1998

Understanding French Grand Opera Through Dance

Maribeth Clark

University of Pennsylvania

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Abstract
This dissertation examines the reception of nineteenth-century French grand operas (ca. 1828-1879) at the Académie Royale de Musique in relationship to dance in order to understand how past choreographic practices inflected audiences' understandings of the spectacle. It focuses primarily on the music and the practices of the Parisian composer Daniel-François-Esprit Auber, and leans heavily on journalistic accounts of dance from the Revue Musicale, Le Ménestrel, and La France musicale to place his works in the context of more general practices and perceptions of operatic and choreographic works at this theater. These journalistic accounts, in combination with archival sources such as violon répétiteur scores and the partie de ballet, reveal the aesthetic and commercial importance of dancers and danced episodes to the genre of grand opera in general. In demonstrating this importance, the study recovers aspects of the French operatic experience that have been comparatively neglected by musicological scholarship.

The dissertation is comprised of four case studies, each focusing on a different issue of musical expression and understanding in the context of dancing. The first chapter examines the many ways audiences interpreted the bodies of Opéra dancers, concentrating particularly on the criticism of Théophile Gautier, the travesty role of the page, and bacchanales in Meyerbeer's Robert le diable (1831) and Le prophète (1849). The second chapter discusses the reception of the 1837 revival of La Muette de Portici (1828), an opera that starred a female mime alongside the more conventional singing roles, suggesting that its performance history reveals the increasing conceptual separation of ballet from opera. In the third chapter, the performance history of the fifth-act ball scene from Gustave, ou Le bal masqué (1833) serves as an example of the many types of permutations that divertissements underwent as part of the Opera's production process. The final chapter addresses issues of social dance, demonstrating how quadrille arrangements of operas shaped operatic listening habits.

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UNDERSTANDING FRENCH GRAND OPERA THROUGH DANCE

Maribeth Clark

A Dissertation
in
Music

Presented to the Faculties of the University of Pennsylvania
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

1998

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ABSTRACT
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Maribeth Clark
Supervisor: Jeffrey Kallberg

This dissertation examines the reception of nineteenth-century French grand operas (ca. 1828-1879) at the Académie Royale de Musique in relationship to dance in order to understand how past choreographic practices inflected audiences' understandings of the spectacle. It focuses primarily on the music and the practices of the Parisian composer Daniel-François-Esprit Auber, and leans heavily on journalistic accounts of dance from the Revue Musicale, Le Ménestrel, and La France musicale to place his works in the context of more general practices and perceptions of operatic and choreographic works at this theater. These journalistic accounts, in combination with archival sources such as violon répétiteur scores and the partie de ballet, reveal the aesthetic and commercial importance of dancers and danced episodes to the genre of grand opera in general. In demonstrating this importance, the study recovers aspects of the French operatic experience that have been comparatively neglected by musicological scholarship.
The dissertation is comprised of four case studies, each focusing on a different issue of musical expression and understanding in the context of dancing. The first chapter examines the many ways audiences interpreted the bodies of Opéra dancers, concentrating particularly on the criticism of Théophile Gautier, the travesty role of the page, and bacchanales in Meyerbeer's *Robert le diable* (1831) and *Le prophète* (1849). The second chapter discusses the reception of the 1837 revival of *La Muette de Portici* (1828), an opera that starred a female mime alongside the more conventional singing roles, suggesting that its performance history reveals the increasing conceptual separation of ballet from opera. In the third chapter, the performance history of the fifth-act ball scene from *Gustave, ou Le bal masqué* (1833) serves as an example of the many types of permutations that divertissements underwent as part of the Opéra's production process. The final chapter addresses issues of social dance, demonstrating how quadrille arrangements of operas shaped operatic listening habits.
ABBREVIATIONS

AWV Auber Werke Verzeichnis
F-Pn Bibliothèque Nationale
F-Po Bibliothèque de L’Opéra
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Introduction: French Grand Opera and Dance in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Paris

The resources and reputation of the Paris Opéra, the premiere lyric theater in Europe during the mid-nineteenth century, enticed an international spectrum of composers—including Rossini, Meyerbeer, Wagner, and Verdi—to produce works for its stage. Despite this domination by foreign

Several musicological studies focusing on the Paris Opéra as an institution and as a context for both a lyric and choreographic repertory inform this study. The dissertations of Carolyn Abbate and Marian Smith provide methodological models. See Carolyn Abbate, “The ‘Parisian’ Tannhäuser,” Ph. D. diss., Princeton University, 1984; and Marian Smith, “Music for the ballet-pantomime at the Paris Opéra, 1825-1850,” Ph. D. diss., Yale University, 1988. Abbate’s investigation of the “Bacchanale” from Wagner’s Tannhäuser provides an analysis of this controversial operatic moment from both musical and choreographic angles as well as within the context of general practices at the Opéra, most of which Wagner resisted. Her conclusions provide a contrasting frame in which to see the more traditional practices that this dissertation examines. Smith’s historical and stylistic account of ballet-pantomime outlines the musical and literary qualities that define this genre, providing a context for the operatic divertissements that form the primary focus of this study. In addition, Jane Fulcher’s The Nation’s Image: French Grand Opera as Political and Politicized Art (Cambridge University Press, 1987) and William Crosten’s French Grand Opera: An Art and a Business (New York: King’s Crown Press, 1948) contribute valuable political critiques of the changes that this theater experienced during the 1830s, while Stephen Huebner’s study of Parisian audiences adds an empirical dimension to the consideration of audiences from this time, both at the Opéra and at lower-ranking theaters. See Huebner, “Opera Audiences in Paris 1830-1870,” Music and Letters 70 (1989): 206-25. Although the secondary
composers, the Opéra maintained its identity as a French--if not a Parisian--institution. It owes this identity at least in part to the centrality of choreography to its productions. Other leading European theaters--La Scala in Milan, the Kärntner Tor Theater in Vienna, Covent Garden in London--employed dancers and produced ballets, but dance was nowhere so intrinsic to the identity of a theater as in Paris at the Opéra, where anecdotes about social life, iconography representing events at this theater, and the performances that occurred on its stage almost always featured dancers. Evenings of entertainment were traditionally differentiated from those at other lyric theaters through the presence of dancers and the inclusion of dance within every performance, be it within the divertissement of a large five-act lyric work, a ballet-

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literature that informs this study comes primarily from the field of musicology, studies from dance history also influence its direction. The work of François Gasnault and Jean-Michel Guilcher contribute important information on social dancing from the 1830s. François Gasnault, Guinguettes et Lorettes: Bals publics à Paris au XIXe siècle (Paris: Aubier, 1986); and Jean-Michel Guilcher, La Contredanse et les renouvellements de la danse française (Paris: Mouton, 1969). In addition, the questions of sexuality and music in the context of dance raised by Susan McClary provide a provocative framework for considering dance's role in opera at the Académie Royale de Musique. See McClary, "Music, the Pythagoreans, and the Body," in Choreographing History, ed. Susan Leigh Foster (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), 82-104.
pantomime alongside a shorter opera, or as part of a varied evening of entertainment, which might include selected acts from both operas and ballets.

The composer most often associated with music for dance in connection with operas was D.-F.-E. Auber, the most quintessentially French composer from this era to work at the Opéra, and perhaps the most disdained. In *Portraits and Silhouettes of Musicians*, Camille Bellaigue begins the chapter on Auber with the following: "One cannot be always in the company of the great musicians, so let us give a thought to Auber,—it will not cost us many moments." Yet not all Auber biographers were so disparaging. In his 1911 biography of Auber, Charles Malherbe justifies Auber's inclusion in a volume within a series on celebrated musicians through references to the admiration Rossini and Wagner expressed for him. Despite the unfashionable nature of Auber's music at the turn of the twentieth century, Rossini had called him a great composer (if, Rossini added backhandedly, of minor music), and Wagner eulogized him in 1871, praising *La Muette de Portici* in his "Reminiscences of

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Auber's lack of fashion may have arisen from his identification with the bourgeoisie. Malherbe constructs a highly unromantic image of the composer, describing him as one who wrote music to make money. Although Auber enjoyed musical pursuits as a musical amateur in his younger days, when his father died he becomes a professional composer in order to support his mother and his brother. Like the minor authors that James Smith Allen examines in his study of popular French Romanticism in literature, Auber responded to a growing market of consumers in mid-nineteenth-century Paris. Although audiences knew Auber as a composer of operas—particularly opéras-comiques, they enjoyed his music for the dance, both that which he wrote for divertissements and that which was ultimately arranged into quadrilles and distributed outside of the theater. As one reviewer of La

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4 Malherbe, 30.

Muette expressed it in 1879, Auber gave full reign to his brilliant and lively imagination in the "ballets," his term for the divertissements. The music he wrote for the dance highlighted the clarity of his melodies and his regular motivic style. Another critic, writing in 1836, disdained Auber's seeming disregard for the French school of composition by remarking that all his operas seemed to be written in order to be arranged later into quadrilles:

Is it fitting for a composer so highly ranked to stack score upon score? To compose quickly and badly to beat out not his rivals, but new composers who might suddenly appear? Is it fitting for M. Auber to take M. Musard for Apollo, and have nothing in view but the Bazaar Saint-Honoré when he composes a new work? Does he think of nothing but quadrilles and galops that can result from his inspirations?


"H. Lavoix fils, Revue et gazette musicale de Paris 46/37 (14 September 1879), 298. Although Malherbe does not relate Auber's style to the popularity of his dance music, its clarity, regular rhythm and phrasing, and conservative harmony clearly can be. See Malherbe's discussion of Auber's music, 93-94, 103-4.

Financial and popular success did not equate with aesthetic success.

In its pursuit of financial success, the Paris Opéra fostered a woman-centered approach to choreography that reflected the relatively new identification of dance with women. So this study begins with an examination of the feminization of dance at the Opéra. Through the writings of two critics, Théophile Gautier and Alex Ropicquet, I explore the influence that the predominance of the female dancer had on the reception of dance at the Opéra. This analysis helps our understanding of the construction and limits of the patriarchal gaze, and of the femininity of dance within performances at the Opéra. Although viewers identified dance with the feminine, they did not see all female dancers alike or equally. For example, Théophile Gautier saw the most beautiful principal dancers as both artists and works of art; Balzac went so far as to identify the sylphic Marie Taglioni with genius. Yet many dancers who possessed less discipline were identified with the greed and debauchery of the coquette, qualities often exploited in the roles that lower-ranked dancers played. Especially in bacchic scenes of overindulgence, the fleshly and undisciplined bodies of marcheuses and figurantes could be displayed to dramatic advantage. The status of the dancer at the Paris Opéra
suggests a less rigid, more decentered (following Foucault) power structure than the controlling gaze would allow. Women can be understood to share occasionally in the dispersion of power, rather than always being controlled by the dominant patriarchal gaze.

Chapter 2 examines the role of mime in the context of La Muette de Portici, Auber’s first grand opera, a subject closely related to the discussion of female dancers in Chapter 1. Although Fenella, the mute of the title, was a

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I use the term “grand opera” to refer to large lyric works created at the Opéra comprised of from three to five acts and containing at least one but usually two divertissements. “Grand opera” is, however, a term that could be contested on many levels. For instance, many of the works generally referred to as grand operas, such as La Muette de Portici, Robert le diable, and Gustave, ou le bal masqué, were labeled as “opera-ballets” on the manuscripts associated with them. As genres, however, both “grand opera” and “opera-ballet” support a tremendous amount of rhetorical variation, leading Karin Pendle to label La Muette de Portici a grand opera, while labeling another large five-act work, Le Lac des fées, an opéra-féerique despite its five acts and a lavish ballet in the third act. For her discussion of the definition of grand opera, see Karin Pendle, Eugène Scribe and French Opera of the Nineteenth Century (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1979), 377-81; for her discussion of Le Lac des fées, 388. If grand opera is thought of as the process through which these large-scale lyric and choreographic spectacles are created at the Opéra as well as a genre with specific characteristics, Le Lac des fées fits more comfortably into
spectacle in her own right, her silence and her identity as a female dancer affected perceptions of the singers around her, her mime calling attention to the interaction between the actors involved in the operatic performance. Discussions of Fenella often center around the generic appropriateness of a dancer in a principal operatic role interacting with singers. These discussions suggest that although La Muette de Portici represents a fusion between opera and ballet-pantomime, it is an uncomfortable union. Fenella’s presence was tolerated within the operatic landscape because she was an attractive woman, a sanctioned object of the gaze. Yet her presence disrupted the accepted visual and musical rhetoric of the event.

As the subject of Chapter 3, the ball scene from Gustave, ou le bal masqué serves as an example of the tremendous instability of divertissements in the course of this operatic tradition, a tradition that respects few generic boundaries, while appropriating elements from Italian operas, opéras-comiques, ballet-pantomimes and melodramas. Christian Sprang attributes such a useful processual sense to the term “grand opera” by associating it with the musical and legal processes inspired by the Opéra between 1826 and 1868, coining the terms “grand-opera epoch” and “grand-opera period.” His approach acknowledges the international renown that these works enjoyed and the European market for theater and printed music in which they circulated. For his discussion of these terms, see his study of lawsuits associated with performances of grand operas: Sprang, Grand Opéra vor Gericht (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 1993), 11.
their performance history of a grand opera. First, this chapter explores the potential resonance of this ball with the Carnival ball experiences of audience members. Produced at a time when entrepreneurial director Louis Véron rejuvenated the traditional winter Opéra ball, Gustave’s divertissement gained popularity in part through its relationship with this seasonal and sometimes controversial social event. Gustave’s ball also represented an imagined past in association with dance at the Opéra, an idealized time when the ball was characterized by the grandeur and spectacle that it possessed in the context of Gustave. The fifth-act ball scene is unusual as well for its impact beyond the context of the work in which it originally appeared. After full five-act performances of Gustave became infrequent, the fifth act alone served as a popular venue for the best dancers and the most popular dances performed at the Opéra. As such it proved to be a commercial as well as an aesthetic success for the administration and even formed part of a courtly celebration for the opening of the Museum of the History of France at Versailles in 1837.

The dissertation ends with a consideration of quadrille arrangements from works first performed at the Opéra. These dance suites follow no particular logic in the ways that
their arrangers chose to present operatic themes. Rather, they concentrate on either highly recognizable gestures, such as popular airs, or on particularly danceable rhythmic gestures that were often taken from obscure locations such as transitional portions of overtures or other instrumental interludes. The reaction against these arrangements in the musical press is surprising, and suggests that many critics viewed quadrilles arranged from pre-existent works as threatening to the integrity of the original. At the same time, many reactions to quadrilles suggest that they potentially shaped the listening experience of the operatic public by introducing audiences to popular tunes and tidbits outside the context of the theater.

These four chapters show that while dance was important to the identity of the Opéra, it was also complicit in a process of disassembling productions at this theater as soon as they were put together, operating against the grain of the notion of the inviolate musical masterpiece. Operas in any and all contexts may share this instability, and this instability need not have any connection with choreography. In the context of the Opéra, however, the importance of choreography to the understanding of these operas and the expensive resources necessary to support such spectacle suggest reasons why this body of musical literature, so
successful and widely known during the nineteenth century, has not endured within European operatic repertories. Dance represents what was most spectacular, most mundane, and most French in grand operas.
Chapter 1: The Performative Power of Women in the Context of Dance

Physicist John Wheeler once explained the visibility of a black hole through the following analogy:

Friends ask me, well, if a black hole is black, how can you see it? And I say, have you ever been to a ball? Have you ever watched the young men dressed in their black evening tuxedos and the girls in their white dresses, whirling around, held in each other's arms, and the lights turned low, and all you can see is the girls? Well the girl is the ordinary star, and the boy is the black hole. You can't see the black hole any more than you can see the boy, but the girl going around gives you convincing evidence there must be something there holding her in orbit.

However Wheeler uses the image of a closed-position couple dance, his example constructs a gendered relationship between the two quite different heavenly bodies: just as a man leads a woman in the embrace of a waltz, so a black hole guides the orbit of a star. Within these bipolar relationships the woman, or feminine object, serves as the decorative element, while the invisible male force provides momentum and control. Both the stellar and the human dichotomies resonate with French nineteenth-century,

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bourgeois notions of difference and complementarity between the sexes; the combination of male physical strength with female beauty supposedly led to an equilibrium between the genders within marriage. This equilibrium could only be maintained, however, if the woman remained within the home, suggesting that a woman’s mere presence in public could challenge men’s domination of the public sphere.

Yet binary oppositions are hardly realistic models for the complexity of gendered roles. Theorists of the gaze have proposed that women in general are inexorably caught within the sight of the patriarchy; however, art historians such as Edward Snow and musicologists such as Carolyn Abbate have recently challenged this notion of the unavoidability of female entrapment within this ideological structure. In his analysis of female nudes, Snow focuses on elements that overflow and challenge the dominance of the male gaze rather than those that conform to the model. In her discussion of

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Salome’s power, Abbate suggests that live vocal performance can overpower any control the male gaze may hold over its object.⁴ Both approaches acknowledge the potential power of the gaze while also acknowledging the weaknesses within the rigid patriarchal frame the gaze theorist would construct, or, conversely, the strengths of the female subject. Such approaches to female actors and their images acknowledge the potential power of the female form to overcome the ideological strictures that the gaze and other patriarchal social structures impose.⁵


⁵ For a study in contrast to Snow and Abbate that forbids the subject of the gaze any feminine creative autonomy outside of its strictures, see Abigale Solomon-Godard, “The Legs of the Countess,” in Emily Apter and William Pietz, eds., Fetishism as Cultural Discourse (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 266-306. While theories of the gaze recognize the difference between male observers and the females they observe, Michel Foucault’s approach to discipline and the gaze suggests a more realistic model for the circulation of power in such circumstances. While most theories suggest a top-down power structure, the powerful controlling the powerless in a highly predictable and repetitious relationship between the viewer and the object of his attention, Foucault’s model allows for a circulation of power that comes neither strictly from the bottom-up or the top-down, but from all places in all directions. Foucault’s disciplinary gaze and the dispersion of power within its model fit the context of theatrical dynamics during the 1830s more appropriately than does this theoretical concept, which was first conceived as a component of the experience of film. See Michel Foucault, Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison, trans.
The notion of the gaze becomes particularly relevant to theatrical performances of dance beginning in the third decade of the nineteenth century, when dance came to be generally identified as a feminine and feminizing activity. During the first quarter of the nineteenth century, when both men and women gained prestige through superior dancing skills, audience members might observe Opéra dancers of both genders for ideas to incorporate into their own choreographic performances within the balls and salons populated by the leisure classes. However, circumstances changed dramatically during the 1820s. Fewer and fewer men participated voluntarily in social dance, perhaps initially because they had less leisure time in which to learn the steps and figures the dances required. As men lost interest in social dancing they also lost interest in male theatrical dancers. If they still received pleasure from dancing in Paris, it was through attending performances within theaters like the Opéra, the Porte Saint-Martin, and

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the Théâtre Nautique, watching dance for the graceful or curvaceous forms of women on the stage."

The shift within theatrical dance towards a woman-centered aesthetic is often equated with the beginnings of the Romantic ballet, a movement that is frequently characterized as both the high point and the beginning of the decline of Parisian theatrical dance. In her study The Art of the Dance in French Literature from Théophile Gautier to Paul Valéry, Dierdre Pridden discusses what she sees as the long-standing and deleterious effect of the Romantic movement on ballet during the nineteenth century.6 According to Pridden, it took the advent of Diaghilev to ameliorate theatrical dance by again joining together ideas from literature and dance, allowing "eminent writers" to "regard dancing as a serious art form." One could argue as well that Diaghilev rescued ballet from female domination by elevating the male dancer. As with musical and literary

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6 For more basic information on these three theaters and their repertories, see their respective entries in Nicole Wild, Dictionnaire des théâtres parisiens au XIXe siècle: Les Théâtres et la musique (Paris: Aux Amateurs de livres, 1989).


8 Pridden, xvi.
genres identified with women during the nineteenth century, dance experienced a decline in status.

In descriptions of performances at the Opéra after 1830, women are frequently characterized as overshadowing men in the context of dance. This commentary begins in the context of the interaction of Marie Taglioni and Jules Perrot at the Opéra during the early 1830s. At this time Taglioni was perceived to desire domination over Perrot. This discourse of dominance continued into the 1840s in a more general form. Male dancers, more often simply ignored than discussed, were viewed as sad and isolated creatures, as a conquered nation, and as human automatons. In addition, women’s attraction to dance and dance music suggested to one journalist that the fair sex could be blamed for the invasion of music inspired by the ballroom:

The ball seeks to encroach upon the concert to the degree that it can, and, disquietingly, women provoke and second this usurpation with all the force of their spirit and their will. Everywhere the quadrille dethrones the air variée, everywhere the waltz insults the barcarolle, crowds out the symphony, smothers the

\[10\] For instance, in the “Chroniques” column of Le Ménestrel 2/10 (2 February 1834), Perrot was rumored to have received more applause than Marie Taglioni during a performance of the ballet Révolte au serail. Taglioni’s unhappiness resulted in Veron’s repremand of Auguste, the leader of the claque, for allowing the audience to express greater appreciation for Perrot than Taglioni.

\[11\] See the discussion of Fenella as a dancer in La Muette de Portici in Chapter 2 of this dissertation.
cavatine. So resist this torrent, when the ladies take part!\(^2\)

Dance music and women who enjoyed it were seen by some not only as threatening to musical taste and art music in France, but threatening to men in general. For instance, in an encyclopedia article from 1857, Saint-Agnan Choler described the contredanse as a frame through which women gained control over men. This power came from its ability to make men look foolish by requiring them to participate in social dancing when they had no ability.\(^3\) According to Saint-Agnan Choler, women desired revenge for their exclusion from political activity in the state. He pointed particularly to the fourth figure of the quadrille, either Pastourelle or Trénis, as dangerous to the man. Traditionally, this figure provided each male participant a moment to show his skill in a solo. As recently as the

\(^2\) "Le bal cherche à empiéter sur le concert tant qu’il peut, et, chose inquiétante, les dames provoquent et secondent cette usurpation de toute la force de leur âme et de leur volonté. Partout le quadrille détrône l’air varié, partout la valse insulte à la barcarole, écrase la symphonie, étouffe la cavatine. Resistez donc au torrent, quand les dames s’en mêlent!"  "Bals," Le Ménestrel 5/9 (28 January 1838).

Napoleonic era, this point in the quadrille had served as the climax of the dance, but by the 1850s, when the skills possessed by men of the leisure classes for social dance had all but disappeared, this figure had deteriorated to the most embarrassing moment of the evening.

To investigate the power associated with women in the context of dance, this chapter focuses on how both theatrical and social dance constructed femininity and on the occasional connections between the “social” and “theatrical” as understood during this period. At the Opéra, authors who chronicled events there described a reversal of the typical power relationship between men and women: female dancers eclipsed their male counterparts, appearing to subvert male superiority on stage. At the same time, observers mapped the power and desirability of some professional dancers onto leisure-class women in general. Women were evaluated as actresses the moment they entered into the public realm, and were often seen as adversaries rather than complements to men. This situation suggests that the performance of femininity and beauty represented real power, and that dance during this time might be understood--or even defined--as a performance of feminine beauty and power.
The Dancer as Art

Théophile Gautier, the best-know dance critic from this period, unquestioningly accepted the new preeminence of feminine beauty in dance.\textsuperscript{14} Although Gautier's dance criticism is today more widely available than any other critic, it is hardly typical of that found regularly within music journals such as \textit{Le Ménestrel} and \textit{La France Musicale}. Critics in these publications rarely describe the physical appearance of dancers in any detail.\textsuperscript{15} In contrast, Gautier creates images in his prose that aspire to the level of art. This feminine ideal dominated his critical evaluations, so much so that he ignored male dancers or evaluated them on the basis of these same feminine ideals. In general men no longer complemented women, but detracted from their


\textsuperscript{15} By 1840 the Opéra lacked the women to whom it attributed much of its financial success during the previous decade. Marie Taglioni left for St. Petersburg in 1837, and Fanny Elssler began a tour of the United States soon after in 1839. No tremendous female star remained to support the danseuse-centered repertory.
performance unless they played an appropriately grotesque or secondary role.

When Gautier wrote about dancers whose beauty he thought near perfection, he referred to classical figures in paintings, cameos, frescoes and Ancient Greek sculpture. Rather than capture the unique image in prose, these references provide the reader a sense of the indescribably ideal quality of the beauty. For instance, in one review Gautier traced the details and contours of Fanny Elssler’s body in part through references to the plastic arts of antiquity:

Her pure and noble profile, the elegant cut of her head, and the delicate way in which her neck is attached give her the air of an antique cameo of incredible charm; two eyes full of light, of mischief, and sensual delight and a smile that is naive and mocking at the same time light up and animate her happy features. Add to these precious gifts her plump and rounded arms, a rare quality in a dancer, her supple waist set well on the hips, legs of Diana the huntress which one could believe had been sculpted out of Pentelic marble by some Greek artist from the time of Phidias were they not more mobile, lively and restless than the wings of a bird, and above all else, the appeal, the charm, Vénus et les Cupidons, veneres

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cupidinesque, as the ancients called those qualities which are inborn and which cannot be described.17

Gautier's ideal is not difficult to delineate. Having been an art student during the 1820s, he came to theater criticism with an unusually strong artistic education. His descriptions of dancers demonstrate his familiarity with William Hogarth's *Analysis of Beauty* (1753), which situated beauty and grace in the context of the serpentine line and the appearance of motion, as well as Greek ideals expressed by Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717-1768), the German scholar responsible for the revival of interest in Greek statuary. He conflated the ideals of Winckelmann and

17 "Son profil pur et noble, la coupe élégante de sa tête, la manière délicate dont son col est attaché, lui donnent un air de camee antique on ne saurait plus charmant; deux yeux pleins de lumière, de malice et de volupté; un sourire naïf et moqueur à la fois, éclairent et vivifient cette heureuse physionomie. Ajoutez, à ces dons précieux, des bras ronds et potelés, qualité rare chez une danseuse, une taille souple et bien assise sur ses hanches, des jambes de Diane Chasseresse que l'on croirait sculptées dans le marbre du Pentélique par quelque statuaire grec du temps de Phidias, si elles n'etaient plus mobiles, plus vives et plus inquiètes que des ailes d'oiseau, et, sur tout cela, l'attrait, le charme, les Vénus et les Cupidons, veneres cupidines que, comme disaient les anciens, tout ce qui ne s'acquiert pas et qu'on ne peut expliquer." This passage occurs within a review of a revival of *La Fille du Danube*, a ballet-pantomime in which Marie Taglioni originally danced in 1836. The Opéra revived the work for Elssler in 1838, which inspired comparisons between the two dancers. Gautier saw Elssler as preferable to Taglioni on the basis of her inherent beauty, a physical beauty that Taglioni lacked. *Histoire de l'art dramatique*, vol. 1, 189-190.
Hogarth in his considerations of the most physically attractive dancers at the Paris Opéra, who in his prose vacillate between fleshly statuary and moving stone.¹⁸

Gautier expected a great deal from the dancers he evaluated, for he held them responsible for being beautiful as well as creating the effect of beauty. A female dancer was both art and artist, object and agent, as the following passage from a review of a performance by the too-thin Louise Fitzjames suggests:

It must not be forgotten that the first condition that one should demand from a female dancer is that of beauty; she has no excuse for not being beautiful and she can be reproached for her plainness, just as an actress can be reproached for her bad pronunciation. Dancing is simply the art of displaying elegant and correctly proportioned shapes in various positions favorable to the development of lines; when one makes of oneself a danseuse, it is necessary to have a body that is at least graceful if not perfect.¹⁹


¹⁹ "Il ne faut pas oublier que la première condition qu'on doive exiger d'une danseuse, c'est la beauté; elle n'a aucune excuse de ne pas être belle, et l'on peut lui..."
Through his references to art Gautier objectified the performers that he described, but not to the extent that they lacked agency, for the dancer was responsible for making herself attractive even if she lacked innate beauty. Because she was equivalent to both art and artist, she subjected herself to the incompassionate scrutiny of the critic. As Gautier wrote,

An actress is a statue or a picture who comes to pose before you, and one can criticize her in good conscience; she can be reproached for her ugliness just as a painter is criticized for a fault in drawing (the question of compassion for human imperfections is out of place here) and can be praised for her charms with the same calm that a sculptor who, placed before a statue, says "here is a beautiful shoulder or a shapely arm."  

reprocher sa laideur, comme on reprocherait à une actrice sa mauvaise prononciation. La danse n'est autre chose que l'art de montrer des formes élégantes et correctes dans diverses positions favorables au développement des lignes; il faut nécessairement, quand on se fait danseuse, avoir un corps sinon parfait, tout au moins gracieux." Histoire de l'art dramatique, vol. 1, 73.

"Une actrice est une statue ou un tableau qui vient poser devant vous, et l'on peut la critiquer en toute sûreté de conscience, lui reprocher sa laideur comme on reprocherait à un peintre une faute de dessin (la question de pitié pour les défectuosités humaines n'est pas ici de saison), et la louer pour ses charmes, avec le même sang-froid qu'un sculpteur qui, placé devant un marbre, dit: voici une belle épaule ou un bras bien tourné." The term "actress" included dancers and singers during this time. "Galerie des belles actrices. Mlle Fanny Elssler," Figaro 11/5 (19 October 1837).
Such characterizations of female dancers as statuary might easily be read as misogynistic. For example, Parmenia Migel has remarked that Gautier often described dancers "as so much slave flesh to be analysed before purchase," using as an example the following passage from a review of Lucille Grahn, a successful Danish dancer who appeared at the Opéra from 1838 to 1839: ²¹

The smile, which is never found on the marble mouth of goddesses of antiquity, produces a tension which destroys the harmony of the lines: the cheeks expand, the corners of the nose become creased, the eyes make crows’ feet, the lips are drawn back, thinned and lengthened. Nothing is more opposed to beauty. A beautiful woman should keep her features almost motionless; the play of the eyes is sufficient to animate and brighten them. ²²

These descriptions can be understood, however, in a different way: as attempts to elevate the dancers from sexual human beings to art objects. Gautier’s use of sculptural metaphors potentially extricates the dancer’s

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²² "Le sourire, qui ne se trouve jamais sur le bouches de marbre des déesses antiques, produit une crispation qui détruit l’harmonie des lignes: les joues ballonnent, les coins du nez se plissent, les yeux font patte d’oie, levres se brient, s’amincissent et s’allongent. Rien n’est plus contraire à la beauté. Une belle femme doit garder son masque presque immobile: le manège des yeux suffit pour l’animer et l’éclairer." Histoire de l’art dramatique, vol. 1, 155-56.
body from a sexual interpretation. According to eighteenth-century ballet master Jean-Georges Noverre, criticism of dance easily "fell prey" to the beauty of the female dancer:

Besides, sir, a pretty face, beautiful eyes, an elegant form and voluptuous arms are the inevitable rocks on which criticism founders, and powerful claims to the indulgence of the spectator, whose imagination substitutes for the pleasure which he has not received, that pleasure that he might possess off the stage. 23

The pleasure of watching a woman's body had not so much to do with the experience of viewing the woman on-stage as with the potential for experiencing the woman's company off-stage. Dance criticism foundered when woman became the subject because she could inspire a reaction that valued her body and its shape more than her technique. In the case of female dancers, who were often considered equivalent to high-class prostitutes, Gautier's concept of the dancer as art and artist might be read as resisting the sexual or erotic thoughts that she might inspire. 24


24 Of course, women of the theater were often viewed as one form of prostitute or another. Pierre Dufour devotes a chapter to the history of prostitution at the theater, but claims the subject could fill a whole book. See Histoire de
In applying aesthetic views developed for the plastic arts to dance, Gautier's ideal aspires not only to a new artistic level, but to a new moral level. Within his writings on art, Greek statuary provides the soul an uplifting and moral experience. As he wrote in regard to the Venus de Milo,

Art elevates the soul in giving it the pure sensation of beauty, in lifting it from material pleasures, in satisfying the postulations of its dreams, in approaching more or less the ideal. In this sense, the torso of the Venus de Milo contains more morality than all the work of Hogarth; in its white nudity shines the splendor of truth and beams the most divine concept of form that the human hand has ever realized.  

One can assume that when dancers are conceptualized as sculpture they have the potential to supply the viewer a experience similar to seeing the perfection of the transcendental Venus de Milo, to whom Gautier once compared Fanny Elssler.  

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la Prostitution chez tous les peuples du monde depuis l'antiquité la plus reculée jusqu'à nos jours (Paris, 1853).

25 "L'art élève l'âme en lui donnant la pure sensation du beau, en l'arrachant aux plaisirs matériels, en satisfaisant aux postulations de ses rêves, en la rapprochant plus ou moins de l'idéal. En ce sens, le torse de la Vénus de Milo contient plus de moralité que toute l'oeuvre de Hogarth; dans sa blanche nudité luit la splendeur du vrai et rayonne le plus divin concept de la forme qu'ait jamais réalisé la main humaine." Guide de l'amateur au Musée du Louvre (Paris: Charpontier, 1882), 321.

26 Elssler had the arms that the Venus de Milo lost. Guest, Gautier on Dance, 245.
Gautier was not the only figure from this time to idealize women's bodies as statuary. As Figures 1.1 and 1.2 suggest, men looking at female forms became a comic subject for caricaturists such as Honoré Daumier (1808-1879) and Grandville (1803-1847) to illustrate. Within the amateur's art collection that Daumier depicted, the materiality rather than the transcendent morality of the Venus de Milo is emphasized. She becomes one more token in a man's collection of signs that demonstrate his taste and wealth. Grandville positioned an apple of temptation just below his rendering of the "Venus of the Opéra," suggesting the potential fall from grace that the stone vision might inspire. In a similar vein, Prosper Mérimée expressed a malignancy associated with a bronze statue of Venus in the short story "La Vénus d'Ile" (1837). This Venus mysteriously comes to life to avenge the faithlessness of her "owner," who is marrying a flesh-and-blood woman.

Although any viewer of dance familiar with these negative associations associated with sculpture from this time might read Gautier's artistic rhetoric as negative, his admiration for Classical forms suggests that his intentions are positive: he exalts the female dancer. The imagery he employs allows the eye to rest on these bodies without embarrassment at their partial nudity, respectful of the
Figure 1.2: Daumier, "L'Amateur." From Alain Pasquier, La Vénus de Milo et les Aphrodites du Louvre (Paris: Editions de la Réunion des musées nationaux, 1985), 21.
form and mindless to the greater context of the theater in which the dancer might be understood. One must acknowledge, however, that in his criticism Gautier focused on only the most admired and disciplined of the dancers at the Opéra, ignoring those of a lower tier who had yet to achieve a high rank or who had no real hope of advancement.

The Dancer as Undisciplined

In both fictional and non-fiction accounts of their activities, low-ranking dancers at the Opéra were more often associated with debauchery and a lack of discipline than with art or spiritual enlightenment. The dandy who inhabited the parterre during performances often served as the female dancer's partner in a life of luxury off the stage. Both the dandy and the dancer are symbolically linked with this theater, their images often seen together in nineteenth-century representations. Many a chapter or article about the Opéra includes illustrations of fashionable men dressed in black suits chatting with thin young women in white, sleeveless, short-skirted dresses.²⁷

Within these illustrations the dandies might sit in the parterre or loges infernales while a dancer receives an ovation, stand with her in the wings of the stage, or visit within the foyer de la danse, the room in which subscribers to the Opéra might encounter danseuses in great numbers. In addition to such visual representations of these relationships, fictional accounts from this time tell tales of their affairs, the dandy serving as the patron of the poor, uneducated, yet beautiful dancing girl, who acts as his companion or mistress.\footnote{Pierre Clément's story "À bon chat bon rat" in the collection Le Foyer de l'Opéra (Paris: Hippolite Souverain, n.d.) serves as one archetypical story of this genre. In it Edouard Chemillé, tired of his current mistress, becomes obsessed with Clara Tournau, who has recently made her début at the Opéra. He becomes Clara's protector, she his mistress. Soon after she has his daughter. The story ends with Clara refusing the hand of an honest stage hand in favor of continuing the life of luxury she leads as a dancer at the Opéra, and winning a 20,000-franc dowery from Edouard for her daughter.}

These real or imagined liaisons between performer and audience member occasionally colored performances at the Opéra, as the following passage from an article on the state of the Opéra in 1840 in the journal Le Ménestrel suggests:

The corps de ballet has provoked for some time a lively displeasure among the habitués of the Opéra: Monday in La Somnambule [the ballet], we saw the recurrence of an improper act that the public first saw in the scene of the nuns in Robert: certain figurantes, in name only, talked with people in the front of the house, and the pretty village celebration at the rise of the curtain...
appeared more like a holiday at the Grande-Chaumière. Not one of these figurantes knows how to walk, despite their title of WALKERS. [...] Duponchel (the current director of the Opéra) makes a rain of gold fall on these marcheuses because it gives pleasure to the yellow gloves who are their only judges.  

The antics of these dancers resembled the actions of women one would expect to find on the streets of Paris more than on the stage. The description also suggests that this celebration produced a realistic effect that this writer disdained. He appreciated instead a mannered and discipline "unrealistic" style of the Opéra past. Rather than acknowledge a sanctioned change in presentation, he sees these dancers as lacking in discipline. He reasoned that these dancers maintained a position at the Opéra to please the dandy who desired to see them. And because of these relationships, attractive women of little skill gained influence over men of material wealth in order to gain

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29 "Le corps de ballet excite depuis quelque temps de vifs mécontentements parmi les habitués de l'Opéra: Lundi, dans la Somnambule, nous avons vu se reproduire un acte inconvenant que le public avait déjà remarqué dans la scène des nonnes de Robert: certaines figurantes, qui ne le sont que de nom, parlaient aux personnes placées aux avant-scènes; et cette jolie fête villageois, au lever du rideau, paraissait plutôt une fête à la Grande-Chaumière; pas une de ces figurantes ne savait même marcher, malgré leurs titres de MARCHEUSES.... M. Duponchel fait tomber sa pluie d'or sur les marcheuses, parce qu'il faut plaire aux gants jaunes qui sont ses seuls juges." A. R., "Académie royale de musique. La Danse," Le Ménestrel 7/18 (29 March 1840)
influence over Henri Duponchel, then the director of the Opéra.

The above quotation comes from a series of articles on the declining state of the Opéra in *Le Ménestrel*. Signed only A. R., their tone and the insider knowledge of the pre-1830s Opéra they display suggests that they were penned by Alexandre Casimir Ropicquet, an ex-opera dancer briefly employed by this journal. After his career as a dancer at the Opéra ended during the early 1830s, Ropicquet made a living as a member of the Opéra orchestra, a high-society violin instructor, arranger of dance music, composer of romances, and occasional journalist. He failed to earn an entry in Pétis's *Biographie universelle* or any other biographical dictionary that in one source might have

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That Ropicquet wrote these articles is suggested not only by the initials A. R. and the name A. Ropicquet [sic] in the 1841 masthead of this same publication, but through biographical information included in reviews of his own violin concerts, his obituary published in this same journal in 1861, and programs that list a boy or man named Ropicquet in dance performances at the Académie Royale de Musique from 1818 to 1833. In his obituary from September 8, 1861, Ropicquet was described as a well-liked man who died prematurely at the age of 53. It also stated that thirty years before, around 1831, he had been a member of the Opéra's dance personnel, but later he devoted himself exclusively to music. Although it makes no mention of Ropicquet's earlier involvement with *Le Ménestrel*, the mere presence of the obituary suggests some connection with the publication, for neither *Revue et Gazette Musicale* nor *La France Musicale*, two other well-known Parisian music journals from this time, make mention of Ropicquet's death.
connected the diverse directions his career took, but the various articles either authored by him or written about him suggest that these seemingly disparate activities were performed by the same man. Although known best in 1840 as a violin teacher of ability, he was still remembered as an ex-Opéra dancer and an expert imitator of Paganini at masked balls.31

In contrast to Gautier, who espoused a relatively new aesthetic of dance, Alex Ropicquet viewed dance conservatively, invoking critical standards he developed as a dancer himself. Within this series of Le Ménestrel articles, he bemoaned the decline of dance at the Opéra. He saw ballet in the context of his experience fifteen years past, while his choreographically-trained eye noted the discipline of the dancer's movement he observed—or, more often, the lack thereof—with a precision that is rare during this period. Ropicquet's articles thus serve as a counterbalance to the rhapsodic and impressionistic praise of a critic like Gautier.

As Ropicquet stated in his articles, the world of the entrepreneurial Opéra differed on many levels from when the state had supplied almost all its support. For Ropicquet

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the Opéra's identity as the leading theater in the world depended on the recovery and maintenance of a sadly-lacking choreographic excellence. His critique focused on the estrangement of the male dancer from the stage, the loss of the three genres of dance, and the decline of choreographic quality. Each of these problems contributed either directly or indirectly to the poor technique among female dancers, and the lack of discipline among the lowest ranks. To ameliorate the low level of skills he described, he advocated a complete revision of the system of education and exams, returning to the regulatory systems that managed dance during the Restoration.

Ropiquet looked nostalgically to the 1820s, when choreographers Pierre Gardel and Louis Milon controlled dance quality through rigorous exams and disciplinary action against dancers who did not perform up to their standards. Male dancers during this period increased the complexity of their dance under the influence of Auguste Vestris, who gradually abandoned "expressive, refined, graceful dancing in favor of tour de force."12 Through Vestris's influence the three genres of ballet technique--the noble style, demi-
caractère, and the comic or grotesque style--merged into one undifferentiated and highly technical type of dance. Despite the growing obsolescence of these categories, the choreographers Gardel and Milon tried to maintain them at the opera in the 1820s, but to no avail. Ropicquet's desire to reinstate the three genres of ballet reveal him as a loyalist to these conservative dancing masters, for Ropicquet still invoked these categories in his consideration of dancer in 1840, basing his classification on body types and appropriate roles. 33 In his classification he noted the absence of noble dancers and mimes, and suggested that their unfashionability in Paris had forced artists of these types to find employment at other urban centers such as St. Petersburg, Brussels, and Copenhagen.

Ropicquet also implicated women dancers in the decline of dance, stating that real talent among them was rare. He attributed their recent successes to the claque, the group of men hired to provide applause for key moments of a performance. "[Female dancers] don't need to have talent; this public doesn't like ballet and even less the women with

talent." The patrons controlled who danced with success and who failed through the response of the claque, which they influenced through their monetary contributions. Ropicquet suggested that female dancers were in as short a supply as men at the Opéra. In the days before 1830 principal men and women dancers all had acceptable doubles, replacements in case of illness or injury. In 1840 such a luxury no longer existed because the number of skilled dancers was not large enough to allow fine dancers of either sex to act as mere replacements. Although Ropicquet did not mention it, the larger salaries of the highest-ranked dancers may have limited the number of artists at the top of the ranks.

Finally, Ropicquet criticized the choreographers at the Opéra, in particular Coralli, who he claimed modeled his dance on the second-class productions of the boulevard theaters. Such influences represented for Ropicquet an abandonment of the high standards of this theater:

We examine briefly the works of Coraly [sic], who is the premier master of ballet today at the Académie Royale de Musique. His stage début was in L'Orgie (which appeared and disappeared). Common style, corps de ballet not composed, genre of the second order that played fifteen years at the Porte-Sainte-Martin. La

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34 Le Ménestrel 7/20 (12 April 1840).

35 Marian Hanna Winter has seconded this claim; see Theatre of Marvels (New York: Blom, 1962), 158-171.
Tempête! Pass this work by in silence! One must respect the dead. La Tarentule--One calls this a ballet? The Funambules could sue the choreographer of the grand Opéra for plagiarism. The scene of the second act is that which is found in all the ancient pantomimes between Columbine and Cassandra. You call this creating art and working for the glory of our century! You fool yourself.16

Charles Maurice made similar claims against Filippo Taglioni’s choreographic style for the third act divertissement in Robert le Diable. He perceived that the new choreographers who controlled the opera stage during the 1830s introduced a less-demanding use of the corps de ballet, and that this change resulted in less precision.17

16 "Examinons un peu les ouvrages de M. Coraly, qui est le premier maître de ballets aujourd’hui à l’Académie royale. Son début à la scène a été le ballet de l’Orgie (qui n’a fait que paraître et disparaître). Style commun, corps de ballets non composés, genre du deuxième ordre que l’on jouait il y a quinze ans à la Porte-Sainte-Martin. La Tempête! Hélas! passons sous silence cet ouvrage; il faut respecter les morts. La Tarentule! appelez-t-on cela un ballet? Le théâtre des Funambules pourrait traiter de plagiat le chorégraphe du grand Opéra. La scène du second acte est celle que l’on retrouve dans toutes les anciennes pantomimes entre Columbine et Cassandre. Vous appelez cela faire de l’art et travailler pour la gloire de notre siècle! vous vous trompez." The ballets that Ropiquet admires—Clary, La Somnambule, Télémaque—were all produced before 1830 except for one: Mazillier’s La Gypsy (1839). Ropiquet seems to prefer the genre ballet d’action over genres derivative from the lower-class boulevard theaters. Le Ménestrel 7/20 (12 April 1840).

The writings of both Gautier and Ropicquet suggest two different disciplinary frames within which at least two types of dancing bodies might be considered. Gautier asserted an artistic frame through which viewing beautiful, disciplined feminine forms provided not only a voyeuristic but a morally elevating experience. Ropicquet, on the other hand, argued that only the basest audience members--the yellow gloves, or dandies--could support the decadence of dance. The dancers that he noticed actually misbehaved on occasion, and lacked the proper education to merit approval. While Gautier was blind to any deterioration in technique, Ropicquet refused to see any virtue in beautiful female dancing bodies. Yet, despite their differences, Gautier and Ropicquet acknowledged the same process of change at the Opéra, which promoted women to the central subject of dance.

The Undisciplined Dancer as Sexually Available

Ropicquet aimed the harshest words at the most minor of dancers, the figurantes and marcheuses, bodies that Gautier ignored. Unlike those individuals that the press routinely named, who enjoyed high salaries and general acclaim, these women earned just enough money to survive. They depended heavily on the sponsorship or patronage of wealthy men if they wished to enjoy a lavish lifestyle or even more than a
subsistence existence after hours. Although classified as dancers, they literally walked on stage and became a decorative part of the stage design. They rarely danced a step, and could not be trusted to know how to dance if they were asked. In the course of an opera, they might at most escort characters on and off stage, or play a part in the figuration of a divertissement. Yet the erotic messages their undisciplined bodies communicated could be read into the roles they played and the situations in which they appeared.

As Ropicquet suggested, the new Opéra administration under Louis Véron enacted many new policies that affected dance, among them opening the backstage area to the male subscribers, or abonnés, lowering the wages of the lowest-ranked dancers and chorus members while raising those of the highest-echelon soloists. These new conditions ultimately transformed the public's perception of dance and participation style within the theater, reshaping the image of dance projected during the 1830s. The opening of the backstage renewed the general public's prurient interest in the Opéra and expanded the sanctioned venues for this interest. Although the opera dancer, a euphemism for a prostitute in most circles, had traditionally served as the companion or mistress of aristocrats in the eighteenth
century, the morally-upright opera administration of the 1820s had encouraged modesty among the corps de ballet and barred members of the audience from entering the backstage area. The lowering of wages in 1831 and the opening of the backstage reveals the contrasting attitudes of the new administration. Rather than protecting the modesty of their employees, as had the last administration, Véron informally encouraged young female dancers to form business relationships with wealthy aristocratic and bourgeois men.

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39 According to Louise Robin-Challan, the often-impoverished women required the extra resources that these informal “patrons” provided to pay for dancing lessons, to clothe themselves properly, and to support their families. See Louise Robin-Challan, “Social Conditions of Ballet Dancers at the Paris Opera in the 19th Century,” Choreography and Dance 2/1 (1992): 17-28; and “Danse et Danseuse à l’Opéra de Paris 1830-1850.” (Thèse de Troisième Cycle de l’Université de Paris VII, 1983) for a more detailed account of dancer’s experiences, complete with references to archival evidence. Not all these women were necessarily prostitutes, but those that were fit into the special category of femmes galants, relatively high-class women of easy virtue. Traditionally associated with the theater, they operated outside of the official culture of registered prostitutes. For one of the first sociological studies of prostitution, see Alexandre Parent-Duchatelet, De la prostitution dans la ville de Paris, considérée sous le rapport de l’hygiène publique, de la morale et de l’administration (Paris: Bailliere, 1836). For a contemporary study of 19th- and 20th-century prostitution, see Alain Corbin, Les filles de noces. Misère sexuelle et prostitution: 19e et 20e siècle (Paris: Aubier Montaigne, 1978), translated by Alan Sheridan as Women for Hire: Prostitution and Sexuality in France after 1850 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990).
Ultimately, Véron's actions heightened the perceived sexual availability of the dancers, particularly the marcheuses and figurantes.

The "stages of an octopus" caricature explicitly connects the dancer's body with a dangerous sexuality (See Figure 1.3). Its centerpiece is the dancer, flanked to the left by a group of pages or hussars, and to the right by a group of more conventionally-costumed dancers. Although the staging for grand operas has often been characterized as historically accurate, in the case of dancers' costumes, historical accuracy often took a back seat to the display of pale shoulders, shapely legs or a curvaceous form. Their dress often says first and foremost "I am a dancer," rather than "this is thirteenth-century Sicily," or "fifteenth-century Constance." In the context of this cartoon, the artist has constructed a biography literally encircling the body of a premiering dancer. This narrative has nothing to do with the work in which she performs; rather, it reflects on her origins, her materialistic intentions in becoming a

40 Judith Chazin-Bennahum makes a similar observation in "Women of Faint Heart and Steel Toes," in Rethinking the Sylph: New Perspectives on the Romantic Ballet, ed. Lynn Garafola (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1997), 121-130. This article discusses the connections between the costumes of dancers and Parisian fashions during the mid-nineteenth century.
Figure 1.3: Stages of an octopus, from Charivari (31 May 1866).
dancer, and the wealth she achieves through her control of men within this lifestyle. Perhaps because of the assumed licentiousness of dancers from this time, the bacchanale, with its celebration of excess and disorder, is a frequently encountered choreographic element of grand operas from the mid-nineteenth century. Bacchanales are found both within and outside divertissements; they are occasionally peppered with choral interjections in praise of Bacchus, of drunkenness, or of both. They often represent moments when the boundaries between opera and ballet weaken, where song and dance occur simultaneously. The term has quite a long history, referring initially to ancient and disorderly celebrations of Bacchus. But beginning around 1835, according to the Dictionnaire historique de la langue française, the name came to refer specifically to a tumultuous dance in a ballet or an opera. This date suggests that the bacchanale danced by the debauched nuns of Robert le diable, which premiered in 1831, was instrumental in creating this new shade of musical and choreographic meaning. Scenes of revelry in the bacchanale exploited the debauchery associated with minor dancers as well as these nuns.

The third-act bacchanale in Robert le diable introduces audiences to the lascivious character of the nuns. The
production book describes the action leading up to it as follows:

The nuns enter silently with very small steps; a number of groups even gliding from the traps to the wings and arriving on stage from all the sides of the cloister. Those who were lying on the tombs descend and form a circle around Bertram, from which they listen to his orders, and he withdraws [from the stage] 41

The bacchanale then begins after the nuns discard their religious garb. Again, according to the production book,

They return to the wings in an instant and dispose of their religious outfits, and appear in simple petticoats and cotton blouses, arms and legs covered with flesh-colored leotards, hair disorderly and long; they abandon themselves to their games and their profane passions.42

41 "Les religieuses sont entrées silencieusement à très petits pas; plusieurs groupes même glissent sur des trappes à coulisses et arrivent ainsi en scène de tous les côtés du cloître; celles qui étaient couchées sur les tombes en descendent également et elles forment le chartron autour de Bertram dont elles attendent les ordres, et il se retire."

42 "Alors elles rentrent dans les coulisses en un instant se dépouillent de leurs robes de religieuses, et paraissent en simples jupons et corsages de mousseline, jambes et bras couverts de maillots couleur de chair, cheveuse en désordre et longs; elles se livrent à leur jeux et à leurs passions profanes."
This scene of "games and profane passions" ends when the nuns hear Robert approaching, after which they hide behind the columns of the cloister.

Both from the production book and critic Jules Janin's description of Robert's premier we know that the bacchanale required women to move about as if possessed, a description that suggests an undisciplined motion, a type of movement somehow out of conscious control. In addition, reviewer Charles Maurice criticized the choreography of Filippo Taglioni, father of Marie, for the lowness and inappropriateness of its style for the Opéra. As Maurice described it, the women performed round dances and the farandole, leading him to question the fitness of Taglioni's style to performances at this theater:

Is M. Taglioni not unworthy to occupy the place of ballet master at the Opéra? Do not the silly and absurd dances with which he sullies the new piece demonstrate [his unworthiness] to the last degree of evidence? With such means, with such grand resources—twenty dances full of merit, fifty figurantes dressed in a picturesque fashion—with all this to produce nothing but confusion, trouble, an intolerable pell-

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43 The score helps little in elucidating the dancer's movements. It provides only a general sense of the length of the dance through the number of measures of music supplied to accompany it and the shifts in tempo and character of this music. After 200 duple measures at allegro con moto, the tempo increases to a 6/8 allegro vivace for the last 65 measures.
mell, crooked lines, runs of blind-man’s bluff, and figures from roadside inns, it must be a Taglioni.  

The women of the bacchanale moved quite differently from Marie Taglioni, the head nun and dancer most frequently identified with Robert’s third-act divertissement. Taglioni, whose performance was praised for its elegance, lightness, chasteness, correctness, and nobility, entered the stage after the bacchanale had finished. Her movement lacked the demonic and deranged quality of the corps de ballet. This contrast between the principal and her entourage further exaggerated the strangeness of the nuns’ behavior, so different were they from their “superior.” Marie Taglioni’s reputation was protected in part by her close familial associations within the theater, her high level of professional discipline, and her plainness.

Despite Taglioni’s impeccable grace and technique—she is

44 M. Taglioni n’est-il pas indigné d’occuper à l’Opéra la place de maître des ballets? Les danses absurdes et niaises, dont il vient de salir la pièce nouvelle, ne le démonstrent-elles pas jusqu’au dernier degré d’évidence? Avec tant de moyens, de si grandes ressources ... vingt danses remplies de mérite, cinquante figurantes vêtues d’une façon pittoresque ... avec tout cela ne rien produire que confusion, embarras, un pêle-mêle insupportable, des lignes torses, de courses de colin-maillard, et des figures de guinguettes, il faut être un Taglioni. Charles Maurice, Le Courrier des théâtres (23 November 1831), quoted in Marie-Hélène Coudroy, La critique parisienne des “grands opéras” de Meyerbeer (Saarbrücken: Musik-Edition Lucie Galland, 1988), 91.
generally credited for introducing the use of pointe into ballet and the popularization of an aerial style of dancing--she was not considered a beautiful woman off stage. As Johanne Luise Heiberg stated it,

...Taglioni did not possess perfect beauty of form: her arms were thin and entirely too long, and not a single one of her limbs might be said to be perfectly beautiful. What was it then? It was, once again, the ideal of Beauty that radiated from the depths of the soul into this body, animated it, lifted it with such power that something marvelous took place before our eyes as we saw the invisible made visible.\textsuperscript{45}

This “making the invisible visible” allowed Honoré de Balzac to classify Taglioni as an artist as great as Franz Liszt and Michaelangelo.\textsuperscript{46} Taglioni’s body was seen to translate the purity of her soul for the pleasure of her audience, a selfless act she performed not for her own benefit, but to express some mysterious genius. For audiences, Taglioni came to represent grace, a component of beauty that was possible for the physically imperfect woman to develop. She became an appropriate model for young


girls, and her performances were anecdotally described as "lessons of grace," for women could acquire grace despite "deformities." Perhaps because of her status as a role model of sorts for young women, Taglioni's audiences at the Opéra were made up of a larger percentage of women than usual. For a benefit honoring Taglioni in 1835 women for the first time were allowed to occupy the parterre, the area of the theater closest to the stage and traditionally occupied by men. In a review describing Taglioni's last performance in Paris, occurring in late July of 1840, one reviewer described how large numbers of women had returned to Paris from the country for this special performance. Adorning the audience, they made the Opéra "beautiful to see" with the crowns of fresh wildflowers that they wore. Such instances corroborate Gautier's claim that Taglioni was a dancer for women (in contrast, Fanny Elssler was a dancer for men). Because Taglioni's performance was perceived to

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47 See, for example, "Les Adieux à Mlle Taglioni, suivis d'une notice biographique sur cette célèbre danseuse," (Paris: Imprimerie de J.-A. Boudon, 131 Rue Montmartre, 1837).

48 For a description of Taglioni's benefit and the preparations made for it, see "Académie Royale de Musique," Le Méneştrêl 2/18 (29 March 1835).

49 Escudier, "Rossini.--Dernière représentation de Taglioni." La France Musicale 3/30 (26 July 1840), 273.
be selfless and chaste--perhaps in part because of her lack of physical beauty--she avoided the negative associations commonly attributed to female dancers.

*Robert le diable* remained a popular work well into the second half of the nineteenth century. Most members of Opéra audiences from this time knew the nun scene at least by reputation if not firsthand. Perhaps because of the notorious success of *Robert's* bacchanale, Meyerbeer revisited the idea briefly in *Le Prophète* (1849), his third work for the Opéra. Within *Le Prophète* the bacchanale took the form of a dramatic complex of singing and dancing called a *choeur dansé*, an episode of choral and instrumental music accompanying the dance. It served as the introduction to the literally explosive finale of the opera. In this last scene, Jean of Leiden sits pensively at the banquet celebrating him. The stage represents the grand room of the palace of Münster splendidly adorned not only with food and drink, but with dancing women--"courtesanes," as the libretto and score indicate. Not only do women in diaphanous skirts adorn the stage with their dancing, they also lay about in seductive poses.

Meyerbeer's two bacchanales share several qualities. Perhaps by coincidence, they both begin in D minor and shortly thereafter move to the parallel major, and both
employ a lively duple meter. They also share the highly regular phrasing of ballet music in general and similar aural "signs" of the dance, such as the incessant "ding" of the triangle. Most strikingly, however, they share the presence of numerous low-ranked dancing women as a key component of the spectacle. Unlike in Robert le diable, where the women become the center of attention (if only for a moment), the prophet maintains the central place in Le Prophète, the women playing an ancillary and purely decorative role.

Stage designers regularly exploited the potential lasciviousness of the lower-ranked dancers in the roles of pages, noble boys in the service of higher-ranking nobility. When noble characters gathered on the Opéra stage to drink, march, or hold court in some other manner, they were accompanied by large numbers of these cross-dressed dancers. Only women played the many pages in Robert le Diable (1831), La Juive (1835), and Les Huguenots (1836), which all include scenes in which pages serve wine to nobility gathered in celebration. Records for costume expenses provide evidence for the number and female gender of pages used in these productions.50 A short passage in one of a series of

50 Archives Nationales AJ13 201-203. To see how these pages were distributed on the stage, see productions books for La
manuscripts dating from the late 1830s, supposedly written by a habilleuse, a female wardrobe assistant or dresser, attributes the creation of the page to Duponchel, who ascended to the directorship of the Opéra in 1838 from his beginnings there in 1830 as stage manager.\footnote{These notebooks form the central source for Louise Robin-Challan, “Danse et Danseuse à l’Opéra de Paris, 1830-1850.” Each notebook is entitled “Chronique de l’Académie Royale de Musique. Les cancans de l’Opéra” followed by the appropriate year (1836-1840/41) [F-Po RES 658 (1-5)]. Although said to be written by a “habilleuse,” the author’s writing style and knowledge of Latin betray a more elevated station in life.}

The nearly-always mute role of pages has become a specialty assigned to a class of figurantes by Mr. Duponchel. For several years now this director has taken pleasure in increasing their number at the Opéra, and he hires them expressly to transport the clothing of women of a certain countenance, a certain form who make one cry out, “Ah! She over there will make a fine page!” Do not believe that the slender, casual form of a young girl would satisfy the requirements of this use. To the contrary, we prefer pronounced and protruding forms under the pants of white or sky blue silk that show them to advantage in opposition with all the principles of theatrical illusion. We want to force the spectators to recognize with the first glance of the eye and without any help from their opera glasses that the woman is nothing but a woman dressed as a little boy.\footnote{“Le rôle presque toujours muet des Pages est devenu une spécialité affectée à une classe de figurantes par Mr Duponchel, depuis quelques années le directeur s’est complu à les multiplier à l’Opéra est l’on engage expressément pour emporter l’habit des femmes à certain air, à certaine tournure qui font s’écrier; ah! celle ci fera fois bien en page! N’allez pas croire que la taille svelte, dégagée,}
Although Duponchel brought the page to prominence during the 1830s, he did not invent the concept. Rather, he elaborated a trouser role already in existence in ballet, dating back at least to 1786 when Jean Dauberval transformed Beaumarchais's play Le Page inconstant into a ballet for the theater in Marseilles.\footnote{This same play served as a basis for Mozart's Marriage of Figaro, containing the most admired page of all time, Cherubino. For more information on the ballet, see Guest, Romantic Ballet, 52-54.} Works at the Opéra that involved pages in their plots seem to have originated on the lower-status stages of provincial or boulevard theaters. For example, the ballet-pantomime Les Pages du Duc de Vendôme, choreographed for the Opéra by Louis Milon in 1820, was based on a work previously performed at the Théâtre de Vaudeville in 1807.\footnote{Emilie Bigottini, a danseuse best known for her mime, played a page in love with the female ward of the Duke whom s/he serves. Despite Bigottini's popularity, the ballet was received poorly by the press in its new form. The critics objected to the overly-lengthy divertissements, the low

elancée d'une jeune fille satisfasse aux exigences de l'emploi. Au contraire nous préférons les formes prononcées et saillantes sous le pantalon de soie blanche ou bleu de ciel qui les accuse encore davantage en opposition avec tous les principes de l'illusion théâtrale nous voulons que les spectateurs soient forcés de reconnaître au premier coup d'oeil et sans le secours d'aucune lunette, la femme est rien que la femme habillée en petit garçon." "Chronique de l'Académie Royale de Musique. Les cancans de l'Opéra, 1838," 143.
page-centered ballet-pantomime, this time reviving Dauberval’s choreography for Le Page inconstant.\textsuperscript{55} Like Les Pages du Duc de Vendôme, the ballet began in Paris as a comedy on the stage of a lower-ranked theater, the Théâtre de la Porte-Saint-Martin in 1805, and remained in the Opéra’s repertory until 1830.\textsuperscript{56}

In the context of the Opéra the page may have replaced l’Amour, or Cupid, who was found in many eighteenth-century mythologically-based ballet-pantomimes. Like the pages, Cupid was a charming boy always played by a woman. In such works as Les Graces (1787), Psyché (1790), Télémaque dans l’île de Calypso (1790), Daphnis et Pandrose, ou la Vengeance de l’amour (1803), and Persée et Andromède (1810),

boulevard origins of the drama, and the lack of differentiation between the Spanish and the French pas. Still, it remained in the Opéra’s repertory until 1830, the year Milon died. See Guest, Romantic Ballet, 38-39.

\textsuperscript{55} Although Bigottini appeared in the work as well, this time she played Susannah, while a Mlle. Marinette played the page Cherubin.

\textsuperscript{56} See Guest, Romantic Ballet, 52. Choreographers returned to the page-centered ballet in 1840. The choreographer Joseph Mazilier (1797-1868) and scenario writer Henri de Saint-Georges (1801-1875) based a new ballet in 1840 on Jacques Cazotte’s Le diable amoureux. In Cazotte’s story Count Frédéric invokes the devil after losing all his money gambling. To enter into the Count’s life, the devil disguises himself as a page. The page/devil became the lead role in the new ballet, first designed with Fanny Elssler in mind, but created by Pauline Leroux after Elssler broke her contract to depart on her New World tour.
he/she descends to earth to create confusion in the romantic lives of mortals. More often than not, Venus accompanies him/her or else later descends to untangle the mess he/she has created. During the 1820s the mythological topics so important to ballets at the Opéra during the eighteenth century and early nineteenth century began to be almost completely replaced by non-mythological works. The class structure of mythology—gods, demigods, and mortals—was replaced with purely mortal equivalents: the nobility, bourgeoisie, and peasants. Cupid acting in the service of Venus found a modern-day equivalent in pages serving their noble masters.

Like Cupid, pages asserted physical love as a peripheral theme in the ballets and operas in which they appeared. This connection is more clear in the context of soprano pages, such as Oscar of Gustave, ou le bal masqué (1833) and in Urbain of Les Huguenots (1836). The plot of Gustave revolves around the King of Sweden’s love affair with Amélie, the wife of his best friend. During the

57 Women who played this role include Mlle Aslehin, Mme Vestris, Mlle Chameroy, Mme Gardel, and Mlle Hullin. Undoubtedly many other mythologically-based ballets contain further examples of l’Amour or groups of Cupids played by women.

58 Roger Parker and Matthew Brown assert this reading of Verdi’s version of the opera in “Motivic and Tonal
course of the opera, Oscar, the king's page, communicates to the audience the king's desires for Amélie as well as his own more general admiration of beautiful women. For instance, in Act I, when Gustave hears the name of Amélie read aloud, Oscar tells the audience that the name "Amélie" affects the king. In addition, Oscar expresses an adolescent boy's delight at the prospect of seeing many beautiful women at the masked ball. The next soprano page at the Opéra, Urbain of *Les Huguenots*, adopts a coquettish and teasing attitude in his role as a messenger in the service of Queen Marguerite, delivering a seductive singing telegram of sorts for an unnamed man [Raoul] during the first act. During the second-act bathing scene, Urbain becomes the obnoxious male adolescent, expressing an unmanageable excitement when he sees the beautiful bathing female bodies revealed before his eyes. Both the roles of Oscar and Urbain exploit this adolescent sexuality, a quality that may have been associated with all the silent pages who joined them on the stage.

Interaction in Verdi's *Un ballo en maschera,* "Journal of the American Musicological Society 36/2 (1983), 245. The authors reason that the love duet located directly in the middle of the score indicates the importance of physical love to Verdi's *Un ballo*; however, they do not connect physical love to the presence of the page or the libretto's Parisian origins.
Although the page represented in principal an effeminate and noble young man, within the world of the Opéra she appeared first and foremost as a woman. The operatic page could not maintain the ambiguity of gender of literary pages. For example, within Gautier's Mademoiselle de Maupin the page who accompanies the androgynous Madelaine inspires unanswerable questions about its sexuality.\(^5^9\) The gender of the page is unclear, as is the reason why Madelaine adores him/her so. But on stage at the Opéra, pages were clearly female. Associated with themes of physical love and the potential for social advancement, she became a potent symbol of the pleasures and dangers of association with public women. And all dancers, regardless of their rank, lived public lives, their identities as individuals often read into the characters they assumed on the stage.

The Coquetry and Ambiguity of the Public Woman

Theaters like the Opéra provide a sanctioned space for spectacle and for viewing women, both on stage and as part of the audience; however, spectacle is in no way limited to

the theater. In fact, on occasion men viewed women outside
the theater in the context of well-known stage performances.
Parisians in general seemed highly aware of the constructed
aspects of feminine beauty and the social power associated
with it, as the short story "Les Apparences" and Balzac's
essay "Théorie du démarche" suggest.

In "Les Apparences," the subject of women arises
through a conversation about Elssler's cachucha, a popular
Spanish-style dance she made famous in 1836 as part of the
ballet-pantomime Le Diable boiteux. Although the cachucha
signified something cute or dear, and therefore innocent,
the perceived lasciviousness of Elssler's performance caused
discomfort at its premier. Accounts of the dance suggest
that the unusual way Elssler moved her body generated among
the men of the audience an intense physical excitement.
Elssler's performance at the Opéra broke new ground for the
extent to which she mobilized her whole body, presenting a
curvaceous and serpentine performance at odds with the

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60 For more information on Elssler's cachucha, see Ivor
Guest, "Fanny Elssler's Cachucha. Its Significance and its
Preservation," in Ann Hutchinson, Fanny Elssler's Cachucha
Meglin, "Le Diable boiteux: French Society behind a Spanish
Arkin, "The Context of Exoticism in Fanny Elssler's
controlled norms of the day, norms represented most ideally by Taglioni.

"Les Apparences" revolves around the meaning of the cachucha for the leisure-class male, Frédéric, who explains his attraction to the dance for the women in his company who profess no ability to comprehend it. Frédéric’s explanation of Elssler’s charm focuses more on the nature of the difference between men and women than on the cachucha, however. He argues that all public women share the same problematic nature inherent in the performer of the cachucha, whether they be dancers or debutantes.

The nature of mankind includes devotion and tenderness; this is not to search for the impossible, without a doubt, and I am among those who think that one can still in the nineteenth century find within certain privileged women these two treasures of the heart, so precious and so rare. But the women who have known how to guard this sacred fire, do we see them in the world? Is it in Parisian salons that we meet them? For my part I must confess, I have met a frightening number of women in whom pride and egoism replace devotion and love, who spend their days thinking about their evening toilette to devise a dress’s nuance or to perfect the cut of a short cape, who experience a grand and real bliss in splendidly displaying themselves to men to whom they are completely indifferent, but whose homage flatters them, and despite myself I understood that they also have a public to manage, that they are also part actress, and between these dancers here and the

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dancers of the Opéra there is only one difference, that of the stage.62

The problem of understanding Fanny Elssler led to a discussion of the general problem of woman. Although Frédéric does not specifically use the term "coquette," other writers did to describe beautiful women like Elssler who took part in public life. These coquettish women—of an inborn, natural beauty—cultivated their appearance to satisfy their ambitions. The Encyclopédie moderne defined coquetry as a physiological problem located within a woman's heart, in which the natural female love for her family was replaced by ambition and desire for advancement. She made herself attractive not to please others, but to please

62 "La nature de l'homme le port le dévouement et la tendresse; ce n'est pas chercher l'inconnu, sans doute, et je suis de ceux qui pensent que l'on peut encore, au XIXe siècle trouver chez certaines femmes privilégiées ces deux trésors du cœur, si précieux et si rares. Mais les femmes qui ont su garder ce feu sacré, est-ce dans le monde que nous le voyons? Est-ce dans les salons de Paris que nous les rencontrons? Pour ma part, je dois l'avouer, j'ai rencontré dans le monde un nombre effrayant des femmes chez lesquelles l'amour-propre et l'egoïsme remplaçaient le dévouement et l'amour, qui passaient toute la journée à méditer leur toilette du soir, à inventer une nuance de robe ou à perfectionner une coupe de mantelet; qui éprouvaient une grande et réelle jouissance en se montrant splendides à des hommes qui leur étaient parfaitement indifférents, mais dont les hommages les flattaient, et malgré moi j'ai compris qu'elles aussi avaient un public à mémager, qu'elles aussi étaient un peu comédiennes, et qu'entre ces danseuses-là et les danseuse de l'Opéra il n'y avait qu'une différence, celle de la scène." Beaumont-Vassy, 304.
herself, and to acquire power in the public sphere. Authors commonly use the term “coquette” as a seemingly innocent modifier describing Elssler’s performances, perhaps reflecting her predilection for roles that required character dancing (as opposed to the ethereal style of Taglioni). For example, in a review of La Tarentule in 1839, Escudier sees Elssler in the role of Laurette as “in turn coquettish, quick-tempered, witty. She plays this ardent character that one only encounters on the lavas of Italy with a marvellous intelligence.” Yet the term designated a far less innocent quality during the nineteenth century than it does today. Its use then pointed to both a potential in women to achieve a role in the public sphere, and a desire to deny women this role. Frédéric’s understanding of Elssler dancing the cachucha assumes a connection between a professional theatrical performer and nonprofessional women whom he perceived as performers within everyday life.

Although he makes no mention of the professional dancer in his discussion, Honoré de Balzac expressed a similar view of women in a curiously ethnographic essay from 1833 entitled "Theorie de la demarche" [Theory of Posture or Walking]. Rather than beginning with the concept of dance, Balzac merely brushes against it, using it to support the larger points he makes about understanding the appearances of people. In the tradition of physiognomists such as Johann Caspar Lavater and Charles le Brun, Balzac dedicates himself to explaining how the body expressed the innermost essence of human beings. Early on in his essay he concludes that such a task evades empirical analysis; however, despite his doubts, he constructs twelve aphorisms that might guide the analyst in pursuit of understanding the inner nature of people through their external appearance, basing his analysis on observations from the Boulevard de Gant and the occasional conversation.

Balzac reads the female body differently than he reads the male. For instance, the same movements performed by a man and woman do not express the same thing. Consider, for

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instance, his aphorism five: "all angular movements betray a vice or a bad education." Although according to Balzac angular or jerky movements reveal vice in men, such movements may indicate virtue in women, for he asserts that for women "virtue is intimately linked to the right angle." Aphorism six seems to serve as a corollary to aphorism five, reflecting on the curve as opposed to the right angle. It states that curves signify grace and nobility, but again, he makes an exception for women. Among the fair sex, curves double as both a sign of grace and of doubtful virtue: "All women who have made mistakes are remarkable for the exquisite roundness of their movements. If I were a mother, the sacramental words of the dancing master:--Round your arms, would make me tremble for my daughters." According to Balzac, any appearance save that of the purely natural and unaffected threatens a woman's virtue.

65 "Tout mouvement saccadé trahit un vice, ou une mauvaise éducation." Balzac, 630.

66 "La vertu des femmes est intimentement liée à l'angle droit." Balzac, 631.

67 "Toutes les femmes qui ont fait ce que l'on nomme des fautes sont remarquables par la rondeur exquise de leurs mouvements. Si j'étais mère de famille, ces mots sacramentels de maître à danser:--Arrondissez les coudes, me feraient trembler pour mes filles." Balzac, 631.
A similar gendered dichotomy arises in Balzac's discussions of clothing and how it influences the posture of the human body. Dress is certainly a technology of display for men, but Balzac fails to concentrate on the effect of the cravatte or the black suit to the extent that he focuses on feminine couture. For instance, he discusses in great detail the dress, and how it displays the protuberances--presumably the breast and the buttocks--of the female form. According to Balzac, the dress reveals everything, yet allows nothing to be seen: "All our society is in a skirt. Remove the skirt from the woman, good-bye to coquetry as well as passion. In the dress is all her power; in places where they wear grass skirts they do not have love."\textsuperscript{68} Within this passage Balzac reveals his ambivalence toward the message that women communicate through the dress, suggesting that coquetry represents a necessary evil if men wish to experience the enjoyment associated with attraction to women. Although Balzac suggests that the truly good woman is the truly plain, unadorned and "unperformative" woman, he also suggests that this ideal is hardly an attractive one.

\textsuperscript{68} "Otez la jupe à la femme, adieu la coquetterie; plus de passion. Dans la robe est toute sa puissance: là où il y a des pagnes, il n'y a pas d'amour." Balzac, 633.
Power in women—a negative attribute—is allied with their appearance, their construction of themselves as beautiful and graceful. For this reason the dancing master's desire that the woman round her elbows proves so dangerous. He will make a coquette of her, give her the potential to overcome a man. As with Frédéric's analysis of the perils of appearing in public, the only way to avoid such performative presentation of self would seem to be to stay at home out of the public eye, or to be banished naked to a primitive island. The act of grace makes of one a performer, and to be a performer is to hide something, thus presenting a self that is not to be trusted.

Conclusion
Theatrical dance at the Opéra experienced many changes around 1830s, the rise of the female dancer to preeminence over her male counterpart the most often noted. At this same time, however, an increasing disparity emerged between an upper echelon of hyper-disciplined dancers and a lower echelon of relatively unschooled yet physically attractive figurantes and marcheuses. These differences in ability and status inspired multiple types of gazes that attributed a range of powers to the feminine form. An anonymous page could not equal the aesthetic authority of a Marie Taglioni,
but neither could a “graceful” Taglioni generate the erotic energy of a buxom figurante.

At the same time that the woman became the privileged object of the gaze at the Opéra--on the stage and in the audience--she also became such an object in public social circles in general. Social dancers and theatrical dancers existed, theoretically, on the same social plane. This connection assumed the inferiority of women as a group, and demonstrated at the same time that those who proclaimed this inferiority also saw a powerful force imbedded within women’s theatricality. More important than the power of the female dancer and the attractive woman, however, were the many different visual forms her power took. No particular vision dominated the choreographic landscape.
Choreography lies at the heart of La Muette de Portici, the strange hybrid of opera and ballet-pantomime that premiered in 1828 at the Académie Royale de Musique. The plot revolves around Fenella, the mute sister of the revolutionary fisherman Masaniello, whose impossible love for the viceroy’s son leads ultimately to her suicide. Silent characters like Fenella usually inhabited ballet-pantomimes, or story ballets, theatrical works danced from beginning to end that were performed on the same stage and often in the same evening as operas at this theater. The strangeness of Fenella’s balletic origins inspired an unusual commentary within the musical press about the effect of pantomime within an opera. This commentary, which begins in 1828 with the premiere of the opera, follows the many revivals of the work. The most noteworthy of these date from 1837, 1863, 1867, and 1879. Reviews on these occasions reflect on the purposes Fenella’s muteness served (or its lack of purpose) and the effects it had on the perception of the work as a whole. In short, Fenella’s muteness generated a crisis of generic identity. Many questioned whether La Muette represented true hybridity, a unique union of opera and ballet-pantomime, or whether the incongruities between
these two genres made the opera dramatically and musically untenable.

Marian Smith, in discussing the many qualities that ballet-pantomime and opera shared at the Académie Royale de Musique during the July Monarchy, argues that these genres had yet to become as distinct from one another as they were later in the century. They often shared sets and costumes, an emphasis on spectacle organized around tableaux, divertissements, and even the occasional use of similar musical structures. One could go so far as to argue that all grand operas were to an extent hybrids of ballet and opera, since they contain dance in almost every act. But some works were more balletic than others. In addition to La Muette, the Opéra produced Auber's Le Dieu et la bayadère in 1830, starring the popular Marie Taglioni as the mute bayadère deprived of speech (she was a stranger who had yet to learn the native tongue). Soon afterward in 1832 another

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2 In ballet-pantomime, a genre only introduced to audiences at the Opéra beginning in 1776, these musical structures include recitative-like passages (without a vocalist) and airs and instrumental music actually borrowed from operas to form part of the pastiche that generally accompanied dancers. Original scores only began to appear in the 1840s, Adolphe Adam's score for Giselle one of the first. Yet even Giselle features some musical material borrowed from operas.
hybrid work, *La Tentation*, a ballet-opera by Halévy, used an unusual mixture of dancers and singers. Unlike *La Muette*, however, which enjoyed a remarkable longevity, neither *Le Dieu et la bayadère* nor *La Tentation* remained in production past the 1840s.³

Despite the many qualities ballet-pantomimes and operas have in common, I argue here that they already represented separate and irreconcilable genres by the premiere of *La Muette*. Discussions of this opera demonstrate not only how separate these genres were thought to be, but how this separation was justified. Discussions of Fenella make visible the inherent conflict between the mime, who communicates through physical gesture alone, and the vocalist, who has recourse to both gesture and song. The incompatibility of pantomime with opera arises not so much from any set of qualities inherent in either genre, but from the very different ways that audiences viewed and "heard" dancers as opposed to singers.

**Why Fenella is Mute**

When asked why he created an opera with a mute character at its center, Eugène Scribe, the librettist, related his

³ *Le Dieu et la bayadère* was revived in 1866, but for only ten performances.
experience of seeing Mlle Bigottini’s performance in Les Deux mots, ou un nuit dans la forêt, an opera comique performed at the Odéon. Mlle Bigottini, a former dancer at the Opéra comparable to Marie Taglioni in popularity, came out of retirement to play the mute for this special occasion, appearing in only one benefit performance of the work. The effect of her pantomime captured the imagination of Scribe, who was said thereafter to “dream of nothing but mutes.” Mute roles in general were commonplace in Paris during this time, as Peter Brooks describes in The Melodramatic Imagination. According to Brooks, the silent body represented the special tradition of the melodrama, expressing the verbally inexpressible through its gesture and physiognomy. Fenella’s character is strangely serious for a dancer—dancing and dancers were generally associated with lighter subjects—pointing again to the melodrama as a source for her character. The mute roles common to the boulevard, however, were not usually played by ballerinas trained at the Académie. Bigottini’s performance was novel not because she was a mime, but because she was a dancer.

5 Brooks, 56-80. John Speagle also discussed the tradition of representing deaf mutes in melodramas and its relationship to La Muette in his paper “Making Mute Things
Scribe's anecdote provides a source for the idea of Fenella, but not a rationale Fenella's muteness. A longer story of her origin suggests that the collaborators—librettists Scribe and Delavigne, composer Auber, and choreographer Aumer—intended for this silent role to replace that of the principal soprano, since the Opéra employed no outstanding soprano during this time. An early version of the libretto, which eliminated all leading soprano roles, supports this claim; the noble Elvire, who appears only briefly at the end of Act V, is as silent as Fenella. In the second version of the libretto, however, Elvire is given voice and an otherwise expanded role.

Fenella's silence is particularly strange considering the "natural" musicality of her fishing clan, who, guitars in hand, seem to perform barcarolles whenever they have the

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Speak: Opera and Mélodrame,* read at the annual meeting of the American Musicological Society in Phoenix, 1997.

6 The mute character of Fenella, whose Scottish name translates as "white shoulders," has Scottish as well as Italian origins, having been borrowed from a Walter Scott novel, Peveril of the Peak. The Fenella of Peveril is, however, inspired by the Italian Mignon of Goethe's Wilhelm Meister's Lehrjahre, so the relationship to Italy remains.

7 See the first version of the libretto in Herbert Schneider and Nicole Wild, La Muette de Portici. Kritische Ausgabe des Librettos und Dokumentation der ersten Inszenierung (Tübingen: Stauffenburg Verlag, 1993), 10-51.

8 Schneider and Wild, 53-88.
chance. The first versions of the libretto lacked an explanation for why Fenella was mute, an explanation that the jury littéraire felt the public deserved. As they wrote,

Ordinarily mutism comes from deafness at birth. Since Fenella is not deaf, she is mute by accident, something that is rare. Perhaps one should explain how it is that she lost the use of speech. One could attribute this loss to a change caused by a great sadness. Fenella, for example, could have seen her mother perish miserably, and have fallen into such a stupor that, since this calamity, the faculty of speech has not returned to her. Two or three lines would suffice for this explanation, which the public needs, accustomed as they are always to joining mutism with deafness.

The librettists responded to these criticisms, adding several lines for Alphonse near the beginning of Act I, in which he says that Fenella is mute because of an unspecified

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9 Two barcarolles are labeled such: Masaniello’s in Act II and Pietro’s in Act V. A barcarolle-like chorus sung by the Lazzaroni ends Act II, but it forms part of the finale rather than a separate number.

10 “Ordinairement, le mutisme provient de la surdité de naissance. Puisque Fenella n’est pas sourde, elle est muette par accident, ce qui est un cas fort rare. Peut-être faudrait-il dire comment elle a perdu l’usage de la parole. On pourrait attribuer cette perte à une révolution causée par une grande douleur. Fenella, par exemple [sic], pourrait avoir vu périr misérablement sa mère, et en avoir été frappée d’une telle stupeur que, depuis ce malheur, la faculté de parler ne lui soit pas revenue. Deux ou trois vers suffiraient pour cette explication, dont le public a besoin, accoutumé qu’il est à voir toujours réunis le mutisme et la surdité.” Report from the jury littéraire, 24 October 1825, in Schneider and Wild, La Muette de Portici, 195-96.
traumatic experience. Within the opera it is important that she is able to hear: the action of Act IV depends on her overhearing the plans of the fishermen while she pretends to sleep.\(^{11}\) Her response to overhearing this conversation—the revelation that the fishermen will incite more bloodshed—motivates her emotional pantomime that fills the space between the exit of the fishermen and the entrance of Alphonse and Elvire, who ask for the protection of Fenella and her brother within the hut they share.

In addition to requesting specific explanation for Fenella's muteness within the libretto, the censors suggested their own interpretations of the effects of her silence on the perception of the work. The most popular of these held that her presence took attention away from the controversial revolutionary nature of the original story. The tale of Masaniello was well-known in Paris during the 1820s, the story performed on various boulevard stages.\(^{12}\) On the boulevard, the focus fell on the portrayal of a bloody revolt. But it was a different matter at the Opéra,

\(^{11}\) In Listening in Paris, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 254, James H. Johnson mistakenly says that Fenella was deaf as well as mute.

where Fenella, and not the mayhem of the original tale,
generated the most attention. As one censor wrote in 1827,

The danger of legitimate authority, the popular tumult,
the clamor of rebellion, all is lost and forgotten, or
rather merged with the interest that a single character
inspires. It is a woman, this woman is mute, and, made
to speak without a single word, she is only more
interesting. Everything is animated by her, everything
comes to life, her person always leads to a new event.
In the end all attention is on her, all hearts are
attached to her.13

For this censor at least, the inclusion of the mute
character transformed a questionable tale into one that was
woman-centered. Fenella, the only character to appear in
every act, became the catalyst who caused the dramatic
action to take place.

Seduced by the son of the viceroy, Alphonse, before the
beginning of the opera, Fenella had been jailed by his
father. During the first act she enters soon after having
escaped from captivity. Elvire, the fiancée of Alphonse
during the first act but his wife thereafter (the first act
closes with the wedding ceremony), vows to protect the

13 "Le danger de l’autorité légitime, le tumulte populaire,
les clameurs de la rébellion, tout se perd et s’oublie, ou
plutôt se confond dans l’interêt qu’inspire un seul
personnage. C’est une femme, cette femme est muette, et,
fait dit sans épigramme, elle n’en est que plus
intéressante. Par elle tout s’anime, tout se vivifie, sa
personne amène toujours une péripétie nouvelle. Enfin c’est
sur elle que se portent tous les regards, c’est à elle que
s’attachent tous les coeurs." From Archives Nationales AJ13
1050, transcribed in Schneider and Wild, 204.
beautiful and graceful girl from those who have unjustly jailed her. In the second act, Fenella reveals to her brother and the other Lazzaroni the injustices done to her, inciting a latent revolutionary sentiment. The busy market scene of the third act becomes the backdrop for Fenella's encounter with her jailers, who are pursued off stage by the fishermen. The fourth act finds the fishermen again plotting and scheming against the Spanish. Alphonse and Elvire appear at Fenella's doorstep, asking for her protection in the cottage that Fenella and Masaniello share. Masaniello is given the key to the city for protecting the noble couple, but to no avail: he is poisoned by his good friend Pietro, who now sees Masaniello as just another tyrant. While the Lazzaroni occupy the palace an uprising against them occurs, and Masaniello, mad from the poison, is brought back to sanity by Fenella's presence. He then leads his people into battle and suffers mortal wounds off stage. Fenella, upon hearing from Alphonse of her brother's death, throws herself into the lava of the erupting Mount Vesuvius.

In general, commentators on the role of Fenella fell into two camps: those who appreciated the "symphonies" that accompanied her, and saw them as supplying her voice and meaning, and those who disparaged the mixed nature of the work, criticizing the alternation between recitative and
pantomime in the scenes in which Fenella appeared. In his review of the premier in 1828, Fétis makes reference to this alternation, which had already emerged by the time he wrote:

The original idea to give the mute an expository role has been the object of several critiques that do not appear to me well founded. The mixture of melodrama with singing can only displease those who do not understand the language of the instrumental music. Moreover, this mute role is an innovation in an opera: it is a means of variety, and in a time when we are always demanding something new, it would be hypocritical to have an argument with the authors for having united within the same work the advantages of opera and ballet.\(^\text{14}\)

In 1863 Joseph d'Ortigue made a similar claim about Fenella's role, commenting on the melodramatic quality of the music and noting how it expresses her emotions:

In my opinion there is a role that rises above all the others, a role for which I have a particular predilection: that of Fenella. Here I do not speak of the gesture and of the mime. Poor Fenella is mute, she does not know how to express herself otherwise. However, her voice and speech are rendered by the orchestra. How touching, expressive, passionate, and full of sensibility are the accents that the composer entrusts the orchestra to lend to her! How the orchestra renders so well all the sadness, the sighs,

\(^{14}\) "L'idée originale de faire l'exposition par la muette, a été l'objet de quelques critiques qui ne me paraissent pas fondées. Le mélange du mélo drame au chant ne peut déplaire qu'à ceux qui ne comprennent pas le langage de la musique instrumentale. D'ailleurs, ce rôle de muette est une innovation dans un opéra: c'est un moyen de variété, et dans un temps où l'on demande surtout du nouveau, on aurait mauvais grace de faire une querelle aux auteurs pour avoir réuni dans le même ouvrage les avantages de l'opéra et du ballet." Fétis, "Nouvelles de Paris. Académie Royale de musique," Revue musicale 3/12 (1 March 1828).
the groans that explode in the bosom of this victim, seduced and abandoned in such a cowardly way.\footnote{15}{Il y a, à mon sens, un rôle qui l'emporte sur tous les autres, un rôle pour lequel j'ai une particulière prédilection, c'est celui de Fenella. Ici, je ne parle pas du geste et de la mimique. La pauvre Fenella est muette, elle ne saurait s'exprimer autrement. Toutefois, la voix et la parole lui sont rendues dans l'orchestre. Combien les accents que le compositeur charge l'orchestre de lui prêter sont touchants, expressifs, passionnés, pleins de sensibilité! Comme l'orchestre rend bien toutes les douleurs, tous les sanglots, tous les gémissements qui éclatent dans la poitrine de cette victime si lâchement séduite et abandonnée!} Joseph d'Ortigue, "Académie impériale de musique, première représentation de la Reprise de La Muette de Portici," \textit{Le Ménestrel} 30/8 (25 January 1863), 60.

Both Fétis and d'Ortigue see advantages to the mixture of ballet and opera that Fenella's mute role makes apparent. It allows Auber to capitalize on his strengths in writing expressive instrumental music. Curiously, however, for Fétis and d'Ortigue it is not the silent body that generates Fenella's pathos, as Brooks has argued from analysis of the melodramatic, but the music that accompanies her gestures. In contrast, Fenella's gestures hardly interest Fétis and d'Ortigue.

As Fétis acknowledges, other observers expressed ambivalence toward the role of Fenella, often enjoying the performance of the dancer yet disparaging the mixture of ballet with opera. In general these writers attempted to
comprehend Fenella through her gestures, not through the
music that accompanied her. As one reviewer wrote of a
performance in 1837:

In this opera the pantomime encroaches too often on the
territory of speech and song, and whatever the graces
of the danseuse may be, and the talent that she employs
in her silent role, one must recognize that this
alternation of articulated speech and gesticulated
speech, this melange of mime and recitative produces a
singularly bizarre effect, especially in pathetic
situations like these. The genres gain nothing by
being mixed, even at the Académie Royale de Musique.

Reviewing an 1879 revival, one critic declared that a mute
caracter should never have been placed at the center of any
opera, on account of the generic trouble such a character
causes: "[La Muette] has one foot in drama and another in
ballet, and the work is neither ballet nor drama."

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16 "Toutefois, dans cet opéra, la pantomime empiète trop
souvent sur le terrain de la parole et du chant, et quelles
que soient les graces de la danseuse, et le talent qu’elle
déploie dans son rôle silencieux, il faut reconnaître que
cette alternative de la parole articulée et de la parole
gesticulée, que ce mélange de la mimique et du récitatif,
produit un effet singulièrement bizarre, surtout dans les
situations pathétiques comme celle-ci. Les genres ne
gagnent jamais rien à être confondus, même à l’Académie
Royale de Musique." This quotation comes from a pamphlet
entitled Album des Théâtres, Académie Royale de Musique.
Argument--Opéra, La Muette de Portici, ([Paris]: Chez
Roullet, n.d.), 4, found in the dossier d’oeuvre for La
Muette de Portici at F-Po. Although undated, it lists the
dramatis personae for the 1837 revival.

17 "On a un pied dans le drame, un pied dans le ballet, et
l’oeuvre n’est ni ballet ni drame." Georges, Le Galois (10
September 1879).
Although separated by more than forty years, these writers see ballet as a disruptive component in the opera, one that damages it dramatically and musically.

In his biography of Auber, Benoit Jouvin argues that Fenella's silence has no dramatic or musical point. Although he acknowledges that the mime offers opportunities for Auber to compose delightful "symphonies" to express Fenella's gestures (notably, perhaps, he does not mention her emotions), the mime role also deprives the opera of a high-pitched supporting voice in many ensembles. Castil-Blaze made these same two arguments. First, in his review of the premier of La Muette in 1828 he lauded the music that accompanies Fenella. Much later, in his history of the Académie Impériale de Musique he criticized the role, going so far as to say he would prefer that Fenella spoke:

If the crux of the play, or at least that of a strong scene, depended on the powerlessness of the mute to reveal an important secret, the muteness of this character would add to the interest; however, from the moment when it is not an absolute necessity to close Fenella's mouth, her constant silence does harm to the opera, which only has the support of a secondary role [Elvire's] for the high voices.

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19 Si le noeud de la pièce, ou du moins celui d'une scène forte, dépendait de l'impuissance où se trouverait la muette de révéler un secret important, le mutisme de ce personnage ajouterait 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
In other words, Fenella is all show and no substance since her silent condition motivates no particular event. Obviously Castil-Blaze had the capacity to understand the music that accompanied Fenella, but he responded to her lack of voice rather than to the accompaniment that potentially replaced this voice, resisting at the same time any communicative potential within her gestures.

Castil-Blaze's reaction to Fenella reveals a resistance to the intertwining of ballet and opera. As Marian Smith has discussed, Georges Noverre introduced the ballet d'action to the Opéra in 1776. He established ballet as a separate genre, but dance still played an important role in operas. However, neither critics nor admirers of La Muette saw the opera as belonging to an Old Regime tradition in which opera and ballet were merged. Rather, they saw it as the combination of anywhere from two to four genres (critics cited different blends of opera-comique, ballet-pantomime, grand opera, and melodrama) although they disagreed on the quality of the result of this mixture. Sung from beginning to end with divertissements, the work represented a grand

la voix d'un rôle secondaire pour les mélodies aiguës."
Quoted in Jouvin, D. F. E. Auber, 39. Joseph d'Ortigue quotes these same passages from Castil-Blaze in his 1863 review of the revival of La Muette, "Académie impériale de musique, première représentation de la Reprise de La Muette de Portici," Le Ménestrel 30/8 (25 January 1863), 60.
opera; however, the subject of the libretto resembled that of an opera-comique.\textsuperscript{20} Fenella's pantomime points to ballet-pantomime, but the darkness of the role seems more appropriate to melodrama. Although \textit{La Muette} represented a melange of genres, critics were highly aware of this mixture and the problems of discontinuity that it created.

\textbf{Fenella as a Dancer}

By the time of \textit{La Muette}'s premier in 1828, interest in pantomime and the story it told as an element of ballet-pantomime had begun to wane in favor of divertissements, purely danced diversions. These divertissements allowed members of the audience to enjoy the bodies of women for their own sake rather than for any message they might communicate.\textsuperscript{21} This shift in interpretation of the dancer's

\textsuperscript{20} For a discussion of \textit{La Muette}'s relationship to operas comiques, see Karin Pendle, \textit{Eugène Scribe and French Opera of the Nineteenth Century} (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1979), 395-415.

body created a historical schism between those who saw the potential narrative quality of a character like Fenella, and those who saw her as an obstruction to narrative. When Mlle Bigottini inspired the creation of Fenella through her performance in Les Deux Mots, the aesthetics of Georges Noverre, who valued the storytelling aspect of mime over the purely danced aspect of divertissements, still reigned among those who wrote about dance. A preference for viewing the female body, combined with a fascination with Fenella's strangeness, allowed Fenella's performance to be enjoyed despite the increasing distaste with which pantomime was viewed in some circles, as the following quotation from a review of a performance in 1863 suggests:

The role of Fenella will always absorb the attention of sensitive souls and those who love strangeness. It is hardly happy nevertheless, and casts quite a chill on the stage; but since it is customary to give the role to the most attractive and most deserving of the Académie de danse, one reserves for it all curiosity and all applause.

when their bodies were revealed to a greater and greater extent, through diaphanous costumes, travesty roles, and through the new dancing techniques introduced by Taglioni, which required higher leg lifts and other motions that caused more of the body to be exposed.

This emphasis on narratives began with Noverre's introduction of ballet-pantomime to Paris in 1776, a tradition he espoused in his letters on the dance. See John V. Chapman's discussion of this aesthetic in "Jules Janin: Romantic Critic," 197-98.

"Le rôle de Fenella accaparera toujours l'attention des âmes sensibles et des amateurs d'étrangétés. Il n'est guère
Fenella was often viewed more as a visual spectacle than as a communicator, a quality of the female dancer regardless of the type of work in which she appeared. In this respect it is important that Fenella is a woman, for a silent man could not have inspired the sympathy associated with her. As women gained prominence as visual objects rather than storytellers within ballets, critics wrote increasingly disparaging comments about male dancers and their mime. A review of the ballet-pantomime La Gypsy from 1839 reveals this disfavor. The review conveys a sense of the complex translation process required of an audience for a mime in a ballet-pantomime if all the nuances were to be understood, and suggests that attempting to grasp the precise message of mime led to frustration. In one unusually graphic passage, the reviewer related how the dancer Joseph Mazilier performed the speech of Stenio to the accompaniment of a well-known tune. Stenio’s words are found in the scenario, a booklet much like a libretto for ballet, distributed at the beginning of performances. The heureux cependant, et jette pas mal de froid sur la scène; mais comme il est d’usage de le confier à la plus jolie et à l’une des plus méritantes de l’Académie de danse, on réserve pour lui toute curiosité et tous applaudissements.” Manet, La Presse Théâtrale (23 January 1863).
reviewer described the pantomime of the dancer and then connected it with these literal translations as follows:

Stenio, in place of speaking, begins by a frightening whirl with his two arms, and then he punches the first gypsy in the eye. Literal translation: I have good arms. Then he puts his hands agreeably on his calves as if he itched, he pinches his waist, he caresses his chin, he twirls a lock of hair lightly, hypnotizing himself. Translation: I am young. Then he pulls his saber, if he has one, and scares two or three children sitting in the wings. Translation: I am courageous. Finally he poses fiercely in the manner of Caesar, and conforming to these two verses from Ruy Blas:

Who is this brigand who, back there, nose to the wind,
Squares himself, his eyes opened and his hip forward?

Translation: Do you want me to join your group?24

This article also demonstrates how easily a pantomimic performance within a ballet could devolve into a ridiculous

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24 "Stenio, au lieu de dire, commence par exécuter un moulinet effrayant avec ses deux bras, et puis il donne un grand coup de poing dans l’œil au premier bohémienn.--Traduction littéral: J’ai de bons bras.--Puis il passe agréablement la main sur ses mollets, comme s’il éprouvait des démangeaisons; il se pince la taille; il se caresse le menton; il se frise légèrement le toupet, se magnétise lui-même.--Trad: je suis jeune.--Puis il tire son sabre, s’il en a un, et a faire peur à deux ou trois petits enfants situés dans la coulisse.--Trad: Je suis courageux.--Enfin il se pose fièrement à la manière de don César, et conformément à ces deux vers de Ruy Blas:

Quel est donc ce brigand qui, là-bas, nez au vent,
Se carre, l’œil au guet et la hanche en avant?


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process of decoding bodily movements in the context of familiar music and a simple verbal text.²⁵

Although the author’s analysis makes the role seem comic, Stenio is in reality the leading man of La Gypsy. Maziliér’s gender affects the tone the reviewer takes in this passage, for at this theater the male dancer was little respected. He had been an important component of ballet in the past and remained a fixture in ballets well into the nineteenth century.²⁶ However, a growing segment of the audience at the Académie Royale de Musique found men too

²⁵ The relationship of words to pantomime remains unclear. Alfred Giraudet codified an approach to mime that he attributed to his teacher Delsarte (1811-1871), a mime and ex-Opéra singer. His approach emphasizes the posture and bearing of the body over any particular gestural language, but how it relates to what might have taken place at the Opéra during the 1830s or any other time is unclear. His theories suggest that mime expressed vague sentiments and difficult ideas rather than words and sentences: “The more simple, clear, and precise the idea, the less it needs gesture. The more elliptical and restrictive, the more it needs gesture.” See Giraudet, Mimique, Physionomies et Gestes. Méthode pratique d’après le système de F. del Sarte pour servir a l’expression des sentiments, (Paris, 1895), 122.

²⁶ Lynn Garafola suggests that during the 1860s women actually replaced men in travesty roles; however, despite the popularity of women dressed as men, men still appeared in large numbers in ballets. See “The Travesty Dancer in Nineteenth-Century Ballet,” in Crossing the Stage: Controversies on Cross-Dressing, ed. Lesley Ferris (New York: Routledge, 1993), 96-106.
ugly to watch, except in comic roles that exploited their grotesqueness.

As I briefly discussed in Chapter 1, the derision of male dancers began in commentaries on the interaction between Marie Taglioni and Jules Perrot at the Opéra during the early 1830s, when Taglioni was perceived to desire domination over Perrot. This discourse continued in a more general vein throughout the century. In a passage from L’Hiver et L’Été à Paris, published in Paris in 1844, theater critic Jules Janin described male dancers as sad and isolated creatures who occupied the margins of the stage, while women formed the central interest of the spectacle. Men were again denigrated in a chronicle of events at the Opéra published in 1846, when Georges Touchard-Lafosse described them as a conquered nation forced into a position of inferiority by the reigning female dancers. Male dancers senselessly developed their dance technique, for audiences no longer viewed their athletic displays with pleasure. Despite the control over dance they exercised as

27 See Chapter 1, fn 10.


teachers and choreographers, this perception that men had been disempowered within the choreographic picture remained commonplace during the 1850s, as the following quotation from an anonymous guide to Parisian theaters from 1855 suggests:

To have in large part suppressed the male dancer, who never should have been introduced into the habits and the pastimes of reasonable people, is incontestable proof of the good taste and judgment of our times. One was duped, by the grace of heaven, by these great human automatons, by his entrechats and exquisite-to-behold pirouettes, the execution of which requires long years of exercise and study employed toward a sterile and most often ridiculous goal.

The female dancer, who is still with us, will persist without doubt as long as the Opéra survives. At the same time, by leaving the male dancers to the side, we make it a pleasure and duty to mention this graceful and charming host of female contemporary dancers who were introduced so happily by Mlle Taglioni, and gathered in the same aureole the names of Elssler, of Carlotta Grisi, Cerito, Rosati, etc.10

10 "C'est, du reste, une preuve incontestable de bon goût et de jugement de la part de notre temps, d'avoir en grande partie supprimé le danseur, qui n'aurait jamais dû s'introduire dans les habitudes et les passe-temps des peuples raisonnables. On s'est lasse, grâce au ciel, de ces grands automatons humains, de ces entrechats et de ces pirouettes a perle de vue, dont l'exécution exigeait de longues années d'exercice et d'étude employées dans un but stérile et le plus souvent ridicule.

"Reste donc la danseuse, qui se maintiendra sans doute tant que l'opéra subsistera. Aussi, en laissant les danseurs de côté, nous faisons-nous un plaisir et un devoir de mentionner cette gracieuse et charmante pléiade de danseuse contemporaines qui s'ouvre si heureusement par Mlle Taglioni et réunit dans une même aureole les nomme des Elssler, des Carlotta Grisi, des Cerito, des Rosati, etc." Guide dans les théâtres (Paris: Paulin et le Chevalier, 1855), 30.
These authors who derided the male dancer criticized the artificiality of his overathletic technique above all else, suggesting that the act of dancing was felt to be incongruous with the idea of masculinity. Women, on the other hand, were most often admired for charm and grace, terms that make no reference to the technical prowess, and appreciated for the appearance of beauty as much for the vocabulary of their movements. In contrast to his negative description of Stenio, the anonymous review of La Gypsy praised Fanny Elssler in the role of Sarah Campbell opposite Stenio as "a charming Sarah, full of grace, of sentiment, and who has as much spirit as one can have when one does not say a word." Instead of ridiculing the performance, as he did in his discussion of Stenio, he derided ballet’s silence in his description of Sarah Campbell.

Fenella served as an ornament to the stage. The attractive ballerina might brighten the role of Fenella and this dark tale of revolution, even if her end was tragic. Her presence inspired interest in the plot in such a way that the political potential of the revolutionary tale

31 "La Gipsy a été créée et mise au monde pour le triomphe de Mlle Fanny Elssler. Mlle Fanny Elssler est une charmante Sarah, pleine de grâce, de sentiment, et qui a autant d’esprit qu’on peut en avoir quand on ne dit pas un mot." X. Y. Z., “Académie Royale de Musique. La Gipsy."
became secondary to her own energy. Because Fenella creates more motion than specific meaning, audiences throughout La Muette's performance history remained content to see an attractive woman moving ambiguously and gracefully about the stage. She pulled on the heartstrings or she confused with her ambiguity, but as long as she pleased the eye her viewers could not wonder too much about what she meant.

Fenella's Influence on the Leading Tenor Role

Despite her choreographic origins, Fenella was not completely alien from the singers around her. According to Louis Véron, the entrepreneurial director of the Académie Royale de Musique from 1830 to 1835, in order for a French grand opera to be effective its dramatic events needed to be

12 Cormac Newark has recently made a similar argument in "'Mille sentiments confus l'agitent:' Understanding La Muette de Portici," at the annual meeting of the American Musicological Society in Phoenix, 1997. Newark sees Fenella's gestures as open to a broad range of ever-circulating meanings--as opposed to Jane Fulcher's political reading of Fenella in The Nation's Image: French Grand Opera as Politics and Politicized Art (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987). I see Fenella's expressive range as more limited. Because Fenella was female and because she was most often a dancer (occasionally the role was played by a stage actress, such as Harriet Smithson), an audience's understanding of her was placed within certain limits even if her gestures were somewhat incomprehensible and thus open to a variety of interpretations.
understood visually, just like the action of a ballet. At points within the action Fenella appeared more as a silent singer than a dancer because the dramatic situations required everyone on stage, from the lowest-ranking chorus member to the leading tenor, to participate in the action. As important as Fenella’s mime was to what happens in La Muette, the acting ability of the singers was equally important to the successful performance of the opera. Fenella’s presence heightened the awareness of bodies and gesture, her silence placing the acting skills of those around her in relief. Especially at moments of heightened emotional intensity such as finales, production books, which describe the tableau in great detail, include the actions of soloists and extras alike. The descriptive prose preserves gestures that were not isolated within Fenella’s choreographic realm, but that ideally belonged to the vocabulary of all the actors on the stage. This unusually detailed set of instructions, the earliest published, may have resulted from the focus on Fenella’s gesture.34


Imagining the action from these third-person directions—as opposed to the directions for direct speech, what Fenella "seems to say"—suggests a world in which, at least at one level, Fenella and the singers share gestures and actions.

Masaniello's mad scene, within the fifth-act finale, contains one of many possible examples of the physical interaction the opera allowed between the soloists and the chorus. And strikingly, just after this scene ends, Fenella and Masaniello collapse briefly into the same gestural language. To emulate his drugged state, the tenor who plays Masaniello must appear to slip in and out of madness. As the production book states, "the responses to Masaniello indicate well enough the place he occupies. Each time that Masaniello has the air of responding soundly, general joy; when he falls back into his madness, apprehension and sadness seizes all those around him; one could not overly observe all these nuances for the effect of the scene."15

15 "Les réponses de Masaniello indiquent assez la place qu'il occupe. Chaque fois que Masaniello a l'air de répondre juste à ce qu'on lui adresse, la joie est générale; lorsqu'il retombe dans ses folies, alors l'inquiétude et le chagrin s'emparent de tout ce qui l'entoure; on ne saurait trop observer toutes ces nuances..."
These directions show that the dramatic success of the scene depends on a successful interaction between tenor and chorus, with the responses of the fishermen to Masaniello even dictating the particulars of blocking.

The music from this scene further communicates Masaniello’s madness through the snippets of barcarolles it recalls from Act II. As Masaniello slips in and out of his mad state, he slips into and out of strains of these barcarolles. Figures 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3 contain the three episodes that Masaniello recalls during Act V. None of these three excerpts is in the same key as it had been in Act II, nor are they in the same key with each other, representing instability through their unorthodox tonal relationships to one-another. The melodies that Masaniello sings in his mad state all come from “Amis, la matinée est belle” (See Figure 2.4 for original version). The text, however, represents a melange between this first barcarolle that Masaniello sings and the second, found in the finale of the second act: Masaniello combines a short portion of the text from the second barcarolle with the tune of the first (See Figure 2.5 for the original “Chantons gaiment.”). In

pour l’effet de la scène.” Cohen, The Original Staging Manuals, 56.

This return of past melodies in a confused rendition articulates madness in a similar way to mad scenes found in
addition, the incomplete couplet structure, the conflation of the texts, and the chorus's reaction to hearing these tunes again all communicate Masaniello's confusion. In the past (Act II), when Masaniello introduced these barcarolles the fishermen happily joined in with him. During this scene when he sings the fishermen react against him musically, singing their own thoughts and feelings. The barcarolles thus represent Masaniello's continued identification with his fishermen confreres (and thus to his low origins and inherently musical nature), but also his separation from them. 37 When Masaniello sings these pieces of melodies past, he shows the audience how incapable he is to lead the Lazzaroni in a simple song, much less a military victory.

We see Fenella acting as a dramatic catalyst when she

Bellini's La Sonnambula and Donizetti's Lucia de Lammermoor. On these other mad scenes, see Mary Ann Smart, "The Silencing of Lucia," Cambridge Opera Journal 4/2 (1992): 119-141. Both La Sonnambula and Lucia were written after La Muette de Portici. La Sonnambula was actually modeled in part on a successful ballet at the Opéra, La Somnambule, which included a mimed mad scene.

37 Although associated particularly with gondoliers in Venice, the barcarolle was also more broadly associated with Italians of working-class origins. A couplet aria form often found in grand and comic French operas, it generally represented an instance of phenomenal music, much like the ballade. In their comic opera La barcarolle (1845), Scribe and Auber suggest that the barcarolle is closely related to the romance, the only difference being whether the author of the text is of aristocratic or common background.

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Figure 2.1: Masaniello’s first episode of madness in the Act V Finale, quoting from the barcarolle, Act II, no. 7, measures 46-48, “pecheurs, parle bas.” Each of the following excerpts comes from La Muette de Portici. Opéra en cinq actes, Paroles de MM Scribe et Germain Delavigne, Musique de D. F. E. Auber. Piano/Vocal score. (Paris: Brandus et Cie, n.d.).
Figure 2.2: Masaniello's second episode of madness, from the mad scene, Act V Finale. Here he slips into the melody of the Act II, no. 7 barcarolle with the words from the Act II Finale, "chantons gaiment."
Figure 2.2, continued.
Figure 2.3: Masaniello’s third and final episode of madness, Act V finale. The melody and text come from Act II, no. 7, measures 52-67, with modifications. “Le roi des mers” is only repeated three times here (four in the original), and the melody is reshaped to allow for a modulation rather than an authentic cadence as in the original.
Figure 2.4: Masaniello’s barcarolle, Act II, no. 7, first couplet.
Figure 2.4, continued.
Figure 2.5: “Chantons gaiment la barcarolle,” Act II finale.

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appears during this act. Her presence and her mime relating the events outside the palace begin to bring Masaniello to his senses, and he then prepares to lead his people against the Spaniards who occupy Naples. However, before he and his followers leave the stage, Masaniello entrusts his sister to the care of Borella, another fisherman. Masaniello seizes a hatchet that a fisherman to his right holds and seems animated with the prospect of vengeance. In the middle of the chorus, everyone on the stage forms a group stage left to prepare to leave. After the chorus ends, Masaniello commends his sister to Borella; Figure 2.6 contains the page from the score on which this action occurs. This is an important moment: when Masaniello entrusts Fenella to Borella, he says nothing. He shows his intentions simply through his actions, the role of the singer becoming purely pantomimic. The difference between the dancer and all the other actors on the stage breaks down through the similarity between the directions for pantomime and the stage directions. This difference between dancer and tenor, however, can only collapse in the context of texts that describe actions, not direct speech. On the occasion when Fenella "seems to say" things with her gestures, she displays a language of gesture or communicative physiognomy that she does not share with the vocalists.
They leave with swords in hand while encouraging Masaniello, who asks Borella to stay near his sister and watch over her.

Figure 2.6: Excerpt from the score where Masaniello entrusts Fenella to Borella. From a facsimile edition of the 1828 score published by Troupenas, D. F. E. Auber, La Muette de Portici, 2 vols. Early Romantic Opera, 30, eds. Philip Gossett and Charles Rosen (New York: Garland, 1980), II: 694-95.
The theatricality required of the tenor and the chorus in Masaniello's mad scene was not unusual in operas from the late 1820s. At the Académie Royale de Musique, both acting and singing defined vocalists, who were responsible for creating a character. Adolphe Nourrit, the leading tenor at the Académie Royale de Musique during this period, personified the acting singer. His presence at this theater no doubt influenced the acting required of the tenor in works like La Muette and, three years later, Robert le diable (1831), an opera in which the tenor again interacts with a female dancer. (Rather than imposing a dancer upon the space dedicated to singing as in La Muette, the tenor invades the space dedicated to dance in Robert le diable, the divertissement. He becomes the center of the debauched nuns' attention during the famous cloister scene of the third act.) Nourrit also played opposite a dancer in Le Dieu et la bayadère (1830). These operas featured dancers, but they also featured Nourrit, who convincingly interacted with the dance and the mime.

Although the tenor roles in operas with mute characters emphasize the acting skills of the tenor, these skills were already valued among singers. As Louis Quicherat, the biographer of Nourrit, wrote:

It does not suffice for a [singer] to be an excellent pantomime, because he must not only make felt what he
says himself, but also what he leaves to the instruments. The orchestra does not render a sentiment that should not depart from his soul. His steps, his glances, his gestures, all should always agree with the music, without him nevertheless appearing to think about it. He should always create interest, even when he is silent, and when he finds himself occupied with a difficult role, if he allows himself for an instant to forget the character and to concern himself with singing, he is only a musician on the stage. He is no longer an actor.38

Quicherat interprets the interaction of the singer’s body with the orchestra in a manner that recalls Fétis and d’Ortigue analyzing Fenella, although his is a more complicated process in that voice is involved. The orchestra “renders sentiments,” and the gesture should agree with these sentiments. Yet the singer is obviously not mute: these gestures work in concert with his vocal expression. If Fétis and d’Ortigue’s comments suggest that the orchestra alone expresses emotion, Quicherat’s comments on the purpose of the acting singer suggest that the gesture

38 "Il ne suffit pas à l’acteur d’opéra d’être un excellent pantomime; car il ne doit pas seulement faire sentir ce qu’il dit lui-même, mais aussi ce qu’il laisse à la symphonie. L’orchestre ne rend pas un sentiment qui ne doive sortir de son âme; ses pas, se regards, son geste, tout doit s’accorder sans cesse avec la musique, sans pourtant qu’il paraisse y songer; il doit intéresser toujours, même en gardant le silence, et quoique occupé d’un rôle difficile, s’il laisse un instant oublier le personnage pour s’occuper du chanteur, ce n’est qu’un musicien sur la scène, il n’est plus acteur." Louis Quicherat, Adolphe Nourrit. Sa vie, son talent, son caractère, sa correspondance, vol. 2 (Paris, 1867), 271.

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of the body must be somehow coordinated appropriately with the "gesture" of the music. Nourrit's career spanned from the mid-twenties until 1837, when he left Paris for a brief career in Italy.\(^9\) We can assume that this was the period Quicherat had in mind when he described Nourrit's style.

In 1843, six years after Nourrit had left the Parisian stage, Leon Escudier observed that most singers at the Académie Royale de Musique, even the most eminent, ignored the art of walking, of placing their hands, and of expressing by their gestures the words that they pronounced while on stage.\(^40\) In other words, singers lacked the attention to gesture and posture necessary to support the emphasis on the visual in productions at this theater. Escudier and Quicherat agree that gesture served as the connecting force between the singer's voice and the instrumental music that accompanied him. When performers abandoned appropriate gesture, they abandoned their responsibility to illustrate how the instrumental music fit with their actions. Escudier's observations, however, suggest a decline in interest in gesture of singers in

\(^9\) Nourrit committed suicide two years later, in 1839.
\(^40\) Escudier, "Le Geste dans le ballet et l'opéra," La France musicale 6/49 (3 December 1843): 393-94.
general, meaningful gesture having been relegated to the realm of the dancer.

Reviews of the 1837 revival of La Muette point to the beginning of this trend, and suggest that it had its origins with Gilbert Duprez’s replacement of Nourrit as the leading tenor at the Opéra. Rarely does a new production of an old work attract as much attention from the press as a premier, but this revival was atypical. The Viennese dancer Fanny Elssler starred for the first time as Fenella, and Duprez made his debut as her brother Masaniello. The premiers of Duprez and Elssler brought a newly Italian character to the operatic work set in Naples. Although originally trained in Paris, Duprez left Paris for Italy in 1825 after an unsuccessful début at the Odéon. In Italy he continued his training and achieved success as a singer. Returning to Paris in 1837, he began his career at the Académie Royale de Musique by assuming the roles Adolphe Nourrit had created, Nourrit experiencing poor health and a weakening voice at the time. The story goes that after Duprez sang a high “C” from the chest rather than in falsetto in the role of Arnold in Guillaume Tell, Nourrit’s fate was sealed—he would
retire from the stage of the Académie Royale de Musique. Duprez succeeded him as leading tenor.\(^4\)

Auber and Scribe originally created the role of Masaniello for Nourrit. His performances often created a memorable experience for his audience. As Blaze de Bury said, "The grand preoccupation of Nourrit was to make you forget that he sang, his gestures adding to the situation, his pantomime making you think. You would come to hear an opera, and before the curtain fell you would nearly believe you had attended a performance of a tragedy of Shakespeare."\(^4\) In contrast, Duprez lacked Nourrit's attention to theatricality, yet his identity as a singer was entwined with his experience of singing in Italy. As Berlioz wrote in this regard, "He has returned the true Masaniello to us."\(^4\) This connection with the native land

\(^4\) Although the "High-C" story may be apocryphal, Duprez replaced Nourrit, and was generally held to be the stronger singer of the two. Blaze de Bury relates the deleterious effect of Duprez's appointment on Nourrit in Musiciens contemporains (Paris, 1856), 230-31.

\(^4\) "La grande préoccupation de Nourrit était de vous faire oublier qu’il chantait, son geste ajoutait à la situation, sa pantomime vous donnait à penser. Vous veniez d’entendre un opéra, et lorsque le rideau tombait, vous croyiez presque avoir assisté à la représentation d’une tragédie de Shakespeare." Blaze de Bury, Meyerbeer et son temps (Paris, 1865), 161.

\(^4\) "C'est la véritable Masaniello qu'il nous a rendu." H. Berlioz, "Académie Royale de Musique. Reprise de La Muette
of Fenella and Masaniello served Duprez as well as a
disciplined acting style might have in La Muette. In
reviews of Duprez as Masaniello, critics focused, as one
might expect, on his singing, which was less sweet and more
forceful than Nourrit’s had been; however, they also
compared his acting to Nourrit’s. Nourrit played Masaniello
as a noble, “believing that he pleased the Parisian taste by
idealizing the character of the man of the people.” In
contrast, Duprez used common gestures. Critics praised the
naturalness with which he assumed the role; since his poses
and all his movements lacked nobility, his style more
accurately expressed Masaniello’s low origins as a
Neapolitan fisherman. His Italian training allowed
audiences to see him as one of the Lazzaroni with ease, his
contemporary self blending effortlessly into the
seventeenth-century revolutionary character he portrayed.

A curious opposition occurs here between Nourrit’s
“noble” and Duprez’s “natural” presentations of self. In
this context the word “noble” suggests old-fashioned actions

 carbohydrate de Portici,” Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris 4/40 (1
October 1837): 131-32.

“...croyait plaire au goût parisien en idéalisant le
personnage de l’homme du peuple.” “Académie royale de
musique. Reprise de La Muette de Portici,” Le Ménestrel
4/44 (1 October 1837).
that are constructed to hide what one actually is. Balzac described such a noble mien in his essay entitled "Theorie de la démarche," in which he "seeks the key to the perpetual hieroglyphs of human posture." In this essay he takes delight in the decay of the French aristocratic way of presenting one's self in public, a studied style of self-presentation so disciplined that it revealed nothing of the inner life of the person. He listed the principles of this sort of walk in the following passage:

To walk well, a man should be straight without stiffness, train himself to direct his two legs in the same line, carry himself sensibly neither to the right nor to the left of his axis, make his body participate imperceptibly in the general movement, introduce to his posture a light balance that destroys the secret thoughts of life through its regular oscillation, incline the head, never give the same attitude to his arms when he stops. Louis XIV walked in this way. These principles come from the remarks made about this grand type of royalty by the writers who, happily for me, only saw his exterior.

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45 Balzac, "Théorie de la démarche," 615.

46 "Donc, pour bien marcher, l'homme doit être droit sans raideur, s'étudier à diriger ses deux jambes sur une même ligne, ne se porter sensiblement ni à droite ni à gauche de son axe, faire participer imperceptiblement tout son corps au mouvement général, introduire dans sa démarche un léger balancement qui détruite par son oscillation régulière la secrète pensée de la vie, incliner la tête, ne jamais donner la même attitude à ses bras quand il s'arrête. Ainsi marchait Louis XIV. Ces principes découlent des remarques faites sur ce grand type de la royauté par les écrivains qui, heureusement pour moi, n'ont vu en lui que son extérieur." Balzac, "Théorie de la démarche," 639-40.
Descriptions of Nourrit as noble point to the Frenchness of the role as Nourrit played it. His acting lacked a verisimilitude that could have been equated with local color: he did not appear to be a working-class Italian fisherman. His bearing suggested the French aristocrat to some, despite his phrygian hat.

If nobility masks the inner self, naturalness allows the inner emotions to shine through, increasingly a virtue for a singer but not necessarily for a dancer. In his review of the 1837 revival of La Muette, Berlioz defined "natural" as revealing of the inner nature in describing the performance of Fanny Elssler, who played Fenella opposite Duprez’s Masaniello: "Mlle Elssler, always true, always herself, is always natural as well. She expresses what she feels, she moves us because she is moved, and she knows, nevertheless, that to maintain the art of her influence [she must] master just to a certain point her emotion."47 Elssler remade Fenella through her seemingly natural Italian pantomime style that complemented Duprez’s Italianate presence. Rather than employing the stylized poses and the

47 "Mlle Elssler, toujours vrai, toujours elle-même est aussi toujours naturelle. Elle exprime ce qu’elle sent; elle émeut parce qu’elle est émue, et qu’elle sait néanmoins, pour conserver à l’art son empire, maîtriser jusqu’à un certain point son émotion." Berlioz, “Académie Royale de Musique. Reprise de La Muette de Portici.”
coquettish interaction with the audience of a French dancer such as Lise Noblet, who created the role of Fenella, Elssler took a realistic approach to the role, timing her gestures to the music, even collapsing into tears at the appropriate moment. However, as Théophile Gautier describes the reception of her performance, Elssler did not gain universal approval. Many who saw her performance missed the coquetry of the French danseuse, and thought Elssler took the role of the mute too seriously by playing it naturally.  

Although the same could never be said of Elssler’s virtuosic mode of performance, at least one critic interpreted Duprez’s “naturalness” as demonstrating a lack of concern for gesture. If Nourrit could be described as an actor’s tenor, Duprez was known more as a singer’s. A critic for the Revue de Paris writing in 1837 called this lack of acting a positive quality, in that Duprez never searched for effects outside the limits of his art. “He is a singer: he must sing above all else. He listens to lift up openly the emotion by the power of his voice, and not to hide it by the ruse of gesture and of pantomime.”


49. "Une des bonnes qualités de Duprez, c’est de ne jamais chercher ses effets hors des limites de son art. Il est
author paints Duprez’s singing abilities as shining out above the possible benefit of pantomime. At the same time, he suggests that pantomime and gesture are not really worth very much to a singer; in fact, these acting techniques might disguise the power of the voice or possibly make one think that one was moved by a voice when one was actually duped by pantomime and gesture.

Duprez’s connections with Italy may have allowed audiences to interpret him as “natural” in the role of Masaniello. However, his lack of acting skills were said to precipitate revisions in the fifth-act mad scene of La Muette, at least according to Quicherat. Perhaps writing in defense of Nourrit, he stated that during rehearsals for this 1837 revision, Auber practically eliminated the mad scene because when Duprez had nothing to sing he did not know what to do. However, reviews of the 1837 production mention no such change. More likely, the effect of the mad scene changed. Without a theatrical tenor at the center of the drama, the chorus had nothing to react against.


Rather than vacillate between joy and sadness, perhaps they just sat in a suspended state, awaiting their signal to run from the stage into the battle that causes Masaniello's death.

With Nourrit's departure from Paris in 1837, the end of the "theatrical" tenor had come. However, operas based on librettos by Eugène Scribe were still constructed through contrasting tableaux. As opposed to acting tenors like Nourrit, singing tenors like Duprez contributed less to the visual effect of these operas. Designed for particular artists during particular times, and often edited to reflect the strengths of new artists, these productions experienced tremendous change with the simple replacement of one tenor or one dancer with another.  

Writing in 1879, over forty years after Nourrit's departure, the issue of pantomime comes up again in the context of another Scribe/Auber collaboration, Le Lac des fées of 1839. This opera featured Mlle Nau, a soprano of great beauty, as the fairy Zeila, and Duprez as the student who woos her. This five-act opera remained on the opera stage for only a year. It may have owed its lack of long-term success to the opinion many held that it would make a better subject for a ballet than an opera. The role of the fairy took advantage of Mlle Nau's remarkable legs, which were often compared to those of a dancer. For the first act and the fifth act, Mlle Nau (or perhaps a figurante serving as her double) descended onto the stage attached to a copper wire harness. To prepare for this role she took pantomime lessons from the Elssler sisters, but despite all her best efforts, "all her talent lay in her throat." See "Nouvelles," Le Méristrel 2/14 (17 February 1839). Mlle Nau experienced limited success as an actress; however, her attempts at improving herself demonstrate that by the end of the 1830s at least
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years after Duprez assumed the role of Masaniello, Henri
Lavoix fils described the differences between Nourrit and
Duprez, and the historical consequences of Duprez's style as
follows:

Two singers have particularly personified Masaniello. The
first, Nourrit, full of fire and ardor, it is true, but with a light voice, gave to the character a cachet
of distinction and of melancholy which possibly responded better to the ideal of Auber. The musical
idea gained in elegance if not in vigor, and Masaniello drew closer to the general style of the work. The
other, Duprez, created a Masaniello thundering with power and force, a dreadful revolutionary, lifting up
his people with his resounding shouts; it is this last type that the singers have preserved.52

Lavoix's evaluations of both Nourrit and Duprez reflect on
the voice more than the bearing: it is the sound and
character of Nourrit's voice rather than his appearance that

52 "Deux chanteurs ont particulièrement personnifié
Masaniello. L'un, Nourrit, plein de feu et d'ardeur, il est vrai, mais à la voix légère, donnait au personnage un cachet
de distinction et même de mélancolie qui répondait peut-être mieux à l'idéal d'Auber. L'idée musicale gagnait en
élégance si ce n'est en vigueur, et Masaniello se rapprochait ainsi davantage du style général de l'oeuvre.
L'autre, Duprez, créa un Masaniello foudroyant de puissance et de force, un terrible révolutionnaire, soulevant les
peuples aux éclats de sa voix retentissante; c'est ce dernier type que les chanteurs ont conservé." H. Lavoix
fils, Revue et gazette musicale de Paris 46/37 (14 September 1879), 297-98.
characterizes him as well as Duprez. No longer is the tenor measured by his physiognomy.

After the era of the theatrical tenor had come to a close, Fenella’s role became less dramatically tenable. She represented not so much a role as a space that displayed a dancer, her performance creating an untenable rupture in the operatic fabric. Whether or not an observer admired her, her presence asserted an incongruent message with the vocality of those around her.

The role of dancers, even in the context of operas, is much more ephemeral than that of singers. No particular artist captured the ideal of Fenella in the way that Nourrit and Duprez created competing ideals of Masaniello. The ideal Fenella may have emerged in 1862, when a French dancer named Emma Livry received fatal burns during a rehearsal of La Muette. The attractive yet inexperienced Marie Vernon replaced Livry in the 1863 revival, which received more attention than it might normally have because of Livry’s tragic end. Vernon, who played Fenella for the next two years, was soon forgotten after she married in 1865 and left the stage, but in discussions of La Muette as late as 1879 reviewers still mentioned Livry, who never actually made her debut as Fenella. Perhaps it is fitting that the most memorable Fenella shared her tragic end.
La Muette was an opera with an inherent conflict built into it—not so much the Lazzaroni against the Spaniards as gesture against lyricism. Because of this conflict criticism of the work makes visible the growing incompatibility of dance, embodied in the genre ballet-pantomime, with opera. When Fenella is displaced into the operatic landscape, discussions of her show how irreconcilable these two genres are to one another. This irreconcilability grew out of several developments at this theater. After 1830 audiences increasingly placed greater importance on the female ballerina as a spectacle disassociated from the storytelling aspect of ballets. At the same time, they increasingly valued the power of a singer’s voice over his skill as an actor.
Chapter 3: Finding Merit in the Masked Ball from Gustave, ou le bal masqué

On February 27, 1833, Gustave, ou le bal masqué premiered at the Paris Opéra to mixed reviews. One anonymous critic identified a fundamental problem with the work by calling it a "succès d’argent," or financial success, as opposed to a "succès d’estime," or artistic success. ¹ Although this reviewer lauded the libretto by Scribe and the mise en scène, the only musical aspect of Auber’s score that he praised was the fifth-act ball scene. Despite the pleasure the divertissement provided for him, he expressed concern that operas in general needed to depend more on musical quality rather than on extravagant spectacle and captivating dance tunes. A popular divertissement alone could not sustain a grand opera.

Or could it? In the strange case of Gustave, this reviewer was both right and wrong, for the dance not only

supported the opera between 1833 and 1835, it survived the opera. After two years, the five-act work no longer received regular performances, but the last-act ball remained in the repertory to serve as a useful balletic frame highlighting some of the best dancers at the Opéra. Lajart's catalogue of materials at the Opéra, first published in 1876, records 169 performances of **Gustave** between 1833 and 1859, seventy-three times in its entirety, but fifty-seven as the last act alone, and seventeen as the last tableau, the ball alone.² So strongly was the ball identified with the opera—or as the opera—that few if any objected to this replacement of part for whole.

² Théodore de Lajarte, *Bibliothèque Musicale du Théâtre de L'Opéra. Catalogue historique, chronique, anecdotique*, 2 vols. (Paris: Libraire des Bibliophiles, 1878; reprint Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 1969), II: 145-46. Lajarte comments on the particularly messy state of sources for this opera: "Beaucoup de désordre dans les rôles et dans les parties; en voici la raison: on a donné la pièce en entier soixante-treize fois; mais à partir de la 41e représentation (27 Avril 1834), Gustave III a été scindé et le 5e acte surtout a été adjoinit à d'autres ouvrages du répertoire." [Much disorder in the roles and the parts, and this is the reason: the opera was given seventy-three times in its entirety; but after the forty-first performance (27 April 1834), Gustave III was split and the fifth act especially was added to other works from the repertory.] Although the fifth act was the most popular fraction of **Gustave** to be performed separate from the larger work, the fourth act alone was performed four times in 1839, the second act eighteen times, and—although Lajarte does not list it—the third act on at least one occasion, according to the *Théâtre de l'Opéra--Journal* (F-Po usuels 201).
This chapter explores the conditions that allowed for the duration of this ball past the prime of the opera. It traces the various shapes that Gustave’s ball took after 1833 and the meanings it gained through performances with new artists and choreographies, at times in new spaces. Tracing the performance history of this ball scene reveals a high degree of textual instability. At the same time, the many forms and functions of Gustave’s ball suggest a range of ways that audiences understood and enjoyed not only this opera, but opera as a genre. Dance and dance music within lyric works performed at the Paris Opéra contributed greatly to the audience’s pleasure on a variety of levels. The popularity of the grandiose spectacle of the ball scene is undeniable; no critic could avoid commentary on it. More unexpected is the charm and effectiveness the fifth-act dance tunes were perceived to possess. Audiences from this time found that music for the dance could reward their ears as well as motivate the movements of the dancers they observed. In this case, the repetitive rhythms and accessible tunes made as great an impression on audience members as the spectacle.

The tale of Gustave’s ball begins before the premiere of the opera, with an account of changes the traditional series of Opéra balls underwent during the early 1830s.
This information provides a context for the discussion of the structure of Gustave’s original ball, its resonance with the traditional series of balls held between December and Lent within this theater, and its many differences from Opéra balls. I then explore some of the more striking redactions of the divertissement, traceable through journalistic accounts of activities at the Opéra and archival sources. Finally, I address questions of the potential meanings that arise in the context of the ball’s most extreme relocation, as part of the “Fête de Versailles,” a pièce de circonstance performed during the opening celebration for the Museum of the History of France in 1837.

**Popularizing the Opéra Ball**

It is well know that after the July Revolution, in March 1831, just two years before the premier of Gustave the French government established the Académie Royale de Musique as an entrepreneurship. At this time the government also instituted a plan to reduce gradually the large subvention that the theater received from the state. To maximize his profit under this new system, Louis Véron, the theater’s first entrepreneurial director, experimented with making the annual series of Opéra balls more popular, looking to the
Opéra balls as one potential source of increased revenue. The administration of the 1820s had eliminated most interest in this annual series. Held like other theatrical masked balls from December to the beginning of Lent, they were considered the laughing stock of Parisian Carnival celebrations, a situation described by social historian François Gasnault in a study of public balls in nineteenth-century Paris. Dancing was boring; costumes were few.

During Véron’s first season, 1832, the conservatism of social dance continued and crowds kept a distance. The tragic results of the cholera plague of this same year further diminished the ball’s flagging attendance. Reshaping this seasonal series of entertainments into an economically successful event for the 1833 season became

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3 Véron recounts the way he told the minor artists of the Opéra that their salaries would be lowered in Mémoirs d’un bourgeois de Paris, 5 vols. (Paris: Librairie Nouvelle, 1856), III: 146-47. He also shares an anecdote as to the importance of a protector for a dancer. See his Memoirs, III: 189-90. Victoria Huckenpahler has translated the portions of this account pertaining to the Opéra in “Confessions of an Opera Director: Chapters from the Mémoires of Dr. Louis Véron,” Parts I-III, Dance Chronicle 7 (1984): 51-106, 198-228, 345-370.


5 Gasnault, 66-67.
Véron's goal, presenting him with quite a challenge. In order to make the event more attractive, Véron tried several innovations. Most strikingly, he lowered admission to the ball from ten francs to five and initiated full ballet performances within the balls, the first to occur on January 5. That night, opera dancers performed the ballet-pantomime *Carnival de Venise*, another work depicting a carnival ball, for a bored, mostly costumed crowd. The crowd's appearance was unusual, for those typically in attendance at Opéra balls wore evening dress or a domino, the Venetian-inspired cape with a mask. To alleviate their boredom, this disguised throng took it upon itself to enliven the staged production by adding a galop. Pushing the artists from the stage in a frenzy, they took over the performance. Police could not restore order: unruly dancing continued after the demise of the balletic episode in the form of the chahut, a loose, pantomimic version of the quadrille that had recently come into fashion. The press blamed the degeneration of the event on the class of people that the lower, five-franc entrance fee allowed to enter, despite the fact that five francs was still well above what members of the lowest Parisian classes could afford. Despite the excitement the

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6 Gasnault, 63-83.
new policies initially added to the event, Véron ultimately lost more money through the balls of 1833 than he had lost in the previous season.

Although the ball’s initial lack of revenue caused Véron problems, he finally managed to make it profitable. After the unsuccessful 1833 season, to “turn trouble into revenue,” he “sublet” the ball to Mira, another entrepreneur. Mira again raised the entrance fee to ten francs, and prohibited unruly dancing. The event became more heavily attended under this new supervision. Professional dancers continued to perform, but instead of ballets they exhibited new dances, introducing those in attendance to characteristic quadrilles and seductive Spanish dances during the 1834 season. Mira enlarged the orchestra as well, from forty to seventy musicians. The more interesting spectacle and increased sound attracted a growing public. In the first two years of Mira’s contract, 1834 and 1835, the Opéra ball turned a surprising profit. The popularity of the balls continued to grow in the years to follow.

That Gustave premiered within the transitional carnival season of 1833, after the debacle of January 5 and before

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7 Gasnault, 73-74.
Mira took over, may be significant, for its fifth-act ball scene became its chief draw. In some ways this masked ball paralleled the disrupted *Carnival de Venise* two months earlier and foretold the popular and financial success the Opéra ball would ultimately achieve. And, perhaps as a response to the disastrous galop of January 5, Gustave's ball included its own galop as a premeditated rather than spontaneous finale to the divertissement.

Although Gustave's ball resembled the recent ball experiences of Opéra audiences on some levels, the ways in which it differed are perhaps more significant. While events within real balls resisted containment behind the proscenium, as the events of January 5 suggest, the events during the fifth act of Gustave remained safely delimited. From this angle, Gustave's ball represented not a potentially transformative ritual process, but a safe, sanitized, and highly controlled version of the thing it imitated.

**The Imaginary Landscape of Gustave's Masked Ball**

Although Gustave's ball, especially the galop, in some ways resembled events from the 1830s, in general it more strongly recalled eighteenth-century experiences. The event elicited
nostalgic responses from people who had not been old enough to experience Old Regime Opéra balls. For example, Jules Janin discussed the connection of this ball scene with "all that went to make up the eighteenth century" in his review of the premiere. He describes the costumes and the splendor of the Louis XV setting: the dance floor lies in a golden room lighted by over 2,000 candles and filled with costumed madmen and beautiful women:

I do not think that a grander, more gorgeous, more fantastic, or more magnificent spectacle has ever been seen, even at the Opéra, than the fifth act of the masked ball. It is an unbelievable profusion of women, gauze, velvet, the grotesque and the elegant, good taste and bad, trifles, affectations, wit, folly, verve, in short, all that went to make up the eighteenth century. When the curtain rises you find yourself suddenly in an immense ballroom which occupies the whole of the Opéra stage, one of the vastest in Europe. This ballroom is completely surrounded by boxes which are filled with masked onlookers. Below them is an immense throng of disguises of every kind, dominoes of all colors, harlequins of every shape and form, clowns, merchants, and what have you. One is disguised as a barrel, another as a guitar; his neighbor is a bunch of asparagus; another has come as a mirror, another as a fish, there is one dressed as a cockerel, another who represents a clock: you would not have believed the infinite confusion. Mme. Elie and a dancer I don't know are doubles: on one side peasants, on the other a marquis and marquise. It is impossible to comprehend this verve, this extravagance, this bizarreness without end.8

8 "Je ne crois pas que jamais, même à l'Opéra, on ait vu un spectacle plus grand, plus riche, plus curieux, plus magnifique, que le cinquième acte du Bal masqué. C'est une profusion inouïes de femmes, de gaze, de velours, de grotesque, d'elegance, de bon gout, de mauvais gout, de minuties, de recherches, d'esprit, de folie et de verve, de
That every participant on stage during Gustave’s ball wore an eye-catching costume of some type helped convey a sense of the eighteenth century. This degree of masquerade was unheard of at Parisian balls by 1830, and actually outlawed by 1832. According to art historian John Hutton, men especially abandoned dominos and masks at about this time, “except when they were married men seeking to avoid their wives, or spying on those wives.” A travel guide to Paris published in 1829 suggests that only twenty-five percent of male participants wore any sort of costume. To encourage

tout les choses, en un mot, qui composaient le dix-huitième siècle. Quand la toile dont je vous parler tout à leur est levée, vous vous trouvez tout à coup dans une immense salle de bal qui tient tout le théâtre de l’Opéra, une des scènes les plus vastes de l’Europe. Toute cette salle de bal est entourée de loges, ces loges sont remplies de masques qui regardent; à leurs pieds, c’est une foule immense de déguisements de tout genre, dominos de toutes couleurs, arlequins de toutes les façons, paillasses, marchands, que sais-je? L’un est déguisé en bette d’asperges; celui-là est tout miroir, celle-là est tout poisson; il y en a un qui est coq, l’autre est pendule: vous ne sauriez croire quelle confusion infinie! Mme Elie et je ne sais quel danseur sont doubles: d’un côté paysanne et paysan, de l’autre côté marquis et marquise. Il est impossible de comprendre cette verve, ce dévergondage, cette bizarrerie sans fin.” Jules Janin, Journal des débats (1, 4 March 1833). F-Po Dossier d’oeuvre: Gustave III. Ivor Guest translates Janin’s picturesque description of the ball scene in Romantic Ballet in Paris (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1966), 124-26.


further the trend away from men disguising themselves, in 1832 the police declared that only women could wear masks at balls.\footnote{Gasnault, 66.} Gustave's level of disguise resonated not with the present, but with a past time during which men preferred colorful clothing over the drab daily uniform of the bourgeoisie. Figure 3.1 contains an illustration of a masked ball that served as the finale of Louis Henry's \textit{La festa da ballo in maschera}, a Milanese carnival entertainment from 1830 said to resemble Gustave's masked ball quite closely. Just after Gustave's premier, the choreographer Henry, who had recently moved to Paris, accused Filippo Taglioni of plagiarizing his ballet in Gustave's fifth act.\footnote{The issue of Taglioni's plagiarism might reward more thorough investigation. Both Ivor Guest and Marian Hannah Winter repeat Henry's claims in their respective studies, and both quote the note printed on the back of a lithograph Henry had reprinted in Paris to show how similar his original work was to Taglioni's copy: "It can be seen how M. Taglioni has filched this work to insert it in the opera Gustave. He has not forgotten the allemande, the folias, nor the double masquerade of the minuet and the savoyarde which existed in M. L. Henry's ballet. M. Taglioni has called himself the author of this, as he has already done in the case of many other works by various choreographers. [...] Time will reveal many other thefts." Guest, 124-15. See also Winter, \textit{The Theatre of Marvels} (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1962), 128, 199, and fn 56.} Lists of costumes from the
Figure 3.1: A print, probably French, representing Louis Henry's *La festa da ballo in maschera*. Reproduced from Winter, *The Theatre of Marvels* (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1962), 128.
production book for *Gustave* and Janin’s description correspond somewhat with the characters visible in both of these prints. The print in Figure 3.2, of Viennese origin, provides a glimpse of the ballroom Janin describes in addition to the costumes.

The costumes listed in the production book, from a variety of historical times and distant places, span a spectrum of imaginary others. Historical French costumes

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13 I am using the production book housed in the collection of the Musée de l’Histoire de Paris, G 29, a late manuscript copy of an earlier print. Curiously, it is marked as the production book used for a performance of *Gustave* in November 1869, which never occurred. This 1869 production was of a French translation of Verdi’s *Un ballo en maschera*. Perhaps the theater used Auber’s mise en scène for Verdi’s opera on the chance that few would remember Auber’s work, last performed ten years hence.

14 Versions of the Festa da ballo attributed to Henry were performed in 1834 in Berlin as *Die Maskerade*, choreographed by the Elssler sisters, and in 1846 in Milan as the fifth act of a balletic version of *Gustave III*. It is possible, however, that Henry started the plagiarism controversy to generate publicity for himself and the balletic enterprises of a new theater competing with the Opéra in Paris, the Théâtre-Nautique. Ultimately, this theater built bordering a concrete vat of water used for special effects failed, partially because the pond became quite pungent. Begun in 1833, it could not generate enough money to pay the rent, and was closed in 1835. Curiously, it had just gained the rights to perform German-language operas in Paris, and would have filled a unique role in this capacity. But perhaps the Opéra did not appreciate the competition, for just after the Théâtre-Nautique closed, Henry began choreographing at the Opéra. The history of this theater is described in a series of articles in *Revue et Gazette Musicale* and *Le Ménestrel* from 1833-1835. Guest provides a list of its repertory in *Romantic Ballet*, 272-73.
Figure 3.2: A Viennese print representing Louis Henry’s ballet “La festa da ballo in maschera.” Reproduced from Winter, The Theatre of Marvels (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1962), 128. The New York Public Library dance collection holds this lithograph by Andreas Geiger (fl. 1829-1853) entitled “Die Masquerade im Theatre, grosses Divertissement from Henry (letzte Scene)” (Vienna, 1833?).
include a financier, a member of the bourgeoisie, a marquis, and a rich man from the time of Louis XIII. Two Chinese, two Scots, two Polish peasants, a Turk, a Greek, a fat Englishman and an Englishwoman represent a range of international characters. The costumes also cover the mythological, featuring eight gods and goddesses from Olympus and two cupids. Traditional commedia dell’arte characters and twenty dominos of various colors pepper the stage, including a doctor, four Pierrots, four Columbines, two harlequins, and a pulcinella couple. Other miscellaneous characters include a red devil, six folies, two magicians, a musician with a guitar, a rooster, Don Quixote and Sancho, and the hussars and chamberlains that appeared in the first act.

Although it is impossible to create a one-to-one correspondence between the list of costumes and those visible in these prints, the representations of Henry’s ballet share many characters with those listed as participating in Gustave’s ball. More than the specific characters, the viewer recognizes the exaggerated characteristics of the bodies. Hats, wigs, and perhaps even stilts extend many bodies to almost twice their height, while halberds, muskets, umbrellas, and sails carried by the
characters further emphasize the vertical axes of the space. Men with big heads and seemingly dwarfed bodies also have a prominent place on the stage. If not conveying accurately the range of costumes, the illustrations at least provide a sense of the bizarreness and variety of the costumes, the fullness of the stage, and the chaos of the scene.¹⁵

Many elements of the ball scene represented neither a past nor a present time, but the timeless quality of carnival celebrations. During the chorus that introduces the ball a quadrille formed, danced by the eight gods and goddesses of Olympus.¹⁶ Mythological costumes might more

¹⁵ These pictures of Henry's ball scene seem rather lifeless and dull when compared to the balls by French artists such as Gavarni, Watteau, and Manet, to name the best known. For Gavarni, see Nancy Olson's richly illustrated Gavarni: The Carnival Lithographs (New Haven: Yale University Art Gallery, 1979); for Watteau, see Mary Vidal, Watteau's Painted Conversations: Art, Literature, and Talk in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century France (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992); for Manet, see John Hutton, "The Clown at the Ball" and Linda Nochlin, "A Thoroughly Modern Masked Ball," Art in America 71 (1983): 188-201. While the works of Gavarni, Watteau, and Manet generally render the private tête-à-têtes within the larger chaotic context of the ball, Henry's ball seems more focused on mise en scène and accurate rendering of costumes. The actors seem a bit awkward and mannequin-like in their interaction with one another.

¹⁶ It is plausible that these dancing deities served as a model for Offenbach's parodic Orphée aux enfers, which premiered in 1858, just a year before the last performances of Gustave's ball. The galop, a social dance in and of itself, like the waltz, was often performed as the finale, the fifth figure, of the quadrille.
frequently have been encountered during the eighteenth century, but the square of the quadrille was as likely to form during the eighteenth century as the nineteenth, only during the eighteenth it would have been danced with decorative footwork instead of walked through as in the early 1830s. The text of the chorus communicates the revelry associated generally with Carnival balls. It emphasizes the timeless carnivalesque themes of excess, such as staying up until dawn, and surrendering to the pleasures of the body, particularly love, intoxication, and dance.

Chorus Beginning the Masked Ball (Act V, No. 18)

Plaisir amour ivresse,
soirée enchanteresse,
Prolonge encor ton cours!
Jusqu'au jour qui commence,
Livrons nous à la danse,
Livrons nous aux amours!

(avec la voix que l'on se fait au bal masqué)
De ce vieux sénateur voyez donc l'embarras
De sa femme égarée il cherche en vain les pas
Il ne la trouve pas; je la vois tout là bas,
À son jeune cousin elle donne le bras
Ah! Ah! Ah!

(voix naturelle)
Plaisir amour ivresse...

(voix de bal masqué)
voyez donc ces amans intrigués et jaloux
ils se fâchent vraiment dans leurs yeux quel courroux
et tandis qu'un troisième à l'écart et tout bas
de l'object de leurs feux courtise les appas
Ah! Ah! Ah!

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(voix naturelle)
Plaisir amour ivresse...

Translation:
Pleasure, love, intoxication,
Enchanting evening,
Prolong your time!
Until the day begins again
Surrender to the dancing
Surrender to love!

(With the voice that one uses at masked balls)
See the confusion of this old senator
He seeks in vain a trace of his lost wife
He cannot find her; I see her over there,
She is giving her arm to her young cousin
Ah! Ah! Ah!

[natural voice]
Pleasure, love, intoxication...

(masked-ball voice)
See these lovers intrigued and jealous:
They are really cross. In their eyes what anger.
And meanwhile a third person quietly
Encourages the object of their ire.
Ah! Ah! Ah!

[natural voice]
Pleasure, love, intoxication...

Unlike the costumes, which harkened back to the eighteenth century, the quadrille formation and the text to the chorus, which could represent the past or the present, the instrumental music accompanying the chorus contributed to the mimesis of a ball from the 1830s. Stylistically, the refrain of the chorus emphasizes the musical characteristics
of a ball through the orchestration and the heavy duple rhythm (See Figure 3.3). With its beat-marking bass drum and the flageolet-like flute skimming the top of the texture, the orchestration of the refrain mimics the musical extremes of a contemporary ball. For example, in a review of the first Opéra ball from 1835, Berlioz criticized the predominance of these instruments in the texture of orchestral dance music. Despite his distaste for the combination, he used it himself to create a sonic sense of ball festivities in his Roméo et Juliette symphony.

Auber took advantage of these same sonic signs. Melodic instruments--including piccolo, flute, oboe, Bb clarinet, and Eb horns--play in thirds and sixths, another common style for elaborating a melody for dance. The Eb trumpets, trombone, and ophicleides together accompany the tune in a pattern that breaks the 6/8 into something like a fast waltz.

17 As to what figures of the quadrille or contredanse française the dancers danced, I can only guess. The rondo structure of the music suggests the first figure, pantalon, but the music is not quite regular enough to fit comfortably into any particular figure.


Figure 3.3: Excerpt from the refrain of the Chorus, Act V, No. 18. This and the following excerpts are taken from D. F. E. Auber, Gustave, ou le bal masqué, 2 vols. Early Romantic Opera, vol. 31, eds. Philip Gossett and Charles Rosen (New York: Garland, 1980), a facsimile of the Troupenas score from 1833.
rhythm, a common rhythm and speed for quadrilles of the time. The bass drum, cymbals, and triangle further emphasize the strong duple division of the bar. The B sections of this choral rondo further enhance the mimicry of a ball by imitating the gossipy murmurs of a ballroom crowd (See Figure 3.4). Auber sets the text in the chatty patter for which his choruses were known, with the women's monotone patter on Bb accompanied by a soft Eb tonic pedal. The audience may hear the whispers of the chorus over its texture, for, according to the score, the sopranos should sing "using the voices for masked balls," probably a reference to a technique of disguising the voice during carnival events. In many mumming traditions revelers employ inverse speech or falsetto for this purpose. See, for instance, Herbert Halpert's discussion of techniques of disguise in "A Typology of Mummimg," in Herbert Halpert and G. M. Story, eds., Christmas Mummimg in Newfoundland (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 37, 44.
Figure 3.4: Example of the women’s monotone patter from the Chorus, Act V, no. 18.

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The more formal dance began with the allemande. Its music resembles a slow, folkish waltz constructed of eight-bar phrases in sixteen-bar sections accompanied by a pastoral drone (See Figure 3.5). Although from the title it seems that the music makes reference to Germanic areas, the drone and simple horn melody more generally suggest a pastorale or folkloric reference.21

If the allemande represented the folkloric, the pas des folies that follows introduces the balletic. It begins with a frenetic 2/4 allegro movement phrased similarly to the allemande, in sixteen-bar periods made up of eight-bar phrases (See Figure 3.6). A slightly slower and less madcap melody resembles countless other balletic sections with its violin solo in constant sixteenth notes (see Figure 3.7). Two women, Lise Noblet and Alexis Dupont, then performed the pas des folies with the corps de ballet, perhaps consisting of the six folies listed among the costumes.

The third dance air, consisting of a quirky march/minuet melange and two additional marches, accompanied a comic pas double danced by Mme. Elie and M. Simon (See Figure 3.8). The air called "menuet" creates an Old-Regime sonic reference, referring to a time past when amateurs of

21 During the allemande M. Montjoie danced with five women: Mlles. Legallois, Perceval, Vagon, Fitzjames, and Varin.
Figure 3.5: Excerpt from the folkloric allemande.
Figure 3.6: Beginning of the "pas des folies."
Figure 3.7: The balletic violin solo of running sixteenth notes in the "pas des folies."
Figure 3.8: Alternation between 3/4 (minuet) and 2/4 (peasant dance?) in the "menuet."
the dance had the skill to perform a minuet at a ball. This was no longer the case in 1833. In fact, dance skills among Opéra ball crowds had reached a historical low point.22

Despite its serious connotations, this particular menuet literally has a comic side. As music that accompanies the pas double, it accompanies dance by a couple who represent peasants on one side, and a marquis and marquise on the other. The music begins with a 2/4 introduction that moves to the 6/8 section of twenty-four bars. This lively duple music ends abruptly, to be followed by nineteen bars of minuet played by strings. The learned style of this minuet represents some of the most harmonically colorful music in the opera. Its four-bar phrases, with a relatively fast harmonic rhythm of one change per quarter note. This minuet is followed by fourteen bars of the introductory duple-meter music, which stops abruptly again for four bars of the minuet. The 6/8 comic music interrupts the minuet and then prevails to the end of the work. Two marches follow this comic/minuet amalgam, the first in a rather regal and square style reminiscent of the formality of the minuet, the second in a

somewhat off-balance 3/4 (See Figures 3.9 and 3.10). From the description in the production book, these marches seem to have provided the music for the promenade, the procession in front of the stage to present the costumes more formally to the audience.

To end the ball, 122 dancers performed the galop. In his description of this dance in a review of the premier, Jules Janin implies a connection between the ending of the divertissement and present-day Parisian—if not Opéra—balls:

They all dance as if they were a single person. They come, they go, they cross, they go to the front and to the back, to the left and to the right, in all directions. It’s admirable! The galop grabs the body and the spirit of all men and women. . . . You would not believe how closely this masked ball approaches reality. We are no longer in Stockholm, we are in Paris.23

23 "Ils dansent tous comme un seul homme. Ils vont, ils viennent, ils se croisent, ils vont en long, en large, à droite et à gauche, dans tous les sens; c’est admirable! Le galop s’empare corps et âme de tous ces hommes et de toutes ces femmes.’ . . . Vous ne s’ouriez croire à quel degré la vérité est poussée à ce bal masqué. Nous ne sommes plus à Stockholm, nous sommes à Paris.” Jules Janin, Journal des débats (1, 4 March 1833). F-Po Dossier d’oeuvre: Gustave III.
Figure 3.9: The duple, regal march.
Figure 3.10: The 3/4 march.
This dance is the one completely contemporary moment of the ball scene, for the galop came into existence only during the 1820s and reached the height of its popularity as a dance during the early 1830s. The 2/4 melody begins with no introduction, at full speed: allegro, quarter note = 144. The first theme with the galop rhythm, an eighth and two sixteenths followed by two eighths, again follows the sixteen-bar/eight-bar-phrase structure that prevails in music written for dance from this time (see Figure 3.10). Within an irregular structure of repeated themes and returns, the listener would find it difficult to predict whether a tune would last eight or sixteen bars, or whether or not it would repeat. The form seems to increase additively and almost randomly, almost every articulation a surprise.

Dance airs, of which these were thought exemplary, depended on melodic variety, emphasized through contrasting keys, strong rhythms, accompanying figures, and orchestration, to hold the listener's interest. In general, melodic variety rather than harmonic development characterizes these dance airs. Contrasting themes

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24 According to Andrew Lamb in the New Grove article on the galop, this dance first became popular in Vienna during the 1820s, then was introduced in both Paris and London in 1829.
Figure 3.11: Excerpt from the galop.
generally conceived in sixteen-bar blocks provide most of the musical interest. For instance, a new tune contrasts in rhythm, tonality, and orchestration with the tune that it follows. This method of musical construction results in additive structures of binary forms, rounded binary forms, and rondos in eight-bar phrases.

Considered together, the costumes, dance, music, and text that make up this divertissement resonate with both the present and the past, seeming to collapse time into a one-world, universal present. The music pulls back and forth between a nonspecific historical time when minuets were regularly danced, and a fairly specific present in which galops were highly favored for the low level of skill they required and the lively effect of "communitas" they generated on the stage.\(^{25}\)

Within the Opéra during the 1830s, a ball and a theatrical representation of that ball shared many qualities. Both events involved expert performances by professional dancers, and both involved similar musical performances. The most striking difference lay in the

configuration of the Salle de l'Opéra: for a real ball the space was reconfigured into a theater in the round. Planks laid over the seats of the parterre created a large area for socializing. The distinction between stage and theater dissolved, subverting the division from the performance that the proscenium created. The lithographs in Figures 3.12 and 3.13 demonstrate the transformation the theater underwent. Figure 3.12 represents the stage during the cloister scene of Robert le Diable, during which the parterre is sunken and filled with men. In contrast, Figure 3.13 represents a masked ball in the same space, during which the parterre and the stage are at the same level. The mutable and permeable boundary between the audience and the performers on the stage led to a playful confusion between balls represented on stage and balls that occur on what we might consider a stage in the round.

Whether behind the proscenium or pouring into it from the audience's side, balls heightened a confusion among performers and audience members that already existed in performances at the Opéra. From representations in lithographs by Daumier, Gavarni, and Lami we may judge that the idea of the audience as spectacle, a commonplace notion for the eighteenth-century Opéra, still survived into the second quarter of the nineteenth century—even during
Figure 3.12: The Salle de l'Opéra during a performance of Robert le Diable. This lithograph by Eugène Lami is reproduced in Parmenia Migel, ed., Great Ballet Prints of the Romantic Era (New York: Dover, 1981).
Figure 3.13: The Salle de l’Opéra during a masked ball ca. 1844. Reproduced from Jules Janin, L’Hiver et L’Été à Paris (Paris, ca. 1844).
performances that maintained the division the proscenium created. At a time when gas lights remained up for performance and dimmed for intermissions, audience members, especially women, served as a decorative aspect of the hall. Both the beautiful, portrayed in the caricature in Figure 1.1 as a Venus (p. 29), and the grotesque, portrayed in another as a woman resembling a man in drag in Figure 3.14, provided a focus for commentary in caricature. Men played an important and sometimes official part as well. The claque, a group of hired "hands," could supposedly make or break a career through applauding or abstaining from applause at prearranged moments. Groups of dandies, portrayed as lions in their dens, the boxes closest to the stage, became an additional spectacle for audience members whose eyes wandered from the stage, or, conversely, occasionally wandered to the stage. The participants in the ball and performances at the Opéra thus reflect back on themselves as both spectators and spectacle not only during balls, but on an everyday basis.

Figure 3.14: An unattractive woman as spectacle. From Gavarni, *Les gens de Paris*, in *Oeuvres choisies de Gavarni* (Paris: J. Hetzel et Blanchard, 1857).

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At the time of its premier Gustave's ball potentially resonated with audience's experience in a variety of ways. Most straightforwardly, it represented a historical event: the assassination of Gustave; however, with its galop finale and profusion of costumes, it also resembled the scandalous ball of January 5. More than this, though, it reinforced an image of what people nostalgically thought the Opéra ball once had been, and suggested the success the ball could achieve. With its material excessiveness and its fuzzy boundaries between public and private spaces, it also mirrored a certain everyday ethos of the Opéra. Whether impressed by "historical accuracy," dazzled by the costumes, scenery, and dance, or bewitched by the tunes that accompanied the movement, the ball affirmed the audience's sense of magnificence associated with the Opéra in the past, and suggested the possibility for reestablishing this grandeur in the future.

Revisions to Gustave's Masked Ball

Despite its initial popularity, the ball from Gustave was revised often during the 1830s, both as part of the larger opera and as an independent ballet. Gustave was not an unusual grand opera in this respect in that works like it were frequently condensed after their premier. In addition,
divertissements were constructed so that they might be easily deleted.

For most grand operas the scores and production books provide directions for eliminating and cutting divertissements. Although the Opéra identified strongly with the balletic tradition it fostered, many provincial theaters that performed works first produced at the Opéra lacked the appropriate dancing artists to perform lavish balletic entertainments. In order to facilitate performances at these less central theaters, the production book and score for Gustave provide options for eliminating the choreography of the ball altogether, skipping from the first scene to the fifth.27

Conversely, the production book also allows for the elimination of the first scene, jumping immediately into the spectacle of the ball and shortening the last act. Some of the least successful works, such as Louise Bertin’s Esmeralda and Fromental Halévy’s La Tentation, experienced not so much cuts as drastic reconstruction. In the case of

27 The description of the choreography of the ball is vague, mentioning a scene of pantomime and the gallopade, but making no specific reference to the allemande, the pas double, or the pas des folies. Even with access only to the production book and the score, no theater could reconstruct the ball scene as the Opéra had produced it without the help of skilled dancers who knew the choreography.
Esmeralda, the most popular moments of the five-act work were salvaged to form a one-act version of the original. In the case of La Tentation, the famous scene in hell was performed apart from the larger work. Even remarkably successful "masterpieces" experienced condensation. For example, Guillaume Tell was reshaped from a four-act to a three-act opera, and its second act was frequently performed alone. Although occasionally criticized in the press for these actions, the Opéra seemed to consider nearly all works that appeared on its stage as subject to revision.

The types of changes visible in archival sources and sometimes reported in the musical press seem to represent not just editorial changes, but a general fluidity with which most works were presented on the Opéra stage. The ball scene from Gustave constitutes an exaggerated example of this process. Its first big revision came a little over a year after its premier. On July 20, 1834 a short notice in the Gazette Musicale de Paris first announced the planned changes: a new production of Gustave including a new ball scene. A second announcement soon followed: the new ball

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was designed in part to cover the expenses of a free production to be held in conjunction with the fourth anniversary of the July Revolution, 27 July 1834.

The added dances seemed to achieve the desired effect, providing the ball with a new popularity. An article from Charivari mentions in particular the costumes for the quadrille of the Gods of Olympus, and the greater richness of the folies' costumes. M. Simon and Mme. Elie danced a new pas double, but as it involved the same dancers in a dance of the same character, the reporter suggested that it represented neither a loss nor a gain. A Charge of 12 female hussars replaced the pas des six bergères, increasing by six the number of "beautiful women" featured in the ball.29 Finally, a new dance, the pas styrien was introduced, danced by M. and Mme. Paul Taglioni. This dance was said to represent an improvement as well, although we are not told over what.30

29 It may be safe to assume that the pas des six bergères was an alternative name for the pastoral allemande. If so, one wonders if the reviewer mistook M. Montjoie for a woman, for a pas des hussards of twelve women dancers replacing the allemande would technically increase the number of "beautiful women" by seven, not six.

Later in 1834 the ball was further enhanced. Thérèse Elssler’s début at the Opéra, partnering Fanny in a pas de deux, was added to Gustave for a performance on October 1, 1834. Such interpolations into divertissements for débuts were quite common. On November 14, 1834 the Elssler sisters danced the pas styrien as well, presumably replacing the Taglionis.31

The revisions of 1834 may have been followed by another set of changes that received less attention. In a performance of Gustave at the Théâtre Royale dating from September 6, 1835, a slightly different set of dances made up the ball.12 The program for this performance indicates that the ball began with a “mascarade générale,” probably coinciding with the opening chorus of the original. The allemande and the pas de folies followed. “Paysans hongrois” took the place of the pas double, followed by a grand march performed by all the artists of the Théâtre Royale, which could have fit the music of the two marches that follow the “menuet.” As was customary, the galop involving all the artists ended the ball. Although the performance did not occur at the Opéra, it employed at least

31 “Nouvelles,” Revue et gazette musicale de Paris (14 November 1834).
32 F-Po, Dossier d’oeuvre: Gustave III.
some Opéra artists, including Rosine Stoltz as the page Oscar.\footnote{On Rosine Stoltz, see Mary Ann Smart, "The Lost Voice of Rosine Stoltz," In En travesti: Women, gender, subversion, opera (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 169-89, reprinted from Cambridge Opera Journal 6/1 (1994): 31-50.} The leading artists of the Opéra, such as Nourrit, Falcon, and Levasseur, were conspicuous by their absence from this production. After this date the five-act opera appeared infrequently. One of its last performances came in November 1835 when \textit{La Juive} failed to come together in time for its scheduled premier.

During the same year that Gustave saw the effective end of its life as a five-act opera, the fifth act was frequently performed separately at the end of what \textit{Charivari} regularly referred to as "a varied evening's entertainment." The ball scene appeared alone first on February 6, 1835, at the end of a program including excerpts from two other pieces, the hell scene from \textit{La Tentation}, and Auber's two-act comic opera, \textit{Le Philtre}. Again on April 10, 1835, the ball was used apart from the larger opera in a benefit for Marie Taglioni. For this performance Taglioni danced a minuet with Auguste Vestris, the most popular dancer of the
1810s and 1820s, and a figure who revolutionized dance in this period.\textsuperscript{14}

This version of the ball, performed as part of a program to benefit Marie Taglioni, became a topic of fanciful elaboration. It was said that after dancing the minuet, Taglioni was supposed to crown Vestris king of the dance. Vestris in turn would crown Taglioni as goddess of the dance, the coronation taking place during the procession that followed the minuet.\textsuperscript{15} The story goes that Taglioni crowned Vestris, but before he could crown Taglioni, the galop broke out. The author suggests that the jealous Fanny Elssler signaled the conductor ahead of time for the galop.\textsuperscript{16} From the newspaper accounts following Taglioni’s and Vestris’s 1835 performance, I doubt that this story is

\textsuperscript{14} Women were allowed to sit in the parterre for the first time for this performance. To accommodate the large numbers of female audience members Taglioni attracted, stalls similar to those found in the orchestra were placed in the parterre. See “Académie Royale de Musique,” Le Ménestrel (29 March 1835). For a discussion of Marie Taglioni’s female audience, see Chapter 1.

\textsuperscript{15} It is unclear whether Auber wrote a new minuet for this performance. He could have theoretically expanded the one for the \textit{pas double}.

\textsuperscript{16} F-Po, Dossier d'artiste: Marie Taglioni.
true, for no journal could have passed up reporting such an "accident."  

Although journalistic sources provide overwhelming evidence of the instability of Gustave’s ball scene, the musical scores provide less satisfying information. Neither

37 For instance, the following events, which seem more likely to have occurred, caught the attention of a reporter for Charivari:

Mlle Taglioni excited the most deserved applause in the minuet and the romanesca, interpolated into the ball of the fifth act of Gustave, which she danced with the illustrious Vestris, and where she displayed the grace, the suppleness, the lightness that, as they say, always accompanies her steps. Note: One of the arrows of the female troupe fell by accident into the King’s loge. The public laughed heartily at this episode, which was one of the most picante moments of the evening. I saw the moment when the naughty pleasure seekers started yelling “bis.” We signal, for the rest, this essential new element of the production for directors from the provinces who mount this new ballet.

[Madame Taglioni n’a pas excité de moins justes applaudissements dans le menuet et la romanesca, intercalés dans le bal de 5e acte de Gustave, qu’elle a dansés avec l’illustre Vestris, et où elle a déployé la grâce, la souplesse, la légèreté qui, comme on dit toujours, accompagnent partout ses pas. Nota: L’une des flèches de la troupe féminine est venue tomber, par hasard, dans la loge du duc d’Orléans. Le public a beaucoup ri de cet épisode qui n’a pas été la partie la moins piquante de la soirée. J’ai vu le moment où de mauvais plaisans allaient crier bis. Nous signalons, du reste, ce fait essentiel de mise en scène aux directeurs de province qui monteraient le nouveau ballet.]

Charivari 4/90 (10 April 1835). The romanesca Taglioni danced remains a mystery to me.
the *partie de ballet* nor the *repetiteur* scores for *Gustave* include music for these new dances. These new versions of the ball may have always remained in pieces, never copied into new continuity scores. The instability of the performance tradition makes it difficult to know. What we find are manuscript scraps here and printed scraps there that, when pieced together, might constitute musical additions between 1834 and 1835. A small group of manuscripts in the Bibliothèque Nationale conservatory collection suggest that Auber himself penned some of the musical interpolations that these choreographic redactions and replacements would require. For instance, these short manuscripts include one entitled "Pas de Hussards." The

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38 A search through the orchestral parts might reveal traces of these additions. I found none in the parts I had the opportunity to see at F-Po.

39 The only musical addition I can definitely delineate from the archival sources is the *pas des hussards*. Auber’s original autograph and the partie de ballet for this 3/8 dance show beyond a doubt that music was added for it. But to my knowledge no other music was formally added for this revision. The music for the *pas des hussards* is found at F-Po Materiel 19: 309 (107) "Partie de ballet pour Gustave. Pas des hussards," and in autograph rehearsal score F-Pn Music MS 2902, with a note that it was sold to Troupenas. Herbert Schneider dates this manuscript (AWV 187) as ca. 1840 in his catalogue of Auber’s works, *Chronologisch-thematisches Verzeichnis sämtlicher Werke von Daniel Francois Esprit Auber, 2 Vols.* (Hildesheim, New York: G. Olms, 1994). The paper has 24 systems, resembling on manuscript (F-Pn Music Ms 2901, AWV 186), the "Pas de
paper on which the piece is written resembles that of other works dated from the 1830s and could conceivably represent the musical interpolation for the dance of the same name. Another manuscript of a "Pas à deux faces" may represent the new dance for M. Simon and Mme. Elie.⁴⁰ The most complete trace of the "pas styrien" is preserved not in any manuscript source, but in Alex Ropicquet's printed arrangement for piano and violin obligato, dedicated to the Elssler sisters. He makes no reference to either Gustave or Auber in the publication, although it may be assumed that Auber wrote the original tunes that Ropicquet arranged.⁴¹

Sources are clearer, but still incomplete, for the ball's relocation in 1837, when it became part of a pièce de circonstance that was performed only once.⁴² In

Diane," written for Marie Taglioni and dated 1837 in Auber's hand.

⁴⁰ AWV 189, F-Pn Music Ms 2900. Again, Schneider dates this manuscript as ca. 1840.

⁴¹ A printed version arranged by Alex Casimir Ropicquet, Op. 14, was in circulation at this time, supposedly representing the music to which Fanny and Thérèse Elssler danced this character dance (F-Pn Music Vm12g 11712). It was quite common during this time for arrangers to forgo giving the original composer credit for borrowed material.

⁴² This work received only one performance and was never published. Incomplete parts, an incomplete score, and a rehearsal score are held by the F-Pn Music, including MS 2898 (incomplete score); F-Pn Music D. 17459 (incomplete orchestral parts); F-Pn Music D. 17458 (piano and vocal reduction and dance rehearsal score); and F-Po Carton 2237,
collaboration with Eugène Scribe and Jean Coralli, Auber borrowed music from Gustave’s ball scene to make up the second half of a new divertissement entitled "Fête de Versailles." This diversion formed part of the celebration for the opening of the Museum of the History of France at the Palace of Versailles on June 10, 1837.\(^4\) Auber reused the chorus, the dance of the folies, and the pas styrien. In two cases he borrowed music from other divertissements: the Cachucha was taken from Casimir Gide and Coralli’s ballet Le Diable boiteux, and the pas de trois from a divertissement choreographed by Coralli in Cherubini’s Ali Baba.\(^4\) The disruptive galop is notably omitted from the court spectacle.

Program, Palais de Versailles. Spectacle de la cour, 10 Juin 1837.


\(^4\) In his New Grove article on Auber, Rey Longyear includes a cachucha and a pas styrien in Auber’s worklist. From the evidence in the incomplete parts and scores to “Fête à Versailles,” it appears that Auber only wrote new introductions for both these pieces, and reused the existing
For this celebration, a wide variety of Opéra artists including Habeneck and Duprez performed at the palace of Versailles. The program, beginning at 10:00 PM and going on until 1:30 AM, consisted of the Gluck's overture to *Iphigenée en Aulide*, Molière's *Le Misanthrope* in period costumes, lyric fragments from the third and fifth acts of *Robert le Diable*, and the seemingly new intermède by Scribe and Auber called alternatively "Fête à Versailles," "Fête de Versailles," and "Divertissement de Versailles."

The first half of this danced diversion began with an entertainment in the style of one that might have been performed for Louis XIV. The music contains stereotypical melodic and rhythmic gestures from seventeenth-century theatrical music such as the descending, repeated bass tetrachord, and dances such as the minuet, sarabande, and passepied. In general, a faster harmonic rhythm than was typical of nineteenth century dance music also characterized this "Baroque" music. Characters in the pantomime included Lully, who instructed the dancers, and Quinault, who appeared to assure that the entertainment was ready for the king. The king was understood to be seated in the Royal loge, even though he was not visible. The seated gardes-du-parts within the Opéra's library rather than recopy these popular dances.
corps, gentlemen of the chamber, and the seigneurs of the court, numbering ten in all, defined the space around him. The dancers were costumed as marquis, counts, and their ladies.

The balletic entertainment that followed the pantomime consisted of a minuet, a passeped, and a sarabande, followed by a “Marche et cérémonie,” in which actors from Molière's *Le Misanthrope* and Racine's *Athalie* passed in front of the King to line up across the stage. After the dancing, a curtain was raised, and the Palace of Versailles was seen as it appeared during the time of Louis XIII. Allegoric characters such as Apollo, Minerva, Neptune, the Muses, and the Arts surrounded the statue of Louis XIII and waved crowns and branches of laurels. The pedestal of the statue read “A LA GLOIRE DE LOUIS XIV.” At the end of this celebration, clouds emerged and obscured the tableau and all the actors. Then the allegorical symphony began, serving as a bridge from this courtly episode to the entertainment representing the present.

For the second half of the divertissement, the theater represented the chateau of Versailles as it appeared in 1837, within the grand gallery of battles. A crowd of dancers wore costumes from all times as they walked down the gallery. The ball began with the Chorus from the fifth act.
of Gustave. The pas des folies followed the chorus, danced by Mlles. Noblet and Fitz-James. Fanny and Thérèse Elssler then danced the pas de deux. The pas de trois, from Cherubini's Ali Baba, danced by Mlles. Leroux, Maria, and Blangy, occurred next. M. Mazillier and Mme. Dupont then performed the pas styrien, the first dance to feature male/female couples rather than groups of women. Fanny Elssler followed with her famous Cachucha from the ballet-pantomime Le diable boiteux. For the finale, all the dancers entered the stage. A new tableau representing the front of the Palace of Versailles served as the finale. Two lines formed, one representing the military glory of France from ancient chevaliers to modern times, the other representing the poets, scholars, and artists of all types who had brought honor to France. The banner that read "A LA GLOIRE DE LOUIS XIV" was replaced by one that read "A TOUTES LES GLOIRES DE LA FRANCE."

Except for the music to the chorus borrowed from Gustave, this new version of the ball was barely recognizable as somehow derivative of the first, the galop—now absent—having been its most popular moment. Fewer than half of the dances related to the original production or its revisions, pulled as they were from various operas and ballets. Perhaps more significant was the transposition of
a masked ball to represent the new French order under the Bourgeois King, Louis-Philippe. In a sense, it represented the new order through the disorderly, for if any event suggested the unpredictable and the morally suspect, it was a masked ball (particularly one at which a king had been murdered).

Throughout the performance history of Gustave’s ball, we see revisions that the composer seemed to approve and even perform himself. Many of these changes during and after 1834 seem predicated on renewing the marketability of the larger work. This increase in interest could come from dances added to exploit the popularity of newly available artists, as in the case of the Elssler sisters’ pas de deux. More generally, as in the July revisions of 1834, the new choreography simply made the spectacle less familiar and more attractive. But more specific questions arise as to how the many changes Gustave’s ball experienced changed the meaning of the work.

The “Fête à Versailles” constituted the most unusual transformation. Most significantly, it appears to move up rather than down the socioeconomic ladder we imagine when we think of the popularization of art forms. In the context of the instability and social flux represented by the constitutional monarchy, this bi-directional movement says
something important about dance and dance music in the context of the Opéra: at the same time that it depicted that which was most base, most easily accessible, and most commercial to its critics, it portrayed that which was most exalted, most powerful, and most traditional about performances at the Opéra. Ever since the inception of this theater in the late seventeenth century, performances at the Opéra had embodied the splendor and symbolized the power of the state. As the absolutism of Louis XIV gave way to less totalitarian monarchs in the eighteenth century, the symbolic connection between representations on stage and the monarchy shifted. More "popular" genres, such as the opera-ballet and the pastorale-héroïque, emerged in which the connections to the monarchy were replaced by reflections on idealizations of courtly life. During the 1830s, the productions at the Opéra again played on a sense of reflexivity with the audience. In this case, however, the audience was no longer courtly, although it holds a degree of economic and political influence. The carnivalesque qualities of the masked ball allow for a certain ambivalence of class and distinction, suggesting the potential for class transformation in a newly capitalist society. The ambivalence of the ball ironically provided it both an egalitarian and an aristocratic quality. These masked
characters could interact with anyone, could be anyone, yet they were contained within a monarchical frame.

At the same time that the masked ball as part of the "Fête de Versailles" might be said to represent the social flux inherent in French society during the 1830s, it also suggested the powerlessness of the masked ball as a symbol of dissent. Originally associated with danger to the monarchy and situated within an opera about the assassination of the king of Sweden, the masked ball became completely innocuous as the second half of a pièce de circonstance. Such a position emphasized its light, decorative qualities rather than the carnivalistic potential of a world turned topsy-turvy. As a showcase for the most beautiful and the most disciplined bodies of Parisian society, this ball minimized the grotesqueness generally associated with Carnival and tamed the event. In general, it seems that not only at the Opéra but at almost all theaters in Paris in the 1830s carnival balls kept revelers contained in edifices, off the streets where insurrections traditionally began. The work of Peter Stallybrass and Allon White suggests that this containment represents a general trend during the nineteenth century to control
carnivalesque behavior. Gustave’s ball served to remove the carnivalesque one step further, to the safety of theatrical representation. In this context it came to represent the pleasures of the status quo rather than the dangers of the subversive.

The transformations of Gustave did not end at the boundaries of the Opéra house during the 1830s. Its music


46 Curiously, Auber’s music has recently received new attention from performers. Two recent recordings of Auber’s Gustave, ou le bal masqué, one of the opera as a whole and the other of just the ball scene, suggest that the range of forms the opera takes continues to grow. A recent Arion recording of the entire five-act opera preserves a live 1991 recording of a performance at the Théâtre Impérial de Compiègne, Michel Swierczewski directing the Orchestre lyrique francais. Informative liner notes by Herbert Schneider and Derrick Cook draw on nineteenth-century production books, and provide details of the pantomime and dance that accompanied the chorus and the first three dance airs from the published score. Mysteriously, however, the final galop, the most popular moment of the work during the nineteenth century, was cut. In contrast, Richard Bonynge led the English National Opera orchestra in a complete performance of Auber’s Le Domino noir, with the music for Gustave’s ball scene providing a half hour of filler at the end of the second CD in the set. In contrast to Schneider’s notes for the whole opera, Jeremy Commons’s exegesis of the music for the ball centers on its aural rather than visual effect. The music forms an instrumental dance suite to end the recording. Like the music for the ball in Swierczewski’s recording, Bonynge emends the 1833 score, but rather than excise an air he adds one from the first-act ballet.
moved into salons everywhere in the form of the immensely popular galop. Most operas after Meyerbeer’s Robert le diable experienced a large degree of dismantling and distribution through the increasingly accessible and affordable musical press. This galop remained a popular piece well into the second half of the century. When the monument to Auber in Père Lachaise cemetery was dedicated in January of 1877, a performance of the galop by the principal dancers served as part of the Opéra’s celebration. This performance was probably the last that Gustave saw in any form during the nineteenth century, demonstrating that the galop survived in the Opéra repertory longer than any other part of Gustave. But rather that representing the potential for social disorder as it had during the 1830s, it represented Auber at his best at a memorial performance.

The Play of Pure Pleasure against Artistic Merit

Despite the centrality of the pleasures of the dance to the aesthetic power of Gustave’s ball, these pleasures were not

appreciated by all. For example, the review of *Gustave* in the *Revue musical* attributes the success of the opera to the thrilling nature of the fifth-act ball scene. But the author’s comments were tinged with disapproval. Superficial theatricality allowed the production to succeed without the support of music of quality, leading the critic to label “overzealous” the enthusiasm with which audiences greeted the performance:

Several pretty dance airs are all that one finds in the score; and these dance airs do not suffice for a work of such importance.

The production of *Gustave III* makes us forget everything that has been made to this date. The costumes of a faithful and admirable richness; the decorations that lead from surprise to surprise; a production over which a rare intelligence presided—this is what justifies the success of *Gustave III*. Such a spectacle is so dazzling that neither once nor twice one can find an idea of equal richness. Add to this the interest of the poem and the play of the actors and you will have, I repeat, the secret of the public’s overzealousness. 

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48 Quelques jolis airs de danse sont tout ce qu’on trouve dans sa partition; et des airs de danse ne suffisent pas pour un ouvrage de cette importance.

La mise en scène de *Gustave III* efface tout ce qui a été fait jusqu’à ce jour. Des costumes d’une fidélité et d’une richesse admirables; des décorations qui conduisissent le spectateur de stupéfaction en stupéfaction; une mise en scène à laquelle a présidé une rare intelligence, voilà qui justifie le succès de *Gustave III*. Un tel spectacle est si fort éblouissant que ce n’est ni à une, ni à deux fois qu’on peut prendre une juste idée de tant de richesses. Apportez à cela l’intérêt du poème et le jeu des acteurs, et vous aurez, je le répète, le secret de l’empressement du
For this author, the positive reception of this work provided evidence that Parisian audiences preferred spectacular operas of mediocre musical quality to those of artistic musical invention, such as Mozart's *Don Juan* or Beethoven's *Fidelio*.

Perhaps because of the assumed mediocrity of music associated with French grand operas, musicologists such as Carl Dahlhaus, William Crosten, and Jane Fulcher have attempted to account for the aesthetic power of this genre by looking to areas other than the power of the music.\(^4^9\) Dahlhaus and Crosten emphasize the dramatic cohesion of structure through tableaux, while Fulcher discusses the political messages imbedded in these works. Reviews of premiers suggest, however, that it was not the contrasting tableaux within the opera that thrilled Gustave's audiences. Nor did reviewers comment on the political implications of the scene—except in unusual cases.\(^5^0\) Rather, the ball's public. "Nouvelles de Paris," *Revue musicale* (1 March 1833), 38.


\(^{50}\) One reviewer for *Charivari* structured his comical review of *Gustave* around the dissimilarities between Gustave and
non-linear, time-out-of-time scenic splendor and its music for the dance stimulated the audience’s appreciation of it.

In contrast to modern opera audiences, audiences from the early nineteenth-century who held opinions similar to Dahlhaus and Crosten were marginal, best understood as resistant to an increasingly commercial environment. According to many fictional and journalistic accounts, rarely was the Opéra seen as anything more than a setting for an after-dinner entertainment of song and dance. As Alfred de Musset wrote in his review of *Gustave*’s premier, “What matter is it to those of us who come to lean on a balcony for two hours after dinner that art may be in decadence, that true music makes us yawn, that the poems of

Louis-Philippe. Gustave was portrayed in the first act of the opera rehearsing a ballet he had written. Although Louis-Philippe loved the arts he would never compose a ballet. In the second act after the sorceress predicts that a poor sailor will find fortune, Gustave slips a roll of gold (rouleau d’or) and an officer’s brevet in his pocket. Louis-Philippe had too much respect for the laws of the army to break the rules in such a fashion. During the snow of the third act Gustave finds himself without an umbrella, a condition unknown to Louis-Philippe. And while Gustave was murdered by the assassin’s bullet, Louis-Philippe survived such an attempt on his life and remained in good health. See “Académie Nationale [sic] de Musique. Première représentation de *Gustave* ou le Bal masqué, opéra historique en cinq actes,” *Charivari* 2/31 (1 March 1833).
our operas sleep standing up? From the moment that someone dances, what matter is this?*51

Ironically, at the same time that the dance music and the dance it accompanied necessarily contributed to the commercial appeal of the work, it detracted from Gustave’s aesthetic quality for many critics. A composer of danceable music like Auber found himself in a double bind. He could produce what the public wished to hear, but in so doing he diminished his own reputation, for that which was commercially successful was also aesthetically suspect. This aesthetics of pleasure and the question of artistic value in music remained in conflict.

51 “Que nous importe à nous qui venons nous accouder sur un balcon deux heures après dîner, que l’art soit en décadence, que la vrai musique fasse bâiller, que les poèmes de nos opéras dorment debout?...Du moment qu’on danse, qu’importe sur quel air!” Alfred de Musset, Revue de deux mondes (14 March 1833). F-Po Dossier d’œuvre: Gustave III.
Chapter 4: The Quadrille and the Undoing of Opera

"Le drame lyrique est comme une religion que chacun arrange à sa manière..."

Castil-Blaze

Sur l'Opéra français (1856)

Much music journalism from the 1830s suggests that audiences frequently experienced opera as a dance—not just as balletic interludes interpolated into the lyric production, but as a choreographic experience that relocates, reshapes, or even destroys the meaning of the operatic phenomenon. The discourse surrounding quadrilles in the Parisian musical press provides a context for such a "dancerly" understanding of opera. As one anonymous author wrote in 1834, this square-set dance (generally involving four couples, but sometimes eight or more) became a popular means through which the public first became familiar with new operas:

"Most of the Parisian public almost always dance an opera before they see it. The works of our composers have two outlets to gauge their popularity: if it does not directly strike our auditory sense, it will travel through our legs to arrive at our ear."¹ In other words, some Parisians may

¹ "...La majeure partie du public parisien danse presque toujours un opéra avant de l’avoir entendu au théâtre. Les œuvres de nos compositeurs ont donc deux débouchés pour gagner la popularité: s’ils ne frappent pas directement
have heard opera feet first. A quotation like this suggests intriguing possibilities for imagining somatic responses to opera, possibilities this chapter explores.

Parisians had access to a variety of possible venues in which to dance or hear quadrilles, both newly composed and based on operas. During the winter, they experienced their popular strains played by some of the best orchestral musicians in Paris at public balls held by most theaters. During the summer, outdoor promenades and music gardens such as Le jardin turc provided yet another set of venues where high quality orchestral ensembles performed. Regardless of the season, smaller groups of musicians provided dance music at guinguettes, wine bars on the outskirts of the city.²

At the amateur level, sheet music for quadrilles could be purchased and brought into the home for the pleasure of playing at the piano or in small chamber ensembles, as well as guiding groups of friends through the figures of the dance. Parisians could hear quadrilles as well as galops and waltzes in any of these many spaces that dancing or informal piano playing might occur.¹

This omnipresence of quadrilles, especially those arranged from popular operas, inspired a large body of journalistic discussion on the subject during the 1830s, most of it negative. In general, these writers saw the quadrille as an agent in the ongoing erosion of Parisian musical taste, taste seemingly equated with education in most instances. An insufficient musical education generally led to this problem, while an excellent musical education would ameliorate any deficiency. Among the most destructive characteristics attributed to these arrangements were that

¹ Although quadrilles arranged from operas became more numerous as the century wore on, not all were arranged from pre-existent materials. Quite often these suites were newly composed, often in reference to some sort of national character or set of characters that had no explicit connection with any theatrical work. Still, some of the most popular quadrilles were generated from operas produced at the Théâtre Italien, the Opéra Comique, and from ballets as well as operas produced at the Académie Royale de Musique.
they corrupted the operas from which they were generated. Some journalists objected to the ease with which tunes in these arrangements crossed class boundaries. Critics often considered the arrangements of tunes from popular operas to be base, low class, and overly accessible. So simple were many of the tunes that they could be performed, and thus heard, practically anywhere, from church services to the stone pits of Montmartre. Perhaps most destructively, these instrumental dance suites provided simple musical pleasures for the growing ranks of amateur pianists, mostly girls and women, who barely possessed enough skill to realize these accessible scores. Quadrilles and contredanses, terms used interchangeably, dulled the public’s musical wits by allowing them to find satisfaction in musical mediocrity.

The negativity of this nineteenth-century discourse anticipates Carl Dahlhaus’s more recent discussions of trivial music, a term that obscures as much about this music as it illuminates. For Dahlhaus, trivial music is all music that fails to attain the rank of art music, including pieces written for “dance halls and promenade concerts, salons and variétés,” music that is so simple and banal that it defies analysis.⁴ Despite his distaste for its shallow

sentimentality, Dahlhaus supports the possibility that considering this repertory might reveal something worth knowing about nineteenth-century musical culture. The subject holds interest for scholars because the popularity of such music seems implausible, even unthinkable; but the banality acts as a barrier to approaching it critically and divining its secret attractions. In his analysis of "Les cloches du monastère," for example, Dahlhaus's discussion quickly degenerates into a general derogation of the genre. Unfortunately, in this case musical observation became yet another occasion to disparage the music without explaining its attraction.

In almost every way, quadrilles fit squarely into Dahlhaus's nether region of music. They represent the epitome of functional music, as they are designed first and foremost as a support and accompaniment for dance. Because of the demands of the dance, the genre experienced a uniformity and predictability that no other could match: five parts written to match the physical dimensions of the dance they accompanied. In addition to a regularity of

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5 Nineteenth Century Music, 315-16.
form, this genre demanded a regularity and consistency of rhythm and tempo. It afforded the arranger little room for innovation—and "arranger" in many cases fits the quadrille writer's creative process better than "composer." And its success during the nineteenth century seems due in part to the growing number of musicians interested in pieces that pleased yet could be performed by those with little ability.

The popularity of quadrilles arranged from operas and ballets seems to have begun around 1830.° The developments in the quadrille from the early nineteenth century reflect new aesthetic and economic circumstances under which these works were enjoyed and understood. Although the quadrille of the 1830s was directly related to the contredanse française of the past, it may also be treated productively as a separate and new genre because of the standardized form and the vastly different social circumstances in which it existed.

Most of the analysis that follows focuses on the discourse around the quadrille, not the music of the quadrille itself. That does not mean that the music should

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° These quadrilles by no means marked the beginning of contredanses arranged from popular theatrical tunes. Popular tunes had been drawn from operas to form contredanses in England as early as the late seventeenth century as can be seen in the many tunes related to operas found in the Playford collections for dancing.
be ignored. Like Charles Suttoni in his study of piano fantasies based on operas, I have paid special attention to the choice of themes by arrangers when looking at quadrilles arranged from operas. Unlike Suttoni, I do not see interest lying in the accurate or tasteful borrowing of passages from the opera to recreate the drama for the medium of the piano. Within the quadrille literature I observe little concern for the original work, but great concern with familiar or danceable tunes. The quadrille differs significantly from the fantasy as well because of the interference from extramusical sources that the genre experienced in performance. It was usually performed in a context where dance or some other social or even pyrotechnically theatrical activity coincided, distracting participants from what we might call the "musical object." Regardless of its source, the music did not generally become the center of attention in a quadrille performance, a situation that many critics of the form found troubling.

Quadrilles arranged from operas challenge Dahlhaus's category of trivial music in regard to their potential

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7 See Suttoni, “Piano and Opera: A Study of the Piano Fantasies Written on Opera Themes in the Romantic Era” (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1973), 6-10, for criteria for analyzing the choices composers made in selecting and modifying tunes.
connection to what he considers art music. They seem to occupy a border zone between the great and the mundane; because of this liminality quadrilles provoked journalistic anxiety over their status and influence. The borrowed melodies in these pieces beg the question as to the status of opera during the nineteenth century in France. In considering this border zone, I first discuss the regularization and simplification of the contredanse française during the first decades of the nineteenth century, which led to the establishment of the quadrille as a genre. Then I briefly examine the liberties that quadrille arrangers took with the operatic material they borrowed. Finally, I look at how participants in the dance constructed their experiences associated with quadrilles.

The Regularization and Simplification of the Quadrille

Negative journalistic fascination with the quadrille resulted in part from the many changes this form experienced from the turn of the century through the 1820s. During this time the dance became formally standard, simplified into five or six stereotypical composite figures from a random combination of nine or more. According to Castil-Blaze, who discussed the quadrille’s genesis alongside other popular dance genres in a series of articles for La France musicale...
of 1843, this simplification occurred to avoid the confusion that the many potential combinations of figures could cause:

In order to diminish the number of these titles, which were difficult to remember, in order to restrain the number of combinations of figures that changed with each contredanse, one chose six airs, whose forms and the figures that determined them appeared the most suitable and the most varied, and one published it— one executed the contredanses reunited as quadrilles. In this manner a single title became sufficient for five dance airs.\(^8\)

Castil-Blaze continued by relating origin myths behind the naming and standardization of these figures: Pantalon, Été, Poule, Trénis or Pastourelle, and Finale. Each of the names relates to the music that accompanied the particular figure, except for Trénis and Finale. Trénis, commonly danced as the fourth figure, was the name of the famous social dancer who invented the figure that bears his name, and Finale, as Castil-Blaze states, is self-explanatory. Pantalon, the first figure, was named for the first word of a popular song sung to a tune that accompanied the figure.

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\(^8\) "Afin de diminuer le nombre de ces titres, qu'il était difficile de retenir, afin de restreindre le nombre des combinaisons de figures qui changeaient à chaque contredanse, on choisit six de ces airs, dont la coupe et les figures qu'ils réglaient paraissaient les plus convenables, les plus variées, et l'on publia, l'on exécuta des contredanses réunies en quadrilles. Par ce moyen, un seul titre devint suffisant pour cinq airs de danse." Castil-Blaze, "Le Quadrille," La France musicale 6/29 (18 June 1843): 200. Five dance airs could suffice for six figures because either Pastourelle or Trénis could be used for the fourth figure.
The third figure, La Poule, dates from 1802, when a "new and pretty" dance figure was accompanied by a tune in which a clarinet melody of the second reprise resembled the sound of a chicken. Pastourelle, the fourth figure that often replaced Trénis, is named after the form of its melody in the style of the musette, villanelle, or shepherd song. Castil-Blaze provided no story for Été, the second figure.

At about the same time this five-part form became standard, men in general grew less interested in social dance, and this led to further simplification of the form. According to Jean-Michel Guilcher, before 1820 men of distinguished dancing skill populated balls and dance parties in order to show their talent. If enough skillful dancers attended the event, a "zephyr," as the virtuosic man was called, might agree to share his moment in the spotlight with seven other dancers in a quadrille performance worthy of the Opéra stage.⁹ Otherwise, he would perform alone. Such a dancer played an important function as an entertainer, for no ball or dance party could be completely

successful without his virtuosic display. Curiously, at about the same time that the five-part quadrille became standard, zephyrs became scarce and ultimately disappeared as men lost interest in the dancing scene and began pursuing other social interests.

Although men no longer honed their skills to the degree they had in the past, they still participated in dance as the partners of women. Because of their lower level of skill, dancers of both genders abandoned the footwork that had decorated the frame and the figures of the quadrille. As a result, the dance became less choreographically complex and the tempo increased to accommodate the potential for speed that a simple walking step offered.

Aside from the emergence of the five-part form, the simplification of the steps, and the increase in tempo, the contredanse’s musical style changed little. Its most important characteristic remained a clear duple meter, whether organized as 6/8 or 2/4. Ideally the music provided a steady tempo, a satisfying melody, and a downbeat-oriented rhythm to which the dancers could time the regular gliding steps. The music accompanying each figure was generally composed of four- or eight-bar phrases with a simple chordal

accompaniment, its 32- or 24-bar form providing just enough music for the active pair of dancers to complete the required figures. These airs would be repeated four times to allow each couple a chance to perform the figures of the dance. The performance forces for the quadrille varied with the context. For home or small entertainments, a piano alone or a small ensemble might provide the music. For a large public gathering a dance orchestra might number from seventy to a hundred musicians, among them some of the finest, conservatory-trained performers in Paris.

In their new, standard five-part form, quadrilles became a favorite genre of the growing music publishing industry. For instance, beginning in the late 1810s, Collinet, a well-known flageolet player and teacher, began publishing newly-composed quadrilles under the title Soirées de famille. His publications served as a medium for moving the favorite quadrilles of public balls into the domestic sphere. These publications included Collinet's arrangements of popular contredanses by composers such as J. B. Tolbecque and Philippe Musard for a wide range of solo and ensemble arrangements, including piano solo, piano with flute or flageolet accompaniment, piano four hands, violin solo, duet, quartet, or large orchestra, flute or flageolet solo, duo, or dialogue with violin, clarinet, harp, guitar, and so
on. Although Collinet sometimes arranged the quadrilles of others, for the most part they were newly composed.

By the early 1830s it was generally perceived that a bourgeois mediocrity or egalitarian simplicity, depending on the perspective of the writer, had infiltrated what had once been a pretentious aristocratic dance form.\(^{11}\) As Brunet, author of *Théorie-practique du Danseur de société, comprenant les plans descriptifs de la contredanse et de la valse* (1839) wrote,

For example, he who today brought to the manner of dance the same pretensions and the same refinements of the past would be more ridiculous than admirable because the dance has changed character. It has ceased to be an exceptional and difficult art to become a general distraction accessible to all. Henceforth the dance took on, if one may say it, a truly social allure, in the sense that it addresses without distinction all the classes of society.\(^{12}\)

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\(^{11}\) Although it lacked the obvious hierarchical qualities of the minuet, the contredanse still enjoyed a somewhat high-class status as a dance of the courtly beginning with its introduction to French balls in 1716.

\(^{12}\) "Celui, par exemple, qui apporterait aujourd'hui, dans la manière du danser, les mêmes prétentions et la même raffinement qu'autrefois, serait bien plus ridicule qu'admirable, et cela parce que la danse a changé de caractère, elle a cessé d'être un art exceptionnel et difficile pour devenir une distraction générale et à la portée de tous. Désormais la danse a revêtu, si l'on peut dire ainsi, une allure vraiment sociale, en ce sens qu'elle s'adresse indistinctement à toutes les classes de la société." Brunet, *Théorie-practique du Danseur de société, comprenant les plans descriptifs de la contredanse et de la valse* (Paris: Chaumerot, 1839), 9-10.
Other less flexible dancing masters, such as Lepitre, first dancing master of the grand ducal court of Hesse, saw this deterioration of dance style as desperate. His Réflexions sur l’art de la danse, relativement à la décadence momentanée des danses nationales françaises et allemandes preserves the voice of a member of the old guard who does not wish to relinquish the courtly manners of the past. In this tome, he attributes the demise of the old style of dancing the quadrille to Louis-Philippe’s admission of members of the National Guard into court balls. According to Lepitre, most of these soldiers found themselves extremely embarrassed when they were expected to dance the quadrille with the most graceful young nobility of the court, “who dance on a small scale like the celebrated Vestris, Taglioni, Fanny Elsler [sic] and Weiss dance on a large scale.” These officers introduced a careless running style into the courtly event, and made fun of the elegant dancing so that the nobility were dissuaded from employing their learned mannerisms.

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13 “qui dansait en miniature comme les célèbres Vestris, Taglioni, Fanny Elsler et Weiss dansaient en grandiose.” Louis Lepitre, Réflexions sur l’art de la danse, relativement à la décadence momentanée des danses nationales françaises et allemandes (Darmstadt: Chez Guillaume Ollweiler, 1844), 1.
Lepitre may in fact refer obliquely to the irreverent style of dancing the quadrille that emerged during the previous decade called "chahut" or "cancan." When dancing in this style these dancers were described by one English observer as "moving like a worm on a hook, shaking so much that their clothes, if not their muscles, would burst." Most of us are familiar with this style in the burlesque form danced by women and captured in representations of the Moulin Rouge by Toulouse-Latrec in the 1890s, or in Offenbach’s hedonistic deities dancing the "galop infernale" in Orphée aux enfers. The cancan’s less well-known history began in the 1820s, when men added athletic moves and pantomime to the frame of the quadrille. Curiously enough, Lepitre attributed the cancan style of dancing the quadrille not to these rambunctious soldiers, but to the comic dancer Mazurier, who danced a rather wild quadrille in the role of Jocko the Ape in the 1825 melodrama of the same name at the Théâtre Porte-Saint-Martin.

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14 In his study of nineteenth-century public balls in Paris, François Gasnault describes the development of this new vocabulary of public gestures for dancing the quadrille. Gasnault, Guinguettes et lorettes, 47-56.


16 Lepitre, Réflexions sur l’art de la danse, 1-3. Ivor Guest discusses Mazurier and this performance briefly in
It is difficult to confirm or deny the reasons these various dancing masters give for the changes that dance experienced around 1830, but at least one theme emerges: dance appears to have shifted away from noble models redolent of the Old Regime toward less rigorously structured bourgeois influences. To dance as one of the noble class was to appear ridiculous in public. Dance thus became accessible to greater numbers of participants because a dancer required far less technique to participate.

The shifts in dance skills these dancing masters describe changed dancers' perceptions of social dance, particularly within the context of the Opéra ball. For instance, in an article in Le Ménestrel dating from just before the winter ball season of 1834, the contredanse is described as an example of the routine. Despite the fact that the sylphic Marie Taglioni had taken theatrical dance to its apogee, the contredanse had taken social dancing to its nadir. The quadrille had become a social diversion, accessible to all, that obeyed no choreographic law and was

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Jules Perrot, Master of the Romantic Ballet (New York: Dance Horizons, 1984), 9-10. In Paris I was not able to find any documents in connection with this Théâtre Porte-Saint-Martin production, except for several lithographs representing Mazurier as Jocko, but none of them with him participating in the quadrille.
thus boring to dance and to watch. Only a week later another article in the same journal again decried the boring contredanse, but announced at the same time the plans of Véron, director of the Opéra, to "overthrow" the contredanse through the introduction of more interesting and spectacular foreign dances into the ball through exhibition performances.

The ball became more popular in part as a result of these exhibitions, but it could not defeat the quadrille in the process. Proof of this comes in 1839, with a mention of a movement to reform the quadrille at the Opéra. Rather than attempting to force out the quadrille, the administration then attempted to ameliorate it by introducing new figures, suggesting that if the Opéra could not do away with the contredanse, it might as well promote its revolution.

By 1840 two distinct styles of dancing the quadrille had emerged: the rowdy, undisciplined chahut, athletic and virtuosic in its own unorthodox and improvisatory way, and (by comparison) the elegant walking style. When danced with a conservative simplicity, the dance provided dancers with

17 "Routine," Le Ménestrel 1/4 (22 December 1833).
18 "Nouvelles diverses," Le Ménestrel 6/8 (20 Jan 1839).
an opportunity for conversation while waiting their turn to participate within the square. When danced in the wild chahut or cancan style it allowed dancers to display their individuality through vigorous movements and pantomime. And when danced in public spaces the chahut became prohibited soon after its invention: its dancers could be arrested by the police for lack of decency. Although both these forms of the quadrille were arguably less technically demanding than the courtly versions of the past, they held complicated and controversial positions within balls and other types of social dances that belied their seeming simplicity, as the journalistic attention they received suggests.

Quadrilles as Operatic Arrangements

The discourse around quadrilles became most virulent in the context of the growing popularity of contredanse arrangements of operas, a phenomenon closely linked with the increase in amateur female piano players. Many journalists viewed the arrangement of “musical masterpieces” into simple tunes for home consumption as a stultifying musical phenomenon, not only for the people who played the arrangements, but for the works that were arranged. As one journalist wrote,

Stop for a moment at a music dealer, listen to the customers, what do they ask for? Contredanses and
nothing but contredanses. It will be the quadrille of Robert, the quadrille of Robin des Bois, the quadrille of Don Juan, always quadrilles. Meyerbeer, Weber, and Mozart won't sell at all unless they are arranged as contredanses; a publisher will not buy a single score if he cannot have permission to dismember it into contredanses; an air has no value in the eyes of a merchant if the theme rebels against arrangement as a contredanse. 19

Such a view considers the contredanse as a purely musical form, one that destroys the masterpiece from which it was created. The notion of the masterpiece was a relatively new one in France, an ideal that many of the writers against the quadrille wished to promulgate. In his cultural history of listening in Paris, James H. Johnson argues that Parisian audiences only began attending to musical experience with respectful silence and attention

19 Arrêtez-vous un instant chez un marchand de musique, écoutez les chalans, que demandent-ils? De contre-danses, et rien que des contre-danses; ce sera le quadrille de Robert, le quadrille de Robin-des-bois, le quadrille de Don Juan, toujours des quadrilles; Meyerbeer, Weber et Mozart ne se ventraient pas, s’ils n’étaient arrangées en contre-danses; les éditeurs n’acheteraient pas une seule partition s’il ne leur était loisible de la dépecer en contre-danses; un air n’est d’aucune valeur aux yeux du marchand dont le theme est rebelle à arrangement en contre-danses.” N***, “Revue de la semaine,” Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris 2/30 (26 July 1835), 232. Meyerbeer’s Robert le Diable premiered in 1831 at the Opéra; Robin des Bois had been translated into French for the Opéra-Comique by Castil-Blaze in 1824--Berlioz’s version for the Opéra premiered much later, in 1841; and Castil-Blaze had recently arranged Mozart’s Don Juan into a five-act French version with a lengthened ball scene for a divertissement, which premiered at the Opéra in 1834.
during the early part of the nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{20} Despite this new reverence for masters such as Beethoven, the great majority of Parisians still heard music in spaces where people enjoyed it as part of a diverse social atmosphere.

Well into the nineteenth century, despite critics’ objections, contredanses in quadrille arrangements continued to exist in a commercial and aesthetic relationship with the musical stage works from which they were derived.\textsuperscript{21} Arrangements of opera excerpts published in quadrilles kept a work current, which in some cases prolonged its theatrical life, or at least added to the profits the work could produce for its publisher.\textsuperscript{22} In response to this growing market, many musicians supplemented their incomes by reframing operatic moments from the Académie Royale de


\textsuperscript{21} The practice of arranging operas into quadrilles was in no way limited to French operas. For instance, Emmanuel Chabrier arranged themes from Wagner’s Tristan und Isolde for “Souvenirs de Munich, Fantaisie en Forme de Quadrille” (Paris: Editions Musicales Transatlantiques, n.d.), which acquires its humorous effect from the way that Chabrier shoehorns Tristan’s chromatic themes into the square and generally diatonic dimensions of the quadrille. See as well Gabriel Fauré and André Messager, “Souvenirs de Bayreuth, Fantasie en forme de quadrille sur les thèmes favoris de l’Anneau du Nibelung de Richard Wagner” (Paris: Éditions Costallat, n.d.).

\textsuperscript{22} Suttoni discusses fantasias in this regard in “Piano and Opera,” 100-105.
Musique, the Opéra Comique, and the Théâtre-Italien as quadrilles, available for sale from the growing number of music publishers. But the ways in which these arrangements translated a theatrical work into a potentially unskilled, embodied, physical experience was seen to diminish the original. As one critic said, "now, all the lyric masterpieces only serve in the end to make us dance, and again they don't always make us dance in measure."

Many of the operas that became fodder for quadrilles possessed quadrille-like musical qualities even before the corrupting process of arrangement took place. Despite the many rhythmically regular eight-bar phrases that filled these works and called out for their arrangement into

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24 “Maintenant, tous les chef-d'oeuvre lyriques ne servent en définitive qu'à nous faire danser; et encore ne nous font-ils pas toujours danser en mesure." "La Musique d'aujourd'hui et la musique d'autrefois," Le Ménestrel 8/51 (20 November 1841).
dances, critics in general blamed the dancing public, not the composers who bowed to public whims, for the popularity of these derivative works:

We do not need to remark that it is impossible for us to praise or to blame M. Schunke when he descends to arrange contredanses. A composer who in so little time has given us proof of a great dexterity and so happy a gift of invention can only undertake such chores in the interest of the beautiful dancing world, and we are persuaded that this for him was a sincere obligation. 25

If critics could forgive Schunke for descending to the level of the "beautiful dancing world," most offered no such mercy to composers like Auber, a financially— if not always critically— successful composer, who was said "to take M. Musard for Apollo, and have nothing in view but the Bazaar Saint-Honoré when he composes a new work." 26 It was not

25 "Nous n'avons pas besoin de remarquer qu'il nous est impossible de louer ou de blamer M. Schunke, quand il vient bien descendre jusqu'à arranger la contredanses. Un compositeur qui, en si peu de temps, a donné tant de preuves certaines d'une grand habileté et d'un don d'invention si heureux, ne peut entreprendre de telles corvées que dans l'intérêt du beau monde dansant, et nous sommes persuadés que celui-ci lui en aura une sincère obligation." "Revue critique. La Juive. Contre-danses variées pour le piano forte par Charles Schunke," Gazette Musicale de Paris 2/19 (10 May 1835): 161. Schunke was a Parisian piano pedagogue who produced the Bibliothèque du jeune pianiste. Recueil de morceaux instructifs et amusans, à l'usage de la jeunesse, sur des motifs des opéras de Bellini, Halévy, Meyerbeer et Rossini. See Suttoni, "Piano and Opera," 44.

26 "Sied-il à M. Auber de prendre M. Musard pour Apollon, et de n'avoir en vue, lorsqu'il compose un nouvel ouvrage, que le bazar Saint-Honoré?" J. J. J. Diaz, "Théâtre de l'Opéra
that Auber wrote dances specifically for this market, but rather that he seemed to write his operas with arrangers in mind, and with no care to the literary, much less the musical, quality of the production. Because of his incessantly rhythmic, repetitive motivic style, his operas—especially his opéras comiques—seemed designed for dissection into arrangements. The threat went beyond that of poor musical taste to the demise of the French school of composition all told.

Because of the rigidity of its dimensions and performance style, the quadrille enforced a homogeneity of tempo and phrasing on the music it framed, regardless of the source of the tunes. Unlike dance suites of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, all quadrilles were designed so that they might accompany dance.\(^\text{27}\) Each of the five musical sections shares the same tempo and a repetitive construction from four-bar phrases. Unlike earlier dance suites,

\(^{27}\) Although it is possible that someone composed a quadrille that was completely undanceable because of its virtuosic requirements, I know of none. In this respect, the genre differs from the galop, which inspired at least one virtuosic exemplar: Liszt's "Grand galop chromatique." The fluctuation in tempo that Liszt's composition would require in performance makes it more suitable for listening than for dancing.
contrast between the phrases or figures may never be introduced through dramatic changes of movement, such as that between an allemande and a courante or a gigue. Rather, the composer or arranger constructed differences between the sections by means of rhythmic play within the 2/4 or 6/8 meter, contrasting melodies, and contrasting keys.

This homogenizing quality frequently led to large changes in the musical character of borrowed material. Tolbecque, Julien, and Musard, the three best known dance orchestra leaders from this time, frequently took creative license in their operatic quadrille arrangements. On occasion a section of an aria or an overture was adapted with little revision of the original, as in Pantalon from Tolbecque's Guillaume Tell. The rondo form of Pantalon mirrors the rondo structure of the "gallop" section of the overture, and the duple meter, regular phrasing, and motivic repetition fit the character of a quadrille without modification, although the original tempo of the overture material might have been reduced and repetitions of phrases omitted (See Figure 4.1).

In general, however, quadrilles arranged from operas can result in a large degree of abstraction from the original work. Sometimes the contredanses that make up the
Figure 4.1: Pantalon from Tolbecque's quadrille arrangement of Guillaume Tell.
quadrille merely reflect characteristics of the operatic music. For instance, peasant characters can be represented through somewhat homogenous, barcarolle-like 6/8 melodies in thirds and sixths, features that the Neapolitan barcarolles of Masaniello's fishermen friends (See Figure 4.2) and the Sicilienne of Robert le diable (See Figure 4.3) share.

Figure 4.2: Quadrille movement by Tolbecque based on a barcarolle from La Muette de Portici, Act II, finale.
Figure 4.3: Quadrille movement based on the Sicilienne from Robert le diable, Act I.
A selection of quadrilles based on Auber's *La Muette de Portici* (1828)—one by Musard, two by Tolbecque, and one by Jullien—represents a range of possible types of quadrille arrangements. Frequently, arrangers borrowed well-known themes directly from the original opera, as in the example above from Guillaume Tell's overture. Surprisingly, though, as in the case of Musard's *La Muette* quadrille, the music is often based on an idea from the opera rather than an operatic excerpt as such. (See Table 1 for sources of borrowings. See the Appendix for scores to all four *La Muette* quadrilles discussed here.)

The *Muette* quadrille by Musard is only loosely associated to the original. Of the five figures, only the second comes directly from the opera ("Chantons gaiment la barcarolle" might serve as the theme of the quadrille and the opera itself, given the number of barcarolles it contains). Each of the five figures shares the 6/8 meter and lilting rhythm of this stereotypically Italian, strophic vocal genre. The pastourelle and finale are loosely based on material from Pietro's Act V barcarolle and Masaniello's Act II barcarolle respectively. Pantalon and Trénis seem

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28 Quadrilles were usually published in sets of two, more often three, but seem to have been sold singly despite being collected in sets.
<table>
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<th>TABLE 1: Borrowed Materials in Quadrilles based on La Muette</th>
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**Musard**

*All movements in barcarolle-like 6/8*

1. Unknown origin, newly composed?.
3. Unknown origin, newly composed?.
5. Loosely based on Masaniello’s barcarolle, Act II, no. 7, p. 266.

**Tolbecque No. 1**


**Tolbecque No. 2**

3. Unknown origin.

**Jullien**

2. Masaniello’s barcarolle, Act II, no. 7, pp. 266.

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related to the opera only in their barcarolle-like style: neither figure is based directly on themes from the opera.

In contrast, Tolbecque’s first La Muette quadrille is based nearly exclusively on operatic excerpts. He borrowed particularly heavily from non-lyric portions, namely the divertissements and the overture, with Masaniello’s second act barcarolle providing a finale. The opera consists of two divertissements, the first performed by Spanish dancers in the first act to honor Elvire, the second performed by Italian dancers in the third-act market scene. Excerpts from these divertissements make up the first three figures, the Guarache of Act I supplying material for the first and second figure, and the Tarentelle of Act III supplying material for the third. An obscure but highly danceable excerpt from the overture makes up the music for the fourth figure, the emblematic barcarolle providing a finale.

The finale of Tolbecque’s quadrille based on Masaniello’s barcarolle from Act II of La Muette serves as an example of one possible way a borrowed tune might become corrupted. In it the arranger transforms the phrasing of the original version by condensing the eight-bar phrase into four bars. (See Figure 4.4 for Jullien’s quadrille movement that maintains the original phrase structure, Figure 4.5 for Tolbecque’s version.) This condensation makes its pastoral
Figure 4.4: Quadrille movement by Jullien maintaining the original phrase structure from “Amis, la matinée est belle.”
Figure 4.5: Tolbecque’s condensation of the eight-bar phrase in “Amis, la matinée est belle.”
6/8 rhythm more emphatic and denies the melody its quirky 8-bar lyric quality, which Jullien maintained in his version.

If Tolbecque's first quadrille emphasizes the choreographic and non-lyric elements of \textit{La Muette}, his second emphasizes the Italian-folk elements of the music, pulling material strictly from the lyric portions of the opera: Pietro's barcarolle, and three choruses--one from the market scene, a Fisherman's chorus, and the Act II Finale "Chantons gaiment." The exception lies in Trénis, which appears to be newly-composed. This quadrille does not exhaust the Italian-folk possibilities, but it noticeably avoids dance music and the portions of the opera that involve the noble Elvire and Alphonse.

Of the four \textit{La Muette} quadrilles, Jullien's seems to represent most evenly the original opera, democratically drawing from a variety of possible music types and styles. It begins and ends with a chorus, a characteristic quite common in operas themselves if we exclude the overture from consideration. An excerpt from the Guarache represents the Spanish divertissement, providing a token excerpt of dance music. To round out the quadrille, the barcarolle sung by Masaniello is included, but also the Italianate cavatina sung by Elvire. The quadrille thus presents music associated with both a central working-class character and a
central aristocratic character. This quadrille seems designed to display a variety of musical styles from the opera.

All in all, arrangers seemed to value danceable music, music that is “bien rhythmée.” If a particular excerpt is emblematic of some characteristic of the operatic plot, it seems likely to be appropriated, as in the many barcarolles of La Muette. More important than any particular relationship to the original opera, however, is the attempt to create some type of new and interesting arrangement for dancing.

**Interpretations Imposed on Quadrilles**

To the dubious extent that quadrilles tell a story at all, they selectively tell it in disjunctive snapshots. Within the pages of music journals, however, the story tellers are not the quadrilles, but the people who danced them. On occasion quadrilles were interpreted symbolically as pictures of French civility. An article appearing in Le Ménestrel of 1846 relates the views of Mme Elise Voiart, who described the dance as a non-verbal narrative of the rudiments of courtship, and the polite acknowledgment of “companions in pleasure.” As she wrote,

The contredanse presents the scene of French society.
A young man, his head uncovered, brings with him a woman whom he chooses with a respectful eagerness, and places himself with her on one of the four sides that form the contredanse. In this instant this woman dancer belongs to him.

In the break between the figures he looks after niceties for her; he protects her, makes her a place, and will not allow that anyone fail to give her the regard she is due. This protection is so complete that often bloody brawls arise for no other reason than an impoliteness made toward the female dancer.

Nevertheless, faithful image of liaisons of society, this engagement is not so exclusive that it excludes one or the other of the partners to take an interest in other dancers.

When the dance begins, each responds to the call of his opposite.

Then two people that chance has put together appear.

The woman advances towards the stranger, timidly moves away, glides to the right then to the left and seems in this graceful balance not to flee, but to steer clear of too direct an homage. The stranger, executing the same movements, soon compels the woman to cross the arena. She balances again, but to follow the new man by his glance, she returns in turning to her first partner, and after some hesitation, offers him her hands for him to console an involuntary separation.

Finally she ends the figure with a chaine in which she always knows how to distinguish the hand of the man who chose her.

Don’t forget the politeness of the chassé-huit, which resembles a last good-bye to their companions in pleasure.30

30 La contredanse présente le tableau de la société française.

Un jeune homme, la tête découvert, amène avec un empressement respectueux la femme qu’il a choisie, et se place avec elle sur l’une des quatre faces qui
Mme Voiart's conception of the quadrille, although couched in genteel society, seems dependent on a

forment la contredanse. Dès cet instant sa danseuse lui appartient.

Dans l'intervalle des figures il l'entretient de choses aimables; il la protège, lui fait faire place, et ne souffre pas que l'on manque aux égards qui lui sont dus. Cette protection est telle, que souvent des rixes sanglantes n'ont eu d'autre cause qu'une impolitesse faite à la danseuse.

Cependant, image fidèle des liason de société, cet engagement n'est pas tellement exclusif qu'il dispense l'un ou l'autre des partners de s'occuper des autres danseurs.

Quand la danse commence, chacun répond à l'appel de son vis-à-vis.

D'abord figurent avec grace et politesse deux personnes que le hasard rassemble.

La femme s'avance vers l'étranger, recule timidement, glisse à droit, puis à gauche, et semble dans ce balancement gracieux no pas fuir, mais éviter un hommage trop direct.

L'étranger, exécutant les mêmes évolutions, force bientôt la femme à traverser l'arène. Elle balance encore; mais, poursuivie de nouveau par ses regards, elle revient en voltigeant à son premier danseur, et, après quelque hésitation, lui offre les deux mains pour le consoler d'un éloignement involontaire.

Enfin elle termine la figure par un chaine dans laquelle elle sait toujours distinguer la main de celui qui l'a choisie.

N'oublions pas la politesse du chassé-huit, qui semble un dernier adieu à ses compagnons de plaisirs.

"Petite chronique. Le quadrille symbolisé." Le Ménestrel 13/35 (2 August 1846).
physicality, whether in the non-verbal communication she described among the dancers moving through the figures, or the "bloody brawls" inspired by breeches of etiquette. Still, these physical actions were either highly controlled, or out of control in the interest of disciplining a person who fails to maintain etiquette. At the same time, her comments were mildly nationalistic. She reflected on the "sacrifice" of the French quadrille to foreign imports, such as the polka, which became overwhelming during the 1840s. When dancing closed position dances (such as polkas, waltzes and galops), in which partner faced partner in a constant embrace, a couple would be discouraged if not completely prevented from taking interest in other dancers on the dance floor. In the quadrille, on the other hand, the square represented a microcosm of society. In short, for Mme Voiart the quadrille represented the last bastion of communal social grace on the dance floor.

Mme Voiart was not alone in her admiration of the quadrille. Five years earlier, in an article on the demise of decency at public balls, Paul Smith quoted a conversation he had with a woman who defended the quadrille to him. For her, the quadrille was national because in France we are more gallant than passionate, more spiritual than sensual. All the dances from Southern France, from Spain, and from Italy, the fandango, the bolero, the tarentelle, are veritable
battles body against body, veritable duels of extravagance: They are all movement, action, voluptuousness. The German waltz, somewhat more calm, is not less sensual and voluptuous. The contredanse is the lot of a nation that admits to truces in pleasure, who cannot conceive of it without certain conditions of order, of propriety and who want always to reserve a place for the spirit. The contredanse, deadly with a fool of either sex, is ravishing with a partner who has ideas, and in France almost everyone has them.31

The contredanse became a metaphor for the civilized and spiritual pleasures of French society, sentiments that seem rather old-fashioned and courtly during the 1840s. But this woman was more specific about the problems with dances from outside of France, describing the distasteful physical contests that other dances produce. Her view of the quadrille differed significantly from Mme. Voiart in that its performance depended on a conversational pleasure, which

31 "--Parce qu’en France nous sommes plus galants que passionnés, plus spirituels que sensuels. Toutes les danses du Midi, de l’Espagne, et de l’Italie, le fandango, le bolero, la tarentelle, sont de véritables luttes corps à corps, de véritables duels à outrance: tout y est mouvement, action, volupté. La valse allemande, quoique plus calme, n’en est pas moins sensuelle et voluptueuse. La contredanse est le lot d’une nation qui admet des trêves dans la plaisir, qui ne le conçoit qu’avec de certaines conditions d’ordre, de convenance, et qui veut toujours y réserver une place pour l’esprit. La contredanse, mortelle avec un sot ou avec une sotte, est ravissante avec un partner qui a des idées, et en France presque tout le monde en a. Paul Smith [Edouard Monnais], "Danses Prohibées," Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris 8/15 (21 February 1841): 114.

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somehow translated into a spiritual—that is, non-physical—experience.

It is difficult to know how—if at all—these descriptions influenced the understanding of quadrilles based on tunes borrowed from well-known operas. The lithographic cover of one such quadrille based on La Muette de Portici suggests that in at least one circumstance the social relationships within the opera might be transposed onto the quadrille (See Figure 4.6). On this print of the "Masaniello Quadrille" by Jullien, we see the primary characters of the story: Masaniello, the hero of the opera, paired with Fenella, his mute sister. Just behind this central couple to the right a second pair of dancers is visible: Alphonse, the nobleman who seduced Fenella before the action of the opera began, and Elvire, the woman Alphonse marries in the first act. Masaniello's revolutionary compatriots, dressed like him in phrygian caps, fill the space to the left. In this case the artist seemed to connect the plot of the opera with the "plot" of the quadrille expressed by Mme. Voiart. Those who knew the story of Masaniello, as most undoubtedly would, might imagine that he protects his sister in the context of the dance just as Alphonse protects Elvire from injury. The narrative's action is limited by the narrow possibilities
Figure 4.6: Lithograph cover to the "Masaniello Quadrille."
the frame of the quadrille offers: although Mme. Voiart's description allowed for the possibility of a bloody brawl in the middle of the dance, the civility of the form leads us to assume it will end with the partners bidding each other a pleasant "adieu."

So far, these interpretations of the quadrille take no account of the interpretive possibilities music could offer. No evidence seems to exist to suggest that the music accompanying this particular La Muette quadrille (or any other) had any effect on how people experienced it. The circumstances are different, however, for a very successful quadrille arrangement of Les Huguenots by Jullien. During a summer dance garden entertainment of 1836, an outdoor performance of this arrangement created quite a sensation. Jullien went beyond presenting memorable melodies from the opera in his arrangement to recreate its most dramatic moment--the massacre of the Protestants by the Catholics in the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre--as the finale of the dance. In the performance of 1836 this finale was made literally explosive through a pyrotechnic display of fireworks. This arrangement of Les Huguenots supposedly condensed the experience of the four-hour opera into fifteen minutes. As one journalist described it,

At the moment where the public allows itself to be deliciously rocked by the ravishing melodies of the
first acts, all of a sudden, in the fifth figure of the quadrille, the lugubrious sound of the chimes drone, accompanied by the beautiful chorale: then, to create for the eyes as well as the ears the massacre of the Protestants, the bandstand, the pavilion, the trees, all is enveloped at the same time in a rapid explosion, the flames of which take on different colors successively while one hears firearms sounding from all directions. The people in attendance, astonished and enchanted at the same time ask to experience again this magic quadrille with the accompaniment of fireworks, and each evening Jullien repeats it at the end of the concert, when he has had time to renew the fire preparation, which adds such a picturesque effect to the power of the musical charms.32

Descriptions like this suggest that the quadrille offered a theatrical frame that might unite all the pleasurable

32 "Au moment où le public se laisse délicieusement bercer par les ravissantes mélodies des premiers actes, tout à coup, à la cinquième figure du quadrille, bourdonne le son lugubre des cloches, accompagnement le beau choral; puis, pour figurer aux yeux comme aux oreilles le massacre des Protestants, le kiosques, des pavillons, les arbres, tout s'embrase en même temps d'un rapide incendre, dont les lueurs prennent successivement des couleurs différentes, tandis qu'on entend la mousquetterie retentir de toutes parts. Les amateurs étonnées et enchantées à la fois redemmandent à grands cris cet magique quadrille, avec accompagnement de feux d'artifice, et chaque soir M. Jullien le répète à la fin du concert, quand en a eu le temps de renouveler la préparation des feux, qui ajoutent un effet si pittoresque à la puissance du charme musical." Quoted by F. J. Fétis, Biographie universelle des musiciens et bibliographie générale de la musique. 2 ed., vol. 4 (Paris, 1894, reprint Brussels: Culture and Civilization, 1963), 454. Also quoted in Gasnault, Guinguettes et lorettes, 108. At least two other descriptions of the event were published: "Le Jardin Turc. Quadrille des Huguenots," Le Ménestrel 3/29 (19 June 1836); and Delphine de Girardin, "Bals et ballons (11 Javier 1837)" in Chroniques parisiennes 1836-1848, ed. Jean-Louis Vissière (Paris: des femmes, 1986), 70-75.
elements of the choreographic experience in one: the physical sensation of being "deliciously rocked" by "ravishing melodies," the pleasures of recognizing the tunes, and finally the visual delight of being in the middle of a massacre that originally occurred behind the barrier of a proscenium. In this context, Jullien's quadrille brings the operatic experience to life in a deeply physical and participatory manner.

These readings of quadrilles suggest a wide range of performative possibilities with music at the very margin. The quadrille can be imagined as a symbol of all that is civilized in French society or as representative of the trials of courtship. Given a proper context with expensive pyrotechnics, it could take on a dramatic life of its own, recreating the most thrilling and disturbing moment of the most popular opera in Paris, a moment that had more to do with spectacle and bombast than musicality. Music necessarily was present, but its importance faded in the many associations participants could make between what they saw, how they moved, and whom they met.

Conclusion
In many ways the quadrille represented a paradoxical genre: it both exaggerated physicality and bodily restraint.
Danced in the chahut or cancan style, it became physical and improvisatory, emphasizing freedom of movement. Danced in the simple walking style, it became a nostalgic remnant of an imagined past time when civility and spirituality in entertainment were valued over physical pleasure. The sedate quadrille preserved sociability and community rather than individuality. The same sense of paradox emerges in operatic arrangements of quadrilles: the arrangement released operatic moments from the confines of the theater, but it also created a new set of musical limits based on the rigid form and tempo the dance required. As a dance and a piece of music, the quadrille was viewed as both liberating and confining, vulgar and civilized, corporeal and spiritual.

This seemingly contested or paradoxical nature may have emerged as a result of the body's centrality to the experience of the quadrille in all its forms, for first and foremost the quadrille is a dance. The music is designed to allow participants to move through a specific set of figures, whether or not people actually take part in the dance. When this musical frame allows for choreographic freedom, as when the chahut dancers perform pantomimically and kick up their heels, this variation still occurs within the temporal limits imposed by the music designed to
accompany the abandoned figures. Music in this context becomes at worst something of a shackle, at best a remembrance of operatic performances past.

When critics began considering the quadrille as a musical genre, they created tension between the ideal of transcendent musical experience and the firmly embodied nature of music for the dance. Evaluated for what it was, a functional and regular arrangement of tunes, the genre usually fared well. But when considered as the dominant form of music in households and public balls, the quadrille threatened because it set the foot, rather than the spirit, in motion. The quadrille taught people to listen through the figures of the dance, through the rhythms of their steps, not for some abstract sense of beauty that culminated from the coincidence of melody and harmony, but from the enjoyment gained from a witty partner, or the pleasure of physical activity.

Although it is impossible to know for certain how people listened to opera during the 1830s and 1840s, the quadrille suggests a set of possible parameters not normally considered. Audience members might bring the regular eight-bar phrases and motivic rhythms of operas arranged as quadrilles to bear on what they heard. Such previous experience is necessarily non-literary, since such
arrangements strip the original tunes of their words—if the borrowed tunes even had words originally. It would emphasize the tune over its context, encouraging a purely instrumental approach to hearing the work. Some reviews of operas, such as the one that accused Auber of having nothing in mind but the Bazaar Saint-Honoré when he composed, suggest that those who arranged quadrilles from operas might listen for the catchy four- and eight-bar phrases omnipresent in the overtures, divertissements, choruses, and airs that made up French operas. Instrumental arrangements of operas—whatever the genre—fracture the dramatic sense of the opera through familiarizing audiences with favorite tunes and fashionable tidbits. In this sense they threaten the coherence of the original work, a coherence that is often quite fragile even before the arrangement process occurred.

Many critics viewed the quadrille arranged from operatic excerpts as an agent of destruction. It disrupted the opera in such a way that the sense was lost, the drama compromised. Despite the harm they did, quadrilles provided their listeners and participants with a productive pleasure, with an opportunity to appropriate an opera and make it their own, to make enjoyable nonsense of a phenomenon already quite nonsensical, or to display themselves within a
tightly controlled theatrical frame enhanced by pleasant and popular tunes. Although it is tempting to view the quadrille as a locus of resistance against the idea of the masterpiece, such a view would perhaps be going too far. It would suggest that popular operas were generally held to be masterpieces and that the quadrille operated as some sort of argument against the supremacy of opera. Rather than resisting the dominance of opera, the quadrille operated as an element of dominant culture in Parisian musical life. Within this context operas began to unravel almost as soon as a production came together. The quadrille represents but one of many agents in the constant undoing of opera.
Conclusion: Dance, the Body, the Opéra and French Identity

Dance within grand operas produced at the Opéra during the mid-nineteenth century was rarely contained only within divertissements that could be discretely eliminated or replaced. On the contrary, dance permeated the experience of opera within this theater. Women identifiable as dancers, not just as mere extras, populated the stage from nearly the beginning to the end of these productions. Reactions to both social and theatrical dance occasionally made visible the social struggles within the audience, particularly the question of woman’s role in the public sphere and the flux of social class within a constitutional monarchy (and later a republic and an empire). The practice of arranging music from these works into forms suitable for social dancing allowed people to connect a diverse array of musical moments with their own experience of dance, or even to attribute the sole purpose of the operatic enterprise to producing danceable tunes. Whether or not they liked what they saw when they attended performances at the Opéra, audiences identified the choreographic as an essential element of this experience. And despite protests against it, dance came to represent an essential element of much of the music identified as French.
At the same time that French opera and music acquired an association with the choreographic, much of the dance and the music that accompanied it played on stereotypes of national identities outside of France. Parisian ballrooms served as one site for the invention and propagation of such stereotypes, including images of the Spanish, the Italians, and the provincial French among others. Ironically, as Parisians constructed "others" through dance, they identified themselves as French through their own connections with dance.¹

Scholars have rarely explored the implications of character or national styles in dance to the national musics that they study. One reason for this oversight may lie in the focus of most research on Romantic ballet in Paris on the aerial style of dancing popularized by Marie Taglioni. Scholars tend to view character or national dance as peripheral to the more abstract variety characterized by pointework and diaphanous white tutus. Focusing on dance in grand operas makes this omission impossible, for nearly all of the divertissements from this period involve character

and national dancing. One must still ask, however, what implications the popularity of national dance holds for understanding either the music that accompanied it or the music that portrayed it in contexts separate from the actual choreographic event.

This is not to say that the ways in which audiences at the Opéra identified with dance—and identified others with dance—remained stable during the mid-nineteenth century. The performance history of divertissements within La Muette de Portici reveals some of the major trends in dance at this time.

2 Lisa C. Arkin and Marian Smith argue for the centrality of national (or character or folk) dance to the aesthetic of Romantic ballet. See "National Dance in the Romantic Ballet," in Rethinking the Sylph: New Perspectives on the Romantic Ballet, ed. Lynn Garafola (Hanover N.H. and London: University Press of New England, 1997), 11-68. In Rhythmic Gesture in Mozart (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), Wye J. Allanbrook supplies a model for how characters of particular dances might inflect the understanding of the operas in which they appear. However "character" in her study, and perhaps during the late eighteenth century, has a very different connotation from that in the nineteenth. The musical topoi she discusses refer not so much to national styles or characters as to the natures of individuals, creating a musical physiognomy of sorts through identifiable rhythmic gestures. Perhaps during the nineteenth century in France the preoccupation with national identities reshaped the subtle mimetic practice that Allanbrook envisions for Mozart during the late eighteenth century.

theater as they shifted between 1830 and 1870. Auber capitalized on both the popularity of dance and his own skill as a composer of dance music to enhance the two divertissements within this opera on many occasions. The changes these divertissements experienced suggests an increased identification of folk dancing with the lower classes.

Early on, during the 1830s and 1840s, additional Spanish pas enlarged the first-act divertissement; in the 1860s elaboration centered on the third-act market scene, which Auber and choreographer Lucien Petipa expanded from a single tarentelle to a ballet in its own right. Unlike the ball-scene divertissement of Gustave, which rivaled the original opera in popularity, the divertissements in La Muette were never performed separately from the opera, nor did their success overshadow that of the original work.

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4 Jane Fulcher has discussed the 1847 revival of La Muette, which included new Spanish dances in the first-act divertissement. She suggests that these dances toned down the political message of the opera; however, the change fits the pattern of choreographic rehabilitation that divertissements within Auber’s operas enjoyed. It is therefore doubtful that politics motivated the change. See Fulcher, The Nation’s Image: French Grand Opera as Politics and Politicized Art (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 108.

5 See Chapter 3 on Gustave’s ball scene in this dissertation.
Yet they contributed to the overall success of the production, occasionally providing a novel element to this aging war-horse during the later nineteenth-century, or serving a more utilitarian purpose as venues for the debuts of new dancers. More than these functional roles, however, the changes in the nature of divertissements during the 1860s suggest an even greater desire to separate ballet from opera as generic categories.

The first elaborations occurred during the carnival season of 1834, when Véron hired authentic Spanish dancers to perform for several occasions at the Opéra ball and during the first-act divertissement. This first-act divertissement again received notable attention in 1837, when a third dance, the Jaleo en Jerez, was added for Lise Noblet, the dancer who originally created the role of Fenella, to dance with her sister. In 1845 plans fell through to include a performance of the Jaleo by the Danseuses Viennoises, a troupe of young girl dancers from the Josephstadt Theater in Vienna. Although these

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6 The controversy seemed to revolve around whether or not they had been baptized. For a discussion of the Danseuses Viennoises, see Guest, The Romantic Ballet in Paris (Middletown: Wessleyan University Press, 1966), 239-42. An early rehearsal score, the Partie de Ballet for La Muette, F-Po Mat. 19. 291 (359) contains music that may have accompanied some of these choreographic additions. The printed score contains only the original two airs de ballet.
revisions to the first-act divertissement suggest that Spanish dancing held great interest for audiences during the 1830s and 1840s, reviewers rarely commented on the first-act divertissements after the 1840s. Only one reviewer, in 1863, described the obvious falseness of the Spanish dancers, who lacked "Spanish spice" and appeared to be hampered by their castanets. By this date the fascination with the stylized variety of Spanishness that the Opéra produced seems to have waned.

for the first-act divertissement: the guarauche and the bolero, which are performed to honor Elvire, a Spanish noble recently arrived in Naples. In contrast, the rehearsal score contains additional music sandwiched in between the original two airs, which lengthened the divertissement from two to three dance airs. This new second dance air may have accompanied the Jaleo as danced by Noblet. Based on the editorial marks, the music was actually used to accompany dance, even recopied in its corrected form after the editing process had been completed. This additional dance air begins in a rather rhapsodic character style, but ultimately moves into a more generic style of ballet music, employing the cliché of the repeated sixteenth-note melody discussed by Marian Smith in her dissertation. Although its beginning seems stylistically appropriate to the Jaleo, I cannot say for certain that this added air accompanied this dance in 1837, or whether it accompanied additions after this date, such as the changes in 1847 that Fulcher mentions. Similarly, there is no way to know what music accompanied the Spanish dancers of 1834 or would have accompanied the Danseuses Viennoises in 1845 if they had danced the divertissement. One wonders if they would have danced to Auber's compositions or if they supplied music that fit their own choreographies for these dances.

7 H. de Pène, Gazette des Étrangers (21 January 1863).
During the later history of the opera, attention shifted away from these "artificial" Spanish dances toward the market scene divertissement of the third act. The divertissement experienced three major revisions during the 1860s that gradually increased its length. In 1863 Auber composed music to accompany the début of Laure Fonta inserted before the tarentelle. In 1865 he again added new music to accompany a pas de trois, choreographed by Lucien Petipa and danced by Miles. Baratti, Beaugrand, and Fioretti, and a pas de huit led by Fonta. In 1867 he

8 The "Partie de ballet" from this time shows that the added second air possibly associated with the Jaleo was excised, returning the first-act divertissement to its original proportions.

9 Auber's interest in revising his own divertissements and his motivations for these changes are a bit surprising. He encountered Laure Fonta, then known as Mlle Poinet, as a member of the corps de ballet in Lucien Petipa's dance classes. In her honor he decided to write an air for her in which to premier. See Guest, Ballet of the Second Empire, (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1974), 178.

10 Le Ménestrel reported the new name of the divertissement as "La Sorrentina," although it is not found on any of the musical parts associated with the new dance. See "Semaine Théatrale," Le Ménestrel 32/12 (19 February 1865), 92. Auber's manuscript of the music for this divertissement is found in Brussels, B-Bc 1336, listed in Schneider's catalogue of Auber's works. Auber wrote at the top of the score, "A Monsieur Petipa, qui fait écouter ma musique avec les yeux" (Schneider, 204). Schneider attributes too much music to the new divertissement of 1865 in his catalogue, for most of the additions he lists, Nr. 0, 2-6 were probably added for L'Uccelatore of 1867. The strange series of numbers, beginning with 0, may even reflect changes that
added the ballet "L'Uccelatore" to the third act to expand the divertissement even further, borrowing music from his opéras-comiques Le Cheval de Bronze and Zerline, ou le Corbeille d'oranges.\textsuperscript{11}

Rather than playing exclusively on the local color of a Neapolitan market, each of these revisions pitted the abstract and aerial style of dance against the folkloric possibilities of the tarentelle. The first of these additions to the third-act divertissement in 1863 placed a premiering danseuse next to the tarentelle, newly danced in the cancan or chahut style. This tarentelle stood out as tremendously vulgar next to the pas that came before it, choreographed by Lucien Petipa for the début of Laure Fonta. Leon Garnier of L'Europe artiste compared the two, preferring the tarentelle, which he called a "saltarelle populaire," to the disciplined dance of Fonta. He characterized the tarentelle as "a bourée from Auvergne, warm like a cachucha, and of a local color that satisfies and a spirit that takes off."\textsuperscript{12} In contrast, he disliked

\textsuperscript{11} The Italian setting of Zerline, ou le Corbeille d'oranges made it particularly appropriate for a Neapolitan market scene.

\textsuperscript{12} "Caracterisée comme une bourrée d'Auvergne, chaude comme un cachucha, elle a une couleur locale qui saisit et un
the effort that Fonta exerted in her dance: "There is nevertheless nothing at all agreeable, artistically speaking, about seeing a female dancer make supreme efforts to maintain an impossible equilibrium, to prove to us the force of her muscles and her legs by jumps of three meters and the leaps of an automaton."^13

Although Garnier preferred the tarentelle to Fonta's pas, other reactions to this juxtaposition of the high with the low reveal a discomfort with the intrusion of the lowbrow into the context of the Opéra. Those who viewed the tarentelle negatively saw it as symptomatic of the encroachment of the boulevard onto the Opéra.^14 Although audiences seemed to have appreciated the tarentelle, demanding an encore of Coralli, the male dancer, many reviewers could not come to terms with the cancan style in which it was presented. One reviewer asked, "Why make the entraîn qui enlève." Leon Garnier, "Théâtre Impérial de l'Opéra," L'Europe artiste (26 February 1863).

^13 "Il n'y a cependant rien de fort [sic--tut?] agréable, artistiquement parlant, à voir une danseuse faire des efforts suprêmes pour conserver un équilibre impossible, ou nous prouver la force de ses muscles et de ses jarrets par des sauts de trois mètres et des bonds automatiques." Leon Garnier, "Théâtre Impérial de l'Opéra," L'Europe artiste (26 February 1863).

^14 Although similar comments have been made about Fenella's role, its "boulevard origins" were never mentioned by critics.
tarentelle into a cancan? I could understand it at the Casino of the rue Cadet, but at the Opéra?" 15 Another author described the tarentelle as "nothing but a cancan unfit for the stage of the first order like that of the Opéra. I remember how the tarentelle was danced in the past, and this resembles nothing but gestures and movements reflecting the doubtful taste of M. Coralli and Mlle Schlosser." 16 One critic singled out Mlle Schlosser’s performance in particular as too vulgar:

The tarentelle had been led with a diabolical spirit by Coralli and Mlle Schlosser; a word concerning this last: The tarentelle is a folk dance which should guard against being too distinguished; but it is not this reproach which I would like to make toward the charming artist, she fell into the opposite excess; a little less, this would already be too much. I do not think that the fisherwomen of Amalfi are vulgar, and if they were I would not believe the Opéra should be obliged to push towards realism. 17

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16 "La Tarentelle ... n’est qu’un cancan indigne d’une scène de premier ordre comme l’Opéra. Je me rappelle comment l’on dansait autrefois cette tarentelle, et cela ne ressemblait en rien aux gestes et aux mouvements d’un goût plus que douteux de M. Coralli et de Mlle Schlosser." Emile Cardon, Figaro (21 January 1863).

17 "La tarentelle a été conduite avec une fougue endiablée par Coralli et par Mlle Schlosser; un mot pourtant à cette dernière: la tarentelle est une danse populaire, qui doit se garder d’être trop distinguée; mais ce n’est pas ce reproche que je veux faire à la charmante artiste, elle tombe dans l’excès opposé; un peu moins, ce serait déjà
First in 1865 and then again in 1867 Auber and choreographer Lucien Petipa transformed the third-act divertissement into an out-and-out ballet said to please the abonnés.¹⁸ The divertissement of 1865 consisted of a pas de trois accompanied by excerpts from L'Enfant Prodigue, followed by a pas de huit led by Laure Fonta.¹⁹ According to one reviewer, Miles Beaugrand, Baratte, Fioretti, and Fonta had "the good fortune to dance to the delicious music."²⁰ The divertissement of 1867, entitled L'Uccelatore, again using music from Auber's operas-comiques, elaborated the market scene with even more dancing. The ballet featured the dancer Adèle Grantzow and


¹⁸ In 1879, after Auber's death, the choreographer Mérante revised the ballet again. Called "Des marchandes de Portici," the music from 1867 accompanied the new choreography. The name and a brief description of the music, taken from Corbeille d'oranges and other works by Auber is mentioned in "Semaine théâtrale," Le Ménestrel 45/42 (14 September 1879), 333.

¹⁹ "Nouvelles," Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris 32/7 (12 February 1865), 54.

functioned as a space for the unsuccessful débüt of Henriette Dor.\textsuperscript{21}

The variety of reactions to the tarentelle danced as a cancan suggests the ambivalence with which many people viewed dancing associated with the lowbrow. Perhaps the social flux suggested by masked balls found in \textit{Gustave} ended with the return of the Empire. Dance at the Opéra tended again toward the highbrow. Ultimately, the academic style took pride of place over the folkloric, a process that has perhaps shapes our current perceptions of Romantic ballet as dominated by the supernatural \textit{ballet blanc}. Perhaps a study of the ballet-pantomimes from this period would be more telling in this regard.

The main point of this study, however, has been to show that this theater and its productions were inextricably connected with the idea of dance and the many forms it took. Although it may be possible today to produce a grand opera without choreography or dancers, it is impossible to imagine such a condition in Paris during the nineteenth century. Not only was dance an important aspect of experience at the Opéra, dance was fundamental to French musical identity.

\textsuperscript{21} Dor was fired from the Opéra soon after. Ivor Guest provides details of this situation in \textit{Ballet of the Second Empire}, 222-23.
Appendix:  Four *La Muette* Quadrilles

Microfilmed from the collection of the British Library
Trois Quadrilles de Contredanses
pour le Piano

J. B. TOLBEQUL

La Muette de Portici

N° 1

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Trois Quadrilles
de Contredanses
pour le Piano

sur des motifs de
La Muette de Portici

J. B. Tolbecque

2e Quadrille

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No. I.

La C. Murray.

Valse's 9th set. New series.
Figure des Pantalons.

Chaine anglaise,
Balancez a vos Dames,
Tour de mains,
Chaine des Dames,
Demie queue du chat,
Demie chaine anglaise.
Contre partie pour les autres.

Right and left,
Set to your partners,
Turn your partners,
Ladies' chain,
Half Promenade.
Half right and left to your places.
The other 4 Dancers do the same.

Mazurka's 8th Set. New Series.
FIGURE DE L'ÉTÉ.

En avant deux et en arrière,
Chassés a droite et a gauche,
Traversé,
Chassé et déchassé,
Retraversé,
Balance quatre,
Tour de mains.
Contre partie pour les 6 autres.

Opposite Lady and Gent: advance & retire,
Chasses to the right and left,
Cross over,
Chassés and back again,
Return to your places,
Set to your partner,
Turn your partner with both hands.

The other 6 Dancers do the same.
LA GEORGINE

No. 3.
Traversbez deux en donnant la main droite à la Dame de vis-à-vis,
Retraversez en donnant la main gauche,
Balancez quatre en donnant,
la main droite,
Demie queue du chat,
En avant deux,
Dos a dos,
En avant quatre,
Demie chaîne anglaise.
Contre partie pour les 6 autres.

Cross over giving the right hand to the opposite Lady and set,
Back again with the left,
The Ladies give the right hand to the Gentlemen, Balancez, and Half Promenade,
Opposite Lady, and Gent: advance,
Back to back,
The two opposite advance,
Half right to your places.
The other 6 Dancers do the same.
F I G U R E  D E  L A  T R E N I S.

Chassez croisiez quatre
La Trenis.

First Gent: with his partner advances and retires, again forward conducting the Lady to the left of the Gent opposite, and set. The two Ladies cross over to the opposite place while the Gents pass between. The two Ladies change sides while the Gents figure before them. They repass to their respective places and change sides again.
FIGURE.

EN ROND.

L'ÉTÉ.
FLUTE.

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FLUTE.

La Ninette.

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La Mansfield.

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