

Those familiar with the *Speculum Musicae* series will recognize the attractive presentation of text, musical examples and reference tables, as well as the sturdy construction of the volume. The selection of cover art is appealing, if somewhat surprising: Camille Pissarro's famous painting *L'Avenue de l'Opéra: Sunshine Winter Morning* dates from 1898, and this Impressionist view of a very obviously post-Haussmann Paris with its wide boulevards, electric street lamps and the presence of the Palais Garnier (construction of which did not begin until 1861) does not represent the city as it would have appeared during the period under consideration. Perhaps it could be taken as metaphor of a Paris moving *toward* modernism through this earlier stage of cultural development (and, indeed, the title of this volume itself suggests a more expansive chronology). Nevertheless, one is often reminded not to judge a book by its cover, and, in this case, the contents within are richly informative, engaging and generally accessible. The careful reader will notice minor typographical errors, either through translation or editing, and some individual chapters seem to end abruptly (one wonders whether some of the original conference presentations were shortened for publication); however, these elements do not detract from the overall content. Presented with the challenge of incorporating eighteen substantial chapters, Sala has devised a logical gathering of topics into sections, and although the volume is not presented as a linear narrative, the chronology of events and developments as they occurred is well structured. This impressive volume offers an opportunity to reconsider Parisian musical life as it unfolded during a crucial period that straddles the Classical and Romantic eras, and saw the emergence of a recognizably modern musical infrastructure in education, publication and performance; its readers will also learn much about numerous individuals frequently overlooked in today's accounts of music history. As Sala suggests, this Paris was 'the center of a cyclone of virtuosity' (borrowing a phrase from Paul Metzner's *Crescendo of the Virtuoso*¹) fostering an invaluable cultural transfer between native and international musicians associated with the city during this period (p. ix).

Heather de Savage
 University of Connecticut
 heather.desavage@uconn.edu

doi:10.1017/S1479409817000702

First published online 10 November 2017

Jean-Michel Nectoux, ed. *Gabriel Fauré: Correspondance suivie de Lettres à Madame H.* (Paris: Fayard, 2015). 913 pp. €38,00.

The release of a major new publication about Gabriel Fauré (1845–1924) by Jean-Michel Nectoux always is a cause for rejoicing. Mr Nectoux has devoted his career to the promulgation of the life and the music of Fauré, who had heretofore been the least well-known of the major early twentieth-century French composers. Detailed information on Fauré's life and the history of his musical output was difficult to come by for many years after his death. In 1951, the composer's son

¹ Paul Metzner, *Crescendo of the Virtuoso: Spectacle, Skill, and Self-Promotion in Paris during the Age of Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998): 2.

Philippe Fauré-Fremiet edited a slim volume of *Lettres intimes*,¹ written by Fauré to his wife, Marie. This collection, while providing indispensable information of a musical nature, was marred by the lack of critical notes and an index. Additionally, Fauré's wife, Marie Fremiet, had destroyed most of the early correspondence with her husband, and, thus, the collection of letters covered only the last 25 years of the composer's life. In 1973, Nectoux released the first of what would be many publications of Fauré correspondence: the letters exchanged between Fauré and his composition teacher and friend, Camille Saint-Saëns, *Correspondance: Soixante ans d'amitié*.² In 1980, Nectoux's research on Fauré's life and work culminated in an expanded volume of Fauré's *Correspondance*,³ a selection of 211 letters exchanged by the composer and diverse colleagues, friends, patrons and professional contacts, which spanned the composer's lifetime. These 211 annotated letters were organized into chapters (in chronological order within each chapter, but not always in order over the length of the book) that explored diverse aspects of Fauré's life and career; here, each chapter is preceded by a lengthy and informative essay that offered a full, rich view of the composer's inner world, creative process, and professional challenges and successes. Subsequent major publications by Nectoux on Fauré include some two dozen essays, an entry and list of the composer's works in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (1980),⁴ a portrait of the composer in *The New Grove Twentieth-Century French Masters* series,⁵ and the monumental *Gabriel Fauré: Les voix du clair-obscur*.⁶

The present work offers, for the first time, a presentation of Gabriel Fauré's complete correspondence (except for the aforementioned correspondence between Fauré and his wife), arranged in chronological order and organized by year. This collection of 782 letters range from his first known epistle, written at age nine (1855), to a final, loving note to his longtime mistress, Marguerite Hasselmanns (about whom we shall have more to say further on), written on 24 October 1924, only weeks before his death on 4 November of that year. The volume gathers into one source exchanges (some previously unpublished letters) with important figures such as Fauré's student Maurice Ravel; artist John Singer Sargent, whose celebrated portrait of the composer graces the front cover; and pianist Robert Lortat, who performed the complete works of Fauré in Paris and London. Through this correspondence, we come to know not only the musician, but also the man: every word on every page allows us insight into the inner world of a kind, effusive, loyal and caring man who managed, in the complicated, politically

¹ *Lettres intimes*, ed. Philippe Fauré-Fremiet (Paris: La Colombe, then Grasset, 1951).

² *Correspondance: Soixante ans d'amitié*, ed. Jean-Michel Nectoux (Paris: Société française de musicologie/Éditions Transatlantiques, 1973). Prior to their compilation, these letters between Camille Saint-Saëns and Fauré had appeared in *Revue de musicologie* 58/1–2 (1972): 65–89, 1990–252, and 59/1 (1973): 60–98.

³ *Gabriel Fauré: Correspondance (1862–1924)*, ed. Jean-Michel Nectoux (Paris: Flammarion, 1980; published in English as *Gabriel Fauré: His Life Through His Letters*, trans. J. A. Underwood (London: Marion Boyars, 1984)).

⁴ Jean-Michel Nectoux, 'Gabriel Fauré', *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan, 1980), vol. 6: 417–28.

⁵ Jean-Michel Nectoux, *et al*, *The New Grove Twentieth-Century French Masters: Fauré, Debussy, Satie, Ravel, Poulenc, Messiaen, Boulez* (London: Macmillan, 1986): 1–37.

⁶ Jean-Michel Nectoux, *Gabriel Fauré: Les voix du clair-obscur* (Paris: Flammarion, 1990), published in English as *Gabriel Fauré: A Musical Life*, translated by Roger Nichols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991). A more recent edition exists: see Jean-Michel Nectoux, *Gabriel Fauré: Les voix du clair-obscur*, 2nd ed. rev. (Paris: Fayard, 2008).

charged music world of Paris, to endear himself to most people who came in contact with him.

The early letters trace Fauré's entry into the salon and extended family circle of the great singer Pauline Viardot, to whom the composer dedicated a number of songs, and with whose daughter, Marianne, he had an ardent, turbulent love relationship that ended with a broken engagement. With close friends Camille and Marie Clerc, the young composer shared the difficulties of completing his now-celebrated A-major violin sonata Op. 13 and the enthusiastic reception that followed the first performance of the work in 1877, '[which] succeeded above and beyond all my hopes!!!'⁷ (letter to Marie Clerc, p. 45). His quest to achieve professional acknowledgement and financial security – and the resultant anxieties that accompanied his struggles – are manifested in numerous letters. For 20 years, Fauré laboured in relative obscurity: known primarily as the *maître de chapelle* at the Church of the Madeleine, where he was overworked and underpaid, he was forced to spend endless hours riding the trains to give piano lessons in the Paris suburbs. When, in 1892, his teacher and mentor Saint-Saëns urged him to apply for an open post for professor of composition at the Paris Conservatoire, Fauré's artistic scrupulousness and professional insecurities, coupled with his natural qualities of reticence and modesty, held him back: 'I've thought about it and I don't think of myself as being sturdy enough, with all that I already have to do, to add on an occupation so important and so laden down with responsibilities as a composition class'⁸ (pp. 211–12). The post would not have been his in any circumstances: Ambroise Thomas, the Conservatoire's director, vehemently opposed Fauré's candidacy and chose instead to fill the position conservative composer Théodore Dubois, Fauré's chief competitor and longtime *bête noire*. After the scandal of the *L'affaire Ravel* in 1905, Dubois, who had become director of the Conservatoire, resigned, and was succeeded by Fauré. Fauré's first official letter was written to Saint-Saëns: 'As it was you who raised me, and as it's to you that I owe all that I have become, it is in all justice that the first words that I write from the directorial table are addressed to you! ... as you might imagine, I am overwhelmed with things to do'⁹ (p. 315).

Among the most difficult 'things to do' in the composer's schedule was finding the time to compose in the midst of all of his administrative and musical obligations. Fauré had always been a slow composer, and, in this volume, Fauré presents himself as someone constantly behind schedule. The *Requiem*, arguably his best-known work, was not ready for its first performance, in January 1888. Like many of his works, this one, too, was composed in fits and starts. Another challenge was seeing to the logistical and practical matters associated with productions of his music: on the eve of a second performance at the Madeleine in 1888 (privately underwritten by generous admirers), Fauré had to beg Comte Robert de Montesquiou to urge the mutual friends who planned to attend 'not to *gather round* [the church], in order that it not resemble a PERFORMANCE!! There must be an appearance of being there

⁷ 'La *Sonate* a réussi ce soir au-delà de toutes mes espérances!!!' All translations from the original French are my own.

⁸ 'C'est-à-dire que j'ai réfléchi et que je ne me juge pas assez robuste pour ajouter à tout ce que j'ai à faire déjà, une occupation aussi importante, aussi chargée de responsabilités qu'une classe de composition'.

⁹ 'Comme c'est toi qui m'as élevé et que c'est à toi que je dois ce que je suis, il est de toute justice que les premiers mots que j'aurais écrits sur la table directoriale te soient adressés! ... comme tu peux le penser, j'ai été submergé par les occupations'.

by accident'¹⁰ (p. 145). In February 1900, he complained to his British friend, Mrs. George Swinton, that 'this winter it's *crazy* all that I have to do and to *compose!*'¹¹ (p. 272); at the moment of that letter's writing, he was struggling to complete his first opera, *Prométhée*, in time for its creation less than six months later. The complaints notwithstanding, the volume offers innumerable insights into Fauré's creative process, and we, as readers, are fortunate to read of the long inner struggles that eventually brought to the printed page and the ears of music-lovers such masterworks as the First Piano Quintet, Op. 89 – in the words of violinist Eugène Ysaÿe, to whom the work was dedicated, 'this dear Quintet waited for so impatiently for so many years!'¹² (p. 317). And, with his customary modesty, Fauré would write to Henry Gauthier-Villars (better known by his pen name, Willy), after the first performances of the *Requiem* with full orchestra, 'They're playing my *Requiem* in Brussels, and in Nancy, and in Marseilles, and in Paris at the Conservatoire. You see that I'm becoming a well-known musician!'¹³ (p. 286).

In addition to the challenges of the juggling administrative, musical and family obligations, Fauré complicated his life further as a result of his relations, amorous or otherwise, with many women – a lifelong penchant that perpetually aroused the suspicions and ire of his jealous wife, Marie, who destroyed intimate – and, possibly, indiscreet – letters still extant at the time of Fauré's death. Nonetheless, references in the correspondence to women who may have been mistresses – such as the British composer Adela Maddison – appear frequently. The *Correspondance* includes important letters to female friends (Marie Clerc, Colette, Louise Maillot); major musicians (Pauline Viardot, Marguerite Long); patrons and salon hostesses (the Comtesse Greffulhe, the Princesse de Polignac, Marguerite Baugnies (later, Marguerite de Saint-Marceaux)); and mistress (Marguerite Hasselmans). In some of these letters, Fauré unburdens himself in an astonishingly intimate and psychologically revelatory manner. In the midst of what the composer himself describes as a 'crisis', Fauré confesses his unrequited love for Winaretta Singer, recently divorced from the Prince de Scy-Montbéliard, to Marguerite Baugnies: 'BUT SWEAR TO ME THAT YOU WON'T BETRAY ME! ... Venice is DELETERIOUS for my morale!!! I thought I had put that behind me forever! ... And I adore Marie, I assure you ... But what you tell me is true: our princess is delightful to know better. ... I really love her very, very much'¹⁴ (p. 183).

The same ardour is on display in many of the 450 letters, previously unpublished, from Fauré to the great love of the last quarter of his life, Marguerite Hasselmans, the 'Madame H' of the volume's title. The liaison, dating from 1901 and ending only with the composer's death, was well known in the Parisian musical milieu; according to Nectoux (p. 576), Fauré had his work cut out for him in

¹⁰ 'Priez les camarades de ne pas se *grouper* pour que cela ne ressemble pas à une AUDITION!!!! Il faudra avoir l'air d'être là par hasard'.

¹¹ 'cet hiver c'est *fou* tout ce j'ai à faire et à *composer!*'

¹² 'ce cher Quintette si impatientement attendu depuis de longues années!'

¹³ 'On joue mon *Requiem* à Bruxelles, et à Nancy, et à Marseille, et à Paris au Conservatoire. Vous verrez que je vais devenir un musicien connu!'

¹⁴ 'JUREZ-MOI DE NE PAS ME TRAHIR! ... Venise est pour mon moral DÉLÉTÈRE!!! Je croyais que j'étais à tout jamais remis! ... Et je l'adore Marie, je vous l'assure ... Mais ce que vous me disiez est vrai: notre princesse est exquise à connaître mieux. ... Je l'aime vraiment beaucoup, beaucoup'.

maintaining the putative 'secrecy' of the affair, and destroyed all of Marguerite's letters to him immediately upon receiving them. As Nectoux points out,

Nothing in this ensemble seems shocking, either in tone or content, and one understands the interest that [Marguerite] Hasselmans took in the collection and her interest in seeing it published, as an homage to the man whom she had the chance to rub shoulders with. They trace a portrait of the composer, bringing [the reader] as close as possible to his thoughts as a man and artist, and, as such, occupy a place as singular as it is important in the entire large body of correspondence that I was able to find¹⁵ (pp. 577–8).

And, indeed, the joy of reading this ensemble of letters lies not only in savouring Fauré's pleasure in writing to his 'petit bijou' (little jewel), but in the myriad details that he shares concerning his daily musical life, his progress on his second opera, *Pénélope*, and the challenges that this beloved composer experienced as he underwent the aging process.

The brief essay that precedes the 'Madame H' section reminds the reader of how sorely missed are the explanatory and contextualizing essays from the previous (1980) edition of *Correspondance*. Ideally, the two volumes should be read and enjoyed side-by-side; one hopes that libraries will not cast aside the earlier volume: for scholars, performers and lovers of Fauré's music, both are indispensable. And all of us are forever in Jean-Michel Nectoux's debt for the years of indefatigable detective work and scholarly passion and precision that have brought to the light this wealth of correspondence.

Sylvia Kahan
The Graduate Center and College of Staten Island
City University of New York
skahanpf@aol.com

doi:10.1017/S1479409817000738
First published online 22 December 2017

¹⁵ 'Rien dans cet ensemble ne paraît choquer, ni par le ton ni par le contenu, et l'on comprend l'intérêt que M. Hasselmans portait à cet ensemble qu'elle avait à cœur de voir publier, à titre d'hommage à l'homme qu'elle avait eu la chance de côtoyer. Elles tracent un portrait du compositeur au plus près de ses pensées d'homme et d'artiste et, à ce titre, occupent n place aussi singulière qu'importante dans l'ensemble des correspondances, nombreuses, que j'ai pu retrouver'.