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Chamber Tone Poems at the Turn of the Twentieth Century: How the Harp Contributed to their Development

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ABSTRACT

CHAMBER TONE POEMS AT THE TURN OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY: HOW THE HARP CONTRIBUTED TO THEIR DEVELOPMENT

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Unlike other instruments, the harp was not used in chamber ensembles before the twentieth century. When it did start appearing in chamber ensembles, it was usually within programmatic works, non-traditional forms, unconventional instrument combinations, and mostly in France. At the same time, the harp began emerging as a chamber ensemble instrument, and a new genre of chamber music appeared: the chamber tone poem. There is a significant lack of scholarly research and literature as to why the harp appeared alongside chamber tone poems in these unusual chamber ensembles specifically at this time and especially in France. This paper will seek to draw connections between these phenomena by looking at the musical movements occurring at the turn of the twentieth century. Other factors that will be analyzed will include instrument innovations, orchestral works that include the harp, conservatory programs for harp students, and acclaimed harpists. The harp's role in art and literature will also be considered. The findings will show that composers began using the harp as a replacement for the piano and that the harp contributed to the development of chamber tone poems due to its versatility and aesthetic qualities. Furthermore, the findings will show that the use of the harp in chamber tone poems set the trajectory for the instrument to become a popular choice for composers in their

various ensembles throughout the second half of the twentieth century. The chamber tone poems that will be discussed are Debussy's *Danses sacrée et profane*, Ravel's *Introduction et allegro*, and Caplet's *Conte fantastique*.

NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
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CHAMBER TONE POEMS AT THE TURN OF THE TWENTIETH
CENTURY: HOW THE HARP CONTRIBUTED
TO THEIR DEVELOPMENT

BY

ABIGAIL HUGHES STONER
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A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
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DEDICATION

To my mom and dad who sparked my love for music by giving me a harpist music doll
twenty-four years ago.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Significance and Background

Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the harp's use in instrumental ensembles was reserved for orchestral works; it seldom appeared within smaller ensembles. However, at the turn of the twentieth century, the harp became a staple of chamber music ensembles. Composers began using the harp with unusual instrument combinations, as in Maurice Ravel's (1875-1937) *Introduction et allegro*, scored for harp, flute, clarinet, and strings. Many pieces that included the harp were programmatic works in either a single movement or several continuous movements. The artistic developments made to the chamber ensemble regarding instrumentation and form were revolutionary compared to the traditional forms popular before the twentieth century. Traditional chamber genres include piano trios, string quartets, and woodwind quintets. Many of these pieces consist of multiple movements, with the first usually in sonata-allegro form. They often had contrasting slow and fast movements and with few exceptions were not overtly programmatic.

Many composers who began incorporating the harp were based in Paris. Paris was one of the largest music centers in Europe and was at the forefront of innovation, especially within the harp community. Not until the 1920s did composers outside of France begin incorporating the harp into chamber ensembles.

While the harp revolutionized chamber music in France, a new chamber music genre began to emerge: the chamber tone poem. Scholars have understood the term “tone poem” as applying only to symphonic music. This narrow definition overlooks an entire group of chamber pieces that fit the category of “tone poems” in all respects except their instrumentation. Ironically, despite the first use of the term “tone poem” being in reference to a solo piano piece, scholars have limited the term to orchestral works.¹ Many of the chamber pieces that stylistically match tone poems include the harp. This is not surprising given the instrument’s novelty, versatility, and aesthetic qualities.

Literature Review

Few scholarly tomes exist on the development and emergence of the harp throughout the Common Practice Era (ca. 1680-1910). Most journal articles provide broad overviews of the instrument’s history or detailed analyses of the most well-known harp pieces. Little academic research delves into niche aspects of the instrument’s progression through the musical epochs. Harpists and scholars alike generally turn to Roslyn Rensch’s book *Harps and Harpists* (1989), which provides the most detailed account to date. More recently, Mathilde Aubat-Andrieu published *Guide to the Contemporary Harp* along with authors Laurence Bancaud, Aurélie Barbé, and Hélène Breschand in 2013, which focuses on playing technique but also provides a detailed anthology of harp repertoire, including solo pieces and chamber works from the twentieth century. Neither source defines the “chamber tone poem” genre or classifies any pieces by that term.

¹ Linda Nicholson. “Carl Loewe: Piano Music Volume I,” *Toccata Classics*, April 6, 2015, 2–10.

Another important book is *Nineteenth-and-Twentieth-Century Harpists: A Bio Critical Sourcebook* (1995) by Wenonah Milton Govea, which provides a comprehensive anthology of important harpists with short biographies for each. While this source is helpful for researching acclaimed musicians who contributed to the harp's history, it fails to relate the instrument to its musical context. This paper will inspect the harp's place in the age of Modernism and ask why the instrument became an integral part of chamber music in France at the turn of the twentieth century. The harp was central to the development of chamber tone poems in France at the turn of the twentieth century due to its unique and versatile capabilities and the aesthetic ideals it represented.

Terms and Scope of Thesis

For this paper, I will be looking at the period from 1900 to the 1950s, focusing mostly on the first twenty years. This period can be defined as early Modernism. In the years leading up to the twentieth century, a new range of attitudes began developing among composers and musicians. Thanks to the nineteenth century's Age of Romanticism, composers began pushing the boundaries of their music. This was reflected in increasingly chromatic passages and ever-growing ensembles – think of Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 in D minor and the development of new instruments like the "Wagner tuba." These explorations continued into the twentieth century in a slightly different way. Composers began placing a greater emphasis on color and sonority. They also often adapted a "more naturalistic depiction of speech and dramatic action."² This can be seen in how composers sought out ways to connect music to other aspects of life. One of the

² Walter Frisch. *Music in the Nineteenth Century*, 1st ed. (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2013), 6.

most significant ways they did this was through the tone poem, a genre that became popular in the nineteenth century around the 1850s. Tone poems will be discussed in more detail in the first chapter of this paper.

The harp is significant to early Modernism because that is when the instrument first started appearing as a serious musician's instrument, especially within chamber ensembles. Although the harp had existed in orchestral pieces for decades, its new prominence is primarily thanks to Claude Debussy (1862-1918). He was commissioned to write a piece for harp and string quartet in 1904, and the resulting masterpiece *Danses sacrée et profane* remains a staple in any harpist's repertoire today. By the 1950s the harp was firmly established as a viable and versatile chamber instrument and became quite common in ensembles and a popular choice for composers all over Europe and the Americas.

This paper will look primarily at French pieces and composers or works that have been influenced by French styles. For the first two decades of the 1900s, the use of harp in chamber ensembles was markedly greater in France than in any other country. Many of the great composers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries wrote at least once for the harp, including Debussy, Ravel (1875-1937), Albert Roussel (1869-1937), André Caplet (1878-1925), Lili Boulanger (1893-1918), Nadia Boulanger (1887-1979), Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921), and many others. There are numerous reasons for this regional specificity, and they will be analyzed in Chapter Two.

This paper will also seek to define the genre of the chamber tone poem – including reasons for its emergence, composers, and when it began to decline. To avoid confusion, the term symphonic tone poem will refer to orchestral works and chamber tone poems will refer to pieces

for chamber ensembles that have qualities of a symphonic tone poem. Three primary chamber tone poems will be discussed, including the reasons why they can be classified by that term.

Research Aims and Objectives

The research presented in this paper is important for two principal reasons. First, it will establish the similarities between certain programmatic chamber pieces and symphonic tone poems, which will help future musicological and theoretical analyses of harp repertoire. Second, it will bridge a gap in current academic research. Anthologies and analyses of canonic chamber harp repertoire have not as of yet addressed the question of why the harp developed the way and time it did other than to state that the instrument underwent mechanical advancements that facilitated its emergence. While this is certainly true, harp makers had been making improvements on the instrument since the 1800s, so to say that such innovations were the primary, if not only, reason for developments in harp repertoire is an incomplete and unsatisfactory assessment.

My research will aim to answer five paramount questions. What is a chamber tone poem; why did the harp take such prominence in the chamber music scene at the turn of the twentieth century; why was it localized in Paris for the first two decades of the 1900s; why was the harp favored in chamber tone poems specifically; and how did its use in these unique ensembles shape the trajectory of harp playing for the rest of the century and beyond. The research presented will provide expansive cultural and contextual information about chamber tone poems and the harp's use within them.

In the first chapter, I will discuss chamber music at the turn of the century, contextualizing the development of symphonic tone poems and how they influenced programmatic works for smaller ensembles. I will also define the genre of chamber tone poems and explain nuances that can exist within the genre. In the second chapter, I will discuss the factors that led to the harp being a popular instrument for composers writing chamber tone poems. These factors include instrument innovations; substituting the harp for the piano; rethinking the harp in light of its use in orchestral works; the influence of twentieth-century ideals such as relating music to art and literature; and the breeding ground of Paris harp activity. The third chapter will analyze three significant chamber tone poems of the period, Debussy's *Danses sacrée et profane*, Ravel's *Introduction et allegro*, and Caplet's *Conte fantastique*. Lastly, the final chapter will cover the harp's enduring legacy and how chamber tone poems opened the door to prolific chamber works that include harp.

CHAPTER 2

CHAMBER MUSIC AT THE TURN OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Symphonic Poems

The chamber tone poem has its origins in musical Romanticism. The symphonic tone poem was intended as a musical response to extramusical sources from the visual arts, nature, literature, etc.

According to musicologist Hugh Macdonald, the symphonic tone poem met three nineteenth-century aesthetic goals.¹ First, it gave composers creative freedom to actualize a musical realization of a non-musical subject. Second, it compressed multiple movements into a single division; Romantic composers were searching for ways to move away from traditional classical forms, and the symphonic tone poem was one such result. While many consisted of a single movement, some took the form of multiple movements. Notable examples include Bedřich Smetana's (1824-1884) *Má vlast* (1879), Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov's (1844-1908) *Scheherazade* (1888), Jean Sibelius's (1865-1957) *Lemminkäinen Suite* (1896), and Debussy's *La mer* (1905). *Scheherazade* is a four-movement symphonic suite inspired by events from the Middle Eastern tales *One Thousand and One Nights*. The title of each movement evokes images from the stories: "The Sea and Sinbad's Ship," "The Kalendar Prince," "The Young Prince and the Young Princess," and "Festival at Baghdad." The movements are to be performed continuously.

¹ Hugh Macdonald. "Symphonic Poem," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie, 2nd ed., vol. 18 (London: Macmillian Reference, 2001), 428.

Sibelius's *Lemminkäinen Suite* consists of four separate tone poems based on legends from the *Kalevala*, a nineteenth-century compilation of epic poetry by Elias Lönnrot. The poems are from various Karelian and Finnish folklore and mythology. Debussy's *La mer* is another example of a symphonic suite in which each movement is a tone poem. Debussy's close friend Louis Laloy even said that *La mer* is a "symphonic poem in the shape of a symphony."¹ Its three movements are meant to evoke an image, as can be seen by the titles: "De l'aube à midi sur la mer" ("From dawn to noon on the sea"), "Jeux de vagues" ("Play of the waves"), and "Dialogue du vent et de la mer" ("Dialogue of the wind and the sea"). These three pieces are clear examples of tone poems that can be presented as multiple movements within a suite. They are to be played as a whole – Debussy insisted their movements not be performed separately.

The third way that the tone poem met nineteenth-century goals is that it supposedly elevated instrumental program music to a level equivalent to, or even higher, than opera. For many listeners, especially in France, nineteenth-century operas were thought of as the pinnacle of achievement for any composer, and they were most favored by audience members because the material was captivating and musically accessible. Operas could also evoke a feeling of nationalism, as composers could set stories based on their heritage and their country's history and legends. This was another reason audience members could relate to them and found them to be accessible.

The idea of opera, with its vibrant stories and beautiful melodies, trickled into orchestral works in the form of the symphonic tone poem. The term comes from the German word *Tondichtung*, which literally translates as "tone poem." German composer, Carl Loewe (1796-

¹ Brian Hart. "The Symphony in Debussy's World: A Context for His Views on the Genre and Early Interpretations of *La Mer*," in *Debussy and His World*, ed. Jane F Fulcher (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 181–91.

1869) was the first person to use the term in reference to his piano solo *Mazeppa*, Op. 27 (1832) which was based on the poem of the same name by Lord Byron.² Approximately thirteen years later, César Franck (1822-1890) wrote an orchestral piece titled *Ce qu'on entend sur la montagne* (*What one hears on the mountain*) based on Victor Hugo's poem of the same name. The piece exhibits many characteristics of a symphonic tone poem, chiefly that it was inspired by a poem and intended to invoke the mood of said poetry. Some musicologists, such as Norman Demuth and Julien Tiersot consider this piece to be the first true symphonic tone poem, predating those of Franz Liszt (1811-1886) by several years.³ Franck composed the work between 1845 and 1847. Liszt wouldn't start writing his thirteen symphonic tone poems until 1848. Although Franck wrote his first, Liszt is credited with the invention of the genre; Franck did not publish or perform *Ce qu'on entend sur la montagne* nor did he set out to define the characteristics of symphonic tone poems and continue writing them. Liszt on the other hand was determined to explore and publicize his works, thus garnering him a reputation for symphonic tone poems and gaining him recognition as the genre's inventor.

It is important to make a distinction here between the terms *Symphonische Dichtung* and *Tondichtung*. As mentioned above, *Tondichtung* translates to "tone poem" while *Symphonische Dichtung* translates to "symphonic poem." The terms are interchangeable – both referring to symphonic tone poems – but different composers preferred different terms. For instance, Liszt used *Symphonische Dichtung* to describe his works while Richard Strauss (1864-1949) used *Tondichtung*.

² Linda Nicholson. "Carl Loewe: Piano Music Volume I," *Toccata Classics*, April 6, 2015, 2–10, 5-6.

³ Homer Ulrich. *Symphonic Music: Its Evolution Since the Renaissance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1952), 228.

Another reason the tone poem became so prevalent in the later nineteenth century is because it became a favorite type of piece for nationalist composers. Musical nationalism refers to the use of musical ideas or motifs that are identified with a specific country, region, or ethnicity, such as folk tunes and dance rhythms. There was a wide variety of subject matter that nationalist composers could draw from including literature and nature. Composers favored tone poems because it allowed them to tell the story of their homeland. The most notable example is Smetana's *Má vlast* composed from 1874 to 1879. The title translates to "My Fatherland" or "My Homeland." The work consists of six symphonic poems that evoke images of Czech landscapes, legends, or history. The most performed symphonic tone poem from this suite is "Vltava" ("The Moldau") which depicts the longest river that runs through the Czech Republic. Composers could use legends, landscapes, and literature from their country to promote their heritage.

French composers of tone poems favored a different type of nationalism. French nationalist composers wished to distinguish their nation from Germany and Germanic styles after the Franco-Prussian War. Saint-Saëns is credited with introducing the symphonic tone poem to France, despite Franck's tone poem mentioned earlier. Saint-Saëns wrote four tone poems during the 1870s: *Le rouet d'Omphale* (*The Spinning Wheel of Omphale*, 1872), *Phaéton* (*Phaethon*, 1873), *Danse macabre* (*Dance of Death*, 1874), and *La jeunesse d'Hercule* (*The Youth of Hercules*, 1877). *Le rouet d'Omphale* is inspired by Greek mythology and follows the legend of Hercules being condemned by Apollo to serve Omphale while disguised as a woman. *Phaéton* may have been inspired by Ovid's *Metamorphosis*; Saint-Saëns based his tone poem on the Greek figure Phaethon, the son of Helios the sun god. *Danse macabre* started out as an art song for voice and piano with text from the French poet Henri Cazalis, based on the play *Danza*

macàbra by Camillo Antona-Traversi. Two years later Saint-Saëns reworked the piece for orchestra and created the symphonic poem we know today. *La jeunesse d'Hercule* perhaps most closely resembles the Lisztian model of symphonic tone poems and like *Le rouet d'Omphale* and *Phaéton*, is inspired by Greek legends. The piece depicts a youthful Hercules remaining pure despite bacchanalian women attempting to corrupt him.

Symphonic tone poems remained popular until the 1920s when they began to decline in popularity. Many of the prolific composers of the later nineteenth century wrote symphonic tone poems. Liszt's most popular, and certainly most performed symphonic tone poem is *Les préludes*. He composed it between 1848 and 1854 based on an ode from *Nouvelles meditations poétiques* (1823) by Alphonse de Lamartine. Another of his most renowned symphonic tone poems is *Hamlet*, composed in 1858. Another great composer of symphonic tone poems was Strauss. His *Don Juan* (1888) is routinely performed and is known for its virtuosic demands from all members of the orchestra. It is based on the poem *Don Juan* by Nikolaus Lenau.

Perhaps the greatest French tone poem is Debussy's *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*. It was composed in 1894 and is inspired by Stéphane Mallarmé's poem entitled *L'après-midi d'un faune*. Pierre Boulez (1925-2016) considered this score to be the beginning of modern music, observing that "the flute of the faun brought new breath to the art of music."⁴ Debussy explored many colorful timbres and harmonies in the quintessential French symbolist way. One of the most noted Russian symphonic tone poems at the turn of the twentieth century is Sergei Rachmaninoff's (1873-1943) *The Isle of the Dead* written in 1908. It was inspired by Arnold Böcklin's painting *Isle of the Dead*. Rachmaninoff first saw a black-and-white reproduction of

⁴ Pierre Boulez. "Entries for a Musical Encyclopedia: Claude Debussy," in *Stocktakings from an Apprenticeship* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 259–77.

the painting in Paris in 1907. Later, when he saw the original in color he remarked, “If I had seen first the original, I probably would have not written my *Isle of the Dead*. I like it in black and white.”⁵ Other great composers of symphonic tone poems include Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893), Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904), Rimsky-Korsakov, Sibelius, and Saint-Saëns.

Chamber Tone Poems

To a much lesser extent, programmatic chamber pieces were also created in the nineteenth century. The most famous is Arnold Schoenberg’s (1874-1951) string sextet *Verklärte Nacht*, composed in 1899 and inspired by Richard Dehmel’s poem of the same name. The piece is in one movement with five distinct sections that correspond with the five stanzas of Dehmel’s poem. For all intents and purposes, this piece is a chamber tone poem.

Verklärte Nacht marks a shift in Schoenberg’s musical style. In the years preceding 1899, Schoenberg composed abstract works. In 1898 however, Schoenberg was introduced to a volume of poetry by Dehmel titled *Weib und Welt* (Woman and World). These poems articulated Dehmel’s “philosophy of transformation that sought to reconcile the contradictions such as male-female, subject-object, god-nature, light-darkness, etc., through the unity of poetic forms which he further hoped would bring about reconciliation of the individual with the universal.”⁶ As music archivist Steven Lacoste says, Dehmel’s poetry “helped bridge [Schoenberg’s] first neo-Brahmsian phase with his second pseudo-Wagnerian phase.”⁷ Schoenberg himself admitted the

⁵ Eero Tarasti. *Semiotics of Classical Music: How Mozart, Brahms and Wagner Talk to Us*, Vol. 10 (Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 2012), 385.

⁶ Steven Lacoste. “Transfigured Night,” Los Angeles Philharmonic, accessed December 31, 2023, <https://www.laphil.com/musicdb/pieces/4484/transfigured-night>.

⁷ Lacoste. “Transfigured Night.”

poet had a significant impact on his compositions. In a letter to Dehmel, Schoenberg wrote: “Your poems have had a decisive influence on my development as a composer.”⁸ *Verklärte Nacht* is in ABACA form: A is the refrain in the poem that depicts two people walking; B depicts a woman informing a man that she is pregnant by a previous lover; and C depicts the man’s response. The poem is ultimately about the transcendence and transfiguration of the two people overcoming obstacles to their love. Schoenberg conveys this musically through the Brahmsian techniques of thematic variation and “developing variation,” a term he coined himself. Schoenberg states the melody and throughout the piece develops it into new and varied expressions by deriving new musical material based on the original theme. By using thematic development, Schoenberg conveys a sense of transcendence and transfiguration in the same way the poem did, making *Verklärte Nacht* a true chamber tone poem.

A chamber tone poem can be defined as a chamber work written in the style of a tone poem. It is usually characterized by unique instrumentation, drawing from multiple instrument families. There are usually four to eight players, with one player per part. As with symphonic tone poems, chamber tone poems evoke, illustrate, or are inspired by non-musical concepts such as a poem, short story, novel, folk tale, painting, historized event, or landscape. Chamber tone poems are often single movements or part of a set played as one multi-movement work. Debussy’s *Danses sacrée et profane* is an example of a two-movement chamber tone poem that is to be performed as a continuous piece (see Chapter Four).

While these are the general characteristics of chamber tone poems, as with all forms and genres of music there are nuances. A piece does not have to be explicitly programmatic to be

⁸ Lacoste. “Transfigured Night.”

classified as a chamber tone poem. Some tone poems connect clearly to a non-musical inspiration, but others are more atmospheric in nature. This difference can be classified as narrative versus atmospheric tone poems. Caplet's *Conte fantastique* is an example of a piece with clear programmatic inspiration since it is based on a tale by Edgar Allan Poe; Debussy's *Danses sacrée et profane*, on the other hand, is an atmospheric chamber tone poem since it has no clear connection to an outside source. Works can easily be misclassified if one does not consider the context and inspiration for the piece. For instance, in Chapter Four, I argue that Debussy's *Danses sacrée et profane* is a chamber tone poem despite its resemblance to a multi-movement harp solo with string accompaniment; it drew from non-musical inspiration and each movement was intended to evoke a specific image. This, along with other factors discussed later, qualifies it as an atmospheric chamber tone poem.

CHAPTER 3

THE HARP AT THE TURN OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Instrument Innovations

The harp underwent significant improvements during the nineteenth century in France. These improvements precipitated the instrument's increased use in orchestral and chamber works. There were four primary harp makers in Paris: Cousineau, Naderman, Érard, and Pleyel. Up until the nineteenth century, pedal harps were all single-action. The principal single-action harp makers were Georges Cousineau (1733-1800) and Jacques-Georges Cousineau (1760-1836). They were first introduced to single-action pedal harps by Jacob Hochbrucker (1673-1783), who is credited with inventing the first seven-pedal harp in his workshop in Donauwörth, Bavaria in 1720. After its invention, the instrument was introduced in several European music centers, and it became most successful in Paris. Parisian luthiers soon took up the instrument, especially the Cousineaus. Their primary contribution was the use of béquilles instead of crochets for the pedal mechanism. Béquilles are a sort of crutch system that allows the string to be stopped at a different length, thereby changing the pitch. They differed from crochets, with which the string would press onto small bridges which kept the strings in alignment (see Figures 3.1 and 3.2). Béquilles were more secure and allowed for a more accurate tuning of the instrument. Using this béquilles system, the Cousineaus produced the first harp that could be tuned in C flat major and play in all keys in 1782. This harp, thankfully for performers today, did

not become successful as it had fourteen pedals. Each scale degree had two pedals each since they were still single-action.

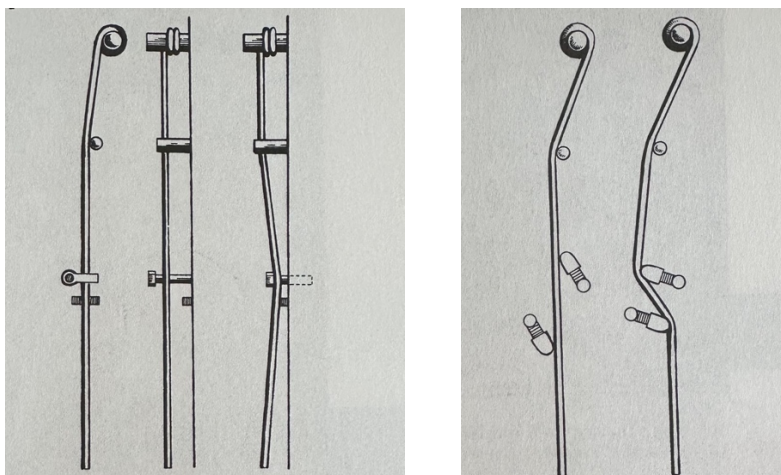


Figure 3.1: Crochet Mechanism¹ Figure 3.2: Béquilles Mechanism²

Another premier harp maker in Paris was the Naderman company. Like the Cousineaus, Jean-Henri Naderman (1734-1799) and Jean-François-Joseph Naderman (1781-1835) were a father and son duo. In addition to making harps, they published much of the harp music written at that time. Jean-François Naderman became the harp maker for Queen Marie Antoinette herself in the 1770s when he made two single-action harps for her in the popular rococo style with gilt carvings on the column.³ One was the legal property of King Louis XVI and the other belonged to Marie Antoinette. Her harp had carvings that depicted lavish flowers and Minerva, a patroness of artists. It was built circa 1774 and is currently kept in the Musée municipal de Vendôme in France.

¹ Roslyn Rensch. *Harps and Harpists* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1989), 155.

² Rensch. *Harps and Harpists*, 157.

³ Rensch. *Harps and Harpists*, 155.

Despite the quality of Cousineau and Naderman harps, luthiers were determined to invent a harp that could be played in all keys with ease. The Érard harp company would be the first to do so. Sébastien Érard (1752-1831) was a luthier in Paris but moved to London when the French Revolution started. There he began working on innovations for the single-action pedal harp. His improvements included brass plates for the mechanism, constructing the harp body in two main sections, placing the mechanism below the neck for stability and reinforcement, and switching from the béquilles system to the fourchette mechanism (see Figure 3.3).

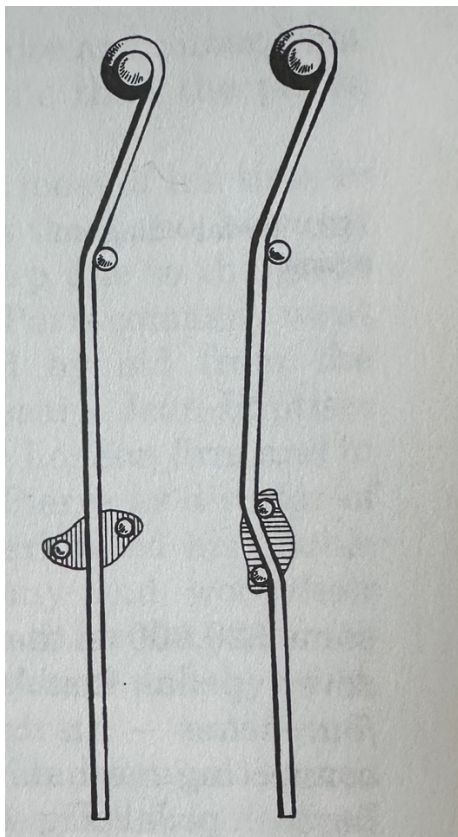


Figure 3.3: Fourchette Mechanism⁴

⁴ Rensch. *Harps and Harpists*, 181.

Instead of the crutch system, fourchette mechanisms utilized forked discs. A forked disc is a small metal plate that has two protruding spikes on either end. These spikes stopped the string in a specific place, allowing the pitch to be altered a half step. The forked disc fourchette mechanism proved to be much more stable and accurate than the béquilles mechanism. In 1810 Érard was able to get the patent for a double-action mechanism and he presented the first double-action pedal harp in 1811. The difference between a single-action and double-action pedal harp lies in how many mechanisms are fitted to each string. A single-action pedal harp has only one row of mechanisms per string, meaning the string can only be altered by one-half step, thereby producing only two pitches per string. A double-action pedal harp has two rows of mechanisms per string, meaning the string can be altered by two half steps, thereby producing three pitches per string. Where a single-action pedal harp could only play in half of the major and minor keys, a double-action pedal harp can play in all of them.

Since Érard was still living in London at the time he created his double-action pedal harp, it became known in England before France. This was not the case for long as Érard moved back to Paris in 1815, bringing with him his double-action pedal harp. Within twenty years of his return, the double-action pedal harp was the preferred instrument among French performers, becoming in 1835 the official harp of the Paris Conservatory, which previously had used Cousineau and Naderman single-action harps.

The last French harp maker worth noting is Pleyel. The Pleyel company was not as successful or long-lasting, but it contributed to the harp's success at the turn of the twentieth century. Belgian harpist and harp maker François Dizi (1780-1840) lived in London from 1796 to 1830. While there, he worked on improvements for the harp and obtained patents for his ideas

in 1813 and 1817. Among the harps he made was a forty-three-string double-action “perpendicular” pedal harp.⁵ It used a quartet of steel plates to house the double-action mechanism. In 1830, Dizi moved to Paris where harps and harp making were becoming a lucrative business. He started a harp factory with Joseph Étienne Camille Pleyel (1788-1855). This proved to be an unsuccessful venture ultimately, but Pleyel did go on to continue making pianos quite prolifically. Pleyel’s most significant contribution to the harp world was its invention of the chromatique harp just after the turn of the century. The chromatique harp is also referred to as the cross-strung harp because it has two rows of strings that intersect in the middle (see Figure 3.4). The harpist plays the strings where they intersect, making the instrument quite complex to master.

Pleyel commissioned Debussy to write a piece for the chromatique harp and strings in 1904. What resulted was the chamber tone poem *Danses sacrée et profane*. While the piece was soon elevated to a staple in harp repertoire, the chromatique harp for which it was composed fell out of style. It was difficult to tune and even more so to play. A few years after Debussy wrote the piece for chromatique harp, Henriette Renié (1875-1956), a notable harpist in Paris at the time reworked the harp part to be playable on the Érard double-action pedal harp.

⁵ This harp is now housed at the Victoria and Albert Museum collection. It is painted Prussian blue with many golden scroll decorations and bears the inscription “F. Dizi’s Perpendicular Harp, London.”

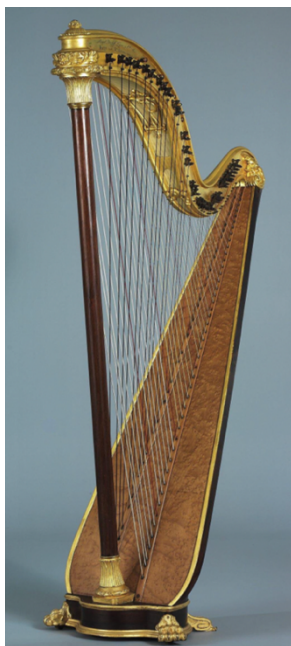


Figure 3.4: Chromatique Harp⁶

The Harp in Orchestral and Symphonic Works

Nineteenth-century composers generally did not recognize the harp as a viable chamber ensemble instrument; instead, they used it first within orchestral works, ballets, and operas. Harps did appear as a chamber instrument within larger works, almost like miniature chamber tone poems embedded within an orchestral piece. Due to the harp's small volume capacities, the instrument was not a popular choice for broad, expansive, tutti passages, but it became quite common to hear the harp alongside a couple of other instruments, usually woodwinds or strings, in a section of the piece that was scored very thinly and transparent.

⁶ Sylvain Blassel. "The Pleyel Harps," *French Harp Association* 45 (2020), <https://www.sylvain-blassel.com/en/pleyel-harps-2>.

Giachino Rossini's (1792-1868) opera *Almaviva, ossia L'inutile precauzione*, later retitled *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (1816), utilized the guitar-like sound of the harp to accompany a tenor serenade. François-Adrien Boieldieu's (1775-1834) opera, *La Dame blanche* (1825), used harp harmonics with an oboe, French horn, bassoon, and string accompaniment. In 1831, Giacomo Meyerbeer (1791-1864) included two harp parts in his opera *Robert le Diable*, which premiered in Paris. Hector Berlioz's (1803-1869) *Symphonie fantastique* (1830), *Harold en Italie* (1834), and his oratorio *L'enfance du Christ* (1853-1854) utilized the harp as well. The second movement of *Symphonie fantastique*, "Un bal (A ball)," features two harps. In *Harold en Italie*, the harp accompanies a solo viola in passages that resemble a duet embedded within the larger orchestral work (see Figure: 3.5). In *L'enfance du Christ* Berlioz silences the singers and orchestra while two flutes and harp play an interlude titled "Trio des jeunes Ismaelites."



Figure 3.5: Berlioz, *Harold en Italie*, Movement I, measures 41-45⁷

In 1872, Georges Bizet (1838-1875) combined the sounds of flute and harp when he composed a duet embedded within the "Minuetto" for his incidental music depicting Alphonse Daudet's drama *L'Arleésienne*. Bizet's use of an embedded duet was very similar to Berlioz's treatment of it forty years earlier in *Harold en Italie*. A few years later, when Bizet wrote *Carmen*

⁷ Hector Berlioz. *Harold en Italie* (Leipzig, Germany: Ernst Eulenburg, 1899).

(1875), he again combined the flute and harp in an embedded duet in “Entr’acte” to Act III. Liszt often utilized two harps in his tone poems, though the most frequently performed, *Les preludes*, calls for only one. Strauss combined violin and harp in another embedded chamber passage in his tone poem *Tod und Berklärung* (1890). Another of Strauss’s tone poems that includes harp is *Also sprach Zarathustra* (1896). Rimsky-Korsakov was fond of the harp’s colorful timbre and used it in *Capriccio espagnole* (1887) and *Scheherazade* (1888). As with many composers before him, Rimsky-Korsakov utilized it within embedded chamber passages, often with violin or woodwind. Another noteworthy example of the harp in orchestral works is Anton Bruckner’s (1824-1896) third movement from his Symphony No. 8 in C minor. This is the last symphony that Bruckner completed, and two versions exist – one from 1887 and the other from 1890. Bruckner exhibited deft skills for writing for the harp, and just as many composers before him did, he chose to have the harp enter at precise moments in the music. In the third movement of the eighth symphony, the harp enters just as the woodwinds and brass drop out, leaving only the strings playing the melody as the harp plays complex ascending arpeggios.

Not only was the harp used in orchestral works, but also within operas and ballets. Richard Wagner (1813-1883) included the harp in his operas *Götterdämmerung* (1848), *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (1862-1867), *Tristan und Isolde* (1859), and *Das Rheingold* (1853-1854). Tchaikovsky wrote many harp cadenzas with interjections from other instruments in his ballets *Swan Lake* (1876), *Sleeping Beauty* (1888), and *Nutcracker* (1892). Take for example *Swan Lake*, Op 20, “Pas d’action.” It opens with woodwinds playing a bar of harmonized chords before holding a sustained note. The harp then enters with sweeping arpeggios (see Figure 3.6). This interplay between woodwinds and harp repeats two more times before the harp goes into a

cadenza passage. Tchaikovsky also included prominent harp parts in his symphonic works, the most renowned being *Romeo and Juliet* (1880).

Debussy was a master of utilizing the harp in embedded chamber passages within his orchestral works and his opera. In *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* (1892-1894) he used two harps that often dovetail each other with glissandos and plucked chords. This allowed him to expand the colorful timbres and textures within his music. The harps are often accompanied by woodwinds and sparse strings (see Figure 3.7). In his opera *Pelléas et Mélisande* (1902) he again shows masterful use of the harp by using glissandi and lush chords to add texture and color.

The image displays a musical score for the 'Pas d'action' from Tchaikovsky's Swan Lake, Op. 20. The score is arranged in a standard orchestral format with multiple staves. The instruments listed on the left are: Oboi, Clarinetti in A, Fagotti, Corni in F (I, II, III, IV), Pistoni in A, Trombe in F, 2 Tromboni tenori, Tr. basso e Tuba, Timpani, and Arpa. The harp part is particularly notable, showing a series of glissandi and plucked chords. The woodwinds (Oboi and Clarinetti in A) have some activity in the first few measures, while the brass and percussion parts are mostly silent.

Figure 3.6: Tchaikovsky, *Swan Lake*, Op. 20, “Pas d’action”⁸

⁸ Pyotr Tchaikovsky. *Swan Lake*, Op. 20 (St. Petersburg: P. Jurgenson, 1876).

The image shows a page of a musical score for measures 5-10 of Debussy's *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*. The score is arranged in a system with five staves. From top to bottom, the staves are labeled: HAUTB. (Hautbois), Cl. (Clarinete), CORS (Corns), 1^{re} HARPE (1st Harp), and 2^e HARPE (2nd Harp). The 1^{re} Harp part has a 'glissando' marking in measure 7. The 2^e Harp part is marked 'ppp' (pianissimo) in measures 5, 7, and 9. The music is in 3/4 time and features a mix of woodwinds and harp textures.

Figure 3.7: Debussy, *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*, measures 5-10⁹

Giacomo Puccini (1858-1924) also included a notable harp part in his opera *Madame Butterfly* (1904). Ravel scored for harp in *Daphnis et Chloë* (1910), and like Debussy in *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*, used two of them. Another exemplary use of the harp in embedded chamber passages is Igor Stravinsky's (1882-1971) "Berceuse" from *Firebird* (1910). Here Stravinsky uses harp harmonics to accompany a solo bassoon while the violas play a counterpoint melody, and the celli sustain harmonies. The result is a haunting mixture of timbres and surprising depth of texture despite the small number of instruments playing (see Figure 3.8). For a more comprehensive list of orchestral and symphonic works with harp in the 1800s, see Appendix A.

⁹ Claude Debussy. *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* (Paris: E. Fromont, 1895).

Figure 3.8: Stravinsky, Opening of “Berceuse” from *Firebird Suite*¹⁰

The Harp and Nineteenth-Century Ideals

Besides using the instrument within orchestral works, composers developed an affinity for the harp because the instrument itself evokes nineteenth-century ideals. One of the ideals that Macdonald mentioned was relating music to an outside source such as a painting, text, or landscape.¹¹ The harp appears in many artistic and literary works dating back to ancient times. One of the most well-known examples is Achilles who is portrayed in Homer’s *Iliad* as a gifted lyre player.¹² The lyre is an early ancestor of the harp, having a “U”-shaped frame with strings running vertically from the bottom of the “U” up to a bar bridging the two sides of the top of the

¹⁰ Igor Stravinsky. *Firebird Suite* (London: J. & W. Chester, 1920).

¹¹ Macdonald. “Symphonic Poem,” 428.

¹² “They came to the Myrmidon huts and ships and found Achilles happy-hearted with his clear toned handsomely designed lyre with its silver bridge. He’d gotten it from the spoils of Etion’s sacked city. With it he cheered his heart when he sang of the fame of men.” 9, 185-189

“U.” Another gifted player is David from the Bible; he would play on his instrument for King Saul to calm him.¹³

Even in children’s folk tales, the harp was a popular instrument to draw upon. In the story *Jack and the Beanstalk*, Jack climbs a magic beanstalk to a giant’s home in the sky. There he sees a gold harp and steals it for himself. Not only has the harp appeared in literature, but it has also served as a symbol. One of the symbols of the Greek god Apollo is a kithara, an ancient version of a lyre. This prompted many artists to use a kithara and/or a lyre in sculptures that depicted Apollo. The most notable example is atop the Palais Garnier opera house in Paris, France, sculpted by Aimé Millet (see Figure 3.9).

Another historical phenomenon that cannot be overlooked is the tradition of the Celtic bard and harper. The harp has deep roots in Celtic history, as early as the eighth century.¹⁴ Chieftains, especially in Gaelic societies, often had an entourage that included a bard, and they were highly esteemed. Bards were storytellers, music makers, oral historians, etc. Within Celtic traditions, the most common instrument for a bard to play or be accompanied on was a harp called a *clársach*.¹⁵ Due to the harp’s prevalence among bards, the term “harper” was sometimes used to describe bards who played the harp.¹⁶ After the Anglo-Norman invasions of Ireland in the twelfth century, Gaelic leaders diminished under English reign, and harpers now had to rely on

¹³ “And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took a harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him.” 1 Samuel 16:23, KJV

¹⁴ There tends to be much confusion regarding the terms Celtic versus Gaelic. Celtic refers to a larger group including the Gaels, Britons, Picts, Gauls, and more. Gaelic refers to a specific language and people native to Scotland, the Isle of Man, and parts of Ireland.

¹⁵ A *clársach* (this is the Scottish Gaelic spelling while the Irish spelling is *cláirseach*) is a triangular frame harp and often strung with wire strings. They were the primary instrument in Gaelic (Scottish) courts until the bagpipes replaced them around the fifteenth century.

¹⁶ Paul F. Moulton. “Of Bards and Harps: The Influence of Ossian on Musical Style” (Thesis, Florida State University, 2005), 40.

patrons to earn their living rather than their chieftains.¹⁷ This resulted in them traveling from town to town to entertain the wealthy families.



Figure 3.9: Apollo and His Lyre atop Palais Garnier, Paris, France¹⁸

Research has confirmed the existence of these traveling bards largely thanks to the literature on Turlough O’Carolan, one of the most famous Celtic harpers. He was born around 1670 and died in 1738. His repertory consisted of approximately two hundred tunes titled with his name and occasionally accompanied by a genre or style title as well, such as jig or lament. Joan Rimmer believes these tunes are only a small sampling of his output, as his working career lasted forty-five years at least.¹⁹ O’Carolan’s tunes incorporate many familiar Irish dance

¹⁷ The Anglo-Norman invasion of Ireland took place in the late twelfth century when the Anglo-Normans – the medieval ruling class in England – conquered large areas of land from the Celtic people. England then claimed sovereignty over the land, including parts of Gaelic Ireland, marking the beginning of colonialism in Ireland.

¹⁸ *Apollo, Poetry and Music* by Aimé Millet (ca. 1860-1869), viewed from the Eastern Side (Rue Halévy), roof of the Palais Garnier, Paris. Public Domain.

¹⁹ Joan Rimmer. “Patronage, Style and Structure in the Music Attributed to Turlough Carolan,” *Early Music* 15, no. 2 (May 1987), 1.

rhythms seen in Celtic music. An eighteenth-century harp that supposedly belonged to him is currently housed in the National Museum of Ireland.²⁰

The tradition of bards and harpers was such an integral part of Celtic life that many works of art and literature depict them. The most famous example is Ossian. Ossian is the narrator and purported author of a set of epic poems published by the Scottish poet James Macpherson. They were originally published as *Fingal* (1761) and *Temora* (1763). Ossian was based on Oisín, son of Fionn mac Cumhaill, who was a legendary bard in Irish mythology. Ossian himself is often depicted as playing the harp while singing along (see Figures 3.10 and 3.11). Figure 3.10 depicts Ossian singing while plucking a Celtic instrument. The instrument, with its triangular shape and strings strung across, is a sort of mix between lap harp and lyre. Figure 3.11 depicts Ossian sitting next to his lover Malvina. He is playing an early Celtic harp with a snake, or some other reptilian animal, carved into the crown of the instrument. Both paintings' backdrop is dark and portrays a natural, wild landscape. This was a widespread trend in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries when artists emphasized the natural, unkept beauty of the wild.

Portrayals of Ossian in visual art flourished in France as well. French painters including Harvey, Duqueylar, Gérard, Girodet, Franque, and Ingres all painted various Ossianic-inspired images. A notable painting by French painter François Pascal Simon Gérard depicts Ossian playing the harp in a celestial setting. It is titled *Ossian Evoking Ghosts on the Edge of the Lora* and shows Ossian playing in front of golden figures, one of whom has wings on his head. Ossian is surrounded by spirits who are also playing lyres. Again, a dark and moody landscape is the backdrop for the scene, including an abandoned fortress in the distance with a river flowing

²⁰ Rimmer. "Patronage, Style and Structure in the Music Attributed to Turlough Carolan," 1.

between Ossian and the god-like figures (see Figure 3.12). Many of the depictions of Ossian and Ossianic themes included moody, cloudy, craggy landscapes, so much so that Albert Boime, an American art historian, has described the style as an “Ossianic mode.”²¹



Figure 3.10: *Ossian Singing*²²



Figure 3.11: *Ossian and Malvina*²³



Figure 3.12: *Ossian Evoking Ghosts on the Edge of the Lora*²⁴

²¹ Albert Boime. *A Social History of Modern Art. Volume 2: Art in an Age of Bonapartism, 1800-1815* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 54-71.

²² Nicolai Abildgaard. *Ossian Singing*, 1787.

²³ Johann Peter Krafft. *Ossian and Malvina*, 1810.

²⁴ François Pascal Simon Gérard. *Ossian Evoking Ghosts on the Edge of the Lora*, 1801.

The Ossianic tales achieved international success and were admired by prominent figures such as Diderot, Voltaire, and Napoleon. Their success even reached the Americas where Henry David Thoreau proclaimed Ossian to be the Celtic equivalent to ancient epic poets such as Homer when he stated: “The genuine remains of *Ossian*...are in many respects the same stamp as the *Iliad*.”²⁵ Another great American author, Edgar Allan Poe, admired the tales and was influenced by them in his own writings.²⁶ This is interesting to note in light of Poe’s major influence on French music, including one of the chamber tone poems that will be discussed in Chapter Four.

There is a heated debate among scholars as to the authenticity of Ossian. This debate does not relate to my argument because, authentic or not, the Ossianic tales clearly show the influence and importance of the harp in literature and art. The Ossianic tales influenced music as well. In 1901 Rudolph Tombo published a list of compositions that referenced Ossian in texts or titles. At the end of the twentieth century, similar lists cataloged over two hundred pieces that refer to Ossian in some way.²⁷ Berlioz, in the text of his *Lélio, ou Le retour à la vie*, depicts the imagery of a bard’s harp hanging from a tree. According to Carl Dahlhaus, this is a reference to Ossian and his harp.²⁸ Numerous times throughout the text of Ossian, the phrase “strike the harp” occurs as Fingal – the king of Morven and supposedly Ossian’s father – instructs his bards to sing.²⁹ Another example of the harp within the text is: “The words of the song were his, and the sound

²⁵ Henry David Thoreau. *Collected Essays and Poems* (New York: Library of America, 2001), 141.

²⁶ Moulton. “Of Bards and Harps: The Influence of Ossian on Musical Style,” 14.

²⁷ Moulton. “Of Bards and Harps: The Influence of Ossian on Musical Style.”

²⁸ Carl Dalhaus. *Nineteenth-Century Music*, ed. and trans. by Bradford Robinson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 67.

²⁹ Moulton. “Of Bards and Harps: The Influence of Ossian on Musical Style,” 40.

of his harp was mournful.”³⁰ The harp became so intertwined with the image of Ossian that Dahlhaus surmises Ossian and his accompanying harp became somewhat of a patron saint for musicians in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.³¹

There are numerous examples of composers using Ossianic references in vocal, instrumental, orchestral, and operatic works. Examples include Jean-François Le Sueur’s (1760-1837) opera *Ossian ou Les Bardes* (1804), Franz Schubert’s (1797-1828) *Ossians Lied nach dem Falle Nathos* (1815), Louis Moreau Gottschalk’s (1829-1869) *Ossian: deux Ballades pour piano* (1846-1847), Johannes Brahms’s (1833-1897) *Gesang aus Fingal* (1861), and Sibelius’s *The Bard* (1913). The latter’s connection to Ossian is not explicit, but Sibelius’s interest in his native Finnish music combined with the many stylistic similarities it possesses to other Ossian-inspired pieces has caused scholars to categorize it with Ossianic works.³² Furthermore, another connection is found in Finnish folk singing. Runic song, also referred to as Runo song or Kalevala song, is a Finnish style of oral poetry that is similar to the singing style Ossian would have used.

The harp was also prominent in non-Ossianic paintings. Rembrandt’s painting *David Playing the Harp Before Saul* (1655) shows David playing the harp to soothe King Saul. Thomas Buchanan Read’s painting *The Harp of Erin* (1867) depicts a golden-haired woman playing the harp upon the cliffs of a seacoast. This painting is especially noteworthy as it brings together multiple nineteenth-century ideals that composers drew from for tone poems: nature, wild

³⁰ Cedric Thorpe Davie. *Scotland’s Music* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood, 1980), 25.

³¹ Dahlhaus. *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 166.

³² Paul Moulton, in his thesis “Of Bards and Harps: The Influence of *Ossian* on Musical Style,” gives an in-depth analysis of the characteristics that scholars use to define a piece as Ossian in style.

landscapes, craggy mountains, and dark color palettes (see Figure 3.13). Much of the imagery and the mood it evokes is reminiscent of the “Ossian mode” of painting.



Figure 3.13: *The Harp of Erin*³³

Edmund Blair Leighton’s painting *The End of the Song* (1902) depicts a handsome harpist wooing a princess in a courtyard. In the 1700s and 1800s, the harp became a popular object to include in portraits, especially of noble ladies. Examples include *Le jeune harpiste* by Louis-Léopold Boilly, *Portrait of Marie-Denise Smits, née Gandolphe* by Antoine-Jean-Joseph-Eléonore Ansiaux, *Marie Antoinette Playing the Harp in Her Room at Versailles* by Jean-Baptiste André Gautier, *Self-portrait of Rose Adélaïde Ducreux*, and *Lady with the Harp: Eliza Ridgley* by Thomas Sully (see Figure 3.14). Whether or not these women could play the instrument they were painted next to is not always known. And it was not important. The point

³³ Thomas Buchanan Read. *The Harp of Erin*, 1867.

was to convey the luxury and status that the harp represented: it symbolized prowess and evoked power that recalled ancient times.

Aside from Ossianic paintings and court portraits, references to the harp's ancient ancestor, the kithara, were also present in a movement known as Neo-Hellenism. This movement flourished from approximately 1750 to the early 1820s and was defined by its goal to incorporate ancient Greek ideals into modern life and art. Primary artists, authors, and historians within Neo-Hellenism include Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717-1768), Johann Christoph Friedrich von Schiller (1759-1805), John Keats (1795-1821), Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822), and Lord Byron (1788-1824). Neo-Hellenism was prominent throughout much of Europe, including Germany, England, and France. One of its main supporters in France was Saint-Saëns.



Figure 3.14: *Lady with the Harp: Eliza Ridgley*³⁴

³⁴ Thomas Sully. *Lady with the Harp; Eliza Ridgley*, 1818.

While the movement's golden age lasted until the 1820s, its influence continued into the late 1800s, especially in France. Saint-Saëns wrote a pamphlet in 1886 titled *Note sur les Décors de Théâtre. Danse l'Antiquité romaine*. In this pamphlet, he seeks to outline a few of the principles that guided Neo-Hellenism. He states, "Of all those who have studied or simply looked at the numerous decorative paintings found at Pompeii, there is not one whose attention has not been drawn to the motifs used in these decorations, when they are other than figures."³⁵ He goes on to describe some of the motifs, and one, in particular, is a citharist.³⁶ Saint-Saëns references an image titled *Cithariste du Panthéon du Pompéi* where a "beautiful citharist from the Pantheon, her eyes aflame, her mouth open, obviously engaged in declaiming or singing – which, for the ancients, was one and the same thing – [is] before an audience in a vast space."³⁷ This pamphlet was not the first time Saint-Saëns called attention to the harp motif within art literature.

In 1879 he composed a work titled *La lyre et la harpe*, Op. 57, based on Victor Hugo's poem of the same name. The work is for solo soprano, tenor, alto, baritone, chorus, and orchestra – including two harps. It consists of six movements in two parts. The lyre represents Greco-Roman paganism while the harp represents Christianity. Each of the instruments takes turns trying to convince the poet to follow their prospective worldviews; in the end, the poet decides both worldviews can have artistic value. Saint-Saëns is yet another example of artists, authors, and musicians drawing inspiration from and using the harp and its ancestors as motifs within their works.

³⁵ Camille Saint-Saëns. *Note Sur Les Décors de Théâtre. Dans l'Antiquité Romaine*. Trans. by Abigail Hughes Stoner. (Paris: L. Baschet, 1886), 8.

³⁶ Citharist is the term used for a person who played the kithara. The Latin version of kithara is cithara.

³⁷ Saint-Saëns. *Note Sur Les Décors de Théâtre. Dans l'Antiquité Romaine*. Trans. by Abigail Hughes Stoner, 24.

This brief overview of the harp in art and literature amply demonstrates that the instrument was a significant symbol for artists, poets, and musicians alike in the nineteenth century. By the twentieth century, the prominence of the harp continued in art and literature. This made it an ideal instrument for composers to evoke non-musical images in their music. For a further list of harp portrayals in art and literature see Appendix B.

The Harp in France: Marie Antoinette and the Paris Conservatoire

The research presented thus far indicates a regional trend. Many of the painters, instrument makers, and composers mentioned so far have been French. The logical question to ask is why the harp emerged in France more than in other countries. The answer can be found by considering three contributory factors: Marie Antoinette, the Paris Conservatoire, and active French harp performers. Marie Antoinette famously took up the harp after Hochbrucker introduced his single-action pedal harp in Paris. In letters to her mother dated January 1773, she claims that “despite the pleasures of court life she was always faithful to her dear harp and took a long harp lesson almost every day.”³⁸ Marie Antoinette was somewhat of a trendsetter among court ladies, and because she played the harp, it became a desired instrument in France. It was not considered a serious musician’s instrument due to its limited chromatic abilities and inability to play in all major and minor keys, but it was a common instrument among amateur musicians, especially within French families of wealth. Even after Marie Antoinette’s political decline and the French Revolution, the harp continued as a popular instrument for noble ladies.

³⁸ Rensch. *Harps and Harpists*, 158.

Eventually, the number of harpists in France combined with the innovations of the double action pedal harp in 1811 precipitated the need for a harp study program at the Paris Conservatoire. The harp program, founded in 1825 under the direction of François-Joseph Naderman, focused at first on single-action pedal harps. Ten years later Antoine Prumier took over, and in 1835 the double-action pedal harp replaced the single-action pedal harps. The harp program passed to several other acclaimed harpists until Alphonse Hasselmans (1845-1912) took over in 1884.³⁹ He directed harp studies until 1912 when his student, Marcel Tournier (1879-1951), succeeded him.

Each year the Paris Conservatoire held an exit exam for each instrument that consisted of students performing selected repertoire, referred to as *morceaux de concours* and usually composed by the faculty at the conservatory, in front of a jury.⁴⁰ These exams and the pieces that were used for them were held in high esteem among musicians of the day; often, winning first prize in the exam almost always guaranteed the student a job in a professional music setting. Some of the harp pieces that were composed for the *concours* have been lost, but the first one used was possibly Naderman's Prelude and Sonata in E-flat Major, Op. 47, No. 1 (1818). The first *concours* for harp most likely took place the year the harp program was founded but could have been slightly later. Regardless of when the first one took place, from approximately 1825 to 1940, there were sixty-eight surviving pieces used for the exams, including Elias Parish Alvars's (1808-1849) "Rondo" from *Concertino*, Op. 34 (1838), Conrad Prumier's (1820-1884) *Solo du concours* (1839), Gabriel Pierné's (1863-1937) *Impromptu-caprice*, Op. 9 (1900) and Fauré's *Impromptu*, Op. 86 (1904).

³⁹ Théodore Labarre was harp professor from 1867-1870, Ange-Conrad-Antoine Prumier taught from 1870-1884.

⁴⁰ Sometimes outside composers were invited by the faculty to compose repertoire for the exams.

The harp program's development within the prestigious Paris Conservatoire shows a shift in the cultural perception of the harp. It was no longer a symbol of status in the royal court but was now considered an instrument suitable for a serious musician who wished to become a professional performer. Luciano Berio once remarked after seeing virtuosic harpist Carlos Salzedo (1885-1961), "Traditionally, the harp is a feminine instrument: one always imagines a beautiful girl with Méliande-like hair, half-naked and concealed behind trees in the mist, stroking the strings... Aeolian harps, Sappho... but Salzedo's playing technique has made me relinquish that poetic imagery: with him, the harp becomes a richer and more powerful instrument. Is it a feminine instrument? – that may well be, but wielded by a strong, earthly woman, one made free."⁴¹

Acclaimed French Harpists: Salzedo and Renié

In addition to serious harp study programs, the presence of acclaimed harpists also bolstered the instrument's position in French society. There were many virtuosic French harp players active in the century and during the early twentieth century, including Hasselmans, Tournier, Marcel Granjany (1891-1975), Pierre Jamet (1893-1991), and Lily Laskine (1893-1988). This paper will focus on two specific French harpists who also composed prolifically for the instrument: Carlos Salzedo (1885-1961) and Henriette Renié (1875-1956).

Salzedo was one of the most renowned harpists of his time. He was born in Arcachon, France in 1885. He showed an affinity for music as a young child and entered the Paris

⁴¹ Mathilde Aubat-Andrieu et al. *Guide to the Contemporary Harp* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013), 1.

Conservatory for piano in 1894. Soon after, he began harp lessons under Hasselmans. Eventually, he also added composition lessons with Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924). In 1901, at age 16, he won the premier prix on both harp and piano in a performance that was unrivaled in its exceptionalism.⁴² Winning the premier prix on a single instrument was a feat itself, but winning on two instruments in the same day was unheard of. In 1903 he made his solo recital debut in Paris but in 1909 he moved to America where he was principal harpist for the Metropolitan Opera House in New York. When World War I broke out, he was drafted into the French Army where he continued his musical endeavors as best he could, playing, performing, and composing within his unit. After the war, he stayed active in the musical society in France and was good friends with French-American composer Edgard Varèse (1883-1965). Together they formed the International Composers' Guild in 1921 to promote and perform the works of many composers including Béla Bartók (1881-1945), Alban Berg (1885-1935), Charles Ives (1874-1954), Francis Poulenc (1899-1963), Ravel, Erik Satie (1866-1925), Anton Webern (1883-1945), and others. The connections that Salzedo had within the music scene no doubt brought awareness of the harp to active composers of the day.

Salzedo composed many chamber and solo works and transcribed harp arrangements of notable pieces. Some of his transcriptions include works by composers such as Bach, Beethoven, Brahms, Debussy, Corelli, Falla, Gluck, Granados, Handel, Haydn, Mendelssohn, Mozart, Ravel, Saint-Saëns, Scarlatti, and Wagner. Some of his most renowned compositions for solo harp include *Ballade*, Op. 28 (1910), *Variations sur un thème dans le style ancien* (1911), *Scintillation* (1936), and *Suite of Eight Dances* (1943). He also wrote *Concerto for Harp and*

⁴² Dewey Owens. *Carlos Salzedo: From Aeolian to Thunder, A Biography*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: Lyon and Healy Harps, 1993), 70.

Seven Wind Instruments (1926). The instrumentation calls for harp, flute, piccolo, clarinet, oboe, French horn, bassoon, and trumpet. Perhaps his most intriguing composition for the purpose of this thesis is *L'Isle enchantée* (The Enchanted Isle, 1918).⁴³ This work is a symphonic tone poem for solo harp and orchestra. Seeing as it is not a true chamber piece, it will not be discussed in Chapter Four, but it does deserve a special mention here.

By 1918 when he composed the work, he had been back in the United States for three years after his service in World War I. Salzedo composed *L'Isle enchantée* following the death of Claude Debussy and it premiered with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra with Salzedo on the harp in 1919. Salzedo provided the following notes for the premiere:

There is no 'program' in connection with my symphonic poem for harp and orchestra. The name – *Terres enchantées* (Enchanted Isles) – has been preferred to any other chiefly on account of the newness of the orchestral balance, which unveils to the hearer a new world of sounds. In this work, the harp is treated in an unexpected, unaccustomed fashion by taking advantage of the unlimited tone colors of the instrument, thirty-seven in number. The conception and the execution of these effects has been made possible only by the recent perfection of the instrument. The principal theme of this symphonic poem has been borrowed from an "Idyllic Poem" of my own (for harp alone), which belongs to a series of "Poetical Studies" which themselves are part of an important work – *The Modern Study of the Harp*.⁴⁴

The "Modern Study" that Salzedo mentions is both a method book and a treatise on playing the harp that includes several compositions.

L'Isle enchantée can be classified as impressionist and has many French characteristics.⁴⁵

Like Debussy, Salzedo created a vague sense of meter with frequent rests on downbeats. He also utilized many Debussian colors and harmonies. The piece has numerous modal and whole-tone

⁴³ Salzedo titled the pieces *Terres enchantées*, but later removed the work from his catalogue. In 1994 Lyra Music Company published the work as *L'Isle enchantée*.

⁴⁴ Elizabeth Richter. "Carlos Salzedo (1885-1961)," in *American Harp Society, National Conference Program Book* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2004), 85.

⁴⁵ Shelley Batt Archambo. "Carlos Salzedo (1885-1961)" (Thesis, University of Kansas, 1984), 48.

passages while also utilizing third relations. These melodic tendencies recall a sense of exoticism that Debussy was also fond of evoking. The score itself is dedicated “à la memoire de Claude Debussy” (to the memory of Claude Debussy).⁴⁶ Debussy himself wrote a tone poem for solo piano with a very similar name in 1904: *L'Isle joyeuse* (The Joyful Island). It is assumed that the painting *The Embarkation for Cythera* by Jean-Antoine Watteau served as inspiration for Debussy's work. There is no clear connection between the two pieces, but Salzedo would no doubt have known of Debussy's *L'Isle joyeuse* when he embarked on composing his *L'Isle enchantée*.

Despite there being no explicit program or inspiration for Salzedo's piece, it is quite possible that Salzedo was inspired by the popularity of tone poems, both symphonic and chamber when he conceived of the work. While there is no narrative or programmatic material, the piece is atmospheric in nature and evokes mystical imagery. By the early 1930s, the piece was no longer characteristic of Salzedo's compositional style, and he withdrew it from his catalogue.⁴⁷ In 1994, Lyra Music Company in New York published the work.

Another notable harpist of this period is Henriette Renié. She is one of the only female harpists of her generation to gain recognition equal to that of her male counterparts. Like Salzedo, she was a performer and composer. Born in Paris in 1875, she also showed a gift in music. When she was a young child, her father had to build a contraption so her feet could reach the pedals of the harp. She studied with Hasselmans at the Paris Conservatoire starting in 1885 at the age of ten. That year she won second prize in harp performance despite the audience voting to give her first place. The director of the conservatory, Ambroise Thomas, did not want to give

⁴⁶ Carlos Salzedo. *The Enchanted Isle* (New York: Lyra Music Company, 1994).

⁴⁷ Richter. “Carlos Salzedo (1885-1961),” 85.

her first because she would be considered a professional and could not continue taking lessons.⁴⁸ The following year she won first prize and the year after began teaching students at the age of twelve. She continued her studies at the Conservatory but this time in composition under the tutelage of Théodore Dubois (1837-1924) and Jules Massenet (1842-1912). In 1901 she composed her Harp Concerto in C minor. This piece is largely considered one of the pieces that put the harp on the stage as a serious solo instrument that could be accompanied by a full orchestra. Previously, the only pieces written for harp accompanied by orchestra were Mozart's Flute and Harp Concerto and Handel's Concerto in B-flat Major. Neither had a full, robust orchestra and they were not frequently programmed or performed.

Another reason this concerto marks the beginning of the harp as a solo instrument capable of orchestral accompaniment is the chromatic passages it contains. The chromatic passages in Concerto in C minor were not possible previously due to the instrument's limitations. Figure 3.15 shows a passage beginning at Rehearsal four that requires natural, sharp, and flat notes with multiple pedal changes within five measures. This passage would simply not be playable on a single-action pedal harp. To achieve natural, sharp, and flat notes in quick succession, a double-action pedal harp is required.

In 1903, the same year Salzedo was giving his debut recital in Paris, Renié composed another staple harp piece, this time a solo called *Légende* inspired by the poem *Les Elfes* by Leconte de Lisle. Like Loewe's solo piano work *Mazeppa*, this piece could be classified as a tone poem for solo harp given its source of inspiration. Both this piece and the concerto were written for the Érard double-action pedal harp. These pieces no doubt contributed to the realization

⁴⁸ Odette de Montesquiou. *The Legend of Henriette Renié*. Trans. by Robert Kilpatrick, ed. by Jamee Haefner, Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2006.

composers had that the harp, specifically the double-action pedal harp, could be a viable solo and chamber instrument.

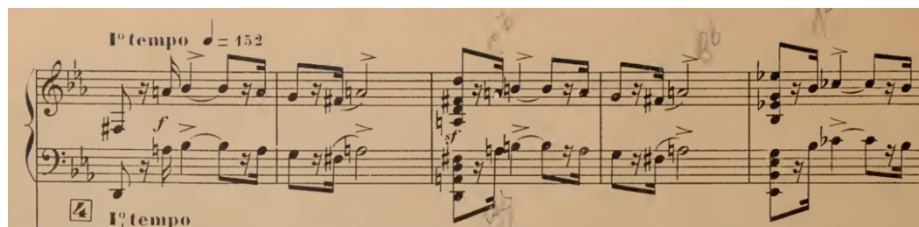


Figure 3.15: Renié, Concerto in C minor, Rehearsal 4⁴⁹

The Harp as Replacement for Piano

Another reason the harp appeared in chamber music at the turn of the twentieth century is that it provided a way for composers to embrace the twentieth-century interest in experimentation within chamber music. They began to use it as a replacement for the piano. The harp could blend with the timbres of different instrument families well, while at the same time offering many of the same capabilities of a piano. Like the piano, the harp has fixed tuning, so it gives the ensemble a frequency that they can tune to. In addition, the two instruments have a similar register with both possessing low bass sounds and high soprano pitches. The harp's range is C1 to G7 while the piano is A0 to C8.

One of the most obvious ways composers utilized the instruments' similarities is in rhythm. The harp can achieve similar percussive and rhythmic sound qualities of a piano. The chamber pieces with piano that will be examined here are Ravel's Piano Trio (1914) and Fauré's

⁴⁹ Henriette Renié. Harp Concerto in C Minor (Paris: E. Fromont, 1902).

Piano Quartet (1876-79). These will be compared to Caplet's *Conte fantastique*, Debussy's Sonata for Flute, Viola, and Harp, and Ravel's *Introduction et allegro*.

In the first movement of Ravel's Piano Trio, at Rehearsal four, the piano plays a series of blocked chords underneath the violin melody. The chords provide rhythmic drive and pulse as well as harmony (see Figure 3.16).

In Fauré's Piano Quartet, measures 19 through 23 of the second movement, Fauré uses the piano to provide a steady rhythmic beat on first inversion chords, alternating between the right and left hand of the pianist. While the piano is setting this rhythmic pulse, the strings take the melody and countermelody (see Figure 3.17).

In Caplet's *Conte fantastique*, the harp is used similarly to the piano scoring in Ravel's Piano Trio. At Rehearsal 36 the harp provides rhythmic drive and a pulse along with harmony while the strings play various ostinato patterns and melodic material (see Figure 3.18).

Figure 3.16: Ravel, Piano Trio, Movement I, Rehearsal 4⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Maurice Ravel. Piano Trio (Paris: Durand & Cie., 1915).

The image shows a musical score for Fauré's Piano Quartet, Movement II, measures 19-23. The score is in 2/4 time and B-flat major. It features four staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Piano. The Violin I and II parts play a melodic line with slurs and accents. The Viola part plays a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The Piano part features a steady rhythmic pulse of alternating chords in the right hand and single notes in the left hand, marked 'sempre pp' and 'f'.

Figure 3.17: Fauré, Piano Quartet, Movement II, measures 19-23⁵¹

Debussy uses the harp in much the same manner that Fauré scored for the piano. In the same way that Fauré used alternating left and right hands to set a steady rhythmic pulse, Debussy wrote alternating sixteenth notes at the opening of the final movement in his Sonata (see Figure 3.19). To play this at tempo, the harpist alternates their left and right hands, taking the “C” in the right hand and the “F” in the left hand. The effect is very similar to the alternating chords in the Fauré piece. It sets a steady, rhythmic pulse to which the rest of the instruments can add their melody.

Another example of the harp being used for its percussive quality is at Rehearsal 16 of Ravel’s *Introduction et allegro* (see Figure 3.20). In this passage, the harp has two main focuses: first, to provide harmonic progression via the rolled chords, and second, to provide a rhythmic

⁵¹ Gabriel Fauré. Piano Quartet No. 1, Op. 15 (Paris: J. Hamelle, 1884).

drive. This section of the piece leads up to a massive swell of sound created by *ad lib.* glissandos in the harp at Rehearsal 17. As the passage progresses, there is an *accelerando* and *crescendo*. The harp's expansive downbeat chords give a percussive quality to the passage and allow the musicians to accelerate in unison.

Figure 3.18: Caplet, *Conte fantastique*, Rehearsal 36⁵²

Figure 3.19: Debussy, “Finale” from Sonata for Flute, Viola, and Harp, measures 4-6⁵³

⁵² André Caplet. *Conte fantastique* (Durand & Cie.: Paris, 1924).

⁵³ Claude Debussy. Sonata for Flute, Viola, and Harp (Paris: Durand & Cie., 1916).

The image shows a page of a musical score for Maurice Ravel's *Introduction et allegro*, rehearsal 16. The score is for a full orchestra and includes parts for Flute (Fl.), Clarinet (Cl.), Harp, Violins (Vons), Viola (Alto), and Cello (Vello). The music is in 3/4 time and features a complex, rhythmic texture with many accidentals and dynamic markings like 'f' and 'arco'. The harp part is particularly prominent, playing a series of chords and arpeggios. The strings play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes.

Figure 3.20: Ravel, *Introduction et allegro*, Rehearsal 16⁵⁴

Aside from being treated as a percussive and rhythmic instrument, the harp also acted as a keyboard instrument in its ability to play ostinato patterns such as Alberti basses or repeating arpeggios. The piano pieces I will look at are Schubert's "Trout" Piano Quintet in A Major (1819), Ravel's Piano Trio, and Fauré's Piano Quartet. The harp pieces to which these will be compared are Dubois's *Terzettino* (1905), Caplet's *Conte fantastique*, Roussel's *Sérénade* (1925), and Debussy's Sonata for Flute, Viola, and Harp.

In Schubert's quintet, Movement I, the piano begins a series of triplet arpeggios in measure 64 that lasts for an eight-bar phrase before playing a three-bar phrase of blocked chords (see Figure 3.21). It then returns to the arpeggiated pattern. During this passage, the strings play the melody over the top of the piano's ostinato pattern.

⁵⁴ Maurice Ravel. *Introduction et allegro* (Paris: Durand & Cie., 1906).

Figure 3.21: Schubert, Piano Quintet in A Major, Movement I, measures 64-68⁵⁵

Another example of the piano playing arpeggiated patterns that primarily provide harmony and texture is in the first movement of Ravel's Piano Trio. Here one can see sweeping arpeggios that start on a low G and ascend to a high F at the climax (see Figure 3.22).

Fauré similarly used the piano in the first movement of his Piano Quartet (see Figure 3.23). In measure 62, the piano begins a passage of thirty-second-note arpeggios while the other instruments play the melody in unison.

In Dubois's *Terzettino*, the harp is applied in a very similar fashion to Schubert's Piano Quintet. While *Terzettino* is not a chamber tone poem, it is the first flute, viola, and harp trio piece, predating Debussy's Sonata by ten years.⁵⁶ Even though it is not a chamber tone poem, it is an insightful example of how composers treated the harp similarly to the piano. Throughout most of the piece, the harp plays repeating arpeggios while the flute and viola take the melody (see Figure 3.24).

⁵⁵ Franz Schubert. Piano Quintet in A Major (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 1930).

⁵⁶ There is some speculation that Dubois's *Terzettino* may have even inspired or at the very least influenced Debussy's decision to score a sonata for the same instrumentation. This speculation has not been proven and the connections are very loosely drawn, based mostly on the two composers' exposure to each other.

Figure 3.22: Ravel, Piano Trio, Movement I, measures 13-16⁵⁷

Figure 3.23: Fauré, Piano Quartet, Movement I, measures 63-64⁵⁸

Another example of a harp providing an ostinato pattern is in *Conte fantastique* at Rehearsal 21. The harp plays a series of triplets, alternating between chords and plucked single notes. The harmony is static in this passage and the main goal of the harp is to provide rhythmic pulse and texture (see Figure 3.25).

⁵⁷ Ravel. Piano Trio.

⁵⁸ Fauré. Piano Quartet No. 1, Op. 15.



Figure 3.24: Dubois, *Terzettino*, measures 16-18⁵⁹

Figure 3.25: Caplet, *Conte fantastique*, Rehearsal 21⁶⁰

Roussel utilizes an ostinato pattern in the harp at Rehearsal 13 in the first movement of his *Sérénade* (see Figure 3.26). The harp plays a pattern of doubled octaves and open fifths to create texture. The harp does not necessarily provide a strong sense of harmony since there are

⁵⁹ Théodore Dubois. *Terzettino* (Paris: Heugel & Cie., 1905).

⁶⁰ Caplet. *Conte fantastique*.

no thirds in the pattern. While the harp plays this ostinato passage, the flute and viola take the melody.

Figure 3.26: Roussel, *Sérénade*, Movement I, Rehearsal 13⁶¹

Finally, in Debussy's *Sonata*, at Rehearsal 14 in the second movement, the harp is treated similarly to the piano in Fauré's quartet (see Figure 3.27). The harp plays a passage of moving arpeggios that provide harmony and a foundation for the melody and countermelody in the flute and viola.

One way that composers were able to differentiate their scoring for harp versus piano was through blending timbres of different instrument families. The harp has the wonderful characteristic of being able to unify the timbres of multiple instruments in a way that the piano cannot. This is because of the mechanics of playing the instruments. With the harp, once the string is plucked, the sound immediately starts to fade away. On the piano, the sound takes

⁶¹ Albert Roussel. *Sérénade* (Paris: Durand & Cie., 1926).

longer to decay when a key is pressed. The player can let go of the key, but it results in an abrupt silencing of the sound. While the sustain pedal can mimic the harp's ability to "fade out," it is not the same. The harp's ability to "fade out" combined with its naturally softer, subdued timbre makes it the ideal instrument to integrate woodwinds, strings, and sometimes even brass together. In addition, the harp can give a defined attack to a pitch while a woodwind or string can sustain the same note. This helps with clarity on attacked notes and at the beginning or end of phrases.

Figure 3.27: Debussy, "Interlude" from Sonata for Flute, Viola, and Harp, Rehearsal 14⁶²

Take for example the opening of Movement I, "Pastorale," from Debussy's Sonata for Flute, Viola, and Harp (see Figure 3.28). This is an exemplary instance of the harp blending multiple timbres while providing clarity and help with tuning. In measure three, the harp doubles

⁶² Debussy. Sonata for Flute, Viola, and Harp.

specific notes in the flute melody to help give rhythmic clarity and a defined sense of important notes and tuning. The viola then sneaks into the texture on the same note on which the flute and harp have just arrived. When performed well, the listener almost doesn't notice that three instruments are all playing an E together because the mixture of timbres is so cohesive.

Figure 3.28: Debussy, “Pastorale” from Sonata for Flute, Viola, and Harp, measures 1-3⁶³

The harp also allowed composers to experiment with extended techniques. Many composers utilized extended techniques, most notably harmonics, glissandi on intervals, and glissandi which utilize enharmonic notes to cancel out non-chord tones.⁶⁴ In Ravel’s *Introduction et allegro* there are numerous examples of harmonics and glissandos. Beginning in measure 62, the harp has a countermelody in the bass clef using harmonics. This is paired with moving

⁶³ Debussy. Sonata for Flute, Viola, and Harp.

⁶⁴ A characteristic that is unique to the harp is its ability to play enharmonic glissandi. Suppose the composer wants a glissando in the key of C Major. The harpist can cancel the half steps in the scale by changing the “F” pedal to flat, making it an “E” and changing the “B” pedal to sharp, making it a “C.” Now when the harpist plays the glissandi, the only pitches that will be heard are “C-D-E-G-A-C” even though they will be strumming all the strings. This is a technique that is only possible on double-action pedal harps.

sixteenth notes that form quintuplets when combined with the bass clef harmonics (see Figure 3.29).

Figure 3.29: Ravel, *Introduction et allegro*, measures 61-65⁶⁵

Debussy also shows masterful use of harmonics in the second movement of his Sonata at Rehearsal 10 (see Figure 3.30). The left-hand plays the melody on harmonics while the right-hand plays an ostinato pattern to provide texture.

In measure 88 of *Introduction et allegro*, Ravel uses glissandi on seventh chords to achieve a unique texture (see Figure 3.31).⁶⁶

Caplet also capitalized on the harp's ability to play extended techniques, especially glissandi on various intervals. At numerous points throughout *Conte fantastique*, there are glissandi on an octave and an open fifth (see Figures 3.32 and 3.33).

⁶⁵ Ravel. *Introduction et allegro*.

⁶⁶ Playing a triadic glissando is very difficult on the harp, and most harpists choose to change it to a slightly easier glissando on the interval of a third.

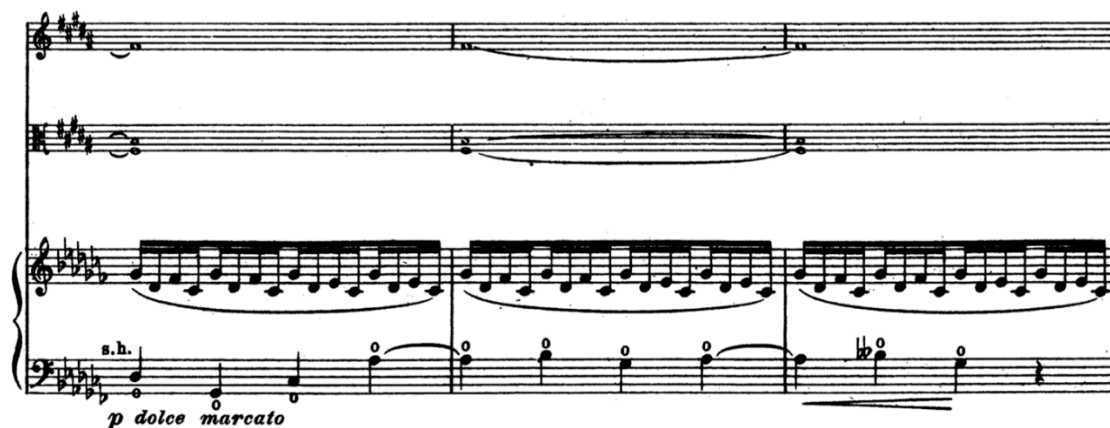


Figure 3.30: Debussy, “Interlude” from Sonata for Flute, Viola, and Harp, Rehearsal 10⁶⁷

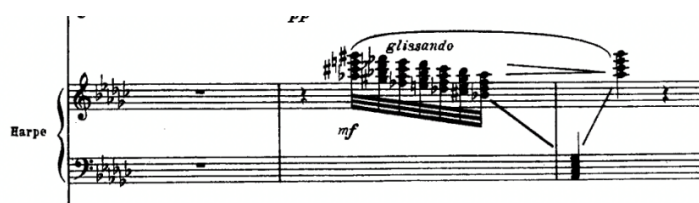


Figure 3.31: Ravel, *Introduction et allegro*, measures 87-89⁶⁸

Ravel uses an enharmonic glissando at rehearsal twelve of his *Introduction et allegro* (see Figure 3.34). The score indicates that the “B” pedal should be set to sharp, thereby making it the same pitch as a “C.”

Numerous other works are comparable to the examples above. When the scores are compared side by side, it is easy to think they are written for the same instrument given the similarity in range as well as rhythmic and harmonic abilities. The examples given show that composers thought of the harp as a sort of alternative instrument to the piano – an instrument that

⁶⁷ Debussy. Sonata for Flute, Viola, and Harp.

⁶⁸ Ravel. *Introduction et allegro*.

could accomplish the same effect as the piano but allowed them to explore new timbres and textures at the same time.

The musical score for Figure 3.32 consists of three staves. The top staff is in treble clef and contains two slurs, each labeled '2 Gliss. touches noires'. The middle staff is in treble clef and contains a slur labeled '2 Gliss. touches blanches'. The bottom staff is in bass clef and contains a slur labeled 'cresc. molto'. The dynamic marking 'pp' is placed between the top and middle staves. A bracket with the number '8' spans the first measure of all three staves. The key signature has one flat, and the time signature is 2/2.

Figure 3.32: Caplet, *Conte fantastique*, measures 60-61⁶⁹

The musical score for Figure 3.33 consists of two staves. The top staff is in treble clef and contains a slur labeled 'f'. The bottom staff is in bass clef and contains a slur labeled 'f'. A bracket with the number '8' spans the first measure of both staves. The key signature has one flat, and the time signature is 2/4.

Figure 3.33: Caplet, *Conte fantastique*, measures 100-101⁷⁰

The musical score for Figure 3.34 is for Harpe (Harp) and consists of two staves. The top staff is in treble clef and contains a slur labeled 'Si# glissando' and 'Ad libitum'. The bottom staff is in bass clef and contains a slur labeled 'Ad libitum'. A bracket with the number '8' spans the first measure of both staves. The key signature has one sharp, and the time signature is 2/4.

Figure 3.34: Ravel, *Introduction et allegro*, Rehearsal 12⁷¹

⁶⁹ Caplet. *Conte fantastique*.

⁷⁰ Caplet. *Conte fantastique*.

⁷¹ Ravel. *Introduction et allegro*.

CHAPTER 4

THE HARP IN CHAMBER TONE POEMS

Debussy: *Danses sacrée et profane*

Before turning to an in-depth discussion of a few primary chamber tone poems with harp, it is important to distinguish why these pieces stand apart from other chamber works. Many other instruments, such as piano, strings, woodwinds, etc. have been used in chamber pieces that fall into various common genres, such as the string quartet, piano trio, and others. These chamber pairings were common throughout the Classical and Romantic periods. The harp had no such place in these works, so when the instrument began appearing in chamber ensembles, composers had the freedom to experiment with new forms and instrument combinations. The result was new and unique instrument combinations. The forms of the pieces that included the harp departed from the typical four-movement sonata cycle in favor of single-movement – or continuous-movement – pieces inspired by an extramusical concept. These factors distinguish them enough to constitute grouping them into a separate and distinct genre. The pieces discussed below can all be classified as chamber tone poems, some more clearly than others as there are nuances to the genre.

The first piece that really was the catalyst for all chamber harp works that followed is Debussy's *Danses sacrée et profane*. Though Debussy did not explicitly state that the *Danses*, specifically *Danse sacrée*, were religious by nature, a brief analysis of the phrase structure, harmony, and influences from other composers show that the work evokes a sense of esotericism

and recalls certain imagery associated with it. Debussy was commissioned to compose *Danses* in 1904, the same year he was writing his symphonic suite *La mer*. Gustav Lyon from the Pleyel harp company wanted a piece that could showcase the company's new chromatique harp that had been invented in 1894 (see Chapter 3.1). Debussy may not have had much faith in this new instrument as the original score indicates that it can be played on a pedal harp, and Debussy himself composed a reduction for two pianos.¹ The piece premiered in Paris on November 6th, 1904, with Lucille Wurmser-Delcourt as harpist.

Danses has some characteristics that fit neatly within the genre of chamber tone poems, as well as other characteristics that arguably disqualify it. As with all art, one cannot assume that artists follow the boundaries scholars erect to try to make sense of various movements one hundred percent of the time, especially because these boundaries are often set up after the fact. Composers constantly take liberties where they see fit, and many times, they may not set out with a specific genre in mind. That is certainly the case for Debussy's *Danses*. After considering the characteristics of *Danses sacrée et profane*, I believe the piece does have enough qualities to align it with a chamber tone poem, or at the very least, a hybrid between a chamber tone poem and a solo for harp with string accompaniment.

Since it has two movements, one may argue that *Danses* cannot be a chamber tone poem. As noted in Chapter Two previously, however, tone poems can exist in multiple movements with no breaks in-between. And that is exactly the case here: the close of "Danse sacrée" sets up the principal theme for "Danse profane" with bass octaves, creating a seamless transition with no

¹ Henriette Renié transcribed the original score to be playable on a double-action pedal harp in 1910. Most harpists agree some of the passages are a bit awkward and clunky with pedals, but given the work was originally conceived for a harp without pedals, overall, it works very nicely on a double-action pedal harp.

break in sound between the two movements. Without being familiar with the work or watching a score, a listener might not even know that the first movement has ended and the second has begun.

Another characteristic that can add confusion is the varied number of musicians used when the piece is performed. Debussy originally conceived the *Danses* as a piece for chromatique harp and chamber string orchestra. In the score, the harp part is placed at the top with the string parts underneath, indicating that the harp is the primary instrument. Through the years though, many musicians have opted to play it as a chamber piece, with no conductor and only a string quartet accompanying. With one player per part, the piece can be described as a chamber ensemble work that features the harp as the primary instrument. Today, it is performed both as a chamber work and as a harp solo with string orchestra accompaniment. Two notable performances of the *Danses* as a chamber work with no conductor include Isabelle Moretti on harp with the Quatuor Ébène at the Festival International de Musique de Wissembourg in September 2010 and Emmanuel Ceysson on harp with the Formosa Quartet (and added double bass) at the Lyon & Healy Summer Concert Series in June 2018. The piece works quite well as either a chamber or chamber-orchestral work. Because nothing is taken from the score – no parts are left out – when it is performed as a chamber piece, and it retains the same depth of texture and color, I believe it can be classified as a chamber work.

When *Danses* is performed as a chamber work, the harp of course remains the primary instrument. Numerous tone poems have featured one instrument more prominently than the rest, such as Salzedo's *L'Isle enchantée*; another example is Franck's *Les Djinns* (1884) for piano and orchestra, which was inspired by the poem "Les Djinns" in *Les Orientales* by Victor Hugo.

Perhaps the most compelling reason this piece can be considered a chamber tone poem lies in its evocative nature. While the piece is not a narrative work (specifically programmatic) it is atmospheric. “Danse sacrée” evokes liturgical imagery while “Danse profane” evokes carefree and playful dancing.

The form of “Danse sacrée” can be described as a fairly clear ternary form with a truncated recapitulation of the A section. The strings play an introductory phase for seven measures before the harp enters. The harp’s entrance uses ample diatonic chord planing, open fifths, and perfect octaves (see Figure 4.1). The theme the harp plays is modal in D pentatonic minor and almost every interval moves in parallel motion by mostly steps and thirds. The parallel motion combined with chord planing creates a sense of placidity. In addition to the modal harmony of the theme, the passage also has a weak sense of meter due to Debussy’s use of quarter note triplets and ties over the bar lines (see Figure 4.1). The B section, beginning in measure 37, centers on a whole-tone harmony, giving the passage an overall atmospheric and somewhat static feel before returning to a D tonal center at the return of A in measure 69.

Like the opening theme of “Danse sacrée,” Gregorian chant, also referred to as plainsong, tends to be modal, favors stepwise and third motions, and has a free meter. Plainsong was, and continues to be, the chants used in the liturgies of the Catholic church.² The liturgical aspects of the movement, combined with the title itself – “sacrée” translates as “sacred” – evoke a spiritual mood.

² Until the ninth century, plainsong was used exclusively in Catholic churches. After the ninth century, polyphony was introduced to the chants. Now, many churches use a mixture of plainsong and polyphonic chants.

Figure 4.1: Debussy, “Danse sacrée” from *Danses sacrée et profane*, harp part, measures 8-17³

In “Danse profane” (Secular dance), by contrast, liturgical characteristics are absent, and instead, there are connections to non-sacred imagery. Its opening theme has a curious resemblance to the opening of Satie’s first *Gymnopédie No. 1* composed in 1888. Debussy and Satie knew each other, and Debussy made a popular orchestra arrangement of *Gymnopédies* in 1897, just seven years before his *Danses*.

Debussy’s “Danse profane” is a waltz that alternates between the principal theme and interludes. It opens with the harp playing an octave in the bass on the downbeat followed by the strings on beat two (see Figure 4.2). Though the key signature and the opening “D” octave indicate the key is D Major, the presence of the “G#” in the strings aurally suggests A Major. The principal theme is heard many times throughout the movement, with slight variations each time. In measure 109, there is a quasi-cadenza for the harp written in the key signature of E Major; however, Debussy again masterfully creates a vague sense of tonic by centering the cadenza

³ Claude Debussy. *Danses sacrée et profane* (Paris: Durand & Cie., 1904).

passage on a G# chord with the third omitted, purposefully blurring the distinction between major and minor modes. The cadenza section leads into an interlude passage before returning to the principal theme in the original tonal center.

The image shows a page of a musical score for Debussy's "Danse profane" from "Danses sacrée et profane". The score is for a full orchestra and harp. The tempo is marked "Modéré (♩ = 152)". The harp part is labeled "HARPE chromatique" and plays a chromatic line. The string parts (1st Violins, 2nd Violins, Altos, Violoncelles, and Contrebasses) play a melodic line with a "pp" dynamic marking.

Figure 4.2: Debussy, “Danse profane” from *Danses sacrée et profane*, measures 1-6⁴

Satie’s *Gymnopédie No. 1*, also written in 3/4 as a waltz, opens with a bass note on the downbeat followed by a right-hand chord on beat two (see Figure 4.3). Satie’s work may have been inspired by the French form of the word *gymnopaedia*, which in Greek refers to an annual festival where young men danced naked or unarmed; *Dictionnaire de Musique* by Peter Lichtenthal and Dominique Mondo defines “gymnopedie” as a “nude dance, accompanied by song, which youthful Spartan maidens danced on specific occasions.”⁵ While there is conflicting evidence regarding whether men or women primarily partook in the festival, it is clear that the term refers to a playful, carefree dance. When one considers the resemblance of “Danse profane”

⁴ Debussy. *Danses sacrée et profane*.

⁵ Mary E. Davis. *Erik Satie* (London: Reaktion Books, 2007), 31.

to Satie's piece, combined with the indication of the title, it evokes a mood of carefree, playful dancing. "Danse profane" is stylistically dance-like with its slightly faster, rhythmic drive compared to "Danse sacrée."



Figure 4.3: Satie, *Gymnopédie No. 1*, measures 1-7⁶

The points discussed above, when taken into consideration, substantiate the claim that Debussy's *Danses sacrée et profane* can be classified as a hybrid between a chamber tone poem and a solo for harp and string accompaniment.

Ravel: *Introduction et allegro*

The next chamber piece with harp that can be defined as a chamber tone poem is Ravel's *Introduction et allegro*. The abstract title is deceptive at first glance, but a closer look indicates this masterpiece can be classified as a chamber tone poem.

Debussy's *Danses sacrée et profane* prompted M. A. Blondel, director of Maison Érard of Paris, to commission Ravel to write a piece for the Érard double-action pedal harp in 1905. The piece that resulted was *Introduction et allegro*. While *Introduction et allegro* is not explicitly

⁶ Erik Satie. *Gymnopédie No. 1* (Paris: Self-published, 1888).

programmatic, it is certainly an atmospheric piece that is meant to evoke an image within the listener's mind. The evocative connection comes from one of Ravel's earlier works: *Introduction et allegro* strongly recalls themes and melodic material from a vocal work written two years earlier. Herbert Glass writes, "In its rhythmic subtleties and languid sensuality, the *Introduction et allegro* strongly recalls the *Shéhérazade* songs of 1903."⁷ Ravel composed two works titled *Shéhérazade*, an overture in 1898 and a song cycle in 1903. Both most likely drew inspiration from Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade* of 1888. All three are loosely based on the heroine and narrator of *The Arabian Nights*, a collection of Middle Eastern folktales dating from the Islamic Golden Age.⁸ Ravel's work was inspired by the poet Léon Leclère, whose pen name was Tristan Klingsor – a nod to Wagner's Tristan from *Tristan und Isolde* and Klingsor from *Parsifal*. Leclère wrote a collection of free-verse poems entitled *Shéhérazade* that became the source for Ravel's song cycle. Ravel and Leclère were friendly acquaintances, and both belonged to the Paris avant-garde artistic group Les Apaches. Leclère recorded his connection to Ravel in an essay entitled "Époque Ravel."⁹ According to Ravel's biographer, Arbie Orenstein, there is little musical connection between Ravel's two *Shéhérazades*. The only melodic connection is in the opening theme of the first song "Asie," which uses a modal scale similar to that at the beginning of the overture (see Figure 4.4).¹⁰

⁷ Herbert Glass. "Introduction et Allegro," Los Angeles Philharmonic, accessed February 20, 2024, <https://www.laphil.com/musicdb/pieces/6549/introduction-et-allegro>.

⁸ Dating from the eighth to thirteenth centuries, *The Arabian Nights* is also referred to as *One Thousand and One Nights*.

⁹ Colette Delage, Maurice Delage, and Léon-Paul Fargue. *Maurice Ravel par quelque-uns de ses familiers* (Paris: Editions du Tambourinaire, 1939), 125-39.

¹⁰ Arbie Orenstein. *Ravel: Man and Musician* (New York: Dover, 2014), 148.

As in “Asie,” the opening of *Introduction et allegro* is vague and modal. The tonic G flat Major is not stated definitively and is voiced as a third with the fifth of the chord omitted. There are three primary themes stated in the 26-measure introduction: the first in the woodwinds (flute and clarinet) at measure one, the second in the strings at measure three, and the third in the cello at measure thirteen. The harp merely interjects expansive arpeggios between the statements of the themes. Ravel utilizes bifocal tonality of relative major and minor keys – G-flat Major and E-flat minor – to create modal and pentatonic passages. He masterfully switches seamlessly between the two tonal centers, often simply putting one or the other tonic note in the bass or melody line, to constantly shift the sense of tonality. Pentatonic scales are often associated with exoticism and Asian music, due to their prevalence in music from various parts of Asia. Furthermore, the harmonics in the harp throughout the piece evoke a mood of exoticism also rooted in South and Eastern Asian influences, as their timbre is similar to that of numerous zithers – especially the guzheng Chinese zither.¹¹

Another example of *Introduction et allegro*'s melodic connection to “Asie” is found in the allegro section, which features three themes, loosely based on material from the introduction. From measures 100 to 200, the third theme is stated at a slower tempo and is mixed with interjections of the first theme. This section acts like the slow movement of a sonata. The piece builds in intensity, returning to the second theme at Rehearsal 10, measure 122. The tempo continues to accelerando and the dynamics crescendo until measure 200 where there is a climatic triple forte with a succession of appoggiaturas over a diminished seventh chord (see Figure 4.5). These chords lead into a harp cadenza, much like Debussy did in his “Danse profane.” This

¹¹ Zithers are a classification of stringed instruments, and many variations of it exist in numerous countries including the Chinese guqin, Chinese guzheng, Japanese koto, Slavic gusli, Arabic qanun, and the Korean gayageum.

avored use of an inverted ninth sonority has a startling resemblance to measure five of “Asie” where there is a dramatic cascade of chromatic, inverted ninths (see Figure 4.6).¹²

Très lent ♩ = 40 **Cédez**

1 PETITE FLÛTE

2 GRANDES FLÛTES

2 HAUTOIS

1 COR ANGLAIS

2 CLARINETTES en LA

2 BASSONS

4 CORS en FA
Chromatiques

2 TROMPETTES en UT
Chromatiques

3 TROMBONES
et 1 TUBA

TIMBALES

TRIANGLE

TAMBOUR de BASQUE

TAMBOUR

CYMBALES

GROSSE CAISSE

TAM-TAM

JEU de TIMBRES

CÉLESTA

2 HARPES

CHANT

pp
A. sie, — A. sie, — A. sie, —

Figure 4.4: Ravel, “Asie” from *Shéhérazade*, measures 1-4¹³

¹² Mark Devoto. “Harmony in the Chamber Music,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Ravel* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 97–105, 103.

¹³ Maurice Ravel. *Shéhérazade* (Paris: Durand & Cie., 1914).

The image shows a page of musical notation for measures 200-202 of Ravel's *Introduction et allegro*. The score is divided into two systems. The first system (measures 200-201) features a harp part with a melodic line and a piano accompaniment. The tempo is marked 'Très animé' and the dynamics are 'fff'. A section of the harp part is marked 'Ad libitum'. The second system (measure 202) continues the piano accompaniment with 'pizz.' markings. The tempo remains 'Très animé' and the dynamics are 'fff'.

Figure 4.5: Ravel, *Introduction et allegro*, measures 200-202¹⁴

Ravel often took a long time to finish a work, but he composed *Introduction et allegro* in three short weeks due to the commissioning deadline. According to Ravel's own testimony, he wrote it in a week and three sleepless nights because he was invited on a boating trip with friends.¹⁵ Perhaps this is why Ravel chose to recall melodic material from his earlier work; many scholars have noted that he pulled the work from his catalog and did not mention it in his autobiography. It is not clear whether he was not pleased with the result, or if he saw the work as nothing more than a commission that provided needed funds. Nonetheless, it is among a small number of pieces that he recorded in 1923. The connections found between "Asie" and *Introduction et allegro* argue for the latter as an atmospheric chamber tone poem that was inspired by images and tales that evoke Middle-Eastern exoticism.

¹⁴ Ravel. *Introduction et allegro*.

¹⁵ Rensch. *Harps and Harpists*.

The image shows a page of a musical score for Ravel's "Asie" from *Shéhérazade*, measures 5-6. The score is for a full orchestra and includes parts for Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet (Cl.), Bassoon (B.), Horns (H.), Trumpets (Tr.), Trombones (T.), Timpani (Timb.), Triangle (Trg.), Snare Drum (T. de B.), Cymbals (Cymb.), Harp (Harp), Violins (Viol.), Viola (Vclle), and Cello/Double Bass (C. B.). The music is in 3/4 time and features a "Cédez" section. The tempo is marked "Plus vite" with a metronome marking of 60. The score includes various dynamics such as *mp*, *p*, and *pp*, and performance instructions like "loco", "div.", and "arco". The score is for measures 5-6, with the first measure of the "Cédez" section starting at measure 5. The score is for measures 5-6, with the first measure of the "Cédez" section starting at measure 5. The score is for measures 5-6, with the first measure of the "Cédez" section starting at measure 5.

Figure 4.6: Ravel, “Asie” from *Shéhérazade*, measures 5-6¹⁶

¹⁶ Ravel. *Shéhérazade*.

Another aspect that can further categorize this piece as a chamber tone poem is the unconventional instrumentation used. The combination of harp, flute, clarinet, and string quartet is unprecedented. With this unique combination, Ravel could imitate symphonic sounds on a much smaller scale by blending both string and woodwind timbres with the harp unifying them. Scholar Mark DeVoto remarked, “The String Quartet and the Introduction et allegro have striking passages of very full and brilliant sound that one can easily imagine in a full orchestration...In the small ensemble of seven players, Ravel was able to achieve a remarkably full instrumental sound, carefully employing arpeggios, multiple stops, colouristic changes, and registral extremes that would have done credit to a much larger group.”¹⁷ For instance, at Rehearsal 15, we can see the left hand of the harp and the cello playing low bass notes, while the right hand of the harp, the flute, and the violin play high melodic notes. The harp plucks lush, expansive chords and the second violin and cello play a descending pattern that fills out the texture (see Figure 4.7).

The final compelling characteristic that places *Introduction et allegro* within the genre of chamber tone poems is its form. The piece is a single movement with no break between the introduction and the allegro. The introduction begins in the first measure and continues until measure 26 when the harp’s brilliant statement of the principal theme marks the beginning of the allegro section. Overall, the piece can be analyzed as a modified sonata form with an introduction, exposition, development, harp cadenza, and recapitulation. The cadenza suggests a “mini-harp concerto,” as the piece is sometimes called. As with Debussy’s *Dances*, this cadenza is not surprising or problematic since the piece was commissioned to showcase the harp. As has

¹⁷ DeVoto. “Harmony in the Chamber Music,” 97, 103.

already been shown, tone poems can feature one instrument more prominently than the other. Aside from the harp cadenza, the piece plays much like a chamber work with the instruments constantly sharing, doubling, or taking turns playing the melodic lines.

Figure 4.7: Ravel, *Introduction et allegro*, Rehearsal 15¹⁸

Caplet: *Conte fantastique*

A few years after Ravel composed his *Introduction et allegro*, Caplet became the first composer to write an explicitly programmatic chamber tone poem that includes harp. His *Conte*

¹⁸ Ravel. *Introduction et allegro*.

fantastique, composed in 1908, was inspired by Poe's tale *The Masque of the Red Death* (1842). The popularity of Poe and his influence in French music was noteworthy in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. They were introduced to France through the translations of Charles Baudelaire and Stéphane Mallarmé. Both Baudelaire and Mallarmé also championed and promoted the works of French poet Aloysius Bertrand who was a contemporary of Poe and wrote within the same genre. Gothic literature was in vogue within French literary circles.¹⁹

Composers also began drawing inspiration from Poe and his Gothic tales. Florent Schmitt (1870-1958) wrote a piece called *Le palais hanté* in 1904 based on Poe's *The Haunted Palace* (1839). Debussy was also inspired by Poe. He started but ultimately did not finish two operas based on Poe's tales. The first, *Le diable dans le beffroi*, based on *The Devil in the Belfry* (1839), was started in 1902 after *Pelléas et Mélisande*; he abandoned the work ten years later. The second, *La chute de la maison Usher*, based on *The Fall of the House of Usher*, was started in 1908 – the same year Caplet composed his *Conte fantastique*. Debussy wrote three versions of the libretto but completed only a small amount of music. There is also evidence of Poe's popularity in Ravel's drawing sketches. A renowned pianist, Ricardo Viñes, wrote in his diary in 1892, "After dinner, I went over to the Ravels. Maurice showed me a very grim picture he'd done after Poe's *A Descent into the Maelström*. Today he did another drawing for me, also very black, after Poe's *Manuscript Found in a Bottle*."²⁰ There is no doubt that the Gothic genre, and Poe's works in particular, had made its way into French music, and Caplet decided to draw upon it in his chamber tone poem.

¹⁹ Emily Kilpatrick. "Ravel, Chopin and the Gothic Imagination," *Reaction*, March 18, 2017, <https://reaction.life/ravel-chopin-gothic-imagination/>.

²⁰ Kilpatrick. "Ravel, Chopin and the Gothic Imagination."

Poe's *The Masque of the Red Death* follows the story of Prince Prospero. He and other nobles have taken refuge in a walled abbey to escape a plague, the Red Death, that is sweeping over the land. They are indifferent and apathetic to the plight of the population outside the abbey, and instead pass their days in luxury. The prince decides to throw a masquerade ball one night with each of the seven rooms in the abbey decorated a different color. The seventh room is black and illuminated by a red light. It also houses an ebony clock that chimes the hour. At midnight the prince notices a figure in black and pursues him into the seventh room. When the figure turns to face Prince Prospero, the prince falls dead. The figure's mask is removed, and it is revealed that it is the Red Death itself. The tale ends with all the other nobles contracting and succumbing to the plague.

Caplet strove to capture not only the dark mood of the tale but also its imagery in his chamber tone poem. *Conte fantastique* is a single movement but has clear sections that follow the storyline of Poe's tale. The opening of the piece evokes "The Abbey." The key signature and opening bass "E" indicate the tonal center as E minor; however, the melodies are modal and utilize pentatonic scales. This obscures the tonal center and gives the passage a mood of far away and long ago. This matches the deep seclusion of the abbey and the "untouched" nature of the landscape. It also gives a feeling of stasis, to reflect the apathetic and indifferent attitude of the nobles in the abbey. "The Red Death" is introduced by the harp when it plays a passage that uses ten of the twelve chromatic notes, further obscuring the tonic note (see Figure 4.8). This passage evokes the Red Death sweeping over the land. The chromatic passage was extremely revolutionary writing for the harp. Even though this was not the first piece to use chromaticism in melodic passages for the harp, it was the most chromatic to date thanks to the double-action

pedal harp. There are sudden dynamic contrasts, ranging from *pp* to *ff* in a matter of one or two measures. These drastic changes in volume evoke a feeling of suspense and foreshadow the plague that the Red Death brings. Further adding to the atmospheric texture are trills and extended techniques such as *col legno* in the strings.



Figure 4.8: Caplet, *Conte fantastique*, measures 6-10²¹

Rehearsal eight marks the beginning of “The Masquerade Ball.” This passage is a waltz with a faster tempo than the opening of the piece. Caplet’s ample use of triplets, sixteenth notes, quintuplets, and sextuplets propel the section forward while evoking a dance-like image. The next section of music is “The Chiming of the Ebony Clock.” The harp evokes the ebony clock's chiming while the strings depict the “buzz and murmur” of the assembled company upon seeing the Red Death. This is accomplished through tremolos, glissandi, and harmonics (see Figure 4.9). One of the most striking aspects of this section is when the harpist uses their knuckles to knock against the soundboard of the harp right before the bass octaves which symbolize the chiming of the clock.

²¹ Caplet. *Conte fantastique*.

The image shows a page of a musical score for the piece 'Caplet' from 'Conte fantastique'. The page is numbered 37 in the top right corner. The score is in G major and 3/4 time. It features three staves for strings (Violin I, Violin II, and Viola) and a piano. The top three staves are for Violin I, Violin II, and Viola. The bottom two staves are for the piano. The score is marked 'Très lent' and includes various dynamics such as ppp, f, and cresc. The tempo is 76 = ♩. The score includes instructions like 'mettez la Sourdine' and 'ôtez la Sourdine'. The piano part has a section marked '39 (♩ = préc.)'.

Figure 4.9: Caplet, *Conte fantastique*, Rehearsal 38²²

The piece concludes with “Darkness and Decay” as the instruments fade into nothingness. Poe closes his tale with “And Darkness and Decay and the Red Death held illimitable dominion over all.” Through revolutionary writing and unique instrumentation, Caplet was able to capture the mood and imagery depicted in Poe’s *The Masque of the Red Death*, making *Conte fantastique* one of the greatest chamber tone poems with harp.

²² Caplet. *Conte fantastique*.

CHAPTER 5

LASTING INFLUENCE

Flute, Viola, and Harp Trio

By the 1920s symphonic tone poems were beginning to decline in popularity, and that is reflected in chamber music as well. As the century progressed, composers began branching into more experimental forms and styles. The rise of atonal and avant-garde music caused a shift away from programmatic pieces. Regardless, the use of the harp in chamber ensembles remained steadfast. The harp's use in chamber tone poems at the beginning of the 1900s set the trajectory for harps in future ensembles. With composers realizing that the harp was a vital asset in chamber music, they began including the harp in other types of ensembles. The most prominent ensemble that would emerge was the "flute, viola, and harp trio."

In 1904 Théodore Dubois composed his *Terzettino* – for flute, viola, and harp. Approximately a decade later, Debussy composed his Sonata for Flute, Viola, and Harp in 1915. A year later Arnold Bax (1883-1953) wrote his Elegiac Trio for the same ensemble.

After these three pioneering works, many composers would try their hand at this trio. Notable examples include Jean-Michel Damase's (1928-2013) Trio (1947), Maurice Duruflé's (1902-1986) *Prélude, Récitatif et Variations*, Op. 3 (1928), Jan Bach's (1937-2020) *Eisteddfod* (1985), Toru Takemitsu's (1930-1996) *And Then I Knew 'Twas Wind* (1992), Andrew MacDonald's (b. 1958) *Pleiades Variations*, Op. 45 (1998), and Eduardo Angulo's (b. 1954) *Bacanal* (2007) and *Cuatro Danzas Sibilinas* (2003). Some composers would add voice to the

trio as in Darius Milhaud's (1892-1974) *Adieu, Cantata for voice, flute, viola, and harp*, Op. 410 (1964) and Jan Bach's *Five Penny Poems* for mezzo-soprano, flute, viola, and harp (2005). New composers and student composers alike are continuing to score for this trio, and it has undoubtedly become the most common instrument combination to include the harp within chamber music.

Heitor Villa-Lobos

Due to Debussy's, Ravel's, and Caplet's chamber tone poems that included harp, composers worldwide became aware of the instrument's versatility as well as the aesthetic draw it held. One notable non-French composer influenced by these French chamber tone poems was Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959). The Brazilian composer spent a significant amount of time in Europe, particularly Paris, from 1923 to 1930. Villa-Lobos's first exposure to French music was in 1913 when he attended a performance by the touring Ballets Russes and saw Vaslav Nijinsky dance his version of Debussy's *Prélude à la après-midi d'un faune*. He then became friends with Milhaud during the latter's time in Brazil from 1916-1918. In 1923, Villa-Lobos arrived in Paris and became friends with Varèse and Schmitt. Through these connections, he was introduced to the style of French music and many important works of French composers. Through this exposure, he picked up many European styles and influences and combined them with Brazilian melodies and rhythms.¹ Villa-Lobos continued to travel to Paris throughout his life, including in the 1950s when he recorded the complete *Bachianas Brasileiras* for EMI with the French National Orchestra.

¹ Joseph Auner. *Music in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Century* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2013), 150.

Villa-Lobos became a prolific composer and included harp in many of his chamber ensembles, including *Sexteto místico* (*Sextour mystique*) for flute, oboe, saxophone, harp, celesta, and guitar (originally conceived in 1917 but lost and replaced in 1955), *Quarteto simbólico* (*Quatuor*) for flute, alto saxophone, harp, celesta, and female voices (1921), *Nonetto* for flute, oboe, clarinet, alto saxophone, bassoon, harp, piano, celesta, percussion, and mixed choir (1923), and *Quinteto instrumental* for flute, violin, viola, cello, and harp (1957).

While none of these works are explicitly chamber tone poems, Villa-Lobos did compose two symphonic tone poems in 1917, the same year he conceived of his *Sexteto místico*. *Amazonas* and *Uirapurú* both use many Brazilian folk tales and characters. In addition, they imitate the sounds of the jungle, especially the uirapurú bird itself, using the Stroh violin. In the same way that Villa-Lobos evoked Brazilian imagery in his tone poems, he also recalled imaginative imagery in the chamber works mentioned above. *Sexteto místico*, perhaps his most performed chamber work that includes harp, utilizes many Brazilian styles fused with French influences. Debussian textures and colors, employing harmonics and unique instrumentation, are combined with hemiolas, frequent use of triplets and sextuplets, and distinctive harmonies to evoke a sense of exoticism. Throughout the work, the harp plays expansive arpeggios, rhythmic chords, and occasionally melodic lines. The stylistic aspects, combined with Villa-Lobos's skillful treatment of the harp, make this piece a joy for any harpist to play.

Twentieth Century Chamber Works Harp

Many post-war composers used the harp in their chamber works: two notable French examples include Lili Boulanger's *Pie Jesu* (1918) and Roussel's *Sérénade* (1925). *Pie Jesu* is

scored for soprano, harp, two violins, viola, and cello while *Sérénade* is scored for flute, harp, and string trio. Neither of these works are chamber tone poems, but both affirm that an increasing number of composers chose to use harp within their chamber ensembles. Eventually, the chamber ensembles began branching into increasingly unique combinations thanks to the rise of avant-garde music. Two notable examples are Luciano Berio's (1925-2003) *Circles* (1960) and George Crumb's (1929-2022) *Madrigals* Book III and IV (1965-69).

Berio's *Circles* is a setting of three poems by e. e. cummings: "Stinging gold swarms," "Riverly is a Flower," and "N(o)w the how dis(appeared cleverly) world" from *Collected Poems* for soprano, harp, and percussion. Berio scores the voice almost as if it is an instrument, using extended techniques to achieve specific timbral qualities. Crumb utilized the voice in a similar matter for his *Madrigals*. The four books are settings of fragments of poetry by Federico García Lorca. Here again, extended techniques are used for the voice to achieve an instrument-like timbre. *Madrigals* Book III is scored for soprano, harp, and percussion and Book IV is for soprano, flute, harp, bass, and percussion.

Berio and Crumb were not the only composers to use the harp in their chamber music. Other examples include Schoenberg's *Herzgewächse*, Op. 20, Salzedo's *Preamble et jeux* (1929) and *Musique des troubadours* (1931), Luciano Berio's *Chamber Music* (1943), Jean-Michel Damase's *Quintet*, Op. 2 (1948), and Alan Hovhaness's *The World Beneath the Sea Nos. 1 and 2* (1954, 1963) and *Koke no Niwa* (1954). Many of these pieces have programmatic qualities and are intended to either evoke specific imagery or are inspired by extramusical objects and ideas. Such is the case with Hovhaness's *Koke no Niwa*. According to Hovhaness's own testimony:

In March 1960 a Tokyo television station commissioned a musical tribute to the Moss Temple in Kyoto – Koke Dera – to be entitled *Koke no Niwa* (Moss Garden). The music is scored for English horn, harp, and two percussion players performing on timpani, tam-tam, glockenspiel, and marimba. It is a tribute to all the Buddhist temples of Kyoto as well as to Koke Dera. The first phrase is sounded by English horn over harp, timpani, tam-tam, and glockenspiel. A series of scattered sounds follows on timpani, tam-tam, glockenspiel, and harp - the latter snapping the finger against a bass string. A new phrase is sounded by English horn against the continuing scattered sounds. A dialogue between marimba and harp leads to English horn accompanied by harp harmonics and timpani. Then a free rhythm interlude for marimba, harp, and timpani leads to the final phrase, sung by English horn over murmuring harp and marimba in free rhythm. The music is a garden of sounds and silences.²

The pieces listed here are just a few of the many chamber works that include harp and show the influence of the chamber tone poems discussed in Chapter 3. For a more comprehensive list of chamber works that include harp in the 20th century, see Appendix C.

Conclusion

When looking at the vast repertoire of chamber works with harp that have been composed in just the last century, it is clear that the instrument has taken its place as a vital chamber ensemble instrument. The harp owes its current popularity to various factors, but undoubtedly, the influence of the first few chamber tone poems that included the harp contributed to this development. While we can trace the beginning of modern harp history back to the innovations of single and double-action pedal harps, one must acknowledge that the instrument's presence in literature and art, along with prominent harpists such as Salzedo and Renié contributed to the harp's success. Even more so, without the addition of the harp to Debussy, Ravel, and Caplet's chamber ensembles, the prevalence of chamber tone poems in France from 1900 to 1920 would

² Alan Hovhaness, Ezra Sims, and Lawrence Moss. *Koke No Niwa "Moss Garden"* (USA: Composers Recordings, Inc., 1964).

not have come to be. While other non-tone-poem chamber pieces, such as Dubois's *Terzettino* and Debussy's Sonata, certainly also bolstered the harp's popularity, chamber tone poems arguably were the catalyst that sparked the harp's use in programmatic works for the rest of the twentieth century into the twenty-first century. In this way, music scholars must not overlook the importance of the harp in contributing to the development of chamber tone poems.

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APPENDIX A

ORCHESTRAL AND OPERATIC WORKS WITH HARP IN THE 1800s

*Arranged by genre and in chronological order.

BALLETS

Ludwig van Beethoven: *The Creatures of Prometheus* (1801)

Léo Delibes: *Coppélia* (1869-70)

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky: *Swan Lake*, Op. 20 (1875-76)

Delibes: *Sylvia* (1876)

Tchaikovsky: *Sleeping Beauty*, Op. 66 (1889)

Tchaikovsky: *The Nutcracker*, Op. 71 (1892)

OPERAS

Jean-François Le Sueur: *Les Bardes* (1804)

Etienne Méhul: *Uthal* (1806)

Méhul: *Joseph* (1807)

Gioachino Rossini: *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (1816)

Rossini: *Otello* (1816)

François-Adrien Boiëldieu: *La Dame blanche* (1825)

Rossini: *Guillaume Tell* (1829)

Giacomo Meyerbeer: *Robert le diable* (1831)

Vincenzo Bellini: *Norma* (1831)

Gaetano Donizetti: *Lucia di Lammermoor* (1835)

Meyerbeer: *Les Huguenots* (1836)

Hector Berlioz: *Benvenuto Cellini* (1838)

Richard Wagner: *Rienzi* (1842)

Donizetti: *Don Pasquale* (1843)

Wagner: *Tannhäuser* (1845)

Berlioz: *La Damnation de Faust* (1846)

Meyerbeer: *Le Prophète* (1849)

Wagner: *Lohengrin* (1850)

Giuseppe Verdi: *Il trovatore* (1853)

Verdi: *La traviata* (1853)

Wagner: *Das Rheingold* (1853-54)

Wagner: *Die Walküre* (1856)

Charles Gounod: *Faust* (1859)

Wagner: *Tristan und Isolde* (1859)

Verdi: *La forza del destino* (1861)

Wagner: *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (1862-67)

Ambroise Thomas: *Mignon* (1866)

Tchaikovsky: *The Voyevoda* (1867-68)

Verdi: *Aida* (1870)

Wagner: *Siegfried* (1871)

Tchaikovsky: *The Oprichnik* (1870-72)

Modest Mussorgsky: *Boris Godunov* (1874)

Tchaikovsky: *Vakula the Smith* (1874)

Wagner: *Götterdämmerung* (1874)
Georges Bizet: *Carmen* (1875)
Camille Saint-Saëns: *Samson et Dalila* (1877)
Tchaikovsky: *Eugene Onegin* (1877-78)
Tchaikovsky: *The Maid of Orleans* (1878-79)
Tchaikovsky: *Mazepa* (1881-83)
Wagner: *Parsifal* (1882)
Jules Massenet: *Le Cid* (1885)
Tchaikovsky: *Cherevichki* (1885)
Tchaikovsky: *The Enchantress* (1885-87)
Tchaikovsky: *The Queen of Spades* (1890)
Alexander Borodin: *Prince Igor* (1890)
Pietro Mascagni: *Cavalleria rusticana* (1890)
Tchaikovsky: *Iolanta* (1891)
Giacomo Puccini: *Manon Lescaut* (1893)
Puccini: *La bohème* (1896)

ORCHESTRAL

Berlioz: *Symphonie fantastique* (1831)
Berlioz: *Harold en Italie* (1834)
Franz Liszt: *Ce qu'on entend sur la montagne* (1848-49)
Liszt: *Tasso: Lamento e trionfo* (1849)

Liszt: *Les Préludes* (1850-55)

Liszt: *Orpheus* (1853)

Mussorgsky: *Night on Bald Mountain* (1867)

Tchaikovsky: *Fatum* (1868)

Borodin: *Symphony No. 2 in B minor* (1869-76)

Tchaikovsky: *Romeo and Juliet* (1870)

Vincent d'Indy: *Wallenstein* (1870-81)

Bizet: *L'Arlésienne* (1872)

Saint-Saëns: *Phaéton* (1873)

Saint-Saëns: *Danse macabre* (1874)

Edvard Grieg: *Peer Gynt Suite* (1875)

Tchaikovsky: *Francesca da Rimini*, Op. 32 (1876)

Bedřich Smetana: *Výšehrad* (1876)

Smetana: *Moldau* (1879)

Saint-Saëns: *Le Jeunesse d'Hercule* (1877)

Liszt: *Von der Wiege bis zum Grabe* (1881-82)

d'Indy: *Saugefleurie* (1884)

Tchaikovsky: *Manfred Symphony*, Op. 58 (1885)

d'Indy: *Symphonie sur un chant montagnard français* (1886)

Anton Bruckner: *Symphony No. 8* (1887)

Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov: *Capriccio espagnole* (1887)

Strauss: *Aus Italien* (1887)

Rimsky-Korsakov: *Scheherazade* (1888-89)

César Franck: Symphony in D minor (1889)

Strauss: *Don Juan* (1889)

Strauss: *Tod und Verklärung* (1890)

Claude Debussy: *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* (1892-94)

Jean Sibelius: *Lemminkäinen Suite* (1896)

Strauss: *Don Quixote* (1897)

Sibelius: Symphony No. 1 in E minor (1898-99)

ORATORIOS, REQUIEMS, & CHORAL

Berlioz: *L'Enfance du Christ* (1850-54)

Johannes Brahms: *Ein deutsches Requiem* (1865-68)

Saint-Saëns: *La Lyre et la harpe* (1879)

CONCERTOS AND CONCERTANTE

Boiëldieu: Harp Concerto in C Major (1801)

Louis Spohr: Concertante for violin and harp in G (1806)

Spohr: Concertante for violin and harp in E minor (1807)

Théodore Labarre: *Fantaisie* (1841)

Charles Oberthür: *Macbeth Overture* (1852)

Oberthür: Harp Concertino (1863)

John Thomas: Harp Concerto in B-flat Major (1878)

Carl Reinecke: Harp Concerto in E minor (1884)

Arnold Schoenberg: *Notturmo* for Strings and Harp (1895-96)

APPENDIX B

THE HARP IN ART AND LITERATURE

KING DAVID AND HIS HARP MOTIFS

Illustration of King David playing the harp for King Saul in an English psalter, initial *D*, folio 28 (c. 1235), Oxford, New College, MS 322

Illustration of King David playing the harp in the Tenison Psalter, *Beatus* initial, folio 11 (c. 1280), London, British Library, MS Add. 24686

Illustration of King David playing the harp in the Ormesby Psalter, *Beatus* initial, folio 10, (c. fourteenth century), Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Douce 366

Illustration of King David playing the harp in the *Très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry*, folio 45 (c. 1413-16), Chantilly, Musée Condé, MS 65

The stained-glass window of King David and his harp in the north transept windows at the Chartres Cathedral in France (c. 1190-1220)

Sculpture of winged King David and his harp at the Angel Choir of Lincoln Cathedral in England (c. 1256-1280)

King David in the Temple, painting by Pieter Lastmann (seventeenth century), Munich, Braunschweig Gemälde-Galerie

King David Playing the Harp, painting by Peter Paul Rubens (c. 1616), Frankfurt am Main, Städelsches Kunstinstitut und Städtische Galerie

David Playing the Harp Before Saul, painting by Rembrandt (c. 1658), The Hague, Mauritshuis

HARP WITH ANGEL AND CHILDREN MOTIFS

Illustration of harp played by an angel above a Coronation of the Virgin scene in *Très Riches Heures de Duc de Berry*, folio 6, (c. 1413-16), Chantilly, Musée Condé, MS 65

Illustration of the Virgin and Child in a garden with two angels and a harp in a Dominican Book of Hours, folio 141v (c. 1425-50), London, British Library Add. MS 35312

Sculpture of children with harp and other musical instruments in the organ balustrade of the Cathedral of Florence, attributed to Luca della Robbia (c. 1430)

Woodcut of an angel serenading the Holy Family with a harp, Albrecht Dürer (early sixteenth century), Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum

RENAISSANCE ART WITH A HARP

Engraving of harp and lute played by musicians, Israel van Meckenem (c. 1490), New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1927

Ghent Altarpiece wing detail of Gothic harp with other musicians, Jan van Eyck (early fifteenth century) Ghent, Cathedral of St. Bavon

Virgin and Child in the Rose Garden, painting by Stephan Lochner (c. 1438-40), Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz Museum

Virgin and Child with Angels, painting by Hans Memling (c.1480-90), Washington, National Gallery of Art

The Virgin and Child with Angels, in a Garden with a Rose Hedge, painting by Stefano da Verona (c. fifteenth century) Worcester, Massachusetts, Worcester Art Museum

Christ Glorified in the Court of Heaven, painting by Fra Angelico (c. fifteenth century), London, National Gallery

The Garden of Earthly Delights, painting by Hieronymous Bosch (c. 1500), Madrid, Museo del Prado

Adoration of the Holy Trinity, painting by Albrecht Dürer (1508-11), Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum

Portrait of Johannes (Xilotectus) Zimmermann with a harp, attributed to Hans Holbein (c. 1520), Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum

BAROQUE ART WITH A HARP

The Artist and his Family, painting by Carlo Francesco Nuvolone (seventeenth century), Milan, Brera

Allegoria della Musica, painting by Giovanni Lanfranco (seventeenth century), Rome, Palazzo Barberini, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica

Adoration of the Shepherds, painting by Francisco de Zurbarán (1638-39), Grenoble, Musée de Peinture et de Sculpture

OSSIANIC ART WITH A HARP

Ossian Singing, painting by Nicolai Abildgaard (1787), Statens Museum for Kunst

Ossian and Malvina, painting by Johann Peter Krafft (1810), Vienna, Leon Wilnitsky Alte Kunst Fine Art Gallery

Ossian Evoking Ghosts on the Edge of the Lora, painting by François Pascal Simon Gérard (1801), Paris, Château de Malmaison

Ossian Receiving the Ghosts of Fallen French Heroes, painting by Anne-Louis Girodet (1805), Paris, Château de Malmaison

The Dream of Ossian, painting by Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres (1813), Montauban, France,
Musée Ingres Bourdelle

MISCELLANEOUS ART WITH A HARP

The Harp of Erin, painting by Thomas Buchanan Read (1867), Cincinnati Art Museum

The End of the Song, painting by Edmund Blair Leighton (1902), original housed in a private
collection, digital copy is viewable online at Art Renewal Center: artrenewal.org

PORTRAITS FEATURING A HARP

Le jeune harpiste, painting by Louis-Leopold Boilly (late eighteenth century), New Haven, Yale
University Art Gallery, Hanna and Heinz Funds

Portrait of Marie-Denise Smits, née Gandolphe, painting by Antoine-Jean-Joseph-Eléonore
Ansiaux (late eighteenth century), owned privately

Portrait of Ange-Laurent de la Live de Jully, painting by Jean Baptiste Greuze (c. 1759),
Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art

Double portrait of Lady Caroline and Lady Elizabeth Spencer, painting by George Romney
(1786-91), San Marino, CA, Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery

Marie Antoinette Playing the Harp in Her Room at Versailles, painting by Jean-Baptiste André
Gautier (1777), Versailles, France, Musée de l'Histoire de France

Portrait of Jane, Countess of Eglinton, painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds (1777), London, Thomas
Agnew & Sons Ltd.

Self Portrait, painting by Rose Adélaïde Ducreux (1791), New York, Metropolitan Museum of

Art

Lady With the Harp: Eliza Ridgley, painting by Thomas Sully (1818), Washington, D.C.,

National Gallery of Art

LITERATURE WITH HARP REFERENCES

King Horn, Medieval English romance poem, author unknown, refers to harp playing numerous

times throughout (thirteenth century)

Ossian Tales, Epic poetry compiled and published by James Macpherson, originally as *Fingal*

(1791)

The Iliad, Homer, written in the eighth century BC (published 1488)

The Bible, references to a harp and/or lyre appear in several books including 1 Samuel, Psalms,

Job, Nehemiah, and Revelation

APPENDIX C

CHAMBER WORKS WITH HARP AFTER 1900

*Arranged in chronological order.

Claude Debussy: *Danses sacrée et profane* for harp and string quartet (1904)

Théodore Dubois: *Terzettino* for flute, viola, and harp (1904)

Maurice Ravel: *Introduction et allegro* for flute, clarinet, harp, and string quartet (1905)

Arnold Schoenberg: *Herzgewächse*, Op. 20 for soprano, celesta, harmonium, and harp (1911)

Debussy: *Sonata* for flute, viola, and harp (1915)

Arnold Bax: *Elegiac Trio* for flute, viola, and harp (1916)

Heitor Villa-Lobos: *Sextour mystique* for flute, oboe, alto saxophone, harp, guitar, and celesta
(1917)

Villa-Lobos: *Quatuor* for flute, alto saxophone, harp, celesta, and women's voices (1921)

Villa-Lobos: *Nonetto* for flute, oboe, clarinet, alto saxophone, bassoon, harp, piano, celesta,
percussion, and mixed choir (1923)

Albert Roussel: *Sérénade*, Op. 30 for flute, string trio, and harp (1925)

Carlos Salzedo: *Concerto for Harp and 7 Wind Instruments* (1926)

Nino Rota: *Quintetto* for flute, oboe, viola, cello, and harp (1935)

Luciano Berio: *Chamber Music* for voice, cello, clarinet, and harp (1943)

William Alwyn: *Suite for Oboe and Harp* (1944)

Jean-Michel Damase: *Trio for Flute, Cello, and Harp* (1947)

Damase: *Trio for Flute, Viola, and Harp* (1947)

Josef Tal: *Lament* for violoncello and harp (1947)

Damase: *Quintet for flute, harp, and string trio* (1948)

Lou Harrison: *The Perilous Chapel* for harp, flute, cello, and percussion (1948)

Tal: *Hora* for violoncello and harp (1949)

Villa-Lobos: *Quintette instrumental* for flute, harp, and string trio (1953)

Alan Hovhaness: *The World Beneath the Sea No. 1* for harp, alto saxophone, vibraphone, timpani, and gong (1954)

Hovhaness: *Koke no Niwa* for English horn, two percussion, and harp (1954)

Reine Colaço Osorio-Swaab: Trio No. 4 for clarinet, cello, and harp (1956)

Ludwig Otten: *Prelude en Koraal* for flute, viola, cello, and harp (1959)

Igor Stravinsky: *Epitaphium* for flute, clarinet, and harp (1959)

Berio: *Circles* for voice, harp, and two percussionists (1960)

Morton Feldmann: *The Straits of Magellan* for flute, horn, trumpet, electric guitar, harp, piano, and double bass (1961)

Josef Berg: *Nonet* for two harps, piano, and percussion (1962)

Hovhaness: *The World Beneath the Sea No. 2* for harp, clarinet, timpani, bells, and double bass (1963)

Darius Milhaud: *Adieu* for voice, flute, viola, and harp (1964)

Heinz Holliger: Trio for oboe, viola, and harp (1966)

Giacinto Scelsi: *Okanagon* for harp, double bass, and tam-tam (1968)

Luciano Berio: *Autre fois* for flute, clarinet, and harp (1971)

Johannes Paul Thilman: *Aspekte* for flute, viola, and harp (1971)

Hovhaness: *The Garden of Adonis* for flute and harp (1971)

Toru Takemitsu: *Eucalypts II* for flute, oboe, and harp (1971)

Hovhaness: *Firdausi* for clarinet, harp, and percussion (1972)

- Emmanuel Nunes: *Impromptu pour un voyage I* for flute, viola, harp, and trumpet (1973)
- Joji Yuasa: *Inter-posi-play-tion II* for flute, harp, and percussion (1973)
- Henk Badings: Trio No. X for alto flute, viola, and harp (1977)
- Valeri Kikta: *Antique Visions* for clarinet and harp (1977)
- Anne LeBaron: *Metamorphosis* for flute/piccolo, oboe, clarinet, horn, trombone, harp, and percussion (1977)
- Sofia Gubaidulina: *Garten von Freuden und Traurigkeiten* for flute, viola, and harp (1980)
- Takemitsu: *Rain Spell* for piano, harp, vibraphone, clarinet, and flute (1980-83)
- Isang Yun: *Novellette* for flute, harp, violin, and cello (1980)
- Hovhaness: *Spirit of Trees* for harp and guitar (1983)
- Damase: Sonata for clarinet and harp (1984)
- François Rosse: *Mod'son 5* for flute, viola, and harp (1984)
- Jeremy Beck: *Ghosts* for flute and harp (1985)
- Georges Aperghis: *Compagnie* for harp and percussion (1985)
- Jan Bach: *Eisteddfod* (1985)
- Beck: Sonata for flute, violin, cello, and harp (1986)
- George Crumb: *Federico's Little Songs, canciones para niños* for soprano, flute, and harp (1986)
- Hovhaness: Sonata for flute and harp (1987)
- Mauricio Kagel: *Zwei Akte (Two Nudes)* for saxophone, harp, actor, and actress (1988-89)
- Takemitsu: *Toward the Sea III* for alto flute and harp (1989)
- Tal: Duo for trombone and harp (1989)
- Ivan Fedele: *Imaginary Skylines* for flute and harp (1990)

- Philippe Leroux: *Ial* for guitar and harp (1990)
- Elliott Carter: *Trilogy* for oboe and harp (1992)
- Takemitsu: *And then I knew 'twas Wind* for flute, viola, and harp (1992)
- Howard Buss: *Seaside Reflections* for flute and harp (1993)
- Buss: *Seaside Reflections* for oboe and harp (1993)
- Walter Feldmann: “*Courbes*” – *sequences* for flute, viola, and harp (1993)
- Vladimír Godár: *Barcarolle* for violin/cello, harps, and harpsichord (1993)
- Crumb: *Quest* for guitar, saxophone, double bass, harp, and percussion (1994)
- Mark André: *Un-Fini* for cimbalom, harp, two pianos, and two percussionists (1995)
- Jan Krzywicki: *Four Songs After Rexroth* for mezzo-soprano, harp, and percussion (1995)
- Trevor Baca: *Vein* for flute, viola, and harp (1996)
- Lowell Liebermann: *Sonata* for flute and harp, Op. 56 (1996)
- Carter: *Luimen* for trumpet, trombone, vibraphone, mandolin, guitar, and harp (1997)
- Beck: *Songs Without Words* for flute and harp (1998)
- Pierre Boulez: *Sur Incises* for three pianos, three harps, and three percussionists (1998)
- Kikta: *Sonata* for violin and harp (1998)
- Huber Klaus: *L'âge de notre ombre* for flute, viola/viola d'amore, and harp (1998)
- Godár: *La Canzona refrigerativa dell arpa di Davide* (David's Refreshing Harp Song) for cello and harp (1999)
- Noriko Baba: *En haut et en bas* for harp and string quartet (2001)
- Martín Matalon: *Formas de arena* for flute, viola, and harp (2002)
- Carter: *Mosaic* for flute, oboe, clarinet, harp, violin, viola, cello, and double bass (2004)

- G rard Buquet: *Les Danses du temps* for flute, clarinet, viola, cello, and harp (2005)
- Nigel Keay: *Terrestrial Mirror* for flute, viola, and harp (2005)
- Garrett Byrnes: *Villanelle* for violin and harp (2006)
- Giorgia Spiropoulos: *Ephemerals and Drones* for harp, double bass, and percussion (2006-07)
- Buss: *Alpine Spring* for flute and harp (2008)
- Stefan Beyer: *Die schreien Salz* for bassoon, trumpet, trombone, percussion, harp, violin, and violoncello (2008/9)
- Jo l-Fran ois Durand: *Le Tombeau de Rameau* for flute, viola, and harp (2008)
- Gilad Cohen: *Trio for a Spry Clarinet, Weeping Cello, and Ruminating Harp* (2010)
- Gabriel Erkoreka: *Asklepios* for flute, percussion, and harp (2010)
- Buss: *Inner Quest* for flute and harp (2011)
- Buss: *Seaside Reflections* for clarinet and harp (2011)
- Buss: *Zoom* for bass trombone (or tuba) and harp (2011)
- Carter: *Trije glasbeniki* for flute, bass clarinet, and harp (2011)
- J r me Combier: *Terra d'ombra* for cello, piano, and harp (2011)
- Dave Soldier: *Dean Swift's Satyrs for the Very Very Young* for flute, viola, harp, and voice (2011)
- Christopher Trapani: *Leaving Lute* for flute, viola, and harp (2011)
- Jeremy Cavaterra: *Trio* for harp, flute, and viola (2012)
- Buss: *Saint Francis and the Animals* for flute, clarinet, and harp (2013)
- Anthony Sidney: *Sonata for Harp and Guitar* (2014)
- Sidney: *Sketchbook of a Journey* for Harp and Guitar (2014)
- Francois Couture: *La suite foraine* for Flute, Viola, and Harp (2015)

Cavaterra: *Capriccio Concertante* for clarinet, string quartet, bass, and harp (2017)

Cohen: *Firefly Elegy* for clarinet, violin, viola, cello, and harp (2017)

Airat Ichmouratov: Trio for Flute, Viola, and Harp, “Fujin’s Dream,” Op. 58 (2018)

Sidney: *Chiaroscuro* for Harp, Viola, and Guitar (2018)

Sidney: *Lavender and Mulberry Sonatina* for harp and guitar (2018)

Sidney: *Concert of the Seas* for harp, guitar, and orchestra (2018)

Sidney: Sonata No. 2 for harp and guitar (2021)

Sidney: Sonata for Harp, Flute, and Bassoon (2023)