

THE FEUILLETONS OF CASTIL-BLAZE

IN THE

*JOURNAL DES DÉBATS* (1820-1832):

A CRITICAL EXAMINATION

By

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A Thesis

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies

in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements

for the Degree

Master of Arts

McMaster University

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MASTER OF ARTS (1994)  
(Music Criticism)

McMASTER UNIVERSITY  
Hamilton, Ontario

TITLE: The Feuilletons of Castil-Blaze in the *Journal des Débats* (1820-1832): A Critical Examination

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NUMBER OF PAGES: vii, 229

## ABSTRACT

The feuilletons that François-Henri-Joseph Blaze, better known as Castil-Blaze, wrote for the Parisian daily newspaper the *Journal des Débats* between 1820 and 1832 represent his greatest involvement with music journalism. His appointment as chief music feuilletonist was a turning point for music criticism in France as it opened the door for trained musicians rather than just literary critics to proffer their opinions about music. While establishing himself as a translator of operas and adapter of pasticcios for the French stage, he addressed musical issues and created vivid portraits of the musical scene in Paris through his feuilletons signed "X.X.X.". His analyses of works were evocative in nature, calling upon the reader to re-create the events in his or her mind.

Castil-Blaze's feuilletons contain opinions about music which were prefigured in his two-volume book *De l'Opéra en France*. His views, however, did not remain static, but were modified over time through encountering new works by Weber, Auber, Rossini, Meyerbeer, as well as Beethoven. His feuilletons also provide insight into the issues, personalities, institutions, and vocal and instrumental virtuosi of his time and place. In short, they are a window onto their author and the musical life of France during the Restoration.

Chapter One deals with the life and career of Castil-Blaze. Chapter Two examines both the text and the reading of the feuilleton. Castil-Blaze's manner of analysis, identified herein as "evocative analysis," is explored in light of reader-response criticism. Chapter Three considers Castil-Blaze's reviewing of the Parisian vocal and instrumental music scene and highlights notable institutions, musical personalities and issues of that era. Chapter Four concerns itself with his feuilletons about opera, while the fifth chapter investigates those about Beethoven. Chapter Six furnishes this document with a conclusion.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is with this document that my four-and-a-half year pilgrimage through McMaster University comes to an end. There have been many along the road who have helped me reach this goal. I must start with the faculty at McMaster's Department of Music; firstly, to all of the staff for their kindness and sensitivity in accommodating my teaching schedule into their programme, and secondly, to individual staff members whose guidance made my sojourn at McMaster all the more stimulating.

**Dr. James Deaville**, my advisor, who has been warmly encouraging and scrupulously critical of my work. His advice at every stage of my research, writing and revising was of indispensable value. I am sincerely thankful for his expert assistance.

**Dr. Alan Walker** who served as second reader of this thesis, and who nurtured the dialectical skills of all those under his tutelage.

**Dr. Hugh Hartwell** who so ably guided us through various labyrinthine analytical approaches and theories.

**Dr. Paul Rapoport** who stretched our ears and hence, the boundaries we had built around music, its performance and notation.

**William Littler**, music and dance critic at the *Toronto Star*, who trained our pens in the fine art of music journalism.

I must also give special thanks to **Prof. Pauline Pocknell** of McMaster's French Department. In spite of her schedule, she took time to examine not only the very first rough drafts of this thesis, but also the final drafts and my translations of French as well. Her suggestions and corrections have been welcomed with immense gratitude.

I thank **Dr. William Renwick**, **Dr. Frederick Hall**, and **Dr. Hans Schulte** for their efforts in helping me to obtain and print out Donald Gíslason's dissertation on Castil-Blaze. I am



grateful to **Donald Gíslason** not only for making his dissertation available to me, but for his advice, suggestions and encouragement in studying Castil-Blaze. I must also thank the staff at McMaster University's Inter-Library Loans who saw to it that my numerous requests were handled as quickly as possible.

Thanks are also due to **Mr. Harry Der Nederlanden** for his insightful comments and "deconstruction" of my "evocative analysis."

I should also thank those "generations" of students, too numerous to mention here by name, who served as classmates and colleagues between the years 1989 and 1994. I will always carry fond memories of their genuine love of music and friendship.

I would be remiss not to thank my employers, the Association for Christian Education of St. Catharines, who so graciously granted me release time during the school year to attend classes at McMaster and for allowing me to use my summer work obligations to write this thesis.

I am indebted to my sister, Lorraine, who helped with the presentation of this document. I also thank my parents without whose support this thesis would not have come about. It is to them that this volume is dedicated.

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## PREFACE

I founded musical criticism in Paris!<sup>1</sup>

Words of Voltaire? of Rousseau? of Ragueneau? of Geoffroy? No, not one of these men exclaimed such a thought. These words were written in 1856 by a seventy-two year old man reflecting on his thirty-six years of work as a music writer based in Paris. His name was François-Henri-Joseph Blaze, though he later took on the pen name Castil-Blaze.

His career as a feuilletonist or columnist began in 1820 when he was appointed chief music feuilletonist for the *Journal des Débats*, the most widely circulated Parisian newspaper at that time. During his twelve year tenure at the newspaper, his trademark signature, the initials "X.X.X.," graced the conclusions of a total of three hundred and forty-four feuilletons.<sup>2</sup> He came to fancy himself as the *Maître de Chapelle* or Music Director of the *Journal des Débats*.<sup>3</sup>

François Blaze grew up in a cultured household. His father, Henri-Sébastien (Cavaillon 1763- Avignon 1833), director of the Vaucluse department, filled his leisure time with writing and composing. Both of his brothers, Sébastien and Elzéar, were authors as well. With such role models, it seemed only natural that young Blaze take up a career that straddled literature and music. Castil-Blaze's own son, Ange-Henri, eventually became a music critic as well.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"J'ai fondé la critique musicale à Paris. . ." Castil-Blaze, *Sur l'Opéra français: vérités dures mais utiles* (Paris: Castil-Blaze, 1856), 69. This was a somewhat humble claim, considering that one year earlier, he had written the words "I am founding musical criticism in France" as a subtitle in one of the chapters in a book. "Je fonde la critique musicale en France," *L'Académie impériale de musique* (Paris: Castil-Blaze, 1855), 2:143.

<sup>2</sup>See Appendix 1 for a complete listing of Castil-Blaze's feuilletons in the *Journal des Débats*. No initials are to be found at the end of the 23 August 1828 feuilleton. However, the style is unmistakably that of Castil-Blaze.

<sup>3</sup>*Journal des Débats*, 4 August 1827.

<sup>4</sup>Under the pseudonym of F. de Lagenevais, Ange-Henri succeeded Paul Scudo as music feuilletonist at the *Revue des Deux-Mondes* in 1864. Pierre Larousse, *Grand Dictionnaire universel du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris: Larousse et Boyer, 1866-1890), s.v. "Blaze de Bury (Ange-Henri, Blaze, dit)", 2/2:813.

In his old age Castil-Blaze gave notice of the musical talent inherent in the family when he fondly recalled that,

The French prisoners of war perform operas on the hulk, Old Castille, in the harbour of Cádiz. M<sup>me</sup> Mollard is the leading singer of this lyrical gathering, Petit, a dancer from the Imperial Academy of Music, stands out among the best there and my brother Sebastien conducts the voices and the orchestra.<sup>5</sup>

His contributions to musical criticism in France included not only his feuilletons, but also translations and adaptations of operas, the most infamous example being his reworking of Weber's *Der Freischütz* into *Robin des bois*, as well as composite operas such as *Folies amoureuses*, in which a libretto was set to music borrowed from various composers.

In the field of French musical criticism, scholars have chosen to study the writings of well known feuilletonists, such as Geoffroy or Berlioz.<sup>6</sup> In comparison, the feuilletons of Castil-Blaze have received scant attention outside of one doctoral thesis.<sup>7</sup> Part of the reason for this lies in the fact that his feuilletons still remain buried in the pages of the *Journal des Débats*, a newspaper available only on microfilm or microfiche in North America. Unfortunately, no modern day anthology of his feuilletons has been published. However, after having read the feuilletons, and not without a little hindsight, one could easily regard Castil-Blaze, who fell chronologically and stylistically between Geoffroy and Berlioz, as a transitional figure in the

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<sup>5</sup>"Les Français prisonniers de guerre exécutent des opéras sur le ponton *la Vieille Castille*, dans la rade de Cadix. M<sup>me</sup> Mollard est la première cantatrice de cette société lyrique, Petit, danseur de l'Académie impériale de Musique, y brille au premier rang, et mon frère Sébastien en dirige le chant et l'orchestre." Castil-Blaze, *Académie impériale de Musique*, 2:129.

<sup>6</sup>Charles-Marc des Granges's *Geoffroy et la critique dramatique sous le Consulat et l'Empire* (Paris: Librairie Hachette et C<sup>ie</sup>., 1897), and Kerry Murphy's *Hector Berlioz and the Development of French Music Criticism* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1988), are but two examples of studies about these two masters of the pen.

<sup>7</sup>See Donald Gíslason, *Castil-Blaze, De l'Opéra en France and the Feuilletons of the Journal des Débats (1820-1832)*. Ph. D. diss., Musicology. University of British Columbia, 1992.

history of the music feuilleton in France. To oversimplify: Geoffroy was a literary giant, largely ignorant in musical matters; Castil-Blaze received professional training in music and had a published literary work to his credit; while Berlioz was a musical *and* literary giant.<sup>8</sup> Castil-Blaze's critical efforts made it virtually *de rigueur* for Parisian newspapers to hire a musically trained feuilletonist—one who had been "published"—to write the music feuilleton.

Can the the opening hyperbolic quotation be placed in a realistic perspective? Neither Parisian nor French musical criticism started with Castil-Blaze. The works of Diderot, Ragueneau, Rousseau and others had been on the music scene long before Castil-Blaze. Yet, Castil-Blaze's claim of inaugurating Parisian music criticism with his own advent contains a small amount of truth within its large amount of self-promotion. Were it not for him, owners and editors may well have continued to hire musically ignorant *littérateurs* to write the music feuilleton for their newspapers.<sup>9</sup> Castil-Blaze changed the direction of music criticism found in the daily press away from one dependent solely on literary principles to one concerned with literary and musical principles. This thesis will concern itself with Castil-Blaze's contributions to music criticism as found in his feuilletons.

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<sup>8</sup>In his day, Berlioz was revered more for his music criticism than for his compositions. It is only in the twentieth century that the body of Berlioz's musical works have come to be appreciated by a wide audience.

<sup>9</sup>This was a term used to refer to men of letters well schooled in the classics, but largely uneducated in music. In the writings of Castil-Blaze it was used in a derogatory manner, signalling that the person in question was a "musical dolt."

## CHAPTER ONE

### BIOGRAPHY: THE LIFE AND WORK OF CASTIL-BLAZE

François-Henri-Joseph Blaze was born on 1 December 1784, in Cavaillon, a town situated twenty kilometres south-east of Avignon.<sup>1</sup> His father, a lawyer by profession as well as an author and composer of relatively minor talent, no doubt exposed him to literature and music at an early age. When François turned fifteen, it was decided that he should follow in his father's footsteps: law. Music and literature were to remain as avocations.

According to Marie-Louise Pailleron, when young Blaze arrived in Paris in 1799, he took up art studies at the studio of David for 12 francs per month.<sup>2</sup> During the Year VIII (1800), Blaze found himself working in the Paris studio of the painter Clémence Ducreux in the hotel d'Angivillier, a branch of the Louvre. Among the visitors to this studio were La Harpe and Étienne-Nicolas Méhul (1763-1817). It was here that Méhul—a friend of Blaze's father—counselled Blaze to renounce his aspirations as a painter and take up music.<sup>3</sup> Castil-Blaze reminisced that,

Méhul recognized musical instinct in me. We had long conversations together about this art. He enjoyed my Provençal volubility. He even consulted with me!<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>*Grand Dictionnaire universel du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, s.v. "Blaze (Fr.-Henri-Joseph, dit Castil-)", 2/2:812.

<sup>2</sup>Pailleron was the grand-daughter of François Buloz and hence the great-granddaughter of Castil-Blaze. Her book contains a modest amount of interesting information, as well as some glaring errors, such as listing the year 1823 for Castil-Blaze's inaugural feuilleton for the *Journal des Débats*. Marie-Louise Pailleron, *François Buloz et ses amis: la Revue des Deux-Mondes et la Comédie-Française* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, c. 1920), 48-49.

<sup>3</sup>*Sur l'Opéra français*, 62-63.

<sup>4</sup>"Méhul reconnaissait en moi l'instinct de la musique, nous avons ensemble de longs entretiens sur cet art, il s'amusait de ma faconde provençale, il me consulta même!" Castil-Blaze, *Académie impériale de musique*, 2:58.



François-Henri-Joseph Blaze  
at 15 years of age  
Portrait by Clémence Ducreux



Prior to leaving Ducreux's studio, Blaze had had his portrait painted by the master.<sup>5</sup> Pailleron claims that this portrait formed the basis of Ducreux's *Annette et Lubin*.<sup>6</sup>

In Méhul's company, Blaze commented that he did not become his "servant," but rather his "musical page." Though he had not so much as even worked out a figured bass with Méhul, Blaze thought of himself as his "student," attending rehearsals for *Bion* and *Irato* alongside the composer. There was nothing new to this type of arrangement, for the adolescent Méhul had found himself in a similar position with Gluck. Leaving from a final dress rehearsal of *Irato*, Méhul supposedly advised Blaze that,

Italian operas, translated into French by atrocious and stupid hacks, have never hurt us. Lyrics haphazardly set to a melody were repellant and ridiculously overblown. If an intelligent musician some day dares to exploit this mine, he can ravage, and lay waste our empire.<sup>7</sup>

Whether or not Méhul actually spoke these words to Castil-Blaze is of little consequence. They were words however that Castil-Blaze acted upon through his work as an adaptor and arranger of operas. Blaze was quickly enrolled in the newly-founded Conservatoire national de musique et de déclamation<sup>8</sup> studying the oboe with Antoine Sallantin<sup>9</sup> and taking courses in *sofège*. In an 1827 feuilleton which reviewed Fétis's recently published *Solfèges*, Castil-Blaze disclosed that

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<sup>5</sup>The portrait reproduced herein is from a copy contained in Pailleron's book.

<sup>6</sup>Pailleron, 45-46.

<sup>7</sup>"Traduits en français par d'atroces et stupides barbouilleurs, les opéras italiens ne nous ont fait aucun mal, les paroles jetées au hasard sur la mélodie étaient rebutantes et d'un ridicule exagéré. Si quelque jour un musicien intelligent s'avise d'exploiter cette mine, il peut ravager, saccager notre empire." Castil-Blaze, *Académie impériale de musique*, 2:59.

<sup>8</sup>The Conservatoire was established in the Revolutionary year III (1795) by Bernard Sarette (1765-1858), succeeding both the École gratuite de la garde nationale (1792) and the Institut national de musique (1793).

<sup>9</sup>Castil-Blaze, *Académie impériale de musique*, 2:344.

Mr. Charles Duvernoy was his teacher in this subject.<sup>10</sup>

Castil-Blaze carried several vivid memories of his days at the Conservatoire close to his heart until the end of his life.<sup>11</sup> The lot of a Conservatoire student was, on the whole, a hard one as he later lamented:

But the unfortunate Conservatoire student, who has nothing in the world, what will he do to live during his long period of studies? . . . It still breaks my heart at the thought of what I saw. . . In a bout of melancholy, one of my mates from the Conservatoire resolved to put an end to his existence. The fatal weapon was prepared, he took it to his forehead, the shot was about to ring out. *No*, he said, *I would be killing a great man*. He was right: that feeble student is today one of our most distinguished virtuosos.<sup>12</sup>

Later, his courses of study at the Conservatoire included harmony and composition.<sup>13</sup> His teachers were Catel and François-Louis Perne (1772-1832), whom he called "my master."<sup>14</sup> Blaze's academic career, however, was undistinguished. The *Grand Dictionnaire universel du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle* suggests that he was not very strong in his legal studies,<sup>15</sup> while the name of Blaze

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<sup>10</sup>*Journal des Débats*, 11 June 1827. Charles Duvernoy taught the clarinet at the Conservatoire between 1800 and 1816.

<sup>11</sup>*Journal des Débats*, 11 June 1827.

<sup>12</sup>"Mais le malheureux élève du Conservatoire, qui n'a rien dans le monde, comment va-t-il vivre pendant ses longues études. . . le coeur me saigne encore au souvenir de tout ce que j'ai vu. . . Dans un accès de mélancolie, un de mes camarades du Conservatoire résolut de mettre fin à son existence. L'arme fatale est préparée, il la porte à son front, le coup va partir. *Non*, dit-il, *je tuerais un grand homme*. Il avait raison: ce faible élève est aujourd'hui un de nos virtuoses les plus distingués." F. Castil-Blaze, *De l'Opéra en France* (Paris: Janet et Cotelte, 1820), 2:300.

<sup>13</sup>*De l'Opéra en France*, 1:188.

<sup>14</sup>"Perne, mon maître. . ." Castil-Blaze, *Académie impériale de Musique*, 2:169. Unfortunately, no biographical entry on Blaze or Castil-Blaze lists the exact years that he studied at the Conservatoire. Larousse, Blume, and Mendel all state that F.H.J. Blaze studied harmony with Perne. If one takes 1800 as the year that Blaze entered the Conservatoire—the year Duvernoy started teaching at the Conservatoire—then Perne was but a contrabass player in the Opéra orchestra. It is quite possible therefore that Castil-Blaze studied privately with Perne.

<sup>15</sup>Larousse, s.v. "Blaze (Fr.-Henri-Joseph)", 2/2:812.

does not figure in the list of Conservatoire prize winners.<sup>16</sup>

Paris nevertheless provided Blaze with ample distractions from his legal studies. It was here that he acquainted himself with what would become his lifelong love: opera. Years later he reminisced about his earliest critical proclivity towards musical performances:

16 May 1800: victorious revival of *Psyché*;<sup>17</sup> the performance began with *Anacréon chez Polycrate*. I made my first appearance at the Opera that day—that is to say that I went to seat myself on its benches for the first time. Like Laius's son, I was young and haughty. . . I loved music with a passion, but was not yet a musician. I was nearing my sixteenth springtime, I had left my little town of Cavaillon, I had still seen nothing, heard nothing, however, I was not at all filled with wonder. I expected something better, more gripping. . . I would be able to make a complete feuilleton on the performance of 16 May 1800. I remember it as well as this week's performances.<sup>18</sup>

Unfortunately, the fact that *Psyché* was not an opera, but a ballet which featured M<sup>me</sup> Gardel dancing the title role, seemed to have escaped Castil-Blaze's memory. The memory that remained, and probably ripened with age, was of the actions that occurred in the audience that evening:

I will tell you however that a violent brawl took place in the stalls: they were battling with swords. The combatants could not draw their weapons from their sheaths, the mass of people prevented them from doing it. I saw them hit each other over the head and on the shoulders with the hilt of their curved two-

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<sup>16</sup>Pierre Constant, *Le Conservatoire national de musique et de déclamation* (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1900). The name "Blaze" or "Castil-Blaze" is not even mentioned in this book.

<sup>17</sup>The feuilletons of the *Journal des Débats* rendered the title as *Psiché*. *Journal des Débats*, 26 floréal an VIII.

<sup>18</sup>"Le 26 floréal an VIII, reprise victorieuse de *Psyché*; le spectacle commença par *Anacréon chez Polycrate*. Je fis mon début à l'Opéra ce jour-là, c'est-à-dire que j'allai m'asseoir pour la première fois sur ses banquettes. Comme le fils de Laïus, j'étais jeune et superbe. . .j'aimais la musique avec passion et n'étais pas encore musicien; je touchais à mon seizième printemps, je sortais de ma petite ville, de Cavaillon, je n'avais encore rien vu, rien entendu, pourtant je ne fus point émerveillé; je m'attendais à quelque chose de mieux, de plus saisissant. . .Je pourrais faire un feuilleton complet sur la représentation du 26 floréal an VIII; je m'en souviens comme des spectacles de cette semaine." Castil-Blaze, *Académie impériale de musique*, 2:69.

handed swords. This method of swordplay was still dangerous enough. Blood was flowing. No one however was moved by it; scenes of this nature were so frequent at the theatre that the public paid no attention. Conciliatory neighbours and the orchestra's first downbow disarmed the champions.<sup>19</sup>

Upon completion of his legal and musical education,<sup>20</sup> François returned to the family home, now located in Avignon, where his father earned his living as a notary.<sup>21</sup> It was a complete change of pace for the young man who had become accustomed to the capital and its musical offerings. On his fate he lamented that,

Almost all of those educated at the Conservatory stayed in Paris. What would they do in the provinces?. . . In my city, whose population is as high as twenty-five thousand souls, only the pianist earns a living in his craft. The violinists are merchants, the violist keeps the accounts at city hall, the bassoonist registers births and deaths, the two horns are brokers, the oboe is played by a cabinetmaker, the clarinet and the flute by cloth manufacturers, the bass by a wine merchant. A ravishing perspective for a young Conservatory graduate!<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>"Je vous dirai cependant qu'une rixe violente eut lieu dans le parterre: on s'y battit à coups de sabre. Les combattants ne purent tirer leurs armes du fourreau, la presse le leur défendait; je les vis se frappant sur la tête et sur les épaules avec la monture de leurs glaives recourbés. Cette manière d'espadonner était encore assez dangereuse; le sang coulait; personne cependant ne s'en émut; les scènes de ce genre étaient si fréquentes au spectacle, que le public n'y faisait aucune attention. Des voisins conciliateurs et le premier coup d'archet de l'orchestre désarmèrent les champions." Castil-Blaze, *Académie impériale de musique*, 2:70.

<sup>20</sup>Fétis makes it clear that Blaze did not finish his musical studies: "He was preparing to complete his musical education when he had to renounce his penchant in order to occupy himself exclusively with his profession. . . (as a) lawyer." François Fétis, *Biographie universelle des musiciens et bibliographie générale de la musique*, 2nd ed., (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1860-1878; reprint Bruxelles: Culture et civilisation, 1972), s.v. "Blaze (François-Henri-Joseph, dit Castil [-] Blaze), 2:440. Larousse contradicts Fétis on this last point, stating that Blaze completed his thesis. Larousse, 2/2:812. However, Larousse does not specify whether Blaze's thesis was in law or music.

<sup>21</sup>Gíslason dispatches Castil-Blaze to Vaucluse "sometime toward 1805." Gíslason, 43.

<sup>22</sup>"Presque tous ceux que le Conservatoire a formés sont restés à Paris. Que viendraient-ils faire dans les départemens? . . .

Dans la ville que j'habite, et dont la population s'élève à vingt-cinq mille âmes, le pianiste seul se tire d'affaire; les violinistes sont négocians, le violiste tient la comptabilité à Hôtel-de-ville, le bassoniste y enregistre les naissances et les décès; les deux cornistes sont courtiers; le hautbois est joué par un ébéniste, la clarinette et la flûte, par des fabricans d'étoffes; la basse, par un marchand de vin. La belle perspective pour un jeune conservatorien! *De l'Opéra en France*, 1:275-276.

In such a milieu, it is not surprising that Castil-Blaze earned his daily bread by working at a variety of jobs: painter, inspector of the library, wholesale wine merchant and head clerk of the Vaucluse préfecture.<sup>23</sup> He married a young woman from Avignon, Marie-Anne-Euphrosine-Félice de Bury and together they were blessed with three children, Ange-Henri, Christine and Rosalie.<sup>24</sup> Their marriage was a short one, for Marie died shortly after the birth of Rosalie.<sup>25</sup> Blaze probably made use of his occasional business trips to Paris to attend performances of operas and pore over scores in the Conservatoire's library.<sup>26</sup> Years later, he reflected on his life in Provence,

I am a lawyer. I was a hunter in my youth, and you would not believe how much law and hunting had been a precious help in my musical explorations. In the month of May, you go into the fields to whistle for quail. The rhythm of the bird's twitter, an iambic rhythm, is faithfully repeated by you. The quail heeds the call; and there it is almost under the net. All of a sudden. . . its ear warns it of the trick. It takes flight never to return.<sup>27</sup>

In addition to hunting with family members, François spent the remainder of his leisure time composing, much as his father did. It was during these years that he took on the name

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<sup>23</sup>Larousse, s.v. "Blaze (Fr.-Henri-Joseph)", 2/2:812.

<sup>24</sup>Pailleron cites 1814 as the year of their marriage. Pailleron, 46. As with many of her other dates, this one must also be incorrect for their first child, Ange-Henri, was born in May 1813.

<sup>25</sup>Jules Janin, "La Semaine dramatique," *Journal des Débats*, 21 December 1857.

<sup>26</sup>One such trip occurred in 1810, while another took place in 1815. *De l'Opéra en France*, 1:120; *Académie impériale de musique*, 2:144.

<sup>27</sup>"Je suis avocat, j'étais chasseur en mon jeune temps, et vous ne sauriez croire combien le droit et la chasse m'ont été d'un secours précieux dans mes explorations musicales. Au mois de mai, vous allez dans la plaine y siffler des cailles; le rythme du cri de l'oiseau, rythme de l'iambe, est par vous répété fidèlement; la caille vient à l'appel, là voilà presque sous le filet. D'un coup. . . son oreille l'avertit de la ruse, il part à tire d'ailes et ne reviendra plus." *Sur l'Opéra français*, 25-26.

Castil-Blaze,<sup>28</sup> a Frenchified version of Dom Bernard de Castil Blazo, the first master found in Alain René Le Sage's *L'Histoire de Gil Blas de Santillane* (1717-35). Castil-Blaze was no doubt smitten by the conspicuous resemblance to his own name and perhaps even by the character, who was living a life of ease after having converted his inheritance into fifty thousand ducats.

Though Castil-Blaze claimed that at the age of seventy-one he could have written a feuilleton on the first opera he saw in Paris in 1800, the fact is that he did not. The idea of actually writing about music and his first attempt at a feuilleton came in 1815, after attending a performance of Sacchini's *Renaud* at the Théâtre-Italien in Paris:

They are restaging Sacchini's *Renaud*. This opera produced only a mediocre effect, even though it was sustained by the talent of a valiant Armide, Madame Branchu. Miss Bigotini made her return as Nina on that very day 16 November. I attended this performance as an music-lover. As a lawyer, a subprefect, music was only an entertainment for me. I loved it with a juvenile ardour. This passion has dwindled since I had the whim to marry it. The idea of writing about music came to me while listening to Sacchini's work. The next day I wrote my first feuilleton. Salgues was the director of some paper or other. His articles on music seemed to me to contain fewer foolish remarks than those of his colleagues, I put him first. Did Salgues find my little work bad? Did it appear too good to him? Was this writer too ignorant to be able to voice an opinion on this essay? I can not resolve any of these questions. The fact is that my article was not printed at all. Two other feuilletons, committed to Martainville's keeping,<sup>29</sup> remained in complete neglect. To say that they did

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<sup>28</sup>Numerous misspellings of his name exist: in *Music and the Popular Press: Music Criticism in Paris during the first Empire*, Aitken vacillated between Castil-Blaise and Castil-Blaze; in *Beethoven's Critics*, Robin Wallace consistently rendered it as Castile-Blaze; in the *Journal des Débats* on 4 July 1820, the feuilletonist Étienne Béquet—"R." to his readers—wrote of Castil-Blaze; and on 22 July 1827, typesetters mistakenly exchanged the "z" with an "s." This thesis will adopt the spelling with which he signed all of his books and letters and used whenever he wrote of himself in the newspaper: Castil-Blaze.

<sup>29</sup>Martainville and Salgues collaborated on the pompously titled though short lived (17 July 1824 - 18 July 1825) monthly review *Oriflamme, journal de la littérature, des sciences et des arts, d'histoire et des doctrines religieuses et monarchiques*. Larousse, s.v. "Salgues (Jacques-Barthélemy)", 14/1:109. However, it was in 1818 that Martainville and the bookstore "Dentu" issued the *Drapeau blanc*, an ultra-rightist semi-periodical with a circulation of four thousand at the height of its popularity. Larousse, s.v. "Martainville, (Alphonse-Louis-Dieudonné)", 10/2:1265-1266. One may then assume that is the newspaper to which Castil-Blaze submitted his two first feuilletons.

not want them for two cents, or for two farthings, would be an intolerable presumption. They would not even have wanted them if I had offered to pay their printing costs.<sup>30</sup>

Unable to supply any newspaper with *feuilletons*, Castil-Blaze directed his energies elsewhere. It was during the three years prior to his appointment to the *Journal des Débats* that he took the advice of Méhul and started translating and arranging Italian operatic works for the provincial stages.<sup>31</sup> Among his first endeavours were Cimarosa's *Le mariage secret* and Mozart's *Les Noces de Figaro*. They were staged in Nîmes in 1817 and 1818 respectively by Alexis Singier, a former pupil of Méhul.<sup>32</sup>

1820 was a watershed year in Blaze's career. On the "literary front," Castil-Blaze's first book, *De l'Opéra en France*, was published in two volumes. Written with the musical amateur in mind, it explained the musical principles involved in opera.<sup>33</sup> However, it was in Chapter XIV of Volume Two that he took straight aim at his target. In "On the Necessity of Being a Musician in Order to Properly Judge Music and Write on this Art", Castil-Blaze launched his critical volley at the *littérateurs*—naming several former and current *feuilletonists* at the *Journal*

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<sup>30</sup>"On remet en scène *Renaud* de Sacchini; cet opéra ne produit qu'un médiocre effet, bien qu'il fût soutenu par le talent d'une vaillante Armide, M<sup>me</sup> Branchu. M<sup>lle</sup> Bigottini fit sa rentrée dans *Nina* le même jour 16 novembre. J'assistais à cette représentation en amateur; avocat, sous-préfet, la musique n'était encore pour moi qu'un amusement; je l'aimais avec une ardeur juvénile; ce feu s'est bien ralenti depuis qu'il m'a pris la fantaisie de l'épouser. L'idée d'écrire sur la musique me vint en écoutant l'oeuvre de Sacchini. Le lendemain je fis mon premier feuilleton. Salgues était directeur de je ne sais quel journal; ses articles sur la musique me semblaient contenir un peu moins de sottises que ceux de ses confrères, je lui donnai la préférence. Salgues trouva-t-il mon opuscule mauvais? lui parut-il trop bon? Cet écrivain était-il assez ignorant pour ne pouvoir émettre une opinion sur cet essai? Je ne puis résoudre aucune de ces questions. Le fait est que mon article ne fut point imprimé. Deux autres feuilletons, remis à Martainville, restèrent dans un oubli complet. Dire qu'on n'en voulait pas pour deux sous, pour deux liards, serait d'une intolérable présomption; on n'en voulait pas pour rien, on n'en eût pas voulu même si j'avais offert d'en payer l'impression." *Académie impériale de musique*, 2:144.

<sup>31</sup>*Sur l'Opéra français*, 63.

<sup>32</sup>*Académie impériale de musique*, 2:179.

<sup>33</sup>The following are some examples of chapter titles: "On Melody," "On Harmony," "On Accompaniment," "On the Overture," "On the Recitative," and so on.

*des Débats* in the process—arguing that they were incapable of writing knowledgeably about music. In the ensuing stir amongst the Parisian *littérateurs*, the *Journal des Débats*'s feuilletonist "C." wrote that, while he was struck by the correctness of Castil-Blaze's remarks, a *littérateur* such as himself could still speak sensibly about dramatic music.<sup>34</sup> Read on one level, Castil-Blaze made a case for a professionally trained musician—someone such as himself, of course—to write music feuilletons. Read on another level, this chapter is but a solicitation for the post of feuilletonist at the *Journal des Débats*.

The book and its ideas eventually came to the attention of the Bertin brothers, the proprietors of the *Journal des Débats*. They thought so much of its viewpoints, forceful arguments and literary style that they hired Castil-Blaze to write the music feuilleton for their paper. On Thursday 7 December 1820, his first music feuilleton appeared in the *Journal des Débats*, opening as follows:

This chronicle will be devoted exclusively to music. New and old operas will be examined therein (solely in musical terms), analyzed with care and according to the best principles. . . .  
 . . . I thought that the readers would like to find in this newspaper some details on an art full of charm, and of which the periodic press has up until now, spoken of in too vague and fleeting a manner.<sup>35</sup>

This feuilleton was signed "X.X.X.," Castil-Blaze's trademark initials.<sup>36</sup> But what of this initial,

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<sup>34</sup>"J'ai ai été frappé . . . de la justesse des observations. . . ; je pouvois encore. . . parler raisonnablement de musique. *Journal des Débats*, 19 August 1820.

<sup>35</sup>"Cette chronique sera exclusivement consacrée à la musique. Les opéras anciens et nouveaux y seront (uniquement sous le rapport musical) examinés, analysés avec soin, et d'après les principes de la bonne école. . .

. . . J'ai pensé que les lecteurs aimeront à trouver dans ce Journal des détails sur un art plein de charme, et dont les feuilles périodiques ont jusqu'à ce jour, parlé d'un manière trop vague et trop fugitive." *Journal des Débats*, 7 December 1820.

<sup>36</sup>The "Table générale des collaborateurs du Journal des Débats" in *Le Livre du centenaire du "Journal des Débats" 1789-1889* (Paris: Plon, 1889), 597-626, erroneously states that Castil-Blaze was the only feuilletonist to make use of the initials "X.X.X.". However, on 25 May 1819, the initials "X.X.X." graced a feuilleton discussing the abolition of police control on the press under the title "Mélanges. Littérature,



and why three "X."? "X." was already in use, but "X.X." was available. We could surmise that the widower Castil-Blaze, who referred to the "X." not as a letter but as a star, placed down one star for each of his three children.<sup>37</sup>

Castil-Blaze's campaign on the musical front was progressing concurrently with the one on the literary front. On 20 October 1820, Castil-Blaze signed a contract with the Parisian music publisher Charles Laffillé for the publication of his translations and arrangements of operas, which now included Mozart's *La Flute enchantée* and Rossini's *Le Barbier de Séville* as well as three others.<sup>38</sup>

His first quarters in Paris were located on the Rue de Paradis in the X<sup>e</sup> arrondissement,<sup>39</sup> and then in the IX<sup>e</sup> arrondissement at no. 9 Rue Faubourg-Montmartre. Some years later, he moved several blocks further north to his final place of residence, no. 9 Rue Buffault. Also living on that street were Scribe's collaborator Boniface (known as Saintine) at no. 23 and Adolphe Adam at no. 24.<sup>40</sup> His choice of location from which to scrutinize the Parisian musical scene was nothing short of ideal. Within an eight-hundred-metre radius south of his quarters at the Rue du Faubourg-Montmartre, and but a few hundred metres more from his residence at Rue

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sciences et arts, théâtres." The style of this feuilleton may safely lead one to conclude that it was not written by Castil-Blaze. Further, Castil-Blaze made no mention of a feuilleton from this date in his *Académie impériale de musique*.

<sup>37</sup>Upon seeing his first feuilleton in print, Castil-Blaze was said to have exclaimed, "There, from now on my three stars. . ." "Voilà désormais mes trois étoiles. . ." Jules Janin, "La Semaine dramatique," *Journal des Débats*, 21 December 1857.

<sup>38</sup>Castil-Blaze and Charles Laffillé, Contract, 20 October 1820, Département de la musique, Bibliothèque nationale, Paris, France. Charles Laffillé (Amiens, 1772 - Paris, 1843) had befriended numerous artists and participated in the vogue of writing romances while in Paris. His cantata with full orchestra was performed at the Opéra in April 1814. His publishing firm was purchased by Alexandre Petit in 1824. Fétis, s.v. "Laffillé (Charles)", 5:162.

<sup>39</sup>Pailleron, 55-56.

<sup>40</sup>Jacques Hillairet, *Dictionnaire historique des rues de Paris* (Paris: Les Éditions de Paris, 1963), s.v. "Paradis (rue de)", "Faubourg-Montmartre (rue de)", and "Buffault (rue)".

Buffault, were found all of the major institutions and theatres from which Castil-Blaze would report: the Conservatoire de Musique, the Salle des Menus-Plaisirs, the Théâtre Feydeau, the Salle Favart, the Théâtre Louvois, the Opéra, the Théâtre des Nouveautés, the Salle Ventadour, as well as the Gymnase-Dramatique. He was quite a distance from the headquarters of the *Journal des Débats*, which were located much further south at no. 17 Rue des Prêtres-Saint-Germain-L'Auxerrois, in the 1<sup>er</sup> arrondissement.<sup>41</sup>

The following year, 1821, saw Castil-Blaze active on both fronts. He contributed thirty-four feuillets to the *Journal des Débats*, and his second book, the *Dictionnaire de musique moderne*, was published. His translation of Rossini's *Le Barbier de Séville* was presented under Singier in Lyon on 19 September and earned 42,000 francs.<sup>42</sup>

In 1822, the number of feuillets written by Castil-Blaze dropped to twenty-nine. On 21 July, he entered into a contractual obligation to form a company to promote his own musical works with André Louis Lazare Rossi, a Parisian dentist.<sup>43</sup> Castil-Blaze set about adding to his portfolio. Rossini's *La Pie voleuse* came first.<sup>44</sup> Castil-Blaze also compiled a volume of music by Gluck under the title of *Gluck des concerts*. A version of Rossini's *Otello* was also in the works.

That year, Perne, the *inspecteur générale des classes* at the Conservatoire, announced his retirement. The Marquis de Lauriston, a former general, and now the minister of the royal household, approached Castil-Blaze with an invitation to assume the post of Director of the Conservatoire.

This minister of the house of King Louis XVIII, wishing to take

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<sup>41</sup>The building which housed the newspaper was situated directly west of the Louvre.

<sup>42</sup>*Académie impériale de musique*, 2:179.

<sup>43</sup>*Dictionnaire des éditeurs de musique français* Vol. II De 1820-1914, ed. Anik Devriès and François Lesure (Geneva: Éditions Minkoff, 1988), 9.

<sup>44</sup>Castil-Blaze's version first appeared on stage in Lille on 15 October. *New York Public Library Reference Department Dictionary Catalog of the Music Collection* (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1964), 4:179.

This minister of the house of King Louis XVIII, wishing to take up again the reform plan that Napoléon had conceived, appointed me Director of the Conservatoire. . .<sup>45</sup>

Although it was "an infinitely honourable position," Castil-Blaze's answer was emphatic: ". . . my respect for standards of behaviour did not allow me to accept."<sup>46</sup> However, the real reason behind Castil-Blaze's refusal was that,

as translator and journalist, these two activities promised me a million, and the Conservatoire was only offering me nothing but zero, as the estimated surplus of each year's profits.<sup>47</sup>

In 1823, Castil-Blaze tried his hand at "composing." On 1 March, his *Les Folies amoureuses*, which was based on de Regnard's comedy, was given at the Grand Théâtre de Lyon. *Les Folies amoureuses* was not an original composition from Castil-Blaze's pen, but a pasticcio assembled with pieces culled from works by Mozart, Cimarosa, Pavesi and Steibelt. Some of the music was even composed by a certain Generali.<sup>48</sup> We now know that this was one of four pseudonyms—the others were Borghi, Federici and Mosca—which Castil-Blaze used to conceal

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<sup>45</sup>"Ce ministre de la maison du roi Louis XVIII, voulant ressaisir le projet de réforme que Napoléon avait conçu, me nomma directeur du Conservatoire. . ." *Sur l'Opéra français*, 63.

<sup>46</sup>". . .poste infiniment honorable . . . mon respect pour les bonnes moeurs ne me permit pas d'accepter." *Académie impériale de musique*, 2:167.

<sup>47</sup>"Traducteur et journaliste, ces deux industries me promettaient un million, et le Conservatoire ne m'offrait qu'un zéro pour l'excédant présumé des recettes de chaque année." *Académie impériale de musique*, 2:167.

<sup>48</sup>Castil-Blaze did not hide the sources of his compilation. The *Catalogue thématique* on page iii of the piano-vocal score, which was printed by Aulangier no earlier than 1832, lists the composers and the works which Castil-Blaze borrowed from: the overture was Rossini's *Tancredi*, the second aria was taken from Mozart's *Così fan tutte*, and so on. Generali's piece, a duo for soprano and tenor in A major, claims to be from an opera entitled *La donna soldato*. However, no such work is listed as being composed by Pietro Generali. The price for a single copy of each selection is found at the end of each theme in the catalogue. The text for all of the pieces is in two languages: French, in bold script, is located above Italian.

his authorship from the public.<sup>49</sup>

Two of Castil-Blaze's translations of Rossini's works also received performances that year: *La Pie voleuse* was restaged, this time at the Odéon on 2 August;<sup>50</sup> *Otello* received its first performance by the troupe from the Grand Théâtre de Lyon on 1 December.<sup>51</sup> These works were of course duly praised by the feuilletonist "X.X.X." in the *Journal des Débats*!

Only twenty-four feuilletons by Castil-Blaze appeared in 1824. This was due to his occupation with another pasticcio, *La fausse Agnès*, which he constructed from music by Cimarosa, Rossini, and Meyer-Beer,<sup>52</sup> as well as original contributions by "Generali" and "Federici." He also arranged Carl Maria von Weber's *Der Freischütz*, in a version that was to live on in infamy. On 7 December, *Robin des Bois*, Castil-Blaze's title for his bowdlerization, opened at the Odéon and was promptly hissed off of the stage.<sup>53</sup> In what amounted to a public relations coup, Castil-Blaze came to his own rescue in a feuilleton on 28 December, claiming that due to further minor adjustments, the work was now a success. The public approved and this version went on to enjoy three hundred and twenty-seven performances at the Odéon, and according to Berlioz, earned Castil-Blaze over 100,000 francs.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>49</sup>*Académie impériale de musique*, 2:182. These names were carefully and cleverly chosen for they were composers who were 1) of Italian origin 2) for the most part still living 3) though somewhat obscure to the Parisian public 4) shared their surname with another composer. Most telling in this practice was that an Italian name was preferred over a French one owing to the public's favour of Italian composers.

<sup>50</sup>Larousse, s.v. "Blaze, (Fr.-Henri-Joseph)", 2/2:812.

<sup>51</sup>*N. Y. P. L. Reference Department Dictionary Catalog of the Music Collection*, 4:179.

<sup>52</sup>Castil-Blaze's spelling is used here.

<sup>53</sup>Years later, Castil-Blaze printed a deliberately misleading account of the work's Paris launching in order to extol his efforts. He claimed that it was *Der Freyschütz* [sic] that opened to a hostile public and press that evening, while his *Robin des Bois* first appeared nine days later to wide public and critical acclaim. *Académie impériale de musique*, 2:181. However, it was *Robin des Bois* that appeared on 7 December, and it was this version that was vilified by the public and press alike.

<sup>54</sup>Hector Berlioz, *Mémoires* (Paris: Garnier-Flammarion, 1969), 1:115.

In 1825, he wrote twenty feuilletons, composed his String Quartet op. 17 and concocted another pasticcio, *La Forêt de Sénart ou, La Partie de chasse d'Henri IV*.<sup>55</sup> By December, word of Castil-Blaze's arrangements of Weber's works had reached the composer's ears. A not-too-pleased Weber quickly dispatched a personal letter to Castil-Blaze, who later denied receiving it. Weber then sent a copy of this letter plus a second letter to his Paris publisher, Maurice Schlesinger, asking that both be printed in all of the Parisian newspapers. In the second letter, Weber threatened Castil-Blaze.

You force me, Monsieur, to appeal to public opinion and to state publicly in the French press that I am being robbed, not only of music which belongs exclusively to me, but of my reputation, when mutilated works are performed with my name attached to them. In order to avoid all public disputes, which benefit art no more than they benefit artists, I urgently beg of you, Monsieur, to remove immediately from the work that you have arranged any numbers of which I am the author.<sup>56</sup>

Prior to their publication, Schlesinger had shown both letters to an obdurate Castil-Blaze, who remarked,

I know that Rossini and Weber can bring lawsuits against me and that I could lose, but as every lawsuit in France lasts at least a year according to the course it takes, I would sell my separate arias to the music dealers, I'd break the boards of my stages with my works, and as my capital doesn't consist of an estate, I'd let them take my personal property and that wouldn't pay the legal costs.<sup>57</sup>

On 25 January 1826, Castil-Blaze countered Weber's letters through his feuilleton in order to

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<sup>55</sup>*Académie impériale de musique*, 2:182. Though Larousse correctly states that *La Partie de chasse d'Henri IV* was performed in 1826, he misleads the reader by giving the impression that *La Partie de chasse d'Henri IV* is completely different from the three act comic opera, *La Forêt de Sénart*. It is in fact its subtitle.

<sup>56</sup>John Warrack, *Carl Maria von Weber: Writings on Music*, trans. Martin Cooper (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 310.

<sup>57</sup>Warrack, 311.

diffuse any negative public opinion towards the pasticcios. The impact that Weber had hoped his letters would have never materialized. Though Weber travelled to Paris in February 1826, he and Castil-Blaze never met. Thirteen days after Weber's death in London on 5 June, Castil-Blaze devoted an entire feuilleton as a retrospective on the composer. *Robin des Bois* which Castil-Blaze had metamorphosed from *Der Freischütz* took on a life of its own receiving a total of 432 performances by 1855.<sup>58</sup>

1826 proved to be a busy year for Castil-Blaze. *La fausse Agnès* was re-staged at the Odéon.<sup>59</sup> On 22 July, his translation and arrangement of Mozart's *Les Noces de Figaro* was performed for the first time at this theatre.<sup>60</sup> His first book, *De l'Opéra en France*, was augmented with an *Essai sur le drame lyrique et les vers rythmiques*. Towards the end of this year, Fétis had intended to have Castil-Blaze write about operas and concerts for his *Revue musicale*. However, due to Castil-Blaze's previous commitments, these plans had to be abandoned, thereby leaving Fétis alone to carry out his venture.<sup>61</sup> Fourteen feuilletons by Castil-Blaze appeared in the *Journal des Débats* this year.

His contributions to the *Journal des Débats* increased from thirty-five feuilletons in 1827 to forty-two in 1828. This can be explained by the fact that no new pasticcios were created. His output of forty-one feuilletons in 1829 dropped to thirty-four in 1830, no doubt due to his work

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<sup>58</sup>*Académie impériale de musique*, 2:278.

<sup>59</sup>Boris Schwarz's assertion that Castil-Blaze was the director of the Odéon in 1826 is totally incorrect. Boris Schwarz, *French Instrumental Music between the Revolutions (1789-1830)* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1987), 42. The director of the Odéon from April 1824 until January 1826 was Claude Wolf dit Bernard. He was succeeded by Frédéric du Petit-Méré. Nicole Wild, *Dictionnaire des théâtres parisiens au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris: Aux Amateurs de Livres, 1989), 292.

<sup>60</sup>Mark Everist, "Giacomo Meyerbeer, the Théâtre Royal de l'Odéon, and Music Drama in Restoration Paris," in *Nineteenth Century Music* XVII, no. 2 (Fall 1993): 142.

<sup>61</sup>Arthur Pougin, "Notes sur la presse musicale en France," in *Encyclopédie de la musique et dictionnaire du Conservatoire* (Paris: Librairie Delagrave, 1931), 3847.

on a proposed a two-volume set of his best *Journal des Débats* feuilletons of which only one volume appeared, as well as his translation of Rossini's *L'Italienne à Alger* which was published that same year.

Forty-two feuilletons were printed in 1831, the most in one year. Between 8 January and 25 June in 1832, he wrote only ten feuilletons for the *Journal des Débats*. It turned out to be his final year at this newspaper. He jumped ship to the rival *Constitutionnel*, which at that time was the most widely circulated Paris daily. He did not stay long at this newspaper, moving on to edit the music section of the *Revue de Paris*.<sup>62</sup>

It was around this time that Castil-Blaze had begun to abandon the grind as a feuilletonist in the daily press in favour of the less hectic life of a writer for periodicals. In this capacity, he furnished articles for Schlesinger's *Gazette musicale*, later known as the *Revue et Gazette musicale*, as well as the *Revue française*, *Le Ménestrel*,<sup>63</sup> *La France musicale*,<sup>64</sup> *Dictionnaire de la conversation*, *Magasin pittoresque*<sup>65</sup> and Abbé Normand's (a.k.a. Théodore Nisard) *Revue de musique sacrée ancienne et moderne*.<sup>66</sup> Likewise, his forays into the periodic press afforded him the time to write monographs of which the following are examples: *Chapelle-musique des rois de France* (1832); *La danse et les ballets depuis Bacchus jusqu'à Mademoiselle Taglioni*

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<sup>62</sup>Castil-Blaze contributed articles on the L'Académie Royale de Musique for the 7, 19, 26 June, 11 December 1836, 1 January and 24 September 1837 issues. Wild, 320. For the 7 October 1838 issue, he wrote on Paër. Gustave Chouquet, *Histoire de la musique dramatique en France* (Paris: Librairie Firmin Didot Frères, Fils et C<sup>ie</sup>., 1873), 443.

<sup>63</sup>An article entitled "La Famille Bach" appeared in 1834. Danièle Pistone, *La Musique en France de la Révolution à 1900* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1979), 170.

<sup>64</sup>His "Musée Dantan. Les Pianistes magot," which dealt with Jean-Pierre Dantan's sculpted caricatures of Thalberg and Liszt, appeared in issue V on 17 April 1842. H. Robert Cohen, "Dantan Jeune," in *Music in Paris in the Eighteen-Thirties*, ed. Peter Bloom (Stuyvesant, N.Y.: Pendragon Press, 1987), 145.

<sup>65</sup>Fétis, s.v. "Blaze (Fr.-H.-J.)", 2:441.

<sup>66</sup>Pougin, 3854.

(1832);<sup>67</sup> *Le piano: histoire de son invention* (1840);<sup>68</sup> *Physiologie du musicien* (1844); *Mémorial du grand opéra* (1847);<sup>69</sup> *Molière musicien* (1852);<sup>70</sup> *Théâtres lyriques de Paris: l'Académie impériale de musique de 1645 à 1855* (1855);<sup>71</sup> *L'opéra italien de 1548 à 1856* (1856); *Sur l'opéra français: vérités dures mais utiles* (1856).<sup>72</sup>

Finding little success on the musical front, he devoted his final years to writing. Enclosed in the narrow and low confines of his study at Rue Buffault no. 9 in Paris,<sup>73</sup> he wrote,

perhaps you believe that I live like a bear. . . far from the joyous, witty, charming society that only the love of small coins could unite against me. Not at all.<sup>74</sup>

His last books, *L'Académie impériale de musique* and *Sur l'Opéra français*, contained attempts to vindicate his works from previous decades. In his mind, it was not greed, but an ignorant public that united against him. Of the reception accorded Beethoven's and Weber's works a quarter of a century earlier, he explained that

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<sup>67</sup>This work first appeared in the *Revue de Paris* in 1829. It offers an example of Castil-Blaze's "double-dipping": having the same article printed in more than one publication. [*Revue de Paris*, (Paris: 1829; reprint Genève: Slatkine Reprints, 1972), Tome IV à VI, 193-208.]

<sup>68</sup>This work is based on articles which appeared in the *Revue de Paris* between 1839 and 1840. No doubt his many feuillets for the *Journal des Débats* on the piano as well as those which highlight the careers of piano builders such as Sébastien Érard and others provided fodder for this book.

<sup>69</sup>This work is based on articles that he first supplied to the *Revue de Paris*.

<sup>70</sup>This work has little to do with Molière, but is rather a collection of writings on assorted topics.

<sup>71</sup>Larousse has ascertained that this work contains an enormous amount of errors concerning dates. For example, he claims that Rameau's opera *Nais* was performed on 22 April 1749 and not as Castil-Blaze erroneously stated on 5 December 1749. Larousse, s.v. "Blaze (Fr.-Henri-Joseph)", 2/2:812.

<sup>72</sup>In criticizing these later publications, Fétis claimed that Castil-Blaze was far too fond of using the events, dates and smutty adventures recorded in the unedited writings of Beffara, a former Superintendent of Police in Paris, to produce works of a speculative nature. Fétis, s.v. "Blaze (Fr.-H.-J.)", 2:442.

<sup>73</sup>Fétis, s.v. "Blaze (Fr.-H.-J.)", 2:443.

<sup>74</sup>"Peut-être croyez-vous que je vis comme un ours. . . loin d'une société joyeuse, spirituelle, charmante que l'amour des piécettes a seul pu liguer contre moi; point du tout." *Sur l'Opéra français*, 70.



Beethoven and Weber were vilified at the Odéon's rehearsals because it was believed that I was the composer of the *Pastoral Symphony* and *Euryanthe*. My choruses were praised to the skies, all because my admirers wished to honour Weber.<sup>75</sup>

By the following year, his tone had become even more strident. Castil-Blaze lashed out at the innocent reader, crescendoing to a final cry of despair, in the hope of convincing everyone that his fate was unjustified, and that *he* should have worn the laurels which were bestowed by the public upon Weber and Beethoven:

I was ridiculed, anathematized by your illustrious ones from the Odéon, the whole of the famous orchestra led by its two conductors Crémont and Bloc. It was Weber, it was Beethoven who received the insult. Our illustrious virtuosos attributed the march from *Euryanthe*, the *Pastoral Symphony* to me! And I was booed, whipped for such foolishness! They had applauded Weber until exhausted, bravos without end, encores demanded. And this Weber celebrated so noisily at the Odéon and the Conservatoire, was me. Yes, always me!<sup>76</sup>

Castil-Blaze's vituperations were to no avail. The public was not fooled. They knew Weber and Beethoven when they heard it. They knew pastiche when they heard it, too. In the face of this adversity, Castil-Blaze did not give up. He envisioned a glorious place for himself in the musical history of France.

I translated the masterpieces of Mozart, Rossini, Weber, Donizetti, and, thanks to my work, the music of the theatre has made great strides in our country.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>75</sup>"Beethoven et Weber ont été vilipendés aux répétitions de l'Odéon, parce qu'on me croyait l'auteur de la *Symphonie pastorale* et d'*Euriante*. Des chœurs de ma façon étaient portés aux nues, par la raison que mes admirateurs voulaient bien en faire honneur à Weber." *Académie Impériale de Musique*, 2:182.

<sup>76</sup>"J'avais été frappé de ridicule, d'anathème par vos illustres de l'Odéon, tout le fameux orchestre commandé par ses deux chefs Crémont, Bloc, et c'était Weber, c'était Beethoven qui recevaient l'affront. Nos illustres virtuoses m'attribuaient la marche d'*Euriante* [sic], la *Symphonie pastorale!* et j'étais sifflé, fouetté pour de telles sottises! On avait applaudi Weber à tout briser, des bravos sans fin, des bis demandés, et ce Weber fêté [sic] si bruyamment à l'Odéon, au Conservatoire, c'était moi, oui, toujours moi!" *Sur l'Opéra français*, 76.

<sup>77</sup>"J'ai traduit les chefs-d'oeuvre de Mozart, de Rossini, de Weber, de Donizetti, et, grâce à mon travail, la musique de théâtre a fait chez nous un pas de géant." *Sur l'Opéra français*, 69.



Castil-Blaze

In providing music for the theatres, Castil-Blaze was a prodigious worker. In addition to assembling pasticcios, arranging and composing original works, came the task of editing. It was he who prepared the scores of his and other composers' works, fashioned the piano-vocal arrangements, took care of the layout of the plates for the engravers, chose the paper, paid attention to the print, corrected the proofs, did the book-keeping and maintained an extensive correspondence without a single assistant.

Though he expended a great amount of energy on his own projects, he was not above helping others. One such example was his letter of recommendation on behalf of the singer M<sup>lle</sup> Lebourg to M. Ferville, the correspondent of the theatres, for employment in the provinces or outside of France.<sup>78</sup>

His final years witnessed a rapid decline in his health. Fétis claimed that the only exercise he took was in moving a pen across a piece of paper.<sup>79</sup> After a sickness had confined him to bed for several days, he died in Paris on 11 December 1857, at the age seventy-three. Left unfinished at his death were the following works: "Livre des pianistes"; "Musiciens illustres"; "Curiosités musicales et galantes sur le Grand-Opéra"; "Musicians, salad cueillie et légèrement assaisonnée"; and "Histoire de l'Opéra-Comique".<sup>80</sup> *L'Art des vers lyriques* was published posthumously in 1858 by A. Delahays in Paris.<sup>81</sup> In addition to the romances and works for military orchestra mentioned above, we should note his other non-operatic compositions, selectively listed here: *Messe à voix récitants que soutient un orchestre vocal*; *Sextuor* op. 18 for

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<sup>78</sup>Castil-Blaze to M. Ferville, 4 July 1832, Département de la musique, Bibliothèque nationale, Paris, France.

<sup>79</sup>Fétis, s.v. "Blaze (Fr.-H.-J.)", 2:443.

<sup>80</sup>Larousse, s.v. "Blaze (Fr.-Henri-Joseph)", 2/2:813.

<sup>81</sup>*N. Y. P. L. Reference Department Dictionary Catalog of the Music Collection*, 4:177.

two clarinets, horns and bassoons;<sup>82</sup> *Allegro concertante* for flute and piano;<sup>83</sup> and *Romance de Joseph* for flute and piano.<sup>84</sup> He also brought out many collections of operatic works, such as *La Pie voleuse: airs avec accompagnement de piano* (1822), the aforementioned *Le Gluck des concerts* (1822); *Le Piccini des concerts* (1823), *Le Sacchini des concerts* (1824), as well as *Le Dalayrac des concerts* (1828), *Airs de Figaro, de Basile, de Bartholo, du Barbier de Séville - de Rossini, mis en provençal*, *Le Mois de Marie: cantiques, antiennes et motets*, and *Chants Populaires de la Provence*.

Everything about Castil-Blaze was sharp, sardonic, aggressive. Notwithstanding, he was the best of men, who knew how to enjoy his being without making others suffer too much.<sup>85</sup>

One of his compatriots, Mr. Gregali, summed him up thus:

Castil went at the run, visiting friendly cities and homes, often chatting in the sunshine, his large Béarnaise hat in his hand, a sparkling gaze, a memory bursting with souvenirs. He mixed history, anecdote, criticism, poetry, travel, table talk, astronomy, proverbs, music, gaiety, verve, good sense, science, eccentricity, mockery, philosophy, passion, gastronomy and Provençal. He spoke and sang. He was by himself a library and a concert.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>82</sup>This work was published by Musica Rara, London, in 1971. The editor, Roger Hellyer, surmises that the work was published no earlier than 1832, the date when Aulagnier moved to Rue de Valois in Paris.

<sup>83</sup>This work was published in 1889.

<sup>84</sup>It was based on music from Méhul's 1807 opera *Joseph*.

<sup>85</sup>Larousse, s.v. "Blaze (Fr.-Henri-Joseph)", 2/2:813.

<sup>86</sup>"Castil allait courant, visitant les villes et les maisons amies, causant souvent au soleil, son grand chapeau béarnais à la main, le regard brillant, la mémoire gonflée de souvenirs. Il mêlait l'histoire, l'anecdote, la critique, la poésie, les voyages, les propos de table, l'astronomie, les proverbes, la musique, la gaîté, la verve, le bon sens, la science, l'excentricité, la moquerie, la philosophie, la passion, la gastronomie, et le provençal; il parlait et chantait, il était à lui seul une bibliothèque et un concert!" Pailleron, 48.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE FEUILLETON

This chapter examines the feuilleton under two major headings, "artistic" and "aesthetic." Borrowed from the Polish literary critic Roman Ingarden, these terms stress the idea that when considering a literary work such as a feuilleton, one must take into account not only the actual text but the actions involved in responding to that text. "Artistic refers to the text as created by the author and the aesthetic to the realization accomplished by the reader."<sup>1</sup> The artistic section will therefore search for a definition of the feuilleton, trace the development of the feuilleton in the Parisian press, delineate the characteristics of a feuilleton, and categorize the feuilleton. This artistic section will also examine the feuilletonists themselves, including the *littérateur*, and the qualities they possessed.<sup>2</sup> The aesthetic section will explore a reader's response to feuilletons. It will begin with a survey of Parisian readership and Castil-Blaze's readers, and then progress to investigate a model for reader response to a selected passage from one of Castil-Blaze's feuilletons. This exploration will introduce the term "evocative analysis," the underlying foundation of which is rooted in the writings of the literary theorist Wolfgang Iser.

#### ARTISTIC: THE TEXT

##### Towards a Definition of "Feuilleton"

. . . a feuilleton is such a slight thing, it is gone  
with the wind.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Wolfgang Iser, *The Implied Reader* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1980), 274.

<sup>2</sup>No attempt has been made to follow an Ingardian model for the examination of these artistic concerns.

<sup>3</sup>". . . un feuilleton est chose si légère, autant en emporte le vent." *Journal des Débats*, 14 February 1832.

Thus wrote Castil-Blaze, in an attempt to capture the essence of a feuilleton. Jules Janin, a distinguished feuilletonist for the *Journal des Débats* from 1829 until 1873, once charmingly mused that the feuilleton was, "A little cry of joy which the day's events wring from us."<sup>4</sup>

Though these ruminations offer us insight into the spirit and mood of a feuilleton, they provide little technical detail other than suggesting that it involves writing about daily events in a light style. For an academic explanation of a feuilleton, one could turn to the definition provided by Wilmont Haacke:

A feuilleton is a work of clean, elevated and appealing prose, in which a poetic experience is presented in an emphasized, personable style through the literary means of brief journalistic observations, under the addition of a philosophical construction or interpretation of moralistic perspectives, in which, nevertheless, the general public's passion is not diminished, but is augmented, and so presented that the ordinary is combined in perpetual harmony and pleasantness.<sup>5</sup>

Yet, this is but a weightier version of the descriptions provided by Castil-Blaze and Janin. In addition to identifying the feuilleton as an appealing but brief account of some poetic experience or occurrence, Haacke brought to light what was intrinsically understood by these earlier writers, that it was cast in prose, laced with the personal element, and treated mundane experiences as though they were eternal. Above all, the feuilleton was to be found in newspapers. This did not

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<sup>4</sup>"Un petit cri de joie que nous arrache le spectacle du jour." Emile Fauget, *Histoire de la langue et de la littérature française* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1899), 658; quoted in Murphy, 220, n. 12.

<sup>5</sup>"Ein Feuilleton ist ein Stück sauberer, gehobener und ansprechender Prosa, in welchem ein dichterisches Erlebnis mit literarischen Mitteln bei Innehaltung journalistischer Kürze unter Hinzufügung einer philosophischen Unterbauung oder Auslegung zu moralischer Perspektive, gehalten in einer betont persönlichen Schilderung, welche jedoch die Nachempfndbarkeit für die Allgemeinheit nicht schwächt, sondern hebt, so dargestellt wird, dass sich Alltägliches mit Ewigem darin harmonisch und erfreuend verbinden." Wilmont Haacke, *Handbuch des Feuilletons* (Emsdetten: Verlag Lechte, 1951), 2:305.

rule out the use of poetry, however. In fact, feuilletonists were wont to quote poems within their feuilletons.<sup>6</sup>

Still, Haacke's circumscription neglected to address the dual usage of the term feuilleton in nineteenth-century France. Larousse's *Grand Dictionnaire universel du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, which defined a feuilleton as "an article about literature, science or criticism which is usually printed in a spot reserved at the bottom of the pages of newspapers,"<sup>7</sup> comes close to disclosing this duality, but is wanting in several aspects. First, in France the term feuilleton came to refer not only to the article, but also to the bottom third of the newspaper's pages where the article itself was located, hence the dual connotation. The French nicknamed this section of the newspaper "*rez-de-chaussée*" or the "ground floor," insofar as a thick, dark horizontal line physically separated it from the newspaper's other more factual or non-bellitristic articles. Not only did this horizontal line establish the boundary of the feuilleton, which could be spread over multiple pages, but it also served to draw the reader's eyes and subsequently the reader's attention to that section. Second, the feuilleton section was not reserved exclusively for one article or feuilleton. On occasion two or even three feuilletons, each written by a different feuilletonist, could appear within this section. Third, topics other than those mentioned in Larousse's definition were treated in a feuilleton. Though the feuilleton was often a review of a musical or dramatic performance, other topics such as fashion and the fine arts were included. Overt discussions of politics and deep philosophical concerns were nevertheless anathema to this section. For a long time, the feuilleton section was an all too handy area to place miscellany, i.e., non-political information. At times, the feuilleton section in the *Journal des Débats* was devoid of a single feuilleton and

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<sup>6</sup>In the 1820s, selections of poetry by Lamartine and others appeared in the *Journal des Débats*. This will be discussed further with regard to the *littérateurs*.

<sup>7</sup>"Article de littérature, de science ou de critique, qui s'imprime ordinairement dans les journaux à une place réservée au bas des pages." Larousse, s.v. "Feuilleton", 8/1:311.

featured only announcements of upcoming performances, while at other times, feuilletons stood alongside these announcements for plays and operas, as well as advertisements of books and musical scores for sale.<sup>8</sup> On occasion, no feuilleton whatsoever appeared. As Castil-Blaze once sarcastically wrote, "music must give precedence to politics."<sup>9</sup> If the feuilleton was "bumped" in favour of political news, it was either saved for future issues or remained unprinted. On occasion Castil-Blaze informed his readers of such occurrences:

I had devoted an article on Mr. Baillot's evenings of quartets and quintets. Parliamentary debates withheld this feuilleton and many others in boxes.<sup>10</sup>

By April 1830, Castil-Blaze claimed that more than sixty of his feuilletons were withheld and eventually left unprinted due to the abundance of political matters.<sup>11</sup> Fourth, the feuilleton increasingly came to be serialized. feuilletonists began to write lengthier feuilletons, which necessitated continuation in any number of subsequent issues. Novelists seized upon this concept and offered their works for serialization in the newspapers. The result was the creation of the *roman-feuilleton* which took Paris by storm in 1836.<sup>12</sup>

In short, the feuilleton in Paris during the 1820s was a concert or drama review or an article on a non-political topic, written in a light, graceful, and usually humorous or sometimes sarcastic style, to be read by the general public. Let us now turn our attention to how the feuilleton was developed in the Parisian press.

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<sup>8</sup>After 1827 such advertisements were relocated to the back pages.

<sup>9</sup>"La musique doit céder le pas à la politique." *Journal des Débats*, 5 January 1821.

<sup>10</sup>"J'avois consacré un article aux soirées de quatuors et quintettes de M. Baillot; les discussions parlementaires ont retenu ce feuilleton et bien d'autres dans les cartons." *Journal des Débats*, 29 March 1828.

<sup>11</sup>*Journal des Débats*, 19 April 1830.

<sup>12</sup>Eugène Sue's *Les Mystères de Paris*—which appeared in the *Journal des Débats*—and Alexandre Dumas's *Les Trois Mousquetaires* are but two examples of novels disseminated in this manner.



## The Parisian Press and the Development of the Feuilleton

"La trompette de la Presse joue une musique variée, éclatante et poétique. . ." <sup>13</sup>

The most important predecessor of the feuilleton in the French press of the late eighteenth century was the *Petites Affiches*. Dealing solely with the theatre, it was brought out in pamphlet form by its editor Abbé J. L. Aubert between 1751 and 1790. Des Granges states that one can recognize numerous characteristics in Aubert's writings that were to become hallmarks of the feuilleton's style: the brevity of many of the articles; the lively writing style; the detailed listing of upcoming performances, including repeat engagements and opening nights; the history of the work in question; the comparisons with other works; the successes of previous performances; the analysis of the plot; the brief discussion on the work's interpretation; the public's reaction; and the critiques of actors' performances.<sup>14</sup> Aubert was more a journalist than a critic and not surprisingly, his work contained characteristics that future feuilletonists, especially the *littérateurs*, were to use in their feuilletons. In his drama reviews, he would begin by citing passages from any works analagous to the one in question. Following this, a brief discussion of the theoretical principles used by the playwright would occur. The writer would then take up the play, though a detailed analysis of the work was rare. Aubert ended his articles the way future feuilletonists would end theirs: by pronouncing judgement on the work in asking whether it was praiseworthy or not. These characteristics made for an article that the public could read quickly. One was not inundated with philosophical conundrums. Everything was kept short, lively, and superficial. Not only are Aubert's writings important because of the model they provided for the

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<sup>13</sup>Honoré de Balzac, *Monographie de la presse parisienne* (Paris: Editions J.-E. Hallier / Albin Michel, 1981), 153.

<sup>14</sup>Charles-Marc des Granges, *Geoffroy et la critique dramatique sous le Consulat et l'Empire (1800-1814)* (Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1897), 104.

feuilleton, but for the information they provide us concerning the writer's knowledge of the theatre and of the audience of the age.<sup>15</sup>

The revolution of 1789 brought about the abolition of censorship which had existed under the monarchy. On 27 August the Assembly voted to entrench the right of free speech and publication into the Constitution which appeared in 1791.<sup>16</sup> The effect of this declaration was immediate and unprecedented. One hundred and fifty *feuilles* or bulletins which reflected the political bias of the authors appeared in 1789, while a further 140 were printed the following year.<sup>17</sup> Many of these, though, were short-lived. Among those participating in the newspaper boom were Gaultier de Biauzat, a lawyer from the Auvergne, and Baudouin, the printer of the National Assembly. On 30 August 1789, they brought out the first issue of the *Journal des débats et décrets*. The *raison d'être* of this newspaper was to report on the discussions in the Assembly. The *Journal des débats et décrets* did not have a corner on the political market, however. The government had its own official organ, the *Moniteur*, a newspaper that would of course report on its deliberations in a most favourable manner. Soon people turned to the *Journal des débats et décrets*, rather than the *Moniteur*, for a more reliable account of political activity. After June 1797,<sup>18</sup> the newspaper appeared under a title that even more accurately reflected the paper's contents: *Journal des débats et lois du Corps législatif*. With such a mandate in their title, it is hardly surprising that the newspaper abstained from printing almost anything but articles that

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<sup>15</sup>Granges, 103-104.

<sup>16</sup>Eugène Hatin, *Histoire de la presse en France* (Genève: Slatkine Reprints, 1967), 8:12.

<sup>17</sup>Shelagh A. Aitken, *Music and the Popular Press: Music Criticism in Paris during the First Empire* (Northwestern University, 1987), 78.

<sup>18</sup>Prairial V in the French Revolutionary calendar.

addressed political issues. Only on rare occasion could one find poetry in the *Journal des débats et décrets*. One such example was the "Hymne" by Marie-Joseph Chénier.<sup>19</sup>

This new-found freedom did not last long. The Constitution of 1793 proclaimed the "indefinite liberty of the press."<sup>20</sup> Journalists nonetheless were not immune from the tribunals of the Reign of Terror from April 1793 to May 1794: the proprietors of Jacques Hébert's *Père Duchenes* and Camille Desmoulins's *Vieux Cordelier* were executed as traitors to the Revolution.<sup>21</sup> The government took abrupt measures to restrict the press. A decree on 5 September 1797 placed newspapers and their print shops under police inspection. On 17 December 1797, a decree simply suppressed some newspapers and had their presses sealed. The Constitution of 1797 left no place for freedom of the press.<sup>22</sup> By 1799, these restraints effectively wiped out all but seventy-two newspapers which were still being published in Paris.<sup>23</sup>

A new era for the *Journal des Débats* started in late 1799 when it was purchased from Baudouin by the Bertin brothers, Louis François (a.k.a. Bertin l'aîné, 1766-1841) and Louis-François (a.k.a. Bertin des Veaux, 1771-1842), for 20,000 francs. The Bertins had embarked upon their enterprise at an unstable time. In an effort to strengthen his control of both the government and public thought, Napoleon, who by now was First Consul, decreed on 17 January 1800 that only thirteen specified newspapers out of the existing seventy-two could continue to

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<sup>19</sup>This poem appeared in the *Journal des débats et décrets* on 29 December 1795 (9 nivôse an II). Ruth Jakoby, *Das Feuilleton des Journal des Débats von 1814 bis 1830* (Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag, 1988), 15, n. 6.

<sup>20</sup>Claude Bellanger and others, eds., *Histoire générale de la presse française* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1969), 2:5.

<sup>21</sup>Aitken, 78.

<sup>22</sup>Bellanger, 2:5.

<sup>23</sup>Aitken, 78.

publish.<sup>24</sup> Fortunately for the Bertins, the *Journal des Débats* was one of those thirteen newspapers. The remainder were eventually required to merge with one of the "official" papers, or were simply suppressed.<sup>25</sup> The first issue under the new owners appeared on 23 January 1800.<sup>26</sup>

As a result of this new decree, in effect only four newspapers were published regularly between the years 1800 and 1814: the *Journal des Débats* and *Le Moniteur*, both founded in 1789, as well as the *Gazette de France* and the *Journal de Paris*, founded respectively in 1631 and 1777. These officially sanctioned publications, however, were hardly free to do as they pleased. Editors and owners alike were required to swear an oath of allegiance to Napoleon's Constitution. The tactics of the *Journal des Débats* were simple: unceasingly attack the institutions and the men of the Revolution, but basely flatter the Premier consul. The *Journal des Débats* escaped suppression and seemingly won the sympathies of Bonaparte.

After noticing a distinct void in the reportage of Paris's cultural activities in the remaining newspapers, Bertin l'aîné came up with the idea of including a regular feuilleton section in his newspaper on 28 January 1800.<sup>27</sup> One could now subscribe to one publication—the *Journal des Débats*—in order to receive timely and specialized reporting in political and cultural spheres. Over the years, a brilliant roster of feuilletonists, which included Geoffroy,<sup>28</sup> Dussault, Feletz, Malte-Brun, Royer-Collard, and Chateaubriand, was assembled to carry out the newspaper's

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<sup>24</sup>Jakoby, 17.

<sup>25</sup>Aitken, 4.

<sup>26</sup>Jakoby, 15-18.

<sup>27</sup>Charles-Marc des Granges, *Le romantisme et la critique. La presse littéraire sous la Restauration 1815-1830* (Paris: Société du Mercure de France, 1907; reprint, Genève: Slatkine Reprints 1973), 104.

<sup>28</sup>On 2 March 1800, Julien-Louis Geoffroy (1743-1814) became the chief feuilletonist for the *Journal des Débats*, a post he would hold until his death on 14 February 1814. Jakoby, 9-21.

cultural mandate. The *Journal des Débats* was transformed from an unadorned political newspaper into a literary wonder. Fiévée's compliment that "the *Journal des Débats* was the first to show what a newspaper could be in France,"<sup>29</sup> was no doubt due to its feuilleton and feuilletonists.

Nevertheless, the concept of a newspaper providing reviews of musical and theatrical productions was not a new one at the turn of the century. Prior to 1800, the *Journal de Paris* had infrequently published reviews in the manner of Abbé Aubert's *Petites Affiches*, which included a plot synopsis, the names of performers, and the audience's reaction.<sup>30</sup> Similar descriptive reviews were also an occasional feature in such newspapers as the *Gazette de France* and the *Gazette nationale*, known later as the *Moniteur universel*.

The *Journal des Débats*'s first feuilleton appeared on 3 February 1800. Bertin's originality lay not so much in the provision for a feuilleton, as previously indicated, but in its presentation:<sup>31</sup> it was contained on the bottom third of each of the newspaper's four pages.

Beneath an announcement calling for advertisements in the feuilleton section, came the sub-heading "Spectacles." Here theatres listed their various dramatic and operatic productions, supplying a minimum amount of information: the title of the work(s); the company; and the composer or author. Top listing on 3 February 1800 was for the Théâtre de la République et des Arts. Then came the most important theatre in Paris, which announced a performance of Méhul's opera *Adrien*, followed by a number of other theatres and their playbills for that evening.

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<sup>29</sup>"Le *Journal des Débats* avait le premier montré ce que pouvait être un journal en France." Larousse, s.v. "Fiévée (Joseph)", 8/1:344-345. See nn. 41 and 42 for further information on Fiévée.

<sup>30</sup>Aitken, 14.

<sup>31</sup>Aitken, 10.

Page Two included a thirteen line "Enigme," an enigma for which the answer would be revealed the next day, as well as a quatrain praising the Premier Consul. The remainder of the feuilleton from the second column of Page Two until the end of Page Four, contained a dramatic review. This unsigned effort bore the following title:

"Ephémérides politiques et littéraires"  
Tableau du 3 février  
L'an 1689, le 3 février, première représentation  
d'*Esther*, tragédie de Saint-Cyr.

A notice on Page Four in the 19 February 1800 issue of the *Journal des Débats* defined the spectrum of the feuilleton:<sup>32</sup>

Special Announcement:

This column reviews the latest productions and actors first appearances on the stages of Paris's theatres. Therein one finds various agenda which offer readers a quick and interesting listing of the main political and literary events, which took place at different periods in time corresponding to the day of the year on which they are inserted.

Dupré, editor<sup>33</sup>

Such reviews were found under the sub-heading "Variétés." They contained not only familiar features such as a plot synopsis and an evaluation of the leading artists, but also further interesting reading material in the manner of brief biographies, as well as comments on diverse

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<sup>32</sup>Granges erroneously insists that it was from this day hence that the *Journal des Débats's* feuilleton section began to announce upcoming shows. He also incorrectly claims that the first real critical feuilleton, appeared on 11 ventôse (2 March 1800), the day that Geoffroy took up his duties as feuilletonist for the *Journal des Débats*. "A partir de ce jour, le *feuilleton* donne d'abord l'annonce des spectacles. . . le premier article de critique, digne de ce nom, paraît le 11 ventôse. . . Geoffroy commençait ainsi la campagne qu'il devait mener sans interruption jusqu'au 4 février 1814." Granges, 119.

<sup>33</sup>"Avis essentiel: On rend compte dans ce feuilleton des nouveautés sur les différents théâtres de Paris et des débuts des acteurs. On y trouve des éphémérides variés qui offrent aux lecteurs le tableau rapide et intéressant des principaux événements politiques et littéraires, arrivés à diverses époques correspondantes aux jours où on les insère.

DUPRÉ, rédacteur"

*Journal des Débats*, 30 pluviôse an VIII (3 February 1800). A portion of this text is found in Granges, 119.

topics, ranging from the history of a particular institution to backstage gossip.<sup>34</sup> Controversies between rival feuilletonists or a feuilletonist and his readers, as well as lawsuits, were carried on here as well.<sup>35</sup>

However, in reality the feuilleton was not exclusively reserved for articles on theatre or literature. Its format had to be varied, since musical or dramatic presentations were not being reviewed daily. Under various other sub-headings, articles on fashion, science, geography and especially literature and drama appeared. Even charades, puzzles, bookstore catalogues, and commercial offers found their way into the feuilleton.<sup>36</sup>

Furthermore, the feuilleton was not a daily feature. It was however a major selling feature of the *Journal des Débats*. Between 1800 and 1803, the newspaper was being issued in two forms: quarto and folio. Yet, it was only the larger format which included the feuilleton.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>Aitken, 92.

<sup>35</sup>*La Mort d'Adam* was the subject of a lawsuit between the composers Lesueur and Kreutzer in 1809. Lesueur claimed sole rights to the subject since he had written his version a decade earlier, but had not been allowed to stage it. Kreutzer's recently composed *La Mort d'Abel* had a plot and title similar to Lesueur's opera. Lesueur accused Kreutzer of plagiarism. *La Mort d'Adam* was eventually staged, and the opening of *La Mort d'Abel* was postponed until 1810. Their debate was carried on in the press. On 21 March 1809, the *Journal des Débats* published both the brief, vitriolic accusation by Lesueur and his librettist Guillard, and the much longer, defensive response by Kreutzer's librettist, Hoffman, a feuilletonist at the *Journal des Débats*. Eventually, Lesueur won. The altercation provided the plot of a parody entitled *Adam et Abel, ou le procès du père et du fils* (*Adam and Abel, or the Lawsuit between Father and Son*). It was performed at the Opéra. Aitken, 97.

<sup>36</sup>Jakoby, 10.

<sup>37</sup>Jakoby, 20.

At first, other Parisian newspapers, such as the *Journal de Paris*, were envious of the *Journal des Débats* success and downplayed its feuilleton.<sup>38</sup> Yet, in time most of Paris's major newspapers came to include a feuilleton, copying the format found in the *Journal des Débats*.<sup>39</sup>

In 1805, Napoleon further tightened his grasp on the press and the *Journal des Débats*. Firstly, censorship was re-introduced to the French press. From 1805 until 1814 each newspaper was required to have a *commissaire*—an inspector or censor—on staff in order to watch out for the "interests" of the Empereur.<sup>40</sup> During these years of censorship, discussion of political topics was severely limited. The arts and literature were however relatively safe topics and thus gained in importance.

On the matter of censorship, Napoleon sent a *Note de l'Empereur* to Fiévée,<sup>41</sup> the *Journal de l'Empire*'s censor, explaining that,

A censor was given to the *Journal des Débats* as a form of punishment. The feuilleton of Geoffroy had been withdrawn from censure, as was the literary section. . .<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>38</sup>Granges, 182-184.

<sup>39</sup>In 1805, the *Gazette de France* started its feuilleton and six years later the *Journal de Paris* formally followed suit with Gustave Fabien-Pillet as its feuilletonist. The *Courrier des spectacles* included a feuilleton by the novelist and critic François Ducray-Duminil, while Jean-Baptiste Suard wrote for the *Moniteur universel*. Aitken, 17 and 45.

<sup>40</sup>Larousse, s.v. "Débats (Journal des)."

<sup>41</sup>Joseph Fiévée (1767-1839) was named as censor to the *Journal de l'Empire* in 1805. During the Empire, he wrote feuilletons on politics and literature and signed them with an "F." This initial was replaced by "T. L." after 4 October 1815. He retired in 1828. *Le Livre du centenaire*, 608.

<sup>42</sup>"Un censeur a été donné au Journal des Débats par forme de punition; le feuilleton de Geoffroy a été soustrait à la censure, ainsi que la partie littéraire. . ." Hatin, 7:503; quoted in Jakoby, 27. Fiévée was a close friend of Geoffroy and probably shielded him from any reprisals. Granges, 239.



Napoleon's reasoning for this was that, "if the prattling of the newspapers has its disadvantages, it also has its advantages."<sup>43</sup> Clearly, Napoleon thought that men who wrote on literature or the arts were less likely to be involved in politics and hence, less critical of the government,<sup>44</sup> and less likely to write of political matters in their *feuilletons* which could sway the public. By 1811, Napoleon's stranglehold on the newspaper was complete. On 18 February, he issued a decree declaring himself the new owner of the newspaper. When the allies entered Paris on 31 March 1814, the Marquis de la Grange was authorized to change the editors of the *Journal des Débats*. Literally overnight, the Bertins re-possessed their paper and lost little time in re-titling it the *Journal des Débats*. Its mixture of liberal and royalist viewpoints soon garnered it a circulation of 23,000.<sup>45</sup>

In spite of Napoleon's abdication in 1814, censorship of the press continued until the spring of 1819, though now placed squarely in the hands of the police on behalf of the restored monarchy of Louis XVIII.<sup>46</sup> With the writings of Chateaubriand, the *Journal des Débats* was pulled into the camp of the Ultra-Royalists. The consequence was predictable: the government assigned a censor to the newspaper.

In November 1827, the *Journal des Débats* overhauled its *feuilleton* section, banishing all advertisements to a special *rez-de-chaussée* on the back page.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>43</sup>" . . . si le bavardage des journaux a des inconvénients, il a aussi des avantages." Hatin, 7:503; quoted in Jakoby, 28.

<sup>44</sup>Aitken, 83.

<sup>45</sup>Jakoby, 28.

<sup>46</sup>Irene Collins, *The Government and the Newspaper Press in France 1814-1881* (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), 15.

<sup>47</sup>The revenue from these advertisements soon reached 20,000 francs. The *Journal des Débats* did not lead the way in this area, however. These type of advertisements were first inaugurated in France by Alexandre Baudoin in his *Aristarque* earlier in 1827. This recourse to paid advertisements was imported from England. Maurice Descotes, *Histoire de la littérature en France* (Paris: Jean-Michel Place, 1980), 251.

We will seize upon the coming about of this change in the newspapers in order to adopt a measure demanded some time ago by commerce, industry and property owners to satisfy their ever-increasing need for publicity, and to devote to them without taking anything away from the space exclusively reserved as in the past for politics, literature, daily bulletins, open to all insertions whatever their nature.<sup>48</sup>

This also meant that the daily announcement of Parisian theatre productions was now to be listed not under the heading of the "Feuilleton", but under "Spectacles" and was also to be found on the back page instead of the front.

When the protests of journalists against the ordinances of July 1830 were filling almost every newspaper in Paris, the *Journal des Débats* carried on as though nothing was about to occur. However, after the revolution, it sided enthusiastically with the new dynasty. Many of the *Journal des Débats* writers and clients soon found themselves entering political office.<sup>49</sup>

Lamartine best expressed the history of the *Journal des Débats* when he wrote,

The *Journal des Débats*, which supports governments in their turn as being the necessary expression of the most essential and permanent interests of society, was written by men who had matured while in power. It displayed seriousness, loftiness, scornful sarcasm, and sometimes also the poignant provocation of force. It seemed to reign with monarchy itself and recall the Empire. The names of all the official writers. . . gave it a superior prestige over the periodic press, younger in both years and passion. . . The sciences, high level literature, philosophy, theatre, arts, criticism, were analysed, reproduced, vilified in its

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<sup>48</sup>"Nous saisirons l'occasion de ce changement dans les journaux pour adopter une mesure réclamée depuis long-temps par le commerce, par l'industrie et par la propriété, pour satisfaire leur besoin toujours croissant de publicité, et pour leur consacrer, sans rien diminuer de l'espace exclusivement réservé, comme par le passé, à la politique et à la littérature, une feuille d'annonces quotidiennes, ouvertes à toutes les insertions, de quelque nature qu'elles puissent être." *Journal des Débats*, 21 November 1827.

<sup>49</sup>Larousse, s.v. "Débats (Journal de)", 6/1:183-184.

feuilletons, whose gravity was never heavy. . . It. . . belongs, so to speak, to the history of France.<sup>50</sup>

### Authorship of a Feuilleton

In order for a feuilletonist to emit a "little cry of joy" in the daily press,

the quick impressions that one dashes off in a rush the day after the first performance, must be compared to those quick remarks uttered during a lively and animated conversation, where one defends one's opinion: it is not always necessary to look for accuracy or rigorous exactitude in every sentence; but all together they modify, temper, and explain each other.<sup>51</sup>

The intent of the style of these writings is well described in the following passage:

Lazy readers are quite fond of those separate pieces that they can, in a way, skim through without interrupting a conversation. Nothing pleases them more than these quick analyses where a light witticism and a fine epigram cause a mischievous smile. But this type of article requires a certain graceful wit, and a certain lightness of style. Nothing is less suited to it than a pedantic mind and weighty learning. The public expects a subtle and well-bred joke.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>50</sup>"Le *Journal des Débats*, qui soutient les gouvernements tour à tour comme étant l'expression nécessaire des intérêts les plus essentiels et les plus permanentes de la société, était rédigé par des hommes mûris dans le pouvoir. Il avait la gravité, l'élévation, le sarcasme dédaigneux, et quelquefois aussi la provocation poignante de la force. Il semblait régner avec la monarchie elle-même et se souvenir de l'Empire. Les noms de tous les écrivains officiels . . . lui donnaient un prestige de supériorité sur la presse périodique plus jeune d'années et de passion. . . Les sciences, la haute littérature, la philosophie, le théâtre, les arts, la critique, se trouvaient analysés, reproduits, vivifiés dans ses feuilletons, où la gravité n'était jamais lourde. . . Il . . . [fait] pour ainsi dire partie de l'histoire de France." Larousse, s.v. "Débats (*Journal de*)", 6/1:184.

<sup>51</sup>"Les aperçus rapides que l'on jette en courant, le lendemain de la première représentation, doivent être mis au rang de ces traits qui échappent dans une conversation vive et animée, où l'on soutient son opinion: il ne faut pas toujours chercher une justesse et une précision bien rigoureuses dans chaque phrase; mais toutes ensemble se modifient, se tempèrent et s'expliquent mutuellement les unes par les autres." Granges, 198; quoted in Jakoby, 25.

<sup>52</sup>"Le lecteur paresseux aime assez ces morceaux détachés qu'on peut en quelque sorte parcourir sans interrompre une conversation. Rien ne lui plaît tant que ces rapides analyses ou [sic] un trait léger et une fine épigramme font sourire [de] la malice. Mais ce genre d'article demande une certaine grâce dans l'esprit, et une certaine légèreté dans le style, rien n'y est moins propre que l'esprit pédantesque et la lourde érudition. C'est une plaisanterie fine et de bonne compagnie que le public attend." *Journal des*

Castil-Blaze, however, had one more stipulation for a feuilleton: that there be criticism.

A feuilleton without criticism would be worth as much as a flower-bed without roses, a court without lovely ladies.<sup>53</sup>

As will be shown, Castil-Blaze's feuilletons contained all of those features—including criticism—necessary to cause that "mischievous smile."

Castil-Blaze stated that a name at the end of the feuilleton was necessary to inspire confidence and to offer a guarantee.<sup>54</sup> However, not all feuilletonists chose to sign with their name. Many in fact—and Castil-Blaze was one of them—attempted to conceal their identity by choosing one of three options: 1) not signing the articles; 2) signing with a pseudonym ("Paul Smith" in the *Courrier Français* was Édouard Monnais, for example);<sup>55</sup> or 3) using an initial such as "C." or "X." or "A.". The latter was by far the most common practice.

The reasons for the use of initials were fourfold. First,

in the press of days gone by, when political articles appeared without a signature, it wasn't the writers of the articles [alone], it was the newspaper that spoke, and in order that it spoke with authority, the editor-in-chief had to establish, by his personal action, a unified perspective and doctrine among his diverse collaborators.<sup>56</sup>

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*Débats*, 10 June 1818; quoted in Jakoby, 37.

<sup>53</sup>"Un feuilleton sans critique! autant vaudrait un parterre sans roses, une cour sans jolies femmes." *Journal des Débats*, 19 January 1830.

<sup>54</sup>*De l'Opéra en France*, 2:237.

<sup>55</sup>Fétis, s.v. "Monnais (Guillaume-Édouard-Dieudonné)", 6:173-174.

<sup>56</sup>"Dans l'ancienne presse, quand les articles politiques paraissaient sans signature, ce n'étaient pas les rédacteurs des articles, c'était le journal qui parlait, et pour qu'il parlât avec autorité, le rédacteur en chef devait établir, par son action personnelle, une unité de vue et de doctrine entre ses divers collaborateurs." Léon Say, "Bertin l'aîné et Bertin de Veaux," *Le Livre du centenaire*, 43.

Second, the practice of initialling was a rite of passage whereby, after years of successful writing, the feuilletonist gradually earned the distinction of signing with his or her own name.<sup>57</sup> Third, as Barzun mentioned, the feuilletonist hid behind initials as a safeguard against the challenge to a duel.<sup>58</sup> Fourth, after decades of use by hundreds of feuilletonists, it became virtually *de rigueur* to have one's own initials.<sup>59</sup>

Yet, were these feuilletonists actually anonymous? Did anyone really know it was Castil-Blaze behind the initials "X.X.X."? Of course his colleagues at the *Journal des Débats* knew. But what of the readers? In his announcement of a planned second collected edition of feuilletons from 1821 to 1830, Castil-Blaze, ever overzealous for praise, included a quote that his friend Fétis had written about the "Chronique musicale":

. . . the interesting polemic of the *Chronique musicale*, that Mr. Castil-Blaze was responsible for writing in the *Journal des Débats*. . .<sup>60</sup>

His cover was blown. Now every reader of the "Chronique musicale" was certain of one thing: Castil-Blaze was "X.X.X."

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<sup>57</sup>Jakoby, 36. Feuilletonists such as Dussault, Malte-Brun and Charles Nodier who signed with their own names had enough confidence to "lay it on the line."

<sup>58</sup>Both, the poet Charles Dovalle (1807-1829) and the historian Armand Carrel (1800-1836) were killed in duels brought on by "incautious words in print," in a society that believed that an honour smeared "must be cleansed in blood." Jacques Barzun, "Paris in 1830," in *Music in Paris in the Eighteen-Thirties*, ed. Peter Bloom (Stuyvesant: Pendragon Press, 1987), 19.

<sup>59</sup>See Murphy, 185-186 for a listing of the identified initials of Parisian music critics from 1830-1839.

<sup>60</sup>". . . la polémique intéressante de la *Chronique musicale*, que M. Castil-Blaze fut chargé de rédiger dans le *Journal des Débats*. . ." F.-J. Fétis, *Revue musicale* no. 19 (June 1827); quoted in *Journal des Débats*, 19 April 1830.

### The Eclecticism of the Feuilleton

The *rez-de-chaussée* was the one area of the paper where politics did not reign supreme. The feuilletonist was expected to treat a variety of topics. Geoffroy, for example, wrote about dramatic productions, literary criticism, musical productions and so on.

When Castil-Blaze commenced his duties at the paper, the emphasis of the feuilletonist had shifted somewhat. Instead of having one feuilletonist handle everything, the *Journal des Débats* had several, each with his own field of expertise. Castil-Blaze, therefore, was not required to cover dramatic productions. These would be reported on by Duvicquet as well as Le Sourd ("L.S."). Charles Nodier and Louis-Aimé Martin (L'Aimé-Martin) would contribute literary criticism, with the latter also furnishing feuilletons on historical perspectives and the salons. Art criticism as well as occasional music criticism was handled by "D."—Jean-Étienne Déclécluze. Poems by Lamartine would appear. Feuilletons on *beaux arts* would be submitted by "V."—Charles-Guillaume Étienne.

Each writer, then, within his own area of expertise, attempted to be as wide-ranging as possible. Castil-Blaze's eclecticism in musical matters can be witnessed by the fact that he did not just stick to the tried and true opera feuilleton, but wrote reviews about music books and scores, concert reviews, reported on musical news, obituaries of famous composers, and so on. On rare occasion, details within one feuilleton spawned a life of their own in a subsequent feuilleton.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>61</sup>Such was the case with the telegraph which was used in the plot to Pixis's opera *Bibiana*. Castil-Blaze's comments about the 108<sup>th</sup> regiment brought several letters from men who had served in that very regiment and who wished to correct an error that the librettist had made. *Journal des Débats*, 3 and 11 May 1830.

### The Feuilleton Categorized

In Chapter XIV of Volume Two in *De l'Opéra en France*, "On the Necessity of Being a Musician in Order to Properly Judge Music and Write on this Art", Castil-Blaze distinguished between three types of feuilletons. The first type limited itself to a formula. The feuilletonist, who after having meticulously analysed the drama, announced that the poet had been perfectly assisted by the musician, and added some generalities about the music being good or excellent or enchanting or divine. The second type contained judicious observations and justified criticism, but from a feuilletonist who learned them by rote from another source and copied them down to the last detail without understanding any of it. The final type was written by *littérateurs* such as Marmontel, La Harpe or Geoffroy, who dauntlessly wrote down their views, which only serve to expose their ignorance on music.<sup>62</sup> Castil-Blaze's musical training allowed him to establish a category based on the expertise of the feuilletonist.

### Qualities of the Feuilletonist

Feuilletonists, on the whole, were a well-paid lot. The more one wrote, the better paid one would be, and hence the better one's status.<sup>63</sup> But just what were the qualities that one had to possess in order to be a feuilletonist?

The feuilletonist was first and foremost a critic. In his praise of Dussault, de Feletz made note of several qualities that a good literary feuilletonist should possess:

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<sup>62</sup>*De l'Opéra en France*, 2:193-197.

<sup>63</sup>For example, at the *Journal des Débats* in the month of October 1814, the feuilletonist Charles Nodier earned 1,100 francs, one hundred francs more than his chief editor, Bertin l'aîné! This newspaper's other feuilletonists were not as lavishly paid: Duvicquet earned 600 francs, while de Feletz and Aimé-Martin earned 500 and 225 francs respectively—still reasonable pay considering that a domestic servant during the Restoration earned four or five francs per day. Archives Nationales, A.N. F<sub>18</sub>13 (*Journal de l'Empire*); quoted in Jakoby, 44-45.

[He] judged all writers, and all literature of all ages, developed and justified his judgements, combined important discussions with even more serious questions, and thus became, more than in any other era, a complete course in literary principles applied to a heap of old, modern, contemporary, French and foreign writings.<sup>64</sup>

But critical acumen, so vital to a feuilletonist, was ineffective without an admirable writing style.

Berlioz seems to have toiled over just the right word or turn of phrase in his feuilletons:

. . . It is a struggle to get myself to begin to write a page of prose, and before I have done a dozen lines (except on very rare occasions) I . . . do anything to fight off the boredom and fatigue which rapidly descend on me. It can take eight or nine attempts before I am rid of an article for the *Journal des Débats*. I have to set aside two days for it . . . The first draft is like a battlefield.<sup>65</sup>

Though this thesis will treat Castil-Blaze's feuilletons in later chapters, I wish here to include a brief and interesting example from one of Castil-Blaze's early notes and letters. Consider the panache of the following anecdote found at the bottom of an undated page of rough notes, one that never saw the light of day:

During the siege of Hamburg in 1814, Prince Ekmul ordered that dramatic productions were to become more frequent. One evening while M<sup>me</sup> Fodor was on stage, Crémont on the podium and my brother Elzéar, captain of the 108th, in the balcony, a cannonball entered without a ticket and lodged itself in the gallery. The pedal point was a free-for-all. But, the conductor got everyone on track at the right measure and the performance continued without a hitch until the end.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>64</sup>"[I] jugea tous les écrivains et toutes les littératures de tous les âges, développa et motiva ses jugemens, mêla à ces discussions importantes des questions plus graves encore, et devint ainsi, plus qu'à toute autre époque, un cours complet de principes littéraires appliqués à une foule d'écrits anciens, modernes, contemporains, français et étrangers." *Journal des Débats*, 8 December 1818; quoted in Jakoby, 35.

<sup>65</sup>*The Memoirs of Hector Berlioz*, trans. and ed. David Cairns. (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1975), 108.

<sup>66</sup>"En 1814, pendant le siège de Hambourg, le prince d'Ekmul ordonna que les représentations dramatiques devinssent plus fréquentes. Un soir, Mme Fodor étant en scène; Crémont, chef d'orchestre, à son pupitre; mon frère Elzéar, capitaine au 108e du ligne, au balcon; un boulet de canon entra sans billet,



Castil-Blaze rarely included an anecdote for the anecdote's sake. This particular example contained no criticism, a requirement for Castil-Blaze, and was hence cast aside. This anecdote may well have been written prior or subsequent to Castil-Blaze's appointment at the *Journal des Débats* and hence would not figure in any feuilleton.<sup>67</sup>

As far as the present author is aware, only one draft of a published feuilleton by Castil-Blaze exists.<sup>68</sup> Examination of this draft leads one to believe that he struggled very little with writing. It consists of biographical notes on the recently deceased Gossec, which Castil-Blaze turned into a feuilleton that appeared on 3 March 1829. That Castil-Blaze had an ease of writing is amply demonstrated by 1) a consistently flowing pen stroke, indicating that the draft was written at one sitting, and 2) only two words in this two-page manuscript that were crossed out—hardly qualifying it as a "battlefield." The printed feuilleton followed the draft's presentation of points fairly closely, though it was considerably elaborated. The draft, therefore, appears to be a summary of the feuilleton. From this sole example, we can assume, albeit rather tenuously, the following: 1) that Castil-Blaze's feuilletons were not dashed off as one would expect in this genre; 2) that he did not submit his first attempt as a finished copy; and 3) that his drafts were summarized thoughts which were later amplified. Writing for a daily newspaper, whether one's feuilletons appeared daily or once every few days, could quickly become tedious. Geoffroy, the first feuilletonist at the *Journal des Débats*, was aware of this very early on in his career:

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et vint se loger au paradis. Le point d'orgue fut général; mais le chef d'orchestre remit tout son monde à la mesure, et le spectacle continua sans trouble jusqu'à la fin." Castil-Blaze, Notes sur la musique à Hambourg en 1814, n.d., Département de la musique, Bibliothèque nationale, Paris, France.

<sup>67</sup>This may have been part of a rejoinder to a reader's letter about the 108<sup>th</sup> regiment mentioned in the feuilleton about Pixis's *Bibiana*. See n. 61.

<sup>68</sup>Castil-Blaze, Notes sur Gossec, 1829, Département de la musique, Bibliothèque nationale, Paris, France.

This monotony [of shows], very disagreeable for the public, is all the more tiresome for me, whose pen dries up faced with such hackneyed subjects. . . Every day I am constantly coming across tragedies and comedies on the bill with which I have already wearied my readers. The actors do not furnish me a more abundant subject. It's always the same ones that act. They always have the same acting technique. For a long time now I have been wasting away looking vainly for new formulae of praise and blame to characterize some changeless artists for whose good qualities and faults never vary.<sup>69</sup>

Geoffroy's sentiments were echoed decades later in Hector Berlioz's *Mémoires*. The tedium of attending productions made him nauseous:

. . . I write in the *Débats* only when absolutely forced to by the events of the musical world. Such is my aversion to all work of this nature. I cannot hear of a forthcoming performance at one of our opera houses without a feeling of malaise which goes on getting worse until my article is finished.

This self-perpetuating task poisons my life.<sup>70</sup>

Despite the struggles that went on in the workshop of some feuilletonists, there was only one "bottom line" for the newspaper and its audience: produce quickly and well. Castil-Blaze once wrote:

Most of the articles for the newspapers are hastily done. They are printed in a great rush and without the possibility of showing the proofs to those who wrote them.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>69</sup>"Cette monotonie [de spectacles], très-désagréable pour le public, est encore plus fâcheuse pour moi dont la plume expire sur des sujets si rebattus. . . Je retrouve tous les jours sur l'affiche les tragédies et les comédies dont j'ai déjà fatigué mes lecteurs. Les acteurs ne me fournissent pas une matière plus abondante: ce sont toujours les mêmes qui jouent; ils ont toujours le même jeu; et depuis long-tems je me consume en vain à chercher de nouvelles formules d'éloge et de blâme pour caractériser des artistes immuables dont les qualités et les défauts ne varient jamais." *Journal des Débats*, 29 October 1802; quoted in Granges, 182, corrected by present author.

<sup>70</sup>*The Memoirs of Hector Berlioz*, 238.

<sup>71</sup>"La plupart des articles des journaux sont faits à la hâte, on les imprime avec un grande précipitation, et sans pouvoir en montrer les épreuves à ceux qui les ont écrits." *Journal des Débats*, 9 October 1821.

Time was of the essence. Castil-Blaze once lamented to his readership that he could not say anything more about a particular concert because "this feuilleton forced me to withdraw after the first half of the concert."<sup>72</sup>

Whether the feuilletonist remained for the entire concert or not, the feuilleton could not smack of labour. Style had to be at one's fingertips. Knowledge and wit were to be bedfellows. A flair for words sustained a career. It was Geoffroy who admirably summed up the task of the feuilletonist:

To shrewdly grasp the beauties and defects of a piece; to expose them with wit and elegance; to refer to grand philosophical and literary principles; to make excursions on society; to unveil the mysteries of art, to observe the tastes of different peoples, and to develop the entire philosophy of letters; to put warmth, charm and variety, a trace of urbanity and fun in one's style; to hold, interest and persuade readers. . .<sup>73</sup>

If the feuilletonist accomplished all of this, then truly, "the critical feuilleton. . . served as nourishment to the cultivated reader."<sup>74</sup>

### Qualities of a Music Feuilletonist

At a time when the daily newspapers of France lacked a specialized music feuilletonist, Castil-Blaze outlined five qualities of just such a person in Chapter XIV of the second volume

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<sup>72</sup>" . . . ce feuilleton m'a fait faire retraite après la première partie du concert." *Journal des Débats*, 2 February 1831.

<sup>73</sup>"Saisir avec sagacité les beautés et les défauts d'un ouvrage; les exposer avec esprit et avec élégance; remonter aux grands principes de la morale et de la littérature; faire des excursions sur la société; dévoiler les mystères de l'art, observer les goûts des différens peuples, et développer toute la philosophie des lettres; mettre dans son style de la chaleur, de l'agrément et de la variété, une fleur d'urbanité et de plaisanterie; attacher, intéresser, persuader les lecteurs. . ." *Journal de l'Empire*, 26 April 1808; quoted in Granges, 199, corrected by the present author.

<sup>74</sup>" . . . le feuilleton critique . . . servait de nourriture au lecteur au lecteur cultivé. . ." Jean Tortel, "Le roman populaire," in *Histoire des littératures* (Paris: Raymond Queneau, 1978), Vol. 3:1647; quoted in Jakoby, 32.

of *De l'Opéra en France*. First, he or she must obviously be a knowledgeable, experienced musician with a good ear, and possessing the ability to read music. He reasoned that if a drama feuilletonist could judge a comedy or tragedy by silent examination, then why couldn't the same be expected of a music feuilletonist?<sup>75</sup> Second, the music feuilletonist should make use of proper musical terminology when describing compositions in order to make his sentences intelligible to the trained reader.<sup>76</sup> Third, the feuilletonist should to be able to recognize a piece of music as being by a certain composer from its style.<sup>77</sup> Castil-Blaze stated that since the music feuilletonist is musically literate,

it's only by leafing through scores night and day, by analyzing and classifying those harmonic treasures in his memory, that he will be able to contrast some against others. He must envisage at a glance all of the works of authors and not methodically compare them page by page.<sup>78</sup>

A music feuilletonist was to use score-study as an avenue to distinguish excellent music from bad. Once the music feuilletonist had stored all of those scores in his memory, he would be able to fulfill the fourth quality, that of being able to cite from them just as the *littérateurs* were able to cite from Virgil, Homer and others.

Lastly, the feuilletonist was to make use of his musical and stylistic literacy, experience and memory to detect originality or plagiarism or merely derivative elements in a work.<sup>79</sup>

As for Castil-Blaze's ideal music feuilletonist,

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<sup>75</sup>*De l'Opéra en France*, 2:221.

<sup>76</sup>*De l'Opéra en France*, 2:199.

<sup>77</sup>*De l'Opéra en France*, 2:203-204.

<sup>78</sup>"...ce n'est qu'en feuilletant nuit et jour des partitions, en les analysant, en classant dans sa mémoire ces richesses harmoniques, qu'il pourra les opposer les unes aux autres. Il faut envisager d'un seul coup d'oeil tous les ouvrages des auteurs et non les comparer méthodiquement page à page." *De l'Opéra en France*, 2:205.

<sup>79</sup>*De l'Opéra en France*, 2:224.

nothing escapes him. He has no need to resort to the playbill to identify the composer. He pierces the veil of anonymity, returns to Mozart a duo incorrectly attributed to Cimarosa, indicates the plagiarism, the reminiscences, omissions, defects in the course of a rapid piece, applauds a strikingly original feature, a well chosen chord, an elegant turn, savours music as an enthusiast and judges it as an enlightened man. His praise announces a complete triumph and his criticism does not offend. Both are justified.<sup>80</sup>

In Castil-Blaze's mind, there was one man who possessed these five qualities: himself. He felt that he was the "ideal" music feuilletonist for the France of his day. With the inclusion of such a chapter in his book, there could be no better lobbying on his behalf for the post of music feuilletonist at the *Journal des Débats*.

### The Music Feuilletonist Categorized

H. Robert Cohen sets out four categories of music critics for the years after 1830: *littérateurs* or personalities associated with the theatre who, with a smattering of musical knowledge write on music as well as other topics; writers who by profession are music critics and display varying degrees of competency; composer-critics; and historian-critics.<sup>81</sup> Castil-Blaze is correctly designated by Cohen as an example of the final category. However, this may be too limiting. One could by virtue of his compositions and pasticcios also place Castil-Blaze in the third category, even though he never came close to the compositional abilities of Berlioz, Debussy or Saint-Saëns. One could even place Castil-Blaze in Cohen's second category as well.

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<sup>80</sup>" . . . rien ne lui échappe: il n'a pas besoin de recourir à l'affiche pour faire connaissance avec le compositeur. Il perce le voile de l'anonyme, rend à Mozart le duo faussement attribué à Cimarosa, sigale le plagiat, les réminiscences, les négligences, les défauts, dans le cours d'un morceau rapide, applaudit un trait d'une piquante originalité, un accord bien choisi, un tour élégant, goûte la musique en amateur, et la juge en homme éclairé; ses éloges annoncent un triomphe complet, et sa critique n'offense point: l'un et l'autre sont motivés." *De l'Opéra en France*, 2:211-212.

<sup>81</sup>H. Robert Cohen, "La Presse française du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle et l'historien de la musique," in *La musique en France à l'époque romantique (1830-1870)* (Paris: Flammarion, 1991), 268.

He did, after all, earn his living from writing feuilletons for the Parisian newspapers for a number of years. Berlioz, who took many a literary swipe at Castil-Blaze after the latter had snubbed his musical works, would probably have entrenched him in Cohen's first category.

### **The Style of the *Littérateur* at the *Journal des Débats***

As already stated, Castil-Blaze was not the first feuilletonist to write about music for the *Journal des Débats*. This distinction belongs to Julien-Louis Geoffroy (1743-1814). From 1800 until his death, he contributed feuilletons every two to three days on musical, dramatic and literary activities from various Paris theatres such as the Théâtre-Français, the Opéra, the Opéra-Comique, the Odéon, the Porte-Saint-Martin and others.<sup>82</sup> During his tenure, he was assisted by Jean-Joseph-François Dussault and upon his death, was succeeded by Charles Nodier<sup>83</sup> and Pierre Duvicquet. This generation of feuilletonists came to be known as *littérateurs* because of the copious citations of literary works found in their feuilletons. This section will be devoted to the study of the characteristics of the early nineteenth century musical feuilleton as developed by Geoffroy and others.

From 1776 until 1790, Geoffroy had been the principal editor of the literary journal *L'Année littéraire*. Geoffroy was a man of letters first and an amateur in music a distant second. With many of the feuilletonists lacking a formal musical education, it is not surprising that the art of music was not taken all that seriously. Geoffroy described music as, "a fashionable art, that

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<sup>82</sup>Gíslason, 29.

<sup>83</sup>Poet, critic, novelist and bibliographer, Charles Nodier's first article for the *Journal des Débats* appeared on 29 November 1813. He replaced Geoffroy in March of the following year. His feuilletons consisted of "Variétés littéraires", historical and literary criticism. Between 1820 and 1826, his feuilletons appeared less frequently. He always signed with his own name. *Le Livre du centenaire*, 619.

grows outmoded like style. It's the most frivolous of all the arts."<sup>84</sup> If music was not taken seriously, certainly literature and drama were. In the critical reviews of operas, a great deal of emphasis was placed on the *livret* or libretto.

When the early feuilletonists did deal with the music, they were primarily interested in determining if the work in question had lived up to the reputation of the composer's previous works. In a feuilleton about Mozart's *Don Juan* by an anonymous feuilletonist, one finds a judgement so typical for its perfunctory style: "Generally speaking, this opera is worthy of its famous author."<sup>85</sup>

Comments on the music itself were usually terse, with few technical terms. The openings of the feuilletons focused quite frequently on the audience: "Public expectations were amply demonstrated by the huge throng of listeners at this performance."<sup>86</sup> "Grabbers" such as these enabled the reader to identify with the situation while the terseness of the openings invited continued reading.<sup>87</sup>

Eager to fill their columns, early feuilletonists included biographies of composers and also wrote about the history of institutions. During these years of instability, politics were incidentally alluded to in numerous feuilletons. The jingoistic attitude prevalent in the politics of the French empire spilled over into discussions about music. Even Geoffroy was caught up in the jingoism

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<sup>84</sup> ". . . un art à la mode, et qui passe avec elle; c'est le plus frivole de tous les arts." Granges, 151. Upon verification, Granges's quote of Geoffroy is but a paraphrase. The original reads, ". . . c'est que la musique est purement arbitraire, et le plus frivole de tous les arts, ou bien que les artistes actuels s'efforcent de pallier sa décadence, et qu'il y a conjuration des musiciens vivans contre les morts." *Journal des Débats*, 26 June 1802. Granges incorrectly claims that the "quote" appeared on 27 June 1802.

<sup>85</sup> "En général, cet opéra est digne de son célèbre auteur." *Journal de Paris*, 18 September 1805; quoted in Aitken, 340.

<sup>86</sup> "La prodigieuse affluence des spectateurs à cette représentation marquoit assez l'attente du public." *Journal des Débats*, 19 and 20 September 1805; quoted in Aitken, 360.

<sup>87</sup> A "grabber" or "hook" was a device used by the feuilletonist, usually at the opening of the feuilleton, to invite further reading. A conversation or anecdote are but two possible forms.

of his age. His feuilletons were occasionally seasoned with Napoleonic kowtowing and heavily spiced with ethnocentric considerations. Nationalistic digressions in which neighbouring countries and the homeland of the composer or artist in question were compared to France, permeated his writings. In a feuilleton about *Don Juan*, Geoffroy wrote that, "Mozart composed nothing for France, and one always perceives that he only worked for the Germans."<sup>88</sup> In such instances, the feuilleton in the *rez-de-chaussée* of the *Journal des Débats* reflected the upper portion of the newspaper's front page, which presented the political news of each (largely) European country—most of which were either at war with or in silent opposition to Napoleon's France—under its own heading.

The great French lexicographer Pierre Larousse stated that, "The only true feuilleton begins with Geoffroy,"<sup>89</sup> but, went on to explain that Geoffroy "was of a rare stupidity in musical matters."<sup>90</sup> Castil-Blaze declared that Geoffroy was

a man with much wit, knowledge and talent. A journalist who regulated taste in France by imposing his opinion. A critic whose feuilletons quite often included pompous praise, excessive for Napoleon. . .<sup>91</sup>

He was quick to add that this was not the complete story:

Completely ignorant in music, not even having, in this respect, the instinct that nature grants to the least intelligent of animals. A lout. Perhaps more of a lout than La Harpe! Geoffroy held musical France under his iron rule, and dictated to the Opera:

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<sup>88</sup>"Mozart n'a rien composé pour la France, et l'on s'aperçoit toujours qu'il n'a travaillé que pour les Allemands." *Journal de l'Empire*, 19 and 20 September 1805; quoted in Aitken, 362, corrected and translated by present author.

<sup>89</sup>"A Geoffroy commence le seul vrai feuilleton." Larousse, s.v. "Feuilleton", 8/1:311.

<sup>90</sup>". . . était d'une stupidité rare en musique." Larousse, s.v. "Feuilleton", 8/1:311.

<sup>91</sup>". . . un homme de beaucoup d'esprit, de savoir, de talent; un journaliste qui réglait le goût en France, imposait son opinion; un critique dont les feuilletons renfermaient bien souvent des éloges pompeux, outrés de Napoléon. . ." *Académie impériale de musique*, 2:139.



imagine that he said exquisite things about it with an admirable self-assurance. Responsible for writing the feuilleton for the *Journal de l'Empire*, he furnished the enormous share of six or seven feuilletons per week, primarily on theatres, and on all other types of topics from the epic to tulips and jam. He earned thirty thousand francs per year. It was money well invested. Meticulous, rightfully esteemed, excluding his stupid ravings on music, Geoffroy's feuilletons contributed greatly to the fortune of the *Journal de l'Empire*.<sup>92</sup>

The interval between Geoffroy's death in 1814 and Castil-Blaze's appointment to the *Journal des Débats* in 1820 is a crucial one with regard to the format of the musical feuilleton in the 1820s. During this period, several feuilletonists covered the musical scene in Paris: Étienne and Béquet ("R." and occasionally "B."), who wrote about the performances of Rossini's operas and the Théâtre-Italien under the heading "Mélanges," and François-Benoît Hoffmann ("Z.").<sup>93</sup> However, after Geoffroy the feuilletonist who exerted the greatest influence on the feuilletons of Castil-Blaze was Pierre Duvicquet, or "C."<sup>94</sup>

Duvicquet, 1766-1835, was a lawyer and professor at the Lycée Napoléon. He succeeded Geoffroy as feuilletonist on 14 May 1814, though at first alternating with Charles Nodier. Dramatic productions, academic lectures, literary criticism, politics, the salons, as well as

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<sup>92</sup>"Ignorant de tout point en musique; n'ayant pas même, à cet égard, l'instinct que la nature accorde aux animaux les moins intelligents; butor, plus butor peut-être que La Harpe! Geoffroy tenait la France musicale sous sa férule, et régénait l'Opéra: croyez qu'il en disait de belles avec un admirable aplomb. Chargé d'écrire le feuilleton du *Journal de l'Empire*, il fournissait l'énorme contingent de six ou de sept articles par semaine, sur les théâtres principalement, et sur toute autre espèce de sujets, depuis l'épopée jusqu'aux tulipes, aux confitures. Il recevait trente mille francs par an; c'était l'argent bien placé. Recherchés, à bon droit estimés, en exceptant ses divagations stupides sur la musique, les feuilletons de Geoffroy contribuèrent pour beaucoup à la fortune du *Journal de l'Empire*." *Académie impériale de Musique*, 2:139-140.

<sup>93</sup>Hoffmann was the librettist for Cherubini's *Médée* and Spontini's *La Vestale*. Gíslason, 40.

<sup>94</sup>French sources, such as *Le Livre du centenaire du "Journal des Débats" 1789-1889* and Hatin's *Histoire générale de la presse française* both spell his name with a "c", while non-French sources such as Murphy and Jakoby spell his name Duvicquet without the "c." How à propos was his initial "C."! At times, he would merely sign as *Duv...t*. During the Restoration, he never signed his political articles. *Le Livre du centenaire*, 608. This document will follow the spelling of the French sources.

operatic presentations were all treated in his feuilletons.<sup>95</sup> Many of his opera-feuilletons were written during the years when Castil-Blaze was head music feuilletonist at the newspaper!

DuVICQUET was an indefatigable writer who supplied feuilletons to the newspaper in profusion between 1814 and 1831.<sup>96</sup> His feuilletons exhibit several hallmarks of the "feuilleton" style. The feuilleton could be a patchwork of various reports from drama, to book reviews, to performers and so on. Topics were specified in a subheading below the main heading.<sup>97</sup> Present in DuVICQUET's feuilletons are what have since become hallmarks of the feuilleton: stories, dialogues as well as humour. These devices were used to lighten the style which made for quicker reading. However, later feuilletonists such as Castil-Blaze were not too impressed with his knowledge of music. In his feuilletons, DuVICQUET, like his predecessor Geoffroy, remained all too brief and general when dealing with music. In reviewing *La Fille de l'Exilé* by Alexandre Piccini, he writes only about the plot, the performers, the staging and the decor. Not once does he even touch upon the music.<sup>98</sup>

In conclusion, the feuilletons of Geoffroy and his generation can be said to have been of a high literary quality. Many of them were written in the panegyric *style admiratif*, albeit critically. Geoffroy went beyond a mere stating of the facts of the plot and the performers and added his own comments and views as well as historical information, in order to raise the taste

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<sup>95</sup>*Le Livre du centenaire*, 607-608.

<sup>96</sup>During some stretches, DuVICQUET's lengthy feuilletons appeared on a daily basis. One will come across more feuilletons signed "C." than by any other initial.

<sup>97</sup>If more than one feuilletonist appeared in the feuilleton section on a particular day, names of theatres would still be used as subtitles to separate reviews. Changes of topic in the body of the feuilleton were conveyed to the reader by a "—" followed by an indentation. This particular layout was inaugurated by Charles-Guillaume Étienne—"X."—on 31 March 1817 under the heading of "Variétés. Nouvelles Littéraires et théâtrales."

<sup>98</sup>*Journal des Débats*, 16 March 1819.

of not only the general reading public, but that of concert and theatre-goers as well.<sup>99</sup> Future generations of music feuilletonists such as Castil-Blaze and Berlioz, would not agree with Geoffroy's assertion that "good intentions and good taste could outweigh musical training in the education of a music critic."<sup>100</sup> Though Geoffroy admitted to being a musical amateur, the same did not hold true for Castil-Blaze. Though both these men wrote for a readership largely untrained in music, it was Castil-Blaze who would write with expertise. Opera for Castil-Blaze became more than just a leisure activity, or an art, but a business.<sup>101</sup> Duvicquet's feuilletons contained the seeds of a truly "feuilletonistic" style. Yet, it would be for succeeding generations, notably Castil-Blaze, to build upon this foundation.

### **AESTHETIC: READING**

This section is devoted what Ingarden would term the aesthetic side of the feuilleton, that of reading it. An examination of newspaper readership in Paris during the Restoration is followed by a brief look into the three groups which read Castil-Blaze's feuilletons. Following this, Castil-Blaze's evocative analysis will be introduced and a model for reader response to this type of analysis will be presented.

### **Readership in Paris during the Restoration**

Measuring the readership, and hence influence, of the *Journal des Débats* is made difficult because literacy rates and newspaper circulation figures from this era do not necessarily

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<sup>99</sup>Aitken, 14-15.

<sup>100</sup>Aitken, 288.

<sup>101</sup>For further information see William L. Crosten, *French Grand Opera: An Art and a Business* (New York: King's Crown Press, 1948).

translate into the exact number of readers. Paris was undisputedly the centre of French publishing activity. In 1827, Comte Daru counted 367 paper manufacturers, 24 type founders, 870 presses, 7 manufacturers of industrial ink, as well as more than 4,500 press workers.<sup>102</sup> This industry served a population which had increased slightly from 713,966 in 1817 to 785,866 in 1831.<sup>103</sup>

Newspapers were sold by quarterly subscriptions. Single copies were only obtainable from the publisher. The French regarded the price of a paper as quite high, so the subscribers came from the well-to-do part of society. The public who could read and had the inclination, time and money to do so, could find copies of a newspaper at the home of a subscriber, and at restaurants, cafés and *cabinets de lecture*.<sup>104</sup> The latter were establishments that consisted of one or two rooms that offered up to 5,000 titles of books and newspapers to choose from, although some operations were less elaborate and provided no place whatsoever to read.<sup>105</sup> In 1820, there were only 32 officially reported *cabinets*. By 1830, that number had grown to 150.<sup>106</sup> As a result, one scholar has estimated that, on the average, one copy of a newspaper could have been read by sixteen readers.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>102</sup>Pierre A. N. B. Daru, *Notions statistiques sur la librairie, pour servir à la discussion des lois sur la presse* (Paris: F. Didot, 1827), 29-30; quoted in James Smith Allen, *Popular French Romanticism* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1981), 127.

<sup>103</sup>Département de la Seine, *Recherches statistiques sur la ville de Paris et le département de la Seine* (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, etc., 1821-1860), 6 vols.; quoted in Allen, 171.

<sup>104</sup>Collins, 42.

<sup>105</sup>Allen, 141.

<sup>106</sup>Allen, 140. One author even suggests that this figure reached 520 during the Restoration. Françoise Parent-Lardeur, *Les cabinets de lecture. La lecture publique à Paris sous la Restauration* (Paris: Payot, 1982); quoted in Jakoby, 47.

<sup>107</sup>Marion Muchot, *Le Constitutionnel*, Thèse de l'école de Chartres, (Chartres, no publisher given, 1968), 84; quoted in Jakoby, 51.

When examining the circulation figures through subscription rates for any newspaper during these years, it is helpful to keep in mind that these figures do not necessarily translate into an exact number of people who would have read the paper. In 1801, the subscription rates for the *Journal des Débats* in Paris alone stood at 2,000 with a further 8,150 in the provinces—triple that of Napoléon's official *Moniteur*.<sup>108</sup> In 1816, the *Journal des Débats* total circulation in France had increased to 16,000 subscribers.<sup>109</sup> As population and literacy rates increased, so too did the public's demand for newspapers. However, as Paris was flooded with newspapers, the *Journal des Débats*'s overall share of the daily newspaper market shrank. In 1825, its circulation decreased to 13,000.<sup>110</sup> No longer was it the leading paper of Paris. By 1827, its circulation dropped even further to 12,600—well below the 19,732 readership of the rival *Constitutionnel*.<sup>111</sup> By 1830, it fell to third place behind the *Gazette de France*.

Hatin wrote that the influence of the *Journal des Débats* in 1825:

was large. . . , and its opposition, although less direct than that of the *Constitutionnel*, did not contribute any the less to the fall of the Restoration. But the greatest affinities were for the latter newspaper, of whose popularity was immense.<sup>112</sup>

Therefore, even though the *Journal des Débats* had a large circulation and reached a great many people, for it was "read more or less everywhere,"<sup>113</sup> there is a common misconception

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<sup>108</sup> André Cabanis, *La Presse sous le Consulat et l'Empire, 1799-1814* (Paris: Sociétés des Etudes Robespierriennes, 1975), 20; quoted in Aitken, 81.

<sup>109</sup> Collins, 13.

<sup>110</sup> Jakoby, 48.

<sup>111</sup> Jakoby, 48.

<sup>112</sup> ". . . était grande. . . , et son opposition, pour être moins directe que celle du *Constitutionnel*, . . . ne contribua pas moins à la chute de la Restauration. Mais les plus grandes sympathies étaient pour cette dernière feuille, dont la popularité était immense." Hatin, 8:445; quoted in Jakoby, 52.

<sup>113</sup> ". . . lus un peu partout." René Bray, *Chronologie du romantisme (1804-1830)* (Paris: Nizet, 1963), 27; quoted in Jakoby, 52.

that the *Journal des Débats* was the most widely circulated of newspapers in Paris. By extrapolation then, though Castil-Blaze's feuilletons were popularly read, one can dispel any thoughts that they were all the rage with Parisians during the Restoration.

### Castil-Blaze's Readers

The public likes criticism. It listens with the keenest of interest to the orators of the opposition.<sup>114</sup>

Yet, just who made up this keenly interested public? In his feuilletons, Castil-Blaze wrote to or about three types of readers. The first, and probably the largest segment of his readership, were the amateurs or *dilettanti*. Castil-Blaze defined an amateur as "one who, without being a professional musician, attends a concert out of pleasure and love for music."<sup>115</sup> The second group which Castil-Blaze recognized were the *fashionables*, also referred to as the *haute société*, or the *gens du monde*. These were the well to do of French society, and Castil-Blaze held them in mild disdain for their snobbishness. Lastly, Castil-Blaze wrote for the professional musician—evidence of this will be found in this document's sub-chapter on Berlioz. Thus Castil-Blaze targeted his feuilletons to a large reading base which included the non-musician, the lay person as well as the professional musician. Therein lay his challenge: to balance his writing about music so as not to alienate one group of readers from his feuilletons.

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<sup>114</sup>"Le public aime la critique; il écoute avec le plus vif intérêt les orateurs de l'Opposition." *Journal des Débats*, 19 January 1830.

<sup>115</sup> . . . celui qui, sans être musicien de profession, fait sa partie dans un concert pour son plaisir et par amour pour la musique." Castil-Blaze, *Dictionnaire moderne de musique*, 3d ed., rev. (Bruxelles: Cantaerts, 1828), s.v. "Amateur", 12.

### **Re-creation and Recreation: Reading the Feuilleton**

It was stated at the beginning of this chapter that the feuilleton was an article written in a light, engaging style, meant for entertaining reading, to be read at one's leisure. Castil-Blaze's feuilletons were recreational to their core. He supplied much obvious fodder for recreational reading in the form of reportage of musical news items. Such reportage, which included announcements for upcoming concerts and the like, could be read passively, i.e., without a concerted effort by the reader to act upon, or in this instance listen to, the text. However, there were passages in his feuilletons which were meant to be read actively, i.e., the reader had to act on them in order to give these passages meaning. Castil-Blaze's analyses of compositions were just such passages. The following pages investigate what is meant by the term evocative analysis and aim towards a model of reader-response to this type of analysis.

### **Evocative Analysis**

The term evocative analysis has been coined by the present author to denote the manner in which Castil-Blaze reviewed works of music for the readers of the *Journal des Débats*. It should be stated at the outset that this term was never used by Castil-Blaze. He referred to his analysis as just that, "my analysis." The term evocative analysis attempts to capture the what and how of Castil-Blaze's reviewing technique. In his analyses, Castil-Blaze sought to evoke the features, the strengths and weaknesses of a musical composition in the reader's imagination through the printed word. The reader was to take these words and re-create the mood, style, composition, or the concert itself in his or her mind.

Castil-Blaze's feuilletons contain a wealth of evocative analyses, an excellent example of which can be found from 30 December 1820.<sup>116</sup> It dealt with the overture to Lachnith's pasticcio *Les Mystères d'Isis*, in reality Mozart's overture to *The Magic Flute*.

Une courte introduction, quelques accords solennels, ont commandé le silence et captivé l'attention. Le second violon attaque le motif, bientôt il est suivi du premier; la viole, le violoncelle, s'en emparent à leur tour, et dès que chacun des instrumens a pu se faire entendre, un *tutti* général le livre à tout orchestre. On s'attend peut-être que, selon l'usage trop généralement suivi, des accords pompeux de tonique et de dominante, lieux communs cent fois rebattus, vont seuls remplir l'oreille pendant cet effet éclatant. Point du tout, c'est encore ce motif pétillant d'esprit, de verve et de gentillesse, qui va résonner sur la basse sonore, tandis que les violons couronnent le dessin harmonique. Nous le retrouvons encore dans les folâtres badinages de la flûte et de la clarinette, du hautbois et du basson; c'est lui qui figurera dans la seconde partie, et prêtera sa véhémence entraînante à la stretta qui la suit. Véritable Protée, sous diverses formes il est toujours le même. Cette phrase que le génie fécond de Mozart vient d'embellir, cette phrase qui seule forme une grande composition, que seroit-elle devenue entre les mains du timide mélodiste? Rien. Celui-ci se seroit contenté de la présenter d'abord à la dominante, et ensuite à la tonique; peut-être auroit-il osé ébaucher une transition dans le relatif mineur. Ce n'est pas tout que de trouver des idées, il faut encore les mettre en oeuvre. Les oeuvres des grands maîtres, expérience de l'école, l'Europe entière, nous diront que le style est tout: témoin les andante [sic], les finales des symphonies de

A brief introduction, several solemn chords called for silence and drew one's attention. The second violin attacks the motif, and is soon followed by the first. The viola, violoncello, seize it in turn. As soon as each of these instruments has been heard, a *tutti* hands it over to the entire orchestra. Perhaps one expects that, according to a practice too generally followed, pompous tonic and dominant chords, commonplaces used hundreds of times, will alone fill the ears during this brilliant effect. Not at all. It's still this motif sparkling with spirit, verve and charm which will resound in the sonorous bass, while the violins crown the harmonic design. We will hear it again in the sprightly banter of the flute and clarinet, the oboe and bassoon. It will figure in the second half and lend its captivating vehemence to the *stretto* which follows it. A true Proteus, it remains the same in assorted forms. This phrase that the fecund genius of Mozart has just embellished, this phrase which is a great composition in itself, what would become of it in the hands of a timid tunesmith? Nothing. The latter would have been content to introduce it first in the dominant and then in the tonic. Perhaps he would have dared to give a hint of a transition to the relative minor. Finding ideas is not everything. They must be put to work. The works of the great masters, one's schooling, the whole of Europe will tell us that style is everything: witness the Andantes, the Finales of Haydn's

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<sup>116</sup>Castil-Blaze wasted little time in introducing his "analyses" to the readership of the *Journal des Débats*.



Haydn. Que dirai-je de la péroraison qui termine l'ouverture de *la Flûte enchantée*? Comment d'écrire, comment analyser des effets aussi ravissants? Il semble que toutes les ressources de l'harmonie avoient été épuisées dans le courant de ce morceau: le sujet pris tour à tour par chaque interlocuteur figurant dans un dialogue ou dans un chœur, placé à l'aigu, à la basse, ou dans les milieux, tout ce que les combinaisons de l'harmonie ont de plus audacieux a été employé. Comment Mozart va-t-il frapper ce dernier coup qui doit porter l'admiration au comble? Comment? Par les moyens les plus simples. Une partie de l'orchestre reste sur la tonique; l'autre se précipite sur le *ré bémol*, et c'est ainsi qu'avec deux notes, le dieu de l'harmonie produit l'effet le plus grandiose qu'on puisse imaginer; effet qui tient toute sa force de sa simplicité, et le seul qui pût réveiller l'attention, étonner et ravir l'oreille déjà charmée par le développement de tous les jeux de l'orchestre et de toutes les richesses du contrepoint.

Je l'ai déjà dit: c'est là que finit l'oeuvre de Mozart. L'opéra les *Mystères d'Isis* quoique composé en grande partie avec les chœurs fournis par ce maître, n'en est pas moins fort ennuyeux; en l'écoutant, le musicien éprouve des sensations qui diffèrent bien entr'elles, une sorte de tiraillement causé par l'admiration que l'oeuvre du grand homme inspire toujours par le déplaisir de ne pas l'entendre tel qu'il a été composé. L'amateur est-il d'abord séduit par le trio des Dames de la nuit, ou par le chœur *ô dolce concerto*: le plain-chant que l'on a ajouté à celui-ci, la mutilation que l'on a fait éprouver à l'autre viennent également le désespérer; d'ailleurs ce chœur est d'un caractère très gai dans la *Flûte enchantée*; en retarder le mouvement, c'est en changer absolument le caractère.

symphonies. What shall I say about the peroration which ends the overture to *The Magic Flute*? How can I describe, how can I analyze such ravishing effects? It seems that all of the harmonic resources had been exhausted in the course of this work. The subject taken up in turn by each interlocutor, figuring in a dialogue or a chorus, placed high, low, or in between, all the most daring effects of harmony have been used. How is Mozart going to strike the final blow which must carry admiration to its height? How? By the simplest of means. One part of the orchestra remains on the tonic, the other seizes the *D♭*. It's with these two notes that the god of harmony produces the most grandiose effect imaginable. An effect which obtains all of its force from its simplicity, and the only one which could revive interest, astonish, and delight the ear already charmed by the development of all the orchestral effects and the wealth of the counterpoint.

I have said it once before: Mozart's work finishes there. The opera *The Mysteries of Isis*, though in large part made up of choruses furnished by this master, is nonetheless extremely tedious. When listening to it, the musician experiences contrary sensations, a sort of conflict caused by the admiration that the great man's work always inspires and by the displeasure at not hearing the work as it had been composed. Is the music lover attracted first by the trio of Attendants to the Queen of the Night, or by the chorus "O dolce concerto"? The plainsong that has been added to the latter, the mutilation imposed on the former, discourage him equally. Besides, this chorus is of a very merry character in *The Magic Flute*. Slowing the movement changes its character entirely.

The first question that arises is whether this passage is an analysis. Ian Bent has defined "musical analysis" as

. . . the resolution of a musical structure into relatively simpler constituent elements, and the investigation of the functions of those elements within that structure. In such a process the "structure" may be part of a work, a work in its entirety, a group or even a repertory of works, in a written or oral tradition.<sup>117</sup>

Does Castil-Blaze's analysis measure up to Bent's definition of analysis? The musical structure under question is *Les Mystères d'Isis*. In the above passage Castil-Blaze has broken down this structure—the pasticcio—to deal with the overture. Similarly, the overture has been broken down into smaller elements. These smaller elements are events in the score that have been highlighted by Castil-Blaze's written word.<sup>118</sup> Some such events are: 1) the opening chords; 2) the motif of the *allegro*; and 3) the overture's conclusion. These events are discussed according to their function within the overture. Castil-Blaze then goes on to explain how this overture relates or does not relate to the remainder of the pasticcio that followed. From these short examples, it can be seen that Castil-Blaze fulfilled a major duty of analysis, that of explaining relationships. Therefore, the above passage is to be considered an analysis, for it measures up to Bent's premise that "analysis is the means of answering directly the question 'how does it work?'"<sup>119</sup>

As can be witnessed in the passage, Castil-Blaze made frequent use of description, such as "pompous tonic and dominant chords," "brilliant," "ravishing" or "grandiose effect." Castil-Blaze, however, cannot be considered to be a "descriptive critic." Bent has defined the descriptive critic as one who

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<sup>117</sup>Ian Bent, *Analysis* (London: The Macmillan Press, Ltd., 1987), 1.

<sup>118</sup>One is reminded of the visual highlighting used in the Norton Scores.

<sup>119</sup>Bent, 5.

tries to do either or both of two things: to portray in words his own inner response—to depict his responding feelings—to a piece of music or a performance, or to think his way into the composer's or performer's mind and expound the vision that he then perceives.<sup>120</sup>

Though Castil-Blaze did write of the emotions or feelings that events in a work or the work itself conjured up, he avoided stating so in a personal manner. He went further than just stating that it was a "grandiose effect," and attempted to explain why and how that particular effect was "grandiose." Not only did Castil-Blaze think his way into the mind of the composer or arranger, but he explained to his readers the why and how of the musical composition. In Bent's opinion, "analysis is more concerned with describing than judging," and that "most analysis arrives ultimately at the point that the judicial critic has reached when he has perceived to his own satisfaction the artistic 'conception', and is about to present judgment."<sup>121</sup> Yet, in Castil-Blaze's evocative analysis, analysis and criticism, according to Bent's definitions, are melded together. When Castil-Blaze described his own inner response to and his own criticism of the use of Mozart's overture to open Lachnith's pasticcio, he explained not only why such a feeling and judgement came to be, but also how. Therefore, Castil-Blaze's evocative analysis could also include criticism.

As Edward T. Cone has stated, "analysis. . . exists precariously between description and prescription. . . Description, restricted to detailing what happens, fails to explain why. Prescription offers its own explanation. . ." <sup>122</sup> The present term evocative analysis springs from these two seemingly unrelated areas: description evokes and analysis analyzes or explains the

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<sup>120</sup>Bent, 4.

<sup>121</sup>Bent, 4.

<sup>122</sup>Edward T. Cone, "Analysis Today," *The Musical Quarterly*, XLVI (1960), 172-88; reprinted in Ellen Rosand, ed., *The Garland Library of the History of Western Music: "Criticism and Analysis."* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1985), Vol. 13: 48.

what, how and why. In the above passage, did not Castil-Blaze ask, "how can I describe, how can I analyze such ravishing effects?" To that we may also add the question, "how can I criticize?" Castil-Blaze did so through the evocative analysis.

### **Reader Response: A Model for Inner Listening**

It's the feuilleton that makes music.<sup>123</sup>

In the above evocative analysis, Castil-Blaze wrote how a musical event such as Mozart's *Magic Flute* overture could be heard by showing why it occurs. Through his examination of the motif, the overture is revealed as an organic temporal unity. He related the event of the overture to the event of the pasticcio that followed. In other words, he uncovered the events explicitly.<sup>124</sup> However, the reader of Castil-Blaze's analyses was implicitly to render the events in his or her inner ear or mind. Cone has stated that "true analysis works through and for the ear."<sup>125</sup> Castil-Blaze's evocative analyses, too, were for the ear since, as mentioned above, they were used to evoke a mood, an event, a composition in the reader's inner ear or mind. In the above evocative analysis, Castil-Blaze went so far as to include the ear as the recipient of his analysis: "pompous tonic and dominant chords . . . will alone fill the ear;" and "an effect which . . . could . . . delight the ear. . ."

What then is the reader's role in reading these analyses? Who is the reader? Does the reader contribute anything to a text? To answer these and other questions, we must turn to reader-oriented theories. The following model for reader response to an evocative analysis is heavily indebted to, but does not rigidly follow, the ideas of several reader-oriented theorists, namely

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<sup>123</sup>"C'est le feuilleton qui fait la musique." Haacke, 2:312.

<sup>124</sup>Cone, 174; in Rosand, 48.

<sup>125</sup>Rosand, 48.

Gerald Prince and especially Wolfgang Iser, as well as a model for "listening through the written word" by Peter Rabinowitz.<sup>126</sup>

Before investigating how this imaginary object could be constructed in the reader's mind, it may be helpful to investigate the different kinds of person to whom the text is addressed, and how the reader is engaged to read. Gerald Prince has termed the person to whom the narrator addresses the discourse as the "narratee."<sup>127</sup> In our example, Castil-Blaze, an omniscient narrator, has cast his discourse as a monologue. Since the feuilleton from which the above evocative analysis was drawn continued an encounter between Castil-Blaze and his narratee—a music lover from the provinces<sup>128</sup>—it will be necessary to consider Castil-Blaze's previous feuilleton for a fuller portrait of this narratee. Castil-Blaze's "yokel" was on a visit to the capital and came to him for musical direction:

For eight days I have not read a single feuilleton, and as a result I know nothing. Should one visit the Opéra, the Feydeau, the Théâtre des Italiens? Please speak, guide my choice, and give me the means to use efficiently what little time I have in Paris.<sup>129</sup>

Of course, the narratee—the "unsophisticated provincial"—is not the actual reader. The actual reader, or the "authorial audience," may or may not have had anything in common with the narratee. The actual reader could have been from the provinces, but most likely was from Paris. In the previous feuilleton, the narratee is revealed to be a male. This should not however prevent

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<sup>126</sup>Peter J. Rabinowitz. "Chord and Discourse: Listening Through the Written Word," in *Music and Text: Critical Inquiries*, ed. S. P. Sacher (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 38-56.

<sup>127</sup>Raman Selden, *A reader's guide to contemporary literary theory* (Lexington: The University of Kentucky Press, 1989), 117.

<sup>128</sup>"Listen to that beautiful overture,' I said to my provincial acquaintance. . ." "Écoutez cette belle ouverture, dis-je à mon provincial. . ." *Journal des Débats*, 30 December 1820.

<sup>129</sup>"Depuis huit jours je ne lis aucun Feuilleton, et par conséquent je ne sais rien. Faut-il se rendre à l'Opéra, à Feydeau, aux Italiens?. . . Parlez, dirigez mon choix, et donnez-moi les moyens de bien employer le peu de jours que je dois passer à Paris." *Journal des Débats*, 15 December 1820.

women from reading the feuilleton. The actual reader may have "visited" Castil-Blaze in the *rez-de-chaussée* with concerns similar to those of the narratee—"what is the state of affairs in the opera houses of Paris?" The actual reader would not be able to speak with Castil-Blaze, but similar to the narratee, could only re-create the work or its mood in his or her mind. The actual reader could attribute any writing that created a master-pupil relationship, and any remarks that suggested condescension or unnecessary explanation, to the necessity of making matters especially extra clear to this fictional character. This enabled a more intimate and more equal relationship to be established between the feuilletonist and his or her authorial audience. Together, they looked down on this provincial, who needed to be taken step-by-step through a musical performance and to have the outstanding moments pointed out to him, as though he might mistake a railway station for a cathedral. In this way, the feuilleton calls forth a more intimate author-reader relationship and thereby creates the role of the reader as insider. It is therefore through the use of a narratee that the text produces its own readers and listeners.<sup>130</sup>

Yet, in order for this to happen, the narrator conceives the text in such a way that it must engage the reader's imagination to work things out—or in the case of the evocative analysis, to listen—for himself or herself. How then did Castil-Blaze engage the reader into his discourse? First, the fiction of the interlocutor/narratee from the provinces developed the relationship between the feuilletonist and his readers that was necessary to initiate them into the privileged circle of genius. This fiction allowed the critic to provide explanations that the sophisticated, sensitive reader would not need, or at least it enabled such a reader to pretend that he or she did not need them. The feuilletonist was not condescending to him or her, the actual reader, but to the unsophisticated fellow from the country. To the unsophisticated listener (but not, of course, to the sophisticated reader eavesdropping on this introduction to music) all music would sound

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<sup>130</sup>Selden, 118.

the same, and it was the supreme service of the feuilletonist to make him or her aware that he or she was in the presence of something capable of elevating us beyond the commonplace, of taking us up onto the mount of transfiguration. Yet, in this position the sophisticated reader had to act upon Castil-Blaze's explanations to give them meaning. By appealing to the sagacity of his readership, Castil-Blaze aroused a sense of discernment in the reader.<sup>131</sup> This act of discernment was to be regarded as a pleasure, since in this way the reader would be able to test his or her own faculties in relation to the narratee's.<sup>132</sup>

Secondly, the narrator has left what Iser calls "gaps" in his discourse. Castil-Blaze has not given the reader an analysis of every event in the overture. In so doing, he stimulates the reader to imagine what is there and to supply what is not there. For example, the reader is to imagine, or "shade in the outlines,"<sup>133</sup> to the motif of the *allegro*, its character, as well as the different orchestral instruments which take it up in turn. This coming together of the reader's imagination and the text is what Iser terms the "virtual dimension."<sup>134</sup>

Yet, what transpires in this "virtual dimension" to allow the reader to listen through the written word? How does a reader perceive musical meaning in an evocative analysis? Castil-Blaze's evocative analysis is made up of words (and sentences),<sup>135</sup> which do not represent Mozart's overture, but rather human speech in fictional guise which helps the reader to construct

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<sup>131</sup>Even a provincial would be able to discern his sagacity in relation to the provincial narratee.

<sup>132</sup>Iser, 31.

<sup>133</sup>Iser, 276.

<sup>134</sup>Iser, 279.

<sup>135</sup>As a feuilletonist, Castil-Blaze had little choice but to always work through the medium of words. He never included a music example in his feuilletons. The reasons for this are varied: his readership may or may not have had some elementary music training and therefore may or may not have been able to read notes; the *Journal des Débats* was not a music journal, and as such could not offer a feuilletonist the amount of space necessary for such a lay-out.

*imaginary* objects in his or her mind.<sup>136</sup> In constructing the imaginary object, or listening through the written word in the reader's mind, Rabinowitz suggests that the reader applies rules of listening such as "Notice," "Signification," "Configuration," and "Coherence" to create what it is he or she understands the text, in this instance the evocative analysis, to be.<sup>137</sup> "Notice" allows the reader to construct those features of the score or their mood that Castil-Blaze has mentioned, i.e., the opening chords, the imitation of the main theme by various instruments, and the peroration. Hence the reader/listener will attribute more importance to these features than to ones that were not noticed. In "Signification,"

specific themes or gestures take on musical meanings which stem not only from their particular character (yet another area of musical signification) but also from their relationship to other gestures, either within the same piece or in other pieces.<sup>138</sup>

In this evocative analysis, the reader is to recognize the assorted forms of the motif as somehow the same theme. However, this sense of recognition depends on a large part on the "inter-compositional grid"—those works which the reader has heard and stored in his or her reading and listening experience—that each reader brings to the evocative analysis. This intercompositional grid becomes ever more important when considering "Configuration," whose "rules tell us what to expect as we go through a piece of music."<sup>139</sup> Castil-Blaze heard the D ♭ against an E ♭ tonic harmony as "the most grandiose effect imaginable." He heard this dissonance against his own listening background. He steered the listener to do the same by invoking the Andantes and Finales of Haydn's symphonies. At the conclusion of reading, "Coherence" allows

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<sup>136</sup>Selden, 120.

<sup>137</sup>The following discussion is based on Rabinowitz, 42-49.

<sup>138</sup>Rabinowitz, 46.

<sup>139</sup>Rabinowitz, 49.



the reader to reconsider what he or she has heard inwardly, to convert the analysis into a meaningful whole. This includes the pattern of frustrations and satisfactions that "Configuration" has allowed the reader to experience, i.e., revising the effect of the dissonance in light of a different inter-compositional grid. In this evocative analysis, Castil-Blaze went even further than the reader could go by relating the overture and its incoherence within the remainder of Lachnith's pasticcio.<sup>140</sup>

Yet, the indeterminacy involved in the filling of "gaps" in the "virtual dimension" stage has been the target of much criticism. Can the reader imagine the exact notes contained in the theme of Mozart's overture to the *Magic Flute* by only reading Castil-Blaze's evocative analysis? The answer to this question is assuredly "no!" The only way that the indeterminacy of gaps such as these can be filled is if one listens to a performance of the work, i.e., referring the analysis to the live and not imagined sound. Can we imagine what is in the gap between the opening chords and the theme of the *allegro*? Perhaps not, for the reader may not even be aware that there is a gap of twelve bars to be filled. Is the reader then misled to imagine that the *allegro* follows on the heels of the opening chords? What then is the relationship of this virtual dimension to reality? Another way of asking this question is, "how does the reader's imagination of Mozart's overture relate to a live performance of the overture?" There is no one answer to these questions. Since each reader brings his or her own store of reading and listening experience to the reading of the evocative analysis there are as many different actualizations—inner listenings—as there are readers.

Yet, in Castil-Blaze's passage, there is a counterbalance to prevent the reader from going too far astray from Mozart in his imagination. This counterbalance or, to use Iser's term, "negation," can be seen in Castil-Blaze's hypothetical "timid tunesmith." Castil-Blaze, anticipating that his

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<sup>140</sup>That is if the reader had not by that time already heard the entire pasticcio performed.

reader's imagination could roam far afield, provided the example of a timid tunesmith with his reiterated "pompous tonic and dominant chords" to represent what the reader should not be imagining. In this manner, the reader's journey is a continuous process of adjustments, a dynamic process of re-creation. Castil-Blaze modified the expectations, i.e., the timid tunesmith's technique, and hence modified the reader's inner listening to the analysis.<sup>141</sup> This "process of anticipation and retrospection leads to the formation of the virtual dimension, which in turn transforms the text into an experience for the reader."<sup>142</sup> It is this "experience of the performance and an attitude to that experience,"<sup>143</sup> that Castil-Blaze conveyed to the reader, rather than the exact notes of the motif. It is in this manner that the reader is given "the chance to formulate the unformulated."<sup>144</sup> With regard to the present model, reading gives the reader the chance to formulate or re-create the experience of Mozart's overture in his or her inner hearing. In order to do so, the reader must "act upon the textual material in order to produce meaning."<sup>145</sup> This re-creation in the "virtual dimension" may even occur if the reader has already heard a performance of the overture. In such a case, the reader's memory of the overture

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<sup>141</sup>Not only does the "timid tunesmith" segment serve as counterbalance, but it too brings the reader into a circle of cognoscenti: with Castil-Blaze as the knowledgeable guide, the reader enters into this circle and is able to recognize and appreciate the uniqueness, the genius of the music, for the conventional is invoked not so much to assimilate the music into it, but to differentiate it in no uncertain terms. Under Castil-Blaze's tutelage, the reader enters into an experience that puts him or her in the company of genius, with the suggestion that he or she share in the same sensibility, for it takes one to know one.

<sup>142</sup>Iser, 281.

<sup>143</sup>Iser, 291.

<sup>144</sup>Selden, 121.

<sup>145</sup>Selden, 116.

will belong to his "intercompositional grid," and will be used to measure Castil-Blaze's memory of the overture as perceived in his analysis.<sup>146</sup>

What then constituted a truly successful reading of an evocative analysis? Was it just to read the feuilleton from one end to the other? Was it merely the re-creation of something that the reader thought was happening while reading the text? It is rather the identification of the reader with what he or she reads.<sup>147</sup> When the reader has assimilated the analysis to be his or her own, even after having first listened to a performance of the piece and then having read Castil-Blaze's evocative analysis, we may then say that the reading has been successful. However, even if the reader has not assimilated the analysis, such non-assimilation did not rule out the re-creative principle involved in the reading process. An unsuccessful reading then, is one where the re-creation of the reader is unidentifiable with the analysis.<sup>148</sup>

The feuilleton from 30 December 1820 was one of the first instances of Castil-Blaze's evocative analysis. He proceeded in similar fashion, though in varying degrees, in most, if not all of his feuilletons. Castil-Blaze wrote his evocative analyses to train and sharpen the inner ear of his readers. In doing so, he used musical terms i.e., tonic, dominant, relative minor, transition, and *stretto*, which readers of the *Journal des Débats* had never before seen in their newspaper.<sup>149</sup> Such words, tools for communication and inner listening, were (and still are)

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<sup>146</sup>The evocative analysis, written after a performance, allowed Castil-Blaze himself to recall or re-experience the performance for himself. In an evocative analysis based solely from score reading, Castil-Blaze related his "re-creation," the experience of his "inner ear," to his readers.

<sup>147</sup>Iser has defined "identification" as "the establishment of affinities between oneself and someone outside of oneself." Iser, 291.

<sup>148</sup>See Chapter Four "Gluck: A Critical View and the Question of Transposition" for a remark on Berlioz's readings of Castil-Blaze's feuilletons about Gluck.

<sup>149</sup>Many of his readers may have stumbled over the word *stretto*. In fact, Castil-Blaze himself tripped over this term. Mozart's overture contains no *stretto*, neither in a fugal sense, nor as a concluding section in a faster tempo.

effective only for those who understood their meaning, i.e., the circle of cognoscenti. Used and understood correctly, they helped towards a successful reading. Misused or misunderstood, they aided an unsuccessful reading.

In conclusion then, while reading through Castil-Blaze's evocative analyses, the addressee is not merely "a passive recipient of an entirely formulated meaning, but an active agent in the making of the meaning."<sup>150</sup> The reader, in his or her mind, must act upon the text—re-create the musical event or experience—in order for the text to have meaning. Every re-creation will be different since all readers, whether synchronic or diachronic, bring different reading and listening experiences as well as an inter-compositional grid from which they cannot divorce themselves to meet the text in the "virtual dimension." In this manner, Castil-Blaze's analyses are open, i.e., they invite or rather necessitate the reader's collaboration in the production of meaning.<sup>151</sup> Hence, the reader is forced to discover the meaning, or in the case of Castil-Blaze's analyses, discover the composition. Iser has pointed out that "discovery" is one form of aesthetic pleasure.<sup>152</sup> Taken as such, the reading, discovery, and re-creating of Castil-Blaze's evocative analyses served as a recreation to his readers.

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<sup>150</sup>Selden, 115.

<sup>151</sup>Selden, 117.

<sup>152</sup>Iser, xiii.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE MUSICAL SCENE IN PARIS: 1820-1832

In his very first music feuilleton for the *Journal des Débats* on 7 December 1820, Castil-Blaze delineated the boundaries of his terrain:

This column will be devoted exclusively to music. New and old operas will be examined therein (solely in musical terms), analyzed with care, and according to the best principles.

I will not limit myself to theatrical compositions. I will also speak of Masses, motets, oratorios, symphonies published or performed in churches and concerts. I will concern myself with chamber music, and be quick to point out a good romance when it appears in the middle of the deluge of rhapsodies with which little scribblers inundate us.

I will make known new discoveries and improvements brought to teaching music and the manufacturing of instruments, as well as the successes obtained in provincial theatres whenever they distinguish themselves by staging some new musical work not yet performed in Paris.<sup>1</sup>

For the next eleven years and seven months Castil-Blaze faithfully kept this promise to the readers of his feuilleton in the *Journal des Débats*. One should note that Castil-Blaze never devoted his *feuilletons* to reporting on the salons, though they may have been mentioned in passing, nor on balls or the vaudeville. This chapter will examine some of the musical scene as reported in Castil-Blaze's *feuilletons*. The contents of this chapter are examined through 1) the vocal-music scene, including theatres and opera houses, singing and vocalists as well as Castil-

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<sup>1</sup>"Cette chronique sera exclusivement consacrée à la musique. Les opéras anciens et nouveaux y seront (uniquement sous le rapport musical) examinés, analysés avec soin, et d'après les principes de la bonne école.

Je ne me bornerai pas aux compositions théâtrales, je parlerai aussi des *messes, des motets, des oratorios*, des symphonies publiées ou exécutées dans les églises et les concerts. La musique de chambre fixera mon attention, et je m'empresserai de signaler une bonne romance quand elle paroîtra au milieu du déluge de rapsodies dont les petits faiseurs nous inondent.

Je ferai connoître les nouvelles découvertes et les perfectionnements apportés dans l'enseignement de l'art et de la facture des instrumens, ainsi que le succès obtenu sur les théâtres des départmens, toutes les fois qu'ils donneront des preuves de leur existence, en représentant quelque nouveauté musicale non encore jouée dans Paris." *Journal des Débats*, 7 December 1820.

Blaze's impressions of Parisian opera goers, 2) the instrumental-music scene, including the concert series, chamber music, as well as notable personalities such as Hector Berlioz, Franz Liszt, Niccolò Paganini, and François-Joseph Fétis and 3) issues about which Castil-Blaze had a change of opinion such as ballet and government funding of the arts.

## VOCAL MUSIC

### Theatres and Opera Houses of Paris

Between 1806 and 1814, Napoleon attempted to resolve the crisis in the war-ravaged and impoverished Parisian theatres by limiting the number in the city to eight.<sup>2</sup> These eight theatres were classed in two categories 1) the grand theatres: the Opéra or Académie impériale de musique; the Théâtre français or Comédie française; the Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique or Théâtre de S. M. l'Empereur; and the Théâtre de l'Impératrice, which were granted official status and given generous subsidies; and 2) the secondary theatres, comprising the Théâtre du Vaudeville, Théâtre des Variétés, Théâtre de la Gaîté, and the Théâtre de l'Ambigu-Comique. Each had to follow strict regulations. Only the Opéra, which was specially dedicated to opera and dance, had the right to perform new works, and only those written with music throughout. The Opéra-Comique was required to stage works in which singing alternated with spoken text. The Théâtre de l'Impératrice or Opera buffa could only present operas in Italian. As for the secondary theatres, they could only perform lyrics that were coupled to known melodies.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>These theatres served a population that de Sauvigny estimated to be 622,000 in 1811. Guillaume de Bertier de Sauvigny, *The Bourbon Restoration*, trans. L. M. Case (Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press, 1966), 237.

<sup>3</sup>Wild, 13-14.

In 1815, the returning monarchy brought some freedom to the Parisian theatre scene. The monopoly enjoyed by the eight theatres was abolished.<sup>4</sup> New companies were formed and housed in the new theatres that were being built to replace those that had been demolished after 1807. During Castil-Blaze's era, there were fifteen theatres in the city.<sup>5</sup>

### **Théâtre de l'Opéra**

Known under various names since 1669, the Académie de Musique was the official title of the Théâtre de l'Opéra. An imperial decree of 1807 made it one of the *grands théâtres*.<sup>6</sup> François-Antoine Habeneck, who took over the directorship from Giovanni-Battista Viotti in November 1821 until 1824, was also its assistant, then chief, conductor from 1817 until 1846. Operas performed here included Spontini's *La Vestale* and *Olympie*, Méhul's *Joseph*, Lesueur's *La Mort d'Adam*, Auber's *La Muette de Portici*, Meyerbeer's *Robert le diable*, Rossini's *Guillaume Tell*, Weber's *Freischütz* and *Euryanthe*, among many others. It was also an important theatre for dance, as witnessed by the ballet scores of composers such as Méhul, Cherubini, Hérold, Adam, Halévy and others.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Marvin Carlson, *The French Stage in the Nineteenth Century* (Metuchen, N.J.: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1972), 28.

<sup>5</sup>Patrick Barbier, *À l'opéra au temps de Rossini et de Balzac: Paris 1800-1850* (Paris: Hachette, 1987), 262.

<sup>6</sup>This theatre was the scene of a national tragedy. On the evening of 13 February 1820, while leaving a performance, the Duc de Berry was assassinated. The Archbishop of Paris demanded that the area no longer be used for secular entertainment as the last rites were performed in the lobby of the Opéra. The government agreed and permanently closed the building. A new structure was built in the rue Le Peletier in 1821. Carlson, 41.

<sup>7</sup>Wild, 299-321.

### Salle Feydeau or Opéra-Comique Français / Salle Ventadour

This hall was opened on 6 January 1791 under the name Théâtre de Monsieur. Between 1791 and 1801, it was referred to as the Théâtre Feydeau, after the street on which it was located. After 16 September 1801 until its closure on 12 April 1829 it was officially known as the Théâtre National de l'Opéra-Comique.<sup>8</sup> In 1826, the King's Minister acquired a former governmental financial building to house the troupe at the Salle Feydeau, in poor repair. A new theatre was constructed on this site. In 1829, the Salle Ventadour opened its doors for business as the new home for the l'Opéra-Comique.<sup>9</sup> After the troupe had relocated to this new hall, Castil-Blaze stubbornly referred to it as the Opéra-Comique in his feuilletons, for he felt that the administration of the Salle Ventadour offered a watered-down version of *opéra-comique*.<sup>10</sup> The Opéra-Comique staged works by Méhul, Kreutzer, Boïeldieu, Auber, Berton, Carafa and Hérold among many others.

### Salle des Menus-Plaisirs / Salle des Concerts

In 1763, construction began on an arts complex where a 1,000 seat rehearsal hall for the Opéra-Comique would be surrounded by costume, set-design, woodworking, ironworking, and art workshops. The result was the Théâtres des Menus-Plaisirs. On 3 March 1806, permission was given for construction of a new hall.<sup>11</sup> Named the Salle des Concerts, it became the home

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<sup>8</sup>Castil-Blaze incessantly referred to it as the Feydeau in his *De l'Opéra en France*.

<sup>9</sup>Wild, 426-428.

<sup>10</sup>In a sentimental feuilleton devoted entirely to the closing of the Opéra-Comique he wrote, ". . . le Théâtre Ventadour n'a donc pas de genre spécial." *Journal des Débats*, 14 July 1830.

<sup>11</sup>Wild, 258-260.



of the *Société des Concerts* on 9 March 1828.<sup>12</sup> It was in this hall that Beethoven's symphonies were performed under Habeneck during the Restoration.

### **Théâtre Royale de l'Odéon**

The Odéon became the home of the Comédie-Française after an order of 25 March 1818:

the Odéon theatre will continue to be an annex of the Comédie-Française; it will perform the tragedies, comedies, and dramas which make up the repertoire of the Théâtre-Français.<sup>13</sup>

Hence, all of the works performed at the Odéon conformed to the outlines of *opéra-comique*, i.e., any secco recitative in the original work was replaced with spoken dialogue.<sup>14</sup>

On 28 December 1829, the committee of the Comédie-Française entrusted the conductor of the orchestra with the composition and arrangement of vocal and instrumental works, to be borrowed and chosen from whatever was in fashion. Conductor Léopold Aimon selected for pillaging Rossini, Adam, Weber, Paër, Donizetti and Auber, among others.<sup>15</sup>

However, between 1823 and 1828, the administration of the Odéon preferred operatic rather than dramatic productions.<sup>16</sup> The list of composers presented during these years is as follows: Rossini, Weber, Mercadante, Mozart, P. Winter, Gyrowetz, F. Devienne, Meyerbeer, Cimarosa, A. Panzeron, Carafa, Weigl, C. Kreutzer aîné, Giraud, C. Tolbecque, Hérold,

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<sup>12</sup>Arthur Dandelot, *La Société des Concerts du Conservatoire (1828-1923), avec une étude historique sur les grands concerts symphoniques avant et depuis 1828*, 3d ed., rev. (Paris: Librairie Delagrave, 1923), 15.

<sup>13</sup>"Le théâtre de l'Odéon continuera d'être annexe de la Comédie-Française; il jouera les tragédies, les comédies et drames qui composent le répertoire du Théâtre-Français." Wild, 293.

<sup>14</sup>Everist, 127.

<sup>15</sup>Wild, 97-99.

<sup>16</sup>Between June 1827 and October 1828, its director was Thomas Sauvage, Castil-Blaze's collaborator on *Robin des bois*. Wild, 292.

Dalayrac, Grétry, Auber, Boïeldieu, Fioravanti, Méhul, Castil-Blaze and Beethoven.<sup>17</sup> It was here that *Robin des Bois* was first staged. Castil-Blaze's pasticcios *Monsieur de Porceaugnac* and *La Forêt de Sénart*, as well as his versions of Rossini's *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *La gazza ladra*, and *Otello* and Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, were specifically prepared for this theatre.<sup>18</sup>

### **Théâtre-Italien**

The Théâtre-Italien was established in 1807 as an annex of the Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique under the title of "Théâtre de l'Impératrice." From 1752 onwards, numerous Italian companies had sojourned there. From May 1814 until 1848, the theatre was known as Théâtre Royal Italien.<sup>19</sup> In 1819, it was placed under the same administration as the Opéra. The company moved to the Salle Favart in 1825. The list of administrators is distinguished. While the Opéra administrators included Giovanni-Battista Viotti from 1819 to 1821 and F. A. Habeneck from 1821 to 1824, the music directors of the Théâtre Italien were no less stellar. From 1812 until 1826, Ferdinando Paër was *Compositeur, chef des artistes* and then, from November 1826 until October 1827 he possessed the title of *Directeur du Théâtre-Italien*. His duties, however, were shared with Gioacchino Rossini, who from 1 December 1824 until November 1826 was *Directeur de la musique et de la scène du Théâtre-Italien*. Emile Laurent took over the directorship in October of 1827. Jean-Jacques Grasset was its chief conductor from 1804 until 1830, whereupon he was succeeded by Narcisse Girard.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Wild, 291-294.

<sup>18</sup>Everist, 128.

<sup>19</sup>During the months from March to June, 1815, it went under the name of "Théâtre de l'Impératrice." Wild, 208.

<sup>20</sup>Wild, 204-205.

The repertoire of this company was constrained by various contracts dating back to 1801. A decree of 25 April 1807 stated that: "Only works written in Italian could be staged,"<sup>21</sup> although works by other composers of different nationalities could be presented, as long as the text was in Italian. In 1810, the government allowed opera seria to be performed along with opera buffa. Ballets and interludes must be an integral part of the original work.<sup>22</sup> These decrees encouraged the later prevalence of adaptations there, provided by arrangers and translators. However, not all of their repertoire consisted of adaptations. Rossini's *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Sémiramide*, and *Zelmira*, Meyerbeer's *Il Crociato in Egitto*, Bellini's *La Sonnambula*, and *Norma*, and Donizetti's *Anna Bolena* and *L'Elisir d'amore* are but a few of the works that were staged by the company.<sup>23</sup> With performances by such singers as Pasta, Malibran, Cinti-Damoreau, Sontag, Galli, Lablache, Rubini and Tamburini, the popularity of this theatre was greater than that of the Opéra making it by far the most important venue in Paris for Castil-Blaze and the *Journal des Débats* to cover.<sup>24</sup>

### Salle Louvois

From its inauguration in August of 1791, the Salle Louvois was home to a number of troupes. Between 1818 and 1825, the Théâtre-Italien stored its backdrops, stage props and settings there. On 16 March 1818, the state purchased the hall as an annex for the Opéra for rehearsals, concerts and the *Concerts spirituels* series.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>Wild, 202.

<sup>22</sup>Wild, 194-208.

<sup>23</sup>Albert Soubies, *Le Théâtre-italien de 1801-1913* (Paris: Librairie Fischbacher, 1913), insert.

<sup>24</sup>Gíslason, 38-40.

<sup>25</sup>Wild, 229-232.

### **Salle Favart**

The Salle Favart, built for the Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique, was inaugurated in 1783. Between 1815 and 1821, it served in turn as the home of the Théâtre-Italien, Théâtre de l'Odéon and Théâtre de l'Opéra, after which it again fell into disuse. In 1825, the director of the King's civil list purchased the hall and the Théâtre-Italien once again moved in. From 1827 onwards, the hall was used intermittently in the summer months by either a troupe of English actors or German singers.<sup>26</sup>

On 25 April 1807, the genre permissible at the theatre was fixed by decree:

This theatre is intended specifically for the performances of all types of plays consisting of verse, ariettas and chorus work. . . provided that the dialogue of the plays must be broken up by singing.<sup>27</sup>

During the Restoration, compositions by Auber, Boïeldieu, Paër, Adam, Halévy, Thomas, and Meyerbeer graced its stage. Between 1818 and 1828, Frédéric Kreubé conducted an orchestra of approximately 58 musicians.<sup>28</sup>

### **Gymnase-Dramatique**

The Gymnase-Dramatique was inaugurated on 23 December 1820. The Gymnase-Dramatique could present only spoken theatre or comedies or comic operas that were reduced to one act. In 1822, the theatre had an orchestra of thirty-four musicians, who were conducted by Antoine-François Heudier. Adam served as its chorus master for the 1826-1827 season. Works

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<sup>26</sup>Wild, 135-137.

<sup>27</sup>"Ce théâtre est spécialement destiné à la représentation de toutes espèces de comédies ou drames mêlés de couplets, d'ariettes et de morceaux d'ensemble. . . pourvu que le dialogue de ces pièces soit coupé par du chant." Wild, 330.

<sup>28</sup>Wild, 331-335.

by composers such as Piccini, M. Garcia, Dalayrac, Méhul, Grétry and A. Panseron were performed here.<sup>29</sup>

### **Théâtre des Nouveautés**

The Théâtre des Nouveautés opened its doors on 1 March 1827. An authorization of 5 December 1825 fixed its repertoire:

Comedies in one, two or three acts, mixed with verse set to melodies in the public domain.<sup>30</sup>

From its very inception, other principal theatres, especially the Opéra-Comique, challenged its presentation of adaptations based on works by living composers, which encroached upon their repertoire. Castil-Blaze, as well as Blangini, Blanchard and Béancourt, provided these musical adaptations. Original operas such as Adam's *Casimir* and Rossini's *Le Barbier de Séville* were also staged. Béancourt conducted an orchestra of thirty-five musicians and twenty-five chorus members, among whom sang Hector Berlioz.<sup>31</sup>

### **Singing and Vocalists**

With the rise of Italian opera, Paris was inundated with highly-paid and skilled singers. Castil-Blaze detailed their technique and performance for his readers. Yet, this was not meant to be just timely reporting of interesting news, but to demonstrate that the singer was an integral part of the opera. This stance was articulated in his *De l'Opéra en France*: "The musician

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<sup>29</sup>Wild, 180-182.

<sup>30</sup>"Comédies en 1, 2 ou 3 actes, mêlées de couplets sur des airs du domaine public." Wild, 280.

<sup>31</sup>Wild, 279-281.

depends entirely on those who perform his compositions."<sup>32</sup> Since music, specifically opera for Castil-Blaze, was written to be heard, the performer was thus considered co-equal with the composer: "There are two types of expression: that of composition and that of performance. The happy union of these breeds all of music's beautiful effects." For Castil-Blaze nothing could be more effective than M<sup>me</sup> Pasta's recomposition of an aria, and nothing more disheartening than her leaving Paris with her new composition:

The singer recomposes a cavatina, searches and finds a variety of accents and ornaments that cannot be indicated or written on paper, animates the ritornellas by her pantomime, gives a smile to the melody of the flutes and ends by owning. . . all of the nuances of expression. . . By leaving us, M<sup>me</sup> Pasta has carried away the secret of the famous cavatina "*Di tanti palpiti*. . ." <sup>33</sup>

Uniting these two areas of composition and performance was the act of ornamenting:

To the operatic heroes I say: Ornament, ornament unceasingly.  
The art of singing is the art of ornamenting.<sup>34</sup>

This did not mean that a singer had *carte blanche* to ornament anything in sight. In short, Castil-Blaze urged singers to take part in the composition of a piece through performance and ornamentation.

Supporting the musical edifice of the ensemble was the bass voice. Castil-Blaze's ideal bass was Filippo Galli:

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<sup>32</sup>"Le musicien est entièrement dans la dépendance de ceux qui exécutent ses compositions." *De l'Opéra en France*, 1:422.

<sup>33</sup>"Le chanteur recompose une cavatine, cherche et trouve une variété d'accens et d'ornemens qu'on ne saurait indiquer ou tracer sur papier, anime les ritournelles par le jeu de sa pantomime, donne un sourire à la mélodie des flûtes. . . et finit par posséder. . . toutes les nuances d'expression. . . En nous quittant, M<sup>me</sup> Pasta avait emporté le secret de sa fameuse cavatine *di tanti palpiti*. . ." *Journal des Débats*, 25 September 1831.

<sup>34</sup>". . . je dirai aux héros d'opéras: Brodez, brodez sans cesse; l'art de chanter c'est l'art de broder." *Journal des Débats*, 21 November 1822.

If Galli's talent is applauded in arias and duos, it should be all the more so in ensemble numbers. This deep, biting and sonorous voice serves as the foundation of the musical edifice, and casts harmonic reflections on the higher parts.<sup>35</sup>

A tenor should be of strong voice and bold character, unafraid of high notes. Duprez was anything but in his 1828 debut in Boïeldieu's *La Dame blanche*:

Too much timidity again prevented him from singing the ballad as well as he could. He was afraid to attempt the high C. . . Duprez's voice is weak. . .<sup>36</sup>

Castil-Blaze considered the soprano voice:

. . . the polar star for the numerous singers that a finale gathers together. If this star is not brilliant and unwavering, all of the voices grouped below it fall into confusion. . .<sup>37</sup>

The soprano also required an agility in the upper end of her range, as well as clear enunciation.

Castil-Blaze found such qualities in the voice of M<sup>lle</sup> Mombelli:

M<sup>lle</sup> Mombelli's voice is very wide-ranging and sounds well, especially in the upper end. She has agility. Her manner of singing is graceful, direct, expressive and brilliant. Her pronunciation leaves nothing to be desired.<sup>38</sup>

In conclusion, Castil-Blaze urged that vocalists be used in the *emploi* best suited to their vocal quality and range in order to perform music clearly and expressively.

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<sup>35</sup>"Si le talent de Galli est applaudi dans les airs et les duos, il doit l'être davantage dans les morceaux d'ensembles. Cette voix grave, mordante et sonore sert de base à l'édifice musical, et jette des reflets d'harmonie sur les parties qui la dominent." *Journal des Débats*, 30 November 1821.

<sup>36</sup>"Trop de timidité l'a empêché encore de dire la ballade aussi bien qu'il le pouvait; il a craint d'aborder l'*ut* à l'aigu. . . La voix de Duprez est faible. . ." *Journal des Débats*, 15 September 1828.

<sup>37</sup>". . . l'étoile polaire des nombreux chanteurs que rassemble un finale; si cet astre n'est pas brillant et invariable, toutes les parties groupées au dessous de lui tombent dans la confusion. . ." *Journal des Débats*, 22 April 1824.

<sup>38</sup>"La voix de M<sup>lle</sup> Mombelli est très étendue et sonne bien, surtout dans sa partie élevée: elle a de l'agilité; sa manière de chanter est gracieuse, franche, expressive et brillante, sa prononciation ne laisse rien à désirer." *Journal des Débats*, 22 April 1824.

## Parisian Theatre Audiences

Long known for their ill-mannered and unattentive behaviour,<sup>39</sup> Castil-Blaze did not hesitate to write about the imperfections of Parisian theatre audiences, no doubt well aware that some were his readers.

Castil-Blaze regretted that many went to the opera not to hear the latest work, but to socialize. He lampooned one of these individuals, a man of the world, in an 1821 feuilleton about *Don Juan*:

If the performance of certain operas fails to live up to the expectations of the music lover, the man of the world will always find diverse pleasures. He knows in advance that the opera contains only one or two pieces worthy of being listened to. He takes care to save his attention for the favourite arias performed by elite singers. As long as the stage only offers him a vulgar or badly rendered melody, he will search the hall for distractions not provided by the actors. Firstly he becomes acquainted with his neighbours, and the conversation struck up during the overture continues well after the exposition . . . Some arias [delivered] more or less precisely do not prevent him from visiting his acquaintances. He goes from box to box. This is just how time passes until the moment when the applause signals the virtuoso's entry. He sings his aria and duet. The bravos intensify. People say to each other: "It's over," and several scurry to leave. In this way, many people come to spend an amusing evening in places where others find only boredom.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>39</sup>Castil-Blaze's earliest memories in a Parisian theatre included a brawl between spectators. *Académie impériale de musique*, 2:70.

<sup>40</sup>"Si la représentation de certains opéras trompe souvent l'attente de l'amateur de musique, l'homme du monde y trouve toujours des plaisirs variés. Il sait d'avance que la pièce ne renferme qu'un ou deux morceaux dignes d'être écoutés, il a soin de réserver son attention pour des airs favoris exécutés par des chanteurs d'élite. Tant que la scène ne lui offrira qu'une mélodie vulgaire ou mal rendue, il cherchera dans la salle les distractions que les acteurs lui refusent. D'abord il fait connoissance avec ses voisins, et la conversation commencée pendant l'ouverture continue encore après l'exposition. . . quelques airs [rendus] avec plus ou moins de justesse ne l'empêchent pas de faire des visites à ses connoissances; il va de loge en loge, et c'est ainsi que le temps s'écoule jusqu'au moment où les applaudissemens ont signalé l'entrée du virtuose. Il chante son air et son duo: les bravos redoublent; on se dit: tout est fini, et plusieurs s'empressent de faire retraite. Par ce moyen, bien des gens parviennent à passer une soirée amusante dans des lieux où d'autres ne rencontrent que l'ennui." *Journal des Débats*, 10 December 1821.



The *claqueurs*, a group of people who were given tickets to parterre seats in the houses in return for their applause of a certain singer or selection, were a phenomenon against which Castil-Blaze raged. In his feuilleton about Rossini's *Le comte Ory*,<sup>41</sup> Castil-Blaze, in his inimitably sarcastic manner, commented on the audience:

The public, who had hardly taken part in the applause except at the beautiful finale of the first act, welcomed it [the drinking scene] with the liveliest enthusiasm. All the rest—and indeed it was a useless precaution, when we're dealing with Rossini's music—all of the rest had been handed over to the mechanical salvos of the *claqueurs* posted in the middle of the orchestra seats. It's an odd thing, this active group in the midst of a crowd which often only keeps still because it's attention has been strongly engaged. For seventy-five centimes, indefatigable admirers can be found, who do their duty conscientiously. Just by seeing and hearing them one can verify that not a single one of them is motionless. Not one clap too many or too few, always with the same exactitude.<sup>42</sup>

On the surface, Castil-Blaze's sarcastic comments about audiences made for entertaining reading. Perhaps some of his readers took delight in seeing or imagining themselves as Castil-Blaze's man of the world or as a *claqueur*. Yet, his comments had a far deeper intent. Through his cajoling, he wanted desperately to educate his readership not only in the social graces of concert etiquette, but in the morally and ethically correct conduct of a theatre-going public.

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<sup>41</sup>The initials "X.X.X." do not appear at the end of this feuilleton. The style of writing and the form of the article, however, are pure Castil-Blaze. This omission was undoubtedly due to an error during typesetting.

<sup>42</sup>"Le public, qui n'avait guère pris part aux applaudissemens qu'au beau finale du premier acte, l'a accueilli avec le plus vif enthousiasme. Tout le reste, et certes c'était bien une précaution inutile, lorsqu'il s'agit de la musique de Rossini; tout le reste a été livré aux salves mécaniques des *claqueurs* postés au milieu du parterre. C'est une chose singulière que ce groupe agissant au milieu d'une assemblée qui souvent ne reste immobile que parce que son attention est fortement captivée. Pour soixante-quinze centimes on trouve des admirateurs infatigables, et qui font leur devoir en conscience; il suffit de les voir et de les entendre pour s'assurer qu'aucun d'eux ne reste en repos. Pas un coup de plus ni de moins, toujours la même exactitude." *Journal des Débats*, 23 August 1828.

## INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

### The Concert Series in Paris

During his tenure at the *Journal des Débats*, Castil-Blaze covered Paris's two major concert series: the *Concerts spirituels* and the *Société des concerts*. The original *Concerts spirituels* series ran between 1725 and 1790. In the 1820s, the Théâtre-Italien resurrected this series under the sponsorship of the Opéra.<sup>43</sup>

On 30 April 1821, Castil-Blaze first reported on these concerts. His constant criticism of the *Concerts spirituels* was that they rehashed the same material:

It's always Pergolesi's *Stabat*, Salieri's *Le Jugement dernier*, etc., etc., . . . For goodness sake, vary the repertoire . . . let us hear the productions that we are restricted to admiring in the silence of the library. Copying expenses and a few rehearsals—that's all it would cost you.<sup>44</sup>

By 1828, Castil-Blaze had become sarcastic:

The repertoire of the *Concerts spirituels* closely resembles that of mechanical organs. One would do well to notate it on some cylinders. It would thus save one the trouble of rehearsing. A single man would suffice to give the concert to two thousand. . .<sup>45</sup>

The repertoire in the 1820s included Beethoven's oratorio *Mont des Oliviers* and Symphonies No. 3 and No. 5 (1828 and 1830 performances), Mozart's *Requiem*, and Haydn's Symphony No. 48, as well as arias by Mozart, Rossini and others. Of particular interest was the appearance of the

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<sup>43</sup>Cooper, 233.

<sup>44</sup>"C'est toujours le *Stabat* de Pergolèse, le *Jugement dernier* de Salieri, etc., etc., . . . Variez, variez le répertoire . . . faites-nous entendre les productions que l'on est réduit à admirer dans le silence des bibliothèques. Des frais de copie, quelques répétitions, voilà tout ce qu'il vous en coûtera." *Journal des Débats*, 30 April 1821.

<sup>45</sup>"Le répertoire des concerts spirituels ressemble assez à celui des orgues mécaniques; on feroit bien de le noter sur des cylindres, on s'épargneroit ainsi la peine de répéter. Un seul homme suffiroit pour donner le concert à deux mille. . ." *Journal des Débats*, 17 April 1828.

young Liszt in the series of 1824.<sup>46</sup> In fact, the repertoire of the *Concerts spirituels* was becoming increasingly popular, using material that had been performed on the stages a hundred times before.<sup>47</sup> In 1828, Castil-Blaze would end one of his feuilletons: "Few in the stalls, empty boxes, slim takings."<sup>48</sup>

By 1828, a rival series had emerged that was to win over Paris through its repertoire and excellent performances. This was the *Société des Concerts*, established on the initiative of François-Antoine Habeneck. It was he, who as a student at the Conservatoire, had conducted the Parisian premières of Beethoven's Symphony No. 1 in 1807, possibly No. 2 in 1810, and No. 3 in 1811.<sup>49</sup> That this series would promote the music of Beethoven can be seen from its very first programme on 9 March 1828, in which the Symphony No. 3 was programmed.<sup>50</sup> In fact, during Habeneck's 191-concert tenure between 1828 and 1845, there was a seventy-per-cent chance that a Beethoven symphony would appear on the programme.<sup>51</sup> The *Société des Concerts* even started a *Concerts spirituels* series of its own. The orchestra, comprised of past and present students of the Conservatoire,<sup>52</sup> soon became famous not only in Paris, where Castil-Blaze wrote about "the amazing superiority of the orchestra,"<sup>53</sup> but all over Europe. Castil-Blaze listed three factors that contributed to their superiority:

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<sup>46</sup>See Chapter Three "Franz Liszt" for further information.

<sup>47</sup>*Journal des Débats*, 1 June 1827.

<sup>48</sup>"Peu de monde au parterre, loges vides, maigre recette." *Journal des Débats*, 17 April 1828.

<sup>49</sup>Constant, 476-500.

<sup>50</sup>Cooper, 25.

<sup>51</sup>Cooper, 30.

<sup>52</sup>Cooper, 24.

<sup>53</sup>" . . . l'étonnante supériorité de l'orchestre. . ." *Journal des Débats*, 19 March 1828.

Firstly, the position of the performers, placed on an amphitheatre: They see each other better and their attack is more simultaneous. The audience is comprised only of determined music lovers and people of taste who know how to listen for whom one dreads to offend the delicate ear by the slightest incorectness. I arrive at my third reason. . .the desire, the need to uphold the honour of the institution.<sup>54</sup>

With his coverage of these two concert series in Paris, Castil-Blaze remained true to the promise he made to his readers at the outset of his career as feuilletonist.<sup>55</sup> With the advent of the *Société des Concerts*, he could not ignore the growth of the instrumental concert. From 1828 onward, his readers were increasingly apprised of these concerts in an enthusiasm which rivalled that of the latest operatic productions.

### Chamber Music

In his first feuilleton, Castil-Blaze also promised that he would cover chamber music. However, reports on chamber music in his feuilletons were rare. This should come as no surprise since by all accounts, in terms of popularity, chamber music lagged far behind opera. As Schwarz writes,

. . . more than ever, the musical center of gravity was the opera, for it satisfied the general desire for pomp and display, as well as light entertainment.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>54</sup>"D'abord, la position des exécutans, placés sur un amphithéâtre: ils se voient mieux, et leur attaque est plus simultanée. L'auditoire ne se compose que d'amateurs déterminés et de gens de goût, qui savent écouter, et dont on redoute d'offenser l'oreille délicate par le moindre incorrection. . .J'arrive à ma troisième raison. . .le désir, le besoin de soutenir l'honneur de l'Ecole." *Journal des Débats*, 29 March 1828. Two of these reasons—honour to the school and placement of the conductor—existed concurrently in Fétis's "Régénération de l'Ecole Royale de Musique. Société des concerts." in *Revue musicale* III (1828), 145-149; quoted in Bloom 125-130.

<sup>55</sup>See footnote 1 of present chapter.

<sup>56</sup>Schwarz, 10.

Chamber music thus remained an obscure genre for most of the French. Castil-Blaze's reporting of chamber music was limited to two areas: 1) publications of Boccherini's quintets and 2) performances by Baillot, the brothers Bohrer, and others.<sup>57</sup> Such reports were usually limited to a paragraph or two, and were mixed in with other news and happenings in the musical scene. One must nevertheless congratulate Castil-Blaze for having included notices, however small, of Parisian chamber music activity in his feuilletons. In doing so he remained faithful to the promise he made to his readers in his first music feuilleton.

## NOTABLE MUSICIANS

### Hector Berlioz

It has only been in the last half of the twentieth-century that the musical works of Hector Berlioz have come to receive the musical respect they so richly deserve. Establishing himself as a composer was an uphill battle for Berlioz throughout his life. Early in his career as a composer, Berlioz looked to Castil-Blaze for some much needed recognition. Castil-Blaze responded, but sparingly. In fact, during his career at the *Journal des Débats*, Castil-Blaze mentioned Berlioz in only four feuilletons.

Castil-Blaze's first reference to Berlioz was at the end of the feuilleton from 14 July 1825, to which he devoted a scant sixty-eight words to the *Messe solennelle*.<sup>58</sup> Castil-Blaze treated this work in very general terms. He made no mention of the performing forces, which

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<sup>57</sup>Boccherini quintets were featured on 5 January and 25 September 1821, 15 January 1823. Baillot's concerts were mentioned on 14 April 1822, 20 March and 18 May 1831.

<sup>58</sup>This fourteen movement work, once thought to have been destroyed by fire, was recently re-discovered in the organ loft of St. Carolus-Borromeus Church in Antwerp, Belgium. Berlioz had given a copy of this work to a Belgian violinist friend who promptly forgot of its existence. This *Messe* was performed at St. Roch in Paris in the autumn of 1993. *Musical Times*, (London) 134 (March 1993): 122.

included a choir of 150, or the conductor, Valentino, but merely highlighted the sections that most appealed to him and the audience.<sup>59</sup> Nevertheless, it was a most encouraging review.

Last Sunday, a Mass for choir and orchestra by Berlioz was performed at the church of St Roch. This composition did the greatest credit to Lesueur's young student. This first success augurs well and suggests that he will succeed in the dramatic genre. Connoisseurs noticed particularly the *Gloria in excelsis* and the chorus *Et iterum venturus est*.<sup>60</sup>

After attending a concert of Berlioz's works in 1829,<sup>61</sup> Castil-Blaze wrote a feuilleton which began by "pointing out the absurdity of the government's training young French composers for the lyric stage and then denying them access to it."<sup>62</sup> He then began to unveil a particular composer and created suspense by withholding the composer's name.

A new hapless companion presents himself, younger, alas! He is all the more to be pitied, he will be persecuted longer. His head is adorned with wreaths from the Academy; laden with scores that he would produce at the theatre, if that was permitted in France. . . The operas are prohibited, but they have still not dreamed of prohibiting concerts too. Excerpts from *Waverly*, *Francs-Juges*, *Faust* will appear at musical gatherings, and in this manner, it will be easy to trick the enemy, put oneself out of the reach of the bailiffs, the subpoenas, the fines that fall like hail on authors reckless enough to have new things sung.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>59</sup>David Cairns, *Berlioz: The Making of an Artist 1803-1832*, Vol. 1 (London: Macdonald & Co. Ltd., 1990), 169-170.

<sup>60</sup>"On a exécuté dimanche dernier, dans l'église de Saint-Roch, une messe avec chœurs et orchestre de M. Berlios [sic]. Cette composition fait le plus grand honneur à ce jeune élève de M. Lesueur. Ce premier succès donne des espérances et fait présumer qu'il réussira dans le genre dramatique. Le *Gloria in excelsis* et le chœur *Et iterum venturus est*, ont été particulièrement remarqués par les connoisseurs." *Journal des Débats*, 14 July 1825.

<sup>61</sup>Castil-Blaze was sent a complimentary ticket for this concert by Berlioz. For a further listing of Berlioz's complimentary ticket list, see Cairns, *Berlioz*, 315.

<sup>62</sup>Cairns, *Berlioz*, 302.

<sup>63</sup>"Un nouveau compagnon d'infortune se présente, plus jeune, hélas! il n'en est que plus à plaindre, il sera plus long-temps persécuté. Sa tête est parée des lauriers de l'Institut; chargé de partitions qu'il produirait au théâtre, si cela était permis en France. . . Les opéras sont prohibés, mais on n'a pas encore songé à prohiber aussi les concerts. *Waverly*, *les Francs-Juges*, *Faust* paraîtront par fragment dans une

Berlioz was now named and a short, for the most part favourable, review of his concert followed. In the following example, note Castil-Blaze's pro-French stance of having the libretto in the vernacular.

The conspiracy is hatched, Mr. Berlioz leads it with as much ardour as prudence and manages to make known some very remarkable excerpts from his operas . . . the students that the Conservatoire trains for the Italian theatres, have been good enough to lend a hand and even to lower the standard imposed by their future careers by singing the text in French. . . Mr. Berlioz . . . as a man of taste. . . wanted his programme to offer this variety of styles and colours that the concert demands.<sup>64</sup>

Much to Berlioz's chagrin and frustration, Castil-Blaze did not attend nor write about any further concerts featuring Berlioz's music. The twentieth-century reader will lament the absence of any coverage of the premiere of Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique* in the *Journal des Débats* by either Castil-Blaze or one of the other stringers.

Berlioz's treatment of Castil-Blaze, on the other hand, was quite vitriolic. It began as early as 1825, when Berlioz, then a feuilletonist for *Le Corsaire*, criticized Castil-Blaze for his views on Gluck. Berlioz, a staunch Gluckist, could not bear to read Castil-Blaze's treatment of his idol. In the *Corsaire*'s "Polémique musicale" column, he sarcastically aimed at Castil-Blaze:

[. . .] Who could restrain an impulse of indignation on reading the reviews of *Armide* written by several journalists, among others M. \*\*\* of the *Débats*? What! The finale of the first act "produces no effect"? "*Notre général vous rappelle*" "causes no emotion"? The music for *Renaud* and *Armide* "lacks development and invariably sounds truncated"? The whole work is composed "on a fallacious method of declamation which we have since

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réunion musicale, et, de cette manière, il sera facile de tromper l'ennemi, de se mettre à l'abri des poursuites des huissiers, des assignations, des amendes qui tombent comme la grêle sur les auteurs assez imprudens pour faire chanter du nouveau." *Journal des Débats*, 6 November 1829.

<sup>64</sup>"Le complot est formé, M. Berlioz le conduit avec autant d'ardeur que de prudence, et parvient à faire connaître des fragmens très remarquables de ses opéras. . . les élèves que le Conservatoire forme pour les théâtres d'Italie, ont bien voulu prêter assistance et déroger même, en chantant des paroles françaises, aux obligations que leur avenir impose. . . M. Berlioz. . . en homme de goût. . . a voulu que son programme offrît cette variété de styles et de couleurs que le concert réclame." *Journal des Débats*, 6 November 1829.

rejected"? What do you want then, wretch? . . . Who is it that has rejected Gluck's method? M. \*\*\*. Who finds half the music of *Armide* absurd? M. \*\*\*. Who finds the poem bad, the principal rôle anti-musical, the embellishments paltry, the ballets dull? M. \*\*\* again. But who, will you ask, is this implacable critic, this righter of wrongs, this universal improver? No doubt some great composer, some lyric poet, at the least a member of the Academy. No: he is more than all these. He is M. Castil-Blaze.<sup>65</sup>

Undeterred, Castil-Blaze never referred to Berlioz in this fracas, but obstinately carried on undermining Gluck.<sup>66</sup> In the years to come, Castil-Blaze was anathema to Berlioz, who unrelentingly made his vituperative attacks against the "chronicler" in the press.<sup>67</sup>

As for Castil-Blaze, he answered Berlioz not with caustic reaction, but with what became a manner of his criticism—silence. No report about Berlioz winning the Prix de Rome in 1830.<sup>68</sup> No report about the first performance of the *Symphonie fantastique* on 5 December 1830. If one were to read only the *Journal des Débats*, one would come to the erroneous

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<sup>65</sup>*Le Corsaire*, 19 December 1825; translated by and quoted in Cairns, 183.

<sup>66</sup>See Chapter 4 "Gluck: A Critical View and the Question of Transposition."

<sup>67</sup>The present author refers the reader to the following three examples in which Berlioz gives Castil-Blaze a good thrashing: "Appréciateurs de Beethoven" and "Grande Nouvelle" in *Les grotesques de la musique* and "Dix-huitième soirée — analyse de Pigeon Vole" in *Les soirées de l'orchestre*.

<sup>68</sup>The opportunity to do so, however, presented itself in the "Liberty of the Theatres" feuilleton which appeared four months after the simultaneous occurrence of the competition and the July Revolution.

During the battles for the Louvre, the competitors for the Grand Prize in musical composition were sequestered in their examination rooms at the Institute. Bullets, balls, and grapeshot fell like hail on their peaceful dwelling place and broke arms and legs on the Academicians's chairs. It was in the middle of these disturbances that they wrote the cantata *Sardanapale*, as required for the contest. After having polished their melody and their orchestral effects, these young candidates for the Institute's laurels went out crying, 'Long live liberty! Long live musical liberty!'

"Les concurrens pour le grand prix de composition musicale étaient enfermés dans leurs loges au palais de l'Institut pendant les batailles du Louvre. Les boulets, les balles, les mitrailles tombaient comme la grêle sur leur paisible demeure, et rompaient bras et jambes aux fauteuils des académiciens. C'est au milieu de ce désordre qu'ils ont écrit la cantate de *Sardanapale*, donnée pour le concours. Après avoir ajusté leur mélodie et leurs effets d'orchestre, ces jeunes prétendants au laurier de l'Institut sont sortis en criant *vive la liberté! vive la liberté musicale!*" *Journal des Débats*, 14 October 1830.



conclusion that Berlioz had by this time vanished from the face of the earth. One could hazard that Castil-Blaze thought of Berlioz as a brazen, young up-start who did not yet merit extended coverage. This lack of coverage no doubt provoked Berlioz to abandon any remaining hope of public recognition from Castil-Blaze, and to covet Castil-Blaze's post at the *Journal des Débats*. Berlioz, of course, eventually succeeded Castil-Blaze as the music feuilletonist at the *Journal des Débats* in 1835 and used his feuilleton in hopes of furthering his career as a composer.

### Franz Liszt

On 11 December 1823, a twelve year old Hungarian piano prodigy and his parents arrived in Paris. By New Year's Eve he had performed for the Duke of Orléans and the Duchess of Berry. His name: Franz Liszt. If we are to believe Liszt's father, Adam, by March 1824 the boy had performed in public no fewer than thirty-eight times. Critical acclaim of the boy's playing came swiftly from various Parisian newspapers.<sup>69</sup> However, it was only on 23 March 1824 that Liszt was first mentioned in Castil-Blaze's "Chronique musicale," and then in connection with the growing number of concerts in Paris:

M<sup>me</sup> Szymanowska and young Liszt, Messrs Hertz [Herz] and Stockhausen have just experienced the happy results of that enthusiasm which is so flattering for artists and so honourable for music lovers. Progress in musical civilisation is immense.<sup>70</sup>

After a long tirade against the *littérateurs*, Castil-Blaze returned to Liszt:

I have still said nothing about young Liszt. Let me join in the chorus of praise that music lovers have addressed to this likeable virtuoso. His talent is prodigious in improvisation as well as in

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<sup>69</sup>Alan Walker, *Franz Liszt: The Virtuoso Years 1811-1847*, Vol. 1. rev. ed. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987), 96-97.

<sup>70</sup>"Mme Szymanowska et le jeune Liszt, MM. Hertz et Stockhausen viennent d'éprouver les heureux résultats d'un empressément si flatteur pour les artistes et si honorable pour les amateurs; les progrès dans la civilisation musicale sont immenses." *Journal des Débats*, 23 March 1824.

the execution of written music. His firm and grandiose style is of an openness which defies criticism. He brings to mind the wonders of Mozart's childhood. Liszt must be judged as a man, he has no need of the concessions that one ordinarily makes for composers and even pianists his age. We will hear him again at the performance for the benefit of Barilli, at the *Concerts spirituels* and in a second concert for his benefit.<sup>71</sup>

Clearly, Castil-Blaze recognized Liszt as a genius. Comparisons between Liszt and Mozart abounded in the press of the day and Castil-Blaze only added to the adulation. Unfortunately, Castil-Blaze did not mention one single piece that Liszt performed. As for the above mentioned benefit concerts, Castil-Blaze did not review them at all.

On 21 April 1824, Castil-Blaze did however report about the *Concerts spirituels*. Again, no selections were mentioned and Liszt received only passing reference in the entire feuilleton:

Young Liszt appeared again to the pleasure of those who knew him already and of those who were enchanted to see him justify his dazzling reputation.<sup>72</sup>

Readers of the *Journal des Débats* "Chronique Musicale" would have to wait until November of 1826 to once again read about Liszt. In a review of a concert given by M<sup>lle</sup> A. Bertrand in the Théâtre de Madame, Castil-Blaze informed the reader in passing that Liszt had performed (or perhaps improvised upon) a concoction of English and crowd-pleasing French music: variations on Joseph Mazzinghi's song *Robin Adair* and a chorus from Boïeldieu's *La Dame blanche*. Castil-Blaze reported that Liszt's variations had received a lukewarm reception

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<sup>71</sup>"Je n'ai rien dit encore du jeune Liszt, qu'il me soit permis de mêler ma voix au concert d'éloges que les amateurs ont adressé à cet aimable virtuose. Son talent est prodigieux dans l'improvisation comme dans l'exécution de la musique écrite. Son style ferme et grandiose est d'une franchise qu'on ne sauroit trop admirer; il rappelle les merveilles de l'enfance de Mozart. Liszt doit être jugé comme un homme, il n'a pas besoin de concessions que l'on fait ordinairement aux compositeurs et même aux pianistes de son âge. Nous l'entendrons encore à la représentation au bénéfice de Barilli, aux concerts spirituels, et dans un second concert à son bénéfice." *Journal des Débats*, 23 March 1824.

<sup>72</sup>"Le jeune Liszt a reparu à la satisfaction des personnes qui le connoissoient déjà et de celles qui étoient charmées de lui voir justifier sa brillante réputation." *Journal des Débats*, 21 April 1824.

from the audience and likened them to a dinner at which guests were served hors-d'oeuvre all night long:

Mr. Listz [Liszt] played the piano in order to give us more variations:

What! only pâtés to eat?  
Not a roasted eel!

He performed brilliant and superficial passages with much vigour and vivacity, preceded and followed by the ballad of *Robin Adair*, which made one presume that the virtuoso piano passages were a paraphrase of this English motive. The flattering reception with which the audience welcomed the first chorus from the *Dame blanche*, which was used as a conclusion to the variations, must convince performers that the public is not as fond of variations on songs as it is often said. It was enchanted to find a straightforward and followable melody and this flash sparkled with all the more brilliance after the darkness of the variations.<sup>73</sup>

By 1827, Liszt's reputation in Paris was such that he was used as the benchmark for all other pianists. Castil-Blaze did not hesitate to compare a winner of the Conservatoire competition to him and Alkan.

The young [Charles] Wagner who carried off the first prize is a new prodigy who yields nothing to the Listz [Liszts] and the Alkans.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>73</sup>"M. Listz [sic] a joué du piano pour nous donner encore des variations:

Eh quoi! toujours pâtés au bec?  
Pas une anguille de rôti!

Il a exécuté avec beaucoup de vigueur et de vivacité des traits brillans et amphigouriques, précédés et suivis par la ballade de *Robin Adair*, ce qui pouvoit faire présumer que les traits de piano étoient la paraphrase de ce motif anglais. La manière flatteuse dont l'auditoire a accueilli le premier choeur de *la Dame blanche*, qui seroit de conclusion à ces variations, doit persuader les exécutans que le public n'affectionne pas tant les airs variés qu'on veut bien le dire. Il a été enchanté de retrouver une mélodie franche et suivie, et cet éclair a brillé d'un plus vif éclat après les ténèbres des variations." *Journal des Débats*, 6 November 1826. Mazzinghi lived from 1765 to 1844. *Robin Adair* is actually an Irish ballad.

<sup>74</sup>"Le jeune Wagner, qui a remporté le premier prix, est un nouveau prodige qui ne le cède en rien aux Listz, [sic] aux Alkan. . ." *Journal des Débats*, 14 August 1827.

Liszt's last appearance in Castil-Blaze's feuilletons came in connection with a performance by a quartet of pianists including Pixis and the Herz brothers. This time Castil-Blaze did not neglect to mention the selection:

. . . Four pianists appeared at the concert from the Théâtre de Madame. The Herz brothers, Pixis and Liszt formed the angles of this square. The piece for two pianos is none other than the chorus from *Crociato*, on which Mr. H. Herz had previously written variations, and thereafter arranged for the forty fingers of these men.<sup>75</sup>

It was not however the last time that Liszt was to perform in Paris during Castil-Blaze's reign at the *Journal des Débats*. Walker reports that Liszt performed at the very first *Concerts spirituels* in 1828—the Hummel B-minor Piano Concerto—but very badly.<sup>76</sup> In his review of this concert, Castil-Blaze made absolutely no mention of an appearance by Liszt.<sup>77</sup>

There are several reasons one could put forward for Castil-Blaze's scant coverage of Liszt, who was mentioned only five times, but without a harsh word. Of course, Castil-Blaze could not attend every concert of Liszt. Moreover, in the feuilletons of the early 1820s Castil-Blaze devoted little space to instrumental virtuosi, and young Liszt was no exception. Castil-Blaze tended to treat the instrumental concert as an item for reportage. In his feuilletons about such concerts, he seemingly had little to sink his teeth into: no libretto; no sets; no costumes. Descriptions of Liszt's physical appearance or references to any idiosyncracies at the piano do not seem to have been important to Castil-Blaze, who refused to be swept up in the blind Liszt-adoration of the times. Furthermore, an unfamiliarity with the compositions performed, or

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<sup>75</sup>" . . . quatre pianistes ont comparu au concert du théâtre de MADAME; MM. Herz frères, Pixis et Litz [sic] formoient cette partie carrée. Le morceau à deux pianos n'est autre chose que le chœur du *Crociato* précédemment varié par M. H. Herz, et arrangé ensuite pour les quarante doigts de ces messieurs." *Journal des Débats*, 5 January 1828.

<sup>76</sup>Walker, 133.

<sup>77</sup>*Journal des Débats*, 17 April 1828.

even improvised, forced Castil-Blaze to rely on his ears and not on a score. By the late 1820s, the death of Liszt's father, Liszt's own illness and his teaching schedule hindered him from substantial concertizing in the manner of the mid-1820s. Liszt's greater conquests lay in the future.

### Niccolò Paganini

No artist about whom Castil-Blaze wrote ever received so triumphant and glorious a review as did Niccolò Paganini. All the more surprising is the fact that it had been gained without Castil-Blaze so much as hearing a single note played by the renowned violin virtuoso.

Paganini's first appearance in the "Chronique Musicale" was on 28 December 1829. A little over one month later on 9 February 1830, Paganini became the sole topic of that day's feuilleton. It was not the last time that Castil-Blaze would wax romantic about Paganini.

The coming of Paganini has been announced for more than one year. True, this marvelous violinist has started the journey for our capital with horses harnessed to his carriage galloping as fast as those of a diplomatic courier, and yet, the beloved does not come! say the disappointed music lovers. . . Springtime will have made new roses blossom, the bay-trees will put out new shoots before Paganini's bow has charmed Parisian listeners.<sup>78</sup>

Castil-Blaze, echoing the reports of an unnamed German newspaper, went on to elevate Paganini to the heights of the mythic Orpheus:

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<sup>78</sup>Voilà déjà plus d'un an qu'on annonce la venue de Paganini; il est vrai que ce merveilleux violoniste s'est mis en route pour notre capitale les chevaux attelés à son char galopent tout aussi vite que ceux d'un courrier diplomatique, et pourtant

Le bien-aimé n'arrive pas!

disent les *dilettanti* désappointés. . . Le printemps aura fait éclore de nouvelles roses, les lauriers se seront parés de jeunes rameaux avant que l'archet de Paganini ait charmé les auditeurs parisiens. *Journal des Débats*, 9 February 1830.

He civilizes yokels by means of Orpheus's and Paganini's art.  
The temples resound with four part hymns intoned and led with  
precision by the peasants.<sup>79</sup>

What followed was a long panegyric taken from M. de Laphalèque's "Notice sur Paganini," and duly admitted as such. Castil-Blaze now used the unknown to build up curiosity and suspense:

I haven't seen Paganini's bow. I don't know what rosin he rubs on it. But, I have read through his music. The Devil's Sonata, that bugbear of violinists of the last century, seems like child's play beside the new difficulties and combinations discovered by the Genovese virtuoso.<sup>80</sup>

He capped off the feuilleton with an endorsement by one of Paganini's friends, a ploy worthy of today's slickest advertising:

'Imagine the most stunning effects ever produced on the violin. Dream of the marvels of the bow and melody. Paganini will still surpass your expectations.' So I was told by a very competent judge, one of the most illustrious composers of our day, Mr. Meyerbeer.<sup>81</sup>

The remainder of the feuilleton used de Laphalèque's notice on the wonders of Paganini's playing technique. Praise must be given to Castil-Blaze for not totally succumbing to the myths that surrounded Paganini and were fanned by a scandal-hungry press. De Laphalèque's article contained many such anecdotes, which Castil-Blaze wisely did not repeat. Castil-Blaze skirted around this aspect by referring the reader to de Laphalèque's article.

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<sup>79</sup>"Il civilise les rustres au moyen de l'art d'Orphée et de Paganini; les temples retentissent des hymnes à quatre parties que des paysans entonnent et conduisent avec précision." *Journal des Débats*, 9 February 1830.

<sup>80</sup>"Je n'ai pas vu l'archet de Paganini; je ne sais point de quelle colophane il le frotte; mais j'ai lu sa musique; et la Sonate du Diable, cet épouvantail des violonistes du dernier siècle, ne paraît qu'un jeu d'enfant à côté des nouvelles difficultés, des nouvelles combinaisons trouvées par le virtuose génois." *Journal des Débats*, 9 February 1830.

<sup>81</sup>"Imaginez les effets les plus étonnans que l'on puisse produire sur un violon; rêvez les prodiges de l'archet et de la mélodie; Paganini va surpasser encore votre attente.' Voilà ce que m'a dit un juge très compétent, un des plus illustres compositeurs de notre époque, M. Meyer-Beer." *Journal des Débats*, 9 February 1830.

I refer my readers to Mr. de Laphalèque's curious brochure. There they will find some piquant anecdotes, a complete justification of Paganini on the subject of diverse injurious rumours which have circulated about him and the details of some amazing feats performed in the company of his friends.<sup>82</sup>

With a feuilleton such as this, Castil-Blaze enhanced the Genoese violin virtuoso's aura. The burden was now on Paganini to live up to this phenomenal advance billing.

Finally arriving in Paris on 24 February 1831, his first concert was arranged to take place on Sunday 9 March 1831. In the meantime, Castil-Blaze, along with the Rothschilds and the Merlins of the *société élégante* and de Bériot, La Malibran, Rossini, Donizetti, Auber, Halévy, Heine, Börne, Delacroix, de Musset, Nodier, Sand, and Janin, among other Parisian cultural elite, converged at the Opéra where admission prices had doubled.<sup>83</sup>

Paganini's effect on Castil-Blaze could be seen from the feuilleton's introduction, after M<sup>me</sup> de Sévigné:

This thing is the most astounding, the most surprising, the most marvelous, the most miraculous, the most triumphant, the most stunning, the most unheard-of, the most unique, the most extraordinary, the most incredible, the most unexpected. . .<sup>84</sup>

Paganini could not have hoped for better publicity, especially since this feuilleton appeared on the day of his second Paris concert.

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<sup>82</sup>"Je renvoie mes lecteurs à la curieuse brochure de M. de Laphalèque; ils y trouveront des anecdotes piquantes, une justification complète de Paganini, au sujet de divers bruits injurieux que l'on avait fait courir sur son compte, et le détail de quelques tours de force qu'il a exécutés dans la société de ses amis." *Journal des Débats*, 9 February 1830.

<sup>83</sup>Geraldine I. C. de Courcy, *Paganini the Genoese* (Norman: Oklahoma University Press, 1957; repr., New York: Da Capo Press, 1977), 2:13-15.

<sup>84</sup>"C'est la chose la plus étonnante, la plus surprenante, la plus merveilleuse, la plus miraculeuse, la plus triomphante, la plus étourdissante, la plus inouïe, le plus singulière, la plus extraordinaire, la plus incroyable, la plus imprévue. . ." *Journal des Débats*, 13 March 1831.

Castil-Blaze now yielded to the temptation to take up the familiar thread of the diabolical

Paganini:

Tartini dreamt of a demon who played a diabolical sonata—this demon was surely Paganini. . . You see that I'm giving myself to the devil to make you understand what Paganini is, to express what I felt while hearing him, what I experienced after having heard him, the agitation that deprived me of a whole night's sleep and gave me St. Vitus' dance. And yet, I will not manage it.<sup>85</sup>

However, this imagery soon faded and Castil-Blaze treated Paganini not like a magician, but as a prodigious being. Castil-Blaze urged his readers to see the man in concert for only then could they come to agree with his assessment.<sup>86</sup>

The Trumpet of Fame is only a miserable whistle when celebrating the accomplishments of the marvelous violinist. What purpose would it serve to raise it to one's lips? And even if Gargantua lent me his trombone, I would hardly be better off. I forewarn my readers that what I said and what I am going to say about Paganini is nothing, absolutely nothing in comparison to what he does and my readers will agree with me when they have heard him.<sup>87</sup>

Skimming over the opening numbers, he brought the reader right into the concert hall, starting first with applause and shouts of bravo, his salutation by the orchestral musicians, and then a physical description of the virtuoso—a fairly common practice when writing about Paganini.

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<sup>85</sup>"Tartini vit en songe un démon qui jouait une diabolique sonate; ce démon était sûrement Paganini. . . Vous voyez que je me donne au diable pour vous faire comprendre ce que c'est que Paganini, pour exprimer ce que j'ai senti en l'écouter, ce que j'ai éprouvé après l'avoir entendu, l'agitation qui m'a privée de sommeil pendant toute la nuit, et m'a fait danser la danse de Saint Guis, et pourtant je n'y réussirai pas." *Journal des Débats*, 13 March 1831.

<sup>86</sup>Only then could they come to a truly "successful reading" of this feuilleton. See Chapter Two "Reader Response: A Model for Inner Listening."

<sup>87</sup>"La trompette de la renommée n'est qu'un misérable sifflet pour célébrer les hauts faits du merveilleux violon; A quoi servirait de l'emboucher? Et quand même Gargantua me prêterait son trombone, je n'en serais guères plus avancé. J[e]. . . préviens mes lecteurs que ce que j'ai dit et ce que je vais dire sur Paganini n'est rien, rien absolument rien en comparaison de ce qu'il fait, et mes lecteurs en conviendront quand ils l'auront entendu." *Journal des Débats*, 13 March 1831.



Portions of this description seem to have been influenced by the numerous caricatures of the day: ". . . his cheeks resemble the f-holes of a violin or a double bass. . . his left hand is longer than his right."<sup>88</sup> Subsequently, Castil-Blaze wrote about each piece that Paganini performed that evening, lavishing nothing but golden words of praise on composer and performer. Though this passage is too long to quote in its entirety, two sentences about his concerto can stand for the tone and style used in this feuilleton.

The first ten measures of the first solo sufficed to make Paganini's marvelous talent known. Doubtless he would go far. . . This first piece in which suave melodies glistened, whence soared virtuoso passages of a piquancy, of the extreme audacity of which Paganini alone possesses the secret [and] which he alone can perform.<sup>89</sup>

By concert's end, Castil-Blaze reported, in his typically sarcastic manner, that the audience was stunned and had no more physical strength to applaud the master.

Some thought that this violinist had had less success in the last piece than the earlier ones, seeing that they were applauded less. The remark would be true if it was proven that members of an audience can shout continuously at full voice like an organ pedal, and clap with equal fervour for one and a half hours like the tilt hammer of a powder magazine.<sup>90</sup>

Readers of the *Journal des Débats*, who perhaps could not attend Paganini's concert on 9 March and were eager to read the latest news, would have to wait until 23 March for the

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<sup>88</sup>" . . . ses joues. . . ressemblent aux *ff* d'un violon ou d'une contrebasse. . . sa main gauche est plus longue que la droite." *Journal des Débats*, 13 March 1831.

<sup>89</sup>"Les dix premières mesures du premier solo ont suffi pour faire connaître le merveilleux talent de Paganini; il devait aller loin sans doute. . . Ce premier morceau dans lequel brillaient des chants suaves, d'où s'élançaient des traits d'une qualité piquante, d'une extrême audace, dont Paganini possède seul le secret [et] lui seul peut les exécuter. . . ." *Journal des Débats*, 13 March 1831.

<sup>90</sup>"Quelques personnes pensaient que ce violoniste avait eu moins de succès dans le dernier morceau que dans les premiers, attendu que l'on avait moins applaudi. La remarque serait juste s'il était démontré que des spectateurs peuvent sans cesse crier à pleine gorge comme une pédale d'orgue, et battre des mains avec une égale vigueur pendant une heure et demie comme le ferait le martinet d'une poudrière." *Journal des Débats*, 13 March 1831.

promised review.<sup>91</sup> In the meantime, Paganini had performed another concert. These two concerts were the focus of Castil-Blaze's next feuilleton.

Having now listened to three of Paganini's concerts, Castil-Blaze's quill became razor-sharp.

I did not tie myself in analytical knots. Not a single word of analysis has adulterated my praises of Paganini. . . Certain things appeared bizarre to me. . . I don't like the canary's song from Canarie. I would have liked to find less often the imitation of this high-pitched warbling in the playing of this master.<sup>92</sup>

But why the sudden reserve? Attempting to convince the reader of his critical stance, he wrote,

I have however, been wary of communicating such reflections to my readers. A journalist renounces his right to censure with difficulty. He must even have recourse to this means sometimes to make his praises be accepted more readily. Certain critical volleys skilfully fired please certain troubled souls who don't like total victories, and endless superior qualities. Their self-esteem is wounded by them, I am not too sure why. . .<sup>93</sup>

All this made for a defensive statement, as if someone had criticized Castil-Blaze for his blind exaltation of Paganini. He now felt obliged to show both sides of the coin: "What charm,

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<sup>91</sup>Castil-Blaze incorrectly dated two feuilletons on Paganini as having appeared on 15 and 25 March 1831. *Académie impériale de musique*, 2:223. Actually, both feuilletons appeared two days earlier on 13 and 23 March. The *Journal des Débats*'s typescript for numbers 3 and 5 were so similar that Castil-Blaze probably mistook the one for the other.

<sup>92</sup>"Je ne me suis point enferré; pas un mot de critique ne s'est mêlé aux éloges que j'ai donné à Paganini. . . Certaines choses me paraissaient bizarres. . . Je n'aime point le chant de serin de Canarie; j'aurais voulu trouver moins souvent l'imitation de ce ramage sur-aigu dans les jeux de ce maître." *Journal des Débats*, 23 March 1831.

<sup>93</sup>"Je me suis gardé cependant de communiquer ces réflexions à mes lecteurs. Un journaliste renonce difficilement à son droit de censurer; il faut même quelquefois qu'il ait recours à ce moyen pour faire adopter plus aisément les louanges qu'il donne. Quelques traits de critique adroitement décochés plaisent à certains esprits inquiets qui n'aiment pas les victoires complètes, les supériorités à perte de vue. Leur amour propre en est blessé, je ne sais trop pourquoi. . ." *Journal des Débats*, 23 March 1831.

energy, originality lies in this talent! But in the end, what malice."<sup>94</sup> Paganini's "malice" was construed as the hold he had on an audience:

Paganini has studied his public for a long time. . . Who can cause thunderous applause to break forth. . .? It's the public en masse, the thunderbolt is in its hands. . .<sup>95</sup>

Despite presenting the good and the bad in Paganini, Castil-Blaze raved about his *Concerto in d minor* which he felt was

. . . of an original form and contains some picturesque effects and contrasts. . . The glamour, the magic of Paganini's technique astounds me more each day.<sup>96</sup>

The feuilleton ended with a verse that captured Castil-Blaze's "critical" feelings towards Paganini:

. . . we heard Paganini and  
What we heard to his glory,  
And what we admired without belief,  
Will be believed,  
But not  
without being admired.<sup>97</sup>

Castil-Blaze's admiration permitted him to report that Paganini's financial success from a Sunday concert at the Opéra was tremendous: 22,000 francs. However, after Paganini had refused to perform at a charity ball given by the National Guard, the Parisian press looked upon him not

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<sup>94</sup>"Qu'il y a de charme, de vigueur, de nouveauté dans ce talent! Mais enfin qu'il y a de malice!" *Journal des Débats*, 23 March 1831.

<sup>95</sup>"Paganini a dès long-temps étudié son public. . . Qui peut faire éclater un tonnerre d'applaudissemens. . .? C'est le public en masse, la foudre est dans ses mains. . ." *Journal des Débats*, 23 March 1831.

<sup>96</sup>" . . d'une forme originale, et renferme des effets, des contrastes très pittoresques. . . Le prestige, la magie du jeu de Paganini me confond chaque jour davantage." *Journal des Débats*, 23 March 1831.

<sup>97</sup>" . . nous avons entendu Paganini, et  
Ce qu'on nous disait à sa gloire,  
Et qu'on admirait sans le croire,  
Mais non pas  
Sans être admiré."

*Journal des Débats*, 23 March 1831.

with admiration, but with disdain, calling him "a callous miser, filling his pockets with French gold."<sup>98</sup> In spite of a charity concert given on 17 April at the Opéra, Paganini's reception in some Parisian newspapers remained uncomplimentary.<sup>99</sup> Castil-Blaze, however, made no mention of these issues to his readers. In fact, after March 1831, Paganini was rarely mentioned in the "Chronique musicale." This is another example of Castil-Blaze's "silent" criticism—completely ignoring the issue—which likely arose as a result of not wishing to lower himself to the level of the *Courrier des Théâtres*, which relentlessly attacked Paganini, nor to offend his friend Fétis, who wrote a letter to the *Moniteur universel* as well the *Revue musicale* under Paganini's name on Paganini's behalf.<sup>100</sup>

Castil-Blaze's reviews about Paganini stand out for their sobriety. One must give credit to Castil-Blaze for dealing almost entirely with musical virtue, or the lack thereof, and not with fable, as others had done. Though at one point Castil-Blaze had willingly participated in the tremendous promotional build up of Paganini in the press, in the end the mythifying proved to be too excessive. Even Castil-Blaze could not believe in what he wrote. Perhaps Castil-Blaze did not want to be caught adrift in the changing tide of Paganini's popularity and so he ignored or refused to write about the virtuoso. One must simply recognize Castil-Blaze's feuilletons as chronicles of the ideas and events of his time, however subjectively discussed they were. In the span of two years, Castil-Blaze's readers had seen Paganini tumble from the mythical heights of Orpheus to the level of a mortal with clay feet. The real Paganini probably lies somewhere between these extremes.

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<sup>98</sup>Courcy, 24.

<sup>99</sup>See Courcy pp. 22-34 and 98-109.

<sup>100</sup>Courcy, 22-29. François-Joseph Fétis will be discussed below.

## François-Joseph Fétis

On the final page of his *Mémorial du Grand-Opéra* (1847), Castil-Blaze remarked:

The musician-lawyer, a former bookstore inspector, warns forgers that his *Mémorial* is bristling with traps, into which they will not fail to fall. . .

A single man in the universe can discover these innocent acts of perfidy. The author has just named François-Joseph Fétis. . .<sup>101</sup>

Castil-Blaze had the highest regard for this man, admiring his unparalleled musical intelligence. This was unmistakable whenever Castil-Blaze mentioned Fétis. Castil-Blaze freely admitted that he had drawn several facts for a feuilleton about Méhul from the excellent account that Fétis had joined to the portrait of the composer in his *Galerie des musiciens célèbres*.<sup>102</sup> Castil-Blaze once openly used Fétis's critique of M<sup>me</sup> Malibran's performance in Rossini's *The Barber of Seville* to lend another convincing voice to bolster his own criticism.

Although M<sup>me</sup> Malibran achieves without effort the highest pitches of the *soprano* part in an aria or in a duet, this singer does not have an adequately placed voice for high-pitched melodies. She can run through them with agility, but not nail her voice to them during the entire length of such a long and noisy finale. . .

The knowledgeable editor of the *Revue musicale*, a journal whose success grows daily, complains that he doesn't hear the voice of M<sup>me</sup> Malibran in the finale of the *Barber*. I was no luckier than Mr. Fétis.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>101</sup>"Le musicien-avocat, ancien inspecteur de la librairie, prévient les contrefacteurs que son *Mémorial* est semé de pièges [sic], dans lesquels ils ne manqueraient pas de tomber. . . . Un seul homme dans l'univers peut découvrir ces innocentes perfidies. L'auteur vient de nommer François-Joseph Fétis. . ." Castil-Blaze, *Mémorial du Grand-Opéra*, (Paris: Castil-Blaze, 1847), 64.

<sup>102</sup>*Journal des Débats*, 3 September 1828.

<sup>103</sup>"Quoique M<sup>me</sup> Malibran arrive sans effort aux sons les plus élevés du *soprano* dans un air ou dans un duo, cette cantatrice n'a pas un organe assez précisément disposé pour les mélodies aiguës. Elle peut les parcourir avec agilité, mais non pas y clouer sa voix pendant toute la durée d'un finale si long et si bruyant. . . .

Le savant rédacteur de la *Revue Musicale* journal dont le succès augmente tous les jours, se plaint de ce qu'il n'entend pas la voix de M<sup>me</sup> Malibran dans le finale du *Barbier*. Je n'ai pas été plus heureux que M. Fétis." *Journal des Débats*, 3 May 1828.

The above quote also puts to rest the falsehood that Castil-Blaze never praised the *Revue musicale* in his feuilletons. Though it is true that Castil-Blaze never devoted a feuilleton to the *Revue musicale*, simply stating that it was a successful journal and that the editor was very knowledgeable was the best way that he could phrase his delight of a fellow music critic.

Castil-Blaze showed much more enthusiasm for Fétis's writings, devoting an entire feuilleton of eight columns to his *Traité du contrepoint et de la fugue*,<sup>104</sup> and five-and-a-half columns to *Solfèges progressifs*.<sup>105</sup> It must be said that neither feuilleton dealt exclusively with the books themselves. The antithesis of inspiration and genius to the science and erudition found in music manuals provided the backdrop for his review of the counterpoint treatise. Not surprisingly, Fétis's manual constituted the pinnacle of achievement in the area of *solfège*, supported by the opinion that it encompassed a much more singer-friendly tessitura and exhibited a more logical gradation of pedagogical principles than earlier manuals. Though the following quote is extracted from the *Solfèges* feuilleton, it may be used to sum up Castil-Blaze's thoughts on both of these works:

Finally, everything seems to me to have been provided for in this work, which should be epoch-making in the teaching of music in France, and will soon come into widespread use.<sup>106</sup>

Castil-Blaze's acknowledgement and promotion of Fétis's manuals demonstrated his concern for music education in France. He also realized, and was not afraid or ashamed to admit,

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<sup>104</sup>*Traité du contrepoint et de la fugue, contenant l'exposé analytique des règles de la composition musicale, depuis deux jusqu'à huit parties réelles.* In 1824, the price of this expensive two volume work was 60 francs. For that amount of money, one could attend the opera twenty-four times.

<sup>105</sup>*Solfèges progressifs, avec accompagnement de piano, précédés des principes de la musique.* This one volume work was available at a price of twenty-four francs.

<sup>106</sup>"Enfin, tout me semble avoir été prévu dans cet ouvrage, qui doit faire époque dans l'enseignement de la musique en France, et devenir bientôt d'un usage général." *Journal des Débats*, 11 June 1827.

that there was at least one other Parisian music critic who possessed a greater knowledge of music than himself.

## ISSUES

### The Ballet: Castil-Blaze's Conversion

In his early feuilletons, Castil-Blaze was of the opinion that the obligatory ballet scene in an opera hindered the flow of dramatic action. In 1822 he wrote, "the ballet that is introduced in the second act contributes greatly to slackening of action."<sup>107</sup> In another feuilleton, he derided the dancers and used the audience as authoratative witnesses:

. . . the ballerinas aroused the mirth of the public. The Opéra-  
Buffa ballets are quite grotesque. At the Louvois, they  
sometimes dance like they sing in other locales. Nevertheless the  
ballets have one very precious quality: they are short . . .<sup>108</sup>

In 1827, a young dancer's debut at the Opéra changed his opinion about ballet. Her name was M<sup>lle</sup> Marie Taglioni. Captivated by her dance, Castil-Blaze wrote that ". . . M<sup>lle</sup> Taglioni dances like a bird and seems to surpass once again all of the gracefulness that she had shown us earlier."<sup>109</sup> With her advent on the Parisian musical scene, Castil-Blaze was now able to draw a distinction between Italian and French dance for his readers:

These virtuosi [Taglioni et al] owe a large part of their success  
to the simultaneous use of every part of their body, whereas our

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<sup>107</sup>"Le ballet que l'on introduit dans le second acte contribue beaucoup à ralentir l'action." *Journal des Débats*, 2 May 1822.

<sup>108</sup>". . . les ballerinis ont excité l'hilarité du public, les ballets de l'Opéra-*Buffa* sont assez grotesques. On danse à Louvois comme on chante quelquefois en d'autres lieux. Ces ballets néanmoins ont une qualité bien précieuse, ils sont courts. . ." *Journal des Débats*, 21 November 1822.

<sup>109</sup>". . . M<sup>lle</sup> Taglioni danse comme un oiseau, et semble surpasser encore tout ce qu'elle nous avait montré de gracieux." *Journal des Débats*, 11 August 1829.

classical dance leaves the torso, arms, head, if not immobile, at least in a state of very unpleasant stiffness and inactivity.<sup>110</sup>

Preferring the movements of Italian dancers over those of the French, Castil-Blaze could now tolerate if not look forward to the ballet scene of an opera. In conclusion then, were it not for the artistry of M<sup>lle</sup> Taglioni, Castil-Blaze might perhaps have continued to denigrate dance in opera.

### Government Funding of the Arts: A Change of Heart

In his *De l'Opéra en France* Castil-Blaze urged that operatic performances be placed under the direction of the government, citing the Greeks and Romans as models:

In Rome and Greece, shows were under the direction of the government. . . I don't see what would prevent our large cities from adopting it [this funding].<sup>111</sup>

Castil-Blaze reasoned that only with the financial wherewithal from the government would all of France's theatres be in a position to hire good singers in order to stage productions that would rival those of the Italian opera houses. Up until 1827, he was a vocal supporter of government funding of the arts:

If governments do not lend a powerful and indispensable hand to the artist, he will pay dearly for his noble folly.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>110</sup>"Ces virtuoses doivent une grande part de leurs succès à l'action simultanée de toutes les parties du corps, tandis que notre danse classique laisse le torso, les bras et la tête, sinon immobiles, de moins dans un état de roideur et d'inaction très déplaisant." *Journal des Débats*, 16 September 1829.

<sup>111</sup>"A Rome et en Grèce, les spectacles étaient sous la direction du gouvernement. . . Je ne vois pas ce qui empêcherait nos grandes villes de l'adopter." *De l'Opéra en France*, 2:286-287.

<sup>112</sup>"Si les gouvernements ne prêtent pas un secours puissant et indispensable à l'artiste, il paiera cher sa noble folie." *Journal des Débats*, 13 September 1823.



Governments ought to encourage artists to give their best efforts to those areas in art that are neglected only because they offer no financial reward.<sup>113</sup>

And in those days the government did indeed encourage the arts. However, in early 1828 Castil-Blaze reported that the bureaucracy established during the years of government funding of theatres was now threatening to destroy the lyric stage in France:

Our lyric theatres are falling into ruin. The cause of this decadence is known, and there is no desire either to destroy or fight it. Too many people are interested in maintaining a system that guarantees them their profits.<sup>114</sup>

Castil-Blaze then realized that the root of the problem lay not only with the unwieldy bureaucracy of the houses, but with the entire premise of government involvement in the arts:

What interest can the government have in prescribing each theatre to sing in such and such a manner? . . . This can have absolutely no influence on the prosperity of the nation. . .

The constraints that hinder an artistic endeavour, the privileges granted to favour such and such an enterprise are the cause of our country's decadent state of music.<sup>115</sup>

By the end of 1828, Castil-Blaze predicted gloom and doom if things remained as they were: "in three years barely three cities in France will be able to maintain a vocal troupe."<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>113</sup>"Les gouvernemens devroient encourager les artistes à donner leurs soins aux parties de l'art que l'on néglige par la seule raison qu'elles n'offrent pas des résultats financiers." *Journal des Débats*, 23 September 1827.

<sup>114</sup>"Nos théâtres lyriques tombent en ruine; la cause de cette décadence est connue, et l'on ne veut pas la détruire ni la combattre. Trop de gens sont intéressés à soutenir un ordre de choses qui leur garantit leurs profits. . ." *Journal des Débats*, 11 January 1828.

<sup>115</sup>"Quel intérêt le gouvernement peut-il avoir à prescrire à chaque théâtre de chanter de telle ou telle manière? . . . Cela ne peut nullement influencer sur la prospérité de la nation. . .

Les entraves que l'on oppose à l'exercice d'un art, les privilèges que l'on accorde pour favoriser telle ou telle entreprise, sont la cause de l'état de décadence de notre Ecole musicale." *Journal des Débats*, 8 February 1828.

<sup>116</sup>"Dans trois ans on ne comptera pas trois villes en France qui puissent entretenir une troupe chantante." *Journal des Débats*, 10 December 1828.

Though Castil-Blaze's objection to government funding of the arts became a common thread in many of his feuilletons in 1828, he also reported the aspirations of the other side—the actors.

The actors ardently desire to be freed from the Ministry's generosity. . . Our lyric theatres will flourish again when they have reconquered their liberty.<sup>117</sup>

How prophetic to find the word "liberty" used twenty-two months before the July Revolution.

That desire for liberty was granted to actor and theatre alike after July 1830. The title of Castil-Blaze's 14 October feuilleton cried out "Liberty for the Theatres."

She [music] has reached the day her chains were broken and her future lies in the single word: *Liberty*.<sup>118</sup>

Castil-Blaze correctly described the "new order:"

Directors of shows, amass your fortunes or declare bankruptcy, pay or don't pay your employees, it doesn't concern you in the least. It's a business venture . . . The practice of the profession of actor or singer is a veritable business, and directors are

terribly honest people  
who, for equally honest prices  
give cavatinas and duos, tirades and finales, show palaces and prisons, cascades and volcanoes, joyous feasts and appalling massacres to music lovers who crowd in throngs to their brilliant stores. . .<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> . . . les comédiens desirent ardemment qu'on les délivre des libéralités du ministère. . . nos théâtres lyriques reflouriront quand ils auront reconquis leur liberté." *Journal des Débats*, 8 September 1828.

<sup>118</sup> . . . elle a obtenu le jour que ses chaînes ont été brisées, et son avenir est dans ce seul mot: *Liberté*." *Journal des Débats*, 14 October 1830.

<sup>119</sup> "Directeurs de spectacles, amassez des trésors ou faites banqueroute, payez ou ne payez pas vos pensionnaires, cela ne vous regarde en aucune manière. C'est une affaire de commerce. . . L'exercice de l'état de chanteur et de comédien est un véritable commerce, et les directeurs sont

De fort honnêtes gens  
Qui, pour des prix également honnêtes,  
donnent des cavatines et des duos, des tirades et des finales, montrent des palais et des prisons, des cascades et des volcans, de joyeux festins et des massacres épouvantables aux amateurs qui se rendent en foule dans leurs brillants magasins." *Journal des Débats*, 14 October 1830.

Though Castil-Blaze heartily welcomed this new order, it would in the end leave him behind. As will be shown in Chapter Four, he received the first Grand Opera works of Meyerbeer and Auber quite well. However, as the emphasis on spectacle for spectacle's sake increased at the opera in the following years, Castil-Blaze's disappointment at this turn of events turned to bitterness.

With his outspoken views on government funding of the arts, Castil-Blaze made political commentary a feature of his music feuilleton. In instances when such issues were broached, the "Chronique musicale" mirrored the political news of the day found above the *rez-de-chaussée* in the *Journal des Débats*, and broke with the age-old taboo of avoiding political discussion in a feuilleton.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### OPERA

The majority of Castil-Blaze's feuilletons in the *Journal des Débats* dealt with opera. This chapter is devoted to an investigation of Castil-Blaze's feuilletons about opera composers such as Mozart, Gluck, Méhul and Boïeldieu, as well as composers of grand opera, Auber, Rossini and Meyerbeer. Castil-Blaze's feuilletons about Weber's *Der Freischütz* will also be examined.

#### Mozart: Of Zealots and Moderates

Though Mozart visited Paris twice—in 1763 and again in 1778—few of his works were performed or published in the city until after 1801.<sup>1</sup> It was with the publishing of two anecdotal French biographies of the composer in 1801—C. F. Cramer's *Anecdotes sur W. G. [sic] Mozart* and J.-F. Winckler's *Notice biographique sur Jean-Chrysostome-Wolfgang-Théophile Mozart*—that Mozart became a legend in France. Furthermore, the enormous success of Lachnith's pasticcio *Les Mystères d'Isis*, first staged in August 1801, popularized Mozart's name.<sup>2</sup>

However, as with all manias, rival factions soon developed. Quarrels erupted throughout Paris over the merits of Mozart's works. Counted among Mozart's Parisian enthusiasts were the composer and violinist Michael Woldemar as well as Méhul.<sup>3</sup> Méhul considered Mozart as "one of the greatest musical geniuses of all time."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Performance possibilities were severely curtailed with the demise of the *Concerts spirituels* in 1790.

<sup>2</sup>Between 1801 and 1809, *Les Mystères d'Isis* received sixty-eight performances, the most of any work staged at the Opéra during that first decade of the nineteenth-century. Barbier, 88.

<sup>3</sup>Jean Mongrédien, *La Musique en France: des Lumières au Romantisme 1789-1830* (Paris: Flammarion, 1986), 325.

<sup>4</sup>*Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, 17 March 1802; quoted in Mongrédien 325.

Leading the opposition—the Mozartphobes—was Geoffroy, whose protests were found in his feuilletons for the *Journal des Débats* or the *Journal de l'Empire*. Geoffroy complained that,

There is too much music in *Don Juan*. . . listeners are crushed, so to speak, under the weight of the harmony. . . We have too much taste to tolerate this complexity of sections. We enjoy what is natural, simple and touching. . .<sup>5</sup>

He denigrated the enthusiasts as a congregation of zealots:

When a new work or a revival of Mozart's is announced, the masters of music spread throughout this immense capital and almost all those affiliated with the Germanic sect serenade the good families of Paris with hymns in honour of Mozart and their religious zeal does not stop unless they have persuaded husband, wife, daughter to attend the new masterpiece of the god of music.<sup>6</sup>

Geoffroy and others of his ilk were lashing out against what they perceived to be the dominance of harmony over melody and of instruments over voice. Germany was seen as the country of harmony, while France that of melody. Geoffroy viewed Mozart as a German harmonist: "The German composer has thought solely of making harmony, arias, ensembles, to nourish a large orchestra."<sup>7</sup> It was the harmony of instruments that threatened the dominance of the voice as found in opera. "The Germanic crashing worked its way into Italian orchestras with

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<sup>5</sup>"Il y a trop de musique dans *Don Juan*. . . les auditeurs se trouvent pour ainsi dire écrasé sous le poids de l'harmonie. . . Nous avons trop de goût pour supporter cette complication de parties; nous aimons ce qui est naturel, simple et touchant. . ." *Journal de l'Empire*, 19 and 20 October 1805; quoted in Mongrédien, 326.

<sup>6</sup>"Qu'on annonce une nouveauté ou une reprise de Mozart, les maîtres de musique répandus dans cette immense capitale et presque tous les affiliés à la secte germanique font retenir les bonnes maisons de Paris de cantiques en l'honneur de Mozart et leur zèle religieux ne s'arrête pas qu'ils n'aient persuadé au mari, à la femme, à la demoiselle d'aller voir le chef-d'oeuvre nouveau du Dieu de la musique." *Journal de l'Empire*, 24 March 1820; quoted in Mongrédien, 326.

<sup>7</sup>"Le compositeur allemand a songé uniquement à faire de l'harmonie, des airs, des morceaux d'ensemble, à nourrir un orchestre nombreux." *Journal de l'Empire*, 27 January 1808; quoted in Mongrédien, 330.

its trombones, trumpets, drums and tamtam."<sup>8</sup> Geoffroy must have agreed wholeheartedly with this statement, for he claimed that, "the progress of instruments is disastrous to melody. Our orchestras are killing our operas."<sup>9</sup> Mozart was considered as the prime corrupting influence on French musical mores:

If he had been born with the true spirit of his art, he would have opposed this humiliating and destructive revolution which could only favour mediocrity by corrupting the taste of listeners through seductive and dangerous novelties. He preferred to profit himself from the revolution and establish his glory on the corruption of the century."<sup>10</sup>

### **Mozartmania in the "Chronique musicale"**

However, by 1820, one could find the following words in the *Journal des Débats*: "Handel and Pergolesi have already gloried for a century. Mozart is eternal."<sup>11</sup> These words, written by Castil-Blaze, turned every word by Geoffroy about Mozart on its ear and ushered in a new era for Mozart in the *Journal des Débats*. Truly, Castil-Blaze venerated no other musician or composer as he did Mozart. He considered Mozart's works so precious that he dubbed them the "Eldorado of music."<sup>12</sup> It was demonstrated in Chapter Two that Castil-Blaze treated Mozart as someone exceptional, and not just as some "timid tunesmith." Mozart's music was said to be

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<sup>8</sup>"Le fracas germanique s'est introduit avec ses trombones, ses trompettes, ses tambours et le tam-tam dans les orchestres d'Italie." *La Clef du cabinet des Souverains*, 19 November 1801; quoted in Mongrédien, 330.

<sup>9</sup>Mongrédien, 329.

<sup>10</sup>"... s'il était né avec le véritable esprit de son art, il se fût opposé à cette révolution humiliante et destructive qui ne pouvait être favorable qu'à la médiocrité en corrompant le goût des auditeurs par des nouveautés séduisantes et dangereuses; il aima mieux profiter lui-même de la révolution et fonder sa gloire sur la corruption du siècle." *Journal de l'Empire*, 6 February 1809; quoted in Mongrédien, 330.

<sup>11</sup>"Handel et Pergolèse comptent déjà un siècle de gloire; celle de Mozart ne finira jamais." *Journal des Débats*, 30 December 1820.

<sup>12</sup>*Journal des Débats*, 10 December 1821.

"indescribable" and "ravishing." Castil-Blaze considered Mozart to be in a class by himself—comparison to Haydn was inadequate. Mozart's work was more than the culmination and crowning achievement of Europe's cultural history: it transcended it. In his many references to Mozart there was hardly a negative word about him. The worst comment Castil-Blaze levelled against Mozart was that he was guilty in his operas of "the clumsiness of not including a single weak piece which would allow the awestruck listener a necessary break."<sup>13</sup>

Let us now examine what Castil-Blaze found so wonderful in Mozart's operas. He enjoyed *Don Juan* for its variety of emotions:

From the accents of the liveliest joy to the roars of despair, from the naive villagers' song to the noble songs of the Commendatore's daughter, all of the intermediary sentiments are expressed, all of the nuances marked with perfect truthfulness.<sup>14</sup>

Yet, to achieve this "perfect truthfulness," Castil-Blaze claimed that Mozart's harmony did not dominate melody, but formed an undergirding structure for it: "When Mozart has a motif, he works on it as a harmonist indepth. Eight measures, sixteen at the most, are all that he requires to create a beautiful aria."<sup>15</sup> Further, Castil-Blaze's perception was that Mozart used instruments not to dominate voices, but to support them and mirror the prevailing sentiments in sound, as in the finale to Act Two of *Figaro*:

In the duet which begins this finale, the voice alone dominates. The orchestra has only one salient virtuoso passage: the one where the clarinets and the bassoons express through undulations

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<sup>13</sup>" . . . la maladresse de n'y mettre aucun morceau foible qui vînt ménager un repos nécessaire à l'auditeur émerveillé." *Journal des Débats*, 10 December 1821.

<sup>14</sup>"Depuis les accens de la joie la plus vive jusqu'aux rugissemens du désespoir, depuis la chanson naïve du villageois jusqu'aux nobles chants de la fille du commandeur, tous les sentimens intermédiaires sont exprimés, toutes les nuances marquées avec une vérité parfaite." *Journal des Débats*, 10 December 1821.

<sup>15</sup>"Lorsque Mozart possède un motif, il le travaille en harmoniste profond; huit mesures, seize au plus, lui suffisent pour faire un grand et bel air." *Journal des Débats*, 18 June 1821.

of their scales in thirds, the tortures of Almaviva given over to her jealous fury.<sup>16</sup>

Harmony, melody, instruments and voices blended to form a perfect union to express feelings precisely:

The wedding march is well depicted and presents a faithful imitation of concerts by strolling village fiddlers. . . Those second violins, those violas that play their low part note by note, with the melody, as if a single spring would set so many machines in motion, those great chords in G (in G, this detail is not superfluous) similar to sabre strokes, those clarinets, those flutes which, not knowing what to do, improvise haphazardly long, sustained notes, trills over the dominant. All this is of a striking realism.<sup>17</sup>

Castil-Blaze considered Mozart's orchestration to be beyond reproach. Appraising *Don Juan* as "the masterpiece of masterpieces,"<sup>18</sup> he wrote that, "As. . . for the orchestral details, I will cite the entire opera. I defy the harshest censor to find Mozart lacking in this respect."<sup>19</sup>

In conclusion then, Castil-Blaze's writings on Mozart completely repudiated those of his predecessor, Geoffroy. He felt that the composer's poor reception in France was undoubtedly due to *littérateurs* such as Geoffroy, who influenced the public with the disparaging remark that

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<sup>16</sup>"Dans le duo qui sert de début à ce finale, la voix seule domine, l'orchestre n'a qu'un seul trait remarquable, c'est celui où les clarinettes et les bassons expriment, par les ondulations de leurs gammes en tierces, les tortures d'Almaviva livré à la fureur jalouse." *Journal des Débats*, 18 September 1826. The duet is sung by the Count and Countess. The clarinets's and bassoons's scales appear four times between bars 83 and 105.

<sup>17</sup>"La marche de la noce est bien caractérisée, et présente une fidèle imitation des concerts ambulans des ménétriers de village. . . Ces seconds violons, ces violes qui jouent bas leur partie note contre note, avec le chant, comme si un même ressort faisoit agir autant de machines, ces grands accords en *sol* (en *sol* l'observation n'est point inutile), pareils à des coups de sabre, ces clarinettes, ces flûtes qui, ne sachant que faire, improvisent à tout hasard des tenues, des trilles sur la dominante; tout cela est d'une vérité frappante." *Journal des Débats*, 18 September 1826.

<sup>18</sup>. . . [du] chef-d'oeuvre des chefs-d'oeuvre. . ." *Journal des Débats*, 14 March 1821.

<sup>19</sup>"Quant. . . aux détails d'orchestre, je citerai tout l'opéra; je défie le censeur le plus sévère de trouver Mozart en défaut." *Journal des Débats*, 14 March 1821.



Mozart was "a *fabricator of shivarees*."<sup>20</sup> The purpose of Castil-Blaze's evocative criticism of Mozart was to counter Geoffroy's negative criticism and to convince readers of Mozart's greatness. Even so, Castil-Blaze did not credit the present warmhearted reception of Mozart in France to his feuilletons, but to the experience of listening to the composer's works over a period of time.<sup>21</sup>

By presenting examples of Mozart's perfection in melody, harmony, orchestration, and dramatic action, Castil-Blaze attempted to persuade the reader of that: "you will grant me, I believe, that concerning art, it is impossible to do better. This is therefore scholarly music."<sup>22</sup> Castil-Blaze could offer no higher praise than this. Yet, this praise was intended to establish Mozart's works as the *sine qua non* in the reader's inter-compositional grid, a conscious, mental benchmark against which other operas were to be measured.

It has been shown that Castil-Blaze was an ardent and enthusiastic admirer of Mozart's operas. This admiration knew no bounds, for Castil-Blaze also championed the cause of arrangements and pasticcios of Mozart's music in France. He felt that Mozart's operas in their original state could not be successful in France, especially in the provinces, because they were too demanding on the theatres' resources and audiences. Castil-Blaze reckoned that they would have to be tailored to the needs of performer and audience alike. It was in this way that he tried to rationalize that the only versions capable of fulfilling these needs were by Castil-Blaze and not

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<sup>20</sup>" . . . un *faiseur de charivaris*." *Journal des Débats*, 14 March 1821.

<sup>21</sup>"Ten years of experience have refined our taste, and we alone can congratulate ourselves on this metamorphosis. Mozart is still the same, but our ears are more sensitive and practiced. With delight they savour a graceful and ingenuous, vehement and poignant melody united with harmonious chords." "Dix ans d'expérience ont épuré le goût, et nous devons seuls nous féliciter de la métamorphose. Mozart est toujours le même, mais notre oreille est plus sensible et plus exercée; elle peut savourer avec délices une mélodie gracieuse et spirituelle, véhémement et pathétique, jointe à d'harmonieux accords." *Journal des Débats*, 14 March 1821.

<sup>22</sup>"On m'accordera, je pense, que, sous le rapport de l'art, il est impossible de faire mieux: c'est donc de la musique savante." *Journal des Débats*, 14 March 1821.

Mozart. One cannot come away without feeling that these reasons were motivated by the self-indulgence and rapaciousness of the nineteenth-century opera arranger.

### Gluck: A Critical View and the Question of Transposition

Joseph-Marc Bailbé's statement that "before leaving the *Journal des Débats* in 1832, Castil-Blaze had. . . spoken highly of Gluck. . .,"<sup>23</sup> is a half-truth, most likely resulting from a superficial reading of one or at the most two of Castil-Blaze's feuilletons. Perhaps Bailbé came across the following quote from an 1826 feuilleton and accepted it at face value:

I have always admired Gluck's admirable and sublime compositions and it's precisely for this reason that I would not want the reputation of a great man compromised by currently exposing some works on the stage which are no longer capable of making a favourable impression there.<sup>24</sup>

This quotation lends itself to an examination on two points: Castil-Blaze's "admiration" for Gluck's works and Castil-Blaze's solution for the enhancement of Gluck's music. As will presently be proven, Castil-Blaze's praise of Gluck was hardly unequivocal. It was, in fact, quite reserved, for all too often it seemed as though Castil-Blaze had little respect for Gluck's works.

*Armide*. . . produced its usual effect: twenty minutes of interest and two and a half hours of boredom. The days follow each other monotonously: Wednesday it's *Armide*; Thursday it's *Semiramide*. No one has pity on the poor journalist who has to withstand two similar attacks in quick succession.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>"Avant de quitter en 1832 *Le Journal des Débats*, Castil-Blaze avait . . . fait l'éloge de Gluck. . ."  
Joseph-Marc Bailbé, "La Critique Musicale au «Journal des Débats»" in *La Musique en France à l'époque romantique (1830-1870)* (Paris: Flammarion, 1991), 278.

<sup>24</sup>"J'ai toujours admiré les compositions admirables et sublimes de Gluck, et c'est justement par cette raison que je ne voudrais pas que l'on compromit la réputation d'un grand homme en exposant maintenant sur la scène des ouvrages qui ne peuvent plus y paroître avec avantage." *Journal des Débats*, 10 December 1825.

<sup>25</sup>"*Armide*. . . a produit son effet ordinaire, celui d'intéresser pendant vingt minutes, et d'ennuyer pendant deux heures et demie. Les jours se suivent et se ressemblent: mercredi, *Armide* et jeudi, *Semiramide* et l'on ne plaint pas le pauvre journaliste obligé de soutenir coup sur coup deux assauts de

Castil-Blaze went on to "expose" Gluck's major fault: the use of measured recitative.

In the past, it was held that theatrical music had to be a faithful imitation of declamation. Gluck composed his operas based on this faulty principle. This error is now recognized. One wants, quite rightly, music to produce its effects by its own means without recourse to an art completely foreign to it. . . Measured recitative is no longer in use. . .<sup>26</sup>

The final verdict was never in doubt: "The performance of *Armide* totally bored the very large audience that this solemn revival had assembled."<sup>27</sup>

However, the worst was yet to come. Castil-Blaze devoted two more feuilletons to *Armide* in 1826: the first disapproved of Quinault's libretto; and the second examined Gluck's score. Castil-Blaze felt that Quinault's libretto, on its own without music, was "the masterpiece of our Opera."<sup>28</sup>

Castil-Blaze's examination of Gluck's music to *Armide* appeared six months later. Many of his comments were unfavourable towards Gluck's music.

The overture to *Armide* is nothing special . . . The vocal parts are poorly arranged. . . Renaud's entry, his dialogue with Artemidore, and the aria that ends this scene are medieval and tortured and of poor workmanship. The melody, if there is one, is trivial and of an outdated style. . . I am surprised that a man like Gluck, a man who time and again has given us proof of a superior talent, wrote sometimes well and sometimes poorly. . .

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ce genre!" *Journal des Débats*, 10 December 1825.

<sup>26</sup>"Autrefois on croyait que la musique de théâtre devoit être une imitation fidèle de la déclamation, c'est d'après ce faux principe que Gluck a composé ses opéras. Cette erreur est maintenant reconnue: on veut, avec raison, que la musique produise ses effets par ses propres moyens, sans avoir recours à un art qui lui est tout à fait étranger. . . Le récitatif mesuré n'est plus en usage. . ." *Journal des Débats*, 10 December 1825.

<sup>27</sup>"La représentation d'*Armide* a complètement ennuyé le très nombreux auditoire que cette reprise solennelle avoit assemblé." *Journal des Débats*, 10 December 1825.

<sup>28</sup>" . . . le chef-d'oeuvre de notre Opéra. . ." *Journal des Débats*, 20 February 1826.

I will therefore end here the examination of the music of this opera which has just taken its place in the tomb of *Alceste*.<sup>29</sup>

If works such as *Armide* tarnished Gluck's reputation, how could they be presented without compromising their creator? Castil-Blaze's practical solution for Gluck's operas to appear on stage in their best light was simple: "Transpose an opera from one end to the other. Rejuvenate it with as much taste as skill. That is what had to be done."<sup>30</sup> That Castil-Blaze was a staunch advocate of transposing Gluck's operas into a lower key was apparent from his first feuilleton: "If the Italians owned Gluck's repertoire, his scores would have been transposed from one end to the other twenty years ago."<sup>31</sup> Yet there was a contradiction between what Castil-Blaze wrote and what he actually did. In his feuilletons he called for the transposition of the *entire* opera, and chastised random transposition. Yet, in his *Gluck des concerts*—an album of Gluck's vocal music intended for the dilettante in the salon—Castil-Blaze randomly transposed some numbers while leaving others in their original keys! One could either say that Castil-Blaze maintained a double aesthetic—one for the professional and one for the lay—or that he simply sold-out his principles. In order for his collection to sell he had to make his product fit the market. If this meant transposing only a portion of the pieces, so be it.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>"L'ouverture d'*Armide* n'a rien de remarquable. . . Les voix sont mal disposées. . . L'entrée de Renaud, son dialogue avec Artémidore, l'air qui termine cette scène, sont d'une facture pauvre, gothique et tourmentée; la mélodie, quand il y en a, est triviale et d'un goût suranné. . . Je suis surpris qu'un homme tel que Gluck, un homme qui a fait si souvent preuve d'un talent supérieur, écrive tantôt bien, tantôt mal. . . Je terminerai donc ici l'examen de la musique de cet opéra qui vient de prendre sa place dans le tombeau d'*Alceste*." *Journal des Débats*, 19 August 1826.

<sup>30</sup>"Transposer un opéra d'un bout à l'autre, le rajeunir avec autant de goût que d'adresse, voilà ce qu'il falloit faire." *Journal des Débats*, 13 May 1825.

<sup>31</sup>"Si les Italiens possédoient le repétoire de Gluck, il y a vingt ans que ses partitions seroient transposées d'un bout à l'autre." *Journal des Débats*, 7 December 1820.

<sup>32</sup>In fact, to further promote his product he ended the feuilleton with these words: "A large number [of pieces] will be found in the collection. They are all excellent and easily performed." "On en trouvera un grand nombre dans ce recueil; ils sont tous excellens et d'une exécution facile." *Journal des Débats*, 2 May 1822.

In conclusion, we have seen that Castil-Blaze's view of Gluck was not as totally favorable as one has been led to believe. His viewpoints were formed in consultation with the score, as well as the writings of previous feuilletonists.<sup>33</sup> It is in the Gluck feuilletons that Castil-Blaze strongly advocates the use of downward transposition to rejuvenate the aging works of this master. His recommendation to transpose an entire opera downward, which he bolstered with rather flimsy reasons, has not survived into the final years of the twentieth century. Castil-Blaze himself did not even follow this practice. Surely Castil-Blaze knew that a downward transposition would not improve upon Gluck's "trivial and outdated melodies." Nevertheless, his feuilletons are an invaluable source about some of the performance practices of the period. Such factual information existed side by side with moments of exaggeration, as in the description of instruments used:

Mr. Gebäuer was armed with a large cathedral bassoon. . . Before the music-lovers' eyes, Messrs. Mengal and Meifred produced horns in low A fifteen ells long. The trombones gave a perfect impression of the trumpets at the Last Judgement, and it is asserted that these are the very ones that were formerly used by the ancestors of Pantagruel.<sup>34</sup>

One quickly notes the influence that such passages had on the writings of Berlioz, especially in *Evenings in the Orchestra*.

Castil-Blaze's feuilletons about Gluck are interesting, stimulating, provocative and entertaining—genuine goals of the feuilleton. A truly successful reading of them would require

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<sup>33</sup>In his 19 August 1826 feuilleton, Castil-Blaze gave the page number in the score where some "barbaric" parallel fifths could be found and quoted from a 1779 pamphlet on Gluck's music. In 1826, he stated that he had known Gluck's score to *Armide* off by heart for twenty years. *Journal des Débats*, 20 February 1826.

<sup>34</sup>"M. Gebäuer étoit armé d'un gros basson de cathédrale. . . MM. Mengal et Meifred étaloient aux yeux des amateurs surpris des cors en *la bas* longs de quinze aunes. Les trombones donnoient une idée parfaite des trompettes du jugement dernier; et l'on assure que ce sont les mêmes qui servoient jadis aux aïeux de Pantagruel." *Journal des Débats*, 13 May 1825.

a knowledge of Gluck's works. Berlioz, who had just such a knowledge, disagreed with Castil-Blaze's assertions and ended up with an unsuccessful reading.<sup>35</sup>

### Méhul: The Master of Our School

In the autumn of 1828, Castil-Blaze decided to devote two feuilletons to the works of Étienne Nicolas Méhul (1763-1817).<sup>36</sup> Not long into the opening paragraph of the first instalment Castil-Blaze declared that

Méhul is the real leader of our School. . . Méhul distanced himself [from Grétry] by the style of his dramatic compositions and the new ways in which he enriched our lyric stage.<sup>37</sup>

Castil-Blaze also provided a window onto Méhul's character.

. . . a happy mixture of finesse and good-naturedness, grace and simplicity, gravity and liveliness. . . Nevertheless he was not happy, always concerned about his renown, his success, the future fate of his works. He thought himself surrounded by enemies conspired against his peace of mind and cursed the day on which he had taken up a dramatic career.<sup>38</sup>

The second instalment appeared one month later. The reader was greeted with the following description of Méhul: "The greatest musician of our School. . ."<sup>39</sup> Yet this instalment was less a review of Méhul's life and works than it was an attack on vaudeville and a justification

<sup>35</sup>See Chapter 3 "Hector Berlioz" for further information.

<sup>36</sup>Castil-Blaze not only incorrectly named him Étienne-Henri but also listed his year of birth as 1764. *Journal des Débats*, 3 September 1828.

<sup>37</sup>"Méhul est le chef réel de notre Ecole. . . Méhul s'en est éloigné par le style de ses compositions dramatiques, et les moyens nouveaux dont il a enrichi notre scène lyrique." *Journal des Débats*, 3 September 1828.

<sup>38</sup>". . . mélange heureux de finesse et de bonhomie, de grâce et de simplicité, de sérieux et d'enjouement. . . Néanmoins il n'était pas heureux; toujours inquiet sur sa renommée, sur ses succès, sur le sort de ses ouvrages dans la postérité, il se croyait environné d'ennemis conjurés contre son repos, et maudissait le jour où il avait embrassé la carrière dramatique." *Journal des Débats*, 3 September 1828.

<sup>39</sup>"Le plus grand musicien de notre école. . ." *Journal des Débats*, 2 November 1828.

of Castil-Blaze's operatic verse. These two topics were approached by a common feature of the feuilleton—lengthy digressions. While French composers such as Méhul had to surmount numerous difficulties in order to have their works performed—not the least of which was a virtually insatiable French appetite for Italian works—the vaudeville flourished. Castil-Blaze sarcastically wrote:

. . . I express my sincerest wishes for the prosperity of Vaudeville. I want it to continue to enrich its entrepreneurs and our retired ministers. . . to draw the *consequent* monthly dividends. But I ask the same protection or the same financial disinterest, and this latter would be infinitely preferable, be granted to poor denigrated music. . .<sup>40</sup>

Clearly, Castil-Blaze felt that Méhul was the finest French composer up until that day. Though Castil-Blaze had an aversion to the counterpoint contained in Méhul's works,<sup>41</sup> he nevertheless deemed them worth performing. While later writings, such as *Académie impériale de musique* made reference to the personal contact between the youthful Blaze and Méhul in 1800, neither this feuilleton nor its second instalment contained any mention of this. In fact, at the end of the first instalment Castil-Blaze stated that most of the information for his article was taken from Fétis's *La Galerie des musiciens célèbres*.

### **Boïeldieu: A Man's Honour**

In spite of the success of operas such as *Jean de Paris*, *Ma Tante Aurore* and others, the name François Adrien Boïeldieu (1775-1834) rarely figured in Castil-Blaze's early feuilletons.

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<sup>40</sup>" . . . je forme les voeux les plus sincères pour la prospérité du Vaudeville, je desire qu'il continue à enrichir ses entrepreneurs, et que nos ministres retraités . . . touchent chaque mois des dividendes *conséquens*. Mais je demande que la même protection ou la même indifférence, et cette dernière vaudrait infiniment mieux, soit accordée à cette pauvre musique rebutée. . ." *Journal des Débats*, 2 November 1828.

<sup>41</sup>*Journal des Débats*, 3 September 1828.

However, on 25 December 1824, Castil-Blaze threw down the gauntlet in the midst of a feuilleton on Berton's *Les Deux Mousquetaires*:

M<sup>me</sup> Casimir sang a grand aria shaped in the same style as that of M<sup>me</sup> Lemmonier in *Voitures versées*. I will be careful not to shout plagiarism. Perhaps the last to arrive is the first inventor.<sup>42</sup>

Boïeldieu took swift action: his letter to the editor appeared in Castil-Blaze's feuilleton three days later. Addressed to Mr. X.X.X., Boïeldieu wrote:

My only response is that this opera [*Voitures versées*] was presented sixteen to eighteen years ago in St. Petersburg (all the Russians in Paris can attest to this), and that this air was sung there by M<sup>me</sup> Phillis Andrieu for whom it had been composed.<sup>43</sup>

It seemed to work. For the time being Castil-Blaze held off from any further attacks on Boïeldieu.

In 1825, Boïeldieu's *La Dame blanche* opened in Paris. It was an instant success. However, music critics—though not Castil-Blaze—soon accused Boïeldieu of plagiarising Meyerbeer. As the rumours swirled about him, he sought out an ally. It was a man with an extensive knowledge of opera, a man who used Meyerbeer's music for his own pasticcio *La Fausse Agnès*, a man who with a few strokes of the pen in the *Journal des Débats* could clear his name and save his honour. That man was Castil-Blaze. In a letter to Castil-Blaze, Boïeldieu pleaded:

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<sup>42</sup>"M<sup>me</sup> Casimir a très bien dit un grand air coupé, de la même manière que celui de M<sup>me</sup> Lemmonier dans *les Voitures Versées*. Je me garderai bien de crier au plagiat, peut-être le dernier venu est-il le premier inventeur." *Journal des Débats*, 25 December 1824.

<sup>43</sup>"Pour toute réponse, je dirai que cet opéra a été représenté il y a 16 à 18 ans à Saint-Pétersbourg (tous les Russes qui sont à Paris peuvent l'attester), et que cet air y a été chanté par M<sup>me</sup> Phillis Andrieu pour laquelle il a été composé." *Journal des Débats*, 28 December 1824.



Dear Mr. Castil Blaze,

although I do not have a great deal about which to flatter myself with regard to your treatment of me, since you have not found my *Dame Blanche* worthy of an article which you had promised, I hope however that you will not refuse me the small explanation to which I have a right since they are attacking me from all sides as having stolen the theme from the aria "Ah quel plaisir d'être soldat" in the *Dame blanche*, some say from Meyerbeer, others from Gullielmi. I do not know your *Fausse Agnès*, in the form in which it is being played at the Odéon. I have no knowledge of the overture in which this theme occurs. It's to you that I now address myself for a favour. . . you know that the aria in *La Dame blanche* had originally been for the prologue to the overture with those words "La belle chasse qu'un tournois."

If this is so, the suspicion of plagiarism must fall on me, but as I don't know the first note of the overture in question and I swear to it on my honour. . . Other people assure me that this motif does not exist at all in Meyerbeer's overture, and that it has been placed there with ill will in order to give me a reputation of a plagiarist [sic] . . .

. . . You will perhaps be astonished that I [sic] I attach so much importance to such nonsense but since some newspapers are attacking me I wish to defend myself. . . Can you send me in a few lines the phrase from the overture in question? . . . Can you also tell me when this overture was composed? . . .

Come on, dear Castil-Blaze, prove to me by sending me a couple of lines this time, which you have never before deigned to do, that you do not want to break the good fellowship that should always exist between people who owe each other mutual esteem.

In spite of everything, your truly devoted servant

Boïeldieu<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>Mon cher Monsieur Castil Blaze

quoique je n'aie pas beaucoup à me louer de vos procédés à mon égard puisque vous n'avez pas trouvé ma dame blanche digne d'un article que vous m'aviez promis, j'espère cependant que vous ne me refuserez pas la petite explication à laquelle j'ai droit puisque l'on m'attaque de tous côtés comme ayant volé le motif de l'air ah' quel plaisir d'être soldat dans la dame blanche, l'un dit à Mayer Ber [sic], l'autre dit à Gullielmi [sic]. Je ne connais point votre fausse agnès telle qu'on le joue à l'Odéon. je n'ai nulle connaissance de l'ouverture où se trouve ce motif. c'est à vous que je m'adresse pour faveur. . . vous savez que l'air de la dame blanche a été primitivement fait pour le prologue d'ouverture avec ces paroles la belle chasse qu'un tournois.

It is not known if Castil-Blaze responded to Boïeldieu's plea by letter. However, in August of 1827, Boïeldieu's pleas were answered, for Castil-Blaze printed the long awaited feuilleton on *La Dame blanche*:

In *La Dame blanche*, there is not a single piece which reaches the level of the quartet and the first duet of *Ma Tante Aurore*, of the finale of *Jean de Paris*, and several other arias from this same opera. The whole music of *La Dame blanche* is pleasant. Its style is elegant, flowery. . . but it is perhaps too mannered and one would like to find more vigour and verve in the pieces which should contrast with the graceful effects that abound in his composition. . . The aria "Ah! quel plaisir d'être soldat!" begins with a motif that moves with great directness, and whose harmonic work is interesting, and recalls a rondo from *Joconde*.<sup>45</sup>

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S'il en est ainsi, le soupçon de plagiat doit tomber sur moi, mais comme je ne connais pas la première note de l'ouverture dont il s'agit et cela je le jure sur mon honneur. . . d'autres personnes m'assurent que ce motif n'existe point dans l'ouverture de Mayer Ber [sic] et qu'il a été placé avec malignité pour me donner la reputation de plagiaire [sic]. . .

. . . Vous serez peut être étonné que je j'attache autant d'importance à une pareille niaiserie, mais puisque quelques journaux m'attaquent je veux me défendre. . . pouvez-vous m'envoyer sur 2 lignes la phrase de l'ouverture dont il s'agit. . . pouvez-vous aussi me dire à quelle époque a été faite cette ouverture? . . .

Allons mon cher Castil Blaze prouvez moi en me répondant un mot cette fois, ce que vous n'avez jamais daigné faire, que vous ne voulez rompre la bonne harmonie qui doit toujours exister entre gens qui ont droit à une estime reciproque

croyez-moi malgré tout votre bien dévoué  
serviteur

Boïeldieu

Letter from F.-A. Boïeldieu to Castil-Blaze, Paris, 1825. Département de la musique, Bibliothèque nationale, Paris, France.

<sup>45</sup>"On ne remarque, dans *la Dame blanche*, aucun morceau qui soit à la hauteur du quatuor et du premier duo de *Ma Tante Aurore*, du finale de *Jean de Paris*, et de plusieurs airs du même opéra. L'ensemble de la musique de *la Dame blanche* plaît; le style en est élégant, fleuri. . . mais il est peut-être trop recherché, et l'on voudrait trouver plus de vigueur et de verve dans les morceaux qui doivent contraster avec les effets gracieux qui abondent dans cette composition. . . L'air: *Ah! quel plaisir d'être soldat!* débute par un motif qui marche avec franchise, et dont le travail harmonique est intéressant; ce motif n'est pourtant pas très original, et rappelle un rondeau de *Joconde*." *Journal des Débats*, 8 August 1827.

Boïeldieu must have been disappointed with Castil-Blaze's view, as the air in question now evidently resembled a number from an opera by his former rival, Nicolo Isouard (1775-1818). Castil-Blaze, however, was not yet through. Boïeldieu must have been horrified when he read that,

It has been said that the finale of *La Dame blanche* resembled that of the *Pie voleuse*. . . They are two tableaux in the same style and have no point of contact between them. The finale of *Pie voleuse* is superior to that of *La Dame blanche* because it's more varied. . . the melody, which alone can claim to interest us keenly, asserts itself there more often than the dramatic flow. Moreover there is more force in the situation; the music changes its mood as a new incident arises or as a new character is introduced. . .<sup>46</sup>

Yet, in the final analysis, Castil-Blaze's opinion of the work was quite favourable:

*La Dame blanche* is a very remarkable work. . . *La Dame blanche* has everywhere had the most brilliant of successes, and yet it is not the author's masterpiece.<sup>47</sup>

A combination of the authority with which Castil-Blaze wrote and the authority of the printed word—supposed on the part of the reader—placed Castil-Blaze in an ideal position to be judge, prosecuting and defence attorney, and jury when questions of plagiarism arose. Boïeldieu attempted to use Castil-Blaze's authority to clear his name. In this case, however, it was of no avail. Castil-Blaze's verdict: guilty.

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<sup>46</sup>"On a dit que le finale de *la Dame blanche* ressembloit à celui de *la Pie voleuse*. . . Ce sont deux tableaux du même genre, et qui n'ont entre eux aucun point de contact. Le finale de *la Pie voleuse* est supérieur à celui de *la Dame blanche* parce qu'il est varié. . . la mélodie, qui seule a le droit de nous intéresser vivement, s'y montre plus souvent que le débit dramatique. Il y a d'ailleurs plus de force dans la situation; la musique change de face à mesure qu'un nouvel incident se présente, ou qu'un nouveau personnage est introduit. . ." *Journal des Débats*, 8 August 1827.

<sup>47</sup>"*La Dame blanche* est un ouvrage très remarquable. . . *La Dame blanche* a eu un succès des plus brillants partout, et pourtant ce n'est pas le chef-d'oeuvre de son auteur." *Journal des Débats*, 8 August 1827.

## GRAND OPERA

Let us now turn our attention to Grand Opera. During the last four years of his tenure at the *Journal des Débats*, Castil-Blaze had occasion to review three of the five operas that have since come to be viewed as setting the standard for this genre: Auber's *La Muette de Portici*, Rossini's *Guillaume Tell* and Meyerbeer's *Robert le diable*.<sup>48</sup> In 1831, Castil-Blaze defined *grand opéra* in a traditional manner:

a play that is sung from beginning to end, where recitative takes the place of the spoken dialogue used at the Ventadour or the German Theatre. This is the sole condition imposed on authors who work for the Royal Academy of Music. They must make their actors sing from start to finish of the drama.<sup>49</sup>

It is interesting to note that he did not define it on the basis of the seriousness of its subject or its grandiose proportions. Castil-Blaze soon discovered that one feuilleton was not sufficient for an analysis of one of these operas. The following is an examination of Castil-Blaze's feuilleton instalments on Grand Operas.

### The Feuilletons about *La Muette de Portici*

*La Muette de Portici* opened at the Opéra on 29 February 1828. The first of Castil-Blaze's four feuilletons on this opera appeared several days later. He first took issue with the title of this opera, preferring that it be named after its principle character, *Masaniello*. But then, any re-titling would have been awkward since the Opéra-Comique had recently presented an opera

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<sup>48</sup>The two remaining operas in this list, Meyerbeer's *Les Huguenots* and Halévy's *La Juive*, were performed after 1832. *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 1980 ed., s.v. "Opera III, 3: France - grand opera," Dennis Libby.

<sup>49</sup>"...une pièce que l'on chante d'un bout à l'autre, où le récitatif tient la place du dialogue parlé, employé au théâtre Ventadour, au Théâtre Allemand. Telle est l'unique condition imposée aux auteurs qui travaillent pour l'Académie royale de Musique; ils doivent faire chanter leurs acteurs depuis le commencement jusqu'à la fin du drame." *Journal des Débats*, 22 June 1831.

so named.<sup>50</sup> Noting such separate versions allowed Castil-Blaze to bring *Guillaume Tell* into this feuilleton: "Four *Guillaume Tells* will arrive before the opera for which Rossini is writing music."<sup>51</sup>

Opening the second feuilleton without a "grabber," Castil-Blaze plunged into it in a manner similar to Auber's overture, dispensing with an introduction. "The overture begins with boisterous and harsh chords. . ."<sup>52</sup> The inclusion of dance in an opera disturbed Castil-Blaze, who set about to reproach the application of dance within this work.

Serious, fine or noble dance, whatever one wants to call it, is quite a boring thing. . .

In many villages, people dance in front of the church. . .  
But all the permissiveness of lyric drama cannot justify the madness of these ladies of the court, who on caprice, perform. . . pirouettes in the middle of a public square. . .<sup>53</sup>

The dramatic reason for the tarantella of Act Three in which the peasants danced in an attempt to entertain and distract the soldiers who sought the hidden Fenella was lost on Castil-Blaze.<sup>54</sup> At this point in time so adverse was Castil-Blaze to dance that neither this dance nor the bolero in Act One received any mention in the plot analysis contained in the first feuilleton.

He also found himself at odds with Fenella's muteness:

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<sup>50</sup>Castil-Blaze's feuilleton on Carafa's opera *Mazaniello* appeared on 30 December 1827.

<sup>51</sup>"Quatre *Guillaume Tell* arriveront avant l'opéra dont Rossini écrit la musique." *Journal des Débats*, 2 March 1828.

<sup>52</sup>"L'ouverture commence par des accords bruyans et durs. . ." *Journal des Débats*, 3 March 1828.

<sup>53</sup>"La danse sérieux, belle ou noble, peu importe le nom que l'on veut lui donner, est une chose fort ennuyeuse. . .

Dans beaucoup de villages, on danse devant l'église. . . Mais toutes ces licences du drame lyrique ne peuvent pas justifier la folie de ces dames de la cour à qui il prend la fantaisie de faire. . .des pirouettes au milieu d'une place publique. . ." *Journal des Débats*, 3 March 1828.

<sup>54</sup>Karin Pendle, "The Boulevard Theaters and Continuity in French opera of the 19th Century," in *Music in Paris in the Eighteen-Thirties* (New York: Pendragon Press, 1987), 513-515.

I have already spoken of the orchestral fragments that serve as interpreters of the mute girl's gestures. They are a very necessary part of the opera. . . treated with much spirit, talent and accuracy. Despite all that, I admit that I would like it better if Fenella spoke. . . If the knot of the play. . . depended on the incapacity of the mute girl to reveal an important secret. . . the mutism of this character would add to the interest. But, from the moment that there is no absolute necessity to seal the mouth of Fenella, her constant silence is harmful for the opera, which can only lean on the voice of a secondary role for the high melodies.<sup>55</sup>

But if Fenella had been made to speak and sing, the title of the opera could no longer refer to a mute girl. In such a scenario, Castil-Blaze would definitely advocate switching the title to *Masaniello!*

Castil-Blaze broke off his analysis of the second act at "Je vends des bouquets à la reine," in order to relate a conversation between himself and his neighbour at the Académie.<sup>56</sup> For the remainder of the feuilleton, Castil-Blaze described scenes chosen from the third to the fifth acts that struck his fancy. He ended with the announcement of a third article which would deal with his erstwhile promises: libretto and music; costumes; decorations; and production.

In conclusion, his instalments about this opera and its production contained quite favourable, well-written, and entertaining comments that demonstrated an adherence to his critical principles—especially with regard to dance—as expounded in *De l'Opéra en France*. Castil-Blaze also employed literary devices such as monologues and humourous anecdotes that sustained the reader's interest, drawing him or her into the work and through the instalment series. To the

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<sup>55</sup>"J'ai déjà parlé des fragmens de symphonie qui servent d'interprètes aux gestes de la Muette; c'est une partie très essentielle de l'opéra. . . traitée avec beaucoup d'esprit, de talent, de justesse. Malgré tout cela, j'avoue que j'aimerois mieux que Fenella parlât. . . Si le noeud de la pièce. . . dépendoit de l'impuissance où se trouveroit la Muette de révéler un secret important. . . le mutisme de ce personnage ajouteroit à l'intérêt. Mais, du moment où il n'y a pas une absolue nécessité de clore la bouche à Fenella, son silence constant est un dommage pour l'opéra, qui n'a pour appui que la voix d'un rôle secondaire pour les mélodies aiguës." *Journal des Débats*, 3 March 1828.

<sup>56</sup>It seems the gentleman mistook *bouquets* for *poulets* (chickens)!

reader who knows the identity of "X.X.X.," the self-promotional commentary is conspicuous. The instalments however demonstrated a looseness of form, due no doubt to the lack of a premeditated design. It would be in the feuilleton instalments for Rossini's *Guillaume Tell* and Meyerbeer's *Robert le diable* that form and content would join to create a brilliant whole.

### Rossini and the *Guillaume Tell* Feuilletons

Since any mention of Rossini in *De l'Opéra en France* was limited to *The Barber of Seville*, we may then conclude that up until 1820 Castil-Blaze was relatively unfamiliar with much of his music. He thought highly of this particular work though, preparing a French translation while still in Avignon. However, once in Paris the unfamiliarity with Rossini soon vanished. Rossini's operas had been performed there since 1817, and even more so after 1819. As the number of performances escalated, the long simmering embers left over from the battles over French or Italian opera were once again fanned into a raging battle of words by a musical Paris which had divided itself into two camps. The anti-Rossini faction proclaimed,

The end of the musical world is near. The antichrist has already appeared. He triumphs. The altars of Genius are desecrated. . .<sup>57</sup>

The pro-Rossinists treated him as a demigod. From his very first music feuilleton for the *Journal des Débats*—*Torvaldo e Dorliska* was the first musical work that he reviewed—Castil-Blaze aligned himself with the pro-Rossini camp. So elated was Castil-Blaze at Rossini's arrival in Paris on 9 November 1823 that he devoted an entire feuilleton in his honour:

We have applauded the masterpieces of Rossini a thousand times. Their delicious melodies, the charm of a rich

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<sup>57</sup>"La fin du monde musical approche; l'antéchrist a déjà paru, il triomphe: les autels du Génie sont profanés. . ." *Guerre aux rossinistes! par un amateur du Morvan* (Paris: 1821), 3; quoted in Philip Gossett, "Music at the Théâtre-Italien," in *Music in Paris in the Eighteen-Thirties*, 330.

and varied harmony, their brilliant colour, their brilliant dramatic force. . . .

Everyone left very pleased to have renewed their acquaintance with Mr. Rossini. "We already knew him," they said. "He is witty, he is lovable just like his music."<sup>58</sup>

However, this is not to say that he treated Rossini uncritically over the next twelve years. In an early feuilleton, Castil-Blaze offered these words to his detractors both present and future:

They will not accuse me of having treated Rossini too considerately. I was indignant that this master had dared to put so many trivial things in a serious and tragic work. Not content with having delivered up so many mediocre, bad and detestable pages to the public's censure, I wanted to refute them completely. I tore them from the score in order to destroy them. The flame devoured them. No longer do they exist. What are we left with? Ten sublime and ravishing pieces. Does that suffice for a nation which sometimes proclaims the success of a play in three or five acts in which one comes across only one romance?<sup>59</sup>

When reviewing a Rossini opera, Castil-Blaze's principle was simple: exalt the best, condemn the rest. His critical reaction to *Torvaldo e Dorliska* was mixed—he enjoyed the music but abhorred the plot:

If one admires the *Barbier de Séville* one should not scorn *Torvaldo*, for most of the melodies and effects of the orchestra are the same in these two operas. . . but this new opera is the

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<sup>58</sup>"Nous avons applaudi mille fois les chefs-d'oeuvres de Rossini; leur délicieuse mélodie, le charme d'une harmonie riche et varié, leur brillant coloris, leur force dramatique. . .

Tout le monde s'est retiré très satisfait d'avoir renouvelé connoissance avec M. Rossini. Nous le connoissions déjà, disoit-on: il est spirituel, il est aimable comme sa musique." *Journal des Débats*, 22 November 1823.

<sup>59</sup>"On ne m'accusera pas d'avoir traité Rossini avec trop de ménagement. J'étois indigné que ce maître eût osé mettre tant de choses triviales dans un ouvrage sérieux et tragique. Non content d'avoir livré à la censure du public tant de pages médiocres, mauvaises ou détestables, j'ai voulu en faire une entière justice. Je les ai arrachées de la partition pour les détruire; la flamme les a dévorées, elles n'existent plus. Que nous reste-t-il? dix morceaux sublimes et ravissans; cela suffira-t-il à une nation qui proclame quelquefois le succès d'une pièce en trois, en cinq actes, où l'on rencontre qu'une romance?" *Journal des Débats*, 26 October 1822.



perhaps the most absurd and most boring that Italy has sent us.  
It's a bad parody of our *Lodoïska*.<sup>60</sup>

*La Gazza ladra* fared no better:

Regarded as Rossini's masterpiece, this work should have been infinitely superior to the *Barbier de Séville* and *Otello*. . .

The music of *La Gazza Ladra* is brilliant and poignant. One can however reproach its author for not having always expressed what the words commanded him to express.<sup>61</sup>

*La Donna del Lago* also suffered at the hands of Castil-Blaze:

The music for *La Donna del Lago* contains some pieces of great beauty. . . Besides, nothing is dramatic in this libretto and it is known that we insist particularly that action in an opera not be completely without interest.<sup>62</sup>

However, *Moïse en Egypte* was praised: "Its music is magnificent, full of new and dramatic effects. . . [it] will not be out of place on our great lyric stage."<sup>63</sup> So too was *Otello*: "*Otello* is unquestionably Rossini's masterpiece in the tragic genre."<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>60</sup>"Si l'on admire *le Barbier de Séville*, on ne doit pas mépriser *Torvaldo*, car la plupart des mélodies et des effets d'orchestre sont les mêmes dans ces deux opéras. . . mais ce nouvel opéra est peut-être le plus absurde et le plus ennuyeux que l'Italie nous ait envoyé. C'est une mauvaise parodie de notre *Lodoïska*. *Journal des Débats*, 7 December 1820.

<sup>61</sup>"Regardé comme le chef-d'oeuvre de Rossini, cet ouvrage devoit être infiniment supérieur au *Barbier de Séville* et à l'*Otello*. . .

La musique de *la Gazza* est brillante et pathétique. On peut cependant reprocher à son auteur de n'avoir pas toujours exprimé ce que les paroles lui commandoient d'exprimer." *Journal des Débats*, 20 September 1821.

<sup>62</sup>"La musique de *la Donna des Lago* renferme des morceaux d'une grande beauté. . . D'ailleurs, rien n'est dramatique dans ce libretto, et l'on sait que nous tenons particulièrement à ce que l'action d'un opéra ne soit pas tout à fait sans intérêt." *Journal des Débats*, 9 September 1824.

<sup>63</sup>"La musique en est magnifique, pleine d'effets nouveaux et dramatiques. . . ne sera point déplacé sur notre grande scène lyrique." *Journal des Débats*, 19 September 1821.

<sup>64</sup>"*Otello* est sans contredit le chef-d'oeuvre de Rossini dans le genre tragique." *Journal des Débats*, 27 May 1823.

In April of 1829, rehearsals for *Guillaume Tell* began at the Opéra. On 3 August, Parisians attended its first performance. Two days later, the first of Castil-Blaze's five instalments appeared.

Every nation had its day in the sun,  
the time for *Italy* has finally come.<sup>65</sup>

These opening words set the tone for the instalments of feuilletons. The reader knew that he or she should prepare for another Italian-versus-French opera debate. The reader could also anticipate which side would conquer.

Castil-Blaze continued with a brilliant monologue which served to outline Rossini's previous operas produced in Paris and to criticize the Royal Academy's opera jury. The apple in *Guillaume Tell* became a metaphor for the opera no one was interested in.

The Helvetian apple, trailed about from la rue de Chartres to Boulevard du Temple, passing by the Comédie française and rue Feydeau, didn't find music lovers very anxious to take a bite. Now it is pompously installed at the Royal Academy. Rossini's brilliant chords entitle it to the happiest of fates, and this will perhaps be the finest triumph of this grand master.<sup>66</sup>

Soloists, chorus and orchestra were praised for their efforts. Then finally came the verdict:

*Guillaume Tell* has been a complete success, despite the timeworn subject, and the boredom that the work occasionally spread over the audience.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>65</sup>"Chaque peuple à son tour a brillé sur la terre,  
Le temps de l'*Italie* est à la fin venu." *Journal des Débats*, 5 August 1829.

<sup>66</sup>"La pomme helvétique promené depuis la rue de Chartres jusqu'au boulevard du Temple, en passant par la comédie française et la rue Feydeau, n'a pas trouvé des amateurs bien empressés d'y mordre. La voilà pompeusement installé à l'Académie royale; les brillants accords de Rossini lui permettent de plus heureuses destinées, et ce sera peut-être le plus beau triomphe de ce grand maître." *Journal des Débats*, 5 August 1829.

<sup>67</sup>"*Guillaume Tell* a complètement réussi, malgré la vétusté du sujet, et l'ennui que la pièce répandait parfois sur l'assemblée. *Journal des Débats*, 5 August 1829.

The second instalment appeared six days later. Save for two brief concluding paragraphs on the performers, Castil-Blaze devoted this entire five-column feuilleton to an evocative analysis of the overture. Too lengthy to quote in its entirety, the opening will suffice as an example:

A quintet of violoncellos serve as an opening to this orchestral movement, the design of which is mellow, the chords skillfully varied, the melody vague. It's like a type of harmonious vapour which rises from the orchestra. The author wished to paint the calm which precedes the break of dawn.<sup>68</sup>

The use of imagined conversation also appeared in this feuilleton. As if foreshadowing a device used successfully by Berlioz in *Les Soirées de l'orchestre*, Castil-Blaze had musical instruments speak: "‘We perform because we perform,’ the violins of the Royal Academy will say if you ask them the cause of a similar result."<sup>69</sup>

In the third instalment Castil-Blaze returned to the French versus Italian questions raised in the first feuilleton.

Foreign composers, called to France during various eras in order to write operas destined for our great lyric stage, have always been catechized by the administrators of the theatre and the music-lovers incorporated in administration.<sup>70</sup>

To support this claim, he summarized the history of foreign (largely Italian) composers and their operas from Lully up until Rossini in Paris. However, since trained people had reviewed and

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<sup>68</sup>"Un quintette de cinq violoncelles sert de début à cette symphonie. Le dessin en est moëlleux; les accords adroitement variés, la mélodie vague, c'est comme une espèce de vapeur harmonieuse qui s'élève de l'orchestre. L'auteur a voulu peindre le calme qui précède le lever de l'aurore." *Journal des Débats*, 11 August 1829.

<sup>69</sup>"‘Nous exécutons parce que nous exécutons,’ diront les violons de l'Académie royale, si vous leur demandez la cause d'un semblable résultat." *Journal des Débats*, 11 August 1829.

<sup>70</sup>"Les compositeurs étrangers, appelés en France à diverses époques pour écrire des opéras destinés à notre grand scène lyrique, ont toujours été catéchisés par les administrateurs de ce théâtre et les amateurs agrégés à la direction." *Journal des Débats*, 13 August 1829.

corrected the libretto, "Rossini could then remain Rossini and preserve his style while writing *Guillaume Tell*."<sup>71</sup>

An evocative analysis of the first act followed. Castil-Blaze used Arnold's words "Tyrants vomited up by Germany. The horn sounds on the mountain,"<sup>72</sup> to conjure up a fanfare in the reader's mind. Always on the lookout for dramatic action and musical effects, the procedure of performing fanfares on the horn became a metaphor for the hunters who "change the crooks of their horns every time they change horses."<sup>73</sup> This instalment was written after the fourth performance of the opera.

Castil-Blaze used the gastronomical exhibition of the hunters in the opening scene of Act II as his "grabber" for the fourth instalment. An evocative analysis of that act followed.

In the first three instalments, music and plot summary had been given the lion's share of the analysis while the libretto was accorded scant treatment. He made amends for this in the subsequent instalments by using both score analysis and performance criticism. After scrutinizing the libretto, Castil-Blaze objected to two lines of verse in the translation.

These two verses that the Parisian public lets pass by without perceiving the disorder that they bring to the melody, would suffice to revolt an Italian audience, and audience accustomed to the perfect union of words and music. Let's hope that in the future, Rossini will know how to choose more skilful partners for himself, so that his phrase unfurls with as much elegance at the Royal Academy as at the Théâtre-Italien.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>71</sup>"Rossini a donc pu rester Rossini, et conserver son style, en écrivant *Guillaume Tell* pour l'Académie royale de Musique." *Journal des Débats*, 13 August 1829.

<sup>72</sup>"Des tyrans qu'à vomis l'Allemagne, Le cor sonne sur la montagne."

<sup>73</sup>"...changent les cercles de leur cors toutes les fois qu'ils changent de cheval." *Journal des Débats*, 13 August 1829.

<sup>74</sup>"Ces deux vers que le public de Paris laisse passer sans apercevoir le désordre qu'ils portent dans la mélodie, suffiraient pour révolter un auditoire italien, un auditoire accoutumé à l'union parfaite des vers avec la musique. Espérons qu'à l'avenir, Rossini saura se choisir des complices plus habiles, afin que sa phrase se déploie avec autant d'élégance à l'Académie royale qu'au Théâtre-Italien." *Journal des Débats*,

This was the first time in the instalments that Castil-Blaze had directed his critical gaze towards the librettists—Étienne de Jouy, Hippolyte Bis and Armand Marrast—who were not mentioned by name.<sup>75</sup>

An interval of almost two months separated the fourth from the fifth and final instalment. Castil-Blaze asserted that, "*Guillaume Tell* is a musical masterpiece,"<sup>76</sup> and then brazenly took credit for it:

Today I repeat what I have said a hundred times in this feuilleton, I preached in advance on the bull that Rossini has just published. I needed an example that justified my precepts. *Guillaume Tell* provided me with one, and this score must set the seal on the musical revolution, on the salutary reform that this chronicle has provoked and foretold.<sup>77</sup>

During the remainder of his analysis, Castil-Blaze made sparing use of musical vocabulary that could confuse a musically untrained reader. At his most complicated, he wrote

I will cite the figure in sixths with intermediate fourths that the violins and violas attack from the first measures. . .<sup>78</sup>

Summing up, the five *Guillaume Tell* instalments show a marked improvement in form over those of *La Muette de Portici*. The varying intervals between the instalments allowed Castil-Blaze the time not only for greater reflection on the finer points of the score, but also for contradictions to arise over earlier remarks, since forgotten.

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20 August 1829.

<sup>75</sup>The names of Jouy and Bis are found only in the title of the first instalment.

<sup>76</sup>"*Guillaume Tell* est un chef-d'oeuvre musical." *Journal des Débats*, 11 October 1829.

<sup>77</sup>"Je répète aujourd'hui ce que j'ai dit cent fois dans ce feuilleton, je prêchais d'avance sur la bulle que Rossini vient de publier; il me fallait un exemple qui justifiât mes préceptes, *Guillaume Tell* me le fournit, et cette partition doit mettre le sceau à la révolution musicale, à la salutaire réforme que cette chronique a provoquée et prédite." *Journal des Débats*, 11 October 1829.

<sup>78</sup>"Je citerai le trait en sixtes avec quarts intermédiaires que les violons et les violes attaquent dès les premières mesures. . ." *Journal des Débats*, 11 October 1829.

The language used in his evocative analyses could be understood and acted upon by the reader, whether an amateur or professional musician. Citations, such as Castil-Blaze's insertion of a line spoken by Stratonice to Antiochus, served as a parallel to the description of Arnold and Mathilde's conversation. The ability to cite was as much a requirement to become a feuilletonist, as the citation itself was a requisite of the feuilleton. The educational background and reading goals of the individual reader determined whether the citation would be taken as a diversion to be enjoyed, or disregarded for its own sake, or would form an inter-dramatic grid within the reader's imagination.

#### **Meyerbeer and the *Robert le diable* Feuilletons**

Readers of the *Journal des Débats* were alerted to the name of Meyerbeer in Castil-Blaze's first music feuilleton: "Levasseur has just repeated more success in *Marguerite d'Anjou*, Meyerbeer's opera."<sup>79</sup> Several years elapsed before he was mentioned again. In 1824, Castil-Blaze cited the review of *Il Crociato in Egitto* from the *Gazette de Venise* which designated Meyerbeer as "second to none."<sup>80</sup>

*Il Crociato* opened at the Théâtre-Italien under both Rossini's and Meyerbeer's direction on 22 September 1825. Castil-Blaze's feuilleton appeared two days later. The laudatory tone taken in the earlier feuilleton had since disappeared. Confronted with the entire plot, Castil-Blaze declared,

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<sup>79</sup>"Levasseur vient d'obtenir de nouveaux succès à Milan, dans *Marguerite d'Anjou*, opéra de Mayer Berr [sic]." *Journal des Débats*, 7 December 1820.

<sup>80</sup>". . . M. Meyerbeer n'a pas de second." *Journal des Débats*, 22 April 1824.

It's futile to write a critique on such an absurd drama, in which one finds nevertheless some musical situations.<sup>81</sup>

He was careful to distinguish between criticizing the perceived faults of the Italian dramatic style and the compositional talent of Meyerbeer: "Suffice to say that Mr. Meyerbeer knows how to make a fine opera. . ."<sup>82</sup>

*Robert le diable* opened at the Opéra on 21 November 1831. Two days later, the *Journal des Débats* carried the first of five instalments by Castil-Blaze on this opera. The first three instalments were issued consecutively, while the last two were interspersed with one or two other feuilletons.

The first instalment was treated in the manner of an overture—setting the stage for what was to follow. The form of this feuilleton was simple: grabber; comments on characters and action of each act; general comments on music, decor, performers and cost of production. All of these topics would be elaborated upon in the subsequent instalments.

Castil-Blaze's grabber consisted of leading the reader into this review of the opening night by signalling three separate incidents of either scenery or characters falling down. Subsequently a short critical commentary on the work was presented:

As for the work, it produced a prodigious effect, enthusiasm grew from act to act. Never was success more beautiful, more dazzling.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>81</sup>"Il est inutile de faire la critique d'un drame aussi absurde, dans lequel on trouve néanmoins quelques situations musicales." *Journal des Débats*, 24 September 1825.

<sup>82</sup>"Il suffit de constater que M. Meyerbeer sait faire un bel opéra. . ." *Journal des Débats*, 24 September 1825.

<sup>83</sup>"Quant à la pièce, elle a produit un effet prodigieux, l'enthousiasme s'est accru d'acte en acte: jamais succès ne fut plus beau, plus éclatant." *Journal des Débats*, 28 November 1831.

Castil-Blaze then laid the ground rules for his feuilletons: ". . . Doubtless music is the chief aim in an opera, but in a feuilleton it must give way to the libretto. . ." <sup>84</sup> At this point he commenced his brief descriptions of each act. Castil-Blaze's comment about the *ronde du sabbat* in the third act—"never had a newer or more original effect been produced in any theatre"—must surely have raised Berlioz's ire. <sup>85</sup>

Castil-Blaze found that Meyerbeer's music fulfilled his criteria of responding to every twist and turn of the drama:

The music is alternately graceful, light, strong, passionate, bizarre, [or] appalling according to the diverse positions where the drama has set it. <sup>86</sup>

The second instalment appeared five days later after a second performance of the opera had been given. This instalment only examined Act One. It was in a three part form commenting first on music, then text and finally performers. The feuilleton was spiced with musical terms which served to describe each musical number and aided the musically trained reader in acting on the evocative analysis. One example will suffice:

The first chorus, "*Versez à tasse pleine*," is full of frankness and brilliance. Written in the key of F, the transition in D $\flat$ , although very commonly used, makes a good effect, especially because of the movement in ascending semitones that the composer employs in order to return to the point of departure. This chorus, in two-four time, ends in a very animated *stretto* in six-eight. <sup>87</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> ". . . la musique est l'objet principal d'un opéra sans doute, mais dans un feuilleton elle doit céder le pas au livret. . ." *Journal des Débats*, 28 November 1831.

<sup>85</sup> "Jamais effet plus neuf et plus original n'avait été produit sur aucun théâtre." *Journal des Débats*, 28 November 1831. Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*, with its "*Songe d'une nuit du sabbat*," was performed almost one full year earlier—a performance that Castil-Blaze did not review.

<sup>86</sup> "La musique est tour à tour gracieuse, légère, forte, passionnée, bizarre, épouvantable selon les diverses positions où le drame l'a placée." *Journal des Débats*, 23 November 1831.

<sup>87</sup> "Le premier chœur, *Versez à tasse pleine*, est plein de franchise et d'éclat. Ecrit dans le ton de *fa*, la transition en *ré bémol*, quoique très usitée, est d'un bon effet, surtout à cause de la marche ascendante par demi-tons, que l'auteur emploie pour revenir au point de départ. Ce chœur, à deux-quatre, se termine



Centring on what Castil-Blaze felt was an awkward rhyme, the discussion of the libretto was divorced from the discussion on music in this feuilleton.

The third instalment, printed six days later on 4 December 1831, treated only the second act. Its contents were in reverse order from the previous feuilletons: performers, notably M<sup>me</sup> Damoreau, were treated first; then music and verse; and then critical reception. A moment of self-gratification occurred when Castil-Blaze discussed the merits of the librettists:

These gentlemen are on the right track. They now adjust themselves to the model strophes for which Mr. Castil-Blaze has obtained a patent. . .<sup>88</sup>

This allowed for a discussion on the influence of text on music. Castil-Blaze located a problem area in the libretto and offered a solution, all within the context of his critical framework:

Words are the very humble servants of music, slaves that he [the composer] is permitted to trample and even to crush if it suits him. I have acknowledged the bad: this word *son....nez*, has a harsh ring to the ear. It pierced mine three times. I am going to indicate the way. . .to render this line musical and regular. . .It suffices to change the plural to the singular, saying:

Sonne, clairon, honore la bannière. . .<sup>89</sup>

Twelve days later, on 16 December, the fourth instalment appeared. As expected, it treated just the third act. Castil-Blaze eschewed a grabber for this feuilleton, using the full six columns of the feuilleton section for his examination. Throughout the instalment, Castil-Blaze evoked how the orchestration mirrored the changing mood and decor.

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par une strette à six-huit très animée." *Journal des Débats*, 28 November 1831.

<sup>88</sup>"Ces messieurs sont en bon chemin; ils se règlent maintenant sur les strophes modèles pour lesquelles M. Castil-Blaze a obtenu un brevet d'invention. . ." *Journal des Débats*, 4 December 1831.

<sup>89</sup>"Les paroles sont les très humbles servantes de la musique, des esclaves qu'il lui est permis de fouler et d'écraser même si cela lui convient. J'ai fait connaître le mal; ce mot *son....nez*, sonne durement à l'oreille; il a déchiré la mienne trois fois. Je vais indiquer le moyen. . .de rendre le vers musical et régulier . . .il suffit de mettre au singulier ce qui est au pluriel, en disant:

Sonne, clairon, honore la bannière. . ."

*Journal des Débats*, 4 December 1831.

Bertram enters the cavern to drink toasts with his friends. Alice appears on the mountain. The infernal sabbath has ceased. The instruments which thundered full blast, the roar of the timpanies, cymbals, triangles, the bows which whistled at high pitch, shivered as double stops in the low register, the shrill squeals of the oboes and piccolo, the howlings of the chalumeau, all subside. The musical storm is over.<sup>90</sup>

Instead of treating just one act as the previous instalments had done, the fifth and final instalment dealt with the final two acts, though Act Four received the most space. An interval of two months separated this instalment from the fourth about which Castil-Blaze leisurely reasoned: "Why hurry when you are sure to arrive on time?"<sup>91</sup> The evocative analysis begun in the second instalment was continued here in the same fashion, though staging and costuming were given increased emphasis:

Ladies-in-waiting mingle with pages, bachelorettes with courtesans, soldiers with marchionesses and countesses. The ladies place themselves by chance in poses as elegant as they are picturesque on the long terraces offered them, the pages gracefully stretched out rest their curly heads on the women's knees, animated conversations start up everywhere. They chat, laugh, reason, indulge in innocent word-play.<sup>92</sup>

In his discussion of the text, Castil-Blaze referred to the librettists as he had in the third instalment. Only in this effort at self-congratulation, he allowed the intuitive reader, who

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<sup>90</sup>"Bertram entre dans la caverne pour trinquer avec ses amis; Alice paraît sur la montagne. Le sabbat infernal a cessé, les instrumens qui tonnaient à pleine embouchure, le fracas des timbales, des cymbales, des triangles; les archets qui sifflaient à l'aigu, frémissaient en double corde au grave; les cris aigus des hautbois et de la petite flûte, les mugissemens du chalumeau, tout s'apaise, la tempête musicale est finie." *Journal des Débats*, 16 December 1831.

<sup>91</sup>"Pourquoi se presser quand on est certain d'arriver à temps?" *Journal des Débats*, 14 February 1832.

<sup>92</sup>"Les dames d'honneur se mêlent avec les pages, les bachelettes avec les courtisans, les soldats avec les marquises et les comtesses. Les longs gradins sont offerts aux dames qui s'y placent au hasard et dans des positions aussi élégantes que pittoresques, les pages étendus gracieusement reposent leur tête frisée sur les genoux des dames, des conversations très animées s'engagent de toutes parts, on jase, on rit, on raisonne, on se permet l'innocent calembour." *Journal des Débats*, 14 February 1832.

remembered that it was Mr. Castil-Blaze who had the patented verses, to piece together who "X.X.X." really was!

If I had time for it, I would make some remarks about the verses of this act. But today, the librettists adopt my system of versification. I have no need to demonstrate the excellence of it.<sup>93</sup>

In summary, at this point in his career, Castil-Blaze looked quite favourably on Meyerbeer's works, especially *Robert le diable*. The aversion to Meyerbeer's operas which surfaced in Castil-Blaze's later writings was nowhere to be detected in his feuilletons for the *Journal des Débats*. Castil-Blaze's five instalments on *Robert le diable* were sincere writings, carefully crafted, full of vigour and elan. The evocative analyses supplied therein provided for entertaining re-creation. Without a doubt, these feuilletons rank among Castil-Blaze's finest.

### Weber and the *Der Freischütz* / *Robin des Bois* Feuilletons

It was on the final page of the feuilleton section on 1 December 1824 that *Robin des Bois* was first mentioned. The reader could not miss the purely promotional intent of the writing. Today it reads like a text out of a twentieth-century motion-picture trailer.

— *Robin des Bois*, or *les Trois Balles* (1), is the title of a three act opera being rehearsed at the Odéon and to be presented at this theatre early next month. It's an imitation of the famous *Freischütz* de Ch. M. Weber, of which the Germans and the English have told us marvellous things. Will the new translators be capable of making us agree with our neighbours about this Germanic production? Its music is vigorous and full of originality. The bizarre subject offers, like that of *Don Juan*, an infinite number of contrasts truly invaluable for musical effects. Hunting choruses, airs of despair, drinking songs, an evocation,

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<sup>93</sup>"Si j'avais le temps, je ferais quelques observations sur les vers de cet acte; mais aujourd'hui nos poètes adoptent mon système de versification: je n'ai plus besoin d'en démontrer l'excellence." *Journal des Débats*, 14 February 1832.

a waltz, diabolical protests, a prayer full of candour and suavity, the horrors of a murder, the joyous wedding preparations. All this is combined in *Robin des Bois*.<sup>94</sup>

Castil-Blaze's *Dictionnaire* provides us with an indication as to how he considered imitation.

Imitation is always well taken even in changing several notes provided that this song is recognizable as the same and one does not stray from the laws of a good modulation. . . Imitation is treated as one wishes: abandon it, take it up again, begin another at will. In short, the rules are as relaxed as those of a fugue are strict.<sup>95</sup>

In other words, Castil-Blaze did whatever he felt like to Weber's *Der Freischütz*. In that first sentence occurs a characteristic of feuilletons from this period, that of the footnote indication. The footnote was nothing more than an advertisement for the availability and prices of Castil-Blaze's various editions of *Robin des Bois*. In his attempt to out-do the other editors who, he claimed, at that moment were publishing scores of *Der Freischütz* under different titles, he wrote,

This translation, the only one with the right to be performed at the Odéon. . .the only complete one, since by offering all of the pieces from the *Freischütz* from Germany, it contains in addition those which had been composed by Weber and added to this opera at the time of its production in London, has nothing in common with the others. This score. . .does not

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<sup>94</sup>" — *Robin des Bois, ou les Trois Balles* (1), tel est le titre d'un opéra en trois actes que l'on répète à l'Odéon, et qui sera représenté sur ce théâtre dans les premiers jours du mois prochain. C'est une imitation du fameux *Freischütz* de Ch. M. Weber, dont les Allemands et les Anglais nous ont dit des merveilles. Les nouveaux traducteurs sauront-ils nous mettre d'accord avec nos voisins, au sujet de cette production germanique? La musique en est vigoureuse et pleine d'originalité; le sujet bizarre offre, comme celui de *Don Juan*, une infinité de contrastes bien précieux pour les effets musicaux. Des chœurs de chasseurs, des airs de désespoir, des chansons bachiques, une évocation, une walse, des clameurs diaboliques, une prière pleine de candeur et de suavité, les horreurs d'un meurtre, les apprêts joyeux d'une noce: tout cela se trouve réuni dans *Robin des Bois*. . ." *Journal des Débats*, 1 December 1824.

<sup>95</sup>"L'imitation est toujours bien prise, même en changeant plusieurs notes pourvu que ce même chant se reconnaisse, et qu'on ne s'écarte point des lois d'une bonne modulation. . .On traite l'imitation comme on veut; on l'abandonne, on la reprend, on en commence une autre à volonté; en un mot, les règles en sont aussi relâchées, que celles de la fugue sont sévères." *Dictionnaire de musique moderne*, s.v. "Imitation."

contain the German text which would have wearied the reader uselessly.<sup>96</sup>

Neither Castil-Blaze, or rather X.X.X., nor the *Journal des Débats* had any conflict in having him review a work of his own.<sup>97</sup> His feuilleton on *Robin des Bois* appeared on 28 December, complete with a footnote advertising the availability of the piano-vocal score. By the second sentence the reader learned that all had not gone well at the opening:

It is useless to speak of all the hitches, the unforeseen accidents, the sudden illnesses, which contributed at first with as much power as perseverance to the poor performance of Weber's masterpiece. This first attempt was nevertheless very favourable to this opera, since the marked opinion of a numerous and enlightened audience caused the translators to make changes. . . The immense reputation of *Freischütz* of which *Robin des Bois* is faithful enough imitation had no doubt decided them to make plans for reform.<sup>98</sup>

However, it was on the feuilleton's last page that Castil-Blaze admitted to making changes to the scoring of the Wolf's Glen scene after the opening performance: "Some vocal parts, added to the orchestral, produced an excellent effect at the second performance."<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>96</sup>"Cette traduction, la seule qui doit être exécuté à l'Odéon . . . la seule complète, puisqu'en offrant tous les morceaux du *Freischütz* d'Allemagne, elle contient en outre ceux qui ont été composés par Weber, et ajoutés à cet opéra, lors de sa mise en scène à Londres, n'a rien en commun avec les autres. Sa partition . . . ne renferme point de texte allemand, qui auroit inutilement fatigué le lecteur." *Journal des Débats*, 1 December 1824.

<sup>97</sup>However, Duvicquet was assigned to review the opening night. His feuilleton on the fiasco appeared two days later. It is interesting to note that he is privy to all of the changes that were going to be made to the work for he lists them one by one! *Journal des Débats*, 9 December 1824.

<sup>98</sup>"Il est inutile de parler de tous les contre-temps, des accidents imprévus, des indispositions subites qui ont contribué d'abord avec autant de pouvoir que de persévérance à la mauvaise exécution de chef-d'oeuvre de Weber. Ce premier essai néanmoins a été très favorable à cet opéra, puisque l'opinion bien prononcée d'un auditoire nombreux et éclairé a pu décider les traducteurs à faire les changements. . . L'immense réputation du *Freischütz* dont *Robin des Bois* est une imitation assez fidèle, les avoit sans doute arrêtés dans leurs projets de reforme." *Journal des Débats*, 28 December 1824.

<sup>99</sup>"Des parties vocales, ajoutées à la symphonie, ont produit un effet excellent à la seconde représentation." *Journal des Débats*, 28 December 1824.

The body of the feuilleton was devoted to an evocative analysis of the work. Each paragraph was rife with Castil-Blaze's critical principles: musical effects must be a consequence of the libretto; the overture, using motifs from the opera, is a small drama in music; display the ability to cite other works by composers who used the same key as Weber for similar effect; use orchestral music to introduce a character onto the stage or remind the audience of his or her persona; state how and where German composers have benefitted from the study of musical effects in French operas; include an air from another opera to support the dramatic force of the work; decoration on the stage should change at the same time as the orchestral parts; please the public by giving them what they expect; abridge a piece if it is too long; delete characters if they are useless to the story line. In a word, Castil-Blaze portrayed *Robin des Bois* as a musical masterpiece, since so many of the work's characteristics met his criteria.

This did not mean that Castil-Blaze ceased to write about or promote *Robin des Bois* in his feuilletons. Two examples will now be given. The first case in point is Castil-Blaze's letter to the editor responding to Weber's angry letters to him regarding his bowdlerization of *Der Freischütz*.<sup>100</sup> Castil-Blaze wrote that he did not publish *Der Freischütz* under his name, but that *Robin des Bois* was imitated from that work. He claimed that he did not tamper with the music prior to the first performance, at which time it was whistled off the stage. This failure proved that changes to the work were necessary in order to assure it a prodigious success.

It is recognized that a foreign opera would not be able to succeed on a stage in our country if not arranged according to our dramatic principles. One must cut and readjust the music, present it on stage, compose a French opera with elements taken over from the foreign scores. . . .

I am upset that a person of so distinguished a talent as Mr. Weber could have found himself offended by the changes that we have made to his opera in order to assure it a prodigious success. . . The goal of my enterprise was to make known in

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<sup>100</sup>Weber's letters were printed in the *Corsaire*. *Carl Maria von Weber: Writings on Music*, 307-311.

France the admirable masterpiece of this composer and to add our laurels to those that Germany, Prussia, Holland, [and] England have already placed on the score of *Der Freischütz*.<sup>101</sup>

These statements, though, raise questions about Castil-Blaze's critical principles. If he knew 1) the dramatical principles of French opera and 2) that changes needed to be made to foreign operas that did not fit these principles, why then were these changes not made earlier to assure an opening night success? Though Castil-Blaze offered Weber these reasons as grounds for the changes in characters's names and the plot, they could not be used to explain adequately the opening night flop. If so used, they incriminate Castil-Blaze on charges of ignorance. If one accepts Warrack's opinion that a second version of *Robin des Bois* was never made, then Castil-Blaze—who claims that changes were made—is a liar.<sup>102</sup> Either way, Castil-Blaze does not come out clean.

The second case in point is the full-length feuilleton obituary on Weber, in which Castil-Blaze masked the difference between *Der Freischütz* and *Robin des Bois* by straying from his discussion on the instrumentation of *Der Freischütz* to suddenly introduce the character of Robin. It was only at the end of this glowing tribute to Weber that the reason for Robin's introduction into the narrative became clear. Castil-Blaze announced that the Odéon was to present a special benefit performance, the proceeds of which going to Weber's surviving family. The opera to be staged? Nothing less than *Robin des Bois*. In fact, Castil-Blaze stated that there would be more,

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<sup>101</sup>"Il est reconnu qu'un opéra étranger ne sauroit réussir chez nous, sur un théâtre français, s'il n'est disposé d'après notre système dramatique. Il faut donc couper et rajuster la musique, la mettre en scène, et composer un opéra français avec des élémens pris dans les partitions étrangères. . . .

Je suis fâché qu'une personne d'un talent aussi éminent que M. Weber ait pu se trouver offensé des changemens que nous avons faits à son opéra pour en assurer le prodigieux succès. . . . Le but de mon entreprise étoit de faire connoître à la France le chef-d'oeuvre admirable de ce compositeur, et d'ajouter nos lauriers à ceux que l'Allemagne, la Prusse, la Hollande, l'Angleterre, avoient déjà posés sur la partition de *Freyschütz* [sic]." *Journal des Débats*, 25 January 1826. Castil-Blaze's familiar "X.X.X." initials are found at the end of the feuilleton. However, the letter which follows bears the name "Castil-Blaze."

<sup>102</sup>*Carl Maria von Weber: Writings on Music*, 308.

since scenes that were earlier suppressed for fear of displeasing the French public were to be restored.<sup>103</sup>

Again it was Duvicquet who provided the feuilleton, who in the course of his musings on the benefit performance managed to throw in a critical barb:

Why wouldn't this example be imitated by the provincial theatres who have not been duped any more than those in Paris by the naturalisation papers granted to Weber by Castil-Blaze and ratified to the sound of applause by the unanimous approval of musical France?<sup>104</sup>

While most of Castil-Blaze's reviews of his translations and his own pasticcios contained no specific mention of their author, such insertions into the feuilleton helped to introduce these operas and attempted to keep them in the public's eyes and imaginations, at least while those readers were engaged with his feuilletons. Castil-Blaze had the ideal promotional tool of his day—the daily newspaper—and he used it to his advantage. He utilized his anonymous initials to keep the reader from finding out that it was the author who was reviewing or actually advertising his own work. Could anyone expect him not to plug his own work? Could anyone even expect impartiality in such a situation? Castil-Blaze knew full well that he would have to advertise or promote his works if he wanted to remain in the music business of Paris. To this end, he was abetted by his deputies at the *Journal des Débats*, Duvicquet and Janin, who were always favourable to his works.<sup>105</sup> Castil-Blaze surely recognized the quality of his work, that it would need buttressing to survive even the shortest length of time. Yet, even for those who

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<sup>103</sup>*Journal des Débats*, 18 June 1826.

<sup>104</sup>"Pourquoi cet exemple ne seroit-il pas imité par les théâtres de province qui n'ont point été plus dupes que celui de Paris, des lettres de naturalisation accordées à Weber par M. Castil-Blaze, et entérinées, au bruit des applaudissemens, par les suffrages unanimes de la France musicale?" *Journal des Débats*, 25 November 1826.

<sup>105</sup>Indeed Castil-Blaze remained immune from Duvicquet's criticism of arrangers who distorted the unity of a work by interspersing sundry pieces by diverse composers.



possessed a far greater talent in composition than Castil-Blaze, such as Berlioz and Wagner, the use of the print media became virtually *de rigueur* for the promulgation of one's work and the sustenance of one's livelihood in nineteenth-century Paris.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### BEETHOVEN

#### Beethoven in Paris

The twentieth century reader poring over *De l'Opéra en France* will notice that Castil-Blaze displays but a passing knowledge of a handful of Beethoven's works. To be fair, up until the 1820s, many in France knew even less of Beethoven than Castil-Blaze.

In France, the earliest written reference to Beethoven came in the form of an advertisement in the *Journal de Paris* on 9 September 1800.<sup>1</sup> By 1810, over forty of Beethoven's works, such as the "Appassionata" sonata, 32 Variations on a Theme in C minor, sonatas for violin and piano and violoncello and piano, the six quartets of opus 18, as well as the Symphony No. 2, were listed in the catalogues of various Parisian publishers such as Sieber, Érard, Pleyel and Simrock.<sup>2</sup>

It was not long before these works were performed. François-Antoine Habeneck, the future conductor of the *Société des Concerts*, was one of the first to perform Beethoven's works in Paris during his student days at the Conservatoire in 1802:

. . . I came to know the first quartets by Beethoven and learned to play them with my friend Philip and others, without being particularly impressed by them. Soon afterwards, we received the first and second symphonies, which we tried with a small orchestra.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"Sonate à quatre mains, pour le Clavecin ou Forté-Piano, composée par Louis Vanbee-Thoven. [sic] OEuvre 6.<sup>me</sup> — Prix, 3<sup>fr</sup> 60°." *Journal de Paris*, 22 fructidor an VIII (9 September 1800); reproduced in Mongrédien, 311.

<sup>2</sup>Mongrédien, 311.

<sup>3</sup>". . . j'ai appris à connaître les premiers quatuors de Beethoven et à les jouer avec mon ami Philipp et autres, sans en être particulièrement impressionné. Bientôt après, nous reçûmes les première et seconde symphonies, que nous essayâmes avec un petit orchestre." J.G. Prod'homme, "Les débuts de Beethoven en France," in *Beethovens Zentnerfeier* (Vienna, 1927), 116-122; quoted in Mongrédien, 311.

Critical reaction to these works was mixed.<sup>4</sup> After the fourth concert by the students of the Conservatoire in 1810 some critics feared for the future of music:

. . .the surprising success of Beethoven's compositions in France [was] a dangerous example for musical art. The infectiousness of a Teutonic harmony seems to be invading the modern school of composition that is forming at the Conservatoire. They will think they are producing an effect by multiplying the most barbarous of dissonances and using noisily the instruments of the orchestra. Alas! They only split the ear noisily without ever speaking to the heart.<sup>5</sup>

Yet, one year later on 5 May, the first Paris performance of Symphony No. 3 took place at the Conservatoire and was favourably reviewed in *Les Tablettes de Polymnie*.

The *Symphony in E♭*, performed at the 10<sup>th</sup> concert, is the most beautiful that he has composed, save for a few somewhat harsh Germanisms brought about by force of habit. The remainder offers a sensible and correct plan though filled with vehemence; graceful episodes artistically unite themselves to the main ideas and his melodic phrases have a freshness of colouring which belongs to them alone.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>"The one which is by Beethoven is in a completely different style (than a symphony by Haydn that had just been performed). Its style is clear, brilliant, and rapid. It was, as they all are, performed perfectly by the orchestra, and it gave great pleasure." "Celle-ci qui est de Beethoven, est d'un genre tout différent (qu'une symphonie de Haydn qu'on venait d'exécuter). Le style en est clair, brillant et rapide. Elle fut, comme elles le sont toutes, parfaitement exécutée par l'orchestre, et elle a fait très grand plaisir." *La Revue philosophique littéraire et politique [Décade]*, 1<sup>er</sup> trim., 11 March 1807, p. 511; quoted in J.-G. Prod'homme, *Les Symphonies de Beethoven*, 3d ed., (Paris: Librairie Ch. Delagrave, 1906; repr., New York: Da Capo Press, 1977), 19.

<sup>5</sup>". . .l'étonnant succès des compositions de Beethoven. . . d'un exemple dangereux pour l'art musical. La contagion d'une harmonie tudesque semble gagner l'école moderne de composition qui se forme au Conservatoire. On croira produire de l'effet en prodiguant les dissonances les plus barbares et en employant avec fracas tous les instruments de l'orchestre. Hélas! on ne fait que déchirer bruyamment l'oreille, sans jamais parler au coeur." *Tablettes de Polymnie*, March 1810, p. 9; quoted in Prod'homme 20-21.

<sup>6</sup>"La symphonie en *mi b*, qu'on a exécutée dans ce 10<sup>e</sup> concert, est la plus belle qu'il ait composée, excepté quelques germanismes un peu durs, dans lesquels la force de l'habitude l'a entraîné, tout le reste offre un plan sage et correct, quoique rempli de véhémence; de gracieux épisodes se rattachent avec art aux idées principales, et ses phrases de chant ont une fraîcheur de coloris qui leur appartient en propre." *Les Tablettes de polymnie*, May 1811, p. 374; quoted in Prod'homme, 121.

The ten performances of early Beethoven symphonies at the Conservatoire between the years 1807 and 1819 represent but a tiny fraction of concert life in Paris. They were simply lost in the shuffle of the musical, theatrical, political, and military activity of the day. It is no wonder that after 1828, when Beethoven became the rage in Paris, critics asked: "How can it be that such masterpieces have remained unknown for so long *in France*?"<sup>7</sup> Castil-Blaze, the Southern Frenchman, answered that

The thunderbolt of the symphony. . .has for fifteen years been the admiration of music lovers in Marseilles, Montpellier, Toulouse and. . . in the cities of the South where musicians are not in sufficient number to attack the giants of harmony, they are scaled down and performed as septets. . . The South of France had armies of Beethovenists before Rossinists existed in Paris. Travelling virtuosos can attest to this fact.<sup>8</sup>

Were these "armies" delusions of grandeur, or a Southerner's attempt at upstaging Paris, or just a distortion? Alexis Rostand claims in his *La Musique à Marseille* that this city was at the forefront of musical activity during the Restoration, for all of Beethoven's symphonies were performed and applauded in that city between the years 1821 and 1827.<sup>9</sup>

Ostensibly about opera, Castil-Blaze's *De l'Opéra en France* helped to disseminate Beethoven's name, not through reference to his sole opera *Fidelio*, which is nowhere mentioned between the covers of these two volumes,<sup>10</sup> but through modest remarks about instrumental

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<sup>7</sup>"Comment se fait-il que de semblables chefs-d'oeuvre soient restés si long-temps inconnus *en France*?" *Journal des Débats*, 9 March 1829.

<sup>8</sup>". . . le foudre de la symphonie. . .est depuis quinze ans l'objet de l'admiration des amateurs de Marseille, de Montpellier, de Toulouse, et. . .dans les villes du Midi où les musiciens ne sont pas en nombre suffisant pour attaquer ces colosses de l'harmonie, on les exécute réduits en septuors. . . Le Midi comptait des armées de beethovenistes avant qu'il existât des rossinistes à Paris; les virtuoses voyageurs peuvent attester ce fait." *Journal des Débats*, 9 March 1829.

<sup>9</sup>Alexis Rostand, *La Musique à Marseille* (Paris: Sandoz et Fischbacher, 1874), 12.

<sup>10</sup>Beethoven's sole opera was not performed in Paris until 1829.

works.<sup>11</sup> Castil-Blaze's *Dictionnaire de musique moderne*, however, contained even more references to Beethoven.<sup>12</sup>

Castil-Blaze's first reference to Beethoven in the *Journal des Débats* came early in 1821 and placed him in elite company:

After having applauded Haydn, admired the noble beauties of Mozart, after abandoning oneself to the ardour of Beethoven. . .<sup>13</sup>

The early years of the 1820s, which witnessed performances of the Symphony No. 2 and *Le Mont des Oliviers* at the *Concerts Spirituels*, marked Beethoven's ascent into apotheosis in France. Following on the heels of the initials "X.X.X.", a promotional addition to a feuilleton claimed that

Beethoven is at present the god of music in Germany. If he has not yet obtained the honours of apotheosis in France, he is at least among the first ranks of composers past and present.<sup>14</sup>

Though Beethoven was not a god for Castil-Blaze, he did by 1827 refer to him as a larger-than-life giant.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>*De l'Opéra en France*, 2:429.

<sup>12</sup>*Dictionnaire de musique moderne*, s.v. "Concertante," "Menuet," "Plagiat," "Septuor," "Sonate," "Symphonie," and "Trio."

<sup>13</sup>"Après avoir applaudi Haydn, admiré les beautés nobles de Mozart, après s'être abandonné à la fougue de Beethoven [sic]. . ." *Journal des Débats*, 5 January 1821.

<sup>14</sup>"Beethoven est à présent le dieu de la musique en Allemagne. S'il n'a pas encore obtenu en France les honneurs de l'apothéose, il occupe du moins un des premiers rangs parmi les compositeurs présents et passés." *Journal des Débats*, 2 May 1822.

<sup>15</sup>This was however in reference to his piano music. *Journal des Débats*, 4 September 1827.

### The Feuilletons about Beethoven's Symphonies and Overtures

This section will deal with Castil-Blaze's writings about Beethoven's orchestral works—the symphonies and overtures. The intriguing question that arises is whether Castil-Blaze's reviews of Beethoven's orchestral works differ from his opera reviews. Castil-Blaze summarized his critical gaze as follows:

Attention cannot be focused on two equally interesting objects at the same time. After the music, one listens to the words, finally to return to the music. If there are neither words nor music to render a work engaging, one has recourse to the decorations, and the eye wanders with pleasure on the tableaux of this dramatic panorama until the moment where the ear feels that the torment can no longer be tolerated.<sup>16</sup>

This was all fine for opera. But what about orchestral music? Where could the eye wander? To the instrumentalists or the conductor perhaps? In the following passage from 1827, it seems as though Castil-Blaze found his own answer on how to review orchestral works. He wrote the following, not even having heard all of Beethoven's symphonies:

Beethoven's symphonies present the merging of all the musical forces. The severe harmony mixes effortlessly with the charms of the melody. The melodic phrases, conceived with the sentiment of the varied chords that they must receive, accept without repugnance all of the embellishments that a knowledgeable hand disposes for them. No isolated *cabaletta* from the masses of the orchestra, a flute, oboe or clarinet solo which hovers, flutters or runs riot over an immobile *pizzicato*, and ends with the eternal *crescendo*. It's an animated conversation, to which all the instruments take an active part. The diversity of the accents and the moods, and the admirable artistry with which the contrasts are prepared, the surprises caused by the return of a motif that one had lost sight of, and which comes to join an already rich tableau that was believed

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<sup>16</sup>"L'attention ne peut se fixer en même temps sur deux objets également intéressants: après la musique, on écoute les paroles, pour revenir ensuite à la musique. S'il n'y a ni paroles ni musique pour rendre une pièce attachante, on a recours alors aux décorations, et l'oeil se promène avec agrément sur les tableaux de ce panorama dramatique, jusqu'au moment où le tourment qu'éprouve l'oreille ne peut plus être supporté [sic]." *Journal des Débats*, 2 May 1823.

complete, [all] . . . inspire the most lively interest and unceasingly draw one's attention.<sup>17</sup>

In this evocative analysis, the eye was used to help the inner ear to follow sound, specifically the musical motif. The eye was to hear that rich musical tableau, i.e., the instruments of Beethoven's orchestration. Castil-Blaze realized that his readers would gain little from isolated comments about Beethoven's symphonies, which at that time were still largely unknown in France. A point of reference was necessary. In this case, Rossini, symbolized by italicized musical terms, served as a negation—the complete opposite to Beethoven—to the reader. Let us now examine how Castil-Blaze treated Beethoven's symphonies in his *feuilletons*.

### **Symphony No. 1 in C major op. 21 and Symphony No. 2 in major D op. 36**

In 1829, when Parisians were being treated to numerous performances of many Beethoven symphonies, Castil-Blaze reminded his readers that "several of Beethoven's symphonies had been performed at the Conservatoire sixteen or seventeen years ago."<sup>18</sup> These performances though took place prior to his appointment as music *feuilletonist*. Exactly what was Castil-Blaze's opinion about the symphonies of Beethoven, early in his career at the *Journal des Débats*?

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<sup>17</sup>"Les symphonies de Beethoven présentent la réunion de toutes les puissances musicales; la sévère harmonie se mêle sans effort aux charmes de la mélodie. Les phrases de chant, conçues avec le sentiment des accords variés qu'elles doivent recevoir, acceptent sans répugnance tous les embellissemens qu'une main savante leur dispose. Ce n'est point une *cabaletta* isolée des masses de l'orchestre, un solo de flûte, de hautbois ou de clarinette, qui plane, voltige ou galope sur un immobile *pizzicato*, et se termine par l'éternel *crescendo*. C'est une conversation animée, à laquelle tous les instrumens prennent une part active; la diversité des accens et des caractères, et l'artifice admirable avec lequel les contrastes sont préparés, les surprises causées par le retour d'un motif que l'on avoit perdu de vue, et qui vient se mêler à un tableau déjà riche, et que l'on croyait complet. . . inspirent l'intérêt le plus vif, et captivent sans cesse l'attention." *Journal des Débats*, 1 June 1827.

<sup>18</sup>"Plusieurs symphonies de Beethoven avaient été exécutées au Conservatoire il y a seize ans. . ." *Journal des Débats*, 9 March 1829. An unidentified symphony, probably No. 1 or No. 2, was performed on 2 May 1813 by the Conservatoire student orchestra. Schwarz, 31.

Though the Second symphony, Symphony in D, was frequently performed at the *Concerts spirituels* at the Opéra—in 1821, 5 April 1822, 20 April 1824, and 22, 24 and 26 May 1826<sup>19</sup>—Castil-Blaze wrote precious little about it. In 1821, confronted by his first opportunity to give his readers some insight into this work, all Castil-Blaze could muster was a report that this symphony had been played.<sup>20</sup>

Two years later his reaction to the first two symphonies was quite positive, although he could not make up his mind whether Paris knew one or the other, or both.

Beethoven has composed symphonies full of fire, verve and originality. Those that we have heard give a general idea of the others which were to come in their turn to vary the repertoire of our concerts.<sup>21</sup>

The following year however, he contradicted himself when he wrote that Paris was only acquainted with one of the symphonies, most likely opus 36, which he had heard at the *Concerts spirituels* the previous day: "Beethoven has composed some [symphonies], of which we only knew one. It is beautiful enough to instill the desire to know the others."<sup>22</sup> From such uncertainty we may conclude that up until 1826 Castil-Blaze was still largely unfamiliar with many of Beethoven's symphonies.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>Prod'homme, 61-62.

<sup>20</sup>*Journal des Débats*, 30 April 1821.

<sup>21</sup>"Beethoven [sic] a fait des symphonies pleines de feu, de verve et d'originalité; celles que nous avons entendues donnent une grande idée des autres qui viendroient à leur tour varier le répertoire de nos concerts." *Journal des Débats*, 30 March 1823.

<sup>22</sup>"Beethoven en a fait, nous n'en connoissons qu'une, elle est assez belle pour inspirer le désir de connoître les autres." *Journal des Débats*, 21 April 1824.

<sup>23</sup>To this list of the first two symphonies we may also add the *Symphonie pastorale*. In a letter to the Viscount de Valernes, Castil-Blaze, detailing the contents of his pasticcio *La Forêt de Sénart, ou la partie de chasse de Henri IV*, mentions that he had inserted a storm by Beethoven in the middle of the final act. Castil-Blaze had also experimented in using music from a Beethoven symphony, unfortunately left unnamed in the letter, as the overture for this work. During rehearsals, this overture did not produce the desired effect in spite of the fine performance by the Odéon's orchestra, and was replaced by Rossini's overture



After the publication of the first few issues of Fétis's *Revue musicale* in 1827, which contained articles on Beethoven, one notices that Castil-Blaze's references to Beethoven became much more frequent and extensive. It is highly likely that Castil-Blaze, if not a subscriber, was an avid reader of this journal.<sup>24</sup>

In a review of a performance of the Symphony in D given at the Académie royale during the Christmas season of 1827, Castil-Blaze pointed out that something was askew with the movements:

This symphony is magnificent. All of the pieces must be placed in the first rank. It's a selection made up of several works by the same author. Some irregularities in the succession of keys are evident, but never mind, the silence which separates each piece suffices to justify the transition. Besides, it's only to give us the best that the conductor leafed through his volume instead of following the pages according to their diatonic order.<sup>25</sup>

It is known that the Allegretto of Symphony No. 7 was performed in place of the Larghetto of Symphony No. 2.<sup>26</sup>

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to *Torvaldo*. Castil-Blaze, Paris, to Vicomte de Valernes, Vaucluse, 1 January 1826, Département de la musique, Bibliothèque nationale, Paris, France.

<sup>24</sup>Though no actual list of subscribers to the *Revue musicale* has been found, a sheet of paper attached to the back of Maurice Schlesinger's edition of Ignaz von Seyfried's *Études de Beethoven, traité d'harmonie et de composition* (Paris, Schlesinger, 1833), which was translated by Fétis, gives a clue as to who could have been either a subscriber or an avid reader. The paper contains approximately two hundred signatures under the heading "Names of Subscribers to the Beethoven Studies." Among those on the list are Cherubini, Berlioz, Chopin, Rossini, Paganini, Liszt, Habeneck, Meyerbeer and Castil-Blaze. Bloom, 44.

<sup>25</sup>" . . .cette symphonie est magnifique; tous les morceaux doivent être placés en première ligne; c'est un choix fait dans plusieurs oeuvres du même auteur. Quelques irrégularités dans la succession des tons se font remarquer; mais peu importe, le silence qui sépare chaque morceau suffit pour légitimer la transition; d'ailleurs, c'est pour ne nous donner que de l'excellente que le chef d'orchestre feuillette son recueil au lieu de suivre les pages selon leur ordre diatonique." *Journal des Débats*, 5 January 1828. The French public was first alerted to the interpolation of the Allegretto from Symphony No. 7 into Symphony No. 2 by Fétis. *Revue musicale*, (May) 1827, 259; quoted in Prod'homme, 62.

<sup>26</sup>Bloom, 176.

### Symphony No. 3 in E♭ major op. 55 (*Symphonie héroïque*)

The *Symphonie héroïque* was the first work performed at the inaugural concert of the *Sociétés des Concerts du Conservatoire* on 9 March 1828. Castil-Blaze's feuilleton on this concert appeared ten days later. The musically trained reader of the twentieth century immediately notices the absence of any explanation for the label *Eroica*; no mention of its original title "Bonaparte"; no mention of the legend of Beethoven scratching out the dedication. Yet, Castil-Blaze's choice of vocabulary in his description of the Conservatoire orchestra and the work conjures up images of battle, of revolution, of heroism itself in the mind of the reader: "deploy; a faithful troop; powerful; the trumpet sounded; the giant; the fight; the old and the young guard; a revolution; the musical empire; heroic; deathly." The review contained no analysis of the work. Instead, Castil-Blaze donned his reporter's cap and wrote about the audience's enthusiasm for the work. The nagging question of why such music remained unknown in France for so long recurred:

Why do we let ourselves be outstripped by foreigners? Why is it that this masterpiece, that the Germans know by heart for twenty years, was presented to us only last week?<sup>27</sup>

But then surprisingly, some in France had heard this work in a different guise: "We had heard it reduced to a septet, a piano duet. . ." <sup>28</sup> Castil-Blaze described his general impression of the work and then asserted his support for Beethoven's originality:

Beethoven has stamped on this work a grandeur, a magnificence, an exaltation which are modified from time to time by phrases of a deep melancholy. One could hear nothing more original and ravishing than the minuet [scherzo]. In a word, it's not Mozart,

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<sup>27</sup>"Pourquoi nous laissons-nous devancer par les étrangers? d'où vient que ce chef-d'oeuvre, que les Allemands savent par coeur depuis vingt ans, ne nous a été présenté que la semaine dernière? Nous l'avions entendu réduit en septuor, en duo de piano. . ." *Journal des Débats*, 19 March 1828.

<sup>28</sup>In his *Histoire de la Société des Concerts* (1860), Elwart claims that this work was performed in 1827 in the studio of Duport, a piano maker on rue Neuve-des-Petits-Champs, Paris, as well as at the home of Habeneck on rue des Filles-Saint-Thomas. Prod'homme, 123.

it's not Haydn, but that's well enough. It's Beethoven through and through.<sup>29</sup>

So successful was this performance with the Parisian public that Habeneck decided that his next concert would be an all-Beethoven affair. Back by popular demand: the *Eroica*. It gave Castil-Blaze another opportunity to listen to the work. In this second review, he seems to have had difficulty accepting the outer movements:

One can find some overly extended developments in the first movement. The finale especially reveals hesitancy in its plan, and clouds obscure the horizon from time to time. But if this darkness serves to give more brilliance to the glimmer of the flashes of lightening, to the explosion of thunder, one must look at it as a kindness from the magician who has taken care to enchant us.<sup>30</sup>

This very criticism of length was voiced one year earlier by Fétis:

Unfortunately, Beethoven never knows when to end; almost all of his most beautiful movements carry on beyond the limits of their necessary development. . .<sup>31</sup>

This symphony opened the Conservatoire's 1831 concert series and Castil-Blaze reported that it was dedicated to the heroism of the "three days" in July 1830. He informed the reader that

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<sup>29</sup>"Beethoven a imprimé à cet oeuvre une grandeur, une magnificence, une exaltation qui se trouvent de temps en temps modifiées par des phrases d'une mélancolie profonde. Le menuet est ce que l'on peut entendre de plus original et de plus ravissant. En un mot, ce n'est pas Mozart, ce n'est pas Haydn, mais c'est aussi bien: c'est Beethoven tout entier." *Journal des Débats*, 19 March 1828.

<sup>30</sup>"On peut trouver dans le premier morceau quelques développemens trop étendus; le finale surtout offre de l'indécision dans son plan, et des nuages viennent de temps en temps obscurcir l'horizon. Mais si cette obscurité sert à donner plus d'éclat à la lueur des éclairs, à l'explosion du tonnerre, on doit la regarder comme un bienfait du magicien qui a pris soin de nous enchanter." *Journal des Débats*, 29 March 1829.

<sup>31</sup>"Malheureusement Beethoven ne sait point finir; presque tous ses morceaux les plus beaux se prolongent au-delà des bornes de leur développement nécessaire . . ." F.-J. Fétis, *Revue musicale* III (1828), 315-317; quoted in Bloom, 146. Fétis is referring to the C-minor Symphony.

members of the orchestra as well as the tenors and basses of the chorus were arrayed in military uniform in honour of the fallen.<sup>32</sup>

### Symphony No. 4 in B♭ major op. 60

In reviewing this symphony, Castil-Blaze took on the role of the concert reporter gauging the audience's reaction and provided little musical insight:

The first *allegro*, less developed than the other works in the same genre from this composer, sparkles with beauties of the highest order, and the details of the second half are all above praise. . . It is impossible to describe the sensation that it created in the audience. . . The minuet is picturesque and capricious. The principal motive is repeated too often. The finale distinguishes itself by beautiful work, surprises, unexpected entries and effects which would seem bizarre if Beethoven had not made them beautiful by the magic of his art, by all the fire of his genius.<sup>33</sup>

The balance dealt with a criticism about the performance:

This finale was taken too quickly. The extreme rapidity of the movement did not prevent the first bassoon from detaching all of the notes of an important passage that many others would have allowed themselves to slur. . . The performance was stunning in the louder movements. . .<sup>34</sup>

The reader is left with nothing more than reportage and Castil-Blaze's opinions about the performance. Such writing was uncondusive to the evocative analysis.

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<sup>32</sup>The *Symphonie héroïque* contains no vocal parts. The chorus members that Castil-Blaze described were present to perform scenes from *Robin des Bois* and *Euryanthe*. *Journal des Débats*, 2 February 1831.

<sup>33</sup>"Le premier *allegro* moins développé que les autres oeuvres du même genre de ce compositeur, étincelle de beautés du premier ordre, et les détails de la seconde partie sont au dessus de tout éloge. . .il est impossible de décrire la sensation qu'il a produite sur l'assemblée. . . Le menuet est pittoresque et capricieux, le motif principal est trop souvent reproduit. Le finale se distingue par un beau travail, des surprises, des entrées inattendues et des effets qui paraîtraient bizarres si Beethoven ne les avait embellis de toute la magie de son art, de tout le feu de son génie." *Journal des Débats*, 11 March 1830.

<sup>34</sup>"Ce finale a été dit trop vite; l'extrême rapidité du mouvement n'a pas empêché le premier basson de détacher toutes les notes d'un trait important, que beaucoup d'autres se seraient permis de couler. . . L'exécution a été foudroyante dans les morceaux éclatans. . ." *Journal des Débats*, 11 March 1830.

### Symphony No. 5 in C minor op. 67

It's admirable, sublime, ravishing. One has never tasted similar pleasures. It is impossible to reach any higher. Composition, performance, all is perfect.<sup>35</sup>

It is regrettable that Castil-Blaze did not go beyond reporting on the reception of this symphony at the Conservatoire's seventh concert. However, from this thread Castil-Blaze wove such a varied tapestry which included a play on words, concert programmes one hundred years earlier at the Théâtre de l'Ambigu, the unfortunate fate of Méhul's symphonies, and the virtuosi of the Italian Opera.

When this symphony was performed in 1830, Castil-Blaze focused more on the music itself in his feuilleton. He reported that the work was well received, although the public was surprised by the victorious entry of the military march (the fourth movement). His criticism of this movement was limited to writing that "the peroration of this march was too long and damaged the general effect of the piece."<sup>36</sup> He found the Andante ravishing and the Scherzo, which he referred to as a Minuet, full of caprice and originality.<sup>37</sup> He was, however, confounded by the form of the first movement:

The first movement, in proportions less developed than the later productions of the same composer contains however all that one desires in respect to motivic work and resources that a great genius should draw from it.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>35</sup>"C'est admirable, sublime, ravissant; on n'a jamais goûté de semblables jouissances, il est impossible d'atteindre plus haut; composition, exécution, tout est parfait." *Journal des Débats*, 9 May 1829.

<sup>36</sup>". . . la péroration de cette marche était trop longue et nuisait à l'effet général du morceau." *Journal des Débats*, 11 April 1830.

<sup>37</sup>Castil-Blaze crudely wrote that a "scherzo" was often a minuet of a more bizarre character than ordinary minuets. *Dictionnaire de musique*, s.v. "Scherzo."

<sup>38</sup>"Le premier morceau dans des proportions beaucoup moins développées que les dernières productions de même auteur contient cependant tout ce que l'on peut désirer sous le rapport du travail des motifs et des ressources qu'un grand génie doit en tirer." *Journal des Débats*, 11 April 1830.

Reading between the lines, it seems that all was not well with the performance:

With such music, experience and talent do not give security. One can make a mistake. This doubt adds interest to the musical drama, to the sweetness of the triumph, when it is obtained each time in such a brilliant manner.<sup>39</sup>

This time Castil-Blaze's words echoed Fétis's, which were printed two years earlier:

. . . A perfection that almost surpasses the limits of human powers. . . the charming details of the minuet, performed with unheard of perfection, linking suddenly and unexpectedly with the March in the finale. . .<sup>40</sup>

### Symphony No. 6 in F major op. 68 (*Symphonie pastorale*)

By 1826, Castil-Blaze was quite familiar with this work, having included the "storm" in his pasticcio *La Forêt de Sénart*.<sup>41</sup> Castil-Blaze perceived this work as

. . . a complete musical drama since it has its exposition, its developments, its climax, its denouement. Similar works ought not to be neglected when one has the means to present them with all of the charm and vigour that they demand.<sup>42</sup>

Though too long to quote in its entirety, Castil-Blaze's major analysis of this work considered imitation in music. Castil-Blaze did not advocate exact imitation:

If one reproaches musicians that their tableaux are sometimes untrue, I will answer that the artist must reproduce nature in its generalities and direct himself towards ideal beauty instead of

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<sup>39</sup>"Avec de semblable musique, l'expérience et le talent ne donnent point la sécurité; on peut se tromper, ce doute ajoute à l'intérêt du drame musical, aux douceurs du triomphe quand on l'obtient chaque fois d'une manière aussi brillante." *Journal des Débats*, 11 April 1830.

<sup>40</sup>" . . . une perfection qui dépasse presque les bornes des facultés humaines. . . les détails délicieux du menuet, exécutés avec une perfection inouïe, s'enchaînant tout-à-coup et d'une manière inattendue avec la marche du finale. . ." F.-J. Fétis, *Revue musicale* III (1828), 274-275; quoted in Bloom, 144.

<sup>41</sup>Castil-Blaze, Paris, to Vicomte de Valernes, Vaucluse, 1 January 1826.

<sup>42</sup>" . . . un drame musical complet, puisqu'il a son exposition, ses progrès, son noeud, son dénouement. De semblables compositions ne devraient pas être négligées, quand on a les moyens de les présenter avec tout le charme et la vigueur qu'elles réclament." *Journal des Débats*, 1 June 1827.

going astray in the paltry details of an exact but slavish imitation.<sup>43</sup>

This too was the goal of Castil-Blaze's evocative analyses, to reveal to the reader the broad lines of the work. As for the musical imitation of birds:

The song of the quail and the lark will certainly be imitated well, but it's not that which one awaits. It's the delicious mixture of all these melodies. The flute in the Opéra's orchestra does not give a truer idea of the song of the nightingale than arpeggios from a guitar can resemble the shrieks of a parrot.<sup>44</sup>

Here, Castil-Blaze diverted the reader from reproducing the sound of the particular birds to reproducing the sound of the instruments in his or her inner ear. He further wrote that,

Beethoven's musical reverie at the edge of a brook is conceived and executed after genuine principles of imitation. It's a mixture of all the melodies that one can hear in the fields. . . This grand painter has felt accurately that one should not rely on the means of one's art in order to imitate the inhabitants of the air. Therefore, he only makes a very faint sketch of them.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>43</sup>"Si l'on reproche aux musiciens que leurs tableaux sont quelquefois infidèles, je répondrai que l'artiste doit reproduire la nature dans ses masses, et se porter vers le beau idéal, au lieu de s'égarer dans les détails mesquins d'une imitation exacte, mais servile." *Journal des Débats*, 24 March 1829.

<sup>44</sup>"On imitera bien le chant de la caille et l'alouette, mais ce n'est pas cela que l'on attend; c'est le mélange délicieux de toutes ces mélodies. La flûte de l'orchestre de l'Opéra ne donne pas une idée plus juste de chant du rossignol que des arpèges [sic] de guitare ne peuvent ressembler aux cris du perroquet." *Journal des Débats*, 24 March 1829.

<sup>45</sup>"La rêverie musicale de Beethoven au bord d'un ruisseau, est conçue et exécutée d'après les véritables principes de l'imitation; c'est un mélange de toutes les mélodies que l'on peut entendre dans les champs. Ce grand peintre a bien senti qu'il ne fallait pas trop se fier sur les moyens de son art pour imiter le chant des habitants de l'air: aussi n'en donne-t-il qu'une très légère esquisse." *Journal des Débats*, 24 March 1829.

Of the individual movements, Castil-Blaze felt that the second movement was too long and needed editing.<sup>46</sup> The third movement, which he referred to as a waltz and a bourrée, "sparkle[s] with verve, charm and originality."<sup>47</sup> As for the fourth movement:

the storm is a gigantic creation. It is the most realistic image, in its entirety and details alike, that music has ever produced in this genre, and from Lully to Rossini many a composer has often made thunder rumble.<sup>48</sup>

He found the final movement insignificant and the first movement "weak of invention, overburdened with minute details and repetitions which fatigue because the motif or its disseminated fragments lack originality."<sup>49</sup> Castil-Blaze concluded that

this first movement was received with the enthusiasm that the name of Beethoven inspires in our music-lovers. Under a changed name, this piece would have but slight success.<sup>50</sup>

In his writings on this symphony, Castil-Blaze attempted to convey the feelings that the listener and reader should experience. The opening of the 24 March 1829 feuilleton with its evocation of a spring day in the countryside provide ample proof of this. He supplied the reader's inter-compositional grid by referring to scenes in *Armide*, *Bion* and *Robin des Bois*.<sup>51</sup> In doing so, he diverted the reader from a false reading, in which one would aurally imagine real birds instead of instruments.

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<sup>46</sup>*Journal des Débats*, 24 March 1829.

<sup>47</sup>" . . . étincellent de verve, de grâce et d'originalité." *Journal des Débats*, 24 March 1829.

<sup>48</sup>"L'orage est une création gigantesque; c'est l'image la plus vraie dans l'ensemble comme dans les détails que la musique ait jamais produite dans ce genre, et depuis Lulli jusqu'à Rossini les compositeurs ont souvent fait gronder le tonnerre." *Journal des Débats*, 24 March 1829.

<sup>49</sup>" . . . faible d'invention, surchargé de détails minutieux, de répétitions qui fatiguent, parce que le motif ou ses fragmens disséminés manquent d'originalité." *Journal des Débats*, 24 March 1829.

<sup>50</sup>"Ce premier morceau a été reçu avec l'enthousiasme que le nom de Beethoven inspire à nos amateurs. *Mutato-nomine*, ce morceau n'aurait qu'un bien petit succès." *Journal des Débats*, 24 March 1829.

<sup>51</sup>*Journal des Débats*, 24 March 1829.



### Symphony No. 7 in A major op. 92

This work ranked behind the *Pastorale* and the *Eroica* with regard to the amount of space Castil-Blaze devoted to a Beethoven symphony. In offering the reader his opinions, Castil-Blaze was also able to summarize piquantly one point for each of the movements. For example, though he found the first movement "remarkable for its original and clever dispositions," its "principal idea is not exempt from triviality."<sup>52</sup> Referring to the Allegretto, he wrote,

The *andante* [sic] is a marvelous masterpiece. . . In it I initially found a classical shape which approached one's ideas about the ancient Greeks. . .<sup>53</sup>

Predictably enough, Beethoven's use of the violoncellos struck a religious chord within Castil-Blaze:

This first entry of the violoncellos. . .has religious and solemn forms. . . I have discovered that it [the motive] proceeds like the hymn to St. John, famous in the history of music since it furnished the names of the notes, and whose melody has been united to the verses of Horace and perhaps those of Anacreon and Sapho.<sup>54</sup>

Bloom correctly stated that to lend the authority of the ages as well as an aura of mystery to this movement, Castil-Blaze alluded to Horace *et al*, and the skein of legends around Guido as the inventor of modern musical notation.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>52</sup>" . . . remarquable par des dispositions originales et savantes . . . l'idée principale. . . n'est pas exempte de trivialité." *Journal des Débats*, 9 March 1829.

<sup>53</sup>"L'*andante* est un chef-d'oeuvre merveilleux. . . Je lui trouvais d'abord une physionomie antique, et qui se rapprochait des idées que l'on se fait sur les anciens Grecs. . ." *Journal des Débats*, 9 March 1829.

<sup>54</sup>" . . . cette première entrée des violoncelles. . . a des formes religieuses et solennelles. . . j'ai découvert qu'il procédait comme l'hymne de saint Jean, hymne fameuse dans la musique, puisqu'elle a fourni les noms des notes, et dont la mélodie s'est unie aux vers d'Horace, et peut-être à ceux d'Anacréon et de Sapho." *Journal des Débats*, 9 March 1829.

<sup>55</sup>Bloom claims that this hymn "is obviously *Ut queant laxis*, the hymn from which French nomenclature for the solmization syllables was derived. Inasmuch as the rhythmic interpretation of this melody is a matter of conjecture, and its melodic structure seems to bear no resemblance to the Beethoven

Again referring to the Scherzo as a Minuet, Castil-Blaze recognized that

The minuet [sic]. . . is of a striking originality. Its cadences in sharp keys denote that this movement written in F major was destined to belong to a symphony in A major.<sup>56</sup>

His aesthetic as an arranger of pastiches then came to the fore:

If Beethoven had had to incorporate this minuet into a composition in C or B $\flat$  major, he would have modulated in some other manner although the minuet forms an independent whole.<sup>57</sup>

For Castil-Blaze, a belief in the independence of a movement or piece led to a practice of interchangeability of movements or pieces, altered as the situation required.<sup>58</sup> His term for such an interchangeability was "transposition." Explaining this to his readers, he wrote,

One could again notice transpositions in Beethoven's symphonies. One would be wrong to get annoyed over them since they are all to our advantage. It's not a matter of transposition of pitch, or change of key, or other fantasies which sometimes do the greatest damage to the effect of a musical composition, but of transposition of pieces. It's quite simply a question of arranged symphonies in which a ravishing andante, a minuet of a piquant liveliness, of an elegant strangeness, have been substituted for other pieces of the same type of which the all too harsh colour, the less graceful or less original melody would not have made the same impression on the listener.<sup>59</sup>

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piece, one wonders what version of the melody Castil-Blaze had on hand, as well as how seriously he accepted its authenticity." Bloom, 184-185.

<sup>56</sup>"Le menuet. . . est d'une piquante originalité; ses cadences en tons de dièzes [sic] annoncent que ce morceau écrit en *fa* était destiné à faire partie d'une symphonie en *la*." *Journal des Débats*, 9 March 1829.

<sup>57</sup>"Si Beethoven avait dû encadrer ce menuet dans une composition en *ut* ou en *si bémol*, il aurait modulé d'une autre manière, bien que le menuet forme un tout indépendant." *Journal des Débats*, 9 March 1829.

<sup>58</sup>Bloom, 186.

<sup>59</sup>"On a pu remarquer encore des transpositions dans les symphonies de Beethoven; on auroit tort de s'en fâcher, puisqu'elles sont toutes à notre avantage. Il ne s'agit point ici de transpositions de ton, de changement de diapason, et autres fantaisies qui portent quelquefois le plus grand tort à l'effet d'une composition musicale, mais de transpositions de morceaux. Ce sont tout bonnement des symphonies arrangées dans lesquelles un andante ravissant, un minuetto d'une piquante vivacité, d'une bizarrerie élégante, ont été substitués à d'autres morceaux de même nature, dont la couleur trop sévère, la mélodie

Spoken like a true *pasticheur*. And Castil-Blaze practiced what he preached! The proof of this was when he used music from the Allegretto and the final movement of this very symphony in his version of *Léonore*.<sup>60</sup>

If Castil-Blaze used music from the finale to this symphony, then surely he must have thought highly of it. Not in this feuilleton! He was put off by the tertian key relationships used in the third movement:

The frequent transitions from the key of F major to D major are not of an agreeable effect. The finale is inferior. . . it's a musical folie more bizarre than merry.<sup>61</sup>

The question then arises, why use music from such a "bizarre" movement as this? For the simple reason that it made a tremendous effect. In spite of his mixed feelings, the performance of the Conservatoire orchestra sealed his verdict: The giant of the symphony came out of it victoriously.<sup>62</sup>

Concurrently, Fétis shared Castil-Blaze's opinions on the symphony:

Its opening is beautiful, extensive, filled with newness. . . Long, fastidious work more bizarre than original on a very short motive. . . leads the listener to the end of the first movement after having fatigued rather than satisfied his attention. . .

Nothing is more original than the minuet or *scherzo*. . . I only find one fault in it: it's the continual modulation from the key of F major to that of D major. . .

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moins gracieuse ou moins originale, n'auroient pas fait éprouver la même sensation à l'auditoire." *Journal des Débats*, 1 June 1827.

<sup>60</sup>Ludwig van Beethoven, *Fidelio*, Wilhelm Altmann, "Beethoven's Fidelio. Zur Geschichte der Entstehung, Aufführung und Veröffentlichung." (London: Ernst Eulenburg Ltd., n.d.), xxiii.

<sup>61</sup>. . . les transitions fréquents du ton de *fa* naturel à *re* naturel ne sont pas d'un effet agréable. Le finale est inférieur. . . c'est une folie musicale plus bizarre que gaie." *Journal des Débats*, 9 March 1829.

<sup>62</sup>"Le géant de la symphonie en est sorti victorieusement." *Journal des Débats*, 9 March 1829.

The finale is one of those inconceivable creations that could only come from a sublime and sick mind.<sup>63</sup>

In the last line of this quote, one finds echoes of Weber's criticism that "Beethoven must be mad" to have written such a movement.

Castil-Blaze was obviously familiar with the score of this work since he was able to cite keys of particular episodes and movements. This familiarity allowed him to better appraise the work and to imagine solutions to hypothetical problems.

### **Symphony No. 8 in F major op. 93**

This work—the *Petite Symphonie en fa*—was performed on 19 February 1832, making it the last of Beethoven's symphonies eventually to appear in Paris. It also turned out to be Castil-Blaze's last year at the *Journal des Débats*. Unfortunately, Castil-Blaze did not review this symphony in his feuilletons.

### **Symphony No. 9 in D minor op. 125 (*Symphonie avec choeurs*)**

Castil-Blaze first announced the existence of this work in 1827, along with his source: "Beethoven published a symphony with choruses last year of which marvels are spoken. We had been notified of this by the English journals."<sup>64</sup> Before the work was first performed, Castil-Blaze offered the reader a sketch of what to expect:

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<sup>63</sup>"Le début en est beau, large, rempli de nouveauté. . . Un travail long, fastidieux, et plus bizarre qu'original, sur un motif très court. . . conduit l'auditeur jusqu'à la fin du premier morceau, après avoir plus fatigué que satisfait son attention. . . .

Rien de plus original que le menuet ou *scherzo*. . . Je n'y trouve qu'un seul défaut, c'est le passage continuel du ton de *fa majeur* à celui de *ré majeur*. . . .

Le finale est une de ces créations inconcevables qui n'ont pu sortir que d'un cerveau sublime et malade." F.-J. Fétis, *Revue musicale* V (1829), 131-132; quoted in Prod'homme, 325-326.

<sup>64</sup>"Beethoven a publié l'année dernière une symphonie avec des choeurs dont on dit des merveilles; nous en avons été instruits par les journaux anglais." *Journal des Débats*, 1 June 1827.

It contains two pieces, a minuet especially, which, for the grandness of the scale, the force of the rhythm, the originality of ideas, the art of bringing them into play and the newness of effects are above anything we know.<sup>65</sup>

By two pieces, Castil-Blaze probably meant the exclusively instrumental movements of the symphony as one piece and the finale, which combines voices and instruments, as the other piece.

Castil-Blaze joined his voice to the popular critical refrain about Beethoven's vocal writing.

Beethoven who has handled instruments in so marvelous a manner has not succeeded in his vocal compositions as much as his admirable talent could have led one to hope.<sup>66</sup>

It is regrettable that Castil-Blaze provided no feuilleton for the work's first Paris performance on 27 March 1831.

### ***Egmont Overture op. 84***

After a performance by the Conservatoire orchestra in 1830, Castil-Blaze maintained that this

very beautiful work. . . [with] impoverished melody. . . can only have success when the orchestral effects are given with the power of sound, the skill, the liveliness in handling, and the unity of intention that one finds at the Conservatoire.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> . . . elle renferme deux morceaux, un menuet surtout qui pour le grandiose du plan, la force du rythme, l'originalité des idées, l'art de les mettre en oeuvre, et la nouveauté des effets sont au-dessus de tout ce que nous connaissons." *Journal des Débats*, 30 March 1830.

<sup>66</sup> "Beethoven qui fait manoeuvrer les instrumens d'une manière si merveilleuse n'a pas réussi dans ses compositions vocales autant que son admirable talent pouvait le faire espérer." *Journal des Débats*, 23 April 1830.

<sup>67</sup> . . . un très beau travail. . . pauvre de mélodie. . . ne peut avoir du succès que quand les effets d'orchestre sont rendus avec la puissance de son, l'habileté, la vivacité dans les manoeuvres, et l'unité d'intention que l'on rencontre au Conservatoire." *Journal des Débats*, 11 April 1830.

A gustatorial metaphor was used to liken the Languedoc tradition of eating soup for dessert to the placement of a symphony within a concert program. Castil-Blaze concluded that

Everything is for the best. We are progressing towards perfection. While expecting that we are to have soup for dessert, the Conservatoire has just changed the order of its menu. The symphony, which in all times figured as the entrée at a concert for which it used to form the overture and introduction, now serves to close the performance. It owes this exclusive honour to Beethoven.<sup>68</sup>

### *Le Mont des Oliviers op. 85*

The performances of this oratorio given at the *Concerts spirituels* provided Parisians of the 1820s with their first acquaintance with Beethoven's vocal music. Castil-Blaze attended these concerts and wrote of the experience:

This composition, which is really impossible to know inside out after having heard it only once, is of an august and severe character. The introduction produced an indescribable sensation. It strikes a religious terror in the soul and prepares us for the emotions that it will make us experience.<sup>69</sup>

But just how did Castil-Blaze translate its "august and severe character" or "indescribable sensation" into words for the reader? With the time-honoured use of oratory:

O you who, without knowing why, and only to repeat an old saying, cease not to proscribe the timpani, *the deafening timpani*. Go to hear this masterpiece by Beethoven and resist if you can

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<sup>68</sup>"Tout se fait pour le mieux: nous marchons vers la perfection; en attendant que nous mangions la soupe au dessert, le Conservatoire vient de changer l'ordre de son service. La symphonie, qui, dans tous les temps, a figuré à l'entrée d'un concert dont elle formait l'ouverture et l'introduction, sert maintenant à clore la séance; c'est à Beethoven qu'elle doit cet honneur insigne." *Journal des Débats*, 9 March 1829.

<sup>69</sup>"Cette composition, qu'il est impossible de bien posséder après l'avoir entendue une seule fois, est d'un caractère auguste et sévère. L'introduction produit une sensation qu'on ne sauroit décrire: elle porte dans l'âme une terreur religieuse, et nous prépare aux sentimens qu'on va nous faire éprouver." *Journal des Débats*, 14 April 1822.

the effect of the magic tones of this instrument that you disdain!<sup>70</sup>

A brief evocative analysis ensued, attempting to place the reader not only into the music but right onto the Mount itself.

A distant march announces the arrival of the Jews. Here the musical expression triumphs over all obstacles and presents them to the imagination. Circling the hill, they approach, and the same melodies that the orchestra alone had earlier presented unite with the voices of the satellites of Judas. The angels and the apostles join this tumultuous debate and one hears choruses opposed to one another, choruses well characterised and of a marvellous effect. The victim is carried along and the celestial powers celebrate the august sacrifice with a chorus of praise.<sup>71</sup>

Several paragraphs on the performance of the oratorio follow, with most of this space devoted to the *littérateur's* handling of the translation from German to French. Both praise and condemnation flowed from Castil-Blaze's pen.

. . . This translation is excellent for a literary hack who has done all that he could do. . . I am well aware that trained singers bravely confront the difficulties with which the translator opposed them. They can only surmount them however by disfiguring the composer's work.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>70</sup>"O vous qui, sans savoir pourquoi, et seulement pour répéter un vieux dicton, ne cessez de proscrire les timbales, *les timbales assourdissantes*, allez entendre ce chef-d'oeuvre de Beethoven, et résistez si vous pouvez à l'effet des sons magiques de cet instrument que vous dédaignez!" *Journal des Débats*, 14 April 1822.

<sup>71</sup>"Une marche lointaine annonce l'arrivée des juifs: ici l'expression musicale triomphe de tous les obstacles, et les présente à l'imagination. Tournant autour de la colline, ils s'approchent, et les mêmes mélodies que l'orchestre seul avoit présentées d'abord s'unissent aux voix des satellites de Judas; les anges et les apôtres se mêlent à ce débat tumultueux, et l'on entend des chœurs opposés les uns aux autres, des chœurs bien caractérisés et d'un merveilleux résultat. La victime est entraînée et les puissances célestes célèbrent l'auguste sacrifice par un chœur de louanges." *Journal des Débats*, 14 April 1822.

<sup>72</sup>" . . .cette traduction est excellente pour un littérateur qui a fait tout ce qu'il pouvait faire. . . Je sais bien que les chanteurs exercés affrontent bravement les difficultés que le traducteur leur a opposées, ils ne peuvent cependant les surmonter qu'en défigurant l'oeuvre de compositeur." *Journal des Débats*, 14 April 1822.

Clearly, Castil-Blaze's evocative analyses were all the more effective when he had a libretto to work with.

### *Missa solennis* op. 123

This work was performed at the *Concerts spirituels* in 1824, though Castil-Blaze did not review it. Later that year however, Castil-Blaze mentioned this work in a letter written to the Vicomte de Valernes:

This week I will bring out the superbe *Messe solennelle* by Beethoven that was performed at the last *Concerts spirituels*. It is a masterpiece. The large score superbly engraved and printed on fine paper will only cost subscribers 12 francs and has a regular price of 36 francs. I will also reserve a copy for you. I believe that it will not disgrace your beautiful collection.<sup>73</sup>

Yet, it would be four years before this work was mentioned in Castil-Blaze's feuilletons. The Benedictus from the *Missa solennis* was twice reviewed by Castil-Blaze in 1828. He felt that this movement was not superior to the Kyrie of the same Mass, but owed its popularity to "the effects that result from the opposition of four recitative sections to the chorus. . ."<sup>74</sup> Noteworthy are Castil-Blaze's comments on the performance of sacred, as opposed to secular, music.

The Benedictus was performed with ensemble and precision, but not with that religious emotion, that severity of colour and style that sacred music requires.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>73</sup>"Je vais faire paraître cette semaine la superbe Messe solennelle de Beethoven que l'on a exécutée aux derniers Concerts spirituels. C'est un chef-d'oeuvre, la grand partition superbement gravée et imprimée sur un beau papier ne coûtera que 12<sup>f</sup> aux souscripteurs[.] Le prix en est de 36[.] Je vous en réserverai aussi un exemplaire, je crois que cela ne déparera pas votre belle collection." Castil-Blaze, Paris, to Vicomte de Valernes, Vaucluse, 22 November 1824, Département de la musique, Bibliothèque nationale, Paris, France.

<sup>74</sup>". . . des effets qui résultent des quatre parties récitantées opposées au choeur. . ." *Journal des Débats*, 29 March 1828.

<sup>75</sup>"Le Benedictus a été exécuté avec ensemble et précision, mais non pas avec ce sentiment religieux, cette sévérité de couleur et de style que demande la musique sacrée." *Journal des Débats*, 29 March 1828.



From Castil-Blaze's few comments regarding this work, one can see that a sacred work had to be performed with an inner conviction. When this conviction was lacking, the performance was marred. It was the task of the reader to imagine how a work was to be performed in a sacred manner.

### **The Feuilletons about Beethoven's *Fidelio***

The first mention of *Fidelio* dated from the time of Castil-Blaze's acquaintance with Weber's *Der Freischütz*.

*Der Freischütz* by Weber, *Fidelio* by Beethoven: these are the works that the translator of *The Barber of Seville* has borrowed from Germany.<sup>76</sup>

However, it was *Der Freischütz*, or rather *Robin des Bois*, which made it to the Parisian stage first. Castil-Blaze did bring out a version of *Fidelio*, though retitled as *Léonore*.<sup>77</sup> It was never performed in Paris.

### **Overture to *Fidelio***

After attending a concert at which this overture was performed, Castil-Blaze was left with mixed opinions:

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<sup>76</sup>*Der Freischütz* de Weber, *Fidelio* de Bethoven [sic]: tels sont les ouvrages que le traducteur du *Barbier de Séville* a empruntés aux Allemands." *Journal des Débats*, 9 April 1824.

<sup>77</sup>Wilhelm Altmann states that during the last years of the 1820s Castil-Blaze had engendered his version interpolating music from the *Allegretto* and *Finale* of Beethoven's Symphony No. 7 as well as from *Adelaïde*. Beethoven, *Fidelio*, ed. Wilhelm Altmann, xxiii.

It's a work full of vigour in which one recognizes the talent of Beethoven, but not his genius. This orchestral work, admirably performed, only produced a mediocre effect.<sup>78</sup>

### *Fidelio*

The first of Castil-Blaze's four feuilletons on *Fidelio* appeared in 1830. Castil-Blaze allocated his discussion of the opera over three columns, one each for audience reaction, discussion of music and performance criticism of selected vocalists. Castil-Blaze gave the impression that the complete performance of this opera ended as any other, but then,

The curtain fell to the sustained noise of applause, the orchestra members were packing their bags, the retreat had been sounded, and yet spectators remained at their door, clapping furiously and shouting *encore*.<sup>79</sup>

He continued to describe the scene and then added the thoughts that he imagined must be running through Haizinger's mind:

The curtain rose, the actors once more filled the stage, Haizinger moved forward to be informed of an all too laconically expressed request which was difficult to interpret.

'What's this? Do we have to do the opera all over again like they did in Vienna in honour of Cimarosa whose *Matrimonio segreto* appeared on the stage twice in one evening? Do we have to start the arias, the duets again? — No, that would be abusing your goodwill. Please repeat the finale, the chorus in C, and we will be satisfied.'<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>78</sup>" . . .c'est un morceau plein de vigueur, dans lequel on reconnaît le talent de Beethoven, mais non pas son génie. Cette symphonie, admirablement exécutée, n'a produit qu'un médiocre effet." *Journal des Débats*, 9 March 1829.

<sup>79</sup>"La toile est tombée au bruit prolongé des applaudissemens, les symphonistes pliaient bagage, l'heure de la retraite avait sonné, et pourtant les spectateurs restaient à leur porte, battant des mains avec fureur et criant *bis*." *Journal des Débats*, 11 May 1830.

<sup>80</sup>"Le rideau s'est relevé, les acteurs ont regarni la scène, Haizinger s'est avancé pour avoir communication d'une demande exprimée d'une manière trop laconique, et qu'il était difficile d'interpréter.

'Was ist das? Faut-il redire l'opéra tout entier comme on le fit à Vienne en l'honneur de Cimarosa, dont le *Matrimonio segreto* parut deux fois sur la scène dans une même soirée? Faut-il recommencer les airs, les duos? — Non, ce serait abuser de votre

Yes, the finale was repeated and Castil-Blaze praised the French audience for admiring such a work. Now that Castil-Blaze had engaged the reader's attention, he moved to his discussion about the music. He found Beethoven's orchestral writing quite effective:

The music of *Fidelio*, perfect from the stylistic viewpoint, is also rich in vocal melody. . . The details of the orchestral part which joins the discourse of the singer, those groups so well combined are not a veneer, a clever mosaic arrayed on paper to convey picturesque contrasts and fill the empty spaces with more or less artifice. All these effects have been dreamed and conceived by the genius and effortlessly join the overall design.<sup>81</sup>

Castil-Blaze anticipated the reader's thoughts that one would have to be a genius to enjoy the music of a genius.

The *dilettante*. . . easily receives the impression that one wished to make on him, whereas the connoisseur cannot refrain from following the sequence of the parts. . .<sup>82</sup>

Castil-Blaze, like so many others, was ill at ease with Beethoven's vocal writing:

Beethoven has disposed his voices in an instrumental manner, he readily leads them to high pitch and keeps them in this overly high range.<sup>83</sup>

He was also critical of a six-four chord which resolved into a root position of the same chord:

In the twelfth measure of this overture when the clarinets, sustaining in thirds, form a resolution to A, the horns always

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bonne volonté; répétez le finale, le chœur en *ut*, et nous serons satisfaits." *Journal des Débats*, 11 May 1830.

<sup>81</sup>"La musique de *Fidelio*, parfaite sous le rapport du style, est encore riche de mélodie vocale. . . Les détails de symphonie qui se mêlent aux discours du chanteur, ces groupes si bien combinés ne sont point un placage, une savante marqueterie disposée sur le papier pour amener des contrastes pittoresques et remplir des vides avec plus ou moins d'artifice. Tous ces effets ont été rêvés et conçus par le génie, et se lient sans efforts au dessin général." *Journal des Débats*, 11 May 1830.

<sup>82</sup>"Le *dilettante*. . . reçoit sans trouble l'impression qu'on a voulu produire sur lui, tandis que le connoisseur ne peut se défendre de suivre l'enchaînement des parties. . ." *Journal des Débats*, 11 May 1830.

<sup>83</sup>"Beethoven a disposé ses voix d'une manière instrumentale, il les conduit volontiers à l'aigu et les maintient dans ce diapason trop haut." *Journal des Débats*, 11 May 1830.

keep to the low E. This extension that the composer has done, no doubt to preserve the symmetry of his phrase, does not seem at all justified to me. The sixth and the fourth over the E leading to an A major chord has nothing pleasant for the ear.<sup>84</sup>

A reader with some musical training will note that Castil-Blaze craved the dominant chord just before the *allegro* at bar 13. From this criticism, we are able to ascertain that it was what is now designated as opus 72<sup>b</sup> that was performed as the overture.

This feuilleton was brought full circle by complimenting the performers, Haizinger and Devrient, and then exciting the reader for the next success:

Their presence, coupled with the superiority of this half of the score, constantly interested the listeners. . .

Since we have another Scio, give us *Les Deux Journées* (*Der Wasserträger*), and above all, be prepared to repeat the finale.<sup>85</sup>

Slightly less than a month later, Castil-Blaze supplied his readers with a second feuilleton about this opera. The most effective way for Castil-Blaze to relate Beethoven's style to his readers was to compare it to a work by a composer in their inter-compositional grid.

Without copying, without even precisely imitating Mozart, one sees that Beethoven has taken this master as his model. . . The soldiers's march of the first act presents an infinite number of connections of outline and harmony with the villagers's march in *The Marriage of Figaro*. . . Mozart's melody is much better suited for the voices, his colouring is fresher, more brilliant, and

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<sup>84</sup>"A la douzième mesure de cette ouverture lorsque les clarinettes, portant des tierces, forment une résolution en *la*, les cors tiennent toujours le *mi* au grave; cette prolongation que l'auteur a faite, sans doute pour conserver la symétrie de sa phrase, ne me semble point justifiée. La sixte et quarte sur le *mi* conduisant à l'accord parfait de *la*, n'a rien d'agréable pour l'oreille." *Journal des Débats*, 11 May 1830.

<sup>85</sup>" . . . leur présence, jointe à la superiorité de cette moitié de la partition, a constamment intéressé l'auditoire. . .

Puisque nous avons une autre Scio, donnez-nous *les Deux Journées* (*der Vasser-Trager*)[sic], et surtout soyez prêts à répéter le finale." *Journal des Débats*, 11 May 1830.

[he] does not show us those greyish hues, those arid periods that sometimes detract from Beethoven's music.<sup>86</sup>

Castil-Blaze explained that Beethoven's originality was precisely why audiences seemed cool to his music. Although taken aback by his music, they just did not know when to applaud.

. . . But this originality becomes fatal for the singer and at the end of a piece [it] takes all of the palms that he merited. . . The public, not finding the characteristics that announce and prepare the conclusion of an aria, believes that there is still something more to come and doesn't applaud.<sup>87</sup>

Castil-Blaze's final feuilleton on *Fidelio* spotlighted the main performers through comparison. Yet again Beethoven's vocal writing was reproached:

If M<sup>me</sup> Pistrich and those who have preceded her have always failed in this virtuosic passage in G, the fault is Beethoven's who has written it outside of the range of the secondary female role.<sup>88</sup>

Nevertheless, by feuilleton's end his conviction was firm: "Fidelio is a musical masterpiece. . ." <sup>89</sup> Yet, Castil-Blaze placed the ultimate success of the work not with the considerable compositional feats of Beethoven, but at the feet of the French audience:

if one of our composers was writing this opera today, if he had it performed at one of our theatres by a Haizinger, a Devrient,

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<sup>86</sup>"Sans copier, sans imiter même précisément Mozart, on voit que Beethoven a pris ce maître pour modèle. . . La marche des soldats du premier acte, présente une infinité de rapports de dessin et d'harmonie avec la marche villageoise de la Noce de Figaro. . . la mélodie de Mozart est bien mieux disposée pour les voix, son coloris est plus frais, plus brillant, et ne nous montre pas ces teintes grisâtres, ces périodes arides qui déparent quelquefois la musique de Beethoven." *Journal des Débats*, 5 June 1830.

<sup>87</sup>" . . . mais cette originalité devient fatale au chanteur, et lui enlève, à la fin d'un morceau, toutes les palmes qu'il a méritées. . . Le public ne trouvant pas les traits qui annoncent et préparent la conclusion d'un air, croit qu'il reste encore quelque chose à dire, et n'applaudit pas." *Journal des Débats*, 5 June 1830.

<sup>88</sup>"Si M<sup>me</sup> Pistrich et celles qui l'ont précédée ont toujours échoué dans ce trait en *sol*, la faute en est à Beethoven qui l'a écrit hors de la portée d'une seconde femme." *Journal des Débats*, 19 May 1831. Castil-Blaze is probably referring to Marzelline's aria (No. 2) bar 70 to 72 where she must hold a high G for two and a half bars. This section of the aria though is in C major.

<sup>89</sup>"*Fidelio* est un chef-d'oeuvre de musique. . ." *Journal des Débats*, 19 May 1831.

this masterpiece would be scorned. It would neither be listened to nor understood. . . It is not sufficient to make an excellent opera, to entrust the roles to good dramatic singers, it is still necessary to find an audience who wishes to accept the beautiful things that are presented to them, which does not despair of a work it does not understand on the spot. When attending a performance, the audience at the German theatre, the Italian theatre brings with it the most favourable attitude towards the musician. It knows how to listen, and it is especially in music that one must not judge without hearing.<sup>90</sup>

In this passage Castil-Blaze suggested two ingredients for a composer's successful reception in France. Firstly, one was better off being a foreigner and not a native Frenchman. The difficulties encountered by Berlioz in having his works performed attest to this. Secondly, one required an educated audience, one that did not listen unconcernedly to music wafting around its ears, but an audience that heard—took in and ruminated over, or in other words, listened knowledgeable and critically to a work.

## Conclusion

In 1820, Beethoven was so unknown in France that some, including Castil-Blaze, thought he was Dutch. Yet, by 1830 Beethoven had become so popular in Paris that small souvenir medals were being struck by a Mr. Gatteaux and sold by the publisher Launer. The French could, as Castil-Blaze commented, display Beethoven's, Mozart's and Haydn's medal in triangular fashion, just like France's fleur-de-lis.<sup>91</sup> With the addition of Beethoven's medal, a symbolic

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<sup>90</sup> . . . si un de nos compositeurs écrivait aujourd'hui cet opéra, s'il le faisait exécuter sur un de nos théâtres par un Haizinger, une Devrient, ce chef-d'oeuvre serait dédaigné, on ne voudrait ni l'écouter ni le comprendre. . . Il ne suffit pas de faire un excellent opéra, d'en confier les rôles à de bons chanteurs dramatiques, il faut encore trouver un auditoire qui veuille accepter les belles choses qu'on lui présente, qui ne désespère pas d'un ouvrage quand il ne l'a pas compris sur-le-champ. Le public de théâtre allemand, du théâtre italien apporte en entrant au spectacle les dispositions les plus favorables pour le musicien; il sait écouter, et c'est en musique surtout qu'il ne faut pas juger sans entendre." *Journal des Débats*, 19 May 1831.

<sup>91</sup>*Journal des Débats*, 8 April 1830.

trinity of musical royalty had now been completed. There were several factors that aided Beethoven's acceptance in France: an increase in the number of performances of his works, especially those given by the *Société des Concerts* under Habeneck, and the distribution of Fétis's scholarly *Revue musicale* amongst the musical intelligentsia. However, some years before the *Société des Concerts* and the *Revue musicale* were established, Castil-Blaze did his share in promoting the music of Beethoven in *De l'Opéra en France* and at the *Journal des Débats*. Let us not forget that Castil-Blaze used Beethoven to promote his own career as a *pasticheur*, in which *La Forêt de Sénart* played a prominent role.

Castil-Blaze endeavoured to treat Beethoven not as a deity or even a superhuman, but as one of the greatest composers who ever lived. However, this great man was still capable of flaws. Whether one accepts the flaws that Castil-Blaze pointed out is an entirely different matter.<sup>92</sup>

His writings on the symphonies were regrettably too terse to reveal much of Castil-Blaze's mind about Beethoven. An examination of the extant feuilletons about Beethoven's symphonies leaves the reader wondering whether Castil-Blaze had the musical insight and literary wherewithal to tackle such an analysis. However, this deficiency could be attributed to the dilemma of the evocative analysis. How could Castil-Blaze communicate Beethoven's originality when the inter-compositional grid of his largely musically untrained readers made little or no allowance for comparison to other works? Castil-Blaze was averse to providing stories to explain the mood or inner workings of purely instrumental works. Yet, his feuilletons about *Fidelio* and *Le Mont des Oliviers* were much more dynamic since he had a legitimate story to work with. Castil-Blaze's feuilletons about *Fidelio* were of the level that we would have come to expect from

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<sup>92</sup>Castil-Blaze claimed that the second movement of the *Symphonie pastorale* was far too long and needed to be cut.

his best work. Informative, critical, opinionated, witty and substantial, they display Castil-Blaze's feuilleton-istic strength.

Whether France read Castil-Blaze in the *Journal des Débats* or Fétis in the *Revue musicale* for insight on the symphonies, the opinions expressed therein were similar. The influence of Fétis on Castil-Blaze and vice versa is perhaps not as remarkable as it seems, however, for both men were schooled at the Conservatoire around the same time, and knew and respected each other since the early 1800s.

Among Castil-Blaze's writings on Beethoven, one item is lacking: an obituary. It is strange that Castil-Blaze, who thought so highly of Beethoven's works despite reservations, did not print an obituary about the composer, as the rival *Le Globe* had done, and as he had done for Weber and Gossec. Again, it should be remembered that by 1827, few of Beethoven's works had been performed in Paris. When one contrasts this with the situation for the works of Weber in Paris, i.e., *Der Freischütz* or *Robin des Bois*, the reason for this commission of omission becomes readily apparent. Nevertheless, Castil-Blaze can rightfully assume a place at the forefront of Beethoven's French admirers during the Restoration.



## CHAPTER SIX

### CONCLUSIONS

The feuilletons of Castil-Blaze in the *Journal des Débats* between 1820 and 1832 present a vivid picture of musical life in and around the French capital. The feuilleton was found in a daily newspaper, meant to be read and enjoyed through re-creating, and then discarded. This short life expectancy is the prime reason why Castil-Blaze's feuilletons still reside in obscurity. French music historians have given him little consideration. In his book *Histoire de la musique dramatique en France*, Gustave Chouquet notes that Castil-Blaze was a critic at the *Journal des Débats* and an indefatigable reader.<sup>1</sup> The prime focus of Chouquet's book was, of course, to study opera in France. It comes as no surprise then that Chouquet does not deal with Castil-Blaze's feuilletons, but his arrangements of operas such as Weber's *Der Freischütz*. Arthur Pougin's "Notes sur la presse musicale en France" deals primarily with the history of French music periodicals. Castil-Blaze is never mentioned as being a feuilletonist for the *Journal des Débats*, but rather as a contributor to various periodicals. A much more fruitful, though all too brief, discussion of Castil-Blaze can be found in Ernest Reyer's article "La critique musicale" in the *Le Livre du centenaire du "Journal des Débats" 1789-1889*, where he is accorded the distinction of being the first music specialist to be placed in charge of reviewing musical productions.<sup>2</sup>

Though the feuilleton in the daily newspaper of Castil-Blaze's day may have been ephemeral, it was the ideal means to disseminate musical criticism to a wide audience. The *Journal des Débats* provided ample room at the bottom of up to four pages for the feuilletonist to ply his trade. Today, such lengthy articles are not to be found in the dailies.

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<sup>1</sup>Chouquet, 243.

<sup>2</sup>*Le Livre du centenaire*, 427-432.

Castil-Blaze appeared at a time when the *littérateur* reigned supreme. His appointment to the *Journal des Débats* changed the direction of music journalism in France: a trained musician now proffered his or her views on music. Certainly, Castil-Blaze's achievements paved the way for future feuilletonists, among whom Hector Berlioz figures most prominently.

Castil-Blaze ably chronicled the musical scene of the French capital, the provinces and Europe in general. His manner of analyzing a work can best be described as an evocative analysis. In this active reading of the text, it was the reader who was to give meaning to the words in Castil-Blaze's feuilleton, by allowing the musical features, general composition or event, mood, or concert atmosphere to evoke the work in his or her mind. Castil-Blaze's choice of vocabulary, though spiced with musical terms from time to time, allowed a broad public to appreciate his writings through their re-creation of the music. Successful readings not only asked for a re-creation of some event, but equated the opinions of the reader with those of Castil-Blaze.

The reader was furnished with Castil-Blaze's unconditional admiration of Mozart which provided the measuring stick necessary for comparison of works by other composers. Castil-Blaze used a narratee to explain Mozart's music to his readers. Perhaps Castil-Blaze's country bumpkin was one of the aspiring masses flowing into Paris to consume the increasingly mass-produced products of culture. Castil-Blaze played on two conflicting desires, split up into two different audiences, though they could easily reside in the same person. First, there was the desire of the uninitiated to learn the world of high culture and so to better him- or herself. Second, he also spoke to those desiring to get beyond all artificially acquired culture to something pure, innocent, natural and transcendent. The latter dreaded the levelling and mechanization of democracy and the middle-class consumer, while the former was intimidated by the elitism, the aristocracy of the soul as implied by genius.<sup>3</sup> Placed in such a situation, the reader of the feuilleton is

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<sup>3</sup>Perhaps Castil-Blaze's sarcasm, entertaining to some readers, was born out of frustration over the attempt to write for these two dichotomous groups.

1) dispersed over the different moments of the performance and scattered into comparisons with other works in the tradition and 2) led toward a moment of transcendent unity as all the moments came together in one indescribable experience.

Castil-Blaze asked his reader to hear the magnificent results of an entire Gluck opera transposed down a tone. Through instalments, the reader could hear or re-hear the various grand operas by Auber, Rossini and Meyerbeer, one act at a time. Though the instalment procedure provided Castil-Blaze with more space to deal with these larger, more complicated operas, its issuing over a period of time placed a great burden on the reader. The reader now had to recall what was evoked in previous instalments, in order to give coherence not just to the entire set of instalments, but to the re-creation of work in question.

To be sure, the feuilleton also provided the means for self-promotion. There is no better example of this than in Castil-Blaze's feuilletons about Weber's *Der Freischütz*, or rather Castil-Blaze's *Robin des Bois*. Readers were always being manipulated to believe in the value of his arrangement over the veracity of the original composer's work.

The feuilleton also provided for passive reading. It was both a harbinger and chronicle of musical reports about institutions, concerts, music books and personalities. Castil-Blaze provided his readers with timely reporting about the vocal and instrumental virtuosi, as well as rising composers of his day. Unfortunately, today's reader interested in deepening his knowledge about these men and women may come away from the feuilletons disappointed. Castil-Blaze treated the instrumental concert through reportage. The same holds true, even for such an original composer as Beethoven. The evocative analysis was rendered largely ineffective if the reader did not have any work that could compare to Beethoven in his or her inter-compositional grid. The modern reader, of course, possesses a much larger inter-compositional grid than Castil-Blaze did, who wrote his analyses primarily for his day and not for future generations.

Another explanation can be extended for the disappointment in reading Castil-Blaze's feuilletons about Liszt, Paganini and Beethoven, among others. A doubt arises whether Castil-Blaze was totally familiar with the music of these composers, a requirement of the music feuilletonist which he stressed in his *De l'Opéra en France*. With regard to Liszt and Paganini, the modern reader comes away with the feeling that Castil-Blaze knew little about their music at the time of his writing. With regard to Beethoven's orchestral music, Castil-Blaze apparently knew the scores to Symphonies No. 6 and No. 7, but little else. In these instances, Castil-Blaze did not measure up to all of the qualities necessary for the music feuilletonist, qualities which he flaunted as possessing compared to the *littérateurs*. However, his unfamiliarity with some works did not render his feuilletons completely ineffective, but merely limited in their scope.

On the whole, Castil-Blaze was an effective music feuilletonist. He was more than just an "expert musical wine-taster who when blindfolded can imbibe a swig of aural elixir and give forth instantaneously with the musical equivalent of the château and year of bottling, telling if necessary, when the label is lying and the vintage has been re-bottled."<sup>4</sup> Castil-Blaze was a communicator of his musical passions and judgements, and in this light, he acted as judge, jury, prosecutor and defender. He educated and entertained his readers through his analyses which were expertly aimed at the feuilleton reader of the day. Castil-Blaze was also a chronicler of his musical age. His feuilletons provide a wealth of information and insight on a heretofore neglected period of musical history. It is for these reasons that Castil-Blaze's feuilletons in the *Journal des Débats* between 1820 and 1832 should occupy a place of prominence in the history of musical criticism and musical journalism.

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<sup>4</sup>Gíslason, 82.

## APPENDIX ONE

### The Titles of Castil-Blaze's Feuilletons in the *Journal des Débats*

The following pages contain a complete listing of Castil-Blaze's feuillets signed X.X.X. in the *Journal des Débats* between the years of 1820 and 1832. The dates of publication, translated into English below, are shown to the left. The headings and titles are presented in the original French. The *Journal des Débats's* inconsistent use of italicized and non-italicized script has been retained.

1820

#### DECEMBER

Thursday	7	CHRONIQUE MUSICALE
Friday	15	CHRONIQUE MUSICALE
Saturday	30	CHRONIQUE MUSICALE

1821

#### JANUARY

Friday	5	CHRONIQUE MUSICALE
Sunday	14	CHRONIQUE MUSICALE
Thursday	26	CHRONIQUE MUSICALE

#### FEBRUARY

Sunday	4	CHRONIQUE MUSICALE
Monday	19	CHRONIQUE MUSICALE

#### MARCH

Wednesday	14	CHRONIQUE MUSICALE
Friday	30	CHRONIQUE MUSICALE

## APRIL

Saturday 21 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE

Monday 30 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE

## JUNE

Monday 4 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE

Monday 18 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE

## JULY

Tuesday 24 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *L'Académie royale de Musique. Oeuvres de J.S. Bach. Olimpie et Fernand Cortès. Otello. Léontine Fay. M<sup>lle</sup> Lalande. Alexis, ou l'Erreur d'un bon Père.*

Sunday 29 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *De l'esprit en musique. — M<sup>me</sup> Bonnini. — Galli. — M<sup>me</sup> Pasta dans Don Juan. — Le Messie, de Haendel. — Le Barbier, de Rossini.*

## AUGUST

Sunday 5 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Otello. — Trompette à coulisse de M. Legram. — La Vente après Décès. — Réponse à quelques critiques. — M. Farrenc. — Sur l'établissement d'un Théâtre de Mélodrame chanté.*

Saturday 18 THEATRE ROYAL DE L'OPERA - COMIQUE Première représentation du *Philosophe en voyage*

Tuesday 21 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *De l'Etablissement d'un Théâtre de mélodrame chanté. — L'Oiseau bleu, à Versailles.*

Thursday 23 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *L'Art Lyrique, poème en quatre chants avec des notes, etc., par Alexis Lucot.*

## SEPTEMBER

Saturday 1 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Première représentation de *Roméo et Julietta*, musique de Zingarelli.

Tuesday 4 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Prix de l'Ecole de Chant et de Déclamation. — Méthode pour la nouvelle clarinette et la clarinette alto, par Iwan Muller.*

- Sunday** 8 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Ce que nous avons dit aux Italiens, et ce qu'ils nous répondent.* — Académie royale de Musique, *les Bayadères, la Vestale, Iphigénie en Tauride.*
- Wednesday** 19 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Académie Royale de Musique, *Iphigénie en Tauride.* — Opéra-Comique, *L'Habit retourné.* — *Tancredi.* *Moïse en Egypte,* de Rossini. — Théâtres des départemens, *le Barbier de Séville,* de Rossini; *les Noces de Figaro,* de Mozart.
- Thursday** 20 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE ACADÉMIE ROYALE DE MUSIQUE Première représentation de *la Gazza ladra,* opéra de Rossini, au bénéfice de M<sup>me</sup> Mainvielle Fodor.
- Tuesday** 25 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Enseignement mutuel appliqué à la musique, par M.B. Wilhelm.* — *Orgues de Barbarie, vielleurs des boulevards.* — *Rentrée de Martin à l'Opéra Comique.* — *Passage d'Horace expliqué par un jeune violoniste.* — *Collection des quintette [sic] de Boccherini, publiée par MM Janet et Cotelle* — *Clavi harpe de Dietz, perfectionné par M. Bodin-Lagrange.* — *Le Trésor supposé, au Gymnase.*
- Friday** 28 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Théâtre Louvois, seconde représentation de la Gazza ladra, mélodrame de Rossini.* — *Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique. Picaros et Diego.* — *Théâtre de Lyon, première et seconde représentation du Barbier de Séville, opéra de Rossini.*

## OCTOBER

- Tuesday** 9 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Errata. — *Euterpe et Polymnie, muses.* — *Orchestres des trois grands théâtres lyriques de Paris.* — *Roméo et Juliette de M. Steibelt.*
- Saturday** 13 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Le Barbier de Séville à Bruxelles.* — *Insurrection des pensionnaires du théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique.* — *Grand prix de composition musicale* — *Nouvelles diverses.* — *Rentrée de M<sup>me</sup> Pradher.* — *Le Barbier de Séville à Louvois. M<sup>lle</sup> Cinti.* — *Notice sur Monsigny, par M. Hédouin* — *Les Noces de Figaro à l'Opéra-Comique.* — *Romance de M. Garat.* — *La Camilla de M. Paër.*
- Wednesday** 17 THEATRE ROYAL DE L'OPERA-COMIQUE Première représentation du *Négociant de Hambourg,* musique de M. Kreutzer.
- Tuesday** 23 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Théâtre Italien, première représentation de Camilla, mélodrame en trois actes, musique de M. Paër.*

- Tuesday 30** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique*, Camille ou le Souterrain, *mélodrame, musique de Dalayrac*. — *Théâtre Italien*, Camilla, ossia il Sotterraneo, *mélodrame, musique de M. Paër*.

## NOVEMBER

- Thursday 9** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Académie royale de Musique*, Iphigénie en Tauride. — *Théâtre royal de l'Opéra-Comique. Martin*. — *Cours de chant et d'accompagnement-pratique, par MM. Panseron et Fétis*. — *Nouvelles des théâtres d'Italie*. — *Théâtre Italien, M<sup>me</sup> Pasta*. — *Variétés*.
- Sunday 18** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Mémoires sur la vie et les ouvrages du célèbre compositeur de musique Jean Adolphe Hasse, dit le Saxon, etc., par F.S. Kandler*. — *Variétés, Plagiats, Répétitions, Corrections*.
- Saturday 24** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Stratonice*. — *La Gazza Ladra*.
- Friday 30** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Première représentation de l'Italiana in Algeri, musique de Rossini*. — *M. Kalkbrenner*. — *Athalie, avec les chœurs de Schultz*. — *M<sup>lle</sup> Belleville*. — *Elisa e Claudio, de Mercadante à Milan*.

## DECEMBER

- Monday 10** THEATRE ROYAL ITALIEN *Don Juan*. — Début de M<sup>lle</sup> Corri.
- Tuesday 18** THEATRE ROYAL DE L'OPERA-COMIQUE *Gulistan*. — *Léonore et Félix*.

1822

## JANUARY

- Wednesday 2** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Première représentation des Noces de Figaro sur le théâtre de Lyon*. — *Inventions nouvelles*. — *Les Orgues*. — *Elixir musical*. — *Elisa et Clodio, [sic] musique de Mercadente [sic]*.
- Tuesday 8** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Académie royale de musique, reprise de Tarare*. — *Opéra comique, reprise de Jeanne d'Arc; rentrée de M<sup>me</sup> Gavaudan, dans le Diable à Quatre et les Petits Savoyards*. — *Nouvelles diverses*.

## FEBRUARY

- Thursday 21** THÉÂTRE ROYAL DE L'OPÉRA-COMIQUE *Reprise de Roméo et Juliette*.



## MARCH

- Monday** 11 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Psaumes de Benedetto Marcello. — Zelmira, de Rossini.*
- Friday** 15 ACADÉMIE ROYALE DE MUSIQUE Représentation au bénéfice de [sic] M<sup>me</sup> Mainvielle-Fodor : *Elisabetta, Regina d'Inghilterra (Elisabeth, Reine d'Angleterre)*, opéra de Rossini.

## APRIL

- Thursday** 4 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Théâtre italien, rentrée de M<sup>me</sup> Pasta, départ de M<sup>me</sup> Mainvielle-Fodor. La Gazza ladra.*
- Sunday** 14 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Petite revue des concerts.
- Thursday** 25 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE THÉÂTRE ROYAL ITALIEN. *Première représentation de Tancredi, opéra sérieux en deux actes, musique de Rossini.*

## MAY

- Thursday** 2 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Iphigénie en Aulide. — Le Gluck des concerts.*
- Friday** 10 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *S. Mercadante. — Théorie du Son, par M. Azais. — Ecoles primaires de musique. — Médailler français de M. Romagnesi. — Reprise de Camilla ossia il Sotteraneo, de M. Paër. — Variétés.*
- Thursday** 16 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Académie royale de Musique. *Aladin, ou la Lampe merveilleuse.*
- Wednesday** 29 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre royal de l'Opéra-Comique. — *Ma Tante Aurore.* Début de Cassel.

## JUNE

- Saturday** 1 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Théâtres des Départemens. — Les Noces de Figaro, musique de Mozart.*
- Monday** 10 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre royal Italien. *Première représentation de la Cenerentola (Cendrillon), opéra en deux actes de Rossini, pour le début de M<sup>me</sup> Bonini.*

## AUGUST

- Monday**      **12**      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Théâtre de Vienne, Zelmira de Rossini* (Extrait d'une lettre de Vienne).
- Tuesday**      **20**      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Théâtre Royal de l'Opéra-Comique Première représentation du Solitaire, opéra-comique en trois actes, paroles de M. Planard, musique de M. Caraffa.*
- Thursday**      **29**      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Opéra Italien, départ de Galli. — Opéra-Comique, divers débuts. — Gymnase-Dramatique, la Petite Lampe merveilleuse. — Musique sacrée, par M. Perne.*

## SEPTEMBER

- Tuesday**      **10**      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *M<sup>me</sup> Pasta.*
- Tuesday**      **17**      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Reprise d'Elisabetta, opéra de Rossini. — Grand prix de composition musicale. — Collection des meilleures partitions de Rossini avec accompagnement de piano, publiée par souscription par M. Pacini.*
- Saturday**      **28**      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Académie royale de Musique. Alfred-le-Grand, ballet pantomime en trois actes, de M. Aumer, musique de M. le comte de Gallemberg.*

## OCTOBER

- Monday**      **14**      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Académie royale de Musique. — Mosè in Egitto, opéra en trois actes de Rossini, au bénéfice de M<sup>me</sup> Pasta. Théâtre royal de l'Opéra-Comique. — Représentation au bénéfice de M<sup>me</sup> veuve Moreau, le Château de Montenero.*
- Tuesday**      **22**      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Académie royale de Musique.*
- Saturday**      **26**      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Mosè in Egitto, de Rossini.*
- Thursday**      **31**      THÉÂTRE ROYAL DE L'OPÉRA-COMIQUE *Première représentation de Fanfan et Colas, arrangé en opéra comique.*

## NOVEMBER

- Tuesday**      **12**      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Reprise de la Gazza ladra, de Rossini. — Cours élémentaire d'harmonie et d'accompagnement, par F.L. Perne. — Nouvelles d'Italie.*

**Thursday 21** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre royal Italien. — *Tancredi*. — Partition de *Zelmira*, opéra nouveau de Rossini.

#### DECEMBER

**Monday 2** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre royal de l'Opéra-Comique. Première représentation de *Valentine de Milan*, opéra en trois actes paroles de M. Bouilly, musique de feu Méhul, terminée par M. Danesoigne, neveu et élève de ce compositeur. — Partition de *Nadir et Selim*, musique de Romagnesi.

**Saturday 14** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Concert de M<sup>me</sup> Borgondio*. — *Médaille de Méhul*. — *Théâtres de Lille et de Bruxelles*. Première représentation de *la Pie voleuse*, opéra en trois actes, musique de Rossini.

1823

#### JANUARY

**Wednesday 15** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Situation des Théâtres lyriques*. — *Variétés*. — *Quintettes de Boccherini*.

**Thursday 16** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Royal Italien. Première représentation de *Medea in Corinto*, opéra en deux actes, de Mayer, au bénéfice de M. Garcia.

**Saturday 25** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Variétés*. — *Le Piccini des Concerts*.

#### FEBRUARY

**Thursday 20** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Quelques faits relatifs à l'ancien Répertoire de Feydeau*.

#### MARCH

**Wednesday 5** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Reprise de la Cenerentola*, opéra bouffon de Rossini. *Leicester*. M<sup>me</sup> Montano. Mlle Demeri.

**Friday 14** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Début de M<sup>lle</sup> Demeri au Théâtre royal Italien*.

**Monday 24** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Martin. — *Sémiramide*, musique de Rossini. — M<sup>mo</sup> Fodor. — *La Bouquetière*.

**Sunday 30** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Concerts spirituels*.

## MAY

- Friday**        **2**        CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Théâtre du Gymnase Dramatique, grand théâtre de Lyon, les Folies amoureuses, opéra bouffon en trois actes, d'après Regnard, musique de Mozart, Cimarosa, Paër, Rossini, Pavesi, Generali et Steibelt.*
- Thursday**     **8**        CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Théâtre royal Italien, première représentation de la Rosa Bianca e la Rosa Rossa, opéra seria en deux actes, de Mayer. Début de Bonoldi premier ténor. Théâtre royal de l'Opéra-Comique, début de d'Arboville.*
- Thursday**     **15**       CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Théâtre royal de l'Opéra-Comique. Première représentation du Muletier, opéra comique en un acte, paroles de M. Kock, musique de M.F. Herold. — Variétés.*
- Tuesday**      **27**       CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Théâtre royal Italien. Reprise d'Otello. Début de Bonoldi.*

## JUNE

- Sunday**        **1**        CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Giuseppe in Egitto, Oratorio del maestro Méhul. — Le Fixateur. — M. Legros de la Neuville. — Nécrologie, Garat, Bréval, Delamarre. — Deuxième représentation d'Otello.*
- Monday**       **16**       CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Théâtre royal de l'Opéra-Comique, l'Intrigue au Château, opéra en trois actes. — Théâtre royal Italien, Mosè in Egitto, début de M<sup>lle</sup> Bonsignori. — Académie royale de Musique, Virginie, tragédie lyrique, paroles de M. Désangiers, musique de M. Berton.*
- Sunday**        **22**       CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Il Matrimonio segreto.*

## AUGUST

- Friday**        **1**        CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Les Mystères d'Isis.*

## SEPTEMBER

- Saturday**     **13**       CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Encyclopédie des Dames. Histoire de la Musique, par M<sup>me</sup> de Bawr.*
- Monday**       **29**       CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *OEuvres de Rossini, édition de Pacini.*

## NOVEMBER

- Saturday 22 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Rossini à Paris.*
- Monday 24 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre royal Italien. *Au bénéfice de M<sup>me</sup> Pasta.* Première représentation de *Elisa e Claudio*, opéra semi-séria, en deux actes, musique de *Mercadante*; reprise de *Nina*, opéra réduit en un acte, musique de *Paisiello*, précédé d'un divertissement.

## DECEMBER

- Saturday 6 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre royal Italien. Reprise de *Don Juan* et d'*Otello*, départ de *Garcia*.

1824

## JANUARY

- Thursday 15 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Reprise d'*Agnèse*, musique de *Paër*. — Début de M<sup>lle</sup> *Amigo* dans *la Cenerentola*, de *Rossini*. — *Le Componium*, ou improvisateur musical de *M. Winkel*.

## FEBRUARY

- Sunday 1 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Situation du Théâtre royal Italien.* — Reprise de *Don Juan*. — *Concert de M. Lafont*.

## MARCH

- Friday 12 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *l'Inganno Fortunato*, de *Rossini*. — *Nina*, de *Paisiello*. — *La Neige*.
- Tuesday 23 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Le Sacchini des Concerts.* — *Théorie du Son*, par *M. Azaïs*. — *Franz Liszt*, pianiste improvisateur. — *Nouveaux pianos de MM. Erard.* — *Variétés*.

## APRIL

- Friday 9 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE L'ODÉON
- Wednesday 14 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Sur le diapason de l'Académie royale de Musique.*
- Wednesday 21 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Concerts spirituels.*

**Thursday 22** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre royal Italien. Début de M<sup>lle</sup> Mombelli dans *la Cenerentola*. — Théâtre de Venise. *Il Crociato in Egitto*, opéra de M. Meyerbeer. — Théâtre de Vienne. *La Neige*.

#### JUNE

**Thursday 3** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre royal Italien. — Première représentation de *Ricciardo e Zoraïde*, opéra seria en deux actes, musique de Rossini. — Début de Mari, premier ténor. — *Le Barbier de Séville*, début de Weixelbaum, etc.

#### AUGUST

**Monday 23** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre royal de l'Odéon. *La Pie Voleuse*.

#### SEPTEMBER

**Tuesday 7** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE M<sup>lle</sup> Schiassetti. — *Il Crociato in Egitto*. — Partition de l'*Alcade de la Véga*. — Sur le mot *andantino*. — M. Mirecki. — Concours de l'Ecole royale de Musique. — *La fausse Agnès*.

**Thursday 9** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Première représentation de *la Donna del Lago*; opéra en deux actes, musique de Rossini.

**Monday 13** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Académie royale de Musique. *Didon*, de Piccini. — Début de M<sup>me</sup> Noël.

#### OCTOBER

**Wednesday 6** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre royal Italien. — *La Donna del Lago*, musique de M. Rossini.

**Tuesday 19** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Du drame lyrique*. — M<sup>me</sup> Pasta. — M. Rossini, etc.

**Thursday 28** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Reprise d'Otello*, début de Curioni.

#### DECEMBER

**Wednesday 1** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *L'Italiana in Algeri*. — *Mosè*. — *Semiramide*. — *La Fausse Agnès*. — *Requiem* de Mozart. — *Robin des Bois*.

**Saturday 25** THÉÂTRE ROYAL DE L'OPÉRA-COMIQUE *Les Deux Mousquetaires*, ou *la Robe de chambre*, opéra-comique en un acte, paroles de MM. Vial et Justin Gensoul, musique de M. Berton.

**Tuesday 28** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre royal de d'Odéon. *Robin des Bois*, ou *les trois Balles*, opéra en trois actes, imité du *Freischütz*, musique de Ch. M. Weber, paroles de MM. Castil-Blaze et Sauvage.

1825

MAY

**Monday 2** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre royal Italien. *Otello*. Début de Donzelli.

**Thursday 13** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Académie royale de Musique. *Alceste*. Changement du diapason.

JUNE

**Thursday 9** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *OEuvres de Grétry*.

**Tuesday 21** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre royal Italien. Première représentation de *il Viaggio à Reims, ossia l'Albergo dei Giglio'd'Oro* (le Voyage à Reims, ou l'Auberge du Lys-d'Or), opéra en un acte, paroles de M. Balocchi, musique de M. Rossini, ballets de M. Milos, décors de M. Blanchard. [Spectacle honoré de la présence du Roi et de celle de la Famille royale.]

JULY

**Thursday 7** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Concert de M<sup>me</sup> Catalani*.

**Thursday 14** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Il Crociato in Egitto*, opéra en deux actes, de M. Meyerbeer. — Velluti à Londres. — *La Clemenza di Tito*. — *Messe* de M. Berlios [sic]. — Concert de M<sup>le</sup> Bertrand.

**Saturday 23** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *OEuvres de Grétry*. (Deuxième article.)

AUGUST

**Tuesday 2** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Odéon. Deuxième représentation d'*Otello*, opéra en trois actes, paroles de M. Castil-Blaze; musique de M. Rossini.

**Saturday 6** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, pour la rentrée de Galli.

**Friday 12** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Traité du contrepoint et de la fugue, contenant l'exposé analytique des règles de la composition musicale, depuis deux jusqu'à huit parties réelles*; par F.J. Fétis, professeur de composition à l'École royale de Musique.

Sunday 21 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *La Cenerentola*. — La Gazza Ladra. — Galli. — Zucchelli.

Sunday 28 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Stratonice*. — *Les Deux Journées*.

#### SEPTEMBER

Wednesday 14 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *OEuvres de Grétry*. (Troisième article. Voy. les Nos. des 9 juin et 23 juillet.)

Saturday 24 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Première représentation d'*Il Crociato in Egitto*, opéra en deux actes de M. Meyerbeer.

#### OCTOBER

Saturday 1 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Correspondance théâtrale au sujet de *la Semiramide*.

Saturday 8 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre royal Italien. *Cenerentola*. — Début de Rubbini [sic] dans le rôle de Ramiro. — Nouvelles d'Italie.

#### NOVEMBER

Wednesday 16 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre royal Italien. Représentation de *Tancredi* à la nouvelle salle. — *La Donna del Lago*. Troisième début de Rubini, premier début de M<sup>me</sup> Schütz.<sup>1</sup>

#### DECEMBER

Saturday 10 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Semiramide*. — *Armide*.

Saturday 17 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Début de Rubini dans *Otello*. — *Diapasorama* de M. Matrot.

1826

#### JANUARY

Wednesday 25 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *M. Andreozzi*. — *Armide*. — *Olympie*. — *Nausieaa* [sic]. — Concert de M. Bénazet. — *La Guimbarde* de M. Eulenstein. — Concert de M. Lafont. — M<sup>me</sup> Mainvielle-Fodor.

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<sup>1</sup>This issue does not appear on the National Library of Canada's micro-reel of the *Journal des Débats*. As Providence would have it, Castil-Blaze included the entire feuilleton in his *Académie impériale de musique*, 2:193-196. The title was supplied in Gíslason, 231.



## FEBRUARY

Monday 20 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Armide, Lulli, Quinault, Gluck.*

## MARCH

Friday 17 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre royal Italien. Première représentation de *Zelmira*, opéra de Rossini. — *Il Barbiere de Siviglia*, représentation au bénéfice de Rubini.

## JUNE

Sunday 18 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Nécrologie. *Carl-Maria Von Weber.*

Friday 23 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *La Donna del Lago* ; M<sup>lle</sup> Sontag.

## AUGUST

Thursday 10 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. M<sup>lle</sup> Sontag. — M<sup>lle</sup> Canz. — Rentrée de M<sup>me</sup> Pasta.

Saturday 19 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Armide.*

Tuesday 22 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *OEuvres de Grétry.* (4<sup>e</sup> Article.)

## SEPTEMBER

Thursday 7 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Mémoires ou Essais sur la Musique*, par Grétry. (1<sup>er</sup> Article.)

Saturday 9 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. Première représentation d'*Adelina*, opéra en un acte, musique de Generali. — Début de M<sup>me</sup> Cantarelli. — *L'Inganno fortunato*, de Rossini.

Monday 18 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre royal de l'Odéon. *Le Mariage de Figaro*, opéra.

Monday 25 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Mémoires ou Essais sur la Musique*, par Grétry. (II<sup>e</sup> article. — Voyez le Numéro du 7 septembre.)

## OCTOBER

Tuesday 10 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Théâtre-Italien, Semiramide, début de M<sup>lle</sup> Cesari dans le rôle d'Arsace.* — *Trompettes à soupape.* — *Requiem de Mozart.* — *La Vieille.* — *Marie.*

## NOVEMBER

**Monday**      **6**      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de Madame. *Concert donné par M<sup>lle</sup> A. Bertrand.*

**1827**

## MAY

**Sunday**      **13**      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. Reprise de *Torvaldo e Dorliska*, opéra en deux actes, musique de Rossini. — Début de M<sup>lle</sup> Garcia. — Arrivée de M<sup>me</sup> Pisaroni.

**Monday**      **28**      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. *Semiramide*. — Début de M<sup>me</sup> Pisaroni.

## JUNE

**Friday**      **1**      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Concerts spirituels. *Institution de Musique religieuse, dirigée par M. Choron.* — *Exercices.*

**Monday**      **11**      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Solfèges*, par F. J. Fétis. — *La Donna del Lago*. — M<sup>me</sup> Pisaroni.

## JULY

**Sunday**      **1**      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *De la Musique dans les départemens.* (1er Article.)

**Sunday**      **8**      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtres étrangers. *Extraits du Journal d'un Amateur de musique en tournée.*

**Thursday**      **12**      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique. *Les Petits Appartemens*, opéra en un acte, paroles de MM. Dupin et Varner, musique de M.H. Berton.

**Thursday**      **19**      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtres étrangers. *Extrait du journal d'un amateur de musique en tournée.* (Voyez le 1<sup>er</sup> extrait dans le numéro du 8 juillet.)

**Sunday**      **22**      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Français. *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme*. — *Le menteur*. — *Les Folies amoureuses*. — *Turcaret*.

**Wednesday**      **25**      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Lalande.

**Saturday**      **28**      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique. *Jean de Paris*. — *Paul et Virginie*. — Débuts de M<sup>lle</sup> Verteuil.

## AUGUST

- Thursday** 2 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. *Tebaldo ed Isolina*, mélodrame héroïque en deux actes, musique de Morlacchi, 1<sup>re</sup> représentation.
- Saturday** 4 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique. *Les Deux Journées*, reprise de cet opéra.
- Wednesday** 8 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique. *La Dame blanche*. Début de M<sup>me</sup> Casimir et de Tiany.
- Monday** 13 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. *La Donna del Lago*. — Début de Poggi.
- Tuesday** 14 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Concours du Conservatoire*.
- Wednesday** 29 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique. *La Maison isolée, La Dame blanche*. — Débuts de Serda.

## SEPTEMBER

- Saturday** 1 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Le Piano*.
- Tuesday** 4 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Le Piano*. (Deuxième article. Voy. le Numéro du 1<sup>er</sup> septembre.)
- Wednesday** 5 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique. *Michel-Ange, Marie, les Rendez-vous bourgeois*, pour la rentrée de MM. Huet, Ponchard, Feréol, Chollet, Lafeuillade, et de M<sup>mes</sup> Boulanger, Rigaut, Prévost, Ponchard.
- Thursday** 14 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. *Guilietta e Romeo*, opéra en deux actes, musique de Vaccaï.
- Sunday** 23 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Exposition de 1827*.

## OCTOBER

- Tuesday** 2 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique. *Une Nuit de Gustave Wasa*, opéra en deux actes, musique de M. Gasse; première représentation. — Milan; théâtre de la Scala; *l'Ultimo Giorno di Pompei*, musique de Pacini.
- Thursday** 5 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Des Chanteurs*.
- Thursday** 11 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Orchestres des Théâtres des départemens*.

- Monday** 15 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique. Première représentation de *l'Orphelin et le Brigadier*, opéra-comique en deux actes, paroles de M. \*\*\*; musique de M. Prosper.
- Thursday** 18 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. *Guilietta e Romeo*. — M<sup>me</sup> Pisaroni.
- Tuesday** 23 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Lulli*.
- Tuesday** 30 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Académie royale de Musique. *Fernand Cortez*. — Début de Damoreau.

## NOVEMBER

- Tuesday** 6 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Académie royale de Musique. *La Vestale*. — Troisième début de Damoreau.

## DECEMBER

- Monday** 10 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Petite revue. — *Le Colporteur*. — M<sup>me</sup> Lalande.
- Friday** 14 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *L'Italiana in Algeri*. — *Le Colporteur*.
- Tuesday** 18 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Galerie des Musiciens célèbres. Compositeurs, Chanteurs et Instrumentalistes, par F.J. Fétis*.
- Sunday** 30 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique. Première représentation de *Mazaniello*, opéra en quatre actes, paroles de MM. Moreau et Lafortelle, musique de M. Carafa.

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## JANUARY

- Saturday** 5 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Concerts. — *Otello*. — M<sup>lle</sup> Sontag.
- Friday** 11 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Otello*. — M<sup>lle</sup> Sontag.
- Saturday** 12 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *La Donna del Lago*. — M<sup>me</sup> Pisaroni, M<sup>lle</sup> Sontag.
- Wednesday** 16 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Académie royale de Musique. (Représentation au bénéfice de M. Galli.) *Semiramide*. — *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. — M<sup>me</sup> Mallibrand-Garcia [sic].

**Saturday** 26 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. *Cenerentola*. — M<sup>lle</sup> Sontag. — Levasseur. — Donzelli.

#### FEBRUARY

**Sunday** 3 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. — M<sup>lle</sup> Sontag. — Début de Balfe dans le rôle de Figaro. — Messe de M. Lesueur.

**Friday** 8 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique. *Le Prisonnier d'Etat*, opéra en un acte.

**Saturday** 23 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. *Tancredi*. — M<sup>me</sup> Pisaroni, M<sup>lle</sup> Sontag.

**Monday** 25 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique. *Le Camp du drap d'or*, opéra en 3 actes.

#### MARCH

**Sunday** 2 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Académie royale de Musique. *La Muette de Portici*, opéra en cinq actes, paroles de MM. Scribe et Germain Delavigne, musique de M. Auber, divertissement de M. Aumer, décors de M. Cicéri.

**Monday** 3 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Académie royale de Musique. *La Muette de Portici*. — La Musique et la Danse. (Voir le numéro d'hier.)

**Thursday** 6 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique. *Le Mariage à l'anglaise*, opéra comique en un acte, paroles de MM. Vial et Justin Gensoul, musique de M. Frédéric Kreubé.

**Monday** 10 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Académie royale de Musique. *La Muette de Portici*.

**Wednesday** 19 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Concerts du Conservatoire.

**Saturday** 29 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Concerts du Conservatoire; Beethoven, Kalkbrenner, M<sup>me</sup> Herault, M<sup>me</sup> Malibrand.*

#### APRIL

**Thursday** 17 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Premier Concert spirituel.*

**Saturday** 19 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. Débuts de M<sup>me</sup> Malibran, *Semiramide, Otello*. — Concerts.

**Thursday** 24 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*; débuts de Santini. — M<sup>me</sup> Malibran.

## MAY

**Saturday** 3 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. M<sup>me</sup> Malibran. — Santini. — Zuccoli. — Martin. — Variétés.

**Thursday** 29 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique. Reprise de *Guillaume Tell*, opéra en trois actes, paroles de Sedaine, musique de Grétry, avec des changemens faits par MM. Pélissier et Berton. Première représentation.

## AUGUST

**Sunday** 10 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Grands prix de composition. — *Tancredi*, M<sup>mes</sup> Schutz, Adelina, Catalani.

**Saturday** 23 ACADÉMIE ROYALE DE MUSIQUE. *Le Comte Ory*, opéra en deux actes, musique de Rossini.

**Tuesday** 26 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtres lyriques de Paris. (1<sup>er</sup> Article.)

**Thursday** 28 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Concours du Conservatoire. — Nouveaux pianos de M. Erard. — Rentrée de M<sup>lle</sup> Sontag et de Zuchelli. — M. Benazet.

## SEPTEMBER

**Wednesday** 3 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *OEuvres de Méhul*. (1<sup>er</sup> article.)

**Friday** 5 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *La Gazza ladra*. — M<sup>lle</sup> Sontag.

**Monday** 8 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Opéra-Comique. *Adolphe et Clara*. — *La Dame blanche*. — Pour l'ouverture du théâtre.

**Thursday** 11 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique.

**Monday** 15 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique. *La Dame blanche*. — Début de Duprez. — *La Nascita del Sole* à Dresde. — Langue musicale inventée par M. Sudre. — Nouvelles.

**Thursday** 26 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Académie royale de Musique. *La Muette de Portici*, pour les débuts de Lafont.

**Saturday** 27 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique. *Une Folie*. — Débuts.

## OCTOBER

- Thursday**      **2**      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *OEuvres de Méhul*, — (Deuxième article.)  
*Euphrosine et Coradin*, pour la rentrée de M<sup>me</sup> Lemonnier.
- Saturday**      **4**      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Otello*, pour la rentrée de M<sup>me</sup> Malibran. —  
Ordonnance de police du 10 septembre 1828.
- Thursday**      **9**      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique. Première  
représentation de *la Violette* ou *Gérard de Nevers*, opéra en trois actes,  
paroles de M. Planard, musique de M. Carafa.
- Sunday**        **12**     CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. *Il Barbieri di Siviglia*, pour  
les débuts de Manuel Garcia, fils.

## NOVEMBER

- Friday**        **21**     CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Académie royale de Musique.  
Représentation au bénéfice de M<sup>me</sup> Marinette-Launer. *Le Jeu de l'Amour  
et du hasard*, comédie. — Le second acte du *Barbier de Séville*, opéra.  
— *La Fille mal gardée*, ballet. — *Deux Mots* ou *une Nuit dans la forêt*,  
opéra suivi d'un combat exécuté par l'infanterie et la cavalerie du  
Cirque-Olympique.
- Thursday**      **27**     CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *La Gazza ladra*, M<sup>me</sup> Malibran. — Ballade;  
MM. Baillet, de Vicq; écoles de musique. — Nouvelles d'Italie.

## DECEMBER

- Monday**        **1**      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre royal de l'Opéra-Comique. *L'Exil  
de Rochester*, opéra comique en un acte, paroles de MM. Moreau et  
Dumolard, musique de M. Russo.
- Wednesday**    **10**     CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique. Reprise  
d'*Aline, reine de Golconde*.
- Thursday**      **12**     CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. Première représentation de  
*Clari*, opéra en trois actes, musique de M.F. Halevy. (Premier Article.)
- Saturday**      **20**     CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Académie royale de Musique. Début de  
M<sup>lle</sup> Lebrun dans *le Rossignol*. Début de M<sup>lle</sup> Taglioni dans *Cendrillon*.
- Monday**        **29**     CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Théâtres lyriques de Paris; causes de leur  
décadence*. (Deuxième article.)

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## JANUARY

- Monday** 5 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. *Clari*, opéra en trois actes, musique de M.F. Halevy. (Deuxième article.)
- Tuesday** 13 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre royal de l'Opéra-Comique. *La Fiancée*, opéra en trois actes; paroles de M. Scribe, musique de M. Auber. Première représentation.
- Monday** 19 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique. *La Fiancée*. — Deuxième Article.
- Wednesday** 21 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Théâtres lyriques de Paris; causes de leur décadence*. (IIIe Article.)
- Friday** 30 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. Pour la rentrée de M<sup>lle</sup> Sontag.

## FEBRUARY

- Friday** 6 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Académie royale de Musique. *Le Siège de Corinthe*, pour les débuts de M<sup>me</sup> Maraffa-Fischer.
- Wednesday** 11 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique. *Pierre et Catherine*, opéra en un acte; paroles de M. de Saint-George; musique de M. Adolphe Adam. (Première représentation.)
- Wednesday** 18 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre-Italien. — *Les Fausses confidences*, *Tancredi*, M<sup>lle</sup> Taglioni. — Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique. — *Euphrosine*, *Jean de Paris*, pour les débuts de M<sup>lle</sup> Duchemin. — Mort de Gossec.
- Wednesday** 25 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Académie royale de Musique. Représentation *au bénéfice de M. Gardel*, maître des ballets. *Les Originiaux*, comédie. — Le 3<sup>e</sup> acte de *Romeo e Guiletta*, de Zingarelli. — *Psyché*, ballet. — *Les Petites Danaïdes*, vaudeville.

## MARCH

- Tuesday** 3 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Gossec.
- Monday** 9 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Deuxième concert du Conservatoire*. — *Concert de M. Beriot*.
- Monday** 24 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Troisième concert du Conservatoire*. — Théâtre-Italien, D. Giovanni.



## APRIL

- Wednesday 29 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Académie royale de Musique. *La Belle au Bois dormant*, ballet en quatre actes de M. Aumer, musique composée et arrangée par M. Hérold, décors de M. Cicéri. — Première représentation.

## MAY

- Saturday 9 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Septième concert du Conservatoire.*
- Friday 22 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique. *Les deux Nuits*, opéra en trois actes, paroles de MM. Bouilly et Scribe, musique de M. Boïeldieu.
- Monday 25 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Allemand à Paris.

## JULY

- Monday 20 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique. *L'Illusion*, opéra en un acte, paroles de MM. de Saint-George et Ménissier, musique de M. Hérold.

## AUGUST

- Wednesday 5 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Académie royale de Musique. *Guillaume Tell*, opéra en quatre actes, paroles de MM. Jouy et Bis, musique de Rossini, ballet de M. Aumer, décorations de M. Cicéri.
- Tuesday 11 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Académie royale de Musique. Deuxième et troisième représentation de *Guillaume Tell*. (Deuxième article.)
- Thursday 13 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Académie royal de Musique. *Guillaume Tell*. (Troisième article.)
- Thursday 20 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Académie royale de Musique. *Guillaume Tell*. (Quatrième article.)

## SEPTEMBER

- Saturday 5 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Concours du Conservatoire. — M<sup>me</sup> Malibran à Bruxelles. — Basse gigantesque. — M. George Onslow. — *L'Italiana in Algeri*, pour la rentrée du Théâtre-Italien.
- Wednesday 16 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Orgue expressif de M. Erard.* — Académie royale de Musique, *le Siège de Corinthe*. — Début de M<sup>lle</sup> Saint-Romain.

- Thursday** 17 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. *Semiramide*, pour la rentrée de M<sup>lle</sup> Sontag.
- Monday** 21 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. *Zelmira*, pour le début de M<sup>lles</sup> Heinefetter et Speck.
- Saturday** 26 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, pour la rentrée de Garcia.
- Monday** 28 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique. *Jenny*, opéra-comique en trois actes, paroles de M. de Saint-George, musique de M. Carafa.

## OCTOBER

- Saturday** 3 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. *Semiramide*, pour les débuts d'Inchindi.
- Tuesday** 6 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre royal Italien. *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*.
- Sunday** 11 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Académie royale de Musique. *Guillaume Tell*. (Cinquième article.)
- Saturday** 17 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre royal Italien. *Matilda di Sabran*, opéra en deux actes, musique de Rossini.
- Wednesday** 21 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. *Matilde [sic] di Sabran*. (Deuxième représentation.)
- Saturday** 24 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre royal Italien. Reprise d'*Elisabetta*, opéra en deux actes, de Rossini.

## NOVEMBER

- Friday** 6 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Concerts. — Débuts de M<sup>lle</sup> Albert à l'Académie royale de Musique. — *La Gazza ladra*, pour la rentrée de M<sup>me</sup> Malibran.
- Monday** 9 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique. *Le dilettante d'Avignon*, opéra-comique en un acte, paroles d'Hoffman et de M.L. Halevy, musique de M. Halevy.
- Thursday** 12 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de Mexico. — *Guillaume Tell*. — M<sup>lle</sup> Javurek.

## DECEMBER

- Monday**      **7**      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre royal Italien. *Don Giovanni*.
- Monday**      **14**      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre royal Italien. *Le Nozze de Lammermoor* (la Fiancée de Lammermoor), opéra en deux actes, paroles de M. Balocchi, musique de M. Carafa. (Première représentation.)
- Monday**      **21**      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Le Nozze di Lammermoor*. — Variétés. — Athénée musical. — *La Guerre des Dilettanti*, par M. d'Ortigue.
- Wednesday**      **23**      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. (Représentation au bénéfice de M. Garcia. ) Premier acte de *D. Giovanni*; deuxième acte de *Tancredi*. *La Guerre des Dilettanti*, par M. d'Ortigue.
- Monday**      **28**      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Musée Colbert, Harpolyre de M. Salomon. — *La Table et la Logement*, opéra comique en un acte, paroles de MM. Dumersan et Gabriel, musique de M. Chélaré; première représentation. — Concerts de l'Opéra et du Théâtre-Italien.

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## JANUARY

- Sunday**      **10**      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Académie royale de Musique. *Le Concert à la Cour*. — *Il Matrimonio Segreto*, premier acte. — *Nina*, ballet. (Représentation donnée au bénéfice de M<sup>me</sup> Damoreau.)
- Tuesday**      **19**      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Tancredi*. — *Don Giovanni*. — Adieux de M<sup>lle</sup> Sontag.
- Thursday**      **28**      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. Reprise de *Clari*, opéra en trois actes, musique de M. Halévy. — Concert de M. Moschelès.
- Saturday**      **30**      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique. *L'Hôtellerie de Terracine*, opéra-comique en trois actes, paroles de M. Scribe, musique de M. Auber. Première représentation.

## FEBRUARY

- Tuesday**      **9**      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Paganini*.
- Friday**      **12**      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. *Le Nozze di Figaro*. Le troisième acte de *Romeo e Guiletta*. — Représentation au bénéfice de Zuchelli.

## MARCH

- Thursday** 11 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Concerts du Conservatoire.
- Friday** 19 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Académie royale de Musique. *François Ier à Chambord*, opéra en deux actes, paroles de M. \*\*\*, musique de M. Prosper, danses de M. Vestris, décorations de M. Cicéri. ( Première représentation.)
- Tuesday** 30 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Théâtre Italien*. — *Troisième Concert du Conservatoire*. — *Variétés*.

## APRIL

- Wednesday** 7 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Quatrième concert du Conservatoire*. — Pimmaglione, Tancredi, *clôture du Théâtre-Italien*.
- Thursday** 8 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Théâtre de Milan, M<sup>me</sup> Méric-Lalande*. — *Il conte Ori, à Venise*. — *Médaille de Beethoven*.
- Sunday** 11 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Conservatoire de Musique. *Premier et deuxième concerts spirituels*.
- Monday** 19 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Chroniques musicales du Journal des Débats*, 1<sup>re</sup> livraison, contenant les années 1820 et 1821. — ouverture du Théâtre-Allemand, première et deuxième représentations de *Freyschütz* [sic].
- Friday** 23 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Allemand. *Faust*, opéra romantique en trois actes, musique de Spohr, première représentation.
- Sunday** 25 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique. *Danilowa*, opéra en trois actes, paroles de MM. Vial et Duport, musique de M. Adam. — Première représentation.

## MAY

- Monday** 3 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Allemand. *Bibiana*, opéra en trois actes, musique de M. Pixis. — *Das Unterbrochene Operfest (le Sacrifice interrompu)*, opéra en trois actes, musique de Salieri.
- Wednesday** 5 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Académie royale de Musique. *Manon Lescaut*, ballet pantomime en trois actes, de M. Aumer, musique de M. Halevy, décors de M. Cicéri. (Première représentation.)
- Saturday** 8 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Freyschütz* [sic]. Début de Woltereck et de M<sup>me</sup> Schroeder-Devrient.

- Tuesday** 11 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de Rouen. — Concerts. — Quatrième messe solennelle de M. Chérubini. — Télégraphe de société de M. Darel. *Fidelio*, opéra de Beethoven. — M<sup>me</sup> Schroeder-Devrient.
- Thursday** 13 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique. *L'Auberge d'Auray*, opéra-comique en un acte, paroles de MM. Moreau et d'Epagny, musique de MM. Hérold et Carafa; première représentation. — Théâtre-Allemand, *der Freyschütz* [sic].
- Thursday** 27 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Allemand. *Oberon*, opéra en trois actes, musique de C.M. Wéber. (Première représentation.)

## JUNE

- Saturday** 5 CHRONIQUE MUSCIALE Théâtre Allemand. *Fidelio*. — *Adelaïde*, cantate de Beethoven. — *La Famille suisse*, opéra en trois actes, musique de Weigl.
- Thursday** 10 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Allemand. Au bénéfice de M<sup>me</sup> Fischer, Ire représentation de *Cordelia*, opéra en un acte, musique de Conradin Kreutzer.
- Saturday** 26 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Allemand. *La Fiancée du Brigand*, opéra en trois actes, musique de Ries. — *La Vestale*. — M<sup>me</sup> Schroeder-Devrient. — *Fidelio*.
- Thursday** 17 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Allemand. *Le Sérail*, opéra de Mozart. — *Liebe kann Alles*, comédie de Holbein. — Le 2<sup>e</sup> acte de *Fidelio*.

## JULY

- Wednesday** 14 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique. *Clôture*.

## OCTOBER

- Monday** 4 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. *L'Ultimo Giorno di Pompei*, opéra en deux actes, musique de Pacini. — M<sup>me</sup> Mérie-Lalande.
- Thursday** 14 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Liberté des Théâtres.
- Friday** 15 CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Académie royale de Musique. *Le Dieu et la Bayadère*, opéra en deux actes, paroles de M. Scribe, musique de M. Auber, ballets de M. Taglioni, décorations de M. Cicéri, costumes de M. Duponchel, mise en scène de M. Salomé.

- Monday 25** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. *Ricciardo e Zoraïde*, pour les débuts de Davide et de M<sup>mes</sup> Tadolini et Micheli.
- Thursday 28** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique. *L'Enlèvement ou les Guelfes et les Gibelins*, opéra en trois actes, paroles de M. Saint-Victor, musique de M. Zimmerman, décorations de M. Gué; première représentation.

## NOVEMBER

- Thursday 4** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. *Il Matrimonio segreto*, pour les débuts de Lablache.
- Monday 15** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. *Otello*, pour la rentrée de M<sup>me</sup> Malibran.
- Thursday 18** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *L'Amzone*, opéra comique en 2 actes, musique de M. Amédée de Beauplan. (Première représentation.) — *Sémiramide*.
- Monday 29** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. Lablache, M<sup>me</sup> Malibran.

## DECEMBER

- Tuesday 28** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre-Italien. *Cenerentola*. — Lablache.

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## JANUARY

- Saturday 8** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre-Italien. *La Prova d'un Opera seria*, opéra en deux actes, musique de Guecco. — L'Académie royale de Musique. — L'Opéra-Comique.
- Tuesday 18** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique. *Les deux familles*, opéra-comique en trois actes, paroles de M. Eugène, musique de M. Labarre; première représentation.

## FEBRUARY

- Wednesday 2** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique. *Le Diable à Séville* ou *Riego*, opéra en deux actes, paroles de MM. \*\*\*, musique de M. Gomis. Première représentation. — Premier concert du Conservatoire.

**Tuesday 15** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. *Don Giovanni*. — Madame Fodor. — *Euriante [sic]*.

### MARCH

**Wednesday 9** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Fausto*, opéra semi-opéra en 3 actes.

**Saturday 12** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. *Fausto*, opéra en trois actes. — Première représentation.

**Sunday 20** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Flore et Zéphire*. — *Euriante [sic]*. — Concerts. — Soirées de M. Baillot. — Matinées de MM. Bohrer. — *Le Morceau d'ensemble*, opéra comique.

**Wednesday 23** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Paganini. *Deuxième et troisième Concerts*.

### APRIL

**Monday 4** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. — *Fausto*.

**Monday 25** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de l'Ambigu-Comique. *L'Hôtel des Princes*, opéra-comique en un acte, paroles de MM. Ferrière et M....., musique de M. Prévost.

**Wednesday 27** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. Fin de la saison.

**Friday 29** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. Bénéfice de Graziani. — *La Gazza ladra*. — *Semiramide*. — *La Prova d'un Opéra Seria*.

### MAY

**Friday 6** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Ouverture du Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique. *Zampa*, ou *La Fiancée de marbre*, opéra en trois actes, paroles de M. Mélesville, musique de M. Hérold, décorations de M. Gué, mise en scène de M. Solomé. — Première représentation.

**Tuesday 10** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Freyschütz [sic]*. — *Zampa*, la musique, les acteurs.

**Wednesday 18** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Allemand, *Freyschütz [sic]*, début de M<sup>me</sup> Rosner. — Théâtre de l'Ambigu-Comique, *le Grenadier de Wagram*, opéra-comique en un acte, paroles de MM. Lefebvre et Saint-Amand, musique de M.E. Prévost. — Rubini à Londres. — Paganini en province. — M<sup>me</sup> Malibran. — Concerts de M. Osborne. — Concert de M. Baillot. — M. de Sevelinges.

**Thursday 19** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Allemand. *Fidelio*.

**Wednesday 25** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Allemand. *Obéron*.

**Saturday 28** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Allemand. *Don Juan*.

#### JUNE

**Friday 3** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Académie royale de Musique. Ouverture de la Salle: *Guillaume Tell, la Somnambule*.

**Saturday 4** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Allemand. *Don Juan*.

**Thursday 16** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Allemand. *Euriante* [sic], opéra en trois actes, musique de C.-M. Weber.

**Tuesday 21** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Allemand. *Euriante* [sic], la musique, les acteurs.

**Wednesday 22** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Académie royale de Musique. *Le Philtre*, opéra en deux actes, paroles de M. Scribe, musique de M. Auber, décors de M. Cicéri.

#### JULY

**Monday 11** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique. *Le grand-Prix* ou *le Voyage à frais communs*, opéra-comique en trois actes, paroles de MM. Gabriel et Masson, musique de M. Adolphe Adam.

**Wednesday 20** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Académie royale de Musique. *L'Orgie*, ballet en trois actes, de MM. Scribe et Coralli, musique de M. Carafa, décorations de M. Cicéri, première représentation.

#### AUGUST

**Wednesday 3** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE *Le Philtre*. — *La Pie voleuse*. — Théâtre Italien.

**Monday 8** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de Tivoli. *Les Infortunes d'Arlequin*, pantomime burlesque, — *Le Vendemie di Xeres*, opéra semi-seria, en deux actes, musique de M. le chevalier de B\*\*\*, ballet de M. Petit. — Théâtre de l'Académie royale de Musique, le 2<sup>e</sup> acte de *Guillaume Tell, l'Orgie*.

**Monday 29** CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Sébastien Erard. — Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique; clôture. — Théâtre des Nouveautés; *le Barbier de Séville*. — Théâtre de l'Académie royale de Musique; *le Philtre, l'Orgie*.



## SEPTEMBER

- Saturday**      3      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien.
- Monday**        5      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. *Anna Bolena*, la musique, les acteurs.
- Tuesday**      13     CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Académie royale de Musique, *Armide*, en trois actes. Théâtre Italien, *Il Matrimonio segreto*.
- Sunday**        25     CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. *Tancredi*. M<sup>me</sup> Pasta, Rubini.
- Thursday**     29     CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Académie royale de Musique. Débuts de Dérivis fils. — Théâtre des Nouveautés. Débuts de M<sup>lle</sup> Camoin. — Théâtre Italien. *Otello*, Rubini, M<sup>me</sup> Pasta.

## OCTOBER

- Monday**        3      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Académie royale de Musique. *La Bayadère*, rentrée de M<sup>lle</sup> Taglioni. Théâtre Italien. *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, pour les débuts de M<sup>me</sup> Caradori.
- Friday**        28     CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre-Italien. — *La Sonnambula*, opéra en deux actes, musique de Bellini, première représentation donnée au bénéfice de M<sup>me</sup> Pasta. Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique. — *Le Roi de Sicile*, en un acte, paroles de MM. Frédéric Soulié et Dulac, musique de M. Casimir Gide.

## NOVEMBER

- Monday**        14     CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. *Cenerentola*, pour le début de Nicolini.
- Tuesday**      22     CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Opéra Italien. Les deux derniers actes d'*Otello*. — *La Prova d'un Opera seria*, réduite en un acte. — Représentation au bénéfice de M<sup>me</sup> Malibran.
- Wednesday**   23     CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Académie royale de Musique. *Robert-le-Diable*, opéra en cinq actes, paroles de MM. Scribe et Germain Dalavigne, musique de M. Meyerbeer, ballets de M. Coraly, décorations de M. Cicéri.
- Monday**        28     CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Académie royale de musique. *Robert-le-Diable*. La musique, premier acte. Deuxième représentation. (II<sup>e</sup> article.)

## DECEMBER

- Sunday**      4      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Académie royale de Musique. *Robert-le-Diable*. Deuxième acte. (Troisième article.)
- Thursday**    8      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre des Nouveautés. *Casimir*, opéra en un acte, paroles de M. Desnoyers, musique de M. Adolphe Adam. — Concert de M. Ferdinand Hiller. — Théâtre-Italien; *l'Italiana in Algeri*, pour les débuts de M<sup>me</sup> Raimbaux.
- Wednesday** 16      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Académie royale de Musique. *Robert-le-Diable*. Troisième acte. (Quatrième article.)

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## JANUARY

- Friday**      8      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Opéra-Comique. — Théâtre Italien, *Otello*.

## FEBRUARY

- Thursday**    5      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. *Il Pirata*, opéra en deux actes, paroles de Romani, musique de Bellini. (Première représentation.)
- Tuesday**     14      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Académie royale de Musique. *Robert-le-Diable*. 4<sup>e</sup> et 5<sup>e</sup> actes. (Cinquième article.)
- Friday**      24      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique. *Zémire et Azor*, réduit en deux actes.
- Tuesday**     28      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique. *Térésa*, drame lyrique en cinq actes. — Nouveaux pianos de Pape.

## MARCH

- Sunday**      4      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique. *Le Mannequin de Bergame*, opéra-bouffon en un acte, paroles de MM. Eugène et Duport, musique de M. Fétis.
- Wednesday** 14      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Académie royale de Musique. *Le Sylphide*, ballet en deux actes, de M. Taglioni, musique de M. Schneitzhoeffler, décorations de M. Cicéri. Première représentation.
- Saturday**    17      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE Théâtre Italien. *Comingio romito*, opéra en deux actes, paroles de Tottala, musique de Fioravanti. — *La Prova d'un Opera seria*. — Clôture du théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique.

## MAY

**Thursday**      **4**      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE    Concert de Paganini. — Départ de Lablache. — Méthode de violon de M. Mazas. — Concert de piano de M. Alkan. — *La Marquise de Brinvilliers*, à Strasbourg. — M<sup>me</sup> Eckerlin. — Partitions de *Robert le diable* avec accompagnement de piano.

## JUNE

**Saturday**      **23**      CHRONIQUE MUSICALE    Académie Royale de Musique    *La Tentation*, ballet en cinq actes, de MM\*\*\* et Coraly, musique de MM. Halévy et Gide, décorations de MM.....

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### Letters and Notes

The complete list of the autograph letters and notes concerning Castil-Blaze as contained in the holdings of the Département de la musique, Bibliothèque nationale, Paris, France is presented below. The numbering follows that of the Bibliothèque nationale's manual inventory for Castil-Blaze and F.-A. Boïeldieu.

#### CASTIL-BLAZE

1. Castil-Blaze, Dieppe to Mr. François Bruin [?], 16 July 1837.
2. Deposit receipt for arrangement of *Léonore*, Ministère de l'intérieur, Imprimerie et librairie, 28 December 1848.
3. Travel notes by Castil-Blaze, n.d.
4. Notes by Castil-Blaze about *Phyrné*, n.d.
5. Contract between Castil-Blaze and François Colombier for *Don Juan*, 10 November 1841.
6. Narrative fragment by Castil-Blaze, n.d.
7. Notes about music in Hamburg in 1814 by Castil-Blaze, n.d.
8. Draft of feuilleton about Gossec by Castil-Blaze, n.d.
9. Castil-Blaze, Avignon, to Alexander Choron, Paris, 28 March 1820.
10. Notes about Haendel by Castil-Blaze, n.d.
11. Manuscript of libretto to *La Fausse Agnès*, n.d.
12. Castil-Blaze, Paris to Mr. Ferville, Paris, 4 July 1832.

13. Castil-Blaze to Mr. Pacini, n.d.
14. Castil-Blaze, Paris to Mr. de Beauchesne, 1 March 1842.
15. Castil-Blaze, Paris to the Viscount of Valernes, Vaucluse, 22 November 1824.
16. Castil-Blaze, Paris to the Viscount of Valernes, Vaucluse, 1 January 1826.
17. Castil-Blaze, Paris to Auguste Girault, 10 October 1857.
18. Castil-Blaze, Mormoiron to Miss Girault de St. Fargeau, 6 May 1854.
19. Castil-Blaze, Mormoiron to Mr. Girault de St. Fargeau, 9 April 1854.
20. Fragment of notes by Castil-Blaze, n.d.
21. Page of notes bearing the title Folio 14, n.d.
22. Leroy, Paris to Castil-Blaze, Paris, n.d. [185- ?]
23. Contract between Castil-Blaze and Léopold Aimon for *Les Sybarites de Florence*, 17 November 1831.
24. Contract between Castil-Blaze, Avignon and Charles Laffillé, Paris, 20 October 1820.
25. Contract between Castil-Blaze and André Rossi, Paris, 21 July 1822.
26. Note from Castil-Blaze to Mr. Meyerbeer, n.d.

François-Adrien BOÏELDIEU

84. F.-A. Boïeldieu, Paris to Castil-Blaze, Paris, n.d.

**S.D.G.**