

The German Connection: Darius Milhaud's Unusual Path to Official Recognition in France

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In his autobiography, Darius Milhaud reflected on the humiliation of witnessing the premiere of his *Polka*, written for the collective ballet *L'éventail de Jeanne*, at the Paris Opéra in 1929. The composer complained that he would have preferred to see one of “so many lyrical works that had never been performed at the Opéra” on the stage instead of an inconsequential piece “written one morning in May, in Vienna.”¹ With these words, Milhaud alluded to a frustrating streak: between 1913 and 1929 he composed eleven operas but saw only two premiered in France, both at the Opéra-Comique; four were staged outside of France, and five more awaited their premieres. His failure to secure premieres or even performances at the Opéra—the most prestigious musical venue in France—reflected a broader critical failure that dogged him through the 1920s. Even as he accrued notoriety and professional opportunities, he struggled to earn the respect he felt he deserved. His music was often dismissed by influential critics and composers, many of whom served on prize-giving or advisory committees. And because he had failed to win the coveted Prix de Rome, the official accolade *par excellence* for aspiring composers, he was at a distinct disadvantage when it came to realizing his ambition of seeing one of his lyrical works performed at the Paris Opéra.²

¹ Darius Milhaud, *Ma vie heureuse* (Paris: Belfond, 1987), 170. All translations are my own unless otherwise noted.

² Annegret Fauser, “*La guerre en dentelles: Women and the Prix de Rome in French Cultural Politics*,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 51 (1998): 83–129, at 89.

It is all the more remarkable, then, that a circuitous career path enabled Milhaud to overcome institutional, cultural, and aesthetic prejudices and achieve official recognition in France. In an unlikely twist given the international and musical politics of the day, his path took him through Vienna, where he forged a powerful partnership with the publishing firm Universal Edition, which facilitated numerous performances of his music in Central Europe and particularly in Germany. I argue that Milhaud's relationship with Universal Edition and the successful premiere that the firm leveraged in Berlin of his experimental opera *Christophe Colomb* in 1930 were key to his belated acceptance in France. His partnership with Universal Edition and success in Germany catalyzed institutional and political jealousy at home, precipitating his official consecration at the Paris Opéra with the premiere of his opera *Maximilien* there in 1932.

Scholarship on Milhaud's interwar career has largely approached his music within the context of French musical life, ignoring the importance of his Central European reception. Before he partnered with Universal Edition (hereafter UE), Milhaud first gained notoriety in France through his affiliation with Les Six and through compositions that were characterized by irony, references to jazz, and polytonality.³ Important to both his French and international reception were the popular ballets he composed in the early 1920s that remain his best-known works, including *Le boeuf sur le toit* (1920), *La création du monde* (1923), and *Le Train Bleu* (1924). And scholars have recently shown how his alignment with the Popular Front in the mid-to-late 1930s affected his career.⁴ Yet none of his provocations, successes, or political affiliations won Milhaud's music a performance at the Paris Opéra—a failure that represented a broader trend in his early reception. In fact, Milhaud's membership in Les Six, his leftist politics, and his Jewish identity constituted persistent obstacles to official recognition in France throughout the 1920s. His achievement in getting *Maximilien* staged at the Paris Opéra shows that his French reception should be understood in the context of his broader European

³ On the importance of Les Six to Milhaud's early career, see Jean Roy, *Le Groupe des Six* (Paris: Seuil, 1994); Eveline Hurard-Viltard, *Le groupe des six, ou le matin d'un jour de fête* (Paris: Meridiens Klincksieck, 1987); Robert Orledge, "Satie & Les Six," in *French Music since Berlioz*, ed. Richard Langham Smith and Caroline Potter (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006), 223–48; and Barbara L. Kelly, *Tradition and Style in the Works of Darius Milhaud* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2003).

⁴ See Nigel Simeone, "Music at the 1937 Paris Exposition: The Science of Enchantment," *Musical Times* 143 (2002): 9–17; Christopher Lee Moore, "Music in France and the Popular Front (1934–1938): Politics, Aesthetics and Reception" (PhD diss., McGill University, 2006); and Leslie A. Sprout, "Music for a 'New Era': Composers and National Identity in France, 1936–1946" (PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2000).

reception, and specifically in terms of his relationship with UE, which remains poorly understood.⁵

Milhaud pursued business opportunities in the Americas as well as throughout Europe, but his dealings with Austrian and German institutions deserve special scrutiny given the extent to which they exemplify the type of transnational relations that are the focus of a growing body of scholarship, and demonstrate that musical divisions between France and Germany were less rigid during this period than historiography has traditionally suggested.⁶ Milhaud was one of several interwar French composers and critics to seek rapprochement with contemporary German and Austrian musical figures, and to take part in transnational networks that eschewed chauvinistic politics in favor of advancing the cause of contemporary music, no matter its provenance. Although nationalist rhetoric remained common within musical discourse, there were also many individuals and institutions facilitating the kind of musical cooperation and exchange that are normally associated with the period after the Second World War. In arguing for this important similarity between pre- and postwar musical culture, I build on the work of scholars who have identified continuities that transcend established historiographical caesuras in twentieth-century French and German musical life.⁷

⁵ Most scholarship on UE focuses on its impact on Austro-Germanic composers and musical modernism. See Hans Heinsheimer and Paul Stefan, eds., *25 Jahre neue Musik, Jahrbuch 1926 der Universal-Edition* (Vienna: Universal Edition, 1926); Ernst Hilmar, ed., *75 Jahre Universal Edition (1901–1976): Katalog zur Ausstellung der Wiener Stadt- und Landesbibliothek im Historischen Museum der Stadt Wien, Dez. 1976–Jänner 1977* (Vienna: Universal Edition, 1976); and Otto Tomek et al., eds., *Universal Edition: 1901–2001* (Vienna: Universal Edition, 2000). See also Nigel Simeone, “A Tale of Two Vixens: Janáček’s Relationship with Emil Hertzka at Universal Edition and the 1924 and 1925 Editions of *The Cunning Little Vixen*,” in *Sundry Sorts of Music Books: Essays on the British Library Collections*, ed. Chris Banks, Arthur Searle, and Malcolm Turner (London: British Library, 1993), 319–29; Kurt Weill, *Briefwechsel mit der Universal Edition*, ed. Nils Grosch (Stuttgart: Metzler, 2002); and Ernst Krenek, *Briefwechsel mit der Universal Edition (1921–1941)*, ed. Claudia Maurer Zenck (Cologne: Böhlau, 2010).

⁶ Scholarship focusing on transnationalist trends in European and American musical life during the 1920s and 1930s includes Dorothea Baumann and Dinko Fabris, eds., *The History of the IMS (1927–2017)* (Basel: Bärenreiter, 2017); Felix Meyer, Carol J. Oja, Wolfgang Rathert, and Anne C. Shreffler, eds., *Crosscurrents: American and European Music in Interaction, 1900–2000* (Rochester, NY: Boydell and Brewer, 2014); Annegret Fauser, “Aaron Copland, Nadia Boulanger, and the Making of an ‘American’ Composer,” *Musical Quarterly* 89 (2006): 524–54; and numerous essays in *Revue de Musicologie* 103, no. 2 (2017): 497–724, a special issue devoted to the history of the journal. Such scholarship helpfully complicates the overdetermined, chauvinistic distinctions that interwar critics and composers often drew between French and German musical styles and cultures. See Jean Cocteau, *Le coq et l’arlequin* (Paris: Éditions de la Sirène, 1918); Darius Milhaud, “The Evolution of Modern Music in Paris and in Vienna,” *North American Review* 217 (1923): 544–54; and Maurice Ravel, “Une conférence de Maurice Ravel à Houston,” ed. Bohdan Pilarski, *Revue de musicologie* 50 (1964): 208–21.

⁷ Scholars who have shown that prewar aesthetic priorities and institutional practices stretched through and beyond the Second World War include, among others, Nicholas

Milhaud's transformation from critical outcast to official composer offers an opportunity to better understand how business, politics, personal ambition, and public reception contributed to the steady circulation of music and ideas across national boundaries during the interwar period.

Milhaud's Early Reception in France

Milhaud might never have sought success in Germany had his reception in France followed a smoother course. In the early 1920s a contentious relationship with the press and a modernist streak at odds with French tastes led to a series of raucously received performances of his works, which he recounted in a chapter of his autobiography titled "Scandals."⁸ Milhaud felt that the works he valued most existed in tension with those that pleased his peers, audiences, and critics.⁹ While his ballets and jazz-inspired piano pieces met with positive reactions, more "serious" dramatic works, such as his operas and nonprogrammatic concert works, did not receive either the performances or the critical reception he would have liked. Although influential critics published several elaborate, largely supportive profiles of him in the mid-1920s, throughout the decade his reputation improved glacially or not at all, with harsh criticism of his music more common than affirmation.¹⁰

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Seeking to explain Milhaud's troubled reputation in a 1947 book-length study of the composer's life and works, Paul Collaer argued that "a good part of the animosity that Milhaud encountered at the beginning of his career was directed more at the frankness with which he voiced his musical likes and dislikes than at his compositions."¹¹ Indeed, Milhaud's own critical writings and public lectures often provoked the elder generation of composers and critics, who were displeased at Milhaud's defamiation or displacement of their musical idols—Debussy, Ravel, d'Indy, and Franck—in favor of Berlioz, Gounod, Satie, and the other members

Atfield, *Challenging the Modern: Conservative Revolution in German Music, 1918–1933* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017); Leslie A. Sprout, *The Musical Legacy of Wartime France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013); Emily Richmond Pollock, "Opera after *Stunde Null*" (PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2012); and Annegret Fauser, *The Sounds of War: Music in the United States during World War II* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

⁸ Milhaud, *Ma vie heureuse*, 91. On the protests that greeted some of his premieres, Milhaud wrote: "this spontaneous, true, violent reaction gave me immense confidence. The public's apathy is depressing; enthusiasm or vehement protest proves that your work *stirs* [the audience]."

⁹ Barbara L. Kelly, *Music and Ultra-Modernism in France: A Fragile Consensus, 1913–1939* (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell Press, 2013), 190–91 and 233.

¹⁰ Kelly, *Tradition and Style*, 24–26; and Kelly, *Music and Ultra-Modernism in France*, 190.

¹¹ Paul Collaer, *Darius Milhaud*, trans. Jane Hohfeld Galante (San Francisco: San Francisco Press, 1988), 17.

of Les Six.¹² In Milhaud's essay "The Evolution of Modern Music in Paris and in Vienna," which emerged out of lectures he gave during his 1922–23 American tour, he contended that Debussy—whom he loved—had inspired the "Impressionist" movement, "which, combined with Rimsky[-Korsakov]'s influence, led French music into a blind alley."¹³ Offended by Milhaud's rhetoric, critic Émile Vuillermoz tried to prevent him from assuming a leadership position within the International Society for Contemporary Music and wrote an article for the January 1924 issue of *Modern Music*, in which he accused Milhaud of deluding audiences during his tour. Entitled "The Legend of the Six," Vuillermoz's article lambasted Milhaud and his peers for "claiming as patron saints" such figures as Ambroise Thomas and Satie over Debussy and Ravel.¹⁴ Vuillermoz connected the "loud blasphemies against the masters of the preceding generation" with the tendency of Les Six to perpetrate "charlatanism" and seek out "scandal" through provocative music.¹⁵ By 1924 Les Six had largely disbanded and Milhaud increasingly sought to enter the French musical mainstream, partly by emphasizing his music's connection with French tradition. But Vuillermoz's charges impeded his efforts and helped to bias Milhaud's reception through the late 1920s.

Milhaud's reputation also suffered from chauvinist, anti-Semitic criticism that fixated on his "German" and/or "Jewish" stylistic tendencies. Several early French reviews included anti-Semitic tirades that diminished his music and conflated Jewishness with his support for Arnold Schoenberg and with his interest in atonality and polytonality.¹⁶ Louis Vuillemin referred to a 1921 concert where Milhaud conducted Schoenberg's *Pierrot lunaire* as a "Concert Météque," *météque* being a slur that could mean half-breed, immigrant, or Jew.¹⁷ Other prominent musical figures, including Vuillermoz and d'Indy, similarly equated support for Schoenberg with an anti-French, specifically Jewish sensibility.¹⁸ Even Paul Landormy, a strong supporter of Milhaud, could not help but rehearse cultural stereotypes in a 1925 essay, writing that "Jews have long proved themselves incapable of true creativity" because they "wrongly

¹² Barbara Kelly discusses Milhaud's personal musical canon in *Tradition and Style*, 34–42.

¹³ Milhaud, "Evolution of Modern Music in Paris and in Vienna," 548. On the broader context of Milhaud's rejection of Debussy, see Marianne Wheelton, "Anti-Debussyism and the Formation of French Neoclassicism," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 70 (2017): 433–74.

¹⁴ Emile Vuillermoz, "The Legend of the Six," *Modern Music* 1, no. 1 (January 1924): 15–19, at 18.

¹⁵ Vuillermoz, "Legend of the Six," 18.

¹⁶ Kelly, *Tradition and Style*, 10–15 and 25–26.

¹⁷ François de Médicis, "Darius Milhaud and the Debate on Polytonality in the French Press of the 1920s," *Music & Letters* 4 (2005): 573–91, at 586.

¹⁸ Kelly, *Tradition and Style*, 27–29.

practiced the habit of avoiding the call of their race”; unusually, then, Milhaud and Schoenberg “confess and assert their Jewishness without shame.”¹⁹ Between the provocative idioms of his compositions, the musical politics behind his shaky critical reception, and anti-Semitic tendencies in French society, Milhaud faced numerous obstacles in securing performances of his works in the most prestigious venues in France.

Milhaud's Reception Abroad

Given his tumultuous French reception during the 1920s, it comes as no surprise that Milhaud looked to advance his career abroad. Many of his peers with more positive reputations did the same, but Milhaud was more motivated and business-savvy than most. With a blend of luck and strategy, he managed to enlist influential figures and institutions to help bring his music to new, potentially more sympathetic performers, audiences, and critics. Collaer in particular became an early champion of the music of Les Six and personally arranged at least a dozen performances of Milhaud's works at his Pro Arte concert series in Brussels. But musical life in Brussels did not exert the influence on Parisian critics needed to improve Milhaud's reputation or provoke cultural jealousy. To accomplish this, Milhaud needed to raise his profile in Vienna and Berlin.

At first, Milhaud fostered contacts in Vienna and Berlin in response to the affinity that he and his peers demonstrated in the immediate postwar environment for the music of contemporary German and Austrian composers.²⁰ Such an affinity might be considered surprising given the recent cessation of hostilities and lingering political conflict between France, Germany, and Austria. Yet as Milhaud's case reminds us, modernist music thrived on the tension between transnational or international consensus and nationalist achievement.²¹ Milhaud's own transnationalist approach to his compositions and career began with the two years he spent as a diplomatic attaché in Brazil, but it accelerated with public expressions of his admiration for Arnold Schoenberg in the early 1920s. He dedicated his String Quartet no. 5 (1920) to Schoenberg and conducted the French premiere of *Pierrot lunaire* in December 1921. He also wrote approvingly of Schoenberg in his articles “The Evolution

¹⁹ Paul Landormy, “Darius Milhaud,” *Le Ménestrel*, August 28, 1925, 345–62, at 362.

²⁰ See Marie-Claire Mussat, “La réception de Schönberg en France avant la Seconde Guerre mondiale,” *Revue de musicologie* 87 (2001): 145–86; Kelly, *Tradition and Style*, 10–15; and Jane F. Fulcher, *The Composer as Intellectual: Music and Ideology in France, 1914–1940* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 182–83.

²¹ See Carol J. Oja, *Making Music Modern: New York in the 1920s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); and Fauser, “Aaron Copland, Nadia Boulanger, and the Making of an ‘American’ Composer,” 524–25.

of Modern Music in Paris and in Vienna” and “Polytonalité et atonalité.”²² Transforming admiration into action, Milhaud and Francis Poulenc even visited Vienna and met Schoenberg, Alban Berg, Anton Webern, Egon Wellesz, and Hugo von Hofmannsthal in early 1922.²³

Schoenberg and others in his circle reciprocated Milhaud’s admiration. For instance, in a 1922 letter Schoenberg observed, “Milhaud strikes me as the most important representative of the contemporary movement in all Latin countries: polytonality. Whether I like him or not is beside the point. But I find him very talented.”²⁴ Milhaud’s name would continue to appear in Schoenberg’s writings for decades, sometimes as a foil for the latter’s own style but always as a representative of important musical trends.²⁵ After meeting in Vienna, Milhaud exchanged warm letters with Alma Mahler, who asked Milhaud to invite her to Paris if he conducted *Das Lied von der Erde*.²⁶ Milhaud would later adapt a play by Mahler’s second husband, Franz Werfel, into the libretto for *Maximilien*. Berg’s and Webern’s correspondence with Milhaud similarly shows how the Viennese circle became a wellspring of support and professional connections. In a 1923 letter, Berg praised Milhaud’s music as “new and original” and thanked Milhaud for having helped him understand polytonality.²⁷ In letters to his wife, Berg later reported socializing with Milhaud in Brussels and in Florence.²⁸ Webern and Milhaud traded letters thanking each other for sharing music and for promoting each other’s work in their respective cities.²⁹ In the short term, earning the admiration of these figures did little to serve Milhaud’s

²² Milhaud, “Evolution of Modern Music in Paris and in Vienna”; and Milhaud, “Polytonalité et atonalité,” *La revue musicale* 4, no. 4 (1923): 29–44.

²³ Mussat, “La Réception de Schönberg en France,” 157–59. Jane Fulcher mistakenly claims that Milhaud and Poulenc went to Vienna in 1921 and returned in 1922 to conduct a performance of *Pierrot lunaire* (*The Composer as Intellectual*, 182), but Mussat’s research and additional evidence in the correspondence between Milhaud and Bela Bartók (Collection Bela Bartók), preserved at the Paul Sacher Stiftung, suggests the two made just one visit in January 1922.

²⁴ Arnold Schoenberg to Alexander Zemlinsky, October 22, 1922, in *Arnold Schoenberg, Letters*, ed. Erwin Stein, trans. Eithne Wilkins and Ernst Kaiser (London: Faber and Faber, 1964), 80.

²⁵ Joseph Auner, ed., *A Schoenberg Reader: Documents of a Life* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003), 8, 154, 210, and 293.

²⁶ Alma Mahler to Darius Milhaud, August 27, 1923, Milhaud Collection, Paul Sacher Stiftung.

²⁷ Alban Berg to Darius Milhaud, April 28, 1923, Milhaud Collection, Paul Sacher Stiftung. “Wenn ich aber vom ersten Eindruck reden will, so muß ich sagen, daß mich das ganze sehr sympathisch berührte und mir ungemein neu und originell vorkam.”

²⁸ Alban Berg, *Letters to His Wife*, ed. and trans. Bernard Grun (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1971), 392 and 406.

²⁹ Anton Webern to Darius Milhaud, May 13, 1922, March 30, 1923, and May 14, 1923, Milhaud Collection, Paul Sacher Stiftung.

immediate prospects in Paris and might have even hurt his critical reception given the apathy accorded to them by some French critics.

The Viennese visit appears to have been particularly successful, however, in laying the groundwork for the professional relationship that Milhaud would later develop with UE. In addition to meeting multiple composers in UE's roster, Milhaud also bought a number of scores at the firm's office at 12 Bösendorferstrasse, giving him ample opportunity to meet and discuss publishing contracts with UE editors.³⁰ If Milhaud and the director of UE, Emil Hertzka, did not meet in early 1922, Hertzka surely heard a performance of Milhaud's Sonata for flute, oboe, clarinet and piano, op. 47 on August 7, 1922 as part of the International Festival of Chamber Music in Salzburg. In a letter, Poulenc claimed that Hertzka was "thrilled" by the piece even though it "shocked" most other listeners.³¹ Hertzka's enthusiasm suggests that he had already signed Milhaud to a contract, or that he was about to. In any case, the earliest preserved correspondence between the two dates from September 12, 1922, and discusses proofs of the five chamber symphonies, suggesting that Hertzka had become Milhaud's editor some time before.³²

In building their partnership both Milhaud and Hertzka overcame significant obstacles, as their voluminous correspondence shows.³³ Milhaud did not speak German and Hertzka did not speak French, making correspondence unwieldy: every letter back and forth needed to be translated, a task Milhaud's wife Madeleine seems to have taken on from time to time. Milhaud had to mail unique exemplars of handwritten manuscripts to Vienna, causing no small amount of anxiety over lost or delayed packages. Finally, UE had no Paris office, making it difficult for the firm to evaluate prevailing rates and price their editions accordingly. Logistically, publishing with UE proved more complicated than publishing with a French editor. It comes as no surprise, then, that Milhaud was the only one of his French peers to work with UE during the interwar period,

³⁰ Darius Milhaud, "To Arnold Schoenberg on His Seventieth Birthday: Personal Reflections," *Musical Quarterly* 30 (1944): 379–84, at 383.

³¹ Francis Poulenc to Darius Milhaud, August 16, 1922, in Francis Poulenc, *Correspondance 1910–1963*, ed. Myriam Chimènes (Paris: Fayard, 1994), 170. In a footnote to this letter, Chimènes notes that Hertzka "would become" Milhaud's editor and friend, but it is unclear whether she bases this on evidence of a later contract or on general knowledge of their subsequent relationship (172).

³² Darius Milhaud to Emil Hertzka, September 12, 1922, private collection of Frank Langlois, photocopied by Langlois from the original in the Universal Edition Archives. I am grateful to Professeur Langlois for granting me access to his large collection of unpublished Milhaud correspondence, which he collected in the 1990s while preparing a biography of Milhaud based on his letters.

³³ In this paragraph I present general observations drawn from extensive consultation of Milhaud's correspondence with Hertzka and UE in Langlois's collection.

but that fact only reinforces the significance of Milhaud's choice of publisher.³⁴

Politically, too, Milhaud disregarded taboos in order to have his works published by UE. Chauvinism in the French press and bitterness over the recent hostilities between French and Austro-German forces rendered a relationship with a Viennese publisher problematic, to say the least. A letter from Bela Bartók to Poulenc in November 1921 attests to the difficulty French musicians already faced in procuring scores published by UE. Bartók complained of "French music sellers [who] still show . . . resistance . . . toward German and Austrian publishing firms."³⁵ Adding to the obstacles Milhaud already faced among French critics, when he organized French performances or spoke in favor of the music of composers on Universal's roster, he became the target of hyperbolic reproaches imbued with the rhetoric of war and national security. For instance, after he conducted the French premiere of Schoenberg's *Pierrot lunaire* in 1921, Vuillemin called Milhaud, Jean Wiéner, and others in Les Six "sycophants" and "young turncoats" whose enthusiasm for the Second Viennese School contributed to the "detriment of art and of France."³⁶ Characteristic of the way French critics conflated Jewishness and Germanness, Léon Vallas referred to the Concerts Salade of Jean Wiéner (also Jewish) at which the premiere took place as "one of the countless examples of the invasion of Paris by outsiders, opportunists and more or less recent immigrants."³⁷ Politics inflected logistics, too: when French forces annexed the Ruhr Valley in January 1923, German publishers boycotted French and Belgian music. In response, French publishers considered reinstating the ban on German editions that had gone into effect during the First World War.³⁸

Yet despite all the logistical and political obstacles, Milhaud's relationship with UE was by no means doomed from the start. An astute businessman, Milhaud quickly grasped the many advantages that UE would provide, not least of which was prestige. UE was the primary publisher for the Second Viennese School and other leading composers from Central and Eastern Europe, including Paul Hindemith, Bartók, Kurt Weill, Leos Janáček, Ernst Krenek, and Richard Strauss, and thus

³⁴ Heinsheimer and Stefan, eds., *25 Jahre neue Musik*, 9–20.

³⁵ Béla Bartók to Francis Poulenc, November 29, 1921, *Correspondance*, 139–40.

³⁶ Louis Vuillemin, "Concerts métèques," *Le courrier musical*, January 1, 1923, 4, translated in Kelly, *Tradition and Style*, 11; Louis Vuillemin, "Musique et nationalism," *Le courrier musical*, February 15, 1923, 65, translated in Kelly, *Tradition and Style*, 12; and Louis Vuillemin, "A propos de 'Notes sans mesure,'" *Le courrier musical*, February 15, 1923, 74.

³⁷ Léon Vallas, "Concerts métèques," *Nouvelle revue musicale* 22 (1923): 87, translated in Kelly, *Tradition and Style*, 13.

³⁸ See Kelly, *Tradition and Style*, 13.

had a reputation as a modernism-friendly institution.³⁹ By signing a contract with UE, Milhaud bolstered his avant-garde credentials and found a champion for the pieces that Parisian audiences, critics, and publishers were inclined to reject.

Financially, too, UE offered Milhaud certain advantages. As Milhaud once explained to his frequent collaborator, the poet-diplomat Paul Claudel, “Universal Edition is much more pleasant to work with than French publishers, as we make money on every aspect [of our work] and the [royalty] percentages are much higher than in Paris.”⁴⁰ In pursuit of higher royalties, between 1922 and 1930 Milhaud published thirty works with UE, while between 1911 (when he first published) and 1930 he only published twenty works with Durand, eighteen with Heugel, sixteen with Eschig, and fifteen with Salabert. Not only did UE ensure higher royalties; Milhaud frequently earned substantial advances and signing bonuses on his contracts. For instance, negotiations in 1927 on the contract for *Maximilien* led to a signing bonus of 3,200 marks, or 18,000 francs, an amount that was higher than all but one of the commissions he accepted in the 1920s.⁴¹ The signing bonus provided Milhaud some cushion to compose an extended work that might not eventually bring in additional income in the form of performance royalties.

Most importantly, the publisher’s relationships with a broad community of influential critics, conductors, and performers in Central Europe meant that Milhaud could expect UE-affiliated musicians to present his music to new audiences who were unlikely to share the cultural and institutional biases he faced in France. Milhaud, for example, wrote to Hertzka in 1925 with a list of people to be sent copies of his *Ballade* for solo piano and orchestra that included Erich Kleiber, Paul von Klenau, Willem Mengelberg, Alfredo Casella, and Schoenberg. To these, he added the instruction: “send also to German and Austrian orchestra conductors and pianists like Steuermann and Giesecking.”⁴² Such practices were typical: publishers routinely attempted to secure performances of works in their catalogues by providing prominent musicians with complimentary copies. But UE differed from Milhaud’s other publishers in

³⁹ See Harald Haslmayr, “Die Geschichte der Universal Edition als kulturhistorisches Paradigma des 20. Jahrhunderts,” in *Der Musikverlag und seine Komponisten im 21. Jahrhundert: zum 100-jährigen Jubiläum der Universal Edition*, ed. Otto Kolleritsch (Vienna: Universal Edition, 2002), 15–29.

⁴⁰ Darius Milhaud to Paul Claudel, December 1928, in *Cahiers Paul Claudel*, vol. 3, *Correspondance Paul Claudel–Darius Milhaud*, ed. Jacques Petit (Paris: Gallimard, 1961), 109.

⁴¹ Darius Milhaud to Emil Hertzka, undated letter, likely from early November 1927, private collection of Frank Langlois.

⁴² Darius Milhaud to Emil Hertzka, undated letter, likely from March 1926, private collection of Frank Langlois. “Envoyez aussi aux chefs d’orchestre allemande et autrichien et aux pianistes comme Steuermann et Giesecking.”

its ability to transmit his work to specific figures in Germany and Austria and to facilitate performances outside of France. The firm arranged for German translations of opera libretti and negotiated on Milhaud's behalf with theaters. And Milhaud did similarly important work for UE; he commanded Hertzka in 1922 to "continue to send me your modern novelties and I will do my best to get them performed in Paris."⁴³ Thus UE and Milhaud worked together to facilitate the transnational circulation and development of musical modernism.

The greatest advantage that UE had to offer was access to the fertile German opera scene. Milhaud coveted the extensive resources, professionalism, and experimental ethos that German theaters offered, and UE opened their doors to Milhaud in a way that none of his French publishers could. Milhaud accepted Hertzka's proposal in 1925 to publish his *Orestes* opera trilogy, because, he explained, "these works would have a greater chance of being performed in Germany, since in France, choirs seem to provide insurmountable difficulties."⁴⁴ UE proved adept at securing performances of Milhaud's works in Germany, where competitive theater directors and conductors embraced the very dramaturgical and musical challenges that discouraged French institutions.⁴⁵

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One reason German institutions were so eager to perform new works by Milhaud and other composers has to do with the musical geography of Weimar Germany. Unlike highly centralized France, the Weimar Republic united the patchwork of former duchies and kingdoms that had for centuries afforded Germany a diverse, vibrant musical culture. Even after the fall of the German aristocracy, cities large and small continued to grant generous funding to the arts, including theaters and opera houses. In his memoir Hertzka's assistant Hans Heinsheimer described the resulting "world-premiere craze" from the perspective of those purveyors of culture who stood to benefit most—publishers and composers of operas and ballets:

In the Rhineland, within an area the size of the city of New York, there were ten different opera houses, all ambitious, all jealous of one another and determined to be bigger and better and certainly more

⁴³ Darius Milhaud to Emil Hertzka, September 12, 1922, private collection of Frank Langlois. "Continuez à m'envoyer vos nouveautés modernes et je m'efforcerai de les faire exécuter à Paris."

⁴⁴ Darius Milhaud to Emil Hertzka, November 12, 1925, private collection of Frank Langlois. "Je crois que ces ouvrages auraient plus de chances d'être exécutés en Allemagne, car en France les difficultés chorales sont . . . insurmontables."

⁴⁵ Attfield, *Challenging the Modern: Conservative Revolution in German Music, 1918–1933*; Bryan Gilliam, "Stage and Screen: Kurt Weill and Operatic Reform in the 1920s," in *Music and Performance during the Weimar Republic*, ed. Bryan Gilliam (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 1–12; and Rachel Emily Nussbaum, "The Kroll Opera and the Politics of Cultural Reform in the Weimar Republic" (PhD diss., Cornell University, 2005).

conspicuous than the nine others. They were separated only by half-hour train rides. I could have breakfast with the manager of the opera house in Düsseldorf, lunch with the fellow in Essen, share coffee and pretzels with the man in Dortmund, have dinner in Bochum and a nightcap in Cologne—and between all these refreshments sell every one of them a new opera or a new ballet!⁴⁶

With help from UE, Milhaud benefited substantially from competition between theaters in Germany. In July 1928 he wrote to Collaer that theaters in Germany were “plumbing the depths” of his repertory, with scheduled or planned performances of his works in Wiesbaden, Darmstadt, Mainz, Mannheim, Gera, and Berlin.⁴⁷ A month later he bragged to Claudel that his theatrical works were performed “everywhere in Germany.”⁴⁸ Although he exaggerated his popularity, Milhaud had good reason to be gleeful. The next year, *Le pauvre matelot* was performed at the Krolloper in Berlin, *La Création du monde* in Leipzig, and *La brebis égarée* in Mannheim.⁴⁹ Milhaud noted the utter lack of parity between French and German provincial theaters, joking in his letter to Collaer that he was “going to propose all that to [the theaters in] Castelnaudary, Tarbes, Calais, Avignon!!!”⁵⁰ Publicly, too, Milhaud praised German theaters while lamenting the state of their French counterparts. In a 1928 interview published in *Comœdia*, he complained about the pitiful state subventions for French theaters as compared with the “formidable” subventions in German cities like Wiesbaden, Essen, Mainz, Cologne, Mannheim, and Baden-Baden.⁵¹

The relative popularity of Milhaud’s music in Germany enabled him to savor the kind of success denied him in France. He bragged in a letter to Henri Sauguet that more of his works were performed in Germany in 1931 than those of Stravinsky, ostensibly by a score of twenty-eight to twenty-two.⁵² Milhaud’s numbers have proven difficult to corroborate and it remains unclear how he arrived at them; one possibility is that UE provided him with a list of recent performances. Elsewhere in his letters and autobiography he engaged in hyperbole, including, in his

⁴⁶ Hans Heinsheimer, *Menagerie in F-Sharp* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1947), 98.

⁴⁷ Darius Milhaud to Paul Collaer, July 17, 1928, in Paul Collaer, *Correspondance avec des amis musiciens*, ed. Robert Wangermée (Liège: Pierre Mardaga, 1996), 255.

⁴⁸ Darius Milhaud to Paul Claudel, August 1928, in *Correspondance Paul Claudel–Darius Milhaud*, 100.

⁴⁹ Darius Milhaud to Paul Collaer, October 4, 1929, in *Correspondance avec des amis musiciens*, 267.

⁵⁰ Darius Milhaud to Paul Collaer, July 17, 1928, in *Correspondance avec des amis musiciens*, 255.

⁵¹ Darius Milhaud, interview by Pierre Maudru, “Defense des jeunes et misère des théâtres d’Etat,” *Comœdia*, May 25, 1928.

⁵² Darius Milhaud to Henri Sauguet, undated, Nouvelles Lettres Autographes 324 Lettre 87, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Département de la Musique (Bn-M).

previously quoted letter to Collaer, the patently ridiculous inflation of his 1928 performances in Berlin to ninety and elsewhere in Germany to 150.⁵³ Nevertheless, documentation of performances in the music press does indicate that German theaters' interest in Milhaud remained unmatched in France, and that UE was largely responsible.⁵⁴ Heinsheimer and Hertzka's advocacy among competing theaters produced at least fifty-five staged performances of Milhaud's lyric works and ballets across the country between 1927 and 1932, with documented performances in Baden-Baden, Berlin, Braunschweig, Breslau, Chemnitz, Darmstadt, Dessau, Erfurt, Frankfurt, Gera, Hagen, Hanover, Leipzig, Lübeck, Magdeburg, Mannheim, Munich, Oldenburg, and Wiesbaden. In contrast, I was able to identify fewer than twenty-five staged performances of Milhaud's dramatic works and ballets in France during that same period. May 1930 marked the high point of Milhaud's interwar German reception. In the first week of the month, the Krolloper again performed *Le pauvre matelot*. On May 30, Milhaud conducted a radio performance in Berlin of *Protée, Mélodies hébraïques*, four *Saudades*, and his *Viola Concerto* with Hindemith performing the solo.⁵⁵ Basking in his German successes, Milhaud facetiously signed a letter to Collaer, "GeneralmusikKomponistvereinpräsident."⁵⁶ He may have felt he deserved the title after the successful premiere of his most ambitious opera to date, *Christophe Colomb*, in Berlin on May 5, 1930. Given the firm's unflagging advocacy of Milhaud, UE deserved almost as much credit for this premiere as the composer, and both reaped dividends as its success led to an increase in Milhaud's stature and in performances of his UE-published works in France.

When Germany Discovered Christophe Colomb

The origins, aesthetics, and early reception of *Christophe Colomb* offer the most direct evidence of how UE's efforts to facilitate Milhaud's

⁵³ Darius Milhaud to Paul Collaer, July 17, 1928, in *Correspondance avec des amis musiciens*, 255.

⁵⁴ UE's ability to secure performances of Milhaud's works is apparent from a comparison of the number of Central European performances of works published by UE versus those by French firms between 1922 and 1930. The works Milhaud published with UE received at least sixty-six Central European performances as against a combined total of sixty-four performances for all of his pieces published by Durand, Eschig, Heugel, and Salabert. This disparity is reinforced by the fact that seventy-nine of Milhaud's works were published by French firms and only thirty by UE.

⁵⁵ Darius Milhaud to Paul Collaer, April 18, 1930, in *Correspondance avec des amis musiciens*, 275.

⁵⁶ Darius Milhaud to Paul Collaer, April 18, 1930, in *Correspondance avec des amis musiciens*, 276.

access to the German market subsequently improved his prospects in France. Stage director Max Reinhardt initially commissioned *Christophe Colomb* from Claudel in 1927, imagining it as a brief scenario for a “pantomime-drama.”⁵⁷ When Claudel wrote a libretto instead, Reinhardt’s interest in the project waned. Ever the pragmatist, Milhaud proposed asking Ida Rubinstein to underwrite the project, but Claudel argued that the subject matter would not attract Rubinstein’s interest, and that instead he and Milhaud should “do what we have always done, you and me, [and] work without worrying about practical considerations.”⁵⁸ Milhaud disagreed. Perhaps Claudel’s ambitious plans for *Christophe Colomb* intimidated him; perhaps he had tired of composing works that sat unperformed for years. Before moving forward, he demanded to “know in advance the musical means at my disposal and to establish . . . a contract that will provide for all necessary arrangements with my editor.”⁵⁹ As had been the case for other works in Milhaud’s catalogue that he foresaw as more successful in Central Europe than in France, the contract for *Christophe Colomb* ultimately went to UE.

Once again, UE tapped the professional connections that had earned them Milhaud’s business to locate a venue for the *Christophe Colomb* premiere. Milhaud informed Claudel that an “advertisement of *Christophe Colomb* has brought me requests from the opera houses in Berlin, Wiesbaden, Cologne, etc. If Reinhardt doesn’t work out, the work will be performed this winter at the Staatsoper Berlin under magnificent conditions and will then tour to various cities.”⁶⁰ Milhaud had supreme confidence in the abilities of Hertzka and UE to place his work. But Berlin’s claim on the opera was by no means inevitable, and efforts to secure a venue for the premiere took several more years. By May 1929 Hertzka was “in serious negotiations” with the Staatsoper Dresden.⁶¹ It was at this point that Milhaud wrote to Claudel with the bitterness of a composer too long scorned by his countrymen:

Perhaps I’ll make the purely courteous gesture of proposing [*Christophe Colomb*] to the Opéra here [in Paris.] Rouché cannot produce such a piece. But I think the gesture necessary; it enables me to

⁵⁷ Jeremy Drake, *The Operas of Darius Milhaud* (London: Garland, 1989), 243.

⁵⁸ Claudel to Milhaud, December 17, 1927, in *Correspondance Paul Claudel–Darius Milhaud*, 86.

⁵⁹ Darius Milhaud to Paul Claudel, undated letter, likely from January 1928, in *Correspondance Paul Claudel–Darius Milhaud*, 87.

⁶⁰ Darius Milhaud to Paul Claudel, undated letter, likely from August 1928, in *Correspondance Paul Claudel–Darius Milhaud*, 100.

⁶¹ Darius Milhaud to Paul Collaer, May 9, 1929, in *Correspondance avec des amis musiciens*, 261.

respond to the vicious people who say, “Why do you have your works performed in Germany?” “Because in France no one wants to produce my operas!”⁶²

Jacques Rouché was the powerful director of the Paris Opéra from 1915 to 1945 and the recipient of Milhaud’s repeated failed entreaties seeking a performance of one of his operas on the national stage between 1922 and 1930.⁶³ When Milhaud petitioned for a performance of *Christophe Colomb*, it was with the excessively polite tone of a composer whose works had been rejected by Rouché before:

I have completed an opera with a libretto by Paul Claudel titled *Christophe Colomb*. I would be interested to know if you might be willing to consider its performance at the Opéra. In this case, would you please let me know if I could, before thinking of an audition, submit the libretto to you?⁶⁴

Rouché must have responded positively to this request, for Milhaud subsequently sent a libretto for Rouché’s consideration.⁶⁵ It remains unclear whether the Opéra director subsequently saw Milhaud’s score, but regardless, the fact that *Christophe Colomb* premiered elsewhere means that Rouché ultimately rejected the work.⁶⁶ Even without seeing the libretto, Rouché might have been hesitant to produce a Milhaud opera given the composer’s earlier, scandalous premieres. Moreover, Milhaud’s particular strain of modernism arguably fell well beyond the Opéra repertory’s stylistic norms. Thus Milhaud was justified in predicting to Claudel that “Rouché *cannot* produce such a piece.”

If Rouché did see the score, he would have encountered other reasons to avoid producing *Christophe Colomb*, not least the many dramaturgical challenges that it posed. It is thus worth taking some time to explore the experimental nature of an opera that Claudel and Milhaud—anticipating Rouché’s rejection—knowingly crafted for performance outside

⁶² Darius Milhaud to Paul Claudel, October 7, 1929, in *Correspondance Paul Claudel–Darius Milhaud*, 122. Emphasis in original.

⁶³ See Fonds Rouché, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Bibliothèque-Musée de l’Opéra (hereafter Bm-O).

⁶⁴ Darius Milhaud to Jacques Rouché, undated letter, Bm-O Fonds Rouché Lettres Autographes Signées (LAS) Milhaud, pièce 62. “J’ai terminé un opéra sur un livret de Paul Claudel sur ‘Christophe Colomb.’ Je serais désireux de savoir si vous seriez disposé à en envisager la réalisation à l’Opéra. Dans ce cas, veuillez me faire savoir si je puis, avant de penser à une audition, vous en soumettre le livret.”

⁶⁵ Darius Milhaud to Jacques Rouché, undated letter, Bm-O Fonds Rouché LAS Milhaud, pièce 61.

⁶⁶ With few exceptions, Rouché’s letters to Milhaud have been lost, probably victims of the ransacking of Milhaud’s Paris apartment by the German military during the Occupation.

of France. Thematically, *Christophe Colomb* offers more tragedy, religious drama, and postcolonial critique than hagiography. Claudel presents Columbus as a flawed hero, prone to cruelty and greed, whose “discovery” of the New World unleashed a wave of violence and oppression. At times, a chorus of Aztecs laments their fate. Yet Claudel gives Columbus credit for opening the Americas to Christian conversion, thus signaling ambivalence over the explorer’s legacy and echoing contemporary debates over Columbus’s canonization.⁶⁷ Dramaturgically, *Christophe Colomb* offered special challenges: comprising twenty-seven scenes in two acts, the opera is staged as a series of chapters in a book detailing Columbus’s life and involves spoken narration as well as sung material. The chapters unfold nonchronologically so that older and younger versions of Columbus are sometimes present on stage at the same time, giving the opera the flavor of a staged oratorio. Boldest of all, Claudel also called for a film screen to replace the traditional backdrop so that images representing the thoughts and feelings of the characters could be projected.

Musically, too, *Christophe Colomb* would have stretched or exceeded the capabilities and will of the Paris Opéra. The score combines Milhaud’s characteristic polytonality with Mediterranean and Latin American local color, and contains numerous *Sprechstimme* passages accompanied by soli percussion. Claudel had included dozens of characters in the original libretto; Milhaud consolidated many of these into the large chorus, assigning lines that were initially conceived for individual characters such as Columbus’s mother, courtesans, and an inquisitor to chorus members or sections. As a result, the chorus did more than comment on Columbus’s story in the vein of Greek tragedy; its members became active participants in it. At least one critic echoed Milhaud’s expectation that the Opéra would not perform the piece, writing, “given the importance of the chorus, it is likely that *Christophe Colomb* will be premiered on a foreign stage”; it is unclear why the critic had so little faith in French choirs.⁶⁸ The large chorus remained on stage for nearly the entire performance, requiring a custom-built proscenium flanking the pit. Staging *Christophe Colomb* would have strained the finances of the Opéra, which regularly ran large budgetary deficits even as Rouché programmed audience favorites by Mozart, Wagner, and Verdi to mitigate losses.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Kelly, *Music and Ultra-Modernism in France*, 199.

⁶⁸ “Musique,” May 25, 1928, *Christophe Colomb* Dossier de Presse, Fonds Rondel, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Département des arts du spectacle. “Etant donné l’importance des chœurs, il est vraisemblable que *Christophe Colomb* devra être créé dans un théâtre étranger.”

⁶⁹ See Myriam Chimènes, “Le Budget de la musique sous la IIIe République,” in *La Musique: Du théorique au politique*, ed. Hugues Dufourt and Joël-Marie Fauquet (Paris:

Given that Milhaud insisted on knowing the “means” at his disposal, and given that he recognized early on that the Paris Opéra would not be a likely venue for *Christophe Colomb*, the opera’s resource-intensive requirements and experimental nature demonstrate the confidence he felt in UE’s ability to secure a performance elsewhere. The opera’s challenges proved less daunting for opera houses outside of France. UE managed to place *Christophe Colomb* at the Staatsoper Unter den Linden in Berlin, and in doing so cemented the firm’s importance for Milhaud’s ambitions as an opera composer.

Years of effort on the parts of Milhaud and UE culminated in a prestigious premiere that drew enormous critical attention. The opera’s experimental qualities irked some listeners, including the critic and musicologist Alfred Einstein. He took issue with the anti-operatic tendencies of a work whose “music does not live through the action,” a work that “is history in the reflection of the medieval mystery plays” and that he found “unconvincing”; nevertheless, he still believed the opera was worth hearing.⁷⁰ Taking a different critical tack, an unnamed, right-wing German critic cited in an article by Heinrich Strobel expressed anger over the generous resources that the Staatsoper devoted to the production. His review contradicted Milhaud’s claims about the personnel challenges faced by French theaters, albeit in an ugly way:

Milhaud is not regarded as a representative of French music and culture in France. He is a dilettante who owes his reputation to the activity of an (almost exclusively Jewish) clique and to stubborn, obtrusive publicity. His assertion that the choir of the Paris Opéra is not suited to the demands of his work is unbelievable. It is much more likely that the Opéra has shown him the cold shoulder.⁷¹

The unnamed critic’s analysis is chilling, not just for its anti-Semitism but for its repetition of themes in French critics’ writings about Milhaud earlier in the 1920s, especially their accusations of dilettantism and publicity-mongering. Yet the critic was also perceptive in acknowledging that the Paris Opéra had chosen not to try to overcome the challenges posed by the work.

Although some reviews took issue with aesthetic and logistical aspects of Milhaud’s work, audiences and most critics reacted

Klincksieck, 1991), 261–312; and Dominique Garban, *Jacques Rouché: L’homme qui sauva l’Opéra de Paris* (Paris: Somogy éditions d’art, 2007).

⁷⁰ Alfred Einstein, “‘Christoph Columbus’ Premiere,” *New York Times*, June 1, 1930. This review was translated from Einstein’s May 6, 1930 review in the *Berliner Tageblatt*.

⁷¹ The unnamed critic writing in the *Deutsche Zeitung* is cited in Heinrich Strobel, “Zu Milhauds Kolumbus-Oper,” *Melos* 5 (1930): 238–40, at 239.

enthusiastically to *Christophe Colomb's* earliest performances.⁷² Sensing an event of geopolitical as well as musical importance, several French critics traveled to the Berlin premiere and transmitted largely positive impressions back to their readers. Referring to the incorporation of cinema into opera, Raymond Petit boldly claimed that the premiere would prove to be "one of the most important events in the aesthetic history of our time."⁷³ Even Vuillermoz lauded the production's "exceptional impressiveness" and praised the idealism of its authors.⁷⁴ French critics' admiration for the production was shared by many German critics. Paul Stefan congratulated the Staatsoper for producing what he described as "no repertory opera," and thanked the work's authors for "struggling to achieve high goals without any thought to profit and loss."⁷⁵ Hugo Leichtentritt was encouraged to see a work that supplies "new blood" to the operatic genre.⁷⁶ After an interview with the composer, *Melos* critic Hanns Gutman echoed Milhaud in wondering why the Paris Opéra had chosen not to premiere an "important French work of art, a work that faithfully reflects at least one of the typical contemporary attitudes of the French spirit."⁷⁷

Gutman became one of a number of critics asking similar questions. Disgruntlement around Rouché's rejection had been mounting in the French press since the Berlin premiere was announced in 1929. A headline in *Paris Midi* took an accusatory tone: "The Germans have made every sacrifice to produce *Christophe Colomb*."⁷⁸ Vuillermoz ended one of his reviews by advising his readers "to be pleased to see two of our compatriots benefit from such a magnificent effort and to hope that this lesson is not lost on the French theater directors."⁷⁹ Another typical article, titled "A Scandal," evoked the "humiliation" suffered by a country

⁷² Of the premiere, Collaer related that "the mood on stage and in the audience was electrifying; there were twenty curtain calls after each section" (*Darius Milhaud*, 129).

⁷³ Raymond Petit, "*Christophe Colomb* de Paul Claudel et Darius Milhaud au Staatsoper Unter den Linden de Berlin," *Nouvelle revue française* 201 (1930), cited in Jens Rosteck, *Darius Milhauds Claudel-Opern Christophe Colomb und L'Orestie d'Eschyle* (Laaber, Germany: Laaber-Verlag, 1995), 252.

⁷⁴ Emile Vuillermoz, "*Christophe Colomb* à l'Opéra de Berlin," *Excelsior*, May 12, 1930. See also positive assessments by Milhaud's former student, Henri Sauguet, "*Christophe Colomb*," *Nouvelles Littéraires*, May 17, 1930, and by M. D. Calvocoressi, "Milhaud's *Christophe Colomb*," *Musical Times* 71 (1930): 406–8.

⁷⁵ Paul Stefan, "Claudel-Milhaud: Christoph Columbus," *Anbruch* 12 (1930): 215–16, cited in Rosteck, *Darius Milhauds Claudel-Opern*, 248–49.

⁷⁶ Hugo Leichtentritt, "Darius Milhaud: Christoph Kolumbus," *Die Musik* 22 (1930): 682–84, cited in Rosteck, *Darius Milhauds Claudel-Opern*, 249.

⁷⁷ Hanns Gutman, "Darius Milhaud Persönlich," *Melos* 5 (1930): 241.

⁷⁸ Pierre Lazareff, "Les Allemands ont fait tous les sacrifices pour présenter *Christophe Colomb*," *Paris Midi*, April 14, 1930.

⁷⁹ Emile Vuillermoz, "Une grande première française à l'Opéra de Berlin," *Candide*, May 15, 1930.

unable or unwilling to perform the works of its top artists and concluded, “we look like both ingrates and imbeciles.”⁸⁰ Articles in the French press emphasized the added humiliation of the situation given Claudel’s status as a top diplomat (former ambassador to Brazil and Denmark and current ambassador to the United States at the time of the premiere). Numerous critics noted the diplomatic coup that the Berlin premiere represented—for Germany. From the perspective of the French press, whether in the arena of economic or cultural production, a win for Germany was a loss for France.

In this case, France’s loss worked in Milhaud’s favor. After years of struggling for positive coverage, Milhaud suddenly enjoyed widespread support from the French press, even if it was largely for political rather than aesthetic reasons. He moved swiftly to capitalize on his moment in the public eye, writing to Rouché immediately after the premiere with details of the opera’s next performance:

The production of *Christophe Colomb* is so perfect from all points of view that I cannot restrain myself from letting you know that the 2nd performance will take place on the 8th of May and the 3rd on the 13th. I would have been so happy had you seen this work. The staging with film projection is managed in a particularly admirable manner.⁸¹

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Publicly, too, he demonstrated a savvy awareness of the need to strike a balance between flattering and critiquing the Paris Opéra and its director. In his interview with Gutman, Milhaud proffered the half-truth that the Paris Opéra had the will but not the finances to produce *Christophe Colomb*.⁸² In another interview, however, he declared that he would not have wanted the work premiered anywhere but Berlin because no other institution could have done the work justice.⁸³ Now that he had seen one of his most ambitious works receive a lavish premiere on one of the top European stages, Milhaud could have turned his back on the Paris Opéra. That he did not is a testament to the symbolic lure of the Opéra as the hitherto unattainable prize. At long last, with the wind at his back,

⁸⁰ F. de Miomandre, “Un scandale,” *Les Nouvelles littéraires*, April 19, 1930, cited in Rosteck, *Darius Milhauds Claudel-Opem*, 275.

⁸¹ Darius Milhaud to Jacques Rouché, undated, likely from May 1930, Bm-O Fonds Rouché, LAS Milhaud, pièce 72. “La réalisation du *Christophe Colomb* est tellement parfaite à tous points de vue que je ne puis m’empêcher de vous faire savoir que la 2^{ième} représentation aura lieu le 8 mai et la 3^{ième} le 13. J’aurais été si heureux que vous voyiez cette œuvre. La mise en scène au projection et cinéma est réglée d’une manière admirable.”

⁸² Gutman, “Darius Milhaud Persönlich,” 241.

⁸³ Max Lenz, “*Christoph Columbus*—die Oper der Meisten Schwierigkeiten,” May 1930, unknown source, cited in Rosteck, *Darius Milhauds Claudel-Opem*, 245.

Milhaud saw an opportunity to capitalize on the political and cultural jealousy that the *Christophe Colomb* premiere had provoked in France.

Milhaud's Arrival at the Paris Opéra

Despite intense critical pressure in the French press, Rouché still hesitated to produce one of Milhaud's operas. The Berlin theater director Franz-Ludwig Hörth relayed to Milhaud a conversation he had had with Rouché after the latter saw *Christophe Colomb* for the first time. Rouché reportedly called the work "incomprehensible" and asserted, "under no circumstances would a French public ever be able to understand this play with three Christopher Columbuses."⁸⁴ For its part, UE moved to secure the premiere of Milhaud's next opera, *Maximilien*, elsewhere. On June 27, 1930, *Le Ménestrel* reported that *Maximilien* would also receive a premiere at the Staatsoper in Berlin.⁸⁵ Nevertheless, Milhaud persisted in seeking a premiere at the Paris Opéra. At some point during the summer or early fall of 1930, he once again petitioned Rouché:

I would very much like you to hear my new opera, *Maximilien*. It is a historical opera in three acts and nine tableaux in the form of classical operas and which requires no complicated staging. Would you first like me to send you the libretto? Or would you prefer that I come play you several excerpts from the score?⁸⁶

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When Rouché expressed interest, Milhaud quickly responded,

I have just received your letter of 31 October and I am delighted that you are considering the possibility of producing *Maximilien* at the Opéra. The orchestration is not yet finished. I will write to my editor (Universal Edition in Vienna) to be able, at our next meeting, to confirm the approximate date by which the material will be placed at your disposal, but I doubt that it will be ready before March/April.⁸⁷

⁸⁴ Darius Milhaud to Paul Claudel, undated, likely from July or August 1930, in *Correspondance Paul Claudel-Darius Milhaud*, 150.

⁸⁵ "Le Mouvement Musical à l'Étranger," *Le Ménestrel*, June 27, 1930, 298.

⁸⁶ Darius Milhaud to Jacques Rouché, undated, likely from September or October 1930, in Bm-O Fonds Rouché, LAS Milhaud, pièce 58. "Je serai très désireux de vous faire entendre mon nouvel opéra 'Maximilien.' C'est un opéra historique en trois actes et neuf tableaux dans la forme des opéras classiques et qui ne nécessite aucune complication de mise en scène. Voulez vous avoir d'abord le livret en communication? Ou voulez vous que je vienne vous jouer quelques fragments à la partition?"

⁸⁷ Darius Milhaud to Jacques Rouché, November 1, 1930, in Bm-O Fonds Rouché, LAS Milhaud, pièce 59. "Je viens de recevoir votre lettre du 31 octobre et je suis ravi que vous envisagiez la possibilité de représenter Maximilien à l'Opéra. L'orchestration n'est pas encore terminée. Je vais écrire à mon éditeur (l'Universal Edition à Vienne) pour pouvoir,

Although he showed interest, Rouché likely did not approach the project with enthusiasm. In a subsequent letter, Milhaud addressed several concerns that the opera director must have had. In contrast to his approach to *Christophe Colomb*, Milhaud wrote Rouché, “I have executed my new opera *Maximilien* with the Opéra in mind.” Between each act and each tableau, “I have always placed a symphonic interlude permitting scenery changes”; and “the choral part is no more substantial than in any other opera.”⁸⁸ From his previous experiences of petitioning Rouché, Milhaud knew exactly how to make his case.

Milhaud on his own, however, was unlikely to have convinced Rouché to take on the opera. In his autobiography, he provides one possible explanation for Rouché’s change in attitude:

Certain official figures were surprised that [*Christophe Colomb*] had been premiered in Germany. I always submitted my works to the Opéra, despite the welcome that they received, a welcome that was not particularly encouraging. . . . Nevertheless, the fact that *Christophe Colomb* had been premiered in Germany provoked some agitation and even a hearing in the Chambre [of Deputies of the French Parliament]. Following this small incident, the Opéra was persuaded to produce a work of mine no matter what: I had just finished *Maximilien*.⁸⁹

Might “certain official figures” have pressured Rouché to program an opera by Milhaud? As a nominal state employee who largely funded the Opéra out of his own, ample pockets, Rouché generally experienced little to no programming oversight.⁹⁰ But for centuries French officials had occasionally intervened in the business of the Opéra, whose formal title during the Third Republic, *Théâtre nationale de la musique*, demonstrates its importance to national cultural pride. Given Rouché’s fierce opposition to Milhaud’s operas through and beyond the premiere of *Christophe Colomb*, it seems likely that an influential and potentially official figure prevailed upon him to relent. Whatever the reason,

à notre prochaine entrevue, vous fixer sur la date approximale à laquelle le matériel pourra être mis à votre disposition, mais je doute que ce soit avant Mars-Avril.”

⁸⁸ Darius Milhaud to Jacques Rouché, October 30, 1930, Bm-O Fond Rouché, LAS Milhaud, pièce 52. “Ainsi que vous me l’aviez aimablement suggéré la dernière fois que je vous ai vu, j’ai réalisé mon nouvel opéra ‘Maximilien’ en pensant au cadre de l’opéra. Il y a trois actes et neuf tableaux et j’ai fait toujours un interlude symphonique permettant les changements des décors. La partie chorale n’est pas plus importante que dans n’importe quel opéra.”

⁸⁹ Milhaud, *Ma vie heureuse*, 174.

⁹⁰ See Steven Huebner, *French Opera at the Fin de Siècle: Wagnerism, Nationalism, and Style* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 1–24; and Louis Epstein, “Toward a Theory of Patronage: Funding for Music Composition in France, 1918–1939” (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2013), 108–24.

by December 1930 Rouché had signed a contract with Milhaud to stage his next opera.

The dates on the *Maximilien* manuscript preserved at the Bibliothèque nationale—November 18, 1930 through January 28, 1931—suggest that Milhaud waited to orchestrate the opera until he knew where it would be performed. True to his word, he tailored the work to fit the Paris Opéra. Like *Christophe Colomb*, *Maximilien* was inspired by historical events, this time the story of the Austrian monarch installed by the French as emperor of Mexico in 1864. But beyond their historical topics and pretensions to the French tradition of grand opera, the two operas differed significantly. *Maximilien*'s plot unfolds more straightforwardly than that of *Christophe Colomb* and is largely a psychological drama, focusing on the fall of the title character at the hands of antagonist Benito Juarez, who ultimately prevails in overthrowing the French-installed monarchy. Juarez, however, is never seen on stage. Instead, the relationship between Maximilien and the Empress Charlotte is at the center of the opera. Crucially, from the perspective of the Opéra, the choir behaves more conventionally than in *Christophe Colomb*, performing as a unit rather than serving as a reserve from which soloists might emerge. Whereas in the earlier work the choir is nearly omnipresent on stage, in *Maximilien* the choir moves from performing on stage to singing off-stage (sometimes wordlessly) to remaining *tacet* for significant portions of the work.

If the Opéra's choirs were weaker than those in Berlin, its corps de danse was stronger, and Milhaud took full advantage by including several dances, choreographed by Serge Lifar. *Maximilien* catered to Parisian audiences by investing heavily in exoticism, both musically and scenically. Milhaud wove Spanish and Latin American musical sources throughout his score without regard for their provenance (for example, using maxixe and tango rhythms, even though these originated in Brazil, not Mexico). The choice to present exotic musical references may not have been motivated exclusively by the geographical setting of the opera; Milhaud's works featuring Latin American influences had always been received more charitably by Parisian critics.⁹¹ Watercolor sketches preserved in the Bibliothèque-Musée de l'Opéra show that Spanish artist Pedro Pruna's designs reinforced Milhaud's exotic references. Pruna blended Mexican colors and patterns with typically "French" Belle Epoque designs in costuming the mariachi band, Native Americans, Catholic priests, Mexican peasants, soldiers of various nationalities, European royalty, and the "negro" with a cutlass called for by the scenario.⁹² As his

⁹¹ See, for example, reviews of works like *Le boeuf sur le toit* (1920) and *Salade* (1924).

⁹² "Costumes d'après les Maquettes de Pruna, exécutées par Bertin," Photograph Collection, Bm-O, D216 86.

most important concessions to notoriously conservative Paris Opéra audiences, Milhaud abandoned the extended percussion soli and narrative declamation present not only in *Christophe Colomb* but in several other dramatic works; instead *Maximilien* exclusively featured singing. And it rejected the experimental film projections of *Christophe Colomb*, along with the latter's attempt at simultaneously presenting and critiquing history. In every respect, *Maximilien* was more conservative aesthetically and dramaturgically, showing Milhaud's willingness to adjust his compositional style to see his work performed at the highest level in France.

The premiere of *Maximilien* at the Paris Opéra took place on January 5, 1932, and with it Milhaud's long-coveted, formal debut on the national stage.⁹³ In a letter to Rouché, now a collaborator rather than a stumbling block, Milhaud gushed, "my dear Director, I write on this day after the premiere of *Maximilien* to express to you all my intense gratitude for the admirable manner in which my work was produced at the Opéra." He went on to compliment the stage director, Pierre Chéreau, for his *mise-en-scène*, the orchestra for its talent, the orchestra's conductor for his "perfect" interpretation, and the choirs and their conductors for their dedication.⁹⁴ In place of the terse, borderline obsequious language of missives past, a new spirit of magnanimity reflected the composer's feelings of relief and pride at having surmounted a major obstacle in his career trajectory.

Milhaud's joy at having finally achieved a premiere at the Paris Opéra was quickly tempered, however, by criticism inspired by his association with UE. In fact, the premieres of both *Christophe Colomb* and *Maximilien* included dark moments that underscore the exceptional nature of Milhaud's relationship with UE during a time when many French and Germans remained fiercely antagonistic. In Berlin, National Socialist protesters had booed the first performance of *Christophe Colomb* because its composer was a French Jew and its librettist a French diplomat. Tellingly, despite critical and likely official pressure on Rouché to present a Milhaud opera in Paris, *Maximilien* ultimately provoked a nationalist backlash there as well. In his review of the premiere, Milhaud's erstwhile antagonist Vuillermoz became his defender, citing unnamed "nationalist" critics who decried the opera as taking a "German" position.⁹⁵ They were reacting in part to the German-

⁹³ Darius Milhaud to Paul Collaer, December 8, 1930, in *Correspondance avec des amis musiciens*, 285.

⁹⁴ Darius Milhaud to Jacques Rouché, undated, in Bm-O Fonds Rouché, LAS Milhaud, pièce 66. "Mon cher Directeur, Je tiens, au lendemain de la première représentation de Maximilien, à vous exprimer toute ma vive reconnaissance pour la manière admirable dont mon œuvre a été montée à l'Opéra."

⁹⁵ Emile Vuillermoz, "Les événements musicaux: Darius Milhaud et Offenbach," *Candide*, January 14, 1932, 14.

language origins of Franz Werfel's libretto, which had been translated into French. Vuillermoz explained that they also took issue with the contents of the libretto, deeming the manner in which the overthrow of the French-installed Hapsburg emperor of Mexico was depicted to be disrespectful of the memory of Napoléon III and Maréchal Bazaine. It was Hertzka who had first suggested Werfel as a librettist, and UE's efforts to shop *Maximilien* to other venues may well have ratcheted up pressure on Rouché to accept the work. Milhaud's relationship with UE had become both the vehicle for his greatest successes and a target for chauvinist critics.

Legacies of a Partnership

Despite the criticisms, the Paris Opéra premiere of *Maximilien* marked a new high point for Milhaud's career, after which UE would play a much less prominent role. Hertzka, perhaps Milhaud's most efficacious advocate, passed away on May 9, 1932. Within a year, Hitler's rise to power and the advent of anti-Semitic laws severely curtailed the performance of Milhaud's music in Germany.⁹⁶ Complicating matters further, in 1932 France and Germany experienced an intensification of the economic crisis that started in the United States in 1929 but spread more slowly to Europe, limiting the resources of theaters and music publishers.⁹⁷ In the case of UE, Milhaud described to Charles Koechlin how the poor economy combined with Hertzka's death had caused grave financial difficulties for the firm, forcing it to sell the rights to several symphonic poems by Richard Strauss.⁹⁸ All of these factors led to a decline in performances of Milhaud's music in Germany. The composer soon entered

⁹⁶ As Pamela M. Potter has argued, the historiography of “degenerate music” under the Nazi regime may have exaggerated the extent to which Jewish and modernist composers' music was banned. See *Art of Suppression: Confronting the Nazi Past in Histories of the Visual and Performing Arts* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2016). But UE royalty statements and concert reviews in periodicals suggest that Milhaud's music received many fewer performances in Central Europe in the mid-to-late 1930s than it had in the 1920s. UE may have succumbed to an Aryanization process that would have made it less likely to promote or publish Milhaud's music. See Hartmut Krones, “‘Die Arisierungsbefestigung ist nun eingelangt . . .’: Die Universal-Edition im Jahr 1938,” *Österreichische Musikzeitschrift* 56, nos. 8–9 (2001): 20–26.

⁹⁷ That the Depression hurt UE is apparent in a 1931 letter an unnamed employee wrote to Henri Sauguet, which cites the “unprecedented economic disaster suffered by Germany and Austria for months” as the reason they would not be able to publish his opera, *La contrebasse*. UE to Henri Sauguet, October 21, 1931, Rés. VM DOS 215 (104), Bn-M. “. . . en raison de l'inouïe catastrophe économique subie par l'Allemagne et l'Autriche depuis des mois, il nous n'est vraiment plus possible à réaliser un projet au sujet de *La contrebasse*.”

⁹⁸ Darius Milhaud to Charles Koechlin, undated letter, likely from 1932, in Fonds Charles Koechlin, Correspondance, Box 7 B 453, Médiathèque Musicale Mahler.

a financial trough. By May 1934 he had cause to complain to Collaer, “complete doldrums. Impossible to find a publisher. This is becoming worrisome.”⁹⁹ When Koechlin asked him to intercede on behalf of a student looking for a publisher, Milhaud responded, “I am completely powerless when it comes to editors who withdraw into their gilded shells.”¹⁰⁰ After Hertzka’s death, the minimal correspondence between Milhaud and UE dealt exclusively with royalties. *Maximilien* would be Milhaud’s last work published by UE during the interwar period.

Fortunately for Milhaud, the investment he and UE had made in one another continued to pay dividends of a different kind. The premieres of *Christophe Colomb* and *Maximilien* had increased his visibility among French officials, and his connections to German-speaking musicians likely strengthened his reputation further. The memoir of H el ene Hoppenot, a writer and close friend of Milhaud, provides one example. Hoppenot recounted that officials had long snubbed Milhaud, “omitting to write his name on official programs” and calling him a “musical charlatan.” Hoppenot claimed that an about-face in Milhaud’s reception took place after Kurt Weill visited Paris in 1933. During his visit, several French ministers asked Weill, “In your opinion, who is the best French musician?” Surprised by the question, he replied, “You have only one great musician—Darius Milhaud.”¹⁰¹ Hoppenot concluded that it was Weill’s pronouncement that led officials to crown Milhaud “musician of the Popular Front.”

Though apocryphal, Hoppenot’s story nevertheless points to the importance of Milhaud’s reputation in Austria and Germany for his career.¹⁰² His star rose as French critics and bureaucrats took note of expensive productions of his works at top German theaters, and as respected German musicians spoke of him admiringly in the press and in Paris. His success on stage translated into numerous forms of official recognition. In 1933 he was made *Chevalier* of the *L egion d’honneur*. Critic Jules Casadesus responded with surprise at the rapid ascent of the composer’s reputation within official circles: “If someone had predicted to Darius Milhaud in 1920 that in 1933 he would have experienced both the consecration of the Op era and the *L egion d’honneur*, he would have

⁹⁹ Darius Milhaud to Paul Collaer, May 12, 1934, in *Correspondance avec des amis musiciens*, 339.

¹⁰⁰ Darius Milhaud to Charles Koechlin, December 18, 1936, Fonds Charles Koechlin, Correspondance, Box 7 B 453, M ediath eque Musicale Mahler. “Je suis tout   fait impuissant aupr es des  diteurs qui rentrent dans leur coquille dor ee.”

¹⁰¹ Madeleine Milhaud, Darius Milhaud, H el ene Hoppenot, and Henri Hoppenot, *Conversation: Correspondance, 1918–1974, compl et e par des pages du journal d’H el ene Hoppenot*, ed. Marie France Mousli (Paris: Gallimard, 2005), 148–49.

¹⁰² Regardless of the veracity of this story, proof that Weill thought highly of Milhaud can be found in the numerous letters between the two preserved in the Milhaud Collection at the Paul Sacher Stiftung.

only smiled with disdain.” Casadesus went on to suggest that the composer would react differently in 1933 to the prediction that he would one day be elected to the Académie des Beaux-Arts—an honor he would go on to earn in 1972, two months after having received the Grand Prix national de la musique.¹⁰³

More performances, appointments, and accolades accrued throughout the 1930s as Milhaud maintained the momentum that UE had helped generate. In 1935 Serge Lifar choreographed and performed a new production of the 1924 ballet *Salade* at the Opéra. That same year, Milhaud was among twenty leading French composers chosen to receive a commission for the 1937 Paris Exposition Internationale. The Opéra-Comique produced an all-Milhaud evening including *Suite provençal* and *Le pauvre matelot* in September 1937. In 1938 Milhaud’s opera *Esther de Carpentras* (1927) received its premiere at the Opéra-Comique, now administered by Rouché. Upon taking control of the Opéra-Comique in 1936, Rouché had appointed a board of composers to advise him, including Georges Auric, Gustave Charpentier, Reynaldo Hahn, Arthur Honegger, Jacques Ibert, Charles Koechlin, Daniel Lazarus, Antoine Mariotte, Max d’Ollone, Gabriel Pierné, Albert Roussel—and Milhaud.¹⁰⁴ With these prestigious performances and the appointment to the Opéra-Comique advisory board, Milhaud had finally joined the elite ranks of French musical administrators, Académie des Beaux Arts members, and Conservatoire professors.

The most conspicuous indication that Milhaud had arrived atop the French musical establishment was his selection in 1938 as a recipient of the inaugural state commission program to support composers financially and create new cultural patrimony for the nation. The committee that selected Milhaud included current members of the Académie des Beaux-Arts, but more importantly, it also included Rouché, who exercised veto power over opera commissions destined for premieres at the Opéra.¹⁰⁵ Given the power he exerted on the state commission committee, it is telling that Milhaud was among the first twelve composers to receive a *Commande d’état*. Rouché seems to have finally embraced Milhaud’s music as the very definition of French contemporary opera. The 1938 commission resulted in another grand opera, *Médée*, which received its world premiere in Antwerp in 1939 and a Paris premiere at the Opéra in May 1940—the last production before the Opéra closed in the face of the

¹⁰³ Jules Casadesus, “Darius Milhaud ou la Brebis Égarée,” *La Volonté*, July 20, 1933.

¹⁰⁴ As Leslie Sprout has noted, this list is all the more significant in that it only includes two figures (Pierné and Charpentier) who were simultaneously serving in the Académie des Beaux-Arts, previously the definition of the musical establishment. “Music for a ‘New Era,’” 28.

¹⁰⁵ Sprout, “Music for a ‘New Era,’” 28–29.

German invasion. When Paris was liberated four years later, Milhaud's works were among the first played on the radio, not just because his music had been banned throughout the occupation, but also because he had ended the 1930s as one of France's most officially recognized composers.

The transformation of Rouché's opinion of Milhaud's music demonstrates the profound impact of the premieres of *Christophe Colomb* and *Maximilien* on Milhaud's career, and accordingly, reveals the significance of UE's role in Milhaud's French reception. Without UE, it is difficult to explain Milhaud's transition during the interwar period from black sheep to darling of numerous French musical institutions. His compositional style did not change significantly in that period. Neither did the tastes of audiences shift to embrace his polytonality or the grand scope of his operas. He may have softened his critical blows at past French masters, but he continued to promote Second Viennese School composers throughout the 1930s. The passage of time alone cannot account for the shift in Milhaud's reception: his peers Poulenc and Auric did not manage to garner so many official accolades. And although private patrons like the Princesse de Polignac and Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge commissioned Milhaud from time to time, those commissions largely faded away in the 1930s as the Depression reduced fortunes; private commissions were not behind Milhaud's most significant successes in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Rather, Universal Edition played the role of a particularly effective patron: the firm funded Milhaud's compositional process by offering advances and taking out options on new works; lent Milhaud the prestige of its name and reputation; connected him with collaborators and kindred spirits; secured performances of his work in top venues; and promoted his compositions and performances. Milhaud's other publishers likely offered some of the same services, but UE's unique ability to promote his music to German-speaking institutions and audiences proved transformative. UE was a central node in a transnational network of people, places, institutions, technologies, and tastes that allowed his music to circulate beyond the pathways most traveled by French composers of the era. By promoting Milhaud's music in Germany, Universal Edition ultimately laid the groundwork for the belated but long-lasting recognition of his music in France.

ABSTRACT

In 1930 the French composer Darius Milhaud achieved a major career milestone: his ambitious opera *Christophe Colomb* received its premiere at Berlin's Staatsoper Unter den Linden. The premiere was

the most prestigious of a surprisingly large number of performances of Milhaud's music in Germany in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Even as he found success in Germany, many French critics dismissed Milhaud's music as frivolous or incomprehensible, and in 1930 the Paris Opéra had yet to stage one of Milhaud's works. In the wake of the Berlin premiere, however, the specter of German cultural dominance provoked calls in Paris for reevaluation of Milhaud's work. In response, the director of the Paris Opéra, Jacques Rouché, quickly secured the right to stage Milhaud's next opera, *Maximilien*, and Milhaud subsequently received a string of state commissions. After years of struggle with French critics and institutions, Milhaud's success abroad finally precipitated official recognition at home.

Milhaud owed his popularity in Germany and the subsequent transformation in his French reception to his relationship with the Viennese music publisher Universal Edition. Unpublished correspondence and contracts reveal how the firm orchestrated Milhaud's success in Germany through a network of affiliated conductors, composers, and institutions. Universal Edition and its director, Emil Hertzka, played crucial but largely unrecognized roles in advancing Milhaud's early career, and Milhaud's letters demonstrate his keen appreciation for the advantages that working with Universal brought, both to his finances and to his international reputation. The transnational collaboration that enabled Milhaud's German reception and facilitated his path to official recognition ultimately offers a thought-provoking counterexample to the historiography of chauvinism and antipathy that otherwise dominates narratives of interwar Franco-German musical relations.

Keywords: publishing, Darius Milhaud, Universal Edition, French music, transnationalism, patronage