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JEAN-BLAISE MARTIN AND THE OPÉRA-COMIQUE:
A STUDY OF SELECTED AIRS SUNG BY
THE ORIGINAL *BARYTON MARTIN*

by

Richard Hartley Weidlich

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A Document Submitted to the Faculty of the
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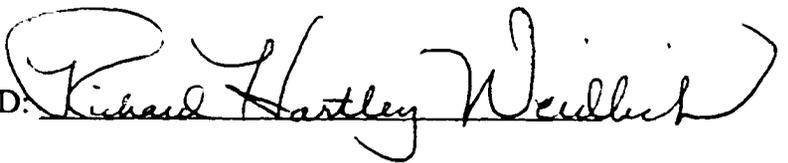
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DEDICATION

It is with deepest thanks that I dedicate this lecture-document to those who supported me throughout the process of its writing: first of all, my parents, George Walford and Louise Barnes Weidlich, my aunt Dr. Virginia Barnes, and my aunt Mrs. Ruby Anderson. I would also like to remember those who are gone, my uncle Carl Anderson and my grandfather, Dr. Homer Francis Barnes, both lovers of music.

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ABSTRACT

(Nicolas) Jean-Blaise Martin (1768-1837) created numerous roles in opéras-comiques by many of the most notable composers in Paris spanning the periods of the French Revolution, Consulate, Empire, and Restoration in a stage career that endured from 1789 to 1834. The outgrowth of his popularity was the creation of the voice type named for him, the baryton Martin, which at first represented the roles for which he was known, but later was developed by numerous French composers who expanded the high lyric baritone repertoire, including Bizet and Ravel.

A discussion of the life of Martin is followed by more specific chapters discussing his voice and select roles sung by him. Works discussed include *Les Visitandines* (1792) by François Devienne, *Joconde* (1814) by Nicolò Isouard, *Les Voitures versées* (1808/1820) by François-Adrien Boïeldieu, and *Les Souvenirs de Lafleur* (1833) by Fromental Halévy.

The voice of Martin is described as to range, weight and timbre, as well as vocal characteristics that were identified with him, including his famous use of fioratura, the use of head voice for passages extending up into the tenor range, "patter" singing, and a frequent use of wide leaps. In addition, reviews are cited later in Martin's career to illuminate his vocal condition at the end of his career.

Each opéra-comique is discussed regarding the composer, the librettist(s), the work, including a brief plot summary, as well as a more specific discussion of one air from each that was sung by Martin. Various observations of these airs will attempt to give a more complete picture of the artist and singer.

A brief discussion detailing the baryton Martin throughout the century will follow the summary of the document, and will detail singers of this voice type and roles written for them.

The career of Martin is detailed in an appendix that lists many works in which the baritone sang, with pertinent information as available, as well as a listing of the theaters in which he performed.

INTRODUCTION

(Nicolas) Jean-Blaise Martin (b Paris: 24 February 1768; d Ronzières: 28 October 1837), created over fifty roles in opéras-comiques by many of the most notable composers in Paris spanning the periods of the French Revolution, Empire and Restoration, including Méhul, Boïeldieu, Isouard, and Halévy, in a stage career that lasted from 1789 to 1834. From his theatrical début in *Le Marquis Tulipano* (Tuileries: 28 January 1789), given at the Théâtre de Monsieur, Martin's promise was evident, and after his great success in the role of Frontin in *Les Visitandines* (Feydeau: 7 July 1792), librettists and composers began creating roles for his voice and stage persona.¹

From 1789 until 1823, Martin entertained audiences with a virtually uninterrupted series of mostly successful opéras-comiques, and he drew applause as much for his brilliant voice and improvisatory skills as for his stage ability and comic acting.² Though starting his career at the Théâtre de Monsieur singing mostly French parodies of Italian operas, Martin moved in 1794 or 1795 to the Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique, where he sang mostly French works composed specifically for his voice. The first pause in his career came in 1823, when at the age of fifty-five Martin first retired from the Opéra-Comique. This retirement lasted only a few years, however, and in 1826 he began to appear sporadically in revivals of his earlier successes as well as making special concert appearances. His last appearance on stage was in a

¹ François-Joseph Fétis, *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens et Bibliographie Générale de Musique*, 2d ed., vol. 5 (Paris: Librairie de Firmin-Didot et Cie, 1875), 476.

² Francis Claudon, et. al., *Histoire de l'Opéra en France* (Paris: Nathan, [1984]), 43.

new work composed for him by Halévy, *Les Souvenirs de Lafleur* (Bourse: 4 March 1833), which was the culmination of his forty-five year career on the stage.

Martin's voice was wide-ranging, encompassing over three octaves, with a baritone timbre in the lower voice and a tenor quality in the upper head register.³ The size of his voice was not large, and was therefore well suited to the light orchestration used at the Opéra-Comique, where comic acting ability took precedence over vocal power. Martin in this genre was somewhat of an anomaly, for in the beginning he was more revered for his vocal gifts than for his acting. Martin's voice was said to be of an intensity and beauty that was not generally heard in opéras-comiques in Paris during this time.

The roles created for Martin during his long career, specifically for his range, tessitura and timbre, were the basis for a specific body of literature for a voice type labeled the baryton Martin, which would be developed by later generations of French composers, including Bizet and Ravel. The labeling of a voice type based on literature of a singer of renown is not uncommon in France, and there are several examples of voice types named for once-popular singers for the purpose of grouping together the roles created by that individual.⁴ The baryton Martin, however,

³ J. Adrien de la Fage, "Nécrologie: Blaise Martin." *Revue et gazette musicale de Paris*, 4, vol. 47 (19 November 1837): 498.

⁴ Roger Parker, ed., *The Oxford History of Opera* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 296. The *falcon*, designating a "soprano with a short range on top," was named for Cornélie Falcon. Falcon created the roles of Rachel in *La Juive* (1835) by Halévy and Valentine in *Les Huguenots* (1836) by Meyerbeer. The *dugazon*, named for Louise-Rosalie Dugazon, who, like Martin, had a long career at the Opéra-Comique, is "a light soprano adept at playing soubrette-like roles." The *mères dugazons* refers to an older soprano "still flirtatious" in character.

continued to be developed as a voice type into the twentieth century, and this term still designates this body of vocal literature.

Very little has been written about the life of Martin and works sung by him. No writings specifically on the baritone are known to be available, especially in English, and what information is available only relates the singer in a secondary capacity to the famous composers and singers of his day. A valuable source was the Favre biography on Boïeldieu, with many interesting stories regarding the works of the composer in which Martin appeared. Another source with a great deal of information regarding Martin's performances with Jean Elleviou is the book on the tenor by De Curzon. Many listings were found regarding the singer in various French encyclopedias, most interestingly the *Biographie des Hommes Vivants*, which was published during Martin's lifetime. Also invaluable was the recently published version of Martin's earliest widely known success, *Les Visitandines* (1792) by Devienne, with a foreword by Sherwood Dudley.

Jean-Blaise Martin had a great influence on the development of the repertoire for baritone in France during the nineteenth century. By providing additional information about the man who originated the voice type of the baryton Martin, it is hoped that it will be helpful to those interested in the high lyric baritone and its initial beginnings in France.

It is of interest to look further into the various works sung by Martin during his career to make some observations regarding the development of his voice and how various composers highlighted his gifts to create a good effect. Four French airs

will be studied to gain more information about these roles. Each opéra-comique discussed will have information about the work and its relative success for Martin. All of these works were successful and all were performed for many years in repertory, with the exception of *Les Souvenirs de Lafleur* (1833), since Martin was sixty-five years of age at the time. Because of the relative obscurity of the composers and librettists who created these works, short biographical sketches will be included in each chapter. A plot summary, especially as it relates to Martin's role, will also be included. There will be a discussion of range, tessitura, and dynamics in the orchestration or piano accompaniment in order to attempt to describe the vocal characteristics of Martin. The music will be discussed briefly in terms of structure and when applicable for musical elements that highlight aspects of character.

Martin's career can be divided into several periods as follows:

1789-1794 or 1795	Théâtre de Monsieur, Feydeau
1794 or 1795-1834	Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique
1801-1823	As "sociétaire"
1813-1823	Without Elleviou
1826-1834	Special appearances

The first air to be studied, "Qu'on est heureux de trouver en voyage," from *Les Visitandines* (1792) by Devienne, is from Martin's earliest period when he worked under the management at the Théâtre de Monsieur and Théâtre Feydeau. Next, an air from *Joconde* (1814) entitled "J'ai longtemps parcouru le monde," by Nicolò Isouard will be studied. This work premiered shortly after the tenor Elleviou

left the theater, and Martin became the Opéra-Comique's biggest attraction. The third opéra-comique, *Les Voitures versées* (1808/1820) by Boïeldieu, was originally written for St. Petersburg in 1808, but was revised for Paris in 1820 with Martin in the starring role, in which he sang the air "Apollon toujours préside aux choix de mes voyageurs." The last air to be discussed will be the "Grand Air" for the character Lafleur from *Les Souvenirs de Lafleur* (1833), music by Halévy, which marked Martin's final appearance in an opéra-comique. In addition, Martin's first years at the Opéra-Comique from 1794 or 1795 until 1813 will also be discussed briefly in chapter two with a closer examination of the air "De l'intrigue, ô vastes mystères!" from *Une Folie* (1802), by Méhul, especially regarding range considerations at this time in his career.

The four opéras-comiques to which chapters have been devoted have been chosen for their relative success in Martin's career, the character traits found in the roles sung by him, and the succession in which they fall by year. Any changes evident in vocal elements from period to period will be noted. It is the hope of the author that this document will be informative regarding the man, his more famous roles, and the voice he used to sing them.

A word regarding methodology: all dynamic markings have been abbreviated for simplicity. They are also placed in italics, as are the tempi and pitch designations. The name opéra-comique is unique to the French language, and therefore this title will be used throughout, as well as its plural form, opéras-comiques. The range for Martin will be based on the following identification:



Ex. I.1: Pitch designations used in the document.

The musical examples, when possible, are from the earliest possible sources available to this author. In cases of poor readability, examples were prepared on the Finale computer program. All English translations unless otherwise identified are by the author and Anne-Marie Engels-Brooks.

CHAPTER ONE

THE LIFE OF MARTIN

(Nicolas) Jean-Blaise Martin was born in Paris, 24 February 1768.¹ to parents of little means.² His grandfather was a famous painter and chemist of some renown, who had been “célébré par Voltaire, qui parle de ses vernis comme *surpassant ceux de la Chine*”³ [celebrated by Voltaire, who spoke of his varnish as *surpassing that of the Chinese*]. Martin lost his father “dans ses premières années”⁴ [in his first years], and was taken in by an uncle, who provided Martin with an excellent education, to be

¹ Théodore Lassabathie, *Histoire du Conservatoire Impériale de Musique et de Déclamation* (Paris: Michel Lévy Frères, 1860), 439. There are a number of birth years and dates given for Martin, but the above source, based on the official records of the Conservatoire where Martin was professor, has been supported subsequently in François-Joseph Fétis, “Jean-Blaise Martin,” *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens et Bibliographique Générale de la Musique*, supplément, ed. Arthur Pougin, 2d ed., vol. 2 (Paris: Firmin-Didot et Cie, 1881), 174, correcting the previously cited date of 14 October 1769 found in François-Joseph Fétis, *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens et Bibliographique Générale de Musique*, 2d ed., vol. 5 (Paris: Librairie de Firmin-Didot et Cie, 1875), 475. Other sources supporting this birth date are: G. Vapereau, “Jean-Blaise Martin,” *Dictionnaire Universel des Contemporains*, vol. 2 (Paris: Hachette, 1858), 1277; Hofer, *Nouvelle Biographie Générale*, vol. 34 (Paris: MM. Firmin Didot Frères, 1861; reprint Copenhagen: Rosenkilde et Bagger, 1967), 46–47, and Philip Robinson, “Jean-Blaise Martin,” *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2d ed., ed. Stanley Sadie and John Tyrell, vol. 15 (London: Macmillan Press Limited, 2001), 913–14. Other sources list various birth years of 1764, 1767, and 1770.

² No sources available to this author have listed names for Martin’s parents.

³ J. Adrien de la Fage, “Nécrologie: Blaise Martin,” *Revue et gazette musicale de Paris*, 4, vol. 47 (19 November 1837), 496. No name or exact lineage is given in sources available to this author. Only referred to in sources as “d’un peintre du même nom,” it is difficult to determine among the various sources *who* was celebrated by Voltaire, the grandfather, a grand uncle, or the father. The claim of grandfather for the painter is seconded by Joseph-Fr. Michaud and Louis Gabriel Michaud, *Biographie Universelle Ancienne et Moderne*, new ed., vol. 27 (Paris: n.p., 1854; reprint Graz: Akademische Druck-u. Verlagsanstalt, 1968), 132, that claims that the “fils (the uncle) de cet habile manipulateur (the painter) qui recueillit son neveu (Martin) dans sa maison.” *Biographie des Hommes Vivants*, vol. 4 (Paris: Chez L. G. Michaud, 1818), 366, published during Martin’s lifetime, lists Martin as the “petit-neveu” of a famous painter and chemist. In Hofer, *Nouvelle Biographie Générale*, 46, Martin is said to be the “fils” of a painter.

⁴ Fétis, *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens*, 475. Both De la Fage, “Nécrologie,” 496, and Michaud, *Biographie Universelle Ancienne et Moderne*, 132, which quotes almost exactly the De la Fage article, omit any mention of the loss of Martin’s father, but state only that Martin was taken by the uncle to raise.

trained as a goldsmith.⁵ At the age of seven Martin was given his first lessons in the arts, studying painting, dance, and music. A natural talent for music was evident very early, and by the age of nine the young boy could read music with some facility.⁶ Martin possessed a clear soprano voice and was chosen to perform solos at society concerts.⁷ Though the young Martin may have been given private singing lessons at this time, there is no evidence that he was given a broad schooling in the vocal arts.

Though an aptitude and talent for singing was evident at this young age, when Martin's voice began to change singing was discontinued and study began on the violin.⁸ In addition to instrumental study, Martin also studied composition with Pierre Joseph Candeille (1744-1827).⁹ Martin made rapid progress on the violin, and near the age of nineteen,¹⁰ he auditioned to fill a vacancy in the orchestra at the prestigious Paris Opéra, located at this time in the Théâtre Porte-Saint-Martin. Though it was said that Martin was first of his level on the violin, he was not accepted for the position.¹¹

As has been stated before, Martin had given up singing in society concerts when his voice changed, but apparently had continued to sing for the pleasure of it.

⁵ Michaud. *Biographie Universelle Ancienne et Moderne*, 132.

⁶ Fétis. *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens*, 475.

⁷ De la Fage. "Nécrologie." 496. Fétis. *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens*, 475, specifies this length of time from Martin's first performances to his voice change as four years.

⁸ De la Fage. 497; Fétis. 475. If Fétis is correct in stating that he sang at society concerts for four years, with the start of lessons at seven and reading music by nine years, it is presumed that Martin would have been around twelve or thirteen at the time of his voice change.

⁹ De la Fage. "Nécrologie." 497. Candeille was a singer and composer who achieved some small success with the opera *Castor et Pollux*, based on the original opera of Rameau, which received 130 performances between 1791 and 1800.

¹⁰ François-Xavier de Feller. "Blaise Martin." *Biographie Universelle ou Dictionnaire Historique des Hommes*, vol. 5 (Paris: J. Leroux, Jouby et Ce. 1849), 536.

¹¹ De la Fage. "Nécrologie." 497.

with no evidence of vocal study.¹² How Martin found his new career path from playing the violin to singing on the stage with no previous vocal or stage training cannot be definitely determined at this time, although various accounts of why Martin chose a career in singing do exist. One account found in Péricaud cited that Martin was playing second violin in the orchestra at the Opéra-Comique and the conductor at the time, Henri Berton (1767-1844), heard Martin humming an ariette and asked him to sing something for him. It was at this time that Martin was recommended for a career on the stage by the conductor because of his remarkable instrument.¹³ Another account in De la Fage cited that Garat, a teacher of singing, had heard Martin sing and encouraged him in this direction.¹⁴ Even a third account, that has the essence of a fable, concerns several of Martin's friends that one day encouraged him to sing for them:

Après s'être fait un peu prier, il se tira d'affaire avec une telle supériorité, que tous ceux qui l'écoutaient demeurèrent ravis d'admiration, et s'écrièrent tous d'une voix, que Martin devait briser son violon, puisqu'il possédait en lui-même un instrument bien supérieur à celui qu'il quitterait.¹⁵

[After having been pressed a little, he pulled through with such superiority that all those who were listening were carried away with admiration, and cried all in one voice that Martin should break his violin, because he possessed in himself an instrument far superior to the one that he would leave behind.]

It was then after some singing in amateur circles and society concerts that Martin, with either outside encouragement or his own self-assurance, presented

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Louis Péricaud, *Théâtre de "Monsieur"* (Paris: E. Jorel, 1908), 24.

¹⁴ De la Fage, "Nécrologie," 497. Probably Pierre Garat (1762-1823), a French tenor and baritone and singing teacher. See Philip Robinson, "Pierre Garat," *New Grove*, 2d ed., vol. 9, 518-19.

¹⁵ Ibid.

himself again at the Opéra to fill a vacancy, not as a violinist, but as an opera singer. Though it is almost certain that Martin had no proper vocal training after his change of voice, he had been encouraged in this area enough to seek this important audition on what appears to be natural ability alone. Martin was not accepted, however, having been judged by the audition panel to not have “assez de creux.”¹⁶ his voice lacking in depth or hollow. There were then certain physical limits to Martin’s instrument, which most likely included a lack of volume in the proper range required of a bass voice singing the current repertoire of the Opéra.

Martin continued to pursue singing after this audition, and could be found participating in concerts given at the Hôtel de Bullion, on the rue Plâtrière. Martin joined other amateur singers there and would sing popular selections of the time, which included arias “empruntée à l’Italie”¹⁷ [borrowed from Italy]. Italian vocal music had been popular in Paris since a performance in that city of *La serva padrona* (comp. 1733) by Giovanni Battista Pergolesi (1710-1736), which was given in 1752, and the French fascination with Italian music, especially vocal music, continued to grow throughout the century. In addition to the concerts at the Bullion, Martin was again invited to sing at society concerts, as he had done in his youth. These concerts put Martin before the public, and he was now known as one of the better amateur singers in Paris.

¹⁶ *Biographie des Hommes Vivants*, 366.

¹⁷ Fétis, *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens*, 476.

By 1788, Martin had achieved what would seem to be a certain amount of success and was presented as a possible baritone for the "L'Opéra français" or "French troupe" of a new theater being formed in Paris, the Théâtre de Monsieur.¹⁸ Founded by Léonard-Alexis Autié, the hairdresser to Queen Marie Antoinette, and Viotti,¹⁹ the Théâtre de Monsieur was created to rival the officially sanctioned Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique by presenting all manner of theatrical productions except for opéras-comiques. The Opéra-Comique, also known as the Théâtre Favart after the name of the theater in which they played, held a monopoly on the presentation of newly-composed opéras-comiques in Paris, which was their sole repertoire. Their new rival, the Théâtre de Monsieur, obtained a right granted to the "monsieur" of the title, the Comte de Provence, who would be eventually crowned King Louis XVIII, by his brother, Louis XVI, to present many varied entertainments. The theater would include three troupes, including the "French troupe," which would primarily present "parodies"²⁰ of Italian operas in the French language, the "Italian troupe," which would perform opera buffas in the original Italian, and a third troupe

¹⁸ Jean Mongrédien, *French Music from the Enlightenment to Romanticism: 1789-1830*, trans. Sylvain Frémaux (Portland, Ore.: Amadeus Press, 1996), 91.

¹⁹ James R. Anthony, "Paris: Opera Companies, Theatres," *New Grove*, 2d ed., vol. 19, 104.

²⁰ Elisabeth Cook and Stanley Sadie, "Parody," *New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, ed. Stanley Sadie, vol. 3 (London: Macmillan Press Limited, 1992), 889. The term parody at this time in France refers to the translating of a foreign work into the vernacular. Parodies of Italian operas were especially popular at this time and were not meant to ridicule the work being parodied. Parodies did not alter any musical elements, except where declamation required it, and whenever censorship demanded it. These translations were not always successful in terms of proper declamation, however. Michael Robinson, "Opera buffa into opéra comique, 1771-90," ed. Malcolm Boyd, *Music and the French Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 46-47. The most successful work of this style in the latter part of the eighteenth century was *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (1782), in which the original music of the Italian composer Paisiello (1740-1816) was written to a translation in the same rhyme scheme as the original French Beaumarchais play. Therefore the original text only had to be reinserted in place of the Italian, solving any declamation problems.

which would perform spoken French comédies. Italian opera in Paris had experienced an especially renewed interest since the summer of 1787.²¹ when an Italian troupe in residence at Versailles began performing Italian operas in their original language. The success enjoyed by this troupe of players may have encouraged the formation of the new theater, and contributed to early repertoire choices as well.²² It was for the “French troupe” of singers, performing in a theater at the Tuileries, that Martin was accepted, under the designation “amoureux concordant”²³ [harmonious lover], without any previous theatrical experience.²⁴

Martin made his début in an Italian opera parody, *Le Marquis Tulipano* (Paris: Théâtre de Monsieur, 28 January 1789),²⁵ with French text attributed to Charles-Joseph-Antoine Gourbillon, set to the music of Giovanni Paisiello (1740-1816),²⁶ after his opera *Il matrimonio inaspettato* (1779).²⁷ This work had been performed with great success in the summers of 1787 and 1788 by the Italian troupe at

²¹ François Henri Joseph Castil-Blaze, *L'Opéra-Italien de 1548 à 1856* (Paris: Castil-Blaze, 1856), 258.

²² *Ibid.*, 261-2. The Théâtre de Monsieur gave its premiere performance in the theater at the Tuileries 26 January 1789 with a performance given by the Italian troupe of the opera *Le Vicende amorose* (1787), music by Giacomo Tritto (1733-1824).

²³ Péricaud, “Monsieur,” 19.

²⁴ “Spectacles: Théâtre de Monsieur,” *Journal de Paris* (30 January 1789): 137. All sources are unanimous in listing this work as Martin’s début, with no mention of previous amateur productions. The criticisms of Martin’s early stage ability seem to bear out his lack of experience.

²⁵ *Ibid.* Some accounts give Martin’s début as 1788, but the theatre did not open until 26 January 1789.

²⁶ “Spectacles: Théâtre de Monsieur,” *Journal de Paris* (28 January 1789): 129. Vapereau, *Dictionnaire Universel des Contemporains*, 1277, is the only source that claims that *Le Marquis Tulipano* was translated specifically for Martin, which is difficult to prove or disprove. Castil-Blaze, *L'Opéra-Italien*, 258, cites the work entitled *Il Marchese di Tulipano* (*Il matrimonio inaspettato*) as the début work for the new Italian troupe at Versailles in the summer of 1787, and was very popular, given thirty performances in three months. This could account for a demand of the work in a French translation for the Théâtre de Monsieur. If this work was translated for Martin, then it begs the question whether he was hired because of his vocal suitability to this work in particular.

²⁷ The title of the parody comes from the theatrical work on which it was based, Chiari’s *Il marchese Villano*.

Versailles,²⁸ and the theater was no doubt counting on its continued popularity with the Parisian public. The new parody was an enormous success, was given again immediately the following night,²⁹ and was presented numerous times at the theater over the next several months.³⁰ De la Fage recounts Martin's first success:

Son succès fut inimaginable. La beauté de sa voix, et surtout le tour de chant qu'il sut donner aux mélodies du grand Paisiello, l'un de ces êtres privilégiés, véritables types des douces et gracieuses inspirations, de l'élégance et de la pureté du style, augmentèrent aux yeux des amateurs le mérite de la composition.³¹

[His success was unimaginable. The beauty of his voice, and above all the turn of song that he gave the great Paisiello's melodies, one of those privileged beings. His real types of soft and gracious inspirations, of elegance and of purity of style, increased the merit of the composition in amateur's eyes.]

The *Journal de Paris* of 30 January 1789 agrees as to the success of the work.

judging *Le Marquis de Tulipano* to have given "le plus grand plaisir. Les charman(t)s morceaux de musique dont cet Opéra est rempli ont été applaudis avec transport"³²

[the greatest pleasure. The many charming pieces of music of this opera were

applauded with rapture]. The reviewer chose only two performers from the work for

special notice. Mme. le Sage for her fine singing and good pronunciation, and

Monsieur Martin, the "jeune Acteur qui n'avoit [avait] paru sur aucun Théâtre. [et

possédait] de la voix, de la facilité, du goût, & une grande aptitude à la scène"³³ [the

²⁸ Castil-Blaze, *L'Opéra-Italien*, 258.

²⁹ "Spectacles: Théâtre de Monsieur." *Journal de Paris* (29 January 1789): 133.

³⁰ "Spectacles: Théâtre de Monsieur." *Journal de Paris* (6 February 1789): 166. The theater was already presenting the 6th performance of the work by this date.

³¹ De la Fage, "Nécrologie," 497.

³² "Spectacles." (30 January 1789): 137.

³³ *Ibid.*

young actor who had never appeared in any theater, for his voice, facility, taste, and a great aptitude to the stage]. In the following months, Martin continued to appear in *Le Marquis Tulipano*, as well as other French parodies, with such great success that the generally poor quality of the translations could be overlooked. Another parody in which Martin sang was entitled *L'Antiquaire* (9 March 1789).³⁴ Announced in advertisements as a parody of an Italian opera buffa with music by Pasquale Anfossi (1727-1797),³⁵ the attribution of this work is in question, and may be by Crispini.³⁶

Martin's next major success was in the role of Crispin in *Le Nouveau Don Quichotte* (25 May 1789).³⁷ text by Baron Thomas-Charles-Gaston Boissel de Monville (1763-1832).³⁸ music by Stanislas Champein (1753-1830). This work was originally billed as an Italian operatic parody of an "opera bouffon" by a "Signor Zaccharelli"³⁹ to avoid censure from the official house for opéras-comiques, the Théâtre Favart. In reality *Le Nouveau Don Quichotte* was actually a newly-composed opéra-comique by Champein, and became Martin's first opportunity to create a new role in a French work. In this new work De la Fage notes that Martin "ne compta plus que des admirateurs, tant pour son jeu que pour son chant"⁴⁰ [counted only admirers, as much for his acting as for his singing].

³⁴ "Spectacles: Théâtre de Monsieur." *Journal de Paris* (9 March 1789): 314.

³⁵ Félix Clément and Pierre Larousse, *Dictionnaire des Opéras*, rev. Arthur Pougin, vol. 1 (Paris: Librairie Larousse, 1905; reprint, New York: Da Capo Press, 1969), 65.

³⁶ Péricaud, Théâtre de "Monsieur," 32. Ethyl L. Will and Elisabeth Cook, "Ludwig Wenzel Lachnith," *New Grove*, 2d ed., vol. 14, 97. Ludwig Wenzel Lachnith (1746-1820) also has been credited with this work.

³⁷ "Spectacles: Théâtre de Monsieur." *Journal de Paris* (25 May 1789): 658.

³⁸ Hoefler, *Nouvelle Biographie Générale*, vol. 6, 454-55.

³⁹ "Spectacles." (25 May 1789): 658.

⁴⁰ De la Fage, "Nécrologie," 497.

Though Martin received much positive encouragement regarding his stage abilities, by all accounts he had not been trained as either an actor or a singer, and was “apprenticed” on the stage.⁴¹ Fétis cited a story that Martin was quite inept at stage movement in his first productions, so clumsy in fact that the staff at the theater was compelled to trace the positions in his different scenes on the floorboards of the stage.⁴² By the premiere of *Le Nouveau Don Quichotte* in May of 1789, Martin had apparently made some improvement in his stage ability, and over the next several years would continue to develop his stagecraft.

During the first years of its formation the Théâtre de Monsieur was a worthy competitor to the Opéra-Comique and Martin was a major element in this success. However, in 1791, when the three troupes of the theater moved into their elegant new surroundings in the new Salle Feydeau, the rivalry would reach a new level. The French troupe had moved from the original theater at the Tuileries to a theater at the Foire St. Germain for the year 1790, but in 1791 the French troupe joined together with the other two troupes of the Monsieur, taking up permanent residence in the Salle Feydeau. The Feydeau was a newly built theater situated “very close to the Grand Opéra as well as to Salle Favart.”⁴³ with a seating capacity of around 1800 people. This capacity far outdistanced the seating for around 1200 of the rival Salle Favart in which the Opéra-Comique performed. In addition, the Salle Feydeau

⁴¹ Ibid. The fact that there appears to be no evidence of vocal study or of stage training for Martin astounds De la Fage, who traces any criticisms of Martin’s singing style to this lack of education.

⁴² Fétis, *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens*, 476.

⁴³ Mongrédien, *French Music*, 91.

possessed a very elegant atmosphere in which important people enjoyed being seen. In this new theater the Théâtre de Monsieur would be referred to as the Théâtre de la rue Feydeau, which was shortened to Théâtre Feydeau, while the Opéra-Comique was known as the Théâtre Favart. The rivalry was also fueled further when the Feydeau began producing French opéras-comiques in direct opposition to the Favart, of which the first publicly acknowledged work was *Lodoïska* (1791), music by Luigi Cherubini (1760-1842). It was in the year 1792 that in one of these new works Martin would portray the character that would determine the rest of his career.

During the spring of 1792, the playwright Louis-Benoît Picard (1769-1828) and composer François Devienne (1759-1803) cast Martin in the role of Frontin, the long-suffering servant of Belfort, in *Les Visitandines*, a “comédie mêlée d’ariettes.”⁴⁴ which was to premiere that summer in the Salle Feydeau. The role of the servant Frontin would provide the foundation of Martin’s career, and he would epitomize what would be known as the “valet fripon.”⁴⁵ the quick-witted and mischievous valet.⁴⁶ Such comic servant roles developed out of the stock characters of the Commedia dell’arte tradition known as “zanni.” The opera was an enormous success, being given 79 performances in its first year alone.⁴⁷ The subject matter of

⁴⁴ Literally, a comedy blended with songs, a title given to early opéras-comiques.

⁴⁵ Jean Gourret, *Histoire de l’Opéra-Comique*, preface by Jean Giraudeau (Paris: Les Publications Universitaires, 1978), 92.

⁴⁶ De la Fage, “Nécrologie,” 500. De la Fage states that Martin’s success was exclusively in the role of the valet, with the exception of Dormeuil in *Les Voitures versées*. Michaud, *Biographie Universelle Ancienne et Moderne*, 132, claims that the role of Frontin would place Martin in “la genre de comique convenable.”

⁴⁷ Sherwood Dudley, introduction to François Devienne, *Les Visitandines: comédie mêlée d’ariettes*, French Opera in the 17th and 18th Centuries, vol. 72a (Stuyvesant, New York: Pendragon Press, 1992), xvii.

Les Visitandines, which concerned irreverent behavior, especially of Frontin and Belfort, at a convent, also had a great deal to do with the success of the work: during the Revolution, anti-religious sentiment was running high, and Picard meant to capitalize on it. *Les Visitandines* gained Martin a high reputation among the theater-going public, and future roles would be tailored specifically for his talents. Martin continued to appear in other works at the Théâtre Feydeau, including a new three-act version of *Les Visitandines* in June of 1793, with new material added for his character.⁴⁸ As Martin's reputation increased, it was said that he alone could rival the popularity of the "l'ancienne Comédie italienne" of Paris.⁴⁹

The early success of Martin, due mostly to his remarkable voice, also owes a debt to the desire by Parisians for theatrical works in a lighter vein. At the time previous to the Revolution the genre of opéra-comique had moved towards serious and sentimental subjects as seen in the opéras-comiques of André-Ernest-Modeste Grétry (1741-1813) and Nicolas-Marie Dalayrac (1753-1809). But with the "Terreur" came a need for lighter comedy to relieve the fear that enveloped the city. And so in the French capital, comedy was again at the forefront of the repertoire of the Feydeau and Favart, and opéras-comiques were becoming at this time more energetic and vivacious.

⁴⁸ See chapter 3 regarding the three-act version of *Les Visitandines*.

⁴⁹ Fétis, *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens*, 476. This title refers to the rival Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique.

By varying accounts, it was in either the year 1794⁵⁰ or 1795⁵¹ that Martin made a decision to leave the Théâtre Feydeau to join the troupe at the rival Théâtre Favart, which since 1793 had been known as the Opéra-Comique National.⁵² This was surely an unfortunate blow to the Feydeau, where Martin was a major attraction. But at the Favart, Martin joined a roster that included some of the best actor-singers in Paris, including Jean Elleviou (1769-1842), Simon Chénard (1758-1831), Louise Dugazon (1755-1821), and Jean Gavaudan (1772-1840), the last having moved there with Martin from the Feydeau. It was with this troupe of players that Martin's name would be forever associated, and he would perform with this theater almost continuously for nearly thirty years, until his retirement in 1823. At the Favart, Martin was given a greater variety and higher quality of roles to sing, and his fellow singers were among the best comedians in Paris.

The tenor Elleviou was paired with Martin in many of the most successful opéras-comiques of this period, up until the tenor's retirement from the stage in 1813. Given the nickname of "L'Empereur"⁵³ [the Emperor] because of his commanding authority on stage, Elleviou was said to be able to elevate even a mediocre work with his performance. He was often cast as an officer or member of royalty with Martin cast as his valet or servant. Composers considered themselves very fortunate if both Elleviou and Martin were cast in their new production, the two singers ensuring a well-executed performance. The two singers were close friends as well.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Mongrédien, *French Music*, 93.

⁵² Fétis, *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens*, 476.

⁵³ Gourret, *Histoire de l'Opéra-Comique*, 90.

As Martin continued to develop as a comedian, he would become associated with two important figures that would take the natural dramatic ability on which he relied and transform it into strong theatrical craft. These two men were Jean-Baptiste-Henri Dugazon (1743-1809),⁵⁴ a professor of declamation at the Paris Conservatoire, and Francois-Joseph Talma (1763-1826).⁵⁵ also a professor at the Conservatoire. Talma was a well-known tragedian and highly-praised actor who was one of the first to seek historical accuracy in costume and stage setting. Martin's greatly improved acting skill was due in large part to the work of these two men.

From the time he joined the Favart in 1794 or 1795 until 1801, when the Feydeau and Favart merged, Martin appeared in many notable opéras-comiques. Included among them were *Le Secret* (20 April 1796), music by Jean-Pierre Solié, *Gulnare, ou l'Esclave Persane* (9 January 1798), music by Nicolas-Marie Dalayrac (1753-1809), and the popular *Zoraïme et Zulnare* (5 October 1798), which was the first major success by the young composer François-Adrien Boïeldieu (1775-1834). In Favre's biography on Boïeldieu, Martin and the tenor Elleviou are praised for their participation in this work. "L'oeuvre est 'jouée avec perfection jusque dans les rôles les moins saillants.' En tête de la distribution figurent deux jeunes chanteurs, le baryton Martin et le ténor Elleviou, qui vont bientôt devenir les interprètes favoris de

⁵⁴ Lassabathie, *Histoire du Conservatoire*, 430. Professor Dugazon gave his first lesson the 20 June 1786.

⁵⁵ Ibid. 445. The entry on page 9 regarding Talma reads as follows: "Talma, qui débuta au Théâtre-Français en 1787, est le premier Tragédien sorti de cette Classe. Il fut admis comme Élève le 13 juillet 1786, après avoir répété le rôle de *Xipharès* de *Mithridate*. Il demeurait alors rue Mauconseil."

Boïeldieu”⁵⁶ [the work is played to perfection even in the least prominent roles. Heading the cast were two young singers, the baritone Martin and the tenor Elleviou, who were to become the favorite interpreters of Boïeldieu]. Martin and Elleviou would eventually pair in several of the composer’s operas, including also *Beniowski, ou les Exilés du Kamtschatka* (8 June 1800).⁵⁷

In early 1801, *L'Irato* (17 February 1801), music by Étienne-Nicolas Méhul (1763-1817), was perhaps one of the most notable successes of this period. The work was originally billed in pre-performance publicity as a parody of an “opéra bouffon italien,” music by Fiorelli,⁵⁸ but was in fact an original work by the Frenchman Méhul. This publicity was meant to capitalize on the craze for Italian opera at the time and to demonstrate to Méhul’s critics that his music could indeed exhibit the finest qualities found in Italian operas. Though not overly Italianate in style, the work fooled many and was a success. *L'Irato* is also one example of the difficulty some composers had writing for Martin’s extensive range and talents. Though Méhul had composed for the singer previously, as in *La caverne* (5 December 1795), Bartlet supposes that he wrote as many as three different airs for the character of Scapin before he succeeded in writing an air particularly suited to Martin’s talents.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Georges Favre, *Boïeldieu, Sa Vie – Son Oeuvre*, vol. 1 (Paris: Librairie E. Droz, 1944; reprint Genève: Slatkine Reprints, 1977), 98.

⁵⁷ Clément and Larousse, *Dictionnaire des Opéras*, vol. 1, 144-45.

⁵⁸ Mary Elizabeth Caroline Bartlet, “Étienne-Nicolas Méhul and Opera During the French Revolution, Consulate and Empire: a source, archival, and stylistic study,” 5 vols. (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1982), 544-45.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 553-556. Please see chapter 2 for more specific information.

It was during Martin's early tenure at the Théâtre Favart that he made his own contribution to the opéra-comique genre. As mentioned earlier, Martin had studied composition with Candeille many years earlier during the period of his violin study,⁶⁰ and in 1796, he composed a one-act opéra-comique entitled *Les Oiseaux de Mer*,⁶¹ given at the Théâtre Feydeau.⁶² As for the outcome of the work, it was claimed to have "obtint quelque succès" [obtained a little success] by De la Fage,⁶³ though Fétis states only that it was not revived.⁶⁴ The *Dictionnaire Universel des Contemporains* blames its poor reception on a weak libretto.⁶⁵ Whatever the reasons for its limited run, it did not stay in the repertoire. Martin also composed many romances, songs for simple accompaniment on the piano or harp, including one entitled "Mon coeur soupire dès l'aurore," published in 1799.⁶⁶

In 1801, after a financial crisis that threatened to close both theaters, the Théâtres Feydeau and Favart merged to establish one combined theater, continuing under the name of the Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique National, moving into the Salle Feydeau. Only two singers refused to join the new venture, the most popular singers of the day. Elleviou left the theater in late spring of 1801 with Martin, who was "presque son frère"⁶⁷ [like a brother], to sing in the provinces, leaving before the end

⁶⁰ De la Fage, "Nécrologie," 497.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Philip Robinson, "Jean-Blaise Martin," *New Grove*, 2d ed., vol. 15, 914. No date of premiere has been located.

⁶³ De la Fage, "Nécrologie," 497.

⁶⁴ Fétis, *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens*, 477.

⁶⁵ *Dictionnaire Universel des Contemporains*, 1277.

⁶⁶ Jean-Blaise Martin, *Romance* (Paris: Frères Gaveaux, 1799). Though the music was not available to this author, a copy resides in the library at Oxford.

⁶⁷ Arthur Pougin, *Figures d'Opéra-Comique: Madame Dugazon, Elleviou, Les Gavaudan* (Paris: Tresse, 1875; reprint, Genève: Minkoff, 1973), 93.

of the season. This departure by the two lead singers was apparently sparked by a disagreement regarding fees for their singing. The administration was concerned that the success or failure of the newly merged Opéra-Comique National would in large part be determined by the return of these two singers.⁶⁸ It was well known that the tenor and baritone were the Opéra-Comique's two biggest theatrical draws, and they were relied on to bring in the most receipts. Elleviou and Martin each turned down new offers, and in a letter to the "sociétaires de Feydeau" refused to return.⁶⁹ In desperation the theater sought the assistance of the French Minister of the Interior as mediator between the management and Elleviou and Martin, in addition to requesting a much-needed government subsidy for the theater. While the mediation was in progress, the question of whether Elleviou and Martin would return to the Opéra-Comique was a topic discussed widely throughout Paris and there was great relief when it was finally announced that an agreement had been reached that would guarantee their return to the company, and that the government would grant a subsidy to the Opéra-Comique National.⁷⁰ With this subsidy the Opéra-Comique was then able to resume operation in September of 1801, and Martin and Elleviou would return to enjoy some of the most productive years of their theatrical careers.⁷¹

⁶⁸ Arthur Pougin, *L'Opéra Comique Pendant La Révolution De 1788 à 1801* (Paris, Nouvelle Librairie Parisienne, 1891; reprint, Genève: Minkoff, 1973), 271.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 275-76.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 276-77. The subsidy amounted to 50,000 francs, with the provision that all obligations of the company would be to the government.

⁷¹ Favre, *Boïeldieu*, 134, footnote 1. It was only a year after the near loss of Martin and Elleviou in 1801 that another threat to the stability of the Opéra-Comique loomed. When Boïeldieu decided to leave Paris for St. Petersburg to head the French Court Theater for Tzar Alexander I, he wanted to take Martin and Elleviou with him, along with other Parisian singers. Though Boïeldieu succeeded in convincing some performers to leave, the two singers decided to stay in Paris.

According to their agreement, the two singers were included as sociétaires, members of the administration set up to run the new theater, and were allowed participation in the artistic direction of the theater. Both singers profited from shares in the new venture, and they received the bigger share of the governmental subsidy granted the Opéra-Comique, and "cet avantage était acquis à deux artistes sur qui reposait toute la fortune de ce spectacle"⁷² [this benefit was given to the two artists on whom all the success of this theater depended].

With the duo of Martin and Elleviou back on stage, it did not take long for the company to regain its audience. *Une Folie* (5 April 1802), music by Méhul, starred both singers and was an even greater success than *L'Irato* the year before. *Maison à vendre* (23 October 1800),⁷³ music by Dalayrac, was praised both for the music and the cast. In the same year, *Le Concert interrompu* (30 May 1802), a revised version of *Les deux sous-lieutenants, ou le Concert interrompu* (1792) of Henri Berton (1767-1844), gave Martin an opportunity to display his facility on the violin, executing an instrumental duet with fellow singer Chénard playing violoncello.

Ma tante Aurore, ou le Roman impromptu (13 January 1803), music by Boïeldieu, was a great success for Martin, though the work had a difficult premiere. The first act ended with a successful uproar of applause, and the second act also received decent applause, but the third act was received very poorly. The work was intended as a spoof of an English romance novel, and the third act turned much darker

⁷² Fetis, *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens*, 476.

⁷³ David Charlton, "Nicolas-Marie Dalayrac," *New Grove*, 2d ed., vol. 6, 845.

in tone. The audience erupted into a fury and the performance was barely able to continue. After opening night, the offensive material was excised, shortening the three-act work to two acts, which was far more successfully received. One of the casualties of the third act was an air sung by Martin. "Deux jeunes gens s'aimaient d'amour." but in spite of the removal of the air, the audience always insisted it be excerpted.⁷⁴ This air was a highlight of the work. "une délicieuse romance, composée sur trois notes, dite dans la perfection par Martin-*nourrice*"⁷⁵ [a delicious romance, composed on three notes, sung to perfection by the "nanny Martin"]. *Ma tante Aurore* was a great success for Martin. The *Courrier des Spectacles* judged that "Martin surtout, joue le rôle de Frontin avec beaucoup d'intelligence, et il le chante avec un goût et une pureté qui enlèvent tous les suffrages"⁷⁶ [Martin above all, plays the role of Frontin with great intelligence, and he sings with such taste and purity that he walks away with all the votes].

In this same year Martin played the role of Mèrival, the pretender to Lucile, in *Les Confidences* (31 March 1803), his first appearance of many in works by the composer Nicolò Isouard (16 May 1773/6 Dec 1775- 23 March 1818).⁷⁷ *Picaros et Diego, ou la folle soirée* (3 May 1803),⁷⁸ music by Dalayrac, premiered soon after. *Le baiser et la quittance, ou une aventure de garnison* (18 June 1803), a musical pastiche

⁷⁴ *Dictionnaire Universelle des Contemporains*, 1277.

⁷⁵ Favre, *Boieldieu*, 124.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 126.

⁷⁷ Marie Briquet/David Charlton, Hervé Lacombe, "Nicolò Isouard," *New Grove*, 2d ed., vol. 12, p. 623. Two possible birthdates are given.

⁷⁸ Clément and Larousse, *Dictionnaire des Opéras*, vol. 2, 875. *Picaros et Diego* was originally titled *L'Antichambre, ou les Valets entre eux*, which premiered 27 February 1802.

with music by Méhul, Isouard, Rodolphe Kreutzer (1766-1831), and Boïeldieu, was a rare failure, blamed for the most part on the weak "livret" [libretto].⁷⁹ *Les deux aveugles de Tolèdes* (28 January 1806), music by Méhul, was also not well received.

The exoticism of the Orient became a popular subject for opéras-comiques during this period. Martin appeared in at least five works of this type, including the previously mentioned *Gulnare, ou l'esclave Persane* (Favart: 30 December 1797), music by Dalayrac; *Zoraïme et Zulnare* (Favart: 10 May 1798), and *Le Calife de Bagdad*, (Favart: 16 September 1800), both with music by Boïeldieu; *Gulistan, ou le Hulla de Samarcande* (Feydeau: 30 September 1805), and *Koulouf, ou Les Chinois* (Feydeau, 18 December 1806), both with music again by Dalayrac. The representation of the Far East was rarely exhibited in the music itself, any attempt at exoticism found only in the stage settings and costumes. One exception can be found in Boïeldieu's *Le Calife de Bagdad*, where *col legno* effects by the string section were meant to evoke some local colour of the Orient.⁸⁰ Of all these works *Le Calife de Bagdad* was by far the most successful, performed 800 times by the mid-nineteenth century.⁸¹ and revived for many later productions.

⁷⁹ Favre, *Boieldieu*, 130.

⁸⁰ Georges Favre and Thomas Betzweiser, "Boieldieu," *New Grove*, 2d ed., vol. 3, 805.

⁸¹ Elizabeth Forbes, "*Calife de Bagdad, Le*," *New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, vol. 1, 689.

As the second decade of the nineteenth century began, the subject of troubadours enjoyed a renewed interest, with Martin cast in at least three works of this type. Works on this subject included *Les troubadours, ou la fête au château* (comp. 1810), music by Méhul, in rehearsal in June of 1810 but never performed.⁸² the enormously popular *Jean de Paris* (4 April 1812), music by Boïeldieu, deemed by Carl Maria von Weber to be a work of great achievement,⁸³ and *Le prince troubadour, ou le grand trompeur des dames* (24 May 1813), music also by Méhul.

Martin also appeared in works loosely based on the lives of famous composers in two works by Isouard. The first was an opéra-comique entitled *Cimarosa* (28 June 1808), based on the life of the Italian composer. In 1812 Martin portrayed on stage the most famous composer in French operatic history, Jean-Baptiste Lully in *Lully et Quinault, ou le déjeuner impossible* (27 February 1812). *Lully et Quinault* was an attempt by Isouard to keep favor with the Parisian public after the return of Boïeldieu to Paris in 1811. Boïeldieu had left for Russia in 1803, and with the composer away, the Maltese-born Isouard gradually ascended as the premier composer of opéras-comiques. Though Isouard's music was unsophisticated, his works were full of an energy and vivacity that appealed to the public. Isouard's first success, *Les Confidences* (31 March 1803), premiered only two months after Boïeldieu's *Ma tante*

⁸² Bartlet, "Étienne-Nicolas Méhul," 685. *Les troubadours* was originally scheduled in April of 1810, but Martin was recuperating from an unspecified illness and did not return to the theater until after other members of the cast, including Elleviou, had left with Napoléon and Marie-Louise for a tour of the Empire on 27 April 1810. Therefore, rehearsals did not begin until the cast could be assembled after their return in early June, and sometime soon after that the work was shelved without receiving a performance.

⁸³ Elizabeth Forbes, "Jean de Paris," *New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, vol. 2, 887.

Aurore (13 January 1803), and Isouard's popularity continued to grow. Upon Boïeldieu's return, Martin, who had starred in both *Ma tante Aurore* and *Les Confidences* in 1803, was again starring in successive works by these two popular composers.

For the first presentation upon his return Boïeldieu presented an opéra-comique that had been originally written for St. Petersburg (25 December 1810), *Rien de trop, ou les deux paravants* (Feydeau: 19 April 1811), which was a success. Favre cites a letter from Boïeldieu to his amie, the singer Jenny Philis-Bertin, with whom he lived in St. Petersburg and would later marry, describing the premiere of *Rien de trop* and detailing some of Martin's participation:

Ah ! ma bonne Jenny, quel succès!...l'air de Martin, ont commencé à me prouver que l'on aimait cette musique. Martin craignait d'être essoufflé avant de commencer son *andante*: il a eu le temps de se reposer par les applaudissements. A la fin de l'*andante*, grand fracas, mais au trio...le public a été pris d'assaut...Les couplets de Martin, *bis, bis, bis*, et mon petit duo n'a pas manqué son coup...applaudi au milieu et à trois reprises, au point que Martin et Chénard ne pouvaient continuer...Martin avait peur, et l'intérêt qu'il me porte, dit-il, en a été la cause; cependant il a chanté comme un ange et joué avec beaucoup de gaieté sa scène de Robinette...il a manqué son entrée aux paravents, cela a failli nous être funeste: mais sitôt que la musique a commencé, l'inquiétude a disparu.⁸⁴

[Ah, my good Jenny, what success!...the air of Martin began to prove to me that they liked the music. Martin feared to be out of breath before beginning the *andante*, but he had time to rest during the applause. At the end of the *andante* the audience responded madly, but at the trio...the public attacked... The couplets of Martin, *encore, encore, encore*, and my little duet did not miss its target...applauded in the middle and three other times, to the point where Martin and Chénard could not continue...Martin was afraid, and it was his interest in me that caused it, but he sang like an angel and played with much gaiety his role of Robinette...he missed his entrance from behind the

⁸⁴ Favre, *Boieldieu*, 175.

screens, and this was nearly a disaster for us, but once the music started, worries disappeared.]

Boïeldieu's next presentation was a new work entitled *Jean de Paris* (4 April 1812), starring Elleviou and Martin. This opéra-comique would be one of the most successful works in Boïeldieu's career, remaining in the repertory of the Opéra-Comique until 1862.⁸⁵ and would only be surpassed in his oeuvre in popularity and number of performances by the work that would prove to be the culmination of his long career, the opéra-comique *La dame blanche* (10 December 1825).⁸⁶ The *Journal de Paris* claimed *Jean de Paris* a triumph, and Martin, Elleviou, and the rest of the cast "ont parfaitement secondé cet aimable compositeur"⁸⁷ [assisted perfectly well this amiable composer].

Jean de Paris would be the last pairing of the legendary duo of Elleviou and Martin. In 1813, when negotiating salary for the next season, Elleviou, the top star at the Opéra-Comique at this time, made the outrageous salary demand for an increase of forty percent over his previous year's wages, from the already high fee of 84,000 francs he was receiving in 1811 to the unheard of sum of 120,000 francs for 1812.⁸⁸ Even Napoléon was outraged and was opposed to meeting Elleviou's demands. Elleviou refused to settle for a lesser amount and retired at the end of the 1812-1813 season. He left Paris and moved to Ronzières, near Lyon, giving up his career in the

⁸⁵ Alfred Loewenberg, *Annals of Opera: 1597-1940*, with an introduction by Edward J. Dent, 3d ed., rev. and cor. (Totowa, N. J.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1978), 625.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 698-699. Loewenberg states that *La Dame Blanche* played 1000 performances at the Opéra-Comique by 1862.

⁸⁷ "Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique: *Jean de Paris*," *Journal de Paris* (6 April 1812): 2.

⁸⁸ Gourret, *Histoire de l'Opéra-Comique*, 91.

theater to enter local politics. The withdrawal of Elleviou had enormous ramifications for Martin, who would now have first position at the Opéra-Comique. The baritone now alone represented the biggest single draw for the theater, much as he had years earlier at the Théâtre de Monsieur, as well as gaining an even more powerful position in the administration of the theater.

Opéras-comiques were now written in which the valet or servant would play the central character in order to feature Martin, and these works included some of the most popular works of the decade. Among these successes were two works by Isouard, *Joconde* (28 February 1814),⁸⁹ and *Jeannot et Colin* (17 October 1814), *La Sérénade* (16 September 1818), music by Sophie Gail (1775-1819),⁹⁰ and two more works of Boïeldieu, *Le petit Chapéron rouge* (30 June 1818), and *Les Voitures versées* (originally St. Petersburg, 1808; revised for Paris, 29 April 1820).⁹¹ Boïeldieu's *Le Nouveau Seigneur de Village* (29 June 1813), most likely Martin's first new opera after the retirement of Elleviou, was somewhat of a disappointment after the spectacular success of *Jean de Paris* the year before. However, while the work itself did not quite meet audience expectation, *Le Nouveau Seigneur de Village* was a success for Martin, proving himself capable of carrying a performance without Elleviou. Boïeldieu dedicated this work to Martin, who was his principal interpreter. the dedication reading as follows:

⁸⁹ See chapter 4.

⁹⁰ Philip Robinson (with Sarah Hibberd), "Sophie Gail," *New Grove*, 2d ed., vol. 9, 423-4. Sophie Gail (1775-1819), was a well-known singer, accompanist and composer. Her fine music was deemed not enough to save the morally degenerate libretto of *La Sérénade*, adapted by S. Gay from the 1694 comedy by J.-F. Regnard.

⁹¹ See chapter 5.

C'est au nom de *Zoraïme*, de *Ma Tante Aurore* et de *Jean de Paris*, qui te doivent une grande part de leur succès, que je t'offre la dédicace du *Nouveau Seigneur de Village*. Tu l'as rendu si aimable, qu'il veut essayer d'acquitter une partie de sa dette auprès de toi, en devenant le gage de la sincère amitié que je t'ai vouée, et de l'admiration que j'ai pour ton beau talent.⁹²

[It is in the name of *Zoraïme*, of *Ma tante Aurore*, and of *Jean de Paris*, which owe you a great part of their success, that I offer to you this dedication of *Nouveau Seigneur de Village*. You have rendered it so pleasing, that this dedication will serve to fulfill a part of the debt owed to you by becoming the promise of the sincere friendship that I have vowed to you, and of the admiration that I have for your wonderful talent.]

In 1816, in addition to his duties at the Opéra-Comique, Martin joined the faculty of the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse for two years, as “professeur de chant déclamé” [professor of declaimed singing], teaching from April 1816 until April 1818.⁹³ For the four years from 1819 to 1822 Martin was listed as a “professeur honoraire”⁹⁴ [professor emeritus].

In 1822, Martin began to notice a slight deterioration in the quality of his voice.⁹⁵ He had wanted to retire two years previous, but had been convinced to stay on at a monetary incentive of 3000 francs.⁹⁶ But Martin wanted to leave while still a success, and he “prit sa retraite le 31 mars 1823, après avoir chanté pendant trente-cinq ans à la scène”⁹⁷ [retired the 31 March 1823, after having sung for thirty-five years on stage]. A number of other factors may have entered into Martin's decision to

⁹² Favre, *Boieldieu*, 184.

⁹³ Lassabathie, *Histoire du Conservatoire*, 439.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 370-73.

⁹⁵ Fétis, *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens*, 476-477.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 477.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.* Fétis states 35 years on the stage, based on the incorrect start of his career in 1788 instead of 1789. Other dates for Martin's retirement include 1822 in *Biographie Universelle Ancienne et Moderne*, and 1821 in De la Fage.

retire beyond any vocal deterioration, including the disbanding of the sociétaire structure of the Opéra-Comique's organization in 1822 or 1823, and the baritone's fourth marriage in 1823. This marriage, to the daughter of the composer Pacini, would support Solié's opinion that Martin, who was now quite wealthy, wanted to enjoy some family life.⁹⁸ This would only be the first of his retirements.

In spite of a "légère altération...dans la pureté de la voix"⁹⁹ [slight alteration in the purity of his voice], Martin's popularity with the Parisian public at this time was high, and is well illustrated by the events at a farewell concert fundraiser for Alexandrine-Marie-Agathe Gavaudan (1781-1850) in 1822. Martin was not in attendance when plans were made for this performance, and he was left off of the program. The audience showed surprise and disapproval that Martin was in the audience, and not on the stage where he was always expected. The following account, included by Pougin from an article that appeared in *Le Miroir*, describes the scene:

On s'aperçoit que Martin n'est pas sur le banc des acteurs, on l'appelle à grands cris: on le voit à la première galerie, les cris redoublent. Le spectacle est interrompu. Martin se lève enfin, on voit qu'il veut parler, on se tait comme s'il allait chanter. Le chanteur, devenu orateur, s'acquitte de ce nouveau rôle avec beaucoup d'aplomb et de mesure: il dit "qu'il se serait fait un plaisir de paraître avec ses camarades, mais qu'il n'avait pas été prévenu." Quelques personnes applaudissent. La majorité se récrie et trouve singulier le fait avancé par Martin: on se donne quelques coups dans un coin du parterre. Huet se lève, s'avance, et commence ainsi: "Notre camarade Martin..." On l'interrompt. Il recommence encore, on l'interrompt de nouveau: on veut voir Martin sur le théâtre où on le voit toujours avec plaisir. Huet parvient enfin à se faire écouter, et dit: "Notre camarade Martin, n'assistant pas à nos assemblées, n'était réellement pas prévenu." On allait demander pourquoi Martin n'assiste pas aux assemblées, où ses lumières pourraient être utiles

⁹⁸ Émile Solié, *Histoire du théâtre Royal de l'Opéra-Comique* (Paris: Chez Tous Les Librairies, 1847), 18.

⁹⁹ Fétis, *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens*, 476.

autant que son talent est agréable sur la scène: mais le calme se rétablit et l'on continue la pièce.¹⁰⁰

[They could see that Martin was not among the actors, and he was called loudly. They could see him in the first gallery, and the shouts increased. The show was interrupted. Martin finally rose, and acted as if he were about to speak, and the people quieted down as if he were going to sing. The singer turned orator, acquitting himself of his new role with much aplomb and serenity, said that he would be happy to appear with his comrades, but he had not been informed. Several people applauded. The majority found Martin's statement unbelievable: some gave several nudges to those seated next to them. Huet rose, stepped forward, and began to speak: "Our comrade Martin..." He was interrupted. He tried again and he was interrupted again: they were demanding to see Martin on the stage where he is always seen with pleasure. Huet finally succeeded in making himself heard, and said: "Our comrade Martin, not being at our meeting, had actually not been notified." They were going to ask why Martin had not participated, where his ideas could be useful as much as his talent was pleasant on the stage: but the calm finally was reestablished and they were able to continue the play.]

This popularity Martin enjoyed with the public would have a profound effect on the number of successful productions of opéras-comiques that were produced outside of Paris. After the initial run of an opéra-comique in Paris, the work usually played the provinces. As opera companies cast these productions, singers were chosen that could sing the repertoire of the great singers of the Opéra-Comique, such as Elleviou, Louise Dugazon, Jean Gavaudan, Marie Trial (1746-1818), Jean-Louis Laruette (1731-1792), and Martin.¹⁰¹ This attempt at recreating the original productions with singers that were as much like the original creators of the roles in voice and character type is standard procedure in many theatrical venues. Therefore, during Martin's life the title of baryton Martin was given to any singer that could

¹⁰⁰ Pougin, *Figures d'Opéra-Comique*, 210-11.

¹⁰¹ *Dictionnaire Universel des Contemporains*, 1277.

execute the roles of Jean-Blaise Martin. The baryton Martin at first was characterized by the vocal qualities of Martin himself, that of a light, high baritone with the timbre of a tenor in the high voice and a baritone timbre in the chest voice.

As baritones were cast to sing the roles of Martin in these various provincial productions, and the number of these productions grew with Martin's long career, the baryton Martin grew in importance. As the century progressed, composers continued writing for the vocal qualities found in the baryton Martin, but expanding beyond valet and servant roles. Some well-known roles originally written for the baryton Martin include Escamillo in *Carmen* (1875), music by Georges Bizet (1838-1875), and Ramiro in *L'Heure espagnole* (1911), music by Maurice Ravel (1875-1937), which were both premiered at the Opéra-Comique.¹⁰²

Martin's retirement, well earned after a career of thirty-four years, was not to last long. In 1826¹⁰³ René Charles Guilbert de Pixérécourt (1773-1844), director of the Opéra-Comique from 1822 to 1827 after the disbanding of the administration of sociétaires, approached Martin and asked him to return to help the financially ailing theater. Martin agreed, after having spent nearly three years in retirement, which had rendered "à sa voix la souplesse et le molleux"¹⁰⁴ [to his voice a suppleness and mellowness]. Martin, in what would be his fifty-eighth year, "étonna encore les

¹⁰² Please see chapter 7 for more information on the baryton Martin.

¹⁰³ Fétis, *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens*, 477; De la Fage, "Nécrologie," 498; and Michaud, *Biographie Générale*, 132, claim that Martin returned "Après 1830," when called to the aid of the theater and performed "plusieurs fois jusqu'en 1833." There is definite evidence of performances in 1828 and earlier.

¹⁰⁴ Fétis, *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens*, 477.

artistes par la vigueur de son exécution dans quelques-uns de ses anciens rôles”¹⁰⁵

[astonished once again the artists by the vigor of his execution in several of his former roles]. Though his voice showed apparent signs of age, Martin could still out-distance all those that came after him, especially regarding character and stage presence.¹⁰⁶ And though several of these performances were reviewed unfavorably, due to his age and lack of vocal power, the audience responded generously to these appearances.¹⁰⁷

Martin appeared in several single-performance benefits or other special events after 1826 as well, having for the most part retreated from the demands of stage roles that required numerous performances. He appeared in a benefit for the pension fund of the theater in 1828,¹⁰⁸ in what appear to be fully staged presentations of *L'Irato* and *Ma tante Aurore*. A performance featuring Martin in a benefit for Louise-Therese-Antoinette Lemonnier (1789-1866) was given at the theater in 1832, with the baritone appearing in a performance of *Lully et Quinault*,¹⁰⁹ and in September of that year he appeared in a performance of *Les Voitures versées* (1820).¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ De la Fage, “Nécrologie,” 498.

¹⁰⁷ Please see chapter 2 for more specific review information.

¹⁰⁸ *Revue Musicale* 3, no. 17 (7 May 1828): 401-2.

¹⁰⁹ *Revue Musicale* 6, no. 8 (24 March 1832): 60-1.

¹¹⁰ *Revue Musicale* 6, no. 35 (29 September 1832): 279.

Martin returned to the Conservatoire de Paris in 1832,¹¹¹ again as “professeur de chant déclamé.” where he would teach until 1837.¹¹² According to De la Fage, his work at the Conservatoire was impressive. “Tous les premiers prix des chants ont appartenu cette année aux élèves de la classe de Martin”¹¹³ [this year all of the first prizes in singing were given to the class of Martin]. In view of his previous retirements, his duties at the Conservatoire, and his apparent loss of vocal strength, it was indeed surprising that in 1833 Martin made an even more substantial return to the stage of the Opéra-Comique.

The Opéra-Comique, still ailing financially, had left the Salle Feydeau in 1829 for a smaller theater, the Salle Ventadour, rue Neuve-Ventadour, which was far from the theatrical center of Paris, and this distance was a problem in keeping attendance high.¹¹⁴ It was for this reason that Martin had been asked to make special appearances during this time. In 1832 they moved to the Théâtre de Nouveautés on the Place de la Bourse,¹¹⁵ and it was for this theater that the director commissioned a new work for Martin from the young composer Fromental Halévy (1799-1862). This one-act work,

¹¹¹ Lassabathie, *Histoire du Conservatoire*, 439. Though the date for reinstatement of Martin at the Conservatoire under his entry in the name index is 1832, no mention of him exists in the yearly list of teachers for 1832 or 1833. Of interest also is the listing for Martin that states he died in Paris, not Ronzières at the home of Elleviou, as is stated in every other source.

¹¹² Ibid. Fétis, *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens*, 477, states that he returned to the Conservatoire in 1825, but no record of this exists in Lassabathie. Hoefer, *Nouvelle Biographie Générale*, 47, states that Martin taught at the Conservatoire from 1820, again not substantiated in Lassabathie.

¹¹³ De la Fage, “Nécrologie,” footnote 1, 498.

¹¹⁴ Mongrédién, *French Music*, 91. Capacity of the Salle Ventadour was 1106.

¹¹⁵ Ibid. Capacity of the Nouveautés was between 1200 and 1300.

entitled *Les Souvenirs de Lafleur*¹¹⁶ (4 March 1833),¹¹⁷ was based on a comédie-vaudeville¹¹⁸ by Pierre-François-Adolphe Carmouche (1797-1868) and Frédéric de Courcy (1795-1862) entitled *La Vieillesse de Frontin* (Paris: Théâtre de Madame, 23 August 1825).¹¹⁹ The new opéra-comique would incorporate music from Martin's past successes over his long and varied career, a summation of one of the greatest careers at the Opéra-Comique. Martin was cast as the aging valet Lafleur, an older version of the character with whom he had so long been associated.¹²⁰

The reviews of the opéra-comique were generally positive, but the audience reception was extremely enthusiastic, especially for Martin. However, at sixty-five years of age Martin could not sustain a long run, and performances were discontinued when he left the show, sometime in 1834. The plot and music were specifically tailored to Martin's talents, and it would have been inadvisable to replace him with another singer. Fittingly, by all accounts Martin's final stage performances were in this role as the valet Lafleur, a culmination of a career that began in 1789, forty-five years earlier. Martin continued to teach at the Conservatoire until 1837, and the *Biographie Universelle ou Dictionnaire Historique* claims that "peu de semaines

¹¹⁶ De la Fage, "Nécrologie," 498. Fétis, *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens*, 477, incorrectly states the title as *La Vieillesse de Lafleur*, a mixture of both the original comédie-vaudeville title of *La Vieillesse de Frontin* and the opéra-comique title of *Les Souvenirs de Lafleur*.

¹¹⁷ Clément and Larousse, *Dictionnaire des Opéras*, vol. 2, 1045. Fétis, *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens*, 477, contains the incorrect date of 1834, although he performed the work into that year.

¹¹⁸ A comédie-vaudeville is primarily a comic play interspersed with popular tunes given new words.

¹¹⁹ Pierre-François-Adolphe Carmouche and Frédéric de Courcy, *La Vieillesse de Frontin* (Paris: Chez Quoy, 1825), 1. From the published comédie-vaudeville. Many other sources give the theater for this work as the Gymnase Dramatique, founded in 1820, which from 1824-1830 was known as the Théâtre de Madame, named for the Duchesse de Berry.

¹²⁰ Please see chapter 6 for more detail.

avant sa mort. il chantait encore avec cette fraîcheur et cette puissance qu'on avait admirées en lui"¹²¹ [even a few weeks before his death, he sang still with this freshness and power for which he had been admired].

Regarding the private life of Martin, very little information is available. Martin had been married four times. The *Biographie Universelle Ancienne et Moderne* recounts all four marriages. His first wife was the singer Simonette, with whom he worked at the Théâtre Feydeau. The second was one of Paulin's daughters, a mediocre actor.¹²² Martin's third marriage was to the dancer Gosselin, known by the stage name "Déssossé," which is translated as "boned," who danced at the Paris Opéra. She died of consumption at age 21 shortly after her marriage to Martin. Martin's fourth and final marriage, in 1823, was to a daughter of the composer Pacini.¹²³ Only one mention of a child could be found, a daughter that died in 1836 of a "grave maladie"¹²⁴ [serious ailment], probably his only child, since Hoefèr cites that Martin left no children.¹²⁵

In addition to his performances at the Opéra-Comique, Martin was engaged in other musical events in Paris, including occasional concert appearances.¹²⁶ Martin also sang baritone in the "chapelle de Napoléon,"¹²⁷ then for Kings Louis XVIII and

¹²¹ Feller, *Biographie Universelle ou Dictionnaire Historique*, vol. 5, 536.

¹²² Michaud, *Biographie Universelle Ancienne et Moderne*, 133.

¹²³ *Dictionnaire Universelle des Contemporains*, 1277.

¹²⁴ *Revue et gazette musicale de Paris* 3, no. 48 (1836): 420. No name or information on the mother was given.

¹²⁵ Hoefèr, *Nouvelle Biographie Générale*, 47.

¹²⁶ Michel Brenet, *Les Concerts en France sous l'ancien régime* (Paris: Librairie Fischbacher, 1900; reprint, New York: Da Capo Press, 1970), 345.

¹²⁷ François Henri Joseph Castil-Blaze, *Chapelle-Musique des Rois de France* (Paris: Chez Paulin, 1832), 173.

Charles X.¹²⁸ The chapelle gave concerts Sunday afternoon with a chorus and orchestra, the soloists taken from the best of the singers at the Opéra and the Opéra-Comique. Martin and all other members of the royal chapel were removed from this post when the chapel was abandoned in the July Revolution of 1830.¹²⁹

At the beginning of September 1837, Martin fell ill with what was possibly gastritis.¹³⁰ The loss of his daughter in 1836 may have caused him an emotional and physical distress that brought about his last illness, which Fétis felt caused “une vive douleur qui ébranla sa constitution”¹³¹ [a living sadness which shook his constitution]. Martin made a trip to Ronzières, near Lyon, to see his old comrade Elleviou. He never returned to Paris, but died there 28 October 1837¹³² “entre les bras de son ancien frère d’armes et de gloire, du compagnon de plusieurs de ses plus beaux succès”¹³³ [in the arms of his old brother in arms and of glory, the companion of many of his most beautiful successes]. He died in his sixty-ninth year,¹³⁴ and his mortal remains were brought back to Paris. On the 13 November 1837 a funeral service was held in his memory:

Un service funèbre eut lieu en l’honneur de l’excellent comédien au milieu d’une grande affluence d’artistes appartenant à tous les théâtres. Rubini, Tamburini, Lablache, Ivanoff, Duprez, Lévassieur et Alexis Dupont, tous nos chanteurs les plus renommés prirent successivement place au pupitre, à Notre-

¹²⁸ Fétis, *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens*, 477.

¹²⁹ De la Fage, “Nécrologie,” 498.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³¹ Fétis, *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens*, 477.

¹³² Lassabathie, *Histoire du Conservatoire*, 439. Fétis, *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens*, supplément, vol. 2, 174. A correction of the date of 18 October 1837 given in the article for Martin in the *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens*, 1875. The official records of the Conservatoire used by Lassabathie are by consensus the official dates cited, and thus are used in this document, although it states that he died in Paris and not Ronzières.

¹³³ De la Fage, “Nécrologie,” 498.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.* De la Fage incorrectly cites his age here as 71.

Dame-de-Lorette. et donnèrent à l'office des Morts une solennité exceptionnelle. dont font foi les journaux de l'époque.¹³⁵

[A funeral service took place in the honor of the great comedian, and among the participants were a great number of artists belonging to all theaters. Rubini. Tamburini. Lablache. Ivanoff. Duprez. Levasseur and Alexis Dupont. all of our most renowned singers went one by one to the pulpit to honor him at Notre-Dame-de-Lorette. and give to the office of death an exceptional solemnity. which was mentioned by the papers of the time.]

¹³⁵ *Dictionnaire Universel des Contemporains*. 1277.

CHAPTER TWO

THE VOICE OF MARTIN

Any attempt to characterize the voice of the legendary Martin will of course be heavily indebted to contemporary accounts of those auditors who left a written record of what they had heard of the baritone in live performance. In the following chapters current observations based on a study of the scores of various roles that were sung by Martin will augment these contemporary accounts. By many accounts Martin's voice was classified as a "basse-taille," which by definition places it at the lower end of the tenor voice and not the higher end of the baritone voice. However, as Fétis cites, Martin's voice had the "caractère d'un beau baryton qui, dans les cordes élevées, atteignait aux limites des ténors les plus élevés, et qui, dans les sons graves, avait la sonorité d'une basse"¹ [quality of a beautiful baritone that, in the high notes, reached the limits of the highest tenors, and which, in the low notes, had the sonority of a bass]. It is to be remembered that at this time a tenor's highest range would have used a falsetto production.² Many accounts concur that the sound was that of a baritone that could reach the high tenor range without strain. Martin having mastered the art of blending the chest and head registers to create a three-octave range.

The first opinion available of Martin's voice is from those who judged his audition for the Paris Opéra, which occurred most likely sometime in 1787 or 1788. It

¹ François-Joseph Fétis, *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens et Bibliographie Générale de Musique*, 2d ed., vol. 5 (Paris: Librairie de Firmin-Didot et Cie, 1875), 475-76.

² Elizabeth Forbes, et. al., "Tenor," *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2d ed., ed. Stanley Sadie and John Tyrell, vol. 25 (London: Macmillan Press Limited, 2001), 287.

was their judgement that Martin's voice did not have "assez de creux" (literally "he hadn't enough hollow"), and it was not satisfactory for the needs of the Opéra.³ After studying the air sung by Martin in one of his earlier works, *Les Visitandines* (1792), it could be ascertained that the strength of his voice was in the upper range of chest voice, and was most successfully heard at this time in the range from *g1* to *e2*.⁴ Therefore the auditioners could have heard a lack of power and a lack of depth in the lower bass range. De la Fage stated that singers at the Opéra were required to sing at extreme volumes, which he likened to bellowing, which most likely was not possible for Martin, especially in his lower range. At the opposite end of the spectrum, De la Fage insists that Martin's voice would not have been appropriate at the Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique of the time either, where the singers were lacking in tone and almost recited their songs.⁵

Martin, however, *sang*, and sang well. De la Fage insists that "on ne commença à *chanter* qu'au théâtre de *Monsieur*, et Martin fut le premier Français applaudi uniquement pour son chant"⁶ [*singing* did not start until the Théâtre de *Monsieur*, and Martin was the first Frenchman applauded solely for his singing]. The Italian melodies that Martin sang as an amateur at the Hôtel Bullion and later in French translation at the Théâtre de Monsieur were probably very influential in contributing to his vocal growth. The Italian style of singing would most likely have

³ "Martin." *Galerie théâtrale, ou collection des portraits en pied*, vol. 1 (Paris: Chez Bance Aîné, 1873), planche 35, 2. The term "assez de creux" was a slang term for the bass voice.

⁴ Please see chapter 3.

⁵ J. Adrien de la Fage, "Nécrologie: Blaise Martin." *Revue et gazette musicale de Paris*, 4, vol. 47 (19 November 1837), 499.

⁶ *Ibid.*

allowed for a fuller tone production, setting him apart from other singers of opéras-comiques.

The Italian literature sung by Martin in his early years may also have contributed to the agility and suppleness in his voice to which many testified. There apparently was a freedom in the production of his voice that allowed for an effortless use of the fioratura that Martin inserted often into his pieces. If this freedom came from a lighter production, it would most likely allow for an easier access to the head voice to augment Martin's already extensive range.

At the Théâtre de Monsieur, Martin mostly performed French parodies of Italian opera buffa, which are characterized by a light orchestration to ensure audible declamation and to mirror the lightweight plot. Also, acting always took precedence over volume of sound.⁷ In this excerpt from Lully's bravura air "D'ici je crois que je l'entends déjà," from *Lully et Quinault* (1812), written by Isouard for Martin, it can be seen that the dynamics in orchestration are adjusted to the range of the vocal line. In mm. 64-66, while the vocal line is in the range from *g1* to *e2*, the entire orchestra crescendoes to a *f* volume, as seen in example 2.1:

⁷ In 1801, the orchestra at the Opéra-Comique numbered forty musicians, but by 1831 the orchestra had expanded to fifty-five. Figures from Patrick Barbier, *Opera in Paris, 1800-1850, A Lively History*, trans. Robert Luoma (Portland, Ore.: Amadeus Press, 1995), 61.

The image shows a musical score for Example 2.1, covering measures 64-66 of "D'ici je crois." from *Lully et Quinault*. The score is arranged in nine staves, labeled on the left as V1, V2, Alto, Flauti, Ob, Corni, Fagotti, Lully, and Bassi. The music is written in a common time signature. The vocal line (Lully and Bassi) is in the bottom two staves, with the lyrics: ". ge la flute le cor le hautbois le basson cest charmant, cest charmant, cest charmant, cest charmant." The instrumental parts include strings (V1, V2), woodwinds (Flauti, Ob, Corni, Fagotti), and a lute (Lully). Dynamic markings such as *f* (forte) and *p* (piano) are present. Performance instructions like *arco* and *pizzicato* are also indicated.

Example 2.1: mm. 64-66 of "D'ici je crois." from *Lully et Quinault*.

But in mm. 67-73, while the vocal line is in the mid-range from *el* to *bl*, the strings play alone with a much lighter texture that utilizes *arco* and *pizzicato*, as seen in example 2.2:

Allegretto mosso.

V1 arco

V2 pizzicato

Alto

Flu:

ob:

Fag:

Allegretto mosso.

Lully violonc. soli

Vlncllo

chut! chut! je vois dici la danse c'est Renaud il parait si len...

Ex. 2.2: mm. 67-73 of "D'ici je crois." from *Lully et Quinault*.

Other examples in the following chapters will support the conclusion that the range in which Martin could have carried well over the orchestra began at *g*¹ and ascended to *g*².

In discussing the voice of Martin in terms of range, evidence exists that it was unusually wide. His chest voice, as described by De la Fage, "commençait au *mi* ou même au *mi bémol*...et s'étendait jusqu'au *la*...mais...Martin possédait une octave de notes de tête: il ne faisait un usage fréquent que des quatres premières"⁸ [began at *e* or *e flat*...rising to *a natural*...but...Martin possessed an additional octave in his head voice above that, of which he most frequently used the first four notes], as seen below in example 2.3a. The average range for a male voice is currently somewhere in the

⁸ De la Fage, "Nécrologie." 498-99.

two-octave range, making Martin's range especially unusual due to the use of head voice extension, which was used at this time mostly for the tenor voice.

As a point of comparison, there was very little difference in the chest range of the tenor Elleviou, with whom Martin often performed. His range was said to span the notes from "si-bémol grave du baryton, au si-bémol aigu du ténor, et il s'y ajoutait 5 à 6 notes en voix de tête!"⁹ [the low *b flat* of the baritone to the high *b flat*2 of the tenor, with five or six additional notes in head voice!] Adjusting for the pitch at this time, the range would equate approximately to an *a natural* as the high note in chest for the tenor, as seen in example 2.3b:

The image contains two musical examples, Ex. 2.3a and Ex. 2.3b, each consisting of two staves (treble and bass clef). In Ex. 2.3a, the bass clef staff has a note on the second line (B2) labeled 'Chest', and the treble clef staff has a note on the second line (B4) labeled 'Head'. A dotted line connects these two notes. In Ex. 2.3b, the bass clef staff has a note on the second line (B2) labeled 'Chest', and the treble clef staff has a note on the second space (C4) labeled 'Head'. A dotted line connects these two notes.

Ex. 2.3a: Martin's range.

Ex. 2.3b: Elleviou's range.

⁹ Jean Gourret, *Histoire de l'Opéra-Comique*, preface by Jean Giraudeau (Paris: Les Publications Universitaires, 1978), 91.

The pitch at this time in Paris was lower than $a=440$, probably around $a=423$.¹⁰ lowering the pitch of Martin's range by approximately one-half step, or d to a flat 2, as seen in the notes in parentheses in the above example. Martin's range in chest voice ascended to within a minor second of the tenor's range, with each voice possessing nearly identical notes in the head voice. There is, however, a marked difference in the low notes of their chest voices. This difference in the low range of the voices of Elleviou and Martin could account for timbre differences between them, as well as possible differences in tessitura. Interestingly, Elleviou began his career also as a basse-taille for his début at the Comédie-Italienne in 1790, but two years later he changed to tenor.¹¹

Although Martin's *voix mixte* appears to have had a tenor-like timbre with a falsetto quality in the upper range, as would have been typical of the French school,¹² the timbre appears to have been somewhat darker in the greater part of his voice. Martin was said to have plenitude in his chest voice that was not typical of tenors of the day, and because timbre is often a major consideration in determining voice type, the baritone timbre he apparently possessed superseded any range determinant for his

¹⁰ Alexander J. Ellis, *The History of Musical Pitch* (Amsterdam: Frits A. M. Knuf, 1963), 320, 322. In researching the pitch of this time it was found that at the Paris Opéra in 1810 the pitch was $a=423.0$. In 1820, the year in which Martin would have been singing *Les Voitures versées*, the same pitch of $a=423$ was found to be in use at the Théâtre Feydeau. By 1830, the pitch had risen to $a=430.8$ at the Paris Opéra, perhaps affecting Halévy's considerations for *Les Souvenirs de Lafleur* (1833), and possibly revivals of works for Martin from 1826 and later, since it is unclear if the pitch had risen before 1830.

¹¹ Arthur Pougin, *Figures d'Opéra-Comique: Madame Dugazon, Elleviou, Les Gavaudan* (Paris: Tresse, 1875; reprint, Genève: Minkoff, 1973), 80-81.

¹² Richard Miller, *National Schools of Singing: English, French, German, and Italian Techniques of Singing Revisited* (Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow Press, 1997), 107. "In the French School, the falsetto sometimes comprises the entire upper range of the tenor voice, and a considerable portion of the upper range of the light baritone, as well."

voice. It was also noted that Martin was able to blend these chest and head registers so successfully that there was no apparent switch. "toute la voix de Martin suffisamment égale...le changement de timbre étant presque imperceptible"¹³ [the entire range of Martin was even...the change of timbre was nearly imperceptible].

Martin had such a wide range that for the typical baritone his music would have been unapproachable, and at times his voice was classified as a tenor, even if only to avoid confusion. Several of the opéras-comiques airs published during Martin's lifetime were identified for "high voice,"¹⁴ though some were most likely more correctly labeled "medium voice,"¹⁵ while still others bore only the identification as having been "chantée par Martin" [sung by Martin]. Since these airs were published for private use by amateurs, Martin's atypical range would have been unapproachable for the typical medium voice, and were possibly for this reason labeled for high voice.

Further commentary on the unique range that Martin possessed can be found in Bartlet's epic study of Méhul. A qualification intended by Méhul to be printed with the published copy of Martin's air from *Une Folie*, "De l'intrigue, ô vastes mystères!" was meant to call attention to the extremes of range needed by a baritone to attempt this piece: "Cet air ayant été composé pour Martin ne peut convenir aux

¹³ De la Fage, "Nécrologie," 499.

¹⁴ For example, "Romance" from *Joconde*, "Dans un délire extrême" (Paris: Chez Bochsapère.... 1815), for tenor voice, but clarified as "chantée par Martin." Also, a "Scène de *Concert Interrompu*," "Plus que moi, Lindorf est heureux" (Paris: À la Nouveauté, chez les frères Gaveaux, 1802), for high voice with guitar accompaniment, also "chantée par Martin." It is assumed that these were not transpositions, and there was no mention of other keys available for purchase.

¹⁵ See "Romance de *Cimarosa*," "Besoin d'aimer à tous est nécessaire," for medium voice with accompaniment arranged for guitar, "chantée par M. Martin." (Paris: Chez Mme. Duhan et Cie, 1808).

basses-tailles qui n'ont point l'habitude de passer de la voix de poitrine à la voix de tête. ainsi je les invite à changer tous les traits qui sortent des limites naturelles de leur voix"¹⁶ [This air was composed for Martin and could not fit those basse-tailles not used to easily passing from chest voice to head voice. and thus I invite them to change any notes that are out of the natural limits of their voices]. The engraver in the final printing failed, however, to enter this qualification. A similar qualification was entered in the score of *Les Voitures versées* (1808/1820) of Boïeldieu, where a footnote was placed on the first page of the air "Apollon toujours préside" to notify the singer that the piece was also available in the lower key of G Major.¹⁷ Also, in Clément and Larousse, again in reference to the air "De l'intrigue. ô vastes mystères!" by Méhul, it is cited that this air¹⁸ was written for Martin, but "c'est-à-dire qu'il est inabordable pour nos ténors modernes"¹⁹ [it is inaccessible to our modern tenors].

Martin's unique vocal gifts posed difficulties for composers attempting to write for his talents. For instance, in Méhul's *L'Irato* (1801), in which Martin appeared previous to *Une Folie* (1802), there is evidence that three airs for the role of Scapin were written before Méhul composed one that was critically successful.

¹⁶ Mary Elizabeth Caroline Bartlet. "Étienne-Nicolas Méhul and Opera During the French Revolution, Consulate and Empire: a source, archival, and stylistic study." 5 vols. (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1982), 561.

¹⁷ François-Adrien Boïeldieu. *Les Voitures versées, opéra-comique en deux actes* (Paris: E. Girod, 1860), 44. "On a gravé cet air sur la clef de sol parce qu'il est dans le diapason des ténors."

¹⁸ Félix Clément and Pierre Larousse. *Dictionnaire des Opéras*, rev. Arthur Pougin, vol. 1 (Paris: Librairie Larousse, 1905; reprint, New York: Da Capo Press, 1969), 475-6. Clément incorrectly classifies this air as "Le premier duo."

¹⁹ No doubt because of the wide range required, especially the descent of the opening phrase, the raising of pitch that would most certainly have happened by this time, and the discontinued use of falsetto for the high range.

Regarding the first air, Bartlet notes that “the *Courrier des spectacles* criticized it for being too long, and the *Journal de Paris*, for being a ‘morceau moins agréable que difficile à chanter’ [a piece less pleasant than difficult to sing]—the only piece that he found less than excellent in the whole opera.”²⁰ The printed libretto prepared for the premiere had a different text than the ultimately published Scapin air “D’un oncle trop colère.” and Bartlet is almost certain that the published air was not sung for the premiere. She surmises that “D’un oncle trop colère” was the second air which was exchanged for the first air sometime later in the year, certainly by the time the score was published, probably by the autumn of 1801. This published air exhibits many characteristics associated with Martin, including fast patter singing, wide leaps, and a very wide range, including an ascent to a high *d3*, sung in head voice, but was not well received critically.

It is not believed by Bartlet to be the last air written for Scapin however. In a review in *Courrier des spectacles* of 7 December 1801, a new air was cited that was finally deemed suited to Martin. Though it was said the recitative was too long, the air was considered appropriate for Martin’s vocal and dramatic talents. “Cette scène donne à l’acteur une occasion de faire des choses absolument neuves. Il rend des passages très-déliçats, avec une aisance et une justesse dont on essayeroit [sic] envain [sic] de donner la moindre idée. Sa manière est ornée, mais avec intelligence. L’exécution est à la vérité riche et brillante”²¹ [This air gives the actor the

²⁰ Bartlet, “Étienne-Nicolas Méhul,” 555.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 555-6. Though this music does not exist, by following the structure outlined in the review, Bartlet does not believe the new air to be “D’un oncle trop colère.” In addition, the date of the printing of the full score that included “D’un oncle trop colère” was well past by December 1801.

opportunity to make things absolutely new and fresh. He renders passages very delicately with an ease and exactness tried in vain by others. His manner is ornamented, but with intelligence. The execution is truly rich and brilliant]. It will be assumed that what Mèhul learned while writing *L'Irato* regarding Martin's voice was put into use the following year when writing *Une Folie* (1802).

Looking further at the air from *Une Folie*, "De l'intrigue, ô vastes mystères!"²² one can find evidence of many of Martin's most outstanding vocal characteristics. In this air some observations can be made regarding range, tessitura, and volume of sound for the voice of Martin. The air begins with an introduction in C Minor, and the following *Allegro moderato* section is in the parallel key of C Major. Regarding the compass of the voice, the great range Martin used in performance at this time can be seen quite clearly in this air. The opening phrase in mm. 2-4 descends to *g* at the bottom of the bass staff, already extending the range below what is possible for most tenors. Quickly, however, the vocal line ascends to a much higher general range, finally reaching the highest note of *c3* in m. 121. By this time, the air is out of the range of most baritones as well. Mèhul has gradually built a range for this air that would highlight the most amazing aspects of Martin's voice, encompassing two and one-half octaves from *g* to *c3*.

²² Étienne-Nicolas Mèhul, *Une Folie* (Paris: S. Richault, n. d.) 36-43. The air was selected for this purpose for its exploitation of Martin's range, for the engraver's information from Mèhul regarding the unusual range, and also because of Mèhul's apparent success with his "third air" for Martin in *L'Irato* (1801) the year before.

The tessitura of the air lies mostly within the lines of the treble clef, with the phrases that begin the *Allegro moderato* section of the air lying between *g1* and *g2*, as seen in example 2.4:

Carlin

Piano

tu - e, je me re - tire en Pi - car - di - e, on u - me tou - jours se pa - ti - e, on

fp fp fp

Ex. 2.4: mm. 24-28.

This is the most frequently utilized portion of Martin's voice in this air, most likely because the voice could carry most successfully in this range at a louder dynamic.

When looking for support of this assumption regarding the range in which the voice speaks most successfully over the orchestra, the dynamic markings in the piece are also revealing. In the highest range, the vocal line is accompanied by a lighter dynamic when it rises above *g2*, as in m. 41, as seen in example 2.5a:

Carlin

Piano

pe - re, je vous par - tout des coeurs con - tents, je suis libre et n'ai rien a fai - re, que des heu

pp

Ex. 2.5a: m. 40-44.

Similarly, in the lower ranges of the vocal line the orchestra is also at a softer dynamic, as in the recitative-like introduction in mm. 3-4, as seen in example 2.5b:

Adagio Carlin

De l'in - trigue ô vas - tes mys - tè - res!

ff *pp*

Ex. 2.5b: mm. 1-4.

The orchestra is *ff* in volume in m. 1, but quickly decrescendos to a *pp* in m. 2 just previous to the vocal entrance. Likewise, the highest ranges of Martin's voice are always accompanied by a very soft dynamic, which gives evidence that all high range notes above *a2* were sung in head voice.

Another example of the use of head voice by Martin can be found in mm. 121-122. The melody is built on an arpeggiation that rises to *c3*, as seen in example 2.6a:

moi tout rit, tout prospère, je vois partout des cœurs con-

Ex. 2.6a: mm. 121-23.

On the first of these assents the accompaniment drops out completely, allowing the light head tone to have no distraction of sound. The repetition of this phrase in mm. 125-126 adds a light, non-legato accompaniment at a *p* volume, as seen in example 2.6b:

tents ? je suis libre et n'ai rien à faire que des heureux et des en-

Ex. 2.6b: mm. 124-27.

Further, the range that is utilized for the *ff* dynamic in the accompaniment at the end of the piece in mm. 135-139 spans *g1* to *g2*, as seen in example 2.7:

The image shows a musical score for Example 2.7, measures 135-139. It consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is written in a single staff with a treble clef and a common time signature. The lyrics are: "- reux et des en_fans." The piano accompaniment is written in two staves (treble and bass clefs) with a common time signature. The dynamic marking starts as *sp* (sotto piano) and then changes to *ff* (fortissimo) in the final measures.

Ex. 2.7: mm. 135-139.

The dynamics throughout show more variety of intensity between the tessitura from *g1* to *g2* than can be found in the outer reaches of the voice. The first crescendo to *f* in the accompaniment, which can be seen in mm. 36-38, shows the rise of the vocal line to *g2* and back to down to *b flat1*, as seen in example 2.8:

The image shows a musical score for Example 2.8, measures 363-402. It consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is written in a single staff with a treble clef and a common time signature. The lyrics are: "je de - viens un Ro - ger bon - tems pres de moi tout nt, tout pres - pe - re." The piano accompaniment is written in two staves (treble and bass clefs) with a common time signature. The dynamic marking starts as *f* (forte) and then changes to *pp* (pianissimo) in the final measures.

Ex. 2.8: mm. 363-402.

This crescendo to *f* in this range supports the supposition that Martin's voice could carry most successfully in the range from *g1* to *g2*.

The timbre of Martin's voice was most likely an element in volume considerations as well. De la Fage has already stated that the voice was not enormous and it lacked the depth of the singers heard at the Opéra, but beyond that, the volume was "bien plus que suffisant pour obtenir toutes les nuances d'intensité du doux au fort"²³ [more than sufficient for obtaining all the nuances in intensity from soft to loud]. But the volume was apparently enhanced by the timbre of Martin's voice, as De la Fage stated also that "la qualité et, si je puis m'exprimer ainsi, la *couleur* de cette voix étaient si remarquables, qu'elle s'entendait parfaitement dans les morceaux d'ensemble, se distinguant et se détachant des autres voix"²⁴ [the quality and, if I may express myself this way, the *colour* of this voice was so remarkable, that one could hear it perfectly in an ensemble piece, distinguishing itself and separating itself from the other voices]. Therefore, the colour enhanced the voice and contributed to making it distinct from other voices within an ensemble. Regarding Martin's low range, De la Fage notes that "les notes graves étonnaient par un genre de plénitude tout particulier et qui, dans les situations comiques, servait merveilleusement le chanteur et le compositeur"²⁵ [the low notes astonished by the particular fullness which, in the

²³ De la Fage, "Nécrologie," 499.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

comic situations, served the singer and the composer well]. The voice that Martin possessed therefore had a distinct timbre that allowed it to be heard in this lower range.

Another attribute of Martin was the energy and vivacity with which he performed. Martin was very frequently praised for his vocal authority on the stage, and perhaps more importantly, it was said that he made people want to listen to him. Martin was said to sing with "du feu, de l'animation, enfin, dans une connaissance profonde de la musique et beaucoup d'aplomb dans les morceaux d'ensemble"²⁶ [fire, animation, and finally, a profound knowledge of the music and with much aplomb in the ensemble pieces]. One of the few comments regarding Martin's physical make-up was from De la Fage, who stated that he "avait une large poitrine et des poumons susceptibles de renfermer et de conserver une masse d'air suffisante à toute prolongation de son"²⁷ [possessed a large chest with lungs capable of a long prolongation of sound], which would allow for good breath control.

Though Martin enjoyed a great success with the audience throughout his career, known especially for his stage presence and excellent voice, it is of interest to note some faults found in his singing. These criticisms were mostly directed at the interpretive elements of Martin's performance. The most frequently mentioned of these faults was an apparent lack of taste he exercised in the use of ornamentation and fioritura for purposes of embellishment. This overuse of ornamentation was so

²⁶ Fétis, *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens*, 476.

²⁷ De la Fage, "Nécrologie," 499.

pervasive that it prompted Grétry, after a performance of his work *Le Jugement de Midas* in which Martin was singing, to sarcastically declare, “Je viens d’assister à l’Opéra de M. Martin”²⁸ [I have just attended the opera of Mr. Martin].

Considering the exposure Martin was given to the practice of embellishment by the Italian troupe of the Théâtre de Monsieur, he may have been emulating these models of Italian singing in his efforts at applying fioratura to the Italian parodies in which he sang, and in turn a misuse of ornamentation from a singer not properly trained in such a skill would not be unexpected. Fétis had noted that these Italian singers offered Martin “les plus beaux modèles de chant dans les talents de [the finest models of Italian singing in the talents of] Vigogni, de Mandini, et de madame Morichelli.”²⁹ Therefore, it could be surmised that Martin attempted to carry over the practice of ornamentation into the French repertoire that he sang as well, though perhaps inappropriate to the music of the time. With the numerous comments regarding this overuse of fioratura, it is apparent that his actual efforts in this area needed more refining. An article from the *Biographie des Hommes Vivants* (1816-1818), published during Martin’s lifetime, says that the baritone “sacrifie en effet quelquefois le naturel et la franchise à une prodigalité d’ornements repoussés par les véritables connaisseurs: et voulant ajouter à l’expression musicale, il dénature

²⁸ Francis Claudon, et al., *Histoire de l’Opéra en France* (Paris: Nathan, [1984]), 43. Another variation of this story appears in Ruth Jordan, *Fromental Halévy, His Life and Music: 1799-1862* (London: Kahn and Averill, 1994), 41. This version can be traced at least as far back as Vapereau, *Dictionnaire Universel des Contemporains*, 1277. Translated into English in the Jordan account, it reads: “Grétry, after the performance of his opera *The Judgement of Midas*, said to young Martin: ‘Lovely singing, but what a pity you left out the grand aria.’ ‘I assure you I sang it all,’ said the surprised Martin. ‘In that case, my good friend, you have embellished it so much I failed to recognise it.’”

²⁹ Fétis, *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens*, 476.

l'intention du compositeur"³⁰ [sometimes sacrificed indeed the natural and the frankness for a lavishness of ornaments that repelled the true connoisseur: and wishing to add to the musical expression, he denatured the intention of the composer]. Pougin agreed when he stated that Martin had "l'amour des enjolivements (!) continuel, la manie des vocalises, et un manque absolu de respect pour le texte musical, pour la pensée même des compositeurs"³¹ [the love of continual embellishment (!), the mania of vocalises, and an absolute lack of respect for the musical text, for the very thought of the composer].

Other faults cited by these critics included the use of a "vocalisation par saccades"³² ["jerky" vocalization] that gave a harsh effect. In addition, Martin also abused the "port de voix"³³ ["scoop"], which he used strongly, especially on enormous leaps, and more frequently in his later years. De la Fage suggested that many of these criticisms were rooted in the baritone's apparent lack of education in the art of singing.³⁴ Also it must be remembered that Martin was at first principally a violinist and received limited training in voice.

³⁰ *Biographie des Hommes Vivants*, vol. 4 (Paris: Chez L. G. Michaud, 1818), 366.

³¹ Pougin, *Figures d'Opéra-Comique*, 97.

³² De la Fage, "Nécrologie," 499.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *Ibid.*

Examples can be found in various pieces written for Martin where one can find opportunities for such abuses. In the duo "C'est dites vous du Chambertin." from *Le Nouveau Seigneur de Village* (1813), music by Boïeldieu, the exceptionally wide leaps in mm. 46-48 could provide an opportunity for the "port de voix," as seen in example 2.9:

The image shows a musical score for a duo. The top staff is for the voice part, labeled 'Frontin'. The bottom two staves are for the piano accompaniment, labeled 'Piano'. The music is in a key with one flat (B-flat major or D minor) and 2/4 time. The lyrics are written below the vocal line: 'one ne com men çons en cor pour ne pas é tre dans mon tort pour ne pas é tre dans maux'. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Ex. 2.9: mm. 45-49 from Duo. *Le Nouveau Seigneur de Village* (1813).

Although Martin was often cited for a certain lack of taste in his singing, the criticisms of his appearances made after his retirement in 1823 were more specifically directed at his loss of vocal power and strength. Many reviews included comments regarding the lack of respect he had for his past success by continuing to perform past the period of his finest singing, comments which leave an impression of a singer past his prime. The most interesting of these articles was not a review, but a request that Martin discontinue his public appearances, which appeared in 1828, six years before he stopped performing. "Si Martin est sage, s'il est soigneux de sa propre gloire, qu'il s'en tienne à ce dernier essai, et que la dernière représentation extraordinaire au bénéfice de la caisse des pensions soit consciencieusement la clôture définitive de ses

apparitions sur la scène”³⁵ [If Martin is wise, if he truly cares for his own glory, he will hold to this last appearance, and this last extraordinary performance to the benefit of the pension fund will thoughtfully be the definite closure to his appearances on stage].

A review of the benefit for the pension fund in 1828 judges Martin’s reprise of the role of Scapin in *L’Irato* (1801) as mediocre, but in *Ma tante Aurore* (1803), Martin received “tous les suffrages, et plusieurs fois il a rappelé par la verve de son chant les beaux jours de Feydeau” [all the votes, and many times the verve of his song reminded us of the best days of the Feydeau]. This reviewer, however, also cautioned Martin in taking his frenzied reception by the audience too seriously. In spite of being called back three times, the reviewer cited this as “les adieux du public: nous engageons Martin à ne pas s’y méprendre”³⁶ [an adieu from the public: we pledge Martin not to misinterpret it].

The review from 24 March 1832, discussing Martin’s performance as Lully in *Lully et Quinault*, was more positive in tone, remarking on the youth and agility still found in his head voice, though his chest voice had “perdu son timbre et son mordant...la voix de tête...encore d’une fraîcheur, d’un velouté remarquable...Les passages...ont excité les plus vifs applaudissem(en)t(s)” [lost its timbre and bite...the head voice...still fresh, has a remarkable velvet quality...and these were the passages...which encouraged the strongest applause]. Perhaps the most telling

³⁵ “Théâtre de l’Opéra-Comique: Représentations de Martin.” *Revue musicale* 3, no. 17 (7 May 1828): 377.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 401-2.

comment by this last critic is in the observation of Martin's voice that asks the question "Pourquoi faut-il que le temps détruise tout!"³⁷ [Why must time destroy everything!]

In a review of a performance given 29 September 1832 that included part or all of *Les Voitures versées* (1820). Martin appears to have satisfied the critic with his abilities when allowing for his age. "C'est en effet quelque chose de bien extraordinaire qu'un chanteur de soixante-sept ou huit ans qui a conservé la faculté de produire des sons doux et moelleux. et d'articuler des traits avec souplesse et légèreté" [It is indeed something truly extraordinary that a singer in his late sixties has preserved the ability to produce such sweet and mellow sounds. and to articulate the notes with suppleness and lightness]. Though it mentioned the general loss of sonority and strength in his voice. Martin again was applauded for his head voice passages. Also, the program included the famous variations from *Ma tante Aurore* that were so successful in 1803. which again created a good effect. The reviewer observed that the "nombre des chanteurs qui ont conservé la faculté de chanter ainsi dans un âge si avancé est bien peu considérable"³⁸ [the number of singers able to sing at such an advanced age is indeed rare].

Pougin, although critical as to Martin's faults, noted that he "s'est rendu compte des grandes qualités du comédien. qui joignait à la grâce et à la légèreté. à la finesse et à l'ironie. un vrai sentiment dramatique. la sensibilité et la tendresse. le

³⁷ "Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique: Représentation au bénéfice de Mme. Lemonnier." *Revue Musicale* 6. no. 8 (24 March 1832): 61.

³⁸ "Nouvelles de Paris: Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique. Ouverture au théâtre de la place de la Bourse." *Revue Musicale* 6. no. 35 (29 September 1832): 279.

pathétique et la passion”³⁹ [realized his great qualities as a comedian, and he joined grace, lightness, finesse and irony to a true dramatic sentiment, with sensibility, tenderness, pathos and passion]. It was these talents that created a loyal and enthusiastic following with the general audience. The audience in fact reacted most positively to the more abrasive elements of Martin’s performances, making his most glaring faults into his most favored assets. His wide range and embellishments received great applause and made him a favorite with the public. Martin did by some accounts improve on these faults, apparently heeding the voice of his critics, eventually excelling “dans le chant simple et naturel comme dans les fioritures”⁴⁰ [in the simple and natural song as in the fioraturas]. Fétis, however, states that he “conserva toute sa vie d’assez grands défauts”⁴¹ [kept some rather big faults all of his life], possibly because of this great response they evoked from the public.

It was said that the principal merit of Martin was his incomparable beauty of sound, the freshness of his instrument, and a great ability to pass the voice from chest to head. “dont il se servait avec beaucoup d’adresse”⁴² [that he used very skillfully]. Martin sang with an extensive range that reached both the high and low ranges with little perceptible change in timbre, leaving the audience in astonishment. His high and low ranges lacked strength, and the accompaniment was thoughtfully written to allow for audibility over the orchestra. Though he apparently abused certain elements of his

³⁹ Pougín, *Figures d’Opéra-Comique*, 97.

⁴⁰ G. Vapereau, “Jean-Blaise Martin,” *Dictionnaire Universel des Contemporains*, vol. 2 (Paris : Hachette, 1858), 1277.

⁴¹ Fétis, *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens*, 476.

⁴² *Ibid.*

singing style, especially ornamentation, the audience enjoyed these abuses. It seems especially apparent in the reviews from the period after his retirement in 1823 that, even though much of Martin's vocal strength had left him by this time, he still received a great response from the public.

CHAPTER THREE
LES VISITANDINES (1792)

Les Visitandines, comédie mêlée d'ariettes in two acts, with music by François Devienne (1759-1803) and libretto by Louis-Benoît Picard (1769-1828), premiered at the Théâtre Feydeau 7 July 1792 and was an immediate and great success. The music by Devienne was praised for its "freshness, grace, originality, and the true flavor of the subject."¹ The libretto by Picard was likewise judged favorably, and one critic was sure that this work would no doubt "bring great honor to Mr. Picard."² Jean-Blaise Martin, who at twenty-four years of age was given the pivotal role of the servant Frontin, was a major element in the opera's success.

François Devienne (b Joinville, 31 January 1759; d Charenton, 5 September 1803) was born in Joinville, Haute-Marne, in the southeastern area of France. In 1776 Devienne went to live with his brother in Deux Ponts, who was a musician in the employ of the Duke of Deux Ponts, and probably studied music there. After moving to Paris in 1779, Devienne played last bassoon in the orchestra of the Paris Opéra for one season, then was employed as a chamber musician for the Cardinal de Rohan until 1785. He was also a private music teacher of various wind instruments.

¹ Review of "*Les Visitandines*," *Affiches*, no. 189 (12 juillet 1792), cited in François Devienne, *Les Visitandines: comédie mêlée d'ariettes*, vol. 72a, *French Opera in the 17th and 18th Centuries*, ed. Sherwood Dudley (Paris: Cousineau, 1792; reprint, Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1992), xvi.

² *Ibid.*

Devienne joined the orchestra of the Théâtre de Monsieur in 1789 as second bassoonist, and stayed on when the theatre was renamed the Théâtre Feydeau in 1791.

Devienne began composing opéras-comiques around 1791, and with his fourth work, *Les Visitandines* (1792), he achieved a great commercial and critical success. There were 79 performances during the first year alone, and the opera would be revived in productions in Paris and throughout Europe as late as the year 1920. With the great public demand for more of the same entertainment, Devienne wrote several more opéras-comiques in quick succession, but *Les Visitandines* was the only one to attain a lasting popularity. In 1795, in addition to playing in the theater orchestra and composing, Devienne accepted a professorship at the Paris Conservatoire teaching flute. Devienne quit his orchestral position in 1801 after the merger of the Feydeau and Favart, and after a short period of mental illness, died in 1803 at the age of 44 in a psychiatric hospital in Charenton, France.

At this time in Paris the librettist was as important as the composer in the creation of opéras-comiques and was usually given first billing above the composer. This was due in large part to the outgrowth of the opéra-comique genre from the spoken play, with story and dialogue of the utmost importance. The titles given to opéras-comiques, such as "comédie en un acte mêlée de chants" [comedy in one act mixed with songs], illustrate this fact quite well. The opéra-comique originated from the fair entertainments that began using song to side step a ban on spoken plays. The important position given the librettist at this time, however, also accounted for the blame the librettist would receive if the play were not a success. It was generally

assumed that a good libretto could rise above mediocre music, but that excellent music could not raise a poor libretto into a success.

The plot of *Les Visitandines* recounts the comic misadventures of Belfort, a roguish ladies' man and Frontin, his valet, as they attempt to abscond with a young novice, Euphémie, from a nunnery before she takes her vows. The libretto centered on the irreverent actions of the three main characters while in the convent of the Order of the Visitation, and this irreverence was a major element of the work's success. The mockeries and religious denigration that are the basis for *Les Visitandines* were the creation of Louis-Benoît Picard (b 29 July 1769; d 31 December 1828), who had started writing theatrical comedies only the previous year. *Les Visitandines*, based on an unpublished play, attempted to take advantage of the climate of anti-religious fervor that gripped Paris during the French Revolution. The year earlier a play by Carbon de Flin, *Le Mari directeur* (25 February 1791), had centered its plot on such defamation and was a great success, and Picard continued this anti-religious sentiment in his new work with Devienne. Picard calculated the climate for such works correctly, and the success of *Les Visitandines* gave him entrée to the Paris theatrical world. McKee says that "its mischievous levity announces a new trend: the disrespectful tone for things religious already exhibited in *Le Mari directeur* reappears and will remain throughout the Terror."³

³ Kenneth N. McKee, *The Role of the Priest on the Parisian Stage during the French Revolution*, John Hopkins Studies in Romance Literatures and Languages 36 (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1939), 59.

In the years immediately following, Picard collaborated on many opéras-comiques with Devienne, which included three other new musical works and a revised and expanded version of *Les Visitandines* (1793) in three acts. It also gave him the exposure he needed to start an acting career at the Théâtre Louvois. In 1807, Picard was appointed to the prestigious post of administrative director of the Paris Opéra, as well as being accepted as a member into the Académie Française. Resigning his directorship of the Opéra in 1815 after a less than successful tenure, Picard returned to the Théâtre Louvois for several more years, and continued to work on theatrical ventures until the end of his life in 1828.[†]

The performances in *Les Visitandines* were uniformly praised, but Jean-Blaise Martin, singing the role of the servant Frontin, was a standout of the cast, and his character dominated the opera in dialogue and music. There is more music for Frontin than any other character, with two airs in the original two-act version and a third air added in the three-act version. In the first version of 1792, Frontin takes part in every ensemble except two, the opening nun's ensemble and a duet between Belfort and Gregoire, the alcoholic gardener. In the expanded version of 1793, Frontin has a solo and duet added, although he does not sing in the Act II finale. Frontin is also given the greatest amount of dialogue in both versions and is highly instrumental in furthering the dramatic action. This certainly speaks to a confidence in Martin's

[†] Summary of information on composer and librettist partially from Devienne, *Les Visitandines*, ed. Dudley, xi-xv.

ability on stage in both singing and acting, and also most likely speaks to the status accorded Martin in the company by 1792.

The work takes place in Nevers, in central France, at a nunnery. The overture depicts a storm, after which Belfort and Frontin appear wet and tired, looking for shelter. They mistake the nunnery for an inn, and they attempt to rent a room for the night and are denied. While debating their next move, a harp is heard from inside the convent accompanying a woman's voice which Belfort recognizes as belonging to his former love, Euphémie. A plan is then formulated to kidnap her from the convent, gaining entrance dressed in disguise. Frontin as a priest and Belfort as an ailing sister from another convent who has come to recuperate at the nunnery. The gardener and a coachman, both drunkards, aid Belfort and Frontin in their scheme after a trip to the nearest tavern, which ends Act I.

The father of young Belfort visits Euphémie and tries to convince her not to enter the sisterhood, worried that her insistence on becoming a nun is a reaction to his son's absence. Euphémie insists that the life of a nun is her calling, but her true feelings are shown after the elder Belfort leaves, when she admits to herself that she still loves the young man. The young Belfort then arrives at the convent dressed as Soeur Séraphine. All the nuns are introduced to the new sister, and Euphémie faints when recognizing him underneath his disguise. Frontin enters, dressed as a capuchin monk, and brashly sings of the beauty of each of the nuns. The disguises are ultimately revealed when the elder Belfort arrives to look after the "ailing" Soeur

S raphine, recognizing both his son and Frontin. Euph mie confesses her love for Belfort and all is forgiven.⁵

In the three-act version premiered in the following year, the first and second acts are mostly the same. In Act II, the "elder Belfort is eliminated and a few comedy lines are inserted." Also, a gasconne was added for Martin. A new Act II ending is added concerning a lost parrot belonging to the Abbess that has escaped. During the excitement chasing the parrot, "Belfort persuades Euph mie to flee with him and Frontin." In Act III, Belfort and Euph mie are placed in the convent dungeon while Frontin and Gregoire are put in the nearby Capuchin dungeon. In the robes Frontin is wearing, borrowed from a priest, he finds keys to the monastery, some scandalous love letters to Soeur Josephine, and a bill charging for the construction "of a secret passage to the adjoining convent." After many embarrassing complications, Euph mie leaves "the convent to marry Belfort."⁶

Martin's role of Frontin is assertive and intelligent, and he must have been a very colorful figure to audiences of the time. He always spoke his mind openly for someone in a servile position, and this character trait placed him in many difficult situations. Much of Frontin's dialogue in the two-act version of *Les Visitandines* is comically offensive to the religious characters, though often an outgrowth of situational misunderstandings than outright intention. The audiences must have responded well to such comedy, for in revising the work a year later, Picard added a

⁵ Plot synopsis from Devienne, *Les Visitandines*, ed. Dudley, xxi-xxii.

⁶ McKee, *Priest on the Parisian Stage*, 76-77.

great deal more dialogue for Martin's character in the new Act III, and this dialogue had an even more irreverent tone than the first version.

One such example of this irreverence can be found in Frontin's first lengthy scene of dialogue after his first air, when he attempts to gain entrance into what he thinks is an inn, hoping for a good night's sleep. He speaks to the convent gatekeeper in a very forward manner. The "La Tourière" is shocked by this forwardness, claiming she is no cabaret girl. Frontin, not yet comprehending that what he thinks is an inn is really a convent, promises to spend a great deal of money there, and begs the woman to hurry and open the door, as he burns for her embrace. The comedy of this scene is found in such misunderstandings. La Tourière asks Frontin in a shocked voice, "Quoi! Vous voulez coucher dans la maison?" [What! You wish to sleep in this house?] and Frontin replies "Eh! Oui vraiment, si vous le trouvez bon: nous savons quel métier vous faites" [Ah! Yes truly, if you find it good: we know what trade you practice]. The horrified nun then asks whom he thinks the inhabitants to be. He replies, "N'êtes-vous pas de fort honnêtes gens qui, pour des prix également honnêtes, donnez à coucher aux passans?" [Are you not a strong, honest people who, for an equally honest price, give beds to passers-by?] Throughout the opera, as here, Frontin is right in the middle of the comic action. Later in Act I, as Belfort swears that he is ready to settle down with Euphémie, Frontin reminds him of their previous adventures with many other women throughout Europe. It seems that he was often

made to suffer in Belfort's place, being punished and nearly killed by the husbands or lovers of Belfort's conquests.⁷

In discussing the character of Frontin as found in the music of *Les Visitandines*, Frontin's first air, "Qu'on est heureux de trouver en voyage," will be examined. This air appears early in the first act and provides an introduction to the mischievous valet. The translation of the text is as follows:

Qu'on est heureux de trouver en voyage Un bon souper, mais sur-tout un bon lit! Voilà de quoi faire oublier l'orage: A bien dormir je vais passer la nuit:	That one is happy to find when travelling A good supper, but above all a good bed! Here it is, to make us forget the storm. To a good sleep I will pass the night.
Je n'ai pas regret à la peine Quand je trouve après le plaisir Jusqu'à demain, tout d'une haleine. Ah! Que Frontin va bien dormir.	I don't regret the sadness When I find after it the pleasure. Until tomorrow, all of one breath. Ah! that Frontin is going to sleep well.
Et dans ces lieux où l'on repose, S'il se trouve à faire autre chose, Ce n'est pas à courir les champs Que Frontin passera son temps.	And in this place where one rests, If one finds other things to do, It will not be running through the fields That Frontin will pass his time!

There are found in this air character elements of tempo, phrasing, and a rhythmic motive x. The air is a large ABA design, and is in the key of C Major in the meter *alla breve*, tempo of *allegro assai*. The melody is diatonic for much of the air, with a few lesser excursions to the dominant G Major, the parallel C Minor, and its relative E flat Major. The motive x, with its rhythmic character, is used throughout the piece, but is especially characteristic of the A section seen in example 3.1:

⁷ Devienne, *Les Visitandines*, ed. Dudley, xxxviii.



Ex. 3.1: melodic motive x. Ex. 3.1b: rhythmic motive x.

This motive used in the air characterizes Frontin as a light-hearted and jovial individual by its lively character and its energetic propulsion to the downbeat. Terraced dynamics are usual, with the occasional crescendo used mainly before a perfect authentic cadence.

The basic musical phrases alternate between short phrases of two measures in length to longer phrases of four measures in length, as seen in examples 3.2a and 3.2b:

Ex. 3.2a: mm. 7-11, two-measure phrase in mm. 8-10.

The image shows a musical score for five instruments: Oboe (Ob), Violin I (V1), Violin II (V2), French Horn (Fr), and C-Bass (C-B). The score is written in a single system with five staves. The lyrics for the French Horn part are: "gros fare oublier lo-ra-ge a bien des sur se qui passe le nuit". The music consists of a four-measure phrase in measures 21-24.

Ex. 3.2b: mm. 18-24₂, four-measure phrase in mm. 21-24₂.

The short phrases, as at the beginning of the air, are light and somewhat frivolous in character, while the longer phrases suggest a more legato presentation for alternation.

The *alla breve* meter and the *allegro assai* tempo provide an energetic drive to the air, and this characterizes Frontin in specific ways. First, the tempo at which one must sing the text illustrates what would be a trademark of Martin's roles: "patter" singing. With the text setting almost entirely syllabic, the tempo and meter give the impression of a glib individual who is a quick thinker. Also, the text itself illustrates traits of character as Frontin gives testimony to his desire for the simple creature comforts, wanting only "un bon souper, mais sur-tout un bon lit!"

Wide leaps of a tenth are used in this air as the final cadences of both the A sections are approached, and speak to character traits as well. Herbert Schneider has suggested that the leaps are used here as tools of parody rather than the more common

representation of pathos.⁸ These leaps would then represent the irreverent nature of Frontin in musical terms as he utilizes the interval of a tenth for something other than its standard musical usage. These leaps have been written in a range suitable for singing both softly and at full volume for the high lyric baritone without losing vocal substance, and in fact such varying dynamics are called upon. The first leap of a tenth from *c1* to *e2* as found in m. 44 occurs while the orchestra is playing at a *p* dynamic with light orchestration, as seen below in example 3.3a:

The image shows a musical score for measures 40-45. The instruments listed on the left are Crs, Ob, V1, V2, V, Fr, and C-B. The vocal line (Fr) has lyrics: "que Frontin se bécote sur un que Frontin se bien dor-". The score includes dynamic markings such as *f*, *fp*, and *p*. The vocal line shows a leap of a tenth from *c1* to *e2* in measure 44.

Ex. 3.3a: mm. 40-45.

The second leap of a tenth, found in m. 48, occurs while the full instrumental contingent for this air is playing and the voice must sing with boldness at a louder dynamic, as seen below in example 3.3b:

⁸ Herbert Schneider, "François Devienne: *Les Visitandines*." *Piper's Enzyklopädie des Musik*

The image shows a musical score for a full orchestra and vocal parts. The instruments listed on the left are Crs (Cymbals), Ob (Oboe), V1 (Violin I), V2 (Violin II), V (Viola), Fr (French Horn), and C-B (Cello/Double Bass). The vocal line (Fr) has lyrics: "- - mi" and "al guetron toi va bien dor, mi". The score is for measures 46-51.

Ex. 3.3b: mm. 46-51.

The return of the leap of a tenth at m. 98 is a variation sung up a step from *dl* to *f2*. Though the full orchestra is playing at a *f* volume, the range allows for such a dynamic, as seen below in example 3.3c:

Crs

Ob

V1

V2

V

Fr

C-B

al' que Franklin va bien dormir jusqu'à ce que son tour de France ait été digne. Frontin'

FP FP FP

Ex. 3.3c: mm. 97-102.

Another element of Frontin's character is shown in the rhythmically charged repetitions of short phrases, which signify forcefulness of character both musically and dramatically. These repetitious phrases appear three times in the air, once in each section, and all three are similar rhythmically. The first phrase begins in m. 36, which is repeated in a slightly varied statement, with an exact repetition that follows, and then four repetitions of the first four notes of the opening phrase in eighth-note rhythm, ending with two added notes to arrive on the dominant of G Major. This passage is shown in in example 3.4a:

Cms

Ob

V1

V2

V

Fr

C-B

bien dor mir jus qu'à de main tout d'une ha- leine ah que Er... tivoir bi'ador mir ah

fp fp fp fp fp

cres.

Ex. 3.4a: mm. 35-40.

There is a similar passage found in mm. 72-74 of repetitive eighth-note patterns as seen below in example 3.4b:

fields. Knowing the mischievousness of the valet, a double meaning is found in this statement as he contemplates what the inn has to offer in the way of women. This is seen in the music as well in m. 60, with the deceptive cadence to A flat Major, the minor vi of C Major, on the text "et dans ces lieux ou l'on repose" [and in this house where one rests]. This harmonic change highlights a change of mood in Frontin as his thoughts stray from merely sleep to a more base instinct. "bien dormir" [sleep well] taking on a risqué tone, as seen in example 3.5:

The image shows a musical score for Example 3.5, measures 59-63. The score is arranged in a system with seven staves. From top to bottom, the staves are labeled: Crs (Cymbals), Ob (Oboe), V1 (Violin I), V2 (Violin II), V (Viola), Fr (Frontin), and C-B (Cello/Double Bass). The vocal line for Frontin includes the lyrics: "- tin ou bien dor - ner ailleurs car l'innouï, sure - pose - silco brava faire autre". The music features a deceptive cadence to A flat Major, the minor vi of C Major, on the text "et dans ces lieux ou l'on repose".

Ex. 3.5: mm. 59-63.

This new meaning to "bien dormir" is appropriate to the religious irreverence of the play, as Frontin directs his physical desires to what the audience is now aware is a convent.

In examining the range of the air to determine some of Martin's early vocal characteristics, it must first be reminded that the pitch of the time was most definitely

lower than the current $a=440$, probably at or below $a=423$.⁹ The range is from $c1$ to $f2$, and in light of the pitch difference, the air seems to fall within a range suitable for an average baritone voice, and would appear very conservative for a high lyric baritone, as seen in example 3.6a:



Ex. 3.6a: Range for Frontin's first air.

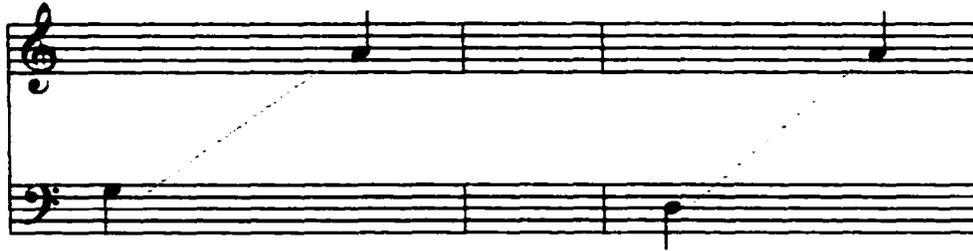
Ex. 3.6b: Range for the role of Frontin.

Though the range of the entire role of Frontin is slightly wider than the first air, from b to $g2$, as seen in example 3.6b, it is still lacking any apparent use of head voice passages which are found in later works written for Martin, such as *Une Folie* (1802).¹⁰ At Martin's young age of twenty-four his range could indeed have been narrower than its eventual range. Other reasons could include that in opéras-comiques, composers might have utilized a somewhat narrower range for better understanding of the text, or that the voices of the actors in these musical plays were not as developed as singers might be at the Opéra. In any case the range is not unusual for an average baritone, even at the current pitch $a=440$.

⁹ Alexander J. Ellis, *History of Musical Pitch*, (Amsterdam: Frits A.M. Knuf, 1963), 320.

¹⁰ Please see chapter 2.

Looking to another role in the work for comparison, the range of the first air for the tenor Belfort is not extreme either, from *g1* to *a2*, as seen in example 3.7a; nor is the range for the entire role extensive, from *d1* to *a2*, also with no apparent head voice passages, as seen in example 3.7b:



Ex. 3.7a: Range for Belfort's first air. Ex. 3.7b: Range for the role of Belfort.

The music of *Les Visitandines* is of a melodic simplicity of style that precludes the use of wide-ranging passages in the higher areas of the voice unless it is intended for comic effect. In this simple musical style, an overabundance of harmonic changes and an overuse of ornamentation would not be appropriate.

The tessitura of Frontin's air is higher than the previous examination of range might at first suggest, as seen in example 3.8:



Ex. 3.8: Tessitura for Frontin's first air.

There is a frequent appearance of e_2 and several phrases that lie chiefly between c_2 and e_2 . Substance of the voice and carrying power are prime considerations in determining the tessitura of a piece for a specific singer, and a portion of this air is higher than average for a lyric baritone, though not exceedingly high. There is particularly one passage in this air where a lyric baritone may have difficulty sustaining the tessitura as written, even at the lowered pitch level of the time. This passage is found in mm. 36-42, where an e_2 is sung eleven times in only seven measures, and is perhaps the earliest indication of Martin's higher range available, even when adjusting for pitch differences of the time (refer to example 3.4a, page 89). A full lyric baritone at the current pitch of $a=440$ would require a laryngeal adjustment at e_2 , probably up to g_2 , and in this air, the pitch equivalent of e_2 is used only once, in the leap from d_1 to f_2 in m. 98. It appears that in this early work, Martin was singing in a range not unusual for a lyric baritone, with e_{flat_2} sung as a chest tone before making a laryngeal adjustment at the second passagio at e_2 .

Therefore, it can be ascertained that the tessitura and range for Frontin in "Qu'on est heureux de trouver en voyage" from *Les Visitandines* is not unusually high, especially when accounting for the pitch difference, and could be identified as a lyric baritone air, with only one passage of a high tessitura. Perhaps Martin had not yet fully developed his head voice at this time, with the expansion of range coming later in the decade. Most likely higher notes than written were not interpolated into the score by the singer, known for his fioratura and embellishment, because of the

simple style of the work. Character considerations could also have precluded any use of the higher range.

Les Visitandines (1792) resounded with the Parisian public that had a need for light-hearted comedy in the wake of the chaos that followed the revolution. The current fashion of religious mockery was a key element in its success. Martin was said to best demonstrate his natural comic acting ability in this work, and the audience responded with a desire for forty-two more years of performances from the baritone.

CHAPTER FOUR

JOCONDE (1814)

Martin, after having moved to the Théâtre Favart from the Feydeau in 1794 or 1795, entered a period of intense success, especially when paired with the young tenor Elleviou beginning in 1798. In 1814, after the tenor retired, Martin enjoyed an enhanced success as the reigning male singer of the Opéra-Comique. The role of the “nouveau Seigneur” in *Le Nouveau Seigneur de Village* (1813), music by Boïeldieu, set Martin free from the duo relationship with Elleviou and gave him title billing. *Joconde, ou les coureurs d’aventure*, opéra-comique in three acts (28 February 1814), text by Charles-Guillaume Étienne (1777-1845), music by Nicolò Isouard (1773, 1775-1818).¹ was the next new work in which Martin sang the title role, a work which gave him and the Opéra-Comique an enormous success.

Joconde has as its source the Arabian collection *A Thousand and One Nights*, a story that had been used countless times as a source for stories, plays, and even opéras-comiques.² Étienne, however, has combined the story of *Joconde* with the

¹ Marie Briquet, et al., “Isouard.” *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2d ed., ed. Stanley Sadie and John Tyrell, vol. 12 (London: Macmillan Press Limited, 2001), 623. Two possible birth years are given.

² Charles Beaumont Wicks, *Charles Guillaume Étienne, Dramatist and Publicist (1777-1845)*, John Hopkins Studies in Romance Literatures and Languages 37 (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1940), 55-56. Of greatest interest is the opéra-comique *Joconde*, words by Desforges, music by L. E. Jadin, premiered at the Théâtre de “Monsieur” 14 September 1790, perhaps with Martin in the cast, as listed in “Jean-Blaise Martin,” *Enciclopedia dello Spettacolo* vol. 7 (Roma: Casa Editrice Le Maschere, 1960), 195. Félix Clément and Pierre Larousse, *Dictionnaire des Opéras*, rev. Arthur Pougin, vol. 1 (Paris: Librairie Larousse, 1905; reprint, New York: Da Capo Press, 1969), 614, lists another work on this subject, an “opéra-comique allemand” also entitled *Joconde* (1876), by German composer Carl Zeller (1842-1898).

story of the rosière competition,³ which was a local custom in the Provence region. which chooses one young girl as the most virtuous of the province.

Joconde was a startling and shining success for all involved. A portion of the review that appeared in the *Journal de Paris* reads as follows:

Première représentation de *Joconde, ou les Coureurs d'Aventures*, opéra-comique en trois actes. Bravo! Bravo! Bravissimo! C'est charmant, c'est délicieux! Telles sont les exclamations dont les voûtes du théâtre Feydeau ont retenti pendant près de deux heures et demie, et que j'ai vingt fois répétées de tout mon coeur, avec la foule des spectateurs entasses dans la salle... Quelque brillant qu'ait été le succès de *Joconde*, quelque vogue que cette pièce puisse avoir, ni le succès ni la vogue seront au-dessus du mérite de l'ouvrage. Une fois au moins l'engouement du public sera approuvé par le goût. La musique est digne du poème... L'auteur des paroles a déclaré, par l'organe de Martin, qu'il désirait garder l'anonyme. M. Nicolo, demandé à grands cris, a été obligé de céder aux instances du parterre.⁴

[The first performance of *Joconde, ou les Coureurs d'Aventure*, opéra-comique in three acts. Bravo, bravo, bravissimo! It is charming! It is delicious! These were the exclamations given at the théâtre Feydeau during two-and-one-half hours, and which I repeated with all my heart, along with everyone else in the room... The success of *Joconde*, and it is a phenomenal, shining success, will not be momentary. The popularity will not fade for this work. When the public is caught by something, what the public likes is because of (good) taste. The music is worthy of the poem.... The name of the librettist, through the voice of Mr. Martin, was to be kept secret. Mr. Nicolo was forced onto the stage.]

Why Étienne chose to remain anonymous is unknown, although it was most likely to avoid any repercussions to his career if the work was not successful. He was to have no worries, as *Joconde* remained in the repertory at least until the end of the

³ The rosière competition is also a plot element in Grétry's *La rosière de Salency* (23 October 1773).

⁴ A. Martainville. "Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique: *Joconde*." *Journal de Paris*, 60 (1 March 1814): 1-2.

nineteenth century, with revivals appearing even beyond 1900, and productions mounted often in Germany, Austria, and London.⁵

Nicolò Isouard (b Valletta, Malta, 16 May 1773/6 December 1775; d Paris, 23 March 1818)⁶ was born in Malta, and educated there as well as Paris. Though pressured by his father to continue in the elder Isouard's merchant business, an early success by young Nicolò with the opera *L'avviso ai maritati* (Florence: 4 June 1794) encouraged the young musician to abandon his father's plans for him to pursue a business career. He worked as an organist and composer in Valletta, and for a brief time as head of the Théâtre Manoel in that city, then was taken to Paris in 1800 by General Vaubois of the French army. His first opéra-comique for Paris was *Le petit page* (Feydeau: 14 February 1800), in collaboration with the composer Rodolphe Kreutzer (1766-1831), text by Pixérécourt (1773-1844) and Lambert, and a few years later the opéra-comique *Michel-Ange* (Feydeau: 11 December 1802), text by Delrieu, was a starring vehicle for Elleviou. Importantly, it was also in 1802 that Isouard began a publishing concern which encouraged the member's own music and connected Isouard with several of the most famous composers of Paris, including Méhul, Cherubini, Pierre Rode (1774-1830), Kreutzer, and Boïeldieu. *Le Magasin de Musique* was in publication from 1802-1811, though Isouard withdrew from the association in 1807.

⁵ Alfred Loewenberg, *Annals of Opera: 1597-1940*, with an introduction by Edward J. Dent, 3d ed., rev. and cor. (Totowa, N.J.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1978), 636-7. Loewenberg cites a London production of 1876, but there appears to be earlier examples. See footnotes 15 and 16 of this chapter.

⁶ Marie Briquet, et al., "Nicolò Isouard," *New Grove*, 2d ed., vol. 12, 623. Two possible birth dates are given.

During the years before 1811, Isouard wrote many plays and opéras-comiques, including most notably his first collaboration with Étienne, *Un jour à Paris* (Feydeau: 24 May 1808). This partnership would also create the biggest financial success at the Opéra-Comique in this era, the three-act *Cendrillon* (22 February 1810). This work's success was influential in the subsequent use of fairy tales as a source for librettos, especially as found in Charles Perrault's *Conte des Fées*,⁷ including *Cenerentola* (1817) of Giacchino Rossini (1792-1868).

Up until 1811, Isouard had no true rivals at the Opéra-Comique, but Boïeldieu returned from Russia in that year and Isouard was thrown into competition with his old friend and business partner. This rivalry stimulated Isouard into writing his most creative scores, resulting in the second greatest success up until this time, the opéra-comique *Joconde* (28 February 1814), starring Martin. Later that year, Isouard and Étienne attempted to recreate the same magic of *Joconde* with the opéra-comique *Jeannot et Colin* (17 October 1814),⁸ also for Martin, but the work could not rise up to the same level of success of its predecessor.⁹ Isouard's final score was another Arabian tale, *Aladin, ou la lampe merveilleuse* (Opéra: 6 February 1822). Isouard had only completed two acts at the time of his death in 1818 and the composer Angelo Maria Benincori (1779-1821) completed the third and final act. Sadly he also died

⁷ Charles Perrault, *Conte des Fées* (Paris: Duprat-Duverger, 1808).

⁸ Wicks, *Étienne*, 56. Apparently the libretto to *Jeannot et Colin* was lost by Isouard and the entire poem had to be rewritten in two weeks. Wicks believes this to be a reason for the weakness of the libretto. Also of interest, Act II of *Jeannot et Colin* includes a scene inspired by Mozart's finale to Act I of *Don Giovanni*, in which three quadrilles combine in three different meters.

⁹ A. Martainville, "Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique: *Jeannot et Colin*," *Journal de Paris*, no. 291 (18 October 1814): 1.

before the premiere. *Aladin* was a popular success, though reportedly this was mostly due to the lavish stage effects.

Isouard's musical characteristics include proper declamation, occasional harmonic boldness for expressive purposes, mostly syllabic ensembles, use of rapid *parlando*, and repetition of phrases. Isouard was one of the first composers to utilize melodrama in his works, an outgrowth of the origins of *opéras-comiques* from spoken plays with music added. Isouard was also responsible for designating specific locations of the actors on the stage, as well as setting some of the first metronome markings with Maelzel's metronome. Most valuable, however, was his contribution to the final form of the *opéra-comique* genre, by his balance of spoken comedy and opera in an effervescent and lively way, which is very apparent in the high energy found in the music for *Joconde*.

The librettist for *Joconde*, Charles-Guillaume Étienne (b Chamouilley, 5 January 1777; d Paris, 13 March 1845), was a renowned dramatic author and political commentator. Étienne and his wife moved to Paris from Chamouilley in 1796 in order to seek a better position that would allow him time to write for the theater, which was his avocation. His first Parisian work was the *opéra-comique* *Le Rêve* (Favart: 27 January 1799), music by A. F. Gresnick (1755-1799).¹⁰ In December of that year Étienne was granted an administrative post and was in a better financial position to devote more time to the writing of plays. These plays were written quickly in a popular vein, hoping for a short but financially rewarding success.

¹⁰ Wicks, *Étienne*, 27.

In 1803, Etienne attempted to have produced *Le Pauvre riche, ou la Séparation de biens*, a play in three acts written with Gaugiran de Nanteuil (1778-1830). This work was accepted for a production at the Théâtre Louvois, the theater managed by Louis-Benoît Picard, the librettist for *Les Visitandines* (1792), but it was never played. It may have been too similar to a play written by Picard himself, *Duhautcours* (1801), and was therefore turned down for a production.¹¹

In 1804, in collaboration with Martainville, Étienne wrote the *Histoire du Théâtre-Français, depuis le commencement de la reunion générale*, a four-volume historical work. In 1805, Étienne attained the post of private secretary to Napoléon's "secrétaire d'État," Maret, and in 1807 expanded his writing talents to include journalism, being named editor-in-chief of the *Journal de l'Empire*, formerly the *Journal des Débats*. His best known play was *Les Deux gendres* (1810), and of his librettos for opéras-comiques, *Joconde* (1814) probably achieved the most notoriety.

Étienne, who was favored by Napoléon, faced many obstacles in the years 1814 to 1816, when the Emperor was removed and the Bourbon family was restored to power. The poet lost important political posts, including one on the board of censorship for the Paris theatres, and it was most likely because of these political difficulties that at this time Étienne took an intense interest in politics, representing the liberal opposition.¹² He continued to face more problems with the government and

¹¹ Ibid. 14.

¹² Ibid. 8.

wrote no more theatrical works after 1816, focusing exclusively on political journalism. He died in Paris on 13 March 1845.

Joconde was probably the most successful role for Martin in which he played a title character until Dormeuil in *Les Voitures versées* (1820) of Boïeldieu. Though Isouard and Étienne collaborated on several works, *Joconde* was one of the most successful both critically and financially, and was given over 400 performances. *Joconde* was not the first work written by Étienne for Martin. *Gulistan, ou le hulla de Samarcande* (Feydeau: 30 September 1805), music by Dalayrac, featured Martin in the cast. This work originally had been scheduled for 21 September 1805, but an illness of Martin delayed the opening until 30 September.¹³ This also marks the first of several plays by Étienne that find their source in an Oriental story, a group to which *Joconde* belongs. The dialogue and music of *Joconde* move at a very fast pace, and this speed is enhanced by “Étienne’s devotion to the classic twenty-four hours as the limit of time for a play.”¹⁴

The work begins at the court in Provence, where the Countess Mathilde and her handmaiden Édile are debating over how to convince the Countess’ hesitant cousin, Sir Robert, the Count, to agree to marry her. Édile suggests utilizing the strategy with which she convinced her lover Joconde, the Count’s servant, to be faithful, by rousing his fears that she may wander if he is not attentive. Although he was until recently “the adoration of women and the envy of men.”¹⁵ Joconde is now

¹³ Ibid. 51.

¹⁴ Ibid. 53.

¹⁵ Nicolo Isouard, *Joconde, or The Adventurers*, trans. J. Arnold, *English and American Drama of the 19th Century* (London: s. n., 1818?: reprint, New York: Readex Microprint, 1967), 4.

wholly faithful to Édile. Lysandre, an older gentleman and acquaintance of all involved, agrees to help the ladies in a plan to make Robert jealous “for his own good.”

Robert and Joconde are found arguing over the servant’s desire to leave the Count’s service in order to be near his Édile. Lysandre appears and emphasizes that Joconde must remain attentive to her to guarantee her faithfulness. Joconde sings of his past loves throughout the world and his joy in his newfound faithfulness in the air “J’ai longtemps parcouru le monde.”

The men decide to test their love’s fidelity by attempting to woo each other’s lover. Édile and Mathilde find out about this scheme from Lysandre and lead the Count and Joconde to believe the worst in order to teach them a lesson. The story then takes a new turn as the men depart for a town that is preparing to give out an award to the most virtuous girl, the “rosière” prize. After various plot complications arise with Jeannette, one of the village girls competing in the “virtuous” competition, and her lover Lucas, the men are caught and taken into custody. After the discovery that they are the Count and his servant, the men are released and return to their loves and all is forgiven.¹⁶

Martin’s participation in *Joconde* was pervasive. The baritone was featured in many musical numbers, including an air, a romance, two couplets with Édile and Jeannette, a trio, two quartets and three larger ensembles. Primarily evident in the

¹⁶ Ibid. Though the musical score that was made available did not include dialogue, a libretto including dialogue and song text was available in a version intended for performance in English at the Theatre Royal English Opera 6 July 1818 under the title *Joconde, or The Adventurers*. It is for the most

score is the fast pace which Isouard sets to keep up with the rapid action of the libretto. Any disappointment or unhappy emotion is expressed in the dialogue scenes only in order to avoid slowing the fast pace of the musical numbers. The most interesting feature in the score is the successful evocation of the local colour of Provence, represented particularly by a villanelle melody and a musette theme. Isouard is credited in *Joconde* with one of the earliest attempts to illustrate the locale of a region in the musical score.¹⁷

The comedy for *Joconde* in this particular play is based more on situational misunderstandings than witty dialogue. Étienne provides a very funny scene where Robert and Joconde are to meet separately with Jeannette, the virtuous village girl, so that each may convince her to love them. Jeannette, however, is already in love with young Lucas. When Robert and Joconde each go to meet Jeannette, she actually is hidden with young Lucas instead. Robert and Joconde each mistake the hidden man for each other and both admit defeat, though they later realize that neither was with Jeannette.

The first air for Martin, "J'ai longtemps parcouru le monde," is in a fast *Allegro spiritoso* tempo with a rhythmically charged accompaniment that contributes

part a faithful representation when compared to the text of the musical selections, and it has been utilized for plot summary and character trait information, though not for translation purposes.

¹⁷ Michael Fend, "Joconde," *New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, ed. Stanley Sadie, vol. 2, (London: Macmillan Press Limited, 1992), 901.

to the rapid pace of the work. The voice writing is primarily syllabic with only an occasional word covering two or three notes at the very most. Joconde, in this air, vows to give up his roving life and a myriad of women to concentrate on the one woman with whom he wants to settle down, and the sections of the air illustrate both Joconde's past and his hopes for the future. The text of the air reads:

J'ai longtemps parcouru le monde
Et l'on ma vu de toute part.
Courtisan la brune et la blonde
Aimer soupirer au hasard;
Sémillant avec les Françaises,
Romanesque avec les Anglaises.
En tous lieux où j'ai voyagé
Selon le pays j'ai changé.

I have for a long time traveled the world,
And one has seen me everywhere
Courting the brunette and the blonde,
Loving with a sigh by chance:
Bubbly with the French women,
Romantic with the English women.
In all the places where I have traveled,
According to the country, I changed.

Sans me piquer d'être fidèle

Without me pricking their curiosity of being faithful

Je courais d'amour en amour.
Je n'aimais jamais qu'une belle, oui.
Mais je ne l'aimais qu'un jour.
Ce n'était pas de l'inconstance
C'était plutôt de la prudence.
Car des femmes sans vanité
Je connais la légèreté.
Et, je ne les quittais d'avance
Que pour n'en pas être quitté.
Et cependant en vérité,
Je l'ai souvent bien mérité car,
J'ai longtemps parcouru le monde...

I flitted from love to love.
I have loved only one beauty at a time, yes.
But for never more than just one day,
This was not to be fickle.
But to be careful
Because women without vanity,
I know their flightiness.
And I only left them in order
For me not to be left.
And however in fact
I have often well deserved it.
For I have for a longtime traveled the world...

Mais de l'amour je porte enfin les chaînes.
L'aimable Édile a reçu mes sermens.
Je trouve même un charme à mes peines,
Et je chéris jusqu'à mes tourmens.

But for love I wear finally the chains.
The loving Édile has received my vows.
I find even a charm in my sadness
And I cherish even my torments.

Mon luth harmonieux et fidèle
Ne raisonne plus que pour elle.
Mais on ne peut toujours languir,
Je suis forcé d'en convenir.
Je me souviens avec plaisir que
J'ai longtemps parcouru le monde...

My harmonious and faithful lute
Only plays now for her.
But one cannot always languish.
I am forced, however, to admit that
I remember with pleasure that
I have for a long time traveled the world...

Joconde has up to this time been a true lady's man, but his new love Édile has outsmarted him into settling down.

The form and musical elements are integrated well with the structure of the text and help to illustrate the character traits of Joconde. Internal repetitions are used heavily throughout this piece and almost all are nearly exact repetitions, with only slight changes, and serve to emphasize the text being repeated. The air is in a modified rondo form. ABACB'A. The A and B sections are characterized by the *allegro spiritoso* tempo in *alla breve* meter. This fast rhythmic vitality shows the youthfulness of his character and the vigor of his past feminine pursuits. This youthful vitality is further characterized by a melodic and rhythmic motive x and the bright key of D Major. The motive x is heard in the very first measure and represents the rhythmic energy of Joconde's character. This motive x can vary from dotted to even rhythm and occasionally appears with an added grace note, as in its first appearance in the orchestra, as seen in example 4.1:



Ex. 4.1: motive x and variants.

The introduction starts with the opening vocal line in the accompaniment, though with slight variations to propel the music forward. The vocal phrases in the A section are generally constructed around arpeggiated chords, with an octave leap appearing in mm. 25-26 that startles with its suddenness, as seen in example 4.2:

Joc

Piano

ye j'ai chan - gé en tous lieux où j'ai vo - ya - gé se - lon le pa - ys j'ai chan

rf *rf*

Ex. 4.2: mm. 24-28.

The B section, mm. 39-81, is centered around the key of B Minor, the relative minor of the central key. The text here describes Joconde flitting from love to love, but always leaving the girl before she could leave him. This change to minor depicts the underlying worry Joconde expresses at the possibility of being left first, exposing a vulnerable side to his character. A Neapolitan chord in m. 61 interrupts this admission of vulnerability to make the assurance that never had a girl left him, and provides some harmonic variety in the piece, as seen in example 4.3:

le et je ne les quit - tais d'a van - ce que pour n'en pas é - tre quit - té Ah! des

Ex. 4.3: Neapolitan chord, mm. 61-65.

The vocal phrases of the B section are more conjunct, with a more legato character to the accompaniment in the first several bars, and with the note duration in quarter notes rather than eighth notes. It is still driving at the same fast tempo and rhythmic energy, however.

All musical elements change drastically for the C section on the text "Mais de l'amour je porte enfin les chaînes." in mm. 111-136. The meter changes to 6/8, the tempo to a much slower *andantino sostenuto*, and the key to the subdominant of G Major. This section, which details Joconde's new life settling down with Édile, is depicted by a new lyrical theme in an entirely different key and tempo, which is heard in the orchestral introduction. A new lyricism not present before is seen in this section. The octave leaps utilized on the word "chéris" in m. 129 and m. 133 do not have the character of those found in the A and B sections, but are much more expressive, depicting Joconde's loving devotion to Édile. This expressivity is emphasized in the musical repetition at m. 132 with a fermata near the end of the phrase, as seen in example 4.4:

The musical score for Example 4.4 consists of three staves. The top staff is the vocal line in treble clef, with lyrics underneath: "mens ahl je ché - ris jus - qu'a mes tour - mens mon". The middle and bottom staves are the piano accompaniment, with the middle staff in treble clef and the bottom staff in bass clef. The piano part features a prominent eighth-note accompaniment in the right hand and a more active bass line in the left hand. A fermata is placed over the final note of the phrase in measure 132.

Ex. 4.4: mm. 131-136.

However, after only twenty-six measures the air quickly returns to the breathless *primo tempo*, with an abbreviated variant of the B section in mm. 136-152, again beginning in B minor. Wide leaps are used here also for expressive purposes. Octave leaps are found for the text “Mon luth harmonieux et fidèle ne raisonne *plus* que pour elle.” when Joconde admits his lute will no longer be needed to catch women, as seen in example 4.5:

The image shows a musical score for Example 4.5, measures 137-140. The score is in B minor, 4/4 time, marked "Allegro". It features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line has lyrics: "luth har-mon - ieux et fi - dè - le ne rai-son-ne plus que pour el - le". The piano part includes a dynamic marking "p".

Ex. 4.5: mm. 137-140.

Joconde has come to the realization here that one cannot always “languish” alone and that a roaming life is an empty life.

In mm. 148-149, during a transition back to D Major, a leap of a seventh on the V7 of D Major is used on the word “forcé.” which keeps up the same energy seen in the earlier leaps found in the A section. This leap asserts the strength of conviction Joconde now has to stay faithful to one woman, and the next phrase, sung with just as much strength, joins his remembrances of his past loves with thoughts of his new one, as seen in example 4.6:

guit je suis for - cé d'en con - ve - nir je me sou - viens a - vec plai - sir que j'ai long

Ex. 4.6: mm. 148-152.

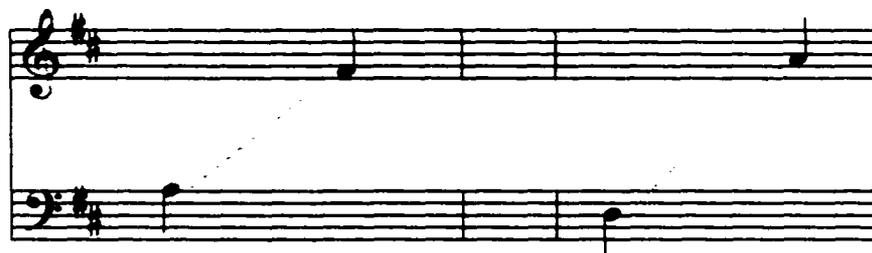
The return of A here is achieved with a slight alteration of the text, as Joconde “remembers with pleasure” the women he has loved, and though now ready to settle down, will always remember fondly his past adventures. This section is shortened beginning in m. 165, with a change in the melodic content to provide a sense of finality in D Major, as seen in example 4.7:

nesque a - vec les An - glai - ses en tous lieux ou j'ai vo - ya - ge par - tout par - tout j'ai chan

Example 4.7: mm. 163-167.

The piece has built up a great deal of momentum that slows slightly with longer note values in the vocal line beginning in m. 176, after which a nine-measure orchestral postlude hastens to the finish of the piece.

Regarding the voice of Martin as used in this air, the first observation concerns the high tessitura. Isouard evidently takes great care to place the range of the air for Martin's voice. The tessitura lies mostly between *a1* and *f#2*, a full step higher than seen in either of the first two airs discussed, as seen in example 4.8a, although the range of the air as seen in example 4.8b, from *d1* to *a2*, is certainly not the full use of Martin's range seen in *Une Folie* (see chapter 2).



Ex. 4.8a: Tessitura of "J'ai longtemps" Ex. 4.8b: Range of the air.

In this range, the baritone would not be required to sing in his head voice at all, ensuring the fullness in the highest notes of his chest voice. Also by not singing in the lower range of his chest voice, Martin's voice would not be lost in the rather busy accompaniment used throughout the piece. It can be concluded that, even when accounting for the pitch $a=423$, the voice of Martin was sufficiently supported to sing "patter" at this high tessitura.

Dynamic considerations by Isouard in the accompaniment of this piece appear to achieve intelligible understanding of the text. Though the orchestra begins at a *f* volume, it is brought down to *p* immediately, as seen in example 4.9:

allegro spruzzo

f *p*

Example 4.9: mm. 1-5.

Motive x is often marked to be played *rf*, emphasizing the vigor of the work.

Even more energy is given at the end of the A section, mm. 29-31 and mm. 33-35.

with a *fp* marking on all downbeats, as seen in example 4.10a:

ys j'ai chan - gé par - tout par - tout où j'ai vo - ya - gé se - lon le pa - ys j'ai chan - gé par - tout par

rf *fp* *fp* *fp* *fp* *fp* *rf* *rf* *fp* *fp*

Example 4.10a: mm. 28-33.

This energy continues in the first *ff* of the piece in mm. 36-39, which contrasts with the following *p* in m. 40, as seen in example 4.10b:

ys j'ai chan - gé. Sans me pi - quer d'ê - tre fi

ff *p*

Ex. 4.10b: mm. 36-40.

All of these elements serve to make the accompaniment exciting, but one can see that the vocal line is in a comfortable range for Martin. Also, the soft dynamics indicated allow the vocal line to be easily heard.

The B section changes back to *p* dynamic for the orchestra, with *mf* again on motive x, and a crescendo to *f* in mm. 74-75 accompanies the vocal line written in Martin's higher chest voice, as seen in example 4.11:

van - ce que pour n'ên pas é - tre quit - té pour n'ên pas é - tre quit - té pour n'ên

cresc *f*

Ex. 4.11: mm. 71-75.

The second A section is an exact repetition of the first A section.

Though no dynamic marking is found for the C section at m. 111, the legato character of the section would suggest a *p* dynamic for the orchestra. One slight crescendo marking is found in this section, in m. 127, to highlight the nonharmonic tone *d#* in the accompaniment, with a decrescendo marking in m. 132 on the same nonharmonic tone of m. 127. The section ends with an emphatic *ff* in the subdominant key, representing the strength of resolve with which Joconde faces his retirement from a life as a roving lover (please refer to example 4.4, page 109).

The B' section begins at a *p* dynamic, allowing the text to be understood. The dynamics continue to emphasize emotions in m. 147, on the repeat of the text "toujours languir," which is given a *ff* marking to illustrate Joconde's desire to no longer languish but to have a settled life, as seen in example 4.12:

The image shows a musical score for Example 4.12, measures 142-147. It consists of three staves: a vocal line (treble clef), a piano accompaniment (grand staff), and a bass line (bass clef). The vocal line has lyrics: "ne ma-son-ne plus que pour el - le ma-son ne peut tou-jours lan - guir mais on ne peut tou-jours lan". The piano accompaniment features a prominent bass line with dynamic markings "mf" and "ff".

Example 4.12: mm. 142-147.

The shortened A section is much the same as before, but with crescendos in m. 171 and m. 173 as the final measures of the vocal line are reached in mm. 176-180, which are accompanied by a *ff* volume in the orchestra, as seen in example 4.13:

Ex. 4.13: mm. 175-181.

All of the more forceful sections in the accompaniment are when the voice lies in a tessitura that covers the area from *a1* to *f#2*, and occasionally to *a2*, which suggests that in 1814, Martin's voice would appear to be at its highest tessitura level.

This air, of all those being discussed, is perhaps the best example of a vocal characteristic for which Martin is best known, rapid patter singing, utilized through most of this air. The breathless tempo at which the piece is propelled requires a speed of articulation for the text that is reminiscent of the "Largo al factotum," Figaro's aria from *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (1816), by Rossini, and this quickness helps to illustrate the character in music. In both cases the character is a servant full of energy and wit. The text "je ne les quittais d'avance," in m. 62 and repeated again in m. 70 is particularly rapid in its execution (please refer to example 4.3, page 108).

The air "J'ai longtemps parcouru le monde" has a higher tessitura for the vocal part than previously seen, and utilizes the verve and energy of Martin's highest chest range to illustrate the character traits of Joconde. The music, though simple, represents Joconde's character with a quick tempo and patter-like text declamation.

and there is an alternating contrast between the three differing musical sections for variety.

CHAPTER FIVE

LES VOITURES VERSÉES (1808/1820)

In 1820, Martin would create the role of Dormeuil in a revised version of *Les Voitures versées* (St. Petersburg: 1808; Paris: 29 April 1820), text by Louis-Emmanuel-Félicité-Charles Mercier Dupaty (1775-1851), music by François-Adrien Boïeldieu (1775-1834). The singer's most recent appearance in a work by Boïeldieu was in the opéra-comique *Le petit Chaperon rouge* (30 June 1818), in the character of Rodolphe, the human counterpart of the wolf in an adaptation of "Little Red Riding Hood." In *Les Voitures versées* Martin would play the role of Dormeuil, a provincial landowner who comes to the aid of Parisian visitors who crash their carriages along the road that goes past his country estate. This role was a definite departure from Martin's usual valet character, playing a landowner with servants of his own, though there is a slight similarity to his previous characters in this provincial citizen, who is of a lower status when compared with the worldly Parisians.

Martin was given the amusing dialogue expected of him, as well as a bravura air "Apollon toujours préside au choix de mes voyageurs," with which to garner unanimous praise for his performance. Another highlight of the score were the variations on "Au clair de la lune," a duo sung by Dormeuil and Élise, his niece. This piece in particular was very popular and generated a number of instrumental works based on it, including two works for piano by Ferdinand Herold (1791-1833), the

Grandes variations sur "Au clair de la lune," op. 19. and a *Polonaise sur Les Voitures versées*. op. 20.¹

Les Voitures versées had been successful in its first presentation in St. Petersburg in 1808, but in Paris the work almost never survived opening night. Boïeldieu revised this work because he was in ill health, and he knew the importance of keeping his name before the public.² Two years had already passed since the premiere of *Le petit Chaperon rouge* (1818), and five more years would pass after *Les Voitures versées* before the crowning work of his career, *La dame blanche* (1825), would premiere to great acclaim. *Les Voitures versées* had originally been composed to a libretto by Vedel, but since the original opéra du vaudeville on which it was based was by the Parisian Dupaty, entitled *Le Séducteur en voyage ou Les Voitures versées* (Vaudeville: 4 December 1806), Boïeldieu asked the original author to revise his work for the new Paris version.

Opening night was a catastrophe, mostly due to disapproval of the libretto. The following excerpt describes some of the objections heard from the audience in attendance at the premiere of 29 April 1820 for *Les Voitures versées*:

Quelques invraisemblances trop fortes dans le livret de Dupaty, par ailleurs débordant d'esprit et de gaieté, indisposent vivement le public. "Une assez forte opposition, dont les intentions hostiles se sont manifestées dès le premier acte, a fait entendre le bruit discordant des sifflets." Puis, "la scène de nuit qui amène le dénouement a paru le comble de l'inconvenance, et c'est là qu'a éclaté dans toute sa force l'orage qui s'était annoncé dès le premier acte par

¹ Thomas Betzwieser, "Ferdinand Herold," *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2d ed., ed. Stanley Sadie and John Tyrell, vol. 11 (London: Macmillan Press Limited, 2001), 434.

² Georges Favre, *Boieldieu, Sa Vie-Son Oeuvre*, vol. 1 (Paris: Librairie E. Groz, 1944; reprint Genève: Slatkine Reprints, 1977), 205.

quelques murmures. qui avait redoublé au commencement du deuxième acte. et qui s'est terminé par un bruit effroyable de sifflets."³

[Some really unbelievable things in Dupaty's libretto, which is otherwise filled with wit and gaiety, greatly disinclined the public. "A fairly strong opposition, the hostile intentions of which began to be manifested in the first act, was made noticed by the discordant noise of whistles." Then, "the night scene which introduced the ending appeared as being the height of unseemly behavior, and it was then that the stormy explosion which had begun in the first act as only murmurs, and had increased at the beginning of the second act, then ended by a dreadful noise of whistles."]

After the disastrous opening night, Dupaty and Boïeldieu went to work on the book, making many cuts, with Dupaty even suggesting the work be shortened to one act. Boïeldieu was hesitant to make such drastic cuts, as two fine musical pieces would be lost, the couplets sung by Mme. de Melval and the Act II finale. After consulting with the actors, the work was left in two acts, but much of the offensive material was removed and a much happier finale was added. The second performance of the edited version of the work on 1 May 1820 was much more successfully received. Boïeldieu was pleased at the reception to the edited version, but was aware how close the work had come to disaster when remarking to the critic Charles Maurice that "enfin nous nous en sommes tirés comme cela"⁴ [finally we survived it that way].

The newly-edited version gathered momentum quickly, with praise for its gracious, lively music and especially for the "quatre variations sur l'air Au clair de la

³ Ibid, 206.

⁴ Ibid, 207.

lune. ‘arrangées avec une merveilleuse adresse’⁵ [arranged very skillfully]. Out of the amusing story line comic situations arise, including a lost traveler who has lost his “sol,” and is promptly given an instrument from the orchestra with which to find his lost pitch. Another especially comic moment concerns Mme. de Melval and her imitation of the different tones that one can make for declaring love.

The librettist responsible for these comic situations was Louis-Emmanuel-Félicité-Charles Mercier Dupaty (b Beanquefort/Gironde: 30 July 1775-d Paris: 31 July 1851),⁶ a poet and playwright. A son of the president of Parliament in Bordeaux, Dupaty had been a marine, fighting in a battle where the ship *le Vengeur* had been lost. After arriving in Paris, Dupaty began to write for the theater. The first true success for which he was well known, *L'Antichambre ou Les Valets entre eux* (Feydeau: 27 February 1802), an opéra-comique, music by Dalayrac, was surrounded by a great controversy. One “biting” critic among the many admirers of the work raised objections to the subject and Dupaty was imprisoned for several months and the play was removed from the stage. The *Biographie des Hommes Vivants* suggests that the reasons stemmed from “le ressentiment de quelques valets, devenues grands seigneurs, dont il avait paru se moquer dans sa pièce, avait été la principale cause de son voyage”⁷ [the resentment of some valets, having become great lords, who seemed to be ridiculed in this work, had been the main reason for his imprisonment]. Several

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Franz Stieger, *Opernlexikon, Part 3, Librettisten*, vol. 1 (Tutzing: Hans Schneider, 1979), 153.

⁷ *Biographie des Hommes Vivants*, vol. 2 (Paris: Chez L. G. Michaud, 1818), 474. The article is signed “A.”

adjustments were made in the work and it was remounted under the title *Picaros et Diego, ou la folle soirée* (3 May 1803),⁸ with Martin in the cast.

Dupaty was known for many works for the stage, including plays, vaudevilles, and opéras-comiques. Included among his works are *L'Opéra-Comique* (9 July 1798), with Ségur jeune, music by Dominique Della-Maria (1769-1800), *Arlequin tout seul* (1799), *L'intrigue aux fenêtres* (25 February 1805), with Bouilly, music by Isouard, and *La Fête de Meudon* (1810). He also wrote an opéra-ballet for Napoléon entitled *Le Triomphe du mois de Mars, ou le Berceau d'Achille* (27 March 1811), music by Rodolphe Kreutzer.⁹ Another well-known work by Dupaty was the play *La Prison militaire* (1804), a comedy on the intrigue of modern theater in Paris of the time. Also known as a poet, Dupaty composed poems for Napoléon for various occasions for the "garde nationale," in which he was an officer. Most famously, Dupaty published in 1819 a "poème iambique," *Les Délateurs*, which resounded with the Parisian public.

The composer François-Adrien Boïeldieu (b Rouen, 16 December 1775; d Jarcy, 3 October 1834) was the foremost composer of opéras-comiques in the early part of the nineteenth century, having developed an interest in this genre attending many of the productions in Rouen of the works of Grétry, Monsigny, and Dalayrac, among others, preferring especially the comic works. Boïeldieu's first successful opéra-comique was a work entitled *La fille coupable* (Rouen: 2 November 1793).

⁸ Pierre Larousse, "Dupaty," *Grand Dictionnaire Universel du XIX siècle*, 2e series, vol. 6 (Paris: Administration du Grand Dictionnaire Universel, 1866-1879; reprint Genève: Slatkine, 1982), 1403.

⁹ Stieger, *Opernlexicon*, part 3, vol. 1, 253.

which was well received. In 1796 Boïeldieu moved to Paris with high aspirations, beginning his career working in the shop of a piano tuner. It was in this capacity that Boïeldieu met many notable composers of the day, including Méhul, who was instrumental in introducing him to many important members of the Parisian musical circle. Opéras-comiques near the end of the eighteenth century had tended towards a more somber and highly dramatic tone, and Boïeldieu's greatest contribution to the genre would be to reintroduce the light, sophisticated opéras-comiques which were melodically rich and full of vitality. The oriental tale *Zoraïme et Zulnare* (1798) was the first major Parisian success for the young Boïeldieu, with Martin and Elleviou leading the cast. The next year *Le Calife de Bagdad* (1789) was an even greater success, so successful that it remained in the repertoire at the Opéra-Comique for over seventy-five years. In addition to his composing, Boïeldieu also taught piano at the Paris Conservatoire from 1798 to 1803.

Soon after the premiere of *Ma tante Aurore* (1803), which starred Martin, Boïeldieu left Paris to direct the French Court Theater in St. Petersburg, leaving his post at the Conservatoire and his role as the foremost composer of opéras-comiques. Boïeldieu left Paris for personal reasons, removing himself from an unhappy marriage to the famous dancer Clotilde Mafleurai. He returned to Paris in 1811, finding the composer Isouard at the head of the current composers of opéras-comiques and he immediately set about reclaiming his position in Parisian theater. For his first production he revised *Rien de trop, ou les deux paravents* (Feydeau: 19 April 1811), a work he had written for St. Petersburg in 1810, the revised version featuring Martin in

the cast. He then wrote a new work, the very successful *Jean de Paris* (4 April 1812), which is claimed by Robert Schumann to fall among the three best comic operas of this era, included with Rossini's *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (1816), and Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro* (1786), each work especially mirroring the nationalities of the composers.¹⁰ *Jean de Paris* was a triumphant success for Boïeldieu. *La Mercure* exclaimed: "Voici, grace au ciel, un opéra-comique digne de ce nom"¹¹ [Here is, thank heaven, an opéra-comique worthy of the name]. It also marked the last great triumph of the duo of Elleviou and Martin, who had sung in productions together since at least 1798. The tenor would leave to pursue a political career.

As is evident, Martin had already sung in numerous works by the composer, and their long association continued, the baritone singing the major roles in most all of Boïeldieu's new opéras-comiques. *Le Nouveau Seigneur de Village* (29 June 1813) was composed the next year as a vehicle for Martin, and Boïeldieu dedicated the work to the singer. The next work would also feature Martin, *La Fête du village voisin* (5 March 1816), which was a rare failure, due to an unusually weak libretto. *Le petit Chaperon rouge* (30 June 1818), text by Théaulon based on the original Claude Perrault tale, was Boïeldieu's greatest advance in a richer harmonic texture and orchestration. The work was written to mark the election of Boïeldieu to the Institut de France, later known as the Académie des Beaux-Arts, where he succeeded Méhul

¹⁰ Marc Honegger and Paul Prévost, "Jean de Paris." *Dictionnaire des Oeuvres de l'Art vocal*, vol. 2 (Paris: Bordas, 1991), 977.

¹¹ Jean Mongrédien, *French Music from the Enlightenment to Romanticism: 1789-1830*, trans. Sylvain Frémaux (Portland, Ore.: Amadeus Press, 1996), 91.

as professor of composition.¹² Boïeldieu felt intense pressure to prepare *Le petit Chaperon rouge* under rigid deadlines, and after the premiere of the new work, it was necessary for him to leave the theatrical turmoil of Paris and rest in the country.

The new popularity of Rossini ruled Parisian musical tastes at this time, which reached an even higher level when Rossini moved to Paris in 1823. However, Boïeldieu's next work, *La dame blanche* (10 December 1825), was an enormous success, perhaps for the very reason that it was quite unlike Rossini. Rooted in a wealth of melodic inspiration, Boïeldieu utilized in his landmark work many appoggiaturas and passing notes, spare modulations, and an orchestration full of colour, with unusual instrumentation. Boïeldieu's last attempt at an opéra-comique, *Les Deux nuits* (20 May 1829), was a failure. His health never recovered, even after a recuperative trip to Italy in 1832, and a persistent hoarseness brought on by consumptive laryngitis eventually took away his ability to speak. Boïeldieu died 3 October 1834 in Jarcy, France.

The most apparent musical characteristic that permeates all of Boïeldieu is his abundance of melodic material. It was said that Boïeldieu wrote his melodies by singing them, thereby giving them a sense of spontaneity. His chordal structure was not complicated, and "Berlioz found this harmony 'a bit monotonous' but never tired of praising its grace and 'Parisian elegance, well-liked and in good taste.'"¹³ The depth of instrumental colour found in the works of *Le petit Chaperon rouge* and *La*

¹² Favre and Betzwieser, "Boïeldieu," *New Grove* 2d ed., vol. 3, 804.

¹³ Mongrédien, *French Music*, 105.

dame blanche was influential with the next generation of opéra-comique composers, including Herold and Halévy. In addition, the energy and vivacity found in the music of Boïeldieu would keep many of his works, including *Le Calife de Bagdad* and *Jean de Paris*, in the repertoire for most of the nineteenth century.

The story of *Les Voitures versées*, or *The Overturned Carriages*, is a slight one. The road that runs in front of a provincial castle owned by Dormeuil (Martin) is in terrible condition, but he refuses to repair it. As travelers from Paris drive along the road in their carriages, the poor condition of the road turns them topsy-turvy. Though Dormeuil appears sympathetic to each traveler's plight, he has actually intentionally not repaired this road so that he may receive visitors in his remote location. Dormeuil offers the travelers lodging and hospitality as fine as any Parisian could hope for, and offers to repair their carriage, all in trade for an evening's diversion during which he is apprised of the latest news and fashions of the day in the French capital. One such traveler, the young Florville, courts Dormeuil's niece, Élise, and succeeds in luring her away from her local amour, Armand. Dormeuil prefers the provincial Armand for his niece, and in order to convince Élise to return to her former love, Mme. de Melval, a widow of forty years of age, is called upon by Dormeuil to seduce Florville in order to demonstrate to Élise that his intentions are not honorable. The scheme succeeds and a happy ending ensues. Armand inherits a large fortune and a post in Paris, and Dormeuil agrees to allow Armand Élise's hand in marriage.¹⁴

¹⁴ Honegger and Prévost, *L'Art Vocal*, vol. 3, 2204.

The air of Dormeuil, "Apollon toujours préside au choix de mes voyageurs," serves as an introduction to Martin's character while at the same time providing a display piece for the singer. The dialogue leading to the air gives many insights into character. Dormeuil is talking to Armand of the impending visit of Mme. de Melval, and Armand expresses his interest in the lovely widow. Dormeuil is somewhat surprised at the young man's interest, and is slow to realize that Armand's nature is to appreciate beautiful women. "C'est bon!...c'est bon!...j'y vois clair...il ne me faut qu'une minute" [All right !...all right!...I see clearly...I only need a minute]. Armand, under his breath, observes "et depuis huit jours il ne s'aperçoit pas que j'adore sa niece!" [and it takes him eight days to see I adore his niece!] The impression one is given of Dormeuil in such dialogue is that of a wit, albeit a slow one. Later in the same scene, as Dormeuil is telling Armand how his travelers come to stay at "Dormeuil," the name of his estate, he admits that he refuses help to fix the road in hopes that each day some coaches will flip. "On verse dans le sable: jamais de blessés: des contusions seulement, quelques côtes enfoncées, des riens...J'en ai le plus grand soin..." [They only flip in the sand and the people are not injured. A few bruises only, a few ribs out of place maybe, little things...I am very careful about that...]. Dormeuil prefers contact with these Parisian visitors, and he will do whatever it takes to bring them to his remote location. The following air then goes on to describe the prestigious and talented travelers which have descended on his house from these flipped carriages.

The translation to the air is as follows:

Apollon toujours préside
 Au choix de mes voyageurs.
 Jamais les jardins d'Armide,
 N'ont vu de tels enchanteurs:
 J'ai reçu dans ma retraite
 Trois académiciens.
 Un jour, me tombe un poète.
 Un jour des musiciens.
 Et quels musiciens!

L'un excelle sur la flûte,
 Et par un touchant bémol,
 Dans une brillante lutte,
 Est l'égal du rossignol.
 J'ai tantôt la clarinette,
 Le basson et le hautbois.
 J'eus même un jour, la trompette!
 Quel concert, quel jour de fête!
 Quand tout ça verse à la fois?

Est-il chemin plus commode,
 Et senton quel bonheur j'ai
 Quand nos acteurs à la mode
 Prennent un petit congé.
 L'an passé, quelle victoire!
 J'eus le moderne Lekain.
 Ferme au sentier de la gloire,
 Il versa dans mon chemin:
 Il nous a joué Thieste,
 Il nous déclama Néron.
 Et dans les fureurs d'Oreste,
 Fit frémir tout le canton.
 Des serpens de la furie,
 J'entendais le sifflement.
 J'ai tantôt la tragédie, tantôt l'opéra.
 C'est charmant!

Apollo always presides
 Over the choice of my travelers.
 Never have the gardens of Armide
 Seen such enchanters;
 I have received in my retreat
 Three academicians.
 One day a poet fell my way,
 One day, some musicians.
 And what musicians!

One excelled on the flute,
 And by a touching of b flat,
 In a brilliant struggle,
 Is the equal of the nightingale.
 I then had a clarinet,
 A bassoon, and an oboe:
 I even had one day a trumpet!
 What a concert! What a day of celebration!
 When all this poured out at once.

Is it a path more convenient,
 And imagine how happy I was
 When our actors in fashion
 Took a little holiday.
 This year past, what victory!
 I had the modern Lekain.¹⁵
 Firm to the path of glory,
 He poured down my path.
 For us he played Thieste,
 He declaimed Nero,
 And in the furor of Orestes,
 He made the entire district rumble.
 The serpents of the furies,
 I could actually hear them hiss.
 I have at one moment tragedy, the next opera.
 It is charming!

The air is in the key of C Major with the range from *c1* to *g2*, the same equal span of an octave and a fifth found in “J’ai longtemps parcouru le monde” from *Joconde*, and nearly equivalent to the *c1* to *f2* in “Qu’on est heureux de trouver en voyage” from *Les Visitandines*. These ranges however differ greatly from those seen

¹⁵ Larousse, “Lekain.” *Dictionnaire du XIXe siècle*, 1^e série, vol. 10, 344-45. “Le moderne Lekain” is in reference to a celebrated French tragedian of the eighteenth century, Henri-Louis Cain (1729-1778), nicknamed Lekain.

in the period of the works *L'Irato* (1801) and *Une Folie* (1802), when *b flat2*, *c3*, and *d3* were more common. C Major is the same key as the air from *Les Visitandines*, and is a whole tone lower than the air from *Joconde*, which is in D Major. There is exact evidence that the pitch equivalent would have been $a=423$ at the Feydeau in 1820.¹⁶ The tessitura lies from *g1* to *e2*, and adjusting for modern pitch this would place it at *g flat1* to *e flat2*. The range and tessitura of the air can be seen in example 5.1:



Ex. 5.1a: Range of "Apollon toujours." Ex. 5.1b: Tessitura of the air.

Of note is the infrequency of the highest pitch of *g2*, which appears only twice, near the middle of the piece in m. 64 and at the very end in m. 131. In comparison, the air from *Joconde* has three *a2*s and the first appears in m. 26, very early in the piece. Of course it is always possible that Martin would have embellished the vocal line, adding interpolated high notes, but there is no record of this in the published score. Martin was said to have triumphed in the air,¹⁷ and sang it many times in concert after the initial run of the work was over, therefore, it must have been suitable for him. If this

¹⁶ Alexander J. Ellis, *The History of Musical Pitch* (Amsterdam: Frits A.M. Knuf, 1963), 320.

¹⁷ Félix Clément and Pierre Larousse, *Dictionnaire des Opéras*, rev. Arthur Pougin, vol. 2 (Paris: Librairie Larousse, 1905; reprint, New York: Da Capo Press, 1969), 1153.

presumption is correct, the overall tessitura and range of Martin would appear to have shifted lower since *Joconde*. Whatever the case, various observations can be made regarding his voice at this time.

The air begins with a twelve measure introduction at a tempo of *Maestoso* in 4/4 meter. The piece is generally through-composed, though not entirely so, as it utilizes some internal repetitions both musically and textually, as well as a return of the first theme of the *Allegretto* section with condensed text. The *Allegretto* tempo continues through most of the work, from m. 12 until m. 107, where a tempo change to *Allegro Vivace* is found with the text “j’ai tantôt la tragédie.” This faster tempo is accelerated at m. 113, which combines with a gradual crescendo to *ff* for the coda of the piece. The acceleration to the end builds excitement to the final breathless tempo and majestic finish.

There are many passages in the text that can be characterized in music, giving Martin ample opportunity for displaying his acting ability. This begins with the stately chords that underscore the first line of text. These chords evoke the strength of Apollo as he presides over the fate of the travelers that crash outside of Dormeuil’s estate, as seen in example 5.2a:

The image shows a musical score for voice and piano. The voice part is on a single staff with lyrics: "A-pol-lon toujours pré-si-de au choix de mes voya-geurs, A-pol-l'". The piano part consists of two staves (treble and bass clef) with chords and some melodic lines. The tempo is *Maestoso* and the meter is 4/4. The score is for measures 4-8.

Ex. 5.2a: “Apollo” chords, mm. 4-8.

There are several vignettes that describe the various instruments played by some of these visitors, and two are highlighted in musical terms. In mm. 30-38, the flute is heard in the accompaniment in its struggle to out-sing the nightingale, which is also illustrated by the trill in the vocal line in m. 36, as seen in example 5.2b:

par un touchant: bé - mol, dans u - ne brillan - te lut - - te, ent le -

Ex. 5.2b: a portion of the "flute's struggle," mm. 33-36.

The trumpet is first heard in mm. 44 in the fanfare that announces its arrival and then continues underneath the vocal line to the beginning of m. 48, seen in example 5.2c:

cor, le bas - son, le haut - bois; j'ous même un jour, la trom -

Ex. 5.2c: a portion of the "Trumpet solo," mm. 43-45.

To illustrate Dormeuil's excitement while reminiscing of such a grand concert.

agitated chords are heard in the accompaniment in mm. 48-55, as seen in example

5.2d:

The image shows a musical score for a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in treble clef and contains the lyrics: "cert! ——— quel jour de fê - - - te! quand tout ça verse à la". The piano accompaniment is shown in two staves, treble and bass clefs, with dense, agitated chordal textures. The score is divided into measures by vertical bar lines.

Ex. 5.2d: a portion of the "Excitement" chords, mm. 49-51.

Harmonic excursions also help to illustrate the text. The most adventurous section harmonically is used to underscore the performances of a visiting actor at the estate, beginning in m. 78 with an unstable tonal center that shifts between F Major and D Minor for several measures, finally arriving at a D Minor first inversion chord in m. 94. This section modulates to the relative A Minor in mm. 98-105, and then returns to the tonic key of C Major in m. 105, which continues to the conclusion of the piece. Many diminished chords are used throughout this section to build excitement for the description of the various performances given by this "modern Lekain." The accompaniment throughout this section is agitated, and reaches a flourish of scalar passages in mm. 98-101 to illustrate the hissing of the serpents of the furies of Orestes. Also in m. 98 the dissonance of an added minor sixth to the E

Major dominant chord of A Minor is used as a preparation for the serpent's appearance. Just previous to the furies, there is a moment of intensity as the phrase "fit frémir tout le canton" is repeated three times beginning in m. 93, rising to a climax of *f#2* in the second statement in mm. 95-96, and descending to an *e1* at the end of the third statement in mm. 97-98. This repetition depicts the strength of the resounding actor's voice as his intensity of performance builds until the entire district is shaking. These various elements can be seen in example 5.3:

The image displays three systems of musical notation. Each system consists of a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (grand staff). The lyrics are written below the vocal line. The piano accompaniment is characterized by dense, rhythmic patterns, often with dynamic markings such as *sf*, *p*, and *ff*. The first system shows the vocal line with the lyrics "ton, fit frémir tout le canton, fit frémir". The second system shows the vocal line with the lyrics "mir tout le canton. des serpens de la fu". The third system shows the vocal line with the lyrics "ri - e, j'entendais le sifflement, le sif-flu".

Ex. 5.3: A portion of the "actor's performance." mm. 94-102.

The mood shifts quickly after this, the music becoming lighter and faster, with a triplet figure “rollicking” under the vocal line. Though the accompaniment is very rapid at this point, the text declamation has not become rushed. This triplet figure, which is found in mm. 111-120, is evocative of a laugh as it illustrates the excitement of Dormeuil as he returns to his reminiscences of the instrumentalists, as seen in example 5.4:

The image shows a musical score for a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in treble clef and contains the lyrics: "cu dans ma re - trai - te, po - é - te a - ca - dé - mi - ci -". The piano accompaniment consists of two staves, treble and bass clef, featuring a rapid triplet figure in the right hand and a simpler accompaniment in the left hand.

Ex. 5.4: A portion of the “rollicking” triplet figure, mm. 112-114.

The dynamics also play an important part in the illustration of the text and continue to give insight into Martin’s voice. This air continues to support the theory that overall the upper parts of Martin’s chest voice were the most penetrating, particularly the tessitura area of *g1* to *g2*. The most evident difference in this air from the other two studied is the recurring appearance of *ff* as a dynamic throughout the piece. The introduction begins at a *ff* volume, dropping back only to *f* for the first phrase of the vocal line in mm. 5-6, but on the second phrase the accompaniment

lowers to a *p* dynamic as the vocal line drops down to *e1* in m. 7-8, as seen in example 5.5a:

A - pol - lon toujours pré - si - de au choix de mes voya - geurs, A - pol -

Ex. 5.5a: mm. 4-8.

As the vocal line rises to *f2* in m. 9, the accompaniment again returns to the beginning *ff*. With the next phrase in m. 11 at the *p* dynamic level, an element of terraced dynamics is heard that appears in both mm. 5-8 and mm. 9-12, as seen in example 5.5b:

lon toujours pré - si - de au choix de mes voya - geurs, ja -

très doux

Ex. 5.5b: Terraced dynamics in mm. 9-12.

The beginning of the *Allegretto* section in mm. 13-16 is marked *pp*, allowing for intelligible textual declamation in a varying vocal range, as seen in example 5.6:

The image shows a musical score for Example 5.6, measures 13-16. It consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The tempo is marked 'Allegretto'. The vocal line has the lyrics 'mais les jachins d'Armi - - de, n'ont vu de tels enchanteurs ja...'. The piano accompaniment is marked 'pp' and 'Allegretto 126 = d'.

Ex. 5.6: mm. 13-16.

The first reappearance of the *ff* dynamic is in m. 46 with the fanfare of trumpets, which continues through m. 60. The exact range of this *ff* section is from *g1* to *e2*, repeatedly seen as the most plentiful dynamic range for Martin (please refer to example 5.2b, c, d, pages 131-32).

A *ff* dynamic is used throughout the section from m. 78, alternating at times with the *fp*, utilized to build excitement beginning in m. 85, as seen in examples 5.7a and 5.7b:

teurs. l'an pas - sé, quel-le vic - toi - re!

ff *f* *f*

Ex. 5.7a: mm. 78-80

min il nous a jou - é Thi - es - - - te,

ff *fp* *ff*

Ex. 5.7b: mm. 86-88.

This continues to m. 105, where the accompaniment returns to a *pp* dynamic so that the text can be heard clearly, as seen in example 5.8:

allegro vivace

j'ai tan-tôt la tra-gé - di - e, tan-tôt la tra-gé - di - e, tan-tôt lo - pé

allegro vivace

pp

Ex. 5.8: mm. 105-107.

A *ff* dynamic returns at m. 121 and continues to the end, the final measures of the vocal line utilizing the tessitura from b_2 to g_2 , within the higher range of Martin's voice, that allows for a loud dynamic, as seen in example 5.9:

bois. quel plai - sir! quel jour de fê - - - te! quanttout

laca.

ff

Ex. 5.9: mm. 121-123.

In conclusion, the air is lower in range and tessitura than the air from *Joconde* and *Une Folie*, and while moments of patter are still evident, the tempo is slower and more in keeping with a man of older years. The dynamics are at a higher level than all previous airs discussed so far, especially regarding the frequency of the *ff* dynamic. This could infer a possible added strength to Martin's voice at this time, or perhaps a style change that encouraged the writing of loud dynamics, though the orchestra may have been kept to a suitable volume. Also, the through-composed nature of the piece, again different from the previous airs, allows for constant variety to mirror the text. This air was sung by Martin often as an excerpted selection in concerts in later years and was very popular with the audience, and the role of Dormeuil was another of Martin's great successes.

CHAPTER SIX

LES SOUVENIRS DE LAFLEUR (1833)

Although Martin had officially retired from the stage on 31 March 1823, he periodically reappeared in many revivals of his former roles during the period from 1826 to 1832. Though the critical reception to these appearances was decidedly mixed, with nearly all agreeing to some extent that Martin was well beyond his best singing, such special concerts were financially successful and Martin was received warmly by the audience.¹

In 1833 Martin was asked to return to the stage again as the star of a new work to be composed for him, *Les Souvenirs de Lafleur* (Bourse: 4 March 1833), opéra-comique in one act, text by Pierre-François-Adolphe Carmouche (1797-1868)² and Frédéric de Courcy (1795-1862), music by Fromental Halévy (1799-1862). The work was to be based on a one-act comédie-vaudeville, also by Carmouche and De Courcy, entitled *La Vieillesse de Frontin* (Paris: Théâtre de Madame, 23 August 1825).³

The current stars of the Opéra-Comique in the 1830s lived in the shadows of the great singers that had come before them, including the famous tenor Elleviou, Mme. Gavaudan, Mme. Dugazon, and Martin. One by one these famous names left

¹ Please see chapter 2.

² G. Vapereau, *Dictionnaire Universel des Contemporains*, vol. 1 (Paris: Hachette, 1858), 343. Hoefler, *Nouvelle Biographie Générale*, vol. 7-8 (Paris: MM. Firmin Didot Frères, 1861; reprint Copenhagen: Rosenkilde et Bagger, 1967), 774, lists Carmouche as Pierre-Frédéric-Adolphe.

³ Pierre-François-Adolphe Carmouche and Frédéric de Courcy, *La Vieillesse de Frontin* (Paris: Chez Quoy, Librairie, 1825), 1.

the theater until Martin was the only representative of the past glory of the Opéra-Comique still singing. It had been several years since the famous baritone had sung in a new production, and the management of the Opéra-Comique felt certain that a new work starring the “doyen des chanteurs français”⁴ [dean of French singers] would greatly help a dwindling box office. And though Martin was at this time again teaching at the Conservatoire, recently reinstated in 1832 after his initial tenure from 1816 to 1818,⁵ he was convinced to return to the stage for one final triumph.

In need of a guaranteed success, the Opéra-Comique engaged Carmouche and De Courcy to adapt their work *La Vieillesse de Frontin* (1825) for Martin, and the young composer Halévy would write the musical score. This comédie-vaudeville had as its central character an aging but clever valet and was especially suited to Martin, who had played valets throughout his career, but was now nearing sixty-five years of age. The authors were by no means newcomers to the theater, and brought with them experience working with many of the great theatrical writers of Paris. The composer Halévy had also by this time had some success, and would write with ingenuity for the voice Martin possessed at the time, placing the aging singer in the best possible light.

Pierre-François-Adolphe Carmouche (b Lyon, 18 April 1797; d Paris,

December 1868) was an actor and dramatic author of plays and librettos who would

⁴ Félix Clément and Pierre Larousse, *Dictionnaire des Opéras*, rev. Arthur Pougin, vol. 2 (Paris: Librairie Larousse, 1905; reprint, New York: Da Capo Press, 1969), 1046.

⁵ Théodore Lassabathie, *Histoire du Conservatoire Impériale de Musique et de Déclamation* (Paris: Michel Lévy Frères, 1860), 439.

also serve as a director of several theaters as well. Carmouche moved to Paris from his native Lyon to pursue a career in theater against the objections of his family. At the age of 19, his play was given at the Théâtre Porte-Saint-Martin, and this success allowed him acceptance into the "Caveau moderne," where he met many future collaborators.⁶ It was at the Porte-Saint-Martin that Carmouche would first meet his co-author of among other works *La Vieillesse de Frontin* and *Les Souvenirs de Lafleur*. Frédéric de Courcy. In addition to De Courcy, Carmouche collaborated with Anne-Honoré-Joseph Duveyrier, known by the name Melesville (1788-1865), Augustin Eugène Scribe (1791-1861), Marie-Emmanuel-Guillaume-Marguerite Théaulon (1787-1841), and Alexandre-Vincent Pineu Duval (1767-1842), all highly respected theatrical writers of the period. In addition to his theatrical writings, Carmouche compiled a four-volume work *Le Théâtre Révolutionnaire*, which listed all theatrical productions based on a revolutionary theme from 1757 to 1830.⁷ He was made director of the Théâtre Porte-Saint-Martin in 1827, the Théâtre de Versailles in Strasbourg in 1830, and later the Théâtre Français in London, where he had traveled with his wife, the celebrated actress Jenny Vertpré.

Frédéric de Courcy (1795: d Paris, 1862) made his début as a theatrical author in 1822, beginning a career that spanned over thirty years, both alone and as a co-author. De Courcy wrote primarily comédies-vaudevilles, and many of his works remained in the repertory. Among the most popular were *Le Duel par procuration*

⁶ Daniel Jean Louis Marie Luc Pralus, "Le Théâtre Révolutionnaire de Monsieur Carmouche" (M. A. thesis, University of Delaware, 1969), 2. "Caveau moderne," literally, "modern vault," could mean a club where a society of writers met in Paris at this time. More research is needed.

⁷ *Ibid.* 6.

(1822), with Rousseau, *Olivier Basselin* (1838), a comédie-vaudeville with Nicolas Brazier (1783-1838), and *La Chaste Suzanne* (1839), an opéra-comique in four acts, with Carmouche, music by Hippolyte Monpou (1804-1841). In addition to these collaborators, De Courcy wrote works with Jean-François-Alfred Bayard (1796-1853), Jules-Henri Vernoy de Saint-Georges (1801-1875), Théodore-César Muret (1808-1866), and Scribe. In addition, De Courcy authored a cantata entitled *Mazagran*, *Bulletin d'Afrique* (1840), and a novel *Les Gueux de Bruges* (1842). In addition to those works mentioned previously, De Courcy also collaborated with Carmouche on the opéras-comiques *Le Morceau d'ensemble* (7 March 1831), music by Adolphe Adam (1803-1856), and *Le Pendu* (25 March 1841), music by Louis Clapisson (1808-1866).

Fromental Halévy (b Paris, 27 May 1799; d Nice, 17 March 1862) was a composer, professor, and writer on music, best known for his dramatic opéra *La Juive* (Opéra: 23 February 1835). Halévy entered the Paris Conservatoire in 1810, and began composition studies with Cherubini the next year. During his training Halévy also studied with Berton and Méhul. The young composer won the Prix de Rome in 1819, but delayed accepting the prize for one year due to the death of his mother.⁸ Though he had written an opera as early as 1819-1820, Halévy was not to have a work produced until 1827, the opéra-comique entitled *L'Artisan* (Feydeau: 30

⁸ Ruth Jordan, *Fromental Halévy, His Life and Music: 1799-1862* (London: Kahn and Averill, 1994), 12-13.

January 1827). His first real success came two years later, with the opéra-comique *Le dilettante d'Avignon* (Ventadour: 7 November 1829), which remained in the repertory for many years.

After this success Halévy was made "chef du chant" [vocal director] at the Opéra, and he produced two ballets there, as well as annual offerings at the Opéra-Comique for several years, including *Les Souvenirs de Lafleur* in 1833. It was soon after that the Paris Opéra would premiere *La Juive* (23 February 1835), his most successful work. Halévy had another success the same year with the opéra-comique *L'éclair* (Bourse: 16 December 1835), and he continued to write for both houses for the next several decades, enjoying continued success to the end of his life.

Halévy was indebted to his training in Italian musical style in Rome as well as to his predecessors Boïeldieu and Auber. It appears that his principal concern was for the musical phrase, not allowing the word stress to determine the musical elements.

The music for *Les Souvenirs de Lafleur* would primarily be original, but in order to take advantage of the star appearance of Martin, musical reminiscences of his past triumphs would be utilized in Lafleur's "Grand Air," which would be incorporated into the story skillfully by the librettists and composer. All the character names were changed from the original play in the adaptation, but the location, thirty "lieues" from Paris in the provinces, and the basic story line were left intact.

Lafleur is an aging valet to his master, the also older Baron de Valbonne,⁹ and together they spend their time reminiscing of past adventures. The uncle has an errant nephew, Adrien, who has a desire to marry his cousin, the widow Mme. de Surville, but has too many debts. The uncle tries to correct the nephew's irresponsible behavior by confining the nephew to his castle to study for the diplomatic service exams. Lafleur is left as "guard" of the young Adrien, and "trompe les ennuis de sa captivité"¹⁰ [relieves the boredom of his captivity] by recounting past exploits of himself and Adrien's uncle. Through these stories Lafleur skillfully gives Adrien advice without seeming too obvious on how to pay off his debts and marry his love. It seems that in the uncle's youth, he sold off trees from his father's lands to make his fortune, after which he smuggled his soon-to-be bride onto the estate disguised as a dairy maid. Adrien, seeing the parallels to his own situation, immediately sells some of his uncle's forest and marries his cousin, who enters the estate in disguise. The uncle is at first furious, but Lafleur reminds him that he did the same in his youth, and all is forgiven.¹¹

The plot of *Les Souvenirs de Lafleur* presents an interesting juxtaposition between the aging valet Lafleur and the aging chanteur Martin, especially in Lafleur's "Grand Air," during which the valet reminisces of past adventures while at the same time the singer is reminiscing of his many past musical triumphs. This "Grand Air" constructed by Halévy is a pastiche of airs Martin made famous, including musical

⁹ Fromental Halévy, *Les Souvenirs de Lafleur* (Paris: Pacini, 1833), 2. Jordan, *Halévy*, 41, lists the baron as "Monsieur de Vallone."

¹⁰ Clément and Larousse, *Dictionnaire des Opéras*, 1045.

¹¹ Jordan, *Halévy*, 41, and Clément and Larousse, *Dictionnaire des Opéras*, vol. 2, 1045-46.

and textual references to *Les Visitandines* (1792), *Joconde* (1814), *Le Nouveau Seigneur de Village* (1813), *Le Fête du village voisin* (1816), and others. It was noted that Martin received great applause for this air, as well as the moment when Lafleur reprimands De Valbonne for chastising his nephew, reminding the Baron of his own similar past.¹²

Martin astounded “critics and audiences with the perfectly preserved purity and range of his voice.”¹³ as well as the marvelous charm and freshness exhibited by one his age. Some judged the work to be slight, and *La France Nouvelle* found that it would have been more desirable for the composer if “MM. Carmouche et Decourcy (sic) plaçassent (sic) un peu mieux les morceaux de musique et recherchassent plutôt les situations dramatiques que les mots spirituels. De quelque verve que soit doué un musicien, il lui est difficile de trouver une inspiration heureuse dans un trait d’esprit ou un madrigal” [Carmouche and Decourcy invested a little bit less in the music and looked more for dramatic situations rather than spiritual words. No matter how gifted the singer may be, it is difficult to find positive inspiration in a wit or a madrigal]. But Martin was given an occasion to show the “ressources de sa voix étonnante” [resources of his astonishing voice], and was “redemandé après la chute du rideau”¹⁴ [was vehemently applauded and called back]. Clément and Larousse observed that Halévy “a composé pour cet opéra-comique une musique charmante, instrumentée avec élégance et discrétion pour ne pas couvrir la voix du doyen des chanteurs

¹² Clément and Larousse, *Dictionnaire des Opéras*, vol. 2, 1045.

¹³ Jordan, *Halévy*, 41.

¹⁴ “Nouvelles des théâtres: *Souvenirs de Lafleur*.” *La France Nouvelle*, no. 2023 (5 March 1833): 2.

français”¹⁵ [composed for this opéra-comique charming music which was elegantly and discreetly orchestrated in order to not cover the voice of the dean of French singers].”

The opera was successful in bringing crowds back to the Opéra-Comique, but for only a short time. The work was so specifically aimed at Martin’s talents and his musical past that no one could possibly have replaced him in the work, and when he left the production, performances were discontinued. Another result of the opera was that it provided him with the longest career in the theater in France up until that time. Clément and Larousse cited that “il n’y a pas d’exemple d’une carrière aussi longue au théâtre. Thévenard, qui chanta pendant quarante ans les opéras de Lulli et de Rameau, prit sa retraite à l’âge de soixante-deux ans”¹⁶ [there is no other example of such a long career in the theater. Thévenard, who sang in the operas of Lully and of Rameau, retired at the age of sixty-two].

The “Grand Air,” as Clément and Larousse refer to it, is a monumental piece in any genre, but especially by opéra-comique standards, and contains an introduction and six large sections over 303 measures. As mentioned, it incorporates elements from past works sung by Martin. Not all origins of the works used in this air have been identified, due in part to the scarcity of the scores of these works, and more research is needed. The final two large sections have not been identified, and other

¹⁵ Clément and Larousse, *Dictionnaire des Opéras*, vol. 2, 1046.

¹⁶ Ibid. Gabriel-Vincent Thévenard (1669-1741). Mary Cyr, “Gabriel Vincent Thévenard.” *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2d ed., ed. Stanley Sadie and John Tyrell, vol. 25 (London: Macmillan Press Limited, 2001), 389, states that he sang for “over 30 years.”

musical and textual references could also be lacking. The overall layout of the work can be seen in example 6.1:

Section:	Introduction	Section 1: "Lafleur"	2: <i>Visitandines</i>	"Qu'on est heureux"
Tempo:	<i>Allegro</i>	<i>Allegro non troppo</i>	<i>Un Plus lent</i>	<i>Allegro</i>
Measures:	1-13	14-52	53-73	73-93
Key:	E flat M	E flat M	E flat M	cm/E flat M/CM
	I-V	I-V	I	vi-I-VI
Section:	3: "Joconde"	4: "Fête du village voisin"	5: "Écoute, ô mon amie"	6: "C'est ainsi"
Tempo:	<i>Allegro</i>	<i>Andantino con moto</i>	<i>Larghetto non tanto</i>	<i>Allegro</i>
Measure:	94-118	119-145	146-168	169-303
Key:	C M	G minor	G M	E flat M
	VI	lii	III	I

Ex. 6.1: Structural outline for the "Grand Air."

The final section 6 is the only section that has a repetition in its structure, and a more complete breakdown of the final section can be found in example 6.2:

Section:	6: <i>Intro: "C'est ainsi"</i>	A: " <i>Quand j'aperçois</i> "	bridge	A'	Coda-abc
Tempo:	<i>Allegro</i>	<i>Allegro</i>	<i>animato</i>	<i>Allegro</i>	<i>Allegro</i>
Measure:	169-182	183-209	209-238	239-263	263-303
	I	I	(V)	I	I

Ex. 6.2: Section 6 structure.

The translation divides the text into musical and textual sections. Lafleur is reminiscing of his past adventures with Adrien, whom he is “guarding” for the Baron de Valbonne:

Introduction: *Allegro*

(The first section is an introduction used to set up the reminiscences of Lafleur.)

Ah! de tels souvenirs.	Ah! Of such memories.
Oui mon orgueil s'honore.	Yes. I pride myself.
Semblable au vieux soldat	Similar to the old soldier
Qui reedit ses exploits.	Who retells his exploits.
Au temps de mes hauts-faits.	I seem to be reliving again
Il me semble être encor.	My peak of life.
Et je me rajeunis	And I become younger
En parlant d'autrefois.	In speaking of the past.

Section 1: *Allegro non troppo. "Lafleur."*

J'étais un héros d'antichambre.	I was a hero of the antichamber.
Adroit, malin, hardi menteur.	Skillful, sly, a bold liar.
Frisé, coquet.	Curly, well dressed.
Toujours parfumé d'ambre.	Always perfumed with amber.
Des valets j'étais l'Empereur.	Of the valets I was the Emperor.
On m'avait surnomé Lafleur.	And one had given me the nickname of Lafleur:
Et je méritais bien d'honneur	And I merited well the honor
Ce noble surnom de Lafleur.	Of this noble surname of Lafleur.
À l'intrigue élevez un temple	If in my honor they will erect a temple.
Et je m'y présente à l'instant.	I will be there instantly.
De mes bon tours	Of my clever tricks
Je puis citer plus d'un exemple.	I then will cite more than one example.

Section 2: *Un plus lent. Les Visitandines.*

En moine un jour dans un couvent	As a monk one day in a convent
Je pris une dévote face,	I put on a devout face.
Un air contri et repentant	An air contrite and repentant
Avait remplacé mon audace.	Had replaced my boldness.

Je chantais sur un ton nouveau.
 Ah! Est-il une plus douce place
 Que celle de pasteur
 D'un si joli troupeau.

I sang a new tune.
 Ah! Is there a sweeter place
 Than this one to be the pastor
 Of so pretty a flock.

Allegro. "Qu'on est heureux de trouver en voyage."

Et quel plaisir quand j'étais un voyage
 Courant la poste jour et nuit,
 Bravant et la pluie et l'orage
 Je savais grâce a mon esprit
 Trouver partout bon souper et bon lit

(transition with text from *Joconde*)
 car j'ai longtemps parcouru le monde.

And what pleasure when I was travelling
 Running the post day and night,
 Defying the rain and the storm
 And with my wits able
 To find everywhere I went a good meal and a
 good bed.

(transition with text from *Joconde*)
 for I have a long time covered the globe.

Section 3: *Allegro. Joconde.*

J'ai su briller en tout pays.
 Et l'on ma vu nouveau Joconde,
 Dans tous les temps en tous pays
 Toujours l'effroi des tuteurs des maris.

Parfois je quittais la livrée
 Et l'habit m'allait bien d'honneur.
 De gloire un jour l'âme cuivrée
 (transition is text from *Nouveau
 Seigneur de Village*)
 D'un village je fus seigneur. Paix! Paix!

I have been known to shine in all countries
 And all have seen me, the new Joconde.
 In all times in all countries
 Always the dread of the guardians and of
 husbands.

Once I took off the livery
 And clothes that were of honor.
 Of glory one day my soul was gilded.
 (transition is text from *Nouveau Seigneur de
 Village*)
 Of a village I was lord. Peace! Peace!

Section 4: *Andantino con moto. La Fête du village voisin*

Et quand à la fête
 D'un certain village voisin.
 Je me mis en tête
 De prendre l'air bête et calin
 Séduire une soubrette,
 Simple, innocente, et jolie.
 Ce fut l'affaire d'un moment.
 (transition to section 5: "et même encore
 maintenant." origin unidentified)
 Et même encore maintenant
 Je dirais à femme jolie:

And at a celebration
 Of a certain neighboring village.
 I made myself stupid
 And cuddly in order
 To seduce a chambermaid,
 simple, innocent and pretty.
 It was the matter of the moment.
 (transition to section 5: "et même encore
 maintenant." origin unidentified)
 And even still now
 I say to pretty women:

Section 5: *Larghetto non tanto*, "Écoute, ô mon amie." origin unidentified.

Écoute, ô mon amie.	Hear, oh my love.
L'aveu d'un tendre amant.	The confession of a tender lover.
Cède, cède je t'en supplie.	Give up, give up. I beseech you.
À la voix du sentiment,	To the voice of feeling.
Sois sensible ô cruelle.	To be sensitive to a cruel.
Que je peine mortelle	And deadly sorrow.
Ou ton amant fidèle.	Or your faithful lover
Va mourir de son tourment.	Is going to die of his torments.
(transition to section 6: "C'est ainsi, oui	(transition to section 6: "C'est ainsi, oui
monsieur." origin unidentified)	monsieur." origin unidentified).
C'est ainsi, oui, monsieur.	It is in this way, yes, sir.
Que je peins mon tourment.	That I portray my torment.
Oui, même encore maintenant...	Yes, even still now...

Section 6: *Allegro*. "Quand j'aperçois gente brunette." origin unidentified.

Quand j'aperçois gente brunette	When I notice a brunette
Au minois fripon et lutin.	With a mischievous face and a little malicious.
Je regarde encor la fillette	I still look at a young girl
Séduit par un démon malin.	And am seduced by a shrewd demon.
Je crois revoir encor Lisette.	I believe I see again Lisette.
Ou bien Julie, ou bien Rosette.	Or dear Julie, or dear Rosette.
Enfin tout ce peuple soubrette	At last these chambermaids
Que je n'aimai jamais envain.	That I never loved in vain.

Animez

(B section back to the repeat of A section)

Je sens encor de veine en veine.	I still feel flowing in my veins
Se glisser la flamme soudaine	The sudden fire
Qui venait embrâser mon coeur.	Which flares up in my heart.
Alors comme dans ma jeunesse.	As it did in my youth.
Je dis plein d'une noble ivresse.	I say that I am full of a noble drunkenness.
Je suis toujours Lafleur! Ah!	I am forever Lafleur! Ah!
Quand j'aperçois...	When I notice...
(Repeat of section 6 with Coda).	(Repeat of section 6 with Coda).

The introduction and section 1 are assumed to be newly composed, as they act as an introduction of the character of Lafleur and prepare the way for the reminiscences of the past airs sung by Martin. Section 2 begins the musical pastiche

of airs from Martin's previous roles and the composer connects the sections musically to match the textual transitions. This section 2 tells the story of *Les Visitandines* and his disguise as a monk. At the *Allegro*, the rhythmic and melodic elements appear for "Qu'on est heureux de trouver en voyage," which lasts only briefly, intersecting with the text and a suggestion of melodic elements from "J'ai longtemps parcouru le monde," from *Joconde* at m. 85. Section 3 is an air centered around the character of Joconde, which is used as a transition into text describing the day when he was a seigneur of a village from *Le Nouveau Seigneur de Village*, and the introduction to that air is heard with the exclamations "Paix! Paix!" Then to another village, that of *La Fête du village voisin*, in section 4, at m. 119, with text and possibly melodic elements as well.¹⁷ A new melody is heard at m. 146, and the text just previous mentions "je dirais à femme jolie," which may be well-known text from another air as well, if the past pattern continues. The final section 6 is to the text "quand j'aperçois gente brunette," again origin unknown. This is the most interesting piece in the air and is saved for last for the obvious energetic drive and exciting leaps in the melody that generate a building intensity to the end of the piece.

Because the air is a collection of previous airs that have been re-orchestrated with altered keys to best suit the voice of Martin in its condition at the time, some elements are worth noting. The introduction and section 1 are very grand in scope. This serves to convey the dignity and stateliness that illustrate the character of Lafleur that is found in the text of section 1. "des valets j'étais l'Empereur, on m'avait

¹⁷ The author has not been able to view a score for this opéra-comique.

surnomé Lafleur” [Of the valets I was the Emperor, and they called me Lafleur]. This text gives the indication that Lafleur was the valet that all other valets could be judged against. This was also the case with Martin in the role of the valet throughout his career, as he was considered the best actor of this character type.

The air alternates between more tranquil legato passages and those with more energy, and this alternation is seen often throughout the air, allowing Martin an opportunity to show all of his vocal talents. Section 2, from *Les Visitandines*, provides both a tempo and character change, starting in a slower *un peu lent* in m. 53, and changing to an *allegro* in m. 73. Section 3 continues in the same *allegro* in a jocular manner, which is altered at the transition to section 4 at m. 106 to a grand broadening for the opening “Paix” from *Le Nouveau Seigneur de Village* in m. 115.

For variety, a much more legato section appears at m. 119, a melody which from the text appears to be from *La Fête du village voisin* (1816). The vocal line is centered around the key of G Minor, and it is in this section that are found the first fermatas that allow improvisation on the part of the singer. The first written cadenza is in m. 134, just after the change of key to D Major in m. 131. The second cadenza is inserted at the end of this section, in m. 144.

Melismas found in the section 5 that follows hint at the fioratura for which Martin was known, especially in m. 154, m. 156, and m. 158, some of which can be seen in example 6.3, mm. 156-158:

Ob

Cl

Crs

Bsns

Vl1

Vl2

Vla

Laf

CB

pe - ne - mor - tel - le ou tou a - mant - fi -

pp

pizz

Ex. 6.3: mm. 156-158.

The final section 6 is the best example in this air of the patter singing for which Martin was also well known, and is best illustrated in mm. 197-203, as seen in example 6.4:

Fl

2Fl

Ob

Vl1

Vl2

Vla

Laf

CB

je crois re - voir en - cor Li - sei - le ou bien Ju - lie ou bien Ro - sei - le en fin tout ce pre - cie - xes - t - bre - le que je n'ai

Ex. 6.4: mm.197-203.

It should be remarked that during the “patter,” the voice is accompanied by strings only marked *p* at an *Allegro* tempo.

The range of the air is nearly as wide as the air from *Une Folie* (1802), but without the head voice range, and encompasses over two octaves, from *g* to *a flat2*, as seen in example 6.5a:



Ex. 6.5a: Range for the "Grand Air."

Ex. 6.5b: Tessitura

The general range appears to have lowered considerably from those airs previously discussed. The pitch had risen by this time, with the pitch equivalent documented for Paris Opéra in 1830 at $a=430.8$,¹⁸ an approximate quarter step down from the current $a=440$. This pitch is then higher than the previous $a=423$ seen in 1820 at the Opéra-Comique. With the key center around E flat Major the tonic and dominant chords allow for a melodic range that frequently utilizes the range from *b flat* to *e flat*₂, demonstrating a possible added strength in his middle and lower range. The *Larghetto non tanto* section at m. 146 in G Major contains the lowest note in the piece, *g*, which appears in m. 162 and m. 165.

The key of E flat Major is a very friendly key for the baritone, and the nature of this key would provide an easier tessitura than seen previously in the other airs, covering the areas between *d*₁ and *e flat*₂, as seen above in example 6.5b, similar to the tessitura of the air from *Les Voitures versées*, which was *g*₁ to *e*₂ in the key of C Major. In spite of this generally lower tessitura, the appearance of *g*₂'s are more

¹⁸ Alexander J. Ellis, *The History of Musical Pitch* (Amsterdam: Frits A. M. Knuf, 1963), 322.

frequent than the air from *Les Voitures versées*, numbering sixteen. of which all but three are in the final *Allegro* section.

As has been seen in the previous three airs. dynamics and orchestration are a major determinant of audible text declamation. This air is no exception. however there is a larger orchestra here than seen in *Les Visitandines* or *Joconde*. Several players were added in 1820. and by 1831 the orchestra numbered fifty-five players.¹⁹ Nevertheless. the orchestration and dynamics show careful attention to the audibility of the vocal line.

The Introduction begins with a flourish at a *f* dynamic with an arpeggiated and ornamented figure in E flat Major and the first two measures of the recitative are totally unaccompanied. as seen in example 6.6:

¹⁹ Patrick Barbier. *Opera in Paris, 1800-1850. A Lively History*. trans. Robert Luoma (Portland, Ore.: Amadeus Press, 1995). 61.

Allegro. **AIR.**

Fl
P.Fl
Ob
Cl
Corns
Bsns
Vl I
Vl II
Vla
Laf
Vclo
CB

Récit:
Ah! de tels souve... nirs oui mon orgueil s'ho...

Ex. 6.6: mm. 1-4.

There is a rhythmic alternation between voice and orchestra that is used throughout and allows most vocal syllables to be heard, as seen in example 6.7:

Vl I
 Vl II
 Vla
 Fl
 CB

tais un héros d'anti-chambre a-droit ma-lin hardi men-teur fri-

Ex. 6.7: mm. 18-21.

This device is used often throughout the air but is again observed in the following passage in m. 43. The word "tours" is placed on the downbeat, then the orchestra enters one sixteenth-note later, at a *p* dynamic. This repeats, after which only strings are heard in mm. 45-49, which crescendo in m. 48, as seen in example 6.8:

Fl

P.Fl

Cl

Bsn

Vl I

Vl II

Vla

Lafl

CB

tous de mes bons tous je pensai le plus d'un ex-ple plus d'un e-mple

Ex. 6.8: mm. 43-48.

At m. 50 nearly the full orchestra enters *f* the beat after the voice sings the middle syllable of "ex-em-ple" on the downbeat on a low *b flat*, as seen in example 6.9:

Fl Fl
P.Fl
Ob*
Cl
Cors
Bsns
Vll
Vl2
Vla
Lafl
CB

La plus lent

plus d'un temple

En moins un jour dans un court-jour

*(According to previous page. oboe should be third line).

Ex. 6.9: mm. 49-55.

In section 1, there is a variation of the previous device that will also be used often. Instead of playing on the offbeat, with the voice singing on the downbeat, the orchestra sounds on the downbeat while the voice enters after, as seen in example 6.10:

The image displays a musical score for an orchestral and vocal passage, labeled 'Ex. 6.10: mm. 25-30'. The score is arranged in a vertical stack of staves. From top to bottom, the staves are labeled: Fl (Flute), P.Fl (Piccolo Flute), Ob (Oboe), Cl (Clarinet), Cors (Trumpet), Bsns (Horn), VII (Violin I), VI2 (Violin II), Vla (Viola), Lafl (Cello), and CB (Bass). The vocal line is positioned between the Lafl and CB staves. The music is written in a common time signature (C) and features a dynamic marking of *f* (forte) throughout. The vocal line includes the lyrics: 'dun - tre des va - les fé - tax Eba - pe - ner on a' - ut - ar no - bis La - que et p' a' - i - tax'. The orchestration is dense, with many instruments playing active parts, particularly in the woodwinds and strings.

Ex. 6.10: mm. 25-30.

This passage shows a care in balancing the large orchestra with what was then by accounts a weaker voice. Halévy most often uses the full orchestra only in instrumental passages or between phrases of the vocal line, frequently using strings alone to accompany the voice. When a climactic phrase needs full orchestra, the vocal line is almost always in the range from *d2* to *f2*, where it is assumed the voice would

carry over the instrumentation. An example of this is found in mm. 110-115, with the voice on *d2* in m. 113 and m. 115, and the full orchestra playing at a *f* dynamic, as seen in example 6.11:

The image shows a musical score for measures 110-115. The staves are labeled as follows from top to bottom: Fl, P.Fl, Ob, Cl, Cors, Bsns, Vl I, Vl II, Vla, Cb, and Cb. The voice part is on the bottom staff with lyrics: "e - dit - la - ge - p - tus rex - par - tis". The score is marked with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The instrumentation is dense, with many notes in each staff, particularly in the string and woodwind sections.

Ex. 6.11: mm. 110-115.

The use of strings to allow for better audibility of the voice is used often, as in section 3, the *Allegro* section at m. 73, which is marked *p*, and is strings alone.

marking the first and third beats of each measure, accompanying the melody of "Qu'on est heureux de trouver en voyage." from *Les Visitandines*, as seen in example 6.12:

Allegro.

Vl I
Vl II
Vla
Cb
Cb

peau et quel plaisir quand j'étais en voyage courant la poste jour et nuit bravant et la pluie

Ex. 6.12: mm. 73-78.

This lighter orchestration is interrupted for a long held note on "monde" in mm. 89-93, which is accompanied by full orchestra playing the theme to "J'ai longtemps parcouru le monde." from *Joconde*, at a *f* dynamic, as seen in example 6.13:

Fl
P.Fl
Ob
Cl
Cors
Bsns
Vl I
Vl II
Vla
Lafl
CB

con . . . de . . . fu . . . et . . . ter . . . et . . . qu . . . et . . . in . . .

Ex. 6.13: mm. 89-95.

This *f* dynamic would not obliterate any text, and it is assumed that the voice was meant to be heard only at interruptions in the phrasing.

Section 4, the *Andantino con moto*, and section 5, the *Larghetto non tanto* are mostly accompanied by strings alone, with winds at times lightly filling in the chords. Section 6, the *Allegro* at m. 169, strings are alone again and exhibit *pizzicato* in the lower strings and *p* dynamic in the violins. This final section, which comprises nearly

half the piece, is in an ABA form with a Coda, and the A section is almost solely accompanied by strings in a light tremolo at a *pp* dynamic, with the winds entering after the voice has completed the last syllable of the phrase. The B section is transformed completely, with a *ff* dynamic and utilizing the whole orchestra and marked *animato*. This section could serve to propel the music into the repetition of the A section, and acts as the bridge section commonly found in the cabaletta of the Rossinian double aria form. The measures that accompany the voice with the whole orchestra at *f* here are mm. 218-221, when the vocal line is between *al* and *e flat*2, after which in m. 222 the accompaniment returns to strings alone at a *p* marking, as seen in example 6.14:

Fl

P.Fl

Ob

Cl

Cors

Bsns

Vl I

Vl II

Vla

Bafl

CB

f sempre *p*

f sempre *p*

f sempre *p*

Dum - me sou - dai-ne qui ve - nat en - tre cer - ceur mon coeur a - l'ex - cept

Ex. 6.14: mm. 216-222.

The orchestra gradually builds from *p* to *f* across mm. 232-237, adding a full orchestral chord on m. 237 where the vocal line is singing a held *f*2 after the orchestra is silent. A short one-measure cadenza is heard in m. 238, unaccompanied as would

be typical, and though written out, it is assumed that Martin would have embellished this in his own way. The written cadenza can be seen in example 6.15:

The musical score for Example 6.15, mm. 231-238, features a full orchestral arrangement with a vocal line. The instruments are listed on the left: Fl. (Flute), P.Fl. (Piccolo Flute), Ob. (Oboe), Clar. (Clarinet), Cors (Cor Anglais), Bsns (Bassoon), V1 (Violin I), V2 (Violin II), Vla (Viola), Cb (Cello/Double Bass), and another Cb (Bassoon). The vocal line includes the lyrics: "mis tou-jours La-fleur je suis tou-jours La-fleur Ah!". The score shows a cadenza for the vocal line, indicated by "cres" markings and a fermata over the final notes.

Ex. 6.15: mm. 231-238.

More observations include the impression that Martin's voice could still this late in his career carry the most successfully between *g1* and *g2*. Also, by allowing him to sing alone on many syllables, the text is not obscured. The Coda after the repetition of the A section is with a full orchestra at *f* or *ff*, but the text is less

important here, as it has all been heard before, thus audibility is not as important as the strength with which the piece finishes. Wisely, the voice is often accompanied by the string section alone at a light dynamic, with only winds entering on off-beats and the last syllables of words to minimize the loss of text. There are also no head voice passages in this air, and any that were performed would likely have been interpolated in ornamentation.

The role of Lafleur would be Martin's last at the Opéra-Comique, his theatrical home for nearly forty years. Martin would make no more appearances in full productions, and no evidence of further performances has been located. Though he continued to teach at the Conservatoire until only a few months before his death, this final work would see Martin effectively retired from the operatic stage.

CHAPTER SEVEN

IN SUMMARY

Jean-Blaise Martin performed continuously in musical works on the stage in Paris for over thirty-four years, and returned later for several more years for a career total of forty-five years as a singing actor. Though he originally had intended an instrumental career for himself, the baritone finally found the proper venue for his musical talents, singing in dozens of opéra-comique roles written specifically for his vocal and acting talents.

The unique voice of Martin spanned the range of over three octaves through the masterful blending of chest and head registers, creating a baritone voice with tenor-like falsetto high notes. His high tessitura made much of his music too high for the average baritone and it was quite close to that of the tenor Jean Elleviou, except that Martin's range extended a fifth lower. Though his voice was not large, it had great flexibility and his ornamentation and fioratura were greatly admired by the public. Though many critics cited that these audience-pleasing elements of Martin's performances were overused and lacked taste, they commended him for his acting skill, comedic talents, and distinct vocal timbre. In addition to his performing career, Martin was by all accounts a fine teacher of singing, and for several years worked to transfer much of the knowledge gained by his years on the stage to those singers that would come after him.

Martin's legacy can best be found in the voice type named for him, the *baryton Martin*, which was developed into the twentieth century by composers and

librettists who have proved more enduring than those who actually wrote for Martin. Among them are Georges Bizet (1838-1875), who wrote many roles in this range and tessitura including the Duc de Rothsay in *La jolie fille de Perth* (26 December 1867), and Maurice Ravel (1875-1937), who specifically wrote the role of Ramiro in *L'heure Espagnole* (1911) for the famous baryton Martin Jean Périer (1869-1954). These composers started with the light, high baritone of Martin and adapted it to their specific needs of character, range, and vocal quality.

According to Boldrey, the *basse-taille* was the French term for the baritone dating from the operas of Lully and Rameau, and he goes on to state that the baryton Martin is actually now more similar to a full lyric baritone and not a light lyric baritone, though with the same high tessitura bordering on tenor. Some famous roles for this voice type do require more dramatic singing, especially Escamillo in *Carmen* (1875) by Bizet and Valentin in *Faust* (1859) by Gounod (1818-1893), as do some portions of the role of Pelléas from *Pelléas et Mélisande* (1902) by Claude Debussy (1862-1918). The *passaggio* spans from *c2* to *f2*, slightly higher than the lyric baritone, which spans from *b2* to *e2*.¹ The range often extends up to *a flat2* or *a2*, with a low note of *a* or *a flat*. Because there is a register change at a higher pitch level, the baryton Martin is really a high baritone and “not simply a bass with further development of the top register.”² The high baritone can be traced as far back as

¹ Richard Miller, *National Schools of Singing: English, French, German, and Italian Techniques of Singing Revisited* (Lanham, Md.: The Scarecrow Press, 1997), 127. Miller uses a different designation for pitches, his *passaggio* for the baryton Martin reading from *c1* to *f1*, and for the lyric baritone from *b* to *e1*.

² Will Crutchfield, “Voices,” Howard Mayer Brown and Stanley Sadie, eds., *Performance Practice: Music after 1600*, Norton/Grove Handbooks in Music (New York: W.W. Norton, 1990), 428.

Giulio Caccini's *Nuove Musiche e Nuova Maniera di Scriverle* (1614), where two songs were included for the "tenor with notes like a bass."³ Roles in this range can also be found in Italy with Rossini's Figaro in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (1816), though Henry Pleasants found the original singer of this role to sing in an average baritone range and has deduced that the high notes would have been of a light production.⁴ In Germany this type of voice is known as the Spielbariton, which is classified as a "zwischenfach," or "between fach," singing high baritone and low tenor roles, especially in operettas, such as Eisenstein in *Die Fledermaus* (1874) by Johann Strauss II (1825-1899). The Spielbariton are known more for the theatrical skill that they possess rather than vocal abilities. But in France there are more baritones than any other male voice type and the high baritone is considered by Miller to be the standard male voice in the French school of singing.⁵ He believes it is best explained by the comparatively casual laissez-faire attitude of singing in France, which does not utilize enough energy to create a ringing tenor sound.⁶

A famous successor to Martin's repertoire was Jean-Baptiste Marie Chollet, who later sang the title tenor role in *Zampa* (1831), by Ferdinand Hérold. Similar to Elleviou, Chollet began as a basse-taille, later changing to tenor. Another baritone of note, referred to only as "Monsieur Henry" (fl. 1813-1849) also had a long career at the Opéra-Comique, creating the roles of Gaveston in Boïeldieu's *La dame blanche*

³ Giulio Caccini, *Nuove Musiche e Nuova Maniera Di Scriverle (1614)*, Recent Researches in the Music of the Baroque Era, Wiley Hitchcock, ed. 28 (Madison: A-R Editions, 1978), 64-77.

⁴ Henry Pleasants, "How High was G?," *Opera News*, vol. 35, no. 17 (20 February 1971), 24-25.

⁵ Miller, *National Schools of Singing*, 165.

⁶ *Ibid.*

(1825), Mathéo in Auber's *Fra Diavolo* (1830), and Sulpice in Donizetti's *La fille du régiment* (1840).⁷ Henri-Bernard Dabadie sang the early Rossini Parisian roles at the Opéra, as well as Pietro in Auber's groundbreaking *La muette de Portici* (1828), and Ruggiero in Halévy's *La Juive* (1835). One of the more famous baryton Martin's of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was Jean Périer (1869-1954), who sang the lead roles in premieres of both *Pelléas et Mélisande* (1909) by Debussy as Pelléas, and *L'heure Espagnole* (1911) by Ravel as Ramiro. Jean Périer was not envisioned originally for the role of Pelléas, but was eventually cast for his physical appearance and acting ability.⁸ and Debussy had to make vocal adjustments for Périer, as Pelléas was originally written as a tenor role.⁹ Ramiro, however, was written by Ravel with Périer in mind, and calls specifically for a baryton Martin. Périer also sang the roles of Don Giovanni, Sharpless, Fortunio, Lescaut, and Florestan in *Véronique* (1898) by Messager (1858-1929).¹⁰ Gabrielle Soulacroix (1853-1905) was a famous singer of this type in the late nineteenth century while both André Baugé (1892-1966), who sang Figaro in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, and Camille Mauranne (b. 1911), who sang in later productions as Pelléas, came later in the twentieth century.

An important development in the high baritone occurred when falsetto or head tones used in the upper registers fell out of favor with the public. Once the tenor

⁷ Elizabeth Forbes, "Monsieur Henry," *New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, vol. 2, 694.

⁸ David A. Grayson, *The Genesis of Debussy's Pelléas et Mélisande* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1986), 57. "With his tall, slim profile, his sad, handsome look, Jean Périer seemed to be Pelléas himself."

⁹ *Ibid.*, 297, note 22.

¹⁰ André Messager was also the conductor of *Pelléas et Mélisande*.

Gilbert Duprez (1806-1896) sang a high $c3$ in chest in a performance of Guillaume Tell in Paris around 1837, then the range of the baryton Martin was shortened to a high note of $a2$ or $a\ flat2$. Tenors that could not sing a high $c3$ were then lowered to singing this repertoire, as demands were for the singer to produce a full mixed chest tone up to the highest note. It can be seen that the baryton Martin was not merely a label to identify the roles that were originally sung by Martin, but a voice type that was utilized and adapted to suit the changing musical tastes of the time.

There are many facets of this topic that encourage further research. It is the intention of this author to continue to investigate the baryton Martin voice type and to trace its development during and beyond Martin's lifetime. More information on its use by Bizet, Gounod, Ravel, and other famous composers will hope to be uncovered in order to show the adaption of the high baritone to various character types. Regarding further investigation of Martin, more will be researched regarding his family and early years, and the appendix of works in which the baritone appeared will be augmented where possible. There is much more to be done by this author regarding discussion of Martin's vocal literature, and in addition literature will be investigated for use in performance and as teaching tools for young high lyric baritones. It is hoped that the information in this paper will create a renewed interest in the high lyric baritone in France and other countries, especially regarding Martin's contributions and influence in its development.

APPENDIX

JEAN-BLAISE MARTIN'S THEATRICAL CAREER: 1789-1834

From 1789 to 1794 or 1795 Martin appeared in productions of the Théâtre de Monsieur, which was renamed the Théâtre de la rue Feydeau in 1791, and he performed in the following theaters:

January 1789-December 1790	Théâtre Tuileries
January 1790-June 1791	Théâtre de la Foire St. Germain
June 1791-1794 or 1795	Théâtre de la rue Feydeau

In 1794 or 1795 Martin moved to the rival Théâtre National de l'Opéra-Comique, so named in 1793.

1794-1795 to 1801	Opéra-Comique-Salle Favart
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In 1801 the rival theaters Feydeau and Favart merged, continuing under the title of the Théâtre National de l'Opéra-Comique, and performed in the following theaters:

1801-1804	Salle Feydeau
1804-1805	Salle Favart
1805-1829	Salle Feydeau
1829-1832	Salle Ventadour
1832-1834	Théâtre de la Nouveautés-Place de la Bourse

Martin's final performances with the Opéra-Comique most likely took place in 1834.

The opéras-comiques in which Jean-Blaise Martin appeared:

The following is a partial list of opéras-comiques and Italian operatic parodies in which Martin appeared or had planned to appear in during his long career. The entries were taken from Louis Péricaud, *Théâtre de "Monsieur."* Henri de Curzon, *Elleviou*, M. Elizabeth C. Bartlet, "Étienne-Nicolas Méhul and Opera During the French Revolution, Consulate, and Empire: a source, archival, and stylistic study." Carl Dahlhaus, *Piper's Enzyklopedie des Music Theaters*, Clément and Larousse, *Dictionnaire des Opéras*, and all various encyclopedic listings of Martin's appearances. It should be emphasized that this is only a partial list and not at all comprehensive.

1789-1794 or 1795 Théâtre de Monsieur/Théâtre Feydeau

- 1) *Le Marquis Tulipano* (début), parody with French text by C. J. A. Gourbillon of the Italian opera by G. Paisiello (28 January 1789).
- 2) *L'Antiquaire*, parody with French text author unknown of the Italian opera possibly by Crispini (9 March 1789), though doubtful attributions to the music have been made to P. Anfossi and L. Lachnith.
- 3) *Le Nouveau Don Quichotte*, opéra-comique in two acts, text by Boissel, music by S. Champein, publicized as a parody of an Italian opera by Zaccharelli (25 May 1789).

4) *L'Infante de Zamora*, three acts, parody with French text by N. E. Framery, of the Italian opera by G. Paisiello (22 June 1789). Based on Paisiello's *La frascatana* (1774). Martin played the role of Champagne.

5) *Azélie*, comédie lyrique in three acts, text by Florian, music by H.-J. Rigel (4 July 1790).

6) *Laurette*, three acts, text by P. U. Dubuisson, music by F. J. Haydn (21 January 1791). Based on *Rosanie* (1780).

7) *Philippe et Georgette*, one act, text by Boutet de Monville, music by N. Dalayrac (28 December 1791).¹

8) *Les Visitandines*, comédie mêlée d'ariettes in two acts, text by L.-B. Picard, music by F. Devienne (7 July 1792).

8a) *Les Visitandines*, three act version, same authors (5 June 1793).

1794 or 1795-1801 Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique

9) *La caverne*, opéra-comique in three acts, text by N. J. Forgeot, music by É.-N. Méhul (5 December 1795). Martin probably played the role of Alvar (Bartlet).

10) *Le Secret*, opéra-comique in one act, text by Hoffman, music by J. P. Solié (20 April 1796).

¹ Félix Clément and Pierre Larousse, *Dictionnaire des Opéras*, rev. Arthur Pougin, vol. I (Paris: Librairie Larousse, 1905; reprint, New York: Da Capo Press, 1969), 873. Clément and Larousse cite the air of M. Martin, "pour basse-taille: "Oui, je vois, j'entends fort bien." Martin is not, however, listed in the review of *Journal de Paris* (1791). It was given at the Théâtre de la Comédie-Italienne, where Martin did not appear at this time, and it is most likely that Martin appeared in a later production of the work.

11) *Le Jugement de Midas*, text by T. D'Hélé, after K. O'Hara. music by A.-M. Grétry, originally premiered 28 March 1778. Martin probably appeared in the work when it was in the repertoire of the Opéra-Comique in the fall of 1797. in the role of Apollo.

12) *Gulnare, ou l'esclave Persane*. comédie in one act. text by B.-J. Marsollier des Vivitières. music by N. Dalayrac (30 December 1797 or 9 January 1798).

13) *Zoraïme et Zulnare*. opéra-comique in three acts. text by Saint-Just. music by F.-A. Boïeldieu (10 May 1798).

14) *L'Oncle Valet*. opéra in one act. text by A. Duval. music by D. Della-Maria (8 December 1798).

15) *Le Trente et quarante*. opéra-comique. text by A. Duval. music by A. Tarchi (18 May 1799).

16) *D'Auberge en auberge ou Les preventions*. opéra-comique. text by E. Dupaty. music by A. Tarchi (26 April 1800).

17) *Beniowski, ou Les Exilés du Kamtchatka*. opéra-comique in three acts. text by A. Duval. music by F.-A. Boïeldieu (8 June 1800).

18) *Le calife de Bagdad*. opera-comique in one act. text by Saint-Just. music by F.-A. Boieldieu (16 September 1800).

19) *Maison à vendre*. comédie in one act. text by A. Duval, music by N. Dalayrac (23 October 1800).

20) *L'Irato*, comédie-parade en prose mêlée d'ariettes in one act. text by B.-J. Marsollier des Vivitières, music by É.-N. Méhul (17 February 1801) Martin in the role of Scapin. (Claimed to be an opera buffa parody. music by Fiorelli).

1801-1823 Théâtre National de l'Opéra-Comique

21) *Une Aventure de M. de Saint-Foix, ou Le coup d'épée*. opéra-comique. text by A. Duval, music by A. Tarchi (20 or 28 January or 27 February 1802).

22) *L'Antichambre ou Les valets entre eux*. one act. text by E. Dupaty. music by N. Dalayrac (27 February 1802).

23) *Une Folie*. comédie en prose mêlée de chants in two acts. text by J. N. Bouilly, music by É.-N. Méhul (5 April 1802).

24) *Les deux lieutenants ou Le concert interrompu*. comédie in one act. text by De Favières. music by H. Berton (31 May 1802).

25) *La Boucle de cheveux*. opéra in one act. text by Hoffman. music by N. Dalayrac (29 or 30 October 1802).

26) *Ma tante Aurore, ou Le roman impromptu*. opéra-comique in two acts. text by Longchamps. music by F.-A. Boïeldieu (13 January 1803).

27) *Les Confidences*. comédie mêlée de chants in two acts. text by Hoffman. music by N. Isouard (31 March 1803). Martin in the role of Mérival.

28) *Picaros et Diego, ou la folle soirée*. opéra bouffon in one act. text by E. Dupaty. music by N. Dalayrac (3 May 1803). (Played 27 February 1802 under the title *L'Antichambre ou Les valets entre eux*).

29) *Le baiser et la quittance, ou Une aventure de garnison*, opéra bouffon en prose in three acts, text by Picard, Dieulafoy and Longchamps, music by Méhul, Boïeldieu, Kreutzer, Isouard (18 June 1803).

30) *L'Habit du chevalier de Grammout*, opéra-comique in one act, text by J. Bins de Saint-Victor, music by A.-F. Eler (6 December 1803), based on a novel by Hamilton.

31) *La Petite maison*, opéra-comique in three acts, text by Dieulafoy and N. Gersin, music by G. Spontini (12 May 1804).

32) *L'intrigue aux fenestres*, opéra bouffon in one act, text by J. N. Bouilly and E. Dupaty, music by N. Isouard (25 February 1805).

33) *Délia et Verdikan*, opéra in one act, text by Elleviou, music by H. Berton (9 May 1805).

34) *La Ruse inutile, ou Les rivaux par convention*, opéra-comique in two acts, text by Hoffman, music by N. Isouard (30 May 1805).

35) *Gulistan, ou Le hulla de Samarcande*, opéra-comique in three acts, text by C.-G. Étienne and Poisson de la Chabeaussière, music by N. Dalayrac (30 September 1805).

36) *Les deux aveugles de Tolède*, opéra-comique en prose in one act, text by Marsollier des Vivitières, music by É.-N. Méhul (28 January 1806). Martin in the role of Mendocce.

37) *Les Maris garçons*, in one act, text by P. G. Gaugiran-Nanteuil, music by H. Berton (15 July 1806).

38) *Koulouf, ou Les Chinois*. opéra-comique in three acts, text by Pixérecourt. music by Dalayrac (18 December 1806).

39) *L'Auberge de Bagnères*, text by Jalabert. music by Catel (23 April 1807).

40) *Un jour à Paris ou La leçon singulière*. opéra-comique mêlée de musique in three acts. text by C.-G. Étienne. music by N. Isouard (24 May 1808).

41) *Cimarosa*. opéra-comique in two acts. text by Bouilly. music by N. Isouard (28 June 1808).

42) *Jadis et aujourd'hui*. opéra bouffon in one act. text by Sewrin. music by R. Kreutzer (29 October 1808).

43) *Les troubadours, ou La fête au château*. opéra-comique en prose in one act. text by A. Duval. music by É.-N. Méhul (June 1810 in rehearsal at the Opéra-Comique. never performed. score incomplete). Martin in the role of Bernard.

44) *La fête de Meudon*. opéra-vaudeville. text by E. Dupaty. music by H. Berton. 1810. libretto published but the work was never performed.²

45) *Cagliostro, ou La séduction*. opéra-comique in three acts. text by Saint-Cyr and E. Dupaty. music by A. Reicha (27 November 1810).

46) *Le charme de la voix*. opéra-comique in one act. text by Gaugiran-Nanteuil and Fillette-Loroux. music by H. Berton (24 January 1811).

47) *La Fête du village ou L'hereux militaire*. text by C.-G. Étienne. music by N. Isouard (31 March 1811).

²M. Elizabeth C. Bartlet. "A Newly Discovered Opera for Napoleon." *Acta Musicologica*. vol. 56 (1984): 291. Rehearsal schedule of this work was affected by the absence of Elleviou, who left Paris with Napoleon 27 April 1810.

48) *Rien de trop, ou les deux paravents*, opéra-comique in one act, text by Pain, music by F.-A. Boïeldieu (St. Petersburg, 1810; Paris, Opera-Comique (19 April 1811).

49) *Le Poète et le musicien ou Je cherche un sujet*, comédie mêlée de chants in three acts, text by E. Dupaty, music by N. Dalayrac (30 May 1811).

50) *Lully et Quinault, ou Le déjeuner impossible*, opéra-comique in one act, text by P. C. Gaugiran-Nanteuil, music by N. Isouard (27 February 1812).

51) *Jean de Paris*, opéra-comique in two acts, text by Saint-Just, music by F.-A. Boïeldieu (4 April 1812).

52) *Les deux jaloux*, opéra-comique in one act, text by C. R. Dufresny and J. B. C. Vial, music by S. Gail (27 March 1813).

53) *Le prince troubadour, ou le grand trompeur de dames*, text by A. Duval, music by É.-N. Méhul (24 May 1813).

54) *Le Nouveau Seigneur de Village*, opéra-comique in three acts, text by Creuzé de Lesser and De Favières, music by F.-A. Boïeldieu (29 June 1813).

55) *Joconde, ou Les coureurs d'aventures*, comédie mêlée de chants in three acts, text by C.-G. Étienne, music by N. Isouard (28 February 1814).

56) *Jeannot et Colin*, opéra-comique in three acts, text by C.-G. Étienne, music by N. Isouard (17 October 1814).

57) *La Sérénade*, opéra-comique in one act, text by S. Gay after J.-F. Regnard, music by S. Gail (16 September 1818).

58) *Le petit Chapéron rouge*. opéra-comique in three acts. text by Théaulon de Lambert. music by F.-A. Boïeldieu (30 June 1818). Martin played the role of Rodolphe.

59) *Les Voitures versées*. opéra-comique in two acts. text by E. Dupaty. music by F.-A. Boïeldieu (29 April 1820).

60) *Le maître de chapelle, ou Le souper imprévu*. text by S. Gay. after A. Duval. music by F. Paër (29 March 1821).

1823-1832 – No new productions are known.

1833-1834 Théâtre de la Nouveautés

61) *Les Souvenirs de Lafleur*. opéra-comique in one act. text by P.-F.-A. Carmouche and De Courcy. music by F. Halévy (4 March 1833).

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