi, and the pianist Viñes. Klingsor studied composition with Pierre de

<sup>36</sup> See Barbara Kelly, ‘Debussy and the Making of a ‘musicien français’: *Pelléas*, the Press and the First World War’, *French Music, Culture and National Identity* (Rochester, NY, forthcoming), n.p.

<sup>37</sup> Jann Pasler, ‘Apaches in Paris: The Making of a Turn-of-the-Century Art World’, paper given at the National Meeting of the American Musicological Society, Cleveland, OH (8 November 1986) and ‘La Schola cantorum et les apaches: L’enjeu du pouvoir artistique ou Séverac médiateur et critique’, in *La Musique: du théorique au politique*, ed. Joel-Marie Fauquet (Paris, 1990), pp. 313–43.

<sup>38</sup> In his *Musique et société du Second Empire aux Années vingt* (Paris, 1985), Michel Faure observes that Ravel considered himself a political anarchist because he read *Le Canard enchaîné* and *l’Humanité*. But it is not known whether he read these papers before 1910, when they are first mentioned in his letters. According to Valéry, contemporary writers considered Fargue an anarchist; however it is not clear whether this was meant in the political sense. See Edmée de la Rochefoucauld, *Léon-Paul Fargue* (Paris, 1958), p. 42.

Bréville, who taught counterpoint at the Schola from 1898 to 1902. And between 1896 and 1907 (when he received his diploma) Séverac was a student at the Schola Cantorum, where he studied composition with Vincent d'Indy. He also wrote about Schola concerts for *La Renaissance latine*, and the Schola performed his music.<sup>39</sup> An admirer of Debussy's music, Séverac was also friendly with Viñes, who had premiered several of his piano works, and he shared the Apaches' interest in poetry and painting. With the perspective gained from his allegiance to both the Schola and the Apaches, Séverac viewed the quarrel between the d'Indystes and the Debussystes with remarkable objectivity. In his final thesis devoted to a study of the conflict, his familiarity with the two groups allowed him to be critical of both. Another Apache composer, Ladmirault, also took classes at the Schola. With his focus on Brittany, he represented an interest in regional folk song that Vuillermoz, Inghelbrecht, Ravel, and Calvocoressi shared with Séverac and other Scholists.<sup>40</sup>

Like Vuillermoz, Calvocoressi worked principally as a music critic. Approaching his profession differently, he believed a critic should observe and comment, stimulate and provide information, more than pronounce judgement on its value. Among his earliest publications is a review of *Pelléas* in *L'Art moderne* (1902) and of Debussy's criticism in *La Renaissance latine*, a journal that focused on promoting regionalism, a core interest of the Schola. There Calvocoressi split the job of reviewing Parisian concerts with Séverac. He also published some articles in the Schola's journal *La Tribune de Saint-Gervais*, and in 1903–4 was editor-in-chief of their concert bulletin and calendar of internal events, *Les Tablettes de la schola*. At the Schola and elsewhere he occasionally gave lectures, often illustrated with musical examples played by Viñes.<sup>41</sup> Unlike Vuillermoz, Calvocoressi did not reject d'Indy's music, but instead published analyses of d'Indy's *L'Etranger* in *La Tribune* (April 1903) and his Symphony in B<sup>b</sup> in *Guide musical* (8 and 15 May 1904). At the same time, he played a role in instigating Ravel's *Sonatine*, *Cinq chansons populaires grecques*, and *Daphnis et Chloé*, suggesting he write these works for specific contexts.<sup>42</sup>

Analogous to Charles Bordes, who led the Schola's 'propaganda' outside Paris, Calvocoressi wanted to disseminate his ideas beyond the frontiers of France. He became the principal promoter of Apache interests abroad. Fluent in Russian and English, besides writing for the Parisian *Comoedia illustré* and *Courrier musical*, he published articles on Debussy, Ravel, Séverac, and others in the British *Monthly Musical Record* in 1906, the American *New Music Review* in 1910, and the Russian *Apollon* in 1911. In 1908 he wrote a biography of Mussorgsky replete

<sup>39</sup> For a well-annotated edition of his critical writings, see Guillot, *Ecrits*.

<sup>40</sup> Albert Roussel, a professor at the Schola, occasionally attended Apache evenings.

<sup>41</sup> Viñes notes that he accompanied Calvocoressi's lectures on Russian music at the Université populaire in December 1905, the ninth arrondissement city hall in December 1906, and the Cercle musical russe in December 1910.

<sup>42</sup> Calvocoressi, *Musicians Gallery*, pp. 74–6.

with musical analyses. He served as an important musical liaison for Russians who came to Paris, and as an adviser to Diaghilev, to whom he promoted the Apaches as collaborators. With his good command of Russian, he advised Ravel in negotiating an agreement concerning Fokine's performing rights for *Daphnis*. He also aided Delage in negotiating with Edwin Evans in London for Kipling's permission to set *Les Bâtisseurs du pont* to music, and with Diaghilev in Russia for a Ballets Russes performance of it. Calvocoressi also instigated his own collaborations with Apaches, proposing a ballet subject to Séverac in 1903 and others to Ladmirault in 1909 and 1914, as well as providing Schmitt with a scenario for a ballet, *Urvasi*, in 1909.<sup>43</sup>

Ricardo Viñes's remarkable talent as a pianist provided another great service to, and articulation of, Apache ideals. Already in April 1904 *Le Monde musical* called him 'one of most remarkable' of young pianists, and 'almost the appointed [*attitré*] pianist of the Société nationale, that is, the habitual and favoured interpreter of our young composers'.<sup>44</sup> He combined the virtuoso technique of a Conservatoire-trained performer with the musicianship idealized at the Schola. Not surprisingly, Viñes premiered many piano works by Debussy (*Pour le piano, Estampes, L'Isle joyeuse, Images I and II, selected preludes*) and Ravel (*Sites auriculaires, Jeux d'eau, Pavane, Miroirs*), most of which he shared with the Apaches as he was working on them. He also promoted this repertoire through performances in the provinces and abroad.

Although an Impressionist of the piano, Viñes also established strong connections with the Schola and its music. Despite not liking d'Indy's music (in a diary entry of December 1903 he calls *L'Etranger* 'truly very, very ugly'), he gave concerts at the Schola, including a four-hand arrangement of Debussy's *Nocturnes* on 21 April 1904 and Séverac's *En languedoc* on 25 May 1905. He also toured with works dear to Scholists, such as Franck's *Variations symphoniques*, and the music of young Scholists, such as Henri Woollett. Alongside his devotion to contemporary music, like the Scholists he also loved Beethoven's music, becoming known for his rendition of the Piano Sonata Op. 111. He also shared their enthusiasm for early music. In spring 1905 Viñes gave a solo recital of five concerts with music from various European traditions – 49 composers, 55 pieces, all played from memory, and some using early instruments. He began with Cabezon, Byrd, Frescobaldi, Rameau and Couperin, Handel and Bach. When it came to the more recent music in this series, he was equally inclusive, performing composers most Apaches did not appreciate – Saint-Saëns and Théodore Dubois – along with Grieg, Borodin, and a premiere by Cyril Scott. On the last concert, an

<sup>43</sup> L.a. Séverac (20 Aug. 1903), Bibliothèque nationale, Paris (BN); I.a. Ladmirault, (29 March 1912), BN; Calvocoressi, *Musicians Gallery*, p. 58.

<sup>44</sup> 'M.R. Viñes est devenu l'une des personnalités les plus marquantes des la jeune école du piano ... Il est "francisé" à ce point, qu'il est devenu le pianiste presque attitré de la Nationale, c'est à dire l'interprète habituel et favori de nos jeunes compositeurs.' A.M., 'Salles Erard', *Monde musical* (April 1902): 145.

all-French programme, he juxtaposed Franck, d'Indy, Fauré, Debussy, Séverac, Ravel, and Chabrier. Calvocoressi argued for this as proof of Viñes's 'universal talent' as well as his desire to interpret works 'of diverse tendencies, even the most opposed ... with equal conscience and equal sincerity'. He also pointed to the 'modesty' with which Viñes presented his concerts, without advance publicity vaunting his repeated ovations and encores – 'an attitude worthy of a true, great artist' and reflective of the subtle kind of impact the Apaches wished to have on the musical world. In renouncing 'external effects' and seeking to '*render* rather than *interpret* the work',<sup>45</sup> Viñes became the quintessential modernist performer, a great craftsman and the kind of artist d'Indy envisaged when he became director of the Schola in 1900.



Figure 9.3 Music Critic

Vuillermoz once claimed that a revolution is never the result of just one person. Debussy, a 'decisive lightning bolt', brought together all the 'dreams, aspirations, and premonitions' of the young musicians of his time.<sup>46</sup> His opera stimulated the notion of concert attendance as 'a way to serve'<sup>47</sup> and attracted a broad range of artists and musicians. The Apaches help us to understand what is involved when a young generation, impassioned by the innovations of their immediate predecessors, wish to defend those innovations and explore their implications while clearing a space for their own creative experimentation. Examining them, we appreciate the value of minor artistic figures and their interdependence with major ones; we learn of the manifold supportive roles played by public figures such as Vuillermoz, Calvocoressi, and Viñes, as well as those in the shadows like Sordes and Delage; and we begin to understand the collaborative relationships

<sup>45</sup> 'M. Viñes a donné la meilleure des preuves de son très universel talent et de cette vive intelligence grâce à laquelle il peut s'identifier aux plus diverses inspirations et en interpréter les fruits avec une égale conscience et une égale sincérité ... De même qu'il renonce aux effets extérieurs qui agissent si sûrement sur les auditoires, de même il s'efface devant l'oeuvre à jouer, qu'il cherche à rendre plutôt qu'à interpréter ... C'est aussi la modestie dont il fit prévue tout en l'accomplissant: il ne la précéda point de retentissantes annonces, et s'abstint de faire proclamer, en de propices communiqués, les succès qu'il obtint ... Voilà une belle leçon, une attitude digne d'un véritable, d'un grand artiste.' M.D. Calvocoressi, 'Concerts Ricardo Viñes', *Courrier musical* (1 May 1905): 277–8.

<sup>46</sup> 'l'éclair décisif ... tous les rêves, toutes les aspirations, tous les pressentiments ...'. Emile Vuillermoz, 'Maurice Ravel', *Revue musicale* 187 (1938): 248–9.

<sup>47</sup> Fargue, *Ravel*, p. 54.



between musicians, poets, and visual artists that helped propel music in new directions between *Pelléas* (1902) and *Le Sacre du printemps* (1913).

What began as casual gatherings after concerts evolved into a fascinating microcosm of the French avant-garde, a place ‘open to all the changeable winds of fashion, but firmly closed to pedants and spurious aesthetes’.<sup>48</sup> Other groups during this period were also interdisciplinary and international; what made the Apaches distinct was their focus on musical innovation. Besides their concert attendance and mutual support, Calvocoressi’s lectures at the École des hautes études in November 1912 on Stravinsky, Scriabin, Prokofiev, Schoenberg, and Egon Wellesz; his articles defending Elgar and Schoenberg;<sup>49</sup> Ravel’s attempts to get *Pierrot lunaire* performed in Paris; and Viñes’s performances of music by young composers representing diverse aesthetic tendencies and traditions exemplify the depth of the Apaches’ commitment to supporting the new in whatever form it might take.

The group lasted until World War I because of the nature of its meetings. The Apaches did not convene in public places such as cafés or cabarets, where other musicians and artists often met. Like a salon, their gatherings were private. They offered a forum for discussion and a sympathetic alternative public for their work, but with no women, no codes, no structured or formal presentations, no special clothes or behaviour, no pressure to conform to the ideal of a certain patroness, nor any requirement to produce regularly and in the same manner. Delage wrote very little, and yet remained integral to the group. No one had to ‘leave one’s soul in the cloakroom together with one’s gloves and newspapers’, as in salons.<sup>50</sup> Like Mallarmé’s Tuesdays in the 1890s, the group provided its members with a new kind of public, unlike that of the theatres or salons. Rather than seeking to impose their ideas and tastes, the Apaches sought to learn from one another, work out their aesthetic beliefs, and broaden their interests. They shared their most recent creations—compositions, poetry, or essays—in a friendly, receptive environment that nurtured its members, encouraged their efforts, and protected them from the hostility of the theatre and concert-going public. They also helped one another in practical ways: Delage recalls that they ‘often spent whole nights’ copying orchestral parts for the next day’s concert.<sup>51</sup>

Most significantly, even if members shared a common belief in Debussy as a musical prophet, unlike other ‘little chapels’, including Mallarmé’s, Apache meetings were non-hierarchical and promoted a spirit of independence. Vuillermoz may have depicted the Apaches as ‘the little cohort surrounding Ravel from the beginning of his career, who consoled him for his academic setbacks, jealously

<sup>48</sup> Roland-Manuel, *Ravel* (Paris, 1938), p. 33.

<sup>49</sup> Among Calvocoressi’s publications, see ‘Edward Elgar’, *Courrier musical* (15 January 1905): 42–8, and ‘The Classicism of Arnold Schönberg,’ *Musical Times* (1 April 1914): 234–6.

<sup>50</sup> ‘l’âme ... fait partie de ce qu’il faut laisser au vestiaire, avec gants, journaux et météores’. Fargue, *Refuges*, p. 95.

<sup>51</sup> Delage, ‘Les premiers amis’, pp. 107–8.

watched over his burgeoning fame ... and played the role of a protective and beneficial silken cocoon'.<sup>52</sup> And Ravel *did* 'gain much intellectual benefit' from the group, especially from Fargue, who was for him 'an incomparable teacher of taste'.<sup>53</sup> However, this could be said of other Apaches as well. Séverac and Schmitt certainly benefited from this cocooning before they became successful; Fargue and Klingsor appreciated contact with a music that preached freedom in form and in the expression of intimate emotions. Everyone benefited from the professional contacts and collaborations. Relationships between Apaches were almost certainly on a quasi-equal footing, and since Ravel 'was concerned above all to bring others' works to light',<sup>54</sup> they were not concentrically oriented around a single personality, especially after 1910 when Stravinsky joined them.

No wonder musicians, poets, and artists representing a wide spectrum of differences found mutually beneficial reasons to be part of the Apaches. For Fargue, getting together with these friends was like 'living twice', the combination of friendship and care in their meetings rendering them 'quite rare'.<sup>55</sup> Fruitful interactions and mutual influence ensued because 'each one of them knew, each one understood, day by day, what the others were thinking and doing'.<sup>56</sup> Certainly we can judge the impact of their ideas by their public statements, actions, and works. However, in our effort to understand the forces underlying the renaissance in French music before World War I, perhaps we have been too quick to stop with these or take them at face value, ignoring what can be learned from the private side of musical life in Paris. On this the Apaches provide a very special window.<sup>57</sup>

---

<sup>52</sup> 'la petite cohorte d'artistes qui entoura Maurice Ravel dès le début de sa carrière, qui le consola de ses déboires scolaires, qui veilla jalousement sur sa gloire naissante et qui ... joua le rôle protecteur et bienfaisant de l'enveloppe soyeuse qu'un vœu formel de la nature réserve à la transformation biologique de la chrysalide à la minute où elle va devenir papillon.' Emile Vuillermoz, 'L'Oeuvre de Maurice Ravel', *Ravel par quelques-uns de ses familiers*, p. 33.

<sup>53</sup> Vuillermoz, 'L'Oeuvre de Maurice Ravel', p. 32

<sup>54</sup> '... il tenait surtout à révéler celles des autres'. D.E. Inghelbrecht, 'Ravel et les Russes', *Revue musicale* (December 1938), p. 120.

<sup>55</sup> Fargue, *Refuges*, 93–4 and 'Autour de Ravel', *Ravel par quelques-uns de ses familiers*, p. 155.

<sup>56</sup> 'Chacun de nous savait, chacun de nous comprenait, jour par jour, ce que pensaient et faisaient les autres.' Fargue, *Ravel*, p. 57.

<sup>57</sup> The Apaches never reconvened after the war, in part because a number of them married. I am grateful to the National Endowment for the Humanities for a grant supporting this research in 1988–89. I plan to consolidate this and my other essays on the Apaches into book form. The tiny images herein come at the end of essays on the literary critic, the author, and the music critic in Tristan Klingsor, *Le Livre d'esquisses* (Paris, 1902).