

# Ricardo Viñes and Les Apaches

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**Abstract**

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Music

Ricardo Viñes (1875-1943), Catalan-French pianist, one of the great pianists of his time, forever linked with Claude Debussy, Maurice Ravel, and dozens of other composers of the early twentieth century. A remarkable craftsman at the piano, Viñes was blessed with musical prescience, an uncanny ability to bring new music to life for audiences, and a sense of responsibility toward his contemporaries. Endowed with an inquisitive mind and thirst for eclectic learnings, he was over his lifetime well acquainted with scores of musicians, artists, and literary personages. Mostly Paris-based, Viñes spent significant time in South America after World War I. The diary he kept during his youth fascinates researchers with its details of the Parisian artistic scene. In recent decades, scholars have done much to reassemble the Viñes story, which for multiple reasons had become fragmented across time, place, and language into relative obscurity.

This dissertation provides an English-language overview of the Viñes biography as research currently comprehends it, then shines a spotlight on Viñes's association with Les Apaches, an interdisciplinary circle of friends who collaborated with remarkable consistency and artistic purpose over the first decade of the twentieth century. An examination of Viñes's ever-growing and evolving repertoire and concert programming during this period offers evidence of the ongoing endeavors of this talented cadre and their interface with the larger musical currents flowing through turn-of-the-century Paris, the legendary Belle Époque that continues to entrance scholars and artistic aficionados.

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## Dedication

*To*

Robin McCabe

Julian Martin

and

Nancy Ryder Moore

...who taught me how to play the piano

and passed on their love for this repertoire.

## Prologue: The “Inevitability” of Ricardo Viñes

*Sunday, 1 November 1896: O Wagner! O Leonardo da Vinci! O Edgar Poe! O Baudelaire! O Gustavo Adolfo Becquer!*<sup>1</sup>

**in·ev·i·ta·ble:** adj., certain to make happen, unavoidable

*After the 1781 discovery of Uranus, astronomers noted that the planet was deviating from its expected orbit. It was hypothesized that this was the result of the gravity of another, yet undiscovered planet. A young mathematician set out to solve the puzzle. He sent his calculations to an assistant at the Berlin Observatory, who searched the skies the very night he received the letter. Within one hour, Neptune was discovered within one degree of where its location had been predicted.*<sup>2</sup>

*“You cannot have a Renaissance man without the Renaissance.”*<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Viñes: Diary, 1 November 1896. In Nina Gubisch, ed., "Le journal inédit de Ricardo Viñes: Introduction, traduction et notes," *Revue internationale de la musique française* 1 (1980): 191.

<sup>2</sup> <http://er.jsc.nasa.gov/seh/neptune.html>, accessed 4.26.2013.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.netplaces.com/leonardo-da-vinci/leonardos-legacy/the-quintessential-renaissance-man.htm>, accessed 4.26.2013.

Ricardo Viñes had to be who he was, had to exist when and where he did. In him, the subsequence of artistic and musical vogues, the steady stream of works their representative creators brought forth, somehow found in one man their herald, messenger, cocreator, and chronicler.

Both the evolution and dissemination of piano music in the early twentieth century relied on him. All that sprang from the fin-de-siècle—exquisite pleasures, cultivated self-craftship, artist-as-oracle conceit, words and notes infused with mystical bouquet—were distilled into his person. The words of the era’s writers tickled his mind and imagination. The works of its composers were alchemized through him.

In a time and place where a great musical and pianistic tradition, Western in the main and French in the local, was to honor the old while assisting the new, Viñes could have been tailor-made to fulfill a unique role in shaping music’s destiny, as an agent for bringing new ideas and creations to bear, as a quintessential representative of the Parisian artistic zeitgeist, as a bridge between performance practice of old and virtuoso artistry we so revere today. If a particular history within music can be shown as a logical unfolding of innovation in sound and material, Viñes must be understood as a throughline ferrying the nineteenth-century narratives across the swirling waters of the turn of the century, delivering a tradition into the hands of the annihilators of the 1920s avant-garde.

Ricardo Viñes was a perfect match for his times, the confluence of countless artistic factors and vectors, all of which carried him to accomplishments that confound our imagination. His own passions for literature, art, and the exotic were in exact accord with the artistic mélange that nourished the very composers whose music he brought to the public. As

he acquired untold influences and stimuli, these were integrated and amplified among a remarkable association of interdisciplinary friends: Les Apaches.

His unique, syncretic pianism inspired composers who were exploring imaginative, novel possibilities in piano music. Combined with his remarkable capacity to learn and retain hundreds of pieces, this made him uniquely equipped to animate composers' creations in such lockstep with these same collaborators that some scholars credit Viñes's special technique with directly influencing the new piano writing of the first decade of the twentieth century.

When personal reports are synthesized and reconciled, Viñes's psychology emerges as complex, yet he evinced the joy and intellectual curiosity of a perpetually exploring wunderkind. These qualities imbued his performances with what countless critics noted as a miraculous sense of spontaneous creation. They also made him the life of the party: Fellow Apaches described how the energy in the room immediately uplifted when Viñes entered. These attributes, accreted by his keen intellect, broad artistic knowledge, and multilingual abilities, served him marvelously on the salon circuit and in untold foreign adventures. Who else at the height of his European career could have departed for South America, conquered the musical centers there, sought out all its composers to take under his wing—and then gambled away all his earnings?

In his art and at the keyboard, Viñes had an uncanny ability to bridge seeming opposites, transcend partisanship, and not only maintain face but also foster ever-deeper connections of artistic trust and collaboration with all sides. Debussy vs. Ravel. Ravel vs. Satie. Paris Conservatoire vs. Schola Cantorum. Les Apaches vs. Les Six. No dichotomy mattered. He always

found a way to navigate both sides, choose on his own terms, and address a sense of responsibility to his artistic times.

Seeming black-and-white dualities are infinitely nuanced, but as we try to understand as much as possible over a broad reach, histories we absorb must necessarily polish out these nuances. Viñes thrived *within* the nuances, and because of this he accessed the widest spectrum of input and stimuli, exceptional people of all persuasions, and professional opportunities.

This dissertation is a multipronged inquiry into one of the most fascinating human beings I have ever had the privilege of studying, imagining what being him would be like, even striving in some ways to emulate him. The tapestry of his artistic life is so rich in all manner of detail that this offering must be seen along with others—existing, contemporaneous, and future—as just another step in fully understanding and appreciating Ricardo Viñes—exemplar of Les Apaches.

## **Part I: Ricardo Viñes**

## 1. Summative Biography

*Friday, 7 September 1906: I updated my journal reasonably late. I responded to Fayet, then read Barbey d'Aurevilly. In the afternoon, I practiced piano, then before dinner, I was with Fabre watching the harvest in the vineyards, then the cellar, because today was the first day of the grape harvest. In the evening, philosophized in the garden...<sup>4</sup>*

On 5 February 1875, in an apartment on the corner of Calle Caladererías and Calle Major in Lérida (Catalan: Lleida), in the Catalan region of Spain, Javier Viñes y Solano (born 1843 in Lérida) and Dolores Roda y Vives welcomed a son: Ricardo Javier Viñes y García Roda. His paternal grandparents were José Viñes and Leonor Solano; his maternal grandparents were José Garcia Roda and Teresa Vives.

The Catalan region was at the time affected by civil war. Of these circumstances, Viñes's first biographer Juan Riera romanticizes, "So the twilight that preceded the appearance of Viñes was tainted with a bellicose ardor, as if it tried to light up the seal that characterized the internal substantial strength of our pianist, the strength that would drive him to take a leading role in fierce battles, which later would turn into successes causing a profound effect on the history of contemporary piano."<sup>5</sup>

A delicate child who suffered terrible headaches, young Ricardo was unable to attend school regularly; his amateur-musician mother and lawyer father nurtured what they

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<sup>4</sup> Viñes: Diary, 7 September 1906. In Suzy Levy, ed., *Journal inédit de Ricardo Viñes: Odilon Redon et le milieu occultiste 1897-1915* (Paris: Aux Amateurs de Livres, 1987), 81.

<sup>5</sup> Juan Riera, *Ricardo Viñes (Evocation)* (Lérida: Imprenta-Escuela Provincial, 1968), 19.

considered their child's special, unusually sensitive nature.<sup>6</sup> It appears that the family enjoyed a comparatively comfortable social class despite the upheaval of the time: Ricardo's father had an arts degree and was adept in commercial law, philosophy, and language arts. He "practiced his law profession and poetry with a beautiful baritone voice."<sup>7</sup> His mother played the piano, "a sign of possessing a distinguished and uncommon culture for that era."<sup>8</sup> Music permeated the household.

Ricardo's first piano lessons were with his mother, "in a familial environment, purely recreational."<sup>9</sup> In May 1882, he began solfège with Joaquín Terraza, a local organist. The following April, Terraza began teaching him piano. The boy progressed rapidly, and the family moved to Barcelona in the fall of 1885, intending to enroll Ricardo at the conservatory there. At ten years old, he was below the minimum age, so the well-regarded pedagogue Juan Bautista Pujol agreed to teach him privately. In January 1887 Ricardo was admitted into Pujol's superior class, where he quickly ascended to the top. He received his first prize in July, together with Joaquín Malats, who later would join him at the Paris Conservatoire.

Following this early success, Ricardo's mother consulted with Isaac Albéniz, already in his late twenties a famous international concert pianist, who advised against launching a concert career too early and advocated further study in Paris. Optimistic from his achievements in Barcelona and the promising assessment of Albéniz, Ricardo and his mother left for Paris on 12 October 1887, arriving the next day. His father and two brothers, Pepe and Eugenio, soon followed.

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<sup>6</sup> Mildred Clary, *Ricardo Viñes: Un pèlerin de l'Absolu* (Arles: Musicales Actes Sud, 2011), 16.

<sup>7</sup> Riera, 20.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

On 7 November, he was admitted to the Paris Conservatoire as an auditor, as the quota for foreign students had been reached. Less than two weeks later, he had his first lesson with Charles de Bériot. Young Spanish pianists attending the Conservatoire naturally gravitated to Bériot, as his mother and aunt were, respectively, the Spanish mezzo-sopranos Maria Malibran and Pauline Viardot. Bériot was already teaching Enrique Granados, who also had been born in Lérida and studied with Pujol in Barcelona.<sup>10</sup>

It was exactly as young Ricardo was arriving in Paris that he started writing in his famous diary, a practice he maintained meticulously until World War I. Currently in the possession of Viñes's grandniece Nina Gubisch, the journal fascinates scholars with its observations on the artistic life in Paris over the fin-de-siècle years. Gubisch has released select diary entries in various articles and collaborations.<sup>11</sup> A long-awaited, unabridged French translation in electronic format, prepared by Gubisch and the University of Montreal, is pending.

According to Elaine Brody, in her "The Spaniards in Paris" chapter,<sup>12</sup> Viñes's journal almost immediately started reporting the family's financial struggles. Ongoing expenses included lodging, food, private lessons with Bériot, piano rental and tuning, and performance clothing. Although Viñes received a small allowance of 150 pesetas per month from the

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<sup>10</sup> Riera, 21. Riera suffuses his biography with floral prose: "With Granados, they are the two pianists from Lérida that have reached the mecca of the arts, ready to capture all the understandings that they are capable of perceiving."

<sup>11</sup> See Nina Gubisch, ed., "Le journal inédit de Ricardo Viñes: Introduction, traduction et notes," *Revue internationale de la musique française* 1 (1980): 153-248; Levy; and Clary.

<sup>12</sup> Elaine Brody, "Viñes in Paris: New Light on Twentieth-Century Performance Practice," in *A Musical Offering: Essays in Honor of Martin Bernstein*, ed. Edward H. Clinkscale and Claire Brook, 45-62 (New York: Pendragon Press, 1977).

municipality of Barcelona, money was always short, and the family had to move often. To help out, Viñes started playing the soirée circuit for twenty francs a night.<sup>13</sup>

On 22 November 1888, Viñes met Maurice “Mauricio” Ravel, a fellow pianist and future Apache composer who would become his best friend into adulthood. This introduction was likely facilitated by the acquaintance of their Spanish-speaking mothers. In May 1889, Viñes visited with Albéniz, who inscribed *Septima Habanera*, “In testimony for my sincere and affectionate admiration to the young Viñes, Albéniz.”<sup>14</sup>

Viñes’s journal evidences his delight in exploring his new city, indulging his lifelong trademark, eager inquisitiveness. Together, he and Ravel sought out musical, artistic, and intellectual loci. In the summer of 1889, they shared the greatest playground imaginable: the Paris Exposition Universelle.

“In the extraordinary Exposition of 1889 the arts and crafts of non-Western nations were on display for the first time: Javanese dancers and a gamelan orchestra; Japanese Noh dramas, Indian dancers, and Chinese crafts and craftsmen; lavish offerings of the pavilion of Czarist Russia—in addition to the construction of the most daring and memorable of all exposition structures, the Eiffel Tower.”<sup>15</sup>

Brody notes that Viñes attended the Buffalo Bill shows, pantomime at the Hippodrome, cabaret at the Theatre du Vaudeville, and the Galerie des Machines with Edison’s new phonograph. The fair “remained for him a perpetual attraction.” Together, the boys and their families enjoyed the Exposition, as well as other Parisian sights.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Brody, *Paris: The Musical Kaleidoscope*, 172.

<sup>14</sup> Riera, 21.

<sup>15</sup> Brody, *Paris: The Musical Kaleidoscope*, 174-5.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 176.

In November of the same year, Viñes was finally admitted as an official Conservatoire student into Bériot's class, where he joined compatriots Malats and Granados, as well as Ravel. Viñes kept busy with extracurricular music activities: He continued his salon performances, taught his first private students, accompanied singers, and—often with Ravel for company—attended countless concerts. Progressing rapidly with Bériot, he learned copious repertoire including virtuoso and salon pieces.

In the summers, Viñes competed in the Conservatoire's annual performance competitions, coming up short multiple times. In addition, he spent much time attending the theater and opera and voraciously reading, as he would do throughout his life. In the fall of 1892, he entered Benjamin Godard's ensemble class, joining fellow piano classmate and future Apache Marcel Chadeigne.

On 8 February 1893, he and Ravel played Chabrier's *Valses Romantiques* for two pianos for the composer; the boys were disappointed when the seriously ill Chabrier didn't show up the next day to hear them perform the piece in concert. Later that spring, Viñes worked with composer and conductor Camille Chevillard on his *Variations* and transcription of Chabrier's *España*.<sup>17</sup> At this time, Mme Godebski, third wife of Cyprian Godebski, heard Viñes play at a soirée and subsequently invited him to their home. They and Cyprian's children Cipa and Misia would feature prominently in the lives of Viñes, Ravel, and Les Apaches for decades.<sup>18</sup>

In the summer of 1893, Viñes was heavily favored to win the Conservatoire competition. He wrote in his diary:

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<sup>17</sup> Brody, *Paris: The Musical Kaleidoscope*, 178.

<sup>18</sup> Malou Haine, "Cipa Godebski et les Apaches," in *Revue belge de Musicologie* 60 (2006): 230-231.

“I was immediately applauded. I played the contest piece, the F minor Chopin Fantaisie marvelously. I received applause and bravos after the first half. When I finished, I had the most frenetic ovations—and it was merited because I could not have played better—from the point of cleanliness, security of technique, style, sentiment, warmth. In sum, the public was so enthusiastic about me that I had to get up and bow three or four times. Then I sight-read a piece by Théodore Dubois to perfection, in great style and with much taste. My success was electric. Again I had to return and bow.”<sup>19</sup>

Despite his crowd-pleasing performance, Vines was completely passed over. His diary reports the reaction to these results: furor among the audience and even condemnation in the newspapers.<sup>20</sup>

That fall, he participated in an evening gala benefit for those affected by the steamship explosion in Santander, Spain, which killed more than 500 people and heavily damaged the city.<sup>21</sup> Over the winter, he maintained his rehearsal pianist and soirée schedule; a highlight was meeting Norwegian composer Edvard Grieg.

On 21 July 1894, he finally won his coveted Conservatoire first prize. The required piece was Saint-Saëns’s *Theme and Variations*, in which he “stacked marvels over marvels.” He sight-read a Widor piece without even glancing at it, with “taste and a facility that mesmerized the audience. Even before I had finished, the public acclaimed me with bravos and applause.”<sup>22</sup> His “graduation” was honored on 1 August by Isabel II, former queen of Spain, now living in Paris.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Brody, *Paris: The Musical Kaleidoscope*, 178.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 178.

<sup>21</sup> Nina Gubisch, <http://ricardoViñes.eu/>, accessed 4.14.2013.

<sup>22</sup> Brody, *Paris: The Musical Kaleidoscope*, 180.

<sup>23</sup> Nina Gubisch, <http://ricardoViñes.eu/>, accessed 4.14.2013.

The next month, on 17 September, he attended the burial of Chabrier with Ravel; the two young men honored the occasion beforehand by sight-reading Chabrier's *Gwendoline*.<sup>24</sup>

At the beginning of 1895, Viñes received his prize from the Conservatoire competition: a Pleyel grand piano. On 21 February 1895, he gave his public debut recital at Salle Pleyel. He programmed a mammoth, two-and-a-half hour marathon that started at nine p.m. A prominent event attracting a well-heeled audience of hundreds, the concert earned Viñes a profit of 2,000 francs.<sup>25</sup>

The next month, Viñes performed Bériot's Sonata for Two Pianos at Salle Pleyel, with Bériot on the other piano.<sup>26</sup> That summer, he purchased a Rachmaninoff prelude<sup>27</sup> and Balakirev's *Islamey*, which would feature prominently in his performances for decades. He switched allegiance from Pleyel to Érard, who let him use their hall for no charge.<sup>28</sup>

In 1896 Viñes composed his first song, setting Baudelaire's *Parfum Exotique*.<sup>29</sup> That fall, at a Lamoureux concert with Ravel, he first heard the Prelude and *Liebestod* from *Tristan und Isolde*, which moved him deeply. Viñes gave his second solo recital on 11 March 1897, this time at Salle Érard. In this year, Bériot encouraged him to take up the music of Fauré, and over tea chez Bériot in July, Viñes played Saint-Saëns's Concerto No. 3 for the composer. Saint-Saëns dedicated a photo to Viñes, saying, "He plays better than Saint-Saëns."<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Brody, *Paris: The Musical Kaleidoscope*, 181.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 182.

<sup>26</sup> Nina Gubisch, "Le journal inédit," 188; used in David Korevaar and Laurie J. Sampsel, "The Ricardo Viñes Piano Music Collection at the University of Colorado at Boulder," *Notes*, Second Series 61, no. 2 (December 2004): 362.

<sup>27</sup> The Rachmaninoff is probably the famous Prelude in C# minor, likely the copy at U. Colorado. See Korevaar and Sampsel.

<sup>28</sup> Brody, *Paris: The Musical Kaleidoscope*, 183. This switch was definitive; he always gave his solo recitals at Érard from this point.

<sup>29</sup> Nina Gubisch, <http://ricardoViñes.eu/>, accessed 4.14.2013.

<sup>30</sup> Brody, *Paris: The Musical Kaleidoscope*, 183.

His Conservatoire studies complete, Viñes proceeded to educate himself in the liberal arts. The institution, as Alfred Casella writes, was basically a “finishing school,” the curriculum strictly music pedagogic.<sup>31</sup> It appears Viñes never received a formal education, and therefore, the prodigious intellect he would unceasingly display was nurtured by constant self-study. In addition to attending an endless stream of opera and plays,

“He taught himself English (specifically to be able to read Poe in the original), mathematics, astrology, palmistry, and any number of other branches of the ‘occult sciences.’ He also read extensively from the literature of the time, ranging from the symbolists including Maurice Maeterlinck, Georges Rodenbach, and Stéphane Mallarmé; to the decadents Jules-Amédée Barbey d'Aurevilly, Joris-Karl Huysmans, and Auguste, comte de Villiers de l'Isle-Adam; to Catholic mystics like Ernest Hello; and utterly unclassifiable authors such as the Rosicrucian Catholic Joséphin Péladan.”<sup>32</sup>

Along the way, he shared many of these literary pursuits with Ravel, lending him works of Maeterlinck and well as Aloysius Bertrand’s *Gaspard de la nuit*.

In the second half of 1897, Viñes and Ravel became passionate about Russian music, constantly reading new scores and four-hand arrangements of orchestral works. They also played Camille Saint-Saëns and César Franck. These explorations set the stage for their presentations in future meetings of Les Apaches, where they would perform in this manner countless times for the group. Viñes continued to attract the acquaintance of artists, poets, actors, dancers, and fellow musicians.

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<sup>31</sup> Alfred Casella, *Music in My Time*, Translated by and edited by Spencer Norton (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1955). Casella was a fellow foreign Conservatoire student from Italy. Although he was friendly with Les Apaches folks such as Ravel and Caplet, he was never a member.

<sup>32</sup> Korevaar and Sampsel, 362-63.

On 29 January 1898, Maurice Ravel dedicated *Menuet Antique* to Viñes. French composers were already prevailing upon Viñes to perform their works, and given their close friendship, it was natural that he would premiere Ravel's first piano works such as *Menuet antique*, *Pavane pour une infante defunte*, and *Jeux d'eau*. On 5 March, he appeared for the first time in a Société Nationale de Musique concert: With Marthe Dron, he premiered three etudes of Roger Ducasse for four hands, then on two pianos, Ravel's *Sites auriculaires*. This performance was something of a fiasco, as the two played "rather badly both of us; me, I was an eighth note ahead in Ravel's *Entre cloches*, producing an unspeakable effect."<sup>33</sup>

On 10 March 1898, he gave a recital at Salle Érard, followed by another on 18 April, at which he premiered *Menuet Antique*. On 28 May, he and Ravel met painter Odilon Redon, who would become a close friend and artistic inspiration.<sup>34</sup> Later that year, Spain was badly defeated in the Spanish-American war, and Viñes wrote bitterly about the United States, swearing he would never perform there.<sup>35</sup> In 1899, he met cellist Pablo Casals, pianist Ignace Paderewski, and composer Henri Duparc.<sup>36</sup>

Viñes enjoyed the Paris Exhibition of 1900, which featured art nouveau designs and dazzling displays of electric lights.<sup>37</sup> That fall, he traveled to Russia for two months: "His strong affinity for the music of the Russian school led to—and was fed by—a tour of Russia in 1900. In

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<sup>33</sup> Nina Gubisch, "Le journal inédit," 188. Roger Nichols discusses the piano with two keyboards, one in reverse, and explains why this sounded so dreadful: Roger Nichols, *Ravel* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 27.

<sup>34</sup> Levy, 7. Levy's book catalogs diary entries by Viñes that feature Odilon Redon and capture their friendship.

<sup>35</sup> Brody, *Paris: The Musical Kaleidoscope*, 184. Many years later, he would express the desire to avail himself of the opportunities in the United States, but he never had the chance.

<sup>36</sup> Nina Gubisch, "Le journal inédit," 237-48 presents the diary entries that correspond to Duparc. Viñes and Duparc became very close. On 13 March 1904, for example, Viñes taught Duparc's son how to play checkers.

<sup>37</sup> Brody, *Paris: The Musical Kaleidoscope*, 185.

the years immediately following, he brought the latest compositions of Balakirev, Lyapunov, and other modern Russian composers back to Paris.”<sup>38</sup>

After the New Year 1901, he met painters Camille Pissarro and, at the Godebskis', Pierre Bonnard. A few months later, he met Pablo Picasso. Viñes visited Claude Debussy at the end of November, where he played *Pour le Piano* for the composer. On a return visit two weeks later, Debussy played *Reflets dans l'eau* and *Mouvement*, which he was in process of composing, for Viñes.<sup>39</sup> Viñes gave the first of his many Debussy premieres on 11 January 1902, performing *Pour le piano* in addition to works by Glazounov and Lekeu<sup>40</sup> at Salle Érard for the Société Nationale de Musique.

According to his diary, Viñes first attended Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande* on 2 May, two days after its premiere, “which I liked very much.” He noted that the painters Édouard Vuillard and Maurice Denis were also there.<sup>41</sup> He attended the opera again on 20 June, sitting with composer Charles Koechlin.<sup>42</sup> Out of the young students, musicians, and artists who attended these early performances, a cadre began gathering regularly who would become Les Apaches. For the next decade, Viñes would be a key participant in the group's meetings and endeavors.

Later in the year, Viñes met Joris-Karl Huysmans,<sup>43</sup> whose *À rebours* had long stimulated Viñes and Ravel, along with countless would-be dandies. After a March 1903 concert, Viñes met poet Léon-Paul Fargue, who would become a fellow Apache and lifelong friend. On 21 April, at

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<sup>38</sup> Korevaar and Sampsel, 364.

<sup>39</sup> This was several years before Viñes would premiere them, and they may have been markedly different by then.

<sup>40</sup> Michel Duchesneau, *L'avant-garde musicale et ses sociétés à Paris de 1871 à 1939* (Sprimont: Mardaga, 1997), 262.

<sup>41</sup> Nina Gubisch, “Le journal inédit,” 224.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 224-25

<sup>43</sup> Nina Gubisch, <http://ricardoViñes.eu/>, accessed 4.14.2013.

the Schola Cantorum, he played *Pour le piano*, then with Debussy, the *Trois Nocturnes* arranged for two pianos.

Viñes premiered Debussy's *Estampes* on 9 January 1904 at Salle Érard for the Société Nationale. Later in the winter, on 1 March, he gave an all-French concert at the Libre Esthétique in Brussels, performing works by Debussy, Ravel, de Séverac, and Février. He would regularly perform in Brussels and other capitals such as London, "spreading the gospel of the modern French music of the time in programs calculated to showcase what he considered the best of French music."<sup>44</sup> A budding art collector, he was thrilled to purchase Redon's pastel *Le grand vitrail* ("a rapture of harmonious and dazzling colors") on 4 June for the discount price of 400 francs.<sup>45</sup> Over the years, he would come to assemble a sizable collection of artworks created by friends.

On 8 January 1905, he premiered the Rimsky-Korsakov Piano Concerto with the Société des Concerts du Conservatoire. Three days after playing *Masques* and *L'isle joyeuse* for Debussy, on 10 February, he premiered these pieces at Salle Aeolian. He repeated the works the following week at Salle Pleyel for the Société Nationale,<sup>46</sup> where he also introduced *Coin de cimetière au Printemps* and *À cheval dans la prairie* by Déodat de Séverac. On 20 February, M. D. Calvocoressi brought him a copy of *Islamey* dedicated by Balakirev, who wrote Viñes a few weeks later to recommend an accompanying concerto by Lyapunov.<sup>47</sup>

In the spring, Viñes undertook a most ambitious endeavor: four historic concerts, comprising an overview of piano music from Antonio de Cabezón to Claude Debussy, a total of

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<sup>44</sup> Korevaar and Sampsel, 364.

<sup>45</sup> Levy, 64.

<sup>46</sup> This is incorrectly given as the premiere in some sources, including Duchesneau.

<sup>47</sup> Nina Gubisch, <http://ricardoViñes.eu/>, accessed 4.14.2013. Viñes would go on to frequently perform this work.

55 works by 49 composers.<sup>48</sup> The concerts took place at Salle Érard on four consecutive Mondays starting on 27 March. In May, he performed in a concert of Catalan music at the Schola along with pianist Blanche Selva and guitarist Manuel Llobet,<sup>49</sup> and later gave the world premiere of the entire *En Languedoc* by Déodat de Séverac—dedicated to Viñes—at the Schola Cantorum. By now, “Viñes quickly found himself much in demand as a pianist for new music, with numerous works dedicated to him over his career, and with premieres of many more to his credit.”<sup>50</sup> In the summer, fellow Apache Abbé Léonce Petit introduced him to Léon Bloy,<sup>51</sup> who would exert a significant lifelong spiritual influence on Viñes.

With relatively little time to prepare, Viñes premiered Ravel’s *Miroirs* on 6 January 1906 at Salle Érard for the Société Nationale. This set of five pieces dedicated to Les Apaches members marked a new direction in Ravel’s piano writing. Two more major premieres followed: On 5 February, at Salle des Agriculteurs, Viñes introduced Debussy’s first book of *Images*. Paris heard yet another blockbuster for the first time on 17 March at the Schola Cantorum, where he gave the official French premiere of Moussorgsky’s *Pictures at an Exhibition*. The next month, Viñes performed the Lyapunov Concerto in Florence, then introduced another Apaches work, Florent Schmitt’s *Valses*.

On 4 March 1907, his mother Dolores Roda y Vives died. This event marked Viñes deeply, as would be the case for Ravel in 1917. Viñes’s mother had always exerted a strong influence on the family, and as with Casella,<sup>52</sup> her ambitions and support in relocating the

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<sup>48</sup> Clary, 177-81.

<sup>49</sup> Nina Gubisch, <http://ricardoViñes.eu/>, accessed 4.14.2013.

<sup>50</sup> Korevaar and Sampsel, 363.

<sup>51</sup> Nina Gubisch, <http://ricardoViñes.eu/>, accessed 4.14.2013.

<sup>52</sup> Casella, 187. He eulogizes his mother on this page, but discusses his mother’s role in his development as a theme throughout the book.

family to another country were crucial to Viñes's development. Her death and his subsequent grief prompted him to intensify his spiritual searching and, it seems, ultimately led to his embracing the Catholic faith.

On 26 November, Debussy dedicated *Poissons d'or* to Viñes, the only dedication he would make to a living musician. After the New Year, Viñes received the second book of *Images* from Debussy, who had just published them. On 20 February 1908, he visited Debussy to play these new works, premiering them the next day at a Cercle Musical matinee. On 15 June, just little more than a year after the passing of his mother, his father died.

Viñes gave the world premiere of Ravel's *Gaspard de la Nuit* on 9 January 1909 in a Société Nationale concert at Salle Érard. Some writers suggest that interpretive disagreements between Viñes and Ravel led to the eventual cooling of their friendship. However, less than two weeks later, on 22 January, they were together chez Édouard Laloy, along with fellow Apaches Calvoceossi, Schmitt, and Caplet, to spearhead the creation of the Société Musicale Indépendante as a rival organization to the Société Nationale de Musique.

Later in the winter, Viñes toured England with the Willaume quartet, also participating in a Claude Debussy festival in Manchester with the composer present.<sup>53</sup> On 27 March, he gave the world premiere of Manuel de Falla's *Quatre pieces espagnoles* for the Société Nationale. The two men had met in 1907, when Falla traveled to Paris for his opera *La vie brève*. This premiere marked the start of a productive association between the Spanish composer and pianist that would endure for the remainder of Viñes's life.

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<sup>53</sup> Nina Gubisch, <http://ricardoViñes.eu/>, accessed 4.14.2013.

In a noteworthy departure from his contemporary music activities, in 1910, Viñes marked the centenaries of Frédéric Chopin and Robert Schumann with two solo recitals of their works at Salle Érard, on 21 February and 13 April, respectively. He spent a month in late summer at the Abbaye de Fontfroide with Odilon Redon.<sup>54</sup>

In January 1911, he toured Switzerland, where in Clarens, he met Igor Stravinsky. Over the rest of the year, he performed in England and made two tours into Spain. On 8 April, he gave an all-Liszt concert at Salle Érard<sup>55</sup> in honor of the composer's centenary. His touring continued throughout 1912: Lausanne in January, Lérida with Enrique Grenados in September, and concerts in Berlin (where he met Edgar Varèse) in the fall. He also gave the Paris premieres of Debussy's *Minstrels* and the Lyapunov Piano Concerto, the latter with the Société des Concerts du Conservatoire. In September, he again joined Redon at Fontfroide.

In January 1913, fellow Apache Albert Roussel brought Viñes the new edition of his sonata for piano and violin for performance on Viñes's upcoming German tour.<sup>56</sup> Viñes was in Berlin on 3 February, when he sent Fargue a postcard of a Berlin cityscape, saying he would soon return to Paris. Viñes subsequently performed in Antwerp,<sup>57</sup> where on 11 February he wrote Fargue another postcard, on which he quoted Baudelaire.

Viñes had met Erik Satie back in 1900, and later Satie would say, "M. Viñes is the ideal pianist for the cult of modernism."<sup>58</sup> He starting giving multiple Satie premieres: *Véritables Préludes flasques pour un chien* in April 1913, and *Impressions Automatiques* two months later

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<sup>54</sup> Levy, 107-126.

<sup>55</sup> *Guide Musical*, 1911. Among other works, he performed the Sonata in B Minor and *Mephisto Waltz*.

<sup>56</sup> This is most likely the tour for which the Société Musicale Indépendante commissioned Viñes to perform and promote French repertoire in Germany; sources disagree on the year.

<sup>57</sup> Among solo works by Bach-Tausig, Debussy, and Albéniz, he performed Franck's *Les Djinns* and *Variations symphoniques*.

<sup>58</sup> Korevaar and Sampsel, 364.

for Société Musicale Indépendante. Although Viñes had participated in the formation of this organization, this was the first of its concerts on which he performed. On 14 January 1914, he again played for Société Musicale Indépendante, giving the world premiere of Satie's *Chapitres tournées en tous sens*. This concert was a Les Apaches tour de force, featuring notable premieres by several members.

Upon the outbreak of World War I, Viñes traveled to Barnères de Bigorre at the end of September, where he would spend much of his time during the war years.<sup>59</sup> It was also then that he stopped writing in his diary, save for two days in 1915. As a national of neutral Spain, he was able to avoid combat. However, he participated in scores of charity and benefit concerts throughout the hostilities<sup>60</sup> and somehow was able to carry on with his international performing.<sup>61</sup> This included frequent performances in Spain, with annual visits to his hometown of Lérida, which cultivated a festival atmosphere that continued in the years after Viñes's death.<sup>62</sup> In 1915, he met Jean Cocteau, which would prove a fruitful connection, leading to future collaborations with the new French avant-garde.

On 24 March 1916, Viñes's old friend and compatriot Granados<sup>63</sup> and his wife perished in the torpedoing of the *Sussex* in the English Channel, the last leg of their journey home from New York. They left six children, for whom Viñes arranged benefit concerts in Paris and

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<sup>59</sup> Information from Gubisch, <http://ricardoViñes.eu/>, accessed 4.14.2013. However, Esperanza Berrocal says that it is difficult to pin down exactly when he was there. Esperanza Berrocal, "Ricardo Viñes and the Diffusion of Early Twentieth-Century South American Piano Literature" (Ph.D. diss.: Catholic University of America, 2002), 56.

<sup>60</sup> Riera writes, "He gave all that he could of his generous spirit and his artistic sensibility," 22.

<sup>61</sup> Berrocal notes that he toured eastern Europe at this time, performing benefit concerts on Prague and Budapest, along with Spain, Germany, France, Portugal, Italy, and North Africa.

<sup>62</sup> Berrocal, 57.

<sup>63</sup> Viñes and Granados had played together on the 4 April 1914 concert of the Société Musicale Indépendante, where they premiered his *Deux Dances espagnoles*, playing four hands.

Barcelona.<sup>64</sup> That year, in addition to tours of Spain,<sup>65</sup> he participated in three festivals honoring, respectively, Debussy, Satie, and Ravel. These were held at Lyre et Palette, which would become one of the most celebrated epicenters of the French avant-garde. At this time, Francis Poulenc began studying with Viñes—an enriching connection for both parties, as Poulenc credited Viñes as his indisputable pianistic, musical, and cultural mentor. In turn, Viñes would go on to premiere Poulenc works and those of his Les Six colleagues, in France and internationally. On 4 November, he performed de Falla’s *Nuits dans les Jardins d’Espagne* in Geneva under Ernest Ansermet,<sup>66</sup> conductor of Diaghilev’s Ballets Russes. The next year brought as highlights Gabriel Fauré and d’Indy-Debussy festivals at Palais de Glace to benefit wounded soldiers, a concert of seventeenth-century music at Salle des Agriculteurs, and concerts in Spain.<sup>67</sup>

In the winter of 1918, he gave a highly successful concert of Spanish music at the Theatre du Vieux Colombier in Paris. But undoubtedly, the event that affected Viñes most deeply was the 25 March death of his inspiration, collaborator, and friend Debussy, who died while Paris was under siege from German bombardment. Viñes and the Princesse de Polignac, together in St.-Jean-de-Luz near Spain, held a private homage in her music room, playing through all Debussy’s music.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Berrocal, 57.

<sup>65</sup> On 7 January, he sent a postcard to Valentine (Gross) Hugo from Valencia (“You aren’t in this brilliant city...”), and on 3 February, one from the train leaving Salamanca.

<sup>66</sup> Nina Gubisch, <http://ricardoViñes.eu/>, accessed 4.14.2013.

<sup>67</sup> Berrocal, 57. Turina reviewed one of these Spanish concerts, praising “the quality of his interpretations.”

<sup>68</sup> Sylvia Kahan, *Music’s Modern Muse: A Life of Winnaretta Singer, Princesse de Polignac* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2003), 209.

In August, Viñes was in Normandy, seemingly on holiday based on postcards he sent Fargue and Valentine Hugo.<sup>69</sup> In November, the war over at long last, he embarked on a concert tour to Spain, where he performed in homage to Debussy on 7 December in Madrid.

In the first half of 1919, Viñes premiered the nineteen-year-old Poulenc's *Trois mouvements perpétuels* at Lyre et Palette; the work was immediately successful.<sup>70</sup> He toured Spain for the fourth straight year, where he attended the opening of Lérida's Teatro Viñes.<sup>71</sup> On 21 June, he appeared in what must have been an astonishing concert event featuring French pianistic giants: Viñes, Blanche Selva, Édouard Risler, and Alfred Cortot together performing Bach's Concerto for Four Keyboards and Orchestra with Marcel Labey, a Schola-associated conductor who had been wounded twice in the war. Over the winter, he performed in Spain and France, and in the spring, he participated in Séverac and Satie festivals, the latter at Salle Érard.<sup>72</sup>

From August through December 1920, Viñes made his first of three important tours of South America.<sup>73</sup> One might wonder why Viñes chose to leave Paris amid seemingly constant artistic triumph. Berrocal concludes that Buenos Aires presented a unique challenge and opportunity, as the city's cultural scene had exploded into artistic prominence. "The example of

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<sup>69</sup> This was exactly when the Hundred Days Offensive launched on the Western Front. Viñes's holiday was a little close to the action. These postcards are at the Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas.

<sup>70</sup> Keith W. Daniel, *Francis Poulenc: His Artistic Development and Musical Style* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1982), 171.

<sup>71</sup> Berrocal, 58.

<sup>72</sup> Nina Gubisch, <http://ricardoViñes.eu/>, accessed 4.14.2013.

<sup>73</sup> The definitive source of information about these South American sojourns is Esperanza Berrocal's Ph.D. dissertation "Ricardo Viñes and the Diffusion of Early Twentieth-Century South American Piano Literature" (Catholic University of America, 2002). Previous biographical writings wrote around these years or addressed them extremely generally. Riera's monograph jumps without explanation from 1918 to 1935, for example. Berrocal's document is extremely important and much-cited. Her comprehensive literature review is now somewhat out of date in face of recent Viñes doings.

many other artists surely stimulated the idea, for Buenos Aires had become a habitual and profitable stop for performers on international tours.”<sup>74</sup>

While in South America, Viñes interfaced with composers in Argentina, Uruguay, and Chile, some of whom he had undoubtedly met in Europe. Harkening back to his historical concerts of 1905, his first bookings in Buenos Aires were a series of seven concerts surveying the entire keyboard literature, featuring an astonishing 212 pieces by about fifty composers.<sup>75</sup> Unlike the historical series of 1905, which comprised one long chronological epic, Viñes presented standard repertoire and modern works on all concerts in this series.

Viñes performed in the Argentine provinces and in Montevideo, Uruguay, then extended his stay through December so as to recoup his expenses. Subsequently he performed eight more concerts, at least three of which completed the historical concerts series. To his brother, he wrote, “Later, another year, I would like to visit and have worldly entertainment, things that have been absolutely impossible this time, because I was obliged to study over a hundred pieces.”<sup>76</sup> His spectacular critical success resulted in virtually an open invitation to perform anytime in Buenos Aires. En route home, he even played aboard the *Reina Victoria Eugenia* with a fellow Spanish pianist and cellist.<sup>77</sup>

Back in Paris, on 19 April 1921 in Salle Érard, Viñes performed the complete piano works of fellow Apache and close friend Séverac, who had died on 24 March. Around this time, he met Catalan composer Federico Mompou in Paris; the two would become close and enjoy a

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<sup>74</sup> Berrocal, 59.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 61-64.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 65.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 66.

productive association for years to come. In November, he toured the south of France, including repertoire by Mompou on these programs.

In April 1922, Viñes gave a recital at Salle Érard consisting solely of Argentine composers, as he wished to introduce European audiences to his new South American repertoire. He also premiered Mompou, whose rise to acclaim in Paris was such that his presence was *de rigueur* in the salons.<sup>78</sup> Viñes was active in the first half of 1923, performing frequently in France and Belgium. Concerto highlights included de Falla's *Nuits dans les Jardins d'Espagne* with Arbos and the Concert Colonne, then the premiere of Tailleferre's *Ballade pour piano et orchestra* at the Concert Padeloup.<sup>79</sup> In the latter part of the year through the following spring, he toured France, then North Africa, where he performed in Algiers, Oran, and Tunis.

In June 1923 he participated in an extraordinary artistic-social event: the premiere of Manuel de Falla's puppet opera *El retablo de maese Pedro* in the salon of Princesse de Polignac. She had commissioned the work, an episode from the second part of *Don Quixote*, for her personal puppet theater. Many fellow musicians and artistic luminaries were in attendance, including Wanda Landowska and the filmmaker Luis Buñuel. Together Viñes and Poulenc worked the large *Don Quixote* marionette.<sup>80</sup>

In May 1924 Viñes traveled again to South America, where he stayed until November. This second tour to Argentina was noteworthy for his numerous active collaborations with Buenos Aires-based musicians and composers. He performed ten concerts in the Diapasón

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<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 67-68.

<sup>79</sup> Nina Gubisch, <http://ricardoViñes.eu/>, accessed 4.14.2013.

<sup>80</sup> Kahan, 236.

Theatre and toured cities in the interior. With Argentinian pianist Rafael González, who became a close friend, he performed Tailleferre's *Jeux de plein air* for two pianos.<sup>81</sup> On 3 November, he played for a radio audience of 200,000. A few weeks later, his final concert was billed as Farewell Festival in Homage to Ricardo Viñes, "in gratitude for his contribution to the diffusion of music among us and on the occasion of his upcoming return to Europe."<sup>82</sup> This tour was noted by universally rapturous public reception and critical acclaim: "During the seven months that Viñes has remained among us, he has conquered the sympathy and admiration from all of us who have listened to [his performances] and have met him."<sup>83</sup>

Back in Europe, throughout 1925 Viñes performed a full passel of concerts, in France, Spain, Belgium, Monte Carlo, and The Netherlands. In between, he taught, composed, and lectured. On 10 February 1925—five days after his 50th birthday— he gave a recital at Salle Érard comprising pieces dedicated to him.<sup>84</sup> The next day he introduced Mompou's *Fêtes Lointaines* in Madame André's salon.<sup>85</sup> Another 50th birthday gala was held on 27 May at the University Alexandre Mercereau in Paris, at which his original poetry was read before he played French and Spanish works.<sup>86</sup>

In the spring of 1926, Viñes gave two recitals at Salle Érard, the second of which on 19 April featured music solely by South American composers.<sup>87</sup> Reviews were decidedly mixed. In the years between his South American tours, he was programming works by South American

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<sup>81</sup> González also performed half of the four-hand orchestral-part arrangement for *Nuits dans les Jardins d'Espagne*, which Viñes performed in September.

<sup>82</sup> Berrocal, 73.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, 74.

<sup>84</sup> "By then, Viñes was the dedicatee of hundreds of pieces and at times his concert programs exclusively featured these." (Berrocal, 80)

<sup>85</sup> Nina Gubisch, <http://ricardoViñes.eu/>, accessed 4.14.2013.

<sup>86</sup> Berrocal, 81.

<sup>87</sup> Berrocal, 78.

composers such as Chimenti, Carillo, Forte, Allende, and Williams, “apparently performing to small audiences and little applause.”<sup>88</sup>

Highlights of 1927 included a February recital at Salle Érard, an Igor Stravinsky festival in March at Madame Hirsch’s salon where he played the composer’s *Serenade*, and Falla’s *Nuits dans les Jardins d’Espagne* with Philippe Gaubert at Salle Pleyel in November.<sup>89</sup> He also gave recitals in England, Catalonia, Italy, and the French provinces. Also this year, he completed two compositions, in homage to Erik Satie (*Threnodie*) and Leon-Paul Fargue (*Crinoline*), both of which received public performance. Additionally, he lectured on the writings of Léon Bloy in Barcelona.

On 19 March 1928, he performed in a Manuel de Falla festival<sup>90</sup> at Salle Pleyel, and later in the year, he performed *Nuits dans les Jardins d’Espagne* again with Pierné on the Concert Colonne.<sup>91</sup> The next few years brought multiple concert tours within France, including a performance at the American Conservatory at Fontainebleau; a tour of Spain; at least two trips to The Netherlands; and concerts in London and Brussels. In 1929, he recorded for the first time, including the only Debussy or Ravel he ever set on record: Debussy’s *Poissons d’or* and *Soirée dans Granade*. Events of importance through the spring of 1930 included a recital of Spanish music at Salle Érard, a concert of Argentinian music at the Sorbonne, and a concert of contemporary music at Vieux Colombier.<sup>92</sup>

Viñes embarked for South America again in the summer of 1930. Initially intending to stay just a short time, as he was contracted to give a lucrative series of six recitals in Buenos

<sup>88</sup> Korevaar and Sampsel, 365.

<sup>89</sup> Nina Gubisch, <http://ricardoViñes.eu/>, accessed 4.14.2013.

<sup>90</sup> His presence was *de rigueur* at any kind of Spanish music festival.

<sup>91</sup> Nina Gubisch, <http://ricardoViñes.eu/>, accessed 4.14.2013.

<sup>92</sup> Nina Gubisch, <http://ricardoViñes.eu/>, accessed 4.14.2013.

Aires, he ended up staying more than five years.<sup>93</sup> Almost immediately greeted by a political coup d'état, he continued concertizing ad hoc whenever possible. He had to wait for the political situation to settle, however, before finishing the series, in which he grouped repertoire thematically. On 6 November 1930 he performed Falla's *Nuits dans les Jardins d'Espagne* and Rimsky-Korsakov's Piano Concerto in C-sharp minor with the Argentine conductor Juan Jose Castro in Buenos Aires's Teatro Colón. He assessed this performance as a high point in his career. In Castro, also fiercely dedicated to music of the 20th century, Viñes had found a kindred spirit.

With more concerts to close 1930, then a brief tour to Uruguay to start 1931, Viñes kept delaying his return to Europe. Given the detailed reports of continued success, including rapturous, unceasing applause in Montevideo and new concerts added to the docket, it would seem he was profiting immensely from the tour. But Berrocal raises a point that needs to be better understood to get a full read on Viñes: "In between [the] lines, there was the concern for the tacit subject of his addiction to gambling, which, according to his biographers, had begun as early as 1896 during a trip to Nice and Monte Carlo with his mentor Lord Butterfield and had caused him much trouble during his lifetime."<sup>94</sup>

In any case, new engagements continually appeared, and Viñes spent much of 1931 performing in Buenos Aires, then in more provincial cities, and finally in Uruguay. Even outside the cosmopolitan capitals, he typically presented his trademark eclectic concerts. He offered a

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<sup>93</sup> Berrocal's third chapter of her dissertation—a tour de force of scholarship—presents the activities of these years in comprehensive detail. The information presented here comes almost entirely from this source.

<sup>94</sup> Berrocal 93. To her point, two diary entries from 1911 in Levy show Viñes at the roulette wheel two out of three consecutive days.

prodigious repertoire that boggles the mind; it was said that he studied two or three new pieces per day.<sup>95</sup>

Viñes spent 1932 to 1933 performing throughout Chile, where he collaborated with Chileans including Pedro Allende, the South American composer he appears to have programmed most.<sup>96</sup> Toward the end of 1933, a prolonged serious infection that threatened amputation of a finger took him back to Buenos Aires. Although eventually cured, Viñes was struggling financially from the forced hiatus, a situation exacerbated by his constant gambling.<sup>97</sup> A fundraiser to benefit Viñes in late 1933, featuring Federico Garcia Lorca's play *The Shoemaker's Prodigious Wife* with Lorca himself playing the piano, was a rousing and touching success.<sup>98</sup>

While Viñes recovered, he wrote an article on Debussy, Ravel, and Satie that was published in *La nación*. On 15 March 1934, he gave what was billed as his "farewell" concert in Buenos Aires—which immediately led to new bookings in the capital and provinces. However, it appears that in April, he was hit by a car "like a bull over a bullfighter" and saved by a leap such as "that of the famous Nijinsky at the end of the *Spectre de la Rose*."<sup>99</sup> Although seemingly uninjured, he postponed his return to Europe yet again, spending the rest of the year alternately performing in Buenos Aires and Montevideo.

As his sojourn in South America finally drew to a close, the Teatro Odeón produced a gala homage in his honor, featuring well-known dancers, singers, pianists, and other

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 98.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., 197-98.

<sup>97</sup> Berrocal notes that his concerts in South America generated healthy profits, but he kept gambling the proceeds away, forcing him to keep booking new ones.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., 114.

<sup>99</sup> Berrocal says July, but it must have been April for the day-date to work, and he addressed a note to his family telling of the incident in May.

performers. After a few final concerts in the Argentine and Uruguayan capitals, at long last, on 20 March 1935, he departed for Europe on the *Almanzora*.

Viñes made his Parisian public wait for nine months for his next major concert, which took place on 21 January 1936 at the École Normale de Musique. Dedicated to the Association des Prix de Piano du Conservatoire de Paris, the recital comprised sixteen French, Russian, and Spanish works dedicated to Viñes, including two Leibowitz premieres. The performance garnered unusual critical attention and praise, with press reviewing it from as far away as New York. Roland-Manuel wrote in the 1 February *Courrier Royal*, “Some have seduced us, Gieseking has pleased us. No one to our taste has united absolute honesty with profound delicacy like Viñes has; no one maintains so masterly the unit of tone in the diversity of expressive values.”<sup>100</sup>

Owing to this acclaim, on 28 February he gave a solo recital at Salle Érard, mixing in South American composers with French, Spanish, and Russian ones. This concert resulted in a *L’art musicale* article that compared Viñes and Rachmaninoff.<sup>101</sup> Over the summer, he gave an acclaimed course on the interpretation of Spanish music at the École Normale de Musique and a concert of South American music at the Revue Musicale, where he performed works by Bolivian, Chilean, and Argentine composers. Also this year, he made a second series of recordings.

By this time, Paris was full of talented pianists. For at least his first year back, Viñes found himself acclaimed and in demand. The outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in 1936 seems to correlate with a slow professional decline. To Riera, “Something had happened to the

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<sup>100</sup> Riera, 23.

<sup>101</sup> Berrocal, 130.

musical sphere in Paris during his absence. Performers from all over Europe had captured the attention of audiences. But certainly no one was as convincing as Ricardo Viñes, who lived in their memories."<sup>102</sup> During the war years of 1936 to 1939, the conservative, nationalist Viñes would play often in Spain, particularly in areas secured by General Francisco Franco.

In 1937, after a few recitals in France and Switzerland, he participated in an April homage to Séverac at Salle Gaveau.<sup>103</sup> Summer brought an unusual booking: He played a concert solely of works by Peruvian composer Rauol de Verneuil for the inauguration of Peru's pavilion at the 1937 Exposition Internationale.<sup>104</sup>

But surely the 1937 event that most affected Viñes took place at the end of the year: On 30 December in Paris, he attended the civil-ceremony funeral for Maurice Ravel, who had died two days before following unsuccessful brain surgery. Over the following year, Viñes performed in multiple concerts honoring the composer, and he composed homages to Ravel (*Menuet spectral*) as well as Faure (*En Verlaine mineur*). He doubtless programmed much Ravel in January 1938, when he performed 20 concerts in Spain benefiting the Red Cross. He was back in Spain in September, playing a concert in Saint-Sébastien in homage to Falla, who in a moving letter to Roland-Manuel, bitterly regretted missing Ravel's funeral.<sup>105</sup>

In the first months of 1939 Viñes performed in Lyon and Bordeaux, then gave a concert of Spanish music at the Ecole Normal de Musique. On 1 August, he performed in recital at the American Conservatory in Fontainebleau. January 1940 saw Viñes play a Maurice Ravel festival to benefit mobilized musicians, and he appeared in many benefit galas in subsequent months.

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<sup>102</sup> Riera, 23.

<sup>103</sup> Nina Gubisch, <http://ricardoViñes.eu/>, accessed 4.14.2013.

<sup>104</sup> Berrocal, 133-34.

<sup>105</sup> Nichols, 335.

With World War II hostilities raging unabated, he longed for a respite and left Paris for the last time on 13 November 1940; the next day, his niece Elvira Viñes accompanied him to the border. As Viñes intended to return to Paris after the fighting ended, Ricardo and Elvira did not realize that they would never see each other again. “Once he left Paris, Viñes left behind him the wake of an era, his successes and his well-being won with effort.”<sup>106</sup>

He stayed with relatives, then at the Hotel Bristol in Barcelona. Soon after his arrival in Spain, he refused an offer to return to Argentina, even though opportunities in his native land were few. He did perform occasional concerts in Barcelona, Madrid, and Tárrega. During these years, he taught Maria Canals from early 1941. One of the few to see Viñes regularly in his last years, she wrote of their relationship in *Una vida dins la música*.<sup>107</sup>

On 7 March 1941, he gave a concert at the Teatro Victoria in Lérida, and on 23 November, he performed for the last time in his hometown. On 19 March 1943, one month before his death, he gave his last concert, at the Palau de la Música Catalana in Barcelona.

According to Elvira Viñes, Viñes’s final years were “very painful for him.”<sup>108</sup> By the end, he was poverty-stricken and his family in France was frantic, as the war hindered news and prevented travel. Prevailing upon the generosity of a few friends and the town of Lérida, he kept secret the ailments he was evidently suffering. “Viñes’s strong sense of dignity made it hard for the people who surrounded him in Barcelona to realize the seriousness of his illness. It is difficult to assert from the testimonies what exactly caused his death.”<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Riera, 24.

<sup>107</sup> Maria Canals, *Una vida dins la música* (Barcelona: Editorial Selecta, Volum 429, 1970).

<sup>108</sup> Korevaar and Sampsel, 365.

<sup>109</sup> Berrocal, 138.

Riera writes, “On 23 April the first alarming news of the state of Viñes’ health began to arrive. A prolonged poverty hidden by an innate sense of dignity had undermined his body until it wore out. In the hotel where he was staying, he was found in a serious state in his room, where he had shut himself away without asking for help, not bothering anyone in an attempt to hide the final anguish that gripped him. He was moved with urgency to the public hospital of Pedralbes, but nothing could be done. The disease that had injured him unexpectedly had taken his body.”<sup>110</sup>

He died in the early morning of 29 April 1943, after receiving the last rites. It is said that, pointing to the crucifix, he spoke his last words: “Aquest es el meu millor amic; sols Ell es la veritat.” (Catalan for “This is my best friend; He is the only truth.”)<sup>111</sup> Joaquín Rodrigo lamented, “Europe and America will cry for Ricardo Viñes, and they will cry for him in all languages for he showed the same commitment to all of them.”<sup>112</sup>

His body was shrouded in the Franciscan habit and displayed in the hall of the conservatory. The next day, his remains were moved to Lérida, and a funeral procession including the city council and choirs assembled. He was buried next to his mother in the Lérida cemetery in accordance with his wishes.<sup>113</sup>

In one last mystery of a life seemingly full of them, Berrocal notes that she found the inscription on Viñes’s grave had changed at some unknown time. It was initially engraved thus:

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<sup>110</sup> Riera, 24.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, 24. Riera waxes romantic throughout his monograph, but especially here.

<sup>112</sup> Berrocal, 138.

<sup>113</sup> Riera, 25.

“Here rests the remains of the illustrious citizen of Lleida and eminent pianist Ricardo Viñes Roda who being offered the direction of the Paris Conservatoire upon renunciation of his nationality answered, ‘the best fortune and the biggest glory is to be a Spaniard.’ Lleida gives custody to his remains and will never forget his favorite son.”<sup>114</sup>

The newer inscription says simply, “Here remains the illustrious and eminent pianist Ricardo Viñes i Roda. The city remembers him and admires him.”<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> Berrocal, 140, from a photo in the Lérida archives.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid., 140.

## **Part II: Ricardo Viñes and Les Apaches**

## 2. Les Apaches: A Private Window

*Saturday, 4 April 1904: In the evening, at Delage's place with the usual gang. I played four hands with Ravel. I returned on foot with Fargue and Ravel.*<sup>116</sup>

“*Toute la bande habituelle*” were Les Apaches, a group of Parisian musicians, artists, and writers who began gathering over 1902 and 1903, growing out of a cadre that together attended the entire first run of performances of Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande*.<sup>117</sup> There, they fiercely guarded the opera *en claque* against the initial laughter and derision of critics and “boulevard types” while it established itself with those who would become “*Pelléastre* snobs,” assuring the opera's success.<sup>118</sup>

Out of this crusade, friendships and aesthetic sympathies coalesced. Banding together to share artistic passions and doings, the nascent group met at various members' flats, the Montmartre home of Paul Sordes, and then later—so as to make music and carry on for all hours—a small, detached garden chalet near Auteuil rented by Maurice Delage. Over years of Saturday nights, they enjoyed a collegial, nonhierarchical enclave where they nurtured their creative interests and endeavors.

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<sup>116</sup> Viñes: Diary, 4 April 1904. In Gubisch, “Le journal inédit,” 201.

<sup>117</sup> The opera opened on 30 April 1902.

<sup>118</sup> Jann Pasler, “A Sociology of the Apaches: ‘Sacred Battalion’ for Pelléas,” In *Berlioz and Debussy: Sources, Contexts and Legacies*, edited by Barbara L. Kelly and Kerry Murphy (Burlington: Ashgate, 2007) 151-52.

Viñes's diary and written memoirs from several Apaches<sup>119</sup> document their meetings, penchants, and activities. These centered on various shared interests such as the music of Debussy, Russian music, Asian art, folk music, and symbolist poetry. Individual passions and talents were markedly interdisciplinary: The poets wrote music, the musicians painted and recited poetry, and the painters played instruments.<sup>120</sup>

Key members included pianist Ricardo Viñes; composers Maurice Ravel, Florent Schmitt, Déodat de Séverac, and Maurice Delage; critics Émile Vuillermoz and Michel-Dimitri Calvocoressi; poet Léon-Paul Fargue; poet and painter Tristan Klingsor; artist Paul Sordes; conductor Désire-Émile Inghelbrecht; and designer Émile-Alain Séguy. The group also included conductor Paul Ladmirault, pianist and future Opéra chorale conductor Marcel Chadeigne, music publisher Lucien Garban, composer André Caplet, painter-inventor Édouard Bénédictus, future Opéra chaplain Abbé Léonce Petit, and aviator Maurice Tabuteau. Over the years, Les Apaches continued to attract new members, later receiving composers Manuel de Falla and Igor Stravinsky.

Jann Pasler's articles about Les Apaches<sup>121</sup> portray a vibrant artistic coterie, evolving from casual meetings after concerts to a potent parlor-workshop for the French avant-garde. Other passing references—often in writings about Ravel—depict a group unified in artistic values and revolutionary fervor. Les Apaches, however, were more heterogeneous,

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<sup>119</sup> Four Apaches contributed to a "tombeau" anthology in honor of Ravel: Colette et al, *Maurice Ravel par quelques-uns de ses familiers*, (Paris: Éditions du Tambourinaire, 1939).

<sup>120</sup> Lisa Harrington, "In Search of Marcelle Meyer" (D.M.A. dissertation: University of Colorado, 2012), 16.

<sup>121</sup> Jann Pasler, "A Sociology of the Apaches.;" "La Schola Cantorum et les Apaches: l'Enjou du pouvoir artistique ou Séverac médiateur et critique." In *La musique: Du théorique au politique*, by Dufourt Hugues and Joël-Marie Fauquet. Paris: Klincksieck, 1991.; "Stravinsky and the Apaches." *The Musical Times* 123, no. 1672 (June 1982): 403-407.

representing a cross-section of political, artistic, social, and musical values, together woven into the tapestry of musical society at large.

Teasing out the story of such a private circle presents an elusive but fulfilling challenge to the researcher. “Whereas the world of public institutions is recorded in documents and commented upon in the press, one has to glean the content of private gatherings and the nature of personal relationships from diaries, correspondence, memoirs, and the products of collaborations,”<sup>122</sup> Pasler notes. Thus, an informed peek into the Apaches’ “wigwam” provides “a very special window” into a private side—vis à vis the public institutions—of musical life of Paris at the beginning of the 20th century.

As *Pelléas et Mélisande* found its way to safety in the hands of the well-to-do aesthete arbiters of fashion, the rowdy, young gang of artists and musicians who cheered the work from the rafters indulged in their cause further by playing and singing it in each other’s homes.<sup>123</sup> Les Apaches were well established by 30 May 1903, about a year after the opera’s first run. On this date, Viñes reports the group meeting chez Sordes, at 39 rue Dulong in Montmartre, with Calvocoressi, Séguy, and Fargue also present.

The oft-repeated story of the genesis of *Les Apaches*, recounted in even the briefest passing mentions, has the rowdy band making its way up rue de Rome one evening after a concert.<sup>124</sup> They accidentally jostled a vendor of *L’Intransigeant*, who yelled “Attention les Apaches!” Fortunately for this paper, it appears that it was indeed Viñes who bumped the

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<sup>122</sup> Jann Pasler, “A Sociology of the Apaches,” 154.

<sup>123</sup> Per Pasler, these recollections come largely from Apaches Vuillermoz, Inghelbrecht, and Fargue.

<sup>124</sup> Malou Haine dates this fateful collision to March 1904. Malou Haine, “Cipa Godebski et les Apaches,” *Revue belge de Musicologie* 60 (2006) 237.

newsboy<sup>125</sup> and subsequently delighted in the “hooligan” name (“The word enchanted Viñes which launched that day there the Apaches in eternity.”<sup>126</sup>) He first referred to them as such in his diary on 14 March 1904.<sup>127</sup>

*Apaches* was in the air after 1902, when it was used in *Le matin* to describe a Belleville street gang who terrorized the boulevards. The name also connotes the Native American people, and it was also used for certain artistic anarchists.<sup>128</sup> Given Les Apaches ideals of independence and freedom—Roland-Manuel insisted that the Apaches were “open to all the changeable winds of fashion, but firmly closed to pedants and spurious aesthetes”<sup>129</sup>—it comes as little surprise that this fortuitous epithet would have amused and resonated with the friends.

Ravel came up with an Apaches secret theme: the opening notes of Borodin’s Second Symphony,<sup>130</sup> which they would whistle to summon one another. “It served them to find each other in the concert hall or theater when the ushers, tired of waiting for the end of their discussions in the corridors, would shut off the lights, or if they were in a crowd on the street.”<sup>131</sup> He also invented a phantom member, one Gomez de Riquet, who could be conveniently referenced so as to dodge an unwanted appointment or extract oneself from a tedious encounter.<sup>132</sup> Some Apache members had special nicknames. Ravel was “Rara.”

These dandified conceits reveal something of a snobbish self-concept for the group. Indeed, to some it would appear as though Les Apaches carried some of the attributes of a

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<sup>125</sup> Roland-Manuel, *Ravel* (London: Dennis Dobson, 1947) 34.

<sup>126</sup> Maurice Delage, “Les premiers amis de Ravel,” in *Maurice Ravel par quelques-uns de ses familiers* (Paris: Éditions du Tambourinaire, 1939) 99.

<sup>127</sup> Malou Haine, “Cipa Godebski et les Apaches,” 237.

<sup>128</sup> Jann Pasler, “La Schola Cantorum et les Apaches,” 319-323.

<sup>129</sup> Roland-Manuel, 33.

<sup>130</sup> Reflecting their delight in relatively unknown Russian music.

<sup>131</sup> Victor Seroff, *Maurice Ravel* (Freeport: Books for Libraries Press, 1970) 58.

<sup>132</sup> “I’m so sorry, I must run to Saint-Germain to *dejeuner* with Gomez de Riquet.”

secret society. Women were strictly forbidden from meetings, for example. However, one might consider that these were highly creative, hypersensitive men in their twenties, likely overly steeped in the rarified exquisite pleasures of Baudelaire and Huysmans's *Des Esseintes*, striving to affirm their artistic visions and fulfill their promise in an enormous, chaotic city amid complex social and artistic dynamics. "It was a group of young men whose art was their religion. They were ready to sacrifice everything to it."<sup>133</sup> Artists were astute to band together, and dashes of foppish pretense were likely not confined solely to Les Apaches.

Owing to the extended, animated hubbub of meetings, the men found themselves needing to relocate their late-night artistic sprees. "Apaches headquarters" moved in 1904 to a small wooden pavilion Delage rented at 3 rue de Civry in Auteuil. At their first meeting there, on 24 March, they enjoyed a parody of *Pelléas et Mélisande* put on by Ravel and Delage.<sup>134</sup>

The garden chalet was protected from the street by a wall pierced by a narrow door. Within, "We played or read what we wrote or composed in the friendliest atmosphere that could be imagined."<sup>135</sup> The Apaches sanctuary saw the coming to life of many works: Ravel's *Shéhérazade*, *Miroirs*, and *Gaspard de la Nuit*; de Severac's *En Languedoc*; Fargue's *Poèmes*; even Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*; and untold cross-pollination that would lead to future undertakings and accomplishments.

Les Apaches were a unique confluence of freewheeling, nonhierarchical organization; impressive diversity and eclectic erudition; and disciplined regularity and longevity. Together, the friends fanned the flames of their artistic passions and endeavors for more than a decade.

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<sup>133</sup> Seroff, 56.

<sup>134</sup> Jann Pasler, "A Sociology of the Apaches," 155.

<sup>135</sup> Léon-Paul Fargue, "Un héros de la musique: Ricardo Viñes," in *Portraits de famille* (Paris: J. B. Janin, 1947) 223-24.

Over the years, their commitment and investment in supporting one other in service of artistic innovation informed the course of the French avant-garde, while leading to artistic maturity and success for its members.

Unfortunately, as with many artistic coteries of international composition, World War I brought a definitive end to their gatherings. The group never met again as such after the war, as members scattered and pursued independent paths. Their hold on the pulse of the French avant-garde would be yielded to future artistic collectives such as Satie's *Nouveaux Jeunes* and *Les Six*. But *Les Apaches* writings, music, recollections, and—through all these—the private window that looks into this unique time in musical Paris still spark the imagination. They afford scholars and Belle Époque aficionados artistic nourishment as well as the enjoyment of a voyeur who has the pleasure of witnessing both the cozy of the quotidian and the extraordinary of the historic.

### 3. Les Apaches Roster

*Monday, 14 March 1904: We went out together, all the Apaches, as we call ourselves.*<sup>136</sup>

Naming Les Apaches is somewhat subjective. As the group maintained no official charter or member lists, “real” Apaches are identified through triangulation: mentions in Viñes’s diary, the written legacy of definitive members such as Calvocoressi, accounts by others who interfaced with the group, and retroactively through the investigations of musicologists such as Pasler and Haine. Many names are universal to all accounts of the Apaches story so as to be incontrovertible. On the other hand, the line blurs when distinguishing less-frequent Apaches from non-Apaches visitors.

Markedly nonhierarchical, the group was neither organized around a singular leader nor stack-ranked by member contribution. Multiple individual reminiscences indicated that all felt welcomed and valued no matter the level of involvement or expertise in whatever creative field of endeavor. Pasler notes that there were “no codes, no structured or formal presentations, no special clothes or behavior, no pressure to conform to the ideal of a certain patroness, nor any requirement to produce regularly and in the same manner,”<sup>137</sup> and concludes that as a result, “Relationships between Apaches were almost certainly on a quasi-equal footing.”<sup>138</sup>

In light of this, it may seem moot to reconstitute an organizational structure per se. However, in attempting to comprehend the dynamics of an inherently elusive group a century

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<sup>136</sup> Viñes: Diary, 14 March 1904. In Haine, “Cipa Godebski et les Apaches,” 237.

<sup>137</sup> Pasler, “A Sociology of the Apaches,” 165.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid., 166.

after the fact, one might consider seeming degrees of investment and influence in direction and mission from the evidence at hand—such as would happen in evaluating a present-day organization. At the very least, to understand the Apaches story and appreciate the collaboration and synergy among members, it is beneficial to catalog just who is who. Here then are presented the members of Les Apaches, reconciled from the available information, selected and placed by this author. These profiles are not comprehensive, but serve to spotlight achievements during the Les Apaches era as well as connections and collaborations among the group.

### ***Center***

**Maurice Ravel** (1875-1943), French composer. See section “Maurice Ravel: Composer, Apache, Friend.”

**Ricardo Viñes** (1875-1937), Catalan-French pianist. See chapter 6, “Ricardo Viñes: Les Apaches Exemplar.”

### ***Circle 1: Key members***

**Michel-Dimitri Calvocoressi** (1877-1944), Greek-French writer and critic. See section “The Miroirs Quintet.”

**Marcel Chadeigne** (1875-1926), French pianist and conductor. A classmate of Viñes and Ravel in the studio of Charles de Bériot, and subsequently with Viñes in Godard’s ensemble class, Chadeigne was an excellent pianist who received his Conservatoire first prize the year after Viñes. According to Delage, he could sightread an orchestra score of thirty staves. At

Viñes's debut recital in 1895, it was Chadeigne who played the orchestra reduction for Beriot's Second Piano Concerto.<sup>139</sup>

One of the first Apaches—Viñes noted that Chadeigne was “very intelligent, the only one in the class [with Ravel] with whom we can talk”<sup>140</sup>—Chadeigne was part of the cadre who attended the initial run of *Pelléas et Mélisande*, to which he introduced Inghelbrecht.<sup>141</sup> Viñes noted in his diary of an Apaches gathering where he and Chadeigne performed four hands Rimsky-Korsakov's Piano Concerto and Franck's *Les Djinns*.<sup>142</sup> In March 1906, Chadeigne organized a presentation of works by Vuillermoz and Inghelbrecht at the Théâtre Royal.<sup>143</sup> In 1909, he became conductor of choirs at the Paris Opéra.

**Maurice Delage** (1879-1961), French composer. See section “The Miroirs Quintet.”

**Léon-Paul Fargue** (1876-1947), French poet. See section “The Miroirs Quintet.”

**Désiré-Émile Inghelbrecht** (1880-1965), French conductor-composer. After he was expelled from the Conservatoire, Inghelbrecht played violin in an orchestra. He met Ravel in 1902 at Chadeigne's<sup>144</sup> and was one of the early vociferous defenders of *Pelléas et Mélisande*.<sup>145</sup> In order to attend each performance, he had to find himself a replacement in his orchestra, and added that afterward, “We met at each other's homes and we played it over

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<sup>139</sup> Haine, “Cipa Godebski et les Apaches,” 250.

<sup>140</sup> Viñes: Diary, 27 July 1895. In Haine, “Cipa Godebski et les Apaches,” 250.

<sup>141</sup> Pasler, “A Sociology of the Apaches,” 153.

<sup>142</sup> Viñes: Diary, 31 October 1903. In Haine, “Cipa Godebski et les Apaches,” 250.

<sup>143</sup> Jann Pasler, “La Schola Cantorum et les Apaches: l'Enjou du pouvoir artistique ou Séverac mediateur et critique,” in *La musique: Du théorique au politique*, by Dufourt Hugues and Joël-Marie Fauquet (Paris: Klincksieck, 1991) 331.

<sup>144</sup> Haine, “Cipa Godebski et les Apaches,” 250.

<sup>145</sup> Pasler notes that Chadeigne brought him; the two had known each other in the Conservatoire harmony class.

again for ourselves, some of us at the piano, some singing.”<sup>146</sup> In 1908, as conductor at the Théâtre des Arts, he led 50 performances of Florent Schmitt’s *La tragédie de Salomé*.

Inghelbrecht maintained a close friendship and copious correspondence with Debussy and conducted the chorus for *Le martyr de St. Sébastien* at its 1911 premiere. At the Société Musicale Indépendante concert of 14 January 1914, he conducted the premieres of Ravel’s *Trois Poèmes de Stéphané Mallarmé*<sup>147</sup> and Delage’s *Quatre Poèmes hindous*.<sup>148</sup> Vuillermoz noted that Inghelbrecht enthusiastically promoted his colleagues’ works, “which he conducted with meticulousness and understanding.”<sup>149</sup> He was said to be “lively as saltpeter and nervous as a cat.”<sup>150</sup>

Compositions during the Apaches era are marked by “exotic” influences, such as *Pour le jour de la première neige au vieux Japon* (1908). His *La nursery* (1905-1911) suites of childhood scenes for piano are “presented with charmingly contrived naivety.”<sup>151</sup> Viñes premiered Inghelbrecht’s *Suite petite-russienne (J’ai aimé Ivan, Chant du vent, Kozatchka, Mon coeur, Chant de soldats)* on 11 January 1908 at Salle Érard for the Société Nationale de Musique.<sup>152</sup>

**Tristan Klingsor** (Léon Leclère) (1874-1966), French poet-painter. A true interdisciplinarian, Klingsor was equally at home as poet, painter, and musician. He studied at École du Louvre and met Paul Sordes at the Salon des Indépendants. Sordes subsequently

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<sup>146</sup> Pasler, “A Sociology of the Apaches,” 152-53.

<sup>147</sup> Although according to Roger Nichols, their friendship had cooled by this point. See Nichols, 108, 117.

<sup>148</sup> Haine, “Cipa Godebski et les Apaches,” 250.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*, 250.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*, 250.

<sup>151</sup> The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 2nd ed., s.v. “Inghelbrecht, D(ésiré)-É(mile).”

<sup>152</sup> Michel Duchesneau, *L’avant-garde musicale et ses sociétés à Paris de 1871 à 1939* (Sprimont: Mardaga, 1997) 268.

invited Klingsor to his Saturday soirees, where Klingsor developed an immediate connection with Ravel. He was “one of the most ardent members of the Apaches.”<sup>153</sup>

Klingsor set many of his own poems to music.<sup>154</sup> In his poetry, he “was particularly focused on music-text relationships and sought to apply the laws of harmony and counterpoint to the rules of prosody.”<sup>155</sup> His dreamy take on *Scheherazade*, published in 1903, provided Ravel with the texts for his piece of the same name for voice and orchestra. Both presented their respective versions to the group on 7 November 1903.<sup>156</sup> Interestingly, the sexual ambiguity of the final song *L'indifférent* taken up by some scholars reflects that of Ravel, Viñes, and the Apaches as a whole.<sup>157</sup>

**Paul Ladmirault** (1877-1944), French composer. Displaying immense gifts for composition early on, Ladmirault studied with Gabriel Fauré at the Conservatoire, in the class a few years behind Ravel, Schmitt, and Vuillermoz. Ladmirault and Inghelbrecht were part of a circle of musicians who met weekly chez Vuillermoz during 1901, a possible antecedent to Les Apaches.<sup>158</sup> Viñes’s diary entry of 7 November 1903 mentions Ladmirault and Klingsor joining the group after attending a reprise of *Pelléas et Mélisande*.<sup>159</sup>

It appears that Ladmirault’s compositional mastery was fully mature by this time. Some of his music showcases an interest in regionalism and folklore, including that of his native Brittany. This includes the Apaches-era compositions *Suite bretonne* (1903), *Variations sur des*

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<sup>153</sup> Seroff, 68.

<sup>154</sup> Haine, "Cipa Godebski et les Apaches," 258.

<sup>155</sup> Pasler, "A Sociology of the Apaches," 157.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid., 157-58.

<sup>157</sup> Scholarly discourse to date probes at this issue delicately and discreetly, largely for a conspicuous lack of solid information.

<sup>158</sup> Pasler, "A Sociology of the Apaches," 154.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid., 155.

*airs de biniou trégorois* (1908), and *Rhapsodie gaélique* (1909). Having developed a personal chromaticism and imaginative approach to motivic development, he nonetheless expressed his musical debt to Fauré and Ravel.<sup>160</sup> The latter was particularly fond of *Suite bretonne*, particularly noting its orchestration.<sup>161</sup> In 1911 fellow Apaches Florent Schmitt wrote, “Of all the memorable musicians of the rising generation, Paul Ladmirault is maybe the most gifted, the most original, but also the most modest; and, in our century of ambition, this humility is mistaken.”<sup>162</sup>

**Florent Schmitt** (1870-1958), French composer and critic. Schmitt was a prolific, successful, and important composer of his generation. Born in Lorraine, he studied harmony at the Paris Conservatoire with Dubois and Lavignac and composition with Massenet and Fauré. On his fifth try, he won the Prix de Rome for his cantata *Sémiramis*. His works from his three-year stay in Rome and subsequent travels showed him to be a productive innovator with a strong individual voice. His style “was admired for its energy, dynamism, grandeur, and virility, for its union of French clarity and German strength.”<sup>163</sup>

He and Ravel maintained a warm correspondence, Schmitt often encouraging Ravel in the early years. He frequented Apaches gatherings after his sojourn in Rome, but apparently left no written record of these activities.<sup>164</sup> Important works of the Les Apaches era (out of about 40 he composed by 1910) include the cantata *Psalm XLVII* (1906), Piano Quintet (1908), and ballet *La tragédie de Salomé* (1907), later a 1910 symphonic poem he dedicated to

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<sup>160</sup> The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 2nd ed., s.v. “Ladmirault, Paul.”

<sup>161</sup> Haine, “Cipa Godebski et les Apaches,” 253.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*, 253.

<sup>163</sup> The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 2nd ed., s.v. “Schmitt, Florent.”

<sup>164</sup> Haine, “Cipa Godebski et les Apaches,” 248.

Stravinsky. Stravinsky wrote “I confess that [*Salomé*] has given me greater joy than any work I have heard in a long time.”<sup>165</sup> It was taken up by the Ballet Russes in 1913.

Also a critic, Schmitt championed Chabrier, Lalo, Franck, Saint-Saëns, Fauré, Rimsky-Korsakov, early Stravinsky, and early Schoenberg—reflecting the tastes of many of Les Apaches. “Although a taciturn man, Schmitt forcefully expressed his preferences or disapproval.”<sup>166</sup> It is said that at the March 1908 premiere of *Rhapsodie espagnole* at the Châtelet, the end of the second movement brought jeers from the orchestra level seats, and subsequently, the thundering voice of Schmitt, from above: “Once again, for those below who did not understand.”<sup>167</sup>

Schmitt set several Fargue texts, and the two dedicated many of their works to one another. On two occasions, he commenced collaborations with Calvocoressi but abandoned them. Viñes premiered Schmitt’s *Trois Valses* on 21 April 1906 at the Salle Érard for the Société Nationale de Musique.<sup>168</sup>

**Émile-Alain Séguy** (1877-1951), French designer. One of the earliest Apaches, Séguy was a classmate of Apache Édouard Bénédictus at the École des Arts Decoratifs. He designed furniture and interiors in styles following those of the applied arts, including art nouveau and art deco. Séguy introduced Viñes to the Marquise de Pierre, who repeatedly invited the pianist to her salon.<sup>169</sup>

**Déodat de Séverac** (1872-1921), French composer. Séverac had a long affiliation with the Schola Cantorum, studying there from 1896 to 1907. His thesis advocated for French music

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<sup>165</sup> The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 2nd ed., s.v. “Schmitt, Florent.”

<sup>166</sup> Ibid.

<sup>167</sup> Haine, “Cipa Godebski et les Apaches,” 248.

<sup>168</sup> Duchesneau, 267.

<sup>169</sup> Haine, “Cipa Godebski et les Apaches,” 260.

to draw from regional folk music so as to throw off Germanic influence.<sup>170</sup> This would have been highly sympathetic with Apaches aesthetics; perhaps some of his arguments were developed at Apaches gatherings. Séverac followed this up by moving back to his Languedoc hometown in 1907, where he served on the municipal council. Works composed during this time showed a marked modal flavor and folk influences. He served in the World War I and composed little during the action; unfinished prewar scores mostly remained so. He ended his career as organist in the city of Céret and died young.

Some musicologists propose that his leaving Paris after early success there stunted his career and led to comparative neglect. However, he was an important composer of his generation, “whose works, though humanized by colourful images of people and landscapes, are at the same time characterized by a certain nostalgia and melancholy.”<sup>171</sup>

Viñes first mentions Séverac in his diary entry of 1 July 1901.<sup>172</sup> On 1 March 1904, he included the composer on an all-French program in Brussels. He premiered two movements from *En Languedoc* (*Coin de cimetière au printemps, A cheval dans la prairie*) on 18 February 1905 at the Salle Pleyel for the Société Nationale de Musique,<sup>173</sup> and subsequently premiered the entire work—which Séverac dedicated to him—at the Schola Cantorum on 25 May 1905.<sup>174</sup> Humorously, after critic Pierre Lalo hinted at plagiarism on the part of Ravel in *Miroirs* of *En Languedoc*, Ravel wrote to Séverac the next day in faux apology: “How was I supposed to know that there could be such similarities between an oceangoing vessel and a village fete?!”<sup>175</sup>

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<sup>170</sup> The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 2nd ed., s.v. “Séverac, (Marie Joseph Alexandre) Déodat de.”

<sup>171</sup> Ibid.

<sup>172</sup> Nina Gubisch, <http://ricardoViñes.eu/>

<sup>173</sup> Duchesneau, 265.

<sup>174</sup> Nina Gubisch, <http://ricardoViñes.eu/>

<sup>175</sup> Nichols, 79.

Viñes spent almost the entire month of September 1906 at Séverac's home in his birth village, Saint-Felix.<sup>176</sup> On 29 April 1911, he premiered four movements from Cerdaña (*En tartane, Les Fêtes, Ménétriers et glaneuses, Le Retour des mueltiers*) at the Schola Cantorum for the Société Nationale de Musique.<sup>177</sup> After World War I, he contributed to numerous de Séverac festivals and events.

**Paul Sordes**, French painter. See section "The Miroirs Quintet."

**Émile Vuillermoz** (1878-1960), French music critic. Vuillermoz studied composition alongside Ravel and Schmitt with Fauré at the Conservatoire after studying literature and law at the University of Lyons. A composer of *mélodie* and operetta, he turned to criticism early, noting that *Pelléas* deserved a more worthy audience—the future Apaches in the rafters—than its wealthy aesthete-snob converts.<sup>178</sup> He played a strong-arm role in the initiative to protect the first run: "Vuillermoz, 'in the first row, surrounded by a party of staff-officers that seemed to become more imposing with each act,' looked upon them as 'troops marshaled' to keep order in the theatre."<sup>179</sup>

Vuillermoz parlayed his decisive opinions and combative power on behalf of the Apaches in journals such as *Courrier musical*, and later became editor-in-chief of *Révue musicale* and *Bulletin français de la société Indépendante de musique*.<sup>180</sup> Pasler notes that his prolific, colorful writings were highly skewed to promote his own agendas, but nevertheless, he

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<sup>176</sup> Nina Gubisch, <http://ricardoViñes.eu/>

<sup>177</sup> Duchesneau, 272.

<sup>178</sup> Pasler, "A Sociology of the Apaches," 152.

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid.*, 152-53.

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid.*, 159.

was the “prophetic and clairvoyant...combat musician”<sup>181</sup> of Les Apaches; he achieved marked success on their behalf and in the service of the musical avant-garde.

Vuillermoz helped galvanize the press around Ravel after the controversial failed Prix de Rome attempt of 1905, and later spearheaded the endeavor to form the Société Musicale Indépendante in 1909.<sup>182</sup> After World War I, he analyzed the works of four Apaches in *Musiques d’aujourd’hui*. He went on to have a prolific career as journalist and critic (also of drama and film), championing the cause of his contemporaries. He was keenly interested in film music and recording technology, and created Cinéphonies—a sort of early music video.<sup>183</sup>

He stands out as one of the enthusiastic defenders of contemporary music and more particularly that of Debussy, Ravel, and Schmitt. “With his tactics of attack and exclusion, Vuillermoz helped to unify and protect Apaches members.”<sup>184</sup> Of Vuillermoz, Delage wrote, “It is astonishing to see him put as much intelligence in what he doesn’t write as in what he writes.”<sup>185</sup>

### *Circle 2: Other frequent members*

**Édouard Bénédictus** (1878-1930), painter-chemist. A classmate of Séguy at the École des Arts Decoratifs, he later turned to chemistry. He was also a composer, writer, and painter. Delage described him as a “mage with unlimited knowledge,” and he was also able in

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<sup>181</sup> Ibid., 160.

<sup>182</sup> The Harry Ransom Center holds a number of pieces of correspondence between Vuillermoz and Ravel.

<sup>183</sup> The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 2nd ed., s.v. “Vuillermoz, Émile.”

<sup>184</sup> Pasler, “A Sociology of the Apaches,” 160-61.

<sup>185</sup> Haine, “Cipa Godebski et les Apaches,” 246.

bookbinding and graphic arts. In 1903, he invented the laminated safety glass that is still used in car windshields. Later, he created fabrics and wallpaper in the art deco style.<sup>186</sup>

**André Caplet** (1878-1925), French composer and conductor. Prodigiously talented, Caplet progressed rapidly and was a frequent prize winner at the Conservatoire. He tutored his classmate Calvocoressi in harmony. Just eleven years after serving as rehearsal pianist for the Le Havre Folies-Bergère at age 12, Caplet won the Prix de Rome on his first attempt. As a conductor, he substituted for Leroux at age eighteen, later becoming assistant conductor of the Colonne, musical director of the Theatre de l'Odéon, and in 1912, musical director of the Boston Opera. He was famed for his *Pelléas et Mélisande*, conducting the London premiere.

Caplet and Debussy were on close terms after 1907. Their mutual admiration (Debussy called Caplet his “angel of corrections”<sup>187</sup>) led Caplet to orchestrate a large portion of *Le martyre de Saint Sebastian*, then conduct its premiere. He was wounded in World War I, and aftereffects from gassing led to a premature death. After the war, he composed almost exclusively for the voice, setting many religious texts. His style harkened back to Debussy while being uniquely chromatic and atmospheric. His works often showed his deep Catholic piety.<sup>188</sup>

**Lucien Garban** (1877-1959), music publisher. At Durand, Garban read manuscripts, corrected proofs, and transcribed numerous works of French composers and Mussorgsky. Friends with Ravel at the Conservatoire, he later assisted the composer with many arrangements and transcriptions.

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<sup>186</sup> Ibid., 260.

<sup>187</sup> Haine, "Cipa Godebski et les Apaches," 254.

<sup>188</sup> The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 2nd ed., s.v. "Caplet, André."

Garban was present in Debussy's home on 14 December 1901, where Viñes played *Pour le piano* for Debussy and Debussy in turn played *Reflets dans l'eau* and *Mouvement* from *Images*. Debussy told Garban that Viñes "played them better than he himself."<sup>189</sup>

**Charles Guérin** (1875-1939), French designer. Guérin studied with Gustave Moreau at the École des Beaux-Arts before in turn becoming a professor there. He designed the sets and costumes for *L'incoronazione di Poppea* by Monteverdi at the Théâtre des Arts in 1913. His lithographs and drawings illustrate works of several writers of the 1920s. Klingsor wrote a monograph on Guerin in 1922.<sup>190</sup>

**Pierre Haour** (1880-1920), French editor. Haour was a close friend of Ravel's from 1899, and after 1904, the Apaches occasionally met on Tuesdays at his flat.<sup>191</sup> He was passionate about literature and in 1907 undertook at his own expense to help Fargue publish his *Poèmes*.<sup>192</sup> In 1917, Fargue introduced him to Adrienne Monnier, creator of the bookstore Rue de l'Odéon, frequented by writers of the time. Together Haour and Monnier launched an ambitious publishing program under the label A. Monnier et Cie. During the summers, Haour rented the chateau La Bijeannette in St. Sauveur, and in 1920 Ravel joined him for the summer. By the end of August, Haour was gravely ill. Ravel saw him to a hospital in Auteuil, where he died on September 10 at the age of 40, the first of the Apaches to pass away.<sup>193</sup>

**Georges Mouveau** (1878-1959), French stage designer. He consulted on Jacques Drésa's designs for the 1912 ballet setting of Ravel's *Ma mere l'Oye*. Later, he became lead designer for

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<sup>189</sup> Viñes: Diary, 14 December 1901. In Gubisch, "Le journal inédit," 224.

<sup>190</sup> Haine, "Cipa Godebski et les Apaches," 260.

<sup>191</sup> Pasler, "A Sociology of the Apaches," 155.

<sup>192</sup> Haine, "Cipa Godebski et les Apaches," 261.

<sup>193</sup> Nichols, 217.

the Paris Opéra. It was said that he could create an immediate draft design for any assignment given him.<sup>194</sup>

**Abbé Léonce Petit** (1875-1935), French chaplain. Viñes called Petit “very intelligent” in his journal.<sup>195</sup> It is said that during the early *Pelléas et Mélisande*, he would not leave his breviary to “mingle with the courteous or discourteous jousting between supporters and opponents.”<sup>196</sup> Petit introduced Viñes to Catholic author Leon Bloy, who became a huge influence on Viñes. Roland-Manuel dedicated his *A la gloire de Ravel* (1938) to Petit, who was chaplain of the Paris Opéra.

**Léon Pivet**, French engraver. Pivet studied at the École des Arts Decoratifs. Viñes and Pivet may have originally crossed paths in the company of Nabi painters they both knew.<sup>197</sup> Pivet met Fargue in 1904, just as Les Apaches started meeting chez Delage. Pasler opines that Pivet may have advised Stravinsky on a graphic solution of perspective and space in music for the latter’s *Three Japanese Lyrics*, as his own lithographs and paintings were dramatically influenced by Japanese art.<sup>198</sup>

**Magnus Synnestvedt** (1879-1947), Norwegian critic. Synnestvedt, son of the Norwegian consulate in Paris, joined Les Apaches in 1904. He effected cultural exchange between France and Norway, organizing concerts of Scandinavian music in Paris (at one of which in November 1904 Viñes performed Sinding and Grieg), then presenting works of Debussy in Oslo in December 1906. He served as music critic for several French and Norwegian newspapers. In 1908, he married the cousin of Déodat de Séverac. Settling in Neuilly, the couple opened their

<sup>194</sup> Haine, "Cipa Godebski et les Apaches," 259.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid., 261.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid., 261.

<sup>197</sup> Pasler, "A Sociology of the Apaches," 154.

<sup>198</sup> Jann Pasler, "Stravinsky and the Apaches" (*The Musical Times* 123, no. 1672, June 1982) 406.

home to Les Apaches. A 20 January 1909 soiree saw Viñes performing *Gaspard de la Nuit*, *Poissons d'or*, and *Reflets dans l'eau*. Synnestvedt also worked with Calvocoressi on Russian initiatives including collaboration with Diaghilev and Balakirev.<sup>199</sup>

**Maurice Tabuteau** (1884-1976), French aviator. An amateur pianist and “Ravel fanatic,”<sup>200</sup> Tabuteau was introduced to the Apaches in the summer of 1904 as a result of his sister’s marriage to the brother of critic Jean Marnold. After meetings, Tabuteau would sometimes drive fellow Apaches home in an old Panhard automobile.<sup>201</sup> Fargue likened a Tabuteau without music to a drug addict without morphine.<sup>202</sup>

At an Apaches gathering, he recounted the story of his October 1910 record flight in a Farman biplane over Buc, setting the record for distance and duration.<sup>203</sup> Two months later, he won aviation’s Michelin Cup.<sup>204</sup>

### *Circle 3: Later composer members*

**Manuel de Falla** (1876-1946), Spanish composer. One of the most important Spanish composers of the 20th century, Falla imbued his music with Spanish coloration, dance rhythms, and folk melody. Falla arrived in Paris in 1907 and met Viñes and joined Les Apaches almost immediately. The pianist immediately became a key Falla advocate, bringing him to Les Apaches on 15 October 1907.<sup>205</sup> A tireless champion of Falla’s works, Viñes performed them frequently, both in France and abroad. He premiered the *Pièces espagnoles* (*Aragonesa, Cubana,*

<sup>199</sup> Haine, "Cipa Godebski et les Apaches," 252.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid., 262.

<sup>201</sup> Ibid., 262.

<sup>202</sup> Fargue, 224.

<sup>203</sup> Clary, 148.

<sup>204</sup> Back in those days, aviation records were reset almost on a weekly basis.

<sup>205</sup> Haine, "Cipa Godebski et les Apaches," 254.

*Montanesa, Andaluza*) on 27 March 1909 at the Salle Érard for the Société Nationale de Musique.<sup>206</sup> Falla dedicated *Noches en los jardines de España* (1916) to Viñes. Although Viñes didn't premiere the piece, he programmed it frequently for the rest of his career.

**Roland-Manuel** (1891-1966), French composer and writer. The youngest of the group and one of the last to join, Roland-Manuel studied violin and composition, the latter with Roussel, at the Schola Cantorum after 1905. He later studied with and advocated tirelessly on behalf of Ravel. His modest compositional output dates mostly from after World War I, although he published the song “Farizade au sourire de rose” on a Persian text in 1913 and a piano trio in 1917. His style was precise, restrained, and refined, sometimes more whimsical à la Les Six.<sup>207</sup> He is perhaps better known for his writings on music, especially multiple works on Ravel.

**Albert Roussel** (1869-1937), French composer. Long associated with the Schola Cantorum, he studied composition with Eugène Gigout and Vincent d'Indy from 1898 until 1907, and taught there himself until 1914. A naval officer before resigning to study music, he became interested in Indian music during his voyages. He collaborated with Calvocoressi on texts for the Indian-music inspired *Evocations* (1911), “in its dramatic power, orchestral colour, exotic influences and structure one of the great successes of French music in the period immediately before World War I.”<sup>208</sup> In his memoirs, Calvocoressi wrote about Roussel: “We

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<sup>206</sup> Duchesneau, 362.

<sup>207</sup> *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed., s.v. “Roland-Manuel.”

<sup>208</sup> *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed., s.v. “Alfred Roussel.”

all liked him very much... As often as not, it was just by a quiet smile that he would reveal his unfavorable opinions or, as the case might be, show that he stuck to his guns."<sup>209</sup>

**Igor Stravinsky** (1882-1971), Russian composer. Les Apaches welcomed Stravinsky upon the composer's arrival in Paris, an affiliation overshadowed by that with the Ballets Russes. He became particularly close with Delage and stayed with him at the garden chalet, writing of the words *3 rue de Civry*, "I don't even know how to tell you how dear they are to me!"<sup>210</sup> Schmitt reports of a private performance of *Rite of Spring* at the Apaches wigwam: "This work has, all by itself, more importance than all other music that can be played at this moment anywhere in the world."<sup>211</sup>

Stravinsky's Apaches work was *Three Japanese Lyrics* (1913). The work was premiered on the aforementioned 14 January 1914 Société Musicale Indépendante concert. He dedicated each song to a fellow Apache: Delage, Schmitt, and Ravel. Pasler writes, "Having had the opportunity to discuss not only Japanese art and the implications of *Pelléas*, but also symbolist poetry and the relation between poetry and music gave Stravinsky a wealth of knowledge and understanding about changes at the time in all arts. His association with the Apaches laid the foundations for later alliances with other French poets, artists, and musicians."<sup>212</sup>

#### *Circle 4: Peripheral members*

Others occasionally listed as Apaches are **Felix Augustin**, who worked with Mouveau; **Joaquin Boceta**, Spanish mathematician; **Partington y de Carcer**, secretary general of a Spanish

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<sup>209</sup> M. D. Calvocoressi, *Music and Ballet* (London: Faber and Faber, 1933) 58.

<sup>210</sup> Pasler, "Stravinsky and the Apaches," 403.

<sup>211</sup> *Ibid.*, 404.

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid.*, 407.

bank; **Chanvin**; **Georges d'Espagnat** (1870-1950), French painter; **Estienne**, descendant of the famous printing family; **Alexander Friedrich**; **Georges Jean-Aubrey** (1882-1950), French musicologist and writer; and **Charles Lacoste** (1870-1959), French artist.

## Maurice Ravel: Composer, Apache, Friend

*Sunday, 24 December 1905: At my house, I found Ravel in the process of correcting his Miroirs; also there were Pepe and Elvirita; Ravel bought this one a toy (a mechanical bear) at Bazar des Ternes.*<sup>213</sup>

In considering the artistic values and activities shared and promoted by Apaches members throughout and after the group's existence, and for his meteoric rise during the Apaches era, one could persuasively argue that the group's soul center was composer Maurice Ravel. Maurice Delage later wrote as much: "I had to be admitted to a club whose enthusiasm and spirit of unity deeply touched me. Ravel seemed to be naturally the center of the circle who did not yet have a name."<sup>214</sup>

Ravel was, of course, one of the most innovative and accomplished composers of the 20th century. It was during the time of Les Apaches that he found his footing; highlights during these years include:

- *Jeux d'eau* (1902)
- String Quartet (1904)
- *Shéhérazade* (1904)
- *Sonatine* (1905)
- *Miroirs* (1906)
- *Histoires naturelles* (1907)
- *Rapsodie espagnole* (1908)
- *Gaspard de la nuit* (1909)
- *Ma mère l'oye* (1910)
- *L'heure espagnole* (1911)
- *Valses nobles et sentimentales* (1911)
- *Daphnis et Chloé* (1912)

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<sup>213</sup> Viñes: Diary, 24 December 1905. In Gubisch, "Le journal inédit," 204.

<sup>214</sup> Clary, 145.

Commensurate with Ravel's rise to the heights of cultural and musicological import, scholars have produced myriad accounts, beginning well within his lifetime. Even after this dissertation was underway, this writer was the fortunate beneficiary of Roger Nichols's 2011 biography,<sup>215</sup> which includes information from a *barque*-load of newly released writings and correspondence; and Paul Roberts's 2012 study of Ravel's piano works.<sup>216</sup> Additionally, Nina Gubisch released an article in 2011 about Ravel and Viñes in *Cahiers Maurice Ravel*.<sup>217</sup> Ravel scholarship is flourishing.

These publications consider the Ravel-Viñes dyad of seminal importance. In the previous section categorizing Apaches personages, Ricardo Viñes is placed directly alongside Ravel. The two men are uniquely linked via close, long-term interdependence from their formative years through artistic maturity. As more information surfaces about both, it is evident that the Viñes-Ravel alliance can be considered one of the most synergistic artistic partnerships in recent musical history, deep in personal richness and mutually profitable in active collaboration. The public products of this association were exactly contemporaneous with the Apaches era.

Their lives were entwined from 1888 through the World War I years. Born the same year, musically gifted, and intellectually voracious, the two boys came of age sharing countless hours at the piano, playing scores four hands or experimenting with new sonorities:

*Monday, 15 August 1892: We didn't go out today, but we spent a good day together, all the time at the piano trying out new chords, playing over some ideas we had, Maurice and I. Mama and Pepe*

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<sup>215</sup> Nichols, Roger. *Ravel*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011.

<sup>216</sup> Roberts, Paul. *Reflections: The Piano Music of Maurice Ravel*. Milwaukee: Amadeus Press, 2012.

<sup>217</sup> Gubisch-Viñes, Nina. "Ravel, Viñes, Les années de formation: Goûts croisés, curiosities partagées (1888-1900)." *Cahiers Maurice Ravel*, no. 14 (January 2011): 16-42.

*were angry. I didn't even come home for dinner and they were waiting.*<sup>218</sup>

Outside their drawing rooms, they roamed the streets, partaking of the dazzling musical and artistic offerings in their adopted city. They marveled at novel pleasures such as the Paris Exposition's gamelan and Russian music concerts, outdoor magicians and fire eaters, and the bookstalls along the quay. Over the years, Viñes, an avid reader, shared with Ravel many of his literary discoveries, such as Baudelaire, Huysmans, and Edgar Allen Poe. In turn, Ravel introduced Viñes to the newly published works of Rimbaud. (*"What a genius, this Rimbaud!"*) Together in the concert halls, they heard Berlioz's *Béatrice et Bénédicte*, Gounod's *Romeo et Juliet*, Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*, and countless others.

Victor Seroff's timeworn, romanticized biography of Ravel has the boys taking in crowded cafes, poking around smoky night clubs, and witnessing all manner of street high jinks. He also mentions a decidedly nonacademic component of their musical education:

"The boys explored the street where natives from far lands bivouacked as if they were at home. They spent hours browsing in the Oriental shops and country theatres, and listening to the groups of popular musicians whose free renditions of their national music seemed to flow from inspiration. Here Ravel and Viñes were introduced to music unrestricted by the laws of harmony taught at the Conservatory, they heard music composed of sounds of unrelated chords and scales that enchanted them like a tantalizing perfume. It was there, in those Oriental bazaars, that Ravel tasted for the first time the exotic. To the last days of his life this intoxication never left him."<sup>219</sup>

After Viñes's 1894 Conservatoire first prize, it seemed as though his and Ravel's respective prospects were diverging. As Viñes's star was rising, throngs of people in carriages

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<sup>218</sup> Brody, "Viñes in Paris," 49.

<sup>219</sup> Seroff, 27.

and formalwear in attendance at his 1895 debut recital, Ravel's seemed relatively static.

Composing extremely slowly, seemingly pursuing little else, expelled from the Conservatoire for failing to meet minimum requirements in either piano or composition, and living off his family except for the occasional soiree or accompanying job, Ravel was searching for his way.

In any case he was both possessed of a potent self-concept and not one to wear his heart on his sleeve. Viñes's diary account of Ravel's response to the Prelude from *Tristan et Isolde*, played by the Lamoureux in November 1896, proves telling and perspicacious:

*"By a strange coincidence, at the very moment when, feeling deeply moved, I was thinking to myself there was nothing in the whole of creation as sublime and divine as this superb Prelude, at that moment Ravel touched me on the hand and said: 'That's how it always is, every time I hear it...' and in fact he who looks so cold and cynical, Ravel the super-eccentric decadent, was trembling convulsively and crying like a child, really deeply too because now and then I heard him sobbing. Until here, in spite of the high opinion I had of Ravel's intellectual powers, I thought, because he is so secretive about the least details of his existence, that there was perhaps a touch of bias and fashion-following in his opinions and literary tastes. But since this afternoon, I see that this fellow was born with inclinations, tastes and opinions, and that when he expresses them he does so not to put on airs and be up to date, but because he really feels that way; and I take this opportunity of declaring that Ravel is one of the most unlucky and misunderstood people of all because, in the eyes of the crowd, he passes for a failure, whereas in reality he is someone of superior intellect and artistic gifts, at odds with his surroundings and worthy of the greatest success in the future. He is, what's more, very complex: there is in him a mixture of mediaeval Catholicism and a satanic impiety, but he also has a love of art and beauty that guides him and makes him respond sincerely."<sup>220</sup>*

In January 1898, Ravel reentered the Conservatoire to study with newly appointed Gabriel Fauré, after which he progressed rapidly. That year, Viñes started performing Ravel's

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<sup>220</sup> Viñes: Diary, 1 November 1896. In Gubisch, "Le journal inédit," 190-191. Translated in Nichols, 21-22, 24.

compositions publicly, starting with *Sites auriculaires* and *Menuet antique*, followed within a few years by *Pavane pour une infante defunte* and *Jeux d'eau*. Ravel was admittedly in the thrall of Chabrier and Debussy. However, until Viñes met the latter in 1901, Ravel had exclusive access to Viñes and his imaginative, colorful technique. They had shared pianistic and other artistic explorations for many years, and to many writers, the essence of this exchange definitively found its way into works such as *Jeux d'eau* that heralded new, colorful possibilities in harmony, rhythm, and pianism.

Ravel and Viñes formed the nucleus of the coalescing Apaches from the start, both part of the group who attended the early *Pelléas* performances. One can see them as the hooligan ringleaders, adopting the moniker, devising the secret aural codes and imaginary friends. The melding of assumed street-gang edginess—at least in artistic intent or within their wigwam walls—with extreme aesthete refinement manifested in the group's posturing. Ravel had seemingly been born thus inclined.

In the introduction to his collection of Ravel's correspondence and writings, Arbie Orenstein states that the Apaches group "was an extremely important influence on Ravel. Not only were his own intellectual horizons broadened, but it was at the Apaches meetings that he met many of his future collaborators and lifelong friends."<sup>221</sup> From early on, the nascent band was stunned by Ravel's new pianistic innovations. Léon-Paul Fargue wrote that with *Pavane pour une infant défunte* and *Jeux d'eau*, "Ravel, with the first stroke of his rapier, positioned himself as an independent force of the first order, a grand master of an oeuvre at once

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<sup>221</sup> Orenstein, 3.

personal, singular, secretive.”<sup>222</sup> As these pieces were publically premiered by Viñes on 5 April 1902, just a few weeks before the opening of *Pelléas et Mélisande*, *Jeux d'eau* might be considered as compelling an Apaches talisman as *Pelléas*, and it was composed by one of them.

Fargue went on to say that these works, “the first notes of Ravel that echo in my memory, stayed with all of us for days afterwards. Here, for us, was a strange fire, a precious object we had just discovered, arrayed in resonances and refinements that belonged to no one else.”<sup>223</sup> Les Apaches rallied around Ravel’s musical inspiration and discoveries. They also supported him during his multiple unsuccessful tries for the Prix de Rome. This came to a head in the so-called *Affaire Ravel* of 1905. A few years later they forcefully defended him during the second *Affaire Ravel*, when *Histoires naturelles* achieved a polarizing ruckus with its novel text setting. The real firebomb came from Ravel’s constant nemesis, critic Pierre Lalo, who ended a lengthy article thusly:

“I hope that the vulgarization and exploitation of “Debussysm” by clever and mediocre composers will not make too ephemeral the future of a delightful art and will not turn us away from loving the exquisite music of an exquisite musician as his work merits.”<sup>224</sup>

Not only Ravel himself, but fellow Apaches critics Calvocoressi and Vuillermoz took up forceful pens to counter this sort of salvo. By this time, Debussy and Ravel had been alienated from one another largely by way of polemics such as this.

Viñes premiered almost all of Ravel’s works through *Gaspard de la nuit*, in the process bringing the pieces to realization with the Apaches as private witnesses. These works were instrumental in a kind of mutual exchange between Debussy and Ravel through Viñes. After

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<sup>222</sup> Roberts, “Reflections,” 32.

<sup>223</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

<sup>224</sup> Seroff, 109.

*Miroirs*, Ravel took up his next inspiration: poetry of Aloysius Bertrand he had borrowed from Viñes more than a decade earlier.

*Tuesday, 12 November 1895: In the afternoon, Ravel and his mother came, they stayed until seven o'clock; we talked about literature and art; he told me that the Gaspard de la nuit that I bought in London is very rare.*<sup>225</sup>

Subsequently, on 9 January 1909 at Salle Érard, Viñes introduced one of the most celebrated works in the entire piano literature.

There have been differing takes on the seeming unraveling of Debussy and Viñes's relationship. Victor Seroff writes, "It was one of those friendships that should have lasted a lifetime,"<sup>226</sup> and he attributes the cooling squarely to political differences. It has also been said that their estrangement was at least in part a response to Viñes's performance of *Gaspard de la nuit*, about which the two remained at odds regarding the tempo of *Le gibet*. Years later in 1922, Ravel wrote Calvocoressi regarding the recording of the piano works:

"I'm not asking Ricardo for two reasons: first, I think he's supposed to be in Spain about that time; second, I would especially like to have *Gaspard de la nuit* recorded, and Viñes never wanted to perform these pieces, in particular 'Le Gibet,' according to the composer's intentions. I did say wanted: I don't know if you were ever present at one of those discussions in which he assured me that if he observed the nuances and the tempo that I indicated, 'Le Gibet' would bore the public. And nothing would make him change his mind."<sup>227</sup>

After *Gaspard*, Viñes never gave another Ravel premiere, and Marguerite Long introduced both *Le tombeau de Couperin* and the Piano Concerto in G.

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<sup>225</sup> Viñes: Diary, 12 November 1895. In Gubisch, "Le journal inédit," 188.

<sup>226</sup> Seroff, 26.

<sup>227</sup> In Orenstein, 219.

One can perhaps perceive essential differences between the two men that may have ultimately fissured into a gulf too wide to bridge. While Ravel was agnostic and somewhat revolutionary in his political views, Viñes, always fascinated by fin-de-siècle occult interests, grew ever more mystical, embraced the Catholic faith following his mother's death, and was conservative. Viñes was obsessed by numbers and occult arts such as astrology and palmistry. Ravel was unabashedly secular, cultivated, and precise. Earlier on, the Dreyfus affair that so divided France likely found Ravel and Viñes on opposite sides, as Viñes's journal refers to "Dreyfusard pigs." Although Pasler points out that Apaches members held a wide variety of political and artistic affiliations, multiple contemporary reports noted Viñes's propensity to passionately foist his views and tastes onto his friends. In contrast, Ravel was private and circumspect.

Multiple journal entries indicate rendezvous with Ravel in the years post-*Gaspard*. Together with Fauré and other Apaches, Viñes and Ravel spearheaded the founding of the Société Musicale Indépendante. We will see them immortalized together in d'Espagnat's painting of the Godebski salon. They frequented the same social and musical circles. On 13 October 1911, Ravel wrote from Spain, "Dear Ricardo, I'm returning home the day after tomorrow and will come over to see you soon. Kind regards to all. Cordially yours, Maurice Ravel"<sup>228</sup>

History is full of examples of World War I wreaking havoc on all manner of artistic societies. With the onset of hostilities, Ravel straightaway asserted himself to national service, eventually driving a lorry near the front. Although Viñes participated in wartime initiatives by

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<sup>228</sup> In Orenstein, 127.

tirelessly performing for benefits and charities, he also repaired to relative safety in the south of France and spent much time in neutral Spain, punctuated by time in Paris and occasional appearances on Société Musicale Indépendante concerts.

A handful of scholars propose that perhaps the two simply grew apart as a result of lives diverging as lives do. Esperanza Berrocal notes that Nina Gubisch believes that reports of a decisive break in friendship between Ravel and her great-uncle are exaggerated, and that Ravel may have anticipated Viñes's absence on tours at the time of the *Valses nobles et sentimentales* and *Le tombeau de Couperin* premieres.

This leads to another possible factor: Their musical vehicles eventually diverged. After writing many piano works during the Apaches decade, for the remainder of his career Ravel would follow *Gaspard de la nuit* with just two more major piano solo works and the two piano concerti. Viñes, while continuing to program Apaches-era French works in his repertoire, was ever-compelled to champion new works. He would subsequently serve as pianist for Erik Satie and other composers in Satie's circle (who ultimately rejected Ravel), Mompou and other Spanish composers, and as a result of three life-altering trips to South America, scores of composers from that continent.

Ravel went on to become one of the most successful composers of the 20th century, although in the years after World War I his output slowed: *La valse*, *L'enfant et les sortilèges*, *Bolero*, *Tzigane*, and the two piano concerti for orchestra; the sonatas for violin and cello and violin and piano; and various songs and choral music.

Roger Nichols tells of an idea that back during Apaches years, Viñes may have left Ravel with the gift of a compositional impression that would remain dormant until after the war. In the diary, he muses on a ball he attended with Ravel, the Godebskis, and their friends:

*Saturday, 28 January 1905: It was the first time I had been to the Opéra ball, and as always when I see young, beautiful women, lights, music, and all this activity, I thought of death, of the ephemeral nature of everything, I imagined balls from past generations who are now nothing but dust, as will be all the masks I saw, and in a short while! What horror, Oblivion!*<sup>229</sup>

If there is any reality to this scenario of inspiration, it is appropriate that it was Viñes's protégé Marcelle Meyer who joined Ravel in 1920 to audition *La valse* for Diaghilev.

Among the luminaries who attended Ravel's funeral on 30 December 1938 were Francis Poulenc, Darius Milhaud, Igor Stravinsky, Désiré-Émile Inghelbrecht, and Ricardo Viñes.<sup>230</sup> One can only imagine what Viñes felt at this farewell, almost exactly 50 years after he had first met "the boy with the long hair."<sup>231</sup> In 1939, after Ravel's death, a remarkable collection, *Maurice Ravel par quelques-uns de ses familiers*, was published "à la tombe" in his honor. Among its nine essays were four by fellow Apaches: Fargue, Delage, Klingsor, and Vuillermoz.

In December 1905, as Ravel and Viñes were preparing for the first performance of *Miroirs*, Viñes arrived home on Christmas Eve to find Ravel there, still correcting the proofs at the eleventh hour. After the premiere less than two weeks later, it was evident to thoughtful listeners that Ravel had created a striking composition. More than a year earlier, when Ravel had revealed the first of it to Les Apaches, only the prescient Viñes was appreciative. It is

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<sup>229</sup> Viñes: Diary, 28 January 1905. Quoted and translated in Nichols, 59.

<sup>230</sup> Nichols, 345.

<sup>231</sup> Gubisch, "Le journal inédit," 174.

understandable that Viñes would singularly apprehend *Miroirs*, for in the five pieces' synthesis of impressionist visual imagery, symbolist poetic allusion, and novel organization of harmonic and pitch structure, they epitomize the artistic, literary, and pianistic explorations that Ravel and Viñes enjoyed together while maturing artistically.

As this dissertation has organized Les Apaches around Ravel (as creative nucleus) and Viñes (as essential transmitter and protagonist), it seems fitting to evoke this Ravel piano masterwork with Viñes as dedicatee to reveal something more of Les Apaches and the inner life of some of its other members.

## The *Miroirs* Quintet

*Saturday, 6 January 1906: In the evening, in a fiacre because it was raining, I went to the Salle Érard (concert of the Nationale) and played Ravel's Miroirs, without knowing it quite yet, but divinely well and I had a huge success (as in other years with Debussy); I had to encore "Alborada del gracioso." Everyone was mad with enthusiasm and admiration. I introduced Jean-Aubry to Ravel.*<sup>232</sup>

Maurice Ravel's *Miroirs* could be considered the quintessential Les Apaches work. In development, compositional technique, and most obviously, dedication of its component pieces, it exemplified Apaches discoveries and values through its creation and premiere by the group's most essential core members. One could well imagine a comprehensive dedication over the entire work: "À les Apaches."

A view into a private group of artists can be gleaned solely through the fragments of recollections, threads of their discussions and discoveries, and how these might be brought to bear in the creations birthed from such a milieu. To consider insights into Les Apaches members through such a major work as *Miroirs* is compelling, as the piece so evidently embodies something of the essence of the group, even as the masterwork in the final analysis transcends its constituent components.

In his dissertation, "Ravel's Mirrors,"<sup>233</sup> David Korevaar follows the clues of the eponymous mirrors that Ravel elucidated by way of a Shakespeare quote. He makes the case

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<sup>232</sup> Viñes: Diary, 6 January 1906. In Gubisch, "Le journal inédit," 204-5.

<sup>233</sup> Korevaar, David. "Ravel's Mirrors". D.M.A. dissertation: The Juilliard School, 2000, winner of Juilliard's Richard French award.

that in a larger frame, *Miroirs* shows something of the inner life of its dedicatees, re-reflected through the prism of Ravel's evolving techniques: "Speaking through Shakespeare's Cassius,<sup>234</sup> Ravel may raise the possibility that he is revealing to the friends to whom he inscribed the *Miroirs* something secret about themselves, seen in the composer's musical mirror."<sup>235</sup> Korevaar describes some of the possible correlations among Ravel's compositional innovations within the work and its quintet of Apaches dedicatees: "In the music of Ravel's *Miroirs*, we may seek secret portraits of artists with whom Ravel was closely associated—and, in the sum of its five parts, a portrait of the self-effacing composer himself."<sup>236</sup>

Similarly, in his book *Ravel and the Art of the Piano* (2012), Paul Roberts relates the pianistic gestures within *Miroirs* with writing and poetry by Apaches poet Léon-Paul Fargue to further illuminate possible connections, not only for the piece to which Fargue is dedicatee, but also for the set as a whole.<sup>237</sup>

The movements and their dedications:

*Noctuelles*: to Léon-Paul Fargue

*Oiseaux tristes*: to Ricardo Viñes

*Un barque sur l'océan*: to Paul Sordes

*Alborada del gracioso*: to Michel-Dimitri Calvocoressi

*La vallée des cloches*: to Maurice Delage

**Michel-Dimitri Calvocoressi** (1877-1944), Greek-French-English critic and music writer.

Previously a student of classics and law, Calvocoressi studied harmony with Xavier Leroux at the

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<sup>234</sup> the eye sees not itself/But by reflection, by some other things" [Julius Caesar, Act I, Scene 2].

<sup>235</sup> Korevaar, "Ravel's Mirrors," 25.

<sup>236</sup> Ibid., 28.

<sup>237</sup> Roberts, *Reflections*, Chapter 3, 37-74.

Conservatoire, where he met Ravel. Gifted in languages, he worked as a music critic and correspondent in French, English, German, and Russian. He used these skills to translate libretti and song texts into French and English, furnishing Ravel with translations and transliterations for *Cinq mélodies populaires grecques*.

An ardent champion of Russian music and a Mussorgsky expert, he gave frequent lectures about this music, usually taking Viñes with him to illustrate examples. His correspondence with Balakirev served as link between Les Apaches and Russian composers, and he assisted Diaghilev in organizing the impresario's showcases of Russian music, opera, and ballet in Paris. Of particular import was a meeting Calvocoressi facilitated between Diaghilev and the Apaches at his home on 1 August 1909, which led to commissions for Ravel (*Daphnis et Chloé*), Schmitt (*La tragédie de Salomé*), and later, Falla.<sup>238</sup>

During World War I, he worked as a cryptographer in London, remaining in England after the war as a musicologist and critic. Most of his subsequent books were published in English. His *Music and Ballet* memoirs include information about Les Apaches.<sup>239</sup>

Korevaar and Roberts both point out the humorous disconnect between Calvocoressi's admittedly shoddy pianism and Ravel's dedication to him of *Alborada del gracioso*—one of the most virtuosic pieces in the literature.

**Maurice Delage** (1879-1961), French composer. A late-bloomer from a moneyed family, Delage embraced musical studies as a result of *Pelléas et Mélisande*, which he attended many times with his friends. He taught himself piano so as to play *Pelléas* excerpts by ear before the

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<sup>238</sup> *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed., s.v. "Calvocoressi, Michel-Dimitri."

<sup>239</sup> Calvocoressi, M. D. *Music and Ballet*. London: Faber and Faber, 1933.

opera was published, and Ravel subsequently accepted him as a composition student. Fargue called Delage “the man most saturated with music that I know, mad music man, as we said that Hokusai was mad for drawing.”<sup>240</sup> It was Delage who secured the garden chalet in which Les Apaches held their Saturday meetings. He became close friends with Stravinsky when the latter joined the group, and was the dedicatee of *Akahito*, the first of Stravinsky’s *Three Japanese Lyrics*.

Delage’s compositional influences were Debussy and music of the Far East and India. His first orchestral work, *Conte par la mer* (1909), was rejected by d’Indy and the Société Nationale de Musique. His fellow Apaches rallied around this snub to form the Société Musicale Indépendante. His *Quatre poèmes hindous*, premiered on the aforementioned 14 January 1914 Société Musicale Indépendante concert, feature glissandi, tunings, ornaments, and vocal techniques that evoke Indian timbres and shadings.<sup>241</sup> A later major work was *Sept hai-kaïs* (1923), a setting of Japanese texts for voice and chamber ensemble. Delage’s output was fairly modest, but “his artistic contribution remains far from insignificant. Vuillermoz called him the ‘Henri Duparc of his generation’ while Stravinsky dubbed him ‘an artist of the first order.’”<sup>242</sup>

Korevaar notes that Ravel’s dedication of *La vallée des cloches*, “the most Eastern-sounding of the *Miroirs* with its static harmony and pentatonic sounds,”<sup>243</sup> to Delage was especially appropriate given the latter’s pull toward Asia and Asian musics. In turn, Delage dedicated a great many works to various Apaches colleagues. Delage was the only person

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<sup>240</sup> Fargue, 224.

<sup>241</sup> *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed., s.v. “Delage, Maurice.”

<sup>242</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>243</sup> Korevaar, “Ravel’s Mirrors,” 45.

present when Maurice Ravel died,<sup>244</sup> and his essay in homage, “Les premiers amis de Ravel,”<sup>245</sup> is a valuable document of the Apaches era.

**Léon-Paul Fargue** (1876-1947), French poet. Fargue was an exceptional modernist, a disciple of Mallarmé and master of startling vivid imagery. Apaches leader-mentor and key chronicler, he was evidentially—perhaps with Viñes—the most companionable and beloved of the group. His lifelong close friendships with Ravel and Viñes were marked by mutual admiration and inspiration.

Fellow Apache Émile Vuillermoz said of Fargue, “The elegant and precise writings of this nocturnal visionary constituted, in effect, the daily bread of Ravellians from the very beginning.”<sup>246</sup> Of his poetry, Paul Roberts writes, “Influenced by the musical sonorities and rhythms of Verlaine and Mallarmé, Fargue’s early poetry provided a bridge between the nineteenth century and modernism, between Symbolism and the Surrealists”<sup>247</sup>—and notes that Vuillermoz attributed to Fargue Ravel’s literary sensibilities and tastes. Florent Schmitt went on to say that Fargue “is perhaps the greatest poet” since Rimbaud, Verlaine, and Mallarmé.<sup>248</sup> Vuillermoz noted the “accuracy of his comments in a sparkling language of magical metaphors” and that listening to Fargue read his poems aloud gave the “same auditory pleasure as the execution of a piano piece by Debussy.”<sup>249</sup>

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<sup>244</sup> Nichols, 345.

<sup>245</sup> In Colette et al., 97-114.

<sup>246</sup> Quoted in and translated by Korevaar, 34.

<sup>247</sup> Roberts, *Reflections*, 49.

<sup>248</sup> Haine, “Cipa Godebski et les Apaches,” 257.

<sup>249</sup> *Ibid.*, 257.

The dedication of *Noctuelles* to Fargue is apt, as multiple reports describe him as an avowed night owl who endlessly walked Parisian streets after dark, often arriving at Apaches gatherings long after midnight. The *noctuelles* of the title likely refer directly to an untitled work from *Poèmes*, which although published in 1912 was written much earlier and would have been read by Fargue in Apaches gatherings.<sup>250</sup>

Fargue's first book of *Poèmes* carries over seventeen of its verses dedications to Apaches (all names noted in this chapter). His memorials to Ricardo Viñes ("Un Heroes de la Musique") and Ravel ("Autour de Ravel") include heartfelt reminiscences about Apaches gatherings and members.

**Paul Sordes**, French painter. Sordes is immortalized solely in Apaches recollections and the *Une barque sur l'océan* dedication. No independent record of his biography or works seems to exist. One of the first Apaches, he had met Klingsor at the Salon des Indépendants where the latter was "attracted to his drawings and watercolors of an extraordinary poetic feeling."<sup>251</sup> Sordes, who made his living as a theater scenic artist, hosted early Apaches Saturday evenings at his Montmartre flat.

Almost all of what we know about Sordes comes from various memoirs of fellow Apaches. Léon-Paul Fargue wrote, "We met for years at Paul Sordes's, a discreet and refined painter, music-loving, little fond of the rules and inflations of fashion."<sup>252</sup> He noted Sordes's admiration of Whistler and Aubrey Beardsley.

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<sup>250</sup> Roberts, *Reflections*, 47-56, discusses *Noctuelles*, including analysis of this poem.

<sup>251</sup> Haine, "Cipa Godebski et les Apaches," 259.

<sup>252</sup> Fargue, 223.

Tristan Klingsor speaks to Sordes's pianistic abilities that marked him as a “qualified,” interdisciplinary Apache: “What a seductive spirit this Paul Sordes was!...He sightread modern pieces easily, sensitive to all the inflections, entranced by the subtle harmonies, which were so enjoyable to hear. As a painter, he searched for beautiful nuance and rhythm; one could see he adored Whistler; he could have been a kind of Ravel of the palette.”<sup>253</sup>

Likely his “indolent, capricious, more interested in tasting the joy of art than in creating”<sup>254</sup> character is why he is completely forgotten today. As for Ravel’s dedication of *Un barque sur l’océan*, Korevaar correlates the “indolent, flighty, blond daydreamer” with, among other attributes, the work’s “subtle and ravishing harmonies,” a mark of this “discreet and refined, music-loving” painter.<sup>255</sup> Vuillermoz said that Sordes’s “reminded sensuality was a constant example” to Ravel, who owned a gouache by the artist and reportedly carried it around everywhere.<sup>256</sup> Roberts notes two *barques* in the poetry of Fargue, one of which is in close association with a piano alongside the sea,<sup>257</sup> pointing out that surely Ravel would have heard Fargue read this “La rampe s’allume” at Apaches gatherings—and so perhaps the poet’s imagery penetrates *Miroirs* beyond *Noctuelles*.

Sordes’s brother Charles also joined Apaches gatherings. He read aloud the adventures of Sinbad the Sailor and excerpts from *1001 Nights*, which may have inspired Klingsor and Ravel in their respective *Shéhérazades*. He also played tam-tam in the orchestra under Inghelbrecht for the 1905 premiere of Schmitt’s *Psaume XLVI*.<sup>258</sup>

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<sup>253</sup> Tristan Klingsor, “l’Epoch Ravel,” in Colette et al., 128.

<sup>254</sup> Ibid., 128.

<sup>255</sup> Korevaar, “Ravel’s Mirrors,” 41-42.

<sup>256</sup> Roberts, *Reflections*, 60.

<sup>257</sup> Ibid., 61.

<sup>258</sup> Haine, “Cipa Godebski et les Apaches,” 259.

*Tuesday, 11 October 1904: In the evening, at Delage's; Ravel made us discover Oiseaux tristes, a new piano piece that pleased only me.*<sup>259</sup>

**Ricardo Viñes** (1875-1943), Catalan-French pianist. As the subject of this dissertation, Viñes is well established as a seminal Apaches member. In the context of *Miroirs*, he is both a dedicatee and the pianist who brought the masterwork to public life. As he noted in his journal the night of the performance, his premiere was “un succès monster.” Here is the diary chronology of events that led Viñes to admit “without knowing it quite yet”: A year after Viñes first heard *Oiseaux tristes*, on 16 October 1905, he took the score home to start working on it. On 2 November, Ravel and he corrected the manuscript errors for *Un barque sur l’océan*, and Viñes was finally allowed to borrow that score. On Christmas Eve, Viñes found Ravel chez Viñes, still correcting the *Miroirs*. The world premiere of the entire set took place less than two weeks later.<sup>260</sup>

Viñes was the dedicatee of *Oiseaux tristes*, the first of the set to be composed. Oft quoted is a quip attributed to Ravel: “It was fun to inscribe to a pianist a piece that was not in the least pianistic.”<sup>261</sup> Korevaar notes, too, that in dedicating the first piece composed in the set to Viñes, Ravel was paying homage forward to the man he knew would bring the work to life.<sup>262</sup>

Korevaar notes that psychologically, “sad birds” is at odds with peer reports that paint Viñes as perpetually happy-go-lucky. This notion is decidedly not the case, as Nina Gubisch’s

<sup>259</sup> Viñes: Diary, 11 October 1904. In Gubisch, “Le journal inédit,” 203.

<sup>260</sup> Gubisch, “Le journal inédit,” 204-5.

<sup>261</sup> Calvocoressi, 66.

<sup>262</sup> Korevaar, “Ravel’s Mirrors,” 38.

introduction to her major release of a portion of the Viñes diary<sup>263</sup> underscores the emotional turbulence and insecurity that periodically plagued Viñes. “These complex feelings: sadness in loneliness, incomprehension, but also the joyful realization that this sorrow, in his mind, could be the destiny only of uncommon beings.”<sup>264</sup>

The title may come from another Fargue poem that Ravel again would have known, “Dans la rue qui monte au soleil”: “But in a street with the name of a sad bird, lives and smiles, day and night, the immortal Myrtis, fair of face.”<sup>265</sup> As with Sordes’s *barque*, this image too is associated with that of a piano, which appears a few lines earlier.

Korevaar concludes that “the emotional depth and darkness (and artifice) of ‘Oiseaux tristes’ mirror the inner life not only of Ricardo Viñes, but also of his partner in literary and artistic adventures, Maurice Ravel—both men who, like Léon-Paul Fargue, masked their inner uncertainties with outward gaiety.”<sup>266</sup>

*Miroirs* portrays and names five of the Apaches nearest and dearest to Ravel. Indeed, these particular personages largely correlate to the authors of the various memoirs that shed light on the relationships within the group and with Ravel—and for that matter, Viñes. Together, these illuminate the multidisciplinary elements embodying a set of pieces that mark and describe—while immortalizing—those who were perhaps the most Apaches of Apaches.

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<sup>263</sup> Ibid., 38.

<sup>264</sup> Gubisch, “Le journal inédit,” 167. Quoted in and translated by Korevaar, “Ravel’s Mirrors,” 38.

<sup>265</sup> Roberts, *Reflections*, 57.

<sup>266</sup> Korevaar, “Ravel’s Mirrors,” 39.

#### 4. Les Apaches Realized

*Tuesday, 18 April 1905: I went to look for Cypa to go to dine with the Redons, Bouchor, and Séverac at the Porte Maillot. Fargue came and recited to us his poems, divine, something to Redon, who doesn't know them. Séverac played his "Chant de la terre," a part of his "Languedoc" and the beginning of "La mort de Gauguin" which is wonderful. I could only listen. We left all together to take the Metro. Redon, Fargue, and I talked about Paul Claudel.<sup>267</sup>*

Les Apaches, although rather a diverse band in individual artistic backgrounds and temperaments, established a shared regard for certain artistic influences, movements, and entities. These, gleaned from their discussions and written memories, also influenced the works that emerged.

Léon-Paul Fargue wrote, "Ravel shared our predilections, our weaknesses, our manias, for Chinese art, Mallarmé and Verlaine, Rimbaud and Corbière, Cézanne and Van Gogh, Rameau and Chopin, Whistler and Valéry, the Russians and Debussy."<sup>268</sup> In one expedient sentence, Fargue reveals to us the Apaches aesthetic penchants in a nutshell.

Not insignificantly, these correspond to the very artistic essentials that fascinated Claude Debussy.<sup>269</sup> While the Apaches could themselves examine and consider the philosophy and material specimens of these interests, they also had the alchemic example of Debussy. While his musical innovations resonated with them, extramusical influences perceived therein amplified the multifaceted potency of Debussy as the group's artistic prophet-liege.

<sup>267</sup> Viñes: Diary, 18 April 1905. In Levy, 71.

<sup>268</sup> Quoted in Arbie Orenstein, *A Ravel Reader: Correspondence, Articles, Interviews* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2003) 3.

<sup>269</sup> Paul Roberts, *Reflections: The Piano Music of Maurice Ravel* (Milwaukee: Amadeus Press, 2012) 40.

Debussy was thus an Apaches preoccupation subsequent to the sacred cause of rallying in support of *Pelléas et Mélisande*. Viñes and Ravel—and surely, many of the others—were well aware of works like *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* with its extramusical poetic inspiration and exquisite novel timbres, and *Pelléas* cemented Debussy's status as the leading composer of the French avant-garde. Although the elder composer never attended an Apaches meeting,<sup>270</sup> he nonetheless remained a vital basis for the group. They steeped themselves in and championed his music.

Over the years, Viñes served as a key conduit between Les Apaches and Debussy. As he brought Debussy into his repertoire, he shared these pieces in Apaches meetings while preparing their premieres, or even afterward, such as on 5 December 1903 when he played the *Toccata* from *Pour le piano* just before Fargue read his *Nocturnes*.<sup>271</sup> In this way, they could analyze and assimilate the continued evolution of the elder composer.

With passing years, the relationship between Les Apaches and Debussy became more complex as Ravel's composition evolved and his fame grew. However, amid a dynamic tension between the two composers, the group—and Ravel himself—always held steadfast to the musical principles Debussy sought and stood for. For example, Ravel himself premiered Debussy's *D'une cahier esquisses* on the first concert of the Société Musicale Indépendante. A few of the Apaches conducted *Pelléas et Mélisande*, and the 1911 premiere of *Le Martyre de Saint-Sébastien* involved Apaches Caplet, Chadeigne, Inghelbrecht, and Vuillermoz.<sup>272</sup>

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<sup>270</sup> Pasler, "A Sociology of the Apaches," 156.

<sup>271</sup> Viñes: Diary, 5 December 1903. In Gubisch, "Le journal inédit," 226.

<sup>272</sup> Haine, "Cipa Godebski et les Apaches," 250, 254.

Debussy's own esteem for Russian music was fervently shared by Les Apaches. They were passionate for it, absorbing its attributes such as rough-edged harmonic progression, folk idiom, and exotic instrumental timbres. From 1897, Ravel and Viñes had steeped themselves in countless Russian scores in piano four-hands (such as Rimsky-Korsakov's symphonies and *Antar*, "with its superb Orientalism"),<sup>273</sup> as though in preparation for future Apaches evenings.

In her chapter "The Russians in Paris,"<sup>274</sup> Elaine Brody summarizes the Franco-Russo musical alliance of the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Artists and the public were exposed to Russian music through concert series as part of the Paris Exhibitions, as well as subsequent donations of Russian scores to the Conservatoire Library and increased musical outreach. A Russian Five concert was sponsored back in 1892 by Countess Greffulhe's Société de Grandes Auditions. Brody's chapter paints a picture of a Paris insatiable for Russian music and performers. In truth, this phenomenon was not sustained to the extent portrayed, and the last few of the five historic Russian concerts of 1907 were sparsely attended.<sup>275</sup> However, with Viñes or Viñes and Ravel at the piano, and the expertise of Calvocoressi informing the proceedings, the Apaches had an inner track to comprehending and assimilating this music. This foreknowledge could be brought to bear at, for example, the historic Russian concerts, the *Boris Godunov* of 1908, and starting in 1909, the Ballet Russes, again underwritten by Greffulhe's organization.<sup>276</sup>

Les Apaches also had in common interest in musics from other lands as well as the integration of folk and children's music. The composers particularly admired Mussorgsky's

<sup>273</sup> Gubisch, "Le journal inédit," 192.

<sup>274</sup> Brody, "Paris: The Musical Kaleidoscope," 190-212.

<sup>275</sup> Nichols, 91-92.

<sup>276</sup> Jann Pasler, "Countess Greffulhe as Entrepreneur: Negotiation Class, Gender, and Nation," in *Writing Through Music: Essays on Music, Culture, and Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008) 311-12.

*Nursery* cycle, as did Debussy. Children's music found Apaches outlets in Ravel's *Ma mere l'Oye* and Inghelbrecht's *La nursery*.

Asian music and art were famously in vogue in turn-of-the-century Paris. Debussy had long held an appetite for *l'Orientalisme* and its objects, evidenced in his lacquered goldfish and Arkel the frog as well as the fastidiousness with which he painstakingly arranged his cover designs. The many Apache visual artists were swept up by the *estampes*, Japanese woodcut prints and exquisite watercolors coming from the Far East. Viñes and Ravel enjoyed exhibitions of Japanese art. These visual elements extended to other lands and media. Delage and Stravinsky set Japanese texts, while composers such as Delage and Roussel took up elements of music from India (which had also interested Debussy) into their compositions.

Indeed as with Debussy, the visual arts in general were a key stimulus for Les Apaches; quite obviously their ranks included a number of artists and painters. A young Ravel combined drawing and literature (*Wednesday, 10 August 1892: Maurice showed me a very gloomy drawing he has done for a descent into Edgar Poe's Maelstrom. Today, he made in front of me another one, also very black, for Poe's Manuscript found in a Bottle.*<sup>277</sup>), and Viñes associated with dozens of artists, including the French symbolist painter Odilon Redon, with whom he was close. Redon and Sordes shared an interest in fin-de-siècle spiritual and occult philosophies, informing their artworks. In the salons such as those of Misia Sert and Cipa and Ida Godbebski, group members crossed paths with numerous artistic luminaries such as Pablo Picasso, Pierre Bonnard, and Édouard Vuillard.

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<sup>277</sup> Viñes: Diary, 5 August 1892. In Gubisch, "Le journal inédit," 183.

Baudelaire, Mallarmé, and Verlaine provided key literary inspiration. Seeking to convey the rarified and ephemeral in the words themselves, their poetry was sympathetic with an overall cult of the exquisite. Most notably, Fargue was a disciple of Mallarmé and would have set the tone for the reading of texts within the group, with Klingsor too participating. And Viñes would recite from a veritable encyclopedia of symbolist poetry he had committed to memory. From their adolescence, together Viñes and Ravel had steeped themselves in such poetry and literature. Another recursive aspect becomes apparent: As Debussy was both an Apaches artistic ideal while himself embodying others, Huysmans's *Des Esseintes's* library is itself a compendium of Apaches symbolist staples.<sup>278</sup> Perhaps the Apache rule against woman at meetings stemmed from the symbolist appropriation of the pre-Raphaelite-inspired woman as femme fatale-sacred oracle—too mysterious and distracting for Apaches Saturday nights.

Many of the shared aesthetics of the Apaches had previously manifested in the curriculum of excited self-study and exchange between Viñes and Ravel. With *Les Apaches*, these two doubtless asserted their specialty interests to some degree; at the same time, members likely self-selected into the group based on their own aligning inclinations. As Fargue wrote, “We had more or less the same tastes in art, which was very fortunate for people as fanatical as we were, because, as someone has said, one can only discuss things with like-minded people, especially questions of subtle distinction.”<sup>279</sup>

Jann Pasler in *Composing the Citizen* reveals a Paris that amid a variety of social, political, and artistic agendas nurtured a population imbued with dedication to the public utility

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<sup>278</sup> David Korevaar, “Ravel's Mirrors,” (D.M.A. diss: The Juilliard School, 2000) 4.

<sup>279</sup> Roberts, “Reflections,” 37.

of music (and other arts). This populace was educated, musically informed, and seeking new, novel ways to express the French voice. In this light, Viñes and his friends (as well as pianists Blanche Selva and Édouard Risler, and indeed endeavors such as the Société Nationale de Musique) rode a wave of clamor for new French music that was well established and activated by the time Les Apaches congregated. Their association was perfectly aligned with their time and place.

Within this environment, Les Apaches brought their aesthetic predilections to bear in myriad forms of industry. Most obviously were the works that were created, unveiled, and refined there before publication. Such masterpieces as Ravel's *Rapsodie espagnole* and Fargue's *Poèmes* were developed and shared among the group. Apaches were proactive in outreach to shape public perception so as to curry understanding for their works and promote their initiatives. Through the influence naturally asserted by critics Calvocoressi and Vuillermoz, the group had built-in prolific, persuasive mouthpieces with ready-made platforms from which to defend Apaches values.

As one example, the Calvocoressi-Viñes collaborations made public the Apaches' regard and passion for Russian music, serving as educational outreach in support of the contemporaneous performances. Calvocoressi was a formidable influence, a fluent Russian speaker and encyclopedic Russian music historian. He gave many public lectures on Russian music, with Viñes serving as pianist. And Viñes in turn gave countless premieres and performances of Russian music in Paris and elsewhere. Apaches writings would complement the concerts Viñes packed with contemporary composers and performed in Paris, the provinces, and cities such as Brussels, London, and Berlin.

One can readily imagine these flames fanned within Apaches gatherings, with Calvocoressi soliciting input and airing out his ideas and Ravel and Viñes presenting scores of Russian symphonic works to fellow Apaches. “Such performances undoubtedly encouraged discussions about what the French could learn from the Russians, and created a sympathetic, knowledgeable base upon which Diaghilev and Stravinsky could later draw.”<sup>280</sup>

The Apaches threw their collective support behind up-and-coming new members and other visitors who represented Apaches aims or created works that resonated with Apaches values. Above all things, the group championed musical innovation.<sup>281</sup> Thus, they were the first group to draw Manuel de Falla in 1907 and Igor Stravinsky in 1909, their respective arrivals into Paris.

Apaches initiatives directly created more public arenas for showcasing their works. As one example, a meeting held chez Bénédicte with “all Apaches” present, where they planned a modern music concert held on Saturday, 24 March 1906 in the same building where Viñes’s brother Pépé resided. A printed program evidenced a formal presentation and chronicled the event. All the composers except one were Apaches. Compositions by Schmitt, Vuillermoz, Inghelbrecht, Ravel, and Sévérac alternated with poems by Fargue. Klingsor was represented by his texts. And to top it off, Viñes, Chadeigne, Schmitt, and Vuillermoz were performers.<sup>282</sup>

Apaches composers were not unilateral in opposition to institutional French music per se as the revolutionary band sometimes portrayed. In the so-called schism between the Schola and Conservatoire, both sides would have been well represented in Apaches ranks. However,

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<sup>280</sup> Pasler, “A Sociology of the Apaches,” 157.

<sup>281</sup> *Ibid.*, 165.

<sup>282</sup> Haine, “Cipa Godebski et les Apaches,” 260-61.

the group did occasionally find its art shut out of the officially funded institutions such as the Société Nationale de Musique, especially as the more conservative d'Indy-Saint-Saëns-Schola axis appeared to assert more of a stranglehold on programming.

As a direct result of this, galvanized by president Vincent d'Indy's spurn of Delage's *Conte par la mer*, Les Apaches members along with Fauré mobilized to found the Société Musicale Indépendante. Of interest is that on the first concert, at Salle Gaveau on 20 April 1910. Ravel premiered Debussy's *D'un cahier d'esquisses*—which had been composed years before. Viñes first performed on the twenty-seventh concert, on 5 June 1913, where he premiered Satie's *Descriptions automatiques*.<sup>283</sup>

But it was the thirtieth Société Musicale Indépendante concert of 14 January 1914 that was a tour de force of Les Apaches creations.<sup>284</sup> The day's program comprised:

- Maurice Delage: *Quatre poems hindous (Madras, Lahore, Bénarès, Jeypour)*
- Érik Satie: *Chapitres tournés en tous sens*
- Gaston Knosp: *Deux Scherzare*
- Igor Stravinsky: *Trois Poèmes de la lyrique japonaise (Akahito, Mazatsumi, Tsaraiuki)*
- Florent Schmitt: *Une semaine du petit elfe Ferme-l'oeil*
- Maurice Ravel: *Trois Poèmes de Stéphane Mallarmé (Soupir, Placet futile, Surgi de la croupe et du bond)*

The concert was a rich offering entirely comprising world premieres. Most of the works represented Apaches composers and may well have been workshopped within the group and aired at the Godebskis. The remaining pieces, premieres by Erik Satie and Gaston Knosp, had the distinction of being performed by Viñes. Conveniently, two of the critics reporting on the day's offerings were Apaches Vuillermoz and Calvocoressi.

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<sup>283</sup> Duchesneau, 308

<sup>284</sup> Ibid., 309

In retrospect, this concert was the Les Apaches valedictory. Just a little more than six months later, World War I would splinter the group, as it did so many in Europe. It seems somewhat appropriate and symbolic that amid so much Apaches representation at this event, Viñes gave the world premiere of Erik Satie's *Chapitres tournés en tous sens*.<sup>285</sup> In the next wave of Parisian avant-garde between the wars, Satie would be an epicenter around which the *Nouveaux Jeunes* and *Les Six* generation would flock. None other than Viñes would crash the party before somewhat—but never entirely—leaving pianistic matters in the capable hands of his protégés Francis Poulenc and Marcelle Meyer, themselves to be featured on many future Société Musicale Indépendante concerts.

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<sup>285</sup> Viñes had previously premiered Satie works, however.

## 5. Les Apaches: *Salon Privé*

*Saturday, 12 April 1902: We had a house-warming party at the home of Cypa and Cyprien Godebski, 20 rue de Chartres; there were many artistic celebrities, the vile Catulle Mendès with his last wife who really pleased me, while she looks like death. To think that his first wife was there too, how novel! I made the acquaintance of Dr. Mardrus and his wife. He told me he admired me very much at the Schola Cantorum, the day I played the Beethoven 111. Judith Gautier was there. There was a performance of puppets by the painter Ranson, it had lots of spirit. They asked me to play and I gave the Toccata of Debussy and Seguedillas of Albeniz. There was a supper and I left with Mr. and Mrs. Odilon Redon at four in the morning.<sup>286</sup>*

Les Apaches cultivated a fecund and nourishing artistic enclave that provided a social outlet while it nurtured and insulated its members in their creative endeavors. One can well imagine Apaches members eagerly awaiting their weekly gatherings. As inspired creators, members would have toiled in frequent solitary splendor alternating with various interactions to pursue and promote their initiatives.

Arbie Orenstein writes, “It would be difficult to recapture the great excitement and unbounded enthusiasm of the Apaches meetings.”<sup>287</sup> Can we imagine what it would have been like to share an evening with Les Apaches in their garden chalet?

Fargue pronounced their wigwam “neat as a doll’s house, a little masterpiece of a house with no neighbors, where we could make music all night long when we had missed the last train home.”<sup>288</sup>

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<sup>286</sup> Viñes: Diary, 12 April 1902. In Levy, 38.

<sup>287</sup> Orenstein, 4.

<sup>288</sup> Roland-Manuel, 34.

And then, once inside:

“Benches covered with draperies, a dresser, a few chairs, small tables are the only furniture with, of course, a brand new baby grand piano, soon two. Paintings and engravings, some vases, various objects decorate the room and make it warm. A samovar keeps the tea hot. One recognizes there the taste of the time, Delage having spent two years in England where the Aesthetic Movement (a movement strongly followed by James Whistler, Oscar Wilde, Aubrey Beardsley, and in France by Paul Sordes) has shaken up the decorative and fine arts, giving design in all its forms a new freedom. Busy Victorian interiors are replaced by Japanese-inspired light and bright forms.”<sup>289</sup>

Beyond this inventory, the chalet contained “a large stove which never kept them warm, and Delage’s bed hidden in the closet until the last Apache said goodbye.”<sup>290</sup> This interior ambience, to our imagination, sounds in parts austere, cozy, and artsy-chic, its decor informed by Apaches aesthetics to the extent that the men would have been able to afford them.

Together in this environment, Les Apaches indulged their shared love for the music of Debussy, Russian music, Asian art, folk music, and symbolist poetry. After hours of performance and exchange, Sordes would ring a bell at about one a.m. to signal the closing of the piano lid out of deference to the neighbors. But then night owl Fargue would just be arriving, so “everything had to be performed all over again to keep him informed of their progress.”<sup>291</sup> Hence, the relocation to Auteuil and Delage’s garden pavilion, where the rollicking intellectual and artistic festivities could continue late into the night.

We know of the broad strokes of Apaches tastes from various testimonials, and we can glean their assimilation through the group’s activities and creative works. However, at the end

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<sup>289</sup> Clary, 146.

<sup>290</sup> Seroff, 66.

<sup>291</sup> *Ibid.*, 65.

of the day, we have scant information of the precise nuances of discourse. Arriving home after a late night, it would seem Viñes was too spent to document these specifics in his diary. As Pasler notes, “The presence of poets, painters, set-designers, and a lithographer among the Apaches made interdisciplinary exchange typical of their meetings. It is unfortunate that Viñes noted little detail of what they discussed.”<sup>292</sup>

The main activity and indeed *raison d’être* for meetings was for members to share their projects with one another. Viñes noted in his journal the pieces he worked on for the resident composers, and performances were of both sketches and fully-formed works.<sup>293</sup> Fargue wrote, “Each week one of us would have something to read, to declaim, to perform: a poem, some prose, a piece of music. We found ourselves there in a propitious atmosphere for these exchanges, exchanges made yet more precious by the mixture of friendship and attention.”<sup>294</sup>

Fargue’s last point seems crucial. When discussing the creations springing from such an association of forward-thinking musicians and artists as Les Apaches, while measuring the ideas and products that emerge from such an environment, it is possible to overlook the deep friendship that undergirded such industry. “The happy atmosphere of their circle cannot be emphasized strong enough for, while among those devoted friends, Ravel wrote his most spontaneous works.”<sup>295</sup> Pasler sums it up aptly: “Apache gatherings were essentially private meetings of a group of friends to share and support one another’s deepest artistic passions.”<sup>296</sup>

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<sup>292</sup> Pasler, “A Sociology of the Apaches,” 158.

<sup>293</sup> *Ibid.*, 156.

<sup>294</sup> Quoted in and translated by Korevaar, “Ravel’s Mirrors,” 30.

<sup>295</sup> Seroff, 65. His timeworn biography is clearly romanticized: No music scholar today would use *spontaneous* in association with Ravel; the aura of friendship is the point of this quote.

<sup>296</sup> Pasler, “A Sociology of the Apaches,” 159.

This author has viewed a modest amount of correspondence among Les Apaches. The Parisian pneumatic tube mail system, with multiple deliveries daily, enabled them to dispatch mundane or logistical communiqués as we would e-mail today. Thus, we have Schmitt telling Fargue, “Take the 7h train St Lazare, get off at St Cloud” so they can go together to hear Gaubert.

Occasionally one can find a treasurable bit of correspondence between friends who are thinking of one another when traveling or otherwise apart, and with their connection so fully suffused with that which they share, the message reveals a little something of mutual resonance:



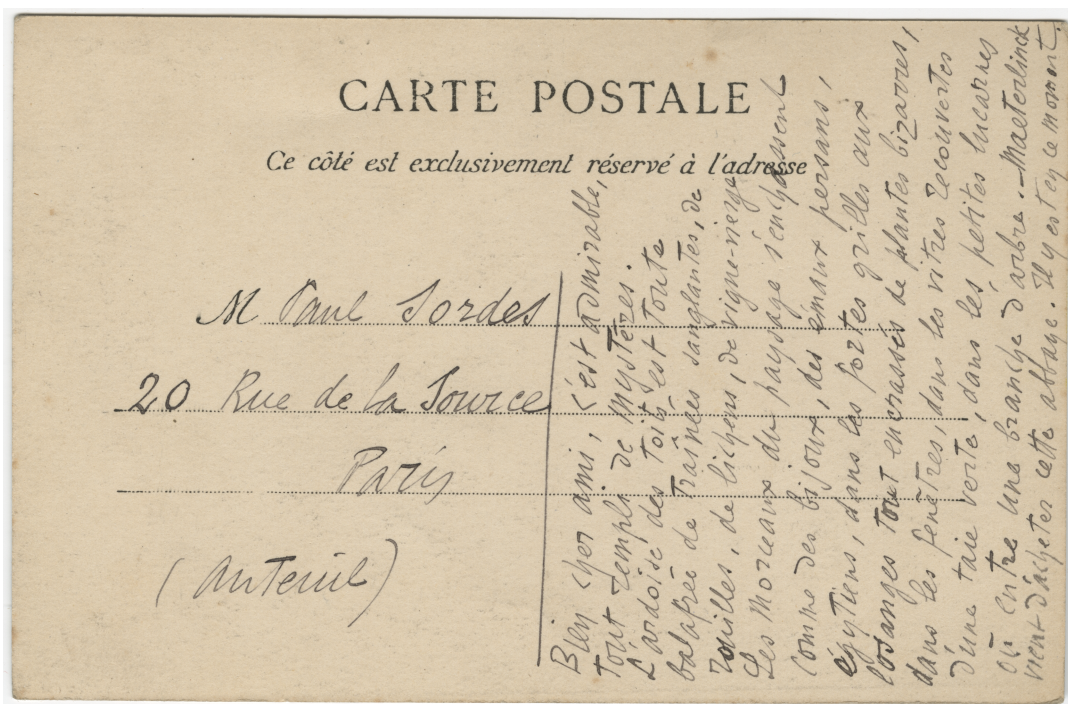


Figure 1: Postcard of Abbaye de Saint-Wandrille (from Léon-Paul Fargue to Paul Sordes)  
 Credit: Harry Ransom Center, the University of Texas at Austin  
 Used with permission

“Dear friend, this is wonderful, filled with mysteries. The slate of the roofs is all scarred with bloody streaks, rust, lichens, ivy. The pieces of the landscape are set like jewels, Persian enamels, Egyptian, in strong diamond grates all encrusted with bizarre plants, in the windows, the panes covered in a green case, in the small dormer windows between a branch of a tree. Maeterlinck just bought this abbey. He is there at this moment.”

Such arresting imagery, with the payoff of the Maeterlinck connection. The Apache sacred chapel germinated in Maeterlinck, by way of *Pelléas et Mélisande* and Debussy. The waft of multilayered sensibilities—shared between friends. The postcard is unsigned, but was definitively written by Fargue to fellow Apache Sordes.

What is it about the nature of close connection and love that brings forth one's highest self in artistic creation? Even the meticulously cultivated self-image of Apaches personnel—especially Ravel—found a voice in so many inspired works because it was animated by authentic feeling. With the innate trust among Les Apaches, a spiritual connection fostered by years of sharing in such a collegial environment, they could collaborate more closely, anticipate each other's actions—and support one another. “They lived in such closer harmony that they claimed that each one knew what every other one of them was doing, what he was thinking, and where he would be on the following day.”<sup>297</sup>

As private artistic entity, the Apaches and their gatherings can be seen as a microcosm of the half-private, half-public Parisian literacy-artistic salons, even as the latter had a long history and would remain relevant to support post-World War I revolutions in art and music. An evening at the Apaches *salon privé* would likely have unfolded similarly to one in an aristocratic or artistic salon, both offering a potpourri of artistic offerings and discussion. Whereas the Apaches wigwam was a protected space in which members could work out their ideas and creations in privacy, the Parisian aristocratic or artistic salon was a somewhat more public milieu, hosts lording over the proceedings, performers and guests varying from week to week.

These venues were vital showcases for artistic achievement alongside the concert and theater series. Mainstays of Parisian intellectual life from the Enlightenment on, the salons still maintained prestige and utility into the 20th century. Debussy and Fauré frequented earlier salons, such as that of Pauline Viardot. Debussy performed his own works and those of others.

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<sup>297</sup> Seroff, 56.

Although not overtly gregarious, Fauré nonetheless understood the importance of circulating through the salons as a way to become known and connected within the Parisian musical establishment. On the manifest of Winnaretta Singer (Princess de Polignac), for example, he was a frequent composer-performer before and during the Les Apache era. He was in turn diligent and tireless in introducing his protégés and other young talent into these circles, putting them into positions to achieve possible commissions or collaborations.

Thus, from an early age, Ravel became a frequent salon-goer. Viñes was in demand as a pianist and accompanist almost from his first days in the French capital. His diary shows such a dizzying social life, in fact, augmented by a tireless inclination to make introductions and nurture connections for other friends, that one wonders how he possibly learned and maintained such a colossal repertoire—especially considering his vociferous reading and gallery hopping.

Princess Cystria, Count Étienne de Beaumont, Jacques Rouché, and others are named as places Viñes played, but Les Apaches also found themselves in big-ticket salons such as those of Mme. de Saint-Marceaux, Princesse de Polignac, and Misia Sert. In 1922, composer Georges Auric wrote, “If I close my eyes for a moment, I imagine quickly a salon where many people wait, tight on the couch, in a doorway, or balancing on the arms of chairs where dreaming, here is André Gide, there, Paul Valéry. Viñes is going to play. He takes a little look at his friends. On the walls, Vuillards, Bonnards cling always to unstable furniture, haunted by ladies in terry robes and poodles made of cotton.”<sup>298</sup>

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<sup>298</sup> Quoted in Clary, 165.

Viñes and his collaborating composers were able to use the salons to develop an audience for newly heard works; sometimes even on consecutive nights. This would have been particularly useful for continued previewing of a work prior to public performance. For example, his diary indicates that on 10 February 1905, he premiered Debussy's *Masques* and *L'isle joyeuse* at Salle Aeolian.<sup>299</sup> At reception given by Princesse de Polignac chez the Duchess of Luynes on 14 February, he played Schumann, Chopin, Debussy, and Albeniz.<sup>300</sup> (The Debussy pieces are unnamed, but likely would have included one or both of the new works.) The next night, at Princesse Polignac's home salon, he again performed *Masques* and *L'isle joyeuse*.<sup>301</sup> Then, on 18 February, he performed them at Salle Pleyel for Société Nationale de Musique<sup>302</sup> Depending on a person's standing with the Princesse, there were multiple chances within eight days to hear and understand the qualities of the new works.

The most "Apaches" of salons was that of Ida and Cipa Godebski, longtime friends of Viñes and Ravel. (Cipa Godebski was half-brother to Misia Sert.) Viñes had met the family back in 1893, becoming a good friend and appearing in their home frequently. About 1902, they began hosting their Sunday nights soirees, which attracted a galaxy of artists, writers, and musicians into the 1920s.<sup>303</sup>

Viñes introduced Ravel to the couple in June 1904:

*16 June 1904: Dinner at the Godebskis', to whom I introduced Ravel. There were also the Terrasses, Grovlez and Léon Simon. We played music, I and Ravel who played the first movement of his Sonatine. It pleased them very much. Bonnard was there too.*<sup>304</sup>

<sup>299</sup> Vines played the pieces for Debussy twice in the previous few days. Gubisch, "Le journal inédit," 228.

<sup>300</sup> Ibid., 228.

<sup>301</sup> Kahan, 378.

<sup>302</sup> Duchesneau, 265. This manifest claims it is the world premiere.

<sup>303</sup> Haine, "Cipa Godebski et les Apaches," 228-31.

<sup>304</sup> Viñes: Diary, 16 June 1904. In Gubisch, "Le journal inédit," 202.

The Godebskis and Ravel became immediately close, and the association would prove beneficial and nurturing to the composer for years to come.

Connected by true friendship and deep creative understanding rather than just benefactor-artist symbiosis, the Godebskis and Apaches accorded one another a more modest, intimate gathering, where intellectual pulchritude and artistic discourse could come to the fore. Of all the salons, this was the most sympathetic to Apaches values and creations, a logical next step to see Apaches creations into the world.

Viñes constantly performed—he gave countless concerts and appeared to love being on stage. This is evidenced in a diary report of a Godebski dinner:

*Sunday 2 May 1903: I dined at Cypa Godebski's. I was next to Bourges and Bonnard. The Nathansons, who went to the gala evening at the opera in honor of the King of England, had to leave after the meal. Bouche came just as the beautiful Mme. Schopfer, the divorcée. I played pieces by Franck, Borodine, Rachmaninov, Schumann, Balakirev, Debussy, and Ravel. I returned with the Redons.*<sup>305</sup>

Toward the end of the decade, as Les Apaches Saturday evenings became less frequent, the Godebski Sundays took up the slack and hosted many of its members. The 1910 Georges d'Espagnet painting *Réunion de musiciens chez Godebski* is a veritable Apaches portrait, depicting, from left to right, Florent Schmitt, Déodat de Séverac, Dimitri Calvocoressi, Cipa and Jan Godebski, Albert Roussel, Ricardo Viñes at the piano, and Maurice Ravel on the far right.<sup>306</sup>

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<sup>305</sup> Viñes: Diary, 2 May 1903. In Levy, 56.

<sup>306</sup> Pierre Guillot, "Lecture d'un tableau," in *Albert Roussel: Musique et esthétique*, by Manfred Kelkel, 34-44 (Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1989).



Figure 2: Georges d'Espagnat (1870-1950), *Réunion de musiciens chez Godebski*, 1910 (oil on canvas)  
 Credit: Bibliothèque de l'Opéra Garnier, Paris, France / The Bridgeman Art Library  
 © 2013 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris  
 Used with permission

For those many Apaches who performed and exhibited works at these salons, the Apaches *salon privé* would feed presence and works into the public Parisian salons as these in turn might be viewed within the musical scene at large. The salons functioned as a wholesale artistic market, vetting and placing their wares through social and cultural connections into myriad theaters, exhibitions, and musical societies. And for the Apaches, their *salon privé* was the hothouse-laboratory where artistic ideas germinated and were coaxed into fruition through the conscientious stewardship of *toute la bande*.

## 6. Ricardo Viñes: Les Apaches Exemplar

*Tuesday, 6 November 1906: I went to dinner at the Morlands in their new apartment at 52 rue La Bruyère. Ravel and Tabuteau dined there also; then, many people came, Delage, the Sordes, and Fargue amid others. We played four hands, Ravel and I, Antar and Thamar; a young girl sang Duparc and Borodine. During dinner, I talked to them about astrology and horoscopes.<sup>307</sup>*

For his multifaceted connections with his fellow Apaches as well as other artists outside the group, while conveying Apaches creations to the public via his performances, Ricardo Viñes assumes a position of unique prominence among Les Apaches. He faithfully recorded their meetings, discussions, and activities. These diary entries and the writings of colleagues show him as not only reporter of Apaches activities, but also key protagonist in the Apaches story, prominent and popular among the group. Measured by influence, exchange, link to the outside, and realization of fellow members' creations, Viñes was an active and persuasive representative.

Viñes most obviously served the group from the piano. Although several of the Apaches, including Ravel and Chadeigne, were capable pianists, Viñes was top-shelf, and moreover it is indisputable that he was an eager performer who loved an audience. It was Viñes, or Viñes and Ravel together, who played the musical scores Les Apaches listened to and scrutinized. He afforded the group a chance to hear, for example, Russian piano music and orchestral reductions virtually before anyone else.

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<sup>307</sup> Viñes: Diary, 6 November 1906. In Gubisch, "Le journal inédit," 206.

Viñes was also an indefatigable champion and performer of the works of Apaches composers. He played their in-progress works, for which they doubtless worked closely with him on matters of pianism. When their pieces were complete, he performed them in the salons and in public. Through the official music societies, he premiered piano works of fellow Apaches Falla, Inghelbrecht, Ravel, Schmitt, and Séverac.

He was able to serve as a pianistic envoy from grandmaster Debussy, sharing all the composer's latest works with the group when they were in hand and many times thereafter. Given the group's allegiance to Debussy and the resident composers' ongoing interest in what the elder composer was doing, these sneak previews and resultant analysis and discussion provided valuable musical input for the group.

Between Godebski Sundays, other salons, and frequent concert bookings, he certainly had the opportunity to perform many of the works in his ever-increasing repertoire each week. The sensitive and sophisticated but friendly and protective Apaches audience would have been highly beneficial as Viñes developed his performance realizations, especially considering so many of the works he played were not yet standard repertoire. While Viñes learned and introduced contemporary works, his fellow Apaches had the opportunity to hear what their colleagues outside the garden walls were creating.

In Apaches discussions of poetry, art, and literature, Viñes was so well read and connected to myriad artists that he was a passionate contributor, bringing a dizzying amount of *au courant* material and information to bear.

“They used to say in Paris that one could see Viñes anywhere and everywhere. As a matter of course he went to concerts, but also he never missed an art exhibit, a new play, a lecture, or an informal gathering of the literati, where he would astonish them

with his encyclopedic knowledge, or by hour-long recitations of poems by Verlaine, Baudelaire, and Mallarmé.”<sup>308</sup>

In addition to testifying that Viñes had an insatiable appetite for Parisian cultural and intellectual offerings, this little dossier shows that Viñes loved sharing his literary passions with audiences, which he doubtless did frequently in the company of Les Apaches. It is likely that he was the best-read of them all; Suzy Levy’s collection of diary entries related to Redon compiles an impressive dossier of Viñes’s annual reading from his journal reports.<sup>309</sup> This lists more than 500 titles by authors including Poe, Dickens, Flaubert, Rousseau, Hugo, Goethe, Zola, Byron, Irving, Virgil, Baudelaire, Molière, Huysmans, Ibsen, Maeterlinck, Rimbaud, Mallarmé, Hawthorne, Emerson, Schiller, Balzac, and scores of others.

Multiple reports portray an animated Viñes, ineffably delighted in sharing his favorites or latest discoveries. An almost manic passion doubtless enlivened many an Apaches evening: “He possessed the vigor and enthusiasm typical of the autodidact eager to share what he had learned.”<sup>310</sup> Viñes socialized with a galaxy of musician, artist, and literary friends, who stimulated him while providing him a forum to circulate his passions. Of Viñes’s seeming effortless collection of luminaries, Riera writes:

“The names and addresses of musicians, intellectuals, and artists begin to line up in his note cards. Manuel Ruiz Zorrilla, the Godebskis, Odilón Redon, Nonell, Picasso, the poet José María Herdia, the astronomer Camille Flammarion, Saint-Saëns, the poet Léon-Paul Fargue, the writers Léon Bloy, Paul Valéry, and Valery Larbaud. This list would become never-ending, explaining the mental agility and universal and extensive culture that Viñes came

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<sup>308</sup> Seroff, 23.

<sup>309</sup> Levy, 149-162.

<sup>310</sup> Brody, “Vines in Paris,” 48.

to possess, permitting him to get along skillfully with whatever artistic or intellectual camp.”<sup>311</sup>

Effortless acquaintance with so much of the Parisian intelligentsia and artistic elite kept Viñes’s pulse on the artistic doings about town. One can imagine that he was an unceasing font of artistic gossip at Apaches gatherings, holding court for his rapt friends.

In considering the importance of friendship as a true force animating Les Apaches, inspiring them to greater innovation and accomplishment, Ricardo Viñes as loving companion must be considered in this discussion of Viñes the exemplar. His peers were universal in noting him as a whirlwind of positive energy. In his homage to Viñes, Fargue wrote:

“Among those who knew him at any time in their life, who could resist the image of a talkative Ricardo, excited, literally jumping on his friends, grasping them forcefully by a button on their jacket, by the end of their sensitivity, in his haste to make them share his love of people and things, his lovely effusions, his fads always sure and motivated? No one, no doubt.”<sup>312</sup>

If the Apaches were looking for a supportive audience for their fledgling works, or someone to play said works, or an emotional pick-me-up amid variable creative prospects and success within the complex web of musical Paris, who could indeed resist?

Another postcard, this time from Viñes to Fargue from Antwerp, evidences the warm relationships and shared passions among Les Apaches, revealing Viñes as a thoughtful, caring friend, his literary dexterity always at the ready.

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<sup>311</sup> Riera, 22.

<sup>312</sup> Fargue, 221-22.



G. Hermans, éd., Anvers.

683, Anvers — Bassin Asia.



Figure 3: Postcard of Anvers (Antwerp) Port (from Ricardo Viñes to Léon-Paul Fargue)

Credit: Harry Ransom Center, the University of Texas at Austin

Used with permission

On the back he writes, “Je vois un port rempli de voiles et de mats/Encor tout fatigués par la vague marine. (Baudelaire)” (“I see a port filled with sails and rigging/Still utterly wearied by the waves of the sea.”) Viñes infuses this travel correspondence with lines from the second half of Baudelaire’s poem *Parfum exotique* from *Fleurs du mal*.<sup>313</sup> Note *vague* added as a later correction, indicating Viñes was likely writing out the poem from memory. As Viñes gave lengthy recitations of poetry, and there is word in his diary that he intended to translate all the Baudelaire he knew into Spanish, this is not surprising. Sharing this bit of Baudelaire with poet Fargue while Viñes was traveling was a small but touching gesture of friendship, perfectly entrained to the artistic chapel they inhabited.

Viñes sent Fargue another postcard<sup>314</sup> on which he compared *splénétic* Normandy to a novel by Barbey.<sup>315</sup> On the photo side, he pens a literary joke; the postcard illustrates stairs leading from a boardwalk down to the beach, with the caption “La Descente à la Mer,” to which Viñes appends in ink: “qui n’est pas terrible, vous le voyez, comme le “Descente dans la Maëlstrom!” (“which isn’t terrible, you see, like “A Descent into the Maelström!”). Viñes like Debussy and Ravel was mad for Edgar Allen Poe; he taught himself English specially to read the author’s works in their native language. But for Viñes, these cultivations were insufficient as ends in themselves—they had to be shared with his fellows.

Viñes had the remarkable ability to inhabit seemingly opposed worlds and thrive in both. His personality seemed well suited to bridge differences and keep the proceedings friendly. He worked with both Debussy and Ravel throughout the Apaches era, serving as

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<sup>313</sup> Note that *Parfum exotique* is the same poem he set to music back in 1896.

<sup>314</sup> Viewed in the Harry Ransom archives, not reproduced here.

<sup>315</sup> Jules Amédée Barbey d’Aureville, another favorite fin-de-siècle author.

artistic emissary subsequent to the cooling of relationships between the two composers. Although the Apaches themselves were diverse in affiliation, including both Schola and Conservatoire-aligned composers and performers, Viñes negotiated both worlds. Educated in the Conservatoire, he also performed within the Schola and collaborated with the composers from both camps. In this way, his presence would serve to help cohere the group beyond their shared commitment to musical innovation.

To all that Viñes was and meant to Les Apaches, no less important is his legacy—the journal entries describing Les Apaches meetings and activities over the duration of the group's existence. As tireless chronicler of the goings-on within the Apaches haven, Viñes serves to widen the view through our very special window.

After World War I, Viñes took his interdisciplinary spirit and attraction to influential artistic circles not only by championing composers such as Poulenc and Satie, but also in his passing the torch of pianistic muse and agent. As mentor to Francis Poulenc and Marcelle Meyer, who collaborated with Satie and Cocteau in bringing forth the next wave of the Parisian avant-garde, Viñes conveyed his impulse to support the new and do well by the composers of the day. Thus, Viñes and his Apaches spirit were able to continue serving the innovative in art and music.

### **Part III: Ricardo Viñes: Pianist**

## 7. “Methode Ricardo Viñes”

*Thursday, 27 October 1901: In the afternoon, Ravel came; Debussy told him that my manner of playing pleased him very much, very much, especially my sonority.*<sup>316</sup>



Figure 4: *Caricatura de Ricard Viñes al piano*, de Dallies, 1911  
 Credit: CAT Arxiu Municipal de Lleida, Llegat Ricard Viñes, Ref. A6-R843  
 Used with permission

Writings on Viñes’s pianism focus primarily on his uncanny embodiment of the essence of a work, prescient ability to bring forth effective new scores, incredible memory, and immense repertoire. Brody captured all these in a quote from private correspondence with a Berkeley professor who was one of Viñes’s students:

<sup>316</sup> Viñes: Diary, 27 October 1901. In Gubisch, "Le journal inédit," 198.

“What made his performances different from other performances?... They were the inner sharing of a discovery he had made on his own, but in which nothing of his own self remained. He *was* the *Pictures*, he *was* the *Nights in the Garden of Spain*, he *was* the *Gallo Mañanero* of Joaquin Rodrigo.... He was self-effacing to the point of obliteration, but never quite. Viñes was always there, but always in good company.... His technique was there but only to be hidden. It was perfect in that it was never brought up.”<sup>317</sup>

This essentially tells us most of what we need to know about his pianistic values. In the most affecting performances, one does not experience music making as “technique” or “sound” or “interpretation”—rather, these elements are indivisible, together a synergistic whole ideally effecting transcendence or transformation for performer and listener.

With contemporary reports so unanimous that indeed something transcendental seemed to occur at Viñes’s performances, a pianist might well yearn to discover just how he was able to produce this. Unfortunately, Viñes made relatively few recordings, and sadly, we are not privy to film documentation of his legendary performances. He left neither a lineage of pedagogical descendants nor encyclopedic piano treatises. In attempting to retroactively analyze his approach to the piano, our inquiry must be multipronged.

In her dissertation section “Viñes as a Performer: Technique and Interpretation,” Berrocal notes that oft-cited by contemporaries and biographers were his “supple touch and flowing, effortless playing.”<sup>318</sup> These shed light on the results, but a process still bears teasing out. With this in mind, it would be illuminating to attempt to recreate a “Methode Viñes.” What did Viñes absorb from the French school, how was he influenced by Bériot, and what is perhaps unique in his approach?

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<sup>317</sup> Brody, “Viñes in Paris,” 47.

<sup>318</sup> Berrocal, 37.

## Training

*Friday, 21 December 1888: I played the 'Mécanisme' and M. Bériot told the students to beware, that I would surpass them all.*<sup>319</sup>

Viñes was taught by his amateur musician mother before commencing solfège, then piano studies, from age seven with organist Joaquin Terraza in his hometown of Lérida, Spain. At age ten, he entered the studio of Juan Bautista Pujol at the Barcelona Conservatory, winning the first prize on 18 July 1887.

Nothing of note seems to be written about Terraza, but Pujol's pedagogy was marked by elements that would remain of paramount importance in Viñes's mature approach:

"The 'Catalan' school of piano playing is characterized by special attention to clarity of voicing, tone color, and most especially, subtle use of the pedals. It is a tradition that was begun by the Catalan pianist Juan Bautista Pujol."<sup>320</sup>

This coloristic approach is notable in encompassing some of the very attributes marveled at by critics during Viñes's career. Pujol, who had studied at the Paris Conservatoire himself before touring and settling back in Barcelona, cultivated an aural sophistication in Viñes and Grenados. Both would later emphasize a singing line and coloristic pedaling with their students.

Viñes clearly displayed immediate facility and musical temperament. Isaac Albéniz, advised further study in Paris—arguably the pianistic center in Europe for much of the 1800s. Pujol had already sent fellow countrymen Enrique Grenados and Joaquín Malats to Charles de Bériot's class at the Paris Conservatoire. Viñes was admitted as an auditor and joined Bériot's

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<sup>319</sup> Viñes: Diary, 21 December 1888. In Nina Gubisch, "Le journal inédit," 179.

<sup>320</sup> Mark Hansen, "The Catalan School of Pedaling," in *The Pianist's Guide to Pedaling*, by Joseph Banowetz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985) 220.

most advanced class straightaway. In 1889, he was officially admitted, and he won his first prize in 1894.

The seminal work exploring the development of Paris Conservatoire pedagogy is Charles Timbrell's *French Pianism: A Historical Perspective*,<sup>321</sup> a compendium of biographies, interviews, and reminiscences pertaining to the Conservatoire's performance and pedagogic tradition. Tracing the lineage of Conservatoire professors back to Chopin and forward to well-known 20th-century pianists, Timbrell reveals a training tradition that is remarkably consistent and unified, uniquely of its time and place.

Thus, upon joining Bériot's class at the Conservatoire, Viñes stepped into a mature national piano pedagogy from which many fine pianists emerged. Generally marked by the cultivation of techniques centered on finger-centric dexterity and independence, the "French School" likely evolved out of the refined harpsichord tradition of Couperin and Rameau. Its shallow-keyed suppleness resulted in seemingly effortless flight or gliding, with values of evenness, precision, *jeu perle*, and speed creating the palette from which pianists served French aesthetics—elegance, understatedness, and subtlety.

An approach where the fingertips lead and the arm follows creates coordinated movement, so in one sense, the French focus on finger action is sound. There is a marked emphasis, however, on cultivating a "hammerlike independence" while deemphasizing arm motions that actually are necessary to accommodate the needs of the fingers. In truth, however, the entire upper arm must be allowed to move freely and appropriately: "These small movements facilitate and enable the movements of the fingers, hands, and forearms that are

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<sup>321</sup> Timbrell, Charles. *French Pianism: A Historical Perspective*. Portland, OR: Amadeus Press, 1999.

usually thought of as constituting technique. When the arms are free, the technique functions better.”<sup>322</sup> Fixing the arms to control “fingers like hammers”—exacerbated by the endless exercises and drilling of the French school— would likely have led many Conservatoire students to reach limits in musical expression, sound, and endurance.

Bériot himself was not strictly a product of the Conservatoire tradition, however, as his major teacher was the great Swiss pianist Sigismond Thalberg, who trained with Hummel and Moscheles. Thalberg was “noted for his round and beautiful tone, nearly motionless control and crystal-clear passage work.”<sup>323</sup> His preferred approach was not one of striking the keys with high fingers, but rather depressing them from a close position for the best tone, or for especially graceful melodies, “kneading” them with “fingers of velvet.”<sup>324</sup>

Bériot was the most influential of Thalberg’s students, and his teaching also incorporated these pianistic values:

“Like Thalberg, he attached great importance to critical listening, refinement of touch, singing tone, slow practice, and meticulous use of the pedals. This very musical approach is reflected in his two books of exercises, *Mécanisme et style* and *La sonorité du piano*.”<sup>325</sup>

An interview given by Paul Loyonnet, another famous Bériot student, corroborates Bériot’s more varied pianistic values, noting clarity and voicing, nuance, and most importantly, cultivation of an always singing tone and singing line:

“With him it was always ‘interpretation, interpretation, interpretation!’ Slow practice and the quality of one’s sound were his main concerns... All of his students developed a taste for good

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<sup>322</sup> Thomas Mark, *What Every Pianist Needs to Know About the Body* (Chicago: GIA Publications, 2003) 70.

<sup>323</sup> Timbrell, 45.

<sup>324</sup> *Ibid.*, 46.

<sup>325</sup> *Ibid.*, 46

musical ‘diction,’ a sense of good pedaling, contrasting touches, and clarity in fast tempos.”<sup>326</sup>

Bériot’s combination of cultivating an intelligent musical response and realizing it through refined touch, sound, and pedal techniques was well suited for Viñes and would have complemented Pujol’s approach. One might surmise that a different, more traditional studio at the Conservatoire—such as Diémer’s—may have trained a more prototypical, more “mechanical” pianist, resulting in a performer less suited to bringing forward prodigious, imaginative, multivariate new repertoire, from the new French and Spanish piano music to Russian blockbusters.

Along the way, Viñes seems to have forged his own synthesis of technique: pristine and fleeting, yet more sonorous and exuberant than the prevailing French aesthetic. After scrutinizing Viñes’s diary, noting ongoing debates with Bériot, Brody was convinced Viñes was largely self-taught rather than a definitive product of Conservatoire training and Bériot’s class. There may be merit to this assessment; however, many of the elements Viñes would have discovered correlate in large part to descriptions of his training. The influence of Pujol and Bériot together manifested in Viñes’s universally acclaimed mastery and upfront teaching of singing tone always in service to a line, local color and shading, myriad pedal techniques, and commitment to serving music first and foremost.

In scores from Viñes’s library that I have obtained,<sup>327</sup> his marked fingerings do indicate something of an independent-finger philosophy (although in truth it may be a tenuous exercise

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<sup>326</sup> Timbrell, 188-89.

to “reverse engineer” for this). Slow, legato passages are marked liberally with finger-substitutions that allow for a continual finger legato. Given Viñes’s constant use of the pedal, in these cases he clearly envisages the pedal as a coloristic tool, not as a substitute for finger connection. Passage works are fingered such that the same finger does not play on two same notes in close proximity, while the hand seems to be kept closed when possible.

From the sound palette he evinced as well as reports of students, Viñes evidently discovered the principle of playing firmly just to the sound point, as Mindru Katz and Dorothy Taubman, among others, would later teach. French technique would by definition avoid slamming to the bottom of the key bed, which combined with slavish “finger independence” would be ruinous. But Viñes clearly found the sweet spot in the key action to effect a malleable, ringing sound, and making use of the subsequent “bounce” would relieve pressure in the fingers and wrist.

Recalling that Viñes was also an autodidact in languages and literature, clearly he was naturally endowed with an investigative, imaginative approach to learning. Moreover, the descriptions of his performances are unique in the unanimity of what listeners report when attempting to describe his “becoming the work” synergizing technique with musical aims. While he was still young, Viñes evolved a technique versatile and adaptable enough to serve textures and sonorities for the hundreds of new music scores he would go on to perform.

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<sup>327</sup> See David Korevaar and Laurie J. Sampsel, "The Ricardo Viñes Piano Music Collection at the University of Colorado at Boulder," (Notes, Second Series 61, no. 2 December 2004) 361-400. I am grateful to Korevaar and Sampsel for allowing me full access to this collection.

## Pedagogy

Although Viñes's history in institutional teaching is modest, he accepted a select group of private students and was a dedicated teacher. Some of these students described their training and lessons in writing, leaving a bit of a record of Viñes's pedagogy. His most famous student was Francois Poulenc, who, forbidden by his father to pursue music studies, sought private instruction with Viñes.

His most accomplished protégé was the great French pianist Marcelle Meyer, whose own life and career are deservedly becoming more known and appreciated. Lisa Harrington, Meyer scholar, writes, "It was Viñes to whom she attributed her brilliant technique. According to Poulenc, who also studied with Viñes, Meyer once said of Stravinsky's *Trois mouvements de Petrouchka*, 'It is not as difficult as all that, thanks to Viñes.'"<sup>328</sup>

Viñes seems to have taught Meyer how to "ring the sound point" from a musical impulse:

"Meyer's first husband, Pierre Bertin, recalls that she played Satie's works "as he liked them to be played, with that feeling of sonorous weight you get from a well-struck note, giving off harmonics which seem to be emanations from the musical thought—an art which Marcelle had learnt from Viñes. But Viñes played only some of Satie's pieces. Marcelle used to play them all, and was equally good at sight-reading them."<sup>329</sup>

Of his own lessons with Viñes, Francis Poulenc recalled, "the art of pedaling, this essential ingredient of modern music; no one could teach it better than Viñes since he managed to play clearly in a wash of pedaling, which seems paradoxical. And what science he

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<sup>328</sup> Harrington, 17

<sup>329</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

demonstrated in staccato!”<sup>330</sup> It is said that Viñes would kick Poulenc in the shin when he did not like the young composer-pianist’s pedaling, although this did not seem to diminish the great esteem with which Poulenc held Viñes.

Viñes’s last student, Maria Canals, left valuable accounts of her teacher in the book *Una vida dins la música*. Canals wrote that Viñes taught that “one must eliminate all unnecessary physical movements and acquire absolute independence in each finger. For advanced students, instead of assigning hours of etudes, he would create exercises from the most difficult passages of each piece, freeing up more practice time for the learning of repertoire, and instilling a more comprehensive musical attitude towards technique, including pedaling, balance, and tone.”<sup>331</sup>

This last phrase is perhaps the key to a paradox I discussed with Harrington. Viñes cultivated a touch where the fingers remain on the keys, which would have been in keeping with Beriot’s approach. This would have aided facility and enabled him to extend his fingers to ring the sound point. However, photos of Viñes sitting at the piano, although not quite as exaggerated as the caricature heading this chapter, exhibit marked anterior head carriage, and invariably, his wrists are prominently pressed down into constant flexion. Combining the French finger-oriented “independent action” with the depressed wrist, one can gain a certain kind of “control.” However, we know today that this clearly comes at a mechanical disadvantage, as the lowered wrist puts constant pressure on the carpal tunnels and breaks the support of the whole arm.

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<sup>330</sup> Ibid., 18.

<sup>331</sup> Maria Canals, *Una vida dins la música* (Barcelona: Editorial Selecta, Volum 429, 1970), quoted in Harrington, 17.

A photo of Marcelle Meyer's hands shows them almost contorted with tension, with low wrists, depressed bridge, and fingers at attention.<sup>332</sup> How did these phenomenal performers play like this? How did these mechanics, which we absolutely now know to be deleterious, serve these pianists through so much repertoire?

In Meyer's recordings, this writer detects a slightly choked-off, hitched quality in her sound generation. What is heard is in accordance with the axiom of "absolute independence in each finger," which we know today is anatomically impossible to achieve but can be approximated with fingers held flexed beyond their natural curve and arch pressed down to accommodate, exactly as can be seen in photos of Meyer's hands.

Hugely important, however, is that this overwork is incredibly well disguised by her ample facility and—more notably—within the intelligence of her music making and absolute commitment to shaping every phrase purposefully. Meyer animates even the smallest motives and gestures with constant microshadings that are a marvel to hear. Viñes's recordings are few and were made relatively late in his career. In them he demonstrates a similar elegance of line and virtuosic coloring, likely through a combination of incredibly precise aural intent being conveyed to both his fingers and the pedals. But one gets the sense that these are not representative of Viñes at his peak, in front of an audience when he was said to be at his best.

For both these Conservatoire graduates who went on to enjoy productive and influential careers, their colossal success and prodigious repertoire may seem at odds with their physical approach to the piano. Undoubtedly this was mitigated by instruments with lighter action. But much more significantly, their avowed commitment to *become* the music, and furthermore to

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<sup>332</sup> Meyer's hands are pictured in Harrington, 18. I am grateful to her for having shared these photos and her dissertation drafts with me as we both traced the evidence of Conservatoire pedagogy through Viñes.

share these exciting works with the audiences they so reportedly loved, would have bestowed on them a heightened coordination based on the needs of expression. In his chapter “Technique of the Soul,” Boris Berman writes, “The performer’s emotional involvement and identification with a piece are necessary conditions for creating an artistically credible performance.”<sup>333</sup>

Australian actor and famous movement reeducator F. M. Alexander discovered that the relationship of the head and spine is the principle means whereby vertebrates organize movement, and that relieving any deleterious pressure in this relationship enables movement and activity to be healthier and more effective. Alexander’s descendants in performance training<sup>334</sup> have discovered that beyond this dynamic relationship, coordination in service of performance is incontrovertibly tied to artistic conception. “The more specifically and actively we invite the audience to be with us while we are with them, the more completely our coordination—our psychophysical selves—will respond.”<sup>335</sup> At the same time, the stronger the performance intent, the more coordination is summoned to serve these aims, and less efficient mechanics can be overridden to a large degree by holistic performance intent.

This is a significant clue as to how Viñes was able to effect transformative performances at the piano despite any awkward physical-mechanical relationship to the instrument he may have evinced. He told students that in order to improve at the piano, they needed to *read books*.<sup>336</sup> To a Conservatoire student, this likely would have sounded absurd, but Viñes had an

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<sup>333</sup> Boris Berman, *Notes from the Pianist's Bench* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000) 172.

<sup>334</sup> In particular his protégé Marjorie Barstow, the first graduate of his teacher training class, and Barstow’s subsequent student Catherine Madden.

<sup>335</sup> Catherine Madden, *Onstage Synergy: Integrative Alexander Technique Practice for Performing Artists* (Wilmington, NC: Intellect Books, forthcoming).

<sup>336</sup> Harrington, 16.

innate sense of the importance of cultivating a rich psychophysical landscape when he played. With a gargantuan library of artistic and literary imagery so much a part of his psyche, he had in his imagination and fingertips a catalog of imaginative intention.

In his memory of Viñes, Fargue wrote sensitively about how Viñes's derived his pianistic intent from vivid music making:

“He had a way of delivering the keyboard that made the hills of Anacapri, for example, spring from his hands, appearing to fall from the peak of a magical art, a second art. He added to his playing something that was not the game, that transcended the keys and put forth as a direct contact of his heart to ours, established on a trail of harmony. He had the passion, authority, precision, flexibility of the famous pianists, but he exceeded them by a magical personal equation, a kind of whisper.”<sup>337</sup>

We know that the poet Fargue was a keen observer and master of metaphor. Cultivating a dimensional visual universe from which Debussy's prelude could spring forth would promote a constructive use and invite an appropriate measure of physical gesture to realize the intent.

All told, based on what we now know about efficient and safe piano technique, and deriving Viñes's approach from various depictions as well as how he taught his own students, this writer would surmise that ubiquitous reports of incredible natural facility had to be accurate, and would be empowered by his imaginative musical impulse. But for Viñes to acquire and maintain one of the largest repertoire any pianist has ever had, practicing and performing constantly with low wrists and “independent fingers,” he would likely have paid a toll over the years. Berrocal invokes scholars who wonder if in the final analysis Viñes's repertoire choices eventually favored pieces (miniatures) that played to his strengths and deemphasized his

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<sup>337</sup> Fargue, 227.

weaknesses. Despite the marathon concerts of standard repertoire earlier in his career, this seems tenable. He preferred the Érard grand, with its lighter action, and the technique he brought forth in service of the music was based on exquisite nuance and color rather than raw power and pyrotechnics. Indeed, the choices and performances on his 1930s recordings seems to underscore this.

This aside, reports that forget his technique as “so effortless one doesn’t realize the difficulties” are onto something key. It seems evident that the physical impetus Viñes produced was such a match to the essence of the music that in artistry it produced the effect reported by critics. And more and more, it is understood by movement and performance trainers that performers who derive their technical needs of the moment from the artistic impulse at hand are highly likely to perform on a more repeatable, consistently inspiring level.

It is an intriguing investigation to attempt a retroactive psychophysical analysis on a performer so unique as Viñes. It is also impossible ever to know the accuracy of such inquiry. We can in any case extrapolate the *values* that animated Viñes’s pianism, hold these principles steadfast, and invite them to serve us in our own playing. These principles can undergird all that we have the advantage to know today about ergonomic relationships at the piano as well as the emerging science of dimensional techniques that enable performing artists to summon the systemic support needed for such a highly organized and excitable activity.

In becoming one of the great pianists of his time, Viñes derived a key tenet from something he likely discovered early, whether through the circumstances of his life, by way of his intellectual pursuits, or through repeated transcendental experience such as with the *Tristan* Prelude: that a performer can and must decode and completely embody the essence of

a work, then share this with the audience. One of Viñes's most impressive accomplishments is that he was able to distill this essence immediately in new scores, which by all reports he learned speedily. He was able to bring to bear the constant reinforcement of Apaches concerns and interdisciplinary presence and discussions of artists and poets feeding him intellectual, visual, and literary stimulus. Thus, a pianist would do well to mind the Brody quote at the beginning of this chapter, then strive to recreate the means whereby Viñes was able to call forth such magic.

## 8. Repertoire and Concerts: Les Apaches Years

*Wednesday 8 January 1908: Today I received the second series of Debussy's Images of which one, Poissons d'or, is dedicated to me. More important, Debussy put the dedication on the copy that was sent to me. I started studying Poissons d'or right away.*<sup>338</sup>

Seventy years after the passing of Ricardo Viñes, his legend is secured in the archival reports of critics and peers. As the recordings he left fill only about one compact disc, the material evidence of his genius resides primarily in the artifacts and compiled testimonials that in composite reveal his spellbinding performances, colossal repertoire, and innovative concert programming. "His repertory, as Jean-Aubry once said, was prodigious; perhaps no pianist ever had one like it. One wondered how he even had time to *read* all the music he actually played from memory."<sup>339</sup> During the years of Les Apaches, his catalog evolved to encompass virtually all the new French, Russian, and Spanish music of the early twentieth century. Later, he augmented this with music written by South American composers. Considering the pieces he performed in context of his overall repertoire and how he programmed his concerts during the era of Les Apaches, a narrative of choices emerges, telling about his vision of performance as it evolved during these years.

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<sup>338</sup> Viñes: Diary, 3 February 1906. In Gubisch, "Le journal inédit," 230.

<sup>339</sup> Brody, "Viñes in Paris," 46.

## Pre-Apache Repertoire

In July 1894, when Viñes won his Conservatoire first prize, he was nineteen years old. As Paul Loyonnet recalls from his own studies with Charles de Bériot, Viñes would have been required to learn a new Bach Prelude and Fugue, Chopin Etude, and Bériot Transcendental Etude by Friday each week.<sup>340</sup> Viñes corroborated this in his diary, as for example on 27 November 1891, when he played an unspecified Prelude and Fugue and one of the two Chopin Etudes in F minor.<sup>341</sup> For a June 1892 jury, he prepared the Chopin Nocturne in C minor, Finale from a Schumann sonata, and a Liszt polonaise.<sup>342</sup> The required Conservatoire concert pieces were the Chopin F minor *Fantasia* and Saint-Saëns's *Theme and Variations*. In addition to standard repertoire, he would have studied salon pieces, virtuosic works, and novelties of the time.

Viñes's library held some three dozen pieces by Charles de Bériot, many of which have markings and fingerings within.<sup>343</sup> He would continue to perform the works of his teacher, as in a 5 March 1895 concert with the Société de musique nouvelle, where together he and Bériot performed the Sonata for Two Pianos.<sup>344</sup> His first two professional solo recitals, in 1895 and 1897, featured Bériot concerti, and he programmed two Bériot pieces in the historical concerts of 1905.

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<sup>340</sup> Timbrell, 186.

<sup>341</sup> Gubisch, "Le journal inédit," 181.

<sup>342</sup> *Ibid.*, 183.

<sup>343</sup> Korevaar and Sampsel, 370-71.

<sup>344</sup> *Le Guide Musical* 1895, no. 11, 257. "Beautiful sonata...played by Mr. Ricardo Viñes and the author with great success."

In February 1895, he booked Salle Pleyel for his public debut. The program ran about two-and-a-half hours long; it comprised a mixture of standard repertoire played in its entirety, French novelties, and an entire piano concerto by Bériot.<sup>345</sup>

- Beethoven: Sonata Op. 57 (“Appassionata”)
- Schumann: *Carnaval*
- Chopin: *Berceuse*
- Chopin: Etude Op. 25 No. 2
- Chopin: Nocturne in C minor
- Dubois: *Les Myrtilles*
- Godard: *Valse chromatique*
- Bériot: *Sérénité*
- Moszkowski: *Tarantelle*
- Schubert: Minuet
- Mendelssohn: Scherzo from *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*
- Liszt: *Un Sospiro*
- Paganini-Liszt: *La Campanella*
- Bériot: Piano Concerto No. 2<sup>346</sup>

The concert, with an audience of several hundred in evening dress arriving in carriages, was both profitable and a critical success.

Viñes presented his second solo recital on 11 March 1897, this time at Salle Érard.<sup>347</sup>

Again, the concert featured a Bériot concerto—the fourth—with the composer at the second piano. The rest of the program included:

- Schumann: *Symphonic Etudes*
- Chopin: Polonaise in A-flat, unspecified Nocturne
- Grieg: *To Spring*
- Franck: *Prélude, chorale, et fugue*
- Albéniz: *Orientale* and *Seguidilla*
- Moszkowski: unspecified

<sup>345</sup> Brody, *Paris: A Musical Kaleidoscope*, 182.

<sup>346</sup> Bériot himself was to accompany the concerto, but was ill; future Apache Marcel Chadeigne was announced as the replacement.

<sup>347</sup> Brody, *Paris: A Musical Kaleidoscope*, 182-183. Brody notes that Viñes sold his prize Pleyel and affiliated with Érard, as he was offered the hall on more favorable terms.

Note the mixture of Romantic classic repertoire; repeats of Bériot and Moszkowski; Franck, a “solidly French” composer whom Viñes would continue to champion; and the first appearance of Albéniz. The *Guide Musical* reviewer noted, “Mr. Viñes won in the implementation of his program, where one could find bravura effects and bright colors.”<sup>348</sup>

Viñes’s first appearance at the Société Nationale de Musique took place on 5 March 1898, marked by the first of his many Ravel premieres: *Sites auriculaires* for two pianos (with Marthe Dron). They also played piano four hands the Etudes (“in a simple style”) of Roger Ducasse. The only commentary from *Le Guide Musical* about the Ravel was “?!?!” after naming the piece—whether this was incredulity about the title, piece, or performance, we cannot know.<sup>349</sup>

Just five days later, Viñes gave another solo recital at Salle Érard, the first of two about a month apart: more traditional repertoire on the first, modern on the second. The first program, on 10 March, included:

- Beethoven: 32 Variations in C minor
- Bach-Tausig: Toccata and Fugue in D minor
- Grieg: *Album Leaves*
- Leschetitzky: *Intermezzo in Octaves*
- Liadov: *Music Box*

The Liadov (“executed with dazzling brio”), which appears to be some of the first Russian music Viñes publically performed, was encored.<sup>350</sup>

Of the contemporary program a month later, the *Guide Musical* reviewer wrote, “Mr. Ricardo Viñes demonstrated this time much commitment and dedication in devoting his

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<sup>348</sup> *Le Guide Musical* 1897, no. 12, 229-30.

<sup>349</sup> *Le Guide Musical* 1898, no. 11, 244.

<sup>350</sup> *Le Guide Musical* 1898, no. 12, 268.

program almost entirely to these gentlemen, the official composers of the Conservatory and the Société Nationale.” Included on the program were Franck’s *Prélude, Aria et Finale*, Albéniz’s *Rapsodia española*, Chabrier’s *Scherzo-Waltz*, the premiere of Ravel’s *Menuet antique*, and many other unnamed “polonaises, mazurkas, suites, variations, sarabandes, etc.! I will not mention the names of the authors; they are so known, they talk about them so often!”<sup>351</sup> It is perhaps interesting that the reviewer noted these composers as “official”; in large part these were then the works of sanctioned composers of the day. The Ravel may well have stood out as a novelty by a newcomer on the scene. In any case, this program dates Viñes’s dedication to creating full-length offerings solely of contemporary music squarely to 1898. Juxtaposed with this, exactly one week later, he performed one of Bach’s double concerti in C minor with the Quatuor Weingaertner at Salle Pleyel.<sup>352</sup>

At Salle Érard in January 1899, Viñes performed Franck’s Sonata for Violin and Piano with violinist César Figuerido, then performed various solo works including Chopin’s Polonaise in F-sharp minor.<sup>353</sup> Franck also featured in a 4 February concert for the Société Nationale de Musique, where Viñes played three chorales arranged for two pianos by Henri Duparc.<sup>354</sup> *Le Guide Musical* announced a solo recital at Salle Érard for 20 April, but did not review the concert.<sup>355</sup>

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<sup>351</sup> *Le Guide Musical* 1898, no. 17, 392.

<sup>352</sup> *Ibid.*, 392-93.

<sup>353</sup> *Le Guide Musical* 1899, no. 5, 107.

<sup>354</sup> *Le Guide Musical* 1899, no. 7, 156. The reviewer lamented, “Leave to the organ that which belongs to the organ!” On the same program, Viñes performed the Édouard Lalo Trio with Parent and Barette.

<sup>355</sup> Perhaps Viñes was upstaged by Paderewski, who was giving three concerts at Salle Érard at that time. (*Le Guide Musical* 1899, no. 18, 412-13.)

Viñes continued to perform a mixture of mostly traditional repertoire supplemented by newer French work in his spring concert at Salle Érard in 1900, “with a perfect understanding of the style specific to each master.”<sup>356</sup> This program included:

- Beethoven: Sonata Op. 27 No. 1
- Schumann: Romance in F# major, *Noveletten* Nos. 1 and 2
- Chopin: Multiple unspecified pieces
- Duparc: *Lénore*, symphonic poem transcribed for two pianos by Saint-Saëns (with Rhené-Batoa)

During this year, Viñes also performed on two Société Nationale de Musique concerts, where he played world premieres by Jemain (“executed with remarkable finesse”),<sup>357</sup> Vreuls, and Labey. As a last-minute substitution on the 13 January program for songs by Tiersot, Viñes offered a work by Albéniz and an “‘I don’t know’ by a Russian composer”—which “brightened the room,” whatever it was.<sup>358</sup> In 1901, in addition to many chamber music performances, he made a noteworthy appearance on the Société Nationale de Musique concert of 13 April, playing solo works by Balakirev and Fauré, as well as Ravel’s *Menuet antique* and the world premiere of a Nocturne by Franz Godebski.<sup>359</sup>

*Le Guide Musical*, in reviewing a January 1902 performance of the Beethoven “Appassionata” at the Schola Cantorum, noted that Viñes and Blanche Selva were lauded for their late-Beethoven sonata performances; apparently these works were seldom heard in Paris except through the cycle performances of Édouard Risler.<sup>360</sup>

But one might consider the January and March 1902 Société Nationale de Musique concerts a valedictory of Viñes’s pre-Apaches era. These concerts were marked by several

<sup>356</sup> *Le Guide Musical* 1900, no. 17, 393.

<sup>357</sup> *Le Guide Musical* 1900, no. 3, 57.

<sup>358</sup> *Ibid.*, 57.

<sup>359</sup> *Le Guide Musical* 1901, no. 16, 371. Franz Godebski was brother of Misia Sert, half-brother of Cipa Godebski.

<sup>360</sup> *Le Guide Musical* 1902, no. 5, 106.

Russian works, including the French premiere of Glazunov's *Suite on the Name "Sacha"* and works by Balakirev and Borodin. Most important was the introduction of *Pour le piano*, the first of Viñes's Debussy premieres. *Le Guide Musical* noted that the room was overflowing; by then there was great interest in a new Debussy work, especially just a few months before the first performance of *Pelléas and Mélisande*. The publication reported a huge success, from the "agile fingers and penetrating feeling" of Viñes to the composition, with which "one should give up trying to express with words the enveloping charm that emanates from such music."<sup>361</sup> As this work represents a demarcation point of sorts in Debussy's piano writing, perhaps owing to nascent influence from Ravel and Viñes, while marking the start of a productive relationship between Debussy and Viñes for years to come, it seems apt to crown Viñes's pre-Apaches years with this particular performance.

### **Apaches-Era Repertoire**

April 1902 represents a persuasive demarcation for the start of the Apaches era. Not only did *Pelléas and Mélisande* premiere at the end of this month, but Viñes also kicked off the proceedings of his own accord a few weeks earlier. In Salle Pleyel for Société Nationale de Musique on 5 April, he premiered Ravel's *Pavane pour une infante défunte* and *Jeux d'eau* while also performing Fauré's *Thème et Variations*.

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<sup>361</sup> *Le Guide Musical* 1902, no. 3, 57.

We know the esteem with which Les Apaches held these new Ravel works, although Nichols notes that Ravel undervalued *Jeux d'eau* at the time.<sup>362</sup> In retrospect, we see these pieces as commencing a remarkable new kind of piano music that took hold over the ensuing decade, evolved by Ravel and Debussy seemingly in lockstep, with Viñes realizing these creations in the company of the accumulating Apaches.<sup>363</sup>

As Viñes performed copiously and premiered many new works at this time, a look at his ever-growing and evolving repertoire and concert programming over the Les Apaches era—approximately 1902 until 1914—evidences the ongoing endeavors of this talented cadre and their interface with the larger musical currents flowing through turn-of-the-century Paris.

In between the Ravel premieres and that of *Pelléas and Mélisande*, Viñes gave a sizeable solo recital at Salle Érard on 24 April. The program included Beethoven's Opus 81a ("Les Adieux"), Schumann's *Kreisleriana*, and other works by Chopin, Brahms, Gluck, Fauré, Borodin, and Balakirev. The *Guide Musical* reviewer likened Viñes to a figure in a Velasquez painting, noting that the pianist "respected the style of the musical gods" and was a "great virtuoso...simple in his originality, touching in the expressive parts, superior master in passages of high difficulty."<sup>364</sup>

Viñes's performances of 1903 and 1904 consolidated his activities on behalf of the new French and Russian music he was championing. The *Guide Musical* lists multiple chamber and

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<sup>362</sup> Nichols, 39-41. For his part, in his diary, Viñes proclaimed "I had much success with *Jeux d'eau*." (Gubisch, "Le journal inédit," 199.) The *Guide Musical* reviewer preferred *Pavane*, considering *Jeux d'eau* a kind of exaggerated Debussy knockoff. (*Le Guide Musical* 1902, no. 15, 349.)

<sup>363</sup> Relative to the soon-to-congregate Les Apaches, Gustave Samazeuilh notes in a small *Guide Musical* review that on 22 March, just a few weeks prior to this concert, Viñes performed two (unnamed) pieces by Florent Schmitt—an Apaches preamble of sorts. (*Le Guide Musical* 1902, no. 13, 296.)

<sup>364</sup> *Le Guide Musical* 1902, no. 18, 420.

solo appearances<sup>365</sup> on shared recitals for various concert performance entities; in the majority of cases, the repertoire consisted of these new French and Russian works, offered a few at a time.<sup>366</sup> After performing Balakirev's Scherzo No. 2 for the Société Nationale de Musique on 10 January 1903, he repeated this work on programs in Brussels and Paris later in the spring. On a 17 April concert titled "Old Masters and Russian Music," he presented Balakirev's *Islamey*, perhaps one of his first public performances of this signature work.<sup>367</sup> Also of interest was his offering of Mussorgsky's *Kinderscherz ("Children's Games")*, evidencing the Russian and Apaches esteem for children's music. He also played *Jeux d'eau* and, on multiple occasions throughout 1903, *Pour le piano*, including at a Debussy festival at the Schola Cantorum where he also performed the two-piano arrangement of *Nocturnes*, with Debussy at the second piano. Traditional repertoire given during this year included Chopin's *Barcarolle* and *Andante spianato et grande polonaise brillante*, as well as the "Appassionata," the latter at a Beethoven festival.

The 9 January 1904 Société Nationale de Musique concert provided Viñes with another Debussy masterpiece to champion: *Estampes*. Korevaar notes that, remarkably, some considered Viñes's talent superior to the work itself.<sup>368</sup> On the same concert, Viñes performed four Grenados *Spanish Dances* in what was likely their French premiere ("pleasant, but no great novelty").<sup>369</sup> He brought *Estampes* to Brussels in March, as well as Ravel's *Pavane* and works of Séverac, and performed the Debussy again on 25 March in Salle Aeolian along with the Fauré

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<sup>365</sup> Often, Viñes would perform chamber and solo works on the same concert.

<sup>366</sup> These included pieces by Fauré, Séverac, Balakirev, Debussy, Ravel, Borodin, Mussorgsky, and Woollet.

<sup>367</sup> *Le Guide Musical* 1903, no. 17, 376. He also offered "the" Rachmaninoff Prelude at this concert (doubtless the aforementioned C-sharp minor).

<sup>368</sup> The *Monde Musical* critic wrote, "One certainly has the right to believe that the three little piano pieces presented by M. Viñes—with such mastery and ability—are of very secondary interest." (Translated and quoted in Korevaar and Sampsel, 364.)

<sup>369</sup> *Le Guide Musical* 1904, no. 3, 48. The reviewer also praised both Viñes and Debussy for *Estampes*, especially *Pagodes*, also noting that *Jardins sous la pluie* was encored.

Piano Quartet in G minor. His last major concert of 1904 took place in November in Verviers, Belgium, where he performed Franck's *Variations symphoniques* along with solo works of Chopin, Schumann, Borodin, and Debussy.<sup>370</sup>

### Historic Concerts of 1905

The first quarter of 1905 brought several noted Viñes debuts: the world premieres of Debussy's *Masques* and *L'Isle Joyeuse*, as well as two pieces from Séverac's *En Languedoc*.<sup>371</sup> With Société des Concerts du Conservatoire, he gave the French premiere of Rimsky-Korsakov's Piano Concerto in C-sharp minor, a work he would champion throughout his career.<sup>372</sup> But Viñes's capstone achievement of the year was his series of historic concerts—a staggering feat that showcased his mastery as a pianistic chronicler. It was in this decade when he was becoming known as a new-works specialist, and by 1905, he would have premiered almost half of the Debussy and Ravel works he would introduce. In these four concerts, however, Viñes gave a survey of the entire keyboard literature and showcased the broad spectrum of repertoire he had acquired. One can surmise that given Viñes's interest in the significance of numbers, his turning thirty years old in February 1905 was a key impetus for this summative presentation. The concerts, in roughly chronological order, took place on consecutive Mondays in spring 1905.

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<sup>370</sup> Imagine that on the same—motley—concert, the orchestra performed Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture*, panned by the *Guide Musical* reviewer for “banality and poverty of orchestration.” (*Le Guide Musicale* 1904, no. 48, 906.)

<sup>371</sup> *Le Guide Musical* 1905, no. 9, 167. Interestingly, according to the *Guide Musical* reviewer, who called the occasion “a great triumph for M. Claude Debussy,” it was the Séverac that was encored.

<sup>372</sup> He performed this concerto at least twice more in 1905 alone, including with Concerts Lamoureux.

27 March 1905: “*De Cabezón à Haydn*”*École Espagnole*

- Cabezón: *Variations sur la Chant du Chevalier*
- Moreno: Minuetto d’une sonatine ( inédite)

*École Anglaise*

- Byrd: *Pavane (Le Marquis de Salisbury)*
- Bull: *Gigue de la chasse du roi*
- Purcell: Prelude in C major

*École Italienne*

- Frescobaldi: Fugue in G minor
- Scarlatti: Sonata in D major

*École Française*

- Champion: *La Loureuse*
- Couperin: *Les Vieux Seigneurs; L’Arlequine*
- Rameau: *Les Tourbillons, rondeau*
- Dandrieu: *L’Hymen (concert des oiseaux no. 3)*

*École Allemande*

- Kuhnau: Partita No. 3: Prélude et Menuet
- J. S. Bach: Invention in B minor
- Handel: Capriccio in G minor
- C. P. E. Bach: *Les langueurs tendres*
- Haydn: Sonata in D major: Allegro
- Bach-Liszt: Organ Prelude and Fugue in A minor

3 April 1905: “*De Mozart à Chopin*”

- Mozart: Adagio in B minor
- Beethoven: Sonata in F minor, Op. 57 (“*Appassionata*”)
- Schubert: Impromptu in A-flat major, Op. 142 No. 2
- Weber: *Momento Capriccioso*
- Mendelssohn: *Romance sans paroles*, Op. 62 No. 1
- Schumann: *Fantaisie*, Op. 17
- Chopin: Scherzo in C-sharp minor; Prelude in A-flat major; Etude in A minor

10 April 1905: “*Auteurs Modernes*”

- Liszt: Sonata in B minor
- Castillon: Fantaisie in D minor
- Saint-Saëns: Prelude in F minor, Op. 52
- Bériot: *Cantabile; Allegro vivace*
- Marty: *Pensée intime*
- Dubois: *Les Myrtilles*
- Brahms: Rhapsody in G minor
- Grieg: *Album Leaf* in B-flat major (première); *Le Ruisseau*

- Scott: *Dagobah* (premiere)
- Borodin: Scherzo in A-flat major
- Albéniz: *La Tour Vermeille*
- Granados: *Danse Espagnole*
- Balakirev: *Islamey*

17 April 1905: “Auteurs Modernes”

- Franck: *Prélude, Choral et Fugue*
- Chausson: *Paysage*
- D’Indy: *Lac Vert, La Poste*
- Fauré: Thème et Variations
- Samazeuilh: Prelude in G minor
- Février: Nocturne (premiere)
- Moreau: *Dans la Nuit*
- Rhené-Baton: *Prélude Oriental*
- Pierné: *Nocturne en forme de Valse*
- Debussy: *L’isle joueuse*
- Séverac: *Coin de cimetièrre au printemps*
- Ravel: *Jeux d’eau*
- Chabrier: *Bourée Fantasque*<sup>373</sup>

Reviews of the series were telling in their investment in the endeavor, thoughtfully discussing aspects of performance practice and chronology as would be on display within such a succession of works covering a long historical period. Of this “fast and vivid story that he has undertaken,” the *Guide Musical* reviewer concluded, “Really, for a performer, there is no better way to prove his variety, his intelligence, and the surety of his style.”<sup>374</sup>

Apache Déodat de Séverac was honored with a festival performance of three piano suites and various songs on 25 May at the Schola Cantorum.<sup>375</sup> Of this event, the *Guide Musical* reviewer wrote, “M. de Séverac is a very young musician who already has many things to tell us.”<sup>376</sup>

<sup>373</sup> Concert repertoire taken from illustrations of the programs. Clary, 179.

<sup>374</sup> *Le Guide Musical* 1905, no. 15, 297.

<sup>375</sup> Viñes and Blanche Selva performed the piano music on this program, and in fact regularly contributed to various “academic concert” presentations at the Schola, often together, as in a Spanish program a few months previously.

<sup>376</sup> *Le Guide Musical* 1905, no. 24-25, 457.

## The Years 1906 to 1910

In the second half of the decade, Viñes's premieres included two major Ravel works staggered fairly far apart, as Ravel was branching out to other media in his compositions. The first half of 1906 was a string of one Apaches-related event after another, as noted in previous chapters. These included the premieres of Ravel's *Miroirs*, the first book of Debussy's *Images*, Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*, and Schmitt's *Valses*. He repeated the Ravel and Debussy throughout the year, performed Lyapunov's Piano Concerto No. 1 in Florence, and gave solo works of Debussy, Albéniz, Ravel, and Séverac in Le Havre.

The year 1907 brought neither Debussy or Ravel premieres nor Société Nationale de Musique appearances, and the *Guide Musical* carries significantly fewer listings. Perhaps the death of Viñes's mother in March temporarily kept him out of the public eye. Just before, on 22 February, the Cercle musical presented an intriguing all-Ravel program,<sup>377</sup> including *Jeux d'eau* and two pieces from *Miroirs*—Viñes at the piano—as well as a performance of *Histoires naturelles* a month after its controversial premiere. On 7 May, Viñes performed the Franck Sonata for Violin and Piano with Parent along with solo pieces by Balakirev, Lyapunov, and Ravel in Salle Berlioz. In November he performed various solo works and both the Rimsky-Korsakov Piano Concerto and Franck's *Variations symphoniques* in Lyon.

Apaches regard for Russian music was evidenced in Inghelbrecht's *Suite petite-russienne*, which Viñes premiered for the 11 January 1908 Société Nationale de Musique

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<sup>377</sup> *Le Guide Musical* 1907, no. 9, 170-71. Of this event, Calvocoressi wrote a lengthy tribute-review.

concert in Salle Érard.<sup>378</sup> Less than a month later, he performed the Rimsky-Korsakov Piano Concerto with Concerts Lamoureux. Calvocoressi's rapturous review in *Le Guide Musical* is no surprise, but the reviewer in *Le Ménestral* added that with Viñes, "We were in the presence of an artist joining a developed musical intelligence to an irreproachable technique."<sup>379</sup> Mixed repertoire appeared a week later, when Viñes performed Rameau, Couperin, Fauré, Debussy, and Rachmaninoff in a salon performance. On 9 May, in what the *Guide Musical* called "a curious concert of varied works," Viñes performed some "pretty" pieces by Armande de Polignac, niece of Winnaretta Singer, Princesse de Polignac.<sup>380</sup>

Viñes premiered two big-ticket Apaches compositions in early 1909: Ravel's *Gaspard de la nuit* and Falla's *Pièces espagnoles* (*Aragonesa, Cubana, Montanesa, Andaluza*), both at Salle Érard for the Société Nationale de Musique. Imagine hearing *Gaspard* for the first time, then immediately having to capture the essence of both work and performance for publication:

"In terms of difficulties, I believe that Mr. Ricardo Viñes broke the world record in three unpublished pieces of M. Ravel, for piano; it should be forbidden to go so fast and thus give vertigo to the ears and even to harmless eyes. In any case, if M. Ravel wrote this *Gaspard de la nuit* for piano enthusiasts, he can boast of having prepared for them chills as terrible as those of Scarbo of the tales of Hoffmann, which he wanted to describe in one of his pieces... Mr. Ricardo Viñes, dizzying, shaped it all, from memory, with a more comic modern art."<sup>381</sup>

Despite Ravel's objection to Viñes's rendition of *Le Gibet*, *Gaspard* evidently made a tremendous impression. The Falla pieces, which he performed on 27 March, were deemed

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<sup>378</sup> *Le Guide Musical* 1908, no. 3, 49. Of this work, the reviewer wrote, "I would like to say nothing." Viñes also premiered works by Jean Poueigh and joined the Geloso Quartet to perform the Franck Quintet. The concert culminated with Ravel's String Quartet.

<sup>379</sup> *Le Ménestral*, 15 February 1908.

<sup>380</sup> *Le Guide Musical* 1908, no. 20, 413.

<sup>381</sup> *Le Guide Musical* 1909, no. 3, 54.

“picturesque and suggestive.”<sup>382</sup> Viñes programmed both works together on 6 April at the Libre-Esthétique in Brussels.<sup>383</sup> These latter two concerts also featured works of fellow Apache Schmitt.

In the fall, Viñes made an appearance in Toulouse, playing the Rimsky-Korsakov Piano Concerto, then an interesting group of solo pieces (“remarkably played and chiseled”): Chopin, Rameau, Liszt’s Hungarian Rhapsody No. 11, Brahms’s transcription after Gluck’s Gavotte from *Iphigénie en Aulide*, and Debussy’s *Jardins sous la pluie*.<sup>384</sup>

### **Centenary Concerts: 1910 to 1911**

By 1910 Viñes was a contemporary music performing legend, his name affixed to those of Debussy, Ravel, and other Apaches such as Falla. His premieres and appearances on various musical societies and internationally are well reported in publications such as *Le Guide Musical*. However, as an acclaimed performer of Chopin, Schumann, and Liszt, as well as a musical encyclopedist, Viñes was not to let these composers’ centenaries pass unacknowledged. He marked these occasions with recitals at Salle Érard, the first two of which were lecture collaborations with M. D. Calvocoressi.

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<sup>382</sup> *Le Guide Musical* 1909, no. 14, 293.

<sup>383</sup> *Le Guide Musical* 1909, no. 15, 317. The reviewer found the Ravel “quite strange.”

<sup>384</sup> *Le Guide Musical* 1909, no. 48, 738. The orchestra also played Dukas’s *Sorcerer’s Apprentice*.

**Chopin: 21 February 1910**

- Sonata in B-flat minor
- Unspecified preludes, nocturnes, impromptus, scherzos, waltzes, polonaises, etudes

**Schumann: 13 April 1910**<sup>385</sup>

- *Fantaisie*
- *Symphonic Etudes*
- *Carnaval*

**Liszt: 8 April 1911**

- Sonata in B minor
- Ballade No. 2
- *Mephisto Waltz*
- Other unspecified pieces

The *Guide Musical* noted that while Viñes lent his prestige to “new talents” such as Chabrier and Ravel, “for the ancients, it is by these happily composed sessions that he knows to honor their memory.”<sup>386</sup>

Repertoire in and among these historical concerts included several world premieres, including that of Turina’s *Sévilla* (*Sous les orangers, Le Jeudi Saint à minuit, La Feria*) on 5 February 1910 at Salle Pleyel for Société Nationale de Musique, broadening Viñes’s Spanish corpus. The *Guide Musical* reviewer was extremely impressed with Turina’s work and wrote about its pieces at some length, concluding, “This composition of a spontaneous, very personal allure was executed to perfection by Mr. Ricardo Viñes, who excels in these sorts of brilliant sketches and who succeeds wonderfully in placing them in the right light. This artist is

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<sup>385</sup> He performed the Schumann Quintet a month previously with Quatuor Tracol for Société Beethoven.

<sup>386</sup> *Le Guide Musicale* 1910, no. 17, 332. Schumann was apparently “ancient” by 1910.

particularly chic in employment of pedal sonorities and the enhancement of contrasts.”<sup>387</sup> In May, he performed Albéniz’s *Triana*<sup>388</sup> in Brussels, along with Fauré’s Theme and Variations.

In January 1911, Viñes performed *Triana* again at Salle Érard for Société Nationale de Musique. This concert was particularly noteworthy for his premieres of four Debussy Preludes.<sup>389</sup> Two weeks later, Concerts Durant in Brussels presented a two-day series comprised entirely of Russian orchestral music, most of which was being heard in the Belgian capital for the first time. On a program of symphonies by Borodin and Rimsky-Korsakov and smaller pieces by Liodov and Glazunov, Viñes performed the concerti of Rimsky-Korsakov and Lyapunov. He gave the latter work again in March with the Société des Concerts du Conservatoire, “executed to perfection, with all its variety of color and lighthearted originality.”<sup>390</sup>

In April 1911, Viñes introduced four pieces of fellow Apache Séverac’s *Cerdaña* at the Schola Cantorum for Société Nationale de Musique. The *Guide Musical* lauded both composer and performer: “Mr. de Séverac, inspired by the character of the modern Spanish School, wrote these parts not in the manner of pastiche, but with a palette that is his own; in their elegant form, rhythmic movement full of verve, charming drawing, they contrast with the known formula of the composer and were greeted triumphantly. It should be acknowledged that the performance was extraordinary; Mr. Ricardo Viñes brought not only the prodigious virtuosity of

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<sup>387</sup> *Le Guide Musicale* 1910, no. 7, 128.

<sup>388</sup> *Le Guide Musical*, 1910, no. 22, 433. This is an early mention of *Triana*, a work with which Viñes became much associated. The University of Colorado library holds Viñes’s personal copy of *Triana*, where one can note many of his fingerings.

<sup>389</sup> *Le Guide Musical* 1911, no. 4, 70. The reviewer and public were more impressed with the Albéniz.

<sup>390</sup> *Le Guide Musical* 1911, no. 13, 247.

his fingers, but placed at the service of this instrumental work his musical soul and a kind of patriotic fervor.”<sup>391</sup>

### Until World War I

In the years leading up to World War I, Viñes started performing more works of Satie and gave his final premieres of Debussy. He played no more Ravel premieres after *Gaspard de la nuit*, although he programmed Ravel frequently his entire career.

In the winter of 1912, Viñes joined several other performers and composers for a series of five concerts presented by Durand to showcase its publications.<sup>392</sup> A concert later in the year in Marseilles combined Viñes’s French, Russian, and Spanish repertoire, including the Rimsky-Korsakov Piano Concerto, Franck’s *Les Djinns*, and solo works of Debussy, Albéniz, and Granados. On 15 December in Salle Berlioz, he performed the works of his Apache colleagues Séverac, Schmitt, and Ravel.

After performing only *Gaspard* for Société Nationale de Musique in 1912, Viñes’s appearances on this organization’s concerts increased markedly in 1913 and 1914. In a noteworthy Société Nationale de Musique concert on 5 April 1913, he premiered Satie’s *Véritables Préludes flasques pour un chien* and three more Debussy preludes.<sup>393</sup> His premiere of Satie’s *Descriptions automatiques* for Société Musicale Indépendante on 5 June 1913 marked his first performance with this organization; it is surprising given Viñes’s role in the founding of

<sup>391</sup> *Le Guide Musical* 1911, no. 19, 367-68.

<sup>392</sup> Viñes performed at least Debussy’s *Estampes* and both sets of *Images*. *Le Guide Musical* 1912, no. 10, 189; no. 10, 200; no. 11, 224.

<sup>393</sup> *Le Guide Musical* 1913, no. 15, 321-22. The three Debussy preludes were *Les Fées sont d'exquises danseuses*, *La Terrasse des audiences du clair de lune*, *Feux d'artifice*, which, according to the *Le Guide Musical* reviewer, “add nothing to the glory of the author,” whereas the Satie was deemed “declicious!”

Société Musicale Indépendante that their twenty-seventh concert was the first on which he appeared. In other cities and venues, he performed *Triana* (multiple times), Debussy preludes, and earlier classics such as Beethoven's 32 Variations and the Bach-Tausig Toccata and Fugue in D minor. When the Société Musicale Indépendante periodical sent him to Berlin to promote French music, he presented Roussel's Sonata for Piano and Violin along with solo works of Séverac.

Before war broke out in 1914, Viñes appeared in a slew of Société Nationale de Musique and Société Musicale Indépendante concerts. On 10 January in Salle Érard, he performed Albéniz's *Rondeleña*, Balakirev's *Islamey*, Debussy's *Pour le piano*, and Mussorgsky's *Ein Kinderscherz*. This was a relatively rare Société Nationale de Musique concert for Viñes in that all the works presented were from his established repertoire. Four days later, however, he premiered Satie's *Chapitres tournés en tous sens* and Gaston Knosp's *Gaston's Deux Scherzare* on the aforementioned Société Musicale Indépendante concert that featured so many new works by Les Apaches. After playing Turina, Séverac, and Ravel works on the Société Nationale de Musique concert of 25 April, on 23 May, he performed Chabrier's *España* and Dukas's Fanfare from *La Péri* with Alfred Cortot on two pianos. This was the last Société Nationale de Musique concert until November 1917.

The celebrated premieres Viñes gave of the piano repertoire of Ravel and Debussy immediately cemented his place in music history, as well as that of the composers. In fact, even before scholars began pulling together the far-flung pieces that in composite give us a fuller understanding of Viñes, books and studies of Debussy and Ravel were diligent in reporting him

as the first performer of their piano works. If he had presented only these, his name would still ring familiar to historians and cognoscenti.

Brody and scholars following on her research (in short, most everyone writing about Viñes) have nurtured a few different mythoi of Viñes based on his legendary repertoire. The first was that he was a prescient oracle endowed with the power to discern the inherent qualities of a work that guaranteed its success. Taken further, Viñes becomes a King Midas, turning even the most oublié oubliés to gold, whose performance guaranteed the success of their works.

A look at the pieces he performed on the Société Nationale de Musique programs, however, gives one small look into his repertoire and the context within which these premieres took place. Of the programs he played from 1898 to 1914 he performed 39 world premieres, including long-forgotten works by Marcel Labey, Louis Thirion, and Abel Decaux.

Year	Date	Composer	Work
1898	March 5	Ducasse, Roger	Études (pn4m)
1898	March 5	Ravel, Maurice	<i>Sites auriculaires (Habanera, Entre cloches)</i> (2pn)
1900	January 13	Jemain, Joseph	<i>Aspirations (Vers la source, Vers la joie, Vers les âmes)</i>
1900	January 13	Vreuls, Victor	Trio
1900	February 24	Labey, Marcel	Sonate
1901	April 13	de Queylar, Jean	<i>Prélude, Choral et Finale</i>
1901	April 13	Gobdebski, Franz	<i>Nocturne</i>
1902	January 11	Debussy, Claude	<i>Pour le piano: Prélude, Sarabande, Toccata</i>
1902	April 5	Ravel, Maurice	<i>Pavane pour une infante défunte</i>
1902	April 5	Ravel, Maurice	<i>Jeux d'eau</i>
1903	January 10	Rousseau, Samuel	Sonate

1903	April 18	Fauré, Gabriel	<i>Pièces brèves: Nos. 2, 4, 7, 8</i>
1903	April 18	Planchet, Charles	Sonate
1903	April 18	Woollett, Henry	<i>Prélude, Fugue et Final</i>
1904	January 9	Debussy, Claude	<i>Estampes: Pagodes, La soirée dans Grenade, Jardins sous la pluie</i>
1904	February 20	Lacroix, Eugène	Sonate
1905	February 18	de Séverac, Déodat	<i>En Languedoc (selections): Coin de cimetière au printemps, A cheval dans la prairie</i>
1905	February 18	Debussy, Claude	<i>Masques</i>
1905	February 18	Debussy, Claude	<i>L'isle joyeuse</i>
1906	January 6	Ravel, Maurice	<i>Miroirs: Noctuelles, Oiseaux tristes, Une barque sur l'océan, Alborada del gracioso, La vallée des cloches</i>
1906	March 17	Février, Henry	Nocturne in F-sharp major
1906	March 17	Février, Henry	<i>Valse-Caprice</i>
1906	April 21	Schmitt, Florent	<i>Trois Valses</i>
1908	January 11	Inghelbrecht, Désiré-Émile	<i>Suite petite-russienne: J'ai aimé Ivan, Chant du vent, Kozatchka, Mon coeur, Chant de soldats</i>
1908	January 11	Poueigh, Jean	<i>Pointes sèches: Cerfs-volants, Parc d'automne, Combat de coqs</i>
1909	January 9	Lekeu, Guillaume	Trio
1909	January 9	Ravel, Maurice	<i>Gaspard de la nuit: Ondine, Le Gibet, Scarbo</i>
1909	March 27	de Falla, Manuel	<i>Pièces espagnoles: Aragonesa, Cubana, Montanesa, Andaluza</i>
1910	February 5	Turina, Joaquín	<i>Sévilla: Sous les orangers, Le Jeudi Saint à minuit, La Feria</i>
1910	February 5	Uribe-Holguin, Guillermo	Sonate
1910	March 5	Février, Henry	<i>Intermezzo</i>
1910	March 5	Grovlez, Gabriel	<i>Recuerdo</i>
1910	March 5	Thirion, Louis	<i>Rêves (Trois Nocturnes)</i>
1911	January 14	Debussy, Claude	<i>Préludes: Les collines d'Anacapri, La fille aux cheveux de lin, La sérénade interrompue, Les sons et les parfums tournent dans l'air du soir</i>

1911	April 29	de Séverac, Déodat	<i>Cerdaña (extraits) : En tartane, Les fêtes, Ménétriers et glaneuses, Le retour des mueltiers</i>
1913	April 5	Debussy, Claude	<i>Préludes: Les fées sont d'exquises danseuses, La terrasse des audiences du clair de lune, Feux d'artifice</i>
1913	April 5	Satie, Érik	<i>Véritables préludes flasques pour un chien: Sévère réprimande, Seul à la maison, On joue</i>
1914	March 28	Decaux, Abel	<i>Clair de lune: Minuit passe, La ruelle, Le cimetière, La mer</i>
1914	March 28	Satie, Érik	<i>Croquis et Agaceries d'un gros bonhomme en bois: Tyrolienne turque, Danse maigre (à la manière de ces messieurs), Española</i>

Table 1: Viñes's Société Nationale de Musique World Premieres<sup>394</sup>

Viñes put himself completely in service of the composers of his day, imbued with a sense of duty to promote the works and ensure the legacy of would-be musical creators the world over. He sometimes invoked friendship and artistic oblige more than the inherent attraction of the scores he was asked to play. However, some writers have gone on to say that by performing new music and not conforming to the programming that the “circus virtuosi” of the day indulged in, Viñes limited his career possibilities.

As we have seen, it was an inherently French attribute to both cultivate and debate the new, and plenty of resources were dedicated to doing just this—at least until tastes grew more reactionary after World War I. For Viñes to play the music of his French colleagues, in particular the already-famous Debussy and his best friend from youth Maurice Ravel, does not fully warrant the meme of “sacrificed his career to dedicate his art to this generation of composers.”

In any case, however, probably no one was better suited to play these new works than Viñes. His unique talents, dizzying interests, interdisciplinary awareness, knowledge of

<sup>394</sup> Compiled from Duchesneau, 225-338.

literature and art, and pianism and musical values were sympathetic and aligned with those of the composers of the day. As an example, this was borne out in the exchange between Debussy and Viñes whereby each independently connected *Pour le Piano* with the paintings of Turner.

### Chamber Music and Concerti

From 1898, Viñes performed a considerable amount of chamber music with various collaborators in important venues. Early that year, he performed Spanish repertoire with a Spanish violinist and cellist to a mostly Spanish audience in Salle Érard. The most interesting part of the *Guide Musical* review, however, is this: “Mr. Viñes played well a Rachmaninoff Prelude curiously built on three descending notes, the sixth, the fifth and the tonic.”<sup>395</sup> We know he purchased this famous Rachmaninoff Prelude in C-sharp minor in 1895.<sup>396</sup> Also notable is that although he repeated this piece in a number of concerts, Viñes seems never to have performed any other Rachmaninoff.

Over the years, Viñes played both traditional chamber repertoire as well as new music offerings. Much of the new French music he played for the Société Nationale de Musique was collaborative, many of which were premieres by myriad minor French composers. But many partnerships, including repeated ones with Sailler and Abbiate or the Quartet Parent, offered traditional repertoire along with pieces by established French composers. In 1901 alone, he performed a Schumann Trio, Brahms Trio Op. 40, Schubert “Trout” Quintet, d’Indy Trio and Quartet, Fauré Quartet Op. 15, and Franck Quintet. The next year, he was lauded for his

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<sup>395</sup> *Le Guide Musical* 1898, no. 5, 101.

<sup>396</sup> Brody, “Paris: The Musical Kaleidoscope,” 182. Viñes’s copy, marked in blue pencil, is most likely in the University of Colorado collection. (Korevaar and Sampsel, 374.)

performance of the Schumann Piano Trio No. 1 with Concerts Colonne. Viñes performed this Schumann and the Franck again in 1906, although by mid-decade, the lion's share of his chamber performances were of newer work and premieres. In fall 1909, Viñes performed the Schumann Quartet and Quintet for Soirées d'Art with the Quatuor Geloso, with whom he also performed the Franck Quintet and more modern works.

Viñes concerti repertoire was minuscule, especially when measured against his solo offerings. Beyond the Bériot offerings of his early recitals, various Bach concerti for multiple keyboards, and occasional one-offs, it appears he regularly performed just a handful:

- Franck: *Variations symphoniques*<sup>397</sup>
- Rimsky-Korsakov: Piano Concerto in C-sharp Minor
- Lyapunov: Piano Concerto No. 1<sup>398</sup>
- Falla: *Noches en los jardines de España*

This is truly curious, given the importance for a solo virtuoso of concerto performance with orchestra. One wonders whether Viñes knew full well that the particular magic of his pianism—subtlety, finesse, local color and shading, embodying “the soul” of a work—might not translate effectively to the inherently heightened frame of the concerto form. These concerti have elements in common: Rimsky-Korsakov would have appealed to Viñes (and Les Apaches) in its kaleidoscopic treatment of a folk theme. The Franck is similarly craftsmanlike in its cyclical thematic transformation, and likewise of short duration for modest, integrated forces. In the Falla, the piano is not on virtuoso display, but evocatively woven with the lush orchestral parts.

Given what we can glean thus far, it seems consistent that Viñes would have little inclination to tackle a “larger-than-life,” bravura concerto such as the Tchaikovsky. But

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<sup>397</sup> He also occasionally performed Franck's *Les Djinns*, as in Antwerp in February 1913.

<sup>398</sup> He also performed Lyapunov's *Rhapsody on Ukrainian Themes*, as with Société des Concerts du Conservatoire in December 1917.

doubtless he could have played anything, and certain of this repertoire would seem tailor-made for his special touch: the Beethoven G major, Chopin F minor, Mendelssohn D minor, Schumann, Liszt A major, or even Scriabin F-sharp minor come to mind. There is no evidence that later in life he performed either of the Ravel concerti, although surely he must have studied these scores at least in private.

### **Russian Piano Music**

Esteem for Russian music had taken hold of Viñes long before he traveled in Russia for most of September and October 1900. By 1898, he was programming Liadov to great success, for example. In subsequent years, he would give French premieres of myriad works by Balakirev, Borodin, Mussorgsky and Rimsky-Korsakov. Fellow Apache and Russophile Michel Calvocoressi noted by 1903 that Viñes was a “tireless and devoted interpreter... of the modern Russian school.”<sup>399</sup>

Evidence that Russian music hadn’t penetrated into France as deeply as we might conclude also lies in the fact that Viñes gave dozens of French premieres of Russian piano repertoire, including pieces such as *Pictures at an Exhibition* that one would expect to have been played in the French capital before 1906. And the *Pictures* premiere was not such a great critical success; the *Guide Musical* critic wrote, “All this noisy phantasmagoria parades by quickly enough and provides pleasant sensations, but one must recognize that this genre, as fun

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<sup>399</sup> Berrocal, 29.

as it is, is a bit superficial, that it would be at home in a film representation but holds little interest from the point of view of piano execution.”<sup>400</sup>

Viñes championed the virtuoso showcase *Islamey*, performing it countless times after the appearance of the new 1902 edition. Although he wasn't the first to perform *Islamey* in France,<sup>401</sup> he was the work's foremost champion outside of Russia. Although the piece dated from 1869, it likely was still relatively unknown and novel to French audiences. Nonetheless, as Roy Howat demonstrates, the work was deeply influential on composers such as Chabrier, Debussy, and Ravel, for more than its dazzling pianism. Ravel stated his regard for this piece in a March 1912 *Revue musicale de la S.I.M.* article on the Lamoureux Orchestra concerts, which featured Casella's orchestral transcription: "I would venture to call *Islamey* a masterpiece... The complex orchestration, very full, nevertheless light, transformed a brilliant fantasy for the piano into an equally brilliant orchestral piece."<sup>402</sup> Techniques from *Islamey* that Ravel gleaned and evolved into his own works would have been revealed or reinforced by Viñes's many performances.

The Calvocoressi lecture-recitals on Russian music, a model Apaches endeavor, received considerable press. The second of these collaborations,<sup>403</sup> on 23 March 1905 at the *École des études sociales*, sold out. Amid various chamber pieces and songs, Viñes performed *Islamey* and

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<sup>400</sup> *Le Guide Musical* 1906, no. 12, 227-28.

<sup>401</sup> The "Ricardo Viñes" entry in *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* says Viñes gave the French premiere of *Islamey*, but this is incorrect. Louis Diémer performed it for Société Nationale de Musique back in April 1888, when Viñes was thirteen years old (the young Viñes might have attended this performance). (Duchesneau, 247.) Blanche Selva also seems to have beaten Viñes to the piece, performing it for Société Nationale de Musique in January 1901. (Duchesneau, 261.)

<sup>402</sup> Orenstein, 346.

<sup>403</sup> Presumably there was little press around the first one.

the “curious” *Pictures at an Exhibition*, “unknown in France.”<sup>404</sup> Another Calvocoressi conference followed in 1906, in which Viñes performed “with his habitual talent” three Borodin pieces.<sup>405</sup> In the winter of 1909, Calvocoressi and Viñes traveled to Brussels to give another such presentation for Cercle Artistique; Viñes’s offerings were *Pictures*, *Islamey*, and works by “Lyapunov, Akimenko, etc.”<sup>406</sup>

Riera lists a fairly comprehensive account of Viñes’s Russian premieres, while a Catalan monograph in collaboration with Gubisch includes a chapter called “The Russian Composers,” which states outright that Viñes was singularly responsible for getting Russian works performed in Paris.<sup>407</sup> Later, after the war, Viñes would introduce Prokofiev’s *Sarcasmes* into Paris.

Indisputably the Viñes legacy includes the dissemination into Western Europe of much of the Russian piano repertoire, a large part of which is considered standard today. It would have been a point of pride for the Apaches that this prescient accomplishment be achieved by one of their own.

### Spanish Piano Music

The music of Russia must have hit France like a behemoth, as its “school” of composers had banded together and produced a significant and copious corpus before Paris was introduced to their work. The music of Spain, right next door, was different, its introduction into Paris quieter. It was not imported to great fanfare atop the circus wagons of a powerful

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<sup>404</sup> *Le Guide Musical* 1905, no. 12, 241. Note that this hearing took place almost exactly a year before the work had its official French premiere for the Société Nationale de Musique.

<sup>405</sup> *Le Guide Musical* 1906, no. 51, 824.

<sup>406</sup> *Le Guide Musical* 1909, no. 6, 118-19. Akimenko was one of Stravinsky’s teachers.

<sup>407</sup> Berrocal, 30

impresario like Diaghelev, but rather was ported in quietly by a cadre of Spanish composers and musicians who came to Paris hoping for more exposure and opportunities.

Berrocal points out that Viñes studies inevitably discuss his diffusion of contemporary French music, then give his Russian initiatives as a sidebar. While she single-handedly took on the South American chapter of his life and repertoire, in her dissertation she persuasively advocates for much more attention on Viñes's role in promoting and spreading Spanish piano music of the time, and this writer concurs. As a Catalan of Spanish nationality, first schooled in a vibrantly colorful Spanish pedagogy, and with the will and mind to take on this repertoire, Viñes evidently did so with great effect. His concerts of Spanish music, such as by Albéniz, Granados, Turina, Falla, and Mompou, were acclaimed.<sup>408</sup> His master classes on this music garnered scholarly attention.

In his chapter "The Exotic Via Russia and Spain,"<sup>409</sup> Roy Howat discusses both sources of rich influences on French piano music and their effect on one another: "This dual exoticism is the more intriguing for its many interactions."<sup>410</sup> With Viñes's championing the works of composers from both countries, along with his natural inclination to bring to bear innumerable artistic impetuses, it is intriguing to ponder a role for the pianist in a possible shared evolution of both Russian and Spanish piano music.

Viñes's unique gift for connection and support would truly be evidenced after the Apaches years, first by his embrace of the young composers around Satie between the wars,

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<sup>408</sup> A ticket stub held by the Harry Ransom Center shows a program at Paris's Theatre Raymond Duncan comprising music of all these composers.

<sup>409</sup> Howat, 126-144.

<sup>410</sup> *Ibid.*, 126.

then in his absorption of the repertoire of South American composers he met in Paris and then after 1920 when he spent many years in South America. A detailed discussion of this repertoire and its merits is outside the scope of this study, but the gold standard in scholarship for the South America chapter has been established by Esperanza Berrocal's much-praised and cited Ph.D. dissertation, "Ricardo Viñes and the Diffusion of South American Repertoire." In this, she documents the rapid cultural development in centers such as Buenos Aires that give rise to a flourishing musical culture and many South American composers. Her examination of concert programs and relics tallies 50 pieces of these composers that entered Viñes's repertoire.

In reexamining the concept that Viñes's conscious decision to throw all his weight behind composers of the day at the expense of his own career, we may note that his performance of contemporary French repertoire would have been in keeping with the prevailing upscale artistic values of the time, evidencing a natural interface and pole position within Les Apaches. His embrace of Russian and Spanish repertoire would have been a logical outgrowth of his own intellectual and artistic curiosity, nourished by Les Apaches values and his own Spanish heritage and history.

Having a natural affinity toward this kind of collaboration, it would be logical and fulfilling for Viñes to perform the music of his temporary South American cohorts. By extension, one wonders whether this did indeed push the perception of his career solidly over into the niche, especially with the changing tastes within the Parisian musical establishment after the 1920s.

Was *all* the new music Viñes took on worth his efforts? Or rather was his loyalty and mission injudicious or out of proportion to the import of the pieces at hand? On one hand,

Berrocal evokes Rubenstein as saying that only Villo-Lobos of South American composers was worth performing. On the other, one of the aims of Berrocal's research was to identify and classify this repertoire in hopes that it would not remain so neglected. By and large, Viñes's concerts of South American music in Paris were not particularly successful. One wonders if by the end of his career, he became overlooked due to his repertoire choices and perhaps decreased pianism. Certainly, by the last decade of Viñes's career, a new breed of international pianist, typified by Rubenstein and Horowitz, had taken hold, both in the salons and concert halls. Repertoire now standard that would have been available to Viñes, such as Rachmaninoff, Prokofiev, Scriabin, as well as a galaxy of Romantic concerti, was passed over. The last years of Viñes's life and subsequent petering out of his career are murky and bear more research.

Likely for a myriad of reasons, Viñes chose to devote a huge portion of his time and performance opportunities in service of composers of his time, and continued this mission for his entire performing life. It can be argued that never again did he have better material to work with than the miraculous oeuvre of piano works from the first decade of the twentieth century. As Viñes helped birth these works into the pianistic canon, he also enjoyed their place in his own and by their virtues had superb repertoire as calling cards to perform all over Europe and in South America. The assertion that Viñes was able to magically prophesize blockbusters perhaps does not quite hold up to scrutiny when one considers that little he brought forward in the thirty years after presenting a number of Debussy's Preludes has been singled out for particular acclaim or solidified a position in the canon.

Viñes's early success with Debussy and Ravel may have validated any predilection for him to commit to the music of his time. Despite bringing literally hundreds of new pieces to life, however, the closest he would come to recapturing these triumphs probably came with Falla, Satie, and Mompou. This does not in any way minimize the yeoman's effort he put forth to the composers of his time, but merely recasts some of the myth of Viñes as oracle into a more nuanced story.

## 9. Ricardo Viñes: Debussy-Ravel Conduit?

*Sunday, 3 February 1903: At three o'clock, I went to Debussy's house to have him hear the Images which I played several times in a row, and also I saw that he was very happy because afterward he made his current wife come (Mme Bardac). Then they asked me to introduce the Miroirs of Ravel that I played for them. I left their house at six o'clock.*<sup>411</sup>

If one accepts axiomatically a sweeping assertion of Elaine Brody—quoted seemingly as self-evident fact in a number of subsequent studies—of Viñes's direct influence on Debussy and Ravel, one might conclude that were it not for Viñes, neither composer could possibly have evolved his own compositional approach such to create the piano masterpieces largely premiered and championed by Viñes himself:

“His influence on the compositional style of both Ravel and Debussy, and through them on the music of their contemporaries, is undeniable.”<sup>412</sup>

“But Debussy and Ravel might almost be said to have a symbiotic relationship, with Ravel first borrowing some of Debussy's concepts of instrumental music and Debussy later being inspired by Ravel's piano music, each feeding on the other and both stimulated by their mutual interpreter Ricardo Viñes.”<sup>413</sup>

The contemporaneous Viñes association with both Debussy and Ravel is of undisputed musicological import. And such statements create a compelling construct to weave into a Viñes mythology. They came in 1977, as new information shed light on the dynamics of this unique “impressionist” era with its exquisite textures and sonorities of keyboard writing—and also

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<sup>411</sup> Viñes: Diary, 3 February 1906. In Gubisch, “Le journal inédit,” 229.

<sup>412</sup> Brody, “Viñes in Paris,” 49.

<sup>413</sup> Ibid., 50-51.

served to reveal the magnitude of a somewhat neglected pianist. We know much more now the extent to which Viñes contributed to the overall musical legacy of the early twentieth century. Now that his career and influence have penetrated the awareness of historians and connoisseurs, perhaps it is time to tease out a more nuanced reality—that in no way diminishes Viñes’s colossal accomplishments.

We have seen how closely knit the lives and careers of Viñes and Ravel were before and during the Apaches era. Ongoing association as they matured musically in each other’s presence accorded a constant exchange of shared ideas and experiences. This took place not just at the piano. In mutually cultivating and sharing their literary and artistic sensibilities, they set the stage for the unusually deep absorption of prevailing artistic trends that served to inform and crystalize Les Apaches concerns.

The Ravel-Viñes relationship inherently supports the assertion of pianistic influence, especially as Viñes rapidly outclassed Ravel as a pianist, while having seemingly little impulse to compose himself. Korevaar agrees in degree with Brody’s assessment: “There is little question that Viñes’s brand of pianism, dependent on his exquisite pedaling and command of color, had a tremendous influence on Ravel’s development as a composer.”<sup>414</sup> Paul Roberts writes, “Viñes...it might be argued, provided Ravel (and Debussy) with the crucial impetus for writing piano works in the first place.”<sup>415</sup>

This seems highly probable in the case of Ravel; it is logical that Ravel would have immediately applied years of amalgamation of both pianists’ timbral and textural discoveries into compositional service straightaway, as he did in his early piano pieces that culminated in

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<sup>414</sup> Korevaar and Sampsel, 363.

<sup>415</sup> Roberts, “Reflections,” 2.

the remarkable *Jeux d'eau*, with its Lisztian figuration, pedal-colored textures, and French coolness and motion.

Debussy had already a corpus of piano works, although these manifested a Chopinesque idiom before *Pour le piano*, and the works afterward are markedly different still. Brody writes, “I believe that these works [Debussy’s pieces for piano after *Pour le piano*], too, were composed with Viñes and his extraordinary technique in mind. True, these pieces may also have drawn something from Ravel’s music.”<sup>416</sup> Korevaar reasons, “Viñes became acquainted with Debussy—a friendship that ultimately was to outlast that with Ravel—and seems to have worked a similar magic on Debussy’s pianistic style. Viñes’s influence can be discerned in Debussy’s move from the neoclassicism of *Pour le piano* (premiered by Viñes in 1902, but composed before they had met) to the impressionism of *Estampes* (premiered by Viñes in 1904).<sup>417</sup>

*Estampes* is thus cited as the prototype of the new Debussy piano writing informed by Viñes’s technique. Roy Howat associates the first of these, *Pagodes*, persuasively with the gamelan Debussy specially sought out at the 1900 Exposition Universelle after having heard it in 1889. “The crux here lies in how often Debussy’s instructions and unusual textural balances in ‘Pagodes’ make little sense by western norms but fall into place when treated as gamelan gestures.”<sup>418</sup> Viñes and Ravel too were enthralled by these gamelan orchestras, and indeed one can perceive gamelan influence in *Jeux d'eau*. Perhaps Viñes and Debussy discussed the possibilities of realizing these timbres and composite textures in keyboard music in late 1901

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<sup>416</sup> Brody, “Viñes in Paris,” 50-51.

<sup>417</sup> Korevaar and Sampsel, 363.

<sup>418</sup> Roy Howat, *The Art of French Piano Music*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009) 113.

while they prepared for the *Pour le Piano* premiere. It also is likely that a few months later, Debussy immediately perceived the gamelan in Ravel's *Jeux d'eau*. But which inspired Debussy more—his musing over how to translate the percussive rhythmic layering of gamelan to the piano, or what he gleaned in Viñes's technique in performances before composing the work?

It would be hard to dispute that *La soirée dans Grenade*, the second piece in the set, seems an “inevitable” Viñes fit.<sup>419</sup> And fortunately, this is one of the two Debussy performances we have of Viñes on record. As Roberts says, “It has an unmistakable Spanish idiom, rhythm is foregrounded and the tempo is surprisingly but compellingly fast. He brings to it the character of Albéniz.” This writer would add that the lines are sensualized by subtlety in coloration, lots of blending with pedal, and shading of the phrasal gestures in exact accord with the overall momentum of the performance.

With the line between *Pour le piano* and *Estampes*, Brody places clusters of Debussy and Ravel's piano works in time, noting the points of mutual interaction with Viñes, to support her assertion of Viñes's influence on the composers' techniques. She takes Debussy's works en masse “the *Estampes*, the *Masques*, *L'Isle joyeuse*, the two sets of *Images*, and eventually the *Preludes*.” Few would disagree that the line demarcating the larger groups of pieces is tenable. But the question remains whether the “strikingly different” Debussy works Viñes performed after *Pour le piano* represents causation or correlation.

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<sup>419</sup> And yet, as scholars point out, Ravel's *Habanera* wafts through the piece. Debussy borrowed this score after the 1898 premiere, but later claimed it had fallen behind his piano.

Year	Date	Composer	Work
1898	March 5	Ravel, Maurice	<i>Sites auriculaires (Habana, Entre cloches)</i> (2pn)
1898	April 18	Ravel, Maurice	<i>Menuet antique</i>
1902	January 11	Debussy, Claude	<i>Pour le piano: Prélude, Sarabande, Toccata</i>
1902	April 5	Ravel, Maurice	<i>Pavane pour une infante défunte</i>
1902	April 5	Ravel, Maurice	<i>Jeux d'eau</i>
1904	January 9	Debussy, Claude	<i>Estampes: Pagodes, La soirée dans Grenade, Jardins sous la pluie</i>
1905	February 10	Debussy, Claude	<i>Masques</i>
1905	February 10	Debussy, Claude	<i>L'isle joyeuse</i>
1906	January 6	Ravel, Maurice	<i>Miroirs: Noctuelles, Oiseaux tristes, Une barque sur l'océan, Alborada del gracioso, La Vallée des cloches</i>
1906	February 5	Debussy, Claude	<i>Images I: Reflets dans l'eau, Hommage à Rameau, Mouvement</i>
1908	February 21	Debussy, Claude	<i>Images II: Cloches à travers les feuilles, Et la lune descend sur le temple qui fut, Poissons d'or</i>
1909	January 9	Ravel, Maurice	<i>Gaspard de la nuit: Ondine, Le gibe, Scarbo</i>
1911	January 14	Debussy, Claude	<i>Préludes: Les collines d'Anacapri, La fille aux cheveux de lin, La sérénade interrompue, Les sons et les parfums tournent dans l'air du soir</i>
1913	April 5	Debussy, Claude	<i>Préludes: Les fées sont d'exquises danseuses, La terrasse des audiences du clair de lune, Feux d'artifice</i>

Table 2: Ricardo Viñes's Debussy and Ravel World Premieres

Ravel and Debussy mutually admired one another's work, and at the turn of the century, maintained cordial relations, even friendship. Perhaps as a result of vociferous press agitators who for whatever reason were compelled to endlessly debate the innovations of each vis-à-vis the other, relations broke between the two. Both remained hyperaware of what the other was doing, however. And the inspiration of Debussy absolutely continued to motivate and inspire Les Apaches after he and Ravel broke. But in their piano works of the first decade of the twentieth century, were they responding to Viñes, directly to one another, or creating works

that somehow drew upon all the prevailing trends of the era, which Viñes with his knowledge and perspicacity was able to immediately discern and animate?

Knotty indeed is scrutinizing the concept that Ravel and Debussy both matured as composers by feeding off one another through respective associations with Viñes, as though through his pianism he was a sort of back-and-forth artistic provocateur, willing both to their full expression. Supporting this writer's puzzlement on this point, Roberts said, "There is an undoubted conduit between the two. But would Debussy have become Debussy, would Ravel have become Ravel, without Viñes? Of course. At the same time, they're constantly aware of what the other is doing."<sup>420</sup> Roberts is more detailed about the chronology of the composers' works and the achievements they revealed on the part of each, showing that the composers did seem to be in a kind of sympathetic lockstep. And undoubtedly, Viñes's voluminous performances showcasing his unique pianism would have afforded a free-flowing channel for such conveyance in both directions.

An interesting study is the relationship between Debussy's *D'un cahier d'esquisses* and Ravel's *Oiseaux tristes*, wherein as communicated by Viñes both composers were creating a finely wrought artifice intended to sound absolutely like an improvised sketch in the moment. Both composers may have employed golden section ratios in their mid-decade works. Could any of this have been conveyed by the numerologist Viñes?

Roberts, in both this private interview, then in his book *Reflections: The Piano Music of Maurice Ravel*, which appeared later, offered another possible way in which Viñes could have over time broadened both composers' palette conception. The Pleyel grand piano he was

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<sup>420</sup> Paul Roberts, private interview, 12 October 2011.

awarded for his July 1894 Conservatoire First Prize—delivered on 16 January 1895—included a third, *sostenuto* middle pedal. (Another French piano maker had invented the system, while Pleyel copied it.) Viñes certainly would have taken to it immediately, and Ravel certainly would have played this piano as well. One can well imagine the two young musicians experimenting with the new sounds possible through its use. Roberts points out that these instruments would have been available in Paris in the 1890s, and indeed Madame de Saint-Marceaux's new 1896 Steinway—subsequently played by scores of composers and performers—would almost certainly have had one. But most pianos in use at the time would not have had this pedal.<sup>421</sup>

At the end of the day, the true importance of Debussy and Ravel's mutual association with Viñes was that of having an intelligent, sensitive, imaginative cocreator to perform their works for the public, for *Les Apaches*, and for each other. It speaks to Viñes's personality and commitment as artistic conveyance and bridge that he maintained close ties with both composers. Viñes's enthusiasm for literary and artistic endeavors, his unforced innocence, and, most of all, his sophisticated pianism given to service of both composers enabled him to maintain these relationships and thus serve as conduit.

In the final analysis, beyond splitting hairs to quantify Viñes's influence on the piano writing of Ravel and Debussy, one might assert the important point that ultimately Viñes and his career benefitted every bit as much from his collaboration with Ravel and Debussy as they did from theirs with him. He earned and enjoyed a privileged relationship with both composers, grounded in artistic sympathies, social proximity, and mutual trust and commitment. Owing to

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<sup>421</sup> Roberts, *Reflections*, 175-78.

his ongoing capability and commitment, Viñes was gifted the opportunity to play these composers' masterworks, creating performances that were calling cards for decades throughout Europe and in South America. One can deduce that of the scores of works he premiered by a galaxy of composers, none were more important than this remarkable collection of Debussy and Ravel pieces, which have long become indispensable piano repertoire and will remain so into perpetuity.

## Epilogue: In Search of Ricardo Viñes

*Thursday, 3 December 1914: I went to dine at the Duparcs' house and then, by car, always paid by them, to the train station where I took the train to go back to Bagnères.*<sup>422</sup>

On 25 July 1914, we find Ricardo Viñes chez Misia Sert with Diaghilev and Erik Satie, with whom he was playing the composer's *Trois morceaux en forme de poire* in hopes that Diaghilev would take up Satie's music for a ballet. Their performance was interrupted by the news that Austria had declared war on Serbia.<sup>423</sup> Nine days later, France and Germany were at war.

The onset of World War I suspended concert series and music publications. Some salons continued to function somewhat; Les Apaches gatherings did not continue. Ravel in short order maneuvered himself into service. Viñes, a national of neutral Spain, occasioned Paris but repaired to the south of France and into Spain. He continued concertizing, often in the service of war relief. He stopped keeping his journal around this time. At the beginning of 1916, he purchased a brand new notebook and composed entries for two days. After this, he never wrote in his diary again.<sup>424</sup>

The Apaches never reconvened after the war, in part because a number of them married. At least none was killed in action (although Caplet's health was severely compromised), unlike with the Blaue Reiter movement, which was decimated by war casualties. Two years later, Viñes was in Buenos Aires for the first time, and he would spend much time in

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<sup>422</sup> Viñes: Diary, 3 December 1914. In Gubisch, "Le journal inédit," 246.

<sup>423</sup> Arthur Gold and Robert Fizdale, *Misia: The Life of Misia Sert* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980) 162.

<sup>424</sup> Levy, 148.

the subsequent fifteen years concertizing in and promoting the resident composers of South America. Separately, the Apaches members continued their own endeavors, periodically crossing paths with one another.

After decades of neglect save for brief mentions in passing, particularly in context of Debussy or Ravel, scholarship on Ricardo Viñes in the past thirty years has assembled an impressive, dimensional canon revealing the magnitude of Viñes the man and pianist, his activities richly entrained to his times and their intellectual fecundity.

In these recent decades, scholars have been much engaged with multiple views into Viñes: his documentation of fin-de-siècle Paris through his remarkable diaries; the interweaving of his life and activities with those of scores of artistic, musical, and social luminaries; his relatively unknown South American adventures; and his affiliation with the Apaches, remarkable in their shared passions and activities. With all that has been added to the Viñes canon through this multivariate inquiry, however, the overall assessment still feels similar to what Elaine Brody wrote in 1977: “Although he is mentioned in almost every book about Debussy, Ravel, Falla, Satie, or Poulenc, the material about him is so scattered that it is almost impossible to gather the entire story without some assistance.”<sup>425</sup>

Issues that Esperanza Berrocal summarizes as still needing to be probed further include the murky circumstances of his last years, such as his waning performances, addiction to gambling, and final illness and death. The information we have is spotty, but nonetheless it paints a singularly bleak picture. To this author, circumstances could credibly lead one to

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<sup>425</sup> Brody, “Viñes in Paris,” 57.

speculate that by the end Viñes suffered terrible depression. Amid bloodshed and chaos, the fecund artistic smorgasbord of his younger days would seem thousands of miles and years remote. It seems plausible that a poverty-stricken and disillusioned Viñes lost interest in performing and no longer cared for himself properly. Too proud to reach out or admit to needing help, he simply would be unable to rally from whatever had manifested, and care at the Barcelona hospital was likely substandard given his war-ravaged homeland. I am reminded of Peter Oswald's searing and pointed retroactive psychophysical analysis of Schumann's last months, prompted by the release of medical records and resulting in a special second edition of the book. Although Schumann's situation was unique in its notoriety and recent availability of information, Oswald has set the bar for this kind of analysis incredibly high. My piano-bench speculation into Viñes's end, ends here.

Perhaps another comparable is the case of Stefan Zweig. Similarly enthusiastic about all that was new and innovative in art, bonded by shared love of knowledge to many fellow writers and scholars across national boundaries, he too grew weary of constant separation and displacement during and between the bloody wars. These writings indicate one direction research into Viñes's last years might take.

While working on an anticipated Viñes monograph, unfulfilled because of her death, Brody wrote that she had access to Viñes's diary and all correspondence and personal papers, likely through her association with Elvira Viñes and Nina Gubisch. At the time, however, the South American chapter was yet to be told by Esperanza Berrocal. In turn, as Berrocal prepared her Ph.D. literature review, a superb compendium, she had no way to know that some 800 pieces of music from Viñes's personal collection were scattered throughout the University of

Colorado Music Library, unbeknownst to anyone—including library staff. Meanwhile, Jann Pasler was independently researching and interviewing scores of people related to and associated with Les Apaches. So the maze of inquiry extends far and wide, surprises around each corner, revealing a more elaborate puzzle than even the earlier Viñes scholars comprehended. This would seem logical, given the hundreds of connections and vectors Viñes moved along.

This story is still worth telling. David Korevaar e-mailed me persuasively, “There is still room for a biography.” In late 2011, Mildred Clary published a study in French, “avec l’aimable collaboration de Nina Gubisch-Viñes,” in the form of thematic biographic sketches, the first in French. These shed light on more neglected aspects of Viñes such as his own compositions and poetry while offering hitherto unpublished diary entries. The book is rich with photos and mementos from Nina Gubisch’s personal connection.

Most recently, scholars (including this one) eagerly awaited the announced December 2012 electronic release of Viñes’s unabridged diaries translated into French, a collaboration between Nina Gubisch and the University of Montreal. Although the compilation and translation are complete and ready for publication, their release has been delayed indefinitely.

This dissertation with its summative biography attempts to pull together in English the information on Viñes, across decades and languages, into a story enabling today’s pianists to gain insight into the pianism, repertoire, and artistic zeitgeist that may shine light on their own study of Ravel, Balakirev, or Granados.

As I have embarked on my own Viñes research, remarkable synchronicities have marked my almost-two-decade journey. In planning a Master’s of Music exam topic about Viñes and his

association with Ravel and Debussy, I discovered that the lion's share of a recital I had given one month previously featured Viñes premieres: *Gaspard de la Nuit* (world premiere) and *Pictures at an Exhibition* (French premiere). When in light of recent scholarship Robin McCabe and I decided to focus on Viñes's association with Les Apaches, I discovered that an active and knowledgeable scholar of this colorful coterie was Jann Pasler at University of California, San Diego, a campus where I had friends and colleagues and visited often.

Later that year, when Paul Roberts arrived at University of Washington to present an all-French master class and lecture-recital, every single piece on his program had had its debut under Viñes, and we had the opportunity to discuss him over post-concert tapas. When I traveled to the University of Colorado to examine the contents of Viñes's personal music library, I met Korevaar, who had his own astonishing coincidence: He had completed his dissertation on *Miroirs*—featuring Les Apaches—years before his appointment to University of Colorado and subsequent discovery and stewardship of the long-forgotten Viñes collection.

Korevaar introduced me to his D.M.A. student Lisa Harrington, at the same time writing her own dissertation on Marcelle Meyer, the great French pianist and associate of Satie, Poulenc, Cocteau, Coco Chanel, and their ilk. Meyer studied privately with Viñes after her Conservatoire first prize and is considered his greatest student and pianistic heir. The fortuitous connection with Harrington was key to deriving yet more insight from the Viñes story.

Poulenc and Meyer can be seen as receiving the baton from their teacher Viñes in the cause of new music and interdisciplinary associations. While Viñes was in Buenos Aires for the first time, it was Meyer with whom Ravel played *Wien* (again at the home of Misa Sert) for Diaghalev, with Stravinsky in attendance. Although Diaghalev's rejection and Stravinsky's

silence led to Ravel's breaking with both men, the work as *La Valse* would go on to a triumph in the concert hall. In 1961, toward the end of his life, Poulenc would link the two together with a hero of Les Apaches, dedicating his book on Emmanuel Chabrier "to the memory of Ricardo Viñes and Marcelle Meyer, unforgettable interpreters of Chabrier."<sup>426</sup>

Understanding the relatively unexplored lineage of Viñes through Poulenc and Meyer reveals correspondences with the psychological and aesthetic Viñes. Poulenc and his cohorts tried to make sense of the world they found themselves in, one that had grown increasingly precarious and astringent, and yet remained intellectually and culturally vibrant. In their activities and works, the artistic ethos and sharing of Viñes wafts through as a sweet balm from the past, a multivariate palette of artistic endeavor and shared benediction.

Viñes recorded seldom, the sum total of his legacy on record fitting on one CD, released by Marston. We are left to extrapolate how Viñes might have sounded in his prime, in front of audiences where it is clear he was at his best. Disliking the recording process and coming to it relatively late in his career, Viñes didn't leave a clear representation of his peak abilities. His recordings, though full of poise and color, do not fully showcase his universally praised technique or mystifying ability to inhabit the world of a piece. Nor do they document his vast repertoire. This said, the recordings are fascinating, the choice of material at the time, telling.

Fortunately, Marcelle Meyer did record prolifically, and after decades of being lost, thus erasing her name as well from the pianist annals (since she never taught), these recordings have now reemerged in a seventeen-CD collection. Although an immense talent, rigorously trained by Cortot and Marguerite Long, Meyer was definitively 'finished' by Viñes—she specially

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<sup>426</sup> Harrington, 110.

sought him out after her Conservatoire training. When hearing her recordings—charming, airy, gracious, insouciant, at the same time etched with a natural undergirding intelligence, and with some of the most compelling motivic and phrasal shaping and shading to be heard on record, particularly in her baroque works—one might imagine that through her Viñes not only passed on his dedication to the composers of the day, but also the very essence of his personality, passionately curious mind, and love for spontaneous performance. In pulling together the story of the almost-forgotten pianist, Harrington and her research offer another view of Viñes, a retroactive one, as teasing out the through line and influences within Marcelle Meyer's career in context of her own highly organized social milieu are more harmonics to Viñes's fundamental.

Although the Viñes story still has many unexplored angles, and pulling it together remains a challenge, we are getting there. New scholarship and digital research techniques will eventually enable musicologists to gather together all the scattered documents. One day soon some intrepid researcher-biographer will create the authoritative magnum opus. The topic is too compelling to leave unfinished, the unabridged journals and colorful mementos too tempting a prize. I traveled to the Harry Ransom Archives looking for some of these, hoping for a find such as a major Ravel work full of Viñes's markings. I unearthed several compelling items, interesting correspondence among the Apaches, the Viñes postcard quoting Baudelaire, Ravel manuscripts in his stunning calligraphy. But I found surprisingly few big-ticket items that would evidence the modus operandi of Debussy or Ravel and Viñes in collaboration into perpetuity. Where was everything? I wondered. Berrocal and Korevaar discuss the continued search for Viñes items, for example. In an intriguing piece of the puzzle, I received an e-mail from Pasler

saying that she had found a thirty-year-old manifest of important Viñes manuscripts and personal papers that had been sold in the 1970s to a woman—in Tangier. The treasure hunt continues.

Understanding Ricardo Viñes is to gain entry into the glittering artistic world of Paris, that most remarkable cauldron of artistic expression and novelty. Viñes embodies the intellectually ostentatious salons, the private “laboratory” of Les Apaches, the passing of the baton to the representatives of the 1920s avant-garde, and both the history of concert piano performance and the French piano tradition.

The original ideas expressed, about piano playing, the responsibility to the music of one’s own time, the thrill of living within an artistic kaleidoscope, are timeless in how they shine light on our own aesthetic value reflection. The existence of this man, his words documented, the writings of others who held him in great esteem, recognizing the nature of his gifts, is a rich legacy to meditate upon for one’s own craft, timely for this day and age. Where so much more that is meaningful in the performance moment is expected from today’s artists, and so many gifted performers (and teachers) understand the power of cocreating with the composer whose sounds and ideas they endeavor to present with inspiration and integrity, Viñes stands as a testament to the power of performer to transform an audience in one night while over time contributing to the artistic legacy of an era.

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