

The Historic New Orleans Collection



Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra

Carlos Miguel Prieto

Adelaide Wisdom Benjamin Music Director and Principal Conductor

PRESENT

Identity, History, Legacy

LA SOCIÉTÉ PHILHARMONIQUE

Thomas Wilkins, conductor

Walter Harris Jr., speaker

Kisma Jordan, soprano

Joseph Meyer, violin

Jean-Baptiste Monnot, organ/piano

Phumzile Sojola, tenor

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2011

Cathedral-Basilica of St. Louis, King of France

New Orleans, Louisiana

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2011

Slidell High School

Slidell, Louisiana

The Historic New Orleans Collection and the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra gratefully acknowledge Rev. Msgr. Crosby W. Kern and the staff of the St. Louis Cathedral for their generous support and assistance.

The musical culture of New Orleans's free people of color and their descendants is one of the most extraordinary aspects of Louisiana history, and it is part of a larger, shared legacy. Only within the context of the development of African music in the New World can the contributions of these sons and daughters of Louisiana be fully appreciated.

The first Africans arrived in the New World with the initial wave of Spanish colonization in the early sixteenth century. Interactions among European, African, and indigenous populations yielded new forms of cultural expression—although African music in the New World remained strongly dependent on wind instruments (such as ivory trumpets), drums, and call-and-response patterns. As early as 1572, Africans were



gathering in front of the famous Aztec calendar stone in Mexico City on Sunday afternoons to dance and sing. When Viceroy Antonio de Mendoza triumphantly entered Lima on August 31, 1551, his procession's route was lined with African drummers. By the end of the sixteenth century, the Indian historian Hernando de Alvarado Tezozómoc was comparing the Aztec death drum of his ancestors to that used in African dances. And by the early seventeenth century, African ritual music performed near present-day Veracruz, Mexico, freely mixed Aztec and African drums. The religious sphere was particularly fruitful for cultural transference; African slaves, serving as singers in churches from Mexico City to Buenos Aires,

helped familiarize “American” ears with European polyphony—one of many musical forms transplanted from Old World to New.

Reports of “Negroes” studying music in Georgia (1753) and Virginia (1755) and teaching voice in New York (1786) serve as reminders that the African American musical experience was not limited to the Latin world. Yet the history of African contributions to the cultural life of France, Spain, and their colonies is particularly rich. This history, of course, is bounded by tragedy: the devastation wrought by the slave trade.

Even as African communities were ravaged by slavery, African folkways and traditions were gradually incorporated into the cultural life of Europe. By the sixteenth century, the African imprint on Spanish literature, sculpture, painting, and music was significant. Liturgical compositions for Corpus Christi, Christmas, and Epiphany, called *negros* or *guineos*, imitated African rhythmic patterns and were accompanied by percussion instruments and *chirimías* (an oboe-like instrument with Moorish roots). The inventory of the music library of King John IV of Portugal (r. 1640–1656) demonstrates that some of the most illustrious composers of the day dedicated themselves to the genre. The tradition of *negros* or *guineos* spread to the Spanish New World, as attested by records in the musical archives of Mexico City, Puebla, Oaxaca, Guatemala City, and Lima.

Although the names of countless musicians of African descent—both slave and free—are lost to history, a handful of individuals claim a lasting legacy. Two Brazilian composers, José Joaquim Emerico Lobo de Mesquita (1746–1805) and José Mauricio Nunes Garcia (1767–1830), are remembered today for a variety of musical contributions. Lobo de Mesquita hailed from the wealthy province of Minas Gerais, where he served as chapel master for several prominent churches. Nunes Garcia, one-time chapel master of the cathedral of Rio de Janeiro, was charged by Prince João of Portugal with establishing the musical program of the Royal Chapel. His late compositions, dating to a period after his royal service, display a more secular sensibility. The remarkable Guadeloupe-born composer Joseph de Boulogne, chevalier de Saint-Georges (1745–1799), mastered both the harpsichord and violin, became conductor of Le concert des amateurs in 1773, and was proposed as director of the Paris Opera in 1776. A musical confidante of Marie Antoinette, Saint-Georges commissioned Haydn's Paris

ABOVE: The Bamboula; print by E. W. Kemble, engraver; 1886; THNOC (1974.25.23.53)

Kemble's well-known depiction of slaves dancing to the rhythmic pulse of Afro-Caribbean drums in the nineteenth century in Congo Square illustrates the African American musical experience in New Orleans.

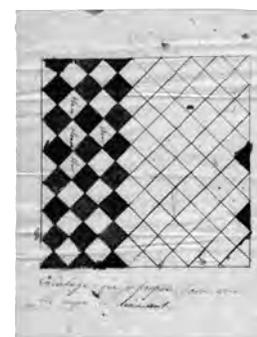
Symphonies in 1784 and, as head of Concert de la Loge Olympique, presided over their premiere in Paris in 1787. As a composer he is best remembered for his string quartets, violin concertos, *sinfonies concertani*, and works for musical theater.



From its founding Louisiana has possessed a complex social structure characterized by both the fluidity and fixity of racial identity. The existence of a free colored population in the colony dates to the early eighteenth century. Some members of this community were descended from French and Spanish colonists and African slaves. Others arrived as refugees from St. Domingue and Cuba. Still others were slaves who achieved their freedom. In the 1840s, New Orleans boasted some twenty thousand free people of color. The social, cultural, and economic impact of this community defies measure.

Edward Larocque Tinker's fundamental survey *Les écrits de langue française en Louisiane au XIXe siècle* (1932) counts some twenty-seven free people of color as literary figures. *Les Cenelles*, a compilation of poems by seventeen free people of color, was published in New Orleans in 1845, becoming the first anthology of African American poetry to be issued in the United States. One contributor to *Les Cenelles* was Victor Séjour, a native of New Orleans who moved to France and became one of Paris's more fashionable playwrights.

The legacy of free people of color as visual artists is seen in the careers of Jules Lion, Julien Hudson, and Eugène Warburg. Born in France, Lion moved to New Orleans and in 1840 demonstrated to the public the daguerreotype process, invented and presented in Paris in 1839. At the time of his death in 1866, he was remembered as a lithographer, daguerreotypist, and teacher. Hudson (1811–1844), a portrait painter, received his initial training in New Orleans and pursued further study in Paris. By 1831 he had opened a studio on Bienville Street. Only one other documented painter of African descent, Baltimore's Joshua Johnson, was active earlier in the United States. Hudson's short but historically significant career is examined in an exhibition currently on display at The Historic New Orleans Collection. Sculptor Warburg received his early training in New Orleans but soon made his way to Paris and eventually to Rome, taking up residence near the Spanish Steps. He died there in 1859 but is remembered in New Orleans for his funerary sculpture and his floor design for the center aisle of the St. Louis Cathedral.



An unparalleled resource on the musical history of New Orleans's free colored community—and, indeed, the musical history of the United States—was published in 1878 by an amateur historian born into slavery in Grand Gulf, Mississippi. James M. Trotter's *Music and Some Highly Musical People*, a survey of African American music, stands as the first book devoted solely to American musicians. The lack of earlier publications may seem startling until one recalls the era's tendency to equate high culture with European culture. (In a now-notorious 1879 essay, Henry James spoke for many of his contemporaries as he itemized the deficits of American life: "No literature, no novels, no museums, no pictures...") *Music and Some Highly Musical People* would begin to right the balance, not only by recognizing the talents of American artists but also by validating vernacular musical forms. The volume contained a luxury seldom seen in a music history book—a 152-page appendix containing thirteen vocal and instrumental compositions by twelve composers. Sales figures attest to the book's enormous popularity: four thousand copies sold by 1880, another thousand in 1881.

ABOVE: Design for center aisle of St. Louis Cathedral by Eugène Warburg; *manuscript*; 1851; THNOC, gift of Samuel Wilson Jr. (86-74-L.1)

Sculptor Eugène Warburg (1826–1859), born a slave to a Cuban woman of mixed race, was freed at an early age by his German Jewish father. Receiving his early training in New Orleans, he continued his studies in France and eventually became known for his funerary sculpture, religious works, and busts.



A Boston resident and employee of the U.S. Postal Service, Trotter (1842–1892) devoted extensive sections of *Music and Some Highly Musical People* to cities such as Baltimore, Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Louisville, Memphis, Nashville, and St. Louis. His discussion of New Orleans begins with the observation that the city is essentially French (and that the Frenchman is “proverbially a devotee of the fine arts”). Extolling the city’s love of opera, he notes that “the colored people of New Orleans have long been remarked for their love of and proficiency in music and other of the elegant arts.” Trotter was hardly the first observer to ruminate on opera’s appeal across race and class lines; visitors often marveled that slaves in New Orleans “hummed operatic arias as they walked through the streets.” In general, Trotter positions himself as a cultural rather than a political critic; he does not ignore social inequities, but neither does he dwell on them.

He notes that “a certain portion of these people, never having been subjected to the depressing cruelties of *abject* servitude,” send their children to “Northern or European schools”—but he also mentions the less fortunate who have labored under the “iron heel of oppression.” They too, he comments, acquired “knowledge of music” and excelled in “its creation and performance.”

Music and Some Highly Musical People provides an unparalleled glimpse of musical life in nineteenth-century New Orleans. The book contains brief biographical sketches of more than thirty-five African American New Orleanians, both men and women, who excelled as bassoonists, cellists, composers, contrabassists, cornetists, guitarists, flutists, pianists, violinists, and vocalists. At least one musician was known to have been born into slavery. Several were descendants of St. Domingue refugees, and others had moved here from other parts of the United States. Here they received a world-class musical education from a diverse group of instructors—some of them African American, others not. Among the latter were Parisian Eugène Prévost (director of the Théâtre d’Orléans), Ludovico Gabici (of the St. Charles Theater), and a number of itinerant German musicians.

Several of the individuals listed in Trotter’s book enjoyed additional training abroad and in some cases achieved international reputations. Victor-Eugène Macarthy, a pianist and composer, and Basile Barès, who was born a slave and later freed, both traveled to Paris in the mid-1800s. Macarthy enjoyed the privilege of studying at the Paris Conservatory, while Barès appeared as a pianist at the 1867 Paris Exposition. As a composer, Barès also enjoyed tremendous popularity in New Orleans and demonstrated his business aptitude as an importer of pianos. Brothers Sidney and Lucien Lambert received their early music education in New Orleans from their father, Richard, a talented musician in his own right as well as founder of a musical dynasty. Both brothers, however, would seek fame elsewhere: Sidney moved to Portugal and served as a royal court pianist, and Lucien, established as a composer in Paris by 1854, eventually moved his family to Brazil. He and his son, Lucien *fi*ls, reportedly appeared in at least one of Louis Moreau Gottschalk’s famed “monster” piano concerts. Lucien *fi*ls studied in Paris under



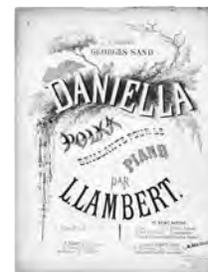
ABOVE LEFT: *James Trotter*, from *Music and Some Highly Musical People*; 1878; Boston: Lee and Shepard; THNOC (2005.0174)

Trotter’s *Music and Some Highly Musical People* was the first book devoted to American musicians and composers and was specifically dedicated to African American music. The popular volume was praised for gathering vast amounts of information “impossible to duplicate in any one place elsewhere.” Born a slave and dedicated to public service, Trotter rose through the ranks to become the Recorder of Deeds for the District of Columbia.

ABOVE RIGHT: Sunday in New Orleans: *detail*, The Negro Gallery; Alfred Rudolph Waud, *delineator*; 1871; THNOC (1951.74v)

Visitors to New Orleans frequently commented upon the musical life of the African American population. Reporting on a June 12, 1865, performance, Andrew Burris of Philadelphia stated that “the singing was in French,” the performers “were all colored,” and the orchestra “of about eighty performers performed in a very artistic style.”

Jules Massenet and Théodore Dubois; his opera *Le Spahi* (1897) has been hailed as the climax of French musical exoticism.



In his chapter on New Orleans, Trotter explores an extraordinary facet of the city’s musical history: “Before the late war,” he writes, “the city had an association of colored men called the ‘Philharmonic Society.’” The members of this organization, Trotter explains, were excellent musicians with whom “the very best artists of any race might well be proud to associate.” In fact, “liberal-minded native and foreign gentlemen of the other race were always glad to come and play with them.” While the exact dates of La Société Philharmonique are not known, it did flourish in the 1840s, and the tradition continued for decades as evinced by a program (reprinted by Trotter) for an October 14, 1877, “Grand Vocal and Instrumental Concert.”

Though the definitive history of the Société Philharmonique remains to be written, it is nonetheless possible to paint a picture of the organization and its members. Contemporary accounts document as many as eighty to one hundred musicians, a large orchestra by any standard for an American city in the mid-nineteenth century. The precise founding date is unknown, but a notice dated April 9, 1840, announces a concert at the Théâtre de la Renaissance with the “orchestra de la Société Philharmonique.” A similar group was later founded in New York City, but La Société Philharmonique remains the earliest on record. Contemporary reviews attest to the quality of the musicianship. “Although the singing was in French,” noted one audience member from Philadelphia in 1865, it was one of “the most classical concerts we have ever visited.”

Tonight’s program represents an attempt to re-create the typical atmosphere of a Société Philharmonique concert. The length of the concert has been shortened, however, as the group’s performances often lasted for several hours, including an intermission. The Society’s repertoire was operatic, not symphonic, and replete with overtures and arias from popular productions. Performances were “mixed bills”: a combination of full orchestral works, instrumental and vocal solos, and dramatic readings. Typical musical and literary selections reveal the degree to which New Orleans’s free people of color and their descendants viewed themselves as French, even in the last decades of the nineteenth century. Tonight’s featured composers are representative of the Society’s tradition, as suggested by surviving concert programs and contemporary newspaper accounts. We invite you to enjoy the selections and to reflect on the artistry of this pioneering orchestral group.

Dr. Alfred E. Lemmon, *Director*
Williams Research Center

ABOVE RIGHT: “Daniella,” Polka brillante pour le piano par Lambert; *Paris: P Schott & Cie., n.d. Al Rose Collection, William Ransom Hogan Jazz Archive, Tulane University*

Lucien Lambert père left New Orleans for France where he quickly established himself as a musician of note. His polka “Daniella” is dedicated to Amantine Aurore Lucile Dupin, better known as George Sand and companion of Chopin.

ABOVE LEFT: *Set design for Le Spahi of Lucien Lambert* files: “L’Univers illustré: Journal Hebdomadaire”; 1897; THNOC (2010.0223.4)

Creole of color Lambert’s opera *Le Spahi* (1897) premiered on October 18, 1897, at the Opéra Comique of Paris. It was the first scenic work awarded a prize by the “Concours Musical” of Paris and attracted the attention of composers such as Paul Dukas.

CONCERT-SPECTACLE

Un Grand Concert Vocal et Instrumental



ABOVE LEFT: *La Belle Créole*; sheet music by Basile Barès; 1866; THNOC (86-716-RL)

ABOVE RIGHT: *Mamie Waltz*; sheet music by Basile Barès; 1880; THNOC (86-1382-RL)

OPPOSITE PAGE: *Les Variétés du Carnaval*; sheet music by Basile Barès; 1875; THNOC (86-1605-RL)

Born a slave in the household of Adolphe Périer, the owner of a piano store, Basile Barès published his first musical composition while still a slave. Freed by Périer, Barès assisted his widow in maintaining the store. As a composer, he was enormously popular in New Orleans. *Les Variétés du Carnaval* honors “Rex, King of Carnival,” and *La Belle Créole* is dedicated to composer Eugène Macarthy (ca. 1817–1881). All three compositions demonstrate the continued allegiance to the French language.

GIOACHINO ROSSINI

Overture to *Semiramide*

SAMUEL SNAËR

“Rappelle-toi,” Romance for Tenor and Piano

Phumzile Sojola, *tenor*

Jean-Baptiste Monnot, *piano*

VINCENZO BELLINI

“De’ lieti auguri a voi” from *La Sonnambula*

Kisma Jordan, *soprano*

GAETANO DONIZETTI

“Una furtiva lagrima” from *L’Elisir d’Amore*

Phumzile Sojola, *tenor*

VICTOR SÉJOUR

“La Retour de Napoléon”

A dramatic reading by Walter Harris Jr.

JACQUES OFFENBACH

Overture to *La Vie Parisienne*

JEAN-DELPHIN ALARD

La Traviata, Fantasy for Violin and Piano, op. 38

Joseph Meyer, *violin*

Jean-Baptiste Monnot, *piano*

EDMOND DÉDÉ

Chicago Waltz (Grande valse à l’américaine)

GIUSEPPE VERDI

“Caro nome” from *Rigoletto*

Kisma Jordan, *soprano*



(continued)

GIUSEPPE VERDI

“La donna è mobile” from *Rigoletto*

Phumzile Sojola, *tenor*

EDOUARD BATISTE

Offertoire in D minor

Jean-Baptiste Monnot, *organ*

(Thursday, February 10)

DANIEL AUBER

Overture to *Fra Diavola*

(Friday, February 11)

GIACOMO MEYERBEER

“Marche du Sacre” from *Le Prophète*

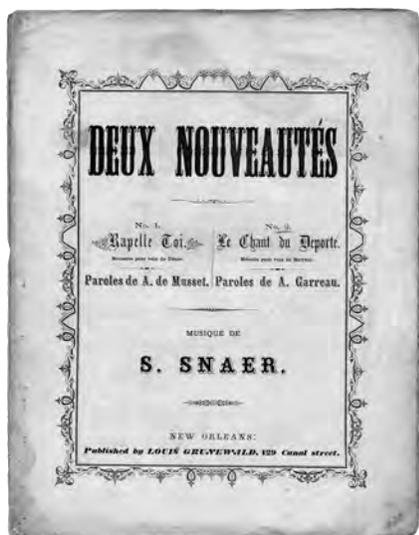
PROGRAM NOTES

GIOACHINO ROSSINI (1792–1868)

Overture to *Semiramide*

The *Louisianian* of October 20, 1877, noted that “New Orleans is probably the only city in the United States that can boast of an orchestra, complete in all details, composed entirely of colored men.” The orchestra, comprising about twenty young men that season, apparently maintained a busy schedule. Under the direction of thirty-seven-year-old Louis Martin, the group presented a “Grand Vocal and Instrumental Concert,” in the tradition of La Société Philharmonique programs, at the Masonic Hall on October 14, followed by a performance at Globe Hall on October 15.

The second part of the October 14 concert opened with the overture to Gioachino Rossini’s two-act opera *Semiramide*. Rossini’s final opera written for an Italian theater, it was based on Voltaire’s account of the legend of Queen Semiramis of Babylon. In the tale, Semiramis and her lover, Assur, conspire to kill her husband, King Nino. Now pledged to Assur, Semiramis falls in love with Arsace, a dashing young general whom only the high priest knows to be Prince Ninia, Semiramis’s son by Nino. Upon discovering his true identity, Arsace/Ninia vows to avenge his father by killing Assur, only to strike and kill Semiramis, bringing the plot to its tragic conclusion.



SAMUEL SNAËR (1832–ca. 1896)

“Rappelle-toi,” Romance for Tenor

A composer, conductor, pianist, organist, violinist, violist, and teacher, François-Michel-Samuel Snaër excelled in a variety of musical pursuits. His family fled their home during the Haitian Revolution and, after a brief period of residence in Cuba, settled in New Orleans before 1818. Here Snaër was born in the 1830s, his African, French, and German ancestry a reflection of the city’s racial and ethnic diversity. Renowned as organist of St. Mary’s Catholic Church, Snaër was honored locally with numerous awards and accolades, including an 1865 benefit performance at the Théâtre d’Orléans. The 1878 publication of *Music and Some Highly Musical People*, its appendix featuring the Gloria and Agnus Dei of Snaër’s “Mass for Three Voices,” brought him national attention.

The documentary record shows that Snaër was active as a conductor in 1865, a concert season chronicled in the pages of the New Orleans–based African

ABOVE: *Deux nouveautés* by Samuel Snaër; *New Orleans*: Louis Grunewald, 1865; William Ransom Hogan Jazz Archive, Tulane University

Prior to the Civil War, only a handful of compositions by free people of color were published in New Orleans. In 1865 works by the multi-talented Snaër were published by Louis Grunewald, and soon others such as A. E. Blackmar and Philip Werlein began to publish works by other native black composers.

American newspaper the *Tribune*. The paper's coverage provides unparalleled insight into the musical traditions of La Société Philharmonique, including the venues available for performances and the roles played by various musicians. Opera overtures by François-Adrien Boieldieu, Daniel-François-Esprit Auber, and Gioachino Rossini were central to the repertoire. In one typical concert, on August 22, 1865, Snaër's own compositions and those of fellow New Orleanian Basile Barès were performed alongside such works as the *Marche du Prophète* by Giacomo Meyerbeer, the grand duo of *Ivanhoe* by Giuseppe Concone, a "grand air" of Giuseppe Verdi, and an arrangement for piano, harmonium, violin, and cello of Franz Schubert's *Der Erlkönig*.

"Rappelle-toi" was published along with Snaër's "Le Chant du déporté" under the collective title *Deux nouveautés* by New Orleans music publisher Louis Grunewald in 1865. The text of "Rappelle-toi" is by the French dramatist, novelist, and poet Alfred de Musset (1810–1857).

VINCENZO BELLINI (1801–1835)

"De' lieti auguri a voi son grata" from *La Sonnambula*

Not surprisingly, the musical tastes of New Orleans's free people of color reflected those of the community at large, and the compositions of Sicilian composer Vincenzo Bellini were widely favored. Although no comprehensive record exists of La Société Philharmonique's programming, making it impossible to determine exactly when particular works entered the group's repertoire, one early Bellini performance took place on February 13, 1847, with a presentation of the grand duo of *I puritani*.

Written in early 1831, *La Sonnambula* (*The Sleepwalker*) was an immediate success when it premiered that year at Milan's Teatro Carcano, its melodies and expressive lyricism making it an exemplar of the *bel canto* tradition. The work maintained its popularity for decades. Indeed, as reported in the *Union*, New Orleanian Edmond Dédé, then living in France, conducted *La Sonnambula* at the Grand Théâtre in Bordeaux in April 1863.

Set in a Swiss village, the opera tells the tale of Amina, an orphan betrothed to the wealthy landowner Elvino. One evening while sleepwalking, Amina enters the room of a visiting count, Rodolfo, who is staying at the local inn. Lisa, the inn's hostess and Amina's romantic rival, accuses the poor girl of infidelity, claims Elvino as her own, and exults in the famed aria "De' lieti auguri a voi son grata." Rodolfo's protestations of Amina's innocence fall on deaf ears, but when Amina is seen sleepwalking again, her reputation is salvaged and Elvino's love rekindled.



ABOVE: Le Grand-Théâtre de Bordeaux; *print; THNOC (2010.0288)*

Throughout the nineteenth century, this theater hosted many of Europe's most famous musical celebrities. It was here that Edmond Dédé, born to free people of color, premiered two of his ballets and won praise for his work as a conductor of opera.

GAETANO DONIZETTI (1797–1848)

“Una furtiva lagrima” from *L’Elisir d’Amore*

Attempts to conjure the musical life of mid-nineteenth-century New Orleans present a challenge: contemporary accounts are often frustratingly devoid of detail. Performers are identified, in many instances, only by their initials or simply as “un Amateur.” Yet surviving records confirm that the works of Gaetano Donizetti were performed on several occasions by La Société Philharmonique and successor organizations. On February 13, 1847, the group presented the grand aria of *La favorite*. And on May 30, 1865, the *Tribune* carried a review of a recent performance, noting that the “salut à la France” from Donizetti’s *La fille du régiment* was perfectly rendered and the “great scene” of *La favorite* applauded by the “numerous connoisseurs in attendance.”

L’Elisir d’Amore, one of Donizetti’s most popular works, is the story of the peasant Nemorino’s attempts to win the love of the wealthy Adina. As is normal in opera buffa, the plot unfolds as a series of mishaps and misapprehensions, many revolving around Nemorino’s failure to see that the titular love potion he has purchased to woo Adina is, in truth, nothing more than overpriced wine. “Una furtiva lagrima” (“A Furtive Tear”) is taken from act 2, when Adina’s growing love for Nemorino is revealed by a furtive tear. Like so many contemporary texts set to music, the work abounds in the tropes of romanticism.

L’Elisir d’Amore received its U.S. premiere in New York on June 18, 1838, its libretto translated into English. The first domestic performance in the original Italian took place in New Orleans on March 30, 1842. Though none of the few existing programs for La Société Philharmonique performances contain this piece, its popularity in New Orleans and the orchestra’s frequent use of Donizetti compositions lends credibility to the assumption that it was a part of its repertoire.

VICTOR SÉJOUR (1817–1874)

“La Retour de Napoléon”



Concerts by La Société Philharmonique and other contemporary groups were seldom strictly musical: the evening’s proceedings were frequently punctuated with dramatic readings. On February 13, 1847, at the Théâtre des Variétés on St. Philip Street, a program featuring works by Bellini, Donizetti, and other composers included a performance of Victor Séjour’s play *Diégarias*, which had premiered in Paris at the Théâtre Français in 1844.

According to the baptismal records of the St. Louis Cathedral, Juan Victor Séjour Marcou et Ferrand was born on June 2, 1817, to Louis Séjour, a successful merchant from St. Domingue, and Héloïse-Phillippe Ferrand, a free woman of color. In his late teens he traveled to Paris to further his studies, and in 1837 he published “Le Mulâtre” in the French journal *La Revue des Colonies*. The piece stands as the earliest known short story to be published, in any language, by an African American.

In December 1840 Séjour was deeply moved as he watched the remains of Napoleon, returned from St. Helena, carried in solemn procession through the streets of

ABOVE: *Victor Séjour* from *La Presse Illustrée*; 1874; THNOC (2010.01763)

Victor Séjour, born to a free woman of mixed race and a free African American father in New Orleans, achieved fame in France as a dramatist, poet, and novelist. During his lifetime, his works were translated into multiple languages.

Paris to their final resting place in Les Invalides. The experience inspired his emotional, patriotic ode “Le Retour de Napoléon” (“The Return of Napoleon”), which was published as a pamphlet in Paris in 1841. The poem was republished in New Orleans in 1845 as part of the anthology *Les Cenelles*, the first volume of African American poetry to be published in the United States. Between 1844 and 1870, twenty-one of Séjour’s twenty-two plays appeared in Paris theaters, frequently in multiple venues simultaneously. Written in French, his works were translated into English, Italian, Spanish, and Danish. Séjour was buried in Paris’s Père Lachaise cemetery, his tomb graced by a sculpture representing an open book.

JACQUES OFFENBACH (1819–1880)

Overture to *La vie parisienne*

The composer of nearly one hundred operettas—and widely credited as an originator of the form—Jacques Offenbach enjoyed enormous popularity in both France and the United States. New Orleanians shared the fervor for the composer’s work. In early 1865 Samuel Snaër conducted Offenbach’s *Les deux aveugles* at the Théâtre d’Orléans. And one of the city’s most prominent native sons, Edmond Dédé, conducted at least five Offenbach operettas at Bordeaux’s Alcazar Theater during the 1877–78 season.

La vie parisienne premiered in 1866 at Paris’s Palais-Royal Theatre. The operetta differed from Offenbach’s earlier works in that it featured a contemporary setting and characters in modern dress. A comical work singing the praises of Paris’s glittering nightlife, *La vie parisienne* was enormously popular with both Parisians and visitors to the 1867 Exposition Universelle. Although no surviving programs indicate a performance of this particular work by La Société Philharmonique, the music of Offenbach was clearly known to New Orleans’s audiences of all races.

JEAN-DELPHIN ALARD (1815–1888)

***La Traviata*, Fantasy for Violin and Piano, op. 38**

Jean-Delphin Alard achieved fame in France as a violinist, composer, and teacher. One of the foremost violinists of the period, Alard’s playing was charged with emotion and virtuosity, and he won the admiration of the luminary Niccolò Paganini (1782–1840). In 1843 Alard was named professor of violin at the Paris Conservatory, a post he occupied for the rest of his life. Here, along with Jean Baptiste Charles Dancla (1817–1907) and Joseph Lambert Massart (1811–1892), he became known for his mentoring of a rising generation of musicians. Among his students were the acclaimed Spanish violinist Pablo de Sarasate (1844–1908) and the Afro-Cuban virtuoso José Silvestre White (1835–1918).

Another Alard student was Edmond Dédé (1827–1901) of New Orleans. Dédé’s father, a bandmaster for a militia unit, immigrated to New Orleans from the West Indies in the early nineteenth century. Among Dédé’s teachers in New Orleans were his father and two conductors of La Société Philharmonique: Constantin Debergue (1800–1861) and Charles Richard Lambert (ca. 1796–1861). In addition, he studied with Ludovico Gabici (ca. 1811–1862), the Italian conductor of the St. Charles Theater, and Eugène Prévost (1809–1872), the French conductor of the Théâtre d’Orléans. After completing his studies at the Paris Conservatory, Dédé

remained in France, becoming a prominent composer and conductor. In 1893 he returned to New Orleans, where he thrilled audiences with performances of violin works by Alard. Given the city's love of opera, Alard fantasies on operatic themes were especially popular.



EDMOND DÉDÉ (1827–1901)

Chicago Waltz (Grand valse à l'américaine)

While future biographical research will resolve many questions concerning Edmond Dédé, his prominence in Louisiana and American music history is secure. Born to free people of color who immigrated to New Orleans from the West Indies, Dédé commenced his musical studies in New Orleans and Mexico and continued his education in Paris under violinist Jean-Delphin Alard and composer Fromental Halévy (1799–1862). Settling permanently in France after the completion of his training, he would serve as a violinist and music director in the cities of Rouen, Angers, and Bordeaux.

As early as 1862, Dédé's ballet *Néhana* was produced at the Grand Théâtre de Bordeaux. In 1877 his ballet *La sensitive* was premiered at the same theater—one of the most celebrated of its day, with a roster of more than 250 instrumentalists, singers, dancers, and technical support staff. The Chicago Waltz was dedicated to Samuel L. Armstrong, a cousin, who has been tentatively identified as a cigar maker who lived in the Seventh Ward of New Orleans.

The New Orleans press covered Dédé's triumphs as a conductor and a composer. Reports of his compositions were carried in the *Tribune* as early as August 3, 1865. With more than a hundred works to his credit, he remained active as a composer throughout his life. His return visit to his native city, during the winter of 1893–94, saw him celebrated by the entire community. He was given honorary membership in the Club des Amis de l'Espérance, which counted Samuel Snaer and Basile Barès among its members.

GIUSEPPE VERDI (1813–1901)

"Caro nome" and "La donna è mobile" from *Rigoletto*

The popularity of Giuseppe Verdi in the nineteenth century is attested to by the considerable number of orchestral performances, piano and aria transcriptions, and arrangements for violin and piano represented in surviving sheet music imprints and performance programs, and New Orleans was no exception. Surely one highlight of the 1857 season was the May 22 New Orleans premiere of *Rigoletto* by a visiting Italian company. Creoles of color embraced works by the Italian master. A "Spectacle-Concert" conducted by Samuel Snaer at the Théâtre d'Orléans on August 22, 1865, included a "Grand Air de Verdi." The soloist that evening, identified only by the initials "M. C.," is unknown, as is the particular aria performed. Perhaps the selection was one of two memorable arias from *Rigoletto*: "Caro nome" ("Dearest Name") or "La donna è mobile" ("Woman is Fickle"). The catchiness of the latter's melody is legendary; indeed, tradition holds that the morning after *Rigoletto*'s 1851 premiere, the tune was already on the lips of every gondolier in Venice.

ABOVE: Edmond Dédé; ca. 1839–1841; Amistad Research Center

A native of Louisiana whose parents emigrated from the French West Indies, Dédé received his early musical education from his father. He eventually moved to Bordeaux, France, and became a musical fixture, conducting at the Grand Theatre and serving as musical director of the Alcazar Theater.

In the opera, Rigoletto, court jester to the womanizing Duke of Mantua, encourages his master's conquests until his own daughter, Gilda, is seduced. Furious, the jester arranges for the duke's murder. But his plot goes awry: it is Gilda whose body is delivered to Rigoletto in the final act, her tragic fate the consequence of the jester's complicity in the intrigues of the court.

EDOUARD BATISTE (1820–1876)

Offertoire in D minor

Thursday, February 10

On November 14, 1881, the New Orleans musical spotlight shone on St. Philip's Protestant Episcopal Church, a historically African American church on Calliope Street between St. Charles Avenue and Prytania Street, where William H. Pilcher (1844–1910) enthralled the audience at a "Grand Organ Recital." A New Yorker of English descent, Pilcher came from a family of organ builders. His performance that November evening, notable for its brilliant technique and sensitivity, was hailed as "the grandest musical ever afforded our people" by the African American newspaper the *Louisianian* and is indicative of La Société Philharmonique's willingness to hire white musicians when necessary.

Included in Pilcher's musical selections were Rossini's famed "William Tell Overture" and music by the Leipzig-trained American composer Dudley Buck (1839–1909), but he chose to begin both halves of the program with the music of Edouard Batiste. A native of Paris, Batiste served as longtime church organist at St. Eustache in Paris. His music serves as a reminder that nineteenth-century French sacramental music often drew inspiration from the theatrics of the opera house. The *Offertoire* is replete with dramatic, stormy passages and music worthy of a coloratura soprano.

Pilcher reached the height of his fame during the 1884 World's Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition. Newspapers faithfully reported Pilcher's every performance, marveling at the mammoth organ built specifically for the fair.

DANIEL-FRANÇOIS-ESPRIT AUBER (1782–1871)

Overture to *Fra Diavolo*

Friday, February 11

Daniel-François-Esprit Auber's frequent appearance in the programs of the 1800s in New Orleans is ample testimony to his popularity in the opera-loving city. Between 1823 and 1849 some twenty-five of his operas were performed in New Orleans, most of which were U.S. premieres. His *La Muette de Portici* (New Orleans premiere, April 24, 1831) and *Fra Diavolo* (New Orleans premiere, June 28, 1832) became staples of the city's repertoire. In the first half of the nineteenth century, he was a local household name. Concerts organized by people of color carrying on the tradition of La Société Philharmonique reflect his popularity in New Orleans. After the Civil War, the overture to *Fra Diavolo* was performed by an orchestra composed of people of color on August 22, 1865. *La muette de Portici* enjoyed a similar distinction with performances on July 8, 1865, and October 14, 1877.

Auber, the son of a Paris printer, was sent to London to further his business education. The death of his father, combined with his lack of business acumen, eventually freed him to focus his energies on musical composition. His opéra comique *Fra Diavolo* is based upon the story of Michele Pezza (1771–1806), otherwise known as Fra Diavolo. An Italian rebel, bandit, soldier, and apparent master of disguise, Pezza fought the French forces occupying Naples in the early 1800s and became a fierce enemy of Napoleon.

GIACOMO MEYERBEER (1791–1864)

“La marche du sacre” from *Le prophète*

Giacomo Meyerbeer’s *Le prophète* is a sterling example of New Orleans’s domestic preeminence in the world of nineteenth-century opera. The piece premiered in Paris on April 6, 1849, and in London on July 24 of that year. On April 1, 1850, New Orleans introduced it to the United States; another three and a half years would pass before New York audiences would have an opportunity to hear the work.

Born Jaakov Liebmann Beer, Meyerbeer was a member of an affluent and talented German Jewish family: his brother Michael achieved renown as a playwright, while his brother Wilhelm published the first map of the moon in 1820. By 1815, using the nom de plume Giacomo Meyerbeer, Jaakov was busy composing operas in the style of Rossini. He settled in Paris and earned his place among the most valued contributors to the French grand opera tradition.

Set during the religious wars of sixteenth-century Germany, *Le prophète* is based upon the story of Jean of Leyden, who was installed as King of Munster in 1534. The review of the British premiere in the *Times of London* observed that the virtuosity required of the singers was matched only by the staging requirements. The opera’s “pompous and brilliant” coronation processional (“La marche du sacre”), from act 3, is a highlight of the opera. Samuel Snaer led a performance of the famed processional at the Théâtre d’Orléans in early 1865; that August, Basile Barès performed a transcription for piano at the same theater.

PERFORMERS' BIOGRAPHIES

THOMAS WILKINS, CONDUCTOR

Thomas Wilkins, music director of the Omaha Symphony and principal guest conductor of the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra, was previously resident conductor of the Detroit Symphony, resident conductor of the Florida Orchestra in Tampa Bay, and associate conductor of the Richmond Symphony in Virginia. He has served on the music faculties of North Park University, the University of Tennessee-Chattanooga, and Virginia Commonwealth University, and has been featured with orchestras throughout the United States, including the Dallas Symphony, Cleveland Orchestra, Buffalo Philharmonic, Houston Symphony, and the National Symphony in Washington, D.C. He is also a frequent guest conductor of the Baltimore Symphony, the New Jersey Symphony, the Indianapolis Symphony, the San Diego Symphony, and the Philadelphia Orchestra.

Committed to promoting a lifelong enthusiasm for music, Wilkins brings energy and dedication to audiences of all ages. The Pinellas County Music Educators Association named him 1998 Friend of the Arts for his significant contribution to the children of Tampa Bay; that same year, the Hillsborough County Elementary Music Educators recognized him as Music Educator of the Year.

A native of Norfolk, Virginia, Wilkins earned his bachelor's degree in music education from the Shenandoah Conservatory of Music in 1978. In 1982 he was awarded a master's degree in orchestral conducting from the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston.

WALTER HARRIS JR., SPEAKER

Walter Harris Jr. is a distinguished university professor, professor of music, and former provost and vice-president for academic affairs at Loyola University New Orleans. During his forty-year career in higher education, he has held professorships and administrative positions across a broad spectrum of institutions, including private,

public, baccalaureate, comprehensive, and research universities such as Arizona State University and the University of North Carolina. Harris has performed throughout the country with his college, civic, and other choirs and internationally with a number of choral ensembles; his solo, oratorio, and operatic performances as a bass-baritone have garnered rave reviews. He is also a prolific pianist, having accompanied hundreds of professional and amateur singers and instrumentalists.

Harris serves on several arts, education, and civic boards and commissions. He currently serves on the boards of the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra, the Greater New Orleans Youth Orchestra, and public radio station WWNO.

KISMA JORDAN, SOPRANO

Soprano Kisma Jordan is emerging as one of the country's most luminous talents. Her 2009–10 season began with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra's annual Home for the Holidays Pops Concert Series, followed by her concert debut with the Mississippi Symphony Orchestra. The previous season featured her debut concert appearances with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, led by resident conductor Thomas Wilkins, and with the Lima Symphony Orchestra. She also performed with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and conductor David Alan Miller in the annual Salute to America Concert Series. She made her debut with the Michigan Opera Theatre in 2008 in their production of Puccini's *La Rondine*, and in 2007 she performed the role of Pamina in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* with the New Jersey Opera Summer Festival. She also appeared as Aurora in the North American premiere of Francesco Cavalli's *Gli Amori d' Apollo e di Dafne*.

Jordan received a personal invitation from renowned American mezzo-soprano Marilyn Horne to participate in "The Song Continues . . . 2006," a master class and recital festival presented by the Marilyn Horne Foundation at Carnegie Hall's Zankel Hall. A native of Detroit, Jordan holds



degrees in vocal performance from Kentucky State University and Bowling Green State University.

JOSEPH MEYER, VIOLIN

As an active soloist, chamber musician, and orchestral leader, Joseph Meyer has garnered critical acclaim throughout the country. He currently holds positions as concertmaster of the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra and associate concertmaster of the Colorado Music Festival. His former positions include associate concertmaster of the Charlotte Symphony, guest concertmaster of the New World Symphony and Louisville Orchestra, and member of the San Francisco Symphony and Minnesota Contemporary Ensemble. With the latter he performed across the United States in critically acclaimed concerts emphasizing new music. The group's debut recording, on the Innova label, was called "a tour de force" by the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*. As a chamber musician, Meyer has been a guest performer with members of the Arditti and Degas quartets, singer Fredrica von Stade, violinist Donald Weilerstein, guitarist Paul Galbraith, the Sierra Chamber Society, and the Colorado Music Festival chamber music series, as well as the Left Coast, Providence, and St. Peter's chamber music series.

Meyer graduated in 2000 from the San Francisco Conservatory with a master's degree in chamber music, studying with Camilla Wicks and Mark Sokol. He is a teacher at the New Orleans Center for the Creative Arts and an active chamber musician in New Orleans.



JEAN-BAPTISTE MONNOT, ORGAN/PIANO

Jean-Baptiste Monnot, titular organist of St. Louis des Chartrons Church in Bordeaux, France, is currently the young-artist-in-residence at the St. Louis Cathedral in New Orleans. He graduated from the Rouen Conservatory with honors in 2002. That same year he was the unanimous first-prize winner of the Young Organists Competition. Later that year he appeared at the International Organ Festival of Toulouse. He continued his studies with Jean Guillou in Paris and Zurich, and in 2004 he entered the Paris Conservatory, where he studied with Olivier Latry, titular organist of Notre Dame Cathedral, and Michel Bouvard, titular organist of the Basilica of St. Sernin in Toulouse and of the Royal Chapel of Versailles. He also studied with Bernard Haas at the Stuttgart Conservatory of Music.



After graduating with honors in 2007 from the Paris Conservatory, he embarked upon an international career as a concert organist. He has performed throughout France and in Austria, Belgium, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Spain, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. Last year he undertook two lengthy recital tours to Australia and Japan.

PHUMZILE SOJOLA, TENOR

Phumzile Sojola, a tenor originally from South Africa, has performed on stages around the world. In 2010 he made his New York City Opera debut as Hérison in Chabrier's *L'Etoile*, and recently he returned to Lyon, France, and Edinburgh, Scotland, in Opera National de Lyon's production of *Porgy and Bess*, as Robbins and as Crab Man. His other roles include Popo in *Troubled Island* with the New York City Opera, Monostatos in *Die Zauberflöte*, the Messenger in *Aida*, Remendado in *Carmen*, and Mingo in *Porgy and Bess* with the Dayton Opera.

Sojola enjoyed success as the leader in *Lost in the Stars* with the Skylark Opera, as Arthur in Nathan Davis's jazz opera *Just Above My Head* with the Opera Theater of Pittsburgh, and as Rodolfo in *La Bohème* with the Missouri Symphony.

He has performed with orchestras across the country, including the Knoxville Philharmonic, Lexington Philharmonic, Evansville Philharmonic, and the Philadelphia Orchestra. He has also performed with the American Spiritual Ensemble in Spain and the United States and can be heard on their recording *The Spirituals*. Since 2006 he has toured internationally with the group Three Mo' Tenors.

Sojola studied at the University of Kentucky and the College Conservatory of Music in Cincinnati. He has been a young artist with the Glimmerglass Opera, Cincinnati Opera, Kentucky Opera, and Dayton Opera and is a grand prize winner of the Orpheus National Vocal Competition.

LOUISIANA PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

Carlos Miguel Prieto, Music Director

*The Adelaide Wisdom Benjamin Music Director
and Principal Conductor*

****Klauspeter Seibel, Principal Guest Conductor**

Violins

Joseph Meyer, *Concertmaster*

The Edward D. and Louise L. Levy

Concertmaster Chair

John Hilton, *Associate Concertmaster*

Hannah Yim, *Assistant Concertmaster*

Byron Tauchi, *Principal Second Violin*

Xiao Fu, *Assistant Principal Second Violin*

Burton Callahan

Razvan Constantin

Zorica Dimova

Judith Armistead Fitzpatrick

Ansis Freimanis

Eva Liebhaber

Janeta Mavrova

Elizabeth Overweg

Gabriel Platica

Yaroslav Rudnytsky

Karen Sanno

Yuki Tanaka

Kate Withrow

Sarah Yen

Violas

Richard Woehrle, *Principal*

The Abby Ray Catledge and Bryne Lucas Ray

Principal Viola Chair

Bruce Owen, *Assistant Principal*

Amelia Clingman

Valborg Gross

Ila Rondeau

Carole Shand

Scott Slapin

Tanya Solomon

Cellos

Jonathan Gerhardt, *Principal*

The Edward B. Benjamin Principal Cello Chair

Adelle-Akiko Kearns, *Assistant Principal*

Ann Cohen

Jeanne Jaubert

Kent Jensen

David Rosen

Dimitri Vychko

*William Schultz

Basses

David Anderson, *Principal*

William Schettler, *Assistant Principal*

Matthew Abramo

Tony Parry

Benjamin Wheeler

Flutes

Ryan Rice, *Principal*

The Mary Freeman Wisdom Principal Flute Chair

Sarah Schettler

Patti Adams, *Assistant Principal*

The Richard C. and Nancy Link Adkerson

Flute Chair

Piccolo

Patti Adams

Oboes

Jaren Philleo, *Principal*

Jane Gabka, *Assistant Principal*

Lissa Stolz

English Horn

Lissa Stolz

Clarinets

Robyn Jones, *Principal*

Stephanie Thompson, *Assistant Principal*

John Reeks

E[♭] Clarinet

Stephanie Thompson

Bass Clarinet

John Reeks

Bassoons

Matthew McDonald, *Principal*

Stacy Salay

Benjamin Atherholt, *Assistant Principal*

*Susan Loegering

Contrabassoon

Benjamin Atherholt

Horns

Mollie Pate, *Principal*

Scott Strong, *Assistant Principal*

Samantha Woolf

Jack Gardner, *Associate Principal*

Juliann Welch

Trumpets

Vance Woolf, *Principal*

Matthew Ernst, *Associate Principal*

Doug Reneau

Trombones

Greg Miller, *Principal*

Bron Wright

Michael Brown, *Bass trombone*

*Carson Keeble

Tuba

Robert Nunez, *Principal*

Timpani

Jim Atwood, *Principal*

Percussion

Nena Lorenz, *Principal*

Dave Salay

Harp

Rachel Van Voorhees, *Principal*

Piano

Mary Ann Bulla

**On leave for the 2010–2011 season **deceased*

*The string section of the Louisiana Philharmonic
Orchestra is listed alphabetically and participates
in revolving seating.*

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THE COLLECTION

THE HISTORIC NEW ORLEANS COLLECTION

The Historic New Orleans Collection is a museum, research center, and publisher dedicated to the study and preservation of the history and culture of New Orleans and the Gulf South. The Collection's exhibitions, holdings, and publications survey more than three centuries of Louisiana's economic, social, cultural, and military history.

The Collection's main galleries are located at 533 Royal Street, and the Williams Research Center is at 410 Chartres Street. Visit www.hnoc.org or call (504) 523-4662 for more details about exhibitions, upcoming programs, and gallery hours.



The **Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra** transforms people and communities through music by playing ambitious, inspiring concerts; educating young people and adults; reaching out to diverse regions, neighborhoods, and audiences; connecting through various mediums and venues; and contributing to the cultural richness of New Orleans and Louisiana. Formed in 1991, the LPO is the only musician-owned and collaboratively operated orchestra in the United States and the only full-time professional orchestra in the Gulf South. The LPO has taken a leadership role in rebuilding and strengthening the cultural life of New Orleans since Hurricane Katrina and through this past summer's oil spill disaster. Led by Music Director Carlos Miguel Prieto, the LPO is proud to be based in New Orleans and serving the region.

