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The Campaign for French Music: The Société des Concerts Français and the Critical Reception of French Music in Britain 1907–1915

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ABSTRACT

Between 1907 and 1915, more than 80 concerts dedicated to the promotion of French music in Britain were staged across the United Kingdom. The majority of these were organised by Tony Guéritte, who had come to Britain for a very different purpose, to oversee the application of reinforced concrete in construction. My thesis examines Guéritte's efforts to bring a range of French music to Britain and focuses in particular on a series of 28 concerts organised by him in London. Much of the music performed in these concerts had never been heard in Britain before, and the introduction of the chamber music of Ravel and other composers to British critics and audiences had a marked impact. In my thesis, I aim, first, to piece together the concert programmes, which have been largely overlooked by scholars, and second to explore their critical reception by examining reviews in a range of different periodicals and national newspapers published over eight years from 1907 until 1915, when the outbreak of the First World War halted the concerts.

DECLARATION

This thesis comprises only my original work towards the Master of Music (MMus) Musicology & Ethnomusicology. Due acknowledgement has been made in the text to all other material used. The thesis is less than the maximum word limit in length.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis has had a long gestation from commencement to final submission. I owe a great debt to my two wonderful supervisors, Professor Kerry Murphy and Dr Sue Cole. They met with me week after week, always offering invaluable feedback and supporting my research's long and winding path to final fruition. I could not have asked for two more supportive supervisors and I'm immensely grateful for everything they have done for me. Thanks must also go to Michael Mullen at the Royal College of Music for giving me access to the Bechstein Hall and André Mangeot archive, and to Sarah Kirby for help and advice on formatting. Our daughter, Esther, was born half way through the thesis and enriched everything with her presence while making it sometimes impossible to turn my attention away from her to the research. Bea Trefalt gave me last minute childcare and support which proved indispensable in the conclusion of the thesis. Even though they could not be with me in person, I received endless encouragement from my mother, Irina Piatigorsky, and my sister, Veronica Rawlings. I owe special thanks to my husband, Adam Clulow, whose encouragement, love and support were so critical in finishing this thesis.

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INTRODUCTION

On 3 December 1907, a concert of French music was held in the Westgate Assembly Rooms in Newcastle. Nine composers including Ravel, Debussy, de Séverac, Chausson and Roussel were featured in the list of works.[1] With one exception, Ernest Chausson, all were still living and between them they represented the latest developments in French music. The concert was organised by Tony Guéritte, who had come to Britain for a very different and far more prosaic purpose, to oversee the application of reinforced concrete, and his brother-in-law Georges Jean-Aubry, a music critic and writer based in Le Havre.[2] After this concert the performers travelled to Leeds and Sheffield before ending their tour in London. Just one day earlier on the previous evening, a series of concerts had begun in Manchester, organised by Madame Lucie Barbier, the wife of a professor at Manchester University, and also dedicated to the promotion of French music.

Such concerts, which took place in scattered locations across Britain, were part of an organised campaign for French music that had been initiated with the dual mission of spreading knowledge about French music while also challenging German musical dominance in Britain.[3] For the next eight years, numerous such concerts, including a series of 28 in London, were staged throughout Britain, continuing until 1915 when the outbreak of the First World War with its restrictions on travel rendered such activities impossible.[4]

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[1] Arthur Symons, 'French Music in London', *Saturday Review* 104, no. 2720 (14 December 1907): 723–4.
[2] 'Notes on Current Events', *British Architect* 64, no.25 (22 December 1905): 246–7.
[3] Georges Jean-Aubry, *French Music of Today*, 4th ed., trans. Edwin Evans (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1926), 237–58.
[4] Martha Elizabeth Stonequist, 'The Musical Entente Cordiale: 1905–1916' (PhD Thesis, University of Colorado at Boulder, 1972), 2. These concerts can be divided into three basic groups: the eight concerts that Barbier gave in Manchester; the roughly 28 concerts given in London by Guéritte under the name

Guéritte and Barbier were determined to showcase French music to British audience and they shared the same goal of showing the best of French music. In order to fulfil this ambition, they arranged to bring musicians and, where possible, composers, to perform across Britain. Most of their efforts were focused on chamber music, and alongside the latest offerings of Debussy and Ravel, the concerts included works of the Franck school, by d'Indy, Chausson and Lekeu, among others. Early music also featured heavily, not only the works of Couperin and Daquin, but also lesser known composers such as Louis-Toussaint Milandre and Jean-Féry Rebel.

There is no single, uniformly agreed upon label for Guéritte's and Barbier's activities. Guéritte's London concerts series was referred to as the Sociéte des concerts français, while the Manchester programmes had the title 'French concerts'. But together, they can be collectively termed the French Concerts. This thesis is concerned with the efforts to spread French music in Britain via such performances with a focus on Guéritte, who was active for longer and more consistently than Barbier, and the concerts organised by him in London under the label of the Société des concerts français.[5] In addition to providing an overview of the wider efforts to promote French music including Barbier's Manchester concerts, it examines the repertoire of Guéritte's London concerts, the performers involved and their critical reception.

My goal is to assess the nature of the concerts and their reception. This will be done, first, by looking at chamber music in London before the French Concerts started and the range of critical attitudes towards modern French music that existed

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Société des concerts français; and then a number of concerts of French music, given by Guéritte under the auspices of other concert societies, all over regional Britain.

[5] There are some variations in accents and capitalization in the spelling of Société des concerts français in reviews and articles: in some cases the print has not been clear. I have standardised the accents and capitalisations for sake of clarity.

prior to 1907. Using a range of sources, I then piece together the actual concerts and their repertoire before considering the critical reception as manifested in reviews in newspapers and periodicals. Since the concerts were extremely diverse, including the latest developments in French music as well as older works, the critical reception varied significantly. The most striking aspect of the reception centred on the work of Ravel, which inspired controversy and a broader questioning of the capacities of the critics to assess unfamiliar music. At the same time, the reviewers were concerned with a broader question of whether the organisers had in fact achieved their goal of showing the best of French music. This concern meant that the concerts were important because they formed a cumulative body of repertoire which provided a stage for a wide-ranging discussion. Critics writing for major newspapers such as the *Guardian*, *The Times,* the *Observer* and the *Daily Telegraph* offered an appraisal of the series as a whole while assessing the extent to which such concerts provided a comprehensive representation of French music.

As explained above, the purpose of the concerts was to show a range of music, both old and new, and as the years progressed the critics began to link together diverse elements in French music, including early music, the works of Franck and those influenced by him, and the modernism of Ravel and Debussy. In assessing the overall response to these concerts, I argue that Guéritte's efforts contributed to a new consideration of what was labelled by some critics as a French 'classical school.'[6]

Concerts and Personalities

[6] 'New French Music', *Manchester Guardian*, 17 January 1914.

There were more than eighty concerts that can be fitted within the broad label of the French Concerts. These include the eight concerts that Lucie Barbier organised in Manchester between 1907 and 1909 as well as the 28 concerts given in London by Guéritte under the name Société des concerts français.[7] The remainder of the concerts were organised by Guéritte in London and regional Britain but were mostly given under the auspices of existing musical organisations, such as the Classical Concerts Society, the Newcastle Classical Concerts Society and the Simpson Concerts of Edinburgh, rather than under the banner of the Société des concerts français. These different groups of concerts are summarised in the table below:

Type of Series	**Number of Concerts**	**Dates**	**Arranged by**
Manchester Series (known as French Concerts.)	8	December 1907 – March 1909	Barbier
A tour of five concerts given across Britain featuring the Parisian Quartet.	5	December 1907	Guéritte
Other concerts given in London and regional Britain, mostly under the name of existing societies. This category also includes the Parisian Quartet tour.	47	February 1907 – approximately June 1915	Guéritte
London Series (known as the Société des concerts français.)	28	1909–1915	Guéritte

At the centre of the French Concerts were three personalities, Madame Lucie Barbier and Tony Guéritte as direct organisers and Georges Jean-Aubry in the background as a kind of missionary for French music. Each came to the concerts with a very different background. Lucie Barbier, the organiser of the Manchester concerts,

[7] Jean-Aubry, *French Music of Today*, 237–58. Jean-Aubry states that a series of 30 concerts were given in London but I have not been able to locate the last two London concerts of 1915 that Jean-Aubry mentions. This could either be due to fewer reviews being published during the war, or Jean-Aubry could have confused two London concerts with earlier concerts given in London in 1907, as part of the first Parisian Quartet tour. As a result, my research suggests that there were 28 concerts staged in London under the title, Société des concerts français.

was the wife of a professor at Manchester University. She had trained in voice and piano at the Paris Conservatoire, and with the help of a fellow expatriate Adèle Guichard, she put together a series of eight French concerts between December 1907 and March 1909. Unlike Guéritte who staged concerts only with French musicians and composers, Barbier included some British composers and performers in her concerts. Her activities, first in Manchester and later in Wales, reflected a desire for a collaboration between British and French artists, as much as an impulse to promote French music. Barbier left Manchester for Aberystwyth in 1909 and continued to organise concerts once there. But although French works and artists were featured, they ceased to be primarily French concerts, as they often included German repertoire. Rather than an activity focused specifically on French music they were named the Musical Club of Wales and had a more general purpose.[8]

Tony Guéritte, the key actor for this thesis, was the most dynamic figure in promoting French music between 1907 and 1915. He had come to Britain as an agent for the engineer François Hennebique, who had invented a new method of building with steel and concrete known as 'Ferro Concrete'.[9] Guéritte lived in the north of England from 1900 and managed to promote interest in French music through a network of concert societies in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Sheffield, Leeds and other cities. There is little extant information on Guéritte, despite the fact that he seems to have single-handedly arranged almost every French Concert in this period with the exception of the Manchester series. One of the few sources, a brief biography detailing the outline of his career in the *Gloucester Citizen* discusses developments in reinforced concrete rather than his musical endeavours.[10] However, as a cheerleader

[8] Stonequist, 'The Musical Entente'.
[9] 'Notes on Current Events', *British Architect* 64, no. 25 (22 December 1905): 246–7.
[10] T.J. Guéritte', *Gloucester Citizen*, 18 June 1923, 17.

for French music, Guéritte did have a small presence in the press. He wrote letters to musical journals referencing his connection with Debussy as well as letters to the *Guardian* acknowledging Barbier's work on the Manchester concerts. The most revealing example was a 1918 letter published by the *Musical Times*, in which Guéritte discussed the finance and support necessary for arranging his long running concert series, and why the London concerts were able to continue for a long as they did.[11]

Georges Jean-Aubry was the brother-in-law of Guéritte. Born in Paris in 1882, Jean-Aubry contemplated a business career before deciding to devote his energies to promoting the artistic movements of the early twentieth century. He was a prominent figure in Le Havre in le Cercle de l'art moderne, which staged concerts of modern French music, as well as engaging in music criticism and translation.[12] Jean-Aubry was absorbed with the idea of Guéritte's concerts from the outset, even though he remained in France until 1919.[13] His role was primarily as a motivating force and as a propagandist for modern French music rather than as an organiser of specific events. His views are articulated in a book, *La Musique française d'aujourd' hui*, first published in France in 1916, which is a collection of essays on French music and musicians written over a ten-year period.[14] An English translation, *French Music of Today*, was published in 1919 and included a chapter added only for publication in Britain, titled, 'French Music in England'. This short chapter gives an insight into the

[11] TJ Guéritte, 'British Music in Paris', *Musical Times* 59, no. 905 (July 1918): 308–9.
[12] Jean-Aubry, *French Music of Today*, v–xxiv.
[13] Arthur Symons credits both Jean-Aubry and Guéritte with organising the tour of December 1907 which began in Newcastle. Symons, 'French Music in London', *Saturday Review* 104, no. 2720 (14 December 1907): 723–4.
[14] Georges Jean-Aubry, *La musique française d'aujourd'hui*, preface by M. Gabriel Fauré (Paris: Perrin, 1916).

author's motivations for promoting French music in Britain as well as providing some details related to the French Concerts.[15]

Jean-Aubry was not only engaged with modern French music; he was also interested in promoting Spanish, Russian and Italian movements in new music. This was partly inspired by his antipathy for German music, and his involvement in Guéritte's activities stemmed in part from a desire to challenge a culture in Britain that he saw as overwhelmingly German dominated. His antipathy was partly borne out of political reasons, as well as his distaste for the musical influence of Wagner and Brahms on music in the late nineteenth century. He was excited by the efforts of various nations to develop their own distinct musical cultures and was convinced that British music had long been stifled by German influences. His motivations for helping Guéritte were therefore as much to do with inspiring British composers to develop their own distinct tradition, as they were about spreading the influence of French music.[16] The objectives of the campaign, as outlined retrospectively in *French Music of Today*, were to show important developments in French music to British audiences, with an emphasis on modern works. Jean-Aubry hoped as well that British musicians, once they had sufficient exposure to such music performed by French artists, would eventually have the confidence to play modern French works themselves, and that these activities would inspire a 'school' of British composition, that could, alongside the French tradition, challenge German musical dominance.[17]

Past Scholarship

[15] Jean-Aubry, *French Music of Today*, 237–58.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Ibid.

There have been almost no studies focused specifically on the French Concerts, which have attracted surprisingly little academic attention. The one exception is an important, unpublished doctoral dissertation from 1972, T*he Musical Entente Cordiale: 1905–1916*, by Martha Elizabeth Stonequist. Stonequist's dissertation remains the most detailed examination of the French Concerts but, while an invaluable study, it has a number of limitations. First, it only provides a detailed account of Lucie Barbier's activities in Manchester, Wales and elsewhere. Stonequist was the granddaughter of Barbier and inherited an archive comprising letters from composers and musicians discussing programmes, repertoire, train timetables tickets, channel crossings, in short, everything necessary to bring about the Manchester French Concerts series. [18] Stonequist devotes several chapters of her thesis to the minutiae of the Manchester concerts before offering a basic overview of Guéritte's activities in London and regional Britain. She then proceeds to a general discussion of the reception of French music in Britain, focusing largely on Debussy, before returning to Barbier's activities after she moved to Aberystwyth and started up the Musical Club of Wales.

When it comes to Guéritte's concerts in London, which form the focus of my thesis, Stonequist provides few details. Aside from including a list of the most commonly played composers in the London series between 1909 and 1915, there is a noticeable lack of specific information about repertoire and performers. Even when Stonequist sets out to discuss the French Concerts in London, she offers instead a general examination of the performance of French repertoire in London and its reception. Because of this, the thesis often fails to disclose whether the performance

[18] The archive is now in the National Library of Wales. Lucie Barbier Letters, 1886-1921- 1972. GB 0210 MSLBarb, National Library of Wales Archives, Cardiff, UK.

under discussion was one of Guéritte's London concerts, a collaboration with another concert society, or unrelated to Guéritte's activities. Crucially, this lack of specific focus makes it impossible for Stonequist to assess the impact of the French Concerts on London musical life.

At the same time, Stonequist makes problematic claims about the cohesion of the wider effort designed to promote French music. The basic premise of the dissertation's argument is that there was a single organisation called the French Concerts Society, consisting of Jean-Aubry, Guéritte and Barbier and that all of these individuals worked together under the name of this society. In her words, 'a group of people in England formed the nucleus of what was to become officially designated, in 1907, La Société des Concerts Français, or the French Concerts Society'.[19] This was not the case. Rather Barbier and Guéritte's activities were only loosely connected. While there is evidence that they occasionally shared resources, they were not part of a unified organisation. All of this means that while Stonequist's thesis is an invaluable study of Barbier's collaboration with important composers and performers in Manchester and later Wales, it does not provide a detailed overview of Guéritte's most important achievement, the London Concert Series.

The French Concerts took place against the backdrop of the Entente Cordiale, a series of agreements signed between Britain and France in 1904. Stonequist, as the title of her dissertation suggests, asserts that the promotion of French music in Britain had a connection to the Entente Cordiale. However, she provides no evidence that this had any bearing on Guéritte or Barbier's motives in creating their concert societies;

[19] Stonequist, 'The Musical Entente', 14.

neither does she attempt to show in what way this political background might have affected the reception of the French Concerts.[20]

In addition to Stonequist's study, there are scattered references to the French Concerts in other works. Guéritte's activities are mentioned briefly in one study of Debussy's reception in Britain. In his chapter, 'The Reception of Debussy's Music in Britain up to 1914', Roger Nichols gives an account of Debussy's visits to England.[21] Nichols looks at Debussy's eight visits to Britain and traces some of the key moments in the composer's journey to prominence. His account covers the same period as the French Concerts, and Nichols acknowledges Guéritte's London concerts as a factor in the growing interest and appreciation of Debussy in Britain. While very valuable, Nichols provides a broad overview focused on Debussy whereas this thesis is concerned with detailed reviews of the concerts as a whole and their wider repertoire. A similar dynamic applies to scholarly discussions of Fauré in England. In his biography of Gabriel Fauré, Robert Orledge acknowledges Stonequist's thesis in his discussion of Fauré's visits to England.[22] He explains that the French Concerts attempted to promote Fauré, both in Manchester and London, but only with limited success.

The French Concerts were intended as an expression of the important developments in French music since 1871. Not surprisingly, scholarship on the Société nationale de musique, an organisation created to promote French composers, provides key background to the repertoire performed by the French Concerts. The success of César Franck was closely connected with the rise of the Société nationale,

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[20] Stonequist, 'The Musical Entente', 10-14.
[21] Roger Nichols, 'The Reception of Debussy's Music in England up to 1914', in *Debussy Studies*, ed. Richard Langham-Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 139–53.
[22] Robert Orledge, *Gabriel Fauré* (London: Eulenberg Books, 1979), 34–73.

and its history is explored by Laurence Davies in *César Franck and his Circle*.[23] Michael Strasser's doctoral dissertation, 'Ars Gallica: The Société Nationale de Musique and its Role in French Musical Life 1871–1891', focuses solely on the Société nationale, providing an examination of its origins, history, and internal politics.[24] Through a close study of previously unseen material in the archives of the Société nationale as well as the archive of the estate of Vincent d'Indy, Strasser has shown how particular events and individuals in the history of the Société, specifically the actions of d'Indy, were crucial in influencing the direction that French music took at the end of the nineteenth century, and thus played their part in the development of modernism in French music.

Another relevant area of scholarship to this thesis is the literature on British musical criticism and culture leading up to the First World War. Meiron Hughes and Robert Stradling's *The English Musical Renaissance: Constructing a National Music* provides vital background, detailing how a musical culture was created in England, through the efforts of George Grove and key public figures such as Stanford and Parry.[25] Crucially, it is their musical legacy that informs many of the prevailing critical attitudes that were to affect the initial reception of the French Concerts.[26] In his 2002 study, *The English Musical Renaissance and the Press, 1850–1914: Watchmen of Music*, Meiron Hughes looks specifically at the role of the press in the creation of a 'national music'.[27] He identifies *The Times*, the *Telegraph*, the *Musical*

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[23] Laurence Davies, *César Franck and His Circle* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1970).
[24] Michael Creasman Strasser, 'Ars Gallica: The Société Nationale de Musique and its Role in French Musical Life 1871–1891' (PhD Thesis, University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign, 1998).
[25] Meiron Hughes and Robert Stradling, *The English Musical Renaissance 1840–1940: Constructing a National Music*, 2nd ed. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001).
[26] This book has a controversial reputation. For a discussion of the reception of its first edition, see Britta Sweers, 'Review: The English Musical Renaissance and the Press 1850–1914: Watchmen of Music by Meiron Hughes', *The World of Music* 44 no. 2 (2002), 200–203.
[27] Meiron Hughes, *The English Musical Renaissance and the Press 1850–1914: The Watchmen of Music* (Aldershot, Ashgate, 2002).

Times, and the *Athenaeum* as the most influential publications involved in promoting the English Musical Renaissance. Hughes' detailed study of the critics, their musical background and their relationship with British music and the beginnings of modernism provides an important foundation for any examination of early-twentieth-century reception in Britain.

In an important chapter in an edited volume, *British Music and Modernism*, Matthew Riley considers many of the same figures, but he focuses on their attempts to come to terms with the new music of the twentieth century, largely through essays written in journals such as *Musical Times* and *Musical Quarterly*.[28] Fuller Maitland, Stanford and Parry, who he describes as 'liberal critics', are shown to be struggling to come to terms with the innovations of composers such as Strauss and Debussy, but the discussion remains general and does not consider reviews of the concerts organised by Guéritte. However, Riley's chapter does provide a framework for my discussion of some of the critical attitudes shown towards the French concerts. *British Music and Modernism* also includes Deborah Heckert's study of the early reception of Arnold Schoenberg in Britain, in which she examines how critics were forced to confront a new musical language, through the 1912 premiere of *Five Orchestral Pieces*.[29] The derision that this work inspired echoes the reaction to the works of Ravel, which were introduced by the French Concerts in 1907 and are discussed in Chapter Three.

By providing a focused discussion of the French Concerts' programmes and reviews, this thesis aims to move the discussion beyond Stonequist's close analysis of Barbier's activities as well as general discussions of individual composers to consider

[28] Matthew Riley, 'Liberal Critics and Modern Music in the Post-Victorian Age', in *British Music and Modernism, 1895–1960*, ed. Matthew Riley (Farnham: Ashgate Press, 2010), 13–29.
[29] Deborah Heckert, 'Schoenberg, Roger Fry and the Emergence of a Critical Language', in *British Music and Modernism*, ed. Riley, 49–64.

Guéritte's highly active role in promoting French music and the critical reception of the concerts he staged.

Methodology

Because they have never been analysed in detail before, there is only fragmentary knowledge about Guéritte's London concerts and their programmes have to be pieced together from multiple sources. In my research, it has frequently been necessary to consult a range of periodicals in order to ascertain the details of a single concert programme. In the absence of surviving programmes or other archival material, I have drawn on press reports to piece together the programmes of the London concert series, the five Parisian Quartet concerts of 1907, and the various other performances organised by Guéritte around Britain. The most commonly used sources were the *Observer*, the *Guardian*, *The Times*, the *Daily Telegraph* and a London weekly newspaper, the *Saturday Review*. I have also consulted Music journals including the *Musical Times*, the *Musical Standard* and the *Musical Herald* as well as other journals such as the *New Age* and the *Athenaeum***.** I was also able to discover four complete programmes in the André Mangeot archive at the Royal College of Music in London.[30]

Chapter outline

The thesis comprises three chapters. Chapter One looks at London concert life prior

[30] André Mangeot was a violinist who performed in Britain for thirty years and took part in four concerts for Guéritte's London series between 1910 and 1913. The catalog for this archive has been made available through a project aimed at cataloguing concert programs funded by the UK's Arts and Humanities Research Council. http://admin.concertprogrammes.org.uk

to the efforts to promote French music that commenced in 1907. The focus is on developments in chamber music between roughly 1900 and 1907. My goal is to identify key developments in concert organisations and common chamber repertoire before the advent of the French Concerts. Chapter Two looks at Guéritte's efforts to promote French music in Britain between 1907 and 1915 through the staging of numerous chamber concerts. I provide an overview of the repertoire, as well as a discussion of some of the most important performers who continued to return to Britain over this period. Guéritte pursued his cause with the help of numerous individuals and organisations and the chapter examines the ways in which he spread the cause of French music through lectures, the sharing of scores, and free tickets to concerts. Chapter Three discusses the reviews of the French Concerts and the ways in which the critics responded to the wide range of repertoire. This included, first and most dramatically, the reaction to the latest French music as manifested in the performance of works by Ravel, but the critics also wrestled with larger questions about the representative nature of the concerts. Finally, my conclusion will examine the critics' responses and consider them in the light of Jean-Aubry's ambitions for the French Concerts as well as questioning the extent to which the concerts furthered the cause of French music in Britain.

CHAPTER ONE: Music in London, 1900–1907

There is a vast amount of great piano music in existence; yet the programmes come pouring in week by week, and one would think there were no more than half a dozen piano composers and that they had each written not more than half a dozen pieces
– John Runciman, *Saturday Review*.[1]

In writings such as these, John Runciman, the noted critic, pleaded for a greater variety of composers and works. Although dramatic and perhaps overstated, his complaint was not without some justification. It was indeed the case that concerts in London in this period relied upon a small number of works such as the Beethoven Kreutzer sonata that were constantly repeated. However, small but important changes were beginning to take place in London concert halls from 1900 onwards. This chapter explores the gradual developments in chamber-music repertoire from roughly 1900 to 1907 when the French Concerts commenced. The focus is on the establishment of new series of concerts, and the promotion of a younger generation of composers. While I am interested primarily in chamber music, I also include those choral and orchestral works that fit into the context of the broader introduction of modern French music into London concert life. The extent to which any of the newer developments in French music were known by scholars and critics will also be examined. The overall goal of the chapter is to provide some context for Guéritte's efforts. Only by considering how British and especially London concert life looked in the early - twentieth century prior to these activities is it possible to understand the impact of the French Concerts when they arrived in 1907.

Musical life was thriving in London in the early-twentieth century and there was a continuous flow of concerts. This included a host of chamber-music concerts

[1] John F. Runciman, 'The Broadwood Concerts: Dr William Rea', *Saturday Review* 95, no. 2475 (4 April 1903): 420–1.

performed in venues suited to the smaller ensemble, including the recently opened Aeolian Hall and Bechstein Hall as well as more established venues such as Steinway Hall, Queen's Hall and St James's Hall.[2] Among the artists competing for attention in London chamber concerts were visiting virtuosi such as Pablo Sarasate, Mischa Elman, Fritz Kreisler, Raoul Pugno and Eugène Ysaÿe. British musicians appearing at these concerts included the pianists Leonard Borwick, Evelyn Suart and Fanny Davies. Finally, child virtuosi, normally violinists or pianists, were a common feature of such concerts, to the extent that in a review of Sybil Keymer's premiere of 1904, the *Musical Times* wearily lamented the appearance of 'yet another child violinist.'[3]

But across all this activity, there was, in line with Runciman's assessment, a core chamber-music repertoire that dominated. Beethoven was prominent in both solo piano and chamber concerts, while Brahms, Schumann and Schubert were also popular. Earlier composers included Mozart, Haydn, and occasionally Bach. The popularity of the core repertoire was frequently commented on by critics, and in 1901, the *Athenaeum* reviewer wondered whether audiences would ever tire of Beethoven and Schumann, writing that the 'public is content to listen over and over to standard works. The Beethoven Septet, the Kreutzer Sonata, the Schumann Quintet and other works seem as if they would prove joys for ever. How long the particular works named will really have a hold on the public we cannot say.'[4] However, as will be shown in this chapter, the standard repertoire was beginning to shift and expand from 1900, with specific developments in chamber music and the establishment of new concert series.

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[2] Cyril Erlich, Simon McVeigh, and Michael Musgrave, 'London: Concert Life', *Grove Music Online*, *Oxford Music Online* http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/23751 (accessed 1 November 2015).
[3] 'London and Suburban Concerts', *Musical Times* 45, no. 737 (1 July 1904): 466–7.
[4] 'The Week', *Athenaeum* 3827 (2 March 1901): 282–3.

Joachim and Ysaÿe

For much of the second half of the nineteenth century in London, serious chamber music had been dominated by the Hungarian violinist Joseph Joachim who chiefly performed the above core repertoire. He was succeeded by Ysaÿe, who began to introduce French music to British audiences. Joachim had played in the 'Monday Popular Concerts' in St James's Hall since 1859. These concerts were subsidised by the publishers Chappell and Boosey and were created in 1858 with the purpose of giving the public serious music at affordable prices.[5] Joachim was not so much celebrated for his virtuosity as for his unaffected and serious interpretation of some of the key chamber works of the nineteenth century. Regarded as one of the most significant violinists of his time, Joachim had several works written for him, among them the violin concertos of Schumann and Dvořák.

In England, Joachim performed both with his own quartet, the 'Joachim Quartet', and the resident quartet at St James's Hall. He also performed several times at the Popular Concerts with Clara Schumann at the piano. [6] Joachim's final performances at the Monday Popular Concerts took place during the 1888–1899 season, and for the following season his place was taken by his student, Professor Carl Halir, whose performances attracted a mixed response.[7] Yet Joachim continued to perform sporadically in London in what were called the 'Joachim Committee Concerts', largely focusing on Brahms, until his death in 1907. Joachim and his

[5] 'St James's Hall', *Musical World* 37, no. 27 (2 July 1859): 420.
[6] Beatrix Borchard, 'Joachim, Joseph', *Grove Music Online*, *Oxford Music Online*, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/14322 (accessed 12 August 2017).
[7] 'Saturday Popular Concerts', *Musical Standard* 13, no. 318 (3 February 1900): 74.

fellow performers had attracted an extraordinarily large and very loyal following. The result was that his retirement from the popular concerts was a significant loss for the Chappell brothers, as his withdrawal caused the concerts to lose a noticeable share of their audience. [8]

The second half of the 1900–1901 season was dominated by the Belgian violinist Eugène Ysaÿe, who performed frequently with his brother, the pianist Théophile Ysaÿe, as well as his own quartet, the Brussels Quartet. Ysaÿe also played with regular Popular Concert performers such as Evelyn Suart and Leonard Borwick. What was significant about Ysaÿe was that alongside the core Austro-Germanic repertoire he introduced new works to the Popular Concerts, notably by Franck and d'Indy.[9] The arrival of Ysaÿe attracted great interest, as the Popular Concerts had become an institution, and the Chappell brothers' decisions were, in line with their role as the creators and producers of these concerts, discussed with great seriousness by the key music journals. [10] Every new work performed was acknowledged and discussed with interest.

With the first performance of the Franck Quartet in D, the *Musical Times* reported that the 'concert of the preceding Saturday added to Mr William Chappell's repertory Cesar Franck's Quartet in D.'[11] It was widely acknowledged that Ysaÿe played an important role in introducing new music, and where Joachim was credited with bringing the chamber music of Brahms to the audiences of the Popular Concerts, 'M. Ysaÿe is now directing our attention to the Franco-Belgian school, of whom César Franck may be considered the founder and a M. Vincent d'Indy one of the chief

[8] 'Comments and Opinions', *Musical Standard* 17, no. 430 (29 March 1902): 195–7.
[9] 'The Week', *Athenaeum* 3827 (2 March 1901): 282–3.
[10] 'Saturday and Monday Popular Concerts', *Musical Times* 42, no. 697 (1 March 1901): 186.
[11] 'Saturday and Monday Popular Concerts', *Musical Times* 42, no. 699 (1 May 1901): 327.

representatives at the present day.'[12] In this way, Ysaÿe was representative of a turn towards French music that would gather speed with Guéritte's activities.

The beginning of the Broadwood Concerts

The Monday Popular Concerts ended in 1902 but their demise coincided with the establishment of a new series of concerts, the Broadwood Concerts. These are significant because they made an effort to introduce a new generation of British composers, hence revealing a shift in the concert landscape. This signalled in turn that chamber concerts in London were beginning to move beyond Runciman's critique of a limited and constantly recycled repertoire. The *Musical Standard* saw this new series as a replacement, commenting that 'These Broadwood concerts should certainly be a feature of London Musical life, and they should more than take the place of the discontinued Monday Popular Concerts.'[13] There were to be twelve concerts a year and the *Musical Standard* noted that as with the Popular Concerts, the ticket prices were affordable, with 'a good number of seats at one shilling.'[14]

The Broadwood concerts were underwritten by the piano makers as part of an effort to make the music accessible. According to the *Musical Standard*: 'The idea of the concerts is to create a healthier state of things in concert giving. At present young artists have to give concerts at their own risk (in most cases it means a loss of money). But the Broadwood Concerts are to be the means of enabling these artists to make a public appearance not only without cost but at some profit to themselves.'[15] Although there were other examples of subsidized concert series' at this time such as the South

[12] 'The Week', Athenaeum 3827 (2 March 1901): 282–3.
[13] 'Comments and Opinions', *Musical Standard* 18, no. 454 (13 September 1902): 155–7.
[14] Ibid.
[15] 'Comments and Opinions', *Musical Standard* 18, no. 452 (30 August 1902): 123–4.

Place Sunday Concerts, the majority of concerts charged high prices for tickets, which would benefit the few popular artists who were able to draw a large audience, but made it difficult for newcomers to establish themselves.

The Broadwood Concerts were also notable for their attempts to feature British works, and to provide a stage for a younger generation of composers. This stood in contrast with the Popular Concerts, which mostly relied on a small range of nineteenth-century composers. In a preview of the first season, the *Musical Standard* reported that alongside the distinguished composers Arthur Somervell and Charles Stanford, the prospective programme would include Ethyl Smyth and Vaughan Williams, who was described as 'a clever young musician of the Royal College of Music who has already won recognition of his undoubted talent.'[16]

The second season of these concerts continued the push for a new generation of British composers with the *Musical Times* commenting on 'the patriotic spirit which so pleasantly pervades the Broadwood Chamber Concerts.'[17] It featured a group of young composers who had studied together in Frankfurt and were starting to make a name for themselves. They included Cyril Scott, Roger Quilter, Balfour Gardiner and Norman O'Neill.

Alongside this interest in British composers, French music was also represented in the series. The pianist Evelyn Suart gave one of the earliest performances in Britain of the Debussy Toccata. Suart, a keen interpreter of modern music, specialized in the works of Cyril Scott and had given one of the first performances of Ravel's *Jeux d'eau* in 1904.[18] Percy Grainger, who was also part of the Frankfurt group, appeared in the 1905–1906 season of the Broadwood series,

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[16] 'Comments and Opinions', *Musical Standard* 18, no. 452 (30 August 1902): 123–4.
[17] 'Broadwood Concerts', *Musical Times* 44, no. 73 (1 December 1903): 808–9.
[18] 'Miss Evelyn Suart's Pianoforte Recital', *Musical Standard* 21, no. 540 (7 May 1904): 295–6.

having been engaged for four concerts. Only twenty-two at the time, he was on the brink of an extensive piano career in Britain. As a supporter of French and British music, it is likely that Grainger collaborated with Guéritte in London through the Classical Concerts Society.[19] Grainger gave some early performances of Debussy at the Broadwood Concerts, as well as performing Franck's *Prélude, Chorale and Fugue*.[20]

The Promotion of British Composers

Another series of concerts that promoted British music were those organised by Josef Holbrooke. Holbrooke's long-running series of concerts, which started in 1902, was established for the purpose of promoting new British music. They also featured his own compositions prominently. Holbrooke was vocal about what he saw as the apathy towards new music, and the continuing dominance of a few nineteenth-century composers in concert halls. His concerts took place at the Salle Érard, and were advertised as 'Josef Holbrooke's Modern Chamber Concerts.'[21]

In general, Holbrooke's efforts received a mixed reception. This was in part due to the varying standard of performance and on a number of occasions the singing was criticised. In one review the *Musical Standard* questioned whether the poor performance standard explained the disappointing audience numbers:

> Going by our knowledge of his chamber concerts, however he will do well to avoid engaging untrained singers to sing songs. On two occasions we heard execrable singing. No musician should condone it. Then again, the performances of the chamber music were not nearly finished enough. If the

[19] See for instance a review of an all French programme at the Classical Concerts Society with Percy Grainger. G.H. Clutsam, 'Music: The Wagner Symphony', *Observer*, 19 February 1911. Stonequist also lists Grainger as one of the supporters of the French Concerts. Martha Elizabeth Stonequist, 'The Musical Entente Cordiale: 1905–1916' (PhD Thesis, University of Colorado at Boulder, 1972), 316.
[20] 'Broadwood Concerts', *Musical Standard* 24, no. 623 (9 December 1905): 375.
[21] 'Advertisement', *Musical Standard* 21, no. 547 (25 June 1904): iii.

> musical public have not supported Mr Holbrooke's concerts generously, that public, as will be understood, is far from being highly blameworthy.[22]

A second problem for Holbrooke's concerts centred on the performance of his own compositions. His chamber music was considerably less well received than his orchestral works, and in assessing a concert for July 1904 the *Musical Standard* commented that 'Mr Holbrooke has yet to prove a gift for the writing of chamber music. As a composer of orchestral music, the case is very different.'[23]

Holbrooke's concerts ran until the start of the First World War. Despite their uneven standard, they were widely acknowledged for their role in promoting a younger generation of composers. In an article in *Musical Opinion*, Constance Smedley singled out both Holbrooke and the Broadwood Concerts for their efforts to support British chamber music, writing that:

> …the chamber concerts of modern British music, which with unrivalled pluck he has carried through for the last three years at the Salle Erard have met with deserved success. At these concerts and at those inaugurated by Messrs Broadwood many fine examples of the neglected English chamber music have been brought to the public ear. Rutland Boughton, Farjeon, Nicholls, Walthew and Ashton are some of the best-known names whose work has been performed there with the addition of course of Holbrooke himself, William Wallace, Granville Bantock, Cyril Scott and others.[24]

Of the older generation of British composers, Stanford, Parry and Alexander Mackenzie were still prominent in musical life, and could rely on getting their compositions heard.[25] Elgar was at the height of his fame in the early-twentieth century and had recently found great success with the *Enigma Variations.* At this

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[22] 'Comments and Opinions', *Musical Standard* 25, no. 628 (13 January 1906): 19–20.
[23] 'Some Events of the Week', *Musical Standard* 22, no. 549 (9 July 1904): 20.
[24] Constance Smedley, 'A Renaissance in British Music', *Musical Opinion and Music Trade Review* 29, no. 337 (October 1905): 29.
[25] See for example a summary of concerts in March 1905. Parry conducted the London Symphony Orchestra in a performance of his own Symphonic Variations, as well as conducting Stanford's violin concerto in D. In the same month Alexander Mackenzie conducted the Royal Choral Society in a premiere of his Cantata *The Witches Daughter*. 'Revisor', *Monthly Musical Record* 35, no. 411 (1 March 1905): 56–7.

time, Elgar was seen as part of a younger generation, and often included in discussions about a younger British 'school', as well as being promoted through Josef Holbrooke's concerts. Viewed as a whole such examples show that the British concert system was relatively dynamic in this period, featuring older and more modern British composers.

Knowledge of French music in Britain

Up until the twentieth century, knowledge of French music in Britain was largely limited to the 'Romantic' generation of composers. The names of Gounod, Massenet and Auber were familiar to music lovers, and Saint-Saëns was a popular figure. A favourite of the Queen, he visited London frequently, often performing his own works. As a mark of his reputation, he was awarded honorary degrees from Oxford and Cambridge.[26] By the early twentieth century, there was considerable interest in musical developments in France specifically the developments in composition that were promoted through the Société nationale, and its most important members, César Franck and Vincent d'Indy. Many of these developments were reported second-hand, through reviews of concerts in Paris, but also through the translation of French articles from journals such as *La Revue Wagnerienne*, *Le Ménestrel*, *Le Courier musical*, and *le Monde musical*. Considerable attention was paid not just to the music itself, but to a larger discussion of how to define the various trends in French music, and what it meant to be a French composer, in contrast to a German Romantic composer.[27]

[26] It is arguable whether Saint Saëns represented the renaissance in French music that started with the founding of the Société nationale in 1871. Saint-Saëns was performed several times through the French Concerts and this issue of his connection to the French 'school' was discussed by several critics.
[27] See for instance, d'Indy's thoughts on French music in the *Musical Standard*. 'Miscellaneous

Two composers who were important in the Société nationale, Franck and Fauré, were already known in Britain at the beginning of the twentieth century. The works of Franck had made some small inroads into the repertoire, spanning orchestral, choral, organ and chamber music. Henry Wood had championed the Symphonic Variations and the Piano Quintet in F had been mostly performed by the Brodsky quartet with Busoni.[28] Both Busoni and Harold Bauer had performed the *Prélude chorale and fugue for* piano.[29]

Fauré was less renowned than Franck, as he was not known for any orchestral or choral works. However, his songs had occasionally been included in British recitals without much comment or controversy since the late nineteenth century.[30] During his tenure at the Popular Concerts, Ysaÿe had included Fauré's Quartet in C in his programme, as well as works by Vieuxtemps and Saint-Saëns.[31] Despite his high profile in France, Vincent d'Indy saw little of his chamber music performed before the French concerts arrived in 1907. Before taking on the Popular Concerts in 1901, Ysaÿe had spent a period as a conductor for a series of concerts in 1900 at the Queen's Hall, where he introduced excerpts from d'Indy's *Fervaal* and *Istar,* as well as Duparc's Symphonic poem *Lénore* and Lekeu's *Adagio*.[32] Viewed as a whole, most British knowledge of d'Indy's repertoire seemed to come from reports and reviews in French journals, which were subsequently paraphrased and translated in the British press.[33] The lack of direct familiarity with d'Indy is seen in a review of a performance of his symphonic work *Wallenstein* in 1902, where the critic of the

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Matters', *Musical Standard* 21, no. 537 (16 April 1904): 254.
[28] 'Second Concert of the Brodsky Quartet', *Manchester Guardian*, 3 December1903.
[29] R. Peggio, 'Concert Room Impressions', *Musical Standard* 17, no. 425 (22 February 1902): 116–17.
[30] Robert Orledge, *Gabriel Fauré* (London: Eulenberg Books, 1979). Here Orledge discusses Fauré's reputation as a salon composer, and the fact that in England, as in France, he was mostly known for a few early songs.
[31] 'Saturday Popular Concerts', *Musical Standard* 13, no. 319 (10 February 1900): 88.
[32] 'Comments and Opinions', *Musical Standard* 14, no. 358 (10 November 1900): 287–9.
[33] 'German Influence on French Music', *Musical Standard* 19, no. 482 (28 March 1903): 198–9.

Musical Standard expressed his dislike of the work, but acknowledged the composer's reputation, stating: 'D'Indy may be an important composer, (I do not know enough about his music to write down an definite opinion), and one must hope that Wallenstein is far from representing the best he can do, despite all claims to originality.'[34]

The progress of Debussy in Britain and 'modern' French music.

Of the next generation of French music, that is Debussy, Ravel, and de Séverac, only Debussy was beginning to make a real impact in Britain from 1903. Pianists such as Fanny Davies, Mary Cracroft, Leonard Borwick and Evelyn Suart had begun to include his early piano works in their recitals, but it was the performance of two particular works, *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* and the Quartet in G minor opus 10, that attracted attention and some controversy.

The *Prélude*, which was published in 1894, was considered by many to represent a radical development in orchestral composition. The work was brought to London by Henry Wood for the 1904 Promenade season at the Queen's Hall and had done much to establish Wood's reputation as a pioneering conductor. [35] An *Observer* review of the *Prélude*'s second performance in 1904, however, rejected the work outright. According to the critic, it 'improved a little on further acquaintance, but still remains comparatively meaningless music. One begins to be quite tired of asking when composers will cease to strive after the impossible. They must, we suppose, be

[34] 'Concert Room Impressions', *Musical Standard* 18, no. 456 (27 September 1902): 189.
[35] Henry Wood, *My Life of Music* (London: Victor Gollancz Limited, 1938).

left to learn their lesson by continued failure; but it is impossible not to grieve over so much wasted energy.'[36]

Henry Wood continued to perform the work in London and by 1907 it had become more familiar, if still controversial. A review in the *Musical Standard* indicated that it was still far from gaining acceptance:

> In perfect contrast to this came the Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune by Debussy, whose style distinctly recalls and yet in certain particulars distinctly differs from that of César Franck. The work is now familiar to Londoners and its indeterminate style has given rise to the usual clash of conflicting opinions. Certainly, coming after the robust and direct compositions of Sibelius its phraseology seemed too subtle, too delicate for the powers of sensibility of the generality. Its appeal must be to few, and these, I am afraid, of the neurotic type.[37]

Debussy's String Quartet in G minor was published in 1892, but its first performance was not given until 1897 by Ysaÿe with the Brussels Quartet although he did not perform this work at the Popular Concerts. The quartet was first performed in Britain in 1905 by the Kruse Quartet. It was quickly taken up by other quartets such as the Nora Clench Quartet and the Edith Robinson Quartet, and by 1907 was seen as an acceptable inclusion in the chamber-music repertoire.[38] The Edith Robinson Quartet's interpretation was reviewed by the *Guardian*. The review itself is significant because it showed an acceptance and appreciation of the music itself, even if its author found the performance lacking, stating that the work 'demands a lyrical sweep such as is required for Chopin, and the faculty of harmonious blending developed to the highest degree. All these things were missing in last night's performance.'[39]

Attitudes to Modern French Music and the English Musical Renaissance.

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[36] 'Yesterday's Concerts', *Observer*, 27 November 1904.
[37] 'Queen's Hall Orchestra Symphony Concerts', *Musical Standard* 27, no. 682 (26 January 1907): 59.
[38] 'Our London Correspondence', *Manchester Guardian*, 6 February 1906.
[39] 'Miss Edith Robinson's Quartet Concert', *Guardian*, 3 November 1906.

Some of the most prominent figures in British music at this time including Charles Stanford, Hubert Parry, Alexander Mackenzie and the scholar and chief critic of *The Times*, J.A. Fuller Maitland, reacted poorly to recent French music, particularly the works of Ravel and Debussy. This response can be seen as part of a wider resistance to all new music. Stanford, Parry, Mackenzie and Fuller Maitland, together with Sir George Grove, had together built what became known as the 'English Musical Renaissance' in the 1880s, a period during which new musical institutions were formed, and musical scholarship flourished, partly through the creation and ongoing expansion of the *Grove Dictionary of Music*, as well as the revival of early English music.[40]

Having done much to raise the status of music in England, they were nevertheless, by the start of the twentieth century, attached to an ideal of music that rapidly appeared out of date. Hughes and Stradling described how the repertoire promoted by such figures was centred on the composers analysed in Grove's Dictionary 'The Three Bs' [Bach, Beethoven and Brahms] as well as Schubert, Mendelsohn and Schumann.' They concluded that this ideology prevailed in the first decade of the century, explaining that 'For the time being, at least, the German tradition remained unassailable in terms of the study curriculum and performance repertoire.'[41] As discussed by Matthew Riley in his 2010 chapter on the 'liberal critics', many of the chief figures of the English Musical Renaissance publicly resisted the newer musical developments of the early twentieth century. Riley describes how Stanford, then the principal of the Royal College of Music, attempted

[40] Robert Stradling and Meiron Hughes, *The English Musical Renaissance 1860–1940* (New York: Routledge, 1993).
[41] Stradling and Hughes, *The English Musical Renaissance*, 45.

to lampoon contemporary composers that he disapproved of in a composition entitled *Ode to Dischord*, written in 1908:

> Dischord and Anarchy are evoked in the Ode by instruments such as the hydrophone and wind machine, the use of whole-tone scales, augmented triads, consecutive fifths, diffuse rhythm and phrase structure, ambiguous harmony, large melodic intervals, unvaried repetition, extremes of instrumental register, and unusual instrumental combinations. The targets of the Ode appear to be Berlioz, Strauss and Debussy, although Stanford may have had Elgar- whose First Symphony had recently been premiered and which Stanford disliked- in his sights too.[42]

The principal of the Royal Academy of Music, Alexander Mackenzie, showed an interest in French music. In an illustrated lecture to the Royal Society in 1907, he discussed the music of nineteenth-century France, and analysed the music of Franck and his followers. Yet he revealed a clear antipathy when he turned to modern French music. His introduction to the audience of excerpts of Ravel's piano music was paraphrased in the *Musical Herald*:

> Mr. York Bowen now played pieces in which the peculiarities spoken of were developed. Only an advanced artist like this player could interpret such difficult music, and even with the best interpretation the appeal seemed to fail. Speaking of the titles of the pieces, Sir A. C Mackenzie slyly said they were usually headed "An evening by the pond," "A corner of the cemetery," or "Sad Birds" (laughter). This style of composition as a whole left one unsatisfied and empty as Shacabac after Barmicide's feast, as if one had been listening not to music, but to its "spook" (laughter). Many of the newer followers were indistinct and erratic in their pieces. In the concrete it was distinctly sad music, sometimes dull to boot.[43]

This lecture was likely to be the first encounter with Ravel for many members of the audience since almost nothing of Ravel had been heard in British Concert Halls prior to this. It revealed a general resistance to modern French music in certain quarters of

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[42] Matthew Riley, 'Liberal Critics and Modern Music in the Post Victorian Age', *British Music and Modernism, 1895–1960*, ed. Matthew Riley (Farnham: Ashgate Press, 2010). See also *Sir Arthur Somervell on Musical Education* which reveals something about the values that prevailed, describing 'the Stanford Parry project, which aimed for more and better music in England, and more and better English music, but firmly within the Schumann–Brahms tradition'. *Sir Arthur Somervell on Music Education: His Writings, Speeches and Letters*, ed. Gordon Cox (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2003), 35.

[43] 'Phases of Modern French Music', *Musical Herald* 708 (1 March 1907): 74–5.

the musical establishment.[44] Many critics were, however, tired of the standard German repertoire and appreciated the need for new works. They responded by showing an interest in new music, both British and French. Nevertheless, for the general audience, there was little first-hand knowledge of new developments in French music. Although the music of Debussy, Franck and Fauré had made some headway in London, French music was still on the fringes of concert life, and it was not until Guéritte and Jean-Aubry's French Concerts that a more extensive range of music could be heard for the first time. *The Times* review of the first French Concerts in London noted that despite the fact that they had not heard most of the works performed, the music arrived with something of a reputation. The reviewer explained that 'Such playing and singing as we have heard at these two concerts are quite the best introduction that anyone could desire to those works of which we have both heard so much and heard so little.'[45]

[44] Stanford conducted Debussy's *Blessed Damozel* at the 2010 Leeds Festival, and described the work as 'fascinating.' Jeremy Dibble, *Charles Villiers Stanford: Man and Musician,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2002), 388.
[45] 'Concerts', *The Times*, 9 December 1907.

CHAPTER TWO: Guéritte and Barbier's Chamber Concerts

It was therefore impossible to accomplish interesting results, save by co-ordinating efforts, and establishing collective action, spread over several years, for the purpose of developing methodically among musicians, professional and amateur, a knowledge of our national music - Georges Jean-Aubry, *French Music of Today*[1]

For Jean-Aubry and Guéritte, the need to challenge the German dominance of musical life in Britain required both sustained activity and new alliances. In his writings, Jean-Aubry described a plan of action for spreading awareness of French music throughout Britain. This was achieved through the staging of multiple concerts with the help of varied organisations and individuals that displayed a particular interest in French music. This chapter examines the concrete ways in which Guéritte was able to promote French works. The primary focus will be the series of concerts given in London between 1909 and 1915, but I will also examine Guéritte's efforts in regional Britain where he was aided by existing concert organisations and networks. The previous chapter has considered music in Britain up to 1907. In this chapter, I shift focus to examine to how the musical environment had changed by the time that the concerts had finished in 1915. I conclude by looking at the effect of the First World War on Guéritte's concerts, as well as examining other musical developments that had emerged by this time.

Madame Barbier and the Manchester Concerts

The very first French Concert was organised by Madame Barbier, as part of a series of concerts given in Manchester. Barbier was part of a sizeable French Community

[1] Georges Jean-Aubry, *French Music of Today*, 4th ed., trans. Edwin Evans (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1926), 243.

who were largely involved in the textiles industry. She was keen to bring French music to Manchester and had kept abreast of the latest musical developments in France. Along with her friend Adèle Guichard, Barbier served as the executive secretary of the Manchester concerts, and was responsible for organising most of the practical details necessary to bring about these concerts.[2] She managed constantly changing programmes and artists while resolving misunderstandings about concert dates, channel crossings, and train tickets. The concerts took place at the Midland Hall, and several concerts were preceded by lectures given in French at Manchester University by Madame Barbier. Since it is difficult to imagine that this was the best way to educate the local audience about French music, it suggests that Barbier was more concerned with engaging with the French community than with attracting a British audience.

Barbier started her campaign with the support of some of the most important and influential figures in Manchester. The preliminary brochure for the first season of the Manchester Concerts listed as its honorary presidents the French consul in Manchester, the Lord Mayor of Manchester and the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Manchester.[3] Barbier attempted to get the support of Hans Richter, the conductor of the Hallé orchestra, but he politely declined, saying that he received far too many such requests.[4] Barbier's aims for the concerts were clear from the statement in the brochure, which noted that 'A series of Three French Concerts has been arranged for this Season under the patronage of the French Ambassador, Mr. Paul Cambon. Their object is to give the musical public of Manchester an opportunity of hearing French

[2] Martha Elizabeth Stonequist, 'The Musical Entente Cordiale: 1905–1916' (PhD Thesis, University of Colorado at Boulder, 1972). See the introduction for a discussion of the archive left to Stonequist by Barbier.
[3] Stonequist, 'The Musical Entente', 40.
[4] Stonequist, 'The Musical Entente', 102.

music, more especially contemporary music, interpreted when possible by the composers themselves.'[5]

In the eight concerts, which took place between December 1907 and March 1909, Barbier was able to present a range of repertoire which included early music; Romantic composers, represented by Lalo and Saint-Saëns; the group of d'Indy and Franck; more contemporary composers, such as Reynaldo Hahn and Fauré; and those considered to be at the forefront of modernism in French music, such as Debussy and Henri Février. A significant number of the composers featured appeared in person to play their works, including Saint-Saëns, d'Indy, Février and Fauré. (see Table 1).

Table 1: Manchester Concerts Repertoire (excluding early music)

Composer	**No. in Series**
Paul Bazelaire*	1
Ernest Chausson	8
Debussy	7
Henri Duparc	1, 8
Fauré*	2, 6
Henri Février*	2
Franck	8
César Geloso*	1
Reynaldo Hahn*	3
Vincent d'Indy*	8
Edouard Lalo	1
Saint-Saëns*	1, 4
Ethyl Smyth*	6

*These composers appeared in person at the concerts.

As shown in Table 2 below, Barbier was also keen to show a range of seventeenth and eighteenth-century French works. Over half of the repertoire of the Manchester concerts was devoted either entirely, or largely to early composers, many virtually

[5] Stonequist, 'The Musical Entente', 41.

unknown in Britain.

Table 2: Early French Composers, Manchester Concerts

Composer	Concert number
Aubert	5
Blavet	3
Boismortier	5
Caix d'Hervelois	3, 5
François Couperin	5
Daquin	2
Gervaise	5
Leclair	5
Lully	3
Marais	3
Rameau	1, 2, 3, 5
Rousseau	5

Barbier was, moreover, keen to promote an alliance between English and French musicians, and in the sixth concert Ethyl Smyth shared a programme with Fauré, with his Quartet in C being performed by the Catterall Quartet. This was possibly the only concert out of the 80 mentioned by Jean-Aubry to include an English composer.[6]

The last Manchester concert was given in March 1909, and featured Vincent d'Indy in person. One feature of the concerts was to include several of the works of the students of Franck together, a practice that was also followed by Guéritte's London Concerts. The March 1909 concert featured Franck's *Prélude chorale and fugue*, a Trio by d'Indy, and songs of Duparc and Chausson who were both devoted students of Franck.[7] Among the numerous composers who appeared in person at Barbier's concerts, the presence of Saint-Saëns in the fourth concert of April 1908

[6] In Chapter Two of her dissertation, Stonequist discusses how Ethyl Smyth proved difficult to work with—Arthur Catterall wrote to Madame Barbier after the concert, vowing never work with her again. Stonequist, 'The Musical Entente', 147-48.
[7] 'The French Concerts', *Manchester Guardian,* 9 March 1909.

was guaranteed to attract attention.[8] The *Guardian* advertised this event heavily, since, as already mentioned, Saint-Saëns was, unlike most of the other composers featured, frequently performed in Britain, and was a popular romantic composer.

In the final assessment, Barbier attracted some important names to Manchester, and managed to present a diverse range of music, from early music to the compositions of Février, who was little known, and does not seem to have been promoted by the French Concerts after this concert. Also notable was the fact that the Ethyl Smith/Fauré concert was a collaboration with local musicians, as Arthur Catterall of the Catterall quartet was also a professor of violin at the Royal Manchester College of Music. Despite Manchester being musically German-dominated, Barbier, in the end did not lack support from the local musicians and, with the exception of Hans Richter, she managed to draw support from the Manchester musical establishment for her concerts.[9]

In general, and with the important exceptions of Debussy and Février, Barbier did not, by any fair measure, fulfil her stated objective of showcasing contemporary French music. Instead she devoted much space to early music, and to providing a platform for little-known composers such as César Geloso (1867–1960) who was compared to Chopin, rather than to composers at the forefront of modern French music.[10] Their impact was limited as well by the brevity of their duration. The concerts stopped after less than two years. There were no French Concerts in Manchester after March 1909 and Barbier moved to University College Wales (now known as Aberystwyth University) with her husband at this time. She continued to organise concerts in her role as the director of the University College of Wales Music

[8] [Classified Ad 44, No Title], *Guardian,* 30 April 1908.
[9] Music in Manchester was dominated by The Hallé Orchestra, for many years conducted by the celebrated Hans Richter, who was known to be musically conservative.
[10] Feruccio Bonavia, 'The First French Concert', *Manchester Guardian*, 3 December 1907.

Club.

There seem to have been no other efforts to promote French chamber music in Manchester after Barbier left. It can only be assumed that there was no one in Manchester who could fulfil a comparable role, and although Barbier maintained her connections with French composers and musicians while in Wales, there is no evidence that she collaborated with Guéritte and Jean-Aubry. Regarding Barbier's role in the Manchester Concerts, Stonequist states that 'it was through Mme. Barbier that most of the French composers and performers were persuaded to participate at the French Concerts in Manchester.'[11] There is, however, evidence that Guéritte was active in neighbouring Bowden and Southport where concerts featured the Parisian Quartet in all-French programmes.[12]

In his chapter on the French concerts, Jean-Aubry acknowledges numerous individuals by name, who helped to promote French music in Britain between 1907 and 1915, as well as listing the towns and cities in regional Britain which had French concerts.[13] He does not, however, mention either the important work done by Barbier or Manchester itself. In doing so, Jean-Aubry had seemingly erased this part of the history of the French Concerts. While we cannot know for sure, this might suggest some sort of falling out with Barbier.

Tony Guéritte

Just one day after the Manchester concerts began in late 1907, the first in a British tour of five contemporary French music concerts organised by Guéritte took place in

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[11] Stonequist, 'The Musical Entente', 164.
[12] 'The Parisian Quartet at the Southport Chamber Concert', *Manchester Guardian*, 29 March 1912. Although Southport is closer to Liverpool, it was popular with the wealthier Manchester residents, being the nearest seaside resort. The Southport Chamber Concerts were organised and often financed by Manchester merchant Charles Brumm. 'Manchester and District', *Musical Times* 54 no.848 (October 1913): 676-77.
[13] Jean-Aubry, *French Music of Today,* 237–58.

Newcastle. Born in 1875, Guéritte left France to work in Newcastle in 1899.[14] It was there that Guéritte first started to promote French music, spending seven years in Newcastle before moving to London to take up a directorship of Hennebique's London headquarters.[15] During his time in the North of England, Guéritte had made numerous connections with regional musical societies. According to Jean-Aubry, Guéritte contacted provincial music teachers, asking them to consider new French works, giving them concert tickets and providing them with scores. [16] One of Guéritte's most successful collaborations was with W.H. Gillies Whittaker, a professor at Armstrong College (now part of Newcastle University.) A prominent local conductor, composer and pianist, Whittaker took up Guéritte's cause with enthusiasm.

According to Jean-Aubry, Whittaker was 'Associated with the activities of the Society from its inception, and supplied with information by its founder, he succeeded, by means of systematic courses of lectures with music, in making of Newcastle a centre in which there is an intimate knowledge of modern French music in all its developments.'[17] Whittaker also frequently gave lectures on French music, for organisations such as the Incorporated Society of Musicians and the Working Mens Association.[18]

Guéritte's tour of December 1907 began in the Westgate Assembly Rooms in Newcastle under the auspices of the Newcastle Classical Concerts Society. A similar programme was then performed in Leeds and Sheffield, with the final two concerts taking place in London. This group of concerts presented repertoire that was largely

[14] 'T.J. Guéritte', *Gloucester Citizen*, 18 June 1923, 17.
[15] See the introduction for information on Hennebique.
[16] Jean-Aubry, *French Music of Today*, 237–58.
[17] Jean-Aubry, *French Music of Today*, 246.
[18] 'Notes', *Newcastle Journal*, 15 February 1915.

contemporary. The two London concerts, which took place in Leighton House and Bechstein Hall, were widely reviewed by national newspapers and music journals. They are shown here as they represent most of the repertoire performed over the five concerts (see Table 3 and Table 4)Table 3. Much of this music had never been heard in Britain before, and these concerts can be credited with introducing the audience to some of the most recent works of Ravel, notably the string quartet, and *Alborada del gracioso* for piano.

Table 3: Leighton House Concert, 6 December 1907

Composer	**Work**	**Instrument/Voice**
Ernest Chausson	Quartet	Piano and Strings
Debussy	*Il pleure dans mon coeur*	Voice
Henri Duparc	*Phydilé*	Voice
Ravel	*Vallées des cloches, Jeux d'eau, Pavane* Quartet	Piano Strings
Albert Roussel	*Le jardin mouillé*	Voice
Florent Schmitt	*Brises*	Piano
De Séverac	*En Languedoc*	Piano

Table 4: Bechstein Hall Concert, 7 December 1907

Composer	**Works**	**Instrument/Voice**
Ernest Chausson	*Paysage,* *La chanson perpetuelle*.	Piano Voice
Debussy	Quartet in G *Toccata*	Strings Piano
Henri Duparc	*L'Invitation au voyage*	Voice
Fauré	Quartet in C *Impromptu* *Clair de lune, La fée aux chansons*.	Piano and Strings Piano Voice
D'Indy	*Lac vert*	Piano
Ravel	*Jeux d'eau, Alborada del gracioso.*	Piano

These concerts introduced the Parisian Quartet to British audiences. This string quartet was made up of four musicians who had all been born in the early 1870s and had all studied at the Paris Conservatoire. Gabriel Willaume, the leader, had obtained first prize at the Conservatoire and was now leader of the Concerts de

Conservatoire.[19] The second violinist, Georges Morel, had been educated at the Lille Conservatoire before studying in Paris, and played for the Opéra Comique. Emile Macon, viola, had also taken first prize at the Conservatoire, and was engaged by the Opéra Comique. The cellist was Louis Feuillard, who held a position as soloist for the Concerts Colonne. In 1909, the *Musical Standard* published a feature on the quartet, emphasising their expertise in contemporary French music. It explained that 'For the last few years he [Macon] and his three friends of the quartet have specialised to a great extent in the interpretation of the works of the modern French school, of which they are now considered the leading exponents.'[20]

Ricardo Viñes also made his British debut at these concerts. He was once described by Poulenc as 'the only virtuoso to play French music', perhaps an allusion to the more traditional repertoire for a concert pianist of such skill, such as the works of Liszt. His presence in Britain was significant, as he was the leading authority on contemporary French piano music and had given many first performances of the works of Ravel and Debussy.[21] Viñes went on to become a frequent presence in the Guéritte's London Series of 1909–1915, specifically as an interpreter of the piano works of Ravel and Debussy.

After Guéritte's initial burst of activity with the Parisian Quartet concerts in 1907, he did not appear to have arranged many concerts the following year. The programme of the fifth Manchester concert of 28 October 1908, which was devoted to early French composers, was repeated the following night at a concert of the Newcastle Classical Concerts Society, which suggests that some resources were

[19] The Concerts de Conservatoire had been running since the early nineteenth century, and took place, as the name suggests, at the Paris Conservatoire. These concerts were initially devoted exclusively to the symphonies of Beethoven, but later broadened their repertoire.
[20] 'The Parisian Quartet', *Musical Standard* 31, no. 796 (3 April 1909).
[21] Henri Hell, *Francis Poulenc*, trans. Edward Lockspeiser (London: John Calder, 1959), 3–4.

shared between Barbier and Guéritte.[22] There were numerous advertisements for a Parisian Quartet Concert to be held in Edinburgh in the following November, under the auspices of The Simpson Concerts of Edinburgh, but I have not been able to find any record of this concert actually taking place.[23]

In December 1908, Guéritte wrote a lecture on *Pelléas et Mélisande*, probably in preparation for the London debut of the opera at Covent Garden in May of the following year. *Pelléas* was an event of some importance, and attracted great interest in the press, with the *Guardian* critic stating that 'No work has been more eagerly expected at Covent Garden than Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande*.' [24] The opera had gained considerable acclaim as well as controversy since its premiere in Paris in 1902. Romain Rolland identified it in 1908 as a turning point in opera, and a crucial event in French music history.[25] Guéritte's lecture was delivered in Leeds by one Arthur Grimshaw, and illustrated by the singers Jane Bathori and Emile Engel, who were resident singers at the Paris Opéra Comique, and were to become regular performers for the French concerts.[26] This lecture was repeated in Edinburgh in March of the following year, this time given by Guéritte himself, with Bathori and Engel again providing the musical examples.[27]

The pair also provided illustrations for another lecture on *Pelléas* given by Edwin Evans on 25 May 1909, just five days after the premiere of the opera, which attracted great interest in the press. Evans' lecture was reproduced in the *Musical*

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[22] Stonequist, 'The Musical Entente', 184.
[23] It is possible that this concert was cancelled, as it did not attract the necessary subscription fees in advance. Advertisements for forthcoming concerts in this period often had the proviso: 'subject to satisfactory subscriptions'.
[24] 'Music in London: Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande'*, *Manchester Guardian*, 22 May 1909.
[25] Romain Roland, *French Music of Today*, trans Mary Blaiklock (London: Henry Holt and Company, 1914), 234.
[26] 'Pelléas et Mélisande', *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 9 December 1908, 6.
[27] 'Music', *Dundee Courier*, 31 March 1909, 5.

Standard, which listed all the organisations, including Guéritte's 'Société des concerts français', that were involved in the event:

> [A Lecture delivered by Mr. Edwin Evans Junior, before the Concert-Goers Club, the Play-Goers Club, and the Society of British Composers, in combination with the Société des Concerts Français, on Tuesday evening, May 25, 1909, at the Royal Academy of Music. Chairman: Lord Alverstone, President of the Concert-Goers' Club.[28]

Evans had begun his advocacy of French music independently of Guéritte's activities, and his first lecture on modern French music had taken place in January 1908, under the auspices of the Concert-Goer's Club, with musical examples given by Hamilton Harty.[29] Jean-Aubry describes the association of the two men in a tribute to Evans:

> Mr Edwin Evans, a man of enthusiastic and courageous spirit, whose knowledge of France and of the French language facilitated his penetration of French music, and who takes a somewhat rare joy in expressing his thoughts without reservation, was the first to take up in London, by means of lectures and articles, the campaign which was them being conducted by M. Guéritte in Newcastle, a coincidence of effort that inevitably brought them into close association when the French organisation removed to London.[30]

Evans regularly lectured on French music, and Jean-Aubry explained that Guéritte frequently collaborated with Evans, by means of illustrated lectures, normally under the auspices of the three societies listed in Table 8. For example, in early 1910 Edwin Evans gave an address focused on French composers at the annual conference of the Incorporated Society of Musicians, in Folkestone. This lecture was illustrated with examples by the Parisian Quartet, who then gave a concert in the evening as part of the same event.[31]

The London Concerts

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[28] 'Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande*', *Musical Standard* 31, no. 805 (5 June 1909): 361–4.
[29] 'Some Aspects of Modern French Music', *Musical Herald*, 1 February 1908, 41.
[30] Jean-Aubry, *French Music of Today*, 254.
[31] 'Musical Gossip', *Athenaeum* 4286 (18 December 1909): 771.

The most significant contribution to the promotion of French music in England was arguably the series of 28 concerts organised by Guéritte in London between 1909 and 1915. The London concerts were, Jean-Aubry wrote later, 'planned as four, annually', with the majority of the concerts taking place at the Bechstein Hall. They took place at irregular times of year and were comprised of solo and chamber works, occasionally featuring a larger ensemble.

The first London Concert was given on 26 February 1909. Debussy was present as a conductor and the programme was entirely devoted to his works. Debussy had been persuaded to come to London by Henry Wood, to conduct his *Trois Nocturnes* at the Queens Hall.[32] Guéritte and Barbier had hoped that he would then be able to embark on a tour, following the London Concert with a performance in the penultimate concert of the Manchester series, then onto Leeds, and finally finishing with a performance for the Edinburgh Classical Concerts Society. This episode is recounted in a letter written to the *Musical Times*, by Guéritte, at the time of Debussy's death in 1918, in which he discussed his friendship with the composer.[33] In the end, however, Debussy became ill after Guéritte's London concert and was unable to travel further with the result that the tour continued without him. These London concerts featured the Parisian Quartet and Ricardo Viñes and included the first performance of Debussy's *Danses sacrée et profane* for chromatic harp and strings.[34]

Soon afterwards, on 26 April 1909, Ravel performed in London for Guéritte's series. As with Debussy, he had established connections in Britain independently of Guéritte, and had stayed with Vaughan Williams, whom he had taught the previous year in Paris. The concert included a premiere of the *Sonatine*, given by Mary Vadot,

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[32] Henry Wood, *My Life in Music* (London: Victor Gollancz Limited, 1938), 207–9.
[33] T.J. Guéritte, 'British Music in Paris', *Musical Times* 59, no. 905 (1 July 1918): 308.
[34] 'A Debussy Concert', *Manchester Guardian*, 27 February 1909.

and Ravel accompanied Jane Bathori for some his songs. Bathori and Engel continued to perform for the London concerts in 1909, as did the Parisian quartet and Helène Luquiens.

D'Indy

The pianist Blanche Selva appeared with the violinist Louise Firmin-Touche in the premieres of d'Indy and Magnard's violin sonatas at the 5th London concert. Just as Ricardo Viñes was seen as the leading interpreter of Ravel and Debussy's piano works, Selva was considered one of the chief exponents of the music of d'Indy and the composers under his influence, such as Albéric Magnard. [35] The influence of d'Indy and Franck's circle became apparent as the London concerts progressed. As well as featuring several of Franck's works, the concerts over the period from 1909 to 1915 were to present almost all of the composers that had been influenced by d'Indy and Franck, either through Franck's organ classes at the Paris conservatoire, or through his private circle of followers (see Table 5).[36] Many of Franck's circle, such as Alexis de Castillon and Pierre de Bréville, had followed d'Indy to the Schola Cantorum, a music school created by d'Indy that specialised in early choral music. D'Indy's reach also extended to Belgium, where a Schola Cantorum was established, according to the same founding principles, and the composers based there were also featured in the London Concert series.

Table 5: London Series, Composers associated with Franck and d'Indy

Composer	Concert number
Charles Bordes	25
Pierre de Bréville	28
Alexis de Castillon	20

[35] 'The Société des Concerts Français', *Musical Standard* 32, no. 826 (30 October 1909): 43.
[36] See Michael Strasser's discussion of d'Indy's influence on the Société Nationale and French musical life in Michael Creasman Strasser, 'Ars Gallica: The Société Nationale de Musique and its Role in French Musical Life 1871–1891' (PhD Thesis, University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign, 1998).

Ernest Chausson	4, 7, 16, 20
Joseph Jongen	26, 28
Vincent d'Indy	2, 5, 9, 18, 25
Henri Duparc	26
Franck	4, 10, 16, 26
Alexandre Guilmant	26
Guillaume Lekeu	7
Albéric Magnard	5
Guy Ropartz	20
Victor Vreuls	26

Ravel returned to Britain at the beginning of 1911. Once there, he performed his *Sonatine*, at the eleventh London concert, sharing the programme with Florent Schmitt and the Parisian Quartet.[37] The Parisian Quartet followed him to Newcastle, then Edinburgh, where they played Ravel's String Quartet, and the composer accompanied the singer Mme Willaume-Lamber for his songs. Although he returned to Britain in 1913 to share a stage with British contemporary composers, such as Frank Bridge, Ravel did not play for Guéritte's concerts again after this tour. The London concerts, however, continued to champion his works: Ricardo Viñes gave the first performance of *Ondine* in the 21st London concert in 1913, and the premiere of the String Trio was given in 1915 at the 27th London concert.[38]

There was also an effort to champion the work of Florent Schmitt. Although he had been a student of Fauré, he was associated with the school of Franck, and was often performed alongside Franck's students, such as Chausson. Guéritte's concerts gave premieres of many of Schmitt's chamber works, devoting the 24th London concert to his works with the composer performing at the piano.

Older music

[37] 'Société des Concerts Français', *Musical Standard* 35, no. 891 (28 January 1911): 7.
[38] G.H. Clutsam, 'Société des Concerts Français', *Observer*, 13 June 1915.

As with the Manchester concerts, the performance of seventeenth and eighteenth-century music was an important feature in Guéritte's London concerts, and fulfilled one of Jean-Aubry's objectives by emphasising France's long musical history. According to Jean-Aubry, the promotion of early French composers was long overdue. He explained that the 'older French music served as a rallying point to which one could refer for evidence that France had an important musical past that was too little appreciated, and for proof of the injustice of the impression, that is too often perpetuated, of a French lack of capacity for music.'[39]

The first London concert to feature early music was given in November 1910, in a collaboration with La Société moderne d'instruments à vent, which played early and contemporary works for wind instruments. While it was common to combine different periods of French works, certain concerts were entirely devoted to early music, and the 15th London concert of January 1912 saw Guéritte hosting the Société des concerts d'autrefois in a staging of Jean-Féry Rebel's Les Caractères de la danse.[40] The Parisian Quartet, which performed frequently, also took part in these early music recitals and Emile Macon, the quartet's viola player, also performed on the viola d'amore. The table below lists the early music composers performed in the London French concerts.

Table 6: Early music composers performed in the London French Concerts

Composer	Concert number
Campra	15
Chevalier de Flagny	22
Costeley	13
François Couperin	15, 22
Dandrieu	22
Daquin	19
Duphy	19
Jean-Féry-Rebel	15

[39] Jean-Aubry, *French Music of Today*, 247.
[40] 'Société des Concerts Français', *Daily Telegraph,* 18 January 1912.

Lully	19
Milandre	20
Mondonville	19
Monteclair	19
Mouret	15
Rameau	15, 19, 20, 22

Many of the composers featured in the London concerts were only performed once and were not to appear in Britain again. Some, such as Moret and Hué, had the advantage of being associated with the Franck/d'Indy circle. Others appeared without any particular context or background, such as the brothers Amedée and Maurice Reuchsel and Jean-Baptiste Ganaye. Occasionally the concept of French works was expanded to include those who had come under the influence of French composers, having studied at the Paris Conservatoire, and the concerts featured de Falla, Albeniz, as well as Alfredo Casella.[41]

Looking at the repertoire of the London concerts over the eight-year period, the most commonly played contemporary composers were largely those featured in Guéritte's Parisian Quartet Tour of November 1907 (see Table 3 and Table 4). In this way, the First Parisian Quartet Tour served as a kind of blueprint for the composers that would dominate the London concerts, as well as showing something of Guéritte's judgment in recognizing the composers that would continue to be in the forefront of French musical life up to 1915, when the French concerts finally ceased. While new composers continued to be introduced throughout the London concerts, the last few concerts of 1915 also showed the same composers dominating: Ravel, Debussy, Fauré, Florent Schmitt and d'Indy.

Table 7: Most Frequently performed composers at the London Concerts

Composer	**No. of times performed**

[41] Jean-Aubry, *French Music of Today*, 247.

Debussy	6
Franck	5
De Séverac	3
Vincent d'Indy	7
Ravel	6
Florent Schmitt	5
Ernest Chausson	5
Fauré	6
Henri Duparc	6

Other Concert Societies

Guéritte also organised other events under the auspices of existing societies. The use of established British concert societies was an expression of Guéritte and Jean-Aubry's desire to integrate French works into British musical life. It also enabled them to reach audiences who may not always have been familiar with modern French works, as Jean-Aubry explained:

> M. Guéritte undertook to spread his activity throughout the provinces. Whenever possible he endeavoured to keep the Société des Concerts Français, so to speak, behind the scenes, and take advantage of the existing organisations and societies to interpolate in their schemes programmes similar to those of the Société des Concerts Français, and devoted, as the name indicates, exclusively to French works, old or modern.[42]

Guéritte managed to create a network of musical organisations spread throughout regional Britain and London that were willing to let him plan a French programme under their name.[43]

Table 8: Partial list of societies that collaborated with Guéritte

Regional Societies	**London Societies**
The Edinburgh Classical Concert Society	The Classical Concerts Society
The Haslemere Classical Concerts	The Concert-Goers Club
The Middlesbrough Musical Union	The Incorporated Society of Musicians*
The Newcastle Classical Concert Society	The Music Club*
The Southport Chamber Concerts	The South Place Sunday Concerts

[42] Jean-Aubry, *French Music of Today*, 244.
[43] Ibid.

*These societies gave lectures on French music, which were illustrated by musicians who played at Guéritte's London concerts.

In my research, I have been able to identify many French Concerts given under the name of British concert societies, as they correspond to specific details mentioned by Jean-Aubry. In these cases, it can be assumed that they were the work of the French Concerts as they had the same performers and repertoire as the London and Manchester concerts, and took place at roughly the same time. As can be seen in the above discussion, many of the concerts were grouped so that a programme would be performed across Britain through different concert societies. In his discussion of the activities of the French Concerts, Jean-Aubry also states that Guéritte was willing to keep his involvement in the background when it came to collaborating with other musical societies:

> It [the Société] did not even hesitate to stand aside in favour of some of these English societies when it judged that the interests of French music would be better served by their organisations. For instance, it several times relinquished, in favour, among others, of the Classical Concerts Society, the advantage of giving the first performance in London of certain new works, which the composers had reserved to it.[44]

The Classical Concerts Society gave numerous concerts that featured French music, but these lack the obvious markers of Guéritte's concerts, and it is possible that many of the so-called first performances mentioned by Jean-Aubry took place in programmes that were not exclusively devoted to French music.[45]

As with Barbier's concerts, the London French Concert series relied upon the support of the French community in London, but Guéritte bore a significant proportion of the costs himself. In a letter to the *Musical Times* in 1918, more than two years after the French concerts had ceased, he described the necessary

[44] Jean-Aubry, *French Music of Today*, 245.
[45] Jean-Aubry, *French Music of Today*, 237–54.

expenditure, concluding that a fund of £700 had been necessary to bring the London concerts to self-sufficiency.[46] After an initial outlay to be spent over the first few years, the concerts would eventually, it was hoped, attract enough subscribers, but only if there was the necessary support from the French community. Guéritte acknowledged that this was the case in the early years of the London French concerts:

> Ready as I was to meet a large part of the loss, I endeavoured to enlist the sympathies of the French Colony in London and although many of its members did not care particularly for music, it is to their credit that they came forward splendidly to help a cause, which they felt was of importance to their country.[47]

Guéritte briefly tried to promote British music in Paris in 1910, but this venture failed, he argued, due to a lack of interest from the British in Paris:

> But in the view of the lack of support from the British Colony I considered that all the loss to be incurred in introducing British music in France should not fall upon a Frenchman, and that, as such it was fairer that I should confine my energies to helping French music in Great Britain.

In contrast, what led the French concerts in Britain to achieve self-sufficiency was the initial backing of the French in London, many of whom patronised the concerts out of a sense of duty rather than necessarily through an interest in music.[48] By 1915, these French patrons were largely replaced by a British audience. In Guéritte's words: 'During the first season the French element constituted 65 percent of the audience. Just before the War the percentage, as was desired had been altogether reversed, the new members being mostly British, and the French element accounting for only 19 percent.'[49]

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[46] T.J. Guéritte, 'British Music in Paris', *Musical Times* 59, no. 905 (1 July 1918): 308.
[47] Ibid.
[48] See also 'English Music in France', *Manchester Guardian,* 22 September 1909. This article mentions the creation of the 'British Concerts Society' and asks for the names of British residents in Paris in order to support the venture.
[49] T.J. Guéritte, 'British Music in Paris', *Musical Times* 59, no. 905 (1 July 1918): 308.

The outbreak of the war

The outbreak of war in 1914 had a dramatic effect on the concerts. The last three concerts were introduced in support of various charitable causes, with the 26th London Concert designated as a concert for 'a fund to provide winter comforts for the soldiers of the allies.'[50] The 27th concert was given in aid of l'Oeuvre fraternelle des artistes, whose vice presidents included Fauré, and the final London concert was in aid of the victims of the war in Poland. The outbreak of war also saw Belgian musicians and composers take refuge in Britain. These included Joseph Jongen and his quartet, who appeared in the last London concert.[51]

The war also had the effect of making it politically expedient to exclude German music from concert halls.[52] The Proms were managing to stage concerts without German music, which gave an increased prominence to other works, largely by French, Russian and British composers.[53] Evidence of this can be seen by looking at the week's concerts in June 1915, when the *Observer's* George Clutsam first congratulated the conductors of the Proms, Landon Ronald and Thomas Beecham for their lack of German repertoire, stating: 'The fine programme, excluding all semblance of Teutonic art, offered by Mr. Landon Ronald and Mr. Thomas Beecham in their enterprising series of promenade concerts at the Albert Hall are not attracting the general public as they deserve to.'[54] The lack of audience numbers contrasted with the attendance at a London Symphony Orchestra concert, which featured two

[50] 'Société des Concerts Français', *Daily Telegraph,* 29 January 1915.
[51] 'Concerts of the Week', *Observer*, 27 June 1915.
[52] This led to increasingly complicated discussions about whether Bach could be permitted, as well as Beethoven, but not Wagner. See, 'German Music: Shall it Be Performed?', *Musical Times* 56, no. 874 (1 December 1915): 722–4.
[53] G.H. Clutsam, 'Music: Concerts of the Week', *Observer*, 13 June 1915.
[54] Ibid.

Beethoven symphonies and Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony.*[55] Clutsam covered this concert in the same article, first commenting on the lack of originality on the part of the conductor, Henri Verbrugghen. He described him as 'ever intent on digging some deeper meaning out of a material that has already been strained to the fullest extent of its possibilities' but was forced to admit that this was still attractive to the public: 'That he was justified in his selection was evident by the excellent attendance…'[56]

It seemed that even the environment caused by the war could not undermine the popularity of German works in concert halls. However, the gradual rise in the awareness of French music that had been noticeable before Guéritte's activities began in December 1907 had continued, to the extent that modern French works were becoming common in London concert halls, and the virtuosic and technically demanding works of Ravel, once the preserve of artists such as Ricardo Viñes, were now part of the repertoire of pianists including Leonard Borwick and Harold Bauer. Inevitably, such works, which were so new in 1907 when introduced by the Parisian Quartet Tour were no longer in the forefront of modernism and had been superseded by composers such as Stravinsky and Scriabin.[57]

Flocking to England

When the concerts drew to a close in 1915, Guéritte had managed to introduce numerous significant works into British concert halls, including the vocal, chamber and piano pieces of Ravel and Debussy. Through his efforts, alongside those of

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[55] Under the 'Trading With the Enemy Act' of 1914, it was decided that living German composers should be banned. Earlier composers were permitted, as can be seen above, partly on the grounds that they were not responsible for the war.
[56] G.H. Clutsam, 'Music: Concerts of the Week', *Observer*, 13 June 1915.
[57] In a review of the 26th London concert, the critic of the *Telegraph* compares the works of the Belgian composer Victor Vreuls to Stravinsky and Scriabin. 'Société des Concerts Français', *Telegraph,* 29 January 1915.

Barbier, he managed to bring many important figures to Britain in an effort to promote French music. Stonequist summarises these developments:

> The number of French performers, most of them artists of the first rank with established reputations in Paris, who flocked to England for minimal fees, is quite remarkable. The appearance, in most cases for the first time, of practically all the major French composers of the day, particularly in London, Edinburgh, and Manchester (Debussy, Fauré, Reynaldo Hahn, d'Indy, Ravel, Florent Schmitt, to name a few) is probably a unique phenomenon.[58]

That Guéritte was able to continue arranging for the best musicians to come to Britain for eight years, without interruption was an impressive achievement. Jean-Aubry's summing up of the French concerts include an estimate of '90 programmes exclusively devoted to French music.'[59] Within these 90 programmes, it was the unbroken series of concerts in London between 1909 and 1915 that represented the greatest push to promote French works and these concerts would also be the focus of the highest level of critical interest.

[58] Stonequist, 'The Musical Entente', 2. Through a comparison of Barbier and Guéritte's concerts, it is likely that Guéritte is responsible for the appearance of Debussy, Ravel and Florent Schmitt while Barbier could take credit for the composers featured in Table 1.

[59] These programmes include Jean-Aubry's estimate of 10 lectures on top of the 80 concerts mentioned previously. As discussed above, Jean-Aubry's summary does not include Barbier's Manchester concerts. Jean-Aubry, *French Music of Today*, 245.

CHAPTER THREE: The Critical Reception of the Concerts

This chapter discusses the critical reception of the French concerts, focusing largely on Guéritte's Parisian Quartet tour of 1907 and the 28 London Concerts that took place between 1909 and 1915. The French Concerts were widely reviewed in music journals and national newspapers, although these reviews have never been assembled or subjected to analysis. Many of the reviews, especially those in music journals, were unsigned but others had clearer authorship including many noted critics of the day. Samuel Langford of the *Guardian* reviewed the Manchester concerts, and many of Guéritte's London concerts were reviewed by a second music critic, the *Guardian*'s 'London Correspondent', Ferruccio Bonavia.[1] Of all the national newspapers, the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Sunday Observer* included the most detailed and enthusiastic reviews. George Clutsam reviewed most of the concerts for the *Observer*, while, according to Jean-Aubry, Robin Legge wrote reviews for the *Daily Telegraph* and H.C. Colles reviewed the concerts for *The Times*.[2]

As already noted the French Concerts included a wide range of works, spanning old and new. While the introduction of Ravel to British audiences prompted the most intense reaction, the concerts also included far more traditional repertoire such as that of Franck and his followers, as well as early music.[3] Assessing the critical reception of these concerts, therefore, requires an expansive approach as they were deliberately diverse in design. This chapter commences by looking at the

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[1] Michael Kennedy, *The Hallé Tradition: A Century of Music* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1960), 181.
[2] Georges Jean-Aubry, *French Music of Today*, 4th ed., trans. Edwin Evans (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1926), 255.
[3] As stated in chapter 2, early music was a notable feature of Guéritte and Barbier's concerts. I will focus on this towards the end of the chapter when looking at the critics' discussion of the connection between early and modern French music.

reaction to Ravel and other contemporary works. During the first phase of the concerts from 1907 to 1909, the reviews were often consumed with fundamental questions of modern music and interpretation. The second part of the chapter considers the critics' attempts to analyse different schools of composition. In addition to providing the first overview of the reviews of the French Concerts, the chapter as a whole assesses to what extent the concerts achieved their aims. Initially this question should be looked at from the perspective of the critics, who believed that the purpose of the French concerts was to show the very best of French music. [4] But Jean-Aubry, in his quest to challenge German musical dominance, had far more ambitious aims for the concerts. Because of this, I will also consider how the critics viewed the repertoire as a whole, and the extent to which Guéritte's concerts can be said to have furthered the cause of French music in Britain.

Parisian Quartet tour, December 1907

When Guéritte's French concerts first came to Britain with the Parisian Quartet tour of December 1907, the critics (as discussed in the first chapter) had at least some knowledge of the works of Fauré and Debussy. [5] Other French composers represented at the concerts such as Roussel and De Séverac, had been little played in Britain. However, there can be no question that the music of Ravel was the striking feature of these concerts. Prior to 1907, his works were largely unknown in Britain and the initial performances of his piano works and string quartet were responsible for

[4] The *Observer* introduced the forthcoming London concerts thus: "A Société des Concerts Français has been recently formed in London with the object of making known to English audiences the best examples of contemporary French music". G.H. Clutsam, 'Music: The Inspiration of the Folk Song', *Observer*, 14 February 1909.

[5] By 1907, critics would have claimed some familiarity with Debussy's String Quartet in G minor, as well as the *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*, conducted several times by Henry Wood.

introducing such new harmonic concepts as bitonality and altered chords. While some critics preferred to gloss over Ravel, often describing the repertoire as fascinating or interesting, there were a significant number of reviews that dealt directly with the music.

One example of such a review was by Arthur Symons for the *Saturday Review* in December 1907. In it, he wrote a long assessment of the two London Concerts which formed the last part of the tour. As a friend of Jean-Aubry, a poet, author and critic and authority on the symbolist movement, Symons was very much an insider, and his review shows that he had keenly followed the Parisian Quartet's activities. He is also one of the few reviewers to explicitly acknowledge the work of Guéritte and Jean-Aubry in establishing the concerts. Yet his detailed and confident review of almost all of the composers represented at the two London concerts reveals how little he thought of most modern French music. Only the quartets of Debussy and Chausson met with his approval, and he condemned the Ravel Quartet and piano works as fundamentally unmusical. In his words:

> Originality is sought by every means, but never comes; the whole aim is effect, and even that end is not attained. In the piano-pieces of the same composer, and in too much of the rest of the show-pieces which we heard, the aim is as yet another kind of effect, an effect not less unmusical: a kind of eternal realism, the imitation as clear as you like, of galloping horses, clattering water, booming bells.[6]

In the review, Symons continued to berate modern French composers for their emptiness, and their 'striving for effect.' He compared Debussy's treatment of Verlaine's words unfavourably with Schubert's setting of Goethe. Even coming as they did from a supporter of modern developments in the arts, Symons' views are not

[6] Arthur Symons, 'French Music in London', *Saturday Review* 104, no. 2720 (14 December 1907): 723–4.

far removed from the views of Stanford and Parry as discussed in Chapter one. They can thus be described as essentially reactionary.

The *Musical Times* also reviewed two of the London concerts, praising them as 'remarkably interesting examples of modern French chamber music'.[7] But again, the critic, who we cannot identify for certain, could not make sense of Ravel's music. After enjoying Chausson's quartet, and bemoaning his death, the reviewer noted in response to the Ravel quarter that 'Very different was the string quartet of Maurice Ravel, that concluded the concert, this music being chiefly remarkable for vagueness of significance, incoherence, and weird harmonic eccentricities.'[8]

The chief music critic of *The Times* in this period was Fuller Maitland, a noted critic and scholar who was known to dislike modern French music. Both London concerts are reviewed in *The Times* and these reviews were almost certainly written by Maitland.[9] Maitland invoked a hierarchy of newness with Ravel at the top, albeit not in a positive sense. He acknowledged the Fauré quartet as familiar, and the Debussy quartet as 'positively ancient' but was unimpressed by his first encounter with Ravel's string quartet and piano works, which he described as 'now the extreme vanguard of the party, being as far beyond Debussy as Debussy is beyond Fauré.' He went on to note that:

> There is no recognizable principle of construction, and the only wonder is how the thing is kept going so long without a principle. Some rhythmic figure, generally tiresome in itself, is reiterated in different positions of the scale, and associated with harmonic progressions that are bound to avoid any of the usual concords. The constantly shifting tonalities seem in a manner bound to follow in the least pleasing succession.[10]

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[7] 'London Concerts', *Musical Times* 49, no. 779 (January 1908): 39–41.
[8] Ibid.
[9] 'Concerts', *The Times,* 7 December 1907.
[10] Ibid.

Maitland's reaction to Ravel's *Jeux d'eau* and *Alborada del gracioso* was equally negative:

> Ravel's Jeux d'Eau was given as an encore, and, though it made even Debussy look antique, it seemed quite sensible compared with the same composer's Alborada del Gracioso, which left one wondering how the player could have committed to memory two consecutive bars; M. Viñes is a serious musician, and therefore it is to be supposed that he was playing the right notes all the time, but it did not really sound as though the wrong ones would have made much difference.[11]

In this way, he dismissed the music as fundamentally unintelligible.

We know as well from an account published in the *Musical Herald*, which includes a summary of the event and the discussion, that Fuller Maitland was present at a lecture given by Edwin Evans, another supporter and propagandist for French music, to the Concert Goer's Club on modern French music. As is clear from Jean-Aubry's retrospective account, Evans started out promoting French music independently of Guéritte, but after the two men met in London they started to collaborate through lectures and recitals.[12] It is likely, however, that Evans' 1908 lecture was not connected to the French Concerts but was rather an independent effort.

Musical examples were performed by Evelyn Suart and included Ravel's *Jeux d'eau* and Debussy's *Jardin sous la pluie*. The *Musical Herald* reported on the lecture, in which Evans gave an overview of some of the important developments in French music, as well as speculating on the differences between English and French musical sensibilities. According to this summary, he explained that 'Englishmen … preferred their music like their cookery, plain and wholesome, and our musicians became heated when they discussed French modern music. Mr Evans showed that

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[11] Ibid.
[12] Jean-Aubry, *French Music*, 254.

there were contending camps in France, and that we have no idea of the eagerness and extent of the discussion there.'[13]

Evans' lecture was an attempt to describe the musical idioms of Ravel, Debussy, Duparc, and, Marcel Labey, a composer little known today.[14] The response to the lecture exposed a clash between the old and the new. Fuller Maitland was unsatisfied with Evans's analysis. He pressed to know more about the intentions of the composers, asking 'what did the composers prefer? Did they prefer adjacent semitones in a chord? Did they regard the result as being beautiful or ugly?'[15] In the account published in the *Musical Herald*, Maitland then concluded the question of beauty for himself. In an echo of Alexander Mackenzie's attempt to mock Ravel, as discussed in Chapter One, Maitland explained that 'Bishop Creighton enunciated a great principle when he said: "art is the veil of beauty over law." He concluded that he could 'not discern in modern French music either law or beauty, but only the veil (laughter).'[16]

As such examples show, Ravel inspired a dramatic response, even extending so far as to include suggestions of madness from some critics. In an unsigned editorial published in January 1908, the *Musical Standard*, discussed this range of responses alongside some examples of contemporary criticism, although without identifying the source. According to the editorial, some contemporary critics had dismissed such 'a work as Maurice Ravel's "Alborada del gracioso…" [as] the nearest approach to musical dementia capable of being committed to paper by means of the accepted notation. But all the members of the school, it must be confessed, are not so mad as Ravel, and some of the other works heard at this concert… were quite

[13] 'Some Aspects of Modern French Music', *Musical Herald* 719 (1 February 1908): 41.
[14] Marcel Labey (1875–1968) was a student of d'Indy who later taught at the Schola Cantorum.
[15] 'Some Aspects of Modern French Music', *Musical Herald* 719 (1 February 1908): 41.
[16] Ibid.

comprehensible, and even pleasing.' The unsigned editorial proceeded to mount a spirited defence of Ravel against such charges:

> The suggestion that the modern French school of composers is a band of lunatics has been hazarded by one or two critics… let us charitably assume that they have let their feelings get the better of their judgment. Such a suggestion is preposterous, and cannot possibly be taken seriously.[17]

In this way, the writer dismissed charges of madness as absurd. Rather, he concluded that the only solution to the problem represented by Ravel was to admit his [the critic's] own limitations in understanding such music. It was impossible for the critic to offer an adequate assessment because the 'work of Ravel is logical, but the ideas of which it built are beyond the comprehension of the majority of us at present, and it is therefore of little use to attempt to appraise their value.'[18] This more pragmatic approach was mirrored by the critic writing for the *Athenaeum*, who explained in relation to works from *Miroirs* that 'to judge such a complicated work, such as his quartet, at first hearing, is not possible.'[19]

These responses, especially the self-proclaimed incapacity to assess, is striking. It is significant that the introduction of Ravel's music in Guéritte's concerts caused such controversy among critics and a sustained questioning about how best to understand and appraise such unfamiliar music. None of Guéritte's subsequent concerts would inspire such a heated reaction but the concerts did generate sustained interest and discussion because they presented a range of lesser-known modern French composers and also because they provided a stage for discussion of French music as a whole. [20]

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[17] 'Editorial', *Musical Standard* 29, no. 731 (4 January 1908): 2.
[18] Ibid.
[19] 'Musical Gossip', *Athenaeum* 4181 (14 December 1907): 698.
[20] The 'inability to assess at first hearing' was also a common reaction to unfamiliar music in 19th Century music criticism. However in the case of Ravel the response appears to have been magnified by the challenges of unfamiliar tonality.

The Manchester Concerts, December 1907 – March 1909

After December when the Parisian Quarter Tour concluded, Guéritte appears to have receded from the scene, largely remaining inactive until his series of 28 London concerts commenced in March 1909. Instead, the promotion of French music passed to Lucie Barbier in Manchester, who, as previously discussed, organised eight concerts between December 1907 and March 1907. These concerts and the reaction they generated has been detailed in Stonequist's dissertation on Barbier's activities. The response was polite rather than enthusiastic or controversial, as the majority of the repertoire was not centred on contemporary composers such as Ravel. Many of the programmes were instead given over to early music. Two concerts, however, stand out as including contemporary works. [21]

The second Manchester concert in February 1908 was devoted to the chamber works of Henry Février including songs and trios. Février was very little played in Britain and this was the only concert of the series at which his music was performed. He was, however, known to the critics, and most likely the audiences knew him as an opera composer, with many reviews mentioning his opera *Le Roi aveugle*, which had been produced at the Opéra Comique in 1906. In the review of this concert, the *Musical Times* provided little detail, stating only that the violin and piano works 'showed nervous warmth of feeling as well as musicianly skill; but it is as a song composer that M. Février seems specially to excel.'[22] A separate review in the

[21] The Manchester concerts were also covered by local newspapers, and Stonequist explores these reviews throughout her thesis, concluding that most local reviewers avoided dealing directly with modern works. Martha Elizabeth Stonequist, 'The Musical Entente Cordiale: 1905–1916' (PhD Thesis, University of Colorado at Boulder, 1972),116-7.
[22] 'Music in Manchester', *Musical Times* 49, no. 781 (March 1908): 186–7.

Musical Standard displayed a familiar discomfort with the more challenging aspects of Février's modernism. For the reviewer Février was 'clearly determined to engage himself in the new paths of progressive thought.' Critiquing such works, the writer believed that beauty became secondary in the pursuit of innovation and that the music was overly abstruse. According to the review, 'it is not surprising that the avowedly beautiful is frequently relegated to second place. This, I think, is the prominent defect of the Trio from an artistic standpoint, so much so that it becomes abstruse to an uncomfortable degree.'[23] In this way, we see a repetition of a familiar pattern. A concern with 'beauty' as suggested by Fuller Maitland was picked up again by the critic and used as a way to criticize contemporary French music.

The Debussy Concerts, February 1909

The other concert with a more modern program was the penultimate Manchester concert given in February 1909 and devoted entirely to Debussy. Reception of Debussy had proceeded on a different track from Ravel as his work had been known in Britain for a number of years already. The date of this concert coincided with a renewed push by Guéritte. Guéritte, who was living in London, had arranged for Debussy and the Parisian Quartet to perform as part of a tour beginning in London in 1909. This was intended as the first of his series of 28 London concerts. As outlined in Chapter Two, Debussy was to conduct his *Danses sacrée et profane* for chromatic harp and strings at the London concert and then the tour would continue onto Manchester where the same program would be replicated for the penultimate concert of Barbier's series. As a result, reviews of both the Debussy London and Manchester

[23] Henry Caunt, 'Music at Manchester', *Musical Standard* 29, no. 739 (29 February 1908): 132.

concerts should be considered together as the programs were identical and included piano works from *Estampes*, the string quartet and the *Danses sacrée et profane* which had not been heard in Britain before.

The *Guardian* published reviews of both concerts. The London reviewer, who did not sign his name, acknowledged that the program contained 'only one thing entirely new to London,' describing the *Danses sacrée* as 'a very characteristic composition, and in it we hear all Debussy's familiar restlessness and vagueness, and yet it leaves a consistent impression and interprets a definite idea.' Although the music was not, as has been the case in earlier periods, described as ugly, the *Guardian* reviews reflected a continuing ambivalence.[24] The London review concludes that 'It is a bold experiment always, to give a concert of one man's music, especially when his peculiarities are as marked as that of Debussy. If the concert cannot be said to be the exception which proves the rule, it was still interesting to the end.'[25] While they did not dismiss *Danses sacrée*, which was a relatively new composition, out of hand, critics were clearly also hesitant to embrace it.

A similar ambivalence can be seen in Samuel Langford's review published in the *Guardian* of the same program in Manchester. In it, he grudgingly acknowledged Debussy's originality, if not his popularity among Manchester listeners:

> The excellence of the artists who took part must have compensated even those that did not like Debussy's music. There was no compromising readiness to go into ecstasies over the music itself. But everyone continued to listen, if with intermittent enjoyment, and although it was remarked how often Debussy repeated himself, no one seemed to charge him with repeating other composers.[26]

For Langford, such music may have been innovative but that did not guarantee a positive response among the audience.

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[24] As discussed in Chapter One.
[25] 'A Debussy concert', *Guardian*, 27 February 1909.
[26] Samuel Langford, 'The French Concerts', *Manchester Guardian*, 3 March 1909.

'A tradition of its own'

By 1909, the French Concerts had been active for close on 18 months. The reception of this earliest phase of concerts was dominated by responses to what was described as modern or ultra-modern contemporary French music as epitomised by the works of Ravel and Debussy. A consistent and parallel theme that emerged in the critical reception hinged on the notion that such music had its own tradition that was not necessarily accessible to non-French musicians. For many critics, such music could only be performed by French musicians with the necessary training and cultural background. According to the *Musical Standard* critic:

> The object of this newly formed society is to give authoritative renderings of contemporary French music. Much of the music which figures in its programmes past and future has already been heard in London, especially within the last few months when French music would appear at last to have claimed the attention which is its due. But many of these performances have been inadequate owing to the fact that this music has a tradition of its own, which must be acquired before it can be interpreted.[27]

Thus, the successful interpretation of this music was seen as dependant on access to this tradition. In a review of the first of Barbier's Manchester concerts of December 1907, Herbert Hughes identified additional barriers of language. He explained that 'No one can sing French songs so well as a Frenchwoman, unless it be a Frenchman. Apart altogether from the mere enunciation of words, the French art-song requires an interpretation which is physically, temperamentally, ethically, artistically impossible to the Anglo-Saxon.'[28]

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[27] 'The Société des Concerts Français', *Musical Standard* 31, no. 796 (3 April 1909): 14.
[28] Herbert Hughes, 'Music: César Geloso in Manchester', *New Age* 2, no. 7 (14 December 1907): 138.

The question of national temperament was again taken up in a review published in the monthly journal, *Review of Reviews*. The concert under discussion does not appear to have been connected to Guéritte's activities but it included the works of Fauré, Franck and Debussy as performed by the pianist Berthe Duranton.[29] The critic began by celebrating the growth of French music in Britain, writing that 'One golden fruit of that evergrowing tree, the entente cordiale, is the spread of French music among us. To be rightly understood French modern composers demand the interpretation of French artists.'[30] In such discussions, the critics seemed unwilling or unable to define exactly what it was that British musicians lacked. In the *Review of Reviews*, the unnamed critic attempted to describe the qualities shown by the French performers in the concert:

> …to those present on this occasion their playing was a revelation of the subtle beauty and extraordinary range of emotions which modern French music can depict when rendered by artists possessing to the full, as these do, that indispensable though rare quality only to be defined by the word "temperament."[31]

Both this reviewer and Herbert Hughes suggest that the performance of modern French music was tied up with national character and indefinable qualities of Frenchness.

A similar point was made by Edwin Evan in his 1908 lecture to the Concert Goer's Club, in which he addressed aspects of modern French harmony and suggested both how it should be played, and its intended effect on the listener. For Evans, 'Our view of harmony put a different complexion on French music to that intended. Two schemes of harmony may be going on at the same time in a composition, and the art of the French performer is to put the one or the other in the background or the

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[29] This concert was given "in aid of the suffrage cause". 'Internationalism in Music and Drama', *Review of Reviews* 38, no. 223 (July 1908): 32–3.
[30] 'Internationalism in Music and Drama', *Review of Reviews* 38, no. 223 (July 1908): 32–3.
[31] Ibid.

foreground as may be needed.' He concluded, therefore, that a 'work that appears on paper to be very discordant may thus be accepted by the ear when performed with insight.'[32] For Evans, once again, the 'art of the French performer' was central and only performers with this background could make sense of this music. Other reviewers believed that the problem of interpretation was more connected to unfamiliar musical idioms and the essential opacity of modern French music. In an article discussing the Manchester French Concerts of 1908, the *Guardian* commented on the enigmatic nature of the music, explaining that these 'harmonies are often riddles to the performer.'[33]

Such assessments created a paradox. For Jean-Aubry and Guéritte, one goal of the French Concerts was to inspire British musicians to take up and play this music. And yet the first response by the critics to such expert performance by French musicians was precisely to discount the capacity of British performers to interpret and play this music. In this way, the campaign to spread French music generated a critical response that seemed to suggest that such music could only be played by French performers.

Acceptance and Appreciation

Between 1909 and 1915, 28 concerts were organised by Guéritte in London. As the concerts progressed from 1909, the critics became less concerned with the problems of modern French music and more accepting of Ravel in particular. Ravel's works were featured six more times in Guéritte's London series. The Ravel Quartet which

[32] 'Some Aspects of Modern French Music', *Musical Herald* 719 (1 February 1908): 41.
[33] 'Music and the Anglo-French "Entente"', *Manchester Guardian*, 24 October 1908.

had previously caused such controversy in 1907 made a very different impression when it was performed again in 1910. *The Times* review of the seventh London concert, which was probably written by H.C. Colles, was far more positive than Maitland's earlier response in the same publication, stressing not incoherence and eccentricity but logic and clarity:

> One can imagine few better exercises in clear technique and logical expression than this Quartet. Every note has its place and seems to have been put there with a firm hand guided by a clear brain…the opening Allegro is strong, vigorous, and above all, beautiful; the Scherzo is a miracle of grace and delicacy…[34]

The language of the review appears to be a clear riposte to the negative assessments of 1907, which accused Ravel of incoherence. The shift was dramatic enough to earn a mention in Jean-Aubry's account in which he noted that Colles' 'alert and well-informed mind [was] animated with youthful vigour' that 'began in the Times to do justice to French music, without favour, but with an accurate knowledge of the works.'[35]

Guéritte's concerts continued to include the key works of Ravel and a 1911 performance of the *Sonatine* given at the ninth London concert attracted generally favourable reviews. Although the original controversy centred on the opaque nature of the music had not disappeared entirely, this time the response was different. Unlike earlier reviews, the *Musical Standard* critic acknowledged that the work appeared initially unintelligible but believed that this impression quickly disappeared: 'M. Maurice Ravel played his *Sonatine f*or piano. This is a charming little composition, delicate and ingenious. This composer's work very soon clears up with a little study, and one's first impression that his work is far-fetched rapidly

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[34] 'Music; Société des Concerts Français', *The Times*, 26 January 1910.
[35] Jean-Aubry, *French Music of Today*, 255.

disappears.'[36] It was a discernible shift that seems to suggest a sea change in the appreciation of Ravel in Britain. A review of a 1912 concert that featured Ricardo Viñes performing *Ondine* received an even more enthusiastic response from George Clutsam who described it as a 'remarkable and original work.'[37]

Franck and his followers

While modern composers like Ravel generated some of the strongest responses, their music was only one part of the wider repertoire of Guéritte's London concerts, which, as discussed in Chapter Two, also included many composers associated with César Franck and Vincent d'Indy. As a result, any assessment of the French Concerts also requires a discussion of the critical response to these more traditional works. This included composers who had fallen under Franck's influence, either as a student, or, in the case of Florent Schmitt, through a close study and emulation of Franck's chamber works. In contrast to the reception of Ravel, the critics found it much easier to assess these works, as the familiarity with Franck provided them with a ready frame of reference. [38]

The seventh London concert staged in January 1910 included works by Lekeu and Chausson, who were represented by their quartets. In a review in *The Times* the critic compared the extent of Franck's influence on each work:

> Both men were pupils of César Franck, and Lekeu was a Belgian like his master. The influence of the great founder of the modern school is apparent in both works, though not to the same extent in Lekeu's as in Chausson's, which is full of the free, clean counterpoint that marks so much of Franck's writing

[36] 'Société des Concerts Français', *Musical Standard* 35, no. 891 (28 January 1911): 7.
[37] G.H. Clutsam, 'Concerts of the Week', *Observer,* 4 May 1913.
[38] It should also be said that the critics found Franck easier to appreciate as his aesthetic was closer to German than French.

> and shows the same feeling for quiet, lyrical expression interrupted by passionate interludes.[39]

For the reviewer, it was key that such pieces could be seen as part of a wider school with common elements and characteristics. Distinguishing features, such as the use of counterpoint and the treatment of a theme or subject across movements of a chamber work, provided a convenient starting point for critical analysis.

In a review of a performance of Florent Schmitt's Quintet in 1914, Samuel Langford placed the work within the Franck tradition and identified some key elements of his style:

> Mr. Schmitt's Quintet ranks with that of Ernst Chasson [sic] in emulation of the lovely Quintet of César Franck, who is the chief master of their school. The characteristic methods of the Franckian school of musical form, in which an effort is made to weld the various movements of a work more closely by the introduction and controlling power of identical subject matter, are followed more systematically in this Quintet than either of its predecessors. The composer also adheres, like Chasson [sic] more to the nobility of Franckian harmonies than to the subtleties of Debussy and Ravel, although he is in some degree representative of the modern French school in all its tendencies.[40]

Langford reflected a common tendency of English critics to divide French music into two different schools: the more conservative school of Franck and his adherents set in opposition to the harmonic innovations of Ravel and Debussy. In his role as an advocate and interpreter of French music, Edwin Evans also identified a similar division when, in a collaboration with Guéritte, he gave a lecture for the Incorporated Society of Musicians, with examples played by the Parisian Quartet.[41] As recounted in the *Musical Times*, the lecture explored the idea of the differences in French music:

> French composers are now split into two opposed factions, the older being represented by the pupils and successors of César Franck…The attitude of Debussy towards music is exactly the opposite to that of d'Indy and his

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[39] 'Music: Société des Concerts Français', *The Times*, 26 January 1910.
[40] Samuel Langford, 'Southport Chamber Concerts', *Manchester Guardian,* 21 February 1914.
[41] 'Musical Gossip', *Athenaeum* 4286 (18 December 1909): 771.

> followers. Not intellectual but aesthetic effect is his object, and his ideal is the shepherd, the tone of whose reed merges into the landscape.[42]

Such points were widely made. In a review of an early London French concert which presented the violin sonatas of d'Indy and his student Albéric Magnard, the *Musical Times* echoed this notion of a split between the aesthetic and the intellectual: 'd'Indy and Debussy are musically as the poles asunder. In the latter the aesthetic almost excludes the intellectual; in the former the intellectual is paramount…'[43] The reviewer went on to praise both Magnard and d'Indy for their faithfulness to the ideals of Franck.

Predictably, this grouping sparked discussion as to who could or could not be included in a category with Franck at the centre. Not everyone was convinced, for example, of Magnard's place in the Franck and d'Indy 'school' and the violin sonata received a markedly different reaction from George Clutsam of the *Observer;*

> I am not sorry to have missed earlier knowledge of M. Magnard's compositions. The sonata for violin and piano, beautifully played as it was by Mlle Blanche Selva and M. Firmin Touche, positively bored me. The composer seemed intent on avoiding the commonplace, but the more he plastered it over with unpleasant affectations, the more wrongly it stood revealed. This work in no way indicates the lines of thought which mark the development of modern French music, and one can easily understand why the composer is indicated as being his own publisher …The Société des Concerts Français can do better than this.[44]

In this way, Clutsam believed that Magnard stood apart from any relevant grouping in French music. Magnard was his own publisher, not due to any failings as an artist, but because commercial publishing would have been at odds with his reclusive and unworldly character.[45] He also possessed the necessary funds to self-publish. As a composer himself, Clutsam had a keen ear for those 'intent on avoiding the

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[42] Edwin Evans, 'The Incorporated Society of Musicians', *Musical Times* 51, no. 804 (February 1910): 100–108.
[43] 'The Société des Concerts Français', *Musical Standard* 32, no. 826 (30 October 1909): 43.
[44] G.H. Clutsam, 'Société des Concerts Français', *Observer*, 24 October 1909.
[45] M.D. Calvocoressi, 'Albéric Magnard', *Musical Times* 62, no. 944 (1 October 1921): 683–5.

commonplace', and while he had been deeply impressed by Ravel and Debussy, he was often harsh with more minor composers such as Magnard.

Negative reviews

Aside from the early reviews of Ravel, Clutsam's damning review of the Magnard violin sonata was among the few reviews of the French Concerts to be wholly negative. It was rare for a concert to be regarded as a complete failure because the programming was generally astute enough to include works that would appeal to a range of tastes, often containing a mix of the new and the more traditional. The closest parallel was a review of the fourteenth London concert which was entirely given up to the works of the brothers Amédée and Maurice Reuchsel. [46]

They were presented to audiences without any real information on their background or musical background and had not been promoted by the Société nationale de musique. Like Magnard, they were unknown to the public and were not represented at the French Concerts again. Predictably, Clutsam questioned their presence in the French Concerts:

> All interested in the modern aspect of music, according to French lights, naturally accord a preliminary welcome to any new works the society may offer, but the directors were ill advised in submitting those of M.M Amédée and Maurice Reuchsel. They are not representative of French music in any way shape or form. They are not even a compromise…. the Société des Concerts Français can do better than this.[47]

In this instance, the verdict was widely shared with critics laying blame at the feet of the organisers. *The Times* review echoed the opinions of Clutsam:

> It is the first object of this valuable society to spread its net wide and give English people the chance of appreciating at its right value the work of a

[46] G.H. Clutsam, 'The Week's Concerts: Société des Concerts Français', *Observer*, 3 December 1911.
[47] Ibid. It is notable that Clutsam has used the same expression twice here, and this reflects his investment in the French Concerts, as will be discussed further.

> number of French composers who do not swim in the main stream of their country's art. It is an excellent object, but it may be questioned whether by devoting the whole of the first of the four concerts to the works of MM Amédée and Maurice Reuchsel the committee was attaining this object in the best possible way.[48]

The critics perceived that the goal of the French Concerts was to represent the most important developments in French music and the inclusion of certain composers sparked a negative response. One example was the inclusion of work by Saint-Saëns, which was seen to be out of place. He featured as part of the programme several times, in both the London and Manchester French concerts, most memorably appearing in person at a concert entirely devoted to his works in Manchester. To the *Guardian* critic, a performance of Saint-Saëns' *Danse macabre* was a wasted opportunity. He complained that the 'music of Saint-Saëns is already too well known and is not representative of the best attendances in French music.'[49] In a review of the twelfth London concert, Clutsam was also clear that Saint-Saëns should not be performed in the French Concert, writing that the 'The style of Saint-Saëns scarcely comes into the scope of these concerts, as they were primarily intended to acquaint the English public with the output of the modern French composer, and at his best, Saint–Saëns could never plead guilty to having inspired a single bar of the latest development of French art.'[50] In this way, Clutsam believed that Saint-Saëns was part of a much older generation and hence had no claim to represent current French music.

Such reviews, even if they were negative, revealed how critics had absorbed the mission of the concerts. In his defence, it could be argued that Saint-Saëns could claim some relationship with the modern generation through his role as a long-term

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[48] 'Music: Société des Concerts Français, *The Times*, 29 November 1911.
[49] Samuel Langford, 'Music in 1907: Composers and their Works', *Manchester Guardian*, 30 December 1907.
[50] G.H. Clutsam, 'Music: Yesterday's Concerts', *Observer*, 26 February 1911.

mentor of Fauré, who in turn was an influential and charismatic teacher who could count Ravel and Florent Schmitt among his students. However, as a composer, Saint-Saëns was understandably seen to be out of place, and the French Concerts exposed a gulf between generations as well as musical styles.

A similar issue manifested itself in the inclusion of work by Jean-Baptiste Ganaye (1870-1944), who had graduated from the Paris conservatoire in 1899. In a review of the sixteenth London Concert, the *Daily Telegraph* critic compared the little-known Ganaye to Arthur Sullivan:

> JB Ganaye's second string quartet means reaction or it means nothing. It is difficult to believe that this work, which was produced here for the first time last night at the sixteenth meeting to the Société des Concerts Français was written only two years ago. One has become so accustomed to Young France leading the Van that it was something of a shock to make acquaintance with this almost Sullivanesque composition. From beginning to end, there was not a bar that might not have been written in England in the eighties…[51]

As this review suggested, a composer did not become modern simply by virtue of coming of age at a particular time and place. In this way, as was the case with Saint-Saëns, Ganaye seemed to have no place in the mission of the French Concerts.

As indicated above, the critics developed clear ideas of what they perceived as the goals of the French Concerts. According to the *Guardian* critic, 'A society exists in London for the exclusive performance of French music, but it cannot be said that its opportunities have always been turned to the best advantage. The occasional relaxation in the standard in the compositions admitted must have gone against the best interests of French music in this country.'[52] In this way, the French Concerts were being judged on very specific criteria. These were, broadly speaking, either to represent the best of contemporary music, or to showcase important developments

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[51] 'Société des Concerts Français', *Daily Telegraph*, 1 April 1912.
[52] Ferruccio Bonavia, 'Debussy's Le Martyre de Saint Sébastien', *Manchester Guardian,* 25 August 1915.

including the revival of early music and the works of Franck and his adherents.[53] This criteria was, however, open to interpretation as there was never a consensus as to what constituted modern or exactly where a work could be placed in a particular tradition. The concerts were, it is evident from the reviews, held in high esteem, and expectations had been generated, both in the quality of composition and the performances. The negative reviews were few and far between, but they gave a good indication that the French Concerts, especially Guéritte's London series, had assumed an important place in London concert life.

A French 'classical school'?

The concerts were effective precisely because they presented so much seemingly diverse repertoire in one programme. But how did the critics assess the concerts and their repertoire as a whole? The performance together of different works prompted a new view of the conception of what some critics called a French 'classical school.'[54] Through the concerts, critics and audiences had been made aware of French music as a force. A review of a concert that took place towards the end of the series in January 1914 shows a new appreciation of French music. According to the reviewer, 'The concert organised by the French concert society, which took place at the Bechstein Hall tonight, was perhaps the most remarkable of the whole series, as it presented us under different aspects of the work of a shoal of composers which has created some stir in the world.' This 'shoal of composers' represented, the writer believed, something new. According the review, 'Classicism in French music is a

[53] Jean-Aubry mentions the importance of showing the best of French music in *French Music of Today*, stating: "It is in the highest degree important that only works of real value be given, and that these be assured of an irreproachable reputation". Jean-Aubry, *French Music of Today*, 248.
[54] 'New French Music', *Manchester Guardian*, 17 January 1914.

comparatively new thing. Before the coming of César Franck few of us have heard of French classical music, though, of course, we were all acquainted with the great Romantic composers.' And he believed that this gave 'France a classical school to balance if not to oust the output of their friendly German rivals.'[55] What this shows is that the idea of a 'classical school', however vaguely expressed, had taken hold in Britain and was now a feature of discussions of modern French music.

These and other reviews showed how critics and commentators had become eager to place certain composers within a wider historical context. They also found ways in which various periods of music could be linked together through a search for unifying features that connected early composers with the modern. In a review of a French Concert at Southport, the critic considered the quartet of Louis Dumas in relation to earlier composers:

> Franck, the pioneer of French classicism, has become more or less familiar to every self-respecting musician, and thanks to him we approach these younger artists in a far more open and sympathetic mood. Couperin and Leclair helped one also to bridge over diversity of national tendency and smoothed the way for the moderns, because these men have the same characteristics as Dumas, and even Debussy, though in a very different form and of a somewhat limited scope. The grace, the refinement which, for the moment, makes all other sentiment appear almost blatant and aggressive is theirs as much as the moderns'. They have also the same restraint, the same undercurrent of passion, kept marvelously within bounds; the same contempt for vulgarity, the same art of finished workmanship, the same distinction, the same directness of style. There is no borrowing from extraneous sources, no compromise between two ideals. One and all they are true to their aim, which they reach infallibly.[56]

What this description shows was a new willingness to see French music in its entirety. The writer connected together the modernism of Debussy, the perceived classicism of Franck and the simplicity of early composers such as Couperin and Leclair, giving them all common characteristics.

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[55] Ibid.
[56] 'The Parisian Quartet at the Southport Chamber Concert', *Manchester Guardian*, 29 March 1912.

If a perception of the breadth and depth of French musical traditions had become evident in reviews, this was surely due in part to the efforts of Guéritte and his programming choices. Guéritte's concerts had spurred a discussion over the nature of French music and a linking together of different periods and composers. The result was a deeper understanding of French music and the suggestion of a challenge to German musical dominance. As such, Guéritte's activities must be considered to have played a role in the fostering of an appreciation of French music in Britain.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has focused on Guéritte's attempts to promote French music through the staging of a string of concerts. My analysis raises two broad questions: were the French Concerts successful, and what was their lasting impact? Answering these questions requires us both to consider the success of the concerts in light of Jean-Aubry's stated ambition, which was chiefly to challenge German musical dominance in British concert halls, but also to place the concerts in the wider context of the musical environment in Britain, which had changed beyond recognition in the years between 1907 and 1915.

The introduction of the music of Ravel to British concert halls was arguably the most significant feature of the French Concerts and the one with the most lasting influence. The piano works and string quartet were undoubtedly a shock to critics, and briefly stopped them in their tracks. Ravel's works generated a string of reviews that exposed the discomfort of the critics, while opening up a revealing discussion about the problems of understanding modern music and the nature of criticism itself. But the gradual acceptance and appreciation of Ravel, as well as the recognition of French musical 'schools', through an appraisal and analysis of the works of Franck and his circle also led the critics to express their own opinions about what the concerts *should* represent. By looking at the changing reception of the French concerts, it is possible to see a shift in the nature of the critical response as new questions were generated and answered. In particular, the critics repeatedly considered the question of whether these concerts were showing the very best examples of French music. In attempting to answer this question, they gradually felt more and more capable of deciding for themselves what did or did not represent important developments in French music. In turn, this confidence enabled them to increasingly acknowledge the importance of a

'French musical tradition.'

The timing of the concerts is critical in assessing their impact on the musical environment in London. The progress in the reception of Debussy's *Prélude a*nd string quartet showed that some advances in understanding modern French works had already been made in Britain prior to 1907. My survey of music journals in Chapter One shows that French music was much reported on, even if it was not widely played, and that it had arrived in Britain with a reputation. This provided fertile ground for a more concentrated exposure of French music. Put another way, Guéritte and his activities took place in a particularly productive window and this accounts in part for their impact. Had the concerts begun any later it would be arguable whether Ravel would have made the same impact, and whether other aspects of French music such as the 'school' of Franck would have inspired such appreciation and interest. By the time the First World War began, the modernism of Ravel and Debussy had been replaced by Schoenberg, Scriabin and Stravinsky. All of this made it especially important that the significance of French music had been acknowledged, through Guéritte's concerts, before it was supplanted by newer musical developments.

In considering Jean-Aubry's most urgent ambition, namely to present a challenge to German musical dominance in Britain, it is clear that French music had not succeeded in pushing German music out of concert halls. A look at the musical environment during the war showed that despite the requirements of political expediency, as well as pressure from the critics such as George Clutsam, audiences were reluctant to be deprived of their favourite German works. However, the last few years of reviews of Guéritte's concerts show that they had gained a small but significant victory in inspiring the critics to acknowledge the importance of French musical traditions, and this must surely be seen as a vindication of his efforts. The

London concerts were also acknowledged as having made noticeable impact on the classical music scene. This was summed up by George Clutsam in a review of one of the later London concerts, in which he explained that they had become 'an indispensable adjunct to the intimate musical life of London.'[57] All of these developments show that Guéritte and his fellow promoters had indeed had an impact on the reception of French Music in Britain and as such they are worthy of closer examination.

[57] G.H. Clutsam, 'Société des Concerts Français', *Observer*, 16 November 1913.

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