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REVIEW ARTICLE

Reimagining Fauré's Solo Vocal Music: New Editions and Recordings of the Songs and Vocalises

Gabriel Fauré, *Complete Songs Volume 1: 1861–1882*, ed. Roy Howat and Emily Kilpatrick (London: Peters Edition, 2014). xlii + 152 pp. £17.95

Gabriel Fauré, *Complete Songs Volume 3: The Complete Verlaine Settings (1887–1894)*, ed. Roy Howat and Emily Kilpatrick (London: Peters Edition, 2015). xxxvii + 98 pp. £17.95

Gabriel Fauré, *Vocalises*, ed. Roy Howat and Emily Kilpatrick (London: Edition Peters, 2013). xv + 57 pp. £13.50

Gabriel Fauré Songs for Bass Voice
Jared Schwartz *bass*, Roy Howat *pf*
Toccata Classics TOCC 0268
2015, 1 CD

Lydia's Vocalises
Jonathan Freeman-Attwood *tpt*, Roy Howat *pf*
Linn Records CKD 488
2014, 1 CD

If familiarity does not always breed contempt, it can obscure the full range of meanings inherent in the object it contemplates. This is certainly true of the songs of Gabriel Fauré, which remain a mainstay of the education of young singers and of the canon of art song. Fauré's songs (*mélodies*) generate for many a sense of personal attachment and even ownership. One need look only, to take one example, at the heated comments on YouTube that follow videos of Philippe Jaroussky and Dame Kiri Te Kanawa performing the perennial Fauré favourite 'Nell', to be reminded of this.[1] The burning issue in this case is tempo: 'Too fast!' cry the detractors, and they certainly have a case given the very slow metronome mark that 'Nell' has carried ever since the first edition, which seems at odds with the music and unduly taxing for the singer. While such YouTube comments are hardly a scientific measure of opinion, they reflect a broader truth familiar to any modern classical musician, namely that the concept of textual fidelity, even if imperfectly understood and sometimes applied too literally, matters to many beyond the scholarly community and affects the ways in which this music lives on in performance today.

It is difficult to predict, of course, how far any new critical edition can turn back the tide of performance traditions based on earlier texts, or indeed those stemming

[1] See, for instance, 'Dame Kiri Te Kanawa Sings "Nell"', YouTube, www.youtube.com/watch?v=D2diLy0xc1A (accessed 7 September 2016); and 'Jaroussky chante "Nell" de Gabriel Fauré/Leconte deLisle', YouTube, www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rk83P-Yktww (accessed 7 September 2016).

from influential performers who are deemed to trump the text itself. The economics and sheer scholarly labour of critical editions, which are typically expensive to produce and enormously time-consuming for the editors, can be daunting, even when they deal only with one work or group of works from a composer's output.[2] Such challenges are one major reason, no doubt, for the sporadic provision of critical scores across even the mainstream classical repertoire, though the dominance of Austro-German music and aesthetic values in the early formation of the canons of Western art music also played its part in the sidelining of French, Italian and other traditions until late into the last century. In French music, it is encouraging that so much ground is now being made up, with major editorial projects devoted to Debussy, Ravel and now Fauré in progress.[3]

Fauré's music has been available in printed sources since the time of its composition and premiere performances. The composer's French publishers (Choudens, Hamelle, Heugel and Durand) were primarily responsible for the first editions, and made significant contributions to the dissemination of his music at home and abroad.[4] In some cases, multiple publications of the same works were issued in close succession by different publishers; this was especially true of the songs and piano solos, due to their popularity among recitalists.[5] Not surprisingly, such duplications have presented inconsistencies in musical notation, editorial markings, performance key and, in the songs, text underlay, that have yielded some puzzling variants; Fauré's own inconsistencies as he drafted and revised his work have further exacerbated this point. Since the mid-1990s, pianist and scholar Roy Howat (Royal Academy of Music, London; Royal Conservatoire of Scotland) has worked to address many of these issues through a series of critical editions for Edition Peters. Howat's volumes are intended not only to address the inconsistencies and basic errors that have become established in print over the years, but also to restore certain lost or displaced elements and clarify others, through scholarly editions that are accessible to performers and faithful to Fauré's intentions and practices.

Most recently, Howat has worked with Emily Kilpatrick (Royal Northern College of Music) to expand the reach of the Peters series to include Fauré's solo vocal music; their critical edition of his songs will eventually be available in four

[2] The laborious process of bringing to fruition the critical edition of Debussy's music, published by Durand as *Claude Debussy's Complete Works*, illustrates this point. See 'Debussy Revealed', *Durand, Salabert, Eschig*, www.durand-salabert-eschig.com/~/media/Files/PDF/DSE/CRITICAL%20EDITION/DEB_book_FINAL_EN.ashx (accessed 10 September 2016).

[3] See n. 2 on Debussy. Roger Nichols has edited a number of Urtext volumes of Ravel's music for Edition Peters. And in addition to Howat's ongoing work on the Fauré critical edition for Peters, a Complete Works Edition of Fauré's music is in progress for Bärenreiter Verlag, under General Editor Jean-Michel Nectoux. For an overview of the Bärenreiter edition and its contents, see 'Gabriel Fauré (1845–1924): The Complete Works', *Bärenreiter: The Musician's Choice*, www.baerenreiter.com/en/catalogue/complete-editions/faure-gabriel/ (accessed 20 August 2016).

[4] Some first editions were also made Fauré's international publishers, including the Violin Sonata in A major, Op. 13 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1877), and the First Piano Quintet, Op. 89 (New York: G. Schirmer, 1907).

[5] Fauré's songs, piano solos and chamber works were among the first to earn international popularity, including in the United States, and especially in Boston. For a discussion of these early performances, see Heather de Savage, 'The American Reception of Gabriel Fauré: From Francophile Boston, 1892–1945, to the Broader Postwar Mainstream' (PhD dissertation, University of Connecticut, 2015).

volumes, in medium and high keys (two volumes are still in progress at the time of this writing).[6] To complement these volumes of Fauré's songs, the editors have also prepared an edition of 45 vocalises (most with piano accompaniment) composed during the composer's tenure as Director of the Conservatoire (1905–20), as sight-singing examples for auditions and examinations.[7] With one exception these works have never previously appeared in print.[8]

This collection joins many existing editions of Fauré's songs, but it is distinctive in offering extensive historical context, detailed critical commentary and a chronological realignment of some pieces.[9] The editors are particularly interested in helping to renew performance of these songs, as they state in their general preface: 'the present edition aims to encourage creative, confident and well-informed performance' and to make these songs 'accessible to as many singers as possible within appropriate bounds of taste and scholarship' (Volume 1, p. vi). Moreover, they seem to resolve conflicting tempo and expression markings, purge basic printing errors, establish appropriate keys for these songs and thus renovate habits of performance that are now deeply entrenched in the musical language of these pieces and, in some cases, depart from Fauré's expectations and ideals for his own music. The musical results, as the editors explain, have been evaluated through workshops, performances and recordings (Volume 1, p. vi).

Each volume of the *Complete Songs* series begins with a general preface that includes a brief statement on Fauré's contribution to the art song genre, the sources consulted for this edition, the editorial process and the presentation of musical scores. It also introduces such topics as key, tempo and text to acclimate the reader to the elements of performance practice addressed in this series. The editors expand on these topics in a second preface specific to that volume, briefly invoking a number of familiar selections to illustrate key points (they address these more fully in the Critical Commentary); additional context is offered through the inclusion of historical and biographical details relevant to that particular volume.

Additional practical resources include a detailed table of contents (identifying the title, poet, key and vocal ambitus), a section of poetic texts with English and German translations (these largely reflect the original French texts, rather than offering freer poetic approximations, as is so often the case in vocal editions) and a select bibliography. With the exception of the table of contents and bibliography, all prefatory material is given in English, French and German. Additional supporting material includes facsimile examples of Fauré's autographs, original title pages from early publications and even some whimsical sketches (for instance, Fauré's well-known caricature of Verlaine in Volume 3, p. iv). A chronology table serves as a convenient 'quick reference' resource for the reader, and includes the following information specific to each song in the volume: 1) the approximate date of composition, 2) the details of the first performance (date, location and singer) and 3) the identity of the dedicatees and their connection to Fauré. The inclusion of both

[6] Both the volumes under reviewed here are available in medium and high versions, containing identical musical content (in appropriate keys) and commentary.

[7] A brief discussion of the vocalises appears in Jean-Michel Nectoux, *Gabriel Fauré: A Musical Life*, trans. Roger Nichols (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991): 370.

[8] The *Vocalise-Étude* in E minor was first published as part of the series *Répertoire Moderne de Vocalises*, compiled by Amédée-Louis Hettich (Paris: Alfonse Leduc, 1907).

[9] The editors acknowledge the fact that many of these pieces can be dated only within five years of composition. See 'Preface to Volume 1', in *Complete Songs* Volume 1, vii.

the year and month of composition, when known, helps to establish a sort of 'micro-chronology' for pieces that Fauré composed in close succession; the performance and dedication details offer a sense of the composer's musical world as well as his individual social and professional interactions at the time this music was first introduced.

In organizing the selections into four volumes, Howat and Kilpatrick seek to realign certain chronological elements, to fill in gaps in previously issued collections and to combine Fauré's diverse settings in a coherent fashion. Thus, they necessarily depart somewhat from the three collections of songs as they were first published during Fauré's lifetime, and as they are still most often considered today: Choudens (1879), Hamelle (1897), and another by Hamelle (1908) (See Volume 1, p. vi). This review covers the three volumes currently available at the time of this writing, as well as two CDs by Howat and his colleagues.

Gabriel Fauré: Complete Songs, Volumes 1 and 3

Volume 1 of the present edition includes Fauré's earliest songs, beginning with his student piece, 'La Papillon et la fleur' (1861), and concluding with 'Chanson d'amour' and 'La Fée aux chansons', originally published together as Op. 27 (1882).[10] Other well-known songs present in this volume include 'Mai', 'Lydia', 'Les berceaux', 'Nell', 'Notre amour' and various others, including those comprising the short set, *Poème d'un jour*, Op. 21.[11] While Volume 1 demonstrates the diversity of poetic selections early in Fauré's career, with musical settings of Victor Hugo, Leconte de Lisle, Charles Baudelaire and others, Volume 3 exclusively features his 17 settings of Paul Verlaine, composed between 1887 and 1894, including the song cycles *Cinq mélodies de Venise*, Op. 58, and *La Bonne Chanson*, Op. 61, as well as the individual selections, 'Clair de lune', 'Spleen' and 'Prison'.[12]

These new editions are comfortable and easy to use, although the inclusion of individual variants, *ossia* passages and brief editorial remarks distinguishes this series from others. Alterations range from basic corrections in pitch or rhythm as they appear in earlier editions or autographs, to more substantial changes implemented by the editors for the ease of the performer, or to offer a more faithful representation of Fauré's style of notation. Still, annotations are given without becoming distracting to the eye; in many cases the editors simply identify an altered element and refer the reader to the Critical Commentary for a more thorough discussion of source evidence that contributed to these editorial decisions.

One of the challenges of source studies of Fauré's songs is that he is known to have destroyed the majority of his sketches and drafts.[13] Some rare sketches of his songs – for example, 'Clair de lune' and 'Le secret' – do exist, but extant sources

[10] 'La Papillon et la fleur' was first published by Choudens in 1869; the two selections of Op. 27 were published by Hamelle in 1882.

[11] *Poème d'un jour*, Op. 21, includes three selections: 'Rencontre', 'Toujours' and 'Adieu'.

[12] *Cinq mélodies de Venise*, Op. 58, includes five songs: 'Mandoline', 'En sourdine', 'Green', 'À Clymène' and 'C'est l'extase'. *La Bonne Chanson*, Op. 61, includes nine: 'Une Sainte en son auréole', 'Puisque l'aube grandit', 'La lune blanche luit dans les bois', 'J'allais par des chemins perfides', 'J'ai presque peur, en vérité', 'Avant que tu ne t'en ailles', 'Donc, ce sera par un clair jour d'été', 'N-est-ce pas?' and 'L'hiver a cessé'.

[13] This topic is addressed in Edward R. Phillips, *Gabriel Fauré Guide to Research*, Routledge Music Bibliographies, second ed. (London: Routledge, 2011): 42–5; Robert Orledge,

more often include complete fair copy autographs, transcriptions and editorial proofs (Volume 1, p. 150 and Volume 3, pp. 80–81, respectively). In the Critical Commentary the editors identify the sources consulted, including autographs and/or early published editions, and specify those that they believe yield the most authentic representations of Fauré's compositions. Additional finer details include references to the colour of ink used, evidence of revisions, hand-written dedications, official stamps and even playful sketches. (The editors identify any markings that cannot be attributed with certainty to Fauré, and suggest possible external contributions when necessary.)

Naturally some individual pieces and collections require more substantial attention in the Critical Commentary than others. For instance, the number of sources for *La Bonne Chanson*, Op. 61 – including the transcription for chamber ensemble – yield nearly two complete pages of discussion in Volume 3 prior to attending to the nine individual songs (Volume 3, pp. 88–9). Howat and Kilpatrick present, point-by-point, local adjustments to performance elements, including rhythmic notation, dynamics and expression markings, presentation of accidentals and text underlay. This amounts to more than pedantry; subtle changes in punctuation might alter the performer's interpretation of poetic phrasing, as may the suggested breath marks, which the editors leave to the discretion of the performer. In each case, they carefully account for their decisions through source citations, and offer sound rationale for any alterations to long-established editions of this repertoire.

Regarding the specific musical content, each volume includes short score extracts in the Critical Commentary to illustrate notational variants and deletions from earlier versions. Volume 3 includes an Appendix containing similar extracts for three selections from *La Bonne Chanson* (Volume 3, p. 98). Volume 1 also includes an appendix, although in this case it is a solitary example – Fauré's original conclusion for 'Ici-bas!' (Volume 1, p. 152). As it appears in the autograph, Fauré's accompaniment for this section matches the related sung portion from the beginning of the piece, which features an arpeggiated semi-quaver pattern. The corresponding passage as it has been known since its first publication presents a dense, syncopated Schumannesque pattern, and a return to an arching gesture from the introduction before concluding with two heavy tonic chords. Surely, many would agree that this familiar conclusion, which so artfully encapsulates the emotion of the text, is far more remarkable than Fauré's original unpublished ending, although the autograph version is certainly interesting from a historical perspective.[14] On a practical note, the inclusion of individual variant pitches in grey notation is slightly problematic, as they do not stand out well in the score extracts, and can be difficult to spot on first glance.[15] The use of brackets or another more obvious printed element would more readily call attention to these moments.

Performance Practice in Fauré's Songs: Key and Tempo

For performers using this edition as a practical resource, two themes of discussion are salient: the choice of key and the interpretation of tempo and related rhythmic elements. Debates on these points, particularly the latter, are not new.

'Fauré the Composer', in *Gabriel Fauré* (London: Eulenburg Books, 1979): 193–234; and Nectoux, *A Musical Life*, 484–9.

[14] See bar 19 through 'Ici-bas!', in Volume 1, p. 77, and the corresponding passage in 'Appendix', in Volume 1, p. 152.

[15] For example, see 'Appendix: *L'hiver a cessé*', Volume 3, p. 98.

Fauré himself was aware of disagreements over his own selected tempos, a point Jean-Michel Nectoux addresses in his overview of the composer's sketches in *Gabriel Fauré: A Musical Life*.[16] While much Fauré scholarship has addressed the general question of tempo concerning his songs, Howat and Kilpatrick take on the task of identifying specific problems that stem from inconsistencies and errors in a variety of published and unpublished sources. They also consider evidence of early performances of songs involving the composer.

The editors generally retain the keys as they were first published, 'except when a source offers a more compelling option or suggests this was Fauré's preference, and occasionally to offer a more realistic distinction between high and medium voices' (Volume 1, p. vi). When an autograph source indicates a key that differs from the published version, they choose either to restore Fauré's autograph key (for instance, in 'Mai', 'Chant d'automne' and 'Le Voyageur'), or they present an alternative that makes sense from a practical standpoint, including from the perspective of the pianist (as in 'Ici-bas!').[17] For instance, 'Mai' was published both by Hartmann (1871) and Choudens (1877) in G major, and this has long been accepted as its standard high key.[18] Here, the editors restore Fauré's higher autograph key of A-flat major; although the difference is only a semitone, for sopranos and tenors accustomed to performing this piece in G major, this subtle alteration might well seem significant.[19] ('Au bord de l'eau' is similarly affected.) Conversely, 'La Fée aux chansons' is presented a semitone lower, as it appears in Fauré's early copies. While some will instinctively resist the 'new' keys, others might readily embrace them and the opportunity to explore the different tone colours they could bring to their performance, and they might perhaps even inspire recitalists to consider alternative orderings or groupings when designing a new programme.

Because both volumes are available in both medium and high keys (as will be the others forthcoming in this series), there is some inherent flexibility for performers. Rather than issuing a strict edict of which keys 'must' be used, Howat and Kilpatrick do not seem to advocate strictly for any one key choice; instead, they present their findings and offer guidance and options for performers, while also acknowledging Fauré's apparent key preferences for certain songs, as well as his own flexibility in performance. They adhere to his preferences when practical to do so, but are also confident that their own flexibility for editorial purposes is not out of line with Fauré's practices when working with singers. As they observe, he most likely performed the same piece in different keys, at least some of the time, depending on the performer (Volume 1, p. vi). In fact, the editors even suggest the possibility of moving between the medium and high volumes in their *Complete Songs* series to find the most appropriate key for an individual singer (Volume 3, p. xiii).

A common criticism in modern-day Fauré song performance is the tendency to slow tempi and rubati that are incompatible with the composer's original expectations. Because the theme of melancholy is present in many of his early songs, performers often instinctively interpret these selections in a slow, plodding style, without taking into consideration other musical elements. In establishing

[16] Fauré acknowledged that some 'considered him as "someone devoid of common sense when it comes to deciding on a speed"'. Nectoux, *A Musical Life*, 487.

[17] The autograph key appears in either the medium or high version of the present edition, with a corresponding key in the other. See Volume 1, p. ix.

[18] Choudens also published as lower version of 'Mai' (F major) that year.

[19] The medium version retains Choudens' lower key of F major.

Fauré's ideals in this regard, Howat and Kilpatrick cite mezzo-soprano Claire Croiza on her experience working with the composer (she premiered *Le jardin clos*, Op. 106, with Fauré in 1915[20]): his approach to tempo, but also the overall importance of not taking the poetic emotions too seriously. They also refer to Vladimir Jankélévitch's writings on this repertoire in support of this line of thought (Volume 1, p. vii, n. 8). The general recommendation is to understand Fauré's particular approach to 'melancholy' and to avoid overly slow tempos, the use of rubato and otherwise cloyingly expressive performance styles. The editors do acknowledge, as an exception to this rule, Fauré's presumed flexibility in the approach to cadences, and an *a tempo* return for the cadence itself (Volume 3, p. xiv).

Howat and Kilpatrick argue that certain internal rhythmic and textural elements in Fauré's songs, particularly in the piano accompaniment, suggest a tempo faster, or at least one that is more forward-moving, than performers might interpret from the vocal line on its own (Volume 1, pp. ix–x). To encourage a better sense of flow and continuity in performance, the editors strive to make these elements more visually apparent in some examples by altering the notation of the inner voices, as for example in 'Avant que tu ne t'en ailles' from *La Bonne Chanson* (Volume 3, p. xiii). Above all, they emphasize the need for proper attention to tempo and a 'firm rhythmic sense', which Fauré, by all accounts, demonstrated in his own performances, a view supported by Croiza's description of Fauré as a 'metronome incarnate' (Volume 3, p. x).

Howat and Kilpatrick argue that certain printed elements have also contributed to a misinterpretation of Fauré's preferred tempos, including the possibility of mistaken metronome markings long associated with certain pieces. For instance, 'Nell' was first published by Hamelle (1880) with the metronome marking '♩. = 66', a tempo perpetuated in numerous subsequent publications. The editors argue that this was possibly a misprint, and offer the alternative '♩. = 96', along with the established tempo (Volume 1, p. 102). This is a reasonable assessment, as many singers who have followed the original metronome marking might well agree with the editors' suggestion that this is 'unsustainably slow'.[21] As indicated at the beginning of this essay, many highly regarded performers have long taken a tempo that is closer to that suggested in this edition; for instance, tenor Nicolai Gedda, soprano Dame Kiri Te Kanawa and countertenor Philippe Jaroussky have all embraced a faster tempo for 'Nell', although many performers and critical audiences still adhere to the printed metronome marking as 'correct' and set in stone. For those who are unflagging in the assumption that printed metronome markings unquestionably represent Fauré's intentions, this edition will at least offer the possibility that there is room for flexibility in performance practice.

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[20] Concerts Casella, 28 January 1915. Jean-Michel Nectoux, ed., *Gabriel Fauré: His Life Through His Letters*, trans. J. A. Underwood (London and New York: Marion Boyars, 1984): 297. Many scholars call on the words of mezzo-soprano Claire Croiza (known for her interpretations of Fauré) in their discussions of tempo in Fauré songs. For instance, see Nectoux, ed., *Gabriel Fauré: His Life Through His Letters*, 196; Jean-Michel Nectoux, 'Fauré: Voice, Style, and Vocality', in *Regarding Fauré*, ed. and trans. Tom Gordon (Amsterdam: Gordon and Breach, 1999): 388; Jessica Duchen, *Gabriel Fauré* (London: Phaidon Press, Ltd., 2000): 37–8; Carol Kimball, *Song: A Guide to Art Song Style and Literature* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard Corporation, 2006): 181; and Graham Johnson, *Gabriel Fauré: The Songs and Their Poets* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009): 390–91.

[21] Volume 1, p. ix. Bernac also suggests a faster tempo for 'Nell', although his is a moderate ♩ = 76. See Pierre Bernac, *The Interpretation of French Song* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1978): 112.

Beyond the practical information to be applied in performance, a wealth of biographical details and historical context for these songs can also be found in each volume. Volume 1 depicts Fauré's student years at the École Niedermeyer (where his lifelong connection to Camille Saint-Saëns began) and his early professional life, including the publication history of this repertoire. A reminder of the political unrest surrounding the Franco-Prussian War provides a broader context for the world in which Fauré lived and worked as a young composer and its potential effect on his music in the surrounding years, but it is surprising that no reference is made to Fauré's service in the French army at that time, an experience that is generally regarded as significant in his early life.[22] Volume 3 places Fauré in the world of Verlaine, the Princesse de Polignac (Winnaretta Singer) and the Parisian salon life, in which Fauré had become so firmly established by the 1890s. Such details in these volumes will be familiar to those acquainted with his biography and will also offer a fine point of departure for a reader new to this composer and his music.

Howat and Kilpatrick provide a substantial discussion of Fauré's poetic choices in the preface to Volume 1. Because his early songs feature an especially diverse selection of both texts and musical styles, the editors suggest a correlation between these changing elements, as Fauré's musical and poetic ideals developed over the span of two decades (Volume 1, pp. vii–ix). Fauré's approach to musical text setting is central here, particularly his methods of altering the original syllabification or phrasing of a poetic line in the interest of yielding a more lyrical setting. While Fauré's musical language is at times highly complex in regard to voice leading, harmonic structure and modality, his songs often project a deceptively effortless style that leads even genuine admirers of this repertoire to classify it as 'salon music', and thus, no more than simple, pretty and charming. Such perceived effortlessness is at least partly connected to the natural, almost spoken quality of his text underlay. This line of discussion as presented by the editors should open up for their readers the understanding that Fauré's process in the composition of art song extends far beyond the creation of lovely melodies and his unusual approach to harmonic and modal elements.

Of particular interest in Volume 3 is the discussion of *La Bonne Chanson*, Op. 61 (1894), which probably received the greatest amount of attention from Fauré's colleagues during this period, and not all positive, as Howat and Kilpatrick readily explain. As this cycle makes up half the volume, a substantial portion of the preface is dedicated to providing context for these nine songs, including Fauré's thoughts on this particular collection, his selection of texts and his organization of them into a true narrative song cycle. Also discussed is the chamber ensemble arrangement and its premiere salon performance in 1898; the evident success of *La Bonne Chanson* in this context, amid Fauré's apparent reservations about what he considered the 'superfluous' accompaniment, offers a glimpse both into the performance history of this cycle, and the composer's tepid response to this version.[23] Regarding the music itself, the editors consider the motives that connect the individual songs, citing Fauré's own identification of 'Lydia' as a musical point of reference (Volume 3, p. xii).

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[22] See Nectoux, *A Musical Life*, 16–17.

[23] This performance was given at the home of Frank Schuster in London, by tenor Maurice Bagès, with string quartet, contrabass and piano. The editors discuss this performance, and possible reasons for Fauré's displeasure surrounding it. See Volume 3, p. xii.

At the forefront of the discussion in the same volume is the contemporary criticism Fauré received for his Verlaine settings, which inspired a great deal of controversy among the composer's friends and colleagues. The editors include a number of quotations that reveal the extent to which those who knew and admired Fauré were confounded by *La Bonne Chanson*, in particular. Even Saint-Saëns, who was quite fond of Fauré and his music, in general, suggested, 'Fauré has gone completely mad' (Volume 3, p. xii). Marcel Proust summarized the popular opinion that the cycle was 'needlessly complicated' (Volume 3, p. xii). And some critics (Camille Benoît, for one) objected to the idea of Fauré setting Verlaine's poetry at all (Volume 3, pp. x–xi). Of course, Fauré was aware of such negative responses, as he reveals in his personal correspondence; still, from today's perspective, such hostility is difficult to imagine concerning this repertoire. The discussion offered in this edition goes far in illuminating the musical aesthetics of *fin-de-siècle* Paris, and the expectations surrounding Fauré at the time that affected the reception of some works.[24]

One note concerning the printed edition: the cover of each volume advertises 'Audio backing tracks available online'. However, at the time of this writing, these tracks are not yet available. According to a representative in the Sales Department of the Glendale, New York, office, there has been a quality control hold on the recordings, as Howat was not satisfied with the tracks that he reviewed, and has decided to complete that portion of the project himself.[25] There is no official date for their release, although the representative informed me that the tracks for Volume 1 should be available soon, and the others will follow in due course.

Songs for Bass Voice: CD

Fauré's songs (and, indeed, the French *mélodie* genre as a whole) are traditionally associated with light, flexible voices, whose timbre and quality most readily fulfil their audience's expectations of a fresh, lyrical presentation of this music. It is far less common to encounter this repertoire on bass recital programmes and, as bass singer Jared Schwartz observes, 'Out of the hundreds of recordings devoted to classical French song repertoire, there are few for the low male voice'.[26] Schwartz has collaborated with Roy Howat on an album of Fauré's songs, in part to demonstrate that this music is far more adaptable to the low male voice than is typically assumed. In his notes on this recording Howat remarks, 'In sum, if Fauré's songs have often been regarded as being material for light voices and the "salon", they are replete with dramatic expression, and perfectly suited to a well-controlled, powerful yet agile bass voice'.[27] As if in demonstration of this, Howat and Schwartz have recorded 25 Fauré songs, among them the popular

[24] The editors do note that Emma Bardac, the dedicatee and identified by Fauré as the 'most moving interpreter' of *La Bonne Chanson* – also once Fauré's lover, and eventually Debussy's second wife – informed Fauré much later that her husband had enjoyed studying *La Bonne Chanson*. Thus, it also offers a possible point of comparison to the changing opinion of this music, as possibly expressed by one of Fauré's most well-respected contemporaries. See Volume 3, p. xii.

[25] Phone conversation with C.F. Peters Corporation, Sales Department, Glendale, New York, 17 August 2016.

[26] Jared Schwartz, 'The Basis for a Bass Recording', liner notes to *Gabriel Fauré: Songs for Bass Voice and Piano*, 9.

[27] Roy Howat, 'Fauré Songs: Poets and Perspectives', liner notes to *Gabriel Fauré: Songs for Bass Voice and Piano*, 2.

selections 'Mandoline', 'Après un rêve', 'Ici-Bas!', 'Fleur jetée' and 'Chanson du pêcheur'. With the exception of the last of these, this is the first time these selections have been recorded by a bass. Another 'first' includes the novelty of hearing 'Sérénade Toscane' and 'Après un rêve' in the 'traditional Tuscan' language – essentially French *mélodie* in Italian – also recorded here for the first time. (Both languages are given in the Peters Edition, Volume 1, p. 81–7.)

As advertised on the album's back cover, 'Going beyond the arbitrary ordering of early editions, this recital programme draws out connections of poets and poetic themes, some of which restore the composer's own original groupings'.[28] In his notes, Schwartz discusses the selection process, undertaken in collaboration with artistic advisor and pianist, Mary Dibbern. He explains the challenges of identifying the songs that would work effectively with the range and flexibility of his particular voice, as well as appropriate poetic texts that he could convincingly express, and that would be suitable to his timbre.[29] Although he remarks that the flexibility of his voice attracted him to certain melismatic passages in Fauré's music, on this album his voice does not always present the agility and fine intonation appreciated in this repertoire. This is especially evident in selections such as 'Mandoline', in which the melismas are somewhat heavy and unfocused in tone, and the voice does not always match the pitches with complete accuracy. On the other hand, in *piano* and *dolce* passages, Schwartz is quite delicate, as he allows a bit more head voice to blend with his stronger full voice, offering a far more tender tone (in 'Hymne', for example). Overall, the intonation would be helped by greater attention to the French vowels, as they are often unfocused; this yields a darker quality and flattening of the tone and pitch that detracts from other perfectly lovely moments. Howat's approach to the piano accompaniment is generally crisp and light in articulation.

The interpretation of the selections on this album is, at times, more overtly dramatic than one typically expects from a performance of Fauré's songs. For instance, *Tristesse* is much more angst-ridden and angry than is commonly heard, although when one considers the bitterness and resentment present in the poetic text, the effect is striking. That is at least part of the goal of this recording: to demonstrate the flexibility of these pieces, and their adaptability to a number of vocal styles and colours, a point that Howat stresses in his notes. While some might miss the freshness and lighter vocal quality more often associated with Fauré (it is difficult for the lovely texts to project clearly in especially low melodic passages), this interpretation by Schwartz and Howat offers a unique perspective on this repertoire, and perhaps could be considered an advertisement of sorts. Bass and baritone singers – particularly students – might well be encouraged to explore Fauré's songs, a portion of the vocal repertoire so often neglected by performers who might otherwise adhere to the traditional views on appropriate range, style and vocal colour associated with it.

Gabriel Fauré: Vocalises

Admirers of Fauré's music should welcome the new addition of vocalises to his oeuvre, made available for the first time by Howat and Kilpatrick as part of the Peters edition. These 45 short sight-singing and dictation examples (most are

[28] *Gabriel Fauré: Songs for Bass Voice and Piano*, back cover.
[29] Schwartz, 'The Basis for a Bass Recording', 9–11.

firmly attributed to Fauré) were composed and used for Conservatoire examinations between 1906 and 1916. As the editors suggest, the inherent musicality of these brief, untexted examples makes them valuable today as study and even performance pieces. Beyond the simple excitement of having 'new' vocal selections by Fauré available for use, the historical interest in this collection lies in the fact that the reader is presented with a snapshot of the Conservatoire practices under Fauré's leadership, as the editors suggest the possibility that the level of difficulty of particular examples might reflect the abilities of the Conservatoire students in certain years, even specified by gender (*Vocalises*, p. vi). Additionally, these vocalises offer practical evidence of some of the significant and widely discussed reforms Fauré put into place. As is observed in the preface, 'In a letter written shortly before his retirement, Fauré reaffirmed that his reforms to the teaching of singing were among his proudest achievements as Director, singling out the emphasis on technical training and the important of *solfège*' (*Vocalises*, p. vii). And, indeed, the editors connect his vocalises to these reforms to the curriculum.

The preface (offered in English, French and German) includes historical and practical information to acclimate the reader to this collection. In an overview of the Conservatoire examination procedures, the editors observe that Fauré was an active contributor of examination materials, who approached his sight-singing examples differently from his colleagues:

> While Conservatoire vocalises by other composer mostly mimic the *bel canto* aria, Fauré's sound much more like *mélodies*, with distinctly Fauréan gestures or turns of phrase in even the simplest ones, as well as some more overt echoes such as those of *Lydia* in no. [20]. (*Vocalises*, p. vii)

They identify musical characteristics present in the main body, as well as the unsigned examples they have attributed to Fauré, including melodic contour, and what they describe as 'modal surprises', 'enharmonic hazards' and 'booby-trapped cadences', among others (*Vocalises*, p. vi). For this reason, they argue, these vocalises might be considered preparatory study pieces for his songs.

A prefatory table presents the vocalises in progressive order of difficulty, as proposed by the editors. Organized into groups of three to five selections, each group is associated with a particular set of technical challenges; for example, the elementary examples are identified as suitable for the 'accurate pitching of basic intervals', while more advanced selections address 'suppleness and nimbleness in rhythmic articulation' or contain 'scales and arpeggios in increasingly virtuosic coloratura passages'(*Vocalises*, p. xiv). (As the editors note, the most difficult examples here, including the *Vocalise-Étude*, require 'advanced musicianship at virtuoso level' (*Vocalises*, p. xiv).) The categories proposed and the associated selections are logical, thus many will find this table highly useful when selecting vocalises according to particular technical requirements.

The main body of the edition includes 29 accompanied vocalises explicitly attributed to Fauré through signed autograph sources. In line with their analysis of technical challenges, the editors explain, 'Since the purpose of these vocalises was practical from the outset, as with the present edition, they are ordered here progressively by level of difficulty, rather than chronologically' (*Vocalises*, p. vi). (Of course, the chronology is not overlooked; the reader will find this information in the table of contents, which identifies the year of each individual vocalise, along with its key, vocal ambitus and tempo markings, when available; a chronological index is also

present at the end of the volume (p. 57), which places the vocalises in order from 1906 to 1916.) Appendix 1 presents 16 vocalises without a signed author; the editors suggest that these share enough stylistic similarities with Fauré's music, including the previous vocalises, that they should be attributed to him as well (*Vocalises*, p. vi). Appendix 2 includes six melodic dictation examples, which the editors suggest are 'usuable as unaccompanied vocalises'.[30] Each example is generally quite short, spanning no more than one full page, with the exception of the more substantial *Vocalise-Étude* [28], and the untitled selection that follows [29]. For each example, the editors indicate the original use: Admission (to the Conservatoire), Examination (regular student assessments) or Concours (annual student competitions.) The date of first use is given at the end of each example, whether the example was originally intended for men or women and in the case of the dictation examples, specifically for male or female instrumentalists or vocalists.[31] Again, this suggests the particular expectations of the Conservatoire students at various times.

For the Critical Commentary, the editors proceed as in the *Complete Songs* series, identifying the sources consulted, including Fauré's autographs, when available, as well as the official copies of the vocalises used by the Conservatoire.[32] Also included here is an overview of any small variants between the sources (for instance, alteration to note duration and clef changes), and in some cases, more substantial passages that Fauré altered or omitted from his earlier drafts. While this information is fairly minimal for some vocalises, others include far more detail, particularly when more than one source is extant. And of course the availability of the *Vocalise-Étude* as a published work, and the drafting notes present in Fauré's autograph, allow for two substantial points of reference not possible for the other selections. This is evident through the attention to detail offered here, and in the musical score of this example.[33]

Editorial notations in the scores are kept to a minimum, and are essentially restricted to breath marks, cautionary accidentals and minor corrections or clarifications. For the *Vocalise-Étude*, Howat and Kilpatrick are loyal to the 1907 publication in regard to phrasing, dynamics, articulation and expression markings, while incorporating small variants from Fauré's autograph. Some alterations for practical reasons include adding or removing cautionary accidentals, utilizing hairpins instead of crescendo and decrescendo text markings and in one instance, the subtle relocation of a clef change by one beat.[34] While such basic alterations are evident, most do not affect the essential musical content.[35] Other slight changes might momentarily surprise those very familiar with the *Vocalise-Étude*. For instance, a portion of the vocal line as it appears in the 1907 edition has

[30] The editors place these examples among the elementary vocalises, as 'exercises in accurate pitching and rhythm'. See *Vocalises*, xiv.

[31] Additional known dates of reuse for these examples are given in the Critical Commentary; it is also assumed that these examples were used on subsequent occasions, as well.

[32] There are generally one or two extant copies, depending on the example.

[33] The editors suggest that the date and presentation of the following vocalise [29] – also considerably longer than most examples here – might imply an original intent to publish it with the *Vocalise-Étude*, but that it was considered too difficult for that particular collection. See *Vocalises*, p. vi.

[34] In the present edition, a clef change in the bass staff occurs at the beginning of bar 27, rather than on beat two of the measure, as in the 1907 edition. A cautionary treble clef is given at the end of bar 26. See *Vocalises*, pp. 30–32.

[35] With the exception of one diminuendo that has been eliminated leading into bar 30, the original dynamic and expression markings are otherwise retained.

been moved to an *ossia*, while the main score now presents the corresponding material from Fauré's autograph.[36] Additionally, the editors suggest two possible chromatic alterations in the accompaniment as possible corrections to the first edition, presumably for reasons of voice leading.[37] Similar editorial notations are made in the scores for the other vocalises, and although there is no point of comparison for the reader through published sources, the editors offer sound rationale for their decisions for these selections, as in the *Vocalise-Étude*.

As Howat and Kilpatrick suggest, 'Fauré's vocalises quietly test and develop both musicality and vocal skill' (*Vocalises*, p. vi). In this vein, their proposed methods for approaching these untexted pieces are traditional in vocal pedagogy, including the use of *solfège* syllables and different vowel sounds; such applications will be familiar and even intuitive to today's singers, including those early in their studies. In his preface to the 1907 edition, Amédée-Louis Hettich addresses the varied and nuanced colours of French vowel sounds, including the particular shading of accented letters (*Vocalises*, p. vii). This is a point to consider for those today who might otherwise proceed with pure Italian vowels in mind, as is so common in vocal pedagogy; this is especially useful to remember when employing these vocalises as preparatory examples for the study of French *mélodie*. Howat and Kilpatrick suggest simply practising with 'different vowel and consonant sounds' (*Vocalises*, p. vii). Tempo is generally not specified in these examples, but as the reader is reminded, Fauré's strong preference was for steadiness and rhythmic accuracy over 'sentimental lingering' (*Vocalises*, p. vii). Regarding their proposed breath marks, the editors have modelled their approach to this element on Fauré's autograph notations in two examples (numbered 20 and 28 in this edition), and have proceeded similarly for the others. While singers might not necessarily agree with the placement of all of these breath marks in regard to the melodic line or practical use, the editors do acknowledge these as suggestions for phrasing and necessity, rather than firm instruction; this encompasses editorial breath marks, as well as those explicitly included in the source material (*Vocalises*, p. vii).

The possible application of these selections in vocal pedagogy is tantalising. As the editors suggest, 'The challenges posed by [Fauré's] collected vocalises are as potent and vital for singers today as they were a century ago' (*Vocalises*, p. vii). Moreover, true vocal études such as these are simply not widely available and these short, deceptively-simple-looking pieces are often as beautiful to the ear as his songs, with as much call for musicality and artistry. The variety of application of vowels, consonants and *solfège* might well be considered a new vehicle for young singers to blend vocal technique practices and with expressive musicianship. As with the songs, it will be highly useful for students to have access to recorded accompaniments for this collection, once they are available.

Lydia's Vocalises: CD

'Why the trumpet, one may well ask, for a first recording of vocalises?'[38] This is the question Howat poses in his notes for the album recorded with Jonathan Freeman-Attwood, in conjunction with the edition published the previous year.

[36] This occurs in the second half of bar 26. See *Vocalises*, p. 32.

[37] These alterations occur in bar 27 (C♮ to C♯ in the bass line), and in bar 29 (G♯ to G♮ in an inner voice). See *Vocalises*, 32.

[38] Roy Howat, liner notes to Gabriel Fauré, *Lydia's Vocalises*, 8.

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In response, he remarks on the technical and expressive range of the instrument that makes it suitable for this music, which encompasses a 'fanfare' element, as well as the 'vigour and precision of articulation' and a more lyrical cantabile style – and Freeman-Attwood often does approach an almost vocal quality on this recording.[39] As such, he observes that, 'even the simplest Vocalises reveal bold colours and surprisingly dramatic character when enunciated on the trumpet'.[40] Certainly other non-vocal instruments could similarly articulate the bold and dramatic elements identified here, but still, it is an interesting idea to perceive an inherent style in these vocalises, and to associate them with this particular instrument as an alternative to a sung performance.

The album includes the complete 29 vocalises from the main body of the Peters Edition, and a selection from Appendix 1. They are not presented in order of progressive difficulty, as in the printed edition, rather as small groups under poetic titles that suggest the progress of a romance from beginning to end: *La Beauté* [beauty], *L'Envie* [envy], *La Cour* [courting], *La Tendresse* [tenderness], *Les Regrets* [regrets] and *Les Souvenirs* [memories].[41] Freeman-Attwood comments on this organization, playfully suggesting that it 'fell to an opportunistic trumpet player to create a group of "tableaux" where a set of conceits or moods, or even mere glances, could comprise an agreeable half hour of freshly-minted Fauré micro-songs'.[42] This designation is apt, as the individual vocalises range on this recording from a mere 24 seconds, to 2 minutes, 23 seconds.[43] The narrative is framed by two presentations of Fauré's 'Lydia', first in the familiar key of F major, and then in G major as a point of closure, the eponymous Lydia representing the romantic object. For those wishing to follow the musical score as they listen, this ordering of pieces might be considered a disadvantage. However, this imaginative approach encourages the listener to become absorbed in a whimsical world of romance, and creates a sense of musical balance as the story progresses, rather than offering what might be perceived by some as a 'crescendo' of technical challenges.

Freeman-Attwood's interpretation of these selections is generally uncomplicated, and matches the straightforward quality of musical content. His occasional departure from the editorial suggestions in the printed edition is a practice Howat and Kilpatrick readily acknowledge, favouring technique and musicality over editorial regulations. In addition to breath placements and phrasing, this includes subtle, ornamental approaches to cadences, and some octave displacement.[44] Howat's style of accompaniment follows Freeman-Attwood's phrasing, and offers a subtle musical backdrop for the melodic content in the trumpet. The tempos are generally quite brisk but steady, a point addressed in Howat's notes; he echoes the discussion in both the *Complete Songs* and *Vocalises* editions, citing again

[39] Howat, notes, *Lydia's Vocalises*, 8–9.
[40] Howat, notes, *Lydia's Vocalises*, 6.
[41] The groups range from four to nine selections.
[42] Jonathan Freeman-Attwood, 'A Trumpet Player's Notes', in *Lydia's Vocalises*, 10.
[43] The brief selection that opens *Le Cour* is from Appendix 1 (number 3); the longest selection is the *Vocalise-Étude*, placed at the beginning of *L'Envie* (this is, by far, the longest set overall). One might wonder why 'envy' is favoured over the concepts of regret or memory, but that is a question for another discussion.
[44] For instance, an added trill leading to the cadence in the first vocalise of *La Beauté*, and in the *Vocalise-Etude* as it is interpreted in *L'Envie*, two instances of cadential pitches played an octave lower than notated.

Claire Croiza's description of Fauré as a 'metronome incarnate'.[45] In some cases on this album, a particularly brisk tempo can seem to alter the musical line; for instance, in 'Vocalise Number 9' (in *La Beauté*), a D-major example marked *moderato*, the passage of triplets sounds almost ornamental. The effect, however, is not unpleasant; in fact, it demonstrates the forward motion present in Fauré's music, as discussed in the Peters Edition.

This is an interesting disc, as it offers not only an aural survey of these unfamiliar pieces by Fauré, but also illustrates their inherent flexibility for use by melodic instruments beyond the voice. It is also in keeping with the tradition of performing arrangements of Fauré's songs on a variety of instruments, a practice that began while the composer was still living.[46] In addition to Fauré's vocalises, 'bonus' tracks include previously released recordings by Freeman-Attwood and pianist Daniel-Ben Pienaar of arrangements for trumpet and piano of works by Fauré's contemporaries (Emmanuel Chabrier, Camille Saint-Saëns and Reynaldo Hahn), as well as selections by baroque composers (Jean-Philippe Rameau, Francois Couperin and Louis Marchand).[47] The recording closes with an arrangement of the first movement of Fauré's Second Violin Sonata, Op. 108 (1916–17). In total, the disc offers a rich assortment of music, some entirely new (as in the vocalises), others perhaps familiar to listeners in other contexts, and repurposed here for trumpet and piano.

Conclusion

The items reviewed here represent a small portion of Fauré-related projects that have been produced in recent years, and that continue to develop today. Beyond the Peters Edition, and the Bärenreiter volumes still in progress, other recent scholarship includes writings on a variety of Fauré subjects, from his individual compositions and genre-specific themes, to discussions of influence and reception, and performance practice topics.[48] Recent conferences, such as *Effable and Ineffable*,

[45] Notes, *Lydia's Vocalises*, 8.

[46] This continues to be illustrated by performances by traditional instruments, and even some non-traditional interpretations; for instance Carolina Eyck includes 'Après un rêve' and 'Les berceaux' on her repertoire list for the Theremin, along with Fauré's popular *Sicilienne*, Op. 78. See 'Repertoire – Chamber Music Arrangements', and 'Theremin Solo and Orchestra – Arrangements', *Carolina Eyck Theremin*, www.carolinaeyck.com/pages/en/music/repertoire.php (accessed 18 August 2016).

[47] Selections other than Fauré: Chabrier, piano solos: *Aubade,* and 'Danse villegeoise' (from *Suite Pastorale*); Saint-Saëns, Cello Sonata No. 2 in F major (Romanza poco adagio); Hahn, *mélodie*: À *Chloris*; Rameau, excerpts from *Naïs* Suite ('*Overture*', and '*Gavotte pour les Zephirs*'); Couperin, organ piece: excerpt from *Messe pour le Couvents* ('Cromorne sur la Taille'); Louis Marchand, organ piece: *Grand Dialogue*.

[48] See, for instance, Johnson, *Gabriel Fauré: The Songs and Their Poets*; Stephen Rumph, 'Fauré and the Effable: Theatricality, Reflection, and Semiosis in the *mélodies*', *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 68/3 (2015): 497–558; Carlo Caballero, 'Fauré chez Piston: Nadia Boulanger and the Shadows of a Style', in *Nadia Boulanger in North America: Histories and Legacies*, ed. Johanna Keller (forthcoming by University of Rochester Press), first presented as 'Fauré *chez* Piston: Nadia Boulager and the Bequest of a Style', *Nadia Boulanger & American Music: A Memorial Symposium*. University of Colorado, Boulder, October 8, 2004; Edward R. Philips, 'Fauré, through Boulanger to Copland: the Nature of Influence', *Gamut: Online Journal of the Music Theory Society of the Mid-Atlantic* 4/1, Article 9 (2011), http://trace.tennessee.edu/gamut/vol4/iss1/9 2 (accessed June 3, 2014); Heather de Savage, 'The American Reception of

Gabriel Fauré and the Limits of Criticism at the University of Washington, Seattle (2015), and the Fauré Festival at Brandeis University (2016), further illustrate the ongoing growth of interest in Fauré scholarship, and celebration of his work, while other musical editions, both new and reissued 'classic' publications, continue to bring his music to a new generation of performers and audiences, as do countless recordings and concerts by both professional and amateur performers.

The songs have maintained an especially consistent presence in concert programmes and educational curricula, and Howat and Kilpatrick's critical editions bring to the table an approach that offers a different perspective for this beautiful music. In the often-quoted words of Maurice Ravel, 'It is truly in his songs that Fauré reveals the flower of his genius'.[49] And Aaron Copland, one of Fauré's great admirers, counted these as 'masterpieces' able to 'withstand the ravages of time'.[50] While only time will tell if the vocalises will also one day find a place alongside the songs, or as an extension of them, their availability will certainly open new possibilities for performance and pedagogy in the years to come.

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Gabriel Fauré'; two performance-based lectures include Sylvia Kahan's 'Fauré the Colorist: Two Versions of the *Ballade*', and Roy Howat's 'A Performer's Guide to the Ineffable', (both given at the conference *Effable and Ineffable: Gabriel Fauré and the Limits of Criticism*, University of Washington, Seattle, 21–24 October 2015).

[49] Quoted in Volume 1, p. vi. This is a statement originally expressed in Maurice Ravel, 'Les Mélodies de Gabriel Fauré', *La Revue musicale* 3 (October 1922).

[50] Aaron Copland, 'Gabriel Fauré, A Neglected Master', *The Musical Quarterly* 10/4 (October 1924): 573–86, at 577.